

# Jacob W Glazier

Jacob Glazier is a transdisciplinary researcher based at the University of West Georgia. His scholarship includes critical theory and parapsychology.

## Career

Jacob W Glazier holds a PhD in Psychology from the [University of West Georgia](#) and a MS Ed degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Western Illinois University. Glazier holds an assistant professorship of psychology in the Department of Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology at the University of West Georgia. His research, published in many academic journals, takes a transdisciplinary approach covering critical theory and embodiment and their relation to praxis and clinical practice.

Glazier is co-editor of the tri-yearly publication *Mindfield: The Bulletin of the Parapsychological Association*. His interest in psi studies is focused on the ecology of the paranormal, animism, paranthropology, the philosophy of parapsychology, psychoanalysis and parapsychology, critical parapsychology, and trickster theory.

## Feminism and Parapsychology

In a 2022 essay Glazier looks at how feminist ideas relate to parapsychology, arguing for a perspective that counters the standard male-centred view of science and referring to female pioneers in parapsychology such as Rhea White, Carl Williams, and Beverly Rubik. He suggests that the fight for women's rights and the study of the paranormal have in common their challenge to the status quo. He refers to the strategy of '[transversality](#)' proposed by the French psychoanalyst [Félix Guattari](#), which advocates collaboration by different academic fields, as a means for parapsychologists to fight prejudice, while also making their studies more accessible to researchers in other areas of science.<sup>1</sup>

## Trickster Theory

Following [George P Hansen](#), Glazier suggests that our world might inherently embody qualities associated with the notion of the 'trickster', and that psi effects breaking through the boundary between our reality and other dimensions are too elusive ever to be tied down.<sup>2</sup> This is why such effects defy straightforward replication and are influenced by individual factors pertaining to both experimenters and participants. He argues that the existence of trickster-like behaviour in psi research, and more generally in science and society, exposes the pivotal role of language and intuitions in shaping scientific methodologies. He encourages parapsychologists to acknowledge the weight of these factors and their impact on the field.

## Emotional Stress and Psi

Glazier and co-authors have studied the psychological aspects involved in mind-matter interactions.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the conventional focus on statistical results obtained through the use of random number generators, they advocate paying attention to phenomenological factors that underlie real-life psychokinetic experiences, notably the emergence of intense emotional states, with initial reactions of surprise or disbelief, followed by the attribution of meaning intertwined with the metaphor of physical energy, and reflections on personal agency and control. This leads to a collective construction of event significance and a willingness to accept accompanying anomalous encounters.

## **Towards a Critical Parapsychology**

In a 2021 article, Glazier explores the historical, linguistic, and epistemological roots in the idea of 'the paranormal'. The term itself derives from Greek and refers to phenomena that challenge conventional scientific explanations, but has become increasingly nebulous over time. He highlights the challenges posed by the concept of the paranormal, extending beyond specific disciplines like psychology and argues that the complexity of the paranormal is influenced not only by scientific methodologies but also by historical and institutional factors. He also draws attention to the evolution of parapsychological terminology, emphasizing the limitations of labels, and advocating use of the term 'exceptional experiences'. The overall aim is to understand these phenomena within personal contexts and encourage a departure from reductionist approaches.<sup>4</sup>

In 2023, his edited volume *Paranormal Ruptures: Critical Approaches to Exceptional Experiences*<sup>[fn]</sup>Glazier (2023). appeared.

## **Energy of Despair**

With Evrard and others, Glazier consider how our understanding of the near death experience (NDE) might be informed by certain historical accounts, in which an individual, faced with the prospect of demise, summons outstanding intellectual and physical abilities to escape. This 'energy of despair' also seems to occur in a subset of contemporaneous NDE reports, as the experient becomes aware of the imminent prospect of death. Glazier discusses these accounts in the context of psychodynamic theory that incorporates both psychology and evolutionary theory, proposing that NDEs in their simplest form might hold survival value.<sup>5</sup>

Michael Duggan

## **Literature**

Evrard, R., Toutain, C., Glazier, J.W., & Le Maléfan, P. (2019). [The energy of despair: Do near-death experiences have an evolutionary value?](#) *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice* 6/2, 184-99.

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Glazier, J.W. (2021a). Trickster theory: Feminism, animism, and post-colonialism. *Mindfield* 13/1, 22-27.

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## Endnotes

### Footnotes

- [1.](#) Glazier (2022).
- [2.](#) Glazier (2019), (2021a).
- [3.](#) Glazier et al. (2015).
- [4.](#) Glazier (2021b).
- [5.](#) Evrard et al. (2019).