

# Deborah Delanoy

Deborah Delanoy is a British psychologist and parapsychologist who has conducted research in ESP and direct mental interaction with living systems (DMILS).

## Career

Deborah Delanoy's first degree, in sociology, was from the University of California at San Diego. After receiving her baccalaureate she returned to her native San Francisco Bay area, where she worked first in publishing then in retail. She then moved to Scotland to pursue a graduate degree in parapsychology at the University of Edinburgh under the supervision of John Beloff. In 1986 she was awarded her doctorate for her experimental work exploring psi training in the [ganzfeld](#).

In 1985, the [Koestler Chair for Parapsychology](#) was founded at Edinburgh University, first held by Professor [Robert Morris](#). Delanoy worked as a research fellow for the Koestler Chair from 1986 to 1999. This latterly included job-sharing a visiting professor position with Morris at the Institut für Grenzgebiete der Psychologie und Psychohygiene (IGPP) in Freiburg, Germany (1995–98).

After twenty years at Edinburgh, Delanoy took up the position of professor of psychology with responsibility for research leadership, at what is now the University of Northampton. Here she was a founding member, and the first director, of the Centre for the Study of Anomalous Psychological Processes (CSAPP). Latterly, she was the associate dean for the School of Social Sciences (research, business/enterprise development and internationalisation remit) at Northampton until her retirement in 2010. She was elected president of the [Parapsychological Association](#) in 1994, served several terms as president of the [Society for Psychical Research](#) (2007-2011), and received the Parapsychology Association's [Outstanding Career Award in 2014](#).

Delanoy's research has included training and development of ESP ability, ganzfeld work, designing methods for testing ESP outside the laboratory, examining psi-conductive target characteristics and DMILS (direct mental interaction with living systems) work.

## Ganzfeld and Psi Training

Delanoy's doctoral work focused on three studies that largely aimed to train percipients to learn to better differentiate between accurate and inaccurate responses to a psi target, with the responses being generated under ganzfeld conditions. This did not achieve successful psi outcomes. However, it helped inform subsequent psi-training activity conducted by Morris, Delanoy and Watt at Edinburgh University, which developed extensive training protocols to help percipients improve at a psi (or any other) task, including methods for securely testing percipients in a laboratory environment. Ganzfeld work at Edinburgh was greatly advanced by the development of an auto-ganzfeld testing environment created by [Charles Honorton](#), [Dean Radin](#) and others at Edinburgh. It continues to

be conducted at the KPU by [Caroline Watt](#), the current holder of the Koestler Chair, and her students.

## **Psi Conducive Practices**

In 1989, Delanoy visited six different US laboratories to learn how they nurtured environments conducive to the expression of psi during experiments. Such information helped inform new and existing research programs at the Koestler Parapsychology Unit (KPU), which was becoming more established. Information was gathered from observing experiments and interviews with principal investigators. General principles that emerged were the importance of cultivating a supportive and friendly research environment, winning the trust and confidence of participants, and creating an expectation of success in experiments. The selection of participants was also important to achieving successful psi outcomes, with a preference for those who are stable and open to psi, and who expect to perform well in the laboratory.<sup>1</sup> These pointers proved to be of significant benefit to the KPU, which became one of the most active and successful centres in psi research, especially with regard to ganzfeld telepathy.<sup>2</sup>

## **Direct Mental Interaction Living Systems (DMILS) Research**

Delanoy conducted a number of DMILS studies, which investigated remote interactions in which an 'agent' attempted to interact with the physiology/electrodermal activity (EDA) of another person (the 'percipient') under conditions of mutual sensory shielding. Most of these studies focused on the relationship between agent and percipient and/or the role of the agent. For example, in one study half the participant pairs were good friends while the other half were related pairs. Overall levels of EDA correspondence between agents and percipient was within chance levels and, contrary to expectation, friend pairs showed higher levels of concordance between their EDA patterns than close relations. More encouragingly, EDA concordance was significant during activate periods but not significant during calm periods, as predicted.<sup>3</sup>

In a further distant influence study conducted with the team at the IGPP in Freiburg, Germany, sessions were divided between training and experimental, with participants led (incorrectly) to believe that training sessions would not be included. The experimental sessions were marginally significant ( $p = 0.05$ ); the training sessions were at chance. Delanoy and Morris speculate that experimenter motivation was responsible for these differences and is an important aspect of distant influence studies and psi research in general.<sup>4</sup>

## **Psi Phenomena Review**

In 1993, Delanoy carried out a major review of the meta-analytic evidence for a wide range of psi phenomena. Her report covers reviews from the ganzfeld, PK on random number generators, [precognition](#) in the lab, distant influence experiments on human biology, and personality correlates with ESP performance, finding consistent trends and patterns in the data. Delanoy argues that the consistency of

effects throughout various reviews suggests that psi data cannot be dismissed as merely random statistical fluctuations and that the effects demand further investigation.[5](#)

In a later review, Delanoy stresses the relevance of psi research to mainstream academia, in addition to its evidential value.[6](#)

Michael Duggan

## Literature

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## Endnotes

### Footnotes

- [1.](#) Delanoy (1997).
- [2.](#) Watt (2006).
- [3.](#) Delanoy et al. (1999).
- [4.](#) Delanoy & Morris (1998-99).
- [5.](#) Delanoy (1993).
- [6.](#) Delanoy (1996).

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