

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Jordan Hall, Bldg. 420

24 November 1993

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

FROM: Ernest R. Hilgard, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor of Psychology
Stanford University

CONCERNING: Eddie Oshins
Visiting Scientist
Stanford University

Mr. Oshins has a somewhat ambiguous status as a professional scientist because he has neither a Ph.D. nor a tenured academic position.

I have known him for many years, see him frequently, and am familiar with his published scientific articles.

My reason for preparing this statement is that I wish to acknowledge the seriousness of his dedication to science, to support his claim that others have used his findings without giving credit to him, and to note my awareness of a delicate situation involving Oshins that may soon evolve into a scandal at an international level.

Although short of the Ph.D., Oshins' educational background is sound. He began his higher education studying biochemistry at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and switched to Reed College where his interest shifted to physics.

He interrupted his undergraduate education at Reed to obtain an M.A. in physics at Yeshiva University in 1970, but returned to Reed to complete his B.S. in physics in 1971.

After a year of graduate work in applied statistics at New York University, he transferred to Stony Brook where he moved into public policy and received an M.S. in urban and policy sciences (1974). Since completing his formal education, he has continued his self-education through reading widely.

Always interested in fundamental theory and conceptualization, in the mid-1970s he became convinced that he had a formal way to reconcile arguments in the psychological literature concerning the nature of schizophrenia. His model, which in the early 1980s he coined "quantum psychology," attempted to harmonize the Von Domarus principle of "identification by predicates" with the Bateson, et al. "double-bind theory."

The endeavor by Oshins contrasts notably with other attempts to relate quantum physics with psychology. These have usually been either purely philosophical, or often loose, incorrect, and even fraudulent associations. In contrast, Oshins believes that he may have found physical consequences to his psychological work. His approach is critical, formal, and empirical.

Although this work still awaits experimental confirmation, I find his insights informed and deep, and his reasoning compelling. Oshins is open and quite willing to change his model to

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incorporate new facts and knowledge, and as such demonstrates a healthy capacity for scientific growth.

An early publication that brought his ideas before a wider audience was co-authored with David McGoveran:

Oshins, E. and McGoveran, D. "...thoughts about logic about thoughts...: the question 'schizophrenia?'" In Banathy, B.H. (ed.) (1980), Systems science and science, Proceedings of the 24th annual North American meeting of the Society for General Systems Research, pp. 505-514. Reprinted in Gray, W., Fidler, J.W., & Battista, J.R., (eds.) (1982), General systems theory and the psychological sciences, vol. 2, first printing, pp. 81-90. Reprinted, with a previously unpublished Errata, both: as a collateral paper, in McGoveran, D. (ed.) (1984), Discrete approaches to natural philosophy, Proceedings of the 1st ANPA West meeting, November 23-25, Stanford University. Boulder Creek, CA: Alternative Natural Philosophy Association West; and in Oshins, E. (1987, note # 6, pp. 32-42), Quantum psychology notes, vol. 1: a personal construct notebook. Menlo Park: California. Published by Eddie Oshins.

Oshins has had various associations with Stanford University since the mid-1970s. He became a visiting scientist in the theory group at SLAC (Stanford Linear Accelerator Center), served as a visiting scholar and research associate in the Department of Psychology, and is currently a visiting scholar in the Department of Physics.

More recently he has become a research associate and the principal investigator for the quantum psychology project at the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto, California.

An important service to the cause of science was Eddie Oshins' efforts on behalf of the Russian scientist, Yuri F. Orlov.

During Orlov's imprisonment in Russia, Oshins had obtained a preprint of Orlov's mathematical paper ("Group Theoretic Approach to Logic: The Wave Logic P"), which he cited in his above mentioned psychological paper with McGoveran. When Orlov himself started to apply his own ideas to psychology in documents smuggled from the Gulag, Valentin Turchin forwarded these to Oshins, as the only person outside the Soviet Union who understood Orlov's psychological ideas, with the request to edit them and secure their publication. He was successful in doing so in the International Journal of Theoretical Physics (1982).

Oshins also edited the translation of a second smuggled paper, published by the New York Academy of Sciences, although his role as editor was not announced until an Errata to this article was published under his name in 1983. In addition to speaking and writing extensively on Orlov's plight, Oshins also discussed Orlov's work along with his own in numerous talks. One such example was his 1981 lecture at SLAC.

Following Orlov's release from prison, a reception was held for him at the New York Academy of Sciences in October 1986. Although Oshins was neglected by Valentin Turchin, who presided, Orlov and his wife, Irina, told Oshins that they knew all the things he had done on their behalf and that they would be eternally grateful to Oshins for his role in Orlov's freedom.

That warm relationship, unfortunately, has not continued.

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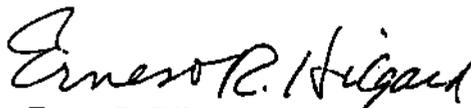
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Another source of disappointment to Eddie Oshins has been an issue between him and Amit Goswami that has had its ups and downs over some 10 years. As long ago as January 1983, Goswami wrote an apologetic letter for his failure to cite Oshins' work adequately and promised to provide proper citation in his book when it was finally published. Yet in his 1993 book, The self-aware universe: How consciousness creates the material world, this neglect and misrepresentation has persisted.

While this account does not do credit to the productivity of Oshins in many directions, I hope that it may serve some purpose in calling attention to his persistence in working seriously as a scientist and thinker, despite his failure to have found a secure connection within the usual type of academic career.

In conclusion, along with my own willingness to vouch for Oshins' substantial contributions to science and to attest to the maltreatment that he has received, I am aware of additional established scientists and others who would also stand behind Oshins' record on these matters.

Sincerely,



Ernest R. Hilgard, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor of Psychology

ERH/t

For information only:

Member, National Academy of Sciences

HILGARD, ERNEST ROPIEQUET, psychologist; b. Belleville, Ill., July 25, 1904; s. George Engelmann and Laura (Ropiequet) H.; m. Josephine Rohrs, Sept. 19, 1931; children—Henry Rohrs, Elizabeth Ann. B.S., U. Ill., 1924; Ph.D., Yale, 1930; D.Sc., Kenyon Coll., 1964; LL.D., Centre Coll., 1974. Asst. instr. in psychology Yale U., 1928-29, instr., 1929-33; successively asst. prof., asso. prof., prof. psychology Stanford, 1933-69, emeritus prof., 1969—, exec. head dept., 1942-50; dean grad. div., 1951-55; Bd. dirs., pres. Ann. Reviews, Inc., 1948-73; With USDA, Washington, 1942, OWI, 1942-43, Office Civilian Requirements, WPB, 1943-44; Collaborator, div. child devel. and tchr. personnel Am. Council Edn., 1940-41; nat. adv. mental health council USPHS, 1952-56; fellow (Center Advanced Study Behavioral Scis.), 1956-57; Mem. U.S. Edn. Mission to Japan, 1946. Author: several books, latest Theories of Learning, 1948, rev. edit., 1981, Introduction to Psychology, 1953, revised edit., 1983, Hypnotic Susceptibility, 1965, Hypnosis in the Relief of Pain, 1975, Divided Consciousness, 1977, American Psychology in Historical Perspective, 1978. Bd. curators Stephens Coll., Mo., 1953-68. Recipient Warren medal in exptl. psychology, 1940; Wilbur Cross medal Yale U., 1971; Gold medal Am. Psychol. Found., 1978. Hon. fellow Brit. Psychol. Assn.; mem. Am. Psychol. Assn. (pres. 1948-49), Am. Acad. Arts and Scis., Nat. Acad. Edn., Soc. Psychol. Study Social Issues (chmn. 1944-45), AAAS, Nat. Acad. Scis., Am. Philos. Soc., Internat. Soc. Hypnosis (pres. 1973-76, Benjamin Franklin gold medal 1979), Sigma Xi. Subspecialties: Cognition. Current work: History of American psychology. Home: 850 Webster Palo Alto CA 94301