

VISION

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Fortunately, somewhere between chance and mystery lies imagination, the only thing that protects our freedom, despite the fact that people keep trying to kill it off altogether.

— Louis Buñuel, *My Last Sigh* (1983)

When there is no vision, the people perish.

— *Proverbs 29:18*

As a man is, so he sees.

— William Blake, *Letter*, 1799

Vision is to *see*, the faculty of sight. Yet vision also concerns the *manner* with which one sees or conceives of something. In everyday life we are concerned with accurate representation of what surrounds us, and we turn to supportive equipment (eyeglasses) or to surgery to remove blockages to seeing (distortion, cataracts) when vision goes astray. Indeed, vision is synonymous with beauty, as when we remark that a person or thing is a *vision*. The term also refers to the product of the sort of foresight that guides us in coping with challenges presented by life in this physical plane. In this sense vision is an active process dependent upon information already residing in the “computer” and not simply a passive process concerned with what tickles the sensors. Finally, in the usage seen above by Buñuel, the term vision is used to refer to a *mental* image produced by the imagination, even of the mystical experience of seeing as if with the eyes of a spiritual being.

Each of the articles in this issue exemplifies an aspect of vision in its own way, actual or symbolic. Beverly Dearing and Sangeeta Singg, in *Photosensitive*

Assessment: A Study of Color Preference, Depression and Temperament pull together previous literature on the effects of color on depression to give direction to a study of their own. Review of the literature is a complex task due to marked differences in past methods for presenting color stimuli, whether reflected from the environment or projected, as well as the type and measurement of individual differences and the particular depressive symptoms addressed. Their own controlled study focuses on color preference effects seen with projected light of various wavelengths on depressed and non-depressed individuals of different temperaments. It is precisely this sort of conceptual and empirical “brick-on-brick” approach, followed by repetitions using various parameters, that will contribute to sorting out greater scientific understanding of energy medicine.

Excellent opportunities for ground-floor experiences remain in our field for scientists willing to conduct intelligent studies to delineate patterns underlying basic principles, studies that are so necessary in guiding us toward future understandings and applications. Sharing of images between creative investigators and visionary clinical practitioners gives direction to this process, each bringing their best skills to the table in the service of all.

Continuing in this issue’s exploration of visual phenomena with a paper to be discussed in a dialogue exchange in the next issue of *Subtle Energies & Energy Medicine* (Volume 7, Number 3), Philip Nicholson, in *Phosphene Images of Thalamic Sleep Rhythms Induced by Self-Hypnosis* literally takes the role of visionary observer by conducting a single case study with important neural implications. Photon emission tomography (PET) studies are providing highly technical detail of the importance of the lateral geniculate nucleus in human behavior, but using a “low-tech” scientific approach, Nicholson provides highly detailed self-observations of visual system phenomena and draws together implications of his observations for associated neural and behavioral activity in this area of the brain. It is interesting that Nicholson began his series of observations by examining a phenomena previously dismissed by other investigators as merely a “psychological component of perception.”

This same sort of reversal of “noise” and signal is elegantly presented in the fascinating experiments of Gary Schwartz, Lonnie Nelson, Linda Russek, and John Allen. Most people who have worked around electrical equipment have

noticed that the position of the body in relation to the equipment may increase noise in the functioning of the system. Typically one attempts to eliminate such noise, but these investigators instead focused on the phenomenon of the “antenna” aspects of the human (and animal) body as a new paradigm for studying systemic energy effects. Their series of observations in their paper titled, “*Electrostatic Body-Motion Registration and the Human Antenna-Receiver Effect: A New Method for Investigating Interpersonal Dynamical Energy System Interactions*” provide provocative examples of how to uncover and understand the meaning of this old/new phenomenon, as well as providing a new look at the energy medicine elephant through a new “keyhole.”

Finally, the cover for this issue, *Awareness*, complements in flight of curve and elegant simplicity, the act of seeing, by reference to the *seer*, him or herself. The lightness of the stone and the flow of its startling, oddly simple form raise the question of who it is *who is seeing, who is it who is aware?* We tend to answer that question through reference to roles: scientist, energy practitioner, client, philosopher, experiencer—we have many faces to give form to the eyes that see and the world that is seen, both inner and outer. Yet behind such simple answers we often have a sense that *something moves* with eyes that form a very different version of reality from our usual one, and we find ourselves transfigured, looking through creative eyes of the supernatural being that is us, at a sudden shaft of light that turns old to new!

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