

## Telecommunications and Telepathy: A Hidden Isomorphism?

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### *Schizophrenic Science*

Traditional scientists tend to whole-heartedly embrace modern advances in telecommunications while rather dogmatically rejecting the validity of telepathic communications. The reason seems to hinge on the lack of evidence for the latter, or at least the lack of repeatable, testable evidence -- a flaw tantamount to a fundamental sin in the Scientific Bible. Telecommunications, on the other hand, can ultimately be understood in terms of a binary symbol set consisting of 1's and 0's, or some such equivalent -- a reductionistic ritual which neatly accommodates the scientific need for consistency, replicability and predictability, with a dash of simplistic beauty thrown in for effect.

Recently, however, I've begun to suspect that the two communication modes may be more alike than different, a possibility that leaves the scientist in me feeling slightly schizophrenic, to say the least. Stanislov Grof captures some of this feeling when he writes that experiences of extraordinary perception (i.e., access of information without reliance on our sensory organs) often brings with them a deep metaphysical fear, a fear "rooted in the fact that such experiences challenge and undermine fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality." (*The Holotropic Mind*, 1990, p139) I get that fear sometimes when I suspect that telepathy really does exist. And, now, after viewing a National Endowment for the Humanities-supported PBS satellite teleconference on the *Quality of Life in the Global Village*, I find that same metaphysical fear encompassing me regarding telecommunications. Lord help us, what have we wrought?

### *Similarities*

All right, so I don't have a shred of evidence about the existence of telepathic communications. Whereas, the electronic village which the PBS video describes so vividly is alive and well in Blacksburg, Virginia -- and promises to be replicated and upgraded all over the world by the year 2010, 2020 at the very latest. But let's just suppose that we aren't interested in arguing the merits of existence. Let's just hypothesize that both telecommunications and telepathic communications do exist, or at least will exist in everyday common practice by, say, the time our children reach our current age. What, then, are the outstanding characteristics of these two "distinct" kinds of communication?

Certainly one of these two modes will be marked by the fact that knowledge is perceived in a way that transcends the ordinary senses. And one of these two modes will be pervaded by an explosion of information. One will be dominated by the fact that all knowledge is public knowledge, a characteristic which at least one present-day scholar insists is the distinguishing feature of science (Alan Cromer, *Uncommon Sense*, 1993, p 155). One will raise questions of protection of individual privacy in an unprecedented fashion. Your boss, for example, could know everything there is to know about you, including even your most private health problems. And, speaking of health, one of these modes will allow a medical doctor to perform a healing operation on an individual located miles and miles away. One of these two communication vehicles will allow people to work from home, to be physically separated but instantly in tune with each other at will, to be part of the "elite" if you have access to this kind of communication

and to be informationally and, hence, literally impoverished if you don't.

### *Isomorphic counterparts?*

The question, of course, is which one?

Oh, sure, you might have to perform a few mental gymnastics to answer that question -- like assuming technology advances sufficiently that you can wear a supercomputer around your brain as you would a pair of glasses or, better yet, implanted so it isn't visible. Given the rapid state of technological evolution which we are currently experiencing, those gymnastics aren't really much more than one giant step for humankind.

The answer, I suggest, is predictable. The two are really one. They just seem different. Now the rational in me says "poppycock" and the supernatural in me screams insanely at this conclusion, and in either case the diagnosis is a strong metaphysical fear that reality isn't what it appears to be. The mathematician in me, however, is unruffled. The mathematician in me heard it before -- in advanced geometry, for instance, when points on a line and men on a committee could be considered two different models for the same abstract mathematical system. The defining word was "isomorphic." The two models didn't necessarily look much alike, but, when you really understood what was going on, you observed a 1-1 correspondence in their basic properties. Something along the lines of "equal." Only, not quite the same.

### *Metaphysical Implications*

Parapsychologists (and others) these days insist that we are evolving as a spiritual species, that we are developing latent powers of communication which hold great potential for humankind. From this perspective, we're just a paradigm shift away from total democracy, from collaborative ways of coexisting, from real peace. Why, extrasensory perception will become as commonplace, as ordinary, as, say, as e-mail perception has become in the last five years.

But therein lies the surprise. For, just suppose this hypothetical brain tease turns out to be true, i.e., suppose tele-communications and telepathic communications really *are* isomorphic models of the same underlying abstract "life" system. Then, if we're evolving toward one model, we're automatically evolving toward its isomorphic equivalent. Presto. Gone is the calculating clinician who haughtily dismisses parapsychology as pseudo-science. Gone is the faith healer's disdain for the mechanistic robot. Gone, too, is reality as we know it.

Scary? Heavens, yes. But perhaps it's more than mere irony that folks who can't quite countenance such a change in one form have an alternative, more "comfortable" model with which to ride the shifting sands of this spiritual journey.

Perhaps, just perhaps, it's grace.