

From One to the Many: The Social Implications of Nonlocal Perception

| Stephan A. Schwartz |

Alexandra, a 22-year-old college student who recently graduated with a degree in psychology, was a summer intern at the Institute of Noetic Sciences. There she met Dean Radin, an experimental psychologist and chief scientist at the Institute. When he told her what he was working on in the lab, she volunteered to participate. Now she sat in his lab in Petaluma, California, staring at a computer monitor. Most of the time there would be nothing, but randomly, pictures would appear for a moment. As Alexandra stared at the monitor, Radin had rigged a macro video camera looking back at her, which was focused on the iris of her eye. Not always, but to a highly significant degree, just before a picture appeared on the monitor, her iris would dilate. And the degree of dilation correlated with the emotional content, the numinosity, of the picture. Violence or sex, not surprisingly, produced the largest effect. Just to be clear: her body responded to something before it happened. She had a presentiment. As Radin and his co-investigator Ana Borges state, “These studies, which replicate conceptual similar experiments, suggest that sometimes seers do see the future. This implies that developing comprehensive models of anticipatory behavior, from understanding the nature of intuition to the placebo effect, may require

consideration of transtemporal and teleological factors.”¹

Dutch mathematician and consciousness researcher Eva Lohbach, at the University of Amsterdam, has examined the several dozen presentiment articles already published in the peer-reviewed literature. These are studies conducted by multiple researchers working at different institutions at labs across the world. She has, in my view, reached the correct conclusion dictated by the data.

“Past and present research has shown that emotionally arousing stimuli, visual or auditory, produce stronger anticipatory effects than more neutral ones. The most important physiological measures used in presentiment studies are heartrate, EEG, fMRI (BOLD signal), and electrodermal activity (EDA). So far, all of these have shown evidence of presentiment, so the whole body appears to be involved. Women appear to be somewhat more sensitive to presentiment than men. Effects of meditation are mixed.”²

In all these studies, the mind–body connection is expressed psychophysically, the response anticipated before there is any cognitive engagement. This is presentiment at the individual level. But I think the data is telling us something else as well: There is another dimension, the individual reaction expressed collectively. This effect is social.

Roger Nelson, an experimentalist psychologist and the Lab Manager for almost the entire history of the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) group has worked on this issue for years. The principal research vector for the PEAR lab was nonlocal perturbation, consciousness directly affecting time–space. Across several decades of

research, individuals would be asked to affect the performance of random event generators (REGS). These instruments were constructed with great sophistication to assure their random performance. Yet, human intention could make them go non-random. Nelson was part of the research team in a dozen such studies. Taken as a whole, they demonstrate that the focused intention of ordinary people can do this, and the odds across the PEAR database once again are better than one in a billion.

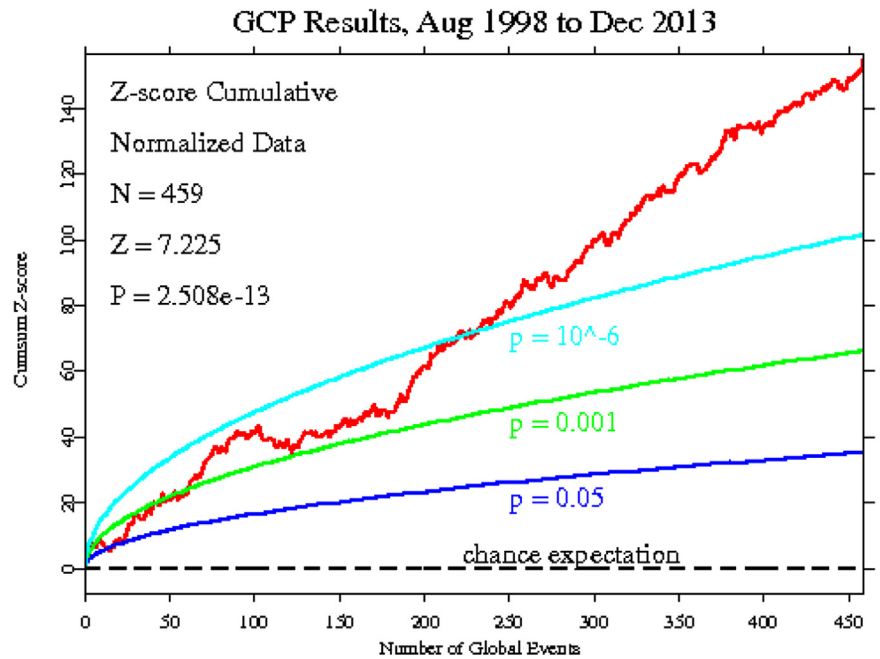
While still at Princeton, Nelson asked the following: Could this individual effect produce an objectively verifiable collective expression? To answer that question, he created the Global Consciousness Project (GCP), which has run continuously now for over a decade. The study design is quite straightforward: Is it possible that a mass of people having an individual but linked experience could have an effect on a constantly running coordinated planet-wide network of computer-linked REGS? A measure of consciousness linked nonlocally expressing itself as social awareness. Something like the world's reaction to the death of Princess Diana in a car accident, or the Japanese tsunami of 2011? I want to go into this in some depth because as hard as it is for many to imagine presentiment in an individual, it is that much harder again for some to see the logical extension, that there is social linkage.

Nelson describes it this way: “Subtle interactions link us with each other and the Earth. When human consciousness becomes coherent and synchronized, the behavior of random systems may change. Quantum event-based random number generators (RNGs) produce

The Schwartzreport tracks emerging trends that will affect the world, particularly the United States. For EXPLORE, it focuses on matters of health in the broadest sense of that term, including medical issues, changes in the biosphere, technology, and policy considerations, all of which will shape our culture and our lives.

completely unpredictable sequences of zeroes and ones. But when a great event synchronizes the feelings of millions of people, our network of RNGs becomes subtly structured. The probability is less than one in a billion that the effect is due to chance. The evidence suggests an emerging noosphere, or the unifying field of consciousness described by sages in all cultures. Coherent consciousness creates order in the world.”^{3,4}

The GCP data is cumulative and publicly available.⁵ It lists hundreds of events in which a hypothesis predicting an event has been advanced and the subsequent results: Significant, Predicted Direction, Opposite, and Opposite and Significant. As I write, the most recent event that stands out is the death of Nelson Mandela. The data records the timeframe, the hypothesis source, the number of REGs recording it, the Z-score, and the probability. For Mandella, that was: 20131205, many people hypothesize, 45 REGs reporting, a Z-score of 2.238 and a probability of 0.013. From the GCP website, as I write, “The two following figures represent the history of our formal hypothesis testing. The first shows the Z-scores for more than 459 formally specified events in an ordinary scatterplot. While there is a noticeable positive bias, it is not easy to see its significance. Yet the odds against chance



of this meanshift over a database this size are about a hundred billion to one.”

“The second figure displays the same data as a cumulative deviation from chance expectation (shown as the horizontal black line at 0 deviation). Truly random data would produce a jagged curve with no slope, wandering up and down around the horizontal. The

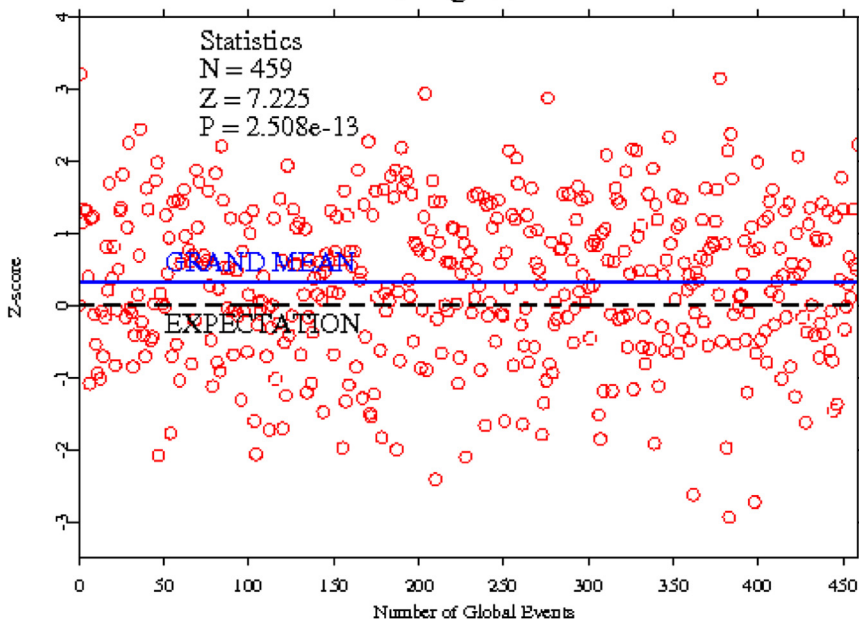
dotted smooth curves show the 0.05 and 0.001 and 0.000001 probability envelopes that indicate significant versus chance excursions. This figure can be compared with a ‘control distribution’ using simulations of the event series.”

“The jagged red line shows the accumulating excess of the empirically normalized Z-scores relative to expectation for the complete dataset of rigorously defined events. The overall result is highly significant. The odds against chance are much greater than a million to one.”⁶

Consider climate change in the context of individual presentiment and collective nonlocal linkage. All scientific projections based on past and present data make it clear catastrophic changes are coming. For many, extreme weather events are already here. I encourage you to go to <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/11/24/opinion/sunday/what-could-disappear.html/> and look at the effect just 5 ft of sea rise has on major American cities on all coasts. Do you think that a cataclysmic and emotional experience such as the submergence of the densest population centers on the planet might precipitate a presentiment reaction? What might that look like?

If your body had a psychophysical linkage presentiment response that a

GCP Results, Aug 1998 to Dec 2013



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