### The Flora Levy Lecture in the Humanities

1989

## Some of My Journeys in Medicine

Ian Stevenson

Preface by Maurice W. duQuesnay

Introduction of Ian Stevenson by Garic Kenneth Barranger

Edited by *Albert W. Fields* 

The University of Southwestern Louisiana Lafayette, Louisiana

Reprinted here courtesy of Maurice W. duQuesnay

#### **Preface**

Ian Stevenson is a man extraordinary in his intellectual and scientific accomplishments and even more extraordinary in his possession of a quality of mind which resists and never allows itself to be dominated by assumption. And so, against a powerful scientific ethos, which generally looks askance upon matters such as religions and more specifically the question of the soul, Stevenson has stood firm, recognizing that such issues are highly debatable issues and cannot be dismissed as trivial, irrelevant or devoid of value.

He is one of those remarkable men whose creativity and intelligence enable him to look beyond boundaries, instead of tempting him to contain his gaze within the pale of a single discipline. His early experiences in science, as a student of biochemistry, and as a young doctor, taught him that scientists are not always free of the prejudices and assumptions which as scientists they should be.

Indeed, Stevenson came to understand that the vanities, pride and jealousies, which historically have been the failings of politicians, philosophers, and theologians, can be, and often are, the same failings of scientists. Scientists, no matter how much they are taught to be wary of the personal and the subjective, are men, and as men they cannot be completely free of arrogance, pride, ambitions and other human failings. It is these human flaws which constrict and hinder that primal imagination of science, out of which come new possibilities from old impossibilities, and new considerations from old rejections. Stevenson's mind is full of these transfiguring impulses of the imagination which are the source of his admirable resistance to those assumptions generated by the past accomplishment of science. Stevenson is remarkable for having been resistant to those vices of self to which science is loathe, vices which make error and shortsightedness among scientists.

Stevenson has all his life been able to achieve a union of imaginative intuition and scientific scrutiny, of vision and method. This union was partially brought about by the native gifts of Stevenson's imagination, and further developed into a working unity by this intellectual powers of mind. Such unity of imagination and intellect did not come to him easily. Such discipline of self, however, reveals only partially the harmony of imagination and science which he achieved. As a young student of science, he found intellectual narrowness and moral failings where he had not expected them to be, in the conclusions and in the personalities of distinguished scientist. Failings such as these might have well tempted young Stevenson to become disillusioned with science: this was not the case. The dogmatic follies of scientists seem only to have deepened his confidence and made more determined his commitment to the scientific method; and so Stevenson continued on, holding steadfastly to both those intuitive cognitions of mind, spirit and soul, and following to the letter what is required in valid scientific observation. And so even to this day, Stevenson submits to a vigorous scientific scrutiny an idea which for years has engaged his mind: the notion of survival after death and the possibility of reincarnation.

Stevenson has done more in the lecture than give us a brilliant paradigm of mind; he has returned to us something which has been too long absent from discussion in philosophical, religious and theological groups and in our intellectual life. I am referring to the argument for the immortality of the soul, a central idea in what we call the perennial philosophy. For centuries the possibility of survival after death has engaged the imagination of men; yet in the last hundred and fifty years, this conception has not fared well in a world in which Darwin, Freud and Marx have gained currency in the general culture. Indeed it is not an exaggeration to see this idea as having been worn to tatters in the ongoing arguments between scientist and theologian and in the

discussions of modern philosophy. Today it is an idea which still suffers almost total rejection by philosophers and scientists. Even those few in religious and philosophical circles still convinced of the cogency and validity of personal immortality have grown timid and reluctant to include it in their discussions. If as a notion it still survives, it survives as a dim vestige of what was once an idea of great brilliance, commanding of the attention of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas.

The lame state of this conception, Stevenson perceives, is sustained by a censorship sponsored by science, which imposes a stigma and intellectual guilt on those who persist in holding the idea of immortality as something still worthy of the consideration of science. "If heretics were burned alive today, the successors in science of the theologians who, in the sixteenth century, burned anyone who denied the existence of souls would today burn those who affirm their existence." So Stevenson remarks, marginally in this essay, and in a hyperbolic spirit. Such irony and overstatement are pointed. And this particular negation of immortality, now one of the assumptions of science, has come to enjoy as almost canonical power which began as a judgment among scientists and philosophers, but later developed as a general assumption of culture.

The immortality of the soul was once considered one of the central truths upon which Christianity rested its case, and it was formulated in syllogism and dialectic; and in these forms, the case for immortality was argued by theologians and apologists. Even in the early decades of this century, the apologists and theologians of the Catholic Church were confident enough of these arguments as to include them in their general defense of the Church. If today, what we call the apologetic tradition continues, the proofs of immortality are no longer part of its strategy; there is no trace of such arguments in the texts, tracts and journals in which immortality was once a dominant theme; indeed the literature of this apologetic tradition which once flooded the shelves of Catholic libraries and was found in the foyers of Catholic churches, has vanished, departed into oblivion, like T.S. Elliot's nymphs.

The greatness of Stevenson's work here resides in this restoration of subject, in his bringing back into discussion, the issue of the soul. The writings of Ian Stevenson so impress us as to be our motivation for renewing our interest in immortality. Science has not only dismissed immortality, but it has placed a taboo on any reconsideration of soul. We are able to break this taboo, thanks to Stevenson, without feeling childishly neurotic or stupidly eccentric.

The last and most magnificent contribution which Stevenson has made, in this lecture and in much of this writings, relates to the trauma from which men now suffer, consequent of their disaffection from the doctrine of immortality. Poets and writers of this century have had to confront this loss. The greatness of T.S. Eliot's early poetry moves to a clear recognition of the despair which follows the death of God, a despair which is connected with the loss of belief in immortality, a natural consequence of the death of God. The full implication of a world without God and a destiny without immortality constitute a tragic reality which finds full expression in T.S. Eliot's most famous poem *The Wasteland*. In the world of *The Wasteland*, men cannot partake of a whole knowledge, or even feel themselves a part of the "whole" in which Stevenson believes. The only reality of this world is a "heap of broken images," perceived in lives lived out in hysteria, compulsion and flight. The April, of Eliot's wasteland, cannot be celebrated by its inhabitants, because spring brings back life which forces upon us processes of life and death, and only processes, which recall the inevitability of death, without promise or hope of immortality. Hence any thought of death becomes taboo in the wasteland. This is why that "friend to man," that infamous dog of *The Wasteland*, must be kept at bay, and ever repelled from the corpse buried in the garden. For the persistent hound would dig up the corpse and lead men to a knowledge of the reality which they most need and ironically, which they most forbid themselves reacquaintance.

Quite early in his life Stevenson had experiences of the kind which pointed to the reality of death. It came to him quietly from his study of history during his first two years of college, quietly yet not undisturbingly. History impressed him not only with the terrible futility of human accomplishment and the inevitable fading away of human monument, but also with the deepest apprehension of the inadequacy of human intention and its ultimate failure to conquer time. Here again, Stevenson comes close to Eliot, in experience and in perception. For in "The Dry Salvages," the third of the four poems making up *The Four Quartets*, Eliot shares experiences and perceptions, all flowing from his own preoccupation with the study of history. The experiences and perceptions of both men are alike to a stunning degree. History had revealed to Eliot what it revealed to Stevenson: "the primitive terror," an experience which others later were to call "the terror of history": "The backward half-look / Over the shoulder toward the primitive terror." Such experiences ad perceptions are the threshold to a deeper life of the mind, to deeper levels of aesthetic, scientific and religious reality. From such experiences, Eliot and Stevenson moved from men of great knowledge to men of profound thought in matters of human destiny.

Much could be gained by us, if we also could find our own paths, as Eliot and Stevenson found theirs, by accepting their own intimations of mortality as a central reality of life and thought. The terror of history and the reality of death in our time have been ignored, suppressed, trivialized and even deliberately forgotten, leaving us only with an unconscious knowledge of death; the knowledge of death can now only be experienced by us as hysteria, compulsion and flight.

It is in the final perspective that Stevenson becomes a great physician, because what he discusses awakens us to what we most need and to what we least care to know, to remember. Our awakening to and our remembrance of the inexorability of death in a world dispossessed of the transcendent, a world without that "significant soil" out of which can be won the fullness of life, cannot be but a freedom regained. The bounding circles of hysteria, compulsion and addiction, which all are formed in denial of death can be unbound, and our disenthralled energies, now detached from imprisoning denials and repression and assumptions, can pursue the transcendent without stigma and humiliation. Stevenson the physician teaches us how we might respond in courage and in dignity to what Eugene Ionesco has written with such final clarity of our tragic circumstance: "As long as we are not assured on immortality, we shall never be fulfilled, we shall go on hating each other in spite of our need for mutual love."

Maurice W. duQuesnay Chairman Flora Levy Committee

#### **Introduction of Ian Stevenson**

Those of us who are unfamiliar with Dr. Ian Stevenson's whole canon of work should know that his fascinating research and studies having to do with reincarnation are preceded by equally distinguished accomplishments in biochemistry, psychiatry and medicine. Ian Stevenson received his college preparation at the University of St. Andrews and McGill and by 1943 had his doctoral degree in medicine. Internships and residencies followed at hospitals in Arizona and Montreal, and by the late forties Dr. Stevenson occupied a fellowship at the Ochsner Medical Foundation. He was a teaching fellow, and many of my friends, including the late Dr. William Sorum, were his students in those halcyon days in the fifties when they all come together at Mandeville at the beginnings of Southeastern Louisiana Hospital. It was truly an intellectually exciting place to be in those days (which, alas, have come to an end). Dr. Stevenson until 1947 maintained an active connection with Louisiana as the Denis Fellow of Biochemistry at Tulane while making the chief cornerstone of his present career the Carlson Professorship of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia and is the Director of the Division of Personality Studies in the Department of Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry at the University of Virginia School of Medicine at Charlottesville. He is also currently President of the Society for Psychical Research in London.

The list of his honors and other fellowships is the size of a small phone book, and his bibliography lists some 229 separate items ranging from full length volumes of case studies to smaller articles in publications of worldwide circulation in English and German. He is also fluent in French. His work has been largely focused upon a scientific empirical investigation of case histories of people in India, Thailand, Turkey, Burma, and the English speaking world in which the subjects, usually children, recall what appear to be past lives in other places and among other families. In some of the cases, the subjects recall whole languages foreign to the present incarnation, and his two volumes on Unlearned Language or Zenoglossy make very fascinating reading indeed. The remarkable thing about this body of work and perhaps the *most* remarkable thing about it, however, is that it is so beautifully written, and eve though the writer is a man unlimited erudition, that it is so enjoyable to read. It is also easy to understand. You do not have to understand German to follow the documentation of the remarkable history of someone else who *shouldn't* know German, but who inexplicable does. At least you do not when Dr. Stevenson is the investigator who is doing the writing.

I mentioned that his bibliography lists some 229 pieces but I did not mention that those comprise his output only since 1969. Before '69 there were another 136 pieces, but they deal with less psychically centered subjects like psychotherapy, psychosomatic medicine and the biochemistry of the psychological effect of various drugs.

Back in the forties and fifties when this kind of study was getting its start, it was fashionable to define MAN as a being who made and used tools. And then the Zoologists pointed out to us that there were lots of other species including other primates and birds who did the same thing. Scratch that definition. Then it became popular to define MAN as a "language, using animal." But it looks as though that definition is also on the way out. Descartes was fashionable for over a century with the suggestion that Man existed qua Man because he thought, but it now appears that we are far from alone hereabouts as being the only animals who simply think. What we can say, it seems to me, is that we are organisms that think and make tools and that we put the two together with language and that we come out with a kind of happy GESTALT which is out ineluctable desire (and fate) to create constructs which try to define what we are all about, and what the world is all

about, and what we are all about in the world. The various constructs which man has put together to understand himself in the world as a reincarnating entity is, if I understand Dr. Stevenson correctly, what he is all about.

It is now my immense pleasure to introduce Dr. Ian Stevenson.

Eric Kenneth Barranger

# The Flora Levy Lecture in the Humanities, 1989 Volume IX by Ian Stevenson

I noticed with some misgivings the announcement that this is the Levy Lecture in the Humanities. It may seem tactless therefore for me to state at the beginning of the lecture that after intending to study history and indeed doing so for several years, I abandoned history for medicine. History became for me Robert Frost's "the road not taken." Frost's metaphor does not fully suit my case, because I have continued to have a strong interest in history and other humanities. If I shall later seem to have accomplished something original in science. I may owe this to my study of history. Let me explain. I do not believe that what history teaches is that history teaches nothing. What it has taught me is the transience, not of our aspirations, but of our material accomplishments and, even more, of our ideas about the nature of man. In particular, the history of medicine shows a humbling succession of ideas about disease, each appearing infrangible for a short period only to prove degradable by the next idea that-at first also hailed as ultimate-is overthrown in its turn. Knowledge in science, as Whitehead said, keeps like fish. An awareness from my reading of history of the ephemeral nature of most concepts about the nature of things freed me to challenge received opinions in medicine. For me everything now believed by scientists is open to question, and I am always dismayed to find that many scientists accept current knowledge as forever fixed. They confuse the product with the process.

Before I give an account of some of my journeys in medicine I wish to extend my tribute to the humanities by emphasizing that with their heritage and their present dialectics we have our only resources for improving our conduct. A few scientists have presumed to declare how we should live on the basis of alleged scientific knowledge, but most scientists believe that scientific knowledge is itself neutral about values. A tiny handful-in which I include myself-dare to hope that scientific knowledge may one day contribute to decisions about values. However, no one now living can foretell when that day may come. In the meantime we must continue searching the humanities for the wisdom that, as T. S. Eliot told us, we have lost in knowledge.

Early in my medical career I undertook (while at Tulane University) some research in biochemistry. To this I brought some ideas, but the success of our experiments on aspects of the oxidation of rat kidney tissue must largely have been due to the technical expertise of my collaborator, who later went on to become a distinguished biochemist. An unexpected result of our experiments was the destruction by our data of a dogma concerning oxidation that the great German chemist Otto Warburg had pronounced. I thought little of that and was astonished one day when a German biochemist who learned of our results told me that it would have been impossible to publish them in Germany. He meant that the awe in which Warburg was held would have led to editorial rejection of our report. From this episode I may date my strong interest in all the obstacles that confront the conduct of original research and the communication of its results.

Sir Peter Medawar described reductionism as "the most successful research stratagem ever devised: it has been the making of science and technology." Quite so, but science can study more than parts considered separately. While killing harmless rats (in order to use their kidneys in the experiments on oxidation mentioned earlier) I experienced a revulsion for this kind of scientific activity and decided that I wanted to devote myself to something more than the study of parts and to something closer to whole human beings.

My mother had believed strongly in the influence of thoughts on physical well-being, and I may owe to her my initial interest in psychosomatic medicine. Even as a medical student I was

keenly interested in the physical accompaniments of emotion. One of the first patients assigned to me had angina pectoris, the dreadful pain of which comes when the heart, through blockage or spasm of the coronary arteries, receives insufficient oxygen. One day I was on this patient's ward when he became angry at a nurse and instantly gripped his chest in the agony of this disease. By this time I may have read what John Hunter, the great eighteenth century surgeon, had said about his own angina pectoris: "My life is at the mercy of any rogue who cares to provoke me." (One later did, and he died as a consequence.) However, I only *read* about Hunter; I *saw* my patient and can still recall vividly the suffering in his face.

The impression from this and similar observations led me, when I abandoned reductionism, to take up research on the physical accompaniments of stress and the emotions it induced. The group with which I was associated in this at the New York Hospital in the late 1940s showed for almost every organ of the body that strong emotions induced by life stresses, and even by talking about such stresses, included markedly altered physical functions, often to the point of experienced symptoms.

In these researches we thought of ourselves as pioneers, but we could not long sustain this view unless we stopped reading and also forgot what we had already read. Solomon had said in Proverbs: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." References to what we call psychosomatic medicine occur frequently in Shakespeare and in many other writers outside the medical profession. One can find reports of psychosomatic symptoms in Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, and Wesley's *Journal*. This is to mention three authors only. However, what needs emphasis is not the frequency of references to the effect of the mind on the body, but the acceptance without question through centuries of this relationship. Doubts and neglect of this knowledge came later, at least within the medical profession, with the discovery of the role of microorganisms in disease. Louis Pasteur said as he was dying, "[Claude] Bernard was right. The *terrain* is everything." He was wiser than many who built on his discoveries, and it was the middle of this century before physicians discovered again the power of the mind on the body.

If our group at the New York Hospital has a rightful claim to originality it may lie in our having asked (and provisionally tried to answer) the question: "Why during stress does one person develop asthma, another high blood pressure, and a third a peptic ulcer?" W. B. Cannon had already shown that many of the physiological accompaniments of fear and rage correspond to those that occur during strenuous physical exertion; the body reacts as if the person is going to respond to the provocation by fighting or running away. This rarely happens in civilized society, but the atavistic physical changes occur anyway. Some of my colleagues extended Cannon's hypothesis with conjectures about the symbolic meaning of various localized psychosomatic symptoms. For example, a woman who reacted to her stresses with a running nose was said to be trying to wash away her troubles; the man whose bronchi closed in the spasms of asthma was trying to shut out the truth of some unpleasant aspect of his situation. This kind of thinking led on to even wilder surmises from the more ridiculous examples of which I shall spare you. More seriously, some of my colleagues sought to delineate certain attitudes toward stressful situations that would predictably induce particular symptoms, other attitudes leading to other symptoms. However, these concepts seemed to me teleological also.

None of these interpretations seemed satisfying to me. The organ whose psychosomatic relationships I investigated was the heart, and I published numerous papers about our observations. However, I could never believe that arrhythmias have any purposeful function for those afflicted by them. My discontent with teleological interpretations of psychosomatic phenomena became greater

when I became aware that not infrequently the same physical symptoms occurred in a person not only when he was angry or frightened, but also when he was unusually happy or joyful. I began to collect instances of physical symptoms that had occurred during pleasurable emotional states. Here my habit of reading outside medicine brought me some useful examples. I learned that both Beethoven and Goya could be fairly described as having died of joy. They had been ill, to be sure, but their final relapses occurred just after they had received news that made them excitedly happy. In Beethoven's case a letter from London brought him 100 pounds that eased his financial embarrassment and in effect commissioned his tenth symphony; in Goya's case the happy news came in a letter from his son, who announced his imminent visit to his father, then exiled in France. Other examples occurred among the appallingly emaciated prisoners held in German concentration camps at the end of World War II. Some of them literally died of joy when they saw the Red Cross buses approach the camps to bring them food and liberty.

In trying to publish these and similar reports I encountered another instance of the resistance to deviant ideas on the part of otherwise first-rate scientists. I owe more to H. G. Wolff than I can take time here adequately to acknowledge. He has had few equals in the standards of rigorous investigation and clarity in the presentation of results that he demonstrated himself and demanded of his associates. However, he was much attached to the teleological interpretation of psychosomatic symptoms. He believed they must have some meaning, some protective purpose in the economy of persons manifesting them. Not surprisingly he reacted with noticeable coolness to my data on the occurrence of physical symptoms during pleasurable emotional states. A crisis was avoided, because it was time for me to move to another position, and I published my results in two papers after I left the New York Hospital.

Although our studies at the New York Hospital failed to answer the question of why a person develops one particular disease or another, I have never lost interest in this problem. If my professional work has a "leit-motif this is it, and I shall have more to say about the subject later.

In the 1950s there seemed some prospect that a medical specialty or subspecialty of psychosomatic medicine would develop. This did not happen, and eventually all physicians who had been active in this field had to move decisively toward either internal medicine or psychiatry. Psychiatry then seemed to offer a better opportunity than internal medicine for the further study of the effects of mental states on bodily ones. So I chose psychiatry and accepted an appointment in a Department of Psychiatry. However, I had had comparatively little training in psychiatry; and it was partly to remedy this deficiency that I enrolled in a psychoanalytic institute and in due course graduated from it. Some of this training was beneficial, but the atmosphere of a psychoanalytic institute was foreign to my eclecticism. The Arabs have a proverb: "Beware of the man with a single book." This may sound strange coming from a group of people who seem more than most groups to restrict themselves to a single book. However, there is a truth to it, and I enlarge the proverb to say "Beware of those who read only the works of a single man." In the psychoanalytic institutes the works of Freud and a few of his disciples were treated as having oracular authority. The works of other authors were not read, let alone discussed. "Where all men think alike, few men think at all."

Having left the reductionism of the biochemistry laboratory, I found that of psychoanalysis equally uncongenial. Given the concepts of Freud it might follow that art and religion could be reduced to expressions of infantile cravings and frustrations. But what was the factual basis for his concepts? A reading of Malinowski's *Sex and Repression in Savage Society* in which Malinowski reported his failure to find the allegedly universal Oedipus complex among the matrilineal Trobrianders stimulated me to look more closely at psychoanalytic evidence. Ernest Jones'

inability to accept Malinowski's evidence, if only as an exception to a generalization, made me realize that psychoanalysis had lost its right to reduce religion because it had itself taken on the negative attributes of a religion: the uncritical acceptance of what its founder says.

Freud had begun his studies of the psychological factors in illness in company with other investigators of the same subject. He studied with Charcot, translated Bernheim's work, and wrote his own first work in psychiatry with Breuer. Thereafter, however, he seems to have isolated himself for many years from persons who could help him correct his ideas. He ignored Eugen Bleuler's advice to keep meetings of psychoanalysts open and chose instead to develop first a coterie and then a movement of choric followers.

Ideas about unconscious mental processes were widely discussed in the second half of the nineteenth century. We can easily learn about these in the reviews by Whyte and Ellenberger. Freud was aware of this current, but separated himself from it. He wrote in his autobiography, almost with smugness, that he avoided reading Nietzsche because he was concerned "with keeping my mind unembarrassed." This attitude suits a philosopher, and I have much sympathy with Thomas Hobbes' remark "that if I had read as much as other men, I should have known no more than other men." However, the way of philosophers is not that of scientists. Whitehead was correct in characterizing the scientific revolution initiated around the turn of the seventeenth century as anti-rationalist. It sought to replace abstract reasoning with observations.

There are other means of attaining knowledge besides the scientific method. Art, music, poetry, and other types of literature give us knowledge. I can also believe that in mystical experiences we may have direct access to important truths or, more specifically, to the most important truth of all, which is that we ourselves are part of a Great All. I do not know whether you would call William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* a work of the humanities or one of science. It partakes of the best of both, and for me is one of the greatest books ever written; I know no better defense of the value of mystical experiences. However, inspirational and mystical experiences are, qua experiences, incommunicable, whereas scientific observations are and must be; there is no science without public demonstrability. This means independent verification of a patient's (or informant's) statements. Independent verification has been almost entirely lacking in psychoanalysis. Thus for me, Freud's greatest mistake was in not attempting to inquire into the truth of his patients' claims about sexual seduction in childhood. To say that there is no difference between being sexually abused and imagining that you have been sexually abused is to take oneself out of science.

As if all the foregoing were not enough to turn me away from psychoanalysis I found unconvincing its assertion that a person's later character depends almost exclusively on the events of infancy. This seems to me like smuggling in predestination; for what infant can avail against the follies of his parents? But then these wicked parents must have been mistreated during their infancies by their parents, and so on back to Adam. One of my earliest papers in psychiatry questioned whether human personality is more plastic in infancy and childhood than it is in the later years of life. This provoked much annoyance among psychoanalysts; and because they were then the dominant force in American psychiatry, Sir Aubrey Lewis, who was professor of psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, asked me (soon after the paper's publication) whether I could go about on the streets unarmed.

In sum, Freud now appears to me to have been an emperor without clothes, and I am less surprised that he developed the concepts he espoused than that he succeeded in persuading so many persons to accept them. We must leave to the historians of science the task of explaining why of

the several contemporaneous concepts of unconscious mental processes, including those of Pierre Janet, Morton Prince, William James, C.G. Jung, and F.W.H. Myers, Freud's moved ahead in popular acceptance and almost crushed the others into oblivion. The concepts of the unconscious mind developed by the other thinkers I have named, especially James, Jung, and Myers, allowed for unconscious mental processes to be the sources or the conduits of man's higher creative achievements (as well as some of his pathological aberrations); they allowed also for the experiences we call paranormal and even for a soul. How the facts on which they based their larger concepts of the unconscious mind became overlooked during the Freudian period remains a mystery. Perhaps the very extravagance of Freud's claims-to be able to explain psychopathology, art, war, and religion-made his ideas attractive to uncritical thinkers craving for certitude. Be that as it may, the widespread acceptance of psychoanalytic ideas among psychiatrists and anthropologists (and many humanists, too) shows that the social sciences cannot yet claim to be obtaining cumulative knowledge, as physics, chemistry, and biology are doing. I do not mean to be querimonious about Freud, but it is necessary to learn from mistakes in scientific method if we are to progress.

Psychoanalysis did not decline only because the weaknesses I have mentioned (and others) became exposed to damaging criticism. It received challenges from new observations about the nature and treatment of mental disease in psychology, genetics, and neurobiology. I do not regard these replacements as unmixed blessings. Psychoanalysis, despite its taint of determinism from infantile experiences, had preserved an awareness of the importance of *mental* processes in human disease. This element is minimized or openly denied by most investigators in psychology, genetics, and neurobiology. For them mind is an epiphenomenon of cerebral processes and free will an illusion.

While I was still involved with psychoanalysis, I began experimenting with hallucinogenic (perhaps better called psychedelic) drugs. I have taken or had administered to me a number of drugs and anesthetics as part of a search for drugs that would assist psychiatrists in interviewing or in psychotherapy. However, here I shall speak only of the effects on me of mescaline and LSD.

The sensory apparatus of my body is defective: I have had poor eyesight since youth, my hearing is imperfect, and my sense of smell extremely dull. My first wife was a gifted amateur artist and also a lover of natural beauty, especially that of forests and jungles. Her senses were extraordinarily acute, and I was often aware that she could perceive aspects of the world that I did not. Mescaline could not improve my vision, but it vastly bettered my appreciation of what I saw. The beauty of the colors that I inwardly saw under the influence of mescaline made me ever afterward far more sensitive to color both in nature and in art than I had been before. From my experience with mescaline I also became more aware than I had been of the subjective element in our sense of the passage of time.

With LSD I had less experience of beautiful colors and much more of memories of my early life. With one of my experiences with LSD I also had a mystical experience by which I mean a sense of unity with all beings, all things. After the second of my LSD experiences I passed three days in perfect serenity. I believe that many persons could benefit as much as I did through taking psychedelic drugs under proper medical supervision, which is the only sensible way to take them.

I have mentioned these experiences here to say that they increased my conviction of the dual natures of mind and body. This may seem paradoxical, because if a small amount of a drug acting on the brain can markedly alter our mental experiences does this not prove that our thoughts are only our subjective awareness of our brain's activity? For me it does not. I admit certainly that the chemical changes in my brain that the drugs induced released the extraordinary images and

feelings that entered my consciousness. However, this does not account for the images themselves, which (apart from those that I could identify as memories) had no correspondence to anything that I had earlier experienced. Here I need to add that my experiences included nothing that I could prove to have originated outside my mind and, if you like, my brain. I had no verifiable extrasensory experience when under the influence of drugs. My interest in extrasensory perception did not derive from my experiences with drugs, although they enhanced it.

For many years I had had a keen interest in extrasensory experiences and kindred phenomena. My dissatisfaction with prevailing theories of human personality led me to extend this interest, and in the 1950s I began to read systematically in the literatures of theosophy and psychical research. These had both arisen in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, but their methods were altogether different. Theosophists presented a potted version of Buddhism to the Western world, but they alloyed this with the teachings of alleged Masters channeled through the imperfect minds of frail humans. Like psychoanalysts, theosophists eschewed verifications of their claims, and however valuable the moral teachings of theosophy are, it forms no part of science

Psychical research, on the other hand, does. The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1882 in London, and within a few years a sister society, the American Society for Psychical Research, was established in New York. They exist "to examine without prejudice or prepossession and in a scientific spirit those faculties of man, real or supposed, which appear to be inexplicable on any generally recognized hypothesis." In simpler words, the Societies study evidence of communication without the known sensory organs and of movements occurring without the usual motor forces. Implicit in their programs is the possibility of obtaining evidence- "to replace or supplement faith-that human personality survives bodily death. However, the societies hold no corporate views, and a belief in mind/body dualism or even a belief in extrasensory perception are not requirements of membership in them. A member need only believe that the question of paranormal phenomena is worthy of inquiry and amenable to scientific investigation

Investigators of these phenomena have two different methods of studying them. One group of researchers has sought to produce or observe the phenomena in laboratories, which provide conditions for excluding normal means of communication and which also, at times, permit varying the conditions in order to learn more about the requirements for the occurrence of the phenomena and their processes. There have been important successes with the experimental method, and I could list for anyone interested a dozen experiments for which I am satisfied that normal explanations fail to explain the observations. However, it must be admitted that experimental results in psychical research are unpredictable. Although experiments have been successfully repeated, they are not voluntarily repeatable as are most experiments in the more developed branches of science. A further weakness of laboratory experiments is that (with rare exceptions) the positive effects are meager and only detectable by statistical methods. A large number of trials are required in order to show an effect, but then one cannot say which successes are due to chance and which to paranormal processes. This necessarily limits what one can learn about processes from experiments. Hopes once held that laboratory experiments in extrasensory perception would convince the majority of scientists to take the phenomena seriously have not been fulfilled.

Nevertheless, an appreciable number of scientists (thirty percent in one recent survey) do believe that something like extrasensory perception is either an undoubted fact or a likely possibility. However, it seems that most of them have reached this judgment through personal experiences instead of from reading reports of laboratory experiments. The study of such

experiences-those that occur spontaneously in everyday life-forms the second division of psychical research, and it is the one to which I have given nearly all my attention for the past twenty years.

The study of spontaneous cases of extrasensory perception sometimes needs defending against the disapproval of those who have come to equate science with the controlled conditions that laboratories can offer and naturalistic situations cannot. Here the first point to make is that some important phenomena, such as the weather, volcanoes, fossils, earthquakes, and meteorites, do not occur in laboratories under controlled conditions, and yet we study them with scientific methods. We do this because science is not a physical location where we obtain evidence, but instead a process for appraising evidence wherever we find it.

In the study of spontaneous paranormal phenomena we must usually interview and crossquestion informants about events that have happened before we arrive on the scene. In principle, the methods are those that lawyers use in reconstructing a crime and historians use in understanding the past. Having the best account possible of the events in question one considers one by one the alternative explanations and tries to eliminate them until only the single most probable one remains. One then tries with further observations to confirm or reject the initially preferred explanation. In addition, series of apparently similar phenomena are searched for recurrent features that may provide clues to causative conditions and processes of occurrence.

The investigators of paranormal phenomena have tried to find a middle way between the gullible and the skeptical, the former saying (usually from the perspective of a religion) that everything relevant is already known, the latter that there are no genuine phenomena to be investigated. Nevertheless, although psychical researchers have never been more than a handful in number and never possessed of adequate resources, they have managed somehow to survive. They have now passed on a tradition of systematic inquiry through four generations. With quiet persistence they adhere to Bacon's assertion that "rarities and reports that seem incredible are not to be suppressed or denied to the memory of men." In my library the publications of the British and American Societies for Psychical Research almost fill one large bookcase. What distinguishes the work of these societies is an almost ruthless insistence on corroboration of an experient's statements and equal insistence on independent verification of the correspondence between these statements and the apparently related event of which the percipient claimed paranormal knowledge. "Were I asked" William James wrote "to point to a scientific journal where hard-headedness and neversleeping suspicion of sources of error might be seen in their full bloom, I think I should have to fall back on the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research. The common run of papers, say on physiological subjects, is apt to show a far lower level of critical consciousness."

I have had some interest in nearly all the phenomena subsumed under the term "psychical research." However, I have concentrated most of my effort in examining the evidence for the survival of human personality after death. I have studied and written reports on apparitions, the visions of dying persons and of persons recovered from near death, and certain types of mediumistic communications. The evidence that I have found most promising has been that provided by children who claim to remember previous lives. I have studied their cases more than those of any other group in this field.

From my childhood reading I had become familiar with the idea of reincarnation. The concept made sense to me, but I never thought until many years later that there could ever be any evidence to support a belief in it. Certainly the theosophists had offered none. Here again, my habit of wide reading proved useful. In the course of this reading I came across accounts of persons who actually claimed to remember the details of previous lives. These accounts mostly appeared as individual case histories or in small groups of case reports. Moreover, I found most of

them in newspapers and magazines or in books for general readers. Still, there seemed to be more than a few of them, and I decided to tabulate and analyze them for recurrent features. They had some. For example, the great majority of the persons who claimed to remember previous lives were very young children when they first spoke about these lives; and in most instances the children stopped speaking about the previous lives when they were still young children of between five and eight years. I could tell also that although some of the reports I had collected were of low quality and little more than journalistic anecdotes, this was not true of all. In several cases cautious adults had inquired searchingly into the claims of the children, and in three instances someone had made a written record of what the child had been saying before its statements had been verified.

In 1960 I published in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research an essay reporting these observations. My report discussed the various interpretations of the cases and recommended accepting reincarnation only after excluding all others. My main conclusion was that if more cases of the same general type could be found and investigated carefully, we might obtain better evidence of survival after death. I added that "in mediumistic communications [and this is true of apparitions also] we have the problem of proving that someone clearly dead still lives. In evaluating apparent memories of former incarnations, the problem consists in judging whether someone clearly living once died. This may prove the easier task."

I do not think that it occurred to me then that I would be the person to undertake the task.<sup>2</sup> Although the American Society for Psychical Research awarded a prize to me for the essay, its journal was (and still is) one of the most obscure journals in the whole of science. Nevertheless, the Essay attracted some attention, and within a few months I received a telephone call from Eileen Garrett, who had (about ten years before) established the Parapsychology Foundation. She had learned of a case in India that seemed to resemble the ones whose reports I had reviewed, and she asked me whether I would be interested in going to India to investigate it. I was indeed interested, and the following summer (August 1961) I made my first visit to India, where I spent about five weeks before going on to Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then called) for another week. Before leaving for India I had learned of some other cases of fairly recent origin, and I also had the addresses of some subjects figuring in cases I had reviewed in my essay. I thought they might still be alive, and I wanted to meet them if I could.

On reaching India I underwent considerable culture shock. However, this was less than the shock of learning how little I knew about India and Sri Lanka. I have subsequently thought that if I had known how ignorant I was of Asia I should never have had the nerve to begin these investigations. However, shielded by this ignorance I pushed on with them. I soon found that the cases were much more numerous than I had been led to expect from the scattered reports I had summarized for my Essay. (Altogether, during this first trip, I learned about and studied-not all with the same thoroughness-about twenty cases in India and five in Sri Lanka.)

Also unexpected by me were the informants' often lively reports of the unusual behavior that most of the subjects showed-behavior that harmonized with the child's statements about the previous life it claimed to remember. I had expected that the cases would consist exclusively of statements the subjects would express neutrally about the previous lives. Instead, I found that the children often talked with strong emotions about the previous lives, and they sometimes behaved as if still living in the past life. For them it seemed still present, not past. For example, a child of low-caste parents who said that he remembered the life of a Brahmin would show snobbish behavior toward his own family and might even refuse to eat their food; from his perspective it was polluted. A child remembering a previous life as a person of the opposite sex might dress for that sex and play its games. One who remembered being shot would show a fear of guns and loud noises. As I

mentioned, many of the reports I had used for my Essay had appeared in newspapers or other popular publications, and one expects that journalistic accounts will exaggerate the basic facts of an event; however, this example shows that such accounts may also miss important details.

Back in Virginia after this first trip to Asia I tried to assimilate a mass of information about the cases that far exceeded my initial expectations. I wrote and had accepted for publication in 1964 a monograph about some of the cases that I had investigated. At this point doubts were publicly expressed about the honesty of the man who had been my interpreter for several of the stronger cases in India. Learning of these suspicions, the publisher halted the publication of my monograph. Although the man in question undoubtedly had been dishonest in some matters—
©something I did not know during my first journey to Asia-I did not think he had deceived me as an interpreter. However, rather than lose the extensive work involved in the cases in which this man had helped me, I decided to return to India and study again these cases (and some others) with new interpreters. The happy side of this misfortune was that the cases I investigated again proved to be even stronger than they had earlier seemed to be. Moreover, I learned the value of repeated interviews. From this experience I date my habit of trying to return to cases for second and third interviews whenever possible. Too often after leaving the site of a case I think of questions that I should have asked when I was there; I can ask them on a second or later visit.

After my second visit to India I revised my monograph, and it was published, in 1966, without further difficulty. If I were inclined to equate market success with scientific worth I should be more than satisfied with this book. It has been translated into seven foreign languages, has sold about 50,000 copies since 1966, and is still in print. However, I am well aware that these sales figures reflect public interest in the subject of reincarnation and little else. In 1977 I achieved what was for me a more gratifying success. In that year I published in a scientific journal an article entitled "The Explanatory Value of the Idea of Reincarnation." For this I had more than 1,000 requests for reprints from scientists all over the world. This was far more than I had ever had for any of my numerous articles derived from what I call orthodox research. In this paper I drew attention to reincarnation as a hypothesis of explanatory value for a wide variety of unsolved problems in psychology and medicine. The interest it evoked among other scientists assured me that I was not alone in my discontent with psychoanalytic and other current theories of human personality.

At about the time of my first visit to India, Chester Carlson, the inventor of xerography, (encouraged by his wife, Dorris) began to offer me funds with which to expand my investigations. I remember being at first conscientiously unable to accept as much money as Chester Carlson offered, because I was then heavily involved in administrative and teaching duties as Chairman of the University of Virginia's Department of Psychiatry. However, I was able gradually to change my situation, and Chester Carlson then offered matching funds for an endowed chair that would enable me to devote myself full-time to psychical research. The risks of giving up the secure position I then had were obvious; but the unique opportunity offered warranted the risks, and I have never regretted my decision to engage full-time in this research.

I am sometimes asked what my colleagues at the University of Virginia think about my research. It has had a mixed reception among them. A few have openly disapproved of having such research at the University, but the majority (at least of those whose opinions have reached me) adhere to the maxim of the University's founder, Thomas Jefferson: "Here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."

Since 1967 I have widened and deepened the research as much as available time and financial resources have permitted. I have published some sixty-five detailed case reports, mostly in books. And I have published each year three or four articles about various aspects of these cases and about other types of cases that I have studied. In late 1987 I published a book written for general readers in which I described my methods of investigation and summarized the results and my present conclusions about children who say they remember previous lives. Before telling you about these conclusions I should briefly describe for you the scope of the research.

Between my first visit to India and the publication, finally, of my monograph reporting, as its title says, twenty cases suggestive of reincarnation, I had extended my investigations to the tribal peoples of northwest North America, and to Lebanon, Brazil, Turkey, and Thailand. In the 1970s I began investigating cases in Burma and West Africa. I have also investigated whatever cases came to my attention in Europe and in North and South America. The number of cases now available for our analysis has gradually increased to about 2,500; but I wish to stress that the cases of varying quality and we have not investigated all of them with the same thoroughness.

Adults sometimes claim to remember previous lives, but with rare exceptions their cases have much less value than those of young children and most, in my view, are worthless. This is because in the case of a young child of only two or three years of age one can reach reasonably satisfactory conclusions concerning the information to which it might have been normally exposed. In contrast, the mind of an adult and even that of an older child has been filled with a large amount of information that becomes available for the ingredients of an imagined previous life. Accordingly, I have concentrated my efforts increasingly on the cases of young children.

I mentioned earlier that in the cases I first reported in 1960 I had discerned some recurrent features. We have since found other recurrent features. One of these is a high incidence of violent death in the persons whose lives the children remember. This feature occurs in the cases of all the ten cultures for which we have examined groups of cases; although the incidence of violent death in the cases varies from one culture to another, it is far higher among the cases than in the general populations from which they are drawn. Other recurrent features also vary from culture to culture. These include the occurrence of dreams in which a deceased person seems to announce to the dreamer the intention of being reborn (usually in the family of the dreamer), the incidence of claims to have been a person of the opposite sex in the previous life, and the interval between the concerned deceased person's death and the subject's birth.

These and other variations in the cases tell us that culture-by which I mean here the beliefs of a group of people-powerfully influences the features of the cases. This being so, it may fairly be asked whether beliefs are not the sufficient causes of the cases. We do not know the actual prevalence of cases (except from one survey in India), but we do know that the cases can be found much more readily in cultures having a belief in reincarnation than in ones not having this belief. Critics of the cases have therefore suggested that a child's fantasies, perhaps of an imaginary playmate, may become shaped by its parents and peers, through their questions and suggestions, until the child assumes an identification with a deceased person. In this way the child becomes the subject of a factitious case suggestive of reincarnation. This argument has considerable force, and its cogency can hardly be denied when we consider the numerous cases in which the subject of a case and the deceased person with whom he or she identifies belong to the same family or same village. However, it will not suffice to explain the smaller, but not negligible number of cases in which the two families live widely separated and, from all the evidence, have had no acquaintance with each other before the case developed. Moreover, in the stronger of such cases the child has furnished specific details (sometimes written down before verification) about the deceased person;

there can be no question in such cases of imaginings, confused memories, and pseudoidentification. In examining the cases of this group we are almost forced to believe that the child has somehow acquired knowledge about a deceased person by other than normal means. If this be granted, one has still a choice among several explanations all of which suppose some paranormal process; and reincarnation is only one of these.

Journalists have sometimes incorrectly (and unjustly) described me as trying to prove that reincarnation occurs. This allegation is wrong as a description both of my motive and of science. Outside of mathematics there is no proof in science; scientists make judgments about probabilities, and they rarely express themselves in statements of certainty. It is true that I search for stronger evidence than we now have for paranormal processes in the cases I study, and if that evidence points toward reincarnation I am not displeased. I have never hidden my interest in the results of my research. William James pointed out that "if you want an absolute duffer in an investigation, you must, after all, take the man who has no interest in its results...the most useful investigator...is always he whose eager interest in one side of a question is balanced by an equally keen nervousness lest he become deceived." The search for stronger evidence is therefore not with an aim at developing some coercive proof. Instead it recognizes that different persons require different amounts and qualities of evidence before they alter their opinions. Although most educated Westerners have some acquaintance with the idea of reincarnation from at least a slight knowledge of Hinduism and Buddhism, few are familiar with concrete instances of children's claims to remember a previous life. It is not surprising that the truth of the claims seems to them antecedently improbable. As Charles Richet, a great French physiologist (and psychical researcher) observed: "Pour croire complètement à un phénomène il faut y être habitué." Perhaps my main contribution will be that of making Western persons familiar, not with the idea of reincarnation-it must be one of the oldest ideas in the world-but with evidence tending to support a belief in reincarnation.

I am frequently asked whether I myself believe in reincarnation. I decline to answer this question, because my beliefs should make no difference to anyone asking such a question. As Leonardo da Vinci said "Whoever in discussion adduces authority uses not intellect but rather memory." Everyone should examine the evidence and judge it for himself. As I have just said, the evidence that my colleagues and I have obtained gives some support to a belief in reincarnation. Before the modern investigations a belief in reincarnation had to rest on the basis of faith, usually inculcated by the scriptures or oral teachings of a traditional religion. Now, one may, if one wishes, believe in reincarnation on the basis of evidence. However, the evidence is not flawless and it certainly does not compel such a belief. Even the best of it is open to alternative interpretations, and one can only censure those who say there is no evidence whatever.

Has then an impasse been reached without a way forward? I do not think so, because I believe we will advance further with the publication of reports of cases the subjects of which have birthmarks or birth defects that seem to derive from previous lives. These marks and defects correspond closely in size and location to wounds (occasionally other marks) on the deceased person whose life the child later claims to remember. Apart from their relevance to medicine the cases with birthmarks and birth defects raise the standard of evidence for the cases in which most of them occur: the birthmarks (or defects) can be photographed, and for many of the corresponding wounds we have obtained medical records, such as autopsy reports. These are important steps toward greater objectivity in the research. You can readily understand how these cases have brought me back to my principal interest in medicine: psychosomatic relationships. However, now we are talking about a mind's influence on a body across the gap of death.

Most of the marks and defects of these cases are on the skin or extremities. However, in a small number of cases the subject has had some internal disease similar or identical to one which the person whose life the child remembers had had. For such a case to be significant the disease must be one from which the subject alone of all members of his family has suffered. We have a few such cases, and they have returned me to another topic in which I have never lost interest: Why does a person acquire one particular disease instead of another?

I think that for most scientists today this last question is absurd. They believe that there is no person apart from a body. For them, any disease a person acquires derives from the combination of the genes he draws in the lottery of parenthood modified by the environment into which he is born and in which he later lives. No one is more aware than I of how subversive it is to talk in the West tod5 of a soul that may survive the death of one physical body and later become associated with another, which second body it may influence, at least to some extent, in form and function. Nevertheless, the accumulated evidence, which I shall be publishing in detail next year, warrants conjectures of this kind.

Here I need to add and to emphasize that the evidence suggestive of reincarnation imperils no present knowledge. I do not question the findings of genetics or even that environments have some effect on us (although I do deny any primacy for the events of infancy among all environmental influences). I am suggesting that instead of a single line of evolution-the one of our physical bodies-we also participate in a second line of evolution-that of our minds or, if you prefer, our souls.

The claim to have evidence of a second line of evolution is, I need hardly say, a large one, and if it does not challenge any substantial knowledge it certainly does throw into question many common assumptions about the nature of man, especially those concerning the relationship between mind and brain. To this I add the heterodox idea that certain birth defects and even some internal diseases may have mental causes anteceding the conception of a person's body. In presuming to doubt the ideas about the nature of man that most Western scientists hold I can take comfort in an aphorism of the great French neurologist Charcot: "La théorie, c'est bon, mais ça n'empêche pas d'exister." Those who would judge my conclusions should first examine the evidence that has led me to them.

It is tempting to conclude this lecture by invoking the names of the many great philosophers and poets who have believed in reincarnation and thereby obliquely exhort you to believe in it yourself. I have already said that such a path is closed to me; authority has no place in science. Yet science acknowledges leaders, and it particularly pleases me to remember that some of the greatest encouragement for the scientific methods of psychical research has come from humanists like William James and Henri Bergson. Each of these great men accepted the Presidency of the Society for Psychical Research, and James was for many years at least a part-time investigator of psychical phenomena. I venerate them less for the particular views they held than for their endorsement of the scientific method applied to paranormal experiences as a means of attaining important new knowledge of man's nature.

Such are some of my journeys in medicine with occasional wanderings in the humanities. I do not agree with a great writer who said that "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive." Certainly those who do not travel hopefully may never arrive, but hope alone cannot long sustain a journey in science. Accordingly, I have tried to describe for you some of the choices that I made of roads to take during my journeys.

#### Notes

I am grateful to Margaret Perzoff Stevenson and Emily Williams Cook for improving this Lecture with their helpful comments.

<sup>1</sup>This is a subject in which I have never lost interest, and I later published two papers about it. <sup>2</sup>In 1923 an Indian (R.B. Sunderlal), who studied four of the cases that I later included in my 1960 Essay, offered reports of them for publication by the American Society for Psychal Research. The Research Officer (W.F. Prince) sent a polite note of rejection in which he said "it is difficult to see how, unless such cases could be multiplied, and attested by various evidences, such a claim...could be proved true." Another member of the Society's staff commented in a memorandum that the cases were "worthy of following up by some Western scientific methods and investigators." Sunderlal published his report in India and also, in 1924, in the French journal of psychical research Revue métaphysique.

<sup>3</sup>I have published detailed reports or analyses of cases from all these regions except Western Europe.

<sup>4</sup>I am not halting here to discuss why the cases are found more readily in some parts of the world than in others. The question is certainly an extremely important one, and I have made a beginning attempt to consider the factors involved in my book for general readers.

<sup>5</sup>If heretics were burned alive today, the successors in science of the theologians who, in the sixteenth century, burned anyone who denied the existence of souls would today burn those who affirm their existence.

#### Publications by Dr. Ian Stevenson referred to in his Lecture

"The Influence of Oxygen Tension upon the Respiration of Rat Kidney Slices." *Archives of Biochemistry*. 17 (1948): 61-73 (withLucile Smith).

"Life Situations, Emotions, and Extrasystoles. *Psychosomatic Medicine* 11 (1949): 257-272 (with C.H. Duncan, □S. Wolf, H.S. Ripley, and H.G. Wolff).

"Circulatory Dynamics before and after Exercise in Subjects with and without Structural Heart Disease during Anxiety and Relaxation." *Journal of Clinical Investigation*. 28 (1949): 1534-1543 (with C.H. Duncan and H.G. Wolff).

"Physical Symptoms During Pleasurable Emotional States." *Psychosomatic Medicine*.12 (1950): 98-102.

"Physical Symptoms Occurring with Pleasurable Emotional States." *American Journal of Psychiatry*. 127 (1970): 175-179.

"Scientists with Half-Closed Minds." *Harper's Magazine*. 217 (1958): 64-71.

"On the Irrational among the Rational: Incredulity in Scientists." *Virginia Quarterly Review.* 41 (1965): 40-57.

"Is the Human Personality More Plastic in Infancy and Childhood?" *American Journal of Psychiatry*. 114 (1957): 152-161.

"The Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations." *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research.* 54 (1960): 51-71 and 95-117.

*Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*. Second edition, revised. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia,1974. First published as *Proceedings* of the American Society for Psychical Research. 26 (1966): 1-362.

"The Explanatory Value of the Idea of Reincarnation." *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*. 164 (1977): 305-326.

"American Children Who Claim to Remember Previous Lives." *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease.* 171 (1983): 742-748.

Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987.