

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

regarding the proposed formation of an

International Society of Paraphysics

1. Definition

Physics has been traditionally based upon the reduction of all natural phenomena to matter and motion, against a common background of space and time. As matter is placed at the very foundation of physics, it is defined as the science that explores the interactions taking place between energy and matter within the physical world. Modern physics therefore believes that all currently unexplained phenomena will ultimately be found to be both physical and material in nature.

Natural phenomena, which cannot be explained within the context of current physical theories, or the prevalent scientific worldview, must therefore be classified as paranormal, being caused by unknown extraneous factors which cannot be weighed or measured. However, no existing theory of physics is capable of providing a physical explanation for the presence of consciousness in the human brain or the participatory role of the observer in quantum physics. Neither is modern physics able to explain paranormal phenomena, including Psi phenomena, dowsing, mediumship, remote viewing, telepathy, psychokinesis, out-of-body experiences and spiritual phenomena such as psychic healing and life after death.

More advanced physical theories, such as "string theory," have attempted to explain multidimensional phenomena, beyond Einstein's four-dimensional space-time. String theory attempts to address the mystery of the multidimensional nature of reality, by hypothesizing the existence of hyperspaces, which exist beyond the perceptual boundaries of the physical senses. Ultimately, it is believed that such a single, unified theory will be capable of explaining everything there is to explain.

Paraphysics explores the non-material aspects of reality and is therefore considered to be the "physics of the paranormal." Although the phenomena it studies are not explainable within the context of current physical theories, paraphysics is nevertheless considered to be just another branch of physics. One of its primary concerns is the study of subtle relationships between psychic and physical processes occurring in living organisms, which are different than those occurring in inanimate matter.

Both conventional physics and paraphysics study physical aspects of nature. The real difference between them is the level at which the explanation of physical reality occurs. Paraphysics attempts to find a more fundamental level of reality than matter, energy and motion. Although these two divergent branches of physics are very specialized, it is generally believed by many paraphysicists that it is possible to expand the boundaries of present physical theories to include all paranormal and psychological phenomena, which are presently regarded as paraphysical.

2. Aims

The International Society of Paraphysics is being formed to organize the exchange and dissemination of information about paraphysics, at both the formal and informal written level, between actively interested persons with a scientific or technological background. The Society will act to stimulate and co-ordinate active paraphysical research by members, either collaborating with each other in subgroups organized into project teams or working individually as well as actively co-operate with other societies and organizations actively interested in paraphysical and related parapsychological research. The Society will also act to coordinate the information resulting from the research efforts of individual laboratories, institutions and researchers engaged in parascientific research.

3. Need

There is a definite need for an International Society of Paraphysics because there are no existing organizations that cater specifically to parapsychicists. On the one hand, the Physical Societies officially adopt the attitude that parapsychical phenomena are not their legitimate concern; on the other hand, the Psychical Research Societies tend to emphasize parapsychological considerations, in practice to the extent of virtual exclusion of the parapsychical viewpoint. Further, several laboratories and institutions dealing more directly with parapsychical research have evolved over the past few decades, but there is no central organization which acts as a central clearing house for the exposition of their findings.

4. History

The formation of the International Society of Paraphysics is a consequence of a 1965 synthesis of the preliminary ideas of Alan Mayne of England and David Davies of Canada concerning the foundation of an active discussion group to investigate parapsychical phenomena at an informal level. The Parapsychical Study Group that Mayne and Davies initiated was meant to evolve into a Society of Paraphysics by 1970, but the group disintegrated before it could evolve into a more comprehensive international scientific society. Members of the Group found that the substantial amount of time and effort required to communicate by post was overwhelming, but the recent development of the Internet offers a new and more efficient means of communication so a fresh start is now warranted. In the meantime, a Parapsychical Laboratory operated in Downton, Wiltshire, England, and published an *International Journal of Paraphysics* under the auspices of the Study Group and later independently. Both the Laboratory and the *Journal* disappeared before the 1980s. In spite of these early setbacks, the need of such institutions has not wavered, but rather grown over the ensuing years. In fact, the need for a larger and more comprehensive Society of Paraphysics has become all the more important with the independent development of other Laboratories where parapsychical research is conducted as well as recent advances in theoretical physics which are more conducive to the further development of the science of paraphysics. James Beichler of the United States and Donald Wolfram of Canada have recently decided to form a new association of scientists interested in paraphysics and thus continue the work started by Davies and Mayne. So, several scientists active within the discipline, including the original founders of the Paraphysics Study Group, are proposing an International Society of Paraphysics.

5. Membership

Individuals who are actively interested in paraphysics, and who consider themselves qualified in mathematics and/or at least one physical science and/or at least one physical technology, are invited to apply for membership in the International Society of Paraphysics. In certain special cases, other individuals will be invited to join. Members will be expected to participate in the functions of the Society as suits their personal preferences which may, of course, include occasional written contributions to experimental, methodological or theoretical paraphysics; and to offer short written criticisms or discussions on the contributions of other members and qualified scholars.

6. Language

It is anticipated that the business of the International Society of Paraphysics will be conducted mostly, and possibly entirely, in English. English has evolved as the primary international language for science, business, commerce and politics. However, attempts will be made to accommodate any members who are not native speakers of English. If there are any interested parapsychicists who are unable to communicate easily in English, they are invited to make their existence known to the Society so they can more fully participate in Society functions, perhaps by organizing non-English speaking sub-groups within the Society

7. Constitution

In its early stages, the International Society of Paraphysics will be run as informally as possible, and its constitution will be kept to a minimum. But provisions will be made for:

1 A small Coordinating Committee, including the Charter Members and early participants in the process of development, to guide the development of the International Society of Paraphysics through the formative stages. The Coordinating Committee will only function until the Society is formally established.

2 The appointment, by the Coordinating Committee, of officers to undertake specific duties.

3 The laying down of definite procedures for the transition, over a period of two to five years, from an autocratic body to a democratically run organization with elected officers; with direct Internet and/or postal balloting when necessary on candidates and issues, not indirectly through proxies; and with the guaranteed right to use the regular channels of communication for electioneering purposes. The democratic Society will then decide how to continue to evolve along the lines of a formal scientific and scholarly Society, depending on the wishes of the majority of members.

4 The establishment of permanent organizational committees to conduct the various aspects of business necessary to such a professional scientific society. These committees will include, but not be specifically limited to, an Executive or Steering Committee, an Educational Committee, a Program Committee and a Publication Committee.

5 The organization of project teams from among the members to investigate, conduct research on, and discuss particular aspects of specific problems in paraphysics. In some cases, pre-existing laboratories and institutions would constitute their own sub-groups, but may find it convenient and helpful to include members from outside of their own institutions. These teams, or sub-groups, may initially be established by the Coordinating Committee, or formed spontaneously by individual members with common interests. They should consist of single individuals working on their own special projects and other interested scholars and scientists. The internal operation of these project teams will be almost entirely independent of the Coordinating Committee, and later independent of the organizational committees, whose main concern will be to ensure that contact is maintained between the various project teams and the International Society of Paraphysics as a whole. The contact between the Society and the sub-groups shall not interfere with the wishes of any project team in order to keep its activities confidential in their early stages.

6 The arrangements for the distribution of material to members, most probably through the Internet, but not exclusively through the Internet.

7 The placing of the responsibility for maintaining an honourable and ethical public reputation for the International Society of Paraphysics with the Coordinating Committee; implying, therefore, that the Coordinating Committee initially has the power to censure or suspend any member whose public conduct dishonours the academic reputation of the International Society of Paraphysics. That right will later fall to the Executive Committee upon consultation with and recommendations from other committees or members of the Society.

8 Interim financial arrangements for the administrative expenses of the Coordinating Committee will include an annual subscription of US \$10 (*or equivalent in other currency*), payable upon joining; for the expenses of the various project teams, to be arranged internally by the teams themselves. An annual membership fee will later be established to support the functioning of the Society. It is hoped that this fee will be kept as low as possible as long as the Internet can be used for publications and notifications of Society business.

9 The Society will not discriminate against any person according to their sex, race, religion, or political affiliations. Discrimination and bias along these and other lines are contradictory to the ideals of our scientific knowledge that belongs to all sentient beings.

8. Activities and services

1 The issue of this initial statement to potentially interested individuals, who are hereby invited to apply for membership of the International Society of Paraphysics, and also to potentially interested organizations or institutions, who shall be allowed to display copies of it, fair summaries of it, or extracts from it to their members. In most cases, the application will be a formality for individuals possessing a university degree or equivalent professional qualification in a relevant speciality. For individuals without a relevant qualification, the Coordinating Committee will consider each application separately on its merits.

2 Initial distributions of written materials:

(a) Newsletter, to be issued at least once every three months to all members of the International Society of Paraphysics, but not externally; initially available over the Internet, but later printed if necessity dictates and resources allow.

(b) General interest working papers, to be posted on the Internet for members only or sent to all members for their mutual discussion; summaries of such discussions to be circulated or distributed.

(c) Special interest working papers, to be listed and usually abstracted briefly in the Newsletter, and to be available to any member upon request.

3 The distribution of written materials via the Internet or other means where necessary to include:

(a) *Yggdrasil: The Journal of Paraphysics*, which contains general interest papers accepted by the Publications Committee. The *Yggdrasil* is presently available over the Internet at <http://members.aol.com/yggdras/paraphysics/home.htm> . The journal will be expanded as the Society grows and will continue to offer a forum for scholarly peer reviewed papers. It will eventually move to the address <http://www.paraphysics.org/>. The *Yggdrasil* and other published material will eventually be offered for sale on CD to interested parties with the proceeds going to the Society.

(b) Paraphysical Proceedings, to contain special interest papers presented at annual meetings and special events sponsored by the Society, and/or special interest papers accepted and approved by the Publications Committee.

Provision will be made for organizations and institutions, interested in paraphysics, to receive free subscriptions to these two periodicals in return for receipt by the International Society of Paraphysics of free copies of their own publications.

4 The foregoing schemes of distribution and publication do not limit the freedom of members and project teams to use other publication channels, if they so wish. Nor do they limit the discretion of the Coordinating Committee to make public announcements about non-confidential affairs of the International Society of Paraphysics, either through the Journal of Paraphysics or elsewhere.

5 Informal small conferences and meetings will be encouraged, and members may ask the Coordinating Committee to help to arrange and advertise them. After the Coordinating Committee's work is finished, the Program Committee will handle such functions. The Program Committee will also plan formal meetings and conferences. The Coordinating Committee (and later the Program Committee) will act as a clearinghouse for information about the travels of members abroad and inside their own countries, offers of hospitality to members, and etc.

6 Library facilities are being considered. A nucleus of paraphysical literature, belonging to the International Society of Paraphysics, will be assembled at a location to be decided upon at a later date, pending such time that it becomes possible to acquire headquarters premises. Any loan service would be rather limited at first, but will be extended later. A collection of classical literature on paraphysics and parapsychology, literally a virtual library, will be made available over the Internet as papers and books are rendered into the proper digital format. It will be the task of the Society to make available any such resources that it can locate and convert to Internet or computer ready formats.

7 A paraphysical abstracting service may well be set up at some future date over the Internet. Attempts will be made to run it in close co-ordination with any other parascientific abstracting services arising elsewhere.

8 Plans are in hand for setting up some laboratory facilities for members. Once the Society has been formally inducted, funds will be sought for a Laboratory to act as the Society's permanent headquarters.

9 Educational courses in paraphysics and related subjects will eventually be offered by the Society over the Internet. It is hoped that the Society's Laboratory and headquarters, when established, will be able to offer internships and practical experience for those scientists and learners who so desire such experience. These courses will eventually lead to formal certification in paraphysics.

10 The first list of members will be included in the first issue of the Newsletter, and supplementary lists of new members will appear in subsequent issues. Each member will be entitled to have his name included, together with an autobiographical statement emphasizing paraphysical interests, not exceeding one hundred words, which should be enclosed with the application for membership.

DECEMBER 2000

The Charter Members of the International Society of Paraphysics have prepared this statement:

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[Top of Page](#)

[YGGDRASIL Homepage](#)