

EDITORIAL

As subscribers to the hard copy version of the *JSE* have already noticed, this is a particularly hefty issue. I'm pleased that we've been able to wrap up 2011 with a gratifyingly substantive and larger than usual array of papers on a variety of interesting and important topics. This issue contains too many papers for me to comment on them individually. But I do want to direct your attention to the detailed exchange over the data from the Global Consciousness Project (GCP). This series of papers addresses not only the specific questions of how to interpret the GCP data and what it is that the GCP is actually tracking, but also the long-standing and more general debate among parapsychologists over the merits of Decision Augmentation Theory (DAT), hailed by some as a more viable ESP (or cognition)-based alternative to physicalistic explanations of much of the apparent evidence for psychokinesis. Ed May and James Spottiswoode argue first for the DAT point of view. They contend that the statistical deviations reported in the GCP reflect a cognitive form of experimenter psi rather than a force-like physical effect. Then Roger Nelson and Peter Bancel reply separately, and from quite different perspectives. May and Spottiswoode get the last word in this exchange. I'm personally pleased to see the details of the debate presented so thoroughly, and I hope readers will agree that the exchange significantly advances our understanding of the issues.

I also hope to feature additional dialogues on topics of interest to SSE members in future issues, and I encourage readers to let me know what key topics they would like to see debated. Of course, I can't promise to satisfy all (or any) suggestions. Already in my brief tenure as *JSE* Editor-in-Chief, I've learned that I can't always extract submissions of target articles (or replies) from relevant researchers, no matter how pathetically or aggressively I frame my requests. But I'll do what I can, and I'm genuinely interested in knowing which topics are of particular interest to our subscribers.

Since this is the holiday season and an appropriate time for reflecting on the year that's coming to a close, I'd like once again to acknowledge and thank my dedicated and hardworking—in fact, overworked—team of Associate Editors and the many reviewers on whom we all rely in vetting papers for inclusion in the *JSE*. As I've noted before, producing this *Journal* poses a distinctive challenge. Because the *JSE* deals with topics either shunned altogether or dealt with shabbily by more mainstream publications, the community of qualified readers for high-level peer review is quite small. Ideally, I'd prefer to have a larger team of Associate Editors, in order to lighten the editorial load for those who—perhaps inscrutably—continue to volunteer large chunks of time to

shepherding submissions through our system. However, adding members to that team inevitably subtracts members from the small pool of qualified referees. So I'm deeply grateful to my Associate Editors, who realize the need to maintain the high standard of scientific and scholarly excellence that's characterized the *JSE* since its inception, who recognize that there are only so many people on whom the *JSE* can rely, and who accordingly and generously donate their valuable time. I'm equally grateful to our many referees, many of whom we call upon over and over, simply because they have expertise in the relevant areas of research, and because the number of people who have both that expertise and the relevant degree of open-mindedness about new ideas remains too small for us to look elsewhere.

I must also express my deep appreciation for the breathtaking efficiency, technical panache, and thorough understanding of the publishing business of our Managing Editor, Kathleen Erickson. Kathleen does it all, and she does it brilliantly. I'm sure *JSE*'s Associate Editors and readers agree with me on this. We benefit, time and again, from Kathleen's assistance, patience, and good nature. In fact, I've never met anyone who can issue a reminder with such a winning combination of grace and coercion.

On a quite different matter, I've learned recently that some found my previous Editorial disturbingly pessimistic. That Editorial dealt with the problem of finding reliable and stable repositories for the book and journal collections, and other scholarly research materials, of those working on the frontiers of science. I commented on the financial struggles of some parapsychological institutions, and I ended my Editorial with what I thought were some appropriate and justifiable concerns about the long-term reliability of current benefactors. But I don't believe there was any more doom and gloom behind those remarks than I'd attribute to the average purchaser of an insurance policy, who doesn't expect the worst but who certainly wants to be protected in case it occurs.

Let's face it, shit happens, and unfortunately the world suffers its share of rogues and scoundrels. The story I told in my Editorial about finding a good home for the Eisenbud/Serios collection was, I thought, a cautionary tale about protecting what members of this diverse community have worked so hard and lovingly to build. But by no means do I feel that the problems are insurmountable. It's just that we need to be smart and careful about protecting our scholarly and research legacies, like any investment.

One reason the SSE is such a valuable community is that its members are united, not so much by shared specific research interests, but rather by a resistance to scientific complacency and a readiness to challenge various forms of received wisdom. It's a sensible empirical stance buttressed by a clear and extensive historical record of scientific development. I'd argue that my cautionary comments are likewise supported by a wealth of historical

examples, which can guide us as we look for ways to preserve our scholarly and research legacies. Fortunately, the SSE abounds in smart and resourceful members who, either individually or collectively, should be able to address this recurring problem. I'd hoped that my previous Editorial would have provoked some discussion and scheming on the matter, and I'm sorry if—for at least some—it elicited more discouragement than enthusiasm for the challenge. And I'm sorry too if I managed to obscure the positive message that, for the Eisenbud/Serios material at least, we were able to find a respectable, respectful, and indeed grateful repository, whose director very actively and energetically promotes the collection. While it's true (as I noted) that we must remain wary of possible changes in attitude along with changes in personnel, I hope that this story encourages *JSE* readers to explore their own mainstream connections for protecting other research archives.

Stephen E. Braude