

# John Randall

John Randall (1933-2011), a British educator and parapsychologist, conducted ESP experiments and contributed extensively to publications of the Society for Psychical Research. He is the author of *Parapsychology and the Nature of Life* (1975).

## Life and Career

John Leslie Randall was born in Warwick on 27 November 1933 where he attended a local school. He wrote a memoir about his experiences there which he published privately.<sup>[1]</sup> He took a degree in chemistry at the University College of Leicester and a postgraduate certificate in education. He taught biology at Leamington College and King Henry VIII's School, Coventry and also taught parapsychology for the Coventry Education Department.

Following retirement in 1990 he was active in voluntary social work among prisoners and the homeless.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Psychical Research

Randall joined the Society for Psychical Research in 1953 and served on its governing council until 2010. He worked with JB Rhine as a visiting research fellow at the Institute for Parapsychology in North Carolina, carrying out ESP and PK tests, with schoolboys and small animals as subjects'.<sup>[3]</sup> He obtained mixed results, but later stated his view that the reality of psi phenomena had been proved 'beyond all reasonable doubt'.<sup>[4]</sup>

In retirement he wrote articles about psychical research and spiritualism for the SPR's publications.

In *Parapsychology and the Nature of Life* (1975), Randall argued that phenomena such as ESP, telepathy and psychokinesis do not appear to be explicable in terms of the mechanistic-reductionist theory and that parapsychological findings 'seem to show clearly the existence of properties of living things which transcend the laws of physics'.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Interest in Survival

An experience in 2007 stimulated his interest in survival – the death of a close friend whose daughter said she saw 'a silvery shimmer' leave her mother, travel to John and descend onto him'.<sup>[6]</sup> In his writings he questioned the comparative lack of interest in near-death experiences shown by parapsychologists, but expressed optimism that science would 'throw some light on the world beyond death'.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Works

### Books

*Parapsychology and the Nature of Life* (1975). London: Souvenir Press.

*Psychokinesis: A Study of Paranormal Forces through the Ages* (1982). London: Souvenir Press.

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*Tests for Extrasensory Perception & Psychokinesis* (n.d.). London: Society for Psychical Research.

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Two psi experiments with gerbils (1972). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 46, 22-30.

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Correspondence (2002). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 66/1, 61-64.

Francis Ward Monck and the problems of physical mediumship (2003). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 67/4, 243-58.

Fifty years on: A parapsychologist looks back (2004). *Paranormal Review* 31, 3-6.

The biggest question of all: One man's search for an answer (2009). *Paranormal Review* 52, 3-12.

## Book Reviews

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- The Sixth Sense of Animals* by M. Burton (1973). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 47, 194-96.
- Supernature* by L. Watson (1974). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 47, 326-29.
- Supersenses* by C. Panati (1975). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 48, 164-68.
- The Biology of God* by A. Hardy (1976). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 48, 271-74.
- Intelligence came first* by E. Lester Smith (1976). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 48, 309-12.
- Parapsychology: Its relation to physics, biology, psychology and psychiatry*, edited by G. Schmeidler (1976). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 48, 400-2.
- Tuning in to Nature: Solar energy; Infrared radiation and the Insect communication system* by P.S. Callahan (1978). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 49, 757-58.
- The Paranormal* by S. Gooch (1978). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 49, 960-61.
- Advances in Parapsychological Research* by S. Krippner (1980). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 50, 297-99.
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- A New Science of Life: The Hypothesis of Formative Causation* by R. Sheldrake (1981). *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 51, 156-58.
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## References

### Footnotes

1.^ Randall (2004).

2.^ Ruffles (2011), 173.

3. ^ Ruffles (2011), 172.
4. ^ Randall (1975), 119.
5. ^ Randall (1975), front cover.
6. ^ Ruffles (2011), 173.
7. ^ Randall (2009), 11.

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