



## Perceptual phenomena associated with spontaneous experiences of after-death communication: Analysis of visual, tactile, auditory and olfactory sensations

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to create a detailed characterization of the nature of the sensory perceptions associated with after-death communication. A primary aim was to determine if perceptions of after-death communication (ADC) support one or more of three hypotheses: (1) they are the result of hallucinations or day-to-day thoughts about the deceased; (2) they are subjective phenomena reflecting the extrasensory perception of remote events; or (3) they constitute objective phenomena, perceived more solidly, as if within the physical world. Methods: The study included a quantitative analysis and qualitative first-person narrative description of part of the data set from a detailed questionnaire study (991 viable cases) investigating the phenomenology of spontaneous ADCs. Results and Conclusions: A majority of respondents reported that ADCs were distinctly different from simple thoughts about the deceased. Specifically, relative distribution of ADCs across the senses was 46% visual, 44% auditory, 48% touch, and 28% olfactory, with 34% sensing the presence of the deceased without input from the five senses. ADCs often were perceived as external and having properties of the material world (e.g., solidity, tactile qualities). Even the more nebulous 'sense of presence' cases were perceived as having a distinct location in space and as being identifiable as a specific deceased presence despite the lack of sensory cues. These elements are more compatible with hypotheses 2 and 3 than hypothesis 1.