

Chris Connelly:

Firstly, from a professional perspective, it would not be appropriate to critique this study on this platform; that's simply not how it should be done (equally that's not to say there are not plenty of anomalies in the methodology used and conclusions drawn). Nor do I have any reason to doubt Prof Kruse's integrity or good intentions. However, in the video, Prof Kruse mentions his experience of getting the study published in a peer-reviewed journal (The Journal of Scientific Exploration, JSE). So, I will limit my comments on this to show that any claims of Gary having been scientifically tested are unfounded.

In the video, Prof Kruse bemoaned that the journal rejected this study for publication, calling the feedback made by the peer-reviewers "ridiculous" due to what he refers to as "the bad side of science and peer-reviews today". Now, I should point out that the purpose of the peer review is, to find weaknesses in the article and give an opportunity for the authors to address these weaknesses so to make the article more robust and better withstand scientific scrutiny. It's disappointing and curious that Prof Kruse didn't take up this opportunity. Further, he fails to mention that the very same journal he bemoans (with their alleged bad science and peer-reviews) did except to publish another article of his detailing a method of experimenting with Ouija boards. That little omission aside, I have given a short explanation of each feedback comment that the reviewers of JSE took the time to provide to explain in my opinion what I believe the reviewers were concerned about or if it reflects the "bad side of science".

- (1) Kruse drew the possibilities of the camcorder not fully and also didn't use it in every séance.

Here the reviewer is simply pointing out that without consistency in the application and use of the camcorder raises legitimate question surrounding the decision-making process that led to the camcorder being used in some seances and not others. For example, where is the video recording showing the devices being fitted to Gary and calibration of the devices e.g. showing Gary moving and the types of measurements you would likely see for a given movement of the arm etc. What we see are just clips, not an end-to-end video like the one produced in 2016.

- (2) The motion sensor used for Kruse's examinations are cheap devices of the lowest price segment [...] likely to be far from what is required to control the movements of a sitting or standing person in a séance room.

Again true. No details have been provided to demonstrate the range of movements that these sensors would detect and the measurements they would display. How do we know if they're sensitive enough to detect movement, if so, what movement? Considering, it seems the whole point of this research was to show that the phenomena produced was not due to the movement of Gary, it's surprising that no effort is made by Prof Kruse to address this point.

- (3) The séances show no standardized protocol in order to compare the individual séances.

Prof Kruse details several cases where seances were held with Gary connected to these instruments so to detect movement etc. However, as the reviewer points out there is inconsistency in how and when these instruments were used. From a scientific research perspective this would be regarded as a poor experimental design. Apart from saying something interesting happened, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from a collection of piece-meal

results without being able to say something about the conditions, their differences and how the results were obtained in each case.

- (4) With appropriate preparation of the cabinet chair Mannion could have easily freed himself and slipped back without damaging the cable ties.

We have 2016 video to demonstrate the ability of Gary to free himself from such ties. So, the reviewers here are suggesting that a more robust control should have been in place to secure Gary to the chair, rather repeat the securing method only 'permitted' by Gary and that was used in 2016. I think that's a fair point.

- (5) Sole application of technical monitoring systems has proven to be of no advantage and even no value in the history of psychical research [...]. A famous (fraudulent) Example is the investigation of Eva Anna Fay by William Crookes in the late 19th century.

This is probably feedback that I'm most disappointed to find Prof Kruse does not address. In essence, the point being made is one of 'so what!', what does this tell us that hasn't already been published before? The approach taken by Kruse is simply a repeat of previous research, the reviewer mentions William Crookes but also, we have W J Crawford who did similar research using instruments and methods (appropriate for their time), to investigate the physical medium Kathleen Goligher. The point being, it is normal before researcher conduct their studies to understand the literature on the topic, to understand what has already been done, the criticism faced (so not to repeat the same mistakes) and areas that could be improved to ensure the approach taken could be defended in publication. But it appears that Prof Kruse by-passed this step and in doing so ended up repeating experimental methods that have been previously criticized and found lacking scientifically.

Referring to Dr Nahm's criticism of Prof Kruse's research of Warren Caylor published in JSE, he points out that Prof Kruse admits to:

"Hardly knowing anything about physical mediumship before, he was first introduced to the strange phenomena that happen in that context in spring 2015 by Lucius Werthmüller, the head of the Basel Psi Association, when he visited a public séance of another ostensible physical medium, Kai Mügge"

Could this lack of knowledge and experience allow for such discrepancies?

- (6) I encourage Professor Kruse to continue his mediumistic investigations [...] with morally less burdened mediums, especially with those who are willing to fully commit themselves to the control conditions of their investigators.

All the reviewers would have been very experienced psychical researchers and so it's no surprise that they would have been aware of the 2016 incident. And so, that raises another concern and valid point. If you intend to research physical mediumship, why use a participant that has already been shown to be willing to use deception and fraud for financial gain. Furthermore, what methods were used to discern that the participant chosen is a physical medium – now I appreciate this presents a chicken and egg scenario. Without the research how do you know if a medium is genuine etc. Well, the answer is to be officially tested, in the same manner as accreditations are awarded to mental mediums. The Psychic News TrUTH campaign

was based upon this idea and had the support from organizations around the world that were willing to provide sympathetic test protocols to validate physical mediums.

One such organization was the Spiritualists' National Union and Arthur Findlay College – but, interestingly since the protocol was adopted, NO physical medium since 2016 has been willing to participate to validate their ability as authentic.

- (7) According to 'Timm's rule', the more or less regular production of these macro-phenomena as produced by these professional 'mediums' needs to be regarded as an unmistakable sign of the production of fraudulent phenomena.

This one I'm not familiar with Timms rule, but I not convinced that the more or less regular production of the physical phenomena would strictly lead to being a sign of fraud. So, I would have countered this point and referred to behavioral sciences and heritage from past psychical research, to get the reviewer to concede this point.

- (8) It is time to advance control conditions [...] not to invent largely useless electronics toys that again only provide [...] most likely misleading information.

As the reviewer points out, isn't it time to stop repeating historically flawed pseudo-experiments, with individuals that dictate the conditions without reasonable controls. Such method provides no evidence of survival, nor that the alleged phenomena was produced by a discarnate intelligence. Yes, it is interesting, fun and even cool using tech but it does nothing to further our understanding of physical mediumship, consciousness studies or post-mortem survival.

So, in conclusion it is evident that Prof Kruse's so-called research, though well-meaning has some fundamental flaws and without addressing these negates any suggestion of Gary's physical mediumship having been validated or scientifically tested. To claim such is simply a lie, and I suspect he is still the scam-artist he was in 2016, though probably better informed, now he understands the limitation of the technology used to measure him!

I think a further issue facing Prof Kruse is firstly one of objectivity. Regardless of the wants, wishes and hopes of a researcher – the researcher must always (at least try) to maintain objectively and allow to be led by the data (ref: Experimenters Effect) wherever it leads.

However, in Prof Kruse's own words:

"As the search for 'undisputed evidence' in physical mediumship seems to be an endless and often pointless endeavor, I decided I might as well relax and take a slightly different path. I started with the more open questions of what I can experience, learn and measure in Gary's seances, without interfering too much by asking for scientific conditions and strict control. Thus, the seances were done like normal 'home circles' in an informal setting."

So, do you mean Prof Kruse "...like normal 'home circles in an informal setting.'" Typically seen in a public séance and in the séance conducted in 2016?