

# *PSYPIONEER*

Founded by Leslie Price

Edited by Paul Gaunt

An Electronic Newsletter

Volume 1, No 17. September 2005.

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## **EDITORIAL**

The B.B.C. 2., documentary 'Science and Séance' screened on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2005, was in my view an excellent representation of what can be achieved when facts and events are allowed to stand for themselves. A pleasing alternative to the usual offering of television programmes based on biased misinformation and ill-founded scepticism.

This nicely balanced programme was refreshing in its entirety reflecting the views and archive footage of some of spiritualisms and psychical research's most prominent influences of the past like Lodge and Doyle.

Professors David Fontana and Archie Roy, with authors, Roy Stemman and Barbara Weisberg gave interviews to a high, and well-informed standard throughout the programme. Which was presented in an impartial, professional way by Dr. Richard Noakes who is an Historian of Science.

As this was screened in the U.K., many of our subscribers may not have had the opportunity of viewing this constructive programme. If I were to be at all critical of the programme there would be only one point of reference that I would make. On the programmes onset viewers are advised by the programmes narrator, Richard Denton, that

“*Kate and her sister Maggie established a simple Yes, No, code and questioned the sound as if it was a person*” This was in fact incorrect (See, What is Known of the Hydesville Peddler? Psypioneer 9 page 82)

It is not often that such attention and detail is directed to a T.V., programme on spiritualistic phenomena and my praise goes to all those involved.

There is a BBC reference to this program on: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/4185356.stm>

For those who did not have the opportunity to watch the programme much of the focus was on the scientific relationship and parallels of the then new sciences in nineteenth century communications, machine and medium!

This reminded me of an interesting paper that I had read some time ago by a Professor of Modern Literature and Theory at Birkbeck College London; Professor Stephen Connor. *Voice, Technology and the Victorian Ear*. Stephen has kindly given Psypioneer permission to re-print this. As this paper has already been put into print I would also like to thank Manchester University Press for giving Psypioneer the opportunity and, again the permission of re-printing this. 'Voice, Technology and the Victorian Ear', in *Transactions and Encounters: Science and Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, Roger Luckhurst and Josephine McDonagh (Eds.), 2002, Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK.

Thanks also to Leslie Price, for the contribution of his valuable article: International Institute for Psychical Investigation.

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**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE**  
**For PSYCHICAL INVESTIGATION.**  
**By**  
**LESLIE PRICE**

In 1934, a group of Spiritualists formed a new research body called the International Institute for Psychical Investigation. Why did they do this, given the prior existence of the SPR, BCPS, and LSA with its own research group? And why, like so many psychic groups, did it rise, and fall into acrimony. We hope to reprint a variety of records, beginning with news reports from LIGHT of the early months. Note that the original title included the words “Psychical Research” This cannot have been pleasing to other

London bodies with similar titles such as the SPR., which was truly international, and perhaps they protested..

The first news came on January 5 1934.

## **NEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

*THROUGH the initiative of the Survival League, a new research organisation called "The International Institute for Psychical Research " has come into being. It has been formed for the purpose of investigating psychic phenomena on strictly scientific lines, and it has already enrolled a number of distinguished scientists both in active and in consultative capacity. Professor Grafton Elliot Smith (biologist) is the president; Professor D. F. Fraser-Harris (physiologist) is the research officer. The other office bearers are announced as follows VICE-PRESIDENTS: Shaw Desmond, Prof. Julian Huxley, and Prof. E. W. MacBride.*

*EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: J. Arthur Findlay (Chairman), Prof. Fraser-Harris, Lieut. Commander John S. Dove (Assistant Honorary Research Officer), Leslie J. Belton, Captain the Hon. Victor Cochrane-Baillie, Shaw Desmond, John Evelyn, Nandor Fodor, Gerald Heard, A. M. Low, Dr. Sam Sloan, William Stephenson, Mrs. C. A. Dawson Scott (Organising Secretary).*

*CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: Charles M. R. Balbi, Sir Ernest Bennett, Dr. William Brown, Prof. Hans Driesch, Prof. Lovatt Evans, Prof. W. E. Gibbs, C. C. L. Gregory, Prof. Julian Huxley, Sir Oliver Lodge, Colonel Arthur Lynch, Prof. E. W. MacBride, Prof. Alan F. C. Pollard, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, Prof. G. Elliot Smith, Dr. William Stede, Brunel White.*

*The Secretarial office (pro tem.) is at 125 Alexandra Road, London, N. W.8.  
(Telephone. Maida Vale 2191).*

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Problems began at once with the loss of the president, as reported on May 25

## **INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE**

*The International Institute for Psychical Research announces the commencement of its activities. Séance room and laboratories have been established at 16, Queensberry Place, London, S.W.7. The investigations will be carried out by the Research Officer, Professor Fraser-Harris. He will be assisted by a number of friends who have specialised in their respective sciences. The equipment of the Laboratory is proceeding. Persons desirous of helping could do so by the donation of scientific instruments. Results of the researches will, from time to time, be published in the appropriate journals.*

*The Research Officer would be pleased to receive accounts of supernormal experiences of all types for the files of the Institute, for analysis and for investigation.*

*Acting on the advice of his physician, Professor G. Elliot Smith has resigned the presidency of the Institute.*

Alas, the research officer had scarcely time to open his post before he too fell by the way, as readers learned on June 15..

#### *INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE*

*Dr. Nandor Fodor has been elected Research Officer of the International Institute for Psychical Research. The election leaves Dr. Fodor's position as Assistant Editor of LIGHT unaffected. Several lines of investigation are being initiated at the Institute's Laboratory at 16 Queensberry Place, S.W.7., in which the new Research Officer, who takes the place of Professor Fraser-Harris, will be assisted by well-known men of science.*

But sharing premises with another body, the LSA, however convenient for Dr Fodor who already worked for LIGHT, was not ideal. New ones were quickly found, as reported on August 17..

#### *THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE*

*The International Institute for Psychical Research has secured premises at 21, Harrington Road, South Kensington, S. W.7. They consist of a séance room, office, dark room, workshop and washing room. Alterations are being made to fit the premises for the Society's work. The services of Miss May Carter have been secured for the Secretarial post. The Society hopes to begin activities at an early date.*

At last it was possible to make a start, and the official opening took place. A glowing account appeared in LIGHT for November 1. Here Shaw Desmond was identified as founder.

#### *INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE*

##### *A PLASTERCAST PROOF OF MATERIALISATION*

*THE official opening of the International Institute for Psychical Research at 21 Harrington Road; London, S.W.7, on Saturday afternoon last (October 27th) was a brilliant affair. Close on a hundred people were present--leaders of psychic thought, army and navy officers, and members of the scientific fraternity and of all other learned professions. Tea was served in the large lecture room. Adjoining it is a small office and, separated by a removable partition, an up-to-date séance room. A perfectly equipped dark room, which also serves as a workshop, a dressing room and a private inside staircase from the third floor complete the premises. The rooms are nicely furnished and have a very pleasant home-like atmosphere.*

*To demonstrate the methods of instantaneous infrared photography, the lecture room was darkened and Mr. Leon Isaacs, the official photographer of the Institute, took a flashlight photograph. A red glow was seen for the fraction of a second. Everyone agreed that the torture of the white flash, which gave Mediums such shocks, will henceforth be a thing of the past.*

*The proceedings were opened by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay, the Chairman of the Institute. He stated that the stormy period was over and the Institute was now firmly established. It is not a society for the exposure of Mediums but for the finding of genuine phenomena by strictly scientific but very sympathetic and patient inquiry. No report would be issued to prove that with certain people phenomena do not occur. Reaching a dead end, the inquiry would be dropped. If fruitful, in due time, a report would be forthcoming.*

*Research Officer Dr. Nandor Fodor reported on a short series of trumpet sittings with Mr. Frank Edouin, and stated that the inquiry will be resumed. In the meantime plans are afoot for other voice sittings, which may be open to a large number of members. On November 9th, Dr. Dudley d'Auvergne Wright is beginning a study of human radiations with special regard to healing Mediums. They should volunteer their services for a photographic record of the emission from their hands. It is hoped that by extensive study a unit may be found to measure such radiations.*

*Plans are also being considered for the duplication of the famous infra-atomic quantity experiment, which appeared to prove that a counterpart of the physical body is liberated at death from every living thing. Further, the Council is promised a demonstration by Yoga methods, of human levitation, to take place on December 1st.*

*Keen interest was shown in Dr. Fodor's account of two sittings with Mrs. Annie Brittain. He said he saw a materialised hand come out of the curtain and was allowed to grip it in good light. He also witnessed the making of a paraffin glove and plastercast of the same hand. He showed the cast. While it was not perfect, the fingers were holding Dr. Fodor's own secretly-marked pencil in the palm of the hand. Conjointly with other and better casts taken under similar conditions on previous occasions (these casts were also on view), an excellent case for materialisation appears to have been made out. Supplemented by infra-red photographs the case would be ripe for submission to the Royal Society.*

*Mr. Shaw Desmond, the Vice President and Founder of the Institute, made an impassioned and eloquent appeal for support. He said that the Institute had come into being at a favourable psychological moment. All the difficulties of its inception were foretold to him from the other side, but he was also assured, as already apparent, that regarding the future of the Institute he need have no apprehension.*

More information about Shaw Desmond hats was given on November 15.

### MR. SHAW DESMOND

*Mr. Shaw Desmond's psychic activities are growing impressively. He is President of the Survival League, Vice-President of the International Institute for Psychical Research, and now he has been elected President of the Leicester Society for Psychical Research. Our congratulations on this latest office. The Leicester S.P.R., under the Chairmanship of Capt. C. E. Loseby, announces the beginning of activities. Details were also given of the new leadership.*

### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

*Now that the International Institute for Psychical Research has successfully gone through a period of reorganisation and begun what we hope will be a very useful programme of practical inquiry, readers will be interested to have a list of those composing the Executive Council. They are: Mr. Arthur Findlay (Chairman), Dr. Nandor Fodor (Research Officer), Mr. Shaw Desmond, Mr. H. Saville Collins, Mr. Stanley De Brath, Dr. Joekes, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, Countess Purtscher-Wydenbruck, Mrs. Elizabeth Severn, Ph.D., Dr. William Stephenson, Ph.D., M. Sc.*

*The Institute's rooms at 21 Harrington Road, London, S. W.7, are well fitted for research work, and we understand that some very important investigations are being planned.*

On November 5, however, a great loss had occurred. We will pause to give some detail about this pioneer, from LIGHT November 15, as she is now almost forgotten.

### MRS. DAWSON SCOTT FOUNDER OF THE SURVIVAL LEAGUE PASSES ON

*BY the death of Mrs. Catharine Amy Dawson Scott, Spiritualism and Psychical Research have suffered a great loss. For some months past she suffered from a weak heart, but her passing, which occurred on November 5th, was quite unexpected by her many friends.*

*Mrs. Dawson Scott held a place of eminence in the literary world as authoress and poet. She was an exceptionally good organiser, and the founder of the To-morrow Club (1911), of the P.E.N. Club (1921), and of the Survival League (1919)[misprint for 1929- P.P.]. She was also one of those who launched the International Institute for Psychical Research. She was the authoress of two psychic books, *From Four Who Are Dead*, and *Is This Wilson?* and she edited the Survival League's two small volumes *A Guide to Psychic Knowledge*.*

*Mrs. Dawson Scott was a woman of vision and enterprise. She had high ideals of service, and knew how to realise them. No doubt she will earn the reward of a well-spent life in the higher world. One wonders whether she had not some intimation of her approaching death, for during the last few months she gradually laid down her offices and responsibilities. She was Hon. Secretary of the Survival League as well as of the International Institute, but resigned from both and relinquished all the duties in which she formerly took much pleasure. Her memory will be honoured both in the world of literature and in the psychic movement.*

*The daughter of Mr. Ebenezer Dawson, she was born at Dulwich, and was educated at the Anglo German College, Camberwell. She began earning her living at 18 as a secretary, and at 21 published an epic of women's rights entitled "Sappho." Her second book of poems came out three years later, followed by a number of novels remarkable for their character drawing and psychological insight. She collaborated with the late Mr. H. D. Lowry in "Wheat Darkness," and edited with Mr. Ernest Rhys a large number of stories of various kinds.*

*She married Dr. Horatio Scott and had two sons and one daughter*

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#### *NOVELIST AND SENSITIVE By THE EDITOR*

*MRS. C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT-whose unexpected death is recorded on another page-had won wide fame as a novelist and organiser. But it was not so well known that she was a Sensitive through whom a long series of very interesting communications was obtained from the "Other Side," and that she had the capacity of projecting her consciousness, so that she could see and hear at a distance from the spot in which her bodily presence was located.*

*A description of her experiences was given in a book with the title From Four Who Are Dead, published in July, 1926 (Arrowsmith, London), which is now rather difficult to obtain.*

*My recollection of the book was that it contained matter of much interest, and this recollection was amply justified when-on hearing of Mrs. Scott's death -I obtained a copy from the L.S.A. library and re-read it. My estimate is that it is one of the best books of its kind ever published in this country, and that, in itself, it provides a complete refutation of the oft-repeated assertion that nothing but trivialities come through Mediumistic channels.*

*In the opening chapter of the book, Mrs. Scott described how she became aware of her psychic gifts. Very frankly she explained that her attitude to religion and the supernatural was agnostic. "My attention being concentrated on every-day existence," she wrote, "I*

*felt little or no interest in the future. I did not know whether death obliterated the individual; I did not care. "*

*Her discovery was made in a curious way. " Resting after the mid-day meal," she wrote, " -I found that soon after I closed my eyes I saw in front of me a dark tunnel. Curiosity took me through it. I stepped out of the tunnel into unknown country, into a new world. I found I could move about in this new world, walk through the wood and along the seashore, go past cream-coloured houses which were standing in hot sunshine. "*

*Later, she found that while resting she could go through this tunnel into different rooms in her own house, and that she could see and speak to a friend who was " dead " and who asked her to convey a message to his sorrowing wife, but she does not say that she ever made much use of this gift.*

*The messages recorded in the book came from her husband (Dr. Scott), George Dawson (her cousin), H. D. Lowry, and W. T. Stead. Interest, I think, centres chiefly in the messages from her husband.*

*After some experiments, her process of receiving the messages was: To empty her mind, fix it on the person of whom she was thinking, draw one or two long breaths, and then wait.*

*" Before my closed eyes," she wrote, " words would presently begin to form. These I scribbled down, then closed my eyes again and waited for more." This would appear to have been a form of clairvoyance rather than automatic or inspirational writing.*

*The messages received in this way were exceedingly interesting. Her husband told of his passing, of his experiences on the "Other Side," of his thought-body, and of the opportunities for development.*

*" We learn, we grow, our natures unfold," he told her. The possibilities which are smothered during our earth-life are able to develop. When we get here, we are often stunted, repressed, damaged. We are bitter, soured, disappointed, unhappy. Light and healing await us. Here are surroundings which assist our growth and development in every way. What we were meant to be, that we become.*

*And now Mrs. Scott has gone on to test for herself the accuracy of the information given to her and through her to all*

*(The editor of LIGHT in question was George Lethem. )*

In 1987, Mrs Marjorie Watts, daughter of Mrs Dawson Scott, published a biography of her mother " Mrs Sappho" (London, Duckworth.). Mrs Watts was not in sympathy with her mother's Spiritualist activities, nor always in touch with them, but she does give essential background detail on her life, and devotes a chapter to the establishment of the Survival League.,

Despite the loss of Mrs Dawson Scott, the first public lecture of the new Institute was held on 16 November, when Mrs Barbara McKenzie spoke of “ Famous mediums I have investigated”. This was an interesting choice, given that these (Ada Besinnet and Evan Powell) had been at BCPS, founded by her late husband Hewat McKenzie.- why then start a new institute? A possible answer was given by her and then by two colleagues.

*Psychical Research and Spiritualism needed each other, and excellent work could be accomplished by the new Institute, in which the leaders were Spiritualists who would carry on necessary research work in the most careful and sympathetic manner.*

#### INSTITUTE'S ARRANGEMENTS

*Mr. Arthur Findlay, who was in the chair, paid tribute to the memory of Mrs. Dawson Scott, who was one of the founders of the Institute. Then he spoke of the arrangements in progress for the duplication of Dr. R. A. Watters' experiments for photographing the astral body of insects and small animals in the Wilson Expansion Chamber, which physicists use for the study of atomic bombardments. These experiments will be conducted by a well-known London physicist. The results, if positive, will go a long way to give support to the vitalistic school of thought against the mechanistic one by proving that something actually leaves the physical body at death; for the inference would obviously present itself that the same thing happens with higher organised beings.*

*Dr. Nandor Fodor (Research Officer), added that the American experiments will be improved upon, inasmuch as it was planned to take cinematograph pictures of the interior of the expansion chamber. For atomic research, this has been done already, and the co-operation of a man with such experience will be assured. Experiments are being initiated, Dr. Fodor stated, with instantaneous photography by ultra-violet light in darkness, and it is hoped that the photographs may reveal the normally invisible part of ectoplasmic structures. An important step is also to be taken in the study of the Direct Voice. On December 4th, in a sitting for eighty people, to be given by Mrs. Perriman, an attempt will be made to record the voices on the ediphone, the most sensitive dictaphone up-to-date.*

Some months later another defence of the Institute was given at the AGM, as reported in LIGHT on May 2 1935..

#### INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

*AN interesting survey of the International Institute's first year's activities was given by Mr. Arthur Findlay, Chairman of the Council, at the annual meeting held last Wednesday (April 23rd), at 21 Harrington Road, London. A favourable balance sheet was submitted, with all the equipment fully written off, the number of members was announced as 333, and Dr. Elizabeth Severn, retiring by rotation, was re-elected to the Council.*

*Mr. Findlay said the Institute was quite a new departure in psychic science. When it was formed, the time was obviously ripe for a research institute adopting modern methods of*

*research. The old methods were obsolete, but scientific progress had put in their hands new methods which they were sure would be much more satisfactory than those adopted by earlier researchers.*

*The Institute, he said, was prepared to offer its accommodation and equipment to any scientist or scientific group who may wish to conduct independent experiments. They hoped to make the Institute a meeting ground for Scientists and Mediums.*

*The Council consisted of Spiritualists and non-Spiritualists; and while scientific methods were strictly observed, the Medium was treated with the respect and consideration he or she merits. "We look on the Medium," he said, "as a priceless asset, a delicate instrument, which must be handled with every care and respect. Because of our having adopted this attitude from the very beginning, Mediums have come to trust us. They realise that nothing will happen that will in any way hurt them, either bodily or mentally, or damage their reputation. If we do find that a Medium is not genuine, we do not propose to publish it broadcast; all that will happen will be that the investigation with this Medium will cease, and he or she will not be asked to return."*

The centre of activity at the Institute had by now passed to Nandor Fodor.. Time was running out for his predecessor as research officer, Professor Fraser-Harris, as LIGHT reported on January 14 1937..

#### *DR. D. FRASER-HARRIS*

*PROFESSOR DAVID FRASER-HARRIS died in a London nursing home at the beginning of last week, and his body was cremated at Golders Green, on Wednesday (January 6th). He was in his 70th year. During the past five or six years he had taken a keen interest in Psychical Research, but never advanced so far as to describe himself as a Spiritualist.*

*Professor Fraser-Harris was a man of wide education. He was a M.D., D.Sc., M.B.C.M., and F.R.S.E. Born in Edinburgh in 1867, he was educated at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow and University College, London, and carried on research work in Germany and Switzerland. As a physiologist he held University posts at Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Birmingham, was Professor of Physiology at Nova Scotia, and represented the University on the Medical Council of Canada from 1912 to 1923. In 1908-09 he was President of the Scottish Microscopical Society, and was a member of the Physiological Society and of the Biochemical Society.*

*Professor Fraser-Harris was a recognised authority on the nerves, on which he wrote extensively. He was author of "Life and Science," "Morpheus, or the Future of Sleep," and "Sixth Sense," and he edited the Modern Health series.*

*After retirement from his Canadian Professorship, Professor Fraser-Harris took up residence in Chiswick, London; and some six years ago he had his first experience as a*

*Psychical Researcher at Mr. Harry Price's Laboratory. He had many sittings with the Medium, Rudi Schneider, and was so impressed with the scientific features of the phenomena that he lectured on them at the L.S.A. (April 27th, 1933), and elsewhere in London and in the Provinces. He vouched (Hibbert Journal, October, 1932) for certain of the telekinetic phenomena and was greatly interested in the rapid breathing of the Medium by which these phenomena were accompanied. For a time Dr. Fraser-Harris was a member of the Council of the British College of Psychic Science; and he was associated with the preliminary work of the International Institute for Psychical Research. He was also associated in a consultative capacity with Sheffield Society for Psychical Research.*

*We tender our respectful sympathy to Mrs. Fraser-Harris (who was keenly interested in her husband's psychical investigation) and to their son.*

Professor Fraser-Harris was perhaps typical of a number of London investigators of the era in that he was involved in at least four London societies.

This perspective on the early months of a psychic organisation has not really answered the obvious question – just why was it started? Some answers may be found in the volumes of other newspapers, such as *Psychic News* or *Two Worlds*. Though *LIGHT* had good contacts, it was not likely to be privy to the inner thoughts of Arthur Findlay, for example, who had resigned the LSA presidency in a religious controversy some years earlier, and might have wanted to set up a rival shop nearby. Then there were those not happy with the investigation of Mrs Duncan, those dissatisfied with the BCPS after the passing of its founder, and so on..

The traumas of the Institute, which were by no means over, (a row involving sex and poltergeists which reached the law courts was just months away) seem to illustrate the analysis of psychic organisations offered by George Hansen in his seminal work “The Trickster and the Paranormal”- that they are vulnerable to powerful forces. Additional to those found in ordinary organisations.

LESLIE PRICE

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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY  
KATE FOX?

Between the years of July 1878 and December 1880, a new monthly journal was in circulation entitled, ‘Spiritual Notes’, described as *A monthly Epitome of the Transactions of Spiritual and Psychological Societies*. Founded mainly through the instrumentality of Dawson Rogers\* in 1873, it was the official journal of the British National Association of Spiritualists.

The intentions of ‘Spiritual Notes’, was to serve as an auxiliary to *all* agencies engaged in disseminating knowledge of Spiritualism, it hoped it may receive the cordial support of all sections of the movement. Mr. J.J. Morse, (James Johnson), accepting the agency for the Midland districts.

On page 6 of the first issue of ‘Spiritual Notes’, an interesting announcement was printed – *‘MRS. HENRY D. JENCKEN (Kate Fox), is about to publish her autobiography, containing remarkable experiences of Spiritual phenomena from the commencement of the movement of modern Spiritualism, thirty years ago, to the present time’*. (At this time, Kate Jencken would have been living in England).

Kate’s sisters both publishing their own respective titles; the elder Fox sister, Anne Leah Underhill publishing ‘The Missing Link’ in 1885, and Margaret Fox Kane, publishing ‘The Love Life of Dr. Kane’ in 1866. It is interesting to note that Margaret’s book clearly states the publisher as Carleton, 413, Broadway, New York and the publishing date as M DCCC LXVI (1866). It may however be possible for this title to have been available in the latter part of 1865 as the book was entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1865 by Geo. W. Carleton etc. My own copy is inscribed, presumably as a Christmas present, ‘Chas F. Southgate from? (Undecipherable name), Dec 25<sup>th</sup> 1865’?

Did therefore, Kate Fox Jencken write her autobiography for publication in 1878, or could the notation in ‘Spiritual Notes’ be incorrect?

More information on Dawson Rogers see Psypioneer No. 1 page 1

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## Voice, Technology and the Victorian Ear

This is the text of a paper given at the conference on *Science and Culture 1780-1900* at Birkbeck College, London, 12th September 1997. It is copyright Steven Connor 1997.

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Jonathan Crary has described the 'autonomization of sight' brought about during the nineteenth century as a dissociation of sight from touch, which is itself part of a separation and remapping of the senses. The loss of touch in particular meant 'the unloosening of the eye from the network of referentiality incarnated in tactility and its subsequent relation to perceived space'. The isolation of vision, and its promotion as a unifying, or meta-sense 'enabled the new objects of vision (whether commodities, photographs, or the act of perception itself) to assume a mystified and abstract identity, sundered from any relation to the observer's position within a cognitively unified field'. The sense of sight became separated from the body; it became the means whereby the other senses were to be ordered and distinguished. We have become accustomed to identifying the rise of the scientific rationality with this cognitive promotion of seeing, and the demotion of the other senses, especially of hearing and touch. The rational remodelling of the world in the nineteenth century can be seen in terms, not just of the bringing of light, but also in terms of the massive production of objects for sight. To take only one example; the efforts to modernise cities like Paris and London meant converting the archaic urban experience composed of smells, sounds and uncomfortable concussions - the world of miry in distinction conjured up in the opening pages of *Bleak House* - into a rational structure available for actual or ideal sight. The development of gas and subsequently electric lighting in the second half of the century would emphasise this conversion

I want in this paper to enquire about the other side of seeing, or about what in the sensorium was subdued by seeing, and in particular the cultural and scientific-technological transformations of sound and hearing. My suggestion will be this: an observational, calculative scientific culture organised around the sequestering powers of the eye began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to produce new forms of technology especially communicative technology, which themselves promoted a reconfiguring of the sensorium in terms of the ear rather than the eye. Far from merely signifying simple resistance to or reversion from scientific rationality, cultural experiences of hearing as newly mediated by technologies such as the telephone, the phonograph, the loudspeaker, the microphone, and the radio anticipated the new scientific understandings of the nature of materiality that we think of as characteristic of twentieth-century science, understandings in which the simple powers and privileges of optical rationality come to seem crude and limiting. Such an account runs the risk of what Raymond Williams once called technological determinism - the view that technological changes themselves simply form and change consciousness. My view is that, far from merely bearing the impress of technology and the forms of scientific understanding that it

encoded, cultural experiences of hearing acted as a kind of laboratory for new understandings of the nature of scientific work: they constituted a relay in which science came to hear itself differently. Here I am in only partial agreement with Carolyn Marvin, who suggests, in her study of the social and cultural effects of the new electrical technologies of the late nineteenth century, that the body may itself be seen as 'a communications medium, that is, as a mode for conveying information about electricity'. I think that Marvin overstates the distinction between the experts and technically informed who communicated in textual form about the new technologies, and those 'groups without recourse to special textual expertise [who] approached the electrical unknown directly, learning with their bodies what it was, and what their relationship to it should be'. Science attempted through the nineteenth century to put the senses to work: at the end of the century, the senses began to perform interesting kinds of work upon the self- understanding of science, as the newly mobile relations between sight and hearing (along with the increasing incorporation of the other senses) form a correlative to emerging scientific conceptions of the complexity of matter and our relations to it. The distinction between the uninformed body and the informed expert is thus far from absolute.

I want first of all to make some broad and no doubt unhistorical generalisations about the differences between sight and hearing. What in hearing does the promotion of sight attempt to subdue and sequester? Hearing has traditionally been seen as the medium of experience, intuition, intensity, and immediacy. As such, the difference between hearing and sight is the difference between oral and literate epochs, between unhistorical and historical cultures. Walter Ong suggests that the difference between a visual-typographic perspective and an oral-aural perspective is the difference between being in front of as opposed to being in the midst of a world. '*Sound situates man in the middle of actuality and in simultaneity, whereas vision situates man in front of things and in sequentially*', writes Ong.

Seeing becomes associated with interiority - or with the defining gap between interiority and exteriority. In allowing, even requiring the reflective distancing of human beings from the world they inhabit, seeing, so to speak, scoops out from the plenitude of shared social existence out in the open, that imaginary concavity which will come to be occupied by the subject. Subsequently, hearing will come to be associated with everything that predates and even threatens the rational, reflective subject: the oral, the infantile, the archaic, the instinctive, the irrational.

Sound appeared to nineteenth-century physicists to be more obviously and measurably material than light. Sound has measurable velocity, and recordable dynamic effects. The idea that light too might be dynamic, might be on the move, would have to wait for the more advanced technologies and theoretical speculation of the twentieth century. The apprehension of the dynamic materiality of sound, which goes back, at least as far as Aristotle in his *De Anima*, may register a physiological and cultural fact about human beings which is simple in its nature but profound in its effects. Human beings respond to light, but do not produce it. Human beings produce sound as well as apprehending it. If

the eye corresponds to the ear, in apprehending light in the same way as the ear apprehends sound, there is no specifically visual correlative to the voice.

Vision embodies or guarantees knowability, because seeing makes available the idea of persistence, or permanence in time. Sound always involves the sense of something *happening*, here and now; but the very intensity of that here and now happening derives from the fact that it is volatile, always passing away. To see the world, or to see it as an object presented to sight, is to believe that it has a form; to hear the world, or to experience it as something heard (importantly, we can no longer speak of an 'object for hearing' with the same assurance) is to encounter materiality without continuous form. What you see is there, and then still there. What you hear is here, and then at that same instant no longer here. (Cinema, as the art of images in movement, may be seen as an approximation, within sight of the conditions of hearing.)

The dynamic nature of hearing allowed it to be conceived in terms of the dominant nineteenth-century scientific paradigm of the mechanical production, exchange and transmissibility of forces. During the mid- nineteenth century, the period that Lewis Mumford has characterised as that of palaeotechnics, this world of relations and transformations (actualisable as opposed to merely symbolic analogies between different forces and states of matter) was dominated by the thermodynamic correlation of heat and energy. Mid-nineteenth-century technologies had led to a massive augmentation of the motor or kinetic powers of the human body - its powers of extension, movement. Thus the machines for replicating, accelerating and multiplying the capacities of the human hand - from the spinning jenny onwards - are matched by the development of machines for replicating, and then accelerating the powers of movement - in the railway, in the development of aeronautics and the internal combustion engine. Not only are such technologies allied to the world of work, they summon up a 'world of work', of striving, resistance, production, idleness and decay. They involve the organisation and subordination of space: the conquest of distance, weight, and inertia. They produce and express a *moralisation of matter* that saw processes of conversion in terms of the minimisation of waste or idleness and the maximisation of profitable work.

Though it had been known about at least since Faraday's demonstrations of electromagnetic induction, it was not until the last quarter of the century that electrodynamic convertibility - the conversion of heat into light, of sound into variable electric current - began to have important cultural impacts. The mechanisation of sound was part of the process of putting the senses to work, in line with the project of exploiting the kinetic powers of the body. Telephonic and phonographic investigations begin with the idea of reducing or translating hearing into sight. Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison were both driven to their experiments with the transmission and reproduction of sound by experiences of deafness - Bell with the deafness of his wife and Edison with his own deafness. Both worked with the idea of relaying sound through sight. Bell was inspired perhaps by the example of his father who invented a highly influential system of phonetic notation, or visible speech, (the word phonography which came to be applied to the early arts of sound recording was originally coined by Pitman for his system of phonetic shorthand). Bell worked for some considerable time with apparatuses, which

rendered sound waves in visible terms. He thought, for example, that deaf people could learn to reproduce pitch and timbre by reproducing the voice-prints obtained by the influence of particular sounds on flames, or the characteristic signatures produced by a device called the phonautograph, which traced vibrations caused in a diaphragm. Both were working, that is to say, with a telegraphic principle, in which sounds were first translated into a visual-linguistic form, and then translated back into sound, rather than with a photographic principle, in which sounds would inscribe themselves directly without the mediation of the interpreting human eye.

'For some time', declared an article in *The Times* in 1877 celebrating the coming of the telephone, 'there has been a prophetic idea that a speech ought to be able to report itself.' The telephone amazed and disquieted early users, because it seemed to have achieved this condition of autonomized hearing. Bell's aim, he said, was to

devise an apparatus that might help [deaf] children...a machine to hear for them, a machine that should render visible to the eyes of the deaf the vibrations of the air that affect us as sound...It was a failure, but the apparatus, in the process of time, became the telephone of today. It did not enable the deaf to see speech as others hear it, but it gave ears to the telegraph.

The autonomization of sight evoked by Jonathan Crary separated sight from the other senses and led to the centring and consolidation of a subject. The autonomization of hearing separated the act of hearing from the individual subject and opened on to a world in which human sensory operations appeared to take place not merely through, but in machines. The telephone appeared to effect a specifically ventriloquial illusion in that the voice transmitted through the apparatus appeared to speak from it. Time and again, early commentators on the telephone expressed their amazement that Bell had succeeded in making the mute material world speak. Thermodynamic technology made iron move: electrodynamic technology, as *The Times* put it, had succeeded 'in making iron talk'.

This autonomization of speech and hearing brought about a curious revival of a very ancient conception of the expressiveness of the material world, a sense that the world could speak, and a vitalist sense that the life of the world consisted in its auditory powers. But it did more than this. Telephony and phonography also seemed to demonstrate that the world could listen to itself, without the agency of the human ear. Bell, it is well known, employed a real, dead human ear in his experiments, and actually incorporated its tympanum in one of his early telephones; though he noted that the ear was poorer as an instrument than the diaphragm he constructed of boiler-plate iron, three feet across and one inch thick. Later in his life, Edison wrote in his journal that he regarded his deafness as a positive advantage when it came to perfecting the sound produced by the phonograph, and that modern urban life was characterised by a kind of phonographic hearing. The Romantic image for this autonomous hearing/speaking of the inhuman world was the Aeolian harp. A poem written in the 1890s by John Payne presented an interesting post- telephonic update of this image. 'The Telephone Harp', which asks us to imagine the inhuman, and literally un- earthly voices that might be rendered audible by telephone wires that were becoming a common sight in city and country:

The hand of the storm-wind sweeps the harp of the telephone-wires.  
One hears in the storm of sound the plaint of the unknown powers  
The concert of wail that comes from other worlds than ours,  
The inarticulate cry of things that till now were mute  
And speak out their need through the strings of this monstrous man-made lute.  
Nay, cruel it is to hear the cry of the lives unknown,  
That voice their ineffable woes in a speech that is not their own,  
A speech that is neither theirs nor ours, that can but wail,  
Nor give us to understand a word of their mournful tale

This separation of hearing from the ears of individual subjects confirmed a kind of cultural fantasy that was widely diffused through the nineteenth century, the fantasy of the mobility of the senses. Early in the nineteenth century, the tendency to identify Mesmer's 'magnetic force' with electricity had already led to the enactment of forms of imaginary electrical telephony in mesmeric experiments in the early nineteenth century. It was widely believed among mesmerists that the sense of hearing and of sight could migrate in an entranced subject from the head to the abdomen. There are a number of reports in the *Zoist*, the journal of phreno-mesmerism published during the 1840s, of women suffering from deafness and dumbness, who could hear perfectly well when someone would whisper close to their stomachs. J.H. Désiré Pététin found the proof that this phenomenon depended upon electrical action in the fact that, although subjects would show no signs of response to questions directed to their ears, they would respond if the mesmeriser placed the fingertips of one hand on the subject's abdomen and whispered his remarks to the fingertips of the other hand. Frank Podmore's account of a further elaboration of this experiments in his *Modern Spiritualism* of 1902 makes clear its anticipation of the telephonic process: 'the same results would follow', writes Podmore, 'if the operator stood at the remote end of a chain of persons holding each other's hands, of whom the last only touched the patient. But if a stick of wax were placed in the circuit, communication at once ceased.' In Podmore's account, it is the word 'operator' (a word in use from the 1840s to designate the telegraphist and transferred readily to the men and later women who performed the same function in the new telephone switchboards) which establishes the circuit between mesmerism, telegraphy and telephony.

Indeed, spiritualist practice provides the most striking and sustained example of this kind of phantasmal experiment with bodily matter. It is routinely claimed that Victorian spiritualism is the expression of a widespread dissatisfaction with the materialism of nineteenth-century science, industry and social and political thought, an assertion of the transcendence of spirit, as a principle of moral, religious and even political renewal, in an

objectified world of inert things and blindly mechanical processes. This ignores the fact that spiritualists shared with their opponents the language of investigation, evidence, exhibition and exposure, and the séance was seen by spiritualists themselves as a kind of laboratory for the investigation of the spirit world, a stage on which to unveil or bring to light hitherto concealed mysteries. Indeed, spiritualism also shared with its materialist adversaries an impatience with supernatural explanations of its phenomena. Annie Besant defended her surprising embrace of theosophy after a lifetime of secularism with the claim that 'the repudiation of the supernatural lies at the very threshold of Theosophy', a sentiment with which Charles Maurice Davies concurred in 1874 in declaring that 'Spiritualism has no such word as Supernatural' and Florence Marryat echoed even more emphatically in 1894 in asserting '*There is no such thing as super-nature*'.

Spiritualist practice is much more accurately thought of as a kind of phantasmal commentary upon the work of science; a sort of cultural dreamwork, or series of embodied reflections upon the reconfigurations of the body induced and potentiated by new communicational technologies. One of the less often remarked ways in which the 'other world' of spiritualism became entangled with the 'real world' of science and progress was in its mirroring of the communicational technologies of the second half of the nineteenth century. For some years after spiritualism began its career in 1848 with the 'Rochester Rappings' experienced in a house in Hydesville, New York, the principal means of communication with the dead was the system of usually alphabetic knocks, which had slowly to be decoded by the sitters. No more literal parallel to the digital system of the electric telegraph could be imagined. In 1858, Charles Partridge had already published his account of spiritualist experiences under the imprint of the 'Spiritual Telegraph Office'; and, as one might expect, the spirits soon began themselves to communicate in morse code. When in 1871 a spirit circle in Cincinnati working with the mediumship of a Mrs. Hollis received messages in morse, it prompted them to incorporate a telegraphic instrument into their séances. The spirits claimed to have invented telegraphy in advance of its invention in the human world (one wonders quite what *for*), and indeed to have given unseen encouragement to its inventor and developers. Although this encouraged hopes that 'the time is not very distant when telegraphic communication between the two worlds will be as much established as it now is between Louisville and Cincinnati', spiritual telegraphy made considerable demands on the spirits' powers of organisation and engineering. It was necessary, for example, to find and retrain a deceased telegraph operator in the spirit world, whose efforts would need to be supported, as on earth, by a 'band of electricians to sustain the community spirit, while he handles the key of the instrument'. Nor was it possible for the spirits simply to commandeer the telegraph instrument placed in the centre of the circle; first of all, it was necessary to materialise a 'battery' to power it.

During the 1860s and 1870s, the systems of 'visible speech', which enabled the direct transformation of acoustic signals into visual form, find parallels in the automatic writing and 'direct writing' practised by mediums during this period, both of which dispensed with the requirement for the members of the séance to decode the spirit messages. Then in 1876 and 1877 came the near-simultaneous invention of the telephone and the phonograph. As we will see, both of these technologies, and especially the former,

quickly entered the language of spiritualism: the effect was both further to 'materialise' spiritualism itself and to highlight the ghostliness of the new technological power to separate the voice from its source, either in space, as with the telephone, or in time, as with the gramophone. Spiritualism moved from the high-definition visibility of the full-figure materialisations which thrilled participants in séances during the 1870s, towards more indeterminate experiences in invocation predominated over materialisation, and the ear over the eye. The twentieth century has been the period of what one spiritualist memoir called 'the voice triumphant'.

There is a deeper relation between the evolution of ghost phenomena and the developing logic of technological communications. For both involved the move from somatic to telematic processes of relay, as effects and manifestations that took place in or through the physical person of the medium - the easiest of these to produce being the production of the voice of the spirits by the medium's own vocal organs - were replaced by manifestations taking place at a distance from the medium's body. The two forms of climax were, firstly, the 'full materialisation' brought about most spectacularly by mediums like Florence Cooke, who, in the person of 'Katie King', moved around the room, conversed with sitters, sat on their knees to be tickled, and so on, and, secondly, and less often discussed, the phenomenon of the 'direct voice', which is to say, a voice which speaks independently of the medium's vocal organs. In the direct voice, the phenomena must be thought of as being facilitated rather than produced by the medium, who acts as a telephonist rather than as a telegraphist, making the connection rather than herself relaying, embodying and interpreting the signal.

{ Often, in 'direct voice' manifestations, the spirits would employ a trumpet (resembling a speaking trumpet or megaphone rather than the musical instrument), or even a series of trumpets, which might be placed in the room at a distance from the medium. The trumpet served both to amplify the voice, and to change its position: trumpets would be moved telekinetically through the air and round the room. The use of this property led to the mediums who specialised in this mode of manifestation becoming known as 'trumpet mediums'. The spiritualist use of the trumpet was probably first suggested by the use of speaking trumpets for the deaf, as well as Biblical uses of the instrument as a sign of spiritual warning and revelation, rather than by the characteristic amplifying horn of the phonograph and later the gramophone. But the technique of making spiritual voices audible comes increasingly to cohere with the technological means of amplification. I think we might interpret this use of the apparatus of reproduction and amplification in terms of the anthropomorphism of the telephonic and phonographic apparatus that has been suggested by Charles Grivel: }

The flourishing of the direct voice during the twentieth century has undoubtedly been encouraged by the development of acoustic technologies - the telephone, the phonograph, the gramophone, the microphone, the megaphone, the radio and the tape recorder. One of the most successful and widely-known of direct voice mediums, Leslie Flint, first manifested his power to conjure voices in the darkness of the cinema during the early 1920s; his psychic gifts were a technological supplement to the silent film, providing a kind of soundtrack.

The séance occupies a central position in the Victorian exploration of the possibilities of a world governed by the principles of sound, and a form of human embodiment governed by hearing, and the proximity senses with which it is associated. The suffusive body of the séance is a body characterised by the mobility of sound, in its influx into the interior of the body, and its passage outwards again into the world. (Later, in the twentieth-century, ectoplasmic materialisation itself would be explained by reference to a theory of matter vibrating at different rates.) Where the optical body is an anatomy unfolded to the eye, which allows it to be clearly differentiated from its outside and from other bodies, the phantasmal body of the spiritualists is a transmissive or connective medium; it is experienced in terms not of the relationship between interiority and exteriority but in terms of passage between them. Hearing the voice from beyond, issuing from the mouth of the medium, and, in later years, hearing the 'direct voice' of the spirit, separated from the medium's body, bring about a temporary ascendancy of acoustic over visual space. For all of the startling visual apparitions of the séance, its tendency is to replace a visual body with the fundamentally auditory/acoustic phenomenology of the sonorous body.

Telephones and phonographs were initially enjoyed and sometimes even dismissed as mere tricks and gadgets. From Galileo's telescope onwards, inventions which began life as toys and gimmicks have developed 'serious' scientific or social uses. Serious purposes, notably military, industrial and medical purposes, were quickly invented for the telephone. It was employed in coalmines, and in hospitals; there was very considerable interest in the medical and in the military applications of the telephone; and the powers of the telephone to assist in the maintenance of public order quickly became apparent - the Boston police force had already installed a telephone network by 1878. Early representations of the telephone stressed its involvement with the worlds of commerce and work (women, for example, are not presented as users of the telephone until relatively late in its development, when, in the 1920s and 1930s it began to be marketed as a leisure device; women by contrast, were addressed by the telephone, and formed part of the circuit or exchange of voices.) The telephone came rapidly to be seen as a way of making businesses and other kinds of serious social processes more efficient. The telephone as a rationalising device channelled speech into calculable purposes. It reconfigured discursive relations into the form of networks, mapped the vectors of speech. The development of the telephone belongs to that generalised dromology, or rationalisation of speed which has been the subject of Paul Virilio's enquiries.

Seen in this way, there is an unbroken continuity between the sciences and technological enhancements of the senses and the cruder forms of technology characteristic of the earlier nineteenth century; a putting of the senses to work in the same way as steam engines derived work from the principle of thermodynamic equivalence. But alongside these developments, the telephone and the phonograph, along with ancillary inventions like the microphone and the loudspeaker, also represent something new. They retained their early associations with fantasy, pleasure and secret excitement. The telephone and the phonograph would develop as part of the commodification of information and communications. But, in entering and transforming intimate, everyday life, technology itself also began to *play*. In these inventions, science would begin its long and uncompleted sojourn with pleasure, style and the techniques of the self. Like the camera

and the cinema, the telephone began to provide forms for self- imaging, and self- transformation. It is surely no accident that the cases of divided and multiple personality encountered and analysed by Pierre Janet and Morton Prince at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century took the forms not of the multiplication of appearance, or presentation of visual symptoms, but the production from a single human body of multiple centres of personality identifiable by their different voices. In these examples, as in the paranoia of a Schreber, pathology lies close to the mainstream of techno-cultural transformation. If the telephone plays a part in the reduction of `culture' to rationality, the putting of the senses to work, it also installs culture and sensation at the heart of rational structures and cognitive operations, and begins to transform them from the inside out. The technologies of the voice and the ear inaugurate the process whereby the subordination of culture by science was inverted; in which science became `culturized'. At the very inauguration of that fierce antagonism of professional scientific expertise and the realms of culture, whether in the commodified forms of the culture industry, or the idealised forms of antiscientific avant-garde art and culture, an antagonism that has often been said to characterise the modern world, we can see the beginnings of that commingling of scientific ideas and cultural practices which has become characteristic of our contemporary epoch.

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**Paul J. Gaunt.**