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Could the sender in traditional Ganzfeld ESP studies be serving as a PK agent?[1]

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Abstract

Despite the relative success of clairvoyance designs in eliciting evidence for ESP when used with other protocols (see, e.g., reviews by Rhine, Pratt, Stuart, Smith & Greenwood, 1966, and Utts, 1996), it has been commonly assumed that a sender can make some positive contribution to the outcome of Ganzfeld studies. Relatively few Ganzfeld experiments have adopted a clairvoyance design except where the objective of the study was to compare sender and no sender conditions. Honorton (1995) found that of 73 Ganzfeld studies only 12 did not employ senders. His meta-analysis comparing sender and no sender experiments showed that those including senders generated better performance than those that did not, although the effect seemed to be confined to those experimenters who had used both conditions at some time. If it could be shown that the sender were unnecessary this would have practical advantages in that sessions would be easier to co-ordinate for only one participant at a time, and security would be more straightforward, since no person need know the identity of the target until after the participant's judgements had been recorded.

Eight previous Ganzfeld studies have directly compared sender and no sender conditions within the same study (Dunne, Warnock & Bisaha, 1977; Kanthamani & Khilji, nd, described in Kanthamani & Palmer, 1993; Milton, 1988-9; Morris, Dalton, Delanoy & Watt, 1995; Raburn & Manning, 1977; Roe, Sherwood & Holt, 2003; Sargent, Milton, Payne & Bennet, unpub, cited in Milton, 1988-9; Williams, Roe, Upchurch, & Lawrence, 1994). Taken together, the findings from these studies offer some support for the suggestion that the sender serves some active role in a typical Ganzfeld ESP session.

These findings may be particularly encouraging given that the experimental manipulations of the IV here are rather gross, for example in not systematically taking into account the possible moderating effect of variables such as the sender-receiver relationship. The designs also tend to assume that any sender effect will be readily apparent in the receiver's overall performance, despite this relationship being dependent upon the receiver not only being able to detect any sender mediated impressions, but also to accurately interpret them and to be able to discriminate them from internally generated 'noise' during judging. Recently we reported on an alternative method for gauging any potential sender effect (Roe, Holt & Simmonds, 2003) that promised to circumvent such complications by replacing the receiver with an REG 'virtual receiver' that would generate a virtual mentation by randomly selecting statements from among an array of descriptors. The virtual mentation was then used by an independent judge to rate the four target clips in the set just as the receiver had done with their own mentation. In that study, the 'live' receiver selected the correct clip as the target on 14 occasions (35% hit rate where MCE is 25%), and by pre-planned sum-of-ranks analysis performed significantly better than chance expectation ($Z = 1.77$, $p = .038$). More interestingly in the present discussion, the ratings based on the REG-generated virtual mentations gave an encouraging 13 hits (32.5%), and a suggestive sum-of-ranks outcome ($Z = 1.48$, $p = .069$). These results were regarded as sufficiently promising to warrant further investigation. In the present study we planned to compare performance of the REG on sender trials with performance on trials when there was no sender (or at least where a nominal sender was unaware of the target). In this case the mentation would presumably consist of random noise and might provide a more suitable control against which to evaluate performance in the experimental condition. In this talk we would report on the results of this study and overview suggestions for future work.

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[1] We would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychhygiene e.V., which has enabled us to conduct this study and to the Bial Foundation for support during analysis and writing up.

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Psychic Lottery Project: Hypothesis phase methodology & results - Plus, take part in a Group Visualisation attempt to win the Lottery jackpot!

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This talk will include a group lottery experiment. Lottery tickets will be bought and winnings shared amongst participants. It is free to take part.

After an initial pilot study of about three years, the last year has seen the project enter the hypothesis phase and this continues. The project's overall aim is to find out whether and how it is possible to use psi to predict lottery numbers and if so, to win the UK National Lottery. Because the project has been described in the last two conferences, this year's paper will only briefly describe the project and concentrate on the hypothesis notification method employed and developments since last year's conference.

BASIC METHODOLOGY: The project involves people being invited to try to predict winning lottery numbers using a short period of visualisation. The experiment currently consists of about 60-100 participants independently attempting this for each bi-weekly draw. The participants pay nothing but simply email or phone their chosen numbers to me. All the numbers are then input into a computer program that collates and saves each participant's numbers and, based on these, decides which tickets are to be bought. Prior to the lottery draw, participants are e-mailed with the numbers on tickets purchased and the information necessary for an unambiguous division of any prizes among participants.

HYPOTHESIS NOTIFICATION RATIONALE:

The history of Psychical research is full of experimental results that are claimed as significant. Dean Radin's 1997 book, *The Conscious Universe*, contains hundreds of such examples. However, around the same time, Skeptic Ray Hyman (1996) could claim with some justification that "Parapsychology … does not have even one exemplar that can be assigned to students in the expectation that they will observe the original result". One explanation of this failure to replicate often suggested these days is that it involves some form of experimenter effect, either because the replicating experimenter is different to the original or the expectations of the original experimenter have altered in a replication, due to the initial success. However, experimenter effect must, in most such instances, itself be a paranormal effect. Some researchers explain this failure to replicate by suggesting a supernatural controlling influence such as the often invoked "Cosmic Jester" or Arthur Oram's (1998) 'higher dimensional' beings who oversee these experiments but lose interest in the replications.

When dealing with psychic phenomena it is NOT a good idea to exclude any explanations, even the most incredible to the current scientific paradigm. However, before such explanations are considered, it may be a good idea to make sure that the reason for the non-replicating significant results in the first place is not the abuse of statistical method. I describe my approach to statistics as 'fundamentalist'. Viewed in this way, the abuse of statistical method appears to be widespread throughout modern science. I think that it is particularly important in psychical research not to fall into the sloppy methods of ordinary scientists since I accept David Hume's idea that "extraordinary claims require extraordinary proofs" is highly relevant to psychical claims

Therefore the following approach is used:

HYPOTHESIS NOTIFICATION METHOD

1. Hypotheses are only made after exhaustive pilot studies suggest a true effect. Every hypothesis that is made is counted and where possible notified, in advance, to other researchers. Then, any probability p values found for an individual result need to be adjusted by multiplying by the number of hypotheses made.

2. The written hypothesis should contain a full statistical analysis, including any control methods and significance levels used. This should be done in such a way that there is no ambiguity in the method that will be used, all the way from data collection to significance claims.
3. If it is appropriate and possible, data should be sent for storage and future verification to independent researchers.

Point 3 is particularly applicable to the Lottery project since predictions can be sent around by email, before each lottery draw.

This approach has been applied to the project and the hypothesis phase of the project has seen two hypotheses proposed so far. (to 30/4/4)

In short they are
1. Participants in Large Group visualisations, such as at our conference today, will predict more winning numbers than chance expected.
2. That there will be a significant excess of cases of participants to the Psychic lottery project having four or more main winning lottery numbers in their 6 predictions for any draw.

RESULTS:
The results to date will be given, as well as an intricate Monte Carlo style control group designed to account for all the complexities of the lottery situation.

Other promising pre-hypothesis results may also be described.

CONCLUSION
The results will be analysed, both in terms of what they say about psychical prediction of lotteries and experimenter effect.

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The Witness is Central: The Importance of Eyewitness accounts to Parapsychology

M L C Colborn

Abstract

1. Eyewitness accounts are of central importance to psychical research because:
2. Many, perhaps most of the subject phenomena cannot be reproduced in the laboratory.
3. Field studies can provide insight into the conditions under which so-called 'psi' occurs and so aid laboratory studies.
4. Large collections of cases can provide material for statistical analysis.
5. Lab work ignores the social and cultural dimension of 'psi' experience, which is often crucial to understanding these events.

Historically, eyewitness accounts have been central to psychical research (Gurney, Myers & Podmore 1888, Rhine 1981). Investigators also remain active today (Cornell 2002), but critics highlight the fallibility of eyewitness testimony and seek to explain anomalous phenomena in mundane terms (Reed 1988).

Experiments show that eyewitnesses can give distorted accounts of events, depending on which question they are asked (Loftus 1996) or even be given 'false memories' that they later believe (Mazzoni, Loftus & Kirsch 2001). There are also significant disparities between the recollections of so-called 'sheep' and 'goats' after witnessing pseudo-psychic events (Wiseman & Morris 1995).

But there are several methods by which witness recall can be improved. O'Keefe (2001) suggested that the cognitive interview technique (Fisher & Geiselman 1992) could be applied to the witnesses of spontaneous phenomena.

It is also suggested that proposed 'explanations,' mundane or extra-mundane, should not be imposed on accounts prematurely, because the price of premature theorising is the neglect of data not considered important. If we are convinced that our theory explains the data, then we will neglect data that doesn't back up this theory. For instance, eyewitness accounts of strange phenomena are often explained away as psychological illusions or mistakes, as with ball lightning (Argyle 1971).

The problem of filtering 'good' from 'bad' eyewitness accounts remains. The remainder of the talk will focus on practical techniques and statistics that may provide solutions to this.

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Schizotypy, Psi and Immersive Sensory Noise

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This project explores the relationship between schizotypy and performance on an immersive 'sensory noise' psi task. This research extends the work of Simmonds and Fox (2002) who conducted a pilot study examining the relationship between schizotypy and psi on a similar, although non-immersive, task. Despite obtaining psi-missing, Simmonds and Fox suggest that the visual noise paradigm is worthy of further investigation. We agree with this sentiment, especially in the context of exploring the possible relationship between schizotypy and psi experiences. We aim to build upon Simmonds and Fox's study in two main ways.

First, we are exploring the effect of increasing the immersive nature of the visual noise. We are presenting the visual noise via two separate methods. One condition uses an i-Visor Head-Mounted Display and the other uses a digital projector. Secondly, participants are given an opportunity to relax into the testing environment by being taken through a 10-minute relaxation procedure. We are further investigating the relationship between schizotypy by having all participants complete the STA Schizotypal Personality Scale (Claridge & Broks, 1984).

A within groups comparison will assess the relative effectiveness of the mode of presentation of the visual noise: Head-mounted display vs. digital projector. The sample size has been pre-set at 40 participants. Participants will complete the STA scale prior to their arrival to take part in the psi testing sessions. Each participant undergoes two separate testing sessions: one in which the visual noise is presented using the i-Visor Head Mounted Display unit and one in which the visual noise is presented using the digital data projector. In both conditions, the procedure will be fully explained to participants before obtaining their written consent.

Participants are sat in a comfortable reclining armchair in a dimly lit room. In the i-visor condition participants adjust the HMD unit to their head and place headphones over their ears. In the projector condition participants sit facing the projector through which the visual noise is displayed. Participants wear specially constructed goggles that act like a screen between the participants and the projector creating an immersive viewing environment. As in the i-Visor condition, white noise is played via headphones. Before being exposed to the visual and auditory sensory noise, participants are taken through a 10-minute relaxation procedure (played through the headphones). The *DigiGanz* software (developed by Fox, Smith & Williams, 2002) then randomly selects a video clip to act as the target for the trial. This is displayed on a computer screen in a locked room in a separate building (approximately 30 metres away). Unlike Simmonds and Fox (2002) study, we are not using a sender. The target clip is played 6 times. During this time, the participant is asked to report aloud any images they are seeing in the visual noise and/or thoughts they are experiencing as they look into the visual noise. The participant's mentation is recorded by the *DigiGanz* software and recorded in note form by the experimenter (who is blind to the identity of the target). The sensory noise is played for up to 30 minutes. At the end of this period, the experimenter reminds the participant of his or her mentation before presenting the participant with the four clips in the judging set. Participants are asked to rate each clip in terms of how closely it matches the imagery they were reporting during the session.

Psi performance will be measured by transforming target ratings for each trial into Z-scores and compared across the two conditions. The relationship between psi and schizotypy will be assessed using a regression analysis. The results of the study will be reported at the conference.

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Response characteristics and lability in an eda-dmils study using emotional stimuli

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Introduction

Research in DMILS has been fairly successful over the years (Schlitz and Braud, 1997), but the effect is not well understood. Often the direction of the effect is reversed (Braud, Shafer and Andrews, 1993; Schlitz and Braud, 1997) or the EDA shows a greater differential effect between influence and rest periods, rather than between activate and calm periods, which are often designated as the main experimental conditions. In a re-analysis of data from two DMILS studies(Watt, Ravenscroft and McDermott, 1999; Delanoy, Morris, Brady and Roe, 1999), Stevens (2000) found that the variance of the EDA between influence (calm and activate) and rest periods in the two studies showed a similar, statistically significant, pattern as opposed to the inconsistent results as originally reported for the two studies . Stevens (2000) argues that, because the EDA patterns of those two studies are considerably different and a comparison of these EDA patterns with the results of a study that exposed subjects to weak electromagnetic fields (Stevens, 2001) showed no apparent similarities, the DMILS effect is more likely to be due to a direct influence effect, rather than a transposed response to sensory input. The fact that the EMF study showed a similar pattern when examining variance, i.e. more variance in the EMF periods (equated to influence) than in the control periods (equated to rest), to the two DMILS studies also supports this view.

Stevens (2000) also compared the rest period variances in the two DMILS studies to the variances in the influence periods and found that responders (those with a response greater than 0.2 sigmas at any point after the start of the influence period) had significantly greater mean variances than non responders. Together with findings from Braud and Schlitz (1983) it suggests that people with greater electrodermal lability might be better receivers in a DMILS situation.

The present study was designed to investigate the effects of emotional stimulation of the sender on the EDA of a remote receiver and by also monitoring the EDA of the sender it makes a direct comparison of responses possible. Thus it can be assessed whether the DMILS response is similar to the sender's sensory response, or whether it is indicative of a direct influence (if there is any such influence) as shown by deviations in mean variance across conditions. A comparison between more traditional measures and the variance measure can offer clues as to the possible cause of the responses.

Hypotheses:

The mean variance in the emotional (“influence”) periods will be greater than the mean variance in the neutral (“rest”) periods.

“Labile” receivers will show a larger difference in mean variance between emotional and control periods when the sender is a “stabile”.

There will be an interaction between electrodermal type of the sender and receiver.

Type of relationship between sender and receiver will have an effect on the difference between mean variances of the emotional and control periods.

Intensity of relationship between sender and receiver will have an effect on the difference between mean variances of the emotional and control periods.

Methods

Participants

90 pairs (10 pairs in a pilot study, 80 pairs in the formal study) of participants will take part. These pairs will consist of males and females (in no particular combination) and their relationship may vary, but the pairs are all recruited by asking one participant to bring a friend or family member.

Apparatus / Materials

The stimuli will consist of a selection of pictures from the International Affective Picture System (IAPS) database. A total of 20 pictures per subject will be used, with 10 pictures around the IAPS mean of 5 for valence and the lowest arousal ratings for the neutral condition, 5 pictures around the highest valence/arousal ratings for the positive condition and 5 pictures with (approximately) the highest arousal rating and the lowest valence rating for the negative condition. Data will be collected according to standard procedures (for the greater part as outlined by Schmidt and Walach, 2000) using two 24 bit serial port model EDA devices, connected to separate, but synchronised pc's. There is also a questionnaire assessing the type (friends, family, etc.) and intensity of relationship.

Procedure

Participant pairs will swap roles half way during the session, so each participant will be sender and receiver once. After the purpose of the study is explained to the participants, and the questionnaires filled out, a decision is made as to who will act as sender for the first run. After this, participants will be led to their respective rooms, where the electrodes will be applied and further instructions given. When both participants are ready the session will start with a relaxation period of 10 minutes in which both the sender and the receiver will hear the sound of waves. A fixation cross is visible on the sender's screen. Then there will be a three minute data collection period prior to picture presentation. The data of these three minutes will be used to determine the electrodermal type of the participant (by calculating the mean variance). After this three minute data collection (at rest) picture presentation will start. Each picture will be presented (in a random order) for 30 s followed by a reaction/recovery period of 15 s, in which the fixation cross will be shown on the screen. Total time per picture will thus be 45 s. Between picture blocks (picture plus fixation cross) there will be a random interval between 0 and 5 s before the next picture will be presented. Each session will last around 25 minutes. After the first session is over, participants swap rooms and receive instructions appropriate to their new role. Then the second session starts and at the end of that participants are debriefed and the total session ends.

Results

Since this is an ongoing study, no results can be reported as yet, but results will be available for presentation at the convention.

Planned analyses: For hypothesis 1 a t-test between mean *variances* of emotional and control periods will be performed. In addition, a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test and PSI scores will be calculated for the *means* of the EDA. Hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5 will be analyzed using a 2x2 ANCOVA with type and intensity of relationship as covariates. Post hoc tests will be done where appropriate.

Discussion

The results of this study will hopefully add to our understanding of the DMILS effect, by shedding light on the question whether the DMILS effect is like a transferred sensory response (i.e. a transference of a sender's similar state) or more likely to be as a result of a direct influence. This study will also allow a comparison between different measures of the DMILS effect (those based on mean SCR against analyses of mean variance).

In addition to this, it will add to the database pertaining to the relationship between psi performance and agent-receiver couplings and explore the suitability of emotional states as independent variable in DMILS research.

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Experimenter effects when testing for ESP and PK[2]

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Abstract

In recent work that we have described at previous SPR conferences (see also Roe, Davey & Stevens, 2003, in press, unpub) we have been concerned to address the question of whether ESP and PK functioning are sufficiently distinct to merit separate terms. Earlier work that had considered this issue is difficult to interpret because the method of testing for ESP is typically quite different from that for PK so that any apparent differences in the preferred conditions of the phenomena may be artifactual (Schmeidler, 1988). We developed a new protocol using a computer game interface that allowed both phenomena to be tested for within a standardised context. In the game, RNG and pseudorandom data are sampled to determine the movements of six greyhounds from the left to the right of the screen, simulating a race. The program monitors progress and registers the order in which the dogs cross the finishing line. In the ESP condition a race had been run 'silently' so that the outcome was 'known' to the computer. Participants were informed that their task was simply to select one dog from among the six that they felt had performed best on that trial. They then watched a replay of the race and the result was confirmed. In the PK condition the race would be run in real time with the movements of their pre-selected greyhound determined by a random number generator (RNG). Participants were informed that their task was to attempt to influence the RNG and thus enable their greyhound to succeed. The program consisted of a block of 12 races that ostensibly were all testing for ESP and a further block of 12 testing for PK. However, half of the trials that appeared to be tests of ESP in fact were of PK and vice versa in order to differentiate between characteristics of the phenomenon and participants' expectancies concerning that phenomenon.

The results from our first three studies have been somewhat disappointing, with overall performance at chance levels for both ESP and PK trials, and for true and disguised trials. One potential contributory factor to poor performance that has not previously been considered by us is that variables associated with the experimenter may have had an inhibiting effect. White (1977, p. 273), for example, has noted that "the experimenter has been a neglected variable in parapsychological research … [yet] … there could hardly be a more significant area of investigation than the role of the experimenter", and Rhine and Pratt (1957) have characterised the experimenter as having to be able to provide "the psychological conditions under which psi can operate" (p. 131, cited in White, 1977, p. 274). These experienced researchers seem to share the view that the experimenter plays a crucial role in encouraging or inhibiting psi in the laboratory (see Smith, 2003, for an updated consideration of this issue).

Reflecting on the previous studies in this series, we should note that the researcher responsible for all interactions with participants was RD. Although RD has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and has previously conducted a parapsychological study for his dissertation, he would nevertheless be considered a novice experimenter, whereas CR has been involved in a number of previous studies that have reported significant effects (e.g., Roe, 1996; Roe, Holt & Simmonds, 2003) and may simply be more practiced at engendering a psi conducive atmosphere. It could be that if a more experienced researcher had interacted with participants in these earlier studies then a different outcome might have occurred. Secondly, although involved in the later stages of design of these studies, RD was not involved at the project's inception and may not feel the same degree of 'ownership' of the project that CR would feel through having been responsible for the seed idea, conducting background literature research, writing funding proposals, and so on. On these grounds we suspected that participants tested by CR may perform significantly better than those tested by RD. We also planned to have the experimenter complete an assessment of key aspects of the interaction in the hope that we may be able to identify predictors of success. Finally, we intended to continue to take attitude and personality measures from participants in order to determine whether the preferred conditions for ESP and PK

[2] We would like to gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Fundacao Bial (grant no. 58/00), which has enabled us to conduct this study.

task performance were similar or distinct (see Roe et al., 2003, for a more detailed rationale for the inclusion of particular measures).
In this talk we would report on the results of this study and overview the findings of the four-study series as a whole.

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Experimenter Effects and Ganzfeld-ESP Performance

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The replicability of ganzfeld-ESP findings continues to be debated by parapsychologists and their critics (e.g., Bem & Honorton, 1994; Milton & Wiseman, 1999). Similarly, the 'experimenter effect' (where some experimenters are consistently more successful than others in obtaining evidence for psi) continues to be a major challenge facing experimental parapsychology (e.g., Smith, 2003). This project addresses both of these concerns.

Sixteen experimenters are being trained to use *DigiGanz*, a digital autoganzfeld system developed in the psychology department at Liverpool Hope University College (Fox, Smith & Williams, 2002), in order to conduct 8 ganzfeld trials each. Experimenters are being recruited on the basis of their prior attitudes towards psi, with the aim of recruiting those obtaining either high or low scores on a measure of attitudes towards psi.

Experimenter expectancy regarding the likely success of the experiment is being manipulated so that half the experimenters are given a positive expectancy of success and half are given a negative expectancy of success. The effects of these independent variables upon participants' confidence of success and actual performance on a ganzfeld-ESP task will be assessed. No previous research has used this approach with the ganzfeld paradigm, nor has any previous research discriminated between the experimenter's a priori attitudes towards psi and his or her more specific expectations about the outcome of the experiment. Preliminary analyses will be presented at the conference, including an exploratory analysis of experimenter-participant interactions from a sub-sample of testing sessions that have been video recorded.

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The Hearn-Pravda Tapes

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Following the death of a friend and neighbour in 1985, the author asked medium Ronald Hearn for a proxy sitting, telling him nothing except the deceased's first name and the date of his death. The neighbour's widow considered this to be evidential. Two further proxy sittings were held and also found to contain evidential statements. It was only after the third proxy reading that Hearn discovered who his client was.

Over the following 19 years, a long series of tape-recorded sittings was held, containing a mass of information relevant to the widow. Three features of the tapes stand out: the number of proper names known to the widow, the apparent comments on her recent activities and, most intriguingly of all, frequent instances of precognition.

This is an unusual example of 'repeat readings' as described by Hearn's (1993) book in which fifteen readings for the parents of a dead nine-year-old produced a mass of accurate information. The present readings have now passed the fifty mark and show no sign of coming to an end. Some of the early sittings were described by Playfair (1988, 1996). This is one of the longest lasting instances of repeat readings on record and provides abundant evidence for either survival or consciousness or 'general ESP' on a scale hitherto unknown.

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Exploring the Association between ESP and Geomagnetic Activity using 5-second Local Geomagnetic Field Measurements

Adrian Ryan

The author extends thanks to the KPU team at Edinburgh University for kindly supplying ganzfeld data and to the SAMNET team for magnetometer data. SAMNET is a PPARC National Facility operated by Lancaster University. Eskdalemuir data is provided courtesy of the British Geological Survey.

ESP Experiments and Geomagnetic Activity

Many researchers have reported an association between the results of ESP experiments and geomagnetic activity (GMA). Most often the correlation reported is negative, that is, a stronger ESP effect is observed when the geomagnetic field is relatively undisturbed (Makarec and Persinger, 1987; Persinger and Krippner, 1989; Krippner and Persinger, 1996; Radin, 2002). Spottiswoode (1990) found the negative correlation only in experiments that showed evidence for ESP and only in trials conducted in real time (i.e. not precognitive).

However in an analysis of two ganzfeld studies, Radin (1994) found opposing results. The first study showed no overall ESP effect but a negative correlation with GMA, whereas the second revealed significant ESP and a positive correlation with GMA (i.e. a stronger ESP effect was observed with a fluctuating geomagnetic field.) In ESP experiments during which participants were exposed to artificially generated magnetic fields, both Persinger et al (2002) and Booth et al (2002) found a strong positive correlation between ESP and GMA.

Some large studies with good evidence for ESP show no correlation with GMA. Nelson and Dunne (1986) examined 334 precognitive remote viewing sessions and found no correlation and Persinger (1989) reports that 139 ganzfeld sessions conducted by Charles Honorton also showed no relationship with GMA. In a meta-analysis of 51 free-response studies comprising 2,879 sessions, Spottiswoode (1997) found a very small overall negative correlation of ESP with GMA.

Most of the analyses cited above used indices of GMA that are derived from geomagnetic field readings from 13 observatories. These indices are based upon the difference between the lowest and highest readings of the most disturbed horizontal magnetic field component during three-hourly time intervals. Therefore these measurements give only a very rough indication of the degree and character of the geomagnetic field disturbances at the location of the experiment.

ESP Experiments and Local Sidereal Time

Spottiswoode (1997a) graphed a large database of ESP experiment results by Local Sidereal Time (LST), a time system based on the rotation of the Earth with respect to star positions, and found an uneven distribution, with a maximum effect size at 13.5 hours.

Any factor that varies by an interaction of time of year and time of day will possess a non-even distribution across LST. As many components of geomagnetic activity exhibit such variation (Jacobs, 1970), the LST findings may be attributable to the association of ESP with GMA. This interpretation is supported by the later finding (Spottiswoode, 1997b) that the negative correlation of ESP with GMA is much stronger in a 2-hour window centred at 12.9 hours LST, close to the LST maximum of effect size.

Edinburgh Ganzfeld ESP Experiments and Geomagnetic Activity

To explore the association between ESP and GMA further, I conducted a detailed analysis of the geomagnetic conditions during ganzfeld ESP experiments conducted at Edinburgh University.

In a preliminary analysis I attempted to reproduce the findings of Dalton & Stevens (1996), who reported an analysis of 97 ganzfeld sessions which showed that ESP was correlated positively with local GMA ($r_s = +0.29$) but negatively with global GMA ($r_s = 0.21$). Using 1 minute measurements of the geomagnetic field from the same local observatory (Eskdalemuir), I found that ESP was

negatively correlated with both local and global GMA (r_s = 0.20 and 0.19 respectively), thus failing to confirm the local GMA finding.

For the main analysis I used a wider database of ganzfeld sessions. The KPU team at Edinburgh University kindly supplied the results of ganzfeld experiments which met the criteria of (i) effect size ($z/\sqrt{n}$) for the study condition > 0.15; and (ii) sessions conducted in real time. Geomagnetic field measurements recorded at a 5second time resolution were obtained from the nearest operating SAMNET magnetometer. For the 207 ganzfeld sessions for which SAMNET measurements were available, the directional, frequency and trend components were analysed to identify the features giving rise to the GMAESP correlation. This analysis is in progress and the results will be presented at the conference.

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Magnetic Field Theories in Psychical Research

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In recent years there has been an upsurge in interest as to the role that magnetic fields might play in phenomena of interest to psychical researchers. It is now very common to see researchers talking about correlations with the Earth's magnetic field or for them to take measurements of the local magnetic fields in the vicinity fo the phenomena. Such interest is not surprising, nor is it unwelcome: an understanding of mechanisms that might underly psychic phenomena would represent a major step forward in the field. However, there appears to be a fair amount of misunderstanding as to which areas magnetic field theories might apply to, how comprehensive they might be in terms of the types of phenomena which they could be involved with, and even to the basics of what such theories are saying. With this in mind, this paper will present an overview of the application of magnetic field theories to phenomena in which there appears to be some form of communication that extends beyond the expected capabilities of human senses.

Magnetic fields exist wherever there are moving electric charges. Thus the Earth has its own magnetic field (the geomagnetic field or GMF) created primarily by currents flowing in its liquid iron core and modified by currents flowing in the crust, oceans and atmosphere. Humans (and other animals) also have their own much-smaller magnetic fields, generated by electrical currents in brain, muscle and other cells. Such fields used to be considered as mere by-products of biological activity but it is now becoming clearer that they are an essential part of that activity, playing a role in signalling between cells and maybe even in consciousness itself (McFadden, 2002). More importantly from the perspective of psychical research, they represent a source of detailed information about the state of person's mental and physical activity that is emitted into that person's environment. Although such information-containing magnetic fields are incredibly weak when compared to others from both natural and man-made sources, they contain patterns that are biologically relevant. Laboratory studies indicate that such patterns can change people's levels of arousal (i.e. how excited or anxious you feel) and may even create more complex experiences (Persinger & Healey, 2002; Randall & Randall, 1991). Although it has not yet been confirmed that the fields emitting from one human will directly affect another human, laboratory studies have shown that artificial fields of the same magnitude with biologically-relevant properties (in terms of frequency and waveform) can have an effect (e.g., Sandyk & Derpapas, 1993).

Even if the fields exchanged between people really are too weak to have a significant effect, there are still other areas in which magnetic fields may aid our understanding of certain phenomena. A long-standing finding (Spottiswoode, 1990) is that apparently receptive forms of real-time communication like ESP are less effective during times of higher geomagnetic activity. This could suggest that magnetic fields can act as 'interference' (see Stevens 2000 for a fuller discussion of this idea), either adding extra noise to the receptive system so that reception is degraded or maybe even disrupting the underlying mechanism by which the communcation occurs. Research in this area offers both an insight into potential mechanisms as well as the possibility of blocking unwanted effects.

There is also the possibility that magnetic fields in the environment that do not originate from any biological system may still create, or at least contribute to, specific phenomena. There have now been several studies (e.g., Wiseman, Watt, Stevens, Greening & O'Keefe, 2003; Roll & Nichols, 1999) showing that sites thought to be haunted show different magnetic field activity in active areas than non-active ones, and some laboratroy studies suggest that similar phenomena can be recreated under controlled conditions (e.g., Persinger, Tiller& Koren, 2000). It is not yet known if the fields simply cause arousal in sensitive people which they then interpret according to their expectations and beliefs, or whether they directly evoke specific mental states, but current research at the KPU (Stevens: Extended Communication of Affective States: physiological and emotional responses to non-sensory stimuli, Bial project #746/02) is hoping to shed some light on this question, with initial results available in time for the conference.

Magnetic field theories certainly cannot explain all instances of extended communication, and probably have little to contribute to our understanding of phenomena like PK, but I would find it surprising if they did not play a significant part in our eventual understanding of psychic phenomena.

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Spontaneous Cases and Electromagnetism

A D Cornell

The occurrence of spontaneous cases has for years been widely held to be due to either activities of the dead or the mind of the percipient(s). Despite years of organised research, neither has been shown incontrovertibly to be responsible – or the actual *modus operandi* by which such events are created.

Much has been written about the possible cause of apparitions and poltergeists being related to the low and high level of geomagnetic activity (Persinger, et al.). Other more recent claims have suggested that electromagnetic fluctuations, the presence of power cables and other electromagnetic fields impinging upon the human brain, created the experiencing of apparitions and other forms of alleged paranormal effects. Neither of these theories to date provides sufficient detailed evidence to warrant such conclusions. Perhaps greater research is needed as to what part, if any, electromagnetic radiation plays and the frequencies involved in the manifestation of such events.

Ghosts were seen in Greek, Roman and medieval times when no man-made power lines existed but geomagnetic variations did. Similarly over the last 100 years while the use of man-made electromagnetic generated frequencies gradually increased, the appearance of ghosts and poltergeist outbreaks were widely reported. In fact, one might argue that if there is an electrical component of some for involved in spontaneous cases and psi in general, then the currently now far greater existence of man-made electromagnetic frequencies should facilitate a far wider experience of paranormal events. That however is not the case. In the last 5-10 years there has been a marked decline in the number of reported spontaneous cases in particular parts of the world. This might indicate an opposite situation whereby too much global electronic smog is interfering with psi events.

Three years ago I was quoted in a widely circulated press report that I thought the widespread use of mobile phones was the cause of the marked absence of ghosts. Although I was quoted out of context, the coincidence of the two events is such and remains the case, that perhaps the matter should be examined in conjunction with a wider search of other possible reasons for the marked decline in spontaneous cases.

I propose to discuss the above in specific detail and raise the following points.

1. What evidence is there that electronic smog could be responsible for the absence of spontaneous cases?
2. Could, in fact, mobile ‘phones or some other electrical activity actually be responsible?
3. Is the decline more likely due to changed social habits?
4. Should a worldwide census be undertaken to determine if only particular parts of the world are affected and why?
5. Are some areas still reporting the occurrence of more spontaneous cases than others?
6. Are there any other causes for the decline in reports of spontaneous cases?

New Evidence for the Clairvoyance of Alexis Didier

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In his book *Un voyant prodigieux: Alexis Didier 1826-1886 (2003),* Bertrand Méheust provided an abundance of new material from a number of sources referring to one of the most remarkable clairvoyants o fall time, whose achievements have received less attention in this country than they can now be clearly seen to deserve. One particular example of his abilities, originally published in The Zoist in 1851 (Volume 9) is discussed here – the unannounced visit to Didier of the clergyman, art collector and mesmerist Rev. Chancey Har Townshend, who was given a lengthy reading by Didier during which he described, among other things, some of the works of art in Townshend's private collection.

Since the publication of Méheust's book, further evidence has unexpectedly come to light which adds considerable strength to an already strong case. It is presented here for the first time.

Telepathy or Clairvoyance – A Message Written on Buttons

Mary Rose Barrington

The two outstanding clairvoyants who have performed with exceptional consistency, co-operating with researchers and other reliable observers, are Alexis Didier and Stefan Ossowiecki, men with entirely different temperaments and lifestyles. Alexis (1840s-1850s) was a professional psychic and part-time actor, and he operated as a clairvoyant only when he was in a state of mesmeric trance. Ossowiecki (1920s-1940s) was an engineer and industrialist, and though he had to put himself into a receptive state to exercise his psychic faculties this did not appear to be a state of auto-hypnosis.

Ossowiecki's experimenters, members of the *Institut Métapsychique International*, carried out numerous experiments directed to ascertaining whether telepathy or clairvoyance was operative; in practice this means excluding telepathy, as this is very easy to do, whereas excluding clairvoyance is difficult if not impossible. By these means they established that Ossowiecki could indeed reproduce concealed targets in the nature of writing, drawing or articles, operating by clairvoyance; other experiments, in which telepathy was not excluded, serve to show that in cases where a grasp of what was in the mind of the agent would have assisted him Ossowiecki he failed to pick up on those ideas, so that he would sometimes reproduce words without understanding them, confuse letters with numbers and misunderstand handwriting. Other experiments indicated that his clairvoyance was in many cases retrocognitive, in that the target he had to reproduce no longer existed; retrocognition is further indicated by his habit of preceding his reading of the target material by describing the agent who created it (whether known to him or not), giving details of the house, the room, the furnishings, the presence of other people, the time of day, and the behaviour of the agent. This focussing on the place, time and circumstances relating to the creation of the target seemed to be instrumental in his perception of it.

The question arises as to whether this retrocognitive *modus operandi* is used by all clairvoyants who are given the task of reproducing targets, giving psychometric readings of articles or otherwise giving information about people and events. One step towards answering this question is to see if Alexis Didier, an entirely different sort of personality, appeared to operate in the same way.

The repertoire of Alexis is even more extensive than that of Ossowiecki, and an in depth study on these lines would be a massive undertaking. For the purposes of this paper a few examples have been selected to compare and contrast the two psychics, and these suggest that both obtained their information though similar modes of paranormal cognition. It appears, however, that Alexis may have been more prone to telepathic episodes, and as an example of this the writer Alexandre Dumas gave a very dramatic account of how he put Alexis into trance by distant hypnosis, after which Alexis gave a lively demonstration of his faculties.

Observations on common features within authenticated cases of ostensible obsession, possession and re-incarnation

Tricia J. Robertson and Archie E. Roy

It is well established in science that in trying to reach an understanding of a field of particular phenomena, a study of the similarities, or dissimilarities, among each of the individual cases is valuable if we are to try to attempt to formulate a theory or an understanding of it. The authors apply this principle to a number of well known cases of ostensible obsession, possession and reincarnation and discuss a number of common features suggesting that such an approach shows promise for future research if applied to a much larger number of cases. These cases may be found by future researchers either by literature research or future investigations in the field.

Rivastigmine Induces Precognitive Dreams in Normal Subjects

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REM sleep is presently known as been functionally related to memory formation (Maquet, Laureys, Peigneux et al, 2000) . Related also to dreaming is the long debated issue of precognition, that is the formation of dreams that mimic or are exact copies of future events rather than been memories of the past. It is reported in the literature how, in particular, dramatic experiences of the subjects future (Rhine, 1954), may be dreamed about before they actually occur and there is not so far a minimal scientific explanation for this phenomenon .It have been postulated that the human brain may engage in backwards transfer of information, that is, in a time retrograde fashion (May, Utts and Spottiswoode, 1995).

A suitable operational condition for this brain retrograde informational flux could occur as memory like process acting backwards in time and coupled to REM sleep (de Pablos, 2004). This model have the advantage of been experimentally testable because chemical substances now available for medical purposes have properties of enhancing memory processes and REM sleep processes of the brain. If these substances, given to human subjects in appropriate conditions, induce also precognitive dreaming, they can be used to refine our theoretical understanding of precognition and for practical purposes as well.

Rivastigmine a potent, partially reversible Acetylcholinesterase (AChE) inhibitor used in the treatment of Alzeheimer Disease (Cummings, 2000), enhances both memory and REM sleep. It is a selective inhibitor of cortical and hippocampal AChE and much less active upon AChE of other CNS and peripheral areas (Prous, Rabasseda and Castañer, 1994). Studies carried out in normal volunteers have shown that a single oral dose of 3 mg may be sufficient to produce a block of 40% of AChE activity in cerebral spinal fluid lasting for approximately 10 hours (Anand and Gharabawl, 1996). Due to its Acetylcholine enhancing effect, Rivastigmine is also a substance that potentiates REM sleep. In normal healthy subjects single doses of 1 mg and higher induces increases in REM sleep density (Holsboer-Trachsler, Hatzinger, Stohler, et al 1993).

A pilot study conducted with only one subject longitudinally along a two months period of time showed that some memory-like retrograde dream formation can be reliably measured . Furthermore this anomalous process was facilitated with low doses of Rivastigmine (de Pablos, 2002). The study promoted a more sophisticated design involving a sample of subjects, which is now presented.

Ten, highly educated subjects (7 MD , 1 PhD, 2RN) who had a neutral attitude towards precognition participated in a double blind experiment. All of them were in good physical health , taken no medications, and had a recent normal EKG performed. They all knew well the nature of the drug that was to be used, its possible side effects and gave informed consent to the experiment. Five of them were randomly assigned to Rivastigmine – 0,30 mg each night- and five to placebo during ten consecutive nights. All subjects were instructed to write a dream protocol containing the dreams that they may have during those nights and a life event protocol in which daily biographical events were to be registered
at a rate of five significant events each day. The experiment involved a longitudinal follow up dream / events matching design in which every dream was matched against the 35 events occurring in its subsequent week.

Once the experiment ended the dream and life event protocols were studied and rated by an independent judge with the intention of finding out matches between each dream and their posterior in time events .

Nine subjects: four in the Rivastigmine and five in the Placebo group completed the experiment.

Three dependent variables were measured. :
-Number of nights with dreams.
-Number of dream episodes (different and thematically independent dreaming histories) per dreaming night
-Number of precognitive matches.

See Table 1. See also Figures 1- 3.

Subjects who took Rivastigmine dreamed a sum total of 26 nights, 65%, and subject on Placebo dreamed a sum total of 25 nights, 50% , a non significant difference. Subjects on Rivastigmine had significantly more dreaming episodes : a total of 51, mean of 1,96 dream episodes per dreaming night versus subjects on Placebo : a total of 29 , mean of 1,16 dream episodes per dreaming night. Precognitive matches were detected in the protocols of all four Rivastigmine subjects while in only one of the five subjects on Placebo. Subjects on Rivastigmine had significantly more precognitive matches : a sum total of 8, 30,77 % of dreaming nights than subjects on Placebo : a sum total of 1, 4 % of dreaming nights.

Table 1
Comparison between Rivastigmine and Placebo status

	Rivastigmine	Placebo	X^2	t	p
Proportion of dreaming nights	65 %	50 %	2,38		0,20
Mean of dreaming episodes	1,96	1,16		3,94 *	0,0002
Proportion of Precognitive matches	30,77 %	4,00 %	6,27**		0,01

* two tailed t test for unrelated means, 49 df
** chi square test., 1 df

Fig.1. Nights with dreams

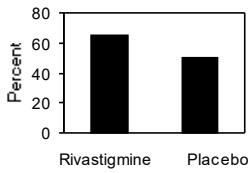


Fig. 2. Dreaming episodes

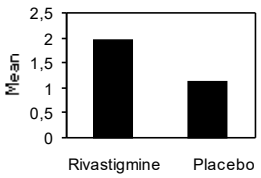
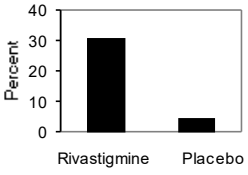


Fig. 3 . Precognitive dreams



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Increasing Hit Rates in Free-Response ESP Experimental Research: A Survey on Researchers

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A frequent focus of criticism in psychical research is related to the controlled replication of the phenomena and experiences studied. Some parapsychologists have dedicated their efforts towards the development of a method to systematically replicate psi effects in the laboratory. The ganzfeld is one of the most frequently used techniques in the experimental inquiry of ESP. However, recent studies (e. g. Milton and Wiseman, 1999) suggest that the mere use of the technique might not be sufficient for the successful replication of the phenomena. At least, it does not seem to be producing the overwhelming, robust results we would like to achieve, most studies remaining slightly or marginally significant. The use of complementary psi-facilitating procedures concerning the experimental setting, protocol, participants, etc. might contribute to the replication of the ESP phenomenon in the psychology laboratory.

A survey was conducted in two phases. First, a large number of researchers and academics in the area, gathered through scanning of recent publications and parapsychology organisations databases, were contacted through a standard letter. They were invited to point out their views on *"potential means to increase hit rates in free-response ESP research".* The response rate was 43%. Most suggestions were viable in the current research trends. Duplicates and unfeasible suggestions were eliminated, reducing the materials received to 45 items. Then, these 45 suggestions were listed in a new questionnaire and, approximately six months later, resent to the same guests one second time. Two new things would be explored: a) the level of confidence that each suggestion would produce in the parapsychology research community, and b) the extent to what the referred strategies had been exploited in previous research. The response rate was 36% in this case.

The mean confidence level for the set of ideas pointed out was 2.84. Suggestions as a whole were believed to be (near) "likely" to increase the hit rate of a given free-response ESP study by the community of researchers surveyed. The highest confidence was shown in relation to items refereed to *instrumental measures, psychological management and preparation of participants, others*, and *ecological validity,* with means of 3.07, 2.98, 2.98, and 2.96 respectively. The lowest confidence level was reported for items refereed to *target, data treatment,* and *experimental design*, with means of 2.55, 2.62, and 2.8 respectively. Similarly, the researchers surveyed reported a mean previous use of the strategies here outlined of 2.32, just above "seldom" used. The strategies most frequently used were those concerned with *psychological management and preparation of participants, others, instrumental measures,* and *experimental design,* with means of 2.6, 2.56, 2.36, and 2.33 respectively. The least used strategies were those in categories *data treatment, ecological validity,* and *targets*, with means 2.15, 1.9, and 1.84 respectively. There was a significant .45 ($p<.01$, one tail) correlation between the level of confidence and the degree in which each strategy had been used in previous research. Researchers, therefore, tend to use more frequently those practices and procedures which are most generally believed to contribute to the experimental success.

A striking, though somewhat expected, finding was that the suggestions have little been used in previous research or, at least, not as much as they could be with a mean rating near *seldom* used. This fact, however, can be accounted for by a dominant interest in process-oriented research. This could also explain the small effect size found in some meta-analytic work (e. g. Milton and Wiseman,

1999).

None of the suggestions would warrant success in improving the study outcome per se. The ideas here outlined could have come from experimental facts as well as from anecdotal observations. It is, however, argued that such techniques are a rich source for further research and that their exploration could largely contribute to the development of a more robust ‘recipe’ for success in ESP experimental research.

psi: mid space – psychic phenomena and performance

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"The psychic is the space between namings" Ned Reiter

"psi: mid space" is a contemporary performance piece that uses sound and video work to explore psychic phenomena in relation to time and space, devised by collaborating artists Sue Palmer, Vic Llewellyn, Lisa Griffiths and Stephen Clarke, (artists, performers and video makers based in the South West of England). The performance has been researched and produced over the past year. The term "mid space" originates from the Irish psychic Eileen Garrett, who used the phrase to describe the state which she entered prior to her mediumistic work – 'mid space' became something we attempted to frame and to capture in the performance: the space between knowing and not knowing, the threshold of the possible and the impossible, the gap opened by the inexplicable. Mid space also became a performance mode, a way of being in the work.

Having attended last years SPR conference as part of the research for the performance, I am returning this year to make a presentation about our work. Funded by Arts Council England, "psi: mid space" has toured around the South West this spring and summer visiting a series of arts and non arts venues, including Cheltenham Festival of Science. The work is cyclical: a 45 minute repeated performance, with conversation, video showings and artwork by clairvoyant and artist Carolyn Findlay between performances. The project also has a strong web presence with research and process documentation and streaming video.

Working with Dr Serena Roney-Dougal during the research process, we took part in a series of precognition and telepathy tests with her. In November 2003, we formally set up a Ganzfeld telepathy experiment with her, filming the process using three cameras, and editing it into a time-synced split screen documentary of the entire experiment, showing the activities of the sender, receiver, experimenter, and the image of the picture attempting to be transmitted. Despite the experiment being a 'miss' the footage reveals a significant moment of communication.

The Ganzfeld experiment became a powerful source of material for our theatre project: the protocol, the conditions, the red light, the ping pong balls, the static target pool, the time structure of the experiment – all became conditions that we used for our work.

Perhaps the thing that most intrigued us was the idea of the hypnagogic state invited by the experiment, that space between wakefulness and sleep, where the mind is lucid, and dream like imagery is perceived; a state conducive to psi receptivity. We became interested in the idea that not only moments of psi are captured in this illusive and curious state of hypnagogia, but that we would use that 'space' at the heart of our process to generate performance material.

"No other sport can engage in the same way, it allows you to dream, it is like being in a trance state." Henry Miller talking about the game of table tennis

This presentation explores and explains the artistic process that we undertook, and our negotiation with the subject of psi, and parapsychology, as artists; the unpacking of the Ganzfeld experiment became a key feature of our work - it provoked and generated fascinating material.

"psi: mid space" has encouraged and generated debate with our audiences, provoking dialogue and contemplation of the questions and challenges created by the piece, and the subject of psi. Using DV video extracts from our research and performances, alongside photographs and images from the project, the presentation will also reference bridges between the worlds of arts and science, one of the most important contemporary interdisciplinary areas.

"The world doesn't yield to us directly. The description of the world stands in between." Carlos Castaneda

A Study of Trance

Richard Alabone

This paper describes an analysis of trance, or ASC that is observed as part of a wide range of different phenomena.

A major discovery in psychology has now shown that dreaming is a necessary state, during which instinctive behaviour is programmed into memory. This is manly into unconscious memory, although some of us remember a few of our dreams. The way that this relates to human drives and emotions will be discussed, together with the way that it requires a mechanism that reduces conscious analysis of what we are doing or why we are doing it. It is suggested that this is the mechanism of trance or ASC. The relationship between our behaviours and emotions during the day will be discussed and will be seen to account for ASCs. But as well as an instinctive behaviour and emotions in trance, we occasionally suffer non-instinctive thoughts, behaviour or emotions.

Further development of this theory shows that it could account for many psychic states that are reached spontaneously. The similarities between all these states and the fact that there are no identifiable boundaries, points to the possibility that they all stem from the same mental mechanism. Furthermore, the induced states of meditation and hypnosis also have similarities and no real boundaries between each other. The relationship between the spontaneous and induced trance states will be examined to suggest that all trance states are the result of a common mechanism derived from dreaming.

The speaker will discuss his own experience of trance in a meditation/hypnosis class given many years ago my Max Cade which led to an enlightenment, brought about by the use of biofeedback principles and equipment. It is noted that Cade's technique of inducing and identifying the neurological symptoms associated with trance, led him to identify the electrical signature associated with an altered state. This work reveals that a possible mechanism for enlightenment may be suggested. The relationship between this hypothesis and the way it equates to unanswered questions in parapsychology and healing will be discussed.

Parapsychology has always had its greatest difficulty over the question of what it is that triggers an ASC. While most studies in this direction show that a relaxed mind and body are important, and that a stressful period in life is often a trigger, these do not appear to offer any likely solution. Evidence will be given to show that non-instinctive trance is a necessary and fundamental mechanism for mankind and that this additionally has an inhibiting mechanism that generally prevents a repeat of the same experience.

However, it is noted that light trance, for example *déjà vu* or a phobic fear of heights or spiders, is not inhibited whereas deeper trance, experienced in meditation or profound hallucination are unlikely to be repeated because of inhibition.

It is well known that enlightenment can be reached from almost any deep ASC. But it was suggested over 100 years ago that this must be an evolved or evolving feature of mankind. It is argued that this evolution must, of necessity, account for non-instinctive trance for without trance enlightenment is impossible.

These various hypotheses are shown to be interrelated and mutually supportive. The implications for psychical research will be discussed.

Assessing evidence for hypothesised 'psi-intrusions' in digiganz receiver mentations

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A phenomenological property said to characterise the emergence of psi-mediated material (PMM) into consciousness, namely that such emergence can be regarded as an intrusion, may yield insights into the supposed nature of psi, as well as testable statements. It appears that the conceptualisation of psi as an intrusion originated with the work of Stanford (1970), who initially used the term 'psi incursion'. Disparate findings within the parapsychological literature which give credence to such a descriptive account of psi are presented.

The present study sought to indirectly test this phenomenological description of psi through the analysis of digiganz receiver mentations. Specifically, we intended to test whether if emphasis put upon mentation items suggestive of intrusive thoughts by an external blind judge would yield significantly greater deviations from chance than participants' own correspondence ratings.

In a pilot study, we found four potential ways in which *ostensibly* intrusive mentation items could be identified. Informed by various sources (i.e. conversation analysis, mind popping research, anecdotal reports from parapsychology – e.g. Parker, Persson, & Haller 2000), and a content analytic method involving the first author as judge, they are as follows:

1) *overt content intrusions* – mentation items whose content is incongruous with that of the surrounding mentation items;
2) *reflections on content of ostensible intrusion* – mentation items which consist of participants' own reflection(s) on, and/or identifications of, incongruent content items, which may evade an external judge (e.g. 'oh that was strange');
3) *overt form intrusions* – changes in the speech of the participant, such as changes in inflexion or fluidity or other paraverbal cues, which may suggest incongruency in speech rather than content; and
4) *reflections on form of ostensible intrusion* – mentation items which consist of participants' reflection(s) upon the form, such as the way in which a preceding mentation item was spoken. Reflective form intrusions may be qualitatively similar to reflective content intrusions (2), but merely possess different referents.

In judging, weight was, in all cases, assigned to mentation items which were suggestibly intrusive, as identified by one, or a combination, of the aforementioned four coding schemes. The experimenters involved in the original digiganz did not inform the authors of the outcome of each trial until coding and judging was completed. Furthermore, the focus was on the mentation and not on any self-reported 'psi-intrusive' thoughts in the post session discussion with the experimenter. Removal of this section from the original audio-recordings, therefore, additionally ensured the judges were not biased by inadvertent reference to the target. Results will be discussed along with suggestions for further coding work and implications for future ganzfeld and other free-response psi research.

References

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