

## PSI DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS

Jeffrey Mishlove, Psi Development Systems.  
Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 1983.

Those interested in psi will be fascinated by a book that has just appeared, "Psi Development Systems," by Jeffrey Mishlove. It is not aimed at a popular audience, so I doubt that it will appear in your local bookstore, but it is well worth ordering.

The book is based on Mishlove's PhD dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley. As one of Mishlove's committee members, I watched the dissertation develop through several stages. You would not know the book is based on a dissertation from its style, however. Mishlove knows how to write!

Modern parapsychology knows it has phenomena like telepathy and psychokinesis to investigate, but it can't investigate them very efficiently: Psi manifests too unreliably and weakly in the laboratory. Mishlove recognized that people have been trying to produce "magical" (psi) effects strongly and reliably all through history. The vast mass of writings they have produced were not written from a scientific point of view, and probably contain a lot of just plain nonsense and/or material now explainable in more conventional ways, but there may be a lot of useful leads in it for developing psychic abilities. The book is thus a major source of fascinating possibilities. I use it for reference, and it's also good reading.

After an introductory section outlining psi and his approach to it, Mishlove reviews both the teachings of major spiritual traditions about psi development (shamanism, divination, yoga, Buddhism, Sufism, Judaism, and ceremonial magic) and some two dozen more contemporary systems, such as spiritualism, Theosophy, the Rosicrucian Order, Scientology, Sylva Mind Control, Transcendental Meditation, and Annette Martin training. Many of the ideas reviewed in this section will be new and stimulating to contemporary parapsychologists. Sixty pages are devoted to reviewing modern scientific literature on psi development, and then another 50 pages to a systematic analysis of important factors underlying all of the approaches. The review of the scientific literature includes assessment of the quantitative strength of psi results, rather than just their statistical significance, which makes it especially useful. I don't agree with all of Mishlove's conclusions, but I think he has produced a very stimulating work that I recommend to all serious parapsychologists, as well as to anyone interested in psi.

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