

SEEKING THE INTUITION RESPONSE

*Richard Broughton**

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Abstract

Recent experiments have demonstrated that the body is capable of generating an "orienting response" several seconds before a randomly timed emotional shock is delivered. If the brain is responding to future information, as these experiments indicate, this suggests that the emotional system may play a role in the type of intuition that involves anomalous communication. This project builds upon this work by determining if this response, called "pre-stimulus response" (PSR) is sufficiently reliable to be used to identify exceptional intuitive talent.

The PSR test measured skin conductance while the subject viewed a random selection of calm or arousing pictures. Typically, a subject produces a large skin conductance response (SCR) following an arousing picture, but a small SCR after a calm picture. The experiment looked for a PSR in the 3-second period before the computer decides whether the target will be a calm or arousing picture. To assess test-retest reliability, each subject did that test on two occasions. To investigate individual differences, subjects completed the MBTI and the NEO-FFI tests.

With a total of 80 subjects, the overall results were in the predicted direction but not significant. Results for the first session were significant, while those for the second session were not, suggesting habituation. Correlations for post-stimulus responses were robust but there was no evidence of test-retest reliability for the PSR. None of the personality variables correlated with the post-stimulus response or the PSR.

* Intuition Laboratories, Inc., Durham, NC, USA.