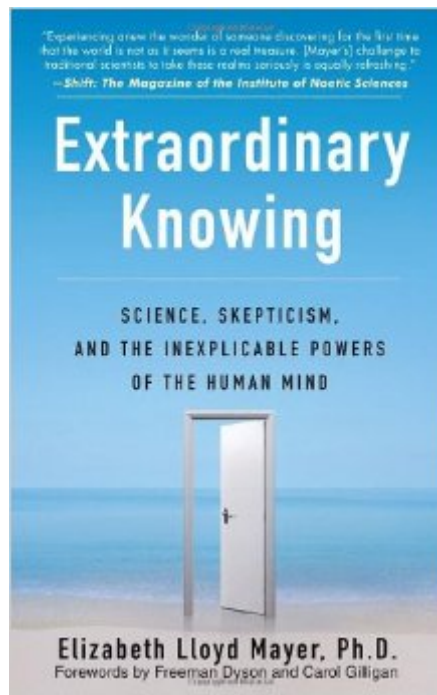


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Extraordinary Knowing: Science, Skepticism, And The Inexplicable Powers Of The Human Mind



Synopsis

In 1991, when her daughter's rare, hand-carved harp was stolen, Lisby Mayer's familiar world of science and rational thinking turned upside down. After the police failed to turn up any leads, a friend suggested she call a dowser "a man who specialized in finding lost objects. With nothing to lose" and almost as a joke "Dr. Mayer agreed. Within two days, and without leaving his Arkansas home, the dowser located the exact California street coordinates where the harp was found. Deeply shaken, yet driven to understand what had happened, Mayer began the fourteen-year journey of discovery that she recounts in this mind-opening, brilliantly readable book. Her first surprise: the dozens of colleagues who'd been keeping similar experiences secret for years, fearful of being labeled credulous or crazy. *Extraordinary Knowing* is an attempt to break through the silence imposed by fear and to explore what science has to say about these and countless other inexplicable phenomena. From Sigmund Freud's writings on telepathy to secret CIA experiments on remote viewing, from leading-edge neuroscience to the strange world of quantum physics, Dr. Mayer reveals a wealth of credible and fascinating research into the realm where the mind seems to trump the laws of nature. She does not ask us to believe. Rather she brings us a book of profound intrigue and optimism, with far-reaching implications not just for scientific inquiry but also for the ways we go about living in the world. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

This is a marvelous book for several reasons. First, it sheds a light on the fact that thousands

(probably millions) of trained scientists, physicians and psychologists have had extraordinary paranormal experiences, but feel constrained by the academic/scientific fundamentalists that they refuse to talk about them. This is where the call for a kind of scientific inquiry that takes anecdotal reports seriously becomes more urgent. Second, it is a wonderful breakdown of psi and distant intentionality research from a truly skeptical source. Such things always carry more weight when they are told by a skeptic rather than a true believer, and the only sensible conclusion from all the data Dr. Mayer provides is that, like it or not, psi and extraordinary human abilities are real. We may not know why they work yet, but we know they are real. Third, her leap of insight related to the idea of universal holism as the ground state of reality is brilliant. Many New Age types, meditators and intuitives have preached this for many years, but it's been hard even for me to accept the idea. Lisby Mayer shows compelling evidence that we may exist in a holistic cosmos where everything and everyone is indeed "one," and our brains prevent most of us from perceiving this in order to allow us to function as individual causal agents and promote the survival of our race. But the concept, yet to be proved but tantalizingly hinted at, that all aspects of the cosmos are connected is a thrilling, marvelous idea. Finally, the book explores the vehement skepticism of some and the inability of others to perceive the paranormal as a fascinating extension of Gestalt psychology.

A professor of psychology at the University of California Medical Center, San Francisco, before her death shortly after completing this book, Elizabeth Lloyd Mayer, Ph.D. begins with a real "Wow!" personal experience. It left her deeply shaken and prompted her to spend the next 14 years attempting to make sense out of it and other paranormal phenomena. Prior to the "Wow!" experience, Mayer had been, like so many of her colleagues, stuck in the muck and mire of scientific materialism. "I was discovering a vast, strange new territory of research regarding anomalous mind-matter interactions - interactions between mind and matter that simply cannot be contained inside what we call normal science," she writes in the first chapter. As Mayer delved into the world of Extra Sensory Perception (ESP), she met a number of friends and associates who had experienced paranormal phenomena of one kind or another but had been reluctant to discuss them until after she told her special story. She began to realize that such experiences are much more common than she had known and came to see how scientific fundamentalism has thwarted discussion and research in the area of parapsychology. "Inevitably, we tiptoe around anomalies," she offers. Mayer approached her investigation objectively and had hoped that CSICOP (Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal) would help her understand what was going on. "I found [their] journal dismayingly snide, regularly punctuated by sarcasm,

self-congratulation, and nastiness, all parading as reverence for true science," she wrote.

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