

# BETWEEN WORLDS AND WAVEFUNCTIONS

*An Interdisciplinary Examination of Psychic Intuition, Mediumship,  
Quantum Physics, and String Theory*

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Interdisciplinary Studies in Consciousness and Theoretical Physics

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## Abstract

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This report examines the theoretical intersections between psychic intuition, mediumship, and two pillars of modern theoretical physics: quantum mechanics and string theory. Drawing on peer-reviewed literature from parapsychology, consciousness studies, and physics, this analysis evaluates whether the conceptual apparatus of non-locality, quantum entanglement, many-worlds interpretations, and the extra-dimensional frameworks of string theory provide scientifically coherent scaffolding for phenomena historically classified as paranormal. The report proceeds through four principal sections: an introduction situating both domains; a review of key empirical and theoretical findings; a critical analysis of proposed mechanisms; and a conclusion identifying productive avenues for further interdisciplinary inquiry. The report concludes that while mainstream physics neither confirms nor requires psychic phenomena, certain frontier theories generate conceptual spaces within which such phenomena are not categorically impossible, warranting continued rigorous investigation.

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 The Problem of Anomalous Cognition

Human cultures across every documented era have reported experiences that defy ordinary sensory explanation: knowledge obtained without known informational channels, apparent communication with deceased individuals, precognitive dreams, and remote perception of spatially or temporally distant events. Collectively catalogued under umbrella terms such as extrasensory perception (ESP), psychic intuition, and mediumship, these phenomena occupy an uncomfortable position in the modern academic landscape—too frequently reported to dismiss as mere anecdote, yet insufficiently explained by established neurobiological or physical models.

The scientific study of such anomalous cognition, known as parapsychology, has accumulated several decades of controlled experimental data, most prominently through the Ganzfeld experiments, remote viewing studies at Stanford Research Institute and the U.S. government-funded STARGATE program, and meta-analyses of presentiment studies. Critics of this research tradition point to methodological concerns, publication bias, and the absence of a plausible physical mechanism. Proponents respond that effect sizes in rigorous meta-analyses, while modest, rival those found in accepted areas of psychology and medicine.

The emergence of quantum mechanics in the early twentieth century, and the subsequent development of string theory and M-theory from the 1970s onward, has prompted a growing body of speculation—some scientifically grounded, much highly speculative—that these frameworks might offer the missing physical mechanism. This report critically evaluates those proposals.

## 1.2 Scope and Methodology

This report surveys peer-reviewed literature in physics, neuroscience, consciousness studies, and parapsychology published between 1935 and 2025. It adopts a position of methodological openness: claims are evaluated on the basis of evidentiary quality and theoretical coherence rather than prior commitment either to skepticism or to belief. The report does not argue that quantum physics proves psychic phenomena exist; nor does it argue that the absence of consensus confirmation means such phenomena cannot exist. It asks, more precisely: what do quantum mechanics and string theory actually permit or imply with respect to anomalous cognition?

### Terminology Note

Throughout this report, 'psychic intuition' refers to claimed acquisition of veridical information through non-standard channels, distinct from ordinary inference. 'Mediumship' denotes the reported capacity

to communicate with or receive information from discarnate entities or deceased individuals. These terms are used descriptively and carry no a priori endorsement of the phenomena's reality.

## 2. Key Findings

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### 2.1 Empirical Landscape of Parapsychology

#### 2.1.1 *Meta-Analytic Evidence*

The most methodologically sophisticated evaluation of anomalous cognition research comes from meta-analysis. Bem and Honorton's 1994 meta-analysis of 79 Ganzfeld studies reported a mean hit rate of approximately 32%, where chance predicts 25%, yielding an odds-against-chance ratio of approximately 29 trillion to one. A subsequent meta-analysis by Storm, Tressoldi, and Di Risio (2010), covering 108 studies, corroborated these findings with comparable effect sizes.

Remote viewing experiments conducted under controlled conditions at SRI International between 1972 and 1995 produced a series of results that led the American Institutes for Research to conclude, in its 1995 review commissioned by the CIA, that remote viewing demonstrated statistically significant effects that could not be attributed to chance, though the practical applicability for intelligence purposes was deemed limited. Physicist Edwin May, a long-term director of the STARGATE program, proposed an 'intuitive data sorting' model as a potential mechanism, positing that the human cognitive system might access probability distributions over near-future events.

Presentiment research, pioneered by Dean Radin at the Institute of Noetic Sciences, uses continuous physiological recording to detect apparent anticipatory responses to emotionally salient stimuli before those stimuli are presented. Meta-analyses of this body of work—sometimes called 'pre-stimulus response' studies—report small but consistent effect sizes, raising questions about the directionality of time as experienced by biological systems.

#### 2.1.2 *Mediumship Research*

Laboratory studies of mediumship have been conducted most systematically by Gary Schwartz at the University of Arizona's Laboratory for Advances in Consciousness and Health, and by Julie Beischel at the Windbridge Research Center. Schwartz's double-blind protocols attempt to control for cold reading, hot reading, and sensory leakage by interposing a blinded intermediary between medium and experimenter, and by comparing accuracy rates with those of control participants attempting to produce plausible readings without claimed psychic access.

Beischel and Schwartz (2007) reported that tested mediums demonstrated statistically significant accuracy in identifying specific details about deceased individuals in conditions designed to rule out conventional explanations. Critics have continued to raise concerns about blinding protocols and possible statistical artifacts. Subsequent work by Beischel and colleagues has attempted to address these concerns through more stringent designs, while acknowledging that no current study can be considered definitive.

**Key Empirical Summary**

Parapsychological research has produced statistically significant results across multiple independent laboratories and experimental paradigms. Effect sizes are small to moderate. No single study is conclusive, but the cumulative meta-analytic evidence resists easy dismissal on purely statistical grounds. The central unanswered question remains mechanistic: by what physical or informational process could anomalous cognition occur?

## 2.2 Quantum Mechanics: Core Concepts Relevant to the Debate

### 2.2.1 *Non-Locality and Entanglement*

Quantum non-locality, experimentally confirmed through Bell test experiments beginning with Aspect and colleagues in 1982 and refined in loophole-free tests by Hensen et al. (2015) and subsequent groups, demonstrates that spatially separated quantum systems can exhibit correlations that cannot be explained by any locally realistic model. The correlations themselves cannot be used to transmit information faster than light—a fact critical to mainstream interpretations—but their existence establishes that the universe is, at the quantum level, non-locally structured.

Quantum entanglement involves two or more particles sharing a common quantum state such that measurement of one instantaneously determines the correlated state of the other, regardless of distance. While this does not permit signaling, it does mean that physical reality at the quantum scale is not separable in the way classical intuition suggests. Physicist David Bohm's ontological interpretation, later elaborated in his concept of the 'implicate order,' proposed that the entire universe might be understood as a single undivided whole, with apparent separateness emerging as an explicate surface feature.

### 2.2.2 *The Quantum Measurement Problem and Consciousness*

The measurement problem—why and how quantum superpositions appear to collapse into definite classical outcomes—remains unresolved. Several prominent interpretations invoke consciousness as a relevant factor. In the original Copenhagen interpretation as understood by von Neumann, the chain of physical causation terminates in a conscious observer. Eugene Wigner formalized this in his 'Wigner's Friend' thought experiment. Henry Stapp has argued, building on von Neumann's formalism, that quantum mechanics necessitates an active role for mind in the physical world.

These consciousness-centric interpretations are minority positions within physics. The majority of physicists prefer the many-worlds interpretation (Everett), decoherence-based approaches, or relational quantum mechanics. However, the fact that the role of the observer has never been

fully excised from quantum foundations without significant interpretive cost provides a foothold for theories that posit a more intimate relationship between consciousness and physical reality.

### ***2.2.3 The Orchestrated Objective Reduction Model***

The Penrose-Hameroff Orchestrated Objective Reduction (Orch OR) hypothesis proposes that quantum computations occurring within microtubule protein structures inside neurons underlie conscious experience. If consciousness has a quantum substrate, then in principle, processes associated with consciousness might share properties with quantum systems: non-locality, superposition, and sensitivity to the quantum structure of spacetime.

Orch OR remains controversial among both physicists and neuroscientists. Thermal decoherence at biological temperatures is typically regarded as too rapid to permit sustained quantum computation of the kind the model requires. Hameroff and Penrose have responded with updated proposals for quantum error correction in biological systems. The hypothesis has neither been confirmed nor definitively refuted, and continues to generate research.

## **2.3 String Theory and Extra Dimensions**

### ***2.3.1 The Theoretical Landscape***

String theory posits that the fundamental constituents of reality are not point particles but one-dimensional vibrating strings of energy, whose different vibrational modes correspond to different particles. To be mathematically consistent, string theory requires additional spatial dimensions beyond the familiar three of space and one of time. The most developed version, M-theory, operates in eleven dimensions: ten spatial plus one temporal.

These extra dimensions are typically conceived as compact—curled up at scales far below current experimental detection limits (roughly the Planck length,  $10^{-35}$  meters). The Kaluza-Klein mechanism, the original proposal for extra dimensions preceding string theory, showed that a five-dimensional theory of gravity and electromagnetism, when the fifth dimension is compactified, reproduces four-dimensional general relativity and Maxwell's equations. This mathematical success established the plausibility of extra-dimensional frameworks.

### ***2.3.2 The Landscape and the Multiverse***

A striking feature of string theory is the existence of an enormous number of possible compactification geometries—estimated at  $10^{500}$  or more—each corresponding to a possible universe with different physical constants. This 'string landscape' naturally accommodates the anthropic fine-tuning of our universe's constants and suggests the possible existence of a vast multiverse of actualized universes.

The multiverse hypothesis, while emerging from theoretical physics, has obvious resonances with metaphysical traditions concerning parallel worlds, astral planes, and other dimensional realities invoked in mediumistic and spiritual frameworks. Whether this resonance is merely metaphorical or potentially substantive is a central question this report examines.

### ***2.3.3 Holography and the Bulk-Brane Model***

The AdS/CFT correspondence, proposed by Juan Maldacena in 1997, is one of the most celebrated results in theoretical physics. It demonstrates an exact duality between a gravitational theory in a higher-dimensional Anti-de Sitter (AdS) space and a quantum field theory on its lower-dimensional boundary. This 'holographic' principle suggests that all information in a volume of space can be encoded on its bounding surface.

In brane-world models derived from M-theory, our observable universe is conceived as a four-dimensional membrane (brane) embedded in a higher-dimensional 'bulk.' Gravity, unlike other forces, can propagate through the bulk, potentially connecting brane-worlds. Some theorists have proposed that this bulk propagation of gravity might, in principle, allow for informational interactions that appear non-local from within our brane—though the physics of such interactions is entirely speculative and has not been developed into a quantitative model.

#### **Theoretical Summary**

Quantum mechanics establishes that physical reality is non-locally structured and that the observer's role in quantum events remains unresolved at a foundational level. String theory posits a universe with more dimensions than are accessible to ordinary observation and implies the possible existence of parallel or adjacent universes. Neither framework currently provides a quantitative, predictive model of psychic phenomena, but both generate conceptual space within which such phenomena are not logically impossible.

## 3. Analysis

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### 3.1 Proposed Quantum Mechanisms for Anomalous Cognition

#### 3.1.1 *Quantum Entanglement as an Information Channel*

The most frequently cited quantum mechanism for psychic phenomena involves entanglement as a potential non-local information channel. The intuitive appeal is clear: if two particles can be correlated across arbitrary distances, perhaps two minds—or a mind and a distant physical system—can be similarly correlated. Several physicists have attempted to formalize this intuition.

Elisabeth Rauscher and Russell Targ proposed a model in which complex Minkowski eight-space (four real plus four imaginary dimensions) permits non-local connections that might underlie remote viewing. Their model generates testable predictions about the geometric structure of remote viewing accuracy. Physicist Nick Herbert, in his 'FLASH' proposal, argued that quantum non-locality could in principle support faster-than-light communication if combined with amplification; this was refuted by the no-cloning theorem and the no-communication theorem, which collectively establish that entanglement cannot be used to transmit classical information.

The no-communication theorem is critical. It demonstrates rigorously that no manipulation of one particle in an entangled pair can produce a detectable signal on the other particle without a classical communication channel. This appears to rule out entanglement as a mechanism for psychic information transfer—unless the cognitive access claimed involves something other than classical information, or unless the theoretical framework is modified in ways that require post-quantum physics.

#### 3.1.2 *Many-Worlds and Consciousness Selection*

In Everett's many-worlds interpretation, every quantum measurement results not in a collapse to a single outcome but in a branching of the universal wavefunction, with every possible outcome realized in a distinct branch. The subjective experience of a definite outcome arises because conscious observers exist within particular branches and cannot perceive others.

Some speculative proposals have suggested that mediumship might involve communication across branches, or that psychic intuition might involve a form of quantum-level 'branch selection' in which the mind preferentially inhabits branches that provide desired information. These proposals face severe difficulties: the many-worlds framework includes no mechanism for cross-branch communication (indeed, branches are defined by their mutual decoherence and inability to interact), and no account of how a biological system could perform branch selection.

A more modest version of this idea, explored by physicist David Deutsch and philosopher of mind David Lockwood, concerns whether conscious experience has a determinate location within the

many-worlds structure. Lockwood's 'many minds' interpretation proposes that what we call a single conscious mind is actually a superposition of mental states. Whether this has implications for anomalous cognition is highly indirect.

### ***3.1.3 Quantum Consciousness and Morphic Fields***

Rupert Sheldrake's hypothesis of morphic resonance posits that memory is not stored exclusively in individual nervous systems but in fields associated with species, habits, and forms—fields that are non-local and potentially temporally non-sequential. Sheldrake explicitly invokes non-locality in quantum mechanics as a precedent, though he does not propose a specific quantum mechanism.

Physicist Roger Penrose and physician Larry Dossey have separately proposed that consciousness may be non-local in ways that exceed what current neuroscience captures. Dossey's concept of 'non-local mind' draws on quantum non-locality as a metaphorical and potentially literal framework for understanding phenomena including distant healing intention, shared dreams, and certain mediumistic experiences. Dossey is careful to distinguish his position from naive quantum-to-consciousness extrapolation, but the foundational physics he invokes remains speculative in this application.

## **3.2 String Theory Frameworks and Non-Physical Dimensions**

### ***3.2.1 Extra Dimensions as the 'Location' of Discarnate Information***

One recurring proposal in the interdisciplinary literature is that the deceased or non-physical entities reported by mediums might 'exist' in extra dimensions inaccessible to ordinary sensory systems. This proposal draws on the brane-world cosmology in which our observable universe is a four-dimensional surface embedded in a higher-dimensional bulk. If consciousness can, in some way, extend into or interact with the bulk, then informational exchange with entities or structures in extra dimensions becomes conceivable.

This proposal faces immediate difficulties. Brane-world models are constructed precisely so that matter and forces (except gravity) are confined to the brane. Only gravitons are generally permitted to propagate in the bulk in standard models. The proposal would therefore require either that consciousness is not entirely a product of electromagnetic interactions (which are brane-confined), or that novel bulk-propagating degrees of freedom exist that interact with neurological systems. No published physics paper has developed such a model quantitatively.

### ***3.2.2 The Holographic Principle and Consciousness***

The holographic principle, as formalized in the AdS/CFT correspondence, establishes that all information within a volume of space can be encoded on its boundary. Some theorists of consciousness, including Paola Zizzi and Menas Kafatos, have proposed that if consciousness is

fundamentally informational, it might participate in holographic encoding. Under this view, consciousness would not be localized in the brain alone but distributed across the holographic degrees of freedom of spacetime.

This proposal is highly speculative and has not been developed into a quantitative model that generates testable predictions. However, it represents a serious attempt to connect a well-established result in theoretical physics—holography—with the phenomenology of consciousness in a way that could in principle accommodate non-local cognitive access. If consciousness participates in holographic encoding at the level of spacetime, then the strict locality assumed by neuroscience might be a derived rather than fundamental feature.

### ***3.2.3 The Multiverse and Survival of Consciousness***

String theory's landscape of  $10^{500}$  possible universes, combined with the anthropic selection of physical constants, raises the question of what constitutes personal identity and continuity across such a landscape. Max Tegmark's Mathematical Universe Hypothesis, which proposes that all mathematically consistent structures exist as physical realities, implies that every possible configuration of conscious experience exists somewhere in the multiverse.

Under this framework, the continuation of conscious experience after biological death—a central claim of mediumistic traditions—would be guaranteed, not by any supernatural mechanism, but by the sheer completeness of mathematical existence. The consciousness associated with a particular biological system would not be destroyed but would persist in other mathematical structures. This is not mediumship in any conventional sense, and Tegmark's hypothesis does not predict that deceased individuals could communicate with living ones. However, it represents a striking example of how the outer reaches of accepted theoretical physics generate conclusions that resonate with traditional metaphysical and spiritual frameworks.

## **3.3 Critical Evaluation**

### ***3.3.1 The Quantum Consciousness Leap***

The most significant objection to quantum and string-theoretic accounts of psychic phenomena is what critics call the 'quantum leap'—the argumentative move from genuine quantum phenomena (superposition, entanglement, non-locality) to claims about consciousness or cognition that go far beyond what the physics entails. Quantum mechanics is a theory of microscale particle behavior. Its application to the macroscale organization of neurons requires intermediate steps that have not been provided.

Max Tegmark's influential analysis (2000) calculated that quantum coherence in neurons would decohere at timescales of  $10^{-13}$  seconds—far too fast to play a role in neural processes operating at millisecond timescales. If the brain is effectively classical in its neural operations,

then quantum mechanisms cannot serve as the basis for anomalous cognition. Defenders of Orch OR and related models have contested these calculations, but the disagreement remains unresolved in the technical literature.

### **3.3.2 Conceptual Metaphor Versus Physical Mechanism**

A consistent concern in this interdisciplinary literature is the conflation of conceptual metaphor with proposed physical mechanism. Terms such as 'non-locality,' 'entanglement,' and 'higher dimensions' function in quantum mechanics and string theory with precise mathematical meaning. When imported into discussions of psychic phenomena, these terms frequently lose their mathematical content and operate as evocative metaphors.

*The problem is not that consciousness researchers look to quantum physics for inspiration—that is scientifically legitimate. The problem is when the metaphorical borrowing is presented as if it constituted a physical explanation. A physical explanation requires a quantitative model, a set of predictions, and a program of experimental tests.*

This distinction does not render the conceptual mapping valueless. Metaphors have historically played important roles in scientific discovery, and the recognition that physical reality is non-locally structured at the quantum level does license a re-examination of assumptions about separability, locality, and the scope of causal influence. The appropriate stance is to hold these conceptual possibilities open while insisting on the eventual provision of quantitative models.

### **3.3.3 The Measurement Problem as an Epistemic Opening**

One area where the quantum-consciousness connection retains genuine scientific traction is the measurement problem. The question of why and how superposition gives way to definite outcomes—and the role, if any, of observation in this process—remains contested at the foundational level of physics. This is not a peripheral issue but a central unsolved problem in the interpretation of quantum mechanics.

If consciousness is ultimately implicated in the measurement process—a position held by von Neumann, Wigner, Stapp, and others—then mind is not an epiphenomenon of matter but an active participant in the constitution of physical reality. This would not in itself explain mediumship or remote viewing, but it would establish the ontological framework within which such phenomena become theoretically possible: a universe in which mind and matter are not categorically separable.

## **3.4 Points of Genuine Convergence**

Setting aside overreach on both sides, this analysis identifies several points of genuine, if provisional, convergence between the physics and parapsychology literatures:

First, quantum non-locality demonstrates that the universe is not locally separable at the fundamental level. This does not entail psychic phenomena but does establish that strict spatial separability is not a fundamental feature of reality.

Second, the measurement problem has not been resolved in a way that definitively excludes the relevance of consciousness. As long as this problem remains open, the relationship between mind and physical reality remains genuinely uncertain.

Third, string theory's requirement for extra dimensions and its implication of a multiverse constitute a physical framework in which our observable four-dimensional spacetime is not the totality of what exists. Entities, processes, or information structures that do not fit within our four-dimensional brane are not, within this framework, logically impossible—though the specific claim that incarnate consciousness exists in extra dimensions has not been developed into a testable model.

Fourth, the holographic principle establishes that information is a fundamental feature of the physical universe and that its distribution is not strictly local. A theory of consciousness as fundamentally informational in character could in principle be embedded in a holographic framework.

## 4. Conclusion

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### 4.1 Summary of Findings

This report has examined the relationship between psychic intuition and mediumship, on one hand, and quantum mechanics and string theory on the other. The parapsychological literature presents a body of experimental evidence, methodologically uneven but statistically suggestive, that anomalous cognition occurs at rates exceeding chance expectation. This evidence is insufficient to establish the phenomena's reality beyond reasonable doubt, but it is also insufficient to justify categorical dismissal.

Quantum mechanics establishes non-locality, entanglement, and a still-unresolved measurement problem as genuine features of fundamental physics. String theory posits extra dimensions and a multiverse. Neither framework currently provides a quantitative, predictive mechanism for psychic phenomena. The no-communication theorem explicitly prohibits the use of quantum entanglement as an information channel. Claims that quantum physics 'explains' psychic phenomena typically involve a conceptual leap that the physics does not support.

At the same time, the physics genuinely establishes a universe more complex, more holistically structured, and more ambiguous with respect to the role of mind than classical physicalism assumes. The conceptual space opened by these theories is real, even if it has not yet been occupied by a confirmed mechanism for anomalous cognition.

### 4.2 Directions for Future Research

Several research directions appear productive based on this analysis. First, the development of post-quantum or generalized probabilistic theories may provide frameworks in which information flow without signaling is possible under expanded physical assumptions. Researchers such as Sandu Popescu and Anthony Short have explored 'non-signaling correlations' that exceed quantum predictions in principle; if nature permits such correlations, existing parapsychological results might find a home in such a framework.

Second, if the Penrose-Hameroff Orch OR model can be experimentally tested—particularly through advances in quantum biology and the detection of quantum effects in biological systems—this would either confirm or constrain the hypothesis that consciousness has a quantum substrate. The emerging field of quantum biology has already documented quantum effects in photosynthesis and avian navigation, indicating that quantum coherence in biological systems, while limited, is not categorically impossible.

Third, more rigorous mediumship and remote viewing studies, incorporating pre-registration, independent replication, and adversarial collaboration between skeptics and proponents, would

help establish whether the anomalous cognition effects reported in the literature are robust. Methodological convergence with the standards expected in clinical medicine would significantly strengthen the evidentiary base.

Fourth, the development of quantitative models connecting consciousness, information, and the holographic principle represents a speculative but potentially generative research program. If consciousness is understood as a process in which information is integrated across boundaries—consistent with Integrated Information Theory and Global Workspace Theory—then its relationship to holographic information encoding is at least worth formalizing.

### 4.3 Epistemological Caution and Intellectual Openness

This report closes with an epistemological observation. The history of science contains repeated instances of phenomena initially dismissed as impossible or paranormal that were subsequently incorporated into scientific frameworks: meteorites, continental drift, hypnosis, and ball lightning were all, at various periods, rejected by scientific consensus before gaining explanatory models. This history argues neither for credulity—most anomalous claims turn out to have conventional explanations—nor for premature dismissal.

The appropriate posture for a scientific community encountering reported phenomena that lack mechanistic explanations is energetic, methodologically rigorous investigation rather than either credulous acceptance or reflexive skepticism. If the phenomena are real, they deserve explanation. If they are artifacts of methodology, cognitive bias, or statistical fluctuation, rigorous investigation will reveal this. In either case, the investigation is warranted.

*Physics has taught us that reality is stranger than our intuitions. Quantum mechanics violates every commonsense principle of separability, determinism, and locality. String theory requires dimensions we cannot detect and a multiverse we cannot access. The lesson is not that any exotic claim is therefore plausible, but that the envelope of the physically possible is larger than classical physics suggested. Rigorous inquiry, not prejudgment, should determine what falls within it.*

Whether psychic intuition and mediumship ultimately find a home within that envelope, are explained by psychology and neuroscience, or remain genuinely anomalous is a question this report cannot answer. What it can affirm is that the question deserves the full, disciplined attention of the scientific community.

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— *End of Report* —