

ORIGINAL PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH

Intended Audience: Researchers, Clinicians, Practitioners, General

Experiences, Business Practices, and Familial Characteristics of Secular American Mediums

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Abstract: Little is known about the day-to-day activities of practicing mediums in the US. Medium participants (n=128; 91.4% female, 93.6% white, 54.0 years) completed online surveys. Over 60% reported each psychic, precognitive, remote viewing, psychometry, and energy healing abilities, and half communicate with living and deceased animals (47.6% and 52.4%, respectively). The majority (55.9%) first experienced mediumistic communication at 10 years or younger. Family members with similar abilities were 74.2% female and 69.3% from the mother's side. Participants worked with law enforcement (21.5%) or other investigators (32.8%) and had 'training' with living mentors, spirit guides, or the deceased. In-person readings are most popular; most mediums perform two or less readings per week lasting 31-60 minutes. Nearly 30% do not charge for readings; 82.8% of those who do, charge less than \$200. These novel data provide unique insight into the lived experiences of mediums and offer directions for future research.

Keywords: medium, psychic, business practices, survey, client

Although practices involving communication with the deceased have existed since antiquity in cultures across the globe (Harris & Alvarado, 2013; Hunter & Luke, 2014), mediums are currently defined in Western cultures as individuals who report experiencing communication with the deceased regularly, reliably, and on-demand and who share the resulting messages with the living. “Using this definition opens the lived experience of mediums and their clients to multidisciplinary investigation” (Beischel & Zingrone, 2015, p. 302). Psychics, in contrast, convey information not about the deceased but about people, events, places, or times unknown to them. A common rule of thumb is that all mediums are psychic but not all psychics are mediums. In addition, although it is possible for anyone to have mediumistic and/or psychic experiences, only those who have these experiences regularly and reliably are appropriately termed mediums or psychics (Beischel, 2018a).

Modern research with mediums has included examinations of their experiences (e.g., Roxburgh & Roe, 2013) and states of consciousness (Rock & Beischel, 2008) as well as the accuracy of their statements under laboratory-controlled conditions (e.g., Beischel et al., 2015) and their psychological (e.g., Taylor & Murray, 2012) and physiological characteristics (Beischel, Tassone, & Boccuzzi, 2019).

The Psychic Services industry in the US (including mediumship, astrology, and other metaphysical services) is currently valued at over \$2 billion. As a rare discretionary industry able to weather economic fluctuations, the continued growth of psychic services has been projected (IBIS World, 2021). However, little is known about the actual practices of contemporary American mediums. It is estimated that the majority of mediums in the US may be secular; that is, not associated with any formal organization or systematized belief system. A previous survey found that only 5% of the self-identified medium respondents from the US reported being a participating member in an organized religion that includes mediumship or spirit communication as part of its services (Beischel, Mosher, & Boccuzzi, 2017). This is in contrast to Spiritualist mediums studied

in the UK (e.g., Roxburgh & Roe, 2014) and Lily Dale, New York (e.g., Emmons & Emmons, 2003) and Spiritist mediums studied in Brazil (e.g., Moreira-Almeida, Neto, & Cardeña, 2008). Our mediumship research program focuses on this majority of secular participants because their beliefs, experiences, and practices may be different from those of mediums who practice as part of an organized religion and/or other culturally- or geographically-based forms. These organized versions of mediumship make it difficult to tease apart individual, organic differences from those resulting from an external source. In addition, it is difficult to remove or account for the impact that organized doctrines and/or practices may have on the perceptions and experiences of participants during phenomenological research.

The aim of the current novel study was to examine the everyday experiences, processes, and methods of practicing secular mediums in the US. While conjecture may exist about, for example, mediums' fees and practices (e.g., Beischel, 2018b), we wanted to collect specific data addressing these issues. Using online surveys, we aimed to examine the activities and practices of these mediums during their readings with clients as well as their training, other experiences, and family members with similar abilities. As no hypotheses were tested, all reported data are descriptive.

Method

Participants

Human research participant protections. The methods used during this study were approved by the Windbridge Institutional Review Board (WIRB, #2014-BF-723). Adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in the study were provided.

Recruitment. Recruitment for the current study began during a previous study [the Online Census of Traits and Observations (OCTO) Study]. Results from this study have been previously reported (Beischel & Boccuzzi, 2020). Medium and non-medium participants for the OCTO study were recruited via Windbridge email lists and social media and calls for

participation shared with similar organizations including the Rhine Research Center. After completion of the anonymous OCTO Study survey, participants could provide their contact information if they were interested in completing additional online surveys. The survey responses analyzed for the current study were collected as part of one of these additional surveys: a multi-part study which was called the Secular American Mediums Survey (SAMS) Study during recruitment. Other SAMS Study results have been reported elsewhere (Beischel, Mosher, & Boccuzzi, 2017; Beischel, Tassone, & Boccuzzi, 2019).

Self-identified medium participants were recruited for the current study by email from the contact list collected at the end of the OCTO Study. Participant requirements were listed as including (1) self-identifying as a medium (i.e., “For the purposes of this study, you are a medium if you regularly experience communication from the deceased and report the information you receive to the living”) and (2) not practicing mediumship or spirit communication during the services of an organized religion. Only participants who reported self-identifying as mediums who did not practice mediumship as part of organized religions were consented and participated in the SAMS Study and the data collection described here. A full informed consenting process was performed with each SAMS Study participant. All participants reported being 18 or more years old, citizens or permanent residents of the United States, and able to read and write English easily.

A total of 128 participants provided responses to the SAMS Study items described here. The participant total for this study includes 14 Windbridge Certified Research Mediums who were previously screened and certified using published criteria (Beischel, 2007). The remaining 114 participants self-identified as secular mediums.

Age. The mean age of the 128 participants was 54.0 ± 9.7 years (range: 28-74).

Gender. Participants were asked, “With what gender do you currently identify yourself?” and could choose female, male, intersex, transgender, or “Do not identify as female, male, intersex, or transgender” as well as “Prefer not to answer.” Participants reported identifying as 91.4% female (n=117) and 8.6% male (n=11).

Race/Ethnicity. Participants were also asked, “Which category best describes you?” Three participants preferred not to answer this item. Of the remaining 125 participants, 93.6% (n=117) identified as “White (of, for example, English, French, German, Italian, Irish, Polish, Russian, etc., descent)”; 3.2% (n=4) identified as “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (of, for example, Cuban, Dominican, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, etc., descent)”; 1.6% (n=2) identified as “Black or African American (of, for example, African, Haitian, Jamaican, etc., descent). Less than 1% chose the options “American Indian or Alaska Native (of, for example, Aztec, Navajo, Mayan, etc., descent)” or “Another race, ethnicity, or origin” (n=1 each). No participants identified as Asian, Middle Eastern/North African, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Data Collection

Survey instrument. The online questionnaire hosting and development service FormSite (<https://fs7.formsite.com/>) was used to create and host the consenting materials and survey items and to capture participant responses. Survey responses were collected in April, 2017.

Survey items. The initial items described here were listed under the survey heading “Your mediumship.” Participants were informed that “The following items ask about your mediumship practice.” The latter items were listed as “Other experiences” and participants were informed that “The following items ask about experiences that might be related to your mediumship.”

Philosophy

The experimenters' overall attitude during the current study is in line with previously outlined methodological guidelines for the rigorous study of anomalous experiences (Moreira-Almeida & Lotufo-Neto, 2017). This includes avoiding dogmatic prejudice and pathologizing the anomalous, evaluating the phenomenon under the conditions it is normally utilized, including non-clinical populations in order to make inferences to the general population, carefully choosing terminology, distinguishing the experience

from interpretations, having a neutral but empathetic attitude, and using diverse research methods.

Results

Data from each survey item are presented below as the verbatim item, the verbatim possible response options, the number of participants who responded, and a graph or text representing the findings. Additional text is provided where necessary.

“Your Mediumship”

Item: “What experience do you have with mediumship training and/or classes? Check all that apply.”

Response options:

None.

I have taken mediumship classes.

I have read mediumship training materials or books.

I teach mediumship classes to others.

I have written mediumship training materials or books.

I prefer not to answer.

Other. (Please explain.)

Responses received: 127.

Findings: Responses of “Other” were reclassified where appropriate. Roughly one-fifth (21.3%) of participants (n=27) chose “None.” Of the remaining 100 participants who could each choose multiple responses, 81 (63.8%) reported having taken classes, 76 (59.8%) reported having read materials, 42 (33.1%) reported having taught, and 12 (9.4%) reported having written or are writing materials or books. The six participants who chose “Other” all described working with mentors; this included living people as well as spirit guides and the deceased.

Item: “Do you perform mediumship readings for other people?”

Response options:

Yes

No

I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 127 plus one respondent who chose “I prefer not to answer.”

Findings: Study requirements indicated that participants be mediums and during recruitment potential participants were asked “Are you a medium? (For the purposes of this study, you are a medium if you regularly experience communication from the deceased and report the information you receive to the living.)” All of the participants chose the response “Yes, according to this definition, I am a medium.” However, to this survey item asking, “Do you perform mediumship readings for other people?” 10 participants (7.8%) chose “No.” The remaining 117 (91.4%) chose “Yes.” Only these 117 were asked the items below about performing readings for others.

Item: “About how long have you been performing mediumship readings for other people?”

Response options:

Less than a year.

1-2 years.

3-5 years.

6-10 years.

11-20 years.

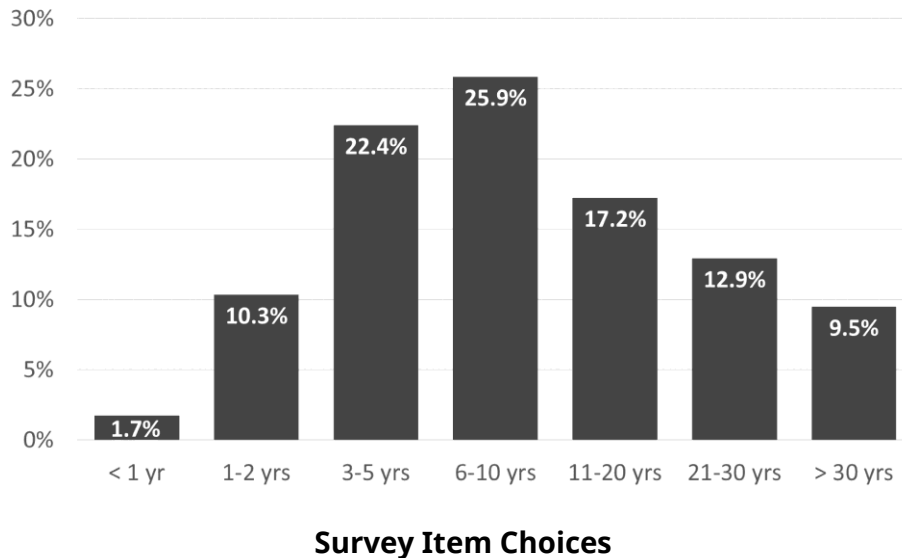
21-30 years.

More than 30 years.

I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 116.

Findings: The participants in this study reported experience levels that fell along a rough bell-curve (Fig. 1).

Figure 1*Length of Time Performing Mediumship Readings for Others*

Item: “In what settings do you perform readings for other people? Check all that apply.”

Response options:

- In-person readings.
- Phone or other audio-only readings.
- Email, online, or other text-only readings.
- Skype or other video + audio readings.
- I prefer not to answer.
- Other. (Please explain.)

Responses received: 114.

Findings: Most participants (84.8%) reported performing readings in multiple settings with in-person readings being the most popular.

Of the 112 respondents who chose from the four types of settings listed (rather than solely the “Other” option) and who could each choose multiple responses, 109 (97.3%) reported performing in-person readings, 86 (76.8%)

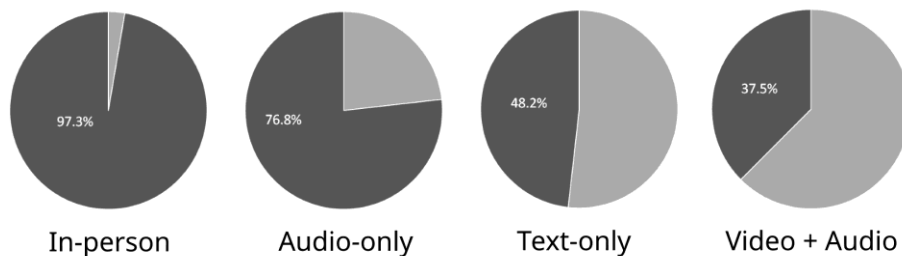
reported performing audio readings, 54 (48.2%) reported performing text readings, and 42 (37.5%) reported performing readings through video with audio (Fig. 2).

Of the 112 participants, 22 (19.6%) reported reading in all four types of settings. Forty-three (38.4%) use three of the settings; roughly 60% of those use in-person, audio-only, and text-only and roughly 40% use in-person, audio-only, and video with audio. Of the 30 (26.8%) who use two different settings, 26 (87%) use in-person and audio-only methods. Of the 17 participants (15.2%) who reported using only one setting, 16 (94.1%) only perform in-person readings.

The seven participants who chose the “Other” option as one of their choices primarily described performing readings in group settings or for friends and family. Subsequent survey items address group readings.

Figure 2

Reading Settings Reported by Mediums



Item: “Do you perform readings for groups larger than two people? Check all that apply.”

Response options:

No.

Groups of 3 to 7 people.

Groups of 8 to 20 people.

Groups of 21 to 50 people.

Groups of 51 to 300 people.

Groups of more than 300 people.

I prefer not to answer.

Other. (Please explain.)

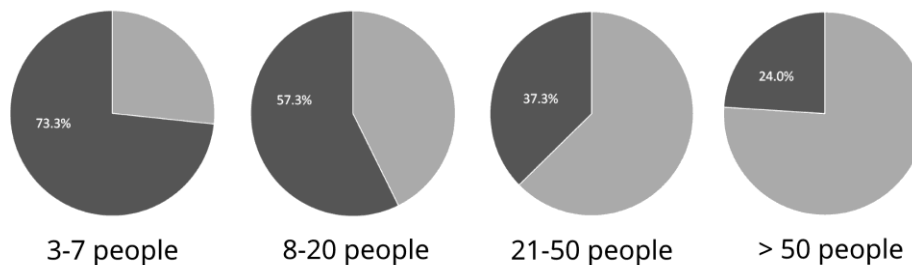
Responses received: 117.

Findings: A majority of participants (65.2%) reported performing readings for groups; reports became fewer as the groups got larger.

Responses of "Other" were reclassified where appropriate and removed if not classifiable. From the remaining 115 responses, 40 participants (34.8%) reported that they do not perform group readings. Of the 75 participants who do perform readings for groups and who could each choose multiple responses, 55 (73.3%) reported reading for 3-7 people, 43 (57.3%) reported reading for 8-20 people, 28 (37.3%) reported reading for 21-50 people, 18 (24.0%) reported reading for 51-300 people, and 3 (4.0%) reported reading for groups larger than 300. These final three also chose the 51-300 option so those two categories are combined in the graphs (Fig. 3).

Figure 3

Reading Sizes Reported by Mediums



Item: "Do you perform individual readings for one to two (1-2) people?"

Response options:

Yes.

No.

I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 117.

Findings: Two participants chose “No.” The remaining 115 (98.3%) chose “Yes.” Only these 115 were given the items below about performing readings for 1-2 people.

Item: “Generally speaking, about how many individual readings for 1-2 people do you perform per week?”

Response options:

Less than one per week.

1 – 2

3 – 5

6 – 10

11 – 15

16 – 20

More than 20

I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 112 plus two participants chose “prefer not to answer.”

Findings: Less participants chose each option as readings per week increased (Fig. 4). No participants chose 16-20 and two (1.8%) chose more than 20.

Item: “On average, when you perform an individual reading for 1-2 people, how long does it last?”

Response options:

Less than 15 minutes.

15 – 30 minutes.

31 – 60 minutes.

61 – 90 minutes (between an hour and an hour and a half).

91 – 120 minutes (between an hour and a half and two hours).

121 – 240 minutes (between two hours and four hours).

More than 4 hours.

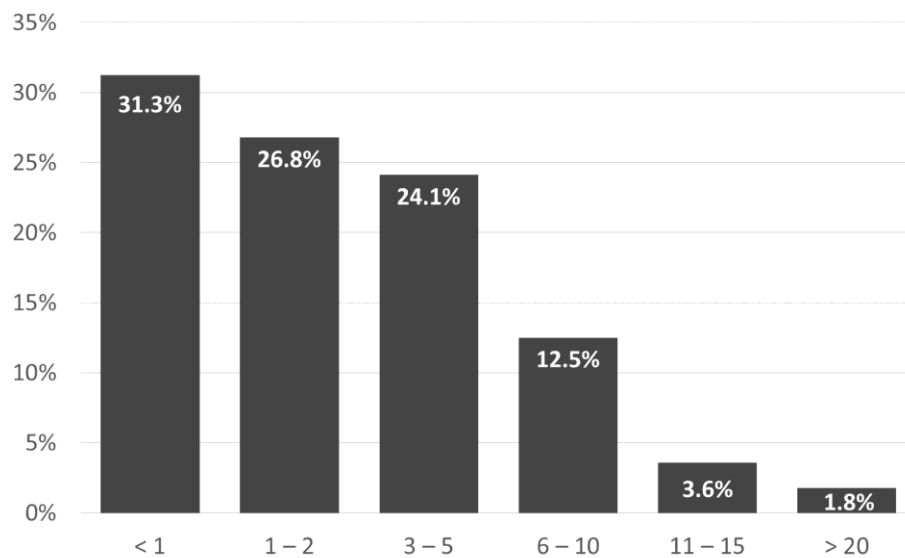
I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 114 plus one participant chose “I prefer not to answer.”

Findings: The largest portion of participants (46; 40.4%) reported readings lasting between a half hour and one hour (Fig. 5). No participants reported readings regularly lasting more than two hours.

Figure 4

Number of Readings per Week Reported by Mediums



Item: “For the majority of your individual readings for 1-2 people, do you get paid?”

Response options:

Yes, I charge for readings.

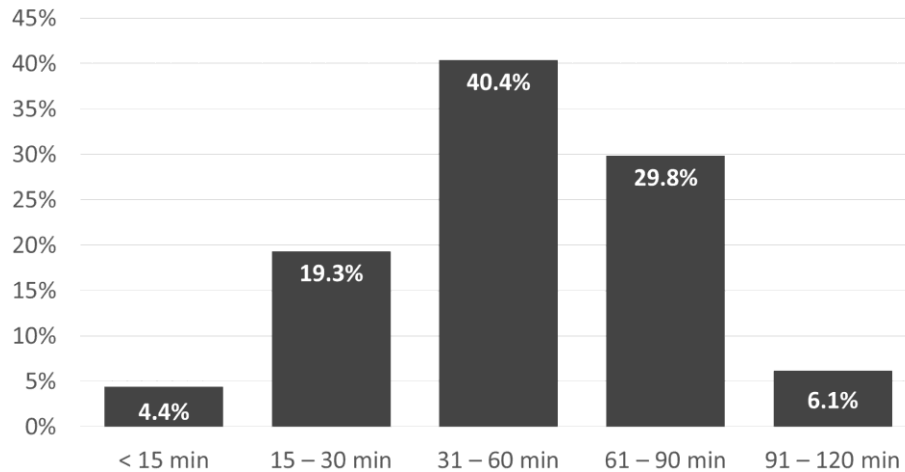
No, I offer readings for free.

I trade readings for other goods or services.

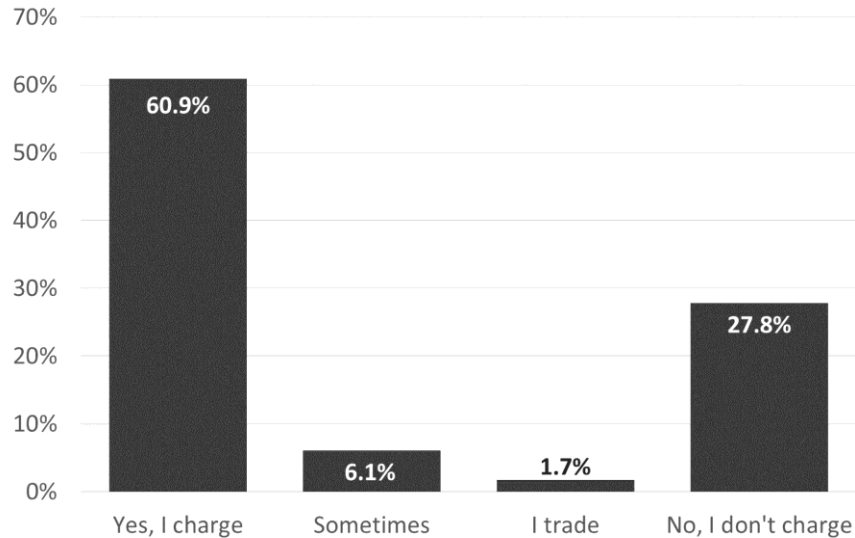
I prefer not to answer.

Other. (Please explain.)

Responses received: 115.

Figure 5*Length of Readings for 1-2 People Reported by Mediums*

Findings: Seventy (60.9%) participants reported charging for readings, two (1.7%) trade readings, and 32 (27.8%) do not charge. Based on responses to the “Other” option, an additional category of “Sometimes I charge, sometimes I don’t” was added during data analysis. Seven participants reported this situation (Fig. 6). Four additional participants provided “Other” responses that did not fall within the categories listed above. These can be paraphrased as: “I used to charge, but I don’t now,” “I only do readings for friends and family,” “I charge for psychic readings during which mediumship may happen,” and “I charge on a sliding scale.” These four responses are not included in the graph.

Figure 6*How Mediums Charge for Readings*

Note: Full responses = "Yes, I charge for readings;" "Sometimes I charge, sometimes I don't;" "I trade readings for other goods or services;" and "No, I offer readings for free."

Only the 70 participants who reported charging for readings in the previous item were asked the following items about that topic.

Item: "Generally speaking, about how much do you charge for an individual reading for 1-2 people?"

Response options:

\$1 - \$20

\$21 - \$50

\$51 - \$100

\$101 - \$200

\$201 - \$300

\$301 - \$400

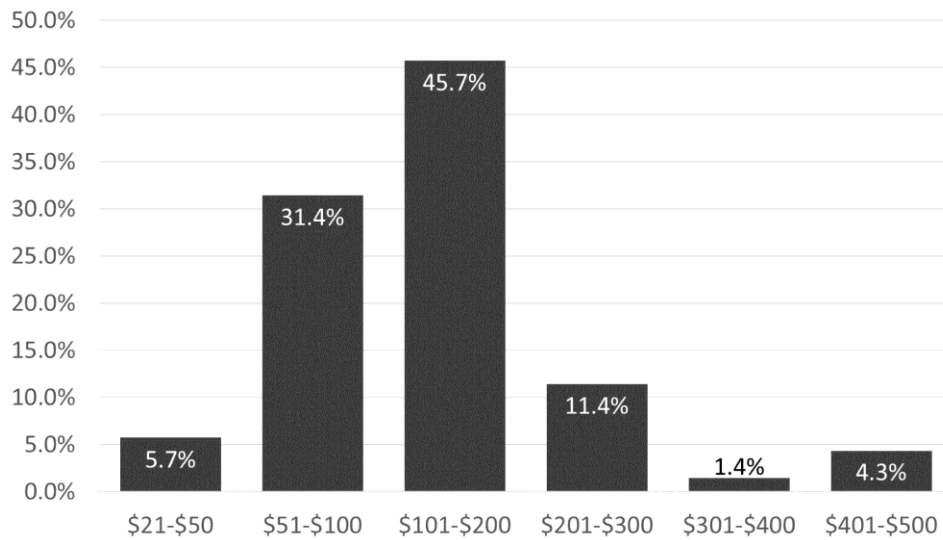
- \$401 - \$500
- \$501 - \$600
- \$601 - \$700
- \$701 - \$999
- \$1,000 - \$2,000
- \$2,001 or more
- I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 70.

Findings: The majority of participants (77.1%) reported charging between \$50 and \$200 for readings (Fig. 7). No participants in this study chose options over \$500.

Figure 7

Percentages of secular American medium survey respondents (n=70) who charge different amounts for readings for 1-2 people.



Item: “Is your mediumship your primary source of income?”

Response options:

Yes

No

I prefer not to answer.

Responses received: 70.

Findings: The majority of participants (68.6%) reported that their mediumship is not their primary source of income. Twenty-two (31.4%) reported that it is.

“Other Experiences”**Item: “Besides mediumship, do you have other abilities? Check all that apply.”**

Response options:

Psychic (the ability to get information about living people).

Precognitive (the ability to get information about the future).

Remote viewing (the ability to get information about a distant place, person, or event).

Psychometry (the ability to get information from objects).

Psychic communication with living animals.

Communication with deceased animals.

Physical mediumship (the production of physical effects such as table-tipping, raps or other sounds, objects moving or materializing, etc.).

Energy healing.

I prefer not to answer.

Other. (Please explain.)

Responses received: 126. An additional participant checked a number of options as well as “I prefer not to answer” so their data was removed for this item.

Findings: A large majority (122; 96.8%) of participants reported having more than one ability beyond mediumship. More than 60% of participants reported psychic, precognitive, clairvoyant (remote viewing), psychometric, and energy healing abilities. Roughly half of participants

reported the ability to communicate with animals (living or deceased; 47.6% and 52.4%, respectively). Less than 20% reported the ability of physical mediumship (Table 1).

Table 1

Related Abilities Reported by Mediums. [see text for ability descriptions]

Ability	n	%
Psychic	121	96.0%
Precognitive	94	74.6%
Remote viewing	83	65.9%
Psychometry	76	60.3%
Living animals	60	47.6%
Deceased animals	66	52.4%
Physical mediumship	23	18.3%
Energy healing	83	65.9%

Responses of “Other” to this item were reclassified where appropriate and are included in Table 1 or were removed from the data set if not classifiable. Two participants chose “Other” and listed finding missing persons as the ability. The remaining six participants who chose “Other” listed or described the following abilities: “psychic art,” channeled writing, tarot card reading, medical intuition, electronic voice phenomena (EVP), angel communication, and empathic abilities.

Item: “Have you ever worked with law enforcement personnel to provide input on an investigation?”

Response options:

No.

I prefer not to answer.

Yes. (Please provide the city and type of organization – police, FBI, etc.)

Responses received: 121 plus 4 who chose “I prefer not to answer.”

Findings: Of the 121 participants who provided a yes or no response to this item, 95 (78.5%) chose “No.” The 26 participants who chose “Yes” (21.5%) listed local, state, and federal agencies including police, fire, and sheriff’s departments; FindMe or similar search organizations; skiptracers; the US military; and the FBI, CIA, ATF, and DEA. The most common agencies listed were police/sheriffs [listed by 18 (69.2%) of the “Yes” participants] and the FBI [listed by 8 (30.8%)]. The cities listed by the participants included Washington, DC, and cities located in Arizona (AZ), California (CA), Florida (FL), Illinois (IL), North Carolina (NC), Oklahoma (OK), Texas (TX), and Virginia (VA). However, two participants reported that they were not able to provide specific details about the individual agencies/investigators.

Item: “Have you ever worked with other types of investigators (for example, ‘ghost hunting’ groups, private investigators, etc.) to provide input on an investigation?”

Response options:

No.

I prefer not to answer.

Yes. (Please provide the city and type of investigator.)

Responses received: 122 plus 2 “I prefer not to answer.”

Findings: Of the 122 participants providing a yes or no response to this item, 82 (67.2%) chose “No.” The 40 participants who chose “Yes” (32.8%) listed the investigations as involving private investigators, house-based phenomena, missing persons, and historical locations but the majority of them (21; 52.5%) listed paranormal investigation/ghost hunting, often with the name of a specific local group. The investigations were reported as having taken place in Arizona (AZ), California (CA), Colorado (CO), Delaware (DE), Florida (FL), Georgia (GA), Illinois (IL), Louisiana (LA), Maine (ME), Maryland (MD), Massachusetts (MA), Minnesota (MN), Missouri (MO), New Jersey (NJ), New Mexico (NM), New York (NY), North Carolina (NC), South

Carolina (SC), Tennessee (TN), Texas (TX), Washington (WA), and countries outside the US.

Item: “About how old were you when you first experienced communication from a deceased person?”

Response options: Fill-in box with set limits of 1 to 99.

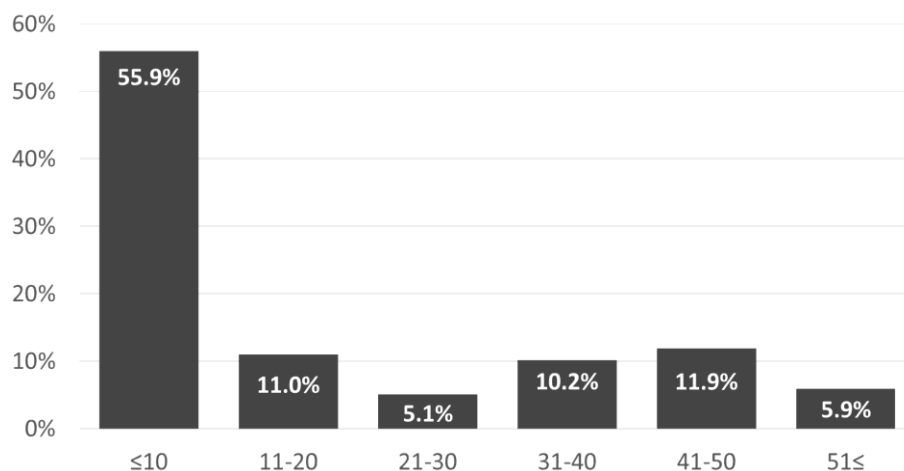
Responses received: 118.

Note: This item was asked in a survey segment separate from the segment that included the business practices items above and was completed on a different day so the participant numbers are slightly different.

Findings: The mean reported age of the participants' initial mediumistic experiences was 18.5 ± 17.9 (range: 1-67). The majority of participants reported being 10 years of age or younger when they first experienced mediumistic communication (Fig. 8).

Figure 8

Mediums' Ages When They First Experienced Communication with the Deceased



Item: “Which members of your family have mediumship or psychic abilities similar to yours? Check all that apply.”

Response options:

None.

I don't know.

Biological female child(ren).

Non-biological (for example, adopted) female child(ren).

Biological male child(ren).

Non-biological (for example, adopted) male child(ren).

Female grandchild(ren).

Male grandchild(ren).

Mother.

Father.

Sister(s).

Brother(s).

Father's mother (your paternal grandmother).

Father's father (your paternal grandfather).

Mother's mother (your maternal grandmother).

Mother's father (your maternal grandfather).

Father's sister(s) (your aunts on your dad's side).

Father's brother(s) (your uncles on your dad's side).

Mother's sister(s) (your aunts on your mom's side).

Mother's brother(s) (your uncles on your mom's side).

Your cousin(s) on your father's side.

Your cousin(s) on your mother's side.

I prefer not to answer.

Other. (Please explain.)

Responses received: 107 plus one “I prefer not to answer.”

Findings: Fifteen participants chose “None.” Nine chose only “I don't know” though an additional four chose it in addition to specific family members. One “I don't know” was related to the medium being adopted. At least 245 family members were reported; because some of the items are plural [e.g., “Sister(s)”], a single choice may represent more than one person. For choices of “Other,” relationships included great-grandparents and

nieces/nephews. For only two choices, gender was not included in the choice [i.e., “Your cousin(s) on your father’s side” and “Your cousin(s) on your mother’s side”]. Of the remaining 225 individuals reported in which gender was noted, 74.2% were female (25.8% male). Of the choices where side of the family (mother or father) was noted (n=137), 69.3% were from the mother’s side (30.7% father’s). The top five most reported relationships were: mother (n=41), biological female child(ren) (n=33), mother’s mother (your maternal grandmother) (n=27), biological male child(ren) (n=26), and sisters(s) (n=25).

Additional Results

A total of 44 participants chose the responses “I teach mediumship classes to others” and/or “I have written mediumship training materials or books” to the item “What experience do you have with mediumship training and/or classes?” Of those, 42 participants also provided responses to the survey item “About how long have you been performing mediumship readings for other people?” Of the participants who have taught classes and/or written training materials, 10% have less than 2 years of experience, 50% have between 3 and 10 years of experience, and 40% have more than 10 years of experience.

In addition, in another segment of the SAMS Study participants answered the question “Can you tell the difference between communication from the deceased and psychic information from the living?” The results from this item and its follow-up items in which these differences were described have been previously reported (Beischel, Mosher, and Boccuzzi 2017) and included the finding that 96.9% of participants (n=123) chose ‘Yes,’ 2.4% (n=3) chose ‘I don’t know,’ and 0.8% (n=1) chose ‘No.’ For the current study, these responses were compared to the responses regarding training and charging for readings described above. An interesting relationship is that two of the three participants who reported not knowing if they could distinguish between mediumistic and psychic communication channels reported that they teach mediumship classes to others and charge \$101 - \$200 to provide readings to clients.

Discussion

Although psychic services including mediumship is a more than \$2 billion per year industry in the US, very little is actually known about the day-to-day activities of practicing mediums. The current study used online surveys to assess the experiences, business practices, and family characteristics of secular American mediums not associated with any formal organization or belief system.

That participants (n=128) were 91.4% female and 93.6% white with an average age of 54.0 ± 9.7 may reflect a social acceptance of mediumistic practices within this gender, race, and age range. Future research may wish to specifically explore the experiences of practicing mediums of other demographic profiles and/or compare them to those from other countries or cultures.

Noteworthy findings from this novel examination included that 96% of medium participants reporting also having psychic abilities. This is in line with the 'rule of thumb' that all mediums are psychic but not all psychics are mediums. Over 60% of participants in this study reported each precognitive, remote viewing, psychometry, and energy healing abilities. This finding from SAMS Study mediums (n=126) is line with previous findings from the larger population of OCTO Study mediums (n=316) from which the SAMS mediums were recruited (for details, see Method: Participant recruitment) in which more than 60% of the self-identified OCTO Study medium participants reported experiences with energy healing, telepathy, clairvoyance/remote viewing, precognition, and out-of-body experiences (Beischel & Boccuzzi, 2020). Roughly half of participants in the current study reported the ability to communicate with living animals (47.6%) and with deceased animals (52.4%).

The majority of participants (55.9%) first experienced communication with the deceased when they were younger than 10 years old. This calls into question the popular claim that all mediums' experiences and practices are financially motivated. Further evidence supporting the idea that not all mediums' motivations are monetary is that nearly 30% of the medium

respondents in this study reported that they do not charge for readings. In addition, 82.8% of those who do, charge less than \$200, and for the large majority (68.6%), mediumship is not their primary source of income.

Of the reported family members with similar abilities, 74.2% were female and 69.3% were from the mother's side of the family. These findings suggest further research examining the genetic and other familial characteristics of mediums.

Interesting reported experiences included working with law enforcement personnel (reported by 21.5%) or with other types of investigators (reported by 32.8%). In addition, the mediums reported participating in 'training' that included working with living mentors, spirit guides, and the deceased. This is in line with previous research noting mediums' initial spiritually transformative experiences as "containing single or multiple spiritual entities that may or may not be considered as guides" (Everist, 2018, p. 35). Further qualitative examinations of these type of mentoring experiences would be a fruitful future direction.

The business practices data may assist clients as well as researchers in understanding what to expect from mediums. The majority of respondents (58.1%) reported performing two or less readings per week. The usual reported duration of readings was 31-60 minutes. In-person readings were the most popular type reported by respondents. Because these data were collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, these findings may have changed. Future research may wish to compare post-pandemic practices to the reported data.

From 127 respondents, 21% (n=27) chose "None" when asked "What experience do you have with mediumship training and/or classes?" If extrapolated, this could mean that more than 1 in 5 practicing mediums in the US have no formal training. This is not surprising as formal training may be hard to come by, be cost prohibitive, or be associated with an organized belief system that is not appealing to the medium.

The data reported herein provide unique insight into the lived experiences of modern, secular American mediums and offer many directions for future research.

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