

## How Scientific Proof of Survival Would Affect Society

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By James E. Beichler, Ph.D.

I've been studying advances in physics, science in general, various aspects of the paranormal, and scientific revolutions from the points-of-view of both a scientist and a historian for many years. Long ago, I came to the conclusion that the vast majority of people in the scientific community or the public will never accept the reality of either paranormal phenomena or the survival of consciousness given the present paradigms under which science operates. Quite frankly, the concepts and the vocabulary to deal with either the paranormal or survival and thus an afterlife do not exist within the scientific lexicon. Science never developed the vocabulary or ideas to even begin a discussion or debate over the slimmest possibility of these phenomena because they were 'programmed' out of science during the original Scientific Revolution. So, the general public could only accept scientific proof of survival after a very profound and fundamental revolution in science that would vastly alter our society and culture.

During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance periods of European intellectual history, science and religion were mixed together under the single banner of Natural Philosophy. It took natural science centuries to break this bond with western religion, so science came to be proud of its breaking from its notorious past. Historians, philosophers and scientists even have a specific name for the excesses of this pre-scientific period: It is called Scholasticism and the practitioners of scholastic philosophy are still shunned today.

The break began (after a century of previous scientific work was conducted) only slowly and only with a lot of problems. In fact,

advances in pure science were stifled for a long time because of the relationship between religion and science. The final break came only after Rene Descartes stipulated the differences between mind and matter and thus relegated religion to the realm of mind and science to the realm of matter. Even this was not enough and did not really take hold until Isaac Newton published the *Principia* in 1687 and thereby institutionalized and reinforced the separation that Descartes originated. Some people, quite literally, gave their lives to establish this break.

From that time until the present, science has specifically sought to stay out of religious matters even though it many times advanced its accumulated knowledge by encroaching upon what were once considered religious themes. Both modern geology and Charles Darwin's theory of evolution offer good cases in point.

Even though science sometimes progresses by encroaching into areas of nature that religion claims as its own domain, science has never willingly sought to explain either the paranormal or survival because they are so closely related to the supernatural and the religious views of an afterlife. Should these be explained by science to the satisfaction of society, it would set religion on its head. However, science has now progressed to a point where avoiding these issues is no longer practical or valid.

The lines of demarcation that Descartes set between mind and matter have shifted in favor of science over the past three centuries, at the expense of religion and religious beliefs, but that boundary is now under direct assault whether science wishes it to be so or not. The further that science delves into the fundamental nature of physical and material reality, the clos-

er that nature brings science to these concepts. So science can no longer afford to ignore the paranormal or the possibility of survival.

Recent discoveries in science have made it necessary to define the nature of both mind (consciousness) and matter, which would greatly change the playing field between science and religion. In other words, science is on track to discover that both the paranormal and survival, while not normal for science, are still natural and thus fall within the realm and scope of scientific inquiry. The real question is how could this be possible given the present paradigms that rule science and physics? The answer is straight forward: science is on the precipice of a new scientific revolution that will redefine what constitutes material and physical reality.

On the one hand, the recent discoveries of Dark Matter and Dark Energy are putting tremendous pressure on theoretical physicists to find a new way to understand and explain matter. For decades physicists have been trying to develop a single theory of reality by combining General Relativity, which uses a continuous field concept to describe gravity, and the Quantum Theory, which is based upon a discrete interpretation of the nature of matter. But the two theories are mutually incompatible, so all previous attempts at unification have failed miserably. These factors indicate that physics, the most basic of the sciences, is undergoing the same type of period of crisis that is well known to precede a scientific revolution.

On the other hand, recent advances in brain research, theoretical biology, the human genome, the Biofield, and life in general indicate that new fundamental ideas have become necessary in order to fully understand life, mind, and consciousness.

Under these circumstances, society is approaching a super revolution that will redefine what we mean by both matter and mind (consciousness). And like all revolutions this one will change everything. In fact, just to say

that 'everything will change' is a simplistic understatement of what will soon happen because 'scientifically accepting the reality of survival' is only one small part of the changes to come and such acceptance will only take place after the scientific revolution is complete, changing all of society.

We've witnessed more than a century and a half of debate, sometimes quite intense, between religion and science over the theory of evolution and how that theory has changed society. Now imagine what will happen when science takes the concept of survival (the after-life) out of the hands of religion and makes it part of science. If people think that a large gulf exists between the western and Islamic worlds now (giving rise to international terrorism and global religious conflict), imagine what it will be like when the Islamic world is forced to accept the scientific reality of survival. The social changes that have occurred from the acceptance of evolution will be nothing compared to what will happen when science explains and accepts survival, not to mention the scientific possibility of communicating with the dead. Communication with the dead is strictly forbidden in Kabala and very strict Judaism. It is also frowned upon in many other religions.

What will happen to terrorism, crime, hate, and even love when it becomes scientifically possible to read other peoples' minds and see the future with some accuracy. The acceptance of survival will only come in a package with the paranormal because they are both cut from the same scientific cloth. What would happen to personal privacy if the government could read your mind? For that matter, what would happen if your wife or husband could read your mind? Would capital punishment end if we learned that the criminal survives, or would it become a more humane punishment for criminals? The possibilities and the unintended consequences of these simple modifications to science that would directly affect socie-

ty are both earth-shaking and mind-boggling. There can be no doubt that society and culture will radically change forever and there would be no turning back. Once the cat is out of the bag, society and human culture will change forever in ways that are as yet impossible to predict.

This change would not occur overnight. It took nearly six-decades for Newton's theories to become the basis of world science in spite of the accuracy of Newton's description of nature and the natural world. But then the French and German philosophers who first accepted Newton's theories tried to apply them to social institutions. According to Newton, all material bodies are to be treated equally under the laws of gravity except for their differences in mass. Gravity works in the same way for all material bodies. According to Thomas Jefferson, all people within the masses are to be treated equally according to the laws of society and the government. Jefferson and our founding fathers' interpretation of the relationship between "we the people" and our government are purely Newtonian. The philosophical standards that they developed became the basis for both the American and French Revolutions. No less could be expected if society were to accept survival because that acceptance could only come after a complete scientific revolution that would be far greater than the revolution wrought by Newton and Descartes.

In the end, society and culture would benefit beyond our present imagination, we could possibly even travel to distant stars and star systems at speeds greater than light and communicate with intelligent beings from other star systems, but those changes would only come after a great deal of violence within our planet's traditional cultures and societies. According to many different philosophers, historians and sociologists, revolutions are never complete until all of the old guard has died off. Let's hope that the next scientific revolution does not fulfill that particular scientifically based prediction, but then even if it did those who die off would still survive in some form and that particular paradox is beyond our comprehension at this point.



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