

## **Exploring the correlates and nature of subjective apparitional experiences**

### **ABSTRACT:**

#### **Background**

Prior research indicates that synesthesia may play a role in the etiology of ghost experiences.

#### **Aims**

A survey explored whether synesthetes differed from non synesthetes on ghost experiences, frequencies of differently appraised ghost experiences, senses and spatial locations of ghost experiences, psychometric predictors of ghost experiences (transliminality, boundary thinness, creativity, somatic focus, interoception and locus of control). Qualitative analysis of narratives using grounded theory. The psychomanteum explored synesthesia, geomagnetic field (GMF), electromagnetic field (emf), heart rate variability, and the output of a random number generator (RNG) in exceptional experiences (ExE).

#### **Method**

An online survey explored correlates of ghost experiences. A psychomanteum compared 15 synesthetes with 15 non synesthetes on ExE and their correlates.

#### **Results**

Synesthetes reported more ghost experiences with a paranormal appraisal. Boundaries, creativity, interoception and somatic focus correlated with ghost experiences with a paranormal appraisal. Transliminality was the strongest independent predictor. The RNG output correlated negatively and significantly with the extent to which ExE were rated as taking up space. Post hoc analysis indicates that this effect was for synesthetes only. The GMF (nanoTesla) and local emf (milliGauss) influenced the levels of heart rate variability. GMF correlated with the extent to which experiences took up space.

#### **Conclusions**

Synesthesia, creativity, boundaries and awareness of the body play a role in ghost experiences. Results of the psychomanteum study are suggestive of interactions between subjective experience and the local and non-local environment, particularly among synesthetes.

#### **Keywords**

Creativity, Locus of control, Interoception, Synaesthesia, Psychological boundaries, Ghost experiences, Psychomanteum, RNG output, Environmental correlates, Heart rate variability (HRV), Geomagnetism and electromagnetism

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