

Brenda J. Dunne (1944–2022)

Herb Mertz¹



Brenda Dunne, ca. 1982

Brenda Dunne, the long-time laboratory manager of the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) program at Princeton University, passed away on June 17, 2022. She studied developmental psychology, receiving a Master's degree from the University of Chicago in 1979. During this period, she also conducted studies in remote viewing. At a conference on this subject, she met Robert Jahn, a professor and dean of Princeton University's engineering school. Jahn had recently become interested in anomalous events based on positive results in a mind-matter interaction study conducted by one of his undergraduate students. Upon meeting Brenda, Jahn felt that she was the ideal candidate for manager of his proposed laboratory at Princeton.

Brenda arrived in Princeton in 1979 to design the PEAR lab as a friendly place for staff and volunteers to explore mind-matter interaction, remote viewing, and other anomalies. The lab operated for 28 years, with the PEAR program often cited as foundational to the field of anomalies, beginning with the landmark 1979 symposium sponsored by PEAR and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) on The Role of Consciousness in the Physical World. Brenda authored or co-authored many of the over 60 publications, as well as four books co-written with Jahn, including *Margins of Reality*

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(1987) and *Consciousness and the Source of Reality* (2011). Both were summaries of the PEAR work, which helped develop new protocols for remote viewing studies and carried out 25 years of highly significant RNG studies. Furthermore, one of her papers showed RNG data-position effects, with participants getting good results at the beginning which persistently declined over time (Dunne et al., 1994), and another showing consistent gender effects in Random Event Generator experiments (Dunne, 1998)

During the 1980s Brenda became a founding member of the Society for Scientific Exploration (SSE), a professional association, and in 1990 she co-founded the International Consciousness Research Laboratories (ICRL), a non-profit educational organization for furthering research and publishing books related to anomalies, with the goal of developing interest in the public. In 2007 the lab closed, and Brenda and Jahn moved ICRL into the town of Princeton where ICRL continued to sponsor research and publish books. In early 2022 Brenda received an honorary Ph. D. from Ubiquity University.

Brenda Dunne had a particular interest in developing young research minds for the field of anomalies. She enticed the next generation into discussions at SSE conferences, offering free pizza lunches to inquiring minds. For all of us who knew Brenda, she was a spellbinding storyteller and a warm presence in the field. Truly a bright light went out of this world with her passing. Brenda is survived by her son Jeff (now Executive Director of ICRL), daughter Jessica, and seven grandchildren.

References

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