



OBITUARY

Stephen E. Braude, Jazz Philosopher and Parapsychologist, 1945–2026

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Stephen E. Braude

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Our extraordinary colleague and friend, Steve Braude is gone, passing from this world on January 3, 2026. Our community of psi-interested people lost a wonderful example of the curiosity and rigorous thinking that defines us at our best. Steve was a professional philosopher but his wide ranging intelligence informed him deeply in many fields of intellectual relevance to the study of psi and anomalies. As a result, his books, papers, and essays became go-to classics for researchers in our field looking for theoretical and practical perspectives on the remarkable phenomena and data we explore.

Stephen was born April 17, 1945, in Las Vegas, Nevada. He studied Philosophy and English at Oberlin College and the University of London, and in 1971 he received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Maryland, where he spent much of his career. When he retired he and his wife Gina (who he said proved that miracles exist) moved to Las Vegas, returning to his birthplace. With his quirky sense of humor, I imagine he'd say he "returned to the scene of the crime."

He was both quiet and gregarious, and counted many in the psi research community as good friends, all admirers of his breadth of interests. He was a professional jazz musician, composing and performing solo and with the Yamara Band. He played cool, smooth jazz we can enjoy in many recordings, including videos that present the music with extraordinarily beautiful landscapes and backgrounds. Steve was always adventurous. I first encountered him at a post-conference evening gathering while he was playing a wire oven shelf – somehow drawing charming musical sounds from what should be clunky at best. He's the only person I know who had a pet pig – named Hamlet, of course. He summed up his way of looking at life in a tongue-in-cheek email signature: "If you never try anything new, you'll miss out on many of life's great disappointments."

Steve was also an accomplished photographer, and created a prize-winning collection of 3-D photographs that delight the eye and mystify the mind. He loved great music, and in each of his homes he created a listening room that sought perfection of presentation. I was fascinated to learn how deep one can go in that pursuit when Steve showed me the CD planing device he used to make the recording surface as nearly ideal as could be achieved. I think it's fair to say he was a perfectionist, remarking in one of his ironic persona descriptions that he was an "Audio Tweakmaster Dedicated to Falling Short of Perfection."

He was a past president of the Parapsychological Association, and was Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Scientific Exploration for 13 years. He published seven books, mostly addressing issues in psi research and theory, and over 100 articles in a range of



philosophical journals. His book titles are a testament to his unusual creative mind, including “Crimes of Reason: On Mind, Nature, and the Paranormal” and “First Person Plural: Multiple Personality and the Philosophy of Mind.”

Steve Braude was a tough minded, deeply insightful contributor to Philosophy and Parapsychology. He wielded a sharp and lucid logic in all his contributions and we will miss that voice. He was also a warm and funny character who became a dear friend to many of us in the

consciousness research community. He will not be forgotten, and through his writings and his many interviews will continue to contribute his clear thinking to our work. A deeper and more comprehensive look at Professor Braude’s many-sided persona can be enjoyed at his personal website, <https://www.jazzphilosopher.com/> Make some time to enjoy a picture made by Steve himself.

Dear friend, we will miss you. Rest in Peace.