

(1-tailed) gives 1 in 15680. In the 2-tailed context, the required figure is presumably 1 in 7840.

In conclusion, the computer programs presented in this book for the home testing of ESP are *potentially* extremely useful. Computer psi-testing at home is likely to appeal to a wide readership—and, conceivably, might lead to the discovery of new psi stars who could then be tested under fully-controlled conditions. It is regrettable that these particular programs, and the associated statistical treatment, are marred by error and inaccuracy. If this sloppy work is characteristic of Sargent's laboratory protocol, then critics, in seeking to explain away his remarkable results, need look no further than experimenter carelessness.

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#### CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor,

I stand corrected. Dr Dingwall is right in saying that the title of St Francis of Assisi is indeed the Seraphic Father, not Doctor (this is because he wrote so little). The point, in the context of my letter of October 1983, was that the *epithel* was Seraphic, so that those involved in the Cross Correspondences could assume that references in them to "the Seraph" should be interpreted as references to his namesake Francis Balfour.

As to that angelic ballet, I had always heard that its venue was a pin but it could well have been a needle. Here the point is the point!

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To the Editor,

A recent article (Winslow and Meyer, 1983) suggests that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was the originator of the Piltdown Man Hoax, fabricating the skull with cleverly doctored bits and pieces of human and animal anatomy gathered during his extensive travels. Although the evidence offered is purely circumstantial and stretches one's credulity a bit, it is an intriguing concept, and will be elaborated on in a book being written by Winslow.

The 1912 Piltdown discovery sent the orthodox scientific community on what the authors call a 40 year 'wild fossil chase,' resulting in a flurry of textbook revision and considerable embarrassment when the fraud was uncovered in 1953. Doyle lived eight miles from the Sussex site where the skull was found and apparently had access to all the anatomical components used, as well as the medical skill and knowledge of paleontology necessary to put it together and surround it with pseudo-corroborating artifacts.

Just enough mistakes were made in the concoction to indicate that the fabricator wanted the fraud to be discoverable, eventually; but it took the scientific establishment 40 years, and Winslow and Meyer suggest that 'such gullibility must have exasperated Doyle, or made him howl with laughter' (p. 43). They also ask the thought-provoking 'but why didn't Doyle ever reveal—anonously, at least—so exquisite a hoax.' (p. 42).

Besides being a great practical joker, Doyle, as intensely emotional as he was logical, had been deeply wounded by written attacks and ridicule from evolutionists, and presumably would have been gratified to see them, as Winslow and Meyer say, 'hoisted by their own petard.' But there may be more to it than that.

*If* the hypothesis of Doyle's involvement is valid (and that's a big if), it's possible that Doyle's Holmesian genius and passion for 'evidence' merged with his notoriously ardent belief in Spiritualism, and that he decided at some point to try to use the hoax as proof of survival. What more convincing evidence could there be than a mediumistic communication from A.C.D. saying 'You 'scientists' had better have another look at the Piltdown skull, which I built and planted, along with a hippopotamus tooth collected in Malta during my honeymoon trip'?

On October 7, 1930, exactly three months after Doyle's death, Harry Price and Ian Coster, a journalist, attended a sitting with Eileen Garrett. It was the intention of the two men to try to contact Doyle, but he was pre-empted by H. C. Irwin, Captain of the R101 airship, which had crashed two days before, killing Irwin and most of the passengers and crew. This became the famous and compelling 'R101 Case,' written about by John Fuller (1979) and others. At the end of this long seance, however, a communication was received 'from Doyle'.

I have skimmed the Cooke (1980) book, and more carefully studied two published reports (virtually identical) of the Garrett seance dialogue between Price (1931, 1933) and 'Doyle', recognizing nothing so far which might be interpreted as pertaining to Piltdown. I have not seen Price's original notes, however, which I believe are in his collection at the University of London library.

One would expect that if anyone could channel vital information from Doyle, it would have been Mrs. Garrett, especially during the spectacularly productive sitting which yielded the R101 material. And it was a perfect opening; Uvani's voice changed to Doyle's, and his first words to Price and Coster were 'Here I am, Arthur Conan Doyle. Now—how am I going to prove it to you?' (Fuller, 1979, p. 215).

While it seems less hopeful to look for pertinent evidence from other mediums, there may be more Doyle material in the Price or Garrett notes (both very extensive, according to Fuller) of that or other Garrett sessions, and an avalanche of 'communication from Doyle' was claimed by a multitude of mediums (see especially Price, 1933, and Fuller, 1979, p. 179). Perhaps the idea

will ring a bell for someone more familiar with the literature on Doyle and on the survival issue.

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To the Editor,

Susan Blackmore's paper on OBE's and other experiences, in the February 1984 Journal, recalled to me that my elder son, when aged 6, said to me one morning "Last night I had the first dream in which I was seeing out of my own eyes". He explained that, up to that point, in all his dreams he had seen himself, participating in the dreams, from a point outside himself.

I had the same experience in my childhood – up to a certain age I saw myself from outside in my dreams. Later, as I do now, I saw "out of my own eyes". In the earlier dreams 'I' was located outside my dream body – but I was also the person I was viewing, taking part in the action of the dream. Childhood dreams also included flying, and later childhood and adolescent dreams were often lucid – with knowledge that one was dreaming and varying ability to direct the course of events in a dream. With adulthood the external viewpoint, flying and lucidity, all largely disappeared.

My impression is that I am by no means alone in this sequence. If it is a common one, this may explain why younger respondents in Susan Blackmore's survey tended to report more flying dreams and lucid dreams – they were more recent and more readily remembered.

While, in my very young dreams, I saw myself from outside, this seems different from what is usually understood by an 'Out of Body Experience' – being apart from a usually inert body (breathing, but not otherwise active) and able either to observe that body or to turn away and observe other things.

An electoral roll, from which Susan Blackmore's sample was taken, would exclude people below the age of 17. It might be interesting to do a survey of schoolchildren, to discover the relationship of age to out-of-the-body viewpoint, flying and lucidity between the ages of, say, six and eighteen years.

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