

Conclusions about Paranormal Phenomena

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This document concisely states my overall conclusions about paranormal phenomena based on over four decades of scientific research and study and my personal paranormal experiences. The individual conclusions have been discussed in various scientific papers, but the overall conclusions have not been presented in one place or in such a direct, simple manner. The conclusions are:

1. Paranormal phenomena beyond current scientific understanding sometimes actually occur. This conclusion is based almost entirely on my personal paranormal experiences around age 20. (Kennedy, 2000)
2. Most parapsychological experiments do not manifest actual paranormal phenomena. The experiments are dominated by methodological noise, various types of experimenter misconduct, and wishful thinking. These obstacles severely hinder scientific understanding and could be avoided with established methodological practices. (Kennedy, 2004a; 2005; 2013a, 2013b)
3. Most (probably more than 80%) of the spontaneous paranormal experiences that people report are not actually paranormal. Most research on spontaneous cases is actually investigating characteristics of wishful thinking. (Kennedy, 2005)
4. The occurrence of actual paranormal phenomena is associated with certain people and varies greatly among people. Few people experience many actual paranormal occurrences. Actual paranormal effects in experiments tend to be associated with certain experimenters. (Kennedy, 2000; 2001; 2005; Kennedy and Taddonio, 1976)
5. Reliable applications of psychic abilities for material benefit such as for financial success or military uses appear to be prevented by some principle that limits paranormal phenomena. Reliable applications have not been achieved after decades of effort. The claims of those who profess reliable paranormal abilities are usually based on wishful thinking, deception, and/or sporadic, uncontrolled, sometimes striking instances of actual paranormal phenomena. (Kennedy, 2003; 2004b)
6. My most convincing paranormal experiences appeared to be guiding my life and provided a sense of meaning in life. Similar effects have been frequently reported by others. A sense of meaning in life and paranormal guidance or destiny are the most common effects of anomalous experiences and may be the primary purposes of actual paranormal phenomena. (Kennedy, 2000; 2004b)

7. Some people have strongly favorable attitudes toward paranormal phenomena and some others have strongly unfavorable attitudes. These extreme attitudes are associated with certain personality types and deeply held values and worldviews that do not easily change. The polarization of attitudes toward paranormal phenomena is sometimes intensified by motivations to impress oneself on others, to find meaning in life through conflict and competition, and to feel superior to those with different beliefs and values. (Kennedy, 2005)

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