

# Review of: "Mediumship for Pets: A Pilot Study With a Triple-Blind Protocol"

Harris Friedman<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Florida, United States

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Extraordinary Claims Require More Than Very Weak Evidence:

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Harris L. Friedman

University of Florida

Tressoldi, Liberale, and Sinesio (2024) claimed their pilot study has demonstrated “the possibility of studying animal mediumship using experimental protocols used to investigate human mediumship” (n.p.). That they undeniably did show, but they showed very little else of interest. With a small sample size and unimpressive findings, this pilot study added little value to the possibility of mediumship for pets, other than showing it can be done -- even if not in a very convincing manner.

Other reviewers have made some valid criticisms of this paper, so I will only add one not yet mentioned. The investigators claimed to have implemented a triple-blind protocol, but the conventional meaning of this term involves keeping the investigator(s), the subject(s) of the investigation, and the data analyst(s) blinded. However, this study does not mention keeping the data analyst(s) blinded, only the “medium and RA\_A and RA\_B” [and] ... “the sitter” (n.p.). The United Kingdom’s National Institute for Health and Care Excellence’s glossary defines a triple-blind study as one in which “the patients, clinicians and the people carrying out the statistical analysis do not know which treatment patients had” (see Glossary | NICE, n.p.). It seems the claim of triple-blinding might be over-reaching, and this pilot study would be better simply called a double-blind study.

My conclusion is that pilot studies are best kept unpublished and used only to guide their researchers’ future work, but not to be shared unless a truly extraordinary finding occurs. The very weak evidence reported in this study, especially as it is in an area that suffers considerable controversy, does not warrant its publication.