

# A Study of Spontaneous Experiences Among Unselected High-School Subjects

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(This abstract was published in the *Journal of Parapsychology*, 1978, Volume 42, pages 67-68, for a paper presented at the 1978 Southeastern Regional Parapsychological Association Conference.)

This study came from a larger on-going project relating to personality characteristics and ESP. Students from five psychology classes ( $N = 135$ )

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of one high school formed the total subject pool. They were given Cattell's HSPQ, an "ESP experience" questionnaire, and 12 runs of a standard ESP test. On the ESP experience questionnaire, 52 students described at least one possible spontaneous psi experience. These descriptions were evaluated and sorted into four groups: "good" cases ( $N = 19$ ), "borderline" cases ( $N = 17$ ), "deja vu" ( $N = 5$ ), and "probably not spontaneous psi" ( $N = 16$ ). The good cases were further divided into different types and compared with L. E. Rhine's classification of spontaneous cases. Of the 19 good cases, 14 were of the intuitive type and 5 were dream experiences. No hallucinatory cases were reported. There were certain similarities between these cases and Rhine's in that (a) dream experiences contained "complete" information more often than did waking experiences; (b) more cases with "conviction" occurred when the subject was awake; and (c) the feeling of conviction was independent of the completeness of information.

To see if the personality characteristics of those who reported psi experiences differed in any significant manner from those who did not, the second-order factors of the HSPQ data for the two groups were analyzed. The "experience" group showed significantly higher creativity scores than the test population norm ( $t = 3.52$ , 51 *df*;  $p < .001$ , two-tailed), these scores being suggestively higher than the "no-experience" group ( $t = 1.94$ , 134 *df*;  $p < .06$ , two-tailed). On the neuroticism scale the whole sample averaged below the norm, though only the no-experience group differed significantly ( $t = 2.64$ , 82 *df*;  $p < .01$ , two-tailed). These results suggest that persons reporting psi experiences tend to be more creative and closer to the norm on the neuroticism scale than those who do not report any such experiences.

Another factor, school achievement, showed differences within the "experience" group. Those who reported experiences with complete information had achievement scores higher than the norm; those who reported incomplete experiences had achievement scores below the norm. The difference between the two was marginal ( $t = 2.45$ , 12 *df*;  $p < .05$ , two-tailed). This relationship may be explained as a function of the motivation and/or general efficiency in communication skill of those subjects who tend to report complete information in their psi experiences. The ESP data did not show any significant evidence of psi.