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Kaleidoscope audience wanted demo on bent keys, toothbrushes

By DAVID GOODMAN
A finale to anything, be it a movie, a symphony, or a lecture series usually has its own special flavour. Unfortunately, the final lecture of the Human Kaleidoscope '76 series did not conclude with a display of fireworks, but rather with a dud. And the odd thing about it was that Allan Spraggot was there. Anytime he appeared, one expected an exciting evening of stories of strange disappearances, phenomenon, or lights in the skies. But what the audience did not know, unfortunately, was that Spraggot was only there as master of ceremonies.

The theme of last Thursday's final programme at Seneca College was entitled "The will beyond Ours". Two authorities in the field of parapsychology, Dr. Rhine and Dr. George Owen, came to talk about psycho-kinesis, the movement of objects in the by means of mental will. Indeed, there was no doubt that 81-year old Dr. Rhine knew his stuff. (Mr. Spraggot referred to him as 'Mr.

Parapsychology'.) But what he didn't know, and what the organizers of the Human Kaleidoscope should have known, was that the audience came to see somebody bend a key, or move a glass of water across a table by merely thinking about it.

The audience, however, was too polite to articulate their anxieties to the 81-year doctor. Instead they sat, complacently listening for Dr. Rhine to give a 75-minute oratory on the history of parapsychology. There were moments of interest, imagining the waves of skeptics trying to drown the lunatics like Dr. Rhine, trying to prove that people has the ability to move objects other than conventional means. The struggle for parapsychologists in the 1920's and 30's to get funds to continue their research was most difficult.

Even today, one gets the feeling that parapsychologists have been limited due to the lack of concrete evidence.

Dr. Owen was more responsive to the inner questions people were obviously anxious to ask. For example, Owen told his audience it has been proven that one out of 100 people can use physical forces outside of their bodies — this is called genetic ability.

People of this nature must have certain nervous tensions and anxieties about them. If a person with such 'potential' ability should have a sudden fit, an object near him (or her) may shake, or actually move. This is called spontaneous psycho-kinesis. Only very few people have been able to master control. Among them is the well known Juri Geller. (He's the guy on Johnny Carson who bends keys with his bare mind!)

According to Dr. Owen, Geller is by no means a fake. As a matter of fact, Owen brought a number of keys, and even a plastic toothbrush, all apparently bent by the mind of Juri Geller.

Owen and Dr. Rhine claimed that many scientists have created mach seances. When they put their minds together, (increasing the power of psycho-kinesis) pretending to conjure up a dead spirit, they were actually able to emit knocking sounds from the table. This is one particular experiment that has been replicated in many parts of the world. However, scientific explanations are few, and only speculative.

At the conclusion of the two-hour programme, people left for the exit doors in a seemingly more tranquil fashion than they usually do after a session of Kaleidoscope. They had, after all, been treated to a lecture on the history and philosophy of parapsychology rather than a demonstration of psycho-kinesis.

Perhaps the evening was best summed up by the gentleman who was sitting beside me who said in frustration, "I came here to hear Allan Spraggot. Geez, all he said was 'Good evening' and 'Good Night'."



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