

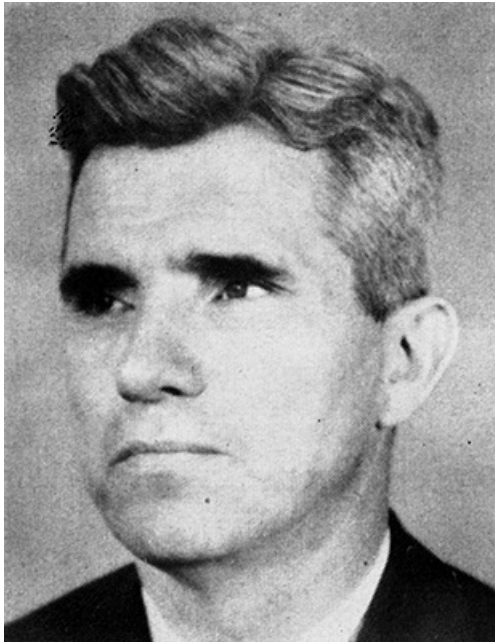
Rhine, Joseph Banks ^[1]

Rhine, Joseph Banks

by William S. Powell, 1994

29 Sept. 1895–20 Feb. 1980

See also: [Rhine Research Center](#) ^[2]



Dr. Joseph Banks Rhine, 1956. Image from the State Archives of North Carolina.

^[3]Joseph Banks Rhine, psychologist, parapsychologist, and university professor, was born in Waterloo, Pa., the son of Samuel Ellis and Elizabeth Ellen Vaughan Rhine. He spent a part of his youth in Ohio, served in the Marine Corps during [World War I](#) ^[4], and entered the University of Chicago in 1919. There he was awarded the B.S. degree in botany in 1922, an M.S. degree in 1923, and the Ph.D. in 1925. During the years 1924–26 he taught botany at West Virginia University, where he became interested in extrasensory perception. The work of [William McDougall](#) ^[5] in experimental psychology at Harvard University attracted him, and he studied there in 1926–27; after McDougall moved to [Duke University](#) ^[6], Rhine also went to Duke. First named a Fellow, in 1928 he became a psychology instructor and in time rose to the rank of full professor.

McDougall, Rhine, and other colleagues established the [Parapsychology Laboratory](#) ^[7] at Duke and conducted experiments in telepathy, clairvoyance, psychokinesis, and precognition. After the publication in 1934 of Rhine's book, *Extra-Sensory Perception*, worldwide attention was drawn to his work. In 1940 he became director of the laboratory, and from 1964 to 1968 he was director of the Institute of Parapsychology, an independent organization that he founded in Durham. While much of Rhine's early work was rejected by scientists, a *New York Times* survey in 1980 reported that "a majority of American scientists accept at least the possibility of ESP [extra-sensory perception]."

Rhine was the author of numerous other books and articles in both scholarly journals and popular magazines. Among them were [New Frontiers of the Mind](#) ^[8] (1937), [The Reach of the Mind](#) ^[9] (1947), and [New World of the Mind](#) ^[10] (1953). He was coauthor of [Extra-Sensory Perception After Sixty Years](#) ^[11] (1940) and editor of the [Journal of Parapsychology](#) ^[12].

In 1920 he married Louisa Ella Weckesser, who participated with him in his research and publications. They were the parents of Robert Eldon, Sara Louise, Elizabeth Ellen, and Rosemary. He died at his home near Hillsborough and a memorial service was held in Duke Chapel.



Professor William McDougall, 1938. Image from Flickr user Duke Yearlook/Duke University Archives.

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Image Credits:

Westmoreland, Alan. "Head shot of Dr. J. B. Rhine, Director of the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University, 1956." Call # N.2000.7.32, [State Archives of North Carolina](#) ^[3].

"William McDougall, 1938." Image from Flickr user Duke Yearlook/Duke University Archives. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dukeyearlook/4525716923/> ^[13] (accessed August 2, 2012).

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Authors:

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