



PHCP | 2018

Moving Forward in Preserving the
Historical Collections of Parapsychology

11th – 13th of May, Winnipeg, Canada

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME PHCP | 2018

In 2014, a highly successful first “Preserving the Historical Collections of Parapsychology” conference ([PHCP | 2014](#)) was hosted by the Het Johan Borgman Fonds in Utrecht, Holland. It was attended largely by archivists, librarians and historians living in Europe and Britain, as well as a handful from Canada and the United States. Our [discussions](#) demonstrated the passion, commitment and knowledge of the group assembled in Utrecht preservation of large data sets, for instance, the data collected by the Global Consciousness Project.

Friday, 11 May 2018 (introduction 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm)

5:30 pm - **Catered Dinner**

7:30 to 10:30 pm - **Launch of Paranormal Archives Exhibition & Opening**

Reception

7:30 pm - **Welcome from Shelley Sweeney, Head, Archives & Special,**

Collections, University of Manitoba

8:00 pm - **Keynote Address by Roy Stemman, Editor, Psychic News, London, England. Working Title: “Manitoba Exposes the Paranormal – to Public Scrutiny”**

8.30 pm - **Opening Reception (wine and cheese)**

Saturday, 12 May 2018 (discussions – 9 am to 5 pm)

Keynote: J. Gordon Melton, Distinguished Professor of American Religious History, Institute for Studies of Religion, Baylor University, Waco, Texas

Working Title: "Revealing the Esoteric World: On Building an Occult and Paranormal Library"

Welcome and Introductions

Session 1 - Building a University-based Parapsychology Collection to support development and expansion of academic programs of study. Is your institution actively soliciting new Spiritualist, theosophical, psychical research, Shaker, Christian Science or other alternate religion/spiritual collections, including for instance UFO and abduction phenomena, in support of your academic programs? Would a shared / collaborative acquisition strategy be useful? What is the future of collecting? Do you have formal connections to any teaching programs within your university? Have you ever tried to establish a connection with a teaching program, and how did you go about doing that?

Invited to launch this discussion

- Anna L. Shparberg, Humanities Librarian, Fondren Library, Rice University, Houston, Blynn Olivieri, Head of Special Collections, Ingram Library, University of West Georgia, Carrollton, Georgia
- Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Assistant Dean and Joseph N. Lambert & Harold B. Schleifer Director of Rare Books, Special Collections, and Margarita Guillory, Assistant Professor of Religion, Department of Religion and Classics, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York
- Callum Cooper and/or David Saunders, University of Northampton, Centre for Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes (CSAPP) Archive, Northampton, England

Session 2 - Building and Preserving Paranormal Library Collections – Monographs. With limited library acquisition budgets, how do we ensure that one of the known parapsychology libraries procures and maintains a reference copy? Is there something we can do that is quick and does not replicate what is already being done for library catalogues? Looking in book stores in the death & dying and New Age sections, there is an endless stream of new titles about near-death experiences, spirit communication, after-death communications, etc. Many of these are personal stories published for popular consumption. Do we need to collect these? Is any institution actively endeavoring to collect these? In the past, organizations such as

the Parapsychology Foundation and the American Society for Psychical Research, both based in New York, had library budgets and librarians and would have collected some of these. As a group, is there anything we can do to share the duplicate copies of monographs that we discard from additional collections received?

Invited to launch this discussion:

- Wim Kramer, Managing Director of the Foundation “Het Johan Borgman Fonds,” Utrecht, The Netherlands
- John Reed, President, World Institute for Scientific Exploration (WISE)
- In addition, we anticipate remote presentations

LUNCH BREAK

Session 3 - Building and Preserving Paranormal Library Collections – Digitization of Journals. Continued discussion of coordination of digitization efforts to avoid duplication of effort. What journals are our priorities to digitize? Do we make them available through our Paranormal Archives Portal?

Invited to launch this discussion

- Roy Stemman, Editor, Psychic News
- Brandon Hodge, Director, International Association for the Preservation of Spiritualist and Occult Periodicals (IAPSOP)
- John Reed, Coalition for the Preservation of EHE Collections (CPEHEC), World Institute for Scientific Exploration

Session 4 – Artifacts. 3D artifacts are not typically collected by either Archives or Libraries – how do we ensure the preservation of obscure equipment and devices that are essential to understanding attempts to interact with psychic phenomena? Who collects artifacts that relate to the history of Spiritualism and other new religions? How can we ensure that the most important artifacts are collected? How do we ensure that these 3D objects get attention?

Invited to launch this discussion:

- Brandon Hodge, Curator, MysteriousPlanchette.com, Austin, Texas
- Natalya Rattan, Archivist, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Ontario

Saturday evening:

Dinner in downtown Winnipeg

Sunday, 13 May 2018 (discussions – 9 am to 5 pm)

Session 5 - Archiving the Data of Paranormal Experiments. Issues specific to the archiving and preservation of large data sets, for instance, the data collected by the Global Consciousness Project.

Invited to launch this discussion

- Patricia S. Cyrus, Remote Viewer in Experiments with Dale E. Graff, and University of Manitoba Archives donor of experimental data

Session 6 - Promoting Paranormal Libraries & Archives. What new methods can we use to promote our collections to a broader public? How do you actively promote your Spiritualism collections? Are there any particular innovations that others would benefit from hearing about? How do we reach main-stream audiences (i.e., those who may have an interest but who are not aficionados)? Is there anything we can do together? How do we reach the media?

Invited to launch this discussion:

- Wim Kramer, Managing Director, and Selma Hofstra, Project Manager, the Foundation “Het Johan Borgman Fonds,” Utrecht, The Netherlands

Keynote: Thomas Beck, Chief Curator (Retired), Affiliate Associate Professor of Art, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Maryland

Working Title: “Science and the Paranormal: the Case of the Jule Eisenbud and Ted Serios Collection”

LUNCH BREAK

Session 7 - Paranormal Archives Portal. Do we need a Paranormal Archives Portal to collect and disseminate high-level descriptive information about known collections, whether in an archival repository or not? Who is the target audience? What use would that audience make of it? If we need a portal, then who is interested in sponsoring, maintaining and administering it? Who can contribute to it? What standards can we use to ensure all descriptions are giving similar information? How do we publicize it once it is realized? Or, should the portal simply lead back to pages within our own institutions that we would be responsible for?

Invited to launch this discussion:

- Nick Richbell, Head, Special Collections & Archives, University of Waterloo Library, Waterloo, Ontario

Session 8 – Fundraising. New financial & institutional support. How do we heighten awareness of the importance of psychical research to understanding of human nature? Do we need a collective mission or vision statement that might attract the funding we need to move forward in a more significant way?

Invited to launch this discussion:

- Shelley Sweeney, Head, University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Sunday evening:

One of the local Winnipeg Spiritualist churches holds its church service on Sunday, 13 May, at 7 pm. The attached questionnaire requests that you indicate whether you would like to join a group that plans to attend. Transportation would be arranged, and the group will have an early meal at a restaurant en route. An alternate dinner option will be organized for those not interested in attending.

Session 10 - Meeting Wrap-Up

Moving Forward – What have we learned?

To launch this discussion: Walter Meyer zu Erpen, President, Survival Research Institute of Canada, Victoria, British Columbia

**Monday, 14 May 2018 – Organized Tours for PHCP Participants
(10:30 am to 3 pm)**

10:30 am to 12 noon - Hermetic Tour of the Manitoba Legislative building. Dr. Frank Albo will reveal a trail of occult clues concealed in the building's architecture including hidden hieroglyphic inscriptions, numerological codes, and Freemasonic symbols so intelligently masked they escaped notice for nearly a hundred years.

12:15 to 1:30 pm – Lunch at the Canadian Human Rights Museum

1:30 to 3:00 pm – Canadian Human Rights Museum – This will be the final event organized as part of our meeting. You may wish to stay for an hour or the whole afternoon.

We are looking forward to see you in Winnipeg!