
CHAPTER 10

Prominent “Psychics”

In the last 150 years, *the* most widely known “psychics” have been as ambiguous as they were prominent, and some are still the subject of debate, despite being dead for over a century. As it happens, allegations of trickery follow nearly all of them, and a summary is presented in Table 3. The general public associates psychic phenomena with all these people, even those who were professional magicians (e.g., Davenport brothers, Kreskin, Dunninger). It is difficult to assess whether most of these characters had genuine abilities, but that is not a primary concern here. Rather, it is their substantial influence on the public’s perception of the paranormal that is of interest. They accentuate the ambiguity surrounding the paranormal. Questions arise not only about their psychic powers but also regarding their sexual orientations, sources of money, and marital statuses.

These are fascinating and colorful individuals, and book-length biographies have been written about them all. Many have undeniable charisma. They inspired devoted, unquestioning followers, and equally fanatic antagonists. Ironically, their enemies have sometimes been their most effective publicists, and the debunkers have often done the most to keep the psychics’ names alive.

Parapsychologists have an ambivalent relationship with these characters, and in most cases they generally shun them because of their bizarre beliefs, odd behaviors, and sometimes cult-like followings. Yet these individuals have had an impact on scientific research. Because of the massive publicity they received, along with the allegations of fraud, serious psychological research was tainted by association.’ Similar figures will continue to emerge; they will continue to play salient roles in shaping belief and skepticism regarding the paranormal. As such, we

need to understand them; they merit study regardless whether or not they ever produced convincing evidence of psi.

Performer	Reference with Report of Trickery
Fox Sisters *	Self-admitted, Earl Wesley Fornell (1964)
Davenport Brothers #*	John Nevil Maskelyne (1910)
Daniel Dunglas Home *	F. Merrifield (1903) Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo (1912, 1930)
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky *	Report of the Committee (1885) Vsevolod Sergyeevich Solovyoff (1892)
Eusapia Palladino *	Self-admitted, Hereward Carrington (1909)
Margery #*	William McDougall (1925 & 1926/1967)
Arthur Ford	William V. Rauscher with Allen Spraggert (1975) Allen Spraggert with William V. Rauscher (1973)
Joseph Dunninger #*	David Price (1985)
Kreskin *	David Marks & Richard Kammann (1980)
don Juan Matus	Richard de Mille (1976, 1980)
Uri Geller #*	Self-admitted, Uri Geller (1975)
Sathya Sai Baba	Venu K. Kodimela (1992)

Table 3 Prominent “Psychics” and Allegations of Their Trickery

Listed in *The Encyclopedia of Magic and Magicians* by T. A. Waters (1988).

* Listed in *Who's Who in Magic* by Bart Whaley (1990).

The Fox sisters became prominent in 1848, when odd sounds were heard in the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Fox in Hydesville, New York. Their daughters, Kate and Margaret, then 12 and 13 years old, discovered rapping sounds that gave messages from what purported to be a deceased person.² Visitors soon flocked to the farmhouse, and newspapers put the sisters on the front page; even Horace Greeley became involved. In short order, the spiritualist movement spread through the U.S. to Europe and beyond. The new religion gathered millions of followers, from all strata of society, and the Fox sisters be-

came the most celebrated of mediums. However, near the end of their careers, during a period of alcoholism, Margaret claimed that as a young girl she had produced the raps by cracking her toe knuckles. She later retracted the confession, but whatever the truth of her statements, the sisters are forever tainted by charges of fraud.

Spiritualism has several trickster elements, its frequent association with deception being only one. Mediums, per their name, mediate between this world and the next, and it is no accident that trickster gods also often serve in that capacity. Spiritualism has other trickster and anti-structural properties, and later chapters will address them in more detail.

In 1855 Ira Erastus Davenport (1839–1877) and William Henry Harrison Davenport (1841-1911), two brothers from Buffalo, New York, began performing spiritualistic effects professionally on stage. They would enter a cabinet similar to a wardrobe, and their hands and feet were bound. After the lights were put out, instruments played within the cabinet, ghostly hands appeared outside of it, and sometimes the Davenports seemed to float over the heads of their audiences. Their personal lives were turbulent. William married a number of times (once secretly to Adah Isaacs Menken, a love-goddess of that era), and he had a severe problem with alcohol.³

There is little doubt that the brothers engaged in trickery, but their true beliefs about spiritualism are still puzzling. Joe Nickell, a CSICOP investigator, examined a scrapbook of the brothers, and from his analysis it is plausible to think that Ira Davenport actually believed in spiritualism.⁴ The brothers generated enormous publicity, entertained royalty, and biographies were written proclaiming their miraculous powers. Many others followed their lead, and conjurors quickly stirred up controversy and capitalized on it.

John Henry Anderson and Henri Robin, two prominent magicians, exposed the Davenports' act in their own performances. John Nevil Maskelyne and Samri Baldwin began their careers doing exposés, later becoming eminent magicians themselves. Maskelyne went on to father a magical dynasty, and Samri Baldwin did handcuff escapes decades before Houdini. Early in his career, Harry Kellar traveled with the Davenports and went on to become the most famous magician of his era in the U.S. Thus the Davenports, who presented themselves as spiritualists, had an extraordinary, if unintended, effect on conjuring. Despite the magician detractors, or perhaps partly because of them, the Davenports were the most successful performing stage mediums of their day.⁵ They publicized spiritualism but also contributed to its am-

biguiry; people were left wondering: were the manifestations real or fake?

Daniel Dunglas Home (1833-1886) is called the medium who was never caught in fraud. The reports of his phenomena are amazing, and Eric Dingwall succinctly summarized Home's life as "the problem of miracles in its most acute form."⁶ Home elongated his body, levitated both himself and large tables, and materialized spirit hands. He could hold red-hot coals in his bare hands without any ill effect and even passed them to others, conferring his immunity on them. Sir William Crookes, the eminent British physicist who invented the Crookes tube and discovered the element thallium, investigated and endorsed him. Home attracted the attention of royalty throughout Europe and gave seances for Czar Alexander II, Napoleon III, and Queen Sophia of Holland. He did not charge money for his séances, but he did accept gifts, some of which were lavish. Elizabeth Barrett Browning was much taken with him, but her husband Robert believed Home to be a fraud and wrote a poem about him: "Mr. Sludge, 'The Medium'." There were many ambiguities in his personal life, and Dingwall suggests that Home likely had some homosexual tendencies, but rarely, if ever, expressed them. It is true that absolute proof of trickery was never obtained against Home; however, there were several serious detailed allegations (see Table 3). Even today debunkers persist in trying to discredit him.⁷

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), co-founder of the Theosophical Society, still retains her notoriety for her paranormal manifestations. Born a granddaughter of a Russian princess, Blavatsky began traveling the world at age 17, later claiming to have spent time in Tibet, though that has been questioned. Her life was frequently in turmoil. She deserted two husbands; several of her devoted disciples became bitter enemies, and at times she lived near poverty. Her sex life still provokes wild speculation. She claimed to be a virgin,⁸ though many say that she had given birth to a son.⁹ There were rumors that she was wildly promiscuous, a lesbian, a transvestite, and a hermaphrodite.¹⁰ The sexual scandals around her and her close followers are very amusing, and Marion Meade recounted some of them in her *Madame Blavatsky: The Woman Behind the Myth* (1980). Whatever the truth, there is no question that this part of her life was marked by ambiguity. Blavatsky's psychic phenomena were exotic. Materializations and levitations were frequently reported. Her followers received apported letters, purportedly from "ascended masters," though many

suspect that HPB wrote them herself. The Society for Psychical Research sent Richard Hodgson to India to investigate, and he found so much trickery that he concluded that she should be considered one of the world’s greatest practical jokers.” His report continues to be debated, even a century after it was written.

Though it is easy to dismiss HPB as a charlatan, she was far too fascinating for that. Her life story is amazing, and religion professor Robert Ellwood writes that she can be regarded as “a fraud and confidence artist, or a sage of sages, or a compulsive liar, or a rare psychic and intimate of supernormal entities, or a gluttonous and overbearing old tartar with a fishwife’s tongue.”¹² HPB continues to be the subject of biographies, and at least two more appeared in the early 1990s.

HPB should not be considered a mere opportunist, capitalizing on the gullibility of those surrounding her. She sometimes privately admitted that she used tricks.¹³ Vselovod S. Solovyoff published a letter of hers (with her permission!) in which she admitted that she would lie about her mahatmas, though the interpretation is ambiguous, as she succeeded in muddying the issue.¹⁴ Her anti-structural characteristics can be seen in other ways. Political intrigue followed Blavatsky, and in India she was suspected of being a Russian agent, fomenting unrest. Whether this was true or not, among her successors in the Theosophical Society were Annie Besant, a central figure in the Indian independence movement, and C. W. Leadbeater, a sex pervert. HPB and her immediate followers were disruptive of the social order, and paranormal phenomena were an impetus in establishing the Theosophical Society.¹⁵

Robert S. Ellwood, Jr. provided an extended analysis of HPB in his book *Alternative Altars: Unconventional and Eastern Spirituality in America* (1979). He was an Episcopal clergyman, a member of the Theosophical Society of America, and professor in the department of religion at the University of Southern California (his wife, Gracia Fay Ellwood, has written on the paranormal). Drawing on the work of Victor Turner, Ellwood pointed out that Blavatsky was a liminal character and that her life identified with archetypal forms, particularly the trickster and shaman. His analysis is particularly valuable because it explicitly discussed liminality in conjunction with deception and the paranormal. Both HPB and her colleague Henry Steel Olcott assumed a voluntary loss of social status and became wanderers; in fact her entire life was marked by travel. Though she was the catalyst for founding the Theosophical Society in 1875, HPB and her teachings were

not its sole focus. She lacked administrative ability and never held the top position in the society.

Eusapia Palladino (1854–1918), an Italian peasant woman, was one of the most celebrated physical mediums in the history of psychical research.¹⁶ She levitated tables, produced paranormal breezes and rapping sounds, and materialized spirit hands, among many other phenomena, and she submitted to extensive testing over a period of years. Palladino was impulsive and had little self-control, especially when in trance, and she warned researchers that she would cheat if given a chance. Despite her warnings, some investigators intentionally loosened controls, allowed her to cheat, and then dismissed her, proclaiming her a fraud. The British Victorian researchers considered her a coarse character and were often shocked by her overt eroticism and sexual remarks. She attracted wide attention, and the *New York Times* published a number of articles about Palladino during her visit to the U.S. for testing. Magicians were involved in that endeavor, and Howard Thurston, the most eminent conjuror of his day, endorsed her phenomena as genuine.¹⁷ Nevertheless, because of the allegations of fraud and attendant publicity, the case of Eusapia Palladino helped discredit psychical research in the eyes of many. Yet the controversy over Palladino continues still, and in the early 1990s the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* carried an extended debate on her.¹⁸

Mina Crandon (1889–1941), also known as “Margery,” was the most famous physical medium of the 1920s. The wife of Boston surgeon Le Roi Crandon, 16 years her senior, she held séances that captured enormous public attention. *Scientific American* magazine had offered prizes totaling \$5000 for demonstrations of certain psychic phenomena. Margery applied to be tested, and a prominent committee was appointed to assess her claims. She produced innumerable dramatic materializations, levitations, and movements of objects for the committee. Ectoplasm appeared to emerge from her bodily orifices, including her vagina, but subsequent examination of the photographs indicated that some of it was actually tissue cut from animal lung, and there was other evidence of fraud as well. Rumors circulated that some investigators were sexually involved with her, thus providing a motive for complicity in deception.¹⁹

One of the members of the *Scientific American* committee was Harry Houdini, another trickster figure of archetypal proportions, and one who was obsessed with spiritualism.²⁰ His assistant, James Collins, later admitted that under Houdini’s orders, he hid a folding ruler in-

side a testing cabinet, leading others to suspect that Margery had smuggled it in. Collins’ actions allowed Houdini to “honestly” deny planting it himself.²¹ The trickster is seen on both sides of the Margery affair.

The Margery case was the most divisive in the history of U.S. Psychical research. Leaders of the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) became her partisans, but the most capable ASPR investigators, including Walter Franklin Prince and Harvard professor William McDougall, left and founded a rival society in Boston.²² As a young man J. B. Rhine attended one of Margery’s seances and was so disgusted by what he witnessed that he published an expose describing the deceptions he saw.²³ This was a turning point in his career, and the Margery affair led Rhine to chart a new course for parapsychology by restricting his work to the laboratory, using statistics and testing ordinary people.²⁴ Thus Margery had a major, albeit indirect, impact on the course of psychical research for over half a century.

Arthur Ford (1897-1971) was a renowned medium, who in 1929 gained notoriety for cracking a secret code that Houdini had left with his wife Bess. According to Houdini’s plan, if a medium was able to ascertain the code’s meaning, it would indicate that Houdini was speaking from beyond the grave. In a dramatic seance, Ford communicated the meaning, and the case received enormous publicity. But there were cries of fraud, and magicians and spiritualists long debated whether Ford was truly successful.²⁵ Almost 40 years later, he came to international attention again, when he conducted a televised séance with the prominent maverick Episcopal bishop, James Pike. He provided Pike with ostensible communication from his son who had committed suicide. After Ford’s death, William Rauscher, Ford’s literary legatee, and writer Allen Spraggett reviewed his private papers and found many old obituaries clipped from newspapers. These contained numerous small details that Ford had given in séances. After he made that discovery public, Rauscher received a letter from a Jay Abbott, who had been closely acquainted with both Ford and Bess Houdini. Abbott provided evidence of a romantic link between the two and indicated that the cracking of the Houdini code was deceitful. Rauscher is an Episcopal priest and a magician with a wide knowledge of fraudulent mediumship, and he was the driving force behind M. Lamar Keene’s expose *The Psychic Mafia* (1977). Yet Rauscher remains convinced that Ford demonstrated genuine psychic ability in some instances.

In addition to deception, there were other trickster and anti-structural aspects to Ford's character. He had a long personal battle with alcoholism. His sex life raised speculation, and his biographers noted that "people were always falling in love with him, men as well as women."²⁶ Ford was the motivating factor for establishing Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship (SFF) in 1956, which grew to be a large organization of clergy and lay people that worked to bring respectability to psychic areas. Despite his influence, Ford always remained in the background, and the SFF never was focused on him.

Mentalists Joseph Dunninger (1892-1975) and Kreskin (b. 1935) are conjurors, yet many people believe them to be genuinely psychic, a belief they both encouraged. Among magicians, the two are known for their publicity skills. Dunninger was the foremost mentalist of his day, and he had a real knack for associating with people who enhanced his credibility. For instance, along with Houdini he published exposés of spiritualism, and later he was appointed Chairman of the *Scientific American* Committee for the Investigation of Psychic Phenomena.²⁷ Berthold E. Schwarz, a kindly but gullible psychiatrist and writer of books on the paranormal, frequently lauded Dunninger's psychic abilities. His association with Houdini, *Scientific American*, and the praise from a psychiatrist undoubtedly convinced many that Dunninger's act was based on psychic ability rather than trickery. His personal life was filled with ambiguity. He lived with Chrystal Spencer for many years, but, during that time he promised to marry a Betty Devery. In 1944 Chrystal won a lawsuit and was declared his common-law wife. But she admitted that there were weeks when she did not know where he was or what he was doing, and she had to compete with his mother for his affection. Many other oddities of Dunninger's life were revealed in Maurice Zolotow's entertaining *It Takes All Kinds* (1952).

After Dunninger's heyday, Kreskin (George Kresge, Jr.) became an internationally known mentalist, and his winning and persuasive manner is now widely acknowledged. He was so charming that even Prometheus Books, the publishing house of the debunking movement, published one of his books (though many skeptics were outraged by it).²⁸ Kreskin is a somewhat solitary man. He has never married, keeps his distance from other conjurors, and is not seen at magicians' conventions; however, he is rumored to furtively visit magic shops late at night, by special appointment. Both Dunninger and Kreskin fostered the belief that they are actually psychic. Their press material and the writings of Walter Gibson, who ghosted books for them, promoted their reputations as psychics.²⁹ I've spoken to magicians who knew

Dunninger and Kreskin, and the general, though not universal, impression is that they both believed themselves to actually be psychic. Don Juan Matus, a Yaqui sorcerer with supernatural powers, was introduced to the reading public by Carlos Castaneda in his *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*. The University of California Press published that work in 1968 with a foreword by Walter Goldschmidt, chairman of the anthropology department of the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), who had also served as president of the American Anthropological Association. In 1973, Castaneda was granted a Ph.D. from that department, with a dissertation essentially identical to his popular book *Journey to Ixtlan: The Lessons of Don Juan* (1972). This was the beginning of a lucrative literary career, and Castaneda continued to produce a steady stream of books well into the 1990s. Some were bestsellers, and *Publishers Weekly* reported that by 1977 nearly four million copies of his books had been sold.³⁰

Don Juan Matus, Castaneda’s “teacher,” had telepathic and PK powers, and Castaneda described them along with amazing feats of other sorcerers.³¹ With the seal of approval of the UCLA anthropology department, many assumed the books to be factual accounts. But Castaneda largely invented them! Primarily through the efforts of psychologist Richard de Mille, overwhelming evidence was marshalled that Castaneda did much of his “fieldwork” in the UCLA library, and there is no good evidence don Juan ever existed.” As such, he is the only fictional character listed in Table 3. Nevertheless, he may well be the most influential, and many people were introduced to paranormal ideas through Castaneda’s writings.

De Mille’s books, *Castaneda’s Journey* (1976) and *The Don Juan Papers* (1980), are nicely crafted and enormously entertaining, and they show a true sympathy for both the trickster and the paranormal.³³ In fact the first chapter of his *Castaneda’s Journey* is titled “The Day of the Coyote,” and it opens with an epigraph from a poltergeist report from the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*. Even though Castaneda tried to erase his personal history, de Mille was able to reconstruct some of it, and his biographical analysis is useful and witty. Both of de Mille’s books have extended discussions of Castaneda as trickster, with intriguing insights into his personality. Castaneda never responded, and his mystique continues to this day.

This landmark hoax severely embarrassed the UCLA anthropology department, and it made it difficult for anthropology students every-

where to investigate paranormal topics because their professors feared being similarly tainted. This helped shield the paranormal from scientific investigation, and de Mille even commented that “I can’t help wondering how many prospective readers of serious psi literature may have been shunted off in another direction” by Castaneda.³⁴

Uri Geller (b. 1946) burst upon the psychic scene in the 1970s with his seeming power to bend keys and spoons with PK and also for his ESP. He was born in Israel, and when he was about 10 his parents divorced; after that he lived in a kibbutz and later went to Cyprus with his mother and stepfather. He returned to Israel and began performing on stage displaying his paranormal abilities, which even he admits were augmented by tricks. He came to the attention of paranormal researcher Andrija Puharich, who helped arrange for tests of his psychic abilities at Stanford Research Institute by Harold Puthoff and Russell Targ. Those results were reported in *Nature* and the *Proceedings of the IEEE*, major scientific journals of international standing (IEEE stands for the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers).³⁵ Those papers sparked enormous controversy, and the fallout persists. Books have been written attacking and defending Geller, and there have been direct allegations of cheating.¹⁶ He has acquired enormous wealth, reputedly through mineral prospecting, and he now lives in a mansion that has a helicopter landing pad. A fictionalized movie has been made of his life.

Geller drew the attention and spite of magician James Randi, who in the last quarter of the twentieth century was the most prominent spokesman for the debunking movement. Both Geller and Randi have appeared on numerous TV shows, and Randi even wrote a book denouncing Geller. The conflict has continued for over 25 years, becoming so intense that the two battled in lawsuits around the world. Randi was forced out of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (which he helped found), because of the legal suits provoked by his statements.³⁷

Sathya Sai Baba (b. 1926), a Hindu holy man with millions of followers around the world, is one of today’s best known miracle workers.³⁸ He reputedly materializes precious metals and gems, is clairvoyant, has turned water into gasoline, and even raised the dead. But he has not allowed controlled tests of his abilities, and there is much evidence indicating trickery.³⁹ Many of his materializations of small objects have been recorded on video, and magicians confirm that they certainly look like magic tricks, though the resolution and video

quality were insufficient for definitive proof. A number of devotees have lived in close proximity with Sai Baba and later became disillusioned, some bitterly so. One was Meenakshi Srikanth who posted an article on the Internet in 1993 entitled “Sri Sathya Sai Baba: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.” He reported that Sai Baba had sodomized a number of his students and that some were familiar with the magic tricks he used. Tal Brooke, another former devotee, also recounted Sai Baba’s homosexual advances on himself and others.⁴⁰ Elements of the trickster constellation appear in the person of Sai Baba.

Summary

I know of no psychics more prominent than those listed in Table 3, and serious allegations of deception follow them all. There are few of comparable public visibility without such taint (e.g., Edgar Cayce, Jeane Dixon, Eileen Garrett, Ingo Swann). Even if one wishes to disregard the relatively weaker testimony, the overwhelming majority of the most widely known psychic performers have a reputation for trickery. This is simply a cultural fact.

These characters exemplify the patterns of liminality, anti-structure, and the trickster. Deception and psi are not the only trickster qualities to manifest in these personalities. None were long-term employees in large bureaucratic institutions; they didn’t fit into the normal work-a-day world. They had odd life-styles; marital situations were nonstandard; they did not hold regular jobs; unusual sexuality was common, and several had problems with alcohol. Many were charismatic. These are liminal, anti-structural people.

These people have been exceptionally effective in drawing attention to themselves and stimulating discussion about their phenomena. At the same time, their antics and deceptions serve as an excuse for status-conscious scientists to ignore them and to marginalize their phenomena. This presents a paradox—for the paranormal, publicity fends off detailed examination.

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¹ Carlos Alvarado (1993) described how Eusapia Palladino’s trickery tainted psychical research, and Harvey Irwin (1987) made the same point regarding Charles Bailey, as Australian apport medium. [Alvarado, C. S. (1993). Gifted subjects’ contributions to psychical research: The case of Eusapia Palladino. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 59, 269-292; Irwin, H. J. (1987). Charles Bailey: A biographical study of the Australian apport medium. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 54, 97-118.]

² Various ages have been given for the sisters in 1848; those here are from Fornell (1964). There is also ambiguity in the spelling of their names. Kate is also given as Catherine and Katherine, and Margaret is also given as Margareta.

³ The Davenport Brothers and Ada Isaacs Menkin by Ormus Davenport, *Linking Ring*, Vol. 73, No. 12, December, 1993, pp. 64-74.

⁴ The Davenport Brothers: Religious Practitioners, Entertainers, or Frauds? by Joe Nickell, *Skeptical Inquirer*, July/August, 1999, pp. 14-17.

⁵ Christopher, 1962, 1975.

⁶ Dingwall, 1947/1962, p. 187. Dingwall's chapter on Home in *Some Human Oddities* focused on the ambiguities in Home's personal life rather than evaluating the evidence for his psychic phenomena. Dingwall recognized the importance of explicitly exploring ambiguity.

⁷ As recently as 1993, skeptic Gordon Stein published the book *The Sorcerer of Kings: The Case of Daniel Dunglas Home and William Crookes* (Buffalo, NK: Prometheus Books).

⁸ Solovyoff, 1892/1976, p. 141. [Solovyoff, V. S. (1892/1976). *A modern priestess of Isis* (trans. Walter Leaf). New York: Arno Press.]

⁹ Meade, 1980, pp. 86-87. [Meade, M. (1980). *Madame Blavatsky: The woman behind the myth*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.]

¹⁰ *Madam Blavatsky's Baboon* by Peter Washington (1993/1995), see p. 407. [Washington, P. (1993/1995). *Madam Blavatsky's Baboon: A History of the mystics, mediums, and misfits who brought spiritualism to America*. New York: Schocken Books.]

¹¹ Report of the Committee, 1885. [Report of the committee appointed to investigate phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society. (1885). *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, 3, 201-400. (Often referred to as The Hodgson Report).]

¹² Ellwood, 1973, p. 75. [Ellwood, Jr., R. S. (1973). *Religious and spiritual groups in Modern America*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.]

¹³ See Solovyoff, 1892/1976, pp. 154-155, 286. [see Note 8.]

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-181.

¹⁵ Bruce Campbell, 1980 [Campbell, B. F. (1980). *Ancient wisdom revisited: A history of the Theosophical Movement*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.]; Meade, 1980 [see Note 9].

¹⁶ Carrington, 1909; Feilding, Baggally & Carrington, 1909; Dingwall, 1950/1962, pp. 178-217. [Carrington, H. (1909). *Eusapia Palladino and her phenomena*. New York: Dodd, Mead; Feilding, E., Baggally, W. W., & Carrington, H. (1909). Report on a series of sittings with Eusapia Palladino. *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, 23, 309-569; Dingwall, E. J. (1950/1962). *Very peculiar people: Portrait studies in the queer, the abnormal and the uncanny*. New Hyde Park, NY: University Books.]

¹⁷ Thurston, 1910. [Thurston, H. (1910). Believes in Palladino: Magician Thurston offers \$1,000 if it be shown she depends on fraud. *New York Times*, May 14, p. 2.]

¹⁸ E.g., Alvarado, 1993 [see Note 1]; Wiseman, 1992, 1993; Martinez-Taboas & Francia, 1993. [Wiseman, R. (1992). The Fielding Report: A reconsideration. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 58, 129-152; Wiseman, R. (1993). Martinez-Taboas, Francia, and Palladino: Nine Major Errors. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 59, 1301450; Martinez-Taboas, A., & Francia, M. (1993). The Fielding Report, Wiseman's critique and scientific reporting. *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, 59, 120-129.]

¹⁹ Tietze, 1973; see also Tabori, 1972, pp. 40-41. [Tietze, T. R. (1973). *Margery*. New York: Harper & Row; Tabori, P. (1972). *Pioneers of the unseen*. New York: Taplinger Publishing Company]

²⁰ I am not aware of any substantial treatments of Houdini as a trickster. The best biography of Houdini is Kenneth Silverman's *Houdini!!! The Career of Erich Weiss* (1996). Useful interpretive biographies are Bernard C. Meyer's *Houdini: A Mind in Chains* (1976), New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.; and Ruth Brandon's *The Life and Many Deaths of Harry Houdini* (1993), New York: Random House.

²¹ T. A. Waters' *The Encyclopedia of Magic and Magicians* (1988), p. 219, gives some details. A number of Houdini fans have tried to dismiss Collin's statement, but their reasons are unconvincing. Brandon accepts the story as very plausible. Silverman reports the details of the séance but does not render an opinion about who lied.

²² Tietze, 1973 [see Note 19], 1985. [Tietze, T. R. (1985). The "Margery" Affair. *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, 79, 339-379.]

²³ One Evening's Observation on the Margery Mediumship by J. B. Rhine and Louisa E. Rhine (1927).

²⁴ See Mauskopf & McVaugh, 1980, pp. 75-80. [Mauskopf, S. H., & McVaugh, M. R. (1980). *The elusive science: Origins of experimental psychical research*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.]

²⁵ See Rauscher, 2000. [Rauscher, W. V. (2000). *The Houdini code mystery: A spirit secret solved*. Pasadena, CA: Mike Caveney's Magic Words.]

²⁶ Spraggett with Rauscher, 1973, p. 198. [Spraggett A., with Rauscher, W. Y. (1973). *Arthur Ford: The man who talked with the dead*. New York: New American Library.]

²⁷ How They Do It, *Scientific American*, January 1942, pp. 20-21.

²⁸ *Secrets of the Amazing Kreskin* by Kreskin, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books.

²⁹ See J. Randolph Cox's *Man of Magic and Mystery: A Guide to the Work of Walter B. Gibson* (1988), Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

³⁰ *Publishers Weekly*, Vol. 211, No. 22, May 30, 1977, p. 29.

³¹ Richard de Mille (1976/1977, p. 169) compiled a helpful list of "nonordinary events" reported by Castaneda. [de Mille, R. (1976/1977). *Castaneda's journey: The power and the allegory*. Santa Barbara, CA: Capra Press.]

³² Richard de Mille, 1976 [see Note 31], 1980. [de Mille, R. (Ed.) (1980). *The Don Juan papers: Further Castaneda's controversies*. Santa Barbara, CA: Ross-Erikson Publishers]

³³ De Mille was a member of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), but he resigned over the scandal and cover-up of Paul Kurtz's astrology study.

³⁴ De Mille, 1976, p. 121. [see Note 31]

³⁵ Information Transmission Under Conditions of Sensory Shielding by Russell Targ & Harold Puthoff, *Nature*, Vol. 251, Oct. 18, 1974, pp. 602-607. A Perceptual Channel for Information Transfer of Kilometer Distances: Historical Perspective and Recent Research, by H. E. Puthoff & R. Targ, *Proceedings of the IEEE*, Vol. 64, 1976, pp. 329-354.

³⁶ Randi, 1975; Catching Geller in the Act by Eugene C. Emery, Jr. (1987).

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