

# PARASCIENTIFICA

www.ppri.net | Issue 1 | September 2022

## Haunted House

RESEARCH IN THE MAINSTREAM

*JAMES HOURAN EXAMINES WHERE THE  
PHENOMENA STANDS WITHIN MAINSTREAM  
SCIENCE*

ARE GHOSTS EXTINCT?

*DARRYLL WALSH ON HOW MODERN  
SOCIETY HAS IMPACTED THE CLASSICAL  
GHOST*



**PLUS**

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**EYE MOVEMENT  
DESENSITIZATION  
REPROCESSING AND  
PARANORMAL TRAUMA**



# Contents

4

**JAMES HOURAN**  
**'HAUNTED HOUSE'**  
**RESEARCH IN THE MAINSTREAM**

15

**DARRYLL WALSH**  
**ARE GHOSTS EXTINCT?**

20

**ELLIOTT VAN DUSEN**  
**THE DARK SIDE OF THE PARANORMAL**

23

**CARMEL CLARK (IN MEMORIAM)**  
**EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION**  
**REPROCESSING AND PARANORMAL TRAUMA**

29

**BARRY TAFF**  
**THE ARISTOCRATIC POLTERGEIST AGENT:**  
**A HIDDEN STORY FROM DECADES PAST**

## PARASCIENTIFICA

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CANADIAN  
ASSOCIATION OF PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL  
RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION

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CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL  
RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION  
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### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Parascientifica is currently sent free to the  
public by email subscription available at  
ppri.net/newsletter.

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### ISSN

2564-4971

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# Editorial

*Hello and welcome to the third new incarnation of Parascientifica!*



Originally in the 1990s we were a hard-copy newsletter. By the late 2000's we went digital and began a page on Facebook, and now in 2022 we are a digital journal to compliment that Facebook page.

The delicate balance between fair representation of both sides of that area where the paranormal and science meet that I strove to achieve will hopefully continue, only in more depth than is possible on Facebook.

To that end, I welcome any submissions ([parascientifica@ppri.net](mailto:parascientifica@ppri.net)) from our readers that could reasonably fit within one of our sections: Main Feature; Religion and Parapsychology; Scientific Studies; First Person Accounts, Letters to the Editor; and Suggestions.

The list will grow in time hand in hand with the material we gather or receive. So, welcome and enjoy our introductory issue of the new Parascientifica!

(And don't forget to keep dropping in on Facebook!)

*Darryll B. D. Walsh*

DARRYLL B. D. WALSH  
Editor-in-Chief

## "where the paranormal and science meet"



Since childhood, Darryll Walsh has dedicated his life pursuing the paranormal. He is the President of Ghost Project Canada and Chief Research Officer for the Canadian Association of Parapsychological Research & Investigation. A holder of a doctorate in parapsychology, he has taught various courses in parapsychology at the Nova Scotia Community College. Darryll authored four supernatural books: "Ghosts of Nova Scotia", "Ghost Waters: Canada's Haunted Sea and Shores", "Legends and Monsters of Atlantic Canada", and "That Which Survives: The Case of the Near-Death Experience". Proclaimed "Canada's Ghost Hunter" by the Ottawa Citizen, he hosted the television series Shadow Hunter from 2005-2006 and appeared as a consultant for "Supernatural Investigator" and "Sight Seers".



MAIN FEATURE

# 'Haunted House'

## Research in the Mainstream

*James Houran, Ph.D.*

*Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Scientific Exploration*



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"DON'T CROSS THE STREAMS!" IS AN ICONIC LINE FROM THE FICTIONAL PARAPSYCHOLOGIST DR. PETER VENKMAN IN THE 1984 BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE *GHOSTBUSTERS*. THIS WARNING EMPHASIZED THE "BAD" THINGS THAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE FOCUSED ENERGY WAVES (OR 'STREAMS') FROM THE TEAM'S PROTON PACKS TOUCHED OR COLLIDED WITH EACH OTHER AS THEY COMBATED QUARRELSOME GHOSTS. A TWIST IN THE MOVIE CAME WHEN THE GHOSTBUSTERS PURPOSEFULLY CROSSED THEIR STREAMS IN A LAST DITCH EFFORT TO OVERPOWER THE FILM'S SUPERNATURAL ANTAGONIST. THE EXPECTED PHYSICS DISASTER DID NOT OCCUR, BUT INSTEAD THEIR ACTIONS CREATED AN EVEN MIGHTIER, COLLECTIVE FORCE THAT ENDED UP SAVING THE DAY. THAT BASIC DYNAMIC IS CURRENTLY PLAYING OUT IN REALITY IN SEVERAL WAYS AND THE OUTCOMES ARE PROVING TO BE SIMILARLY POSITIVE. NOW ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN.

ARGUABLY THERE IS ONE ILLUSORY AND ONE REAL CULTURE WAR IMPACTING THE STUDY OF HAUNTED HOUSES AND GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES. TO BEGIN WITH, MEDIA RHETORIC FROM INFLUENTIAL SKEPTICS OFTEN PORTRAYS INVESTIGATIONS IN THIS DOMAIN AS 'TABOO' WITHIN MAINSTREAM SCIENCE. HERE, GHOSTS AND KINDRED PHENOMENA ARE RELEGATED TO THE FRINGE WORLD OF FORTEAN PHENOMENA OR WHAT SOME RESEARCHERS CALL 'FRONTIER OR EDGE SCIENCE.' SUCH DETRACTORS ARGUE THAT SERIOUS RESEARCH IS NOT NEEDED BECAUSE HAUNTED HOUSES DO NOT SCIENTIFICALLY EXIST — RATHER, WITNESS REPORTS INVOLVE EITHER FRAUD, HYPE, NOISE, OR CONFUSION. THUS, PARANORMAL STREAMS OF INVESTIGATION SHOULD NOT CROSS SCHOLARLY MAINSTREAMS. AS WE EXPLORE LATER, THIS SCENARIO IS DOWNRIGHT INCORRECT. THE TRUTH IS THAT HAUNT-RELATED PHENOMENA HAVE BEEN ROUTINELY STUDIED BY CONVENTIONAL ACADEMICS, ALBEIT THE LINGO, METHODS, AND THEORIES USUALLY DIFFER FROM THOSE IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY.

HOWEVER, IT IS A SAD TO NOTE THAT RESEARCH IN THIS DOMAIN IS OFTEN SEVERLY UNDERCUT

BY 'IDEOLOGICAL TERRITORIES.' THIS DOES NOT MERELY REFERENCE THE CLASSIC 'BELIEVER VS SKEPTIC' CONFLICT, BUT RATHER IT DESCRIBES THE OBVIOUS TENSIONS AMONG PEOPLE WITHIN THE SAME POOL OF 'PARANORMAL BELIEVERS OR ADVOCATES.' PUT BLUNTLY, THE ACTIVE RIVALRY BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS AND AMATEUR GHOST-HUNTER TEAMS IS SIMULTANEOUSLY THE GREATEST OBSTACLE AND THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITY FACING KNOWLEDGE GAIN IN THIS RESEARCH AREA (HILL ET AL., 2019). NOTE THAT PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS ARE CERTAINLY NOT ALONE IN THIS RESPECT, AS SIMILAR CONFLICTS HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED ELSEWHERE INCLUDING THE SASQUATCH INVESTIGATION COMMUNITY (REGAL, 2008). ALTHOUGH THE TENDENCY FOR PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS AND AMATEUR INVESTIGATORS NOT TO COOPERATE IS UNDENIABLY REAL, THIS IS A SITUATION THAT CAN BE RECTIFIED TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH CAMPS, AND IN THE PROCESS, FURTHER OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GHOSTS AND HAUNTED HOUSES.

### **MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE**

"HAUNTED HOUSE" IS A CONVERSATIONAL TERM FOR ANOMALOUS EPISODES THAT ARE SEEMINGLY LINKED TO PARTICULAR BUILT STRUCTURES (E.G., A HOUSE OR OFFICE BUILDING) AND SOMETIMES OUTDOOR AREAS (E.G., A GRAVEYARD OR NATURE PARK) (FOR OVERVIEWS, SEE GOLDSTEIN ET AL., 2007; HOURAN & LANGE, 2001B; MAHER, 2015). SPECIFICALLY, WE ARE DEALING WITH LOCALIZED AREAS OF HIGH-STRANGENESS WHERE WITNESSES CHARACTERICALLY REPORT TWO CATEGORIES OF ANOMALIES: (A) SUBJECTIVE (S) OR "PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES," INCLUDING APPARITIONS, SENSED PRESENCES, HEARING VOICES, OR UNUSUAL SOMATIC OR EMOTIONAL MANIFESTATIONS) BY SINGULAR OBSERVERS VIA THEIR SENSES, OR OTHERWISE EXPLAINABLE AS PERCEPTUAL ABERRATIONS OR ARTIFACTS OF IMAGINATION, COGNITION, OR PERSONALITY, AND (B) OBJECTIVE (O) OR "PHYSICAL EVENTS,"



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SUCH AS OBJECT DISPLACEMENTS, MALFUNCTIONING ELECTRICAL OR MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT, AND ODD PERCUSSIVE SOUNDS LIKE RAPS OR KNOCKS THAT CAN BE PERCEIVED BY MULTIPLE OBSERVERS AND DOCUMENTED WITH SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTATION.

IT IS TRADITIONALLY ASSUMED THAT S ANOMALIES TYPIFY “HAUNTS OR HAUNTINGS” (I.E., HAUNTED PLACES) WHEREAS O MANIFESTATIONS CHARACTERIZE “POLTERGEIST” DISTURBANCES (I.E., HAUNTED PEOPLE). THUS, PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS AND PARANORMAL ENTHUSIASTS USUALLY DIFFERENTIATE HAUNTS AND POLTERGEISTS (E.G., GAULD & CORNELL, 2017) OR SUGGEST THAT THEY INVOLVE A CONSTELLATION OF DIFFERENT PHENOMENA (E.G., ROLL & PERSINGER, 2001). HOWEVER, RESEARCH INDICATES THAT A FIRM DISTINCTION IS PROBLEMATIC DUE TO THE MANY OVERLAPPING CHARACTERISTICS OF BOTH EPISODES (HOURAN ET AL., 2019A; VENTOLA ET AL., 2019) AND THEIR SHARED SET OF S/O ANOMALIES THAT FORMS A PROBABILISTIC HIERARCHY — THAT IS, A PREDICTABLE CONTINUUM OF EVENTS (HOURAN ET AL., 2019B; HOURAN & LANGE, 2001A). A CORE PHENOMENON OR SET OF MECHANISMS MOST PROBABLY THEREFORE UNDERLIES BOTH TYPES OF EPISODES, AND THESE COLLECTIVE TRENDS SUPPORT A BIOMEDICAL-TYPE “SPECTRUM-SYNDROME” MODEL OF GHOSTLY EPISODES (LAYTHE ET AL., 2021A). TO CLARIFY, A SYNDROME IS SIMPLY A RECOGNIZABLE COMPLEX OF SYMPTOMS AND PHYSICAL FINDINGS THAT INDICATE A SPECIFIC CONDITION FOR WHICH A DIRECT CAUSE IS NOT NECESSARILY UNDERSTOOD (BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, 2018)

### **OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES**

THE LABEL OR INTERPRETATION THAT WITNESSES IMPART TO THIS CORE PHENOMENON OR SYNDROME OFTEN REFLECTS THEIR RELIGIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND SITUATIONAL CONTEXT.

THUS, ONE PERSON’S BRUSH WITH “SPIRITS OF DECEASED LOVED ONES” CAN BE RE-

INTERPRETED BY OTHERS AS CONTACT WITH “ANGELS, GODS, DEMONS, EXTRATERRESTRIALS, OR FAIRIES AND OTHER FOLKLORE-RELATED ‘LITTLE PEOPLE’” DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES INVOLVED (EVANS, 2001; HANSEN, 1988; HOURAN, 2000; HUFFORD, 1982; YOUNG, 2018). IN FACT, LOCALIZED AND CLUSTERED OUTBREAKS OF S/O ANOMALIES ALSO OCCUR IN NON-PARANORMAL CONTEXTS, SUCH AS WITH SOME ACCOUNTS OF CHILDHOOD IMAGINARY FRIENDS (LAYTHE ET AL., 2021C; LITTLE ET AL., 2021) AND CASES OF SO-CALLED “GANG (OR GROUP) STALKING” (LANGE ET AL., 2019; O’KEEFFE ET AL., 2018). AS A RESULT, SOCIAL SCIENTISTS OFTEN REFER TO PRESUMED CONTACT OR INTERACTIONS WITH VARIOUS FORMS OF ANOMALOUS BEINGS OR SENTIENT FORCES AS “(ENTITY) ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCES.”

ANXIETY, FEAR, AND DREAD ARE COMMON REACTIONS TO HAUNTED HOUSES AND ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCES (COELHO ET AL., 2021; LANGE & HOURAN, 1999; SILVA & WOODY, 2022), BUT THESE ‘NEGATIVE’ EMOTIONS ARE NEITHER THE ONLY NOR THE MOST IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF HAUNT-TYPE EPISODES. FOR EXAMPLE, GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES CAN INDUCE EFFICACIOUS FEELINGS OF A SPIRITUAL OR TRANSFORMATIVE NATURE. THIS IS PART OF THE MOTIVATION FOR PEOPLE TO INDULGE IN GHOST-HUNTING EXCURSIONS, PARANORMAL TOURISM, LEGEND-TRIPPING, AND OTHER FORMS OF “OSTENTION,” OR THE ACTING OUT OF A LEGEND NARRATIVE IN REAL-LIFE. INDEED, GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES ARE ONE WAY THAT PEOPLE CAN SEEK ENCHANTMENT IN THEIR LIVES (HOLLOWAY, 2010; HOURAN ET AL., 2020; SCHNEIDER, 1993). NAMELY, GHOSTS AND HAUNTED HOUSES ARE PERVASIVE SOCIOCULTURAL NARRATIVES THAT ACT AS HIGHLY-ENGAGING MEMES (HILL ET AL., 2018, 2019). THIS IS TO SAY THAT THESE NARRATIVES — AS PERSONAL BELIEFS, SHARED STORIES, OR PUTATIVE EXPERIENCES — DELIVER EFFECTIVE “IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES” DUE TO THEIR INHERENT VERSATILITY, ADAPTABILITY, PARTICIPATORY NATURE, UNIVERSALITY, AND SCALABILITY (I.E., THE VAPUS MODEL; FOR A



DISCUSSION, SEE HILL ET AL., 2018).

AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE IS CUSTOMARILY DEFINED AS “AN ILLUSORY ENVIRONMENT THAT COMPLETELY SURROUNDS YOU SUCH THAT YOU FEEL THAT YOU ARE INSIDE IT AND PART OF IT.” THE TERM ORIGINATED WITH TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENTS DESIGNED TO COMMAND THE SENSES SUCH AS VIRTUAL, AUGMENTED, OR MIXED REALITIES. BUT GHOST-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES HELP TO RE-DEFINE “IMMERSIVE” IN TERMS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ABSORPTION, THE “DISPOSITION FOR HAVING EPISODES OF ‘TOTAL’ ATTENTION THAT FULLY ENGAGE ONE’S REPRESENTATIONAL (I.E., PERCEPTUAL, ENACTIVE, IMAGINATIVE, AND IDEATIONAL) RESOURCES” (TELLEGEN & ATKINSON, 1974, P. 268). SIMPLY PUT, THIS ENTAILS THE COGNITIVE CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT IN SENSORY AND IMAGINATIVE EXPERIENCES IN WAYS THAT ALTER A PERSON’S PERCEPTION, MEMORY, AND MOOD WITH IMPORTANT BEHAVIORAL AND BIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES. RATHER THAN EXPERIENCING A TECHNO-GENERATED ILLUSION, PARANORMAL RESEARCHERS AND ENTHUSIASTS THUS ARE INVESTING IN THE CHANCE FOR SOMETHING GENUINELY AND VISCERALLY ENTHRALLING TO OCCUR IN REAL-LIFE. HERE IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS TO BE “BETWIXT AND BETWEEN” REALITY AND FANTASY BY WITNESSING EVENTS OR HAVING EXPERIENCES THAT CHALLENGE OR EXPAND THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF REALITY AND THEIR PLACE IN IT. THIS NOTION OF SITUATIONAL-ENCHANTMENT IS FASCINATING IN ITSELF AND BRIDGES PARAPSYCHOLOGY WITH THE HUMANISTIC AND TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGIES (LANGE & HOURAN, 2021).

CONCEPT	DEFINITION	SAMPLE STUDIES
Aberrant Salience	The process of placing inappropriate significance on neutral events	Ceballos-Munuera et al. (2022) Wright et al. (2018) Wright et al. (2020)
Absorption—Engagement	The state of being engrossed (attentionally & perceptually) in something	Annett et al. (2016) Langston et al. (2020) van Elk et al. (2016)
Belief in the Paranormal	Conviction in abilities or events that seemingly violate the fundamental and scientifically founded principles of nature	Escobá-Gascón & Houran (2021) Langston et al. (2020) van Elk (2013)
Embodied Cognition	The idea that the body or the body’s interactions with the environment constitute or contribute to cognition	Goldhagen (2017) Rabeyron & Loose, (2015) Tschacher et al. (2017)
Expectancy—Suggestion	Confirmation biases, or a person’s anticipation or belief of the effects of a behavior or future experience	Acunzo et al. (2020) French et al. (2007) Houran et al. (2020)
Fear Arousal	A heightened state of alertness that includes unpleasant emotions or thoughts when worried that something dangerous, painful, or bad that is happening or might happen	Lange & Houran (2000) Coelho et al. (2021) Silva & Woody (2022)
Narrative Development	Story-telling processes that organize our experiences in order to give meaning to events, make forecasts about how situations will evolve, guide our actions in relationships and make our self-experience coherent	Drinkwater et al. (2019) Eaton (2019) Childs & Murray (2010)
Pareidolia—Apophenia	The tendency to perceive a specific and often meaningful image or pattern in a random or ambiguous information	Drinkwater et al. (2020) van Elk (2015) Williams et al. (2021)
Sensory-Processing Sensitivity	A biologically-based trait characterized by increased awareness and sensitivity to the external environment.	Drinkwater et al. (2020) Grimen & Diseth (2016) Williams et al. (2021)
Situational Enchantment	A complex arousal state defined by competing emotional, sensorial, timeless, rational, and transformative themes that disrupt the mundane or difficult experience of daily life with a positive feeling of connection to a ‘transcendent agency or ultimate reality’	Drinkwater et al. (2022) Holloway (2010) Houran et al. (2022)
Threat-Agent Detection	The tendency for animals, including humans, to presume the purposeful intervention of a sentient or intelligent agent in situations that may or may not involve one	Brett et al. (2014) Drinkwater et al. (2021) Tashjian et al. (2022)
Tolerance of Ambiguity	A person’s comfortable level with uncertainty, unpredictability, conflicting directions, and multiple demands.	Houran & Lange (2004) Houran & Williams (1998) Lange & Houran (2000)
Transliminality	A hypersensitivity to psychological material originating in (a) the unconscious, and/or (b) the external environment	Evans et al. (2019) Lange et al. (2000) Langston et al. (2020)

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF ‘PSYCHOLOGICAL’ CONCEPTS RELEVANT TO HAUNTED HOUSES**



NOW, IT MIGHT SURPRISE READERS TO LEARN THAT ACADEMIC INTEREST IN THE TWO RELATED ISSUES OF “S/O ANOMALIES” AND “THE PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS OF ANOMALOUS OR ALTERED EXPERIENCES ON PEOPLE” ARE NOT CONFINED TO PARAPSYCHOLOGY. THESE LINES OF RESEARCH ARE ACTUALLY FOUND THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRICAL LITERATURE IN THE SOCIAL, BIOMEDICAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES. THE ONE IDEA THAT ARGUABLY CONNECTS INVESTIGATORS ACROSS FOLKLORE, ETHNOLOGY, SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN, EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY, AND CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES IS A RECOGNITION OF “SYSTEMS THEORY,” I.E., ENVIRONMENT—PERSON BIDIRECTIONAL INFLUENCES (GOLDHAGEN, 2017) OR OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ENACTIVE PROCESSES (JELIĆ ET AL., 2016). THE GROWING EVIDENCE INDEED SUGGESTS THAT, AT THE VERY LEAST, HAUNTED HOUSES ARE AN INTERACTIONIST PHENOMENON INVOLVING “THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT SETTINGS” (LAYTHE ET AL., 2018, P. 210). IN OTHER WORDS, EXPERIENTS ARE NEITHER PASSIVE NOR IMPARTIAL WITNESSES TO PARANORMAL EVENTS. IT IS MORE ACCURATE TO SAY THAT PEOPLE ARE ACTIVE, THOUGH MAYBE UNWITTING, PARTICIPANTS IN THE PRODUCTION OF THEIR ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES. THIS VIEW AGREES WITH GENERAL NARRATIVE THEORY THAT CONSTRUES PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AS SUBJECTIVE AND PLIABLE CONSTRUCTIONS RATHER THAN OBJECTIVE AND FIXED REPRESENTATIONS OF PHYSICAL REALITY (DE RIVERA & SARBIN, 1998).


THE KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT CORRESPONDINGLY ARISE ARE WHAT DEFINES THE RIGHT PEOPLE (“PSYCHOLOGY”) AND THE RIGHT SETTINGS (“ENVIRONMENT”), AS WELL AS HOW THESE TWO COMPONENTS INTERACT TO FACILITATE ANOMALOUS OR ALTERED EXPERIENCES. TABLE 1 SHOWS ONE APPROACH TO THESE ISSUES BY LISTING SOME OF THE MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES THAT PREVIOUS STUDIES HAVE IDENTIFIED AS CONTRIBUTORS TO ENACTIONS. PEOPLE VARY

ON THEIR LEVELS OF THESE CHARACTERISTICS, SO THEY ARE REGARDED AS INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES VERSUS ALL-OR-NOTHING TRAITS. AND THEY CAN BE QUITE POWERFUL. FOR EXAMPLE, STUDIES OF AN ALLEGEDLY HAUNTED LOCATIONS RELIABLY SHOW THAT VARIABLES LIKE THESE ALONE CAN SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER PEOPLE’S PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE SAME PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (E.G., ESCOLÀ-GASCÓN & HOURAN, 2021; FRENCH ET AL., 2009; LANGE & HOURAN, 1997).

ON THE OTHER HAND, WE MUST ALSO CONSIDER THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OR ATTRIBUTES OF CERTAIN LOCATIONS THAT ARE CONSISTENTLY PERCEIVED TO BE HAUNTED. DAGNALL ET AL. (2020) REPORTED THAT ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ON HAUNT-TYPE EXPERIENCES IS RELATIVELY SPARSE IN THE LITERATURE AND THAT THE AVAILABLE STUDIES HAVE YIELDED NULL OR CONFLICTING RESULTS. THIS STUDY ULTIMATELY CONCLUDED THAT DISCRETE FACTORS LIKE ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELD ACTIVITY, INFRASOUND, AIR QUALITY, OR LIGHTING LEVELS LIKELY PLAYED A ROLE IN SELECT CASES, BUT THAT THE TWO MOST PROMISING AREAS OF FUTURE STUDY ON ENACTIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF HAUNTINGS WERE (A) “ENVIRONMENTAL GESTALT VARIABLES” (I.E., HOLISTIC OR COLLECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT DEFINE THE OVERALL “MOOD OR VIBE” OF A SPACE), AND (B) “SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS” (I.E., THE INFLUENCE OF BROAD SOCIAL NORMS AND SPECIFIC INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS ON THE ADOPTION OR SPREAD OF PERCEPTIONS AND COGNITIONS). TABLE 2 LISTS A MYRIAD OF ISSUES IN THE ORTHODOX LITERATURE THAT RELATES TO THESE TWO LINES OF RESEARCH.

## **TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF ‘ENVIRONMENTAL’ CONCEPTS RELEVANT TO HAUNTED HOUSES**



CONCEPT	DEFINITION	SAMPLE STUDIES
<b>Contagion—Memetic Effects</b> (emotional/ perceptual/ social)	The spontaneous spread of emotions, cognitions, or behaviors via cuing or priming effects	Houran & Lange (1996) Hullett (2005) Lorber et al. (2007)
<b>Creepiness</b> (per environmental design or phenomenology)	The state of causing an unpleasant feeling of fear or unease.	McAndrew (2020) McAndrew & Koehnke (2016) Wiseman et al. (2003)
<b>Environmental Gestalt Variables</b>	The interaction of sensory/perceptual/attentional mechanisms that forms a person's holistic impression or interpretation of a natural or built environment.	Caputo et al. (2021) Coelho et al. (2021) Jelić et al. (2016) Harte (2000) Lange et al. (1996) McAndrew (2020) van Elk et al. (2015)
Affordance	The “possibility for action” provided by the environment or the degree of interaction between the surrounding space and the visitor	
Ambiguity-Threat	A “risk assessment” in terms of a visitor's feelings of comfort or discomfort within the surrounding space.	
Atmosphere	The overall “tone or impact” of a surrounding space to the visitor	
Immersion & Presence	The extent to which a visitor feels physically present within —and total attention focused on— the surrounding space	
Legibility	The ease with which the surrounding space can be recognized, organized into a pattern, and then recalled — specifically related to clear/ unobstructed views and protective places to hide	
Memory & Associations	The surrounding space contains colors, symbols, textures, objects, sounds, odors, or a sense of “time” with personal meaning to the visitor	
<b>Extraordinary Architectural Experiences</b>	An encounter with a building or place that fundamentally alters one's normal state of being	Bermudez (2009) Bermudez & Ro (2012) Ro & Bermudez (2015)
<b>Gang (or group) Stalking</b>	A set of persecutory beliefs where those affected believe they are being	Lange et al. (2020) O'Keeffe et al. (2019)



	followed, stalked, and harassed by a large number of coordinated people.	Sheridan et al. (2020)
<b>Haunted Intimacy</b>	The idea that "ghosts" are narrative characters that exert a personal and relational presence to the material world	Collins & Jervis (2008) Franz (2021) Marinelli & Ricatti (2003)
<b>Hierotopy</b> (sacred or enchanted spaces)	The creation of sacred spaces viewed as a special form of human creativity and also a related academic field where specific examples of such creativity are studied.	Bermudez (2015) Holloway (2010) Lidov (2006)
<b>Legend Tripping &amp; Ostension</b> (e.g., dark/ heritage/ paranormal tourism)	The acting out of a legend narrative in real-life, such as nocturnal pilgrimages to sites allegedly linked with tragic, horrific, or supernatural events	Holloway (2010) Houran et al. (2020) McNeil & Tucker (2018)
<b>Place Attachment and Identity</b> (or sense of place)	Person-place attachments or bonds that derive from specifiable conditions of a place or emotional/ symbolic meanings that are assigned by an individual	Donohoe (2014) Escalà-Gascón & Houran (2021) Seamon (2014)
<b>Psychogenic Illness</b>	A disorder or illness stoked by psychological factors like emotional conflict or stress, as opposed to physical or environmental reasons	Chen et al. (2003) Houran et al. (2002) Lange & Houran (1998)
<b>Sick Building Syndrome</b>	A situation where building occupants experience acute health and comfort effects that appear linked to time spent in a building, but no specific illness or cause can be identified.	Joshi (2008) Shoemaker & House (2006) Straus (2009)
<b>Spontaneous Fantasies &amp; Spaces</b>	An encounter with an aged landscape or building where a visitor spontaneously experiences images or vignettes from the past in their minds' eye	Lovell & Thurgill (2021) Wells (2017) Wells & Baldwin (2012)
<b>Wayfinding</b>	The manners in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place	Burles & Iaria (2020) Cocchiarella & Drinkwater (2020) Skandali & Blundell (2021)

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NOTE THAT ALL THESE CITATIONS REFER TO ARTICLES IN MAINSTREAM SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE AS OPPOSED TO NICHE JOURNALS IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY. TABLES 1 AND 2 THUS REVEAL THAT ACADEMIA IS FULL OF INTRIGUING CONCEPTS AND STUDIES THAT DIRECTLY INFORM OUR GROWING UNDERSTANDING OF “WHO HAS GHOSTLY EXPERIENCES” AND “WHAT TYPES OF SETTINGS BECOME HAUNTED.” OF COURSE, DISSECTING THESE TWO QUESTIONS IS CHALLENGING ENOUGH BUT RECALL THAT SYSTEMS THEORY (OR ENACTIVE PROCESSES) DICTATES THAT THE SETS OF VARIABLES IN THESE TABLES ALSO CAN INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER. CONSEQUENTLY, IT IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF STUDYING PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AND PHYSICAL FACTORS SEPARATELY; RESEARCHERS MUST START ASSESSING THE CRITICAL INTERPLAYS OF BOTH IN REAL-TIME. THIS IS A DAUNTING, BUT VERY NECESSARY, NEXT STEP IN DISCERNING WHERE CONVENTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND PHYSICS IN HAUNTED HOUSES END, AND PERHAPS SOMETHING PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL BEGINS. NEVERTHELESS, THE INFORMATION SUMMARIZED IN THE TABLES FLATLY DEBUNKS THE PREMISE THAT GHOSTLY PHENOMENA ARE FRINGE OR TABOO SUBJECTS WITHIN MAINSTREAM SCIENCE. THEY ACTUALLY CAN SERVE AS EXCITING AND DRAMATIC CASE STUDIES OF MANY TOPICS THAT ARE CROSS-DISCIPLINARY IN NATURE.

### **NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION**

SCIENTISTS PURSUE “CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES” OF PHENOMENA. AND TO THIS POINT, THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOMETHING BEING UNEXPLAINED VERSUS UNEXPLAINABLE. WE ARE CURRENTLY IGNORANT ABOUT MANY ASPECTS OF HAUNTED HOUSES AND ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCES BUT NEW RESEARCH MIGHT EVENTUALLY RESOLVE THE UNKNOWN AND AMBIGUITIES. STILL, MOUNTING EVIDENCE SUMMARIZED BY LAYTHE ET AL. (2021A) SUGGESTS THAT: (A) THE PERCEPTION OR REPORT OF HAUNT-TYPE EXPERIENCES IS RELATED, IN PART, TO VIGILANCE OR SENSITIVITIES TO INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL STIMULI, (B) THE CONTENTS OF

EXPERIENCES OFTEN APPEAR CONGRUENT WITH CUES IN THE ATTENDING PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOSOCIAL ENVIRONMENT), AND (C) THE PATTERNS OF THE INTER-EVENT TIMES, OR THE TEMPORAL PERIODS BETWEEN SUCCESSIVE ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES, STRONGLY IMPLY THE ROLE OF PERCEPTUAL OR ATTENTIONAL BIASES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ‘CONTAGION’ EFFECTS IN SOME REPORTS. ONLY THEN CAN WE START LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR RULING OUT ORTHODOX EXPLANATIONS OR PROCESSES IN HAUNTED HOUSES AND SEEING WHAT REMAINS—AKA, THE MYSTERY OF “WHAT’S LEFT?”

IN MY VIEW, MEANINGFUL PROGRESS ON THE PREVIOUS ISSUES AND QUESTIONS WILL COME WHEN PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR INVESTIGATORS START CROSSING THEIR METAPHORICAL STREAMS IN COORDINATED AND CONSTRUCTIVE WAYS. PRESENTLY, BOTH CAMPS ARE ENGAGED IN DEFENDING THEIR STATUS AND TERRITORY VERSUS ENGAGED WITH EACH OTHER. THE GIST OF THE PROBLEM IS EASY TO GRASP. PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS TYPICALLY LAMENT THE GREATER CULTURAL CURRENCY ENJOYED BY THE AMATEUR INVESTGATOR COMMUNITY, EVEN THOUGH IT TENDS TO BE DOMINATED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO LACK SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE (BAKER & BADER, 2014; HILL, 2017; HILL ET AL., 2019; POTTS, 2004). CONVERSELY, AMATEUR GROUPS CAN FEEL THREATENED WHEN THEIR IDEAS AND METHODS ARE CRITICIZED AND OVERSHADOWED (OR EVEN TAKEN OVER) BY THE WORK OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS. THERE IS ALSO MORE THAN A TWINGE OF RESENTMENT TOWARDS SCIENTISTS WHO SEEMINGLY AIM TO “DEMISTIFY,” “DIS-ENCHANT,” OR OUTRIGHT “DISCREDIT” THE INVESTIGATIONS AND ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES REPORTED BY GHOST-HUNTERS.

BUT THE NEWS IS NOT ALL BAD, AS SOME ORGANIZATIONS ARE ACTIVELY STRIVING TO BREAK DOWN THESE CULTURAL BARRIERS AND FACILITATE CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGURE AND CROSS-POLLINATION BETWEEN AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL RESEARCHERS. IN PARTICULAR, THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH (SPR) IS



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AMONG THE OLDEST SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO THE CREATION OF A METHODOLOGICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM FOR INVESTIGATING ALLEGED PARANORMAL PHENOMENA. THIS INCLUDES FIELDWORK RESEARCH ON SPONTANEOUS CASES OF APPARITIONS, HAUNTS, AND POLTERGEISTS. THE SPR AND ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM HAVE PUSHED FOR STANDARDIZED RESEARCH AND ETHICAL STANDARDS (E.G., BAKER & O'KEEFFE, 2007; PARSONS, 2018, 2021) TO HELP TRANSFORM AMATEUR INVESTIGATORS INTO "CITIZEN SCIENTISTS." THIS TERM DENOTES NON-PROFESSIONAL RESEARCHERS WHO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ACADEMIC STUDIES TO HELP GENERATE NEW KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION (CECCARONI & PIERA, 2017). A MORE FORMALIZED PROGRAM IN "CITIZEN EDGE SCIENCE" WAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED IN THE UNITED STATES BY THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS AND ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCE (ISRAE), A REGISTERED 501(C)3 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND PUBLIC EDUCATION. UNLIKE THE UK EFFORTS THAT APPEAR SEEMINGLY USE A TOP-DOWN APPROACH (I.E., PROFESSIONALS → AMATEURS), ISRAE HAS ADOPTED A ROUNDTABLE SYSTEM THAT RECOGNIZES AND LEVERAGES THE STRENGTHS OF INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEMBERS TO PROMOTE A GENUINE AND COOPERATIVE "MEETING OF THE MINDS" (I.E., PROFESSIONALS ↔ AMATEURS). NONETHELESS, THE UK AND US EFFORTS ARE BOTH FACILITATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUTUAL LEARNING AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS.

### **MODERN TOOLS FOR CONSTRUCTIVE FIELDWORK INVESTIGATIONS**

FIELDWORK RESEARCH ON HAUNTED HOUSES BECOMES UNSTRUCTURED, UNDISCIPLINED, OR UNPRODUCTIVE IN THE ABSENCE OF AN OVERARCHING PLAN FOR AN INVESTIGATION OR CLARITY ABOUT THE ROLES OF SPECIFIC TEAM MEMBERS. AN "INVESTIGATION" CAN NEVERTHELESS ENTAIL DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE DEPENDING ON THEIR

BACKGROUNDS AND SKILL SETS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE AUTHOR'S OWN RESEARCH APPROACH INVOLVES THREE FORMS OF TACTICAL DATA COLLECTION THAT CAN HANDLED BY INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE TRAINED AND MOTIVATED FOR SOME OR ALL OF THE RESPECTIVE TASKS: (A) "CASE DOCUMENTATIONS," I.E., CHRONICLING THE PHYSICAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES OF LOCATIONS, PSYCHOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE PEOPLE AT THE LOCATION, AND THE S/O ANOMALIES REPORTED AT THE SITE; (B) "EXPLORATORY INSPECTIONS," I.E., A PLANNED OR STRUCTURED SITE SURVEY WITH CONTROLS IN PLACE IN AN ATTEMPT TO DOCUMENT S/O ANOMALIES WHEN THEY OCCUR; AND (C) "HYPOTHESIS TESTING," I.E., SIMILAR TO AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION BUT ORGANIZED TO TEST OF ONE OR MORE SUSPECTED CAUSES OR CORRELATES OF THE S/O EVENTS REPORTED AT A PARTICULAR LOCATION. MOREOVER, THREE IMPORANT DEVELOPMENTS ARE HELPING PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS AND CITIZEN SCIENTISTS ALIKE TO PROFESSIONALIZE FIELDWORK INVESTIGATIONS BY PROVIDING INNOVATIVE TOOLS TO COLLECT STANDARDIZED DATA THAT CAN BE SHARED, ANALYZED, AND EVENTUALLY PUBLISHED. READERS CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL AND TACTICAL RESOURCES AT THE ISRAE WEBSITE ([WWW.ISRAENET.ORG](http://WWW.ISRAENET.ORG)).

### *THE SURVEY OF STRANGE EVENTS (SSE)*

THIS IS A 32-ITEM, 'TRUE/FALSE' RASCH (1960/1980) SCALED MEASURE OF THE OVERALL PERCEPTUAL INTENSITY (OR DEPTH) OF A GHOSTLY ACCOUNT OR NARRATIVE VIA A CHECKLIST OF ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES INHERENT TO THESE EPISODES (HOURAN ET AL., 2019B). THE SSE'S RASCH ITEM HIERARCHY REPRESENTS THE PROBABILISTIC ORDERING OF S/O EVENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR ENDORSEMENT RATES BUT RESCALED INTO A METRIC CALLED 'LOGITS.' HIGHER LOGIT VALUES DENOTE HIGHER POSITIONS (OR GREATER DIFFICULTY) ON THE RASCH SCALE (BOND & FOX, 2015). YOU CAN THINK OF IT SIMPLY AS A WEIGHTED CHECKLIST THAT TAKES AN INVENTORY OF THE "HAUNT HIERARCHY" IN

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INDIVIDUAL CASES AS DISCUSSED EARLIER. MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND AND PSYCHOMETRIC DEVELOPMENT OF THIS INSTRUMENT IS PROVIDED BY HOURAN ET AL. (2019A, 2019B, 2021).

RASCH SCALED SCORES RANGE FROM 22.3 (= RAW SCORE OF 0) TO 90.9 (= RAW SCORE OF 32), WITH A MEAN OF 50, SD = 10, AND RASCH RELIABILITY = 0.87. HIGHER SCORES CORRESPOND TO A GREATER NUMBER AND INTENSITY OF ANOMALIES THAT DEFINE A PERCIPIENT'S GHOSTLY EPISODE. SUPPORTING THE SSE'S CONSTRUCT AND PREDICTIVE VALIDITIES, HOURAN ET AL. (2019B) FOUND THAT THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF 'SPONTANEOUS' ACCOUNTS (I.E., OSTENSIBLY SINCERE AND UNPRIMED) DIFFERED SIGNIFICANTLY FROM CONTROL NARRATIVES FROM 'PRIMED CONDITIONS, FANTASY SCENARIOS, OR DELIBERATE FABRICATION.' FOLLOW-UP STUDIES WITH THE SSE FURTHER SUPPORT ITS VALUE FOR CONTENT ANALYSES OF QUALITATIVE REPORTS (LANGE ET AL., 2020; LAYTHE ET AL., 2021C; LITTLE ET AL., 2021; O'KEEFE ET AL., 2019). TO BE SURE, PSYCHOMETRIC INSTRUMENTS TO GAUGE THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF WITNESS REPORTS ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AS ENVIRONMENTAL INSTRUMENTS TO MONITOR PHYSICAL EVENTS OR CHANGES IN THE WITNESSES' SETTINGS. THIS TOOL WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO DOCUMENT AND MEASURE REPORTS OF S/O ANOMALIES WITHIN AND ACROSS CASES IN AN UNBIASED AND STANDARDIZED WAY. INTERESTED READERS CAN CONTACT THE ISRAE WEBSITE TO LEARN HOW TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE SSE TOOL FOR PRIVATE USE.

#### *MULTI-EVENT SENSOR APP (MESA 3.0)*

NOTED PARAPSYCHOLOGIST CHARLES TART (1965) ADVOCATED LONG AGO FOR THE USE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SENSORS AND COMPUTER INSTRUMENTATION TO STUDY OF GHOSTLY EPISODES. THANKS TO MODERN ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY, HIS ORIGINAL VISION IS BEING REALIZED AT NEW LEVELS OF PRACTICALITY AND AFFORDABILITY.

FOR INSTANCE, LAYTHE ET AL. (2021B) DEVELOPED THE MESA 3.0 ADROID-BASED APPLICATION ("APP") THAT COLLECTS SCIENCE-GRADE DATA PER THE THREE MAIN INVESTIGATION TASKS OUTLINED EARLIER. IT CAN SIMULTANEOUSLY MEASURE (A) ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS, (B) BAROMETRIC PRESSURE, (C) TEMPERATURE, (D) LIGHTING LEVELS, AND (E) GRAVITY. FOUR DIFFERENT "USER MODES" PRODUCE TIME-SYNCHRONIZED, DISTRIBUTIONAL OUTPUTS ON THESE PHYSICAL VARIABLES THAT CAN BE CORRELATED WITH AN EMBEDDED VESION OF THE SSE CHECKLIST OF 'SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE' ANOMALIES, AS WELL AS AUDIO AND PHOTO DOCUMENTATION TO TEST FOR POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL GESTALT EFFECTS OR O ANOMALIES LIKE ELECTRONIC VOICE PHENOMENA (LEARY & BUTLER, 2015) OR INSTRUMENTAL TRANSCOMMUNICATION (LASZLO, 2008). IT CAN ALSO SERVE AS MOTION DETETION TO MONITOR TEST AREAS FOR UNWANTED OR UNAUTHORIZED INTRUSIONS SUCH AS DELIBERATE DECEPTION BY OTHERS WHO AIM TO MIMIC LEGITIMATE ANOMALIES.

#### *CITIZEN EDGE SCIENCE (CES) NETWORK*

ISRAE'S LARGER INITIATIVE ON 'CITIZEN EDGE-SCIENCE' CONTENDS THAT NEW METHODS IN CONJUNCTION WITH ACTIVE COLLABORATION IS NECESSARY TO DRIVE UNIFORM CHANGES IN FIELDWORK PROTOCOLS. ISRAE HAS THUS LAUNCHED [HTTPS://CITIZENEDGESCIENCE.NET](https://citizenedgescience.net)(CES), A PRIVATE SOCIAL MEDIA SITE OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES TO PROMOTE CITIZEN SCIENCE COLLABORATIONS UNDER VARIOUS 'PROJECT/PARTICIPATION' ENTRIES FOR ANY GROUP, INDIVIDUAL, OR ORGANIZATION THAT WISHES TO PURSUE COMMUNITY EDGE SCIENCE RESEARCH. WE NOTE THAT MULTIPLE STUDIES ON THE SITE ARE IN PILOT PHASES, WITH THE SPECIFIC GOALS OF CREATING BASELINE CONTROL DATASETS TO MAKE FIELD EVIDENCE MORE STATISTICALLY TESTABLE. THESE LAY-FRIENDLY PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL PROVIDE METHODS OR TEMPLATES FOR THOSE WANTING TO INVOLVE CITIZEN SCIENTISTS, WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY TRAINING AMATEUR INVESTIGATORS ON THE



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BASIC ISSUES OF PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION. ISRAE HOPES THAT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND ACADEMICS WILL UTILIZE THE CES AS A SAFE COMMUNITY RESOURCE FOR BRINGING TOGETHER ACADEMIC PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS AND LAY INVESTIGATOR GROUPS. THE MESA 3.0 APP FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND MEASUREMENTS IS READILY AVAILABLE FROM THE CES AND ISRAE WEBSITES, WHEREAS THE CES PLATFORM HAS A GROWING BODY OF TUTORIALS AND AIDS FOR MAXIMIZING THE USE OF THE APP BY PROFESSIONAL AND AMATEUR INVESTIGATORS.

### **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

HOPEFULLY THIS ARTICLE DEMONSTRATED THAT RESEARCH ON “HAUNTED HOUSES AND ENCOUNTER EXPERIENCES” IS ALIVE AND KICKING WITHIN MAINSTREAM ACADEMIA, DESPITE THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY DEBUNKERS AND DETRACTORS. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, READERS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT PAST AND ONGOING SCIENTIFIC STUDIES IN THIS DOMAIN DO NOT SET OUT TO “PROVE” THE PARANORMALITY OF S/O ANOMALIES. INSTEAD, THE GOAL IS TO GATHER ENOUGH QUALITY DATA TO IDENTIFY RELIABLE PATTERNS. ONLY THEN CAN SCIENTISTS RESPONSIBLY BEGIN THE PROCESS OF THEORY FORMATION FOR THESE PATTERNS. FINALLY, SCIENTISTS RESIST BEING LED BY THEIR BELIEFS, PREFERENCES, OR PREJUDICES – AND INSTEAD FOLLOW THE EVIDENCE. THIS IS DONE VIA HYPOTHESIS-TESTING TO AFFIRM OR REJECT ANY PROPOSED THEORIES OF CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE. MAKE NO MISTAKE, HAUNTED HOUSES ARE A COMPLEX PROBLEM INVOLVING (A) WITNESS PSYCHOLOGY, (B) ARCHITECTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY, AND (C) THE NUANCES AND INTERPLAYS BETWEEN THESE FORMER SETS OF VARIABLES.

BUT THERE COULD BE—AND LIKELY IS—MORE TO THESE PHENOMENA THAN WHAT CONVENTIONAL SCIENCE CAN CURRENTLY DESCRIBE (SEE E.G., LAYTHE & HOURAN, 2022). ALTHOUGH MANY AMATEUR INVESTGATORS

PARTICIPATE IN EXCURSIONS TO VALIDATE THEIR ESTABLISHED PARANORMAL BELIEFS, A SELECT (FEW OTHERS YEARN FOR GENUINE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ONOTOLOGICAL REALITY OF THESE PHENOMENA. THEY ARE PART OF THE QUEST FOR THE “CORRECT” ANSWERS, NOT THEIR “PREFERRED” ANSWERS. THIS LATTER GROUP HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO BE EFFECTIVE CITIZEN SCIENTISTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROFESSIONAL RESEARCHERS WHO EXHIBIT HUMILITY AND OPEN-MINDEDNESS. AND WITHIN THIS CONFLUENCE OF SUBGROUPS LIES THE GREATEST POTENTIAL. PARTICIPATORY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM SCIENCE IS UNQUESTIONABLY A WINNING STRATGEY TO TACKLE COMPLEX PROBLEMS (TEBES ET AL., 2014). SO, SPEAKING DIRECTLY AND LOUDLY TO THIS NARROW AUDIENCE, MY FERVENT ADVICE FOR ACCELERATING SOLID RESEARCH ON “HAUNTED HOUSES” IS TO EMULATE THE GHOSTBUSTERS AND DELIBERATELY “CROSS THE STREAMS!”

RELIGION AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY

# 'Are Ghosts Extinct'

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THEY ARE EVERYWHERE. YOU CAN'T TURN ON TELEVISION OR WATCH YOUTUBE WITHOUT SEEING THE LATEST VIDEO OR HEARING THE NEWEST RECORDING FROM AN ABANDONED ASYLUM OR LONELY GRAVEYARD. AND OF COURSE YOUR FAMILY HAS ITS OWN FAVOURITE GHOST STORY OR TWO. IF NOT, YOU PROBABLY LIVE A STONE'S THROW FROM A STOP ON THE LOCAL GHOST TOUR OR EAT AT A RESTAURANT THAT PLAYS UP ITS UNSAVOURY PAST.

POLLS DIFFER SLIGHTLY, BUT A STRONG MINORITY BELIEVE IN GHOSTS. THAT IS UP DRAMATICALLY IN THE PAST DECADE, ALMOST CERTAINLY AS RESULT OF BEING BOMBARDED BY TELEVISION AND INTERNET SENSATIONALISM. AND WE WANT TO BELIEVE. SIXTY-ONE PER CENT OF PEOPLE BELIEVE IN AN AFTERLIFE. STILL, AFTER THOUSANDS OF YEARS AND THE UTILIZATION OF CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY WE STILL CANNOT DEFINITELY SAY WHAT GHOSTS ARE.

THE "PROOFS" OFFERED ON HUNDREDS OF WEBSITES ALL HAVE NORMAL, MUNDANE EXPLANATIONS. READINGS ON MANY OF THE INSTRUMENTS DEDICATED TO GHOST HUNTING WOULDN'T RAISE AN EYEBROW IN OTHER CONTEXTS. YET, FOR ALL THESE PROOFS TO BE TRUE EVIDENCE OF GHOSTS WOULD REQUIRE A RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM THE CONCEPTION AND BEHAVIOUR OF GHOSTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY. NOT TO MENTION VIOLATE A PLETHORA OF KNOWN NATURAL LAWS. BUT THEN WE COULD CONSOLE OURSELVES THAT THEY ARE THE RESULT OF SOME UNKNOWN NATURAL LAW. ARE WE FOOLING OURSELVES BY CHASING DIGITAL READOUTS FROM VARIOUS PIECES OF MUNDANE EQUIPMENT INSTEAD OF THE ONE AND ONLY WAY TO ASCERTAIN A GHOST? IF ALL THE EVIDENCE FOR GHOSTS WE CAN AMASS IS JUST DIGITAL ONES AND TWOS, PERHAPS IT ISN'T TOO OUTRAGEOUS TO WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GHOST THAT USED TO BE SO WIDESPREAD AND UNMISTAKABLE?

## THE NATURE OF GHOSTS

THE WORD GHOST WAS COINED IN THE LATE

SIXTEENTH CENTURY. IT COMES FROM THE ANCIENT GERMANIC TERM, GAST, AND IS COMMONLY BELIEVED TO BE THE DISEMBODIED SPIRIT OF A DECEASED PERSON. THOUGH SOME FOOLISHLY THINK GHOSTS WILL DISAPPEAR WITH MORE SCIENCE TEACHING IN SCHOOLS, PARAPSYCHOLOGISTS STUDY TWO THEORIES. THE FIRST IS THEY ARE A DISINCARNATE ENTITY THAT ONCE LIVED ON EARTH IN A HUMAN BODY. OTHERS PURSUE THE THEORY GHOSTS ARE INTERNALLY GENERATED HALLUCINATIONS, ESP WRIT LARGE. WHATEVER THEY MAY ACTUALLY BE, IN ONE INDISPUTABLE REALITY ALMOST EVERYONE NEEDS TO BELIEVE THEY ARE PROOF OF AN EXISTENCE BEYOND DEATH.

THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF MANIFESTATIONS THAT WE CALL GHOSTS. THE FIRST IS THE AFOREMENTIONED DISEMBODIED SPIRIT OF A DECEASED HUMAN OR ANIMAL. IT IS SELF-AWARE AND OFTEN APPEARS AT THE TIME OF DEATH. IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY THEY ARE REFERRED TO AS APPARITIONS. THE SECOND TYPE OF GHOST IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE "PLAYBACK" TYPE OF GHOST OR RESIDUAL HAUNTING. THEY ARE A REPLAY OF PAST EVENTS, SOMEHOW IMPRINTED UPON THE ENVIRONMENT, AND MANIFEST THEMSELVES WHEN CERTAIN CONDITIONS OCCUR THAT WE DO NOT YET UNDERSTAND, THOUGH MOST WOULD HAZARD A GUESS METEOROLOGY PLAYS SOME PART. PERHAPS THOSE OLD BLACK AND WHITE MOVIES WITH THEIR RAGING STORMS AND GLIDING GHOSTS ALONG DARK HALLWAYS WERE CLOSER TO THE TRUTH THAN THEY THOUGHT. THUS ANNE BOLEYN, THE UNLUCKY SECOND WIFE OF THE WORST KING ENGLAND EVER HAD, HENRY VIII, CAN BE SEEN AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN THE UK DOING MUNDANE, ORDINARY ACTIONS AND SEEMINGLY UNAWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF WITNESSES. SHE IS ALSO SEEN BEING TAKEN FROM THE SCAFFOLD IN THE TOWER OF LONDON, HEADLESS, AND CARRIED BY FOUR FOOTMEN. NOW, NO ONE BELIEVES HER SPIRIT AND THAT OF THE FOUR FOOTMEN HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO THAN REENACT THAT SAD PHASE OF HER TRAGIC LIFE REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT TIME. SOME BELIEVE THESE TRAGIC EVENTS ARE SOMEHOW IMPRESSED UPON THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT.

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BUT WHAT ABOUT THE MUNDANE, ORDINARY, NON TRAGIC VIEWS OF HER?

THE THIRD TYPE IS THE RARE GHOST OF SENSATIONAL TELEVISION AND PUBLICITY-SEEKING GHOST/DEMON HUNTERS. THEY ARE LOUD, DANGEROUS AND DESTRUCTIVE. THEY ARE ALSO ALWAYS UNSEEN. WE KNOW THESE SPIRITS AS POLTERGEISTS, GERMAN FOR "NOISY SPIRIT." NOVA SCOTIA HAS HAD TWO MAJOR POLTERGEIST INCIDENTS AND ONE, THE ESTHER COX OR AMHERST MYSTERY, IS FAMOUS WORLDWIDE AND FEATURED IN MANY BOOKS ON THE PARANORMAL EVEN THOUGH IT PALES IN COMPARISON TO THE MARY ELLEN SPOOKFARM OF CALEDONIA MILLS. AS WITH MANY THINGS IN THE PARANORMAL, GOOD PR OFTEN TRUMPS TRUTH. THOUGH MOST HAUNTINGS MAY BE MISTAKES, MOST POLTERGEISTS ARE THE RESULT OF PURPOSEFUL FAKERY. BUT AS WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF GHOSTS, THERE ARE SOME THAT CHALLENGE OUR BELIEFS.

## **HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS**

GHOSTS ARE MENTIONED IN MANY ANCIENT TEXTS INCLUDING THE BIBLE. MATTHEW 14:25-27, MARK 6:48-50, AND LUKE 24:37:39 IN THE NEW TESTAMENT ALL REFER TO GHOSTS, BUT THE MOST FAMOUS PASSAGE CONCERNING A GHOST IS THE ONE FROM I SAMUEL 28: 7-20 IN WHICH KING SAUL ASKS THE WITCH OF ENDOR TO CONJURE THE GHOST OF SAMUEL, HIS FORMER ADVISER. FOR THIS INSOLENCE, SAUL IS CUT OFF FROM GOD'S FAVOUR FOR CHOOSING TO CONSULT A SPIRIT INSTEAD OF TRUSTING IN GOD'S PLAN FOR HIM.

HISTORICALLY, OUR BELIEF IN GHOSTS HAS REMAINED CONSTANT, YET OUR INTERPRETATION OF THEM AND THEIR CORRESPONDING BEHAVIOURS, HAS CHANGED. ANCIENT PEOPLES BELIEVED THE DEAD LIVED ON IN ANOTHER FORM THAT REQUIRED THEY BE BURIED WITH MANY OF THEIR EARTHLY BELONGINGS AND SOME KIND OF SUSTENANCE TO HELP THEM ONCE THEY REACHED THE OTHER SIDE.

THE MOST WELL KNOWN EXAMPLE OF THIS, OF COURSE, IS THE BURIAL RITES OF THE EGYPTIAN PHARAHOES.

ALSO, MANY ANCIENT CULTURES BELIEVED THAT IMPROPER FUNERAL RITES, LACK OF ANY KIND OF BURIAL, ACCIDENTAL OR MALICIOUS DEATH WHERE THE BODY WAS NOT RECOVERED, SUICIDE, OR FAILURE TO RESOLVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS, WOULD LEAD TO A RESTLESS SPIRIT. OFTEN AS A VAMPIRE IN EASTERN EUROPE. FOLKLORE IS FULL OF STORIES OF AN UNWARY TRAVELLER WHO WOULD BE ACCOSTED BY THE GHOST OF SOMEONE WHO NEEDED THE ASSISTANCE OF THE LIVING. OFTEN THEIR BODY WAS NOT FOUND OR BURIED PROPERLY AND THUS THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS MUST BE RECTIFIED OR THEY CANNOT REST. OWING MONEY TO SOMEONE WAS ANOTHER REASON FOR THE RESTLESS DEAD. OFTEN THE REQUIRED ACTION OR AMOUNT PAID WOULD SEEM INSIGNIFICANT TO OUR MODERN EYES.

## **SAMHAIN**

THE APPEARANCE OF RESTLESS SPIRITS WAS RARELY A WELCOME EVENT. IT OFTEN INSPIRED INTENSE FEAR, AND SOMETIMES STILL DOES. THOUGH WE ENJOY GHOST STORIES AND WELCOME GHOSTS AS A COMFORTING REAFFIRMATION OF LIFE AFTER DEATH, THE ACTUAL EXPERIENCE OF A HAUNTING IS ANOTHER MATTER.

THE DEAD ARE SUPPOSED TO STAY DEAD. THIS FEAR OF WANDERING SOULS EXPRESSES ITSELF IN THE MODERN PHENOMENON WE CALL HALLOWEEN, WHICH IS BASED ON THE ANCIENT CELTIC CELEBRATION SAMHAIN, WHICH MEANS 'SUMMER'S END'. CELEBRATING THE HARVESTING OF CROPS AND MARKING THE END OF THE CELTIC YEAR, SAMHAIN ALSO WAS A PRECAUTIONARY RITUAL TO WARD OFF THE DEAD. THEY WERE THOUGHT TO WALK FREELY THROUGH THE WORLD DURING THIS TIME SO THE ANCIENT CELTS INITIATED THE PRACTICE OF WEARING MASKS SO AS NOT TO BE RECOGNIZABLE BY A SPIRIT WHO MAY WISH THEM HARM. FIRES IN THE HEARTH WOULD BE



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EXTINGUISHED AND PEOPLE OF THE VILLAGE AND SURROUNDING AREAS WOULD WALK TO THE TOP OF A HILL WHERE A HUGE BONFIRE WOULD BE LIT. THEN PEOPLE WOULD LIGHT STICKS FROM THE BONFIRE AND TRAVEL BACK TO THEIR HOMES TO RELIGHT THEIR HEARTH FOR ANOTHER YEAR. SINCE THE DEAD WOULD BE ATTRACTED TO THE LARGER BONFIRE ON THE HILL THE CELTS THOUGHT SAFE TO RELIGHT THE FAMILY HEARTH.

THIS RITUAL, ALONG WITH THE WEARING OF MASKS AND COSTUMES, WOULD THWART THE RESTLESS DEAD AND KEEP THE CELTS SAFE. WHEN CHRISTIANITY BECAME THE DOMINANT RELIGION OF THE BRITISH ISLES THE CHURCH INCORPORATED MANY PAGAN HOLIDAYS INTO THEIR CALENDAR IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO TRANSFER THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO THE NEW RELIGION. INSTEAD OF MANY GODS, NOW THERE WAS TO BE ONLY ONE. SINCE SAMHAIN WAS SUCH A POPULAR FESTIVAL, IT BECAME ALL SAINTS DAY OR HALLOWMAS, NOVEMBER 1ST. THUS THE NIGHT BEFORE BECAME ALL HALLOWS EVE (HALLOWEEN). AND TO SEAL THE DEAL, NOVEMBER 2ND BECAME ALL SOUL'S DAY. WHEN THE RITUALS OF SAMHAIN PERSISTED DESPITE TWO SPECIAL DAYS DEDICATED TO THE DEAD, AND THE BEST EFFORTS OF LOCAL PRIESTS AND BISHOPS, CHURCH TEACHINGS CHANGED IN AN EFFORT TO LINK SAMHAIN WITH DEMONS AND THE DEVIL. THIS WAS FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL TO A DEGREE IN ENGLAND, BUT ELSEWHERE SAMHAIN DEVELOPED INTO HALLOWEEN AND HAS FLOURISHED INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

### **GHOSTS IN THE VICTORIAN AGE**

FOR AS LONG AS THERE IS WRITTEN HISTORY THE GHOST APPEARED AS A FULL-BODIED REPRESENTATION, SOLID AND IN FULL 3D. IT WOULD BE VERY EASY TO MISTAKE THEM AS HUMAN BEINGS, AS SOME MAY HAVE BEEN, BUT MOST WERE ACCOMPANIED BY THE RATTLING OF CHAINS OR THE SOUNDS OF GROANS AND MOANS. THE MOST FAMOUS DEPICTION OF THIS IS IN CHARLES DICKENS' CLASSIC *A CHRISTMAS*

*CAROL*. ON FILM THERE ARE DELIGHTFUL, FUN DEPICTIONS, OR DARK, BROODING HORROR MOVIE TYPE RENDITIONS. THE MOST FAMOUS ARE THE 1951 ALISTAIR SIM OR 1984 GEORGE C. SCOTT VERSIONS THAT HEAVILY REINFORCE THE VICTORIAN VISION/BELIEF OF THE CLASSIC GHOST OR HAUNTING. THE 2019 VERSION WITH GUY PIERCE IS THE MOST HORRIFIC IN PRESENTATION, YET IS ALSO A FASCINATING CHARACTER STUDY ANY STUDENT OF PSYCHOLOGY WOULD INSTANTLY ENJOY. VICTORIANS LOVED THEIR GHOSTS AND NO CHRISTMAS WAS COMPLETE WITHOUT GHOST STORIES ON CHRISTMAS EVE. THIS CAN BE SEEN TODAY ON THE VARIOUS TELEVISION CHANNELS WITH SERIES HAVING OFFBEAT OR PARANORMAL THEMED SPECIALS AT CHRISTMAS. GHOSTS STILL CRIED OUT FOR ABSOLUTION OF SINS OR VENGEANCE AGAINST PERCEIVED WRONGS IF YOU WERE UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO MEET THEM ON LONELY ROADS OR AT A CROSSROADS.

### **REALITY TV, THE MODERN GHOST, AND REALITY**

THE APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOURS OF GHOSTS IN THE MODERN AGE DIFFER SHARPLY FROM THE CLASSIC GHOST. GONE ARE THE SOUNDS OF CHAINS RATTLING IN THE NIGHT. NO LONGER DO THE GHOSTS PLEAD PITIABLY FOR REDEMPTION OR WAIL LOUDLY FOR REVENGE TO UNWARY TRAVELLERS. TODAY GHOSTS ARE MOSTLY REPORTED AS A SHADOW, MOVEMENT OUT OF THE CORNER OF ONE'S EYE, OR SIMPLY FELT AS A PRESENCE. NOT ONLY HAS THE GHOST LOST ITS PATHETIC VOICE PLEADING FOR HELP, ITS LOST ITS LOOKS AS WELL. WHEREAS ONCE MANY A GHOST'S APPEARANCE WAS CYCLICAL AND PREDICTABLE, NOW THEY SEEM RANDOM AND UNCONTROLLED. THE ANCIENT TERROR OF LOW MOANS IN THE NIGHT HAS BEEN REPLACED BY INDISTINCT GARBLED SOUNDS ON CHEAP RECORDERS. THE GHOST HAS LOST HIS TRADITIONAL VOICE.

WHEN THEY ARE NOT RUMMAGING AROUND DAMP, DARK BASEMENTS OF OLD HOUSES AND ABANDONED ASYLUMS IN GREEN LIGHT SCREAMING QUESTIONS AT NOTHING, GHOST HUNTERS SPEND A LOT OF THEIR TIME

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COMPLAINING THAT SCIENTISTS DON'T UNDERSTAND THEM AND WON'T LOOK AT THEIR EVIDENCE. WHAT THEY ARE REALLY SAYING IS THAT SCIENCE HAS LOOKED AT THE EVIDENCE AND SEEN THAT IT IS INSUFFICIENT TO PROVE ANYTHING, LET ALONE A HAUNTING IS TAKING PLACE. LET ME BE CLEAR. THERE IS NO PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY ANYWHERE THAT CAN TELL YOU ANY PLACE IS HAUNTED. NONE. PERIOD. FULL STOP. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GHOST DETECTOR. TECHNOLOGY MAY BE MARKETING AS SUCH, BUT THERE IS NO EQUIPMENT FOR THAT PURPOSE. AND NONE THAT CAN FIND A GHOST. THE AMATEUR MAY SAY THEY ARE SCIENTIFICALLY SEARCHING FOR GHOSTS BUT THEY ARE ACTUALLY TECHNOLOGICALLY SEARCHING FOR THEM INSTEAD. AND AS EXPECTED, THIS HAS BEEN A TOTAL FAILURE. WHY IS ALL THIS EXPENSIVE TECHNOLOGY USELESS IN THE PURSUIT OF GHOSTS?

EVERY PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE SEARCH FOR GHOSTS WAS DEVELOPED FOR MORE MUNDANE USES. SINCE THE THEORY THAT DISEMBODIED SPIRITS EXIST IS ASSUMED TO BE TRUE, ANY APPARENTLY ANOMALOUS READINGS FROM THESE INSTRUMENTS ARE EAGERLY PROMOTED TO BE CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF SUCH. BUT THERE IS NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT THESE ANOMALOUS READINGS ARE ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE RESULT OF BADLY CALIBRATED OR IMPROPERLY USED EQUIPMENT.

THE ONLY WAY TO ASCERTAIN THE APPEARANCE OF SOMEONE WHO IS DEAD IS TO SEE THEM WITH ONE'S OWN EYES. TO SEE SOMEONE WHO ABSOLUTELY CANNOT BE THERE, WHO IS KNOWN TO BE DEAD BY ALL AND SUNDRY, IS THE ONLY WAY TO CONCLUSIVELY PROVE SOMETHING PARANORMAL APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING. THIS IS ONE CASE WHERE ALL THE TECHNOLOGY IN THE WORLD IS USELESS. THERE IS NO WAY TO TELL IF TECHNOLOGY IS REGISTERING SOMETHING PARANORMAL, CAPTURING REGULAR VARIATIONS IN CONDITIONS BEING MONITORED, OR SIMPLY BEING MISUSED AND MISUNDERSTOOD. IT

WOULD BE IDEAL TO FIND A HAUNTING THAT IS FREQUENT, PREDICTABLE AND VISUAL. ONCE THE LOCATION OF SUCH A HAUNTING IS ASCERTAINED, THEN AND ONLY THEN, EQUIPMENT CAN BE BROUGHT IN TO SEE IF THERE ARE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES THAT OCCUR SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE GHOST. THIS STAGE OF THE INVESTIGATION HAS TO BE HANDLED SCIENTIFICALLY, WITHOUT BIAS AND WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF BOTH SKEPTICS AND BELIEVERS. ONLY WITH THE ACCUMULATION OF IMPARTIAL EVIDENCE THAT IS ATTESTED TO BY BOTH SIDES OF THE ARGUMENT WILL GHOSTS BE PROVEN TO EXIST.

### **ARE GHOSTS EXTINCT?**

THE CLASSICAL GHOST OF OLD CERTAINLY IS. THEY ARE NOW RARELY SEEN IN OUR BUSY MODERN WORLD. MOST REPORTS OF HAUNTINGS ARE OF AMBIGUOUS PHENOMENA THAT MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH A GHOST. THEY DON'T INTERACT WITH THE LIVING AS THEY ONCE DID.

WHEREAS ONCE THE GHOST WOULD APPEAR DRAMATICALLY TO FAMILY OR STRANGERS AT WILL, NOW THEY ARE SHY AND OFTEN ONLY EXPERIENCED ONLY VIA DIGITAL READOUT. THE GHOSTS THAT USED TO COMFORT US WITH PROMISES OF ETERNAL LIFE EVEN AS THEY FRIGHTENED US OUT OF OUR WITS EXIST NOW ONLY IN FOLKLORE AND GHOSTS STORIES. AS WITH OTHER AREAS OF LIFE IN OUR MODERN TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD, WE HAVE LOST SOMETHING POIGNANT AND ROMANTIC IN OUR DIGITAL HASTE.



# 'The Dark Side of the Paranormal'

RELIGION AND PARAPSYCHOLOGY



*Elliott Van Dusen, Ph.D.  
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A DARK UNDERWORLD HAS EXISTED IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY SINCE ITS CREATION. I AM VERY AWARE THAT THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS WHO TAKE FINANCIAL ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE UNDER THE GUISE OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY. LET THERE BE ABSOLUTELY NO MISTAKE. THOSE WHO DO DEFRAUD THE INNOCENT IN THE NAME OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY SHOULD BE PROSECUTED.

WE SHALL START BY LOOKING AT WHAT MY COLLEAGUE DARRYLL WALSH REFERS TO AS GRIEF VAMPIRES, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS PSYCHIC FRAUD. THIS IS AN UNFORTUNATE OR FORTUNATE PART OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY, DEPENDING ON HOW ONE LOOKS AT IT. FOR INSTANCE, WE WOULDN'T BE WHERE WE ARE TODAY WITH RESPECT TO PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND INVESTIGATIONS IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE FRAUDS. IN 1882, THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH (SPR) WAS CREATED IN LONDON TO SCRUTINIZE CLAIMS OF PSYCHICAL AND OTHER RELATED PARANORMAL PHENOMENA BEING GENERATED FROM THE RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALISM MOVEMENT. CLAIMS OF APPARITIONS, CLAIRVOYANT VISIONS AND PRECOGNITIVE DREAMS WERE RIFE. HOWEVER, IT WAS THE CLAIM OF BEING ABLE TO CONTACT THE DEAD WHICH HAD CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE ACADEMICS WHO CREATED THE SPR.

DURING AND AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN 1918, SOME (NOT ALL) MEDIUMS WERE QUICK TO CAPITALIZE ON THOSE STRUCK WITH GRIEF. MOTHERS AND WIDOWS FLOCKED TO MEDIUMS FOR A CHANCE TO RECONNECT WITH THEIR LOVED ONE. ONE OF THE SPR INVESTIGATORS WHOM YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF, HARRY HOUDINI, FELT SO PASSIONATE ABOUT THESE FRAUDULENT MEDIUMS, THAT HE TESTIFIED BEFORE THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION TO CRIMINALIZE FORTUNE-TELLING. IT WAS ILLEGAL IN CANADA UP UNTIL 2018 WHEN THE CRIMINAL CODE CHARGE OF PRETENDING TO PRACTICE WITCHCRAFT WAS REPEALED.

IT IS A SHAME THAT THE LAW WAS REPEALED AS CHARGES WERE STILL BEING FILED AGAINST INDIVIDUALS UP UNTIL THE CRIME WAS

RESCINDED ON DECEMBER 13, 2018. DORIE STEVENSON OF MILTON, ONTARIO WHO OWNED MILTON PSYCHIC WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED BY POLICE FOR ALLEGEDLY BILKING A CLIENT OUT OF \$60,000. SAMANTHA STEVENSON WHO PRACTICED UNDER THE NAME "EVANNA LOPEZ" WAS ALSO ARRESTED ON A SIMILAR SCHEME. TIFFANY BUTCH FROM TIMMINS, ONTARIO WAS THE LAST PERSON IN CANADA CHARGED UNDER SECTION 365 OF THE CRIMINAL CODE JUST DAYS BEFORE THE LAW WAS REPEALED. SHE WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED FOR ATTEMPTING TO ELICIT FUNDS FROM A LOCAL PERSON CLAIMING THAT IF THEY DIDN'T PAY HER, SOMETHING TERRIBLY SUPERNATURAL WAS GOING TO HAPPEN TO A FAMILY. THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF STORIES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE HAD A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF MONEY STOLEN FROM THEM WHEN THESE GRIEF VAMPIRES SINK THEIR TEETH INTO A JUICY FINANCIAL VEIN.

SPIRITUAL HOUSE CLEARINGS ARE ANOTHER TYPE OF SCAM TO WATCH OUT FOR. THIS SCAM CONSISTS OF A MEDIUM WHO GUARANTEES TO CLEAR A HOME OF ANY NEGATIVE SPIRITS. I HAVE SEEN WEBSITES OFFERING THIS SERVICE FOR AS HIGH AS \$500. THE SCAM CAN CONTINUE SEVERAL TIMES OVER WHEN THE MEDIUM TELLS THE FAMILY THAT IT MAY TAKE A COUPLE OF SESSIONS TO WORK. THE SURVIVAL HYPOTHESIS IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY IS THE BELIEF THAT HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS CAN SURVIVE CLINICAL DEATH AND THAT THE ENERGY AND PERSONALITY OF A DECEASED INDIVIDUAL WILL CONTINUE TO SURVIVE OUTSIDE OF THE PHYSICAL BODY. TRUE PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL INVESTIGATORS KNOW THAT ONE CANNOT GUARANTEE THE REMOVAL OF ANY SPIRIT, EVEN IF POSSIBLE AT ALL. IF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS DOESN'T WANT TO DEPART FROM THE EARTHLY REALM OR A PARTICULAR LOCATION, IT IS BELIEVED THEY STILL HAVE THEIR OWN FREE WILL TO REMAIN. NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG, I DO BELIEVE THAT LEGITIMATE MEDIUMS HAVE THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE TO SPIRIT AND IN SOME INSTANCES HELP THEM MOVE ON, BUT ONLY IF SPIRIT WANTS TO. I DON'T BELIEVE IN AN ABILITY TO GUARANTEE BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT THAT A SPIRIT CAN BE FORCED OUT OF HIS OR HER'S LOCATION.



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I WILL ONLY BRIEFLY TALK ABOUT PROFITEERING FROM PARANORMAL TELEVISION SHOWS AS THAT IS ANOTHER BEAST TO DISCUSS SOME OTHER TIME. HOWEVER, THE MAJORITY OF SHOWS YOU ARE CURRENTLY SEEING ON TELEVISION ARE COMPLETE AND UTTER GARBAGE. NETWORKS CONDUCT PSYCHOLOGICAL SURVEYS OF VIEWERS AND STUDY RATINGS IN ORDER TO DETERMINE AND DESIGN SHOWS THAT GIVE VIEWERS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE. MOST MODERN DAY PARANORMAL SHOWS INVOLVE NOTHING BUT DECEIT, TRICKERY AND MISINFORMATION. WHAT KIND OF PROFIT CAN ONE MAKE OFF OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY THROUGH TELEVISION? WELL IN 2012, THE TRAVEL CHANNEL PROVIDED ZAK BAGANS WITH A 3-YEAR, \$4.5 MILLION CONTRACT TO HOST SOME OF THEIR PROGRAMS. FOUR AND HALF MILLION DOLLARS TO RECORD 42 MINUTE EPISODES OF DRAMATIZED PARANORMAL FICTION WHILE ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS ARE CLOSING PARAPSYCHOLOGY LABORATORIES DUE TO LACK OF FUNDING. LET THAT RESONATE WITH YOU FOR A MOMENT.

THERE ARE SOME LEGITIMATE AND ETHICAL WAYS TO MAKE A PROFIT OFF OF THE PARANORMAL. I THINK BACK TO MY LATE FRIEND STANTON T. FRIEDMAN. HE WAS A RETIRED NUCLEAR PHYSICIST WHO STUDIED UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS. HE WROTE AND SOLD BOOKS BASED ON HIS EXPERIENCE, RESEARCH, AND EXPERTISE. HE WAS COMPENSATED TO TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD TO LECTURE AT CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS. HOWEVER, THESE ARE ALL ETHICAL WAYS OF "PROFITEERING" OFF OF THE PARANORMAL. I USE THE WORD PROFITEERING IN QUOTATIONS, BECAUSE NOT MANY INDIVIDUALS CAN ETHICALLY MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF MONEY OFF OF THE PARANORMAL. BY THE TIME ONE PAYS TAXES AND EXPENSES, MUCH LIKE DARRYLL AND I DID FOR OUR EVENT "AN EVENING WITH CANADA'S GHOST HUNTERS", ONE WOULD BE LUCKY TO BREAK EVEN ON THEIR ENDEAVOR, OR IN OUR CASE, HUMBLY ACCEPT A LOSS.

"THE MAJORITY  
OF SHOWS YOU  
ARE CURRENTLY  
SEEING ON  
TELEVISION ARE  
COMPLETE AND  
UTTER  
GARBAGE"



FIRST PERSON ACCOUNTS

# 'Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing and Paranormal Trauma'

*Carmel Clark (in memoriam)  
EMDR Certified Trauma Therapist*



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I AM A CERTIFIED EMDR TRAUMA THERAPIST, INTEGRATIVE COUNSELLOR AND COACH OF NEARLY TWO DECADES IN PRIVATE PRACTICE AND I HAVE MY OWN PARANORMAL TRAUMA EXPERIENCES.

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND PARANORMAL TRAUMA WAS AT MY BIRTH, WHILE MY MOTHER IRENE WAS HAVING A NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE (NDE). ALTHOUGH I WAS TRULY WANTED, IRENE LEFT HER BODY BECAUSE OF AN ASTHMA ATTACK, AND SHE WITNESSED THE LATER PART OF MY BIRTH FROM THE CEILING OF THE HOSPITAL ROOM AT THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL IN CENTRAL LONDON, ENGLAND. SHE TOLD ME OF HOW SHE WITNESSED THE CHAOS IN THE ROOM BELOW AS THEY WORKED HARD TO REVIVE HER, AND THAT AS SHE RETURNED TO HER BODY, I LEFT HERS AND BREATHED LIFE INTO MINE.

I WAS TO GROW UP IN A QUIET TREELINED STREET ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF LONDON WITH MY FAMILY. MY BELOVED MOTHER, A RELUCTANT MEDIUM, WAS HOUNDED MANY NIGHTS BY UNWANTED ENTITIES, SPIRITS AND GHOSTS. IRENE HAD BEEN TRAINED IN MUSIC AND OPERA AT THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DRAMA IN HER YOUTH AND HAD BEEN A WORKING OPERA SINGER BEFORE SHE RETIRED ONCE CHILDREN CAME INTO THE FRAME. MY MOTHER WOULD OFTEN WAKE ME UP IN THE SMALL HOURS OF THE MORNING WITH A TOP C SCREAM.

AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER I WOULD RUN INTO HER BEDROOM, MY HEART POUNDING, TO FIND MY BEAUTIFUL MOTHER SITTING BOLT UPRIGHT WHERE SHE WOULD QUICKLY TURN TO ME: "I'M OKAY. IT WAS JUST A BAD DREAM CARMEL, GO BACK TO BED". I WOULD RETURN TO MY BEDROOM, STILL TERRIFIED, HEART STILL POUNDING AND PULL MY TEDDIES AND COVERS VERY CLOSE TO ME AND TRY, FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE HOURS, TO RETURN TO SLEEP.

THIS WAS TO BE A REGULAR OCCURRENCE THROUGHOUT MY CHILDHOOD.

THE MORNING I REALISED THESE WERE NOT 'BAD DREAMS' WAS THE NIGHT HER FATHER CAME TO VISIT. UNKNOWN TO US HE HAD DIED TWO WEEKS EARLIER AND, ALTHOUGH SHE HAD NOT SEEN HIM OR HEARD FROM HIM FOR MANY YEARS, THAT NIGHT HE CAME TO LET HER KNOW HE HAD PASSED.

MY MOTHER HATED HER 'GIFT' AND ONLY SAW IT AS A NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE. IT TRAUMATISED HER, AND IT VICARIOUSLY TRAUMATISED ME. SHE NEVER GOT THE HELP SHE BADLY NEEDED, AS SHE TRIED A FEW TIMES TO SEE A THERAPIST, BUT ALL THEY WANTED TO DO WAS MEDICATE HER AND HER 'DISORDER'.

THERE WAS VERY LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PARANORMAL OR PARAPSYCHOLOGY IN THOSE DAYS UNLESS YOU WERE BLESSED TO BE IN THOSE CIRCLES. WITH THE FEAR OF IGNORANCE, DOGMA, AND JUDGMENT THAT MY MOTHER EXPERIENCED, SHE UNDERSTANDABLY CLOSED TO IT AND JUST KEPT IT IN THE FAMILY.

THIS IS A VERY CURRENT THEME EVEN TODAY THAT INFORMS MY THERAPEUTIC TRAUMA WORK AND PRACTICE, HOWEVER FORTUNATELY THERE ARE THOSE OF US WHO TRULY 'KNOW' THE VALIDITY OF THE PARANORMAL AND ARE OUT THERE HELPING.

IN THE PAST I ALSO SUPRESSED MY OWN GIFTS; OBSERVING MY MOTHER'S EXPERIENCE, I DIDN'T WANT ANY PART OF IT. IT FELT LIKE A CURSE, AT LEAST THAT WAS HOW MY MOTHER AND I SAW HERS, BEING BOMBARDED AT NIGHT BY, WHAT I NOW UNDERSTAND, WERE OFTEN NEGATIVE SPIRITS OR GHOSTS TRYING TO GET HER ATTENTION AND MY POOR MOTHER NOT KNOWING OR UNDERSTANDING HOW TO DEAL WITH IT OR THEM.

WE WERE BOTH HAUNTED EMOTIONALLY AND LITERALLY BY THE TRAUMA.

THROUGH THE LATE 70S, 80S AND EARLY 90'S I WORKED AS AN EDITORIAL HAIRSTYLIST IN LONDON, PARIS AND BEYOND IN FASHION.

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MY WORK GRACING THE PAGES OF GLOSSY MAGAZINES, CATWALKS, POP VIDEOS AND THE ADVERTISING WORLD. DESPITE CAREER SUCCESS, THE FASHION INDUSTRY LEFT ME FEELING COMPLETELY UNFULFILLED AND QUESTIONING LIFE'S MEANING TO THE POINT OF TOTAL DESPERATION AND DESOLATION. I RETIRED FROM THE PROFESSION AND LEFT ENGLAND ON THE SPIN OF A GLOBE; "WHEREVER MY FINGER LANDS", I TOLD MYSELF AS I SPUN IT "IS WHERE I WILL GO". AS THE GLOBE STOPPED, MY FINGER HAD LANDED NEAREST TO VENEZUELA IN SOUTH AMERICA.

I SPENT THE NEXT FEW YEARS OF MY LIFE LIVING IN CARACAS, DEEPLY SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS ONLY A 'DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL' COULD PROVIDE. I HAD KNOWN IN MY HEART SOMETHING WAS SO FUNDAMENTALLY MISSING IN MY LIFE THAT THE INNATE DRIVE IN ME TO FIND MEANING AND PURPOSE WAS IMMENSE.

I HAD LOST MYSELF IN A PROFESSION THAT WASN'T MY TRUE CALLING, TO APPEASE MY PARENTS, WHO WANTED MY FINANCIAL SUCCESS IN AN UNCARING WORLD. I HAD ATTAINED THAT, HOWEVER THE MEANING I HAD GIVEN IT COMPLETELY COLLAPSED ONE NIGHT AND I KNEW MY SOUL WAS BEING TORTURED BY THE EMPTINESS I FELT TO THE POINT OF MY NEAR DESTRUCTION. I TRIED SO HARD TO IGNORE THE PAIN I WAS ENDURING UNTIL THAT FATEFUL NIGHT WHEN I COULD NO LONGER AVOID IT AND HAD TO LEAVE MY FASHION LIFE AND HOME BEHIND TO FIND MYSELF.

THE LIGHTBULB EUREKA MOMENT CAME ONE CHRISTMAS IN THE AMAZON JUNGLE WHILE READING A BOOK THAT HAD BEEN GIFTED TO ME, THE WHEEL OF LIFE BY ELIZABETH KUBLER ROSS. THIS BOOK WAS TO COMPLETELY CHANGE THE COURSE OF MY LIFE.

ELIZABETH, LIKE ME, WAS DRIVEN TO DO GOOD IN THIS WORLD. HER DRIVE WAS AROUND HELPING THOSE WHO WERE TERMINALLY ILL AND THE DYING AND HER FAMOUS BOOK ON DEATH AND DYING REVOLUTIONISED HOW THE

MEDICAL WORLD SUPPORTS THOSE TRANSITIONING FROM THIS WORLD TO THE NEXT.

IT SEEMED LIKE THE MOST OBVIOUS REVELATION: I HAD SPENT YEARS HELPING PEOPLE LOOK GOOD ON THE OUTSIDE AND HERE IT WAS OF COURSE, TO HELP THOSE FEEL GOOD ON THE INSIDE.

ELIZABETH WANTED TO HELP THE DYING AND I KNEW IN MY HEART MY CALLING WAS TO HELP THE LIVING.

I QUALIFIED AT 40 AS AN INTEGRATIVE COUNSELLOR FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT IN ENGLAND. THAT WAS NEARLY TWO DECADES AGO, AND AFTER 10 YEARS OF BEING A COUNSELLOR AND A COACH IN PRIVATE PRACTICE, I DECIDED TO SPECIALISE IN TRAUMA. I KNEW THAT GROWING UP WITH TRAUMA AND WITNESSING IT REPEATEDLY IN LIFE, I WANTED TO HELP EASE THE SUFFERING OF MANKIND AND I WAS BLESSED TO LEARN ABOUT AND STUDY EMDR TRAUMA THERAPY.

EMDR IS A TRULY GROUND-BREAKING THERAPY FOR HEALING TRAUMA. IT IS A SAFE, FAST AND EFFECTIVE THERAPY THAT IS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE TO RESOLVING ALL TYPES OF TRAUMA, ESPECIALLY PTSD. ITS VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BY RIGOROUS RESEARCH, WITH MANY CONTROLLED STUDIES INTO EMDR MAKING IT THE MOST THOROUGHLY RESEARCHED METHOD USED IN THE TREATMENT OF TRAUMA. I FOUND MYSELF ABSOLUTELY LOVING THIS AMAZING HEALING MODALITY. I CAME TO SEE I COULD PROCESS AN ACUTE TRAUMA IN UNDER 12 SESSIONS; TRAUMA THAT PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE LIVED WITH FOR A LIFETIME. IT FELT LIKE MAGIC, AND I FELT LIKE I HAD COME HOME.

MY FIRST PARANORMAL TRAUMA CLIENT LIVED IN CANADA AND CAME TO ME WHEN I MOVED FROM ENGLAND TO TORONTO IN 2012. HIS NAME IS SEAN JOHNATHAN SPENCE, AND HE WAS 31 YEARS OLD.

SEAN WAS STILL BEING PRESENTLY TRAUMATISED BY WHAT HE CALLED 'THE



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POSSESSION DREAMS', WHICH HAD BEGUN A YEAR AFTER MOVING INTO THE FAMILY'S NEW HOME WHEN HE WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD. THE HOUSE WAS HAUNTED.

THE FIRST YEAR HAD STARTED QUIET ENOUGH BUT SLOWLY OVER THAT TIME THE GHOSTLY OCCURRENCES BEGAN TO HAPPEN.

SEAN TOLD ME THAT NIGHTS WERE THE WORST FOR HIM ESPECIALLY BETWEEN 2 AND 3AM WHEN SOMETHING OR SOMEONE WOULD BEGIN TO BREATHE IN HIS EAR. THIS WAS TO BE ONE OF THE MOST TRAUMATIC OF THE STRANGE OCCURRENCES FOR THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD.

HOWEVER, SEAN FOUND THE SHADOW FIGURES IN THE BATHROOM TERRIFYING AS DID ALL THE FAMILY; THE CONSTANT BANGING ON HIS BED, CHAIRS THAT WOULD BE MOVED DOWNSTAIRS AT NIGHT, FOOTSTEPS UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS AND SOMETHING SINISTER IN HIS CLOSET. MOST PECULIAR WAS HIS PAJAMAS BEING INSIDE OUT ON WAKING, WHEN HE KNEW ON GOING TO BED, THE PAJAMAS HAD BEEN PUT ON CORRECTLY.

SEAN FOUND SLEEP VERY CHALLENGING, AND HE SHARED WITH ME THAT IF HE DIDN'T GET TO SLEEP EARLY ENOUGH, HE KNEW HE'D MISSED THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY AND THE BREATHING IN HIS EAR WOULD BEGIN. THE REST OF THE NIGHT WOULD BE SPENT TOO SCARED TO MOVE.

HIS SCHOOL LIFE WAS DEEPLY AFFECTED AS HE WAS OFTEN TOO TIRED TO COPE OR MANAGE WITH WHAT WAS NEEDED OF HIM, AND THE HAUNTINGS CONTINUED TO GET MORE SEVERE UNTIL HE LEFT THE FAMILY HOME AT SIXTEEN.

TO HIS GREAT RELIEF THE HAUNTINGS STOPPED WHEN HE LEFT HOME, ALTHOUGH THE POSSESSION DREAMS DIDN'T. SEAN DESCRIBED HOW IN THE DREAMS THE LOCATION MIGHT CHANGE BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS A DEMONIC FORCE TRYING TO GET INSIDE OF HIM,

WANTING TO POSSESS HIM. HE WOULD WAKE IN ABSOLUTE DREAD, SHAKING AND SWEATING, TERRIFIED.

SEAN'S PARTNER AT THE TIME SHARED WITH ME HER EXPERIENCE OF HIS NIGHT TERRORS. SHE EXPLAINED HOW HE WOULD WRITHE AROUND IN BED, OR SIT UP FROZEN, EYES WIDE OPEN. SHE FOUND WAKING HIM FROM THESE NIGHT EXPERIENCES EXTREMELY DIFFICULT, AS IF HE WAS LOCKED INTO THEM IN ANOTHER TIME AND PLACE. SEAN, HOWEVER, HAD NO MEMORY OF THE NIGHT TERRORS, ONLY THE DREAMS.

THE POSSESSION DREAMS AND THE NIGHT TERRORS CONTINUED UNTIL SEAN AND I BEGAN TO WORK TOGETHER.

IT TOOK US 12 SESSIONS OF EMDR TRAUMA THERAPY OVER THREE MONTHS FOR IT ALL TO STOP. I AM STILL IN CONTACT WITH SEAN NEARLY NINE YEARS LATER AND NEITHER THE NIGHT-TERRORS NOR THE NIGHTMARES HAVE RETURNED.

SEAN RECENTLY SHARED WITH ME THE IMPACT OUR WORK HAD ON HIS LIFE. HE SPOKE OF THE RELENTLESS ANGER AND RAGE HE LIVED WITH ALL THOSE YEARS BECAUSE OF THE HAUNTINGS, AND HOW IT HAD DISSIPATED WITH OUR THERAPY. HE ALSO WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT ONCE THE ANGER HAD DIMINISHED, HE FELT SUCH FORGIVENESS FOR HIMSELF, ABOUT WHAT HE HAD EXPERIENCED AND HOW HE HAD MANAGED IT. THE ANGER, THE SHAME, THE GUILT ALL GONE. WHAT STOOD IN ITS PLACE WAS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS RESILIENCE, AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE WISDOM THIS EXPERIENCE HAD TAUGHT HIM AND HOW HE COULD GO ON TO NOT ONLY SURVIVE BUT FLOURISH IN THIS WORLD.

SEAN LATER TOLD ME OUR WORK TOGETHER WAS COMPLETELY TRANSFORMATIONAL. HE RECOMMENDED THAT I USE HIS FULL NAME IN THIS PAPER, AS HE WANTED THE WORLD TO KNOW HOW MUCH IT HAD CHANGED HIS OUTLOOK ON LIFE FOR THE BETTER, AND THAT PEOPLE NEEDED TO KNOW OF THE POWER AND MAGIC OF EMDR TRAUMA THERAPY.

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WORKING WITH SEAN ALSO CHANGED MY LIFE. UNTIL WE WORKED TOGETHER, I HADN'T RECOGNISED OR FULLY REALISED THE VALUE THAT EMDR TRAUMA THERAPY WOULD HAVE ON PROCESSING PARANORMAL TRAUMA.

THIS WAS A WAY THAT I COULD, AT LONG LAST, HELP A GROUP OF SOCIETY THAT WAS MARGINALISED AND MISTREATED. IF ONLY MY OWN MOTHER HAD HAD THIS AVAILABLE TO HER, OUR LIVES WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFERENT.

A LOT OF CLIENTS THAT COME TO ME WITH PARANORMAL TRAUMA HAVE EXTREME MENTAL ANGUISH CAUSED BY THEIR PARANORMAL EXPERIENCES. THE MEDICAL WORLD ASSUMES, OFTEN INCORRECTLY, THAT THE CAUSE OF THESE SYMPTOMS IS NOT PARANORMAL IN NATURE BUT HALLUCINATORY; THAT THE MENTAL DISORDER BEING EXPERIENCED IS NEUROLOGICAL AND THEREFORE MEDICATION WILL CONTROL THE 'ILLNESS'.

THIS IS A TWO-FOLD ERROR, NOT ONLY IS THIS NOT A MENTAL ILLNESS BUT THE ANXIETY AND SYMPTOMS EXPERIENCED ARE A 'RESULT' OF THE PARANORMAL EXPERIENCES AND NOT THE OTHER WAY ROUND. THESE ARE NOT HALLUCINATIONS BUT VERY REAL PARANORMAL EXPERIENCES THAT ARE SUFFICIENTLY TERRIFYING TO CAUSE A TRAUMA RESPONSE IN THE BRAIN.

INCORRECT DIAGNOSES CAN CAUSE EVEN MORE HARM AND TRAUMA TO THE INDIVIDUAL. THE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY, STRESS, HORROR, TERROR, CONFUSION AND SHOCK COUPLED WITH 'HALLUCINATIONS' ARE OFTEN DEEMED A NEUROLOGICAL DISORDER AND DIAGNOSED AS SUCH, SCHIZOPHRENIA, BIPOLAR, PSYCHOSIS OR BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER TO NAME A FEW.

PSYCHIATRISTS BELIEVE THE PATIENT IS NOT REALLY EXPERIENCING ANYTHING PARANORMAL BUT ARE DELUSIONAL AND THEREFORE MEDICATED AND/OR EVEN WORSE COMMITTED.

I HAVE COME ACROSS THIS BIAS AND

NEGLIGENCE TOO MANY TIMES IN MY THERAPEUTIC WORK, AS MANY DOCTORS, PSYCHIATRISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, OR COUNSELLORS DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE PARANORMAL OR DO NOT WANT TO BE SEEN TO BELIEVE FOR FEAR OF JUDGMENT, DISCRIMINATION, OR EVEN WORSE LOSS OF WORK AND THEREFORE DO NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO BE OBJECTIVE AND SUPPORT APPROPRIATELY.

THIS IS EXTREMELY PROBLEMATIC AND WHY MOST PEOPLE EXPERIENCING PARANORMAL TRAUMA DO NOT FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO COME FORWARD AND GET THE HELP THEY DESPERATELY NEED.

I DO, OF COURSE, WHEN TAKING ON A PARANORMAL TRAUMA CLIENT, NEED TO BE DILIGENT IN DETERMINING WHETHER THIS IS A REAL PARANORMAL TRAUMA EXPERIENCE. THERE ARE DISORDERS, JUST DISCUSSED, THAT CAN GENUINELY CAUSE HALLUCINATIONS THAT MIMIC THE PARANORMAL. WISDOM AND ASSESSMENT ARE ALWAYS A NECESSARY APPLICATION IN THESE CASES. HOWEVER, MY FIRST POSITION IS TO BELIEVE AND HONOUR MY CLIENTS' EXPERIENCE REAL OR OTHERWISE.

THIS IS WHERE PARAPSYCHOLOGY IS NOW STEPPING UP AND EMERGING INTO THE WORLD. MORE AND MORE COURAGEOUS THERAPISTS OR WOULD-BE THERAPISTS WHO KNOW THE VALIDITY OR AT LEAST ARE OPEN TO THE TRUTH OF THE UNSEEN WORLD, ARE BECOMING EDUCATED IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND ARE WILLING TO BE SUFFICIENTLY CURIOUS AND OPEN MINDED TO WANT TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE WORLDS.

THE WORLD OF THE PARANORMAL AND THE WORK OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WITH US IN VARYING FORMS, ESPECIALLY IN INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS WHERE THESE NARRATIVES ARE UNDERSTOOD WELL.

IN A WAY LIKE SCIENCE AND THE MEDICAL WORLD, ALTHOUGH ON THE OTHER END OF THE SPECTRUM, INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS EXPLAIN THESE CONDITIONS AS PREDOMINANTLY



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PARANORMAL WHEN THERE MAY HAVE IN-FACT BEEN GENUINE MENTAL ILLNESS PRESENT.

CAN WE WALK A MORE BALANCED LIFE OF UNDERSTANDING BOTH MENTAL ILLNESS AND PARANORMAL TRAUMA AND WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? BECAUSE BOTH CAN PRESENT; THE MENTAL ILLNESS CAUSED BY THE PARANORMAL OR HALLUCINATIONS CAUSED BY MENTAL ILLNESS.

AFTER YEARS OF DOING THIS EXTRAORDINARY AND PRIVILEGED WORK, WHICH WAS BORN IN THE AMAZON JUNGLE, ON A CONTINENT WHERE MAGIC AND THE PARANORMAL ARE PARADOXICALLY DEEMED NORMAL AND ACCEPTED AS PART OF LIFE; I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE STILL SEEMINGLY IN OUR INFANCY OF UNDERSTANDING THE UNSEEN WORLD. SO MANY OF US IN THE WEST DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE PARANORMAL, OR AT LEAST DO NOT ADMIT TO BELIEVING UNLESS IT HAS AFFECTED US DIRECTLY. MOST SKIRT AROUND THE TOPIC OFTEN SHAMING THOSE THAT DO.

FORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, WE ARE ENTERING INTO A MORE CURIOUS AND WILLING ERA OF EXPLORATION WHICH IS BUILDING MOMENTUM THROUGH THE EMERGENCE OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND NEW SCIENTIFIC METHODS THAT ALLOW US TO OBSERVE AND TREAT TRAUMA IN MORE NEUTRAL AND OBJECTIVE WAYS. WE CAN HOPEFULLY RECOGNISE RESPECTFULLY THAT MAYBE WE DO NOT YET HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS ON WHAT IS OR ISN'T REAL WHETHER TANGIBLE OR NOT.

SO HOW CAN WE BLEND THE WISDOM OF THE INDIGENOUS CULTURES WITH THE WISDOM OF SCIENCE AND TRULY USE BOTH TO CREATE INTEGRATION?

FOR ME PERSONALLY I HAVE COME TO SEE THAT THE ANSWER LIES IN EDUCATION, PARAPSYCHOLOGY, AWARENESS, COMPASSION AND HELPING TO INFORM THE WORLD OF THE REALITY OF THE PARANORMAL NARRATIVE.

IN ACKNOWLEDGING THE BRAVERY OF CLIENTS

THAT COME FORWARD TO PROCESS THEIR PARANORMAL TRAUMAS AND AS THEY SHARE AND INTEGRATE THEIR STORIES AND EXPERIENCES, WE CAN ALSO BE INFORMED AND LEARN THROUGH THEM.

WITH THIS GRACE I WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE AND HELP THOSE IN NEED, ON ALL SIDES OF THE SPECTRUM OF THE SEEN AND UNSEEN WORLDS WITH RESPECT, VALIDATION, CURIOSITY AND MY BELOVED AND PHENOMENAL EMDR TRAUMA THERAPY.

**[EDITOR'S REMARK: IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT WE REPORT THE PASSING OF CARMEL CLARK WHO DIED AT HOME ON SUNDAY, MAY 29TH, 2022. CARMEL HAD WRITTEN AND SUBMITTED THIS MANUSCRIPT WHICH HAD BEEN APPROVED PRIOR TO HER PASSING. UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, MY ROLE AS EDITOR HAS BEEN LIMITED TO PREPARING AND PUBLISHING HER ARTICLE POSTHUMOUSLY.]**



FIRST PERSON ACCOUNTS

# 'The Aristocratic Poltergeist Agent: A Hidden Story from Decades Past'

*Barry Taff, Ph.D.*



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WHEN IT COMES TO POLTERGEIST AGENTS, THEY COME IN ALL SHAPES, SIZES, GENDERS AND COLORS. SOME ARE TALL, SOME SHORT, SOME THIN, SOME NOT-SO-THIN, SOME YOUNG, SOME NOT SO YOUNG, SOME MALE AND SOME FEMALE, ALTHOUGH FEMALES APPEAR TO BE FAR MORE COMMON THAN MALES. BUT GENERALLY SPEAKING, IT'S INDEED A RARE DAY WHEN THEY COME FROM PARENTS WHO WERE CELEBRITIES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS OF WORK. ESPECIALLY FROM PARENTS WHO WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS NOT TO DISCLOSE THE EXISTENCE OF THEIR NEWBORN DAUGHTER. PARENT'S WHOSE LIVES WOULD HAVE BEEN FOREVER TAINTED AND TARNISHED BY THE BIRTH OF AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD WITH PARANORMAL PROCLIVITIES, AS THEY WERE MARRIED, BUT NOT TO EACH OTHER. THE SCANDAL OVER THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN HORRENDOUS FOR SURE. IT IS WITH THIS BACKDROP, THAT I DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING CASE.

THE CASE I AM ABOUT TO DISCUSS, HAS NEVER BEEN MADE PUBLIC BEFORE, NOT IN MY BOOK, ANYWHERE ELSE ON MY SITE, NOR IN ANY OF MY LECTURES, AS THERE WERE WAY TOO MANY PROBLEMATIC ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH IT. UNTIL RECENTLY, I FELT SOMEWHAT COMPELLED NOT TO DISCUSS ANY DETAILS OF THIS CASE FOR FEAR OF LEGAL REPERCUSSIONS AGAINST THE WOMAN WHO IS THE FOCUS THIS ARTICLE AND MYSELF.

BUT AS THE WOMAN OF WHICH I SPEAK HAS NOW VERY LIKELY PASSED AWAY (MORE ON THIS LATER), AS HAVE HER BIOLOGICAL AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS LONG AGO, SOME OF THOSE CONCERNS ARE LESS THREATENING THAN THEY ONCE WERE. YET I STILL CANNOT FULLY DIVULGE WHO HER BIOLOGICAL PARENTS WERE, AS THEY WERE PART OF THE UPPER SOCIAL STRATA WITHIN MODERN 20TH CENTURY AMERICA THAT WOULDN'T CARE TO BE LINKED THE PARANORMAL IN ANY WAY WHATSOEVER, WHERE THE MOTHER WAS A FAMOUS ACTRESS WITHIN THE INDUSTRY, AND THE FATHER WAS ASSOCIATED WITH ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL FAMILIES ON EARTH. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THEY DISCREETLY PUT THEIR

LITTLE BABY GIRL UP FOR ADOPTION MORE THAN SIXTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO.

THIS CASE BEGAN IN EARLY FEBRUARY OF 1976 WHEN A GIRL NAMED SUSAN CALLED THE OLD UCLA PARAPSYCHOLOGY LAB IN SEARCH OF ANSWERS TO THE ONGOING PSYCHOKINETIC MAELSTROMS IN HER HOME. IF MEMORY SERVES ME CORRECT AFTER ALMOST FOUR DECADES, IT WAS DR. THELMA MOSS WHO ACTUALLY TOOK THE CALL, AS SUSAN CALLED VERY LATE IN THE AFTERNOON OR EARLY EVENING, AFTER I HAD LEFT FOR THE DAY. IT WASN'T UNTIL THE NEXT MORNING THAT I FOUND THE NOTE LEFT FOR ME BY THE PHONE THAT SUSAN HAD CALLED, NOT HAVING ANY IDEA OF WHO SUSAN WAS IN TERMS OF MY PAST.

AT THAT TIME, SUSAN LIVED WITH TWO OTHER GIRLS IN A QUAIN, LITTLE, THREE BEDROOM HOUSE IN THE NORTH HOLLYWOOD REGION OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY HERE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. UPON MEETING SUSAN, THE DIMINUTIVE BLOND LOOKED VERY FAMILIAR TO ME, BUT I COULDN'T QUITE PLACE HER. THE REASON SHE LOOKED SO FAMILIAR WAS THAT SHE GREW UP NEAR MY COUSINS IN WEST LOS ANGELES, AND THEY KEPT TRYING TO SET US UP ON DATES, WHICH NEVER OCCURRED. SUSAN WAS WAY TOO WEIRD AND MOUSEY, EVEN FOR ME. BUT SUSAN INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED ME, AND I WAS REALLY AMAZED TO SEE WHAT SHE GREW INTO.

THE PASSING OF TIME WAS VERY GOOD TO SUSAN IN MOST WAYS, AS THE MORE MATURE WOMAN WAS FAR MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN THE SCRAWNY 16 YEAR-OLD I KNEW WAY BACK WHEN; A STUNNING GREEN-EYED BLOND, WHO WAS ATTRACTIVE EVEN IF YOU WEREN'T ATTRACTED TO BLONDS, LIKE MYSELF. DURING THAT NEW ENCOUNTER OF THIRTY-NINE YEARS AGO, I LEARNED THAT SUSAN HAD BECOME QUITE THE HISTRIONIC HYPOCHONDRIAC, HAVING LITTLE OR NO EMOTIONAL COPING MECHANISM, WHERE THE SMALLEST AMOUNT OF EMOTIONAL OR PHYSICAL STRESS KNOCKED HER OFF HER FEET AND INTO BED, WHERE SHE COMPLAINED OF VARIOUS ILLS THAT WERE ANYTHING BUT SOMATIC.

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MOREOVER, SHE USED HER MORBID DEPRESSION TO MANIPULATE OTHERS INTO GETTING HER WAY.

BUT FAR AND AWAY, THE MOST RELEVANT PIECE OF THE PUZZLE HERE WAS THAT SUSAN HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED TO SUFFER FROM TEMPORAL LOBE EPILEPSY, WHICH SHE LEARNED OF WHILE STILL A TEENAGER, AND WAS THEREFORE UNABLE TO HOLD A CALIFORNIA DRIVER'S LICENSE. WOW, LIKE WHAT ELSE IS NEW? BACK IN THOSE DAYS OF FORTY YEARS PAST, NO ONE IN THEIR RIGHT MIND EVEN SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS A CAUSAL LINK BETWEEN ONE'S NEUROPHYSIOLOGY/ELECTRO-CHEMISTRY AND POLTERGEIST ACTIVITY, WHILE TODAY IT APPEARS TO BE THE MOST COMMON SOMATIC CORRELATE TO RSPK.

BUT EVEN GIVEN ALL OF THIS, THERE WAS SOMETHING REALLY OFF ABOUT HER, SOMETHING THAT MADE ME KEEP MY DISTANCE, KNOWING FULL WELL THAT HER BIZARRE PSYCHE AND PERSONALITY MIGHT RAISE UP ITS UGLY HEAD TO CREATE EVEN GREATER CHAOS THAN SHE WAS ALREADY IN. WHAT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWS IS A SMALL EXAMPLE OF WHAT I'M REFERRING TO. EVEN WHEN VERY YOUNG, SUSAN REALLY BELIEVED THAT SHE WAS A CAULDRON STIRRING, BROOM-RIDING WITCH, WHO COULD CAST SPELLS AND CURSES THROUGH INCANTATIONS ON THOSE WHO DID HER WRONG, CONJURE LOVE POTIONS FOR THOSE SHE FOUND TO BE EMOTIONALLY APPEALING, OR TO SUMMON THE MINIONS OF THE DEVIL HIMSELF TO HELP HER SEEK REVENGE. THE ONLY CRAFT SHE LEARNED OVER TIME, WAS THE ONE THAT STARTED WITH NAME "WITCH", IF YOU GET MY DRIFT. TO ME, EVEN AS A TEENAGER, SUCH BIZARRE RITUALS WERE BETTER LEFT TO ROGER CORMAN HORROR MOVIES THAN IN MY REALITY. TO ME, SUSAN WAS INDEED "A COUPLE FRIES SHORT OF A HAPPY MEAL".

SO WHEN SUSAN REMINDED ME OF WHO SHE WAS, I WAS NOT TOTALLY SHOCKED TO LEARN THAT SHE HAD ALREADY BEEN TWICE MARRIED AND DIVORCED BY THE TIME SHE WAS 28 YEARS

OLD. BUT GIVEN THAT I KNEW HOW UNUSUAL SHE WAS, THAT DIDN'T COME AS ANY REAL SURPRISE TO ME. BUT WHAT I DIDN'T EXPECT WAS HOW SUSAN TRANSITIONED FROM HETEROSEXUAL ORIENTATION TO HOMOSEXUAL, WHERE ONLY WOMEN NOW CAUGHT AND HELD HER EYE, HEART AND MIND.

THE RESULT OF ALL THIS WAS THE THREE WOMEN LIVING IN A LOVE STEW IF YOU WILL, WHERE THEY SHUNNED MEN IN FAVOR OF EACH OTHER, BUT THERE WAS A STRONG SENSE OF COMPETITION BETWEEN THE OTHER WOMEN FOR SUSAN'S ATTENTION, AS SHE STOOD OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB AROUND THE TALLER, SLIGHTLY OLDER AND DARKER-HAIRED WOMEN.

THERE WERE STRONG FEELINGS OF ENVY HERE, AS SUSAN WAS FAR MORE ATTRACTIVE IN EVERY WAY THAN THE OTHER WOMEN LIVING WITH HER WERE. THEY WEREN'T UGLY IN ANY SENSE OF THE WORD, BUT COMPARED TO SUSAN'S LEVEL OF BEAUTY, THEY WERE ANYTHING BUT EYE-CATCHING. MAKING HER EVEN MORE APPEALING TO THEM WAS THE FACT THAT SUSAN HAD NEVER BEEN MEDICALLY DIAGNOSED AS HAVING ANY SERIOUS PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER (OTHER THAN BEING A HISTRIONIC HYPOCHONDRIAC, OR WHAT WOULD BE LABELED TODAY AS HISTRIONIC PERSONALITY DISORDER [HPD]), BUT SHE WASN'T FORMALLY DIAGNOSED WITH SUCH, IT WAS IN PLAIN SIGHT FOR EVERYONE TO SEE), WHILE THE OTHER TWO HAD. IN FACT, ONE OF THEM WAS DIAGNOSED AS A PARANOID SCHIZOPHRENIC AND THEY BOTH HAD WHAT'S NOW REFERRED TO AS INTERMITTENT EXPLOSIVE DISORDER. ALTHOUGH SUSAN KNEW THAT SHE WAS EPILEPTIC, WE DID NOT KNOW IF SHE INFORMED HER ROOMMATES OF HER DISABILITY, AND EVEN IF SHE HAD DONE SO, WE NEVER QUESTIONED ANYONE REGARDING SUCH MATTERS SO LONG AGO.

BUT MAKING MATTERS EVEN MORE PROBLEMATIC IS THAT THE OTHER TWO WOMEN LIVING WITH SUSAN HAD TO BE REGULARLY MEDICATED AND TRANQUILIZED, AS THEY'D BOTH BEEN DIAGNOSED AS BIPOLAR, ONCE



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CALLED MANIC-DEPRESSION, AND WITHOUT SUCH MEDICATION, THEY TURNED EXTREMELY IRRITABLE AND VIOLENT. I DARED NOT EVEN ASK HOW SUSAN CAME TO MEET AND HOOK UP WITH THESE MOST UNUSUAL LADIES, WHO HAD ALSO CLAIMED TO HAVE HAD LONG HISTORIES OF PARANORMAL ENCOUNTERS SIMILAR TO WHAT WAS CURRENTLY GOING ON AROUND THEM, WHILE SUSAN HAD PRECOGNITIVE AND CLAIRVOYANT EXPERIENCES WITH OCCASIONAL RSPK OUTBREAKS. BUT AS THE OTHER TWO WOMEN WERE FAR LESS OPEN TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR PAST THAN SUSAN WAS, THERE ISN'T MUCH MORE DETAIL TO ADD ABOUT THEM HERE.

THE REASON SUSAN HAD CALLED THE LAB WAS BECAUSE OF THE GROWING NUMBER OF POLTERGEIST TYPE EVENTS TRANSPIRING AROUND HER AND HER TWO LOVERS. EVERYTHING FROM BLOOD DRIPPING FROM THE SHOWER HEAD IN SUSAN'S BATHROOM AND THE FIREPLACE IN THE LIVING ROOM, SOAP BEING THROWN AT THE OTHER TWO GIRLS, BOOKS REPEATEDLY AND SINGULARLY FLYING OFF SHELVES, SHOES BEING THROWN AT THEM, FEELING AS IF SOMEONE WAS PATTING ON THEIR BUTTOCKS, CROTCH AND BREASTS, TO SUSAN'S GUITAR BEING VIOLENTLY TORN FROM HER GRASP AS SHE PLAYED IT AND THEN GENTLY LOWERED ONTO THE FLOOR. DOORS WERE OPENED AND THEN VIOLENTLY SLAMMED SHUT ON THEIR OWN, AND VARIOUS FAUCETS IN THE HOUSE KEPT TURNING THEMSELVES ON, ALONG WITH TOILETS FLUSHING THEMSELVES, DISEMBODIED FOOTSTEPS AND THE SOUND OF KEYS Jangling TOGETHER. THERE WERE ALSO NUMEROUS OCCASIONS WHERE STRANGE, LUMINOUS FOGS THAT WERE VISUALLY OBSERVED AND ACTUALLY PHOTOGRAPHED (UNFORTUNATELY, THESE PHOTOS CANNOT BE DISPLAYED HERE FOR FEAR OF PLACING THE TWO OTHER WOMEN IN JEOPARDY). YET ALL OF THIS IS REALLY QUITE COMMON AS FAR AS POLTERGEIST OUTBREAKS WERE CONCERNED.

AND AS IT TURNED OUT, ACCORDING TO SUSAN, THE LAST OWNER/TENANT, ALSO A FEMALE, HAD EXPERIENCED SIMILAR PHENOMENA WHILE LIVING THERE FOR SEVEN YEARS. IF THERE ONLY

HAD BEEN THE SMALL, PORTABLE INSTRUMENTS THAT WE USE TODAY, AS I'D BE WILLING TO BET THERE WAS EITHER GEOMAGNETIC OR ELECTROMAGNETIC ANOMALIES ASSOCIATED WITH THAT PROPERTY THAT TRIGGERED SUCH RECURRING PSYCHOKINETIC EVENTS. BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THEY WOULDN'T EXIST FOR SEVERAL MORE DECADES.

FOR THE MOST PART, THESE EVENTS GENERALLY SEEMED TO BE CENTERED AROUND SUSAN, THOUGH THE OTHER GIRLS WERE CLEARLY HAVING THEIR OWN ENCOUNTERS AS WELL. THESE EVENTS BECAME SO COMMON THAT THEY WERE ACCEPTED AS NORMAL, EXCEPT WHEN THEY TOOK ON VISUAL LUMINOUS ANOMALIES THAT APPEARED IN NUMEROUS PHOTOS TAKEN WITHIN THE HOUSE. AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE HALLWAY CONNECTING THE BEDROOMS A GLOWING MIST WAS SEEN, A LARGE, LUMINOUS "CLAW" IN FRONT OF WHERE SUSAN AND ONE HER ROOMMATES WERE OPENING CHRISTMAS PRESENTS, TO A HORRIFIC PHOTONIC NOOSE THAT APPEARED OVER THE HEAD OF ONE OF THE OTHERS GIRLS WHILE SHE OPENED HER CHRISTMAS PRESENT, IT JUST KEPT OCCURRING.

THERE WAS A PHOTO OF SUSAN IN WHICH A LUMINOUS ANOMALY APPEARED IN FRONT OF HER AS SHE WAS OPENING HER CHRISTMAS GIFTS. THESE MOST INTERESTING IMAGES WERE NOT SEEN, ONLY PHOTOGRAPHED BY A 35 MM. CAMERA.

GIVEN ALL THE ATTENTION SUSAN WAS NOW GETTING FROM ME AND MY COLLEAGUES, THE OTHER TWO WOMEN FELT THAT THEY WERE IGNORED AND LEFT OUT OF EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY WHEN SUSAN AND I FINALLY BECAME CLOSER FRIENDS. PREDICTABLY, THIS SERVED TO DEMONSTRABLY CHANGE THE NATURE OF THE PSYCHOKINETIC EVENTS.

SUSAN BEGAN ATTENDING MY PSI DEVELOPMENT GROUP AT UCLA (SEE "LEARNED PSI: TRAINING TO BE PSYCHIC", ON MY WEBSITE), BUT AS SHE FELT VERY UNCOMFORTABLE WITHIN THE SENSORY DEPRIVED ENVIRONMENT OF IT, SHE ONLY PARTICIPATED ONCE OR TWICE.

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SUSAN ALSO ACCOMPANIED ME TO SEVERAL OTHER INVESTIGATIONS (HOLLY MONT CASE, ELSEWHERE ON MY WEBSITE AS "THE HOLLY MONT HAUNTING: AS GOOD AS IT GETS") AND LECTURES I GAVE DURING THAT PERIOD. IN FACT, IT WAS SUSAN WHO ARRANGED FOR ME TO SPEAK BEFORE A GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS KNOWN AS CALIFORNIA'S ASSOCIATION OF LICENSED INVESTIGATORS (CALI) (PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS, P.I.'S., NOT PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS) IN BEVERLY HILLS, AS SHE KNEW THE FOUNDER OF THE ORGANIZATION. THE REASON I WAS ASKED TO SPEAK BEFORE THEM WAS THAT SUSAN TOLD THE HEAD OF GROUP ABOUT THE WORK WE HAD DONE FOR VARIOUS LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES OVER THE YEARS LOOKING FOR MISSING PEOPLE AND ATTEMPTING TO ASSIST LAW ENFORCEMENT IN SOLVING OPEN CASES.

WHILE IT CERTAINLY WAS INTERESTING GETTING TO KNOW SUSAN IN A WAY I NEVER REALLY DID WHEN YOUNGER, OUR SPENDING SO MUCH TIME TOGETHER STARTED IRRITATING THE TWO WOMAN SHE LIVED WITH, AS THEY BECAME JEALOUS. IN FACT, THERE WAS A FEEBLE ATTEMPT WHERE IT APPEARED AS IF SUSAN WANTED TO START A REAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ME, BUT THE ONGOING SEXUAL TENSION WITHIN HER HOME WAS FAR TOO GREAT FOR HER TO ENDURE, AS WAS HER SMOKING FOR ME. SHE HAD BEEN IN POOR HEALTH MOST OF HER YOUNG LIFE AND YET SMOKED ABOUT 3-4 PACKS OF CIGARETTES A DAY TO BOOT. I REPEATEDLY TOLD HER THAT I DO NOT ALLOW SMOKING IN MY CAR, NOR WOULD I EVEN DATE A WOMAN WHO SMOKED AT ALL, AS I DIDN'T WANT THAT NOXIOUS ODOR ANYWHERE NEAR ME. I ALSO TOLD SUSAN THAT I SENSED THAT SHE HAD AN ENLARGED HEART, AND THAT SMOKING WAS PERHAPS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS COULD DO TO HER BODY. SUSAN DIDN'T SEEM TO BELIEVE ME OR CARE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

THE TWO WOMEN LIVING WITH SUSAN WERE BECOMING MORE AND MORE UNCOMFORTABLE AT THE NOTION OF SUSAN AND I DOING ANYTHING TOGETHER, EVEN TALKING ON THE

PHONE. AS THESE EMOTIONS BUILT TO A CRITICAL LEVEL, THE PSYCHODYNAMICS WITHIN THE HOUSE TOTALLY CHANGED IN THE MOST NEGATIVE OF WAYS. THE RSPK EVENTS SEEMED TO BE NOW FOCUSED ONLY ON SUSAN, BUT NOW STARTED TAKING ON A BELLIGERENT TONE, WHERE HER GUITAR WAS NOT ONLY PULLED FROM HER GRIP AS IT WAS BEFORE, BUT IT NOW HIT THE WALL WITH SUCH FORCE THAT IT WAS SHATTERED IN MANY PIECES, AND SUSAN BEGAN FEELING SOMETHING PAINFULLY SCRATCHING HER BREASTS, BUTT AND CROTCH AREAS, WHILE FLYING SHOES WERE NOW ACTUALLY STRIKING HER AS OPPOSED TO JUST BEING OBSERVED FROM A DISTANCE. THE MOTIVES BEHIND THIS CHANGE WERE SOMEWHAT OBVIOUS, ALBEIT AT AN SUBCONSCIOUS LEVEL, AND THE TENSIONS GREW WITHIN THEIR HOME.

DURING A SÉANCE AT SUSAN'S HOME AROUND THIS TIME, SOME REALLY INCREDIBLE EVENTS OCCURRED. SO STRANGE WERE THEY, THAT EVEN TODAY, I CANNOT EVEN GUESS AS TO HOW THEY OCCURRED AND WHAT THEY MIGHT HAVE REPRESENTED.

THE FIRST THING WAS THAT SUSAN DROPPED OFF INTO A TRANCE OF SORTS WHERE HER DIMINUTIVE BODY STARTING DOING THINGS THAT DIDN'T MAKE ANY SENSE, NOT IN THE MID-1970'S, OR NOW. ONE OF HER HANDS BECAME SO HOT THAT IT ACTUALLY FELT LIKE FIRE WHEN TOUCHED. AT THE SAME TIME, HER OTHER HAND BECAME SO COLD, THAT IT TOO BURNED, AS IF MADE OF DRY ICE, BUT A BURN RELATED TO EXTREME COLD VERSUS HEAT. WHAT THE HELL WAS THIS?

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.

AS IF HER BODY SIMULTANEOUSLY DEMONSTRATING EXTREMELY EXOTHERMIC AND ENDOTHERMIC REACTIONS WASN'T SUFFICIENT, CAME THE NEXT LEVEL OF HIGH STRANGENESS. STILL DEEP IN A TRANCE, WATER BEGAN FLOWING OUT OF SUSAN'S NOSTRILS LIKE A HIGH PRESSURE HOSE WAS ATTACHED TO HER EARS AND MOUTH. WE COLLECTED SAMPLES OF



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THIS BIOLOGICAL WATER AND IT PROVED TO BE ANYTHING BUT NORMAL. IN FACT, IT PROVED TO BE PURE WATER, NOT SALINE, BUT FRESH WATER.

NOW THE PROBLEM WITH THIS OCCURRENCE IS THAT FRESH WATER DOES NOT EXIST WITHIN THE HUMAN BODY, ONLY SALINE.

SO WHERE DID THE WATER COME FROM?

WE MAY NEVER KNOW.

THEN ONE OF THE OTHER GIRL'S DROPPED INTO A TRANCE OF SORTS WHERE SHE BEGAN SCREAMING AT THE TOP OF HER LUNGS IN A NON-EXISTENT LANGUAGE, THAT NO ONE'S EVER HEARD BEFORE. SO WAS THIS MORE EVIDENCE THAT THIS OTHER WOMAN WAS ALSO SEVERELY DISTURBED OR WAS SHE SIMPLY ATTEMPTING TO DISTRACT OUR ATTENTION AWAY FROM SUSAN? AS SHE WAS QUITE STOIC OTHERWISE AND REFRAINED FROM RESPONDING TO OUR QUESTIONS WHEN SHE CAME OUT OF IT, WE'LL NEVER KNOW.

NOT LONG THEREAFTER, SUSAN AND HER ROMANTIC ROOMMATES SPLIT UP AND WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS, WHERE THEIR WHEREABOUTS WERE WAS UNKNOWN TO ME.

ANOTHER TEN YEARS PASSED BEFORE I AGAIN HEARD FROM SUSAN, WHERE SHE HAD ALREADY BEEN MARRIED TWO MORE TIMES, DIVORCED ONCE MORE, AND HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION WITH HER NEW HUSBAND AS WELL. BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY FOR SUSAN, THE POLTERGEIST ACTIVITY CEASED ONCE SHE AND HER ROOMMATES EACH WENT IN THEIR OWN DIRECTIONS.

MORE YEARS PASSED AND SUSAN GOT DIVORCED AGAIN, AND WAS THEN WITH A NEW MAN WHO WOULD SOON BECOME HER NEXT HUSBAND, WHICH I PREDICTED, EVEN TO WHERE THEY WOULD END UP LIVING OUTF-STATE. AFTER THAT, THERE WAS A VERY LONG SILENCE, WHERE SUSAN ONCE AGAIN VANISHED IN THE OUTER REALMS OF REALITY.

THERE IS THEN A NEWS BLACKOUT FROM HER UNTIL THE SPRING OF 2008, WHERE SUSAN AGAIN CONTACTED ME TO INFORM ME SAYING SHE HAD GOTTEN DIVORCED AGAIN AND WAS NOW LIVING IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA WITH ANOTHER FRIEND, BUT A MALE ONE, NOT A FEMALE ONE, BUT IT AS ALL PLATONIC. AT THIS POINT, WHO CARES.

I ALSO LEARNED THAT MY DIAGNOSIS OF HER LONG AGO WAS VERY ACCURATE, AS HER ENLARGED HEART STARTING FAILING TO THE POINT TO WHERE SHE REQUIRED A BI-VENTRICULAR PACEMAKER AND VALVE REPLACEMENT DUE TO THE ABUSE THAT HEAVY SMOKING TOOK UPON HER SMALL AND DELICATE FRAME.

THIS WAS JUST AFTER THE TIME WHEN SUSAN FINALLY DISCOVERED WHO HER BIOLOGICAL PARENTS WERE AS HER REAL FATHER TRACKED HER DOWN AND BROUGHT ALL THE LEGAL PROOF NEEDED TO DEMONSTRATED WHO HE WAS AND WHO SUSAN'S FAMOUS MOTHER WAS, BUT SHE HAD DIED MANY YEARS EARLIER. SHE ALSO WONDERED IF THIS WAS WHY SHE COULD NEVER STAY WITH ONE MAN FOR A VERY LONG TIME, AS HER MOTHER WAS EXACTLY THE SAME. WHO KNOWS?

SUSAN WAS IN TOTAL SHOCK, EVEN THOUGH SHE KNEW SHE WAS ADOPTED, SHE HAD NO IDEA AS TO WHO GAVE BIRTH TO HER AND WHY HER PARENTS WENT TO SUCH GREAT LENGTHS TO COVER IT UP.

SUSAN DID HER OWN DUE DILIGENCE AND WAS ABLE TO VERIFY AND CONFIRM EVERYTHING HER FATHER HAD TOLD HER.

THEN SUSAN ABRUPTLY MOVED AGAIN, BUT TO GOD KNOWS WHERE THIS TIME, WITH NO FORWARDING ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER, AND GIVEN HOW PSYCHOSOMATIC SUSAN WAS EVEN BEFORE HER HEALTH REALLY TURNED SOUTH, THE STRESS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS LAST MOVE MIGHT HAVE FINISHED HER.

HOPEFULLY NOT.

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NOW WHAT MAKES THIS CASE UNIQUE, IS THE RATHER EXTRAORDINARY HERITAGE SUSAN HAD, WHICH IF FULLY REVEALED, WOULD SEND SHOCK WAVES THROUGH CERTAIN ARISTOCRATIC PARTS OF OUR WESTERN CULTURE, WHICH MAKES ONE WONDER IF THERE IS A GENETIC PREDISPOSITION TO ANY OF THESE OCCURRENCES. AND AS THE OTHER TWO WOMEN HAD PRIOR, SOLITARY RSPK INCIDENTS IN THEIR LIVES BEFORE LIVING WITH SUSAN, WE MUST CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS WHOLE MATTER WAS THE RESULT OF A CONFLUENCE OCCURRING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME, WHERE ALL THREE OF THESE YOUNG LADIES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT OCCURRED SOME FORTY YEARS AGO.

HAD WE ONLY HAD THE HIGH-END, PORTABLE, EMF SENSORS WE CURRENT USE AND ARMED WITH KNOWING WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK REGARDING NEUROPHYSIOLOGICAL HEALTH ASPECTS, THIS CASE MIGHT HAVE MADE HISTORY IN MANY WAYS.

"THIS CASE  
MIGHT  
HAVE MADE  
HISTORY IN  
MANY  
WAYS"





CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CONSISTING OF SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DISCIPLINE OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY SERVING BOTH ATLANTIC CANADA AND THE NEW ENGLAND AREA OF THE UNITED STATES. CAPRI IS DEDICATED TO SERVING THE PUBLIC BY CONDUCTING ETHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS, CONTRIBUTING RESEARCH TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, AND DISSEMINATING FACT BASED EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION.

# in this issue



DR. JAMES HOURAN IS THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *THE JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION* AND SERVES ON THE EDITORIAL BOARDS FOR BOTH *THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH* AND *THE AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY*. HE IS A 25-YEAR VETERAN IN APPLIED PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH RESEARCH INTERESTS IN THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF GHOSTS, HAUNTS AND POLTERGEISTS.



DR. DARRYL WALSH IS THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *PARASCIENTIFICA*, *PRESIDENT OF GHOST PROJECT CANADA*, AND CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER FOR THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION. PROCLAIMED "CANADA'S GHOST HUNTER" BY THE OTTAWA CITIZEN, HE HAS TAUGHT PARAPSYCHOLOGY AT THE NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, HOSTED HIS OWN PARANORMAL TELEVISION SHOW, AND HAS PUBLISHED FOUR PARANORMAL BOOKS.



DR. ELLIOTT VAN DUSEN IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH & INVESTIGATION AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF GHOST PROJECT CANADA. AFTER SERVING CANADA FOR 15 YEARS IN THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE, HE RETIRED AS A CORPORAL. HE HAS APPEARED IN MULTIPLE PARANORMAL TELEVISION SHOWS AND CURRENTLY HAS THREE PUBLISHED BOOKS.



CARMEL CLARK (IN MEMORIAM) GRADUATED IN INTEGRATIVE COUNSELLING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY, ENGLAND, IN 2004. SHE WAS A CERTIFIED FULL MEMBER OF EMDR CANADA AND EMDR INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION WORKING IN PRIVATE PRACTICE. SHE HAD A SPECIAL INTEREST IN TRAUMA, INCLUDING COMPLEX PTSD AND PARANORMAL TRAUMA.



DR. BARRY TAFF HOLDS A DOCTORATE DEGREE IN PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGY WITH A MINOR IN BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING FROM UCLA. FROM 1969-1978, HE WORKED AT UCLA'S FORMER PARAPSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY. DURING HIS 53-YEAR CAREER, DR. TAFF HAS INVESTIGATED MORE THAN 4,800 CASES OF GHOSTS, HAUNTINGS, POLTERGEISTS AND CONDUCTED EXTENSIVE STUDIES IN TELEPATHY AND PRECOGNITION.

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