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Nota di contenuto	Introduction : from spiritualism to vivisection -- ch. 1. Domestic oracle and her genealogy -- ch. 2. From Pearl to Patience -- ch. 3. Pearl vs. Patience : medium vs. control -- ch. 4. What Patience wrote -- ch. 5. An occult vocabulary and the problem of knowledge -- ch. 6. Dissecting a specter -- ch. 7. Pearl and Patience in the twenties -- ch. 8. City of Angels -- ch. 9. Neural Pearl : automaticity for all.
Sommario/riassunto	When St. Louis homemaker Pearl Curran began writing fiction and poetry at a Ouija board in 1913, she attributed the work to the "discarnate entity" Patience Worth, a seventeenth-century Puritan. Though now virtually forgotten, her writing garnered both critical praise and public popularity at the time. The Patience of Pearl uncovers more of Curran's (and thus Patience Worth's) biography than has been known before; Daniel B. Shea provides close readings of the Patience-dictated writings and explores the historical and local context, applying current cognitive and neuro-psychology research. Though Pearl Curran had only a ninth-grade education, Patience Worth was able to dictate a biblical novel and a Victorian novel. Echoes of Dickens and the Potters, a circle of St. Louis women writers, make clear that Patience Worth reflects literary debts that go as far back as Curran being read to as a child. Shea argues that the workings of implicit memory suggest the

medium's creative achievements were her own body's property. Curran also had musical training, and recent developments in the field of psychology regarding the overlap between musical and linguistic rhythms of regularity, anticipation, and surprise supply a firm foundation for attributing skills both automatic and creative to Curran. Her reflections on her doubleness in her self-study anticipate the many-personed Ouija board writing of poet James Merrill.   Shea approaches Curran/Worth as a summary figure for the Victorian-era woman writer's buried voice at the point of its transition into modernism. He investigates many lingering questions about Curran's fluent productivity at the Ouija board, including the "smart" versus "dumb" unconscious. Shea links unconscious memory, dissociation, and automatic writing and reconsiders problematic assumptions about individual identity and claims of personal agency. The Curran/Worth Puritan/writer figure also allows scrutiny of gendered assumptions about the dangers of female speech and the idealization of women's passive reception of divine, or husbandly, revelation. Novelistic in its own way, Curran's life included three husbands and a child adopted on command from Patience Worth. Pearl Curran enjoyed a brief period of celebrity in Los Angeles before her death in 1937. The Patience of Pearl once again brings her the attention she deserves-for her life, her writing, and her place in women's literary history.