

GELLER, Uri

1974

# Physicists Test Telepathy In a 'Cheat-Proof' Setting

By **BOYCE RENSBERGER**

Scientists at the Stanford Research Institute who conducted experiments with a number of persons, including Uri Geller, the magician and purported psychic, report that Mr. Geller, and probably most people, have an ability to send and receive information by some "as yet unidentified perceptual modality."

Despite the publicity that has been given Mr. Geller's contention that he has the ability to bend metal or move objects by mental power alone, the researchers said in the generally conservative journal nature that they were unable to confirm the authenticity of such feats under conditions that eliminated the possibility of deception.

Although several professional magicians have duplicated many of Mr. Geller's feats by using sleight-of-hand techniques, the S.R.I. scientists said in a telephone interview that their current report was based on experiments in which trickery would seem to be unlikely.

The scientists said they had consulted professional magicians in designing their experiments to be as "cheat-proof" as possible.

Mr. Geller was sealed in a room with metal walls capable of insulating it from external sights, sounds and radio waves, the scientists said.

## Random Selection

searchers opened a dictionary at random, looked down the list of entries for the first word that could be depicted graphically and then drew a picture corresponding to the word.

Mr. Geller's task was to draw a similar picture. The researchers said he was never told who would select the picture or how it would be done.

In nine such experiments, Mr. Geller produced seven drawings or sets of drawings. All of Mr. Geller's responses, which were published in the nature article alongside the researchers' drawings, showed some degree of correspondence to the target pictures. Most showed remarkable similarity.

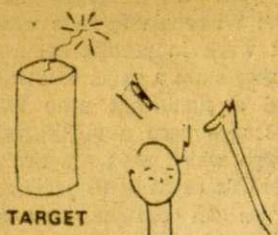
In the two instances in which Mr. Geller did not produce a drawing, he had been fitted with brain wave recording electrodes that, he said, interfered with his ability.

In a 10th experiment, the drawing was placed in the sealed room before Mr. Geller's arrival. Later, when asked to reproduce the drawing he was unable to do so.

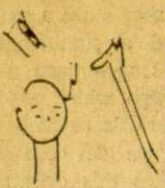
In three additional experiments, images that could be displayed by computer were stored in the machine's memory, known only to the programmer. Mr. Geller, in the sealed room during the selec-

"New York Times" 1974 Feb. 22.

GELLER, Mrs.



TARGET

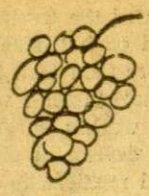


RESPONSE 1

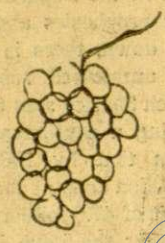


RESPONSE 2

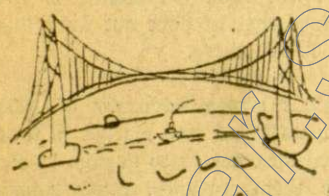
Randomly chosen targets drawn by scientists, and Mr. Geller's responses, made while secluded from researchers.



TARGET



RESPONSE



TARGET BRIDGE



RESPONSE

Restraining



ekönyvtárk-szegeed.hu

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tion and programing of the image, produced drawings that all bore some degree of similarity.

From these experiments, among others, the scientists,

Russell Targ and Dr. Harold Puthoff, concluded that Mr. Geller did indeed possess telepathic ability.

Publication of the report by the British scientific magazine Nature, one of the most respected international science journals, represents something of a first for parapsychology. Research in the field is almost always reported only in journals that circulate within the specialty.

The editor of Nature, aware of the controversy that the article, included in the Oct. 18 issue, might aronse, the published an editorial explaining why they had chosen to print the article despite the objections of some article "referees." According to the editorial, consultants said that the report was "weak in design and presentation" and that details of precautions against conscious or unconscious fraud were "uncomfortably vague."

Nonetheless, the editors said, the report represented a legitimate attempt by bona fide scientists to verify the existence of a purported phenomenon that scientists frequently debated privately.

#### Abilities Held Common

"Perhaps the most important issue raised by the circumstances surrounding the publication of this paper is whether science has yet developed the competence to confront claims of the paranormal," the editorial said.

The scientists, both physicists who have long studied parapsychology as an avocation, experimented with Mr. Geller as part of a continuing study of telepathic abilities that, they contend, are relatively common.

"We feel we have a repeatable phenomenon that doesnt depend on Geller, Mr. Targ said in a telephone interview from S.R.I. offices in Menlo Park. Cal. Mr. Targo said he felt the phenomenon was not "extrasensory at all but one that depended on an unknown, seldom exercised seory capability possessed by many, perhaps all, perons.

He said that experiments with a number of persons who were unaware of any telepathi capability, "including some skeptcs, had suggested that the phenomenon might be common.

