

Radionics—Medicine or Magic?

Linda Fellows

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Radionics and Psionic medicine are aspects of essentially the same healing discipline which emerged in the 1920s and whose adherents divided into 2 groups in the late 1930s. Psionic medicine became reserved for the medically qualified and radionics absorbed everyone else. Since then each group has developed its own ways of working, and each has a large following of satisfied customers, but despite this neither has found favour with disciples of the prevailing 'scientific' view of the world. The stumbling

block has been the use of dowsing to obtain information and particularly, in the case of radionics, the assertion that both analysis of causes and treatment of illness can be carried out, if necessary, entirely at a distance.

This paper outlines what radionic practitioners do, to what extent that can and cannot be reconciled with current materialistic science, and the suggestion that radionics might be better considered as a modern manifestation of traditional white magic, common to all cultures

So what do radionic practitioners do?

The radionic procedure consists of two distinct parts, an analysis and a treatment.

A client requiring treatment provides the practitioner with information about his/her condition together with a small hair sample to serve as a 'witness' — that is something which represents that person as a unique individual, and to which the practitioner can seemingly 'tune in' to investigate the per-

son's condition by means of pendulum dowsing. For the analysis, the practitioner uses lists and diagrams of both physical organs and putative subtle energy structures posing the question 'To what extent does this structure deviate from functional perfection?' and records the result on a chart. The weaknesses which this reveals are then investigated further to find causes. The subtle energy structures investigated are those posited in ancient Indian texts, viz the mental, emotional and etheric bodies, the chakras and nadis (Tansley, 1972). These are deemed to be the scaffolding on which the physical form manifests. It is questionable whether these have any three-dimensional reality, but they seem to provide a useful model which reflects an underlying truth and which can be accessed and investigated by the super-sensible skill of dowsing. Radionic practitioners find that the causes of many physical illnesses can be found in the subtle structures, and that by treating these weaknesses radionically physical problems can be lessened or completely eliminated. It is also believed that early intervention in the subtle bodies can pre-empt the development of disease in the physical body. Except in the case of physical damage, most conditions are found to have their roots in the subtle structures, including susceptibility to infections.

Radionic treatment is carried out by entering sequences of numerical digits known as 'rates' onto a radionic 'instrument.' They are numbers which have mostly been derived by dowsing to represent the ideal energetic state of the organ or structure to be treated. Different systems of rates are in use in the UK and elsewhere, suggesting that the actual numbers are less important than what they are held to represent, and that they seem to be more like an agreed code set up between the practitioner and the ultimate agent of healing, whatever that might be. Rates have no mathematical significance and are merely symbols. Tansley (1934-88) argued that any numbers would do as rates, provided they are used consistently (Tansley, 1982) but other practitioners claim there is a value in the same set of rates being used by many people as the effects are reinforced, and that the number sequences of rates can reveal unexpected links between physical and subtle structures. Many practitioners are convinced also that rates and other information are given to them by helpful discarnate beings.

Radionic instruments are a heterogeneous collection of boxes, which have evolved in various ways over the years, fitted with dials, knobs or numerical key pads onto which appropriate rates can be entered, together with a small plate on which the patient's witness is placed. They vary from complex electrically powered devices to simple boxes with little or no wiring. The circuitry usually means nothing to electrical engineers and since most of

them work with any power supply turned off anyway their role seems to be that of a focus for the procedure. The patient's witness is left on the device for a time determined by dowsing. Treatment is thereby sent to the patient wherever they are on the planet. Although some conditions can respond quickly, long standing problems may require months of continuous treatment before a sustained improvement sets in, but the analysis will usually reveal an underlying improvement in the subtle structures before physical improvement is seen.

It must be said at this point that after learning the basics of radionics by the rates/instruments route, many practitioners find they eventually dispense with one or both of them. They might, for instance, simply write the rates down on paper and swing a pendulum over them till it is indicated that the treatment has been sent. Some use cards with diagrams or images devised to represent the required healing intention and place the client's witness on these. Two useful series of treatment cards are those devised by Malcom Rae (1913-79), and the Meridian Cards of Alison Davy. Among more recent instruments is a holographic plate onto which the witness is placed, and a block of etched glass called Clear Channel (Dennison, C.). A virtual instrument which can be run on a computer yet behaves like a classical instrument has been devised by Geoffrey Ardens. A good grounding in the conventional ways of doing an analysis and treatment is essential before employing any short cuts. Experienced practitioners can, in an emergency, carry out the procedure using pencil and paper, or even in their heads, but this is not recommended as it can be exhausting. Exhaustion in radionic practitioners is a common problem, but the use of an instrument seems to protect against it.

Some practitioners 'potentise' unmedicated lactose pills (or other medium—water can suffice) by placing a vial of pills on their treatment device with appropriate rates and then post it to the client to be taken orally. There is nothing material in these remedies, apart from the sugar itself. Many patients prefer this method of treatment as it gives them some control over their own healing. Also simulating homeopathic remedies by this method allows one to produce very low potencies, such as 1X, free of original substance. Such radionic potencies have been found useful for clearing toxic effects of poisons from the etheric body.

But does radionics really work?

However implausible radionic analysis and treatment might sound, there is overwhelming anecdotal evidence that it does work. Double blind trials, even if they could be designed, which is doubtful, are beyond the resources

of the radionic community, but surveys of patient satisfaction have been overwhelmingly positive (Lafferty, 1998, 2004; Mayne, 1977). Radionic effects are real, however challenging this is currently to scientific orthodoxy, but changes in our vision of reality which have emerged from science, particularly quantum physics, in the last 100 years are now beginning to provide some indications that radionics may not be quite so implausible after all.

The changing face of science

The ability of people to connect telepathically over long distances has been demonstrated many times, for example Vasiliev in Russia and Targ and Puthoff, working for the CIA, in the USA. Electromagnetic shielding could not block this, and, as with radionics, the effect did not lose strength with distance (Targ & Puthoff, 1974; Vasiliev, 1976).

Interconnection of a different kind was revealed by the work of Stanislav Grof. Under the influence of LSD patients regressed and identified with every species on the evolutionary tree, and also described detailed descriptions of historical events, out of body journeys, past and future life expectancies. This led him to conclude that 'If the mind is a continuum, a labyrinth connected not only to every mind that exists or has existed, but to every atom, organism and region in space and time, the fact that it can occasionally have transpersonal (psychic) experiences is not so strange (Grof, 1985).

The inference from quantum theory is that the wave associated with every sub-atomic particle extends to infinity in space, and that therefore everything in the universe is in touch with everything else. One aspect of radionics which has been totally unacceptable to most physicists is its claim to treat at a distance, seemingly instantly, without loss of effectiveness no matter where in the world the patient is located. Quantum theory also predicted, (and this was subsequently proven), so-called 'entanglement', that is *instantaneous* connection between previously linked sub-atomic particles no matter how far apart in the universe they might subsequently be. It was then realised that this link is probably not through space at all but via a reality beyond space-time where there is *no space and no time* (Greene 2004). This has given rise to suggestions that radionics takes place outside the space-time matrix and is not subject to its limitations. This may well be so, but we are still a long way from understanding how information is obtained via our minds about the state of a person's health, and how healing 'energy' can be transmitted back to a patient by essentially mental intention.. Brooks (2004) pointed out that quantum mechanics describes how atoms combine

into molecules and so underpins chemistry. Chemistry underpins biological processes, but the leap to understanding how biological processes are informed by a life force has not yet been made.

In recent years other phenomena have come to light which might have a bearing on radionics, particularly radionic remedies. One is the placebo effect, the bane of drug company double blind trials. The body can seemingly be 'tricked' into healing through belief in what is being done to it. (Motluk, 2006). Another is the discovery of epigenetic inheritance, viz. the chemical modification of the genome, e.g. by methylation or acetylation, as a result of exposure to stress or toxic material and the transmission of its effects to subsequent generations. This has come as a great surprise to those who believed the genome was only modified over long periods of time by random mutations. Some have hailed it as an explanation for the generation of miasms and their inheritance, but again we know too little about the way in which any modifications are transmitted, and their stability over generations, to jump to any conclusions. We are still faced with explaining how homeopathic remedies might clear such effects. What we can see is how toxic man-made material released into the biosphere might affect all our futures (Ho, 1998).

The struggle between science and psychism

There is nothing in the current scientific landscape which can begin to explain the seemingly psychic aspects of radionics and in the interests of honesty this nettle has to be grasped. It requires an approach by the practitioner which could be said to be ritualistic. For the entire procedure to be effective both practitioner and client must be willing participants, and the practitioner needs to be in a calm and focussed state of mind before attempting it—most find a preliminary meditation essential. 'Rates' are unquestionably symbols devised to represent the ideal energetic state of an organ or system. Remedies, where given, are inert substances infused with meaning rather like magical talismans. We are forced to ask whether radionics is, or is akin to, practices of traditional white magic common to all cultures.

Throughout its history practitioners of radionics have striven to present this art as a scientifically 'respectable' activity using 'instruments'. Any intimation of psychism or mysticism was expurgated from public utterances. It is deemed to have been discovered by the American neurologist Albert Abrams in the early part of the 20th century. When percussing the abdomen of patients he noticed that a strange dull note was obtained in different places depending on what illness the person had, and he felt he had discovered

something of great importance. He then found the same dull notes could be detected on the abdomens of healthy subjects if they were connected by a wire to a sick patient, or just held a vial of diseased tissue against their body. He developed circuitry incorporating either the patient, or the patient's witness (such as a blood spot), and a healthy person to act as detector and found that he could use this as a way to diagnose what was wrong with the patient. Certain diseases were found to cause the dull note on overlapping sites on the abdomen, but by introducing different resistors into the circuit he found he could distinguish between them. (*Note that these resistance values in ohms were the precursors of 'rates'.*) It is impossible to believe that Abrams was not aware that there was more to his findings than could be explained by 'science'. For example his writings admit that subjects were at times required to face west and wear red cloths on their heads in order for measurements to be made but this was not widely publicised. The dull notes he found on percussion are likely to have been an unwitting form of dowsing. His method of diagnosis, known as the Electronic Reactions of Abrams (ERA), nevertheless achieved considerable clinical success on both sides of the Atlantic. In the U.K, a commission was set up in 1924 under Lord Horder to investigate the work of W.E.Boyd, one of Abrams' followers. The trials were remarkably successful but the question of how his methods could work was left open (Scofield, 2003).

Abrams' work was taken up in the 1930s by Ruth Drown, a chiropractor. She developed instruments by which she could treat at a distance using a witness, at that time a blood spot, and her healing was targeted particularly at the endocrine glands. For this purpose she devised many rates which are still in use. A little too incautious in her claims for the FDA, she was tried and convicted of fraud in 1950, and briefly imprisoned. Radionics was banned in the USA, but research was continued in Britain by the engineer George de la Warr, whose wife was a successful practitioner. He devised a range of new instruments and acknowledged the fundamental role of the mind in radionics. All attempts to interest medical authorities in his work proved to no avail, other than to earn the wrath of those who saw in radionics a threat to the status quo. In the 1960s he was sued, with the encouragement of a posse of medical men, by a lady to whom he had sold an instrument and who claimed that she could not get it to work and it had caused her psychological damage. De la Warr had no difficulty in finding witnesses in his defence, and was cleared of fraud, but was obliged to pay costs which nearly bankrupted him.

It has probably not helped public awareness and understanding of radi-

onics that its psychic, or at least psychological, nature was not publicly acknowledged sooner. Russell (1973) lamented how little progress had been made in making the benefits of radionics known to the public 50 years after Abrams' death, and 40 years later how little has changed. In fact antagonism has probably increased, probably due, a cynic might suspect, to its being perceived as a threat to the vested interests of some. Look up radionics on Wikipedia and you will find it dismissed as nonsense and Abrams as a charlatan. Many attempts have been made to put the record straight but a dismissive version is always restored within days.

So is radionics 'magic'?

Thirty years ago David Tansley (Tansley, 1982), who had successfully introduced Eastern ideas of subtle energies into radionic analysis, did draw attention to the futility of attempting to describe the processes of radionics within orthodox science, and became estranged from the Radionic Association as a result. He suggested it was a form of 'magic'.

'Due to its efforts...to ally itself with the linear and logical world of scientific thought radionics began to accumulate contradictory concepts and beliefs. (It is) filled with quasi-electronic instrumentation which is said to 'broadcast' healing vibrations over thousands of miles. Such claims have no basis in fact and lay radionics open to ridicule.'

Tansley claimed that radionics is a form of mental healing, instruments are only a link between practitioner and patient, as are rates, and both are expendable once the practice is understood. He suggested radionic activity was mediated by the right brain where intuition held sway in the dimension of consciousness. *'Time does not exist there whereas magical events do. Any knowledge needed can be contacted at any time.'*

Lyall Watson (1986), among others, also asked why radionic practitioners of the day didn't admit that they divine disease and treat by psychic means: *'They measure and treat at a distance by purely mental, and somewhat magical, means'*.

Neither Tansley nor Watson speculated as to what such 'magic' might actually be. The root of the word is found in Sanskrit (maga), in old Persian, magus, and found its way into Greek (magos) and Latin (magus), all meaning 'bearer of wisdom'. Blavatsky (1888), founder of the Theosophical Society, asserted that magic was 'a divine science, the participation in an aspect of divinity itself by means of the inner powers in a man's soul'. It did not imply any compromise of the laws of nature, and its aim was the perfection of man. A successor, Guy de Purucker (1974), stressed that spiritual disci-

pline and avoidance of 'lower psychism' were vital for all on such a path. Within lower psychism he included fortune telling, and all psychic activities likely to inflate the ego of the perpetrator.

Versluis, a contemporary Professor of Religion, believes that the similarities between magical practices among traditional cultures could not have arisen by chance and that they reflect eternal principles, based on supra-rational laws of which modern man is mostly unaware (Versluis, 1986). The Cosmos was seen as a Mind, manifesting geometric and numerical harmonies. Magic was the realisation of that Mind—and brought the power to divine the future, to control the weather and to *heal the sick*.

Is it time to publicly acknowledge the 'magical' nature of radionics?

In radionics we have a healing technique that can be applied anywhere, with little or no drain on natural resources, and without side effects. It might seem we should be buying TV time to tell the world about it? Indeed not. Society is entirely right to beware of dowsers and dowsing. The ability to swing a pendulum can be learned in a few hours. Learning to use it wisely can take years. Few beginners are warned of the dangers which it can present, how easily it is to be misled by it, or to abdicate responsibility for one's life by using it inappropriately. One can only imagine the result if dowsing became a 'mainstream' way of trying to acquire information without the understanding and experience that its safe use demands: society as we know it would collapse.

Traditional teachings all warn of the dangers of lower psychism. Carrying out radionics as a profession, as some of us do, is to daily face the challenges which this presents. Versluis defines the difference between white and black magic as serving the will of God, or playing God, respectively and it easy to see, even with the best of intentions, how one can slip from one to the other. He points out that the role of magic is not an egotistical means to power, but a harmonising force, acting through sympathy 'in every sense of the word'. He asserts that the loss of magic from the world would be an unmitigated tragedy, it being a link to our true nature, *knowledge of what we really are*, and it should be practised within the safety of a conventional religious discipline. By this he does not mean adherence to dogmatic sectarianism, let alone the politically motivated hatred and bigotry which we see all too frequently today, but a striving for peace and harmony which, in reality, is the underlying message of all the great spiritual traditions.

Is there a future for radionic healing?

Today, despite ample anecdotal evidence of the efficacy of radionics in trained hands and supportive discoveries in physics, we struggle to find a place in the accepted 'common-sense' landscape of reality. Many of us still dread the question 'What is it that you do?' Any suggestion of its being a relic of traditional magic, a word that has come to mean trickery and fraud and which has lost its true meaning, will not help our cause. Let us consider instead the state of healthcare today and ask if radionics has any place in it.

In the UK, the National Health Service cannot, on its own admission, cope with the demand for its services, and this is particularly true of the needs of the elderly. Radionics can offer supplementary, and safe, support for those in their later years, and in their earlier years too, at very low cost. In these days of dwindling planetary resources any healing technique which uses little more than the practitioner's own energy must be welcome.

The detrimental effects of pollutants of all kinds, chemical and electromagnetic, including much that goes under the banner of 'medication', released into the environment in the 20thC is now being publically admitted. Radionic practitioners have 'seen' this for decades and have the means to mitigate such effects, not just in humans but in animals and plants also. In the 1980s Aubrey Westlake suggested that the re-discovery of radiesthesia in modern times was a gift of Providence to help us deal with the negative effects of the release of unnatural industrial chemicals into the environment (Westlake, 1987).

We are all aware of the current politically motivated attacks on homeopathy and herbal medicine. The pharmaceutical giants and their allies, having largely failed to generate a sufficient stream of patentable 'new chemical entities' over recent years to ensure their own profitability are seemingly in the business of crushing any perceived competition. Having no product that can be targeted for regulation radionics might be in a better position to survive this assault, although we should be prepared for the ridicule that often goes with it.

Our education strategy is also under review. Hitherto it has been geared to the training of professionally qualified practitioners, but there are many interested and capable people who are keen to learn to use these techniques safely just to help their families and friends. Radionic and allied techniques will never be a substitute for conventional medical care, but might help to significantly reduce suffering and the need for complex and costly interventions.

Physicist David Bohm said that the strength of science is that it is based on

facts, and its weakness that only certain facts are permitted. It will take time for the facts of mind-driven healing, including psionic and radionic, techniques, to be understood and accepted by the general public, but that time will come. For now, we can all help to keep these skills alive.

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Linda Fellows may be contacted at linda@radionic.co.uk

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