

# seriously strange

magazine

## The Human Pendulum

Spirit  
communication  
or Ideomotor  
Response?



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Isle of Wight

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# Updates



## Published in prestigious journal



An article based on ASSAP-funded research and co-written by ASSAP Chairman Dave Wood has been published in prestigious research journal the British Journal of Psychology.

This represents the highest profile journal article in ASSAP's history, with journals like the BJP rarely covering paranormal subjects.

Also co-authoring were Dr Paul Rogers of Goldsmiths, University of London, who has spoken at ASSAP conferences, and Pamela Qualter of the University of Central Lancashire.

The paper was titled: "The impact of event vividness, event severity, and prior paranormal belief on attributions towards a depicted remarkable coincidence experience: Two studies examining the misattribution hypothesis"

ASSAP paid for the printing and recruited participants at Investigator Training Weekends and at organised paranormal investigations. Thanks also go to Norie Miles and Bill Eyre who acted as experimenters in various settings.

The experiment tracked individual levels of paranormal belief and presented scenarios involving apparent prediction of a plane crash, where the vividness of presentation and the severity of the crash were varied. Whilst the results found that severity and vividness did not impact on whether participants felt precognition had taken place, paranormal belief was associated with attributing the plane crash to precognition rather than coincidence.

The experiments took place in 2011. 5 years of peer reviews and rewriting and re-experimenting were needed prior to the BJP clearing it for publication.



## Successful ASSAP Advanced Training Weekend

The ASSAP Advanced Training Weekend - held on 15-16 October in Wiltshire - sold out of tickets and was an outstanding success.

The Saturday comprised a whole day of advanced witness interview training by specialists Mark Davey and Nicky Sewell.

The Sunday was led by Dave Wood and covered the Psychology of Anomalous Experience, getting research value from paranormal investigations and how to organise paranormal groups.

All trainees passed the exam for the National Register of Professional Investigators before the event, and joined the register.

Feedback was very positive on a well attended and well enjoyed weekend



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# Mysteries on The Isle of Wight

President and First Lady's Piece by  
Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe

Over half a century of investigating a wide range of mysteries worldwide has indicated to us that there seems to be a close connection between extreme emotion and reports of strange anomalous phenomena.

Reports from Arreton Manor on the Isle of Wight, harmonise with this general observation. Fifty years ago, there were numerous reports from honest and dependable witnesses that there was something weirdly disquieting about the car park there. It took a brave driver to park there late in the evening. The ghost was described as that of a young woman who had been murdered by her brother. He had pushed her out of an open window and she had been killed when she hit the ground. Could it be argued that his vicious hatred of her was one powerful emotion and her terror as she fell was another?

This combination of fear and hatred are reminiscent of the famous haunting of the Odeon Cinema in Bristol, where the allegedly philandering cinema manager was said to have been shot by the soldier-husband of one of his many exploited lady friends just after the end of WW2. The cuckolded soldier's fury and the errant manager's fear when the husband pointed a gun at him combined to produce the phenomena reported from the cinema.

Carisbrooke Castle has a long and formidable reputation. In medieval times – and even earlier – it was clearly understood that whoever held the castle, held the entire island. There are certainly Saxon remains there. Historians and archaeologists also debate the possibility that there were Roman fortifications at Carisbrooke millennia ago, and that these were preceded by Iron Age earthworks. Whoever first defended the site, Carisbrooke goes a very long way into the Island's past.

What is most clearly seen there today dates from the Eleventh Century – not long after the arrival of William the Conqueror. Apart from its impressive defensive structures, the castle has two wells – one of which is an interesting example of medieval technology: a donkey on

a treadmill hauled up the water.

One spectre that may be thought to haunt the southern approach to the castle is that of the commander of a French assault on the Isle of Wight. The attack floundered and broke when the French leader was killed by an arrow from the bow of Peter de Heyno – the Isle of Wight's equivalent of Robin Hood as far as archery was concerned.

Prior to his beheading, Charles I was imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle. Is it his ghost that has sometimes been reported by sensitive visitors?

His daughter, Elizabeth, was born on December 28th 1635 and died of pneumonia at Carisbrooke Castle aged only fourteen on September 8th 1650. Queen Victoria, who greatly enjoyed living in Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, arranged for a beautiful memorial statue to be sculpted for Elizabeth by Carlo Marochetti. It was erected in 1856. Some witnesses of psychic phenomena at Carisbrooke Castle have suggested that it is haunted by Charles I and his daughter. Both were certainly under great emotional stress.

The Union Inn at Cowes is the centre of reports of the ghost of the landlord's wife from centuries ago, when there was the equivalent of a lighthouse tower above the pub. When her husband was away at sea, his wife had the duty of ensuring that the lamp was lit, and that its light was carefully maintained throughout the night. One evening she forgot to attend to the lamp and it went out. Many boats were lost that night and many fishermen were drowned – including her husband. Reports of anomalous phenomena from the Union Inn frequently centre on the landlady's ghost, filled with remorse and regret. The feelings of the drowning fishermen also reinforce the theory connecting strong emotion to psychic phenomena.

There are many other fascinating reports of anomalous phenomena on the Isle of Wight, which make it an ideal destination for investigators of the paranormal.



# The ASSAP Training Weekend

10-11 March, Wiltshire

**The ASSAP Training Weekend has, over the decades, prepared hundreds of paranormal investigators to take on and handle cases.**

The weekend focuses on practicing the skills needed to handle a client from start to finish including assessing a case, science and ethics, interviewing skills, analysing evidence and report writing.

Important to note this is not a 'how to' guide for how to run a group vigil with vigil attached. There are many commercial events companies that offer such experiences. The ASSAP Training Weekend is a client focussed introduction to serious investigation.

The weekend is also very friendly with group work and social opportunities galore.

Your journey will include a pre-training phone conversation to make sure this is the right course for you, a pre-training learning book and assessment, NRPI e-learning assessment and a post-weekend report.

Please note these events can sell out very quickly. Past Training Weekends have sold out in less than a week.

Costings: £40 (no Lunch) / £55 (including two Lunches) / £70 (including two Lunches and Dinner)

A two-course evening meal is available on Saturday, which will give you the option at checkout to Book with Lunch

Book accommodation direct with the Marsh Farm Hotel for £50 a night. Ref: ASSAP Training Weekend Telephone Bookings: 01793 842800

The course runs from Saturday 10.00am to 6.00pm and Sunday 9.30am to 5.00pm

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# The Human Pendulum

- Spirit Communication  
or Ideomotor Response?  
by Richard Estep

There is a commonly-held belief among non-skeptical paranormal investigators that the single best instrument for detecting the activity of discarnate entities is the human body itself. Some claim to be able to 'sense' the presence of spirits intuitively, whereas others say that they can open themselves up in order to interact with them.

One technique which I find particularly fascinating is known as "The Human Pendulum." For those who have never seen it utilized before, the underlying concept is an extremely simple one. The only thing required is a willing volunteer, and a second person who will act as both observer and questioner.

The person who is taking on the role of pendulum should stand in the middle of a relatively open area, away from furniture and other encumbrances. They must be directed by the observer/questioner to assume a relaxed stance, their body posture upright and free from rigidity, but without their muscles being tensed in any way.

The observer/questioner then takes up a position which affords them a good vantage point, either ninety degrees to the side of the pendulum or at a forty-five degree angle – the goal is to be able to easily see any movement on the part of the volunteer. Depending upon one's belief system, a prayer or blessing of protection may be employed at this point, followed by an invitation for any spirits present in the room to communicate by means of the human pendulum.

Once this has been done, the observer/questioner asks

for the pendulum to be shown their "yes" position. If all goes well, the volunteer will find their body swaying toward one of the four cardinal directions: forward, backward, left, or right. Sometimes the lean is rather subtle, and can initially be difficult to detect if the lights have been dimmed; at other times, the subject can be pushed (even shoved) quite forcefully, often taking them by surprise and occasionally even pushing them off their feet. The same is then done for the "no" position, which is typically the exact opposite of their "yes" – for example, when "yes" is signified by a lean forward, then "no" tends to be a backward push.

With the preliminaries out of the way, the observer/questioner can then ask a series of questions, to which the answer should either be "yes" or "no." The person acting as the pendulum will often try to answer verbally, and may need to be reminded that the questions aren't actually intended for them.

It should be noted that in this particular author's experience, roughly thirty to forty percent of volunteers chosen appear to be susceptible to this technique. The remainder simply do not move at all when the observer/questioner asks for them to be shown their "yes" or "no" position. I have seen quite a number of people who describe themselves as absolute skeptics, be taken completely by surprise when the Human Pendulum technique works on them.

When asked afterward, some describe the feeling of unseen hands on their body, pushing them physically in

response to the stated questions. Others say that although they felt nothing upon their skin, their body was somehow drawn in the directions that signified the “yes” or “no” answers, somehow compelled by an unseen force.

So what is going on here – are discarnate entities truly communicating with the living by making them sway on their feet, or is there a more prosaic explanation for it all?

One possible answer could be found in the ideomotor reflex, a well-documented physiologic phenomenon in which specific thoughts manage to provoke a physical response from the human body. It is important to note that this is not fraud on the part of the subject; they truly have no conscious knowledge of what their body is doing. Scientific researchers have laid the outcomes of such activities as the Ouija Board and automatic writing (also known as “spirit writing”) at the door of ideomotor activity, pointing out that the only “entity” being communicated with is the subject’s own subconscious.

It should also be pointed out that many people have an underlying desire to please. When the volunteer is standing in front of a group of investigators, suddenly becoming the focal point of attention within the room, there is often an increased desire to “deliver the goods,” as it were. When the Human Pendulum technique fails to work, as it often does, the end result is often embarrassment on the part of the observer/questioner, and sometimes also for the volunteer themselves. Does it come as any surprise that some volunteers end up swaying from “yes” to “no,” for no other reason than a strong, subconscious compulsion to avoid embarrassment? After all, nobody likes egg on their face, and many dislike even the mere thought of being part of a potentially embarrassing situation, even if they are only peripherally involved. Small wonder, then, their body would take charge of things and offer its own response, independent of the volunteer’s conscious mind.

We must also consider the fact that some people are simply unsteady on their feet to begin with. Our sense of proprioception (and by extension, our natural sense of balance) degrades as we age, and can also be subtly affected by fatigue, stimulants, and diseases, to name just three of a multitude of factors. All could be misinterpreted as positive responses to the Human Pendulum technique.

**“I have seen quite a number of people who describe themselves as absolute skeptics, be taken completely by surprise when the Human Pendulum technique works on them.”**

As tempting as it may be to just write the Human Pendulum off as an involuntary muscular response, however, things aren’t quite that simple. Over the course of five nights that my team and I spent investigating The Cage, an old prison for those accused of witchcraft in the sixteenth century, we conducted a number of Human Pendulum sessions. After determining which investigators were susceptible, we duly added some

control measures into the mix. These included placing earphones on the patient and playing music at a volume that was loud enough to drown out any ambient noise in the room. The investigator who was playing the role of observer/questioner then placed themselves behind the patient, in order to rule out the possibility of lip reading. Mirrors were also removed or covered, in order to discount the possibility of the volunteer catching a glimpse of the observer/questioner speaking.

Surprisingly, even when such precautions were taken, the team received seemingly-meaningful responses to their questions. The investigator that had volunteered to act as the Human Pendulum found himself tilting into the “yes” and “no” positions when questions were asked, and several of

those answers appeared to be validated during a Ouija Board session undertaken later. With the Pendulum cut off from the questioner (and effectively unable to hear any questions) then the “subconscious ideomotor theory” would have to be discounted, as it requires at least some visual or auditory input in order to generate any responses.

Is the Human Pendulum technique nothing more than a parlor game, a product of the volunteer’s inherent desire to please or a willing subconscious? Could it be a simple physiologic reaction...or are discarnate entities/energies truly moving the Pendulum’s body in response to questioning?

The answer may in fact be “all of the above,” depending upon a number of variables, not least of which is the identity and psychological makeup of the volunteer who is acting as the Human Pendulum.

This author, at least, suspects that more research is needed before a definitive answer can be given. Nonetheless, the Human Pendulum is a technique that I encourage you to experiment with yourself. The results may surprise you.

**“The investigator that had volunteered to act as the Human Pendulum found himself tilting into the “yes” and “no” positions when questions were asked, and several of those answers appeared to be validated during a Ouija Board session undertaken later.”**

#### About the author:

Richard Estep has been a paranormal investigator for the past twenty-one years, conducting research on both sides of the Atlantic. He is the author of *In Search of the Paranormal*, *The World’s Most Haunted Hospitals*, and *The Haunting of Asylum 49*. Four of his cases have been dramatized for the TV shows *Haunted Case Files*. He resides in his adopted Colorado, where he serves as a paramedic and works as a tour guide in an extremely haunted hotel.





# Using the Problem Analysis Triangle to Assist Paranormal Investigation

by Mark Davey

I suddenly realised that I was not alone! I don't mean in the haunting sense, but in my thoughts about how we go about investigating the paranormal. I was sat in the audience at Seriously Strange at Aston University in September 2014, listening to Dr Ciaran O'Keefe, postulating the idea that we should adopt criminal investigation techniques for paranormal investigation. It was refreshing to hear him suggest that witness testimony and even more importantly, how we gather it, is vitally important in the investigation process. This should be combined with a thorough investigation of the location of the reported phenomena. The police adopt meticulous crime scene investigation, using the 'golden hour' principles to capture as much evidence as possible before it is changed and altered for good. This allows us to make sense of the experient's view and capture any corroborating evidence like CCTV or other witnesses.

Let's think about this for a minute. Something happens; let's say a witness sees a man breaking into a car in their street in the middle of the night. Despite the lighting

difficulties, they are able to provide a description of the thief and a direction of travel. The police arrive and try to locate the offender but he has fled the scene. The police then interview the witness, examine the crime scene and look for clues which might identify the offender and prove his guilt.

Let's now put this in the paranormal context. The witness is employed at a youth training venue which used to be a convent. One night, they are locking up when they enter the old Chapel which is now a classroom. Out of the corner of their eye they see a figure and are frozen to the spot. The figure, who resembles a nun, moves across in front of the altar area and walks through a wall. The witness tells a friend and before too long, a paranormal investigation team want to investigate the location.

Now, I would hope that if they had read any decent books on the subject or attended ASSAP's investigation training, they would interview the witness and examine the location prior to holding a vigil. Alas, I fear that what happens in practice does not go far enough to capture all the available

evidence that can provide us with answers. In the 1970s and 80s Andrew Green and Peter Underwood, both respected paranormal investigators, wrote respective guides to assist those interested in this field, to carry out such methodical approaches to gathering evidence and data. This was based on years of personal experience using tried and tested methods. Have we lost these skills in our haste to capture the video or photograph of the phenomena ourselves, so that we can present it to the world at large, through social media?

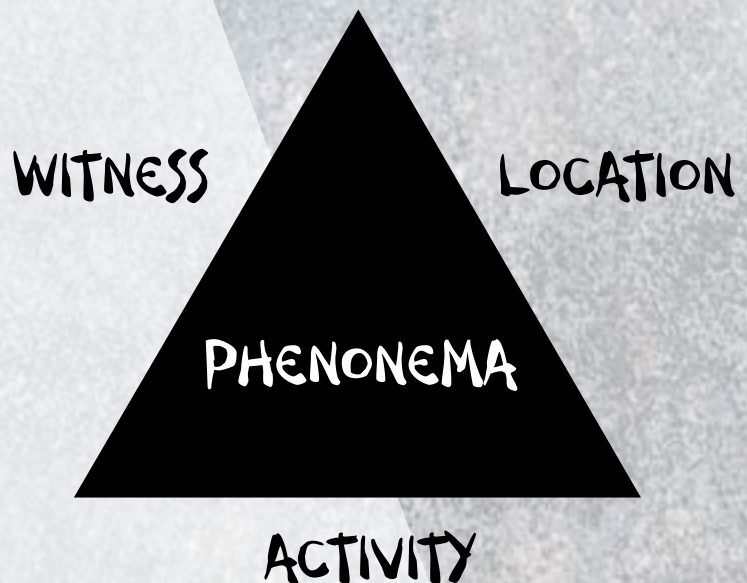
I was reading my copy of *The Ghost Hunter's Guide*, recently and it struck me that the detail that Peter Underwood went into during an investigation has probably been lost on modern day investigation practices, with the exception of a few. Peter would interview all available witnesses whether they had experienced anything paranormal or not. He would make confidential notes of these interviews before examining the fabric of the building as a prelude to an on-sight investigation. One thing that is apparent is a methodological approach to investigation, so that if there is a chance of capturing evidence, it is factored into the investigation plan. This includes a vast array of equipment to test electro-magnetic fields, vibration, temperature, sound recorders and cameras. In the modern age however, we have come to recognise that much of the equipment used by ghost hunters today are impractical or ineffective in measuring what the investigator assumes that they are able to (Parsons, 2015). Paranormal books of Underwood and Green's era have a tendency to show confirmation bias, whether this is a conscious or unconscious factor by the author. This is an issue for many modern day investigators who seek confirmation of their belief systems. Investigators such as Green however, were open-minded enough to remain objective. He spoke of looking beyond the witness' account, examining their imagination, their integrity and honesty. Looking at the relationships between witnesses and examining their statements to identify collaboration. We must also examine the motivation of the witness who reports the phenomena (Green, 1973).

When crime is committed, which amounts to a series, in a particular location, we can justify lying in wait for the culprit to return, so that we can take action and arrest them. This action is usually adopted after analysis of all the data pertaining to, how the crime was committed (*modus operandi*), any pattern or location similarities, and the optimum time period for these events to take place. Within paranormal investigation, we rarely get the same justification to 'stake out' the location, because these events are more random, over long time periods, often based on anecdotal evidence, involving various different types of phenomena. Where credible, eyewitness accounts are available we can start to narrow the parameters for a more focussed proactive investigation. We can also re-create the same conditions that the witness experienced (so much as possible), with 'blind percipients' and compare their experiences with that of the witness, in an attempt to make sense of what factors may have affected them from a psychological perspective.

Within crime analysis, there are many examples of methods, which help to provide an objective assessment of what has taken place. These methods may assist us in identifying further lines of enquiry. The Problem Analysis

Triangle has been used by crime analysts for many years to explore the relationship between the offender, the victim and the location when a crime is committed. A crime opportunity requires that elements converge in time and place including (1) a motivated offender, (2) suitable target or victim, and (3) lack of a capable guardian. It enables analysts to consider recommendations to prevent crimes occurring in the future. It's a simple concept but provokes thought and analysis and identifies gaps in our information, which may need to be answered before we have a full picture of what has taken place and why.

## The Paranormal Analysis Triangle



The above diagram is a depiction of an analysis triangle suitable for paranormal investigation. At the heart of the issue is the phenomena witnessed, whether it is an apparition, a sighting of a being, an animal or object. It could be a sound or an object being moved. In order for phenomena to be apparent, all three elements, a witness at a location involved with an activity need to be in place. You may feel that a witness is not necessary, but even in circumstances that the phenomena is not initially witnessed, in circumstances of poltergeist activity or phenomena captured on CCTV, there is still a witness interaction when the phenomena is discovered.

What we must first do is examine the relationship between the witness and the location. For example, is the witness familiar with the location? Research shows that people who are new to a location such as a house, take time to adjust to the environment and become familiar with the unique sights, sounds and movements. They misperceive things and notice things that we normally filter out because we are used to them. We must ascertain the lighting conditions at the time. It sounds obvious, but our eyes do not identify objects so well in dim light or at night. How good is the witnesses eyesight, hearing or mental state? Are they on medication or suffering from an illness or recently bereaved? Why was the witness at the location? What was the purpose? What is their motivation for reporting the incident? Many reports of ghost sightings are experienced by people who are just



going about their business and do not expect to experience such an event. My research of inns and hotels supports these types of occurrence, however, we cannot rule out the effect of priming and suggestion on the witness, whether this is conscious or not.

These types of question help us to determine credible lines of enquiry with the witness, to explore at interview. Some will require care to illicit the information and not give the impression that we do not believe the witness. We must be careful not to contaminate their memory, so our first objective should be to obtain as full an account as possible, to exhaust their recollection of the event, before embarking on our own line of questioning.

Next we must examine the location and how it interacts with the witness. This normally forms part of the extraneous factors survey. By understanding the location we can start to hypothesise some potential causes for the witnessed phenomena. We must look at the general construction of the building or layout of the open space. This requires an understanding of the common causes for experienced phenomena generated by naturally occurring or manmade activity. We must identify what is actually there, its structure and construction and record it in notes taking photographs from a number of different angles for reference. The only way to get a sense of the norm though is to spend time at the location and experience it ourselves. Some research into electromagnetic fields and their influence on

**“It has been suggested that low frequency sound can produce paranormal experience. However, this is believed to be one of many possible natural or man-made sources of this effect on the human senses. We should only look for these phenomena, if we suspect it is present, with the correct equipment and justification.”**

our brains causing hallucination with certain people, has led enthusiasts and researchers to surmise that electromagnetic fields within a property may be a cause for some paranormal experiences. Likewise, research into Infrasound has generated a lot of interest about its relationship to the human experience. It has been suggested that low frequency sound can produce paranormal experience. However, this is believed to be one of many possible natural or man-made sources of this effect on the human senses. We should only look for these phenomena, if we suspect it is present, with the correct equipment and justification.

Finally, we must examine the activity that was taking place at the time of the witnessed event. In this

I mean what were the people present doing at the time? How may this interact with their perception and attention? What was the activity at the location? Was there machinery being operated? Were there environmental or atmospheric conditions playing a part, for example an electric storm or a strong wind or a mist. Were there other factors like the presence of animals like birds, bats or rodents? A simple example of activity factors would be the staff member working at a pub, who has become accustomed to large heavy goods vehicles travelling past on the road outside, that they filter the noise out. They do not recognise that the glass which appears to fall off the shelf has been set on its path by the lorries driving by and the resultant vibration

which affects the shelf. The trade off between attention and perception is an important consideration. This is particularly so when items are reported to have moved, taps have turned themselves on or items go missing only to turn up in the most unlikely places. Do we consciously take note of everything that we do in the house? If we did, we would not get to the top of the stairs forgetting the reason that we decided to go there in the first place and we would not forget where we had put our keys. We must also examine the potential influence of the activity of the adolescent female (or male) agent within the property due to the correlation of poltergeist activity and the presence of a 'troubled' adolescent agent. If we review CCTV at the scene, we must ask the question 'what areas are not covered by the camera?'

Of course, there are other factors that will not be answered by this approach alone, but it does provide a basis for eliminating that which may be explained. By asking ourselves these questions, our investigation can focus on the gaps in our required information and knowledge about an anomalous event. Again, using investigative evaluation techniques used during criminal investigations we can ask ourselves the following questions:

1. What do we know?
2. What does that tell us?
3. What do we need to know?
4. Where are we going to get the information from?

During this evaluation, we must examine whether our investigative techniques have been effective. This is the stage that we start to hypothesise a number of possible causes for the anomalous events. Remaining open-minded, we must test these hypotheses. It is important to use methods which can be replicated, so that the results can be peer tested and reviewed. For example, within a poltergeist activity investigation, we may deploy CCTV to monitor the location and capture objects moving and sounds, particularly when we are not there. We may even deploy the use of a covert camera to eliminate the actions of an absent minded resident or 'trickster', however, this should only be done when it is right and ethically justifiable to do so.

Using the problem analysis triangle in this manner helps us to explore the interaction of a number of different factors, which may provide positive lines of enquiry, to assist us to determine cause and effect. It is a starting point for many investigations and helps us to determine the 'how' and the 'why' something has happened. It will not provide us with all of the answers but will enable us to eliminate those factors which can be readily tested. It helps us to produce a thorough investigation plan and as a great investigator once said, "once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains,

no matter how improbable, must be the truth" (Sherlock Holmes (Conan Doyle, 1890))

Whilst some impossibilities (in the context of current scientific understanding) might be obvious, sometimes we can be attracted by an idea that intrigues us, despite it being 'impossible'. Other times, it is only on close examination that the impossibility is revealed. Once we remove the impossible, we are left with a clearer understanding of the possible and the probable.

The final and for crime analysts, the most important use of the problem analysis triangle, is in solving the problem. For those who contact us in desperation because of phenomena occurring at their house, this is the most important intervention that we can make. They just want the phenomena to cease. By identifying the appropriate intervention we can seek to achieve this. This might require subtle changes to the location, for example, reducing draughts, removing mirrors, changing machinery, servicing plumbing, removal of rodents or birds. Changes to the activity at the location might assist, by installing CCTV, enabling residents to review footage when something has occurred or altering the use of a particular property. We may attempt to alter how the witness approaches the potential occurrences allowing them to prepare themselves for what they may misperceive and get them to question and challenge any perceived phenomena. The greatest change can be achieved by a change in mindset of the witness. This may be done through education, based on research, about the possible causes of phenomena as a result of a thorough investigation.

Of course, these solutions are biased towards the rational and the sceptical. If this is contrary to the belief system of the witness, they are far less likely to accept these opinions. Paranormal belief may be a factor in misinterpretation of normal events as paranormal occurrences and in selective discounting of information not compatible with a paranormal interpretation. However, if a scientific approach is fostered with the witnesses, then we may find answers to many questions about the paranormal in a manner that we can start to acquire evidence, with some scientific data, whether they support the spiritual or the sceptical argument.

**"The most important use of the problem analysis triangle, is in solving the problem. For those who contact us in desperation because of phenomena occurring at their house, this is the most important intervention that we can make."**

# Thermodynamics:

## Understanding the Macroscopic Paranormal

by Anthony Justus

Many people in the field of the paranormal have encountered the infamous phenomenon known simply as “cold spots.”

Numerous theories have been put forth as to why these places of thermal variance are encountered, but to date, no one has really set them down beyond basic statements and in general terms. Recently, I was studying the laws of thermodynamics for a case, and I believe that I may have come up with a hypothesis that would fall in line with the known laws of thermodynamics and may explain a cold spot in scientific terms.

First, we should define what thermodynamics is.

Thermodynamics is the field of physics that describes and correlates the physical properties of macroscopic systems of matter and energy and their interaction and transference of energy in the form of thermal energy. A macroscopic system (also called a thermodynamic system) is a geometrically (measurable in three dimensional space time) notable piece or pieces of matter in coexistence with an infinite imperturbable environment.

For most people, that is a mouth full. In short, it is the study of how heat energy is transferred from matter to matter and the laws governing those exchanges, called thermodynamic processes.

There are four laws that govern thermodynamic processes in these systemic exchanges. We will examine in turn to get a better understanding of the basic principles of macroscopic system interaction. The first concept that we will deal with is temperature.

Temperature is generally defined as the heat or lack/loss of heat of an object, since cold does not scientifically exist. The Zeroth Law describes what temperature is.

The Zeroth Law states that “...when two systems are in equilibrium with a third, the first two systems must be in equilibrium with each other. This shared property, which can be measured and a definite numerical value ascribed to that measurement of the property. This measurement of the property is called temperature.” This is a more precise definition than that used commonly.

So, if this is the definition of temperature, what is the definition of heat? Heat as a concept is very interesting indeed as it means something entirely different that what most people think of. Heat is commonly known as the opposite of cold, but thermodynamics gives us an entirely different definition of heat. Let's look at it now.

Encarta Encyclopedia states that heat is "...in physics, is the transfer of energy from one part of a substance to another, or from one body to another by virtue of a difference in temperature. Heat is energy in transit; it always flows from a substance at a higher temperature to the substance at a lower temperature, raising the temperature of the latter and lowering that of the former substance, provided the volume of the bodies remains constant. Heat does not flow from a lower to a higher temperature unless another form of energy transfer, work, is also present. "

Energy and Work also have very different definitions than most investigators and people attach to them. Again, according to Encarta:

"Energy is capacity of matter to perform work as the result of its motion or its position in relation to forces acting on it."

While work is slightly more complicated and is defined thus:

"...Is a product of a force applied to a body and the displacement of the body in the direction of the applied force. While work is done on a body, there is a transfer of energy to the body, and so work can be said to be energy in transit. The units of work are identical to those of energy.

If, for example, an object is lifted from the floor to the top of a table, work is done in overcoming the downward force of gravity, and the energy imparted to the body as work will increase its potential energy. Work is also expended when a force accelerates a body, such as the acceleration of an airplane because of the thrust forces developed by its jet engines...."

While this is interesting in and of itself, the next part of the definition is far more interesting from a paranormal perspective when you are not dealing with purely mechanical forces:

"... The force need not be simply a mechanical force, as in the case of lifting a body or accelerating a plane by jet reaction; it can also be an electrostatic, electrodynamic, or surface-tension force..."

In layman's terms, energy is the ability to do work and work is defined as going against another force, for example gravity and heat is the result of energy being transferred back and forth from system to system until equilibrium is reached. So what is equilibrium?

Equilibrium is the condition of a system in which competing influences (variables) are balanced evenly. When a

macroscopic system shifts with an irreversible reaction, equilibrium is reached and no further change in the system is possible.

A variable, by the way, is a factor used to describe a macroscopic system's state of equilibrium and include things such as temperature, pressure, volume, density, etc, in relationship to the environment.

Heat and work therefore are the mechanisms by which two or more systems may exchange energy, which leads us to the next law.

The next law of thermodynamics is perhaps the one most often quoted (and mis-quoted no less) by investigators as proof of survival and while it does have bearing on that notion of the human soul, is it more appropriately fitting to the concept from which it was pulled: the transference of heat energy from one system to another.

This law states "...because energy cannot be created or destroyed, the amount of heat transferred into a system plus the amount of work done on the system must result in a corresponding increase of internal energy in the system."

In simple English, this means energy (heat in this case) cannot be created or destroyed but merely transferred from system to system, creating an equal and opposite reaction in the corresponding systems, with an increase in one, (the receiving system) and a decrease in the other (the transference system).

Following this law, is the next rule of thermodynamics, which precisely defines the property, which is called entropy.

Entropy could be thought of as a measurement of how close a given system is to equilibrium; it can also be thought of as a measurement of a system's amount of disorder. Interestingly, nature itself seems to prefer chaos and disorder as opposed to a true equilibrium, with each external system balancing out the other in a system of chaotic checks and balances. Chaos theory describes this fascinating set of interactions and patterns but more on that later in another article, perhaps at another time.

The law itself states that "the total entropy of any isolated system always increases over time, approaching a maximum value."

What this means is that a system will continue in disorder until it finally reaches balance or equilibrium and as stated earlier, once a system reaches this state, it cannot change. This law shows in that in the absence

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of work, heat cannot be transferred from a region at a lower temperature to one at a higher temperature, however it would be possible for a higher temperature system to give energy (heat) to a lower temperature system.

The last law of thermodynamics that we must understand before moving on to my theory is that the previous law suggests the existence of an absolute zero of temperature and the last law itself states:

“...absolute zero cannot be obtained by any procedure in a finite number of steps and can only be approached arbitrarily closely but never reached.”

What the previous statement suggests is that temperature can be reduced or increased by taking energy out of a system by making the motion of molecules at the molecular level speed up (increase of heat) or slow down (loss of heat) and that absolute zero is close to impossible under normal conditions.

It's a large amount of information to process but you are now going to see how I used the laws of thermodynamics to describe how a cold spot is formed in a hypothesis that I call the Thermodynamic Macroscopic Transference Hypothesis.

With the preceding statements and facts in mind, let's for a moment hypothetically state that we have three isolated systems in a given environment: a living human and a non-corporeal entity, aka a ghost and the air between them. All of these are forms of matter, one solid, two not.

The entity in question could transfer heat energy from the human by slowing down the molecules in the air

“Temperature can be reduced or increased by taking energy out of a system by making the motion of molecules at the molecular level speed up (increase of heat) or slow down (loss of heat) and that absolute zero is close to impossible under normal conditions.”

and speeding up the molecules on the human (work) thus creating friction as heat is transferred into or to the entity, drawing it from the human, creating an increase in entropy in all three systems...the human, the ghost and the air.

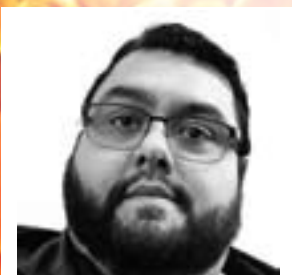
The decrease in heat from the human would create a feeling of intense cold, while the warmer air between the ghost and human would act like a storage battery for the ghost to use while it draws the heat from the human to itself to use as energy to do work aka, manipulate the environment.

This entropy would continue until the human moves out of the range of the entity in question or disrupts the transfer, which would destabilize the increasing entropy and restore the natural equilibrium in all three systems. If a ghost has taken its fill of heat energy stores and utilizes them to make a physical change in its environment, then the expenditure of that stored energy to do work would drain it away, also restoring the native entropy and equilibrium in the entity.

“If a ghost has taken its fill of heat energy stores and utilizes them to make a physical change in its environment, then the expenditure of that stored energy to do work would drain it away, also restoring the native entropy and equilibrium in the entity..”

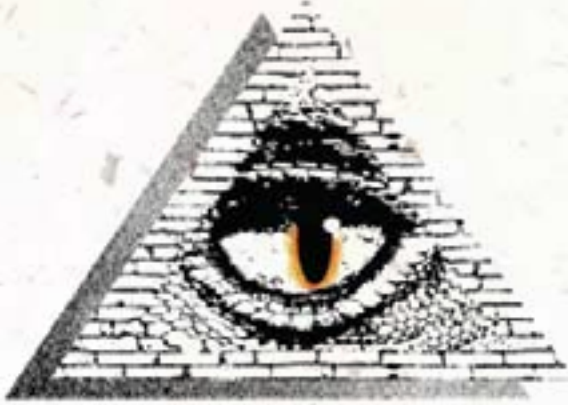
This may help explain the bone chilling cold that some victims of paranormal encounters are unable to shake or the sudden dense pockets of cold air as the entity uses transfers thermal energy to itself from its environment in a thermodynamic process between the two (possibly three) systems.

While this may go some way towards explaining the mechanics, the process by which an entity would do this remains unknown but outlined above, it is fully in line with the laws of known thermodynamics and thus should be possible...of course this assumes that a non corporeal entity could exist and use heat (energy).



#### About the author:

Anthony Justus was born in Elizabethton, TN. He has been a paranormal investigator for eleven years, starting with a small rag-tag team in 2003 and growing into the first scientific research team in his state by 2007. His team was part of the TAPS Family network, a network of objectively minded paranormal researchers that took on clients world-wide to assist those with paranormal problems. He studied at Kaplan University for two years majoring in psychology and now runs the Haunted Spots Library blog and writes for Supernatural Magazine. He lives with his husband Ben in the mountains of Appalachia.



# SERIOUSLY SUSPICIOUS

Article by Lucya Szachnowski

## Seriously Suspicious Conspiracy: Satanic Ritual Abuse

Yesterday I attended Seriously Suspicious – the Assap conference on conspiracy theories – and three of the talks were directly about the occult and witchcraft. Two of those talks were about Satanic Ritual Abuse, and that is what I am going to blog about now.

The two talks were from two seemingly opposing perspectives. Tim Tate, best-selling author of dozens of popular books about murders, sex offences and child abuse with titles including *Children for the Devil* (now withdrawn), *Slave Girl* and *The Murder of Childhood*, gave a talk called *Satanic Ritual Abuse*. This was followed by Professor Chris French of Goldsmiths' APRU who specialises in the psychology of paranormal beliefs and experiences offering *A Further Perspective on Satanic Ritual Abuse*.

Now, I said that the two talks were from seemingly opposing perspectives, but actually there were a few fundamental things both speakers appeared to agree on.

Firstly, there is no conspiracy of Satanists who are ritually abusing children and there never has been. For a conference about conspiracies, that's the biggie. And, although neither of the speakers specifically mentioned this in their talks, I think both would completely agree that child abuse is not a normal or accepted practice of The Church of Satan.

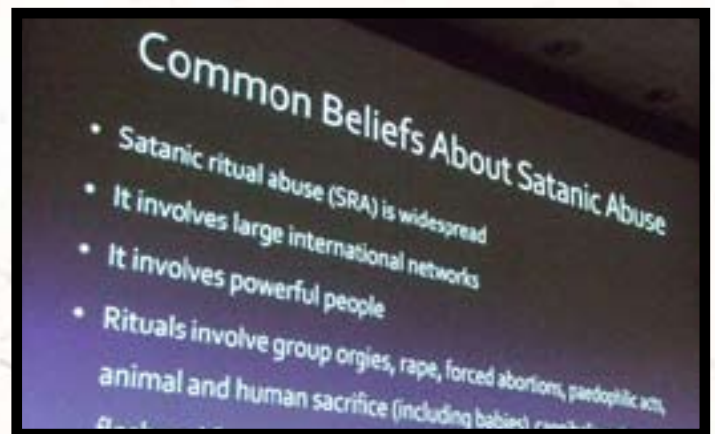
Secondly, and this is also an important and serious point, ritual abuse of children sadly does happen. In recent years a sizable number of the child ritual abuse cases that have reached courts in the UK have been by Christian groups and individuals performing exorcisms on children involving torture and even murder. The most famous example is probably that of Victoria Climbié. Added to that, in some – thankfully extremely rare – cases, paedophiles have self-identified as Satanists and abused children in horror film-like settings. All child abuse is awful, but adding that extra level of terror is, of course, despicable.

Before I get to the area of disagreement, I'm going to talk about the background to the idea of the Satanic Ritual Abuse conspiracy – sometimes called the Satanic Panic.

Back in the 1980s and 90s, first in America but also in the UK and other parts of the world, there was a spate of children being taken away from their parents, guardians or child-care workers, who were suspected of being part of an international Satanic conspiracy. Groups and individuals who were allegedly members of this conspiracy were accused of ritually sexually abusing the children, murdering children in satanic orgies, running baby farms by impregnating the children and then ritually aborting the fetuses and eating them or sacrificing the babies in Satanic rites.

In the UK, without exception, these claims were found to be untrue. Absolutely no forensic evidence was found despite very thorough searching, not even a drop of blood. Charges were also later dropped in the USA too.

This Satanic Ritual Abuse panic was actually part of a wider fear of Satanism that was prevalent in the latter part of the 20th century. The Devil's influence was seen everywhere in pop music, films, books, TV shows, roleplaying and computer games. This was dubbed the Moral Panic, and some groups – particularly evangelical Christians – saw it as part of an international conspiracy by powerful Satanists to recruit people – especially the young – to bring an evil plot to fulfilment.



It all might seem a bit laughable now, at a time of real threats to the world. Except, of course, that the false accusations brought misery to those families accused, separated and put on trial in the modern-day witch hunts.

So, where did Tim Tate disagree with Professor Chris French on this issue?

Well, it is really down to the definition of Satanic Ritual Abuse.

Tim Tate uses the definition of ritual abuse taken from *Nursery Crimes* by Finkelhor, Meyer and Burns (1988): "Abuse that occurs in a context linked to some symbols or group activity that have a religious, supernatural or magical connotation; and that where the invocation of these symbols or activities, repeated over time, is used to frighten and intimidate the children."

Professor Chris French quoted the definition given by Jean La Fontaine in 1994: "Rites that allegedly include the torture and sexual abuse of children and adults, forced abortion and human sacrifice, cannibalism and bestiality may be labelled as Satanic or Satanist. Their defining characteristic is that the sexual abuse of children is part of the rites to a magical or religious objective."

Jean La Fontaine was specifically talking about the Satanic Panic – claims of a widespread network of Satanic ritualists engaging in extreme abuse, baby-farming and infanticide. Tim Tate's preferred definition is much more general.

Tim Tate talked about the case of Albert and Carolee Hickman, two self-identified, isolated Satanists who pleaded guilty to assaulting, raping and torturing a schoolgirl in "Hammer Horror film"-style rites. It is, of course, an awful and shocking case.

As Chris French said: "If you accept Tim's definition of satanic ritual abuse, then yes it occurs – people using trappings of Satanism to frighten children."

However, there is absolutely no evidence that this is the same thing as the widespread, organised Satanic sexual abuse, forced abortions, infanticide and cannibalism, fears of which led social workers to break up families in the 1980s and 90s.

Wouldn't it just be lovely if we could all agree that abusing children is really bad, but rekindling a fake moral panic isn't that helpful either.

# THE BELL WITCH POLTERGEIST ACTIVITY AND THE UFO PHENOMENON

By Sean Casteel

The supernatural is a key element in discovering the true origin of our ultra-terrestrial visitors

That poltergeist activity often follows in the wake of a UFO encounter is a generally recognized fact and has been documented frequently by researchers of alien abduction and other paranormal investigators. Whatever the source of the energy is that drives a “noisy ghost,” UFO witnesses seem to possess it in abundance.

There is even a scene in Steven Spielberg’s classic 1977 UFO movie, “Close Encounters of the Third Kind,” in which actress Melinda Dillon is laid siege by various household objects moving of their own accord and creating a frightening sense of chaos that precedes the abduction of her young son by the aliens. It is sometimes argued that many kinds of paranormal events – including Near Death Experiences and hauntings – form a kind of supernatural continuum and are all manifestations of the flying saucer occupants operating from various planes outside our everyday reality.

If such is the case, then it behooves us to study subjects like poltergeist hauntings in the hope of better understanding how the different aspects of UFOlogy form a cohesive

whole. The new release from the publishing house Global Communications called “The Bell Witch Project” does just that when it examines an early 19th century poltergeist haunting that received wide publicity in the U.S. and remains a controversial case to this day. The new book is part of the “Very Strange People” series that also includes a volume on “Mad” Mollie Fancher, a celebrated “fasting girl” who claimed to live for 51 years without ingesting a single morsel of food.

## WHO WAS THE BELL WITCH?

The uniquely American story of the Bell Witch haunting, in which a ghost took up residence in the home of a Tennessee farming family in 1817, began when John Bell, the head of the family, was out walking through his cornfield. He sighted a strange, doglike creature in the distance that suddenly disappeared. Around the same time, Bell’s son and daughter were walking through an orchard when they noticed an old woman walking beside them. When the daughter spoke to the old woman, the old woman simply disappeared.

These sightings were followed by strange, inexplicable noises in and around the Bell house, such as knocking sounds on doors and windows, wings flapping against the roof and animals fighting and scratching. As the noises became more intense, the family tried desperately to find the source but found nothing. Then bed coverings began slipping off the beds as if being pulled by someone. Sometimes one could hear noises like lips smacking and gulping. The Bell household became a noisy nightmare.

One night the spirit began to talk, introducing itself with hysterical, mocking laughter. When asked its name, the spirit answered "Kate." The spirit began to speak incessantly, arguing theology, teasing and tormenting, spreading gossip and singing loudly. She seemed to know intimate details about everyone and took great delight in being able to pester the household at will.

The poltergeist claimed to have been conjured by the deceased spirit of a woman named Kate Batts, whose invalid husband had been cheated in a slave deal with John Bell. There are historical records to the effect that Bell had been convicted of the crime of usury, or charging excessive interest, in the deal. On her deathbed, Kate Batts swore she would haunt Bell and his descendants.

The spirit abused John Bell in many ways. She threw furniture and dishes at him, pulled his nose, yanked his hair and poked needles into him. She yelled at night to keep him from sleeping and snatched the food from his mouth at mealtime, all in the effort to vent her anger and hatred.

No one ever saw Kate/the Bell Witch, but every visitor to the Bell home could hear her all too well. Future president Andrew Jackson, who at the time was a general in the Tennessee militia, once visited the Bell home, curious to see if the widely circulating stories were true. "I'd rather fight the British in New Orleans than have to fight the Bell Witch," Jackson is alleged to have said after spending the night in the Bell home.

John Bell died in 1820, weak and exhausted by years of physical abuse from the Bell Witch. At his funeral, attended by hundreds of friends and curiosity seekers, Kate laughed and mocked the family, singing loudly and joyously in her triumph. Kate stayed on the Bell property for another year and then departed. She returned briefly seven years later. The remaining members of the Bell family either died or moved away but, to this day, strange lights and ghostly apparitions have been seen in the area. Some believe that John Bell's restless ghost still wanders the land he once owned and farmed.



#### ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON THE BELL WITCH STORY

"The Bell Witch Project" also offers the perspective of present day psychic Shawn Robbins, a protégé of the late ghost hunter, Hans Holzer. Hans often relied on Shawn's psychic abilities in order to facilitate contact with spirits from the other side since he possessed few such powers himself. In the book's opening chapter, Shawn talks about the day Hans invited her over to try to establish a "remote-viewing" link to the Bell Witch house. After Hans put Shawn into a hypnotically-induced, trancelike state, she revealed aspects of the story previously unknown.

"I immediately encountered the ethereal spirit, Kate Batts," Shawn writes, "who had a distraught and distressed look on her face. She quickly pointed to her belly and said, 'It is not my child.'

"Who then?" I asked. 'The slave Wilbur,' she replied. I asked Kate why this was important. She answered, 'I was raped.' At that very moment I knew this was the information that Hans sought

and had eluded so many others. In further conversations with the Bell Witch, Kate revealed to me she carried the child for seven months and gave birth to it prematurely. The male child died a few hours later. When her husband saw the baby was not his, he immediately went into shock and accused Kate of having an affair."

**"These sightings were followed by strange, inexplicable noises in and around the Bell house, such as knocking sounds on doors and windows, wings flapping against the roof and animals fighting and scratching."**

The relationship between Kate Batts and her husband Frederick was never the same afterward. Frederick never forgave what he took to be her adulterous union with a slave, and Kate never forgave herself for never telling Frederick she was raped.

When Shawn awakened from her trance, Hans wrote down everything she said and later used the material on the Bell Witch in one of his many books. The idea that Kate Batts was raped by a slave adds credibility to the notion of her anger and desire for vengeance and its expression from beyond the grave.

### VAMPIRES IN EARLY AMERICA

“The Bell Witch Project” also covers other forms of paranormal strangeness, including legends of vampires and spectral invaders. Noted author and talk show host Paul Eno – [www.behindtheparanormal.com](http://www.behindtheparanormal.com) – has collected many a weird tale over the years, including – surprisingly enough – real life vampires in early America.

“Each of our six New England states has had vampire cases,” Paul writes. “Several of the more striking incidents occurred in eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island in the period between roughly 1770 and 1900. Belief in vampires, in one form or another, has filtered down from the remote past.”

Eno tells the story of the Brown family of Rhode Island. Mary Brown, the mother, died of consumption on December 8, 1883, leaving her husband to care for their one son and several daughters. Six months later, the oldest daughter, 20-year-old Mary, died of the same disease. Edwin, the son, contracted consumption and relocated to Colorado, hoping to recover in a different climate. Declining rapidly, Edwin returned to Rhode Island, only to find that his 19-year-old sister Mercy had the disease and was in even worse shape than he.

As Edwin battled for his life, Mercy died in January of 1892. Twelve members of the Brown family conferred on what could be done for Edwin, who, given his former strength and health, should not be wasting away. They concluded unanimously that a vampire must be draining the



life out of him – a vampire that likely resided in the grave of one of the three deceased family members.

“So, on a cold March day in 1892,” Eno recounts, “a grim assembly arrived at the Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Exeter. The remains of Mrs. Brown and Mary, buried for years, proved to be only skeletons. But in Mercy’s grave was a startling find. Not only did the body look in the pink of health, with blood in the heart and arteries, but it had turned over partway in the coffin. The vampire hunters cut the girl’s heart from her body and burned it on a rock that still can be seen not far from the grave.”

The ashes of the heart were gathered up, to be dissolved in medicine in the hope of curing Edwin. The grotesque remedy did Edwin no good; he died shortly thereafter.



### HOOLIGAN SPIRITS INVADE

Paul Eno has another interesting story to tell in “The Bell Witch Project.” In 1692, in Cape Ann, Massachusetts, an apparent invasion by an army of ghosts or demons took place. It started at the home of Ebenezer Babson, who, along with his family, on a nightly basis, heard strange noises outside their home “as if some persons were running hither and thither about the house,” Eno writes. Returning home late one night, Babson saw two figures emerge from his front door. After his family told him no one had been there, Babson grabbed his gun

and gave chase. The two figures fled into a swamp and one was heard to say, “The man of the house is now come, else we might have taken the house.”

In the days that followed there were other similar local incidents of phantom figures who were immune to bullets and spoke in an incomprehensible language. More of these specters appeared both by day and night, dressed in white and carrying “bright guns,” though they acted more like hooligans than soldiers. Some believed the Devil was loose in Cape Ann. Whoever the phantoms were, they grew more emboldened every day.

“They threw stones, beat upon barns with clubs, and otherwise acted more in the spirit of diabolical revelry than as actuated by any deadlier purpose,” wrote 17th century historian and witch hunter Cotton Mather. “They moved about the swamps without leaving any tracks like ordinary beings. It was evident that such beings as these were must be fought with other weapons besides matchlocks and broadswords; consequently, a strange fear fell on the Cape.”

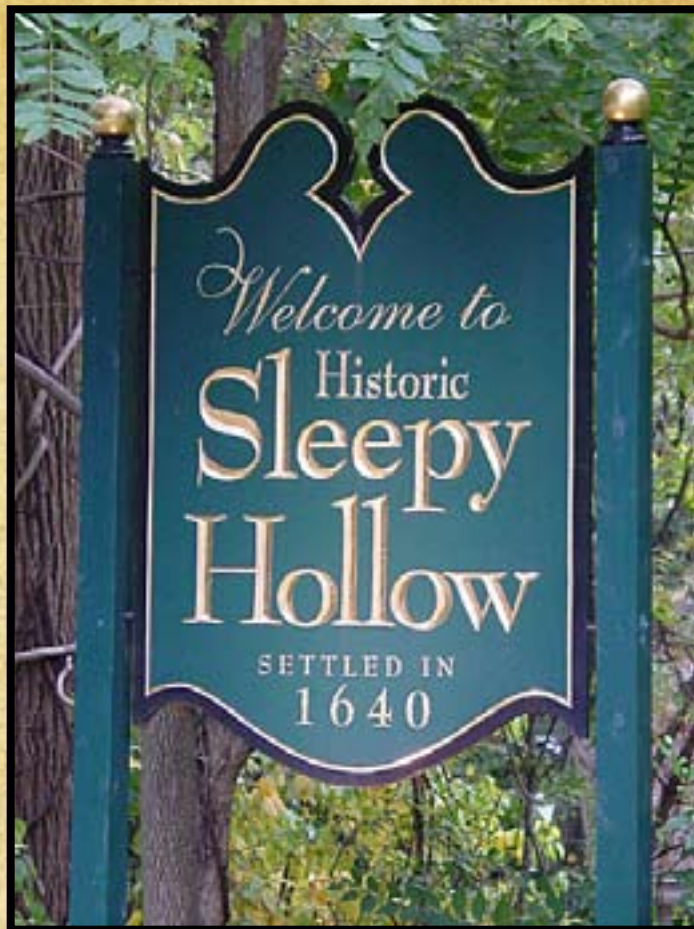
The residents of Cape Ann called upon the nearby town of Ipswich for help, and Ipswich sent 60 men to do battle with the “Powers of Darkness.” The demonic hooligans were not impressed and treated the mortal combatants with open contempt. Once it was settled that the “insults” proceeded from specters and not human beings, the incidents ended as suddenly as they began.

Eno offers the theory that the Cape Ann demon invasion had much to do with stirring people up about the paranormal and contributed to the witch hysteria in Salem and Danvers that would begin in earnest that same year.

### THE MONSTROUS CANNIBAL ROLLING HEADS

The monstrous Rolling Heads of Native American lore are almost too horrifying for the movies, though it would be just the sort of thing current CGI technology could do a good job with. There are several different versions of this story, but they all center on man-eating monsters who appear as an undead, disembodied head with long, tangled hair. The heads roll along the ground chasing humans to kill and devour.

Rolling Heads are created when victims of particularly violent murders rise from the dead to seek revenge. In most stories, this takes the form of an angry man who murders his unfaithful wife, although in some versions the victim is killed for witchcraft or violating some taboo. The story is sometimes made more gruesome by the addition of forced cannibalism, such as feeding the flesh of the mother to her unsuspecting children or feeding the wife part of her own meat as she lays dying.



*“Eventually the series of evil acts leads the Rolling Head to rise from the victim’s grave and take revenge on the killer. It then proceeds to terrorize its own children and/or the neighboring people until someone manages to destroy it.”*

Eventually the series of evil acts leads the Rolling Head to rise from the victim’s grave and take revenge on the killer. It then proceeds to terrorize its own children and/or the neighboring people until someone manages to destroy it. Some say that Rolling Heads can only be killed by drowning, while others say this is accomplished with magical powers or by causing the heads to fall off cliffs or into pits.

### GHOSTLY SLEEPY HOLLOW AND HAUNTED JEROME, ARIZONA

Never being one to take the easy path, intrepid adventurer, writer and publisher Timothy Green Beckley shares his accounts of visiting Sleepy Hollow, New York, the home of the Headless Horseman, and Jerome, Arizona, a sleepy former mining town made

alive by the continual presence of spectral prospectors and tragically wronged ladies of the evening.

As Beckley pondered the fact that Sleepy Hollow had been overflowed by UFOs repeatedly in the famous Hudson Valley flap of the 1980s, his traveling companion, a woman named simply Circe, cracked open their copy of Washington Irving’s famous story “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” and read: “A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land and to pervade the very atmosphere. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs, are subject to trances and visions,

and frequently see strange sights and hear voices and music in the air. Stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country.”

That last sentence, about the frequency of stars shooting and meteors glaring, seems to offer a clue that Sleepy Hollow was a UFO hotspot even centuries ago when Irving first wrote about the bewitched New York hamlet. It serves as an excellent example of the paranormal continuum that connects ghosts and UFOs and other mysterious phenomena.

Meanwhile, in the aforementioned Wild West tourist locale, Jerome, Arizona, prostitution was never formally legal but it was tolerated by city lawmakers and essentially flourished. Jerome even had its own Red Light District known as Husband's Alley.

According to tour guide Ron Roope, "The women of the night often underwent cruel hardships at the hands of their clients. There were beatings, stabbings and strangulation. There was also the specter of alcoholism and opium addiction, to say nothing of disease. Sammie Dean is probably the most famous case of a lady of the night who was murdered under horrendous circumstances."

The story goes that Sammie was murdered in 1931 by the son of the mayor of Jerome when she refused his offer of marriage as he wined and dined her at an upscale restaurant. The next morning she was found brutally strangled to death. No charges were ever pressed, but the mayor's son left town shortly after the incident. The spirits of Sammie and other lesser-known "sporting gals" can be seen and heard wandering the streets by the town's community center, which has been tagged "Spook Hall."

#### BECKLEY WEIGHS IN

Publisher, researcher and co-host of the "Unraveling The Secrets" podcast Tim Beckley has long been pushing the connection between the paranormal and UFOs.

"I have discovered that there are many similarities," Beckley said, "between what happens in a séance room and what happens at a UFO landing site. Objects move, people levitate, mysterious orbs appear to dance around, and sometimes the primary observer will start to channel the occupants of the craft they have seen. There is a certain 'dark side' of UFOlogy which encompasses what I call the 'fear factor.' Many UFO percipients tend to keep silent about what transpires in the aftermath of their encounter. They feel that seeing a UFO is strange enough, so why add to the 'believability' and trauma of the episode in question? Even physical trace investigator Ted Phillips, who was a close associate of the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek, started out believing in the ET Hypothesis for the origin of UFOs but now concedes – mainly because of his research into the ongoing phenomena surrounding Marley Woods – that there is a paranormal aspect to UFOs that serious 'nuts-and-bolts' researchers have long overlooked."

#### SUPERNATURAL AMERICANA

With the foregoing (and many other) bizarre narratives on offer, the profusely illustrated "The Bell Witch Project" is essential reading for those interested in supernatural Americana. From 19th century poltergeist hauntings to New England vampires to man-eating Rolling Heads, stories abound that will surprise and terrify and which most likely

have escaped your notice until now. When we think of the hardy pioneers who settled this country, we should also consider the frightening paranormal encounters that came with the territory. Our forebears not only fought Indians and British and French armies but also strange interlopers from the unknown who sometimes came to vent the rage of hell itself on hapless farmers and ordinary folks of all stripes.

#### SUGGESTED READING;

##### THE BELL WITCH PROJECT:

**poltergeists, ghosts, exorcisms and the supernatural in early american history**

[http://www.amazon.com/bell-witch-project-poltergeist-supernatural/dp/1606111892/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182291&sr=1-1&keywords=bell+witch+project](http://www.amazon.com/bell-witch-project-poltergeist-supernatural/dp/1606111892/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182291&sr=1-1&keywords=bell+witch+project)

##### AMERICA'S STRANGE AND SUPERNATURAL HISTORY: Including prophecy of the presidents

[http://www.amazon.com/americas-strange-supernatural-history-prophecies/dp/1606111558/ref=sr\\_1\\_1\\_twi\\_2\\_pap?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182460&sr=1-1&keywords=supernatural+in+america+tim+swartz](http://www.amazon.com/americas-strange-supernatural-history-prophecies/dp/1606111558/ref=sr_1_1_twi_2_pap?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182460&sr=1-1&keywords=supernatural+in+america+tim+swartz)

##### LEVITATION AND INVISIBILITY

[http://www.amazon.com/levitation-invisibility-incredible-powers-within/dp/1606111434/ref=sr\\_1\\_20\\_twi\\_2\\_pap?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182614&sr=1-20](http://www.amazon.com/levitation-invisibility-incredible-powers-within/dp/1606111434/ref=sr_1_20_twi_2_pap?s=books&ie=utf8&qid=1428182614&sr=1-20)

*"Many UFO percipients tend to keep silent about what transpires in the aftermath of their encounter. They feel that seeing a UFO is strange enough, so why add to the 'believability' and trauma of the episode in question?"*



#### About the author:

Sean Casteel is a freelance journalist who has been writing about UFOs, alien abduction and many other paranormal subjects since 1989. Sean's writing appeared in many UFO- and paranormal-related magazines, including "UFO Magazine," Tim Beckley's "UFO Universe," "FATE Magazine," "Mysteries Magazine," and "Open Minds Magazine," most of which are now defunct but were a major part of a thriving UFO press in their heyday. Magazines in the UK, Italy, Romania and Australia have also published Sean's work.

Sean has written or contributed to over 30 books for Global Communications and Inner Light Publications, all of which are available from Amazon.com. Sean's books include "The Heretic's UFO Guidebook," which analyzes a selection of Gnostic Christian writings and their relationship to the UFO phenomenon, and "Signs and Symbols of the Second Coming," in which he interviews several religious and paranormal experts about how prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ may be fulfilled.

## READER EXPERIENCE:

# The friend who wasn't there (Cromwell Road Portsmouth)

Tony Ainsworth hadn't visited his mother for a while and decided to make a surprise visit, complete with the wife and five kids, arriving very early one morning. Tony's Mother was pleased to see them all but concerned she hadn't enough food in for breakfast to 'feed the five thousand', as she put it. Tony explained there was no need to worry or be concerned as he would go and get things for a cooked breakfast from the corner shop. To this day he will never understand why he walked to the corner shop in Cromwell Road, as he has a philosophy in life, never stand when you can sit, never sit when you can lay and never walk when you can get a taxi.

This day he walked the few hundred yards to the shop but Tony could have so easily driven. The trip was without incident the food bought and as he was returning to his mothers' home at around 8.15 am. In the distance Tony could see a figure stood on the pavement and thought it was a man he knew called Adam that he had known since his childhood. They were not related by blood, he was someone who was quite a bit older than Tony, someone who had always been there in the background but he did not really want to get into a conversation with him as he knew he would be there for ages and he really wanted his bacon and eggs! Tony held his head down to make himself as inconspicuous as possible and went on walking, but there was no escape; Adam had spotted him and delightedly called out to Tony and that was it. He had been captured.

"How's your mother, how's the kids, what are you doing these days?" It was the usual grilling from an old man long since retired and basically living alone and lonely. The conversation seemed to drag on and on and despite shuffling his feet, muttering about his mum and the wife waiting and everyone being hungry, it fell on deaf ears...every means of escape was blocked or thwarted. Eventually, he did finally manage to break away and hurried back to his mother's house where he was met with a certain amount of hostility. "Where have you been shopping?" she asked "London?"

Tony explained he had been delayed on his return by Adam in Cromwell Road and that should have taken care of the problem but his mother seemed confused and asked "Which Adam, Adam who?" Tony replied, somewhat impatiently "Adam! Shirley's Adam, clothes shop Adam, that Adam you know!"

"Ho I know alright Adams been dead seven years if it's a day, you'd better come up with a better excuse than that one!" His mother scoffed, standing with her hands on her hips and looking him straight in the eye. Needless to say this was something of a surprise to Tony and he felt his heart stop for a moment and the hairs on the back of his neck rise.

The shock nearly killed Tony and he often wonders what passers-by on their way to work and the local school had thought seeing Tony talking to a ghost-or perhaps Tony was the only one who could see Adam, and he had appeared to be talking to himself!

Adam was as real flesh and blood as anyone reading Tony's story is, but for over thirty minutes Tony talked to a ghost in broad daylight and didn't know at the time he was doing it. It's a strange world and this event changed Tony's life, bringing a greater level of understanding and belief so that in later years Tony became a spiritual healer and exorcist.

Sadly shortly after writing this, Tony Ainsworth passed away. He is sadly missed by so many people, he was definitely one of the Worlds characters you loved so much.

Norie Mifes

Norie is the Editor of The Supernatural magazine. Publications Officer, Conference and Events Organiser for ASSAP (The Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomenon) and a global business coach.

With 44 year's experience investigating the paranormal, having conducted investigations in Australia and America as well as the UK, there aren't many people with more experience than Norie.

In addition to her commitment as an investigator, Norie has worked as an advisor and researcher for many paranormal TV shows and appeared as a contributor. She is a member of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) and an advisor for Midlands Society for Paranormal Research (MSPR) Norie is a solid part of the wider paranormal community and well respected amongst her peers



# Ghost Hunting

# VS.

# Paranormal Investigation

By Richard Southall

When I started to investigate the unknown in the 1980s and 1990s, paranormal investigations and ghost hunting were not taken too seriously by most of our society. Back in the day, when a person on the street was asked about his or her knowledge and opinion of the paranormal, images from movies such as *Poltergeist* and *Ghostbusters* would often come to mind.

To be honest, this mind-set is still held by a small portion of our population to this day. Although nearly thirty years old and considerably outdated, Ray Parker Jr.'s *Ghostbusters* and the theme from the show *The X-Files* are still occasionally played as introduction music when a credible guest is interviewed about the paranormal.

Of course, there were some of us who have always taken the paranormal very seriously. Those of who knew about the reality of the paranormal persisted and held true to our beliefs. Finally, our voices began to be heard and people started to listen.

Since the late 2000s, the public's perception of the paranormal has evolved to the point that it has become socially acceptable and in some cases even en vogue to believe in things otherworldly. According to a 2005 Gallup Poll, approximately 32% of the general population believe in ghosts. National polls in different countries have yielded similar results. Not too shabby.

I believe that this paradigm shift is absolutely fascinating as it gives paranormal enthusiasts a sense of credibility that was really not there in the past. I'd have to think that the Internet, social media, and television shows such as *Ghost Hunters* or *Ghost Adventures* have brought ghost hunting out of the shadows and has made it an accepted part of our mainstream culture.

However, I've noticed that a small number of people have simply jumped on the bandwagon and have started to "ghost hunt" without having any real understanding of the paranormal. A smaller number still will use a "paranormal investigation" or "ghost hunt" as an excuse to party, trespass, and vandalize. Sadly, this type of irresponsibility and ignorance has occasionally had devastating results. Just think of the tragic end to Lebeau Plantation in Arabi, Louisiana. In 2013, a group of people went "ghost hunting" while under the influence of drugs and alcohol accidentally caught the antebellum mansion on fire, burning it to the ground.

I think that we as paranormal enthusiasts should unite together in order to make certain that the general public understand what ghost hunters and paranormal investigators do, how they do it, and, more importantly, why they do it. In order to do so, I think that it would be useful to make a distinction between ghost hunting and paranormal investigation.



At first glance, the terms “paranormal investigation” and “ghost hunting” appear to be interchangeable, used to describe the active study of paranormal events that take place at different locations. However, with years of experience in the field, I believe that there are some minute but important differences between ghost hunting and paranormal investigation.

### What is Paranormal Investigation?

As the name implies, paranormal investigation is simply the investigation and study of events that mainstream culture would define as “paranormal.” As I have said in previous articles, blogs, and radio interviews, the vast majority of a paranormal investigation does not actually take place at a haunted location. Most of the time spent conducting a paranormal investigation involves doing research.

When I conduct an investigation, I tend to spend the first part of an investigation learning as much history as possible about a location that is allegedly haunted. This would include researching names of people, important dates, significant events, and other facts about the location. When I have gathered enough information about a location, I would then collect rumours, legends, or

any related information that may lead some to believe that a location is haunted. Finally, I will search for eyewitnesses to any paranormal activity. This is actually easier than a person would expect, since most often the people experiencing a haunting are seeking me out. Needless to say, this process can take some time if done properly.

Once I have gathered and researched this information, then I will generally make a visit to a haunted location. Although I tend to remain open-minded, I try to look at things realistically and rationally. I don’t want to simply jump to conclusions; just because there are rumours and legends that a place is haunted do not necessarily mean that it is haunted.

*“I’ve noticed that a small number of people have simply jumped on the bandwagon and have started to “ghost hunt” without having any real understanding of the paranormal. A smaller number still will use a “paranormal investigation” or “ghost hunt” as an excuse to party, trespass, and vandalize.”*

This point is where I believe that paranormal investigations really can get exciting. A person can still bring all of the interesting technology along to capture an EVP or photograph of the ghost. Technology is essential to an investigation, but it is important to remember that there is more to the investigation than simply relying on the technology. It is used to support the hypothesis as to whether or not a location is haunted, one piece of a much larger puzzle. That being said, there is nothing more exciting and then to be able to satisfying than to trace EVP or apparition back to a particular person.

To give you an idea of how paranormal investigation has influenced our society, think of Gray Barker's book *They Knew Too Much* about Flying Saucers or John Keel's *The Moth man* prophesies. Barker and Keel both meticulously researched information from a large variety of sources (interviews, newspapers, etc.), which allowed them to weave together stories that have influenced several aspects of our culture. Think of the movies *Men in Black* and *The Moth man* Prophesies. Without Keel's and Barker's thorough dedication into properly investigating their respective topics, these stories would likely have not endured over the years.

### What Is Ghost Hunting?

Ghost hunting has a slightly different flavour than paranormal investigation. As mentioned earlier in the article, the paranormal and especially ghost hunting has received a great deal of positive attention recent years. Although research of a haunted area is conducted prior to the ghost hunt, it is sometimes not conducted to the same extent as with a paranormal investigation. I feel that sometimes the main focus of the ghost hunt is for the people to have a fun and scary experience while in an area that is believed to be haunted. There is nothing wrong with that. To be honest, some of my most memorable scrapes with the paranormal have been on ghost hunts.

Some ghost hunters rely heavily on technology to gather proof of a haunting. This is all well and good, but sometimes a person can have the tendency to focus too much on the technology that they often overlook some of the bigger picture. Think about a person who sees the ocean for the first time but is so concerned about capturing it on film that they miss the entire experience. I've seen it happen all too often.

If a person relies heavily on listening for EVPs or over-analysing a photograph, there is the danger of finding something that really isn't there. This phenomenon is known as pareidolia, or finding a familiar visual or auditory pattern in some stimulus that is not really present. Sometimes, a shadow in a photograph isn't an apparition of a ghost. Sometimes, it's just a shadow.

That being said, there have been many, many legitimate examples of convincing anecdotal evidence collected during a ghost hunt. Some of the most impressive examples of EVPs and photographs have been captured by people simply going through an area that is believed to be haunted.

Another difference between paranormal investigation and ghost hunting is that ghost hunting can often be considered more of a social event than paranormal investigation. Several

businesses have sprouted throughout the country that offers "ghost hunts," especially around Halloween. Ghost hunts are often accompanied with some publicity or fanfare. Paranormal investigations are usually more low-key with only a few participants.

### So, Is one Better Than the other?

Although there are a few subtle differences between ghost hunting and paranormal investigation, I am not going to say that one is better than another. In fact, I think that the two can complement one another quite nicely. I know of paranormal groups that have ghost hunts for the public and conduct paranormal investigations for private individuals. In essence, they can provide the best of both worlds for those interested in ghosts.

A ghost hunt conducted by a group of responsible friends or under the supervision of a tour guide will allow some people the opportunity to know what it is really like to search through a haunted area. For some, a one night trek by flashlight through an abandoned asylum or prison is quite enough to quench their thirst for the unknown. These people would likely enjoy ghost hunting immensely.

However, there are those of us who want to know the who, why, when, where, and how of a place that may be haunted. People of this mind-set will likely be more inclined to enjoy conducting paranormal investigations.

"Technology is essential to an investigation, but it is important to remember that there is more to the investigation than simply relying on the technology. It is used to support the hypothesis as to whether or not a location is haunted, one piece of a larger puzzle."

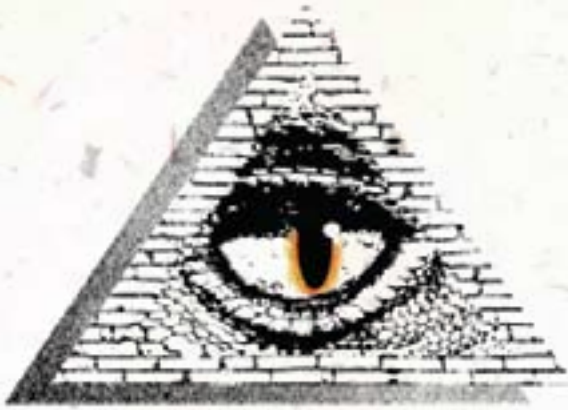


#### About the author:

Richard Southall is the author of *How to Be a Ghost Hunter* (2003), *Haunted Route 66* (2013) and *Haunted Plantations of the South* (2015). He has also written articles for a number of periodicals, including *Fate Magazine*. To reflect his interest in writing about the unknown, Richard is a current member of the Horror Writers' Association.

In addition, he has been a featured guest on several national and international radio shows including *The X-Zone Radio Show* with Rob McConnel, *Shadows of the Paranormal*, *Edge of the Unknown*, and *Spirited History* with Leanne and Angela.

Richard lives in northern West Virginia with his family, where he has worked for over ten years as a substance abuse therapist. He is actively involved in his community and is a current member of the Freemasons and Scottish Rite.



# SERIOUSLY SUSPICIOUS

Article by Lucya Szachnowski

## Seriously Suspicious Conspiracy: Helen Duncan

There have recently been calls to pardon the last woman imprisoned in England under the Witchcraft laws. Her name was Helen Duncan and she was a psychic medium. The details of her life and the case brought against her were the subject of a talk at Assap's Seriously Suspicious conference on conspiracies on Saturday.

The talk was by Ben Emlyn-Jones and it was called Witchcraft Trial. It was about conspiracy theories and the last person to be sent to jail under the Witchcraft Act. Ben started by saying that he is a conspiracy theorist and, in particular, doesn't like injustice. What was done to Helen Duncan 72 years ago, he saw as an injustice, but it is still relevant case. Here is a shortened version of the transcript I took of his talk:

Helen Duncan (pictured below) was born in 1898 and she was a psychic medium – a clairvoyant. She was part of an elite group of mediums - physical mediums. They can affect physical world with things like raps on tables, making objects move and manifesting physical forms, which is what Helen did. Witnesses described seeing ectoplasm, which is a white substance that resembles shapes of people who have died; spirits.

She became one of the most famous in world and travelled all over UK, visiting Spiritualist halls and private homes etc. There are two photos (following page, top left) that are obvious fakes with papier mache dummies, sheets and coat hangers. People say these prove she was a fraud, but there is always more than one side to each story. Yes, these are fakes, but were intended as a reconstruction of what Helen Duncan in trance would look like.

Helen operated in an unusual manner to other mediums. There would be rows of seats for sitters, you paid 12s at the door - not cheap - sitters



would sit in front of stage, which had a cabinet/cubicle with a seat. Helen Duncan would prepare in another room. It was important to her that people believed her. She would strip and a nurse would check her to say she wasn't hiding props and also invite female members of the audience to watch the body search.

Then she would move into the cubicle, curtains were drawn and the room was lit by a low-power red bulb. That lighting could be said to hide tricks, but proponents of this said it was done to protect the spirits, which were harmed by bright light.

In 1939 when World War Two broke out, Helen's fortunes changed. Her services were required. People were very frightened and uncertain. Her business boomed. But, on 25 May 1941, things went wrong. Her spirit guide appeared – one was a man called Albert, an Australian, and another was a young girl called Peggy. At this séance Albert said a British battle ship has just been sunk and that he had 1,400 of her officers with him in spirit. One man in the audience, Brigadier Firebrace, was head of army intelligence in Scotland as well as being a paranormal researcher. He went to his office and checked with a phone call. Initially the reply was no, everything was fine. Then he got a phone call saying that HMS Hood had gone down off Scapa Flow and 1,400 were dead at the time Helen did her séance.

The loss was a major blow to war effort.

Because Brigadier Firebrace had a belief in paranormal and he realised Helen was getting war information from the dead and could possibly reveal classified information, he was worried. His daughter has a letter that he wrote saying there should be intelligence monitoring of Helen.

She carried on her tour. On 24 Nov she was doing a séance in the Master Temple in Portsmouth, which was actually a small room above a chemist's shop run by Mr and Mrs Homer (modern photo, next page top right). Albert said another battle ship had sunk and hundreds of officers were in the spirit world. There were probably intelligence agents in room watching. What made it worrying was that the government had decided to keep the sinking of HMS Barham quiet. It was just after Dunkirk and morale was a major concern. Even some relatives were not informed and secrecy was high, so it is unlikely that Helen had found out by normal means.



PLATE XV  
Helen Duncan "photographed during a seance with Mrs. Duncan at her house. Note mask-like face, "swallowing" shoulders, and waxy and soft of material.

She carried on, but she was probably monitored - maybe by enemy agents too. Nothing more was done for three years. She was arrested 19 Jan 1944 in the Master Temple in Portsmouth. She had a conviction for fraud from several years earlier and in that instance she had been fined. This time, instead of getting a fine, she got something totally unexpected and the case escalated. She was taken to the Old Bailey and charged under the Witchcraft Act of 1735, which was about pretending to use witchcraft or sorcery, or pretending to do any occult science.

It was almost first sceptic law as it said that people who claimed to have psychic powers were pretending. It was not common to use this old law by the 1940s. The Witchcraft Act was on the verge of being repealed. However, the judge sentenced her to nine months in prison.

A look behind the original news stories offers a chance to find out what happened. The trial became media sensation and even war stories were second paged.

John Cyril Maude KC prosecuted the case in courtroom 4 of the Old Bailey. Helen had not been given bail – she was a remand prisoner. He was a member of one of the Inns of Court, a senior member, and after he convicted her he was knighted and became an MP. Is this a coincidence?

Sir John Cyril Maude was dealing with two cases. Also, in court 1, he was prosecuting a case of a man on trial for murder in Portsmouth – the Portsmouth chief constable was a witness in both trials. The murder suspect said he was framed and was acquitted.

Maybe the government wanted Maude because he was a wartime intelligence operative charged with tracking sources of rumours. The office he was in would have been employed to keep an eye on Helen.

The presiding judge was also a senior naval officer, so would have been emotionally involved in the case. There is also a letter specifically asking for Maude to preside over prosecuting the case.

One of the most recent books about the case is called Helen Duncan the Mystery Show Trial, by Hartley 2007. It offers evidence that there was a conspiracy to imprison Helen.

It looks as though there was a secret cabal that included Commander Ian Fleming. He was a naval intelligence officer, a member of Society for Psychical Research, an occultist and, of course, wrote the James Bond novels.

**"She became one of the most famous in world and travelled all over UK, visiting Spiritualist halls and private homes etc. People say these prove she was a fraud, but there is always more than one side to each story. Yes, these are fakes, but were intended as a reconstruction of what Helen Duncan in trance would look like."**



There were difference in the way the witnesses for the prosecution and defence reported the events. Prosecution witnesses said they were lured there and saw Helen in a sheet. Two people were put there by the police and said they pulled a sheet off and blew a police whistle. One of them said he was motivated to do that because he was disillusioned by seeing Helen was a fake. He lied under oath. The defence council asked him if he was a member of the intelligence services. He said no, but he was.

The bed sheet should have been a major exhibit in court, but it wasn't. It got lost – even though two people said they had their hands on it in the police raid. There were discrepancies in the details of how it got lost. There were contradictions in how low the lights were and whether faces were recognisable. Harry Price, the paranormal investigator, coached the prosecution's witnesses.

The jury found her guilty in half an hour and she was taken to Holloway Prison.

One hypothesis is that she was a real psychic medium or people in government thought she was and constructed a conspiracy to put her in jail because of D-Day, which was being kept very secret. All it took for the secret to come out was if in one of Helen's séances something came out.

However, why didn't the government pay Helen off or make her sign the Official Secrets Act?

After she was released, Helen returned to mediumship and the Witchcraft Act was eventually repealed.

# Portrait of A Past Life Skeptic

by Robert L. Snow

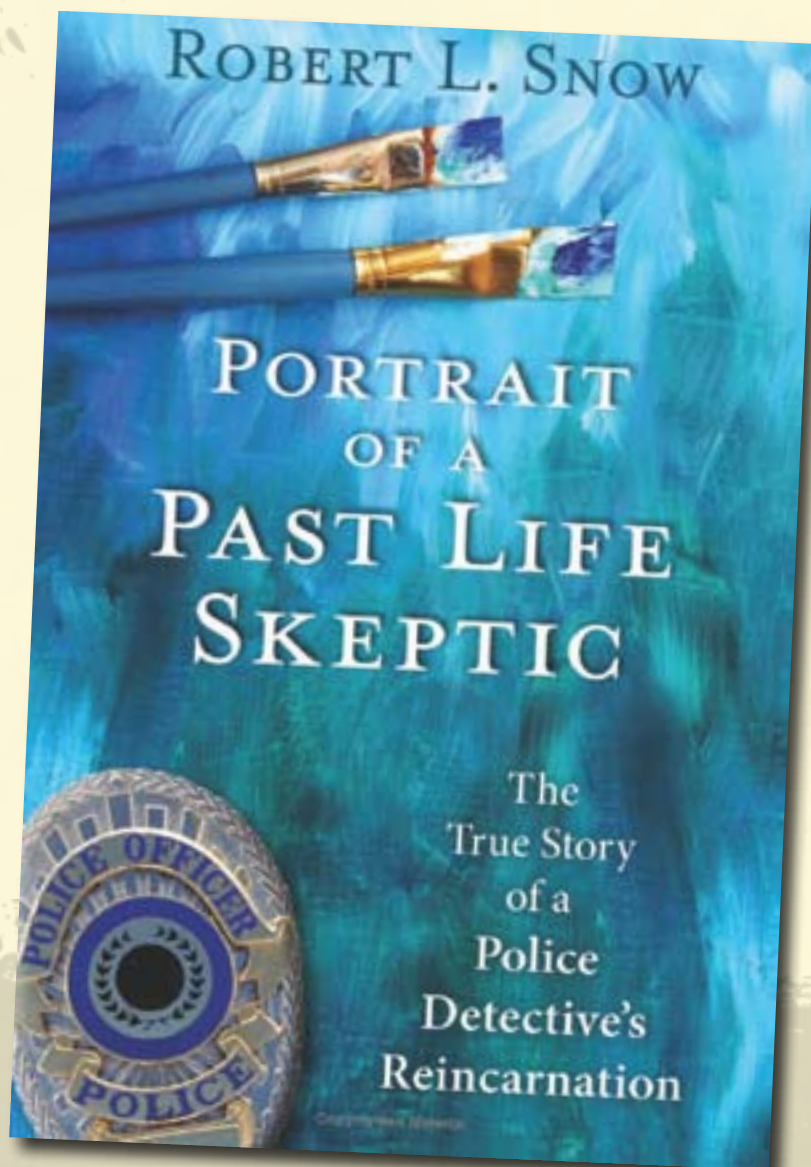
Portrait of A Past Life Skeptic reads as a Master Detective story - and it would be something that I am sure Holmes & Watson would have taken a great interest in had Robert Snow called at their Baker Street "office" with this "conundrum". However Robert had to do all the detective work himself - something that he had been employed to do as Police Captain of the Indianapolis Police Department. Under his jurisdiction homicide dropped in the city and success rates for detection reached over 80% - so you get the idea that this guy is something of a stickler for the truth - and justice.

However, back to the book. Basically Robert was dubious about "past life regression" and the alleged "facts" it sometimes brought to the surface - were these facts simply "put there" by psychoanalysts as "what was wanted to be heard" or was there something more. He went to a recommended "Past Life Regression Therapist" (my words) with the belief that it was all a load of "New Age Hooey". In his attempt to disprove or find what he believed to be a rational explanation for his "regressed memories" he was in for a big shock.

Without giving too much away - for this is after all a "thriller" of sorts - Robert finds that he was an artist in past life and sets out to research the artist's real life and recorded facts to prove or disprove his regression experience.

The book - the second and latest edition - follows his quest for the truth and it is certainly a page turner. "I had to accept that the world was completely different from what I had believed it to be my whole life" is his conclusion.

Recommended for all skeptics - even if you still decide to disbelieve the facts of this book you will have read something that will stimulate discussion and hopefully make you think - "well there may be something in this after all".



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Do you have something you want to share in an upcoming edition of Seriously Strange magazine? We're always looking for interesting contributions. We prioritise articles from our members but also welcome pieces from non-members. If you'd like to write up your research summary, original account or topical thoughts into a short article, please get in touch on [publications@assap.ac.uk](mailto:publications@assap.ac.uk).

We also welcome proposals for submissions to our annual journal, Anomaly.





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