

Southern California Society for Psychical Research

The Southern California Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1961 and later merged with the *International Foundation for Survival Research*.

Founding

In 1961, the Southern California Society for Psychical Research (SCSPR) was established in Beverly Hills, California, USA,^[1] later situated in Thousand Oaks, California, USA.^[2] Its mission statement was as follows:



[D]edicated to education and research in parapsychology. Through lectures and classes, the Society's programs offers members and non-members exposure to all aspects of the field of parapsychology. While the Society does not take a corporate view regarding parapsychology, one of its assumptions is that the field deserves wide public awareness and education. The Society promotes and supports parapsychological research. Members of its Research Committee investigate spontaneous cases of alleged paranormal phenomena. In addition, the Society offers financial support for parapsychological research.^[3]

Noted society members included such figures as Raymond Bayless (consultant), D Scott Rogo (research director, 1974-75), William Welch (board member), David St Clair (president),^[4] Dr Martin Bravin (president, 1975-1978) and Dr Elizabeth McAdams (president, 1978-present).^[5]

The Society published a research journal, the *Journal of the Southern California Society for Psychical Research*, (3 volumes, 1979-1985), and the *SCSPR Newsletter* containing articles, research summaries, correspondence and news items within parapsychology. The *Newsletter* began soon after the Society's formation and outlived the Society's journal, continuing until the Society's end/transition.^[6] Both presented similar information to the Society members and non-members about research activities.

Transition

By 1983, Dr McAdams felt the Society was losing momentum in terms of public engagement and education. Her presidency saw the transition of the SCSPR into the *International Foundation for Survival Research*, which continues to this day.^[7] The SCSPR phased out before the 1990s.

Gordon Melton cites two parapsychology organisations existing within California close to the period of the SCSPR; these included the *California Parapsychology Foundation* (established 1957, San Diego, CA, USA) which focused on research and had a lending library, and the *California Society for Psychical Studies* (established date unknown, Berkeley, CA, USA), which held monthly lectures and published a newsletter called *Iridis*.^[8]

Sources

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Welch, W.A. (1975). *Talks With the Dead*. New York: Pinnacle Books.

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Melton, J.G. ed., (2001). *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology* (2 vols.). Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group.

Endnotes

Footnotes

- 1.^ SCSPR *Journal*, 1979.
- 2.^ SCSPR *Journal*, 1981.
- 3.^ SCSPR *Journal*, 1979.
- 4.^ Welch, 1975.
- 5.^ Cooper, 2012.
- 6.^ Cooper, 2012.
- 7.^ Cooper, 2012; www.expbeyond.org/
- 8.^ Melton, 2001, p. 242.