

# Alternative Science

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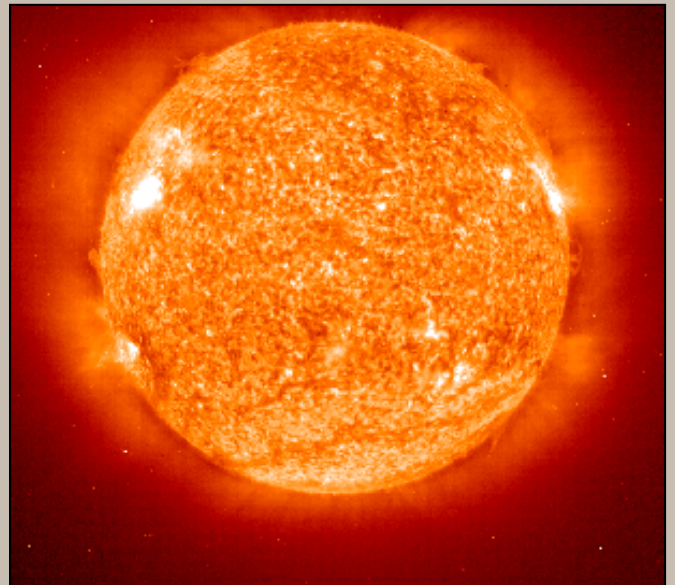
## Lottery ESP



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## ESP and the Lottery

Most developed countries have had public lotteries for many years -- in the case of nations like France and Spain, for centuries. It was not, however, until 1989 that anyone realised that public numerical lotteries provide an unparalleled opportunity to test for the existence of paranormal abilities. Russian astrophysicist Mark Zilberman realised that the historical results of public lotteries provide a colossal statistical base that is completely independent of the observer and that relates to just one goal -- attempting to predict the outcome of a random process.



Astrophysicist Mark Zilberman found a correlation between solar activity and winning the lottery  
Photo: NASA

Zilberman examined the results of the Russian and French state lotteries and asked the question: are the results correlated significantly with any identifiable external factor?

As with the UK lottery, people win if they can predict 3 or more of the correct numbers. Zilberman looked at what he calls the True Predictions Density (TPD) defined as that fraction of lottery ticket buyers who win compared with the total number of tickets sold that week.

'From the standpoint of the player,' says Zilberman, 'lotteries are just a game in which one stands to win a certain sum of money. However, on closer analysis, lotteries afford us valuable material for investigating the ESP ability of masses of people. Indeed, public numerical lotteries are tantamount to a large-scale parapsychological experiment. One has here participants who are trying to predict results obtained from a Random Number Generator and there is feedback.'

There are many properties of lotteries that make them so useful for parapsychological analysis. The 'experiment' has a colossal statistical basis. In Russia, for instance, each monthly average TPD is based on between 200 million and 300 million predictions and the average annual TPD is based on between 3000 and 4000 million predictions. The trials take place every week and following each draw the participants can compare their predictions with the target. Results are published independently of any investigator, so there can be no selection of results. The experiment covers many years. The participants are not selected for any ESP ability but are a random cross section. Finally, the millions of participants demand demonstrable fair play and complete randomness in the lottery number picking system.

Given the nature of lotteries, any variation in TPD (the success of winners at predicting the outcome) ought to be random. In fact, Zilberman discovered in 1989 that the French and Soviet public lotteries exhibit an inexplicable but statistically significant seasonal variation over many years. **Moreover, the variation in one country was mirrored in the other.** As an astrophysicist, Zilberman realised that the variation was correlated with the 11-year cycle of solar activity. When solar activity is high, the number of correct predictions falls and vice versa.

'What can be the explanations for these phenomena?' Asked Zilberman. 'Are they the effect of external factors modifying the results of lottery draws? Are they due to human precognitive abilities as modulated by external geophysical factors? Are they due to human psychokinetic abilities to shift the stochastic process to a desired outcome?'

Zilberman investigated whether the variation might be an artifact of players choosing certain numbers or certain strategies. It is known for example that players prefer numbers below 20. He found that, 'with a certain strategy, large groups of players could reduce the TPD below the random level for a finite period. On the other hand, no tactics, no combined effort, could raise the density above the random level unless this involved prediction of the future.' As Zilberman points out, the results show both seasonal and annual cycles of the rise and fall of TPD above the random level. Moreover, the fluctuations are mirrored in both Russia and France.

Most predictable of all, as with all such anomalous findings, Zilberman's discovery has been relegated to the 'Forbidden Science' file drawer and forgotten.

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