

PERSONALITY TESTS AND ESP SCORES WITH COLLEGE CLASSES

GERTRUDE R. SCHMEIDLER (*U.S.A.*)

Defining as "sheep" those who believe in the possibility of paranormal processes, and as "goats" those who do not, we find that sheep tend to higher ESP scores than goats. There are many individual exceptions. These two facts conjointly lead to two broad hypotheses about ESP functioning: (1) Attitude toward the experiment helps determine ESP success; (2) Attitudes other than the sheep-goat dichotomy are operative. Further research was directed toward testing these hypotheses, and determining some of the other operative attitudes.

The first to be studied was general social adjustment. After preliminary research and observation, we stated that subjects whose social adjustment was good were more likely to be concerned with their instructions. Thus they would be more likely to score as predicted: the sheep above chance expectation, and the goats at or below chance expectation. This was confirmed in later tests, using the Rorschach as the measure of adjustment. Results with over one thousand subjects were highly significant.

For subjects with poor adjustment, we stated that their reactions to the experiment were more likely to be idiosyncratic. Three corollaries are: (1) If the idiosyncracies of certain poorly adjusted subjects are known, their ESP scores can be predicted. (2) The group as a whole will be highly variable. (3) Positive and negative tendencies are likely to cancel out, so that *average* scores will be near chance expectation. The second of these predictions was confirmed by Nicol and

Humphrey, using our data, who found the variance between subjects in the poorly adjusted group to be significantly high. The third prediction was confirmed by our results, where group averages of poorly adjusted sheep or goats were near mean chance expectation. The first has been explored in only a few cases, which so far seem consistent with it.

Preliminary tests indicated that extrapunitive (aggressive) subjects tended to have ESP scores below chance expectation, while subjects who were impunitive (tolerant, easy-going, glad to make the best of a bad situation) tended to score above chance expectation. Later tests showed these tendencies to be statistically significant, and to be particularly pertinent for those subjects who were moderately annoyed by the experimental situation.

On ESP runs where subjects reported that they had been relaxed while making their responses, the mean ESP scores were significantly high. Further investigation of the sheep-goat dichotomy, which is based on intellectual attitude toward the ESP task, showed that it was particularly relevant for the subjects who valued being consistent on intellectual questions, but that it had little relevance for other subjects.

Thus our general conclusion is that, if you study your subjects so carefully that you know how they feel about the ESP responses they are making, and if you then separate out the ESP responses made while the subjects were interested, cooperative and relaxed, you will probably find the average score to be above chance expectation. If you separate out the ESP responses made while the subjects were feeling aggressive and hostile to the ESP situation, you will probably find those responses below average chance expectation.