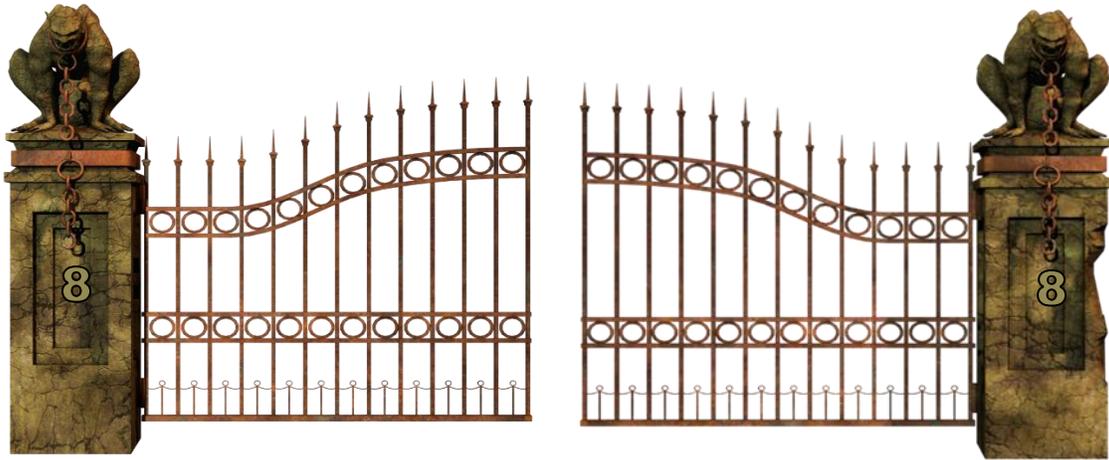


THE 8th GATE



"Ignotum per ignotius, Obscurum per obscurius -"
"The Unknown by still the unknown, the Obscure by still the more obscure -"



Welcome to the 8th Gate. This gate is the archetypal representation of where mundane reality and the inter-dimensional realms between life and death collide creating experiences that are unworldly. The essence is Scorpionic resonating with human and spiritual transcendence. The stories and information presented here are true accounts of real experiences. Names and places have been identified to the extent allowed by the contributors. Personal photos have been reprinted with permission. **SELECTIONS: True Tales: *Rock-a-bye Baby, Battle, SPOOKS, PSI Lab and Classroom, Phantom Writing and Imaging, Parastrology, Supernatural Hall of Fame.***

TRUE TALES



ROCK-A-BYE BABY

Are some people more attuned to the nether world and lost spirits? Is it because they believe that such things really do exist?

John Charles is a believer. He has had his share of spirit encounters for nearly 72 years. One of his most vivid encounters transpired when he was fifteen years old in 1935. He and his family resided in the house on Fairfield Ave. in Bridgeport, Connecticut for a total of ten years. John was five years old when the family moved into the house. From the very first day of occupancy, the family was serenaded each night just before midnight by a disembodied yet beautifully soulful female voice singing “Rock-A-Bye-Baby.” Since John and his siblings were at such a young and impressionable age, the voice was explained away as the spirit of a former resident who had sadly lost her child. Since the spirit presented no attempts at harm, all in the family grew tolerant of the nightly serenade or simply ignored it.



The basement of the house was strictly used for storage (mostly for gardening equipment) and floral supplies used by John’s father in his florist business. An odd feature of the basement was that it had a swing which hung from the beams which was left behind by one of the former occupants of the house. John and his younger siblings used the swing but it was John who enjoyed it the most and used it more often than the others over the years.

One day, John went down into the basement carrying supplies for his father that needed to be stored. Halfway down the stairs he heard movement and thought perhaps that his father was in the basement moving storage boxes but, it soon occurred to him that the swishing sound he heard accompanied by the low creaking sound of the beams was actually the swing in motion. When John reached the bottom of the stairs he fully expected to see his younger brother fooling around but, what he saw stopped him dead in his tracks.

On the swing sat a young boy about the age of five. He wore brown knickers and a buttoned up white shirt and brown shoes. His hair was brown and his eyes appeared to be hazel. He was expressionless and merely sat there swinging to and fro oblivious of John's presence. John's rational mind quickly kicked in and his first thought was that it was one of the neighborhood children but, several seconds later, he realized that there were no children on the street matching the description of the boy. Furthermore, there was no way the child could have accessed the basement from the outside since the outside basement doors were always kept locked because of his father's strict rules about safety regarding garden equipment. John's mother and siblings were home and surely would have noticed the boy had he come into the house from the upstairs level. John was frozen on the spot for several minutes while the boy continued to swing back and forth ever oblivious to anyone or anything else in the environment.

When John's psychological fight/flight response finally took hold he dropped the garden supplies and bolted up the stairs to find his mother. Breathlessly he told his mother about the boy on the swing and although she thought he might be playing a trick she went into the basement to investigate. There was no sign of the boy to be found and the only evidence of the entire episode was a slight rocking of the swing as if someone had just gotten off it. John's mother told him to finish storing the supplies and to stay upstairs for the rest of the day. John obliged his mother but noticed by her expression that she had something on her mind. It was almost as if she knew something but had no intentions of talking about it. Later that evening after John's father came home and the children were sent to bed, he could hear his mother and father talking in low voices in the kitchen about how they intended to handle the matter.

A few days later the parish priest came out to the house. The children were told to go and play outside while the priest blessed the house. John, feeling he was old enough to hear what was being said, decided to eavesdrop a bit under an open window. He caught bits and pieces of conversation - the term 'full-fledged manifestation' and his mother lamenting, "The poor woman... it is such a terrible thing to be pre-deceased by a child..."

Later that evening, the family settled in - all expecting to get a good night's sleep without the lullaby but that was not the case. Right on schedule, just before midnight, the concert began and resonated throughout the second floor. What could usually be ignored now caused anxiety because the family felt that the priest's blessing would dispense the supernatural serenade. There was some worry that perhaps the blessing might have stirred up a stronger paranormal current and more manifestation but nothing else occurred.

John continued to see the boy on the swing on occasion. His mother finally relented and told him what she knew about the sad songstress and the little boy. They were mother and child and both had died of consumption. The boy was an only child and was doted on by his mother who had made him her reason for living. The swing had been mounted in the basement so the boy could enjoy himself even when the weather didn't permit going outdoors. The boy died before his mother which devastated her and added to her deteriorating health. After his death she would sit in his bedroom cradling his toys and singing him the lullaby until she passed on. Eventually John and his family moved out of the house and an acquaintance of the family took residence. Nothing more was ever said about ghostly songs or about activity in the basement.

What might paranormal specialists conclude about these events? Spirits or specters will often appear to the living when they resonate with them on an energetic level. Each can literally "see" and sometimes "hear" the other. In some cases such as this, the spirits make their audio and visual presence known possibly because they need help crossing over. The blessing of the house was not enough to stir them and encourage them into the shift and in some regards because they were not malevolent, might have made them feel more comfortable in their current state.

BATTLE

Join this author as she relives one of the most horrifying nights of her life...

I don't know how I get myself into these things. All alone, dead of night somewhere in Virginia, off the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is pitch black outside and now the damn dog wants to go whiz. "I'm not leaving the safe confines of this house. You can find a piece of newspaper!"

Since arriving five days ago, I've been ill at ease. We volunteered my dog and I, to pack up my in-laws house since our only remaining parent took her leave. She bowed out gracefully after a short four day fight against the West Nile Virus. The house and twenty-five acres are finally going up for sale.

I've been traveling to this homestead for twenty years now. It's in my blood, a part of me that will always be here. All of us knew without ever saying, there dwells an entity inside this house. It probably lived on this land long before our family came here. There is an old home site just down the valley, near the spring. Nothing left but a few foundation stones. An old family cemetery sits up on the highest hill, some tombstones date back to the 1700's. This land has a long human history. Happy and healthy or sick and tragic, we don't know. Nonetheless, we know this land was theirs and they don't let us forget it.

Up on the high pasture you can see for miles. Best view on the mountain. We lovingly call it "the North 40". Our ranch style house sits about a mile from there on a lower hill. No trees within a tenth of a mile; it's surrounded by beautiful, lush pasture. There's not a marred view from any window. For many years we gathered for family holidays and vacations. Always aware that down the hall between the last two bedrooms the Entity stood guard, watching and waiting. For what, we were not sure.

We were no threat, yet we felt we were uninvited and forever intruding. It dared you to walk down the hall. It knew we could feel its menacing presence. Massive shoulders, arms crossed. Feet spread the width of the hall, nearly as tall as the ceiling. Other than brow-beating us, we were generally left physically unmolested...that is until the week our father passed, some eight years before now.



I always slept in the last room on the right. I never entered that room without feeling I was being watched. The night after we buried our Father, I was drawn toward consciousness from a deep sleep. There was a growing pain from the back of my throat. Coldness became evident when saliva dripped from the side of my tongue onto my cheek. It was at that split second I realized the pain was from my tongue, which was being pulled out of my open mouth. My jaw and lips were not in any way touching my tongue. My own hands were underneath the covers. I knew exactly who and what was responsible for this. My eyes ripped open to a pitch black room. At the same instant drawing in my tongue and slapping my hand over my mouth. Sheer terror bolted through me. I knew I must reach out to turn on the lamp, horrified I would touch something not of this world.

The light was all I could think of. I felt whatever had played this game would not dare remain in the light. I hoped and prayed this would be the case. Summoning everything I had, which was All Fear, I shot my arm out fumbling for the lamp.

Finally, the switch turned in slow motion and the light flash flooded the room. Blinded, I dared not close my eyes until I was certain I was alone. The darkness was gone and so was the Entity.

You would think after that I would never stay in this house again. But no... I had to volunteer. The dog and I have packed for days it seems. As I wander from room to room, moving boxes to the back, I notice the dog never comes down the hall. I know what she is sensing and I sense it too. The entire back portion of the house was guarded by this Specter. The only rooms it never presented itself were the living room, dining room and kitchen, "the Heart of the House". On the eve of my last night here alone I was granted an unexpected visit. And it changed me forever.

In the silence of the mountain, night fell quickly and hard. At 3:00 every afternoon preparation is made to ensure my warmth and safety. Groceries were stocked long before then. Wood must be hauled from the woodshed and stacked by the door. I became damn good at starting a fire from scratch. Keeping a roaring fire going all night long is a must up here, power outage is common and a January storm was coming over the mountain tonight.

The fireplace is the source of Energy that makes these rooms the heart of the house. It is built from large, heavy fieldstone pulled from the very land surrounding it. A double-sided hearth, it is so massively heavy, it had to be laid on virgin soil under the house foundation. Soil to chimney, it stands some twenty feet in height. Inside the house I can walk all the way around it, being eight feet deep from hearth to hearth and twelve feet wide. The children loved to play hide and seek; round and round they would run and laugh.

Later that evening, I had finished packing for the night and was talking to my sister from Atlanta on the phone. The wind picked up and it began to rain. I could hear tiny ice pellets tinkle lightly on the eight foot picture windows. I noticed my dog (all six pounds of her) looking straight up at the ceiling next to the fireplace as she began to bark. Odd, but dogs can be at times. It was then I felt a new energy move swiftly into the rooms surrounding the fireplace.

I knew instantly Angels had just entered directly opposite the house from where the Entity brooded. Not meekly did they enter, but with real fanfare, signaling their presence. And we all knew without a doubt they were God sent and with loving intent. The dog continued to bark, wagging her tail with great vigor and happiness. She licked the air as the Angels came down to pet her little furry head. Then I knew for sure I had made no mistake when the dog stopped dead still and

cocked her head to one side. The Angels had vanished, but only for an instant. As quickly as they had left, they reappeared on the other side of the fireplace, beginning a delightful game of hide and seek with the little dog. Back and forth, barking then not, round and round they played. Amazed and terrified at the same time, my nerves had given it up. It was just too much to take in after spending the entire week fending off that thing down the hall. Even the dog felt it. I snatched her up, hushed her quiet and placed her in the safety of her crate by the fireplace. She made not a peep the remainder of the night.

I gathered my wits, what was left, and walked back into the kitchen, still talking to my sister (thank goodness for sisters). I thought all was quiet once again... I thought wrong. As I stood there facing the dining room I felt the angel's presence in front of me, calm and loving. Then it happened... I physically felt the angel reach out and stroke the back of my hair, head and shoulder. I knew the angel meant no harm. Love, caring and protection was translated to me in that instant.

Let me tell you, there is no word to describe my terror. If it had not been for the ice storm I would have run screaming into the darkness outside, dog under my arm, car keys in one hand and the phone ripped from the wall.

Manic with fright, even knowing the Angels were protecting me, all I could do was shut down. Sleep was going to be my only escape this night. Digging in a box I snagged the largest, softest comforter in the house. Wrapping up like a burrito and flopping on the couch, I covered up from head to toe with extra blanket overflowing to the floor. We slept by the roaring fireplace, my dog and I, while the Angels kept watch and protected us. I awoke several times to the sound and vibration of the house being shaken from the roof down to the very foundation. It was like a child banging a wooden block on the table, once then two or three bangs at a time. At every occurrence I was reassured, gently comforted that all was well. We were protected, safe and loved. To this day I cannot imagine what forces were doing battle on that mountain and in that house.

At first light all was dead silent, inside and out. I packed and made an orderly but hasty retreat back into civilization. If the house shaking was from the ice storm, there was little to no evidence of it. I could not escape the fact that there was but a thin layer of ice on the house. Not one shingle missing from the roof, no debris from Mother Nature down the long drive way. In twenty years, I had never heard or felt any storm on the mountain create such structural shaking as I experienced my last night in that house.

My dog and I shared an event not easily recounted, rarely believed and not known by the mountain community in which the house sits. On cold, rainy nights we sit by the little fireplace in my house, my dog, the comforter and I, so grateful for the company of angels and sisters. Thank you Angels of Mercy! That recounts the last night in my beloved family home. We sold the property a few months later. In the four years since that time the house has been sold three more times.

True account submitted with permission by Brenda Staab.

SPOOKS!

What's being attracted to your domain?

In the field of Astrology, the occult or water houses 4, 8 and 12 refer to the cycle of life, death and rebirth and they also refer to barriers that are broken down when human specters or entities enter the plane of the living. The 4th house concerns the circumstances surrounding death, the 8th house concerns the actual demise, and the 12th house concerns circumstances regarding a soul's afterlife other dimensional experience. When a soul or spirit does not pass through the Gate of Death in the 8th house and onward towards either a pleasant or hostile afterlife, it remains earthbound and chooses a location or several locations to occupy. This is when problems can occur and some professional paranormal help is needed. Paranormal investigators, researchers, and demonologists fall under the rulership of the 8th house but individuals who are gifted in helping spirits "move on" fall under the rulership of the 12th house. Paranormal counselors who help families or individuals with any crisis concerning a haunting in the home fall under the rulership of the 4th house. Often times, these people are "naturals" when dealing with trauma concerning all facets of death. During a paranormal event the 8th and 12th houses are often triggered simultaneously. An example of this is as séance that goes awry or a poltergeist attack.

Is there truly an energetic essence that is released when we die? Is this a photo of the Soul in flight? This old black and white photo was taken in 1907 by French neurologist Hippolyte Baraduc. The photo is of his dying wife as she gave her three final gasps of life. Baraduc harbored a fascination for psychic research and

believed he had caught his wife's spiritual energy on film. He called it "vital current."



In winter of 1998, a small group of an Atlanta college aged students gathered together at the home of a friend who lived nearby. When they arrived at the friend's home, they found him to be acting rather strangely and extremely nervous bordering on manic. He told them he had been experimenting with spells and decided to see if could conjure up "something from the other side." He claimed that the experiment worked and that he had actually videotaped a "devil" which made its entrance from the closet in his bedroom. The friends were skeptical until they viewed the video which despite the fact that it had been filmed in the darkened bedroom, clearly showed a satyr like being with horns and cloven hooves emerge from the closet and then disappear. To this day they believe the video while "unexplained" to be absolutely authentic and very scary having left a profound psychological effect on their friend.

Later that spring, the same group of young people decided to visit a local graveyard after midnight. Their visit got out of hand and while "chugging a few brews" they began challenging spirits to come out and play.

One young man took a dare from one of the group and decided to lie down on one of the graves. Nothing unusual seemed to happen until the next day when the young man began experiencing strange occurrences in his bedroom in the middle of the night which constituted poltergeist activity. Books and personal objects flew off a dresser while the young man lie frozen in bed praying for relief. The activity diminished and ceased after a week.

(Names have been eliminated per request for anonymity.)



Artistic rendition of the devil from the closet.

The media is full of shows and entertainment involving the paranormal encompassing everything from real life situations to legends. In a nutshell everything supernatural has become rather chic. These para-tales whether they are televised or retold to us by friends and relatives based upon their personal experiences engage and enthrall us and for the most part scare the daylights out of us. There are real ghost hunters, researchers, psychics and demonologists out there doing real work. But just how dangerous can some of these real life situations play out once we depart from the glamour and hype of television and why are we so attracted to those things that go bump in the night?

In *Shadow World - True Encounters with Beings from the Darkside*, paranormal author and investigator Brad Steiger says, "Accounts of ghostly manifestations, regardless of how terrifying they may be, demonstrate that life exists in more than one dimension of reality... and that there is some aspect of the human mind-body-soul construct that survives physical death."¹ Another consideration is that human beings are ever seeking proof that good can conquer evil in certain paranormal situations that occur. But - just how safe is it to cross the boundaries of the shadowy realms in such situations? Are those individuals who are brave enough to confront the Darkside protected from physical and mental harm?

John Holbrook, an Atlanta based paranormal expert, has been involved in paranormal investigation for over twenty years. His experiences with the supernatural have been numerous and varied dating back to his early childhood. Even though John prefers a scientific approach to investigation his dealings with energies and entities have often times been far from pleasant. The following is an account of some of John's personal experiences:

"In the first few years I started out conducting paranormal investigations I had some experiences that shaped my theories and beliefs. The first one was linked to a location that had always held my interest. It was near my house (about 8 miles) and it was an old cemetery that was called the Witch's Graveyard. From my understanding it was called this because of a couple of graves on the outside of the cemetery that were believed to be the graves of witches. There were also graves of slaves on the outside of the cemetery all buried in unconsecrated ground. The cemetery had a well-defined boundary and had not been used in many years at the time I was investigating during the late 70s early 80s.

During one of my visits to the cemetery I planned to take a friend to see what she thought about the area. My friend had begged me to take her the next time I went to the cemetery so I finally relented. Unknown to me until the day of the trip, she invited two additional people that I had never met. My friend had an understanding that anytime one is dealing with the supernatural all involved need to be in the right frame of mind and properly protected. So I drove the four of us to the cemetery on a Saturday afternoon in my S10 Blazer and we parked on a road that was across the railroad tracks from the cemetery. We spent three or four hours at the location split into teams - I and my friend together and the other two people together. We did not have any experiences at the cemetery except for an uneasy feeling when we were leaving.

The experiences did not start until we were all in my vehicle. The first thing that happened was as we closed the last door of the Blazer the door of the glove box fell off. It did not open - it just fell straight down for no reason. It was not broken and was easily put back in its place. I thought that someone may have been messing with my vehicle so I got out and checked the tracks around the vehicle and could only find our tracks. I got back in the Blazer and had a hard time getting it to start. It would not crank even though I had at least a half a tank of gas and the starter was working correctly. Before the battery started to get weak, the car finally did crank and ran like there was no problem at all. I took everyone home without turning off the engine until I got home just in case there was some other problem. I checked my Blazer thoroughly from top to bottom and did not find anything that

was wrong with it that would cause it not to start. I also opened the door and slammed it several times trying to get the glove box door to fall off again with no success.

The next day, I took my film to get it developed at the local photo booth. My friend called me up every day until I got my pictures back. She was sure that I had captured something on film because she was having weird dreams. She also told me that her friends had called her to tell her that they were having strange issues with their own car. I had not captured anything on the pictures that I had taken but after talking to my friend I knew that something was up with one or both of her friends. My friend said that her friend's car issue had stopped but that there other issues she wanted me to check on with her.

As we arrived at her friend's house I did not have a good feeling about it and after I was inside I knew why. The inside of the house 'felt' to me as belonging to someone who practiced dark arts or witchcraft. I did not draw this judgment based upon the books they had or all the different occult items they had all over the house but from the lack of anything that would be considered 'light.' The only thing that I could see in the house that was light was the walls and they were more a gray. All the candles that I saw were black or red and the upholstery and curtains were dark tones. It was a very dark and gloomy house and the dark feeling I had when I was outside the house was getting worse. We only stayed thirty minutes or so before we left which was none too soon for me.

My friend talked with them several times on the phone and they continued to have different problems, but I was not sure if it was residual from the graveyard visit or because of the energy in their house. I did have other friends that had visited the Witch's Graveyard without me who had no car problems or any other issues. I never knew for sure if the problems I had with my car were because of something that was trying to cause a problem from the graveyard site or if it was being generated by these two people that I did not know. The fact is that when I and my friend went to the site we protected ourselves and were not trying to conjure anything up... we were just taking pictures and respected the graves. I am to this day not sure about the intentions of the two other people on the site. This experience back in my early days taught me on a small scale that things can go wrong on an investigation and that they can have a residual effect.

I have always protected myself whenever I go on an investigation and there was once that I think that I was protected from going on an investigation. The story begins with an investigation that was planned for a Saturday afternoon that was

several hours away by location. I did not set up the investigation but was invited to take part in the investigation by another paranormal investigator. The background story that I was told was that the site used to be a plantation that housed many slaves most of who were killed on the property during the Civil War. The investigator who invited me to assist on the investigation also said that the client was being very pesky about having the location investigated.

We made all the arrangements to meet at a local restaurant that was on the way to the investigation site. We had planned to meet up there and all ride in the same car to the site. I was the farthest one away from the meeting place and the site of the investigation and was going to have to leave at 10 am to get to the meeting place by 12 pm. So I set my alarm for 8 am and had all my equipment ready and in my vehicle before bed. I went to bed early because it was going to be a long day and I did not think that I would be home before 2 or 3 am.

It was around 6 am when I was awakened with the need to go to the bathroom and after I finished I went back to bed. Then at 7 am I was suddenly awakened feeling very sick. It was hard to sit up or even get to the bathroom. So for the next three hours I was so sick that I decided that I was not going to be able to go on the investigation. I called the investigator and cancelled and went back to bed. Then around 12 pm I woke up feeling really good like I had not been sick at all, no ill effects or fever. I knew that I could not get to the meeting point as I did not have the directions to the site of the investigation. I did not have any clue to why I had been so sick and then was suddenly feeling better. I did some work around the house, I had my meals and felt really good, now when I say I felt really good that includes not feeling depressed or guilty about missing out on the investigation. I was also in a very upbeat mood. On Sunday I contacted the investigator and was invited to look over photos taken on the site. I was also told that it was a 'really weird place' and that everyone who was on the team agreed on the way home that the place gave them the creeps.

The very next Saturday I met up with the team and they all had some interesting pictures - lots of orbs some of which were red. I did look at all the pictures and listened to each person's story of the investigation (most of the people that went on the investigation were hobby hunters and were not very objective). So when the rest of the group left, I sat down with the lead investigator and went over the pictures while asking questions. I noticed that most of the orbs were dust but there were some shadows that were out of place. From what I could tell the orbs that were red were from the redevye light that some cameras have or from a laser thermometer that they were using to take temperature readings. Then I saw

something that caught my eye - there were red spots on some of the pictures that were taken outside/outdoors. The lead investigator took several pictures that had these spots. They were not orbs and always appeared in twos. I asked questions about the area outside and could find no natural or manmade reason for the red dots. The investigator did not even notice the dots until I pointed them out. There were other pictures of the same area taken at a different time and the dots were not evident.

The lead investigator said that the lady (client) that had originally contacted her was calling her every day for information asking when the team would come back out to the site. We discussed the psychology of the lady and decided that she was not mentally 'stable' and that it would not be a good idea to go back out there. The lead investigator received a call from the lady before I left and I did hear the lead investigator say that she would send a copy of the pictures but that the team would not be coming back out to the site. The lead investigator had a hard time getting off the phone and said the lady did go a little 'psycho.' We called it a night and I went home.

The next day the investigator called me and said that she had a tough night with bad dreams about the lady and that lady had called an additional two times. I advised the investigator to tell the lady that if necessary a harassment complaint would be filed if she did not quit calling the agency. The investigator said that she did ask the lady if she had seen the red dots before. She said that the lady got upset again and then asked who in the group had seen them. The investigator advised her that she had shown me the pictures but that I had not visited the site. The lady wanted to talk to me but the investigator advised her that she was the contact person for the group and it would not be OK to call me.

That night after we had talked, I had some bad dreams about the area that I had seen in the pictures. The red dots were not dots but eyes and they followed me everywhere I went and I felt very threatened. I awoke from the dream with the feeling that someone was in my room at the foot of my bed. I tried to turn and look to see who it was but I could not move - I could move my eyes but I could not move my body. Then I felt a pressure like something was on top of me trying to push me through the bed. I could not speak but I was still breathing and could only scream in my mind. The pressure changed from holding me down - it seemed to get colder and smaller and was trying to get inside me. I could tell that I could not stop this by myself; it was like I could tell by the way it was starting to feel that my willpower was not enough. Just my telling it to stop was not going to work so I started to pray and ask for Divine help.

As soon as I started doing this, the feeling of cold stopped and turned into a feeling of pressure and then it was off me and I could move again. I sat up looking around my room and could see a shadow that was in the corner of the room where there was nothing to make the shadow. So I continued to pray and called for it to leave and to never return but now that I could move I said it out loud. I got out of bed and again in prayer demanded it to leave and never return. Then the shadow just faded away and the feeling in the room became more angelic. I turned on some light and looked at the clock and it was 3:05 am,* so I then got out my sage and smudged the room before I went back to bed. I did not turn off all the lights and did not go to sleep right away. I did not wake up till late morning feeling sore and drained. I called the lead investigator later that day to see how the team was doing; they said that they all had a tough night with nightmares. I told them of my experience and said they should do a clearing also just like I was going to do and that any equipment that they had used on the site should be cleared also. I did my clearing and did not have any other problems but the lead investigator had many different problems even after the clearing. I think that they were still having problems because the lady from the site continued to call the investigator.

Sometime later that year, I was talking to one of my personal spiritual mentors about the incident. My mentor believed that one of my guides or Angels kept me from going on the investigation because of what was there. My mentor thought that there were evil entities on the site and that because of the nature of the clearings that I had to do that it would have been bad to have gone there with the team. It would have caused more problems than actually happened and that the investigator's problems continued because of the contact with the lady. After talking with my mentor and doing some reading I came to believe that my mystery illness that morning before the investigation was to keep me at home. So my guides or Angel were trying to protect me from whatever was out at the site. It was my own continued involvement in the investigation after the fact that caused the attack. It is important to have protection when dealing with the supernatural and it is important to remember that the paranormal is not always 'Casper the friendly ghost' but something that may want to cause harm."

*Note: 3:00 am - 4:00 am is considered 'The Devil's Hour' or 'Dead Time' by some paranormal investigators and is believed to be a time when paranormal activity and occurrence is at its height.

What about other circumstances such as a séance where many things can go awry? Just how protected are those who are participating in the communion with the dead? In the early 1940's a stage magician by the name of Johnny Reno was in the

process of conducting a séance with a small group of several friends. Johnny was known to be quite psychic and no one was really sure just how much he dabbled with the dark side. All participants sat around the table holding hands firmly. The lights were quite dim when the proceedings began but there was enough light that the two participants holding Johnny's hands could see and feel his hands clasp their hands. As soon as Johnny began calling in the spirits the group all heard a loud slap and those close to Johnny saw his head get whipped to one side. The séance was immediately stopped and the lights turned on by one of the participants who was not holding Johnny's hands. A large red handprint was clearly visible on Johnny's face. To this day there remains no explanation except that "something was very angry." The situation was most disconcerting to those in attendance since all of them knew that a human spirit is not capable of causing great harm. Entities of a different make-up however are quite a different story.

¹ Steiger, Brad. *Shadow World - True Encounters with Beings from the Darkside*. New York: Anomalist Books, 2000. 8.



PSI LAB

Almost everyone has had an occasion when something unexplained has shown up in a photograph. Some photo manifestations are in full form showing up as specter images of people and animals. On other occasions strange smoke-like streams or light filled orbs invade the canvas. The annals of specter photography have several famous photographs of these ghostly images. Some of the other photo images become hard to prove one way or the other because of the lack of photo technology during the era the photos were taken.

Contemporary paranormal experts have more technology available to them to detect fraud or to simply discern the differences between real specters and accidental or explainable image invasion. The following photo gallery includes several different examples of real spirit photography and others that have been explained as having common cause interference.



This is an old portrait of the then recently widowed Mary Todd Lincoln taken by well-known psychic photographer William Mumler of Boston in late 1865. It has been reported that Mrs. Lincoln visited Mumler “incognito” for personal reasons. It shows a very recognizable image of President Lincoln standing behind her with his hands on her shoulders. In his lifetime, there were attempts to discredit Mumler but all investigations failed to prove any fraud.



This is one of the famous Cottingley Fairy photos with Elsie Wright and a supposed gnome. The famous photos were taken with a Midg quarter plate camera. Photographic experts who examined the photos and the negatives could find no evidence of fraud at the time.

Photographs of Elsie Wright and her cousin Frances Griffiths who captured the fairies on film in July - August 1917 and again in 1920. In a BBC-TV interview in

1971 neither Elsie nor Frances would admit fabrication preferring to leave the matter “open” but in 1982 they both admitted the first four photos were fakes.



At a party for this young lady a smoke-like coil appeared in two consecutive frames. Upon scrutiny and further paranormal testing and polarization courtesy of Holbrook PSI, (a filtering process that allows one to see more depth in a photograph and helps in disqualifying particles on a camera lens (water or dust etc.) and any other situations that are connected to reflective surfaces such as window glass). The strange coil was identified as a random hair in the developing solution used by the photo lab. The hair follicle structure was also identified by an experienced hairdresser.



Orbs are a common manifestation that occur in or around paranormal events. An orb is not considered hard evidence of a haunting but is useful in the building of a case study. The large circled object on the left is a true orb but the small circled object on the right is a light reflection. Photo courtesy of Holbrook PSI.





They're here! Several orbs appeared on the TV in the top photo and the question was whether they were light reflections on the screen or something more substantial. PSI lab techniques including find edge filtering, solarization and hue saturation adjustment showed that the orbs were inside of the screen and not an outside reflection.

CLASSROOM

"ORBS ... ORBS EVERYWHERE BUT IS IT PARANORMAL?"
Courtesy of Rev. John Holbrook Founder & CEO of HOLBROOK PSI

Over the years during most of my investigations I've had orbs appear in my photos and video. Does this mean that every place I have investigated was haunted? No ... not for the most part. Does an orb in a photo constitute a ghost or spirit? No. A true orb is just a form of energy that is captured on a media (like film or digital) and may or may not be part of the haunting. The first orb that I captured was on a 35mm camera when I was first starting out doing investigations. We did not have digital cameras or digital camcorders. All the media we used was tape. Most of the orb pictures were caused by the flash and a reflective surface, some were not.

When first started learning the ins and outs of investigations and how to use the equipment, I found that it was easy to get orb pictures. That is to say that I thought that I was getting good evidence with my pictures when I was not. You see, dust,

pollen and insects sometimes appear as orbs in pictures. This is because they are reflecting the flash and that is all you are seeing on the picture (the reflection of the flash not what it was reflected off of).

Even when I had orbs in my pictures that seemed to be real orbs I did not automatically jump to any conclusions that a place was haunted. This is because I wanted more evidence to prove to myself and if needed to others that a haunting was occurring. This is some of my police background coming out - evidence is the key but your use and interpretation of it is the door.

The more evidence you have the better chance you have to opening the right door to the truth.

Now with digital cameras, you can load your pictures on to your computer and really take a very close look at them. You can see that some orbs are not paranormal or supernatural at all.

When you look at photo "I", the tree pollen, you can see orbs everywhere. This is clearly dust and pollen in the air that was captured on film. Also in this picture some of the orbs are the stars in the sky.

Picture "II" is a digital picture of Maple pollen. This picture is from one of the university's digital libraries on pollen that I look at for matches. In this picture the pollen is illuminated from the rear so that you can see the detail and characteristics of the pollen.

As you can see in Picture "III" (taken by Donna Overall) there are several orbs that appear in the picture.

The orb that is close to the fence is the moon and was the reason for taking the photo. The most prominent orb is in front of the pine tree and has the look of pollen or maybe dust.

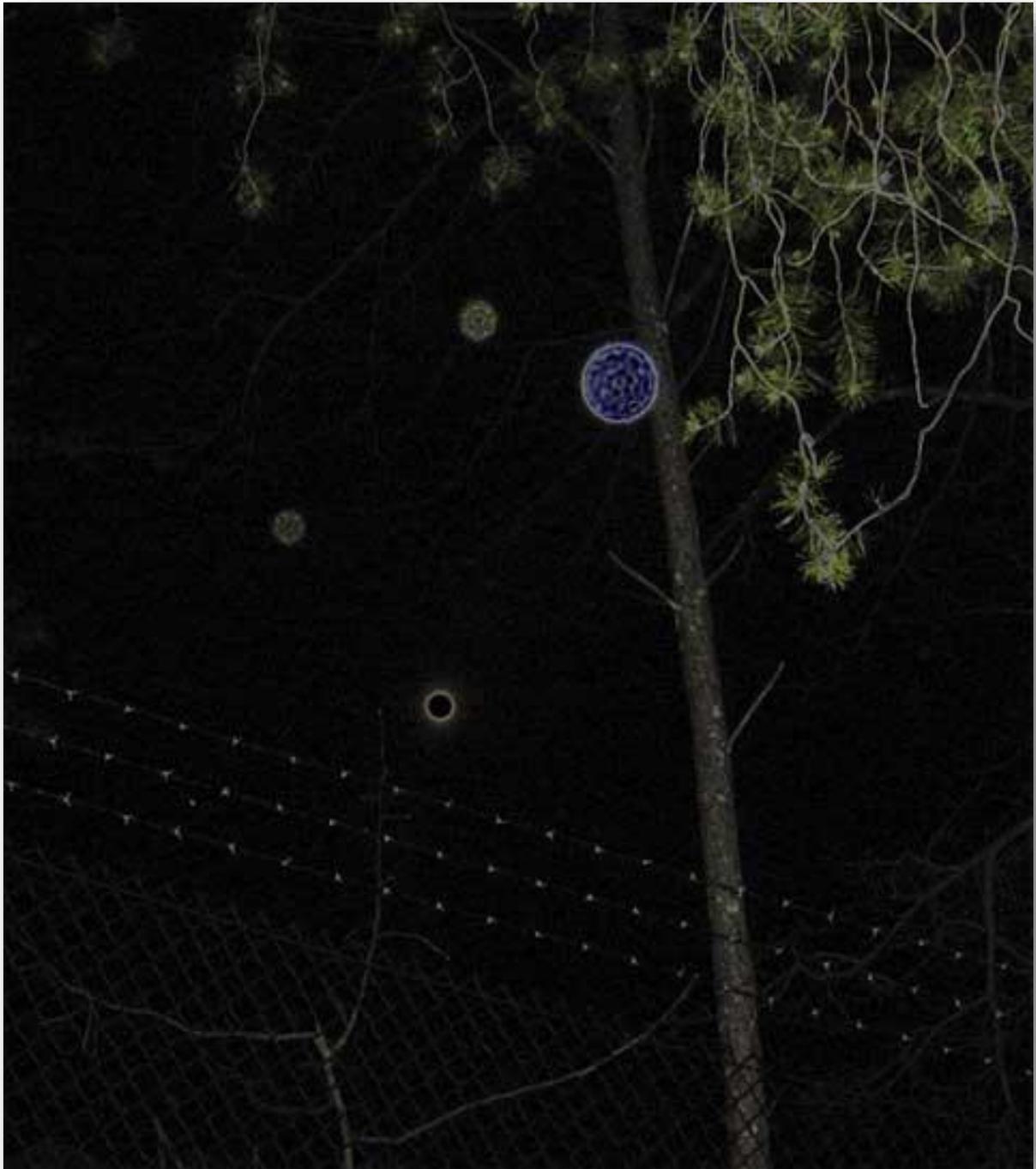
I believe it has the look of dust or pollen because of the similar patterns that are occurring in the orb.

You can see a similar pattern in the picture of Maple pollen (Picture II). I know that it is not a perfect match, but the similarity is there none - the -less.





Let's look at the same photo after it has been solarized. In the picture below, the moon is totally black with just a ring of light and the orb in the picture is spotted or textured. The moon is not reflecting the light of the flash so it is solid black. The orb is not a star or a light in the tree because it would be solid like the moon. You can see the pattern on the orb a little clearer now and you can tell that it is definitely between the camera and the tree. You can see that it is a reflective object that is not interacting with the tree or a part of the tree. So what are all the things that I am looking at in this picture to make my analysis of whether it is supernatural or natural? The way the light reacts with the object and the look of the object is one part of the analysis. The way you look at orb pictures is to determine what exists naturally or is a reflection, so you have to look at many pictures to get the hang of how to discern what is real.



Pictures like the next one can help you see how dust looks. See the orb in the top left, the pattern is the similar as in picture "III". The quality of the picture and the amount of orbs solarizing this picture doesn't help to determine



If it is natural or supernatural. Looking at the consistency and the fact that the person that took the picture said that it was dust helps to know if it is natural not supernatural. I'd like to say that anything caught in a picture is an anomaly or an orb. An orb is round and an anomaly is anything else. "Orb" and "anomaly" are working terms I use until I discern if it is supernatural or natural. I may not always be right but with my experience and by not jumping on the "everything is supernatural" bandwagon I have been able to gain a discerning eye.

Below is a picture of an orb that I captured on my digital camera while practicing with the camera. Right next to it is the same picture that has been solarized; you can see that the reflective part of the orb is near the edge.



If it was the other way around it could be a small insect. So is this supernatural or natural? I feel that it is supernatural but it is not related to a haunting. Just because an orb appeared in this picture, it doesn't indicate evidence of a haunting. This orb could be a nature spirit like a fairy or a sprite or any of the other supernatural beings that inhabit the world around us.

Some would say that all of the supernatural orbs that appear on a picture are ghosts. But there are other energy beings that could be captured on many types of media. Some orbs can be seen without a flash, they produce their own light. With flashes and night vision cameras it is hard to see if it was illuminated by the flash or by itself.

I've heard stories about people who have seen orbs "in person" without a camera. The orbs that have been seen include ball lightning and static electric discharges on the natural side, ghosts, will-o'-the-wisps, fairies and evil entities. In most of the stories the people know or have an idea of what they are seeing or, after the event have figured out what they saw. They do this by many different means which include research of the event itself and of the location where the event occurred.

Some have an interaction with the orb that gives them insight into what it is... like the feelings they have when they see the orb. Some of the orbs that are seen with the naked eye are called ghost lights or have even been deemed alien.

So, as a paranormal investigator I'd like to say, an orb is an orb and it can be supernatural, natural or alien. It is not just a picture or a video of an orb that constitutes good evidence of a paranormal event or a haunting. You need to get as much evidence as possible including historic and eyewitness information, EVPs, videos, pictures, EMF readings, and any other anomalistic readings you can acquire.

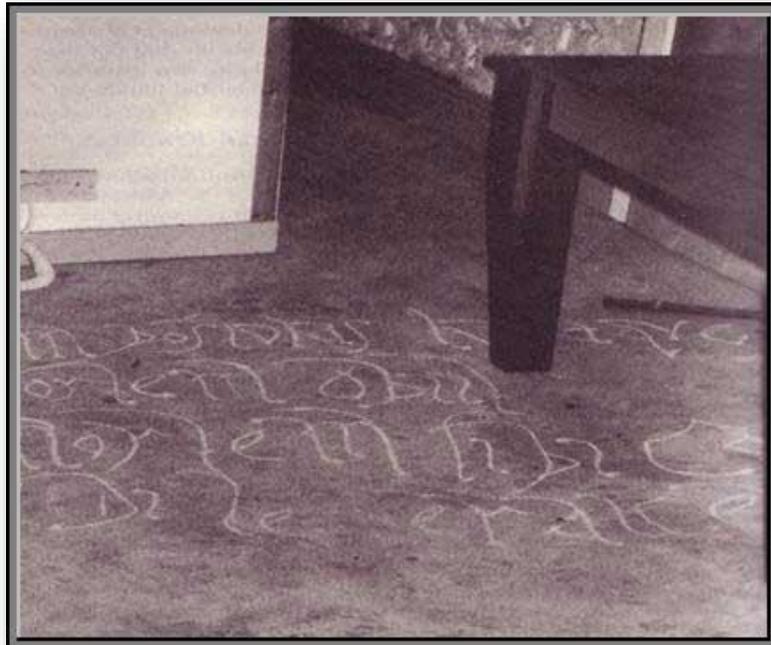
Orbs can be a good part of the evidence that you garner from an investigation if you do not jump to conclusions regarding the nature of the orbs. The only thing that you need to discern is if it is natural or supernatural. So orb are everywhere and they are not all necessarily paranormal.

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PHANTOM WRITERS

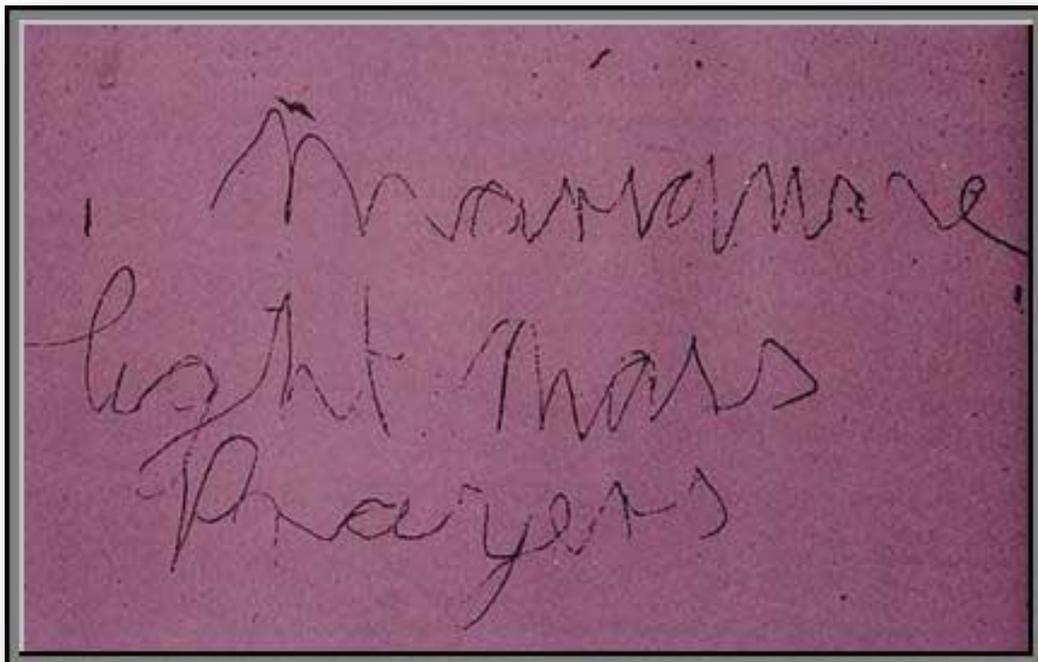
Strange scribbling that appears on walls and floors, pictures and faces imbedded in stone and tile... phantoms use any means possible to display their messages and presence. Here are some fascinating quips...

- Probably the earliest known form of phantom writing is found in Daniel of the Old Testament with reference to the fate of King Belshazzar and his kingdom and Daniel's interpretation of the writing. It states, "At that moment the fingers of a man's hand came forth and were writing in front of the lampstand upon the plaster of the wall of the palace of the king."
- In May of 1985, Ken Webster of Dodleston Chester, UK began receiving messages on his computer from a 16th century man who called himself Tomas Harden. While this could be explained as a prank, the handwriting that appeared on the floor that accompanied these messages is not so easily explained.



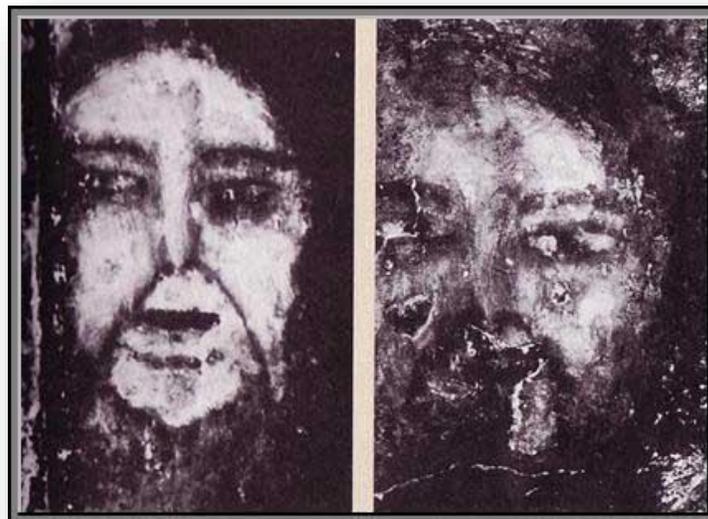
On December 7, 1939 in Owensville, Indiana huge letters stating “Remember Pearl Harbor” were painted on the sidewalk outside of a public elementary school by an unidentified hand. Of course no one knew what this meant until two years later to the exact day when The US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was attacked by the Japanese.

● Until its total destruction by fire in 1939 and concluding demolition in 1944, Borley Rectory was considered the most haunted house in England. Much information is available about Borley Rectory including the 2000 recorded paranormal events that occurred when the rectory was under the investigation (1929 – 1938) by Dr. Harry Price supernatural investigator bar none of his day. Much of the activity seemed to surround Marianne Foyster wife of Reverend Lionel Foyster and their adopted daughter Adelaide. Among the events were ghostly scribbles would appear on the walls as messages apparently left for Marianne. Some of these were allegedly reported as materializing right in front of the eyes of some of Price’s team investigators. Those that were legible read, “Marianne, please get help... light mass prayers.” Although in 2000 an exposé titled We Faked the Ghosts of Borley Rectory by Louis Mayerling reported that Price had been fooled by the Foysters who were in on the prank, some serious phenomena that cannot be explained remain.



● In 1967 a phantom post card correspondent began to plague the then British parliamentary candidate Tevor Silverwood with messages posted from different areas all around the world. The messages always referred to personal information about Silverwood right down to what he had for breakfast on any particular morning to the color of the socks he wore on any particular day and even his daily television viewing habits. After ten years of harassment, Silverwood made a statement to the press complaining about the phantom to which the phantom promptly replied, “Don’t be naughty.” The omniscient author was never found or identified.

● In August 1971 in the village of Bélmez, Spain human faces began to simultaneously appear on the floor tiles of the kitchen of one of the village homes. Despite every scientific test and attempts to wipe out the faces which included ripping up the tiles and replacing the floor with concrete, the faces continued to appear in the kitchen and in other areas of the cottage. After the appearance of a fourth face the cottage was sealed. Ultra-sensitive microphones were placed in the cottage which picked up strange speaking languages and agonizing moans. Shortly thereafter, the faces disappeared as quickly as they had appeared. A section of the floor which had been cut away revealed the remains of a medieval cemetery thought to be connected to witchcraft and it is believed that this was the contributing factor of the phenomena.



Tidbit sources: *Real Ghosts, Restless Spirits, and Haunted Places* by Brad Steiger. *Strange but True* by Thomas Slemen

PARASTROLOGY

Can Astrology validate the paranormal?

Forensic Astrology is a fascinating branch of astrology that deals in specialized detective work. The topics range from criminal investigation including ongoing and unsolved cases, to paranormal probes including hauntings and things such as alien abductions, to queries regarding specific cases involving Quantum physics such as time travel. Of course as with any type of enquiry, the most important single factor is to know where to start looking.

Astrologers who specialize in forensics might use a variety of means, birth charts, event charts, and even location charts or horary charts to discern the truth of a matter.

What astrological forces are at play during a paranormal or supernatural event? The first item to be discerned is the condition of the transiting Moon. Some paranormal investigators often consider the condition of the Moon along with all of their statistical and scientific data when investigating hauntings. The most common astrological conditions that show up regarding the Moon in forensics concern a Full Moon or a Void of Course Moon. Astrologically speaking these are the conditions that represent an undisturbed open channel for energies. The Full Moon in particular represents a time of peak paranormal activity. The Void of course Moon often represents a period when time stands still. The aspects made by the Moon are very important.

The next item is to look for an emphasis on the 1st and 7th houses basically representing the self and others or "me and them" by either heavy planetary load and/or aspects made to those house cusps. This always seems to show up prominently in cases of alien abduction.

The Occult house 4, 8, and 12 are discerned in the same manner. Since the planet Neptune represents intangibles, it too garners a close examination. Depending on the specifics of an event some of the other planets represent other possibilities. For example, if poltergeist activity is suspected one would look for an active Mars and for evil or demonic entities an active Pluto.

ANATOMY OF A HAUNTING

“The Case of the Teacher who Wouldn’t Retire”

On a brisk October morning in 1963, a young woman who was secretary to the Dean of a local college, walked into the front office connected to one of the professor's suites to deliver a message. After taking a few steps into the room, she was stopped dead in her tracks by an intensely musty foul odor. She became immediately aware that the room was unnervingly "silent."

Seemingly out of nowhere, a tall dark-haired woman in a long dress stood before her and raised her arm towards an old music cabinet. She then "faded" away as the young secretary stood in awe. If this wasn't enough of a fright, when the secretary looked out of the office window, it appeared that the campus had reverted to a scene from the early 1900's!

Quite shaken, the secretary ran from the room and confronted the Dean with her experience.

With the help of the Social Sciences Chairman who had been on the faculty since the early 1900's, and through perusal of old yearbooks, the apparition was identified as a music teacher. Her tenure at the college lasted from 1912-1936. Apparently, she was a very dedicated woman because she died in the very office where her apparition was seen, shortly before 9:00 am in 1936.

What cosmic energies might have been at "re-play" in this haunting scenario? In the 1963 Event Chart, the first item to note is that the "restored scene" took place on the day of a Full Moon a time when the energies are opened up for the paranormal. Of the three occult/inter-dimensional houses the 4th, 8th and 12th, there was activity being generated from the 4th (the end of the matter/death) and the 12th (spirits and psychic experiences and disturbances).

The Ascendant was at 7° Scorpio 22' and the angles of the chart were all in Fixed signs. This indicates that the matter was connected to the dead (Scorpio) and would resist any external forces "showing" itself exactly the way it wanted to be seen. Uranus in Virgo in the 10th house exactly sextiles the Ascendant and trines the 7th house cusp indicating an opportunity for an opening up of psychic communication.

The Fixed Star Erakis is conjunct the Moon indicating energy whereby one would be "exposed to a severe trial" and this certainly describes the experience of the secretary. The Moon is seated in the 6th house (the workplace) and is exactly conjunct a retrograde Jupiter both in the sign of Aries (quick paced spiritual endeavors).

In Esoteric forensics, the Moon rules ghosts and apparitions along with the planet Neptune.

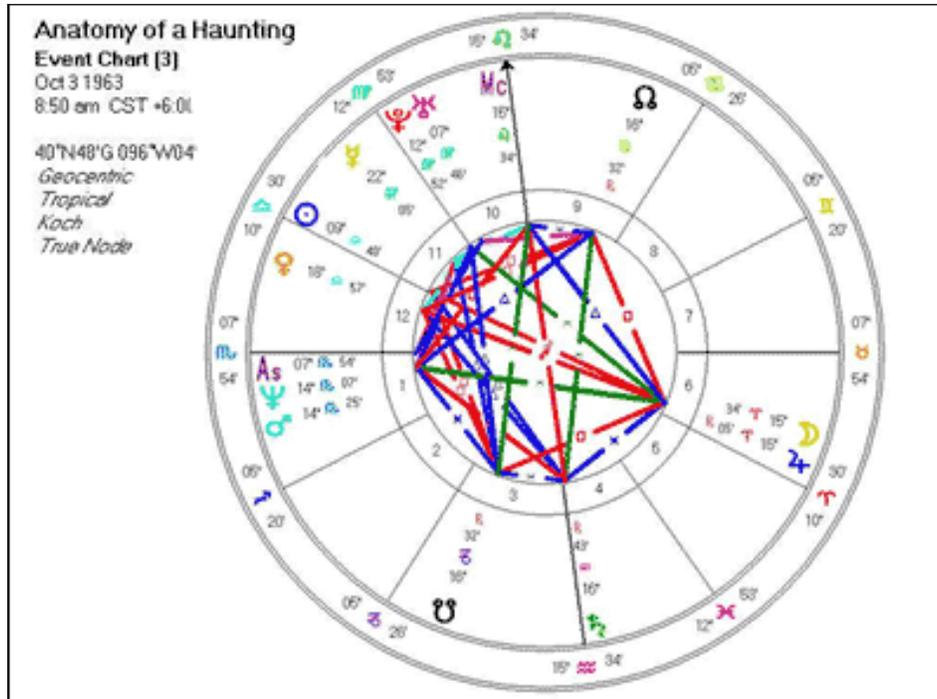
The Moon, the "ruler of the past", makes an applying opposition (awareness) to Venus (females) in the 12th house so it is established that the "entity" is a "woman." The Moon also makes an applying sextile (opportunity) to retrograde Saturn in Aquarius in the 4th house and a quincunx (off timing) to a Mars/Neptune conjunction in Scorpio in the 1st house.

In addition, Saturn, the "ruler of time", is in a separating square to the Mars/Neptune conjunction (difficulties connected to dissipating boundaries) and in an applying trine to Venus (ease in the opening of the structure of time and space).

These aspects indicate that the secretary was "prey" to psychic influences (Moon/Saturn to Mars/Neptune), the viewing of the materialization (Moon/Saturn to Venus), and the inter-dimensional time warp (Saturn/Venus; 4th and 12th houses; Saturn to Neptune).

The 4th house also rules private offices. As the Moon makes the sextile from the 6th house to Saturn in the 4th house a "private office in the workplace" is indicated and as stated previously, the secretary's experience took place in the front office of the professor's suite. Saturn rules "foul" odors and from its position in the 4th house, the "deathly silence."

On a lighter note, it is interesting that the Sabian Symbol for Saturn at 17° Aquarius is "A watchdog standing guard." It is indicative of one who stands and protects the inviolability of his/her experience. It would seem that the music teacher certainly had that in mind when she "appeared" to the secretary!



Rehash of the background of the secretary's ghostly experience was extracted from *Real Ghosts, Restless Spirits, and Haunted Places* by Brad Steiger. Astrological analysis courtesy of STAR LOGIC ASTRODYNAMIICS.

ANATOMY OF A CLOSE ENCOUNTER

"The Strange case of Frederick Valentich"

On October 21, 1978, somewhere over the Bass Strait in Australia, a Cessna 182 light aircraft, piloted by twenty year old Frederick Valentich disappeared never to be seen again. Valentich held an unrestricted flying license and was considered a competent pilot by his colleagues. On this day, his assignment was to fly to King Island midway between Cape Otway, Victoria and Tasmania where he would collect crayfish for the officers' mess of the Air Training Corps.

Valentich took off about 6:19 pm and flew over Cape Otway about 7:00 pm. At around 7:06 pm he contacted ground control at the Melbourne Flight Service asking if there was any known air traffic in his vicinity below 5000 feet since he had spotted a large aircraft at that depth. The Flight Service asked him if he could identify the type of aircraft to which he replied, "I cannot confirm. It has four bright lights that appear to be landing lights ... it has just passed over me at about 1000 feet." Flight Service confirmed that there were no aircraft in the vicinity. At 7:08 Valentich complained that the aircraft was approaching him

from due east and seemed to be, "playing some sort of game." The Flight Service asked Valentich once more if he could identify the aircraft. He replied that the craft was passing him and that, "it has a long shape ... it seems to be stationary ... I'm orbiting and the thing is orbiting on top of me. It has a green light and a sort of metallic light on the outside." At 7:12 pm Valentich told the Flight Service that his engine was rough idling and that the aircraft was on top of him again. He then told Flight Service that his intentions were to proceed to King Island. The only thing Flight Service heard after that was described a long metallic noise after which all communication ceased.

When Valentich failed to arrive at his destination point a visual and radio search began. The Cessna had been equipped with a life jacket and radio survival beacon but nothing could be traced. An RAAF Orion from South Australia continued to track for two days but nothing was found except an oil slick north of King Island. In interviews several days later, Valentich's father stated that his son believed in UFOs and claimed that his son had been, "borrowed by interplanetary visitors."

What really happened to Frederick Valentich? Did he crash into the sea after he collided with a UFO? Was he abducted? Did he perpetrate a hoax?

Some felt that this was no hoax based on the fact that Valentich lived for his professional reputation as a pilot and would never ever have done anything that would affect his chances for promotion. Other experienced pilots came to the fore stating that it should be noted that there was six minutes of recorded conversation between Valentich and the Flight Service mentioning strange lights at several intervals.

The overview of the chart shows energies focused on the 'self' and 'others' via a Bowl pattern with all of the planets spread from the 2nd house to the 8th house. Four of the planets are concentrated in the 7th house (others) with the planetoid Chiron in the 1st house (self). Weight or drama concerning the 1st and 7th houses is a signature often found in cases of alien contact and abduction. There is a Fixed Grand Cross configuration consisting of Chiron Rx, Jupiter, Mercury and the Midheaven indicating a course of action that is virtually unstoppable. A T-Square consisting of a Mercury/Chiron Rx opposition squared by Jupiter (conjunct the cusp of the 4th house of endings and beginnings) with energies gravitating from the 1st to 7th out through the 3rd house focuses on bodily crisis, activated consciousness and "checking out." Another consideration is the Uranus/Chiron opposition. This aspect occurred numerous times between 1951

through 1988 and is often found in the charts of incidents involving airplanes and airplane accidents.

An important factor in discerning a case of this type is to examine any paranormal or 'otherworldly' circumstances surrounding the Moon. The Moon serves as an additional source of identity in a chart. It represents how one feels about one seeks and finds in life. The conditions akin to the Moon alter beliefs, ideals and passions.

In this chart the Moon rests at 28°Gemini 39' in the 2nd house. According to astrologer Ada Muir in her reference guide "The Degrees of the Zodiac Analyzed", the Moon at this degree and sign refers to, "one who cooperates with the invisible forces knowing that all these things are possible." Very important is the fact that the Moon is Void of Course - ready to change signs and making no aspects. When the Moon is Void of Course, it is believed that conditions are ripe for paranormal events that defy logic among them time rifts, openings to parallel planes, and unexplained disappearances.

There are three Fixed Stars conjunct the Moon, Betelgeuse, Menkalinan, and Polaris, indicating turbulence, restraint, danger, and violence. The Moon makes one major aspect which is a trine to the Sun in Libra in the 6th house designating a strong human life force poised to expend energy should survival become an issue.

How might the alien interlopers be described and what was their agenda?

A quick look at the seventh house of 'others' tells the tale. The sign on the 7th house cusp is Scorpio which suggests that the aliens were agents on a specific mission. Since there were fifty sighting testimonials by other individuals before and after the Valentich disappearance, consideration must also be given to the proposition that the alien craft engaged the Cessna because the Cessna was viewed as a trespasser and a threat to 'something else' ... something unseen.

There are four planets in this house all occupying the sign of Scorpio: Mercury, Venus Rx, Mars, and Uranus. The latter three form a stellium - a formidable configuration of blended energies designating superiority in aviation. The stellium also indicates that the aliens were androgynous neither male nor female but housing both qualities. Mercury is conjunct Uranus which confers genius attuned to the "Universal Brain" and the ability to communicate telepathically. They exhibited scientific brilliance and were particularly interested in

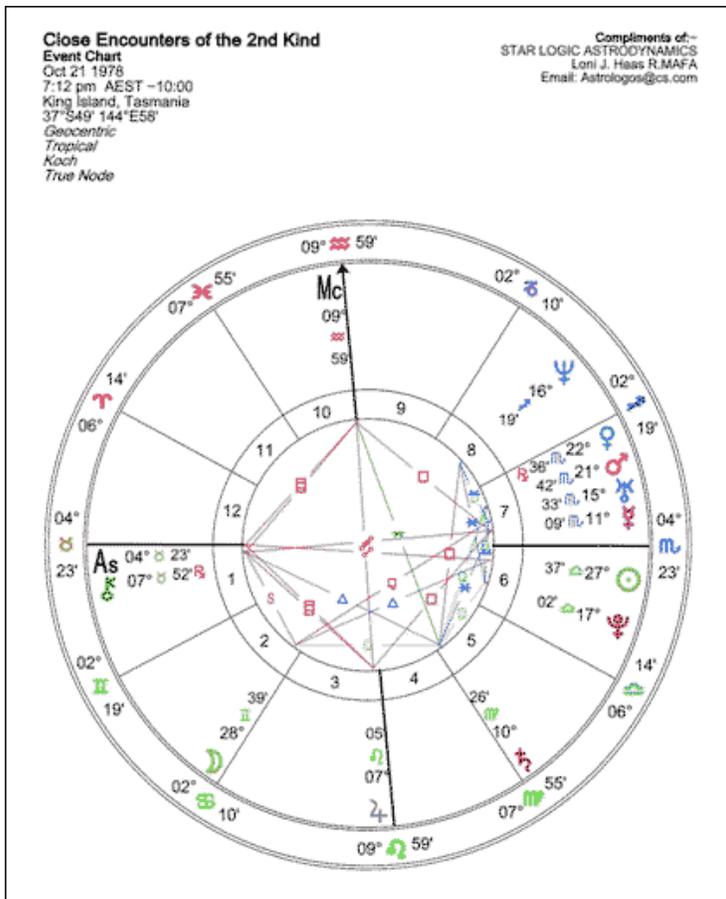
microcosmic forces. They were experimenters who found it necessary to prove everything and understand everything.

Mars conjunct Uranus indicates that they used various forms of mechanical apparatus. They had a keen interest in the human nervous system, the human reproductive system, and in the nature of human creativity. As Mercury and Uranus oppose Chiron in the 1st house, the aliens viewed humans as oddly misshapen or ugly and as housing chaotic energy.

The planet Neptune rules disappearances. In this chart Neptune resides in the 8th house in Sagittarius. Neptune's influence from this house produces extreme sensitivity to and influence from undercurrents in the atmosphere. Neptune is squared by Saturn in Virgo in the 5th house of the Will indicating that Valentich was 'taken over' by something powerful and unsympathetic. It also signals that he was thrust into another dimension giving rise to great anxiety. Since Neptune is exactly conjunct the Vertex point (experiences over which one has no control) by two minutes in the 8th house, he was a victim of bad timing ... in the wrong place at the wrong time. Saturn trines Chiron indicating a gross manipulation by something determined to have its own way. Neptune also sextiles Pluto in Libra in the 6th house indicating that the familiarity with the physical tangible world was dispensed as Valentich was thrust into the infinite reaches of outer space. If he is still alive, he probably exists in an alpha state of consciousness.

To date, Frederick Valentich and his Cessna aircraft have been missing for thirty years. The speculation surrounding his disappearance remains and this documented case continues to be one of the most baffling cases in UFO history.





SUPERNATURAL HALL OF FAME

Read about history's real wizards, seers, channelers, and healers who constitute the Magna cum Laude of Paranormal Society and see what you think!

The Victorian Wizardry of Daniel Dunglas Home



Daniel Dunglas Home (pronounced Hume) was a truly gifted individual. He was born on March 20, 1833 near Edinburgh and was descended on his maternal side from a clan of Highland seers. His gift of second sight began when he was four years old and was characterized by visions of future events of which he could not possibly have any knowledge at his age. He was the eighth child of the Home family and because his family could not afford to feed and clothe yet another child, Daniel was sent to live with an aunt until he was nine years old. His aunt later took him to the United States to be reunited with his family who was living in Connecticut.

By the age of seventeen, Daniel found himself living in an era where spiritualism was ripe. The year was 1850 and the United States was saturated with interest in all things psychic and supernatural for it was the time of the Movement of Modern Spiritualism. People were highly gullible and manic in their desire to connect with spirits from the other side. Fraud and drama by phony seers was also rampant characterized by séances full of moving and levitating furniture, wall rapping and knocking, and in some cases spirit manifestation. Daniel was interested in all of these things not because he wanted to "cash" in but because he possessed real psychic talent and could manifest rapping, knocking, dancing furniture and spirit voices quite naturally. These events greatly disturbed his family and he was turned out into the street. In order to survive, Daniel held

séances like many of his psychic contemporaries. Unlike his contemporaries however, the events were never held where he lived and always took place in the daytime in a well-lit room. Daniel did not need a cloak of darkness to cover

He returned to Britain in 1855 where his supernatural abilities made him the toast of London and he gained many notable admirers including Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Ruskin, William Makepeace Thackeray, Lord Lytton and even Queen Victoria! His abilities now surpassed séances and included levitation, floating from one place to another, manifestation of disembodied hands that dissolved after materialization and bodily elongation... all eye witnessed. For the next nine years Home traveled Europe impressing just about everyone including Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie. He also had an audience with the Pope. Records show that Home married the daughter of a Tsar in 1859 who unfortunately died four years later.

In 1871, Home was investigated by Sir William Crookes an eminent physicist and chemist. Crookes put his reputation on the line to run the experiments since no other scientist of the day wanted to be associated with Home. In fact Crookes suffered great ridicule at the hands of his colleagues after his amazing findings were published. Home passed every test of his telekinetic abilities much to the shock of Crookes who could not believe that Home could use his powers while secured in a closed copper cage under a table. Most notable of these tests was Home's ability to move a spring balance at the end of the room and to play an accordion with seemingly invisible hands. Home went on further to prove his immunity to fire to Crookes by reaching into an open fire and stirring the coals with his bare hands without suffering any ill effects at all. In addition to these abilities Crookes catalogued the following:

- Translocations or apports
- Percussive noises including detonations
- Movement and levitation of furniture
- Levitation of Home himself
- Changes of temperature and current of air
- Movement of articles at a distance
- Change in the weight of objects
- Materializations (Crookes claimed to have retained one of the materialized hands holding onto it until it vaporized)
- Playing tunes on musical instruments without touching them
- Movement of heavy bodies with contact but no pressure
- Writing with disembodied hands visible and invisible

- Phantoms and luminescence
- Manifestation of darting points of light
- Knowledge of people no longer alive and of things of which he had no prior information

Home died in 1886. After his death Sir William said of him, "He was one of the most lovable of men, whose perfect genuineness and uprightness were beyond suspicion." To this day researchers cannot debunk Home's abilities.

Rehash from Strange But True - Mysterious and Bizarre People by Thomas Slemen, Robinson Publishing Ltd., 1998.

The Poet Prophetess - Witch or Wonder?



The time - July 1488. The place - the town of Knaresborough in North Yorkshire, England. The setting - a raging thunderstorm. The event - the birth of the Yorkshire Witch.

The legend: Janet Ursula Southiel was born on this day to Agatha Southiel in the company of several neighbors and the local midwife. All expected a normal birth but shortly after the baby arrived, the tiny newborn smiled and chuckled significantly at all in residence. Witnesses claim that the moment the baby laughed the storm outside immediately ceased and the sun came out from behind the clouds to light up the now clear blue skies. Needless to say the whole event did not sit well with those who experienced it. They immediately labeled the little girl the Devil's Child and ran from the cottage.

Gossip reigned supreme in those days and the maliciousness and non-acceptance of the neighbors drove poor Agatha to a convent leaving baby Janet with a nurse. In an unsuccessful attempt to shield the child from any further harm, the nurse dropped the baby's first name, Janet, and the child became known as Ursula Southiel. When young Ursula entered school she was mercilessly taunted by her

classmates because she had no parents. Ursula retaliated by having her "invisible friend" accost her classmates who experienced punches, bites and pinches. Consequently she was snubbed by everyone at school including the headmaster who made it very clear to her she was not welcome. Ursula spent most of her time alone with only her invisible playmate as a source of company. This situation continued until her early teens when Ursula met a young carpenter named Tobias Shipton. They immediately fell in love and were married. Very soon thereafter they moved to the town of Skipton which was about 35 miles west of York.

While living in Skipton, Ursula discovered that she had psychic abilities and could look into the future. She became fondly known among some as Mother Shipton and adversely as the Yorkshire Sybil or Witch. Her vision was attuned to the politics of the day and she very accurately foresaw the 1513 invasion of France by Henry VIII. She described the defeat as "great shame" for the French which was right on target since history records that the French retreated so fast and so far from the English cavalry that the battle became known as the Battle of the Spurs. Another subject of Ursula's of psychic abilities was Cardinal Wolsey who had fallen into disfavor with King Henry. She referred to Wolsey as the "Mitred Peacock" who would not be able to hide from the King for long and who would never be able to enter the city again. Wolsey sent three spies, the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Darcy, and Lord Percy to the home of the "Yorkshire Witch."

Ursula was unfettered by their visit and was a most gracious hostess feeding them oatcakes and ale. When the Duke of Suffolk asked her if Wolsey would ever see the city again she corrected him about her prediction stating, "No, I said he might see the city but never ENTER it." Offended, the Duke warned her that when Wolsey did finally come back to the city he would see that she was burned at the stake. In a counteraction, Ursula took a linen handkerchief and thrust it into the fireplace on top of a log and said, "If this burns, so shall I." Needless to say, when Ursula lifted the handkerchief out of the fire some 15 minutes later the piece of cloth was untouched by the flames and was just the way it was when she put it in the fire. Now she had the noblemen's undivided attention and they were so impressed that they asked her to tell their futures.

History bears out her words to these men.

- She told the Duke of Suffolk that one day he would be as low as herself, "... a low one indeed." In 1554 The Duke of Suffolk was beheaded for

treason making his fall from grace low indeed not to mention that his severed head lay low on the ground!

- Lord Percy was told that his body would be buried in York but that his head would be. "...stolen from the bar and carried into France." In 1572, Lord Percy was beheaded and his head was impaled on a pole over the Michelgate Bar Gate in York. It was later stolen by a Catholic fanatic and taken to France.
- Lord Darcy was told, "You made a great gun! Go shoot it off, for it will do you no good. You are going to war and you will pain many a man, but you will kill none." Darcy was a soldier and a statesman who was familiar and concerned with artillery. He participated in the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace which was a revolt in Northern England against the tough religious and economic reforms of Henry VIII. Darcy ended up as one of the 230 men who were beheaded because of their part in the uprising.
- Cardinal Wolsey did attempt to travel back to York. About 8 miles outside of the city he was apprehended and arrested. He was charged with high treason and was scheduled to be incarcerated in the Tower of London until his execution. He never made it. He died on the way to the Capital.

Ursula died peacefully in her bed at the age of 73 in 1561. Stories passed down about her relate that she often gave her prophecy in rhyme and that her vision extended far into the future. Here is a passage describing the fate of the World:

"Carriages without horses shall go,
And accidents fill the world with woe.
Around the Earth thoughts shall fly,
In the twinkling of an eye;
The world upside down shall be
And gold found at the root of a tree.
Through the hills man shall ride,
And no horse shall be at his side.
Under water men shall walk,
Shall ride, Shall sleep, Shall even talk.
In the air men shall be seen.
In white, in black, in green;
Iron in the water shall float.
As easily as a wooden boat.
To an end the world shall come,
In the year two thousand and sixty-one."

This is a one account of the life of Ursula Sothiel. Her story has come under much scrutiny and has been debunked in several circles due to the unscrupulousness of her later biographers who added untruths to her story. Still, some of the facts of her life remain and in the end truth will be known.

Rehash, quotes and verse from Strange but True - Mysterious and Bizarre People by Thomas Slemen, Robinson Publishing Ltd., 1998.

The Stroker



When the Greatrakes family of Affane, County Waterford, Ireland was blessed with a baby boy on February 14, 1629, it seemed only fitting to name the child Valentine. Little did they know that the child would grow up to be an amazing healer. His reputation and fame would transverse Europe.

As a child and young man, Valentine did not display any extraordinary talents. At 20, he began a seven year military career as a Parliamentary army officer under Cromwell. After his discharge in 1656 he was awarded a number of political appointments but lost the appointments with the 1660 restoration and the reinstatement of the English monarchy. It wasn't until 1663 at age 34 that Valentine Greatrakes began to experience a series of odd recurrent dreams where he believed he received the "gift of healing" from an omniscient being. This seemed odd to him since he was basically a squeamish man who became nauseous at the sight of disease. These dreams were soon followed by a strong undeniable impulse to begin the physical healing of others. His wife suggested

that he begin his quest by attempting to heal disfigured people and he did with success.

During this point in history, Europe was plagued by Scrofula which is tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands. The disease was commonly known as the "king's evil" and it was generally believed that the touch of a royal hand of a monarch could cure the disease. People flocked from all over the map to be cured of the disease by King Charles I with less than satisfactory results.

In the meantime, Valentine Greatrakes was making a name for himself with successful healings of Scrofula often termed "miraculous cures." He then tried his hand at healing ague a feverish condition characterized by convulsions. Once again his healing hands brought relief and a cure to those afflicted.

In 1665, the Bubonic Plague engulfed London and the Irishman found himself healing the infirmed 12 hours a day several days a week. His home was so overcome with people that he built outhouses to accommodate them. By now his fame had reached far and wide and unfortunately the ears of the ecclesiasts. The "Irish Mesmerist" was called before the bishop's court and he was forbidden to practice his healing methodology. An outraged Greatrakes ignored the ruling and because of his enormous popularity among the laypeople the religious authorities were unable to touch him.

In time Greatrakes earned the name "The Stroker" because of the way he moved his hands in a soothing stroking fashion above the afflicted parts of a patient's body. He was also noted for curing cancer, sciatica, blindness, deafness, and palsy. Even more remarkable was the fact that he never accepted any money for his cures.

London's prominent physicians and academics spoke favorably of Greatrakes and his abilities. He was investigated by the prominent and brilliant Irish physicist of his day, Robert Boyle who proclaimed Greatrakes to be a genuine healer and by others who witnessed his curative miracles.

Valentine Greatrakes withdrew from the public due to baseless but escalating accusations of witchcraft prior to his death at the age of 54 in 1683. No one has ever been able to explain or disprove his great healing talent.

Fantaisie Impromptu



When Londoner Rosemary Brown was seven years old, she was visited by "a spirit with long white hair and a flowing black cassock." He stated that he was a composer who would make her a famous musician one day. Such visions were not uncommon in Rosemary's family for her mother and grandmother were psychic and Rosemary herself displayed psychic abilities at a very early age. It would not be until about 10 years later that Rosemary would identify the man in her vision as Composer Franz Liszt. Still, Rosemary could not make any connection to the vision - she had paid little attention to music during her life and had just as little natural talent for it. She did purchase a second hand piano and took lessons for a year in later life but no spectacular personal musical aptitude or talent emerged.

By 1964, Rosemary was a middle aged widow who had raised two grown children and was living alone in a Victorian house in London. It was during this period of time that Liszt renewed his contact with Rosemary and she began to channel original compositions from great musicians of the past among them Liszt himself, Beethoven, Bach, Rachmaninoff, Chopin, Brahms, and Shubert. Igor Stravinsky appeared to Rosemary shortly after his death and dictated 60 lines of music to her.

Rosemary claimed that despite the different ethnic backgrounds, all of the musicians spoke to her in English although they did have different methods of dictation. Liszt would control her hands at the piano for a few bars at a time allowing her time to write the notes down. Chopin told her the notes and manipulated her fingers on the right keys while Shubert sang his compositions to her. All attempts to debunk Rosemary by trained psychologists and scientists

were unsuccessful AND one thing was very clear - all of the dictated compositions were far beyond her musical capacity and conscious knowledge.

Some great artists she claimed took on different interests in the afterlife such as Debussy who preferred to try his hand at painting. Eventually other historic greats fell into the mix. Rosemary channeled van Gogh who communicated artistic renderings to her, Albert Einstein who patiently explained rather abstract theories to her in order to reconfirm existence on different planes, and philosopher Bertrand Russell who since passing over had reconsidered his atheism and disbelief in life after death.

So where does this information come from? Some psychics believe that it does not come from deceased minds but rather from an individual's receptiveness to the Akashic Records and the Universal consciousness. This might be true but it hardly explains Rosemary Brown's difficulty in keeping up with the other-worldly dictation of musical masterpieces or the ability to turn out paintings and drawings reminiscent of the Masters with an untrained hand.

Rehash and quotes from Strange Stories and Amazing Facts, Reader's Digest Association 1976 and Mysteries of Mind, Space and Time, Vol. 19, H.S. Suttman Inc., Westport, CT. 1992.