

AECKO: TOWARDS A SCIENCE OF ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCE FIELD STUDIES

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Background: This two-phase project seeks to advance the study of, and field approaches to, spontaneous cases of anomalous physical disturbances (often labeled RSPK or “poltergeist”) by achieving a broad synthesis of the current data and developing a systematic approach to identifying a specific type of case with characteristics identified by the acronym *anomalous episodic communal kinetic occurrence (AECKO)*.

Aims: 1.) Conceptually replicate and expand W. G. Roll’s 1977 database & survey of RSPK-type cases up to the present; 2.) Develop the AECKO concept and conduct a preliminary practical test of the systems-based approach stemming from it.

Methods: Phase 1 – RSPK-type cases were retrieved from the parapsychological literature and those meeting specific selection criteria were compiled in a digital database. An analytical survey was then conducted to compare with Roll’s survey & two later surveys. **Phase 2** – A basic test protocol for identifying AECKO cases was created by developing a 22-item checklist, with the items describing particular case features characteristic of AECKO. Seven independent raters from paranormal enthusiast groups made subjective assessments ranging from 0 – 100% (in 25% increments) of the degree to which each feature was present within six RSPK-type cases.

Results: Phase 1 – The final database contained 212 cases spanning 1612 – 2021, expanding Roll’s database by 96 cases. The analysis conceptually replicated several of Roll’s survey findings relating to main phenomena (object movement & percussive noises), case duration & inception time, suspected agency, and health & psychosocial variables. Results were also in line with certain variables examined in other surveys. While not being fully independent, these four surveys did continue to exhibit similar patterns, features, & characteristics among their databases. Novel survey aspects included the tallying of case variables which have not been described or quantitatively assessed in previous surveys. **Phase 2** – Six raters completed & returned checklists within the allotted timeframe; this sample was too small for inferential analysis such as interrater reliability. Standard deviations of 30+ for many of the items indicated wide variation in rater agreement on item scores. Some indication was found that mean item ratings tended to be consistent with researcher’s subjective ratings.

Conclusions: This grant led to important insights. Parapsychology lacks a taxonomy that addresses the question, “What, exactly, are we studying?” *Psi* may more fruitfully be viewed as a product of complex living systems through the biological sciences. Biology’s taxonomy is a *conceptual scaffolding* that makes it a coherent science. Biologists recognize that complex, open, living systems cannot be understood by experiments alone. Neither can psi, because it emerges from complex systems settings. This suggests a *reframed taxonomy for parapsychology* – not types of psi phenomena – but types of *complex systems settings* from which it arises. One such complex systems setting is Solvvin’s (2021, 2026) complex systems friendly update of RSPK, called AECKO (pronounced “echo”) – a family setting from which **K**inetic bursts of anomalies (**A**nomalous **O**ccurrence) play out to a **C**ommunal group of witnesses and victims as an **E**pisode of a larger background *story* or *narrative*. AECKO is *not* a theory, but one

example – of many possible – suggestive of a taxonomic scaffolding of settings from which psi tends to emerge.

Keywords: Anomalous episodic communal kinetic occurrence (AECKO), Poltergeist, Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK), Spontaneous case research

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