

Parapsychology Abstracts International

Fifty-six items suitable for analysis were divided into three groups. The first group contained sixteen items of demographic features of the persons concerned in the cases; the second contained thirty-six items of the main features of the cases; and four variables concerned different aspects of the investigation of the cases.

For forty-four variables, no significant differences between the data of the two groups occurred. Significant differences between the series occurred for three items of the demographic variable, six items of the main features of the cases, and three items concerning the investigations of the cases of the two series. The authors believe that the second investigation constitutes a replication, although not an entirely independent one, of the earlier investigation. The similarities in the two groups of cases do not seem to derive from conformity on the part of the second investigator or on the part of informants for the two series. The authors think the resemblances provide additional evidence for the authenticity of the cases that were included in these two series. - DA

01905. Johnson, Martin U. Obituary: J. Gaither Pratt 1910-1979. *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 1979 (Nov), 3(1), 66-68. 2 refs

The author pays tribute to Gaither Pratt, hailing him as one of the most distinguished parapsychologists and perhaps the most experienced of all experimental parapsychologists. Equal emphasis is given to biographical details and a review of his work. - R.A.W.

01906. Beloff, John. The categories of psi: The case for retention. *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 1979(Nov), 3(1), 69-77. 13 refs

The aim of this paper is to delineate the minimum set of concepts necessary for parapsychology; for example, a distinction between the informational and physical aspects of psi should be maintained. The author argues for the retention, as unique concepts, of the terms *precognition* (because of its theoretical and philosophical implications) and *telepathy* (on the grounds that it can be operationalized as the effect of the presence of an agent). Objections to the concept of clairvoyance are discussed. The author proposes that the category "theta-psi" (psi on the part of a discarnate entity) should not be abandoned until the answer to the question of postmortem survival has been found. - D.H.W./JP

01907. Millar, Brian. The distribution of psi. *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 1979 (Nov), 3(1), 78-110. 5 figs; 56 refs; 2 tables

The topic of this paper is the distribution of psi in the population. Although the basic strategy of experimental work depends upon this, surprisingly little attempt has been made to examine the question experimentally. Instead, since the Rhine revolution, it has been assumed that most people have some small degree of psi ability. The assumption is questioned here.

Drawing heavily upon the observational theories, and Walker in particular, it is suggested that the principal psi differences between people are determined at feedback. The degree to which the feedback stimulated the psi source is proposed to be crucial. The main experimental consequence is that suitable manipulation of the state of the subject at feedback may lead to improved psi scoring.

If psi exists, the traditional distinction between subject and experimenter can no longer be drawn. The results of special subjects are almost independent of the experimenter, while in group experiments he or she is crucial: only a handful of special experimenters can elicit psi from unselected groups with any regularity. Explanation of this in terms of experimenter psi is decidedly no worse than the usual idea of sensori-mediated effects. Ex-

perimenter psi has also the logical advantage that it all can be tested (by removing the possibility of a sensor component). In a few cases this procedure has left experimenter differentials intact.

The problem with experimenter psi is not any logical or empirical deficiency, but rather what to do with it. At this end a scheme of psi distribution is proposed which uses the observational theories to suggest ways out of parapsychology's dilemma. The reason most experimenters do not obtain convincing evidence of psi with unselected groups is that there is none. Instead, this is an artifact of the psi abilities of the few special experimenters. A scheme accounts for many of the observed features of parapsychological experiments and some novel deductions can be made. Only psychic experimenters should be used to get group experiments to work: this is strongly supported by the micro-PK literature.

On this basis, the majority of experimenters who do not "elicit" psi in the conventional way will never be able to and should turn their attention to attempts to find special subjects or use special experimenters as subjects. Special experimenters, on the other hand, should attempt to manipulate their own psi contribution by working with feedback they get within the context of the observational theories. - DA

01908. Bierman, D.J. A methodological hint for research in RSPK cases [letter]. *European Journal of Parapsychology*, 1979 (Nov), 3(1), 111.

In light of the observational theories, Bierman suggests a slight modification in the registration procedure used to objectively verify poltergeist phenomena suggested by the fact that when attempts are made to film or videotape poltergeist phenomena, the happenings cease. With the potential observer effect in mind, he proposes that a series of short films be used from which a number has been exposed to light before filming by a coexperimenter who is also to be in charge of handing those films to the cameraman in a random order (i.e., unknown to the cameraman). He predicts that phenomena will continue while filming with an already exposed film but will stop while filming with an unused film even though none of the people present on the site where the phenomena occur is aware of the condition of the film actually in use. DT/R.A.W.

II. PARAPSYCHOLOGY JOURNALS

(NON-ENGLISH)

DUTCH LANGUAGE

(Editor: George Zorab)

TIJDSCHRIFT VOOR PARAPSYCHOLOGIE

01909. Dietz, P.A. Some cases in the Netherlands of going on living during many months or even years without drinking. *Tijdschrift voor Parapsychologie*, 1930/31, 3, 193-202.

Dietz notes that there are several types of starving (1) The nonparanormal cases of starving are generally exhibitions to obtain money. An example that demonstrates "normal" starving over many days (14-72) was Mr. Papu who lay down in a glass coffin so that people could watch him all the time. In order to watch him people had to pay money. (2) The starving of fakirs in India. Such men generally fall into a trance or coma so that several bodily functions, such as blood circulation and breathing, are very much diminished. The reanimating of such fakirs is sometimes rather difficult. After the exper-

ment ends, the body of the fakir is very much wasted. Such fakirs are known to have been buried for several days. (3) A kind of starving that may be considered of a paranormal nature. This type of starving, i.e., not partaking of any food, and also often not drinking anything, may go on for many years and does not seem to harm the person's health.

This paranormal starving was observed for the first time in 1220, when Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, learned of a nun who lived in a nunnery at Leicester, whose only food was one holy wafer a day. He ordered that the starving nun should be watched for at least a month to see whether the nun really did not eat anything but the holy wafer. (It should be noted that in Holland there were a few cases of this kind of starving, or asitic). The first one was a legendary case during the Middle Ages. The subjects of the other two cases were Protestant women who were never observed to partake of food. One, Saint Luduwina of Schiedam, was born on the 15th of March, 1380. At the age of 15 she became ill, and during the remaining years of her life she suffered all kinds of complaints and never experienced even one day of good health without pains. She was paralyzed on one side, suffered from worms, a high fever, large ulcers. Her body was wasted to a shadow.

According to those who wrote her life-history, she did not eat anything for 26 years. The only exception was that she swallowed a holy wafer every day. Luduwina constantly had visions of Paradise and Hell. It is said that many miracles were attributed to her, even after her death. She was canonized in 1615.

The second case is that of the servant girl, Eva Vliegen, who lived in a small town called Meurs that now belongs to West Germany. Eva's life was described by the Dutch historian, Willem Baudart, who lived in the 17th century. He tells us that Eva was born in 1575. Her parents were very poor and belonged to a very low class. As a young girl she had to tend the pigs of some farmers. She got very little food to eat, and for this reason she felt very hungry all the time. She suffered so much from being constantly hungry that she prayed every day asking God to deliver her from this strong and continuous hungry feeling. Her prayers were successful, for in 1594 her appetite and feeling of being hungry had diminished so much that she partook of some food only every fortnight. From 1594 until her death many years later she did not eat or drink anything.

In 1599 the Countess of Meurs invited Eva to come and stay in her castle. Here the Countess and her friends implored Eva to eat something, even if it was only a cherry. After a long time Eva yielded and ate a cherry. She at once became very ill, so ill that the Countess and her court ladies expected her to die at any moment. Eva had to be carried home, and it took a long time before she was again in good health (without having partaken of any food or drink).

A year later Eva became very ill. The medical doctors who were consulted advised that now and then she should swallow a spoonful of buttermilk. But she never could keep it in her stomach. Whatever she tried to eat or drink was always immediately vomited. Eva's face was very pale; she was of a medium height and slight build. Eva said that twice a week she observed a strong white light, quite different from daylight. When this light appeared she felt a strong sweetish taste on her tongue, giving her a feeling of well-being. The pastor of the town of Meurs refused to believe that Eva had not eaten or drunk anything for many years. He was convinced that she was a fraud. In order to test his conviction the pastor (Conradus Veldhuysen) took Eva to his house where for 13 days she was never out of the sight of someone even for a moment.

What the pastor and his friends observed when

watching Eva convinced them that they had witnessed a miracle. That Eva had not eaten or drunk anything during 26 years is a fact that can be confirmed by at least 1,000 persons. This is written by Eva's historian, Willem Baudart. He also tells us that when he had finished his book about Eva, she was still alive and enjoying reasonably good health.

Eva was visited by princes, Dukes, and counts who regarded her as a saint. It is curious to note that her glory did not last until her death. When she had lived 32 years without partaking of any food, and the people had no doubts that she was a fraud, she became very ill. The pastor, Theodorus Scriba, visited her and took care that she would be well nursed. To the great surprise of those who nursed her, Eva suddenly asked to be given some buttermilk to drink. A woman who lived in the same house as Eva said that she knew all along (two years) that Eva partook of some food or drank something now and then. When Eva's house was searched quite a lot of foodstuffs were found. According to Eva this food was there to be distributed to the poor of the town of Meurs. It seemed that Eva had collected quite a lot of money during the last years of her life. The people were angry about Eva, who in their opinion was nothing but a fraud.

Dietz offers some suggestions as to how an authentic case of asitic can occur. He is of the opinion that asitic of a paranormal nature (which only seems to happen to women) should be regarded as a kind of materialization or as the phenomenon known as matter passing through matter.

The last case concerns Engeltje van der Vlies at Pijnacker, a domestic servant born in 1787. Her parents were poor people, and so the girl Engeltje had to work for her living at an early age. She became a servant in the house of a clergyman named Hoek. She remained with this family until her death. In 1811 she suffered greatly from hysterical fits. Somewhat later she suffered from inflammation of the intestines. This was the reason that she started to eat less every day. But she did not stop eating. She started to refuse food in May, 1818. She then only drank some water. The only food she had was from sucking a piece of meat. In March 1822 she suffered such serious hysterical fits that those that lived with her in the same house were very much afraid that she would die. From this time on it became impossible for her to drink even a few drops of water.

There were dozens of people who came to visit her and to see how she could live without food or drink. These people wanted to have her tested in order to be sure that she was not a fraud. In the beginning Engeltje refused to be tested but when she heard that people had started to regard her as a fraud, she permitted it. On August 15, 1826, a committee was formed and appointed four women, who had had no connection with Engeltje, to watch her day and night for four weeks. After the four weeks had passed, the committee published a written report, stating that during the above period Engeltje had not touched any food, nor had she drunk anything. Engeltje was still alive in 1853, and had not eaten any food for 35 years, nor had she drunk anything for 31 years.

- G.Z.

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