



Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal

Carl Jung , Roderick Main (Editor)

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C. G. Jung had a lifelong interest in the paranormal that culminated in his influential theory of synchronicity. Combining extracts taken from the *Collected Works*; letters; the autobiographical *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*; and transcripts of seminars, *Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal* sets out clearly his seminal contribution to our understanding of this controversial area.

In his introduction, Roderick Main discusses Jung's encounters with and observations of the paranormal, the influences that contributed to his theory of synchronicity, and the central ideas of the theory itself. The selections include Jung's writings on mediumistic trance phenomena, spirits and hauntings, anomalous events in the development and practice of analytical psychology, and the divinatory techniques of astrology and the *I Ching*. The book also features Jung's most lucid account of his theory in the form of his short essay "On Synchronicity," and a number of Jung's less-known writings on parapsychology, his astrological experiment, and the relationship between mind and body.

Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal addresses subjects that were fundamental to Jung's personal and professional development. Probing deeply into the theory of synchronicity, Roderick Main clarifies issues that have long been a source of confusion to Jung's readers.

Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal Details

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From Reader Review Jung on Synchronicity and the Paranormal for online ebook

Bob says

Interesting book by Carl Jung, famous rival to Freud, who was much more open to non materialist view of the universe.

Doug Dillon says

Here we have an excellent selection of Carl Jung's writings and talks on Synchronicity and the Paranormal. If you are interested in either or both subjects, this book is a valuable source straight from the mind of one of the world's great thinkers. The first to make the case that coincidences are not just random events, it was Jung who coined the term Synchronicity.

Associate of Albert Einstein, William James and Wolfgang Pauli, Jung makes it very clear how new discoveries in physics during the 20th Century influenced his work. In story after story, he also relates fascinating paranormal experiences of his own, using them to support his theory of Synchronicity. Even more than that, his words offer a wonderful peek into the man's thought processes by detailing his personal explorations of things such as spiritualism, astrology, I Ching, visions, dreams, life after death, and even UFOs.

In discussing Synchronicity, Jung relies heavily on his views of "archetypes" and "the collective unconscious". I found those portions of the book a little dense and hard to read. I'm not even sure if having a background in Jungian Psychology would be of help but maybe so. However, when Jung launches into his many personal, paranormal experiences, I found a clarity and authenticity to his words that made them a joy to read.

Although I don't think Jung made a complete case for his theory of Synchronicity, he did indeed point the way for others.

Guillermo Galvan says

A mediocre collection of spooky ghost stories told by grandpa.

Ryan says

When I first picked up this book, I was struck by Jung's involvement in early 20th century spiritualism and astrology, which to my eye was discrediting. Upon revisiting the book, I found fascinating anecdotes in the other sections which stimulated plenty of speculation. Conclusion: a mixed bag with some taste of the truth. Importantly, Jung hints that a deep investigation of psychology reveals paranormal content.

Heath Nevergold says

Not so far out as you would think. Attempts to define the supernatural as scientifically as possible.

Dianna says

Brilliant – a must read for anyone who wants to understand Jung's theory of synchronicity in-depth.

Benjamin Bryan says

Fascinating read.

Guy says

Jung On Synchronicity and the Paranormal (JoS&tP) is an important collection because it brings together in one short and well representative book, in Jung's own words, his interest in and experiences of the paranormal to a degree until now I'd read hints of but had never so plainly seen stated and elaborated. *JoS&tP* book goes far beyond what Jung included in his near-autobiographical, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*. In *MD&R* there are included some paranormal activities, but my reading between its lines suggested to me that there was much more than was disclosed there. *JoS&tP* confirms that and then some.

In this anthology Roderick Main has done something quite interesting: even as Jung discloses a personal encounter with a ghost and other paranormal activities, including seances, Main provides linkages to some of the more under-discussed implications of quantum mechanics as they may apply to possible theories of paranormal experiences. Jung was very interested in the modern theories of physics because he saw a tangible theoretical and/or philosophical link between them and what his experiences with and ideas about paranormal experiences were leading him to think and theorize about psychology and the paranormal.

I particularly and thoroughly enjoyed the letters that were included, and not just because I love writing and reading 'heavy' philosophical letters too, but because Jung's informal writing is delightful to read. He relaxes his careful official persona, and expresses some of his unsupported speculations and ideas as to the nature of things inexplicable, such as the meaning of life, in ways always thoughtful, but frequently funny, too.

His face-to-face encounter with a ghost in a British farm house is particularly interesting because my reading of the encounter entangled it to me in one of the most interesting and quite frankly bizarre *fushigis* I've ever experienced. I have blogged it in 2012.02.02 — Half Face and More fushigis.

Despite this being about the 'airy fairy' concepts of *synchronicity* and *ghosts*, mediums and seances, Jung kept his writing and speculations and experiences 'real'. He doesn't leap to conclusions with his experiences, but allows them to challenge and question his pre-formulated beliefs about what may or may not be so-called reality. And in the process he challenges the validity of our ideological fixation on a rationalistic causal —

'Descartian' science. Unlike much of western science, perhaps especially the behaviourists who dismiss as unreal that which falls outside the bounds that their theories delineate, Jung proves his stature as a *real* scientist by neither dismissing nor idealizing his paranormal experiences: they become simply a part of the chisel that Life provided him to chip away at our false ideas and thinking, even if it is stingy in providing additional clues.

On reflection I am not sure what I expected to read before I began reading *JoS&tP*, but it turned out to be a far, far better read than I'd anticipated. Perhaps it was the inclusion of so many letters and extracts from letters, which I'd not read before except in tiny citations.

Also, my prejudice regarding the word 'paranormal' lead me to anticipate something other than what Jung explored, which is a very scientific, coherent, and sound argument that our scientific foundation in causal biased rationalism is not just misguided, but inadequate to explain the full range of what happens within the so-called bounds of life.

I highly recommend this book: a solid five stars.

To see my blogged review, complete with images, links, and extended citations, go to: 2012.04.28 — Jung On Synchronicity and the Paranormal edited with an introduction by Roderick Main.
