

## CASE STUDY RESULTS

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The first study of spontaneous cases made at Duke was the result of a specific need for suggestions on a research program. It was an outgrowth of that ever-present background question, how to get better control of psi. Control seemed to be impossible because test subjects were unable to tell when their responses were correct. They experienced no conviction of certainty.

On this point spontaneous cases presented a quite different result. In almost half of the 1,600 cases in the collection, the person involved had been so convinced that his impression was correct that he had taken action of some appropriate kind, solely because of it; or, if action had not been called for, at least in his report he had stressed his feeling of certainty. Of course, so high a proportion of conviction cases may have been partly the result of selective reporting, but it was at least an obviously different situation from that of the laboratory.

By classifying conviction and non-conviction cases and subdividing both classes further into waking and dream experiences, I found a greater number of conviction instances in the waking than in the dream group. The waking experiences most frequently believed were of the hunch or intuition type, which carried little or no detail or specific information about the event involved. Psi dreams, much less frequently accompanied by conviction than waking experiences, were predominantly of the detailed, highly realistic type in which practically an entire event had been perceived.

This study suggested that conviction was not associated with conscious rational judgment but appeared to arise non-rationally, below the conscious level. Therefore it did not appear to be an element one should expect could be consciously interjected into the test performance by the subject's effort.

The second case project at Duke sought to find what order could be made out of the variations of form in which even simple extrasensory experiences were expressed. Cases that seemed obviously of telepathic type might be experienced by one person as a sudden hunch, by another as a very detailed dream, or by a third as a fantastic "day-dream-like" experience. Analysis of a thousand cases showed four basic forms:

(1) Intuitive, in which the subject's experience was a simple unreasoned impression or idea; (2) Hallucinatory, in which the effect was not primarily an idea, but which instead was projected as if it were a sensation; (3) Unrealistic dreaming, characterized by fantasy or unconscious dramatization; (4) Realistic dreaming, in which the imagery was almost photographically exact.

The main interest lay in the fact that none of these forms is unique to psi. Intuitions and hunches, realistic and unrealistic dreams, are types of psychological experience already familiar in situations not involving psi. The *form* of any given experience then should not be considered as a characteristic of psi but rather only the psychological mechanism by which information secured by psi happens to be expressed. If so, then, the factors which determine the form of a given case must be those inherent in the individual personality, perhaps in combination with the specific conditions, but at least not identified with psi itself.

The third survey covered a group of simple auditory hallucinations, in which a call was heard. Analyzing them, it was found that the events producing a call-hallucination varied from no agent, deceased agent, living agent who

called, living agent who only thought, and living agent who probably did neither.

Therefore, since the same form of experience resulted regardless of the situation pertaining to agency, the analogy between the process involved in these call-cases and that of sense perception did not seem tenable.

The main suggestion arising from this study was that the percipient created his own experience from elements based on the distant event, but he created it to fit his own conceptions; and that therefore the relationship between experience and event bore little resemblance to the analogous one of sense perception.