

## **Philosophical Discussion**

### **Possible Causal Mechanisms in the Occurrence of Synchronicities: Testing the Spiritual Assistance Hypothesis**

*by Gary E. Schwartz, PhD*

*ABSTRACT: According to C. G. Jung, the phenomenon of synchronicity is presumed to be acausal in the sense that the appearance of highly improbable sequences of temporal events cannot be explained as one event directly causing the occurrence of another through physical connections. The implication is that some sort of hidden variable / mechanism is guiding the seeming coordination of nonrandom synchronous events over time. Contemporary research on mediumship, coupled with careful observations of real-life synchronicities, are consistent with the historic hypothesis that alleged spirits (i.e. hypothesized spiritual beings / processes) might play some role in contributing to the orchestration of events in the physical world, possibly by (1) influencing the intuitive cognitive and emotional processes of sensitive individuals and / or (2) affecting electromagnetic and quantum fields in the physical environment. Two unanticipated well documented cases involving anomalous synchronicities potentially associated with well-known drop-in deceased persons illustrate the possibility of investigating the spiritual assistance hypothesis by integrating systematic real-life observations of synchronous events with contemporary triple-blind mediumship and emerging digital electronic research paradigms using a three stage (non-blinded, single-blinded, and triple-blinded) research protocol. The results of (1) a pair of single-blinded mediumship readings, and (2) a spontaneous and anomalous double-blinded mediumship experience, are included in the Appendices. They illustrate the feasibility of using the proposed three stage protocol for testing the spiritual assistance hypothesis.*

#### **Note for Reviewers**

This revision is being submitted as a combined theoretical and methodological article (not as an empirical article). It outlines a three stage protocol for testing *possible spiritual mechanisms* in the occurrence of real-life synchronicities.

The two sets of instances of synchronicities included in the manuscript are prototypic of real life synchronicities. If a reviewer is inclined to interpret them as being merely collections of coincidences (i.e. viewing them entirely as chance events selectively observed and reported by the author and his associates), then the purpose of proposing possible spiritual assistance mechanisms for them becomes moot.

The reason for including two sets of instances – the original manuscript included only one instance – is to enable the skeptical reader to appreciate the sometimes robust nature of these kinds of seemingly anomalous events.

The two sets of exploratory mediumship findings presented in the Appendices of this paper are included for *illustrative purposes*; they are *not* intended to be interpreted as experimental verification of the hypothesis. These spontaneous observations are offered for the purpose of providing important indications of the plausibility of investigating the hypothesis in future controlled research.

The reasons for publishing this article are (1) to raise awareness of (and debate about) these theoretical possibilities and (2) to facilitate the process of investigators

seeking research funds to conduct future controlled research on synchronicity, mediumship, and their relationship.

*I am open to the guidance of synchronicity,  
and do not let expectations hinder my path.*

Dalai Lama

*The intellect has little to do on the road to discovery. There comes  
a leap in consciousness, call it Intuition or what you will,  
the solution comes to you and you don't know how or why.*

Albert Einstein

### **Introduction**

The phenomenon of synchronicity appears to be receiving increased interest among scientists as well as the lay public. The careful examination of real-life synchronous phenomena by C. G. Jung<sup>1</sup> provided the foundation for contemporary explorations of apparent synchronous phenomena.

The classic definition of synchronicity is a psychologically meaningful connection between an inner event (thought, vision or feeling) and one or more external events occurring simultaneously<sup>1</sup>. Jung also proposed a broader definition in which synchronicity experiences could involve a coincidence between an inner event and an outer event occurring at either a distant place or a future point in time.

However, synchronicity can also be defined in a less psychological and more operational / empirical sense as *the occurrence of two or more highly improbable sequences of seemingly disconnected temporary related events which may (or may not) hold a specific meaning or interpretation for the synchronicity observer.*

At a conference on the science of synchronicity in October, 2010, hosted by the Program in Religion, Science and Technology at the Yale University School of Divinity, various definitions of synchronicity were examined, but no single definition was endorsed by the invited participants.

The purpose of this combined theoretical and methodological article is not to examine the extensive clinical and research history on the topic of synchronicity; there are numerous excellent sources for reviewing this information<sup>2-4</sup>. Moreover, the intent here is not to review contemporary personality research investigating individual differences in people's experiences of synchronicities<sup>5</sup> nor is it to discuss the role of interpreting the possible meanings of synchronicities in contemporary clinical practice<sup>6</sup>.

Instead, this article focuses on one core aspect of synchronicity – Jung's acausal hypothesis<sup>1</sup> – and considers a possible three stage research paradigm for investigating a proposed spiritual causal mechanism which could account for the orchestration and occurrence of synchronicities, *including those synchronicities which may not have clear meanings to the individuals observing and interpreting them.* In the process of considering the proposed spiritual assistance hypothesis, this paper also addresses possible parapsychological hypotheses including precognition and psychokinesis.

One reviewer asked, "is it not a contradiction in terms to propose a cause for acausal synchronicities?" The author's opinion is "no." Just because Jung originally proposed that sequences of synchronous events were not physically caused – i.e. as in

Event A physically causing Event B to occur, which in turn could cause Event C to occur, and so forth – this physical acausal theory allows for the possibility that some sort of hidden causal mechanism *other than simple event-to-event causation might be involved in the occurrence and apparent coordination of the events*. Moreover, according to Combs and Holland<sup>2</sup>, Jung was open to such possibilities.

### **The Spiritual Assistance Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of possible spiritual assistance in the mediation of events in the physical world is not new. The idea that unexpected things sometimes happen because alleged spirits are causing them is an ancient idea. Indeed, as one reviewer said of the hypothesis, “it is the original ancient idea used to explain the apparent capriciousness of nature” [underling by the reviewer].

Clearly, the idea of investigating this basic concept through an intermediary – whether through a medium, shaman, or other intuitive individual – goes back to the beginning of human history and culture. Numerous books of alleged afterlife encounters are replete with examples of deceased persons potentially affecting the behavior of lights and other objects in the physical world (e.g. see Arcangel<sup>7</sup>).

However, this historic belief has not been systematically applied to the more recent hypothesis of synchronicities as originally formulated by Jung and extended by numerous investigators (extensively reviewed in Combs and Holland<sup>2</sup>), especially those involving extended strings of complex sequences of highly improbably timed events.

Moreover, science has heretofore failed to offer a systematic experimental research paradigm for bringing the spiritual assistance hypothesis into the laboratory and putting it to experimental test.

This combined theoretical and methodological article integrates aspects of statistics and contemporary mediumship research<sup>8-14</sup> with two unexpected real-life illustrations of how the causal spiritual hypothesis can be investigated systematically. The primary question raised in this article is as follows:

Is it possible, theoretically and empirically, to test whether hypothesized spiritual beings or energies (abbreviated SEs), under certain circumstances, can sometimes play a causal role in orchestrating events involving human beings (and by extension, animals as well) by influencing intuitive information processing in sensitive individuals?

The phrase “spiritual energy” is used here following the *philosophical and conceptual* underpinnings of the physics definition of energy being the “capacity to do work and overcome resistance” (i.e. to have a measurable observed effect in the physical world). Energy is a concept which is *inferred from effects observed (and measured) in the physical world*.

Moreover, in the same way that coherent processes at the quantum level can result in increased energy and power which do not decrease in intensity with the square of distance, it is hypothesized that alleged spiritual beings / energies (SEs), especially when working collectively, can sometimes have similar coherent effects which extend over distance.

The reader should appreciate that the use of the term spiritual energy in this article does *not imply (nor preclude)* the possible operation of nonlocal processes in complex synchronous events as well. Also, the reader should appreciate that it is operation of

*information* (when combined with energy) which allows such effects to be directed and have potential meaning. It is worth noting that many professional mediums describe their experience of communicating with the deceased as connecting with energies.

In addition, the question is raised, is it possible to test whether specific hypothesized SEs *who were not personally known (when they were alive) by the individuals experiencing the synchronicities*, can sometimes play a synchronous orchestrating role? This particular situation is scientifically interesting because it sometimes reduces the possible role of belief and expectancy in the manifestation and interpretation of the synchronous events (i.e. the question naturally arises, why would an unknown deceased person X, spontaneously show up and play a role in person Y's life?).

Finally, the question is raised, is it possible to test whether alleged SEs can, under certain circumstances, sometimes influence the behavior of electromagnetic and quantum field phenomena as well (e.g. lights, photons, and electrons) – i.e. engage in psychokinesis? The three stage research paradigm outlined in this article includes a plausible proposal for using state-of-the-art electronic technology for investigating this hypothesis in the future<sup>15,16</sup>.

The article is organized as follows:

First, the phenomenon of synchronicity is examined using two carefully documented set of real-life events involving multiple people, and alternative conventional interpretations of the observations are considered in terms of selective attention and statistics (e.g. randomness).

Second, contemporary studies of mediumship and related after-life research are discussed which set the stage for examining the spiritual assistance (SA) hypothesis.

Third, a three stage research paradigm integrating exploratory (Stage 1), single-blinded (Stage 2), and triple-blinded (Stage 3) experiments is proposed for investigating the SA hypothesis in future controlled research.

Finally, the article includes two detailed Appendices reporting the results from (1) an unexpected pair of single-blinded (Stage 2) exploratory readings with an experienced medium, and (2) a spontaneous and anomalous double-blind mediumship verification experience, which provide observations consistent with the plausibility of testing of the SA hypothesis.

These unplanned observations with mediums (though they were not pre-planned experiments) illustrate the feasibility of systematically examining the hypothesis in future research. The reader should appreciate that these observations are only meant to serve as exploratory (though meaningful) information which is consistent with the plausibility of the theory and methods, not as scientific evidence of hypothesis verification

The reader should also appreciate that the hypothesized existence of SEs having measurable energetic effects, though strongly supported by recent *computer automated research* using highly sensitive low light CCD camera *where no experimenters were present during the collection of the data*<sup>16</sup>, is controversial and deservedly debatable. Hence, the reader is encouraged to insert the terms “alleged,” “supposed” or “apparent” whenever the term SE or the word spirit happens to be mentioned in the article in the absence of such qualifiers.

However, unlike SEs, whose *existence is inferred indirectly* (e.g. via intuitive perceptions of mediums and / or replicable effects observed with state-of-the-art electronic technology), the *occurrence of synchronous events – as defined in this article –*

*are typically observed directly* and do not require such qualifications (though their possible interpretations require appropriate qualifications).

### **What are Synchronous Events? Two Examples of Extensive Strings of Apparently Nonrandom Real-Life Synchronicities**

To place the SA hypothesis of the occurrence of synchronous events in context, it is useful to illustrate the real-life nature of synchronicities which justify raising the theoretical question in the first place. Since some readers may not be familiar with the phenomenon of complex strings of synchronicities – in either their professional or personal lives – it is instructive to provide some well documented examples.

Questions concerning alternative interpretations of the occurrence of such collections of improbable events – for example, can the observations of these events be explained *entirely* as being a reflection of selective attention and perceptual priming by naïve and / or biased observers – is carefully discussed following the reporting of these observations.

Schwartz<sup>17,18</sup> has previously published some striking examples of very improbable combinations of temporal events which he and others have witnessed in his and their personal lives. The two striking examples described here not only reveal the apparently nonrandom aspect of the events in question, but they also illustrate how it is possible, in principle, to verify the potential role of hypothesized SEs, at least in a subset of the occurrences.

The extensive strings of carefully documented and interrelated synchronous events were observed primarily by Rhonda Eklund-Schwartz (RES), Dr. Robert Stek (RS), and the author (GES). The observers took notes as the events transpired; in addition, photos and videos were also taken whenever feasible.

RES had a personal interest in the possible existence of SEs (and by extension, the SA) hypothesis. An artist and business person by profession, she is also a lay scientist; in a carefully documented book RES reported a collection of her observations and experiences of apparent SA's following the death of her mother<sup>19</sup>. RS is a senior clinical psychologist who has had a long standing interest in psychopharmacology and parapsychology.

In the first instance, the collection of synchronous events was potentially associated with the passing of a well-known individual within the past ten years who had not been personally known by the observers when the alleged SE was alive. Moreover, the observers had little knowledge about (or appreciation of) this person when he was alive. In the second instance, the individual was also well known, but he had passed years before the observers were born.

Since the specific identity of the first individual is not germane to the scientific questions raised in this article, he will simply be referred to here as Mr. Peter Taylor. To preserve his anonymity, at the same time retain scientific validity, some nonessential details about the events and the SEs life have been changed. Moreover, certain facts have been kept purposely general (e.g. Event #1 involved a specific movie; the title of the movie is not provided).

However, the identity of the second person is germane because the synchronicities directly related to him and his name – Mr. Thomas Edison. It was not necessary to keep his name anonymous.

The initial string of 13 interrelated synchronous events reported below for the first instance occurred within a one week period following the release of a movie in which the alleged SE happened to appear. The synchronous occurrences involved lights and the broader theme of light. The thirteen events were summarized by RES (using RES's and GES's notes); the comments were added by GES. GES edited RES's writing somewhat for scientific presentation (e.g. personal pronouns were removed and replaced by initials).

The string of 11 interrelated synchronous events reported below for the second instance also occurred within a one week period. The events happened to transpire after the original draft of this paper had been written and reviewed. They were added to the revision to assist skeptical readers in better appreciating the apparent replicability of improbable strings of seemingly timed and coordinated events in real life.

Examining these two accounts in sequence, the seemingly improbable (if not occasionally incredulous) nature of their temporal occurrences will become apparent. The reader is reminded that these are accurate (though slightly disguised in the first instance) summaries of sets of real-life events. Moreover, the first instance is only a partial list of occurrences during this time period; the purpose is to illustrate the nature of complex synchronicities in search of a scientific explanation.

The observations are described in sufficient detail to convey the reality and novelty (as well as occasional surreal nature) of the collections of such events. It is important to emphasize that had the observers *not recorded these observations as they happened, they would have forgotten many of them after they occurred*. The observers have cultivated the habit of carefully journaling such events within hours of the preponderance of their occurrences.

### **First Example – Events Related to Lights**

**Event #1:** RES and GES were going to see a movie which included the alleged SE Taylor. GES was in the theatre and RES had gone out to purchase some food. As RES was walking back into the theatre, she noticed that the light over the theatre door was blinking on and off. It caught RES's attention because it reminded her of a series of similar instances involving lights which occurred following the death of her mother which she interpreted as being associated with (and possibly sometimes triggered by) her mother<sup>10</sup>. RES spontaneously and playfully said in her head (initially as a joke), "Hi Taylor." This spontaneous thought would soon prove to be potentially precognitive (if not an indication of an emerging collection of SA events).

Comment: RES was clear at the time that she did not know whether the timing of the blinking light (or her noticing it in the first place) had anything to do with SEs in general, or the SE Taylor in particular. At that moment she presumed her noticing the blinking light was probably a coincidence. However, she had never noticed a flashing light over a movie entrance before (maybe this is because she rarely leaves the theater to purchase food). Importantly, it was a can light over the door to the theatre, not a marquee sign. What was noteworthy here was the possible *timing* of the occurrence – of her being at the entrance at the right time, of her noticing the blinking light, and then having the spontaneous thought about the alleged SE. RES did not know the specific mechanism which might have caused the light to flash (e.g. it might have been programmed by the movie theatre). At the time this article was written, RES and GES had attended more

than thirty subsequent movie presentations and never witnessed a can light flashing over a cinema entrance.

**Event #2:** The next night, RES noticed Jane Goodall was being interviewed on TV. She called to GES to turn on channel 39. He did so and she joined him. As RES and GES began watching the interview, both light boxes in the living room (which provided up lighting for two Native American statues) blinked on and off: first one light box and then the other.

Comment: This was decidedly unusual. In the eight plus years GES had owned the light boxes, neither one of them had spontaneously blinked on and off (at least in either his or RES's presence). Moreover, the timing of the combined blinking of the two light boxes was potentially meaningful because Jane Goodall was talking about her then new book, *which happened to emphasize the same take-home message of the movie they had seen the night before*. We later learned that Goodall had known the alleged SE when he was alive. At that point, GES and RES began to wonder, were the blinking lights possibly a synchronicity? They further wondered, would this be a one time event or would other events follow?

**Event #3:** The next day, GES noticed that two ceiling lights in his study had gone out.

Comment: GES has three ceiling lights in his home office and they rarely go out (maybe one will go out every two to three years). GES noticed that two of the three lights happened to be not functioning. Only the ceiling light directly over his desk was working (this will become meaningful at Event #12). The next morning GES replaced one of the broken lights.

**Event #4:** GES then recalled noticing that his penlight in his leather bag had been spontaneously on twice; this had never happened before.

Comment: When GES first noticed the pen light being on, he did not think anything about it since the occurrences had occurred a few days *prior* to seeing the movie. What was important is that GES had never witnessed his penlight spontaneously being on before. He wondered, was this another coincidence, or something more? He further wondered, could the pen lights have potentially heralded the future apparent synchronous light events?

**Event #5:** Driving to the theatre to see the movie again, RES and GES were both thinking about the SE Taylor and the theoretical possibility of mediums receiving communication from him, when they noticed a green traffic light was blinking on and off.

Comment: Both RES and GES noticed the blinking green traffic light independently, and they were frankly surprised. Neither of them had ever seen a green traffic light flashing before (red and orange lights yes, green no). The green light blinked on and off for maybe

thirty seconds, and then stayed on. As a follow up, RES and GES drove past this intersection (individually and collectively) at least a hundred times, and they did not witness another instance of the green light blinking. One presumes either the green flashing light was a fleeting event, or the light was broken and then repaired.

**Event #6:** RES and GES noticed a street lamp blink out.

Comment: The timing of this street lamp going out was especially curious. Street lamps go out every now and again, but this one occurred within a block of the flashing green traffic light (and just prior to seeing the movie again).

**Event #7:** Then another street lamp came on.

Comment: The timing of this street lamp coming on, almost immediately after the prior one going out, was noteworthy. The timings of events 5 – 7 were evenly spaced. At this point RES and GES inferred that something unusually synchronous involving lights was occurring, and they began to wonder whether some sort of SA-like process might be involved.

**Event #8:** In the process of re-watching the movie, RES realized that it began with a large brightly lit object shaped like a human which was described in the dialogue as literally being a “light” person.

Comment: This was the first time that RES and GES realized that light might be particularly important to the alleged SE.

**Event #9:** GES subsequently noticed that the movie ended with a song which prominently featured the word light – and the theme of light – in the lyrics.

Comment: This observation was significant because it implied that a core message of the movie was somehow connected to light. At this point, GES became open to the possibility of discovering additional evidence of a potential Taylor / light connection.

**Event #10:** After the movie, GES intuitively sensed there might be a synchronicity directly outside the theater. Immediately upon leaving the theater, GES and RES noticed a children’s bulldozer in a play area in the food court with a flashing light on top of it approximately 50 feet from the entrance to the theatre.

Comment: GES noticed the bulldozer; RES noticed the flashing light on top of it. GES noticed the bulldozer *because a bulldozer happened to be featured in the movie*. Coming upon a bulldozer outside the theatre was curious enough, noticing that it was designed with a flashing light was even more curious. Was it merely a coincidence (or a simple instance of perceptual priming) that GES and RES happened to notice the bulldozer and flashing light when they did, or did the *timing* of their noticing it – the bulldozer with the flashing light following the bulldozer in the movie - have some potential meaning?

Interestingly, the food court was closed, it was dark, and no children were present. However, the lights were left flashing on the toys.

**Event #11:** The next morning, to GES's surprise, he read in a non-fiction book that not only did Taylor enjoy being in the spotlight, but he was personally and professionally fascinated by the creative process of the dynamic lighting of movies, musicals, and concerts.

Comment: The timing of reading this information was propitious. GES had just read a few pages of a non-fiction book about Taylor before he and RES had their morning coffee. As it so happened the very last paragraph he read featured Taylor talking about being in the spotlight, being flooded in light, and literally making a "light move." It is important to state that GES had not sought out the book to intentionally look up whether Taylor had an interest in light and the process of theatrical lighting. GES happened to be reading a book about Taylor at the time, and it was meaningful that he came upon specific text linking Taylor with light and lighting at that precise moment. GES realized that the timing of his reading about Taylor's interest in light, coupled with GES's long standing interest in the physics of light and its relationship to SEs<sup>12</sup>, might turn out to be propitious if not synchronistic.

**Event #12:** GES had been wondering what this improbable collection of light and light-related events might mean. He began to wonder whether it was possible if the unfolding of the light-related events was somehow related to Taylor. Later in the morning when he sat down at his desk, he discovered that the ceiling light over his desk had gone out – the third in his office that week.

Comment: Never before had all three lights in GES's study stopped functioning in a period of a few days. The timing of the ceiling desk light (the third light) going out was especially curious. GES checked the wiring and found no evidence of it being faulty. Was this simply another coincidence, or was it something more?

**Event #13:** Meanwhile, also that morning, as RES was getting ready in front of the mirror in her bathroom, she noticed a light over her mirror was flickering on and off and making a crackling / sizzling sound.

Comment: RES had never witnessed a light over her bathroom mirror simultaneously blinking and sizzling like that before. Later as GES read RES's notes of the event, he remembered that the movie mentioned the theme of "sizzling" as well as the process of seeing oneself accurately in a mirror. The bathroom fixture was later checked by an electrician and no evidence of faulty wiring was discovered.

Summary: The string of thirteen light-related events, apparently linked to the timing of the appearance of the documentary, its theme, and the alleged SE, was noteworthy and challenging.

## Second Example – Events Related to Edison

**Event #1:** On a Tuesday morning, RES reminded GES of Edison's famous statement, "I didn't fail 10,000 times. I found 10,000 ways how not to create a lightbulb." RES had just been editing this quote in her book *Love Eternal*<sup>19</sup>, and this led her to remind GES of this observation in the context of his on-going research using photon sensitive technologies to potentially detect the presence of spirit.

Comment: At the time RES made the Edison comment, neither she nor GES anticipated that it might portend a new set of synchronicities. GES was cognizant that RES has mentioned this quote maybe once or twice over the four plus years they had known each other.

**Event #'s 2-4:** That afternoon, while entering receipts in the Bahti Native American Arts Gallery where she worked part time, RES noticed that one of the customer's last names was Edison (Event #2). This caught her attention because in the previous year, having entered a total of more than 1,500 names and addresses (approximately 30 per week), none had had the last name (or street name) of Edison. A few receipts later, she noticed that another (unrelated) customer lived on Edison Street (Event #3). A few receipts further, she discovered that the customer with the name Edison had returned a couple of days later and made an additional purchase (Event #4). This combination of three Edison's in a few minutes was so striking, and improbable, that RES called GES and left a message on his cell phone. GES had time to listen to the voice message later that afternoon upon leaving his university laboratory to return home.

Comment: According to RES, based on records kept for more than a year, the frequency of a given customer returning to the galley a couple of days later, and making an additional purchase, was less than 1%. A conditional probability estimate of these three Edison names – last name and street name – being observed in the span of a few minutes would be  $1500 * 1550 * 100$ , or 1 in 225,000,000.

**Events #5-9:** In parallel that afternoon, GES had a meeting with a colleague, Dr. Robert Stek (RS), a Research Associate in the Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health at the University of Arizona, and GES spontaneously mentioned the Edison quote to RS. To his surprise, RS mentioned to GES that both he and his father had delivered mail to Edison, New Jersey (named after Thomas Edison (Event #5), that as a child with his father he frequented the Thomas Edison Center at Menlo Park, New Jersey (Event #6), that he owned a working "cylinder" record player invented by Edison (Event #7), that two days earlier, out of the thousands of songs on his iPod which are set to play randomly, a song by the Bee Gee's came on titled *Edison Came to Stay* which had not heard in many months. The first stanza lyrics are "He made electric lights to read. He gave us light today. He gave us cylinders to please, when Edison came to stay, Edison came to stay." (Event #8), and that upon returning home, and sharing this conversation with his wife Bonnie, she remarked that she had recently read an

article in *Time* magazine where the author referenced his home town of Edison, NJ, and discussed in some depth how it came to be named Edison (Event #9). RS suggested in a subsequent email that “it looks like Bonnie was the first to be alerted.”

Comments: GES had been collaborating with RS for more than 5 years, and they had research meeting at least 2 times a month, for a conservative total of at least 120 meetings. They had never previously discussed Thomas Edison or RS’s connection to Edison. Partly because of GES and RS’s respective travel schedules, they had not seen each other for more than a month. Moreover, GES had not known that there was town in New Jersey named after Edison, nor that there was a Center named after Edison in Menlo Park. Though difficult to calculate a conditional probability for RS’s Edison events, the estimated value would be highly improbable. To the best of GES’s knowledge, few (if any) of his colleagues or acquaintances have a strong historical connection to Edison. Also, at this point GES was unaware that RES was having her own triple set of Edison-related events. The conditional probability calculated by combining Events # 2-4 with Events #5-9 would be exceedingly low.

Event #10: The next day, GES and RES were flying from Tucson to New York City (NYC), via Atlanta, where GES was participating at a small invited conference on post-materialist science being held at Columbia University. In Atlanta, the idea popped into GES’s head that he should attempt to contact Ms. Suzane Northrop (SN), a well-known medium who had participated in three separate experiments<sup>12</sup>. GES had not seen SN in at least six years, and decided to call her partly on a lark, and partly to invite her to participate in future SA hypothesis testing research. GES was aware that SN was away on a speaking tour, and he did not know if she would be back in New York and available on either Saturday night or Sunday morning. GES called SN’s cell and left a message. SN returned his call while he was in flight to NYC, indicating that she happened to be returning to NYC late Saturday night and would be available for breakfast on Sunday. She explained that she was not typically in NYC on weekends (she regularly spends her weekends in her country home in upstate New York). GES vaguely remembered that SN was somehow related to a famous inventor – maybe Edison, possibly Tesla. When he arrived in NYC and listened to his messages, he called SN to confirm Sunday breakfast and to ask her if she was indeed related to a famous inventor. She later returned his call, leaving a message indicating that Thomas Edison was her great uncle.

Comment: GES’s inspiration to reconnect with SN could have been stimulated, at least unconsciously and in part, by the previously mentioned potential Edison synchronicities. However, this would not account for the fact that (1) Events # 2-9 *all occurred the day before he was going to be in NYC*, and (2) *SN just happened to be in NYC that weekend*. Hence, Event #10 is included as a possible synchronicity. How this relates to the meeting with SN is discussed in Appendix B.

**Event #11:** Upon arriving at NYC and checking into the Crowne Plaza hotel, GES spontaneously suggested to RES that they have dinner at one of his favorite restaurants (near Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts). They took a cab for the approximately thirty block ride. The cab driver asked if he could drive in the opposite direction by one block so he could get on an Avenue going up town. GES said certainly. As it turned out, literally one block from the Crowne Plaza hotel happened to be a hotel called the Thomas Edison Hotel. After dinner and returning to the Crowne Plaza hotel, GES and RES recreated the cab ride by foot, confirming that there actually was a Thomas Edison Hotel, and they took numerous pictures.

Comment: It is important to note that neither GES nor RES had stayed at the Crowne Plaza hotel before, and that the reservations had been *made a couple of weeks before the Edison synchronicities began*.

Summary: The combination of Edison-related synchronicities involved three primary people (RES, RS, and GES), and two others (SN and Bonnie); one of them happened to be a medium (SN). The combination of events was noteworthy and challenging.

### **Possible Explanations of the Apparent Synchronous Occurrences of the Observations**

Clearly, at this point in the observational process, it was not possible to discern what (if anything) was responsible for the documented flurry of occurrences of either the 13 light-related events or the 11 Edison events. Besides Jung's acausal synchronicity hypothesis, there were three other more mainstream possible explanations of the observations.

**Explanation #1 – Perceptual Priming and Selective Attention:** Were the observers merely noticing increased light-related and Edison events because they were primed to do so? There are hundreds of studies documenting perceptual priming and selective attention effects in cognitive psychology as well as parapsychology.

This possible explanation was carefully considered and subsequently dismissed as being an insufficient interpretation to account for the combination of these two sets of occurrences:

- (1) the observations did *not* begin with the observers selectively seeking light events or Edison events; their attention and awareness grew as the events unfolded
- (2) the predominance of both sets of events were *first-time* events (i.e. they had not happened to the observers before), and
- (3) the flurry of both sets of events eventually ceased (and did not return in such a concentrated manner) despite continued alertness to the possibility of such events by the observers.

For example, if one is primed to think about VW bugs, one will observe more of these cars while driving. However, save for spontaneous variations in the number of VW bugs driven in a given period, the overall number of VW bugs on the roads will be relatively stable. This is not the case for strings of apparent synchronicities, which typically appear as bursts and then disappear.

**Explanations #2 – Randomness / Chance:** Could these strings of events have happened simply by chance?

From a statistical point of view, the answer, in theory, is yes. However, the novel collections of these particular sets of events was clearly highly (some would conclude extraordinarily) improbable. Moreover, additional highly improbable light-related events and Edison events were observed during this period of time.

For example, a particularly curious (and rare) subset of light-related events began with a check coolant warning light coming on in GES's car. He had owned the car for a couple of years, and the check coolant warning light had never come on. GES wondered whether this was a coincidence (the car was not overheating) or was it something more, so he brought the car to the dealer to be checked.

The service representative provided him with a loaner car. When GES started the loaner, to his surprise the check coolant warning light came on in this car as well. As a result, GES was provided with a second loaner car. This had never happened to GES before.

Moreover, when GES questioned the service representative about this, he explained that he had never (1) witnessed a carefully checked loaner car's warning light coming on which (2) also happened to match the precise warning light of the customer's car. In fact, he had only witnessed a previously checked loaner car's warning light coming on a few times in more than ten years of being a service representative, and it never matched the customer's car's problem.

Interestingly, after GES's car seemingly checked out (they topped off the coolant levels; the levels were not low, and they could not find a cause for the warning light coming on), GES brought his car home and a different warning light came on. GES brought the car back for repair; it turned out to involve an unrelated sensor which needed to be replaced.

Concerning Edison events, at the next meeting he had with RS a couple of weeks later, GES shared the surprising set of Edison events which happened in NYC followed by the spontaneous medium phone call discussed in Appendix 2. RS then took out his iPad and revealed that one of the three quotes of the day provided by Google happened to be by Edison. It read "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." RS explained that Google provides approximately 1,000 quotes per year, and that RS had been reading them for four years. RS could only remember one other time that an Edison quote had been selected by Google (i.e. approximately 2 out of 4,000 plus quotes). It should be recalled that a version of this quote is what triggered RES, GES, and RS becoming aware of Edison events in the first place.

According to RS, later that night he decided to start reading a new book on his iPad. In RS's email recounting what happened next, he wrote:

"I started iBooks and "randomly" picked a Douglas Preston novel I had not yet read - *Mount Dragon*....In the first paragraph of Part 1, Chapter 1, I saw this sentence: *Ahead, U.S. Route 1 ran like a bad dream through Edison, New Jersey.*"

Startled by the mention of Edison, again, RS went on to write:

“To badly paraphrase Holmes, I give you this fact, but - damn it! - I sure would like an explanation! Now how am I supposed to get to sleep after that!”

One reviewer wrote “I don't see how chance/randomness can be ruled out without being able to calculate the statistical probability.” Though precise calculations cannot be determined for these kinds of real-life events, it is feasible to estimate their probabilities (some examples were provided above).

The fact is that if a conditional probability calculation was estimated for the totality of the light events – the first 13 and / or the 3 involving car warning lights – the combined probability of these events occurring by chance would be found to be statistically miniscule by chance alone. The same applies to the 11 original Edison events and / or the 2 involving the repetition of the Edison quote in Google followed by Edison, NJ in the novel – the combined conditional probability calculation would be found to be statistically miniscule by chance alone.

It should be remembered that the majority of these events were *first-time* events – never before witnessed, especially concerning their timing. The difficulty in calculating statistics for rare first-time events is discussed in Combs and Holland<sup>2</sup>.

**Explanation #3 – Conscious (or Unconscious) Mind Either Predicting (Precognition) or Affecting (Psychokinesis) Events in the Material World:** Could the observers themselves somehow have anticipated and / or actually caused the events to occur, consciously and / or unconsciously?

For some of the simple light events the answer is in principle yes. There have been sporadic accounts of alleged macro PK phenomena reported in the parapsychological literature. However, for other of the events, especially those linking the events with the alleged SE Taylor (temporally and thematically), the answer is clearly no.

Moreover, for the Edison events, it seems highly implausible that GES, RES, and RS's minds could have (1) collectively anticipated Events #2-11 (precognition) as well as (2) coordinated their occurrence (PK), especially when the events are combined with the subsequent double-blinded apparent medium verification (described in Appendix B).

The totality of these two sets of events suggests the possibility that more than precognition or PK is required to explain the complete set of the observations.

Given that Explanations 1 – 3 appear to be insufficient to explain the totality of the observations, the question arises, what kind (s) of mechanism (s) could potentially lead the three observers to have been “*repeatedly in the right place, at the right time, observing the right things?*”

Is it possible that alleged SEs could have played a contributing role in influencing the unconscious and intuitive information processing of the observers? Moreover, could alleged SEs have potentially modulated certain physical field phenomena as well?

### **Current Status of Contemporary Mediumship Research**

If SEs exist and were playing a role in: (1) influencing the unconscious minds of intuitive individuals to be present and notice specific events, and / or (2) affecting

electromagnetic and quantum processes in the physical world, *then in principle, if the SEs were willing (the key word here is “if”), they should be able to convey such information to experienced research mediums under controlled conditions.*

A number of investigators have conducted single-blinded as well as multi-blinded experiments with experienced mediums and have reported positive findings<sup>8-11,20-22</sup> though negative findings have sometimes been reported<sup>23</sup>. One reviewer proposed using the phrase “claimant medium.” The author agrees: the reader should presume that the author’s use of the word medium in this paper is simply a short hand for the phrase “claimant medium” unless it is qualified as research medium. Research mediums are defined here as mediums who have successfully participated in previous experimental mediumship research.

Beischel and Schwartz<sup>8</sup> described the positive results of a triple-blind experiment where (1) the mediums were blind to the identity of the sitters and information about the deceased, (2) the experimenter who conducted the readings was blind to this information as well, and (3) the research sitters were blind to which of two readings was theirs (i.e. they were not present when the readings were performed and later received lists of items to score). At the time this paper was written, Beischel and colleagues were conducting a quintuple-blind mediumship experiment.

Mediumship studies are not immune from possible paranormal interpretations, sometimes known as super-psi<sup>24</sup>, and all of the above authors have addressed this critical issue in their respective papers. We will return to this issue in the next section.

Numerous accounts have been reported of spontaneous drop in phenomenon where a deceased person unknown to the medium showed up unannounced, not only in professional readings and even research readings<sup>12,25</sup> but in the medium’s personal lives as well.

For example, Schwartz<sup>13,14</sup> has reviewed how Susy Smith, when she was alive, supposedly experienced a drop in who initially introduced himself as “your Guide James” and later claimed to be Professor William James from Harvard University. Interestingly, after Smith passed, she allegedly appeared to drop in to a medium unknown to GES.. In subsequent controlled testing the medium provided evidential information supporting her claim that the SE Smith has somehow come to her. Evidence consistent with this hypothesis has been reported<sup>18</sup>.

The author was aware that in principle, he could design a triple-blinded experiment to determine if the hypothesized SEs Taylor or Edison had somehow dropped in (possibly because of existence of his active research program). Since the author was not a medium, he could not discern this subjectively for himself. However, despite the fact that the light-related and Edison-related synchronous events were occurring in his personal life (along with RES and RS), his professional life was filled with more mainstream commitments and academic responsibilities, and he did not initiate formal research addressing the hypothesis.

However, an unanticipated (and seemingly synchronous event) occurred involving a visiting professor from Tel Aviv University, Dr. Tamar Levin. Levin brought with her Mrs. Orit Tomer Ish Yemini, a claimant psychic medium whom she had been studying for three years. Levin requested that the author conduct some exploratory investigations with the medium to determine whether formal international collaborative research should be initiated.

In the process of the author conducting preliminary single-blinded evaluations of the medium, he decided to give the medium the first names of different SEs who had purportedly participated in previous research in the laboratory. Included in the list of alleged SEs were a number of individuals who had not been previously mentioned in any publications or presentations. Though the professor had read some of the author's previous research, the medium had not (though she spoke English, she could not read it).

Included in the list of SEs presented to Mrs. Yemini was Taylor. This was the third time in over ten years that the author had requested that a medium potentially identify and verify an SE unknown to him who was potentially somehow participating in the author's life; it was the first time concerning the SE Taylor.

Would the medium provide evidential information that could accurately identify the person? Moreover, would the medium provide evidential information which would verify that the alleged SE was somehow associated with the collection of synchronous light-related events?

Since the experimenter was conducting the exploratory readings with the medium, the readings were performed single blinded (Stage 2; not triple-blinded, Stage 3) and therefore they have inherent experimental limitations.

One critical reviewer made the sweeping comment that single blinded experiments are, by themselves, not "sufficient proof of anything," and therefore have no value. Clearly, in the absence of carefully designed double-blind (or preferably triple-blind) follow-up experiments (Stage 3), single-blinded observations (Stage 2) do not stand as scientific proof; they are, at best, suggestive of feasibility for future research.

However, information obtained from single-blinded investigations can sometimes be sufficiently striking (in terms of specificity of content as well as degree of accuracy) to justify including them (in Appendix A of this article) *as an illustration of the value of collecting Stage 2 information in the proposed Three Stage research paradigm described below*. In this sense, Stage 2 single-blinded experiments serve as *evidence-of-feasibility* as opposed to *evidence-of-verification* provided by Stage 3 triple-blinded experiments. Part of the inspiration for writing this article was provided by evidence-of-feasibility reported in the Appendix A.

For the sake of historical accuracy, the reader should know that the original draft of this manuscript did not include the Edison synchronicities (as they had not yet occurred). Part of the reason for adding them to the revision was because they were almost immediately followed by an unanticipated and spontaneous phone call from Mrs. Yemini, allegedly prompted by her alleged communications with another famous deceased scientist. In the process of recounting her experiences with this alleged SE, she spontaneously brought up a new, first time drop in experience with another alleged SE scientist, Thomas Edison.

GES realized that since (1) the medium was blind to the sudden appearance of the Edison events, and (2) GES was blind to the medium having an alleged drop-in experience with Edison, this *unplanned occurrence fit the essence of what double-blind (or multi-blind) experimental designs attempt to achieve in the laboratory* – where both the subject and experimenter are blind to key information. This anomalous occurrence is briefly discussed in Appendix B because it speaks strongly to the plausibility of conducting future Stage 3 verification research.

### **Testing the Spirit Assistance Hypothesis Using a Three Stage Paradigm**

If (1) synchronicities exist, and moreover, if (2) SEs exist as well – two important “if”s” – then it is logically possible (as well as historically claimed), that at least in principle, the (SEs could play some sort of causal / mediating role in the occurrence of the synchronicities, and this can be examined experimentally.

One systematic approach would be to examine carefully documented collections of interrelated real-life synchronicities and then perform a three staged mediumship research protocol to investigate and verify specific SEs potential role with them. Though mediumship research does not rule out possible non-spiritual / paranormal / super psi explanations (discussed below), the research provides essential *first-step information* which is *consistent* with the hypothesis.

The three stages would be (1) non-blinded (*exploration*) readings, (2) single-blinded (*replication*) readings, and (3) controlled triple-blinded (*verification*) readings, and they *would employ three separate groups of research mediums*.

#### **Stage 1: Non-blinded (exploration) readings**

In this exploratory stage, one or more highly experienced research mediums would be consulted in a completely free form, non-blinded context. These mediums would be told the identity of the alleged SEs. *The goal would be to obtain preliminary information purportedly attributed to the SEs and their claimant role (s) in the occurrences of specific synchronous events.*

No constraints would be placed on the experimenter interviewers during Stage 1 exploratory readings so as to increase the possibility of uncovering possible connections between alleged SEs and observed synchronicities. As a result, no scientific conclusions could be drawn from Stage 1. However, it would provide the exploratory information necessary for carefully designing Stage 2.

#### **Stage 2: Single-blinded (replication) readings**

In this important replication stage, two or more experienced research mediums would perform readings where they would be given only first names (presuming the first names were popular / generic, otherwise nicknames selected and purportedly approved in Stage 1 would be used). These individuals would be blind to the identity of the SE as well as the synchronous events in question.

These readings would be run by experimenters who were *not* blind to the information obtained in Stage 1. *Hence, only specific information received in Stage 2 which replicated information obtained in Stage 1 would be subsequently investigated in Stage 3.*

Unlike Stage 1 non-blinded (exploratory) readings, in Stage 2 singled blinded (replication) readings significant constraints would be placed on the experimenter interviewers. The goal here would be to intentionally minimize the use of any leading questions. For example, in Stage 2 readings it would appropriate for the experimenter to ask open-ended questions such as “What did the SE look like?” (in the case of obtaining SE identification) or “What can the SE show or tell you about an event which happened to X in a movie theatre?” The task for the medium would be to provide specific information regarding hair color, for example, in the case of identification, or details

regarding a specific light flashing event at a movie theatre, for example, in the case of a possible synchronicity.

*The express goal of Stage 2 single-blinded experiments is to narrow down the information obtained in Stage 1 non-blinded experiments, using only information seemingly replicated in Stage 2, to design the formal Stage 3 triple-blind test.*

### **Stage 3: Triple-blinded (verification) readings**

In this critical verification state, three or more experienced research mediums would perform readings also receiving only first names. *However, the experimenters conducting these readings would be blind to the identities of the targeted SEs as well as the specific synchronicities.*

In addition, the readings would include non-targeted (control) SEs as well as non-targeted (control) events. *An essential element of this third stage is that the non-blinded experimenters involved in the Stage 1 and 2 readings would not be present when the Stage 3 readings occurred.*

At a later time, the previously non-blinded experimenters (who would now be blinded per the triple-blind protocol) would be given lists of carefully prepared items from the readings – both targeted and non-targeted – to rate; they would score the items blinded as to their identity. Only information which was clearly verified in the third stage would be interpreted as possible evidence consistent with the SA synchronous event hypothesis.

As mentioned above, presuming that no fraud was involved in the conduct of the research, *the three stage protocol would still be inherently limited in its conclusions*; mediumship research does not eliminate possible alternative psi interpretations such as telepathy and / or precognition. *However, if positive results using the three stage protocol were obtained, additional controls investigating telepathy and precognition, for example, could be added to the research program.*

As an illustration, in future research the mediums could be given a structured telepathy task to determine *how accurate they were in actually reading the minds of the non-blinded experimenters (as well as each other's minds)*, and then compare this degree of accuracy with the information obtained through mediumship readings.

### **From Spontaneously Occurring to Experimentally Produced Synchronicities**

A second potential approach could employ the three stage protocol and extend it in a novel way – *the experimental production of possible future synchronicities*. *In this instance, the first two stages (non-blinded and single-blinded) would be used to establish an agreed upon set of synchronous events which the alleged SEs would potentially attempt to manifest in the future.*

Observers would be selected who regularly experienced synchronicities in their life and who were willing to document them as they unfolded. Following the observation of the alleged predicted synchronicities selected in stages 1 and 2, the third stage (triple-blinded) would then be performed to determine if the alleged SEs would provide confirmatory information which would support the claims formulated in stages 1 and 2.

Again, such research would not rule out possible paranormal explanations (e.g. telepathy and / or precognition). *However, if positive results using the protocol were*

*obtained, additional controls investigating telepathy and precognition, for example, could be added to the research program.*

As an illustration, in future research the mediums could be given a structured precognition task to determine how accurate they were in actually predicting future synchronous events, and compare this degree of accuracy with the information obtained through mediumship readings.

### **Future Use of State-of-the-Art Digital Electronic Technology to Verify Alleged SE Effects**

A third approach employing contemporary digital electronic technology follows from the second. In this instance, sensitive electromagnetic sensing systems such as silicon photomultipliers<sup>15</sup>, low light CCD cameras<sup>16</sup>, and other suitably sensitive devices (e.g. low level magnetic field detectors), could be employed as the alleged SE manifested synchronous physical event to be verified in Stage 3 testing.

This approach is particularly intriguing because actual measurable events were being employed. Moreover, if the above technology advances in the future to the point of serving as a possible spirit communication device, *theoretically it might be used as Phase 3 verification of hypothesized SE involvement in the occurrence of specified synchronicities.*

### **Integrating Multiple and Complimentary Three Stage Research Protocols**

Clearly, no individual three stage research protocol, by itself, would be definitive in addressing the SA synchronicity hypothesis. However, a systematic program of future research employing *multiple combinations of integrated synchronicity plus mediumship and / or associated technology protocols* could provide a significant first step in testing the viability and potential validity of the SA synchronicity hypothesis.

It should be emphasized that it is theoretically possible, if not probable, that *multiple mechanisms may be involved in the real-life occurrence of complex synchronicities*, including: (1) observer intention, (2) precognition, (3) telepathy, (4) implicit remote viewing (5) quantum (participant-observer) / nonlocal processes, as well as (6) possible SA mechanisms.

Moreover, it is logically possible that the source (s) of the alleged SA effects might not only involve deceased individuals but alleged higher spiritual beings / energies as well. Scientific integrity requires that the list of possible spiritual sources be acknowledged honestly and be included as potential causal agents in future research<sup>14,26</sup>.

If this article serves to encourage critical dialogue as well as the future conduct (including funding) of controlled research testing the possible reality (and meaningfulness) of synchronicities, spiritual energies, and their potential relationships, then it will have served its purpose.

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### **Appendix A – Feasibility Testing of Stage Two Single-Blinded Readings**

The results of two pairs of Stage 2 single blinded readings are briefly reported here. As mentioned above, obtaining replicated findings from Stage 2 single blinded readings is a necessary prerequisite for justifying the design and conduct of Stage 3 triple blinded (verification) experiments.

The first pair of readings involved RES's deceased mother Marcia. The second pair of readings involved the alleged SE Taylor. Only if the medium obtained accurate information in the Marcia readings, for example, would it make sense to examine the data from the Taylor readings.

The first reading of each pair was conducted at the Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health at the University of Arizona. The second reading of each pair was conducted the next day at the author's home. The readings were video recorded.

The medium was only given the first names of the deceased and asked to receive whatever information she could.

*It is important to recognize that the author is an experienced experimenter. He has been trained in cold reading (i.e. fake mediumship) techniques, and he understands how to provide minimal information to claimant mediums in order to obtain valid exploratory information.*

In addition, the experimenter was careful *not* ask leading questions which might cue a medium to produce specific information. Moreover, follow-up questions were employed cautiously to seek additional information. These interview procedures cannot completely eliminate possible experimenter biases, they merely keep them to a minimum

– the reader is reminded that the rigorous test of the SA hypothesis comes from the follow-up Stage 3 triple blind experiments. The feasibility of multi-blinded experiments is illustrated in Appendix B.

Each reading was transcribed and prepared for item by item scoring. Each item that could be scored received a number from 1 – 6.

- 1 Complete miss
- 2 Remote possible fit (i.e. a stretch)
- 3 Maybe a fit
- 4 Probable fit
- 5 Definite fit
- 6 Super fit (i.e. a very strong and meaningful hit)

If the rater did not have the information to make a judgment, the item was left blank. Less than 5% of the items could not be scored.

The scoring was performed separately by RES and GES. For each targeted SE, control SEs were scored as well.

RES scored the items for her mother Marcia; as a control, GES scored the same items as they potentially applied to his mother Shirley.

RES and GES both scored the items for Taylor (their scores were averaged); as controls, RES and GES scored the same items as if they potentially applied to their respective fathers Roger and Howard.

For each item, the raters had to explain and justify the rationale for their ratings. For graphic purposes, scores of 6 and 5 were combined as “fits”; scores of 4 – 2 were combined as “possible fits,” and scores of 1 were graphed as “no fit” (i.e. clear errors).

Figure 1 displays the findings for Marcia (the target) and Shirley (the control), separately for Readings 1 and 2. Table 1 presents the raw sums for each rating category.

#### INSERT FIGURE 1 & TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Four observations were noteworthy:

1. The average percent “fits” was approximately 85% for Marcia (the targeted SE) compared to 25% for Shirley (the non-targeted SE control).
2. The average percent “no fit” was only approximately 5% for Marcia compared to 70% for Shirley.
3. The average percent “possible” scores were very low for both of the SEs, approximately 15% for Marcia and 5% for Shirley.
4. The two readings were virtually identical in the pattern of their results.

Importantly, the content received in the two readings was different. Moreover, the information provided by the medium was typically descriptive, specific, and easily scored.

For example, in Reading 1 the medium stated that Marcia spent much of her time in her home doing her professional work which included studying and writing. This was a clear fit for Marcia (she conducted her professional work almost entirely from her home) and a complete miss for Shirley (she spent almost all of her professional time

outside the home). Another example was the medium said that Marcia spent significant time working on a computer. This was a strong fit for Marcia (she used a computer for writing and emails) and an error for Shirley (who did not own a computer).

Concerning Reading 2 the medium stated that Marcia had given RES a special book with an unusual kind of book mark and that this book was important to her. This was a strong fit for Marcia and a no fit for Shirley. Another example involved the medium making reference to a particular ring which was a fit for Marcia and a no fit for Shirley.

The high level of percent accuracy (85%) for the targeted SE (Marcia) versus the relatively low value (25%) for the non-targeted SE control (Shirley), as replicated across the two readings, was comparable to the best mediums reported in previous research<sup>11</sup>.

In light of these successful readings, the results for the alleged SE Taylor could be evaluated. Figure 2 displays the findings for Taylor (the target) and Roger and Howard (the two non-targeted controls), separately for the two readings. Table 2 presents the sums for each rating category.

#### INSERT FIGURE 2 & TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Four observations were again noteworthy:

1. The average percent “fits” was approximately 95% for Taylor (the targeted SE) compared to 20% for Roger and 25% for Howard (the non-targeted controls).
2. The average percent “no fit” was approximately 2% for Taylor compared to 60% for Roger and 60% for Howard.
3. The average percent “possible” scores were low for all three SEs, approximately 5% for Taylor and approximately 18% for both Roger and Howard.
4. The two readings were virtually identical in the overall patterns of their results, with one exception (shown in Figure 3).

Again, the content for the two readings was highly specific and different. Whereas Reading 1 focused on a physical description of Taylor and how he died, Reading 2 focused on Taylor’s seeming relationship with RES and GES and his interest in this reSArch.

For example, in Reading 1 the medium provided a unique description of the SEs nose and eyes. Her description matched the alleged SE Taylor uncannily and did not fit either Roger or Howard (to preserve anonymity, no details can be provided here). Also, the medium provided specific information regarding the SEs death which was highly accurate and emotional; the details fit Taylor exquisitely and did not apply to either Roger or Howard.

The information from Reading 2 was utterly surprising and provided the initial incentive to write this article. Not only did the medium receive information about the SEs personality and philosophy that fit the alleged SE Taylor precisely, but she did so spontaneously and consistent with Taylor’s historic interest in light. *Moreover, the medium provided profound descriptions of the alleged SE Taylor’s unique and apparently emerging new relationship with RES and GES, which was confirmatory of the*

*nature of the kind of relationship implied by the set of light-related synchronicities which had unfolded.* To preserve anonymity, details cannot be provided here.

Interestingly, the medium never actually identified the alleged Taylor (i.e. she did not hear his last name nor recognize him), and although she described aspects of his occupation accurately, she did *not* recognize his persona. *However, had the medium been reading RES and GES minds, she would likely have reported such details.* Schwartz<sup>12,18</sup> has reported similar compelling instances where SEs have seemingly withheld specific pieces of information for the sake of family members as well as the research.

The unique nature of Reading 2 is illustrated in Figure 3. These graphs display the percentage of “super fits” (+6) ratings separately for Readings 1 and 2 for Marcia and Shirley (upper graph) and Taylor, Roger, and Howard (lower graph).

#### INSERT FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

It can be seen that for both readings, the average “super fit” percent scores were approximately 35% for Marcia (targeted SE) as compared to approximately 5% for Shirley (non-targeted control SE).

However, for Taylor (targeted SE) the average “super fit” percent score was approximately 65%. Moreover, what is noteworthy is that the average “super fit” percent score for Reading 2 (the synchronicity-related reading) increased to approximately 85% as compared to 45% for Reading 1. By way of contrast, the average “super fit” percent scores were approximately 5% for both Roger and Howard (non-targeted control SEs).

As mentioned previously, *what is especially interesting about these two readings was that neither RES nor GES had known the alleged SE Taylor when he was alive, and more importantly, they had not followed his career.* In fact, they had not appreciated his work when he was creating it and were mostly unfamiliar with it. RES and GES became knowledgeable and eventually interested in the alleged SE and his history because of the presence of an unusual number of seemingly anomalous synchronous events that were potentially related to him.

Since his real first name was as popular as the names Paul and Michael, it was striking that given only his first name the medium obtained such detailed information about him. Moreover, she provided spontaneous and detailed information which was highly consistent with the emerging hypothesis that the SE Taylor had seemingly dropped into RES and GES’s lives and was somehow involved with the research. For the record, GES and RES had only shared the emerging synchronicities involving lights with a handful of colleagues and trustworthy friends.

Given the exploratory nature of these pairs of mediumship readings, the above findings should be interpreted as *suggestive of and consistent with (but not verification of) the possibility that the SE Taylor had dropped in and was potentially participating in synchronicities as well as this work.* Clearly, formal Stage 3 triple-blind studies would need to be designed and conducted before firmer conclusions could be reached. What is important about this exploratory Stage 2 investigation is that it illustrates the possibility and plausibility of testing the SA hypothesis in a systematic three stage fashion.

#### **Appendix B – Spontaneous Example of a Stage Three Double-Blinded (Verification) Process**

The following events illustrate the plausibility of mediums participating in Stage Three (verification) experiments. The two accounts presented below describe (1) a single-blinded meeting with SN, which unknowingly (at the time) set the stage for (2) a subsequent spontaneous double-blinded verification experience with Mrs. Yemini.

Note that the double-blinded event described below was not a planned experiment by the author. However, the event and its information *fit the essence of a double-blinded experiment in that both the medium and the author were blind to essential aspects of the observations.*

Prior to the meeting with SN, GES and RES were aware not only (1) that the unexpected Edison events were similar in degree of improbability to occurrence and timing to the light-related events, but (2) that it was possible that both sets of apparent synchronicities might be related to the SA hypothesis.

GES and RES decided to mention nothing to SN about apparent synchronous events associated with the alleged SE Taylor or even apparent synchronous events related to the alleged SE Marcia<sup>19</sup>. GES and RES wondered, would any evidence related to the alleged SE Taylor spontaneously show up at the meeting? They intentionally did not request (or even suggest) that SN do a reading during the meeting.

*However, spontaneously during the breakfast, SN made a surprising off-handed comment where she mentioned the actual name of the well-known SE referred herein as Taylor.*

A few minutes later, GES gently asked SN, without explanation, how often she spontaneously happened to mention this particular person in conversation. SN reported that she could not remember ever having brought him up spontaneously in a conversation before. GES did not pursue this further, nor did he offer any further explanation for his seemingly out-of-the-blue question about RN's out-of-the-blue mention of the person.

Since this was obviously a "single-blinded" breakfast – meaning GES and RES were consciously aware of the appearance of possible evidence related to Taylor, and SN was not – SN's spontaneous mention of Taylor merely replicates, in principle, the more detailed single-blinded readings reported in Appendix A. Moreover, since SN could have been reading GES and / or RES's mind; the apparent Taylor observation is merely suggestive.

However, GES did intentionally invite SN to recount some of her personal history with her great uncle Edison. GES explicitly mentioned that he and RES were having some potentially anomalous Edison related synchronicities. This included Rhonda showing SN photos she had taken of the three customer receipts involving Edison, and GES showing SN photos he had taken of the Thomas Edison Hotel.

SN indicated her interest in the possibility of participating in future SA hypothesis research, and she understood the need for her – as well as GES and RES in specific circumstances – to serve in a purposely blinded capacity. It was agreed upon returning to Tucson, GES would send SN a possible research plans for her to consider.

After returning to Tucson, GES and RES discussed how the three phase design described here could potentially applied to the potential Edison synchronicities. Then a completely unanticipated and evidential / double-blinded source of possible SA Edison involvement unfolded.

The next day, GES received an unscheduled phone call from Mrs. Yemini, the Israeli medium who had provided the information reported in Appendix A. GES had not

spoken with this medium for about two months. Though some readers may find this hard to digest, in summary this is what actually transpired.

The medium was calling allegedly on behalf of another well-known deceased scientist (Albert Einstein), and she stated that she (and supposedly he) had some questions for me. Though this is beyond the scope of this report, the medium has claimed that Einstein – along with other distinguished scientists – were supposedly working with her (following her trip to GES’s laboratory). Having no independent evidence of these extraordinary claims (i.e. at this point no formal research on this hypothesis had been initiated), GES remained firmly agnostic.

Note that at this point only four people were aware of the emerging Edison synchronicities: GES, RES, RS, and SN. Moreover, only GES and RES had Orit’s email address, and none of us had her phone number.

Toward the end of the conversation, the medium announced that she had forgotten to tell GES something that she herself found hard to believe, and that GES would find hard to believe as well. The medium went on to explain that *Sunday night in Israel, which would be Sunday morning in NYC – when GES and RES happened to be having breakfast with SN – a new historically famous scientist spontaneously showed up in her house claiming to be participating in on-going research with us. She re-insisted that GES would find this hard to believe. She stated his name was Thomas Edison.*

Given the obvious novelty as well as potential evidential significance of this spontaneous claim, GES asked RES to pick up the phone, and he requested that the medium repeat her statements, followed by a brief account of what had transpired. Only after she finished her summary did GES provide her with some assurance, explaining that around the same time that the medium was having her apparent, unannounced drop in encounter with Edison, that GES and RES happened to be having breakfast with Edison’s great niece in NYC.

Presuming that neither fraud nor subtle cuing were involved in this encounter (and it was not), the timing of this occurrence is striking. *Importantly, in this instance, not only was the medium blind to the identity of the deceased, but the experimenter was blind to the fact that an unplanned verification was unfolding on the other side of the globe.* Obviously, the unanticipated Edison drop in was not as surprising to GES as it was to the medium. Since GES was aware of the SA hypothesis as potentially related to Edison, and the medium was not, upon hearing the medium’s experience he was in the position to recognize its possible historic as well as scientific significance.

As mentioned previously, even triple-blind observations with experienced research mediums do not rule out possible alternative paranormal explanations. One reviewer emphatically proposed that the medium might have (1) unconsciously detected GES’s “excitement” (his word) for the ongoing Edison events from a distance, (2) then unconsciously created the illusion of her having a dialogue with Edison, and finally (3) unknowingly used the illusion of her having a dialogue with another deceased scientist (Einstein) as a justification for calling GES. In addition, the medium may have unconsciously picked up telepathically that GES was wondering about whether Edison was somehow involved in the Edison events.

However, until formal three phrase experimental paradigm testing the SA hypothesis is implemented, and until convincing positive observations are obtained and replicated, there is little cause to consider possible paranormal explanations and their

associated (even more complex) experimental designs. The purpose of publishing the basic theory, methods and preliminary observations regarding the SA hypothesis is to increase the possibility that future formal research connecting synchronicity and mediumship research can occur.

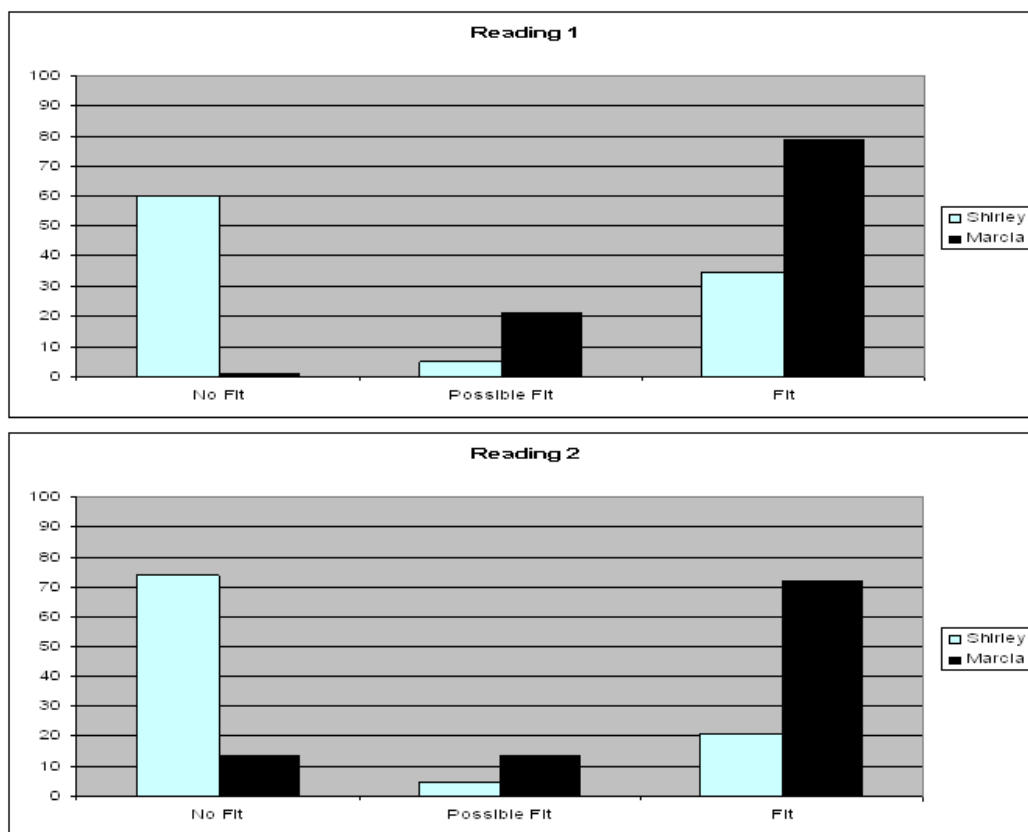
For the sake of completeness, the author should mention that the day after he wrote a first draft of the Edison synchronous events and the subsequent apparent verification by the medium in Appendix B, he sent a draft of the report to a few select people to critique, one of whom is a senior medium (who happens to have earned a PhD from an Ivy League university) who knew nothing about the Edison events. The medium wrote back the following comments, which in slightly edited form are included for their historical (as well as potential scientific) significance:

“I believe experimentally what you say re Einstein. Re Edison, in my early thirties I went to his lab in Brunswick, NJ, where I had the survival experience of my life to that time. You remind me that his clock stopped at 3:24, the precise time of his death. I just began a collaboration with A [a recently deceased person] and E [a distinguished currently living scientist and relative of the deceased] in which I specifically talked about Edison.”

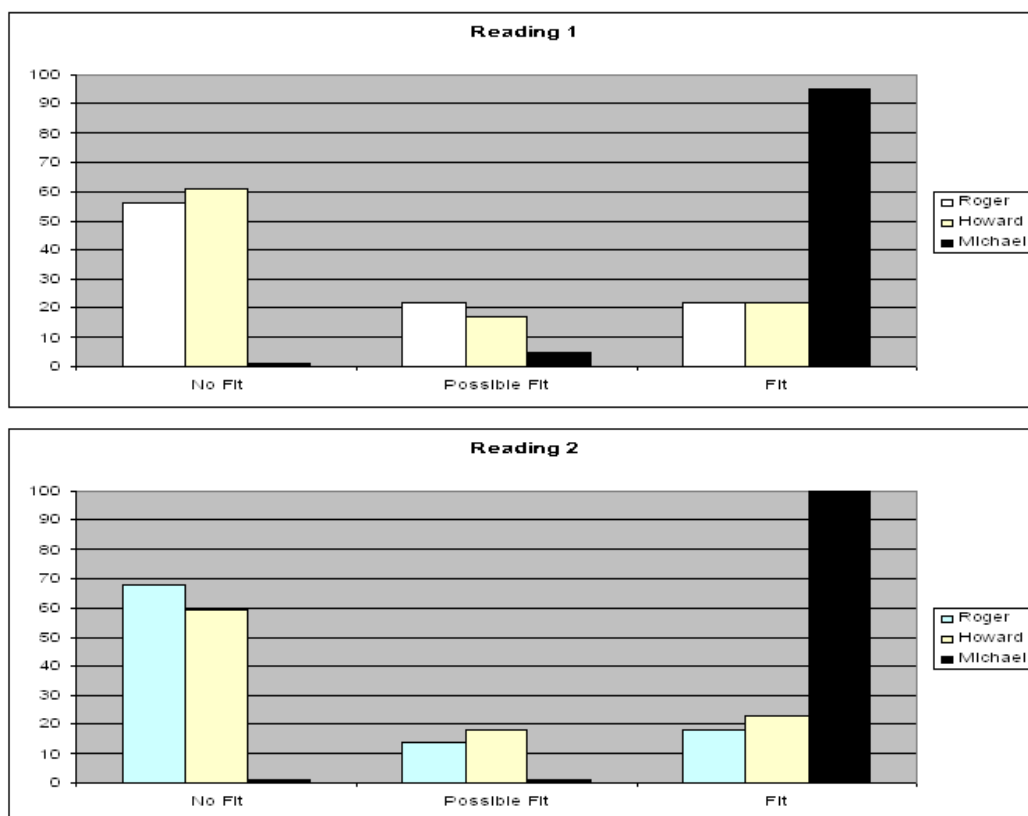
Comment: It is curious how this particular medium not only had an apparent historical connection with Edison, but in her new alleged collaboration with a recently deceased person and his scientist family member, they [presumably A, E and medium] just “talked about” Edison. It is noteworthy that GES has had hundreds of discussions and emails with this medium, and Edison was never a topic of conversation. Could this be another possible SA Edison synchronicity? Time will tell.

### **Figures and Figure Legends**

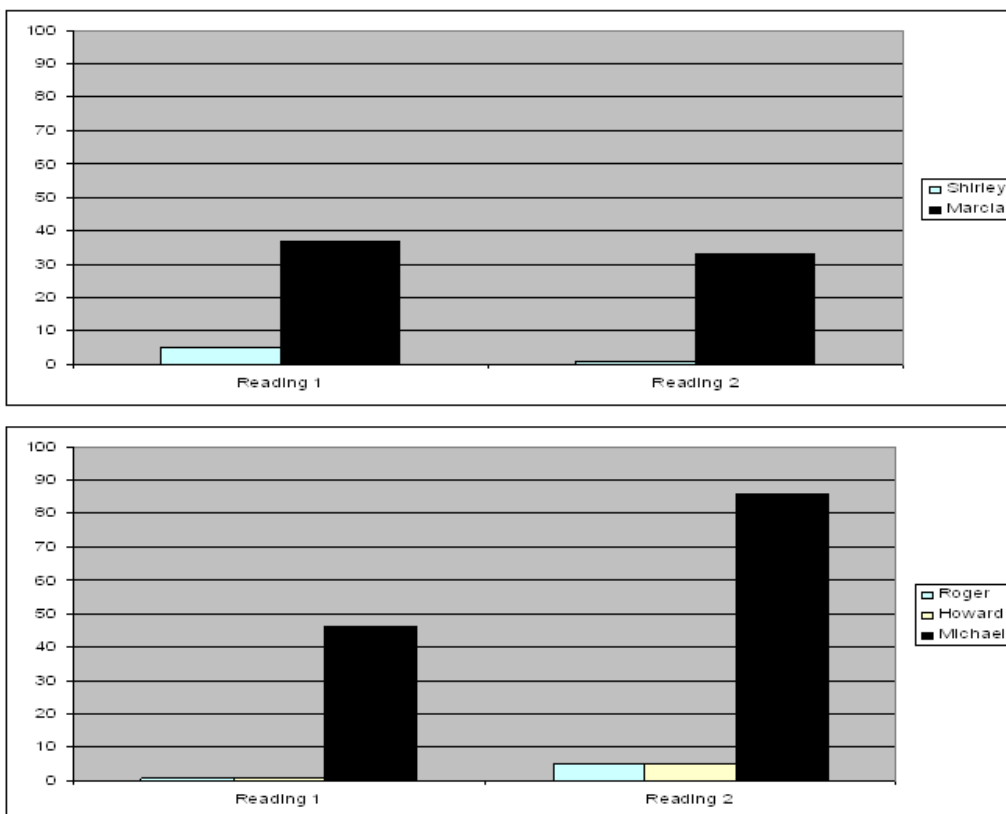
**Figure 1:** Percentages of no fits, possible fits, and fits scores for Marcia (targeted, shown in black) versus Shirley (control) for Reading 1 (upper graph) and Reading 2 (lower graph).



**Figure 2:** Percentages of no fits, possible fits, and fits scores for Taylor (targeted, shown in black) versus Roger and Howard (controls) for Reading 1 (upper graph) and Reading 2 (lower graph).



**Figure 3:** Percentages of super fits scores for Marcia (targeted, shown in black) versus Shirley (controls) for Readings 1 and 2 (upper graph), and for Taylor (targeted, shown in black) versus Roger and Howard (controls) for Readings 1 and 2 (lower graph).



**Table 1**

**Sums of raw scores for Marcia (targeted) versus Shirley (non-targeted control) for Readings 1 and 2**

|   |              | Reading 1 |         | Reading 2 |         |
|---|--------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
|   |              | Marcia    | Shirley | Marcia    | Shirley |
|   | Not Scored   | 1         | 0       | 0         | 2       |
| 1 | Not Fit      | 0         | 12      | 3         | 14      |
| 2 | Stretch      | 0         | 1       | 1         | 0       |
| 3 | Possible     | 2         | 0       | 0         | 1       |
| 4 | Probable     | 2         | 0       | 2         | 0       |
| 5 | Fit          | 8         | 6       | 8         | 4       |
| 6 | Super Fit    | 7         | 1       | 7         | 0       |
|   | Total Scored | 19        | 20      | 21        | 19      |

**Table 2**  
**Sums of raw scores for Peter (targeted) versus Roger and Howard**  
**(non-targeted controls) for Readings 1 and 2**

|              | Reading 1 |       |        | Reading 2 |       |        |
|--------------|-----------|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
|              | Peter     | Roger | Howard | Peter     | Roger | Howard |
| Not Scored   | 5         | 9     | 9      | 0         | 0     | 0      |
| 1 Not Fit    | 0         | 10    | 11     | 0         | 15    | 13     |
| 2 Stretch    | 0         | 2     | 1      | 0         | 2     | 3      |
| 3 Possible   | 1         | 1     | 2      | 0         | 1     | 1      |
| 4 Probable   | 0         | 1     | 0      | 0         | 0     | 0      |
| 5 Fit        | 11        | 4     | 4      | 3         | 3     | 4      |
| 6 Super Fit  | 10        | 0     | 0      | 19        | 1     | 1      |
|              |           |       |        |           |       |        |
| Total Scored | 22        | 18    | 18     | 22        | 22    | 22     |

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