

CONVERSATIONS UNLIMITED - Monday, April 21, 1986

INTRO UP AND UNDER

Hi, everybody. Most of us experience daily the sometimes strange ability to create a mental image. For example, as you listen to this program, imagine yourself in a pool, floating pleasantly in warm water. What do you see? In your mind's eye, as they say, can you see the water? The pool's edge? The motion of the water?

Today we'll be talking with Dr. Ronald Finke, assistant professor of psychology at the State University of New York ~~At~~ Stony Brook. Dr. Finke is the author of a piece that appeared in the March issue of the magazine Scientific American. The article was ⁱⁿ titled "Mental Imagery and the Visual System." Dr. Finke holds undergraduate degrees in both physics and psychology and he earned his Ph.D./at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and carried on research work at Cornell, Stanford and the University of California at Davis prior to joining the Stony Brook faculty in 1983.

Dr. Finke, I suppose it would be too much of a pun to suggest that you approach your research on mental imagery with your eyes wide open.

INTERVIEW DR. FINKE:

- Are mental imagery and visual perception related?
- Explain neural mechanisms involved
- Examples of how: distortion, speed etc.
- Results of experiments: horizontal/vertical
direction/left and/or right
rotating objects: parallelogram, alignment
- Differences in age groups
sex
cultural differences
- Prognosis for improved technique for investigations
- Bottom line: what's at stake for future?

MORE MORE MORE

14:00

We'll take a short break now, then return to talk with Dr. Ronald Finke about his research in such areas as memory and the belief in paranormal phenomena. Please stay with us.

BRIDGE MUSIC UP AND UNDER

Hi. I'm Al Oickle, and I'm at the State University of New York at Stony Brook with Dr. Ronald Finke. We're talking about Dr. Finke's research in visual perception and mental imagery. What we're talking about, Dr. Finke, is perception -- real and imagined. Or perhaps I need some straightening out. What's the difference between imagination and memory, between imagery and imagination?

INTERVIEW DR. FINKE:

- The phenomenal work of the blind Scots artist
- Is it necessary to have seen an object to imagine it?
- Tony Fabbri's "texture art"
- Distortions in visual memory: explain
- Belief in paranormal phenomena (UFOs?)
- Relation to ESP, psychic spirits
- Future research

29:00

OUTRO