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Darrell D. Young

State University New York College at Buffalo

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ESP: A LABORATORY EXERCISE

Darrell D. Young

State University New York College at Buffalo

1300 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, New York 14222

Introduction

Extrasensory perception (ESP), is defined as that knowledge acquired above and beyond that which is obtained by using the five senses. It is also an area of study that seems to fascinate both the young and the old. Furthermore, ESP is a subject that has been studied and believed in for hundreds of years. In fact, at an early stage it was thought that people who had ESP consorted with either "demons" or "angels". Later, many legends evolved using such central figures as "fairies" and "elves". Thus, folklore was born.

Today, we find that apparently traces of ESP exist in nearly everyone but the occurrence of ESP is actually strongest in primitive people (such as the Australian aborigines). It also appears, at least to some extent, that animals have ESP. Those people who have developed or claimed to have developed ESP are often referred to as "mediums".

ESP Today

Early pioneers in ESP study were Dr. Joseph Rhine of Duke University in the United States and Mr. G.N.M. Tyrrell and Professor Whately Carington of England. Both of these men, and other investigators, have found no ideal method for testing for ESP, but certain conditions do appear to be necessary if optimum results are to be obtained. These conditions include:

1. A high level of interest on the part of the subject being tested.
2. An ability to relax while being tested.
3. The avoidance of negative thoughts.
4. The need for a strong feeling of rapport between the subject and the evaluator.

ESP, like any type of easily measured phenomenon, does appear to have certain characteristics which have been identified as being operational during those times in which it has been working. These suggest that:

1. ESP is not adversely effected by the physical conditions of the environment.
2. Extroverts score slightly higher than introverts.
3. Scores are higher for believers.
4. It is not effected by time or space.

An ESP Exercise

The exercise that is described here is very simple and inexpensive. Therefore, if you don't have what you need you can make and/or borrow the items.

This exercise will utilize both ESP cards and dice. The ESP card deck consists of 25 cards with five symbols — a circle, a plus, wavy lines, a square, and a star.

The exercise can proceed by having all subjects pair off, with one subject being tested and the other recording the results. Quietness is important in order that the subjects can concentrate.

When the ESP cards are being used, first allow the subject to examine the cards. Now the exercise may proceed without the subject being able to see the cards shuffled. The cards should remain concealed and the data recorded quietly until all 25 cards have been used. In other words, the subject should be disturbed as little as possible during the run. The recorder may turn the card over (out of the view of the subject) and then allow the subject to tell what the card is. This is called *telepathy*. But if the subject is asked to predict what the card will be before it is turned over, the subject is exhibiting *precognition*, or the ability to predict the future. In order that the results be considered valid, at least four runs (25 cards = 1 run) must be made.

When using dice only a single die will be used and a run will consist of six throws of the die. It is suggested that at least six runs be made. The same procedure is utilized as was for the ESP cards except that the die must be thrown out of the visual range of the subject.

Most good subjects do not perform well at first until they learn to relax and become familiar with the procedure. Therefore the first 100 trials (four runs) may have little or no value. It is even a good idea to test the subjects on several different occasions in order that they have an opportunity to adjust to the test situation.

Interpretation of Results

The laws of probability predict that when a die is thrown, there is one change out of six that a particular number will come up (just as there is but one chance out of two that a tossed coin will come up heads) or when an ESP card is drawn there is but one chance in five that a particular symbol will appear. Thus, chance indicates that correct choices should be obtained 16.7% of the time for the tossing of the die and 20% of the

time for the drawing of the cards. Any score which does not differ significantly from these is termed a negative score and may be just as important as a significantly higher response.

After recording the number of correct responses in four runs with the cards or six runs with the die consult Table 1 for interpretation of the results. It is to be noted that negative results do not preclude the possibility that the subject possesses ESP since some subjects may show ESP ability with one device but not the other. Therefore, it is possible that a subject will not respond to either the use of cards or dice.

Table 1

Interpretation of Results Guide

No. of Correct Responses in Four Runs	ESP Level	No. of Correct Resonses in Six Runs
0-20	—	0- 6
20-30	—	6-11
30-50	?	11-18
50-90	ESP Indicated	18-36

Both experiments can be repeated with the subject actually handling the materials except that the cards must be shuffled by the recorder out of the visual range of the subject. The number on the die will have to be predicted in advance unless the subject is either blindfolded or throwing into a box which has been specially prepared for this purpose.

References

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Mars Map

The first geologic map of the entire surface of the planet Mars may be obtained for \$1.50 from the U.S. Geologic Survey, Branch of Distribution, 1200 South Eads St., Arlington, Virginia 22202.

The colorful 38 by 48-inch map identifies 23 types of rocks, mountains, craters, plains, canyons and other features which suggest that Mars may have resembled Earth, in ages past, more than any other planet in the Solar System.