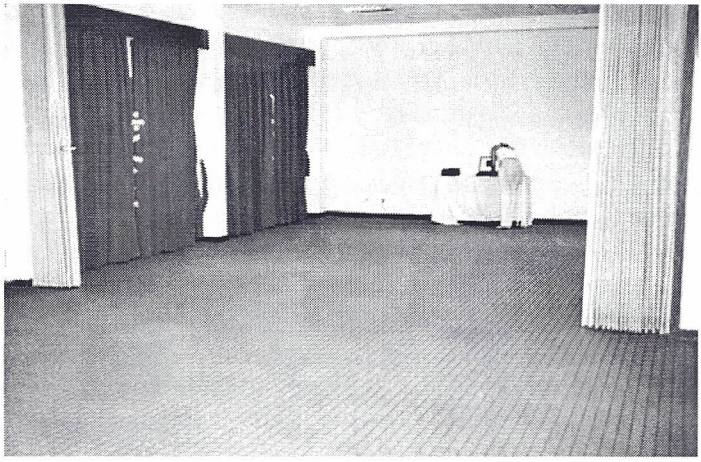
each event. During each experimental session, the auditor remained seated directly outside the Target Room's only entrance, ensuring that no physical ingress was made. The retention of the only key to the Target Room by the researchers also assured the auditor's inability to enter the room or interfere with the random selection of the target image.

- A software program was installed and run on the notebook computer to randomly select and display a single image from an image bank. In the first experiment, in Portugal, the image bank of 200 figures was comprised entirely of colored geometric shapes. The second experiment, in Spain, utilized 199 figures selected from commercial clip-art.

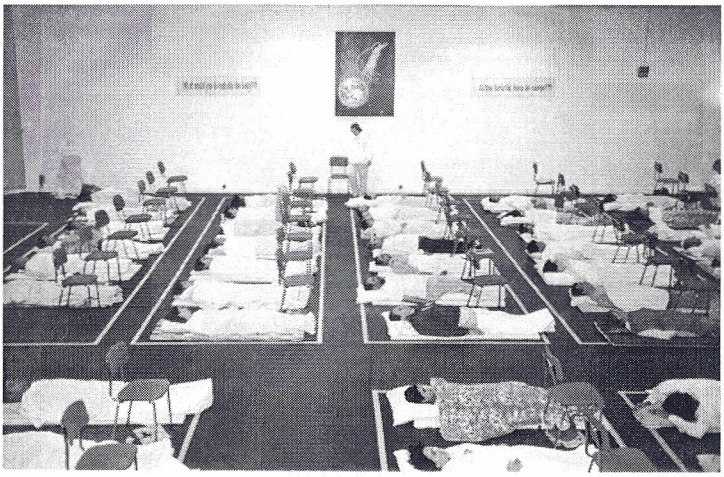


Auditor examining the notebook computer after one of the sessions

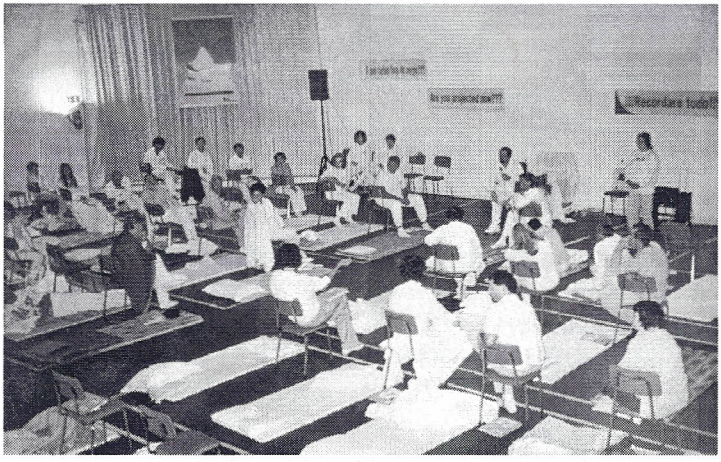
Description of the Experiment Room

- Mattresses and chairs were provided for all participants. During the practical sessions participants remained relaxed and lying on their mattresses, each concentrating on their projective techniques.
- Indirect dim light was used in the Experiment room during the practical sessions.
- The researchers and staff members remained inside the Experiment Room observing participants and assisting them where required.
- During the experiment conducted in Portugal, one staff member remained outside guarding the door of the Experiment room to avoid any entry. In Spain, the room's door remained locked from the inside.

• Thermometer, hygrometer, barometer, compass and clock were placed inside the room.



Participants during a practical, projective session



Participants reporting their sensations, after a projective session

Procedures and Steps followed for each Experiment Session

1. Lights of the Experiment Room were reduced and participants were instructed to lie down, relax, and prepare for the projective exercise.

2. Simultaneously, researcher Nanci Trivellato accompanied the auditor to the Target Room whilst researcher Wagner Alegretti remained

with participants in the Experiment Room. In the Target Room, the notebook was turned on and booted (i.e., started from an inactive condition, not restarting from suspended/stand-by or hibernation state).

3. The auditor was requested to compare the script being used on the computer during that projective session to randomly generate the image with the script appearing on the '*Certificate of Authenticity of the Computer Program Script*'. Once the auditor confirmed each was identical with the other, the certificate was signed by both the researcher and the auditor.

4. Following authentication, the script was run. The program was set to select and display an image precisely two minutes after it was initiated, allowing sufficient time for the researcher and the auditor to leave the room and lock the door before the image appeared on the computer's screen.

5. The auditor remained outside the door of the Target Room uninterrupted and for the duration of that session.

6. Upon locking the door to the Target Room, in each instance Trivellato returned to the Experiment Room and remained there for the duration of the session, keeping the key of the Target Room in her possession. She would leave the Experiment Room only after the session had ended and all the participants had completed and provided her with a completed '*Results and Experiments Evaluation*' questionnaire.

7. Subsequent to the collection of completed questionnaires, Trivellato proceeded directly to the entrance of the Target Room, where the auditor remained positioned outside its only entrance. Auditor and researcher entered the Target Room at the same time, verifying the image that had been selected. The auditor examined the questionnaires completed by the participants, noting how many had been collected in respect of each specific session and applying their own initials to them.

8. The researcher and the auditor then described the displayed image in the document '*Declaration of Reliability and Neutrality*' subsequently signing it. In the experiment conducted in Portugal, a Polaroid picture of the notebook screen was taken, identified and signed by the auditor and researcher. In the Spanish experiment, the image was printed from the computer using a color printer and then identified and signed by both the auditor and the researcher.

9. The computer was, then, turned off and the Target Room door locked. The auditor was invited to the Experiment Room in order to hear the participant's comments on their experiences. Trivellato secured the questionnaires and other documents corresponding to each specific session by locking them in a case located in her room.

Note: The images selected by the computer program during the course of the weekend were revealed to the participants only at the conclusion of the workshop, after all sessions had been completed in accordance with the specified procedures.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Some of the results obtained are, at the very least, intriguing and will certainly motivate the replication of the experiment. These researchers have scheduled additional experiments for 2002 and 2003, with the purpose of accumulating more data on the core focus of this research. This initiative will allow comparative studies, expansion of the case history available and further analysis and conclusions.

Analysis of the questionnaires completed by participants during both workshops reveals that 93 instances of an OBE were reported by 52 individuals out of a total of 105 participants.

The documents completed by participants included certain questions designed to allow comparison of the initial results (Alegretti & Trivellato, 1999) of these experiments with data produced by an extensive, ongoing global OBE survey research work established by these researchers in 1998 [with over 6,000 participants at the time of writing]. These special inclusions were made to allow further investigation into possible links between the OBE experience and certain specific conditions. Amongst items in this category were, for example, the cataloging of each participant's sensations during the practical sessions and a question asking participants if they had hyperthyroidism, hypertension, or respiratory problems.

For the time being, the relatively small quantity of data collected through the structured questionnaire applied in the two experiments conducted to date makes it imprudent to try to draw reliable conclusions based on statistical analysis.

Measurements of the consistency with which individuals perceived the displayed figure indicated that the shape of the figure was the element that was most easily perceived, with 22 instances of significantly correct perception, followed by color, with 15 occasions. Only two accounts provided satisfactorily accurate descriptions of the size of the figure and only one instance accurately reflected the nature of the displayed image.

The difficulty associated with analyzing an individual's description of events that occurred outside his/her physical body or through other parapsychic phenomena (e.g., extrasensory perception - ESP) is

considerable. Since clear-cut measurable variables do not seem to exist in this case, a well-conceived operationalization is required to allow for reliable results in order to yield a theory.

Thus measure of the level of accuracy of the participant's perception was based on objective examination of the descriptions provided using the researchers' extensive personal experience of extraphysical phenomena and on innumerable analyses of students' accounts over the course of 17 years of OBE teaching.

Some of the participants' perceptions represented significant results and encourage further experimentation using the methodology adopted. Certain of the results that indicated some level of perception of the remote target are illustrated below.

The first experiment (Portugal) used abstract, geometric shapes that have subsequently been shown to be less than ideal as participants attempted to contextualize the perceptions instead of simply drawing them. In the second experiment, it was decided that images of objects representing everyday items should be used in order to facilitate recollection and incorporation of the image into the memory of the physical brain.

Session 3, Saturday, in Portugal:

Selected image:

Image description: This image is composed of a large black square surrounded by a yellow band.

Significant perceptions: Two participants reported that they had seen a sunflower, which conforms in terms of the color, proportion, and relative positions (dark core surrounded by a yellow contour) of

the disparate elements of the figure, but instead of squared, rounded. We can speculate that the reporting individuals appear to have in some fashion, inadvertently 'smoothed' the shape of the figure and attempted to link their perception of it with a 'real', known object.

Researchers' comment: To provide a comparison with the image, below is a photo of a species of sunflower that possesses a dark core.

Session 4, Saturday, in Portugal:

Selected image:

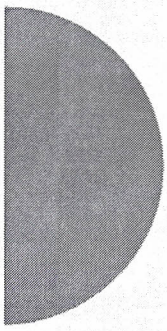
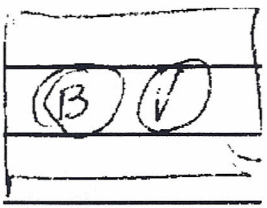


Image description: This image is composed of red semicircle over a yellow background.

Significant perception (1): A participant reported seeing "A big cherry?" (Una cereza muy grande?). The interrogation mark at the

end of the statement suggests that the individual was not sure that that was what the figure actually represented.

Significant perception (2): Another participant stated that the image was "A white and a red ball, in this order" (Uma bola branca e vermelha nesta ordem), and drew this image to accompany the text:



Notes: 1. 'B' stands for branco (white in Portuguese) and 'V' for vermelho (red); 2. The drawing was made on paper with pre-printed lines, resulting in the horizontal marks seen above.

Session 1, Friday, in Spain:

Selected image:

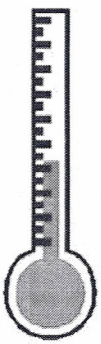


Image description: This figure represents a thermometer, with a red liquid inside the clear glass.

Significant perception (1): A participant reported seeing "a type of jar", (una especie de jarra) which is similar in shape to the picture above. Note: In an informal, exploratory survey with a few individuals, some said they would have perceived the image as a test tube with a liquid inside, what could resemble to certain extent the utility of a jar.

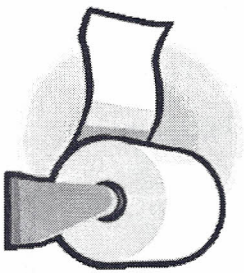
Significant perception (2): Another individual wrote "I think I saw a screw with a bent end" (creí ver una alcayata) and drew the following basic illustration:

(?) or squares" (La pantalla estaba azul, y despues vi como una especie de espiral (?) o de cuadrados).

Researchers' comment: it is possible that the person saw each element of the image separately, without being able to combine them into a cohesive whole. First, she perceived the blue color (the real color in the background of the paper roll and of the supporter), and then focused on the spiral (which is a perception of the nature of the figure, but not its utility). Her interrogation mark, placed after the word spiral, suggests that she was conscious that she was unable to interpret the image clearly. Later still, she perceives the holder.

Significant perception (2): A second individual reported "I think I saw a type of amphora or a not very big jar. The opening [of the amphora] finished in a triangular form" (Creo que era una especie de ánfora o un jarrón no muy grande, por la boca terminaba en forma de triangulo).

Researchers' comment: in this case, the image appears to have been perceived upside down, as shown below, resembling the shape of an amphora:



Note: a brief, informal survey in which the image was rotated to all possible orientations and people were asked what they saw produced a variety of answers such as: toilet paper, steam roller, cylinder, and whistle.

Session 5, Saturday, in Spain:

Selected image:

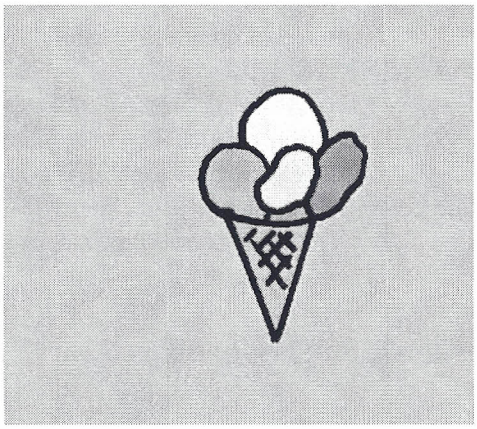


Image description: A stylized ice-cream. The background is entirely gray. The cone is orange. The largest ice-cream scoop at the top of the image is a vivid yellow whilst the other ice-cream scoops (from left to right) are strong purple, a bright sky blue, and a vibrant navy blue.

Significant perception (1): A participant described the image in his questionnaire by stating "I think I saw small squares of distinct colors, but all were vivid colors, like in a mosaic" (me pareció ver cuadritos pequeños de distintos colores, mas bien colores vivos parecido a un mosaico).

Researchers' comment: this is an image typically very much orientation-dependent, especially given the unnatural colors for ice-cream. Observation of the image after 180° inversion reveals that it takes on the appearance of something entirely different, such as the head of a clown perhaps, with prominence on the clown's hat.