

## What's in a Name? A Lot, Actually

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**Abstract:** A research discipline is partly defined by its terms. Parapsychology is no exception. I consider recent calls to change some long-standing terms in the field, primarily “parapsychology” and “extrasensory perception.” I specify desiderata for the terms we want to use to identify the nature of our field and the phenomena we explore, then discuss some reasons the changes in question were proposed, including an exploration of goals and motivations for those proposed changes. Counter-arguments against these reasons are then presented, along with justification for preserving the current terminology. I then argue that, though well intended, the strategies and alternatives presented cannot achieve the goals they intend. The two terms most under pressure are defended, and explanations offered as to why these terms remain the best candidates. One undisclosed motivation for such changes may be what I call “Parapsychology’s Stockholm Syndrome,” reflecting the phenomenon also known as “identity with the aggressor” — suggesting that some of the motivation for offering such name changes may arise from the desire to “fit in” with mainstream science, which has long marginalized scientific parapsychology. Rather than rebranding or renaming, we should instead fight for our terminology against attacks from mainstream “aggressors” and their skeptic allies.

**Keywords:** parapsychology, extrasensory perception, ESP, psychophysical, anomalous cognition

“You’re just arguing over semantics!” We’ve all heard words like this, and perhaps even used them ourselves. They imply that what has just been said is trivial and a detour from what really matters. I have found though, that people who use this locution either don’t know, or in the moment don’t consider, just what “Semantics” is, and why it is important that we get the semantics right. After all, many arguments and disputes we humans get into boil down to semantics. Once we sort out the semantics, disputes often evaporate.

Semantics as a field is the study of meaning. Semantics in conversation has to do with understanding what we’re actually talking about. Semantics *in* a scientific field has to do with the vocabulary and meanings that set the very boundaries of the subject matter of that field. Who defines the vocabulary also sets much of the agenda for the field. Semantics are not just important. They are *very* important.

Clearly, this paper is not a typical report of research results. Instead, I’m addressing a topic that is at least as important to the parapsychological community.

Parapsychology is in an era of what might be called “semantical confusion.” Some wonder what we should call ourselves and how to refer to the subject matter we study. The term Parapsychology is an example. A recent editorial (Radin, 2018) argued for a change in the name “Parapsychological Association” to something presumably more scientifically appropriate — offered as one suggestion was “Psychophysical Association.” Why this is problematic I will shortly address.

## Discussion

We should consider some particular criteria when thinking about terminology for a field. Accuracy, specificity, clarity, and descriptiveness seem obvious. In our necessarily media-driven age, we need to add one further condition: that certain of the relevant terms must also be recognizable and identifying of the organization or subject that they are meant to represent. While it may be difficult to find all these qualities in a given term, we should hope to find at least *some* of them.

The umbrella term for the class of phenomena in which we are interested, “psi,” violates nearly every one of these criteria. It is only the name of a single Greek letter. We claim to study psi phenomena. It has the equivalent in English of saying we study Q or V (or some other arbitrary letter) phenomena or something similar. Since psi purportedly stands for something along the lines of “Something we don’t know what it is,” the label for our scientific subject matter violates the criteria of accuracy, specificity, descriptiveness *and* clarity. And it is certainly recognizable by and identifying *only* to those who are already initiated. It is opaque to most everyone else.

Russell Targ and Stephan Schwartz, among others, have proposed labels such as “nonlocal consciousness” or “nonlocal awareness.” (One can think of the term “nonlocal” as a more convenient way of referring to “action-at-a-distance,” generally taken to mean a result regularly associated with a particular stimulus without any discoverable classically causal connection between the two.) I confess a certain fondness for these terms. “Nonlocal” seems a promising compromise between vagueness and specificity as a possible alternative to the psi label. “Nonlocal,” of course, calls to mind the idea of quantum entanglement, since that phenomenon is also known as quantum nonlocality. Without the modifier “quantum,” the idea of nonlocality is simply that whatever effect is involved occurs independently of accepted principles of causality, without commitment to any particular ontology to account for that causality. That seems *prima facie* right when we consider the behavior of the phenomena with which we are concerned.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, since no one has a grasp on what founds “consciousness” nor what the underpinnings of “awareness” might be, we lose no ground in adding either of these terms to the “nonlocal” locution. But we do add the virtue of delimiting the terminology to the domain which *prima facie* is the focus of the phenomena:

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<sup>1</sup> Note that Stephen Braude (2020) takes exception to deployment of the “nonlocal” terminology. His concerns derive from an apparent assumption that proximity of effect may preclude nonlocal “action at a distance.” For example, since psychics “...can diagnose subtle medical conditions of the client seated before them, that would be an instance of ostensible ESP confined to that small region of space” and “...the distance mentioned in ‘action at a distance’ may actually be quite small” (p. 428). On my understanding of the term, “nonlocal” as a stand-in for “action-at-a-distance” refers not to relative distance, but rather that no classical causal linkage between stimulus and result can be traced. Braude also calls upon counterexamples such as mediumistic ectoplasm materialization, and presumed “psychic” healers who heal themselves. These counterexamples seem to conflate the kinds of phenomena that are normally associated with “nonlocal perception,” such as clairvoyance, remote viewing, and telepathy with phenomena that are strikingly different, and may well owe their occurrence to an altogether different causal nexus. Indeed, it seems plausible that self-healing may even involve a non-paranormal causality, and hence not at all describable as “nonlocal” in the sense I mean here.

## Consciousness

To be sure, the idea of the second term mentioned, “awareness,” does have the shortcoming of not including what has come to be called “psychokinesis,” and also seems to exclude those phenomena currently included under the psi rubric that are experienced by humans but of which they are presumably not consciously aware. “Consciousness” construed broadly enough can encompass both.

The much more informal and misused term “psychic” is only slightly less vague than “psi.” At least “psychic” clearly denotes that mind is involved. However, that term suffers from ambiguity. We can literally translate it from the Greek as “soul” or “spirit.” But its modern heritage embraces usages both in psychology (the term of which it is the root) as an adjective for mental states with no connotation of extrasensory perception. And, of course, “psychic” also refers to phenomena that (to all appearances) seem to transcend the standard psycho-physical concept of mind. To know which sense of “psychic” is being referred to, one needs a context.

## Parapsychology

The term “parapsychology” has some (though not all) of the same shortcomings as “psi.” As often noted, the “para” in parapsychology means “beside” or “adjacent to.” So, parapsychology means right next door to psychology. Literally, the term means nothing, other than to suggest proximity to the presumably more robust field of psychology. If ever there was a name ripe for change, the “parapsychological” in the Parapsychological Association would seem to qualify.

But not so fast. If it were that simple I, and no doubt many others, would be right onboard. Unfortunately, it is not so simple. We may need to push back against this suggestion for four reasons.

1. *The issue of branding.* Rebranding a long-established organization is always risky: It runs a substantial risk of newly interested people never finding the organization; it risks losing supporters who don't recognize the new organization; and it definitely loses painstakingly won name recognition.
2. *It can be expensive.* The replacement or revision of web sites, the revision of publication titles, stationary, logos, etc. consumes resources that could be used more productively elsewhere.
3. *It weakens the perceived status of the organization.* After all, don't we wonder what is wrong, or what is insufficient, or what has changed in an organization that feels obliged to revise its name after a long history under its long-established one?
4. *The proposed “psychophysical” term.* It violates more of the criteria I suggested above than does our current “parapsychology.”

I am going to address this final issue specifically, using “psychophysical” as an example to point out the problems that might confront any other such candidate. First, though, I sympathize with the editorial writer's position, and welcome the good intentions of his proposal. I recognize, and have several times myself encountered, similar obstacles to those he has in dealing with scientists and academics

when they are faced with the “parapsychology” terminology. Though the risks in being associated with that term are sometimes overblown or imagined, there can be real career threats for many in academia if they admit an interest or belief in such phenomena. This is, of course, not a fault of the term itself but the cultural baggage laid on it by the biases and narrow thinking of our sometimes intolerant and occasionally anti-rational Western academic culture.

With that acknowledged, the term on offer, “psychophysical,” is ambiguous. As mentioned in the editorial, there is already a psychophysics discipline, which studies the physical connections between sensory stimuli and the resultant perceptions they produce. Albeit the writer explains the term originated with a parapsychological sense to it, yet it seems today to be fully embraced by physicalist science. There are also already a couple of psychophysical societies, from which the writer suggests we may be able to differentiate ourselves should we ultimately adopt a similar label. Perhaps that could turn out to be true. But the danger is that we won’t know until we try it. And if it doesn’t work, it would be too late to undo the damage.

As an alternative for parapsychology, “psychophysical” is also theory laden. Even if we somehow coopt the word as a replacement term, it implies the accommodation of parapsychological effects within the physical world. That has not, however, been proved, and there remains plenty of reason to doubt that such will ever be provable. For all its flaws, parapsychology is at least not terminologically so burdened with theoretical assumptions.

To be fair, Dean Radin, the author of the essay, isn’t irrevocably committed to the “psychophysical” term. He included an invitation for anyone with alternative terms on offer to send them in. So far as I know, no interesting alternatives have yet been suggested.

### **Parapsychology’s Stockholm Syndrome**

An additional concern — a “meta-concern,” if you will — lurks. I worry about something that may turn out to be the real underlying reason why some in the parapsychology field have hoped to distance themselves from the field’s traditional name. The editorial sums it up neatly: The name is toxic. At least, it is toxic in the minds of mainstream scientists. Some among us see the venerable “parapsychology” label as a liability—an important factor in why science won’t allow us to become fully-accepted playmates in its sandbox. The hope is that changing our name, our surface identity, away from that horrible, tainted label can grease the skids for our acceptance by and assimilation into the ranks of conventional science. To use a religious metaphor — it’s approximately like the Baptists changing their name in hopes that the Jesuits will embrace them as fellow Catholics.

But might this not as well be a symptom of what we could refer to as parapsychology’s “Stockholm syndrome”? I’m sure you’ve heard of this odd psychological phenomenon, described colloquially as “identity with the aggressor.” When kept long enough in captivity, hostages of terrorists or other abusers come to identify with and embrace the agendas and motives of their captors—and even defend their abusers in the aftermath.

Parapsychology has for so many years been suppressed, marginalized and – dare I say it –ridiculed by mainstream science and its fellow travelers, the skeptics. Because of this, do we now pine for their love and acceptance, to the point of being willing to do nearly anything to gain it?

Certainly, there are those in our field who are convinced that they will find a physicalist way of fitting parapsychology into the framework of accepted science. For some, this reflects their own personal beliefs about what the roots of parapsychological phenomena will turn out to be. They themselves are confirmed physicalists. But others merely hope that, once such a reconciliation is achieved, science will *have to accept us*. We the oppressed will be one with *them*, our oppressors.

I confess I find this strategy questionable. Physicalism itself is a dubious enterprise. If there is a point where physicalism is most vulnerable, it is in foundations of physicalism itself. I and others have argued that the basis of physicalism is an ontological mess, held together because so many of its supporters are unaware their emperor wears no clothes. (Smith, 2009, 2010; Targ, 2012; Tart, 2009). Ironically, parapsychology itself poses the greatest threat to physicalism's hegemony. Can a mere name change really suffice to persuade science to gather the parapsychological serpent to its bosom? Not at all. We are more likely to be compelled to altogether surrender our convictions about the plausible reality of the phenomena that are the core of why the Parapsychological Association exists before the mainstream will fully embrace us. And then what would be the point?

This idea of changing names and terminology, trying to come up with something that we think the mainstream will find palatable, strikes me as a phenomenon that finds a parallel in parapsychology research itself. Note that in parapsychological science, experimental paradigms have a shelf life. Many reasons exist for this, but one that seems to run through the research goes like this: A new experimental paradigm is devised. Often ingenious and innovative, the experiments conducted under the paradigm produce good results. Soon, the critics weigh in. Some of their criticism is well founded and leads to improvements in the methodology. Contrary to skeptical expectations, though, in many or most cases the effects persist. Sometimes they are even enhanced by an improved protocol. The criticism, of course, continues nonetheless.

More importantly, even over time few if any people *outside* parapsychology seem persuaded by the evidence. Usually, they don't even so much as pay attention to it. "What?" we ask ourselves figuratively. "There's no one paying attention! Our new experimental paradigm must not be flashy or successful or impressive enough to be persuasive. Let's try something else."

The field bounces from (in no particular order) card guessing and dice rolling to dream telepathy to remote viewing to Ganzfeld to DMILS to presentiment to whatever is next, with many things in between. We learn much, but we gain no more acceptance than we had before. It's not because the research doesn't have merit. It's because it is a threat to the mainstream. I'll not get into Kuhnian and Lakatosian paradigms here. But we all know this. We just think that the next new experiment idea will tip the scales. It never does.

The same thing seems to happen with our labels. It used to be "psychical science," with "psychic" and "paranormal" mixed in. Then "parapsychology," introduced as a presumably more acceptable and (according to J.B. Rhine) more descriptive term. Now there is a new proposal on the table to search for another label to switch to, one with hoped-for greater acceptability.

Sometimes virtue lies in changing. Sometimes the virtue lies in refusing to change. I suggest it's time to stop trying to identify with our oppressors and increase and unify our efforts to fight them. I don't mean this in an overtly confrontational way, but more of a Zen-like approach, perhaps with a few special-ops techniques thrown in. Instead of surrendering our terms and our science, instead of caving into our opponents, we should *defend* our terms and our science. And how to go about that should perhaps be how we spend our energy, rather than searching for just the "right" name to rescue us from scientific leprosy. (And I am obliged to note that the defense is not just against the critics, but also against those of our sympathizers who want to dilute and vernacularize these terms to suit their own metaphysical beliefs.) Perhaps that could be a theme for an upcoming PA conference.

### **Extrasensory Perception**

I want to move on now to another semantics issue with a different context. This also revolves around a time-honored label, in this case "extra-sensory perception," or ESP (for the sake of economy I will drop the hyphen in future mentions, except where quoting).

Perhaps you have noticed a move afoot to replace the ESP term with something more "appropriate." Today's leading competitor is "anomalous cognition," or AC. The term was first defined in a classified paper from the US government's Star Gate Program in 1991 as "a form of information transfer in which all known sensorial stimuli are absent." Terminologically, anomalous cognition is meant to circumscribe "phenomena that are described in the parapsychological literature as extra-sensory perception (ESP), telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition." (May & Luke, 1991/2018). Semantically, then, anomalous cognition is presumed to be coextensive with the "old" term, extrasensory perception.

As in the desire to replace the parapsychology label with something better, the motivation for developing and recommending the anomalous cognition term is also well-intentioned. There is some hope, for example, that the AC term might be less theory laden than "ESP."

However, I see some difficulties anomalous cognition might present as a descriptor for the subject matter of our research and practice. Borrowing from Webster, anomalous means "inconsistent with or deviating from what is usual, normal, or expected; irregular, unusual," or, alternatively, "marked by incongruity or contradiction; paradoxical." (Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anomalous>)

At first, "anomalous" seems a plausible label for phenomena that seem unexpectedly (from a physicalist science perspective) not to conform to physical laws. But let's not be hasty. A truly anomalous effect would presumably fail to conform to *any* sort of law-like behavior. Yet don't we expect to find lawful relations as we explore our chosen areas of interest? And in fact, we *do* find such behavior, though often less robust than we would like. We are often troubled to think that some of our effects are not consistently replicable, but we hope that eventually we will be able to achieve that goal.

Three difficulties with the use of "anomalous" present themselves: First, the term "anomalous" may prove to be overly broad. A 1998 paper expressed this very concern, noting "...all sorts of occurrences

count as anomalous mental phenomena that would not have been classified as ostensible cases of psi,” any of which could easily meet this definition. Examples might include not only assorted pathological conditions but also “many non-pathological, but highly unusual desires, thoughts, or volitions that may occur” (Braude, 1998, 142; see also related comments in Braude, 2020). Consider, for example, the experience of an emotionally healthy person inexplicably feeling the urge once only in her life to leap from the lip of a chasm. This would seem to meet the definition of an anomalous mental event that nevertheless does not require the involvement of psi. The article cites other relevant examples which I will not take the time to list here.

Another issue may arise, albeit in the future. Let us suppose that the physicalists among us turn out to be right. Let’s suppose that, astonishingly, someone develops a fully vetted theory within which psi (or whatever we might eventually decide to call it) can be reconciled with the larger physicalist paradigm. We think of ESP being anomalous because for now we have no way of fitting it into normal science. But if it later turns out that it *does* fit into normal science, then it could no longer be considered anomalous, and we would be stuck with a term we would be obliged to change yet again.

I see the most important difficulty as being this: Do we really want the phenomena we study to be tainted from the outset? By labeling them as anomalous, are we not encumbering our base phenomena even more deeply with the presumption that they are weird or scientifically marginal or suspect? So “anomalous” seems an awkward word to apply to our areas of research interest. Indeed, I would argue that we don’t want the critics who oppose our agenda to latch onto that term and make great hay out of it.

Well, alright—but what about “cognition”? Here we run into a separate issue. Does cognition accurately describe each and every phenomenon involved in the domain generally referred to now as “extrasensory”? Some of the phenomena do clearly include cognition. Of particular note would be remote viewing, and the latter phases of a Ganzfeld experiment, and (assuming dreaming can count as “cognitive”) dream ESP. In each of these, participants at some point become cognitively aware of experiences and facts about their respective targets and have to make cognitively directed judgments.

But what about “presentiment”? In such experiments it seems implausible to conclude that autonomic arousal — which rarely or (usually) never arises to the level of conscious awareness — can count as cognitive. And consider remote influencing in DMILS experiments, where positive intentionality exercised by a distant influencer to a statistically significant degree enhances a target person’s ability to concentrate. This hardly seems a plausible candidate for consideration as a cognitive process — at least for the person being influenced. If a term is to be applied to the entire phenomenal corpus of a discipline, ought it not be descriptive of *all* the phenomena, not just some of them? The ESP term dodges this issue. Anomalous cognition does not.

The anomalous cognition locution is also difficult because it does not clearly refer. In other words, unlike the ESP term it is meant to replace, when people unfamiliar with the term hears “anomalous cognition,” they don’t know what it means. And breaking it down into its constituent parts does not make it clearer. I recently spoke with a prominent member of our field who lamented that whenever she uses

that term with anyone not already acquainted with it, she must first explain what it means before she can continue the conversation. The term she uses to explain it with is “extrasensory perception.”

But what about those venerable words that anomalous cognition is meant to replace, “extrasensory perception”? To most of you, the following discussion will seem obvious or trivial, but it’s good to make sure we are all on the same sheet of music. “Extrasensory” does not, as some believe, mean just one sense more, nor sensing beyond the usual five. The “extra” doesn’t mean superfluous nor additional, nor a bonus sense. It does not mean that all, or even some of us have an extra, or additional “sixth sense.” Rather it has the same meaning as the “extra” in words like “extradite,” “extract,” “extramural,” or if you’ll forgive me, “extraterrestrial.” In other words, it means beyond, outside of, or external from. When “extrasensory” is coupled with the word “perception,” it means perceiving beyond or outside the senses. It means having a perceptual experience, but one uninformed and unmediated by the intervention of our physical senses.

In the 1964 edition of his seminal work, *Extra-Sensory Perception*, J.B. Rhine explained his choosing of these particular words:

I began using the term “Extra-Sensory Perception” (ESP) at first with the more tentative meaning, “perception without the function of the recognized senses.” But as our studies progressed it gradually became more and more evident that ESP was fundamentally different from the sensory processes, lacking a sense organ, apparently independent of recognized energy forms, non-radiative but projectory, cognitive but unanalyzable into sensory components – all quite non-sensory characteristics. It seemed to extend the word “sensory” ridiculously to use it to cover this phenomenon. Hence the present interpretation is rather that E.S.P. is, frankly, “perception in a mode that is just *not* sensory,” omitting all question of “unrecognized.” I think we have progressed this far with reasonable certainty. (p. xxix)

Rhine seems confident that perception occurs without the intercession of the senses. Even after many decades, this confidence seems warranted, in that from a physicalist perspective sensing can only occur through the agency of the electromagnetic spectrum (vision) or some mechanical or chemical process (touch, smell, taste, hearing).

Take, for example, the fact that in remote viewing accurate perceptions occur even when a subject is sequestered in an isolation chamber sealed against intrusion from any of these channels. All physical sources of direct sensing have been eliminated, yet confirmable perception still occurs. Many other examples of successful experiments done under similar and other protocols support Rhine’s conclusion, including displacement in space and/or time (as in precognition) that would also preclude sensory linkages.

All this, of course, raises the question: If the senses are definitively “out of the loop,” why are the resulting perceptions experienced in ways similar to how they would be if induced by impingement of the actual physical senses? I lack the time here to offer my speculations but, fortunately, for this discussion all that is necessary is to reaffirm that the senses have been confirmed to not be involved. Hence, “extrasensory.”

Though Rhine uses the word “cognitive” in the quote above, we should not take that in the same sense as it is meant in the anomalous cognition term. Later in his book, Rhine notes that one of his students submitted a Masters thesis titled “Extra-Sensory Cognition.” He comments:

But this is not specific enough; rational and mnemonic cognition would also be “extra-sensory.” Perception is cognition of outer objects or relations, and is, therefore, the proper word here. Extra-Sensory, then, limits it in the necessary ways. (p. 175)

Here Rhine seems to be using the “cognition” and “cognitive” terms a bit imprecisely. In one sense (in referring to his student), he seems to be thinking of the conventional meaning of “cognition,” and rejecting its use on grounds compatible with Braude’s argument. In another sense, he seems to be conflating cognition with reception of direct sensory input, which is more properly described as perception of raw sensory experience.

Thus, we are presented a useful segue to the notion of “perception.” Unfortunately, this term is used quite loosely in these debates, without distinguishing among the nuances of its various related (but divergent) meanings. Often, people think of “perceiving” as it is used in the sentence, “She perceived his intent.” This construction and others like it take perception to indicate “understanding” or “comprehending” something. In this formulation, “perception” means very much the same as “cognition.” But this is a more vernacular usage.

There are other nuances that are also relevant to the ESP term. One is the process of categorizing sense experience. Applied in this way, perception does not require the recognition or understanding of what something *is*, but merely that one develops a noticing or awareness of what sort of experience one is having. Having the experience of tasting peanut butter doesn’t require that we have any prior experience with peanut butter, nor know what peanut butter is, but only that we become aware that we are having a taste experience of a certain kind different from other kinds of taste experiences.

Some might argue that this also constitutes a sort of cognition and, though it doesn’t match our most common understanding of that word, perhaps it is. We might in fact accept that there is a transition or bridge here between raw perception and comprehension.

A more fundamental meaning of perception is the one I think is key. That is the detection and parsing of sense experiences and assignment to the appropriate processing centers in the brain. This requires neither understanding, nor cognitive awareness, and yet it is perception — indeed, perception of the most basic kind. This may well be the sort of ESP present in presentiment experiments.

Unlike the term “cognition,” all three of these connotations of “perception” are relevant to the phenomena we study as subject matter under what is currently referred to as “extrasensory perception.” We might even argue that cognition is but a subset in the conceptual domain of perception.

In consequence, I argue that “extrasensory perception” is not only descriptive, but it is — to the extent any term can be in a field where there are still so many unknowns about its causality — also clear, accurate and specific. It also meets, as much so or more than any term thus far suggested, the require-

ment of being recognizable and that it be identifying of the subject matter that it labels. It also has the virtue of being less theory-laden than the alternatives.

It seems less than helpful to move from a term that for decades has proved to be both useful *and* descriptive to a new construction that is *less* useful and *less* descriptive — indeed more ambiguous (as I argue that anomalous cognition is). ESP is descriptive rather than definitional — and that is really just what we need right now.

My argument for retaining the ESP term is different from my reasons concerning the parapsychology term. As I expressed above, I believe we should retain “parapsychology” not because it is ideal, but because we already have so much invested in it. Replacing it would be similar to — and just as traumatic as — rebranding a major corporation. If there were enough ground to be gained by rebranding, then it might be worth it. But so far, there is at best little more to proposed changes than the proverbial “changing ‘happy’ to ‘glad’.” And at worst there may be quite a lot more at stake.

We should retain extrasensory perception too, but for different reasons, irrespective of tradition or prior usage. Rather, let us keep ESP based on its utility and descriptiveness. Let’s also be careful that the decision not simply become a semantics popularity contest, where the word with the most votes will win. Back in the old video recorder days, the superior product, Sony’s Betamax, lost the marketing battle to VHS, the inferior product. Let’s avoid replaying our version of the Beta vs. VHS fiasco by doing everything we can to have the best terms available under the circumstances. In the end, we don’t need to replace ESP. Let’s rescue it instead.

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## Qu'est-ce qu'un Nom? Beaucoup, en Réalité

Résumé : Une discipline de recherche est partiellement définie par les concepts qu'elle manipule. La parapsychologie ne fait pas exception. Je discute les récents appels à changer la terminologie présente de longue date dans ce champ, en premier lieu les termes « parapsychologie » et « perception extra-sensorielle ». Je spécifie les desiderata pour les termes que nous voulons utiliser pour identifier la nature de notre champ et les phénomènes que nous explorons, puis discutons certaines raisons pour lesquelles les changements en question furent proposés, incluant une exploration des buts et motifs pour ces changements. Des contre-arguments contre ces raisons sont ensuite présentés, de même qu'une justification pour préserver la terminologie actuelle. J'affirme ensuite que, malgré leurs bonnes intentions, les stratégies et alternatives présentées ne peuvent pas atteindre les buts fixes. Les deux notions qui sont le plus sous pression sont défendues et des explications sont données pour comprendre pourquoi ces termes restent les meilleurs candidats. Une motivation non dévoilée pour un tel changement pourrait être appelée « le syndrome de Stockholm de la parapsychologie », reflétant le phénomène aussi connu sous le nom d'« identification à l'agresseur » - suggérant que certaines des motivations pour proposer de tels changements de dénomination pourraient provenir du désir de « coller » à la science mainstream, qui marginalise la parapsychologie scientifique depuis très longtemps. Plutôt qu'un rebranding ou un renommage, nous devrions plutôt nous battre pour notre terminologie contre les attaques des « agresseurs » mainstream et leurs alliés sceptiques.

## Was steckt hinter einem Namen? Tatsächlich eine Menge

Zusammenfassung: Eine Forschungsdisziplin wird teilweise durch ihre Begriffe definiert. Die Parapsychologie macht da keine Ausnahme. Ich überprüfe die jüngsten Forderungen, einige seit langem gebräuchliche Begriffe in diesem Bereich zu ändern, vor allem "Parapsychologie" und "außersinnliche Wahrnehmung". Ich umreiße die vorgeschlagenen Begriffe, die wir verwenden wollen, um die Natur unseres Gebietes und die Phänomene, die wir erforschen, zu beschreiben, und diskutiere dann einige Gründe, warum die Änderungen vorgeschlagen wurden, sowie eine Untersuchung der Ziele und Motivationen für die vorgeschlagenen Änderungen. Dann werden Gegenargumente gegen diese Gründe vorgestellt, zusammen mit einer Rechtfertigung für die Beibehaltung der aktuellen Terminologie. Ich argumentiere dann, dass die vorgestellten Strategien und Alternativen, auch wenn sie gut gemeint sind, nicht die Ziele erreichen können, die sie beabsichtigen. Die beiden in Frage gestellten Begriffe werden

verteidigt, und es werden Erklärungen angeboten, warum diese Begriffe die besten Kandidaten bleiben. Eine unausgesprochene Motivation für solche Änderungen könnte sein, was ich als “Stockholm-Syndrom der Parapsychologie” bezeichne und das Phänomen widerspiegelt, das auch als “Identifizierung mit dem Aggressor” bekannt ist. Es könnte darauf hindeuten, dass manches an der Motivation, solche Namensänderungen vorzunehmen, dem Wunsch entspringt, sich der Mainstream-Wissenschaft “anzupassen”, die die wissenschaftliche Parapsychologie lange Zeit an den Rand gedrängt hat. Anstatt eine Umwidmung oder eine Umbenennung vorzunehmen, sollten wir stattdessen unsere Terminologie gegen Angriffe von Mainstream-“Aggressoren” und ihren skeptischen Verbündeten verteidigen.

### **Qué hay en un Nombre? Bastante, de Hecho**

Resumen: Una disciplina de investigación se define parcialmente por sus términos. La parapsicología no es una excepción. En el presente artículo, considero las recientes propuestas para cambiar algunos términos de uso prolongado en el campo, principalmente “parapsicología” y “percepción extrasensorial”. Especifico la desiderata de términos que queremos usar para identificar la naturaleza de nuestro campo y los fenómenos que exploramos, luego analizo algunas de las razones por las que se propusieron los cambios en cuestión, incluida una exploración de los objetivos y motivaciones de dichas propuestas. Luego presento argumentos en contra de estas razones, junto con una justificación para preservar la terminología actual. Posteriormente sostengo que, aunque bien intencionadas, las estrategias y alternativas propuestas no pueden lograr los objetivos que pretenden. Luego defiendo los dos términos más cuestionados y ofrezco explicaciones de por qué dichos términos siguen siendo los mejores candidatos. Una motivación inconsciente para proponer tales cambios puede ser lo que llamo “Síndrome de Estocolmo parapsicológico”, que refleja un fenómeno también conocido como “identidad con el agresor” – lo que sugiere que parte de la motivación para proponer tales cambios de términos puede surgir del deseo de “encajar en” la ciencia convencional, que durante mucho tiempo ha marginado la parapsicología científica. En lugar de cambiar el nombre o los tecnicismos, deberíamos defender nuestra terminología contra los ataques de los “agresores” convencionales y sus aliados escépticos.