

Survival of Bodily Death
An Esalen Invitational Conference
February 11 - 16, 2000

Non-Local Mind and Survival
Marilyn Schlitz

As the Director of Research at the Institute for Noetic Sciences, Marilyn Schlitz spoke to the issue of survival of bodily death from the perspective of her research into instances of non-local manifestations of the human mind. Not directly involved in survival research, Schlitz instead has conducted numerous experiments which buttress the view that human consciousness has a small but significant influence upon events in the physical world. Schlitz believes that if we can demonstrate from several angles that the human mind is capable of functioning in ways that are not limited merely by the local physical world or the human body and brain, then there are firmer grounds to support the thesis of survival of death. Looking at the big picture, Schlitz believes there may be a broader paradigm shift at work, one which is revealing that consciousness has not only an influential but perhaps even causal relationship to the physical world and the human body. As more data is generated by researchers demonstrating that consciousness is not exclusively derived from the human brain, then a more comprehensive understanding and mapping of what consciousness really is can begin, and then the survival of bodily death can be viewed from the much larger perspective of consciousness studies in general.

To inform the participants at the conference of her work, Schlitz shared numerous instances from her life and research that support the thesis that the human mind and intentionality are causal. Drawing upon her diverse research background, Schlitz began by discussing her work with the shamanic cultures of South America. In particular, she noted that their view of consciousness is essentially 180 degrees from the Western materialistic and reductionistic paradigm, which sees consciousness as derivative of the chemistry of the human brain. The Achwar tribe, for example, is deeply immersed in a world in which dreams, spirits, and human consciousness all interpenetrate with the everyday physical world. For them, "mind" is not derivative of the brain at all, but rather a co-participant in a more encompassing and interpenetrating reality.

Here in America over the past several years, Schlitz has been involved in numerous conferences and experiments that have looked at instances of non-local mind from a western, scientific perspective. Schlitz mentioned her involvement with Esalen's DMILS conference series (distant mental interaction with living systems) and her work with Richard Wiseman, Elizabeth Targ, and the California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC). (For details, see the Center for Theory and Research conference summaries for the Subtle Energies Conference in 1999 and 2000.) Citing numerous experiments and studies, Schlitz drove home the point that the parapsychology and healing fields have now amassed strong sets of data demonstrating non-local mind. In particular, Schlitz mentioned Elizabeth Targ's recent studies at the CPMC, which inquired into the effects of non-local prayer on AIDS patients. Targ's studies resulted in quite significant results, and follow-up studies already have been planned.

Overall, Schlitz noted that her work in the field of non-local mind is part of a sizable and growing body of evidence that is helping dislodge the current materialistic paradigm of consciousness. With respect to the study of the survival of bodily death, all data that contributes to the broader goal of understanding human consciousness and how it is not necessarily derived directly from the human body and brain, can only serve to further the more specific task of assessing how such consciousness may continue after the human body has died.

[Conferences Menu](#) | [Summary Home](#)

[Transmission Theory](#) | [Inadequacies of Contemporary Mind/Brain Theories](#) | [Hyllic Pluralism and Survival](#) | [Personality and Identity: What is it that Survives?](#) | [The Scoble Report](#) | [Reincarnation and Survival](#) | [Non-Local Mind and Survival](#) | [Near Death Experiences as Evidence for Survival of Bodily Death](#) | [The Buddhist Perspective on Survival and Reincarnation](#) |

[About Esalen CTR](#)
[General Calendar](#)
[Web Links](#)
[Home](#)

[Leading Scholars](#)
[Articles & Book Reviews](#)
[Meditation Archives](#)
[Extraordinary Functioning Archives](#)

[Evolutionary Theory](#)
[Survival Research](#)
[Integral Capitalism](#)
[Past CTR Conferences](#)

For inquiries about Esalen's public workshops and classes, please visit www.esalen.org.

[Help](#)

Questions or comments about our website?

Send email to WebMedia@esalenctr.org.

All text, graphics and content of the Esalen CTR website
are Copyright 1999-2001 by Esalen Center for Theory & Research.

All rights reserved.