

Can Science Guide Man's Mind Into the Future?

William Seabrook
experiments with white
magic for an answer

Black magic, white magic, voodoo, witchcraft, clairvoyance, poltergeist, telepathy—these are the mystery-shrouded arts of the ancients. Yet in our own super-scientific age—right now—new facts about these mystic matters are being unearthed in such unlikely places as the laboratories of Duke University and the farmhouse-home of William Seabrook, social skeptic and soul-searching author whose autobiography, *No Hiding Place*, has just been published. (J. B. Lippincott Co., \$3.)

Our average, Sunday-go-to-meeting citizen is inclined to discount all occult arts as the stuff of fables and fads, or to label his self-conscious anti-superstitions into a mental hiding-place. "You believe what you want to believe," he says.

Study of the supernatural is regarded difficult only today. Fifty years ago, it wasn't a subject for scientific research. Today, science has examined the methods of the mystic and has found them wanting. But even in the cold clear light of conventional experiment, the psychic power of the mind has been recognized by scientists. And it still stands as a challenge to scientific methods.

In addition to the dispassionate denials of science, there is another way to probe the supernatural. It is a scientific approach coupled with a frank acknowledgment that maybe there is something in the darkened rooms, flickering candlelight and long white robes. This method can be pursued only by a person who has immersed himself in the rituals of both.

One such man is William Seabrook, an explorer of mysticism, whose study has driven him to the secret rites of voodoo in Haiti, the ritual of Masonic devices, the mystery of African sorcery. He has watched the mystic workings of half-wild natives who cowered before blood-stained altars. But he has also observed the strict, laboratory experiments in extra-sensory perception made by Professor J. B. Rhine of Duke University. In bare, brightly-lighted rooms, Professor Rhine's subjects proceed in strict calmness and neutral attitude to accomplish precisely the same results sought by Whirling Dervishes or Eskimo witch-doctors. The results? No matter what the method, the key is the ability to blank out one's senses so completely the mind is able to project itself into another world—that Rhine calls "space-time."

Seabrook's startling assaults upon normal consciousness indicate that once this so-called "extra-sensory vision" exists in the mind of the subject, it is no longer under his control. It rambles at will, into the past, into the future, and the glimpses of that "other world" are remembered by the subject when he comes out of his "trance."

Almost everyone occasionally experiences such clairvoyance. When the mind moves into the future, it is called "precognition;" when it slips into the past, it is "retrogression." Telepathy is thought transference, but in each case the procedure is the same and relies on the open mind.

Professor Rhine's experiments are simple in

Education, numbers, even physical pain is dulled if for a moment the mind can slip into the nebulous "space-time."

theory. The subject, man or woman, sits motionless in a chair, and strives to leave his mind open and blank. Unthinking, unsmiling, the five senses are forgotten, and the mind projects itself into space. If it sounds simple, keep in mind that it may take three, six, or twelve hours of the motionless contemplation of a blank table before anything happens. Rhine's telepathic experiments, however, have become famous. It is here that he uses the ESP cards, which might be called a remarkable guessing game, but without tricks.

The cards have abstract geometric designs—a half moon, or some such odd shape. The subject is blindfolded, and at that time when he "haggles checks" his senses, he can call off the designs on the cards—without ever having seen them. And it is not regarded as mysticism; anyone with the ability and patience to concentrate long enough can blank out his senses and do it.

Beaumont goes further—and into less precise psychological patterns.

The girl you see on these pages is no mystic; she does not possess extraordinary psychic powers. Her part in Beaumont's experiment is to portray, graphically, the steps taken to bring about extraordinary vision. To get the result he wants, Beaumont believes in creating an atmosphere of unreality, in dramatizing the experiment. The costumes, the lighting, the all-pervailing quiet, are just as important as the physical aspect.

Beaumont conducts two kinds of experiments: one in which the masked girl sits unmoving on a Turkish throne for as long as 30 to 40 hours. The other, hanging by the walls, is the play method of inducing visions in the most lighted room, he would choose about her wrists, and hanging them from the low beams of the ceiling, draws them back. It is in this position, her legs just touching the floor, that the girl dances, motionlessly, while the hours drag on motionless. Her arms single when the circulation slows, then as she sits there, still as a statue. Numbness creeps over her body, her eyes are closed, her muscles relaxed. Six, even eight hours go by. But her mind is detached from her physical exhaustion. It is at this moment, in a successful experiment, that her senses are wholly lulled, and her mind can slip through the door of time.

What does she see in her mind's eye? If, as Beaumont is inclined to believe, it is the writing up of the subconscious, or if it is in preception in the true, mystical sense of the word, the revelations or visions can be terrifying in the blinding glimpses of vivid reality. An exotic panorama of an ancient past or mystical revelations of a religious quality may fill her mind. It is the mild little incident, as if dreamed, that holds a key to preception. The significance can be lost, but it—some years later—the dreamer can re-live that moment in real life. It is mystical evidence of preception.

In Beaumont's experiments, these incidents have occurred. They can be termed the mystical revelations, but he would not have it so. For to Beaumont, the only vital proof that true preception can offer is when the sensory vision can be focused on the future during these experiments. For when any man can focus his mind on next week's stock market quotations—he can rule the world.



Meanwhile, reading and hearing nothing for 30 hours, this same girl made reference to her mind's world—beyond the mask.



CAN SCIENCE GUIDE MAN'S MIND? continued

WILLIAM BRADDOCK, facing page, has an insensitive mind that never ceases to pry. Aware that darkness is favorable to extra-sensory vision, he elaborated on the principle, designed masks to shut out light. On the left is a series of them. First, painted-rim glasses; second,

a sleeping mask, and then the third and best design, a leather band of skin-tight, glass' kid made to order by an Italian leather artist, that was the ultimate in masks. To see and hear nothing, the effect surpassed the last design, the soft velvet band slipped over the head,



MASKS ON THE WALL, gilt mirrors, and the strangely lovely Oriental costume lend drama

to Bradbrock's experiments. The subject tries to encourage the model by a mental attitude.



THINKING FROM REMOTE PLACES studies the Bradbrock home. In experiments he uses evasive jewelry, intricate chains, ornate necklaces, snowsuits of his snowsuits into the crowd.



DOUBLE-ENDED CHAINS about her wrist might seem needlessly cruel, but gloves protect her skin. Bradbrock doesn't believe in dangerous, self-inflicted pain as practiced by fanatics.



THE **SARABORN HOME** is in Rhineclark, New York. The studio, a renovated stable, has Caphart radios, wooden jacks, and a prize possession like hers, is a house of paradox—African drum masks, steam heat, a witchy; the genuine real cellar, above, which Westbrook and his wife inhabit.



THEIR **VEGETABLE GARDEN** is large enough to provide for the Westbrook needs. Some of Westbrook's investigations have given him a near-sinister character. This is how he really lives.



THEIR **SUMMER** were on their own, when Mrs. Westbrook found them in the garden. She took them in, raised them with an eye-dropper; they took around only to their Springer spaniel.



SARABORN RENTS an empty, double office to do his writing, which is now his prime interest. Author of *Asylum*, *Whitcomb*, and other books, he has just completed his autobiography.

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