CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor:

I should like to submit the following comments on Chuck Honorton's December 1987 study of Malcolm Bessent.[1]

In his creative and otherwise excellent study in a recent edition of this journal, Honorton reported statistically significant precognition scoring and chance clairvoyance scoring by percipient Malcolm Bessent. He then went on to conclude (among other things) that "clearly the present study, along with Bessent's prior experimental history, calls into question the generalizability of Tart's (1983) conclusion that precognition does not work as well as real-time ESP. . . ."[2] I must correct this erroneous conclusion.

My 1983 findings were that, from surveying virtually all the published (to that time) data on quantitative, multiple-choice-type psi studies, real-time ESP (telepathy and clairvoyance) showed functioning in a range of psi coefficients (proportion of time psi is used on trials after factoring out chance hits)[3] running from zero to 1.00 (perfect functioning), while precognitive functioning ranged from zero to 0.33 (with most below 0.10), a dramatic difference. If one compensates for the varying difficulty of different psi tests and computes the average information in bits per trial, real-time ESP ranges from virtually zero to 5.7 bits/trial, while precognition never exceeds a maximum of 0.66 bits/trial, again a dramatic difference, occurring consistently over a wide range of percipients and testing methods.

The best performance of Bessent that Honorton reports (precognition, Series 2) shows, by my calculations from the published data, a psi coefficient of 0.091 and a mean bit rate of 0.182 bits/trial. These are quite typical performances that have no effect on my earlier conclusion, namely, that while both real-time and precognitive ESP often work at low rates, real-time ESP sometimes works at enormously higher frequencies and bit rates than precognitive ESP does. That a single percipient shows better performance on one form of ESP compared to the other is of little relevance to the general conclusion.

The mystery and challenge still remain: why does real-time ESP seem to work so much better at times than precognition ever does?

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[1] See C. Honorton (1987), "Precognition and real-time ESP performance in a computer task with an exceptional subject," *Journal of Parapsychology*, **51**, 291–320.

[2] See C. T. Tart (1983), "Information acquisition rates in forced-choice ESP experiments: Precognition does not work as well as present-time ESP," *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, **77**, 293–310.

[3] See U. Timm (1973), "The measurement of psi," *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, **67**, 282–294.

To the Editor:

I would like to offer a brief correction and clarification to Julie Milton's "Critical Review of the Displacement Effect: II. The Relationship Between Displacement and Psychological and Situational Variables," which appeared in the June 1988 issue of the *JP*.

Dr. Milton writes that the short-duration ganzfeld I developed to control displacement during my experiments with Claudia Adams was 7 minutes long. Actually, the duration was variable, since I used a 5-minute sending period predicated on when the subject first began describing her imagery. This was followed by a 2-minute control period. Since Miss Adams varied the time she took to begin her responses, the sessions lasted from 7 to 12 minutes.

Dr. Milton also asks whether Miss Adams was informed that the change in duration was due to displacement. During these experiments, I always considered Miss Adams as a colleague and coexperimenter, not merely a "subject." She was kept informed why *any* changes in the procedures were implemented. After each session, we reviewed the results and discussed ways by which the ganzfeld could be better adapted to her talents.

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