

Journal of the Society for Psychical Research

Volume 54 Number 807

April 1987

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A DREAM-TELEPATHY STUDY USING A HOME 'DREAM MACHINE'*

by KEITH M. T. HEARNE

ABSTRACT

A home 'dream-telepathy' study was conducted over 8 non-consecutive nights, using a female Subject. The Subject was woken automatically during REM sleep, in the latter half of the experimental night, by means of a 'dream machine' invented by the author.

Using target material prepared by an assistant, the Experimenter attempted to convey a picture (randomly selected from a set of 8 on each experimental night) to the Subject, hoping to introduce a similar picture-content into the Subject's dreams. Experimenter/Sender and Subject were separated by some 150 miles.

It was found that the Subject ranked only 3 of the 8 targets in the top 4 rank-positions for that night, and none was a direct hit (i.e. ranked 1). The results therefore provided no evidence of psi under the circumstances stated.

INTRODUCTION

The facilitatory effect of dreaming for the production of telepathic information has been anecdotally reported throughout history¹, and systematic surveys since 100 years ago have collected very many remarkable and corroborated examples². In recent years the phenomenon has been subjected to scientific scrutiny using laboratory techniques. Typically in such experiments, a Subject is 'wired up' in a sleep-laboratory so that dreaming-sleep may be identified. A distant 'Agent' or 'Sender' person is then instructed to try to influence the Subject's dreams by concentrating on a picture that has been randomly chosen from a pool of possible target material. The results of these studies have been surprisingly good, providing some evidence for psi during dreaming-sleep in several studies,³ though not in all.^{4,5,6} It has been found that dreams experienced at home can apparently contain psi material.^{7,8}

The area, having shown such positive results in adequately scientific conditions, clearly requires to be re-visited, but sleep-laboratory experiments are expensive and cumbersome ventures. Another technique would be simply to ask Subjects for home dream-reports, but dream-recall in most people is very poor considering the amount of time we spend in dreaming-sleep each night (about 2 hours). If an alarm clock method were used, it would be haphazard and might miss periods of dreaming. However, a suitable alternative experimental design was devised by the author, involving a home 'dream machine'.⁹

The 'dream machine' is a micro-processor based device invented and patented by the author, and was developed from researches into 'Lucid' dreaming at Hull and Liverpool universities.^{10,11} It has several functions, the three main ones being: nightmare interruption (an audible alarm sounds when the Subject's breathing-rate exceeds a pre-set value), ordinary-dream interruption (to increase dream recall), and experimental lucid-dream induction (by means of automatic external stimulation). The device operates by monitoring respiratory-

* This research was funded by the Parapsychology Foundation Inc. of New York.

rate, using a reliable nasal-thermistor technique. The rate increases at times during REM sleep (associated with dreaming). A long-timer may be set so that the device does not become operational until a certain time into sleep has elapsed. A short-timer may also be adjusted so that a set amount of dreaming occurs before the incrementing audible alarm wakens the Subject.

Using the device functioning in the 'Nightmare Interruption' mode, so that the dreamer would be woken at emotional peaks in dreams, it was planned to obtain dream reports from 8 non-consecutive nights in a dream-telepathy study, using an interested Subject. The responsibilities of the Sender would, to save costs and simplify the experiment, be taken on by the Experimenter—who would concentrate on the target material over a few hours.

Home dreams are often very different in content from laboratory dreams, and there might be an advantage for this experiment in that the reports might be free of inhibitory effects present in sleep-laboratories. Another possibly favourable factor for the study would be that there is some evidence that emotional peaks in dreams could be associated with psi material.¹² The device would waken the Subject at such points.

METHOD

Subject

Nerys Dee, of Old Coulsdon, Surrey, was the Subject/Receiver in this experiment. She is greatly interested in dreams, has written a book on the topic,¹³ and has attempted to interpret dreams for readers of 'Prediction' magazine for several years. Nerys performed the experiment at home, separated from the Experimenter/Sender by some 150 miles.

Target material

An assistant was instructed to prepare 8 sets of duplicate target material (each consisting of 8 pictures), for the experiment. The themes and compositions were to be as distinct as possible. They were selected from magazines. The pictures in each duplicate set were numbered, randomly, 1-8.

The pictures of one batch of targets were placed in correspondingly numbered envelopes, for use by the Experimenter, while the duplicate pictures were placed in a single envelope—to be sent by post to the Subject for ranking and rating.

Table 1. List of targets

<i>Night</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Random number</i>
1	Barynia perfume	3
2	Carrot	2
3	Bird over water	2
4	Girls in sea	7
5	Couple kissing at sunset	1
6	Ancient columns	2
7	Woman with brown eyes	3
8	Cleansing cream	6

The order of the targets was always presented 1-8, so as not to indicate any preference to the Subject. An advantage of using the duplicate targets was that the Subject could not obtain any clues as to the original target from, say, the extra handling the target picture might have had.

Selection of target material

Just before the experiment began at 5 a.m. (by arrangement with the Subject) on each experimental night, the Experimenter/Sender selected an envelope by a random procedure.

A die was thrown to select 1 of 6 blocks of random numbers (pages 12 & 13 of 'Cambridge Elementary Statistical Tables' by C. V. Lindley and J. C. P. Miller, Cambridge University Press, 1971).

It was thrown again to select a sub-group of 40 digits. The rows were inspected until a digit 1-8 was encountered. The envelope bearing that number was chosen as the target picture. The Experimenter/Sender concentrated on the material for 2 hours.

Instructions to Subject

1. KH will telephone you to arrange which nights are to be the experimental nights. They will be non-consecutive.
2. On an experimental night (8 in all), set up the device and use the respiratory rate setting that you have found to be satisfactory at waking you from dreaming sleep. Adjust the Long-timer on going to bed so that the device will become operational at roughly 5 a.m. On being woken after 5 a.m. note down any dreams that you were experiencing. KH will attempt to 'transmit' a picture to you between 5 and 7 a.m.
3. Later that morning, or the following day, you will receive by post copies of the 8 pictures that were available for 'transmission' that night. Only *one* was selected, by a random procedure. Rank the 8 pictures in order of any correspondences with your dreaming between 5 and 7 a.m., and give a measure of your confidence in that ranking for each picture.

Table 2. List of ranks and ratings by Subject

<i>Night</i>	<i>Rank of actual target</i>	<i>Rating of actual target</i>	<i>Hit (1-4) Miss (5-8)</i>
1	7	10%	M
2	6	20%	M
3	4	30%	H
4	3	30%	H
5	6	9%	M
6	4	35%	H
7	6	20%	M
8	6	25%	M

4. Keep all the literature, pictures, etc until the end of the whole experiment. Then send the completed ranking/rating sheet to the Secretary of the S.P.R. KH will at the same time send details of which target pictures were chosen to the S.P.R. That step is a guard against Experimenter fraud. Subsequently, send KH a copy of the ranking/rating sheet, and the analysis of the results will commence.

Statistical analysis

Those rankings between 1 and 4 would be deemed to constitute a 'hit', while those between 5 and 8 were 'misses'. A simple binomial evaluation would then be applied.

DISCUSSION

The Subject reported that the automatic device functioned flawlessly and that she was woken during vivid dreaming on each of the experimental nights. However, her own rankings of the pictures revealed only 3 within the top 4 ranks for each trial ($p = \cdot36$, 1 tailed). None of the pictures scored a direct 'hit' (i.e. ranked 1), and the ratings were generally low. This experiment therefore did not produce evidence in support of the notion of 'dream telepathy' under the circumstances prevailing.

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