

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,

Messrs Polidori and Garlaschelli speak airily about manoeuvering a hand through a bracelet that is too tight. Whether or not the manoeuvre is possible depends on how much too tight.

Applying a tape measure to my own hand, passing it round the base of the thumb (keeping the thumb tucked into the palm as far as it could be persuaded to go) I obtained a measurement of 210 mm; the measurement around the base of the hand, in front of the collis bone, was 175 mm. This gives one some idea of the degree to which a wax glove would have to be stretched before the most flexible hand could pass through the space represented by the wrist. It implies wax of considerable thickness to withstand the deformation without breaking, whereas the modellers who passed judgment on the Kluski wax gloves considered that the extreme thinness of the wax precluded the possibility of stretching without a break and consequent repair being evident.

It is worth pointing out that though a hand being withdrawn from a glove can flex up, down and sideways it cannot be rotated like an armchair being pulled through a door, since rotation of the hand would also cause rotation of the wrist, the two being attached to one another.

It is interesting that 'skeptics' expect their assertions to be believed though they are not prepared to believe the assertions of Geley and Richet about the conditions under which the Kluski hands were obtained, conditions that would preclude all possibility of pre-formed moulds being introduced by the medium.

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OBITUARY

KARLIS OSIS (1917-1997)

Dr Karlis Osis died on his 80th birthday, 26th December 1997. At the end of the Second World War, he fled his native Latvia when Russian troops invaded the country. He studied psychology at the University of Munich, where he obtained a Ph.D. in 1951 with a thesis on Extrasensory Perception. There followed an emigration to the United States, where J. B. Rhine invited him to the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University. There he started a career in parapsychology which lasted almost forty years.

A few years later Dr Osis joined the Parapsychology Foundation in New York, where he, Montague Ullman and Douglas Dean began their studies of ESP in dreams. This led to a general broadening of the field, both its methods and the choice of areas for research.

Karlis Osis served the American Society for Psychical Research from 1962 to his retirement in 1983, most of the time as the Chester Carlson Director of