

Retrocausal Signalling with Prestimulus Response

Results:

This project describes an attempt to apply a new psi effect, called presentiment or pre-stimulus response (PSR), to produce a reliable time reversed communication channel. In the original PSR protocol single subjects were exposed to randomly timed and chosen stimuli, either audio startles or silent controls. Skin conductance responses (SCR) were measured in the few seconds prior to the stimuli. The frequency of such responses was observed to be significantly higher in pre-audio as opposed to pre-control epochs (Spottiswoode & May, 2003). One interpretation of this result is that the audio stimuli caused subjects to have an SCR in the seconds preceding the startling stimulus. For each stimulus the probability of a subject's showing a preceding SCR is quite low, however by using many subjects simultaneously it is possible to count SCR's across the group and statistically determine whether the upcoming stimulus will be an audio or control, thus realising a retro-causal communication channel.

Six trials were performed with between 15 and 52 subjects in each. However the PSR effect did not replicate in the group setting. A total of 219 subjects contributed data and the observed per subject effect size of 0.0163 was significantly smaller than that observed, 0.106, in the single subject PSR trials. Many possible reasons exist for the failure to see the same effect with multiple as with single subjects: the changed setting of the subjects, differences in the subject population, or the possibility that the original single subject PSR results were due to an experimenter effect similar to the mechanism described in Decision Augmentation Theory (May, E. C., Spottiswoode, S. J. P., Utts, J. M., and James, C. L. 1995).. This last notion has been supported by some post hoc analyses by this author.

Published Work:

May, E. C., Spottiswoode, S. J. P., Utts, J. M., and James, C. L. (1995). Applications of Decision Augmentation Theory. *Journal of Parapsychology*, 59, 221-250.

Spottiswoode, J., & May, E. C. (2003). Skin conductance prestimulus response: Analyses, artifacts and a pilot study. *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 17(4), 617-641.

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