

**Peter L. Nelson, Ph.D**  
*Social Scientist*  
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### ***Research Skills***

- Psycho-phenomenological research: qualitative and quantitative designs
- Statistical surveys
- Assessment instrument development
- Experimental and quasi-experimental research: univariate and multivariate designs
- Data analysis
- Psychological interviewing and assessment
- Qualitative research designs
- Ethnography (video)
- Focus groups
- End-user research
- Usability research and testing

### ***Education***

1966-68    **San Francisco State University, USA.** (BA cum laude, Psychology—1968)  
1984-88    **University of Queensland, Australia** (Ph.D., Psychology of Religion—1988)

### ***Research Experience***

1996-2008    **SOCIAL SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH CONSULTANT**

**5Dynamics, Inc. — Santa Cruz, California, USA (2004-08)**

- *Psychological assessment development, product development research and end-user testing*

**TUNRA — University of Newcastle, Newcastle, NSW, Australia (2003-04)**

- *VitaMedics: Advertising usability study*
- *Soccer NSW: Stakeholders' evaluation study*

**MAROC Market Research, Wyong, NSW, Australia (2003)**

- *Statistical analysis and questionnaire design*

**State University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA (2003-04; in conjunction with *The Child Spirit Foundation*)**

- *Design, implementation and analysis of an empirical study of recalled childhood spiritual experiences*

**American Business Visions, Tustin, CA (2001-02)**

- *Developed software concept and development plan for the Retirement Visualizer, an interactive, psychological and needs assessment package for future financial planning*

**Fund For Global Awakening (non-profit foundation), Point Reyes, CA (1999)**

- *Conducted focus groups and US national statistical survey on religion, values and community (with Clearwater Research).*

**Motorola Corporation, Chicago, IL (1999)**

- *Developed and conducted a seminar on end-user ethnographic research aimed at the identification of future markets for developers of innovative technologies.*

**The Wesley Central Mission, Melbourne, VIC, Australia (1998-99)**

- *Evaluated research needs, set up and staffed Wesley's Research and Advocacy Unit.*
- *'Beach House Devolution Study,' a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the needs and outcome of devolved institutional living for the severely disabled (statistical summary report and multi-media presentation)*

**The Methodist Mission, Christchurch, New Zealand (1996-98)**

- *Conducted a feasibility study for the implementation of a social science research unit at the Christchurch Methodist Mission (1996) and established research unit (1998).*
- *'Eastling House' Evaluation Study, a statistical, comparative examination of client's and care-givers' perceptions of child protection program outcomes.*
- *Care-givers of the Elderly: A Self-Perception Study—a series of interviews conducted to ascertain the perspectives of the front-line primary care-givers of the elderly at a Methodist sponsored home for the aged.*
- *Church Attendance: Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors—a statistical survey carried out to understand the underlying factors influencing increased church attendance at the Durham Street Parish, Christchurch, NZ.*

- 2000-01 MEMESTREAMS.COM, INC. San Francisco, CA  
Director of Assessment R&D
- *Developed an on-line attitude, work and personality assessments and portal to act as a gateway for this company's on-line management consultancy software.*
  - *Designed and conducted product usability research and testing.*
- 1997-98 TEXAS INSTRUMENTS CORPORATION Dallas, TX  
Senior Social Scientist—End-User Research
- *Selected (after a US-wide search for a social scientist) to conduct future markets social research studies on behalf of the Strategic Planning Group of the Digital Imaging Division.*
  - *Developed a model and wrote a position paper outlining the role of social science in a proposed Future Markets Group to be developed for TI corporate-wide.*
  - *Conducted a user-centered ethnographic study of two small northern California towns examining end-user confrontation with new technologies as well as the role of TV in the home (The Nevada City/Grass Valley Study: Looking at TV and New Technologies [multi-media]).*
- 1995-96 STATE UNIVERSITY AT WEST GEORGIA Carrollton, GA.  
Assistant Professor
- *Continued the development of an on-going study on the sociology and psycho-phenomenology of anomalous experiencing.*
- 1993-95 SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY NSW, Australia  
Lecturer
- *Using a quasi-experimental multivariate statistical design, examined the relationship of cannabis use to personality Trait Absorption and to self-perceived depression and anxiety.*
- 1992-94 CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION OF QUEENSLAND QLD, Australia  
Social Science Consultant (external); Senior Research Officer (internal)
- *Analyzed the survey data and co-authored the report for the Commission on police attitudes towards Aboriginal and Islander peoples.*
  - *Analyzed the survey data and produced a detailed internal report on the victims of crime in the state of Queensland.*

- *Analyzed the 1991-93 National Campaign Against Drug Abuse survey data (with particular emphasis on cannabis use in Queensland) for the CJC government report on cannabis.*
  - *Co-authored the Cannabis 'white' paper report presented to the Queensland Government (with Phil Dickie).*
  - *Wrote a critical review of the cannabis research literature for the CJC report on cannabis.*
- 1990-93      GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY      QLD, Australia  
Social Science Consultant; Australian Research Council Research Fellow
- *Acted as qualitative and quantitative research consultant for Dr. Julia Howell of the Division of Asian and International Studies on her research project: Hyperarousal and Deautomatization in Sufi Mystical Practice: Indonesian Cases (on-going).*
  - *Awarded a two-year Australian Research Council grant (large grant scheme) together with Dr. Julia Howell to conduct a two-year ethnographic and psycho-phenomenological study on religious experiencing and worldview conversion of Australians joining an Asian religion.*
- 1988-90      PACIFICA GRADUATE INSTITUTE      Santa Barbara, CA  
Associate Prof. and Director of Research, Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology
- *Developed combined qualitative/quantitative methodological perspective and direction for the Ph.D. program in clinical psychology.*
  - *Was awarded two grants (1988 & 1989) by the Nathan Cummings Foundation to continue research into non-ordinary experiencing.*
- 1985-88      UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND      QLD, Australia  
Doctoral student: Department of Studies in Religion
- *Developed statistical, psycho-phenomenological methodology for studying anomalous experiences in a non-reductive way.*
  - *Conducted study of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity in church attendees.*
- 1973-74      UNIVERSITY OF SURREY      Guildford, England  
Research Associate: Department of Linguistics
- *Psychophysiological research associate—study of syntax processing in the human brain.*
- 1970-71      UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN      Copenhagen, Denmark  
Postgraduate Research: The Psychological Institute
- *Electrophysiological correlates of arousal states and operant control of covert electroencephalographic events in humans.*
  - *The Weber-Fechner Law Revisited: A mathematical model extending Mundie's Neural Calculus.*
- 1969-70      ROCKLAND STATE HOSPITAL RESEARCH CENTER      Orangeburg, NY  
Research Associate
- *Computer monitoring of chronic schizophrenic patients in an open ward situation.*
  - *EEG biofeedback development project.*
- 1967-68      SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY      San Francisco, CA  
Undergraduate Honors Research: Department of Psychology
- *Interpersonal perception: An exploratory empirical study of R.D. Laing's model of interpersonal knowing.*
  - *Electrophysiological correlates of hypnotic states.*

## ***Scholarships, Grants and Awards***

- 1993-95**     *Recruitment Award, Southern Cross University.* - Personality Trait Absorption and Cannabis.
- 1991-92**     *Australian Research Council: Large Grant Scheme* (with Dr. Julia Howell, 2 yrs.) - Religious Experience in Australian New Religions: Australians Entering Asian Religions.
- 1988-89**     *The Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York, USA.* Grants to individuals (Two consecutive years—through the Esalen Institute) - Continuing research on the Technology of Altered State Experiencing.
- 1986-87**     *Australian Commonwealth Postgraduate Research Award.*

## ***Publications & Invited Lectures***

### **REFEREED ARTICLES (single author)**

- Nelson, P. L. (1997-98). Consciousness as reflexive shadow: An operational psycho-phenomenological model. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 17(3)*, 215-228.
- Nelson, P. L. (1995-96). Personality trait absorption: An exploratory study of opportunity and capacity in relation to cannabis use. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 15(1)*, 75-101.
- Nelson, P. L. (1994-95). Cannabis amotivational syndrome and personality trait absorption: A review and reconceptualization. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 14(1)*, 43-58.
- Nelson, P. L. (1991-92). Personality attributes as discriminating factors in distinguishing religio-mystical from paranormal experiences. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 11(4)*, 389-405.
- Nelson, P. L. (1991). Transcending limitations: Spontaneous paranormal and spiritual experiences in Australian daily life. *Australian Parapsychological Review, 2 & 3(18)*, 8-12.
- Nelson, P. L. (1990). The technology of the praternatural: An empirically based model of transpersonal experiences. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 22*, 35-50.
- Nelson, P. L. (1989). Personality factors in the frequency of reported spontaneous praternatural experiences. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 21*, 193-209.

### **REFEREED ARTICLES (multiple authors)**

- Howell, J. D. & Nelson, P. L. (1998). The Brahma Kumaris in the Western World, Part II: Demographic Change and Secularization in an Asian New Religious Movement. *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion, 11*, 225-239.
- Howell, J. D. & Nelson, P. L. (1997). Structural adaptation and “success” in the transplantation of an Asian new religious movement: The Brahma Kumaris in the western world, Part I. *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion, 8*, 1-33.
- Nelson, P. L., & Hart, T. (2004). A survey of recalled childhood spiritual and non-ordinary experiences: Age, rate and psychological factors associated with their occurrence. *Internet distribution.*

Nelson, P. L. & Howell, J. D. (1993-4). A psycho-social phenomenological methodology for conducting operational, ontologically neutral research into religious and altered state experiences. *Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 2-3, 1-48.

Prutting, C. A., Mentis, M., & Nelson, P. (1988). Critique of Siegel: The limit of “The limits of science in communication disorders.” *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 54, 299-300.

#### **BOOKS, CHAPTERS, MULTI-MEDIA PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER PAPERS (single author)**

Nelson, P. L. (2010). Altered States of Consciousness. In J. G. Melton & M. Baumann (Eds.), *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices* (2nd ed., pp. 81-85). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Nelson, P. L. (2000). Mystical experience and radical deconstruction: Through the ontological looking glass. In T. Hart, P. Nelson, & K. Puhakka (Eds.). In *Transpersonal knowing: Exploring the horizons of consciousness*. New York: SUNY

Nelson, P. L. (1999). *Research and advocacy at the Wesley Mission: An overview and proposal*. (internal proposal). Melbourne: The Wesley Central Mission.

Nelson, P. L. (1999). *WASS: A post-devolution guardian survey*. (internal publication of a statistical survey of residents’ guardians for the Wesley Accommodation & Support Services). Melbourne: The Wesley Central Mission.

Nelson, P. L. (1999). *WASS: Reflections on the devolution of Beach House*. (internal multi-media publication of interviews with selected staff members for the Wesley Accommodation & Support Services). Melbourne: The Wesley Central Mission.

Nelson, P. L. (1998). *The Eastling House Residential Program: An Empirical Study of Perceived Effectiveness* (internal research report). Christchurch, N.Z.: The Methodist Mission.

Nelson, P. L. (1997). *The Future Markets Group (FMG)—Establishing User-Centered Research at Texas Instruments. The Discovery of New Customers, New Products and New Markets* (internal publication). Dallas: Texas Instruments Corporation.

Nelson, P. L. (1997). *The Nevada City/Grass Valley study: Confronting new technologies* (internal multi-media publication of an ethnographic study of two small California towns). Dallas: Texas Instruments Corporation.

Nelson, P. L. (1993). *Who are the victims of crime? A statistical survey*. Brisbane: Criminal Justice Commission of Queensland (internal publication).

Nelson, P. L. (1993). A critical review of the research literature concerning some biological and psychological effects of cannabis. In Advisory Committee on Illicit Drugs (Eds.), *Cannabis and the law in Queensland: A discussion paper* (pp. 113-152). Brisbane: Criminal Justice Commission of Queensland.

Nelson, P. L. (1989). A survey of mystical, visionary and remote perception experiences. In G. K. Zollschan, J. F. Schumaker, & G. F. Walsh (Eds.), *Exploring the paranormal: Perspectives on belief and experience* (pp. 184-214). Dorset, U.K.: Prism.

Nelson, P. L. (1971). *The Weber-Fechner Law Revisited: An Extension of Mundie’s Neural Calculus*. Paper presented at the Psychological Institute, The University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

**BOOKS, CHAPTERS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS** (multiple authors)

- Hart, T., Nelson, P. & Puhakka, K. (eds.) (2000). *Transpersonal knowing: Exploring the horizons of consciousness*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Howell, J. D., Subandi, & Nelson, P. L. (1997). Indonesian Sufism: Signs of resurgence. In (P. B. Clarke, Ed.), *New Trends and Developments in the World of Islam*. London: Luzac Oriental.
- Nelson, P. L. & Bennett, D. (1992). *Police attitudes towards Aboriginal and Islander peoples*. Brisbane: Criminal Justice Commission of Queensland (internal government publication).