

Practical Ghost Hunting for Skeptical Believers

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INTRODUCTION

Psychical is a word that means, "of or relating to things perceived through the senses as opposed to the mind", and paranormal is a word that means, "denoting events or phenomena such as telekinesis or clairvoyance that are beyond the scope of normal scientific understanding".

Ghost hunting is a pseudoscience, which means, "a collection of beliefs or practices mistakenly regarded as being based on scientific method", because it is the study of consciousness.

Consciousness is "the awareness or perception of something by a person", and is not a contested topic. However, consciousness has yet to be explained, or even which areas of the human brain are capable of producing it. Some even hypothesize remote consciousness, or non-locality of cognition, wherein consciousness is separate from the brain, and the brain only acts as a filter for it.

Most in the field of psychical research and paranormal investigation believe that some part of a person, be it consciousness or the soul, may be able to interact with the environment and that that part survives physical death and can, on occasion and communicate with the still-living.

But you're not the typical ghost hunter, are you? You avoid television shows about ghost hunting because it all seems so staged. People may say you're one of the most skeptical believers that they've met, and now you want to look further into this pseudoscience to see if there's anything to the phenomena.

Inside this book, you'll learn how to separate possible phenomena from those who only purported to have these experiences, types of hauntings and the different forms of the apparitional experience, how to research and investigate ghostly folklore in your area and separate them from common urban legends, which devices you actually need and which ones are just for show, how to engage with those who claim psychic facilities, and much more. You'll also find example forms for your investigations, a research guide for cemeteries and graveyards, and a parapsychological dictionary inside.

Happy hunting!

BOOK I:
PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND
INVESTIGATION

PERCIPIENT CONSIDERATIONS

Psychical research considers images and experiences as a symptom of mental or physical illnesses and induced by certain substance abuse. Remember, unless you possess specific degrees, you can't diagnose a disorder or illness, and some people are very private and more sensitive than others when medical questions arise.

As a ghost hunter, it's always important to consider why a percipient may be contacting you to investigate their experiences. Some percipients may need help in understanding their experiences, while others may be fraudulent or be suffering from mental health or substance abuse issues.

Some of these illnesses and issues involve hallucinations, which can be perceived as paranormal, so it's best to educate yourself on the types of hallucinations, and why they might occur. They include:

- Auditory hallucinations are sounds such as voices, music, footsteps, doors opening and closing, etc.
- Visual hallucinations are sights such as people, animals, objects, shapes, shadows, lights, etc.
- Tactile hallucinations are feelings of being touched, of bugs crawling over the skin, internal organs moving, etc.
- Olfactory hallucinations are phantom smells that can be pleasant or repulsive
- Gustatory hallucinations are inexplicable strange or unpleasant tastes
- Presence hallucinations are feelings that someone else is in the room
- Proprioceptive hallucinations are feelings of floating or moving when staying still

Mental and physical ailments associated with hallucinations are explained in more detail here.

If you find that there are underage, elderly, or disabled persons in an unsafe home environment as a result of an investigation, it's your responsibility to contact the appropriate agencies, and then cut contact with percipients.

Liminality and Marginality

Researchers into "high strangeness" have noted that all kinds of paranormal phenomena seem to follow persons who are in a liminal state or who have been marginalized.

Liminality is a state of transition between one major stage of life to the next. Pregnancy, puberty, marriage, retirement, divorce, moving to a new location, a death in the family, and career changes are examples of liminality. During these times, paranormal phenomena are more likely to occur.

It's almost a cliché that poltergeist activity is associated with the presence of a young lady going through the liminal period of puberty. Objects unpredictably and repetitively seem to move about the home on their own, residents are disturbed by strange knocking noises, and items in the home may break. These occurrences seem to follow a person, unlike typical haunted house tales. As early as the publication of Hereward Carrington's 1951 book, *Haunted People*, connections between changes in life and poltergeist activity were noted.

Another cliché in parapsychology is that, when a home is undergoing renovations, paranormal activity seems to occur. During renovations, the home is indeed in a liminal state.

Marginality is the state of being marginalized, which can mean a place located on the border or edge of a town, or a person being isolated from their community or culture. In George P. Hansen's book, *The Trickster and the Paranormal*, it's evident that marginalized persons, such as minorities, those in the LGBTQ+ community, disabled persons, persons suffering from persistent mental illness, persons with addictions, those living in poverty, and those with criminal backgrounds have a higher probability of being susceptible to paranormal phenomena.

Marginalized persons are often disadvantaged, leading to financial instability, housing concerns, addiction issues, and physical and mental health issues that aren't always managed properly.

Mental Health Issues

There are a few mental health disorders that can lead sufferers to contact you for alleged paranormal phenomena, though the claims are usually untrue.

Persons suffering from borderline personality disorder are most likely to claim demonic possession or attachment of a discarnate consciousness in an attempt to shift blame for their negative traits. Behavior to look out for that may indicate that the percipient might suffer from this disorder may include:

- Frequently contacting you about supposed possession symptoms to relieve their anxieties surrounding fear of abandonment and feelings of emptiness
- Might claim to have dissociative identity disorder, formerly known as multiple personalities
- Continues to bring up how weak, afraid, and vulnerable they are, as if they're searching for someone to save them
- Discusses openly how frequently people leave their lives for no reason
- Mentions how the possessing or oppressive external agent causes them to become angry, act impulsively, and have thoughts of self-harm and suicide
- May become angry when questioned about their supposed experiences

Persons suffering from histrionic personality disorder crave attention and may continue to contact you to get this attention, claiming any number of alleged paranormal activities. They are more likely to research paranormal activity to claim more and more dramatic occurrences. Behavior to look out for that may indicate that the percipient might suffer from this disorder may include:

- Is overly dramatic when describing alleged paranormal phenomena, including exaggerated body language
- May inflict superficial wounds or cuts on themselves and claim it's because they were attacked by a discarnate consciousness
- Has shallow emotions that change rapidly
- Is often concerned with their physical appearance, sometimes to the point of dressing provocatively
- Quickly brings up sexual topics or may claim to have intercourse with discarnate consciousnesses
- Becomes far too attached to you too quickly, and starts to get involved in your personal life
- Will freely discuss a myriad of physical health conditions in themselves and those closest to them, often bringing them up in conversation for no reason

- May begin to get so close to you that you have to start screening your calls and ignoring messages to the point that you feel that they might be becoming a stalker
- May become desperate for more attention and fake phenomena when questioned about their experiences

Persons suffering from schizotypal personality disorder and not following their medication regimen are more likely to have difficulty telling the difference between their beliefs and reality, as well as act strangely and claim to have utterly bizarre paranormal experiences. Behavior to look out for that may indicate that the percipient might suffer from this disorder may include:

- Voicing concerns that you're only pretending to be a ghost hunter and that you might use their experiences or an investigation to make fun of them or tell someone in their lives about the alleged phenomenon
- Voices concerns that you believe that they brought the supposed paranormal experiences on themselves by some act
- Voices concerns that people in their lives may have caused the alleged activity to punish them
- Believes that a discarnate consciousness is leaving them hidden messages or believes there's paranormal meaning behind a perfectly normal event
- Speaks in a monotone voice almost all of the time

Often, there's a comorbidity of personality disorders and mental disorders, and a person not managing their mental health well may exhibit symptoms from more than one of the above disorders.

Eviction

Some people facing eviction falsely believe that if they can provide any evidence of paranormal phenomena from an outside source, such as a ghost hunter, they will not be forced to leave their residence. This is usually a tactic that comes from real estate death disclosure, where in some states, deaths on the property have to be disclosed when purchasing a home. Even in those states, consideration is seldom extended to renters.

Some clues that this is the basis behind false claims is that the percipient will be very insistent that someone must have passed away on their property or in their residence while seeming to be more comfortable with the paranormal claims than you would expect.

Methamphetamine Use

Those suffering from methamphetamine psychosis will report seeing shadow people, having auditory hallucinations, and hearing things that others haven't. They'll also become extremely paranoid, convinced that someone or something is out to get them, has installed recording devices in their homes, that cars driving by are spying on them, etc.

Since it's unlikely you'll be around someone abusing this illicit substance long enough to see obvious signs of methamphetamine use, and probably won't find paraphernalia, some behavior signs that might help you determine if the percipient is abusing the drug can include:

- Saying that they are too hot when you're comfortable

- Dilated pupils and dark under-eye circles
- Skin sores and sometimes what appears to be a burn mark or scar on the lips and/or hands
- Hyperactivity, erratic behavior, jerking movements, and the inability to sit for too long or pay attention for long periods
- Pressured speech, which is defined as talking faster than normal and too much, and quickly changing topics
- Voices how happy or excited they are a few times during short interactions

Some of these are also symptoms of a manic episode due to bipolar disorder, or a person suffering from attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) who isn't following their medication regimen, and sometimes, it's difficult to tell the difference between methamphetamine psychosis and schizophrenia, so it's always best to follow your instincts.

Publicity

Claims of intense paranormal phenomena can bring a percipient attention or be purposed as a story that can be sold and made into a book, featured on a "reality" television show, or made into a feature-length film. Sometimes, the attention gained by a local newspaper article is a person's goal.

Many businesses try to distance themselves from rumors of being haunted, but some embrace the idea to increase customers and income. In these instances, any anomalies caught on documentary equipment will be celebrated and publicized by business owners. Keep in mind when investigating these businesses that a lot of the information provided about alleged ghosts may have come from a single, unreliable source long ago.

Physical Health Conditions

There are a few physical health conditions that can lead to hallucinations that can be perceived as paranormal, though investigation requests from those suffering are a lot less common than those from persons suffering from certain mental illnesses.

Alzheimer's disease, which begins with a mental decline called dementia, is a tragic condition. Due to changes in the physical structure of the brain, those suffering will experience all sorts of hallucinations of all of the senses. This disease also leads to paranoia and delusions, memory loss, and many more devastating symptoms. Early onset of hallucinations isn't common but can occur in some cases. Most of the time, the person or family knows or suspects the disease, so it's uncommon to receive investigation requests from those suffering. Some family members doing their best to make sense of the disease will say that they believe wholeheartedly that their deteriorating loved one is speaking to deceased persons that they can see and hear because of the illness.

Other changes to the structure of the brain, such as tumors in different parts of the brain, can lead to visual hallucinations that can be perceived as paranormal. However, more profound symptoms such as forgetfulness, speech problems, or mood swings usually precede these and lead to quick diagnosis.

The main symptom of Charles Bonnet syndrome is visual hallucinations, which may include people who aren't there. It's diagnosed in the elderly who are losing their sight. The hallucinations can be sudden and vivid, last for hours, and include not only people, but animals, objects, and different places. In the

majority of cases, the person is aware that what they're seeing isn't real or paranormal. Because the hallucinations are so intense, the syndrome is diagnosed fairly quickly.

Although rare, chronic migraines can cause hallucinations. Some sufferers describe smelling a scent that isn't present before a migraine, and during a migraine, some people may hear voices that aren't present. Those suffering from this condition are typically aware that these are symptoms that come along with the other debilitating effects.

Different types of epilepsy can bring about various kinds of hallucinations immediately before (prodrome) and after (postictal) a seizure. However, persons suffering from these conditions will almost always be well aware that these are neurological and not paranormal.

A thyroid storm is a life-threatening crisis that can occur in persons with hyperthyroidism and can cause psychotic hallucinations. Since it's an emergency, it's very unlikely that someone going through this will contact a ghost-hunter because of the hallucinations.

Nighttime complex visual hallucinations of people and animals are common in persons suffering from Parkinson's disease. These hallucinations are most often friendly and pleasant and occur after other symptoms. If contacted by a person with this disease, it would be important to ask if the phenomena are only visual and if anyone else has seen apparitions, though sufferers are typically aware that these images aren't real.

Hallucinations are common in persons with untreated urinary tract infections and are usually reported by the elderly. However, other symptoms such as trouble sleeping, anxiety and depression, confusion, aggression and hostility, delusions, and paranoia accompany the hallucinations, leading to quick diagnosis and treatment.

TYPES OF EXPERIENCES

Psychical research divides experiences into different types of hauntings, as well as examines the apparitional experience into phases around death.

Types of Hauntings

Residual Haunting

Residual hauntings are apparitions that appear to complete a repetitive task and do not interact with the still-living. One hypothesis to explain this type of haunting is the stone tape theory, wherein emotional events in the past were somehow recorded on the surroundings, and, under certain circumstances, can play out in front of a percipient.

The so-called anniversary ghost is a residual image of a deceased individual that appears around the date of their death, yearly.

A haunted object is usually an object “residual energy” has been absorbed into.

Intelligent Haunting

Intelligent hauntings are believed to be discarnate consciousnesses that are cognizant of their surroundings, and the still-living though may not realize that they are no longer still-living, themselves. They rarely interact with their environment to move objects.

Non-human Entity Haunting

Shadow People

Shadow people are spirits that appear as shadowy humanoids. They are commonly seen during episodes of sleep paralysis, and also by persons with methamphetamine addiction.

Shadow people aren't a new phenomenon, appearing in Elizabeth Jane Puttock's, also known as Madame d'Esperance (1848 – 1919) recollections of the beginning of her mediumship, but mainly appeared in the tales of indigenous people. The Zuni people, for example, had a legend that shadow people, called U'Wannami, were rain-bringers, using long-neck gourds to scoop up water and then hide above the clouds to dump rain onto the earth. They were called Tarrajarsuit in First Nation Inuit tales and were said to be a race of people that lived alongside the indigenous people until war broke out. Tseshah First Nation of the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, people also had tales of shadow people, being shades of the deceased.

It wasn't until after the publication of Rosemary Guiley's 1992 book, *The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits*, describing these specters as “watchers” encountered during sleep paralysis, that their popularity exploded, and they became popular in alleged paranormal encounters. She also hypothesized that they could be “demons” or interdimensional beings.

Demons

Particularly violent spirits are often perceived as “demonic”. Most cases of “demonic hauntings” are mistaken incidences of poltergeist activity. Sometimes, they are a symptom of sleep paralysis. More often, percipients who believe that the cause of their experiences is because of a demon are typically more religious, and the alleged infernal spirit is typically blamed for targeting a single person in the home and “causing” them to exhibit behavioral changes that the family doesn’t agree with.

These types of cases are difficult to navigate as a ghost hunter.

It’s important to respect the religious beliefs of these percipients, and not attempt to challenge those beliefs. Such challenges typically cause cognitive dissonance in percipients, which would cause them to hold two opposite ideas at the same time. The result of this usually causes a fight-or-flight adrenaline response in percipients whose beliefs are being challenged.

If the investigation reveals that the “target” of the allegorical demon is a venerable person, such as an underage family member, it’s your responsibility to contact the appropriate agencies, as they might need behavioral or mental health services, and then cut ties with the percipients.

Persons suffering from sleep paralysis may not be as religious but may report encounters with malevolent entities during an event. The psychological impact on persons with a history of sleep paralysis when perceiving these beings is very real and can be traumatic, and it’s in the person’s best interest to educate them about sleep paralysis and encourage them to speak with a physician and possibly a mental health professional to work through any trauma.

It’s also important to note that some religious persons have been taught that “ghosts are demons disguised as people to challenge faith”.

Egregore

An egregore is an inhuman consciousness that coalesces from particularly violent and immoral human actions, over a long period, to become a presence that can be cruel, and often takes on different appearances to frighten the still living. They are most prominent in old asylums and in abandoned prisons, which are typically not haunted.

There’s something about abandoned places, especially those that might have a tragic past that draws curiosity-seekers. These places are said to be haunted, but no one seems to be able to say which event caused the haunting, or who haunts the location. However, some business owners have made quite a bit of money by opening these buildings up to ghost hunters and charging exorbitant fees for investigations.

When investigating such locations, remember that there’s typically no historical evidence of the persons or events that are advertised to cause present paranormal phenomena. Instead, it’s more common that any unsubstantiated evidence from untrained ghost hunters, unsupported one-time supposed encounters, and uncorroborated impressions from self-purported psychics.

Servitor

On occasion, a percipient may blame paranormal phenomena on witchcraft, and a person who is using the practice against them. In the occult, a servitor is an inhuman intelligence created as a thoughtform

by a person practicing negative magick, to carry out a task. They can be used to torment people, and usually appear in misshapen animal forms.

Unless you're experienced in this field and can validate the phenomena, it's best to defer such a percipient to a religious leader aligning to their spiritual beliefs.

The Apparitional Experience

Apparitions of those deceased, as well as the still-living, are divided into categories in psychical research.

Apparitions during Sleep

The most commonly reported apparitions are encountered while falling asleep, called hypnopompic hallucinations, or while waking up, called hypnagogic hallucinations. They are very common, reported by one-third of people. Unless it's a repeating experience or coincides with another paranormal phenomenon, these events can be dismissed.

On the most extreme end is sleep paralysis. This is a rapid eye movement (REM) sleep dysfunction where a person's body is paralyzed even though they're completely conscious. Persons suffering from this disorder will often experience vivid hallucinations of someone or something watching them or straddling their chest, feel as if they're unable to breathe, and sense a malicious presence in the room with them. If you encounter a percipient who experiences these events, it's best to refer them to a medical professional for education, diagnosis, and treatment.

Apparitions of the Living

Apparitions of a living person are surprisingly very common but can be interpreted as a warning that the person whose image is being seen is near death.

Experimental Apparition

An experimental apparition is an image of a still-living person sent to a percipient and is suggestive of the concept of out-of-body experiences (OBEs), or astral projection. A reciprocal apparition is when said apparition actively interacts with the percipient.

Antemortem Apparitions

Antemortem is defined as "before death", and this kind of apparition is said to predict death.

Premonitory Apparitions

A premonitory apparition is a harbinger that often appears before an individual passes. The most common form this sort of apparition takes is called a doppelgänger, or the image of a still-living person that may appear to the person, or to those close to them, and is usually considered a warning that the person will pass soon.

Perimortem Apparitions

Perimortem is defined as “around the time of death”, and can be interpreted as visitation from a discarnate consciousnesses around the time of death.

Crisis Apparition

A crisis apparition is the image of a still-living person that appears to a percipient around the time of crisis. A delayed crisis apparition, however, appears after the crisis has passed.

Deathbed Apparition

A deathbed apparition appears to a person who will soon pass away, is often are reported to be deceased family members. They are occasionally referred to as a take-away apparition, as they are believed to be present to guide the soon-to-be deceased to the afterlife.

Postmortem Apparitions

A postmortem apparition is the image of a person that appears within 12 hours of a person’s passing. A delayed postmortem apparition, however, appears after 12 hours. They are also referred to as reassuring apparitions, as they indicate to the still-living that consciousness survived physical death.

Bystander-type Apparition

A bystander-type apparition is a particular discarnate consciousness that continually appears to someone they knew well in life, while a transient apparition is described as a discarnate consciousness that is only seen once or twice, and is unknown to the percipient.

Haunting Apparition

A haunting apparition appears in the same location over many years, decades, or even centuries. A group of apparitions is called phantoms en masse.

Soulless Apparition

A soulless apparition is the image of a phantom object that appears to percipients, such as “ghost cars”, and “ghost ships”.

Zoological Apparition

An often short-lived haunting wherein the image of a deceased animal appears to the percipient.

Poltergeist Phenomena

Poltergeist is German for "noisy spirit". Today, parapsychologists use the terms recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK), to describe the activity, and agent to describe the focus of, or source of, the activity.

RSPK seems to occur when there are themes of liminality and marginality. Unsurprisingly, early researchers noted a teen going through puberty as a common catalyst.

The phenomenon occurs suddenly and is characterized by objects moving on their own, objects disappearing and reappearing in places that they were not left, items falling out of closed cabinets (called interpenetration of matter), phantom footsteps, strange rapping or tapping noises, unexplained fires that extinguish themselves, scribbles that no one admits to, and even, in some cases, physical assaults. A focus item is an object or piece of furniture, that seems to move more frequently.

Apports, or objects that appear out of thin air, can also occur in cases of RSPK, drawing a somewhat confusing parallel to the past séances of physical mediums. An extreme example of this is lithobolia where stones and other objects are tossed around a home, with no discernible origin, cause, or source. These objects often seem to defy laws of physics and appear to fall slower than anticipated, don't bounce when they hit the ground, and can be hot to the touch when examined.

Another feature is this phenomenon is telethoryby, or "imitative sound". These are sounds of items being broken, or tossed around, but, upon investigation, everything is secure. In extreme cases, the suggestion of spirit involvement in RSPK can cause direct voice phenomena or voices that appear to come out of thin air. Discarnate voices don't usually start abruptly, nor are these voices always located close to the agent, moving around the residence.

William G. Roll (1926 - 2012) hypothesized that agents suffer from focal onset aware seizures, which somehow manipulate the environment. These types of seizures decrease responsiveness and awareness of one's self and surroundings. This could explain the occurrences where agents seem to be "in a trance" when objects are moving around them.

Another hypothesis is that certain individuals with Tourette syndrome, externalize their "tics", whereas the suppressant medication relieves physical symptoms.

Most parapsychologists conclude that this phenomenon has a purpose, and that is to resolve some psychological conflict within the agent.

When investigating poltergeist phenomena, remember that the phenomenon is, by definition, characterized by objects moving on their own. Also, keep in mind that there will always be doubt that the activity is somehow fraudulent. However, education about the phenomenon will most likely be interpreted as "victim blaming", and percipients will instead choose to blame an external agency.

Focus items should be carefully outlined with chalk or painter's tape and monitored on surveillance equipment. However, cases of RSPK are notorious for exhibiting the inkfish effect, where objects will move when they are no longer being monitored.

URBAN LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

There are more than likely allegedly haunted locations that are accessible to the public in your area. While your safety should always be your primary consideration, visiting these locations and researching their history is an excellent way to hone your skills.

You should always follow your city and state laws and not trespass or enter cemeteries or graveyards at night. Also remember to treat such places with respect, and never leave litter behind, or take anything from the location.

Derelict and Stigmatized Property

Derelict property can be defined as a building that has for some reason been abandoned and has fallen into disrepair. These locations, especially those associated with the healthcare field, such as hospitals or mental health facilities, or deserted prisons, are typically connected with ghosts, even when no evidence is present for such claims. They also draw younger persons who may be destructive.

Stigmatized property can be defined as a location that has no apparent reason to be abandoned, has a sound structure and in a desirable location, and is hard to sell because of an event or occurrence that prospective buyers are wary of, such as a murder that happened on the site. Without reducing the price drastically, the property can become derelict. A murder occurring on a location doesn't necessarily mean that the victim or victim's consciousness will remain in the location, or that a residual haunting will occur.

Battlefields

On the topic of murders, there is an old spiritualist belief that persons who were murdered or died suddenly are left with unfinished business, or perhaps become disoriented by their sudden passing, and will remain in the location where they passed away as a discarnate consciousness. Investigations on battlefields where many lost their lives suddenly should be done when the sites are open to the public and great consideration should be given to respecting the past and possible discarnate consciousnesses.

Cemeteries and Graveyards

Cemeteries are burial grounds unconnected to religious buildings, while graveyards are attached to churches. With a few exceptions, burial grounds aren't haunted. They might feel creepy at night, but the majority of states have trespassing laws preventing nighttime visitors.

Folk Tales

It seems like every other town has ghostly tales of phantom hitchhikers, gravity hills, crybaby bridges, and more. These locations allow you to deep dive the history of the location and examine the importance of the folk tales surrounding them but are more than likely not haunted.

The vanishing hitchhiker ghost story motif doesn't seem to change. The story typically goes that one night, a young man driving along a lonely road picks up a young lady who's standing beside the road without a coat. He gives her his coat, and she gives him directions to her home. She's typically described as pale and doesn't speak much. Upon stopping, the woman either vanishes or quickly leaves the car and rushes into

either a home or a cemetery. If the story says that she went into the cemetery, the young man will follow her out of concern, only to find his jacket draped over a tombstone bearing her name. If she goes into a house, the young man is met with one of her family members, who explains that the young lady passed away years before. As a symbol, the vanishing hitchhiker represented the understandable anxieties about picking up a hitchhiker, which was common until “Stranger Danger” programs became popular in the 1980s.

A gravity hill is an optical illusion, and because of this, is believed to be haunted by a deceased person trying to push your automobile out of a dangerous section of the road. The tale is usually that someone had a fatal automobile accident at the location where you park. When you put your automobile in neutral, the car appears to roll backward uphill. Some say that sprinkling baby powder on the hood or the trunk of your automobile will allow for evidence that a ghost is pushing the car away from danger, leaving behind hand or fingerprints in the powder. However, these places only appear to be going downhill and are sloped in a way that it appears the automobile should be going downhill.

The sounds of a baby crying under a bridge are a common ghost motif. The tale can be that a mother throws her infant off of a small bridge, that an automobile accident involving a woman going over the side of the bridge and her and her infant passing away in the water below, or that a flood swept the mother and infants car into the river or creek. In each telling, it's said that the crying of the infant can still be heard coming from under the bridge. Tales explain that if you go to one side of the bridge to see if there's a baby in trouble, the crying will begin from the other side of the bridge. These tales illustrated the dangers of teen pregnancy, according to religious mountain folks. It could also be interpreted as a cautionary tale about postpartum depression. Long ago, it was used to also show the dangers of a woman driving without a man in the vehicle with her.

Many other folk tales might appear in and around your location. It would be advisable to look into these so that you have more knowledge of ghost tours that profit from retelling these folk tales on nightly walks, especially in October.

The color of the clothing of purported ghosts may also indicate something about how the region views the specter's characteristics and traits:

- Apparitions in black are usually connected to themes of religion or mourning. Common ghost tales associate these figures with monks and nuns, but also wailing figures, consumed by grief.
- Apparitions in blue are usually connected to themes of roaming and servitude. Common ghost tales associate these figures with maids in particular. The spirits of Union soldiers also appear in blue.
- Apparitions in gray are usually connected to themes of weather. They tend to appear before a particularly disastrous weather event as a warning. The spirits of Confederate soldiers also appear in gray.
- Apparitions in green are usually connected to themes of wealth, but can also be connected to forests.
- Apparitions in orange are usually associated with themes of political female figures.
- Apparitions in pink are usually connected to longing. They are associated with themes of awaiting the return of their lover, even after death.
- Apparitions in purple are usually connected to malicious intent. They are associated with themes of wanting to lead the still-living into dangerous situations.
- Apparitions in red are usually connected with sexuality. They are associated with themes of sex work and vanity.

Elemental Spirits

Elementals are spirits that personify one of the four basic elements. The most famous is the beast of Leap Castle, in Coolderry, County Offaly, Ireland. It's believed that this violent fire elemental was introduced into the castle during séances performed by Mildred Darby. However, you may encounter these constructs when investigating places in your community that have a long history and folklore as a haunted site.

First explored during the Renaissance, Swiss physician Paracelsus divided nature spirits that inevitably give rise to regional folklore into the four classical elements of earth, air, fire, and water. Claude Lecouteux greatly expanded on these concepts in his book, *Demons and Spirits of the Land*, examining how the images appears throughout time and within almost all cultures.

The most common of these to be recorded in local ghost tales is the so-called “lady in white”, typically believed to be the ghost of a known or unknown woman who is connected to the loss of love. Paracelsus called them “undines”, which are described as looking similar to mermaids or water nymphs. However, cross-culturally, studies reveal that they typically appear in stories surrounding rivers, ponds, wells, and springs.

Earth spirits were described as gnomes, or small, diminutive men, but are currently represented in tales of “wild men” such as sasquatch in cryptozoology and hooded figures carrying metal wands in ufology, and are connected to forested areas. Caves are still believed to contain earth spirits called “knockers”. They're described as diminutive men dressed in mining outfits similar to those of the miners, but will often appear as a blue light. They were said to haunt mines, being mischievous by stealing unattended tools or food. They could also be beneficial if treated with respect, and knock in the caves and tunnels before disaster, warning miners that a cave-in was about to happen.

Air spirits, classically called “sylphs”, were and continue to be considered to assume the form of the romanticized version of the gossamer-winged fairy.

Paracelsus called fire spirits salamanders and explained that they appeared as burning embers. They appear in regional ghost tales as “lantern men” or ball of light phenomena. The so-called lantern man is a ghost story motif that a wandering light is that of a lantern carried by a man who passed away tragically at night while using the lantern to guide his steps while still alive.

SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY

Though considered a pseudoscience, steps can be taken to adhere to scientific methodology and avoid common biases.

The Scientific Method

1. First, create a hypothesis, or an "educated guess".
2. Gather the equipment that you will need for the experiment.
3. Design your experiment, with a control. A scientific control is an experiment or observation designed to minimize the effects of variables other than the independent variable. This increases the reliability of the results, often through a comparison between control measurements and the other measurements.
4. Complete your experiment.
5. Have your data verified by a third party to avoid bias.
6. Draw your conclusions.

Pareidolia

Pareidolia is when a vague and random stimulus, often an image or sound, is perceived as significant. Some common examples of this tendency are seeing images of animals or faces in clouds, the man in the moon, and hearing non-existent hidden messages on records played in reverse.

In reviewing documented pictures, videos, and audio clips from an investigation, this tendency will cause you to see abstract parts of photos and videos that align with your belief that you've captured verifiable evidence. When reviewing audio, your mind will desperately attempt to assign human voices to vague sounds, as well.

Biases

Cognitive biases are expected. They cloud judgment and cause deviation from conclusions. There are a number to keep in mind:

Confirmation Bias

Confirmation bias is the tendency to search for, interpret, focus on, and remember information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions. If you believe in discarnate consciousnesses and that ghost hunting will lead to evidence of the survival of consciousness, your mind will find ways to misinterpret things to reinforce that belief. Besides having a more skeptical person review your documentation, actively trying to explain supposed paranormal phenomena through perfectly natural and mundane events will help in lessening the effects of this bias.

Experimenter/Expectation Bias

Experimenter/Expectation bias is the tendency for experimenters to believe, certify, and publish data that agree with their expectations for the outcome of an experiment, and to disbelieve, discard, or downgrade the corresponding weightings for data that appear to conflict with those expectations. To try to lessen the

effect of this bias, it would be best to have someone else verify any data that seemingly validated the survival of consciousness.

Observer-expectancy Effect

Observer-expectancy effect is when a researcher expects a given result and therefore unconsciously manipulates an experiment or misinterprets data to find it. To try to mitigate the effects of this bias, try ghost hunting during the day, as this is a deviation from the typical presentation of ghost hunting.

Selective perception

Selective perception is a tendency for expectations to affect perception. During a ghost hunt, you're especially focused on sounds around you, expecting to hear some sort of evidence of a discarnate consciousness. Since you'll be recording, it would be best to announce what noises and sounds you can identify.

Subjective validation

Subjective validation is the perception that something is true if a subject's belief demands it to be true. Also assigns perceived connections between coincidences. To try to control for this, it's best to experiment with new methods of ghost hunting, research ghost tales and why they're important, and try to explain most occurrences as naturally occurring but misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Bandwagon Effect

The bandwagon effect is the tendency to do or believe things because many other people do, and will appear if you're not alone during an investigation or while reviewing documentation for evidence. The best way to try to mitigate this is to have data reviewed by a person not connected to the investigation.

Courtesy Bias

Courtesy bias is the tendency to give an opinion that is more socially correct than one's true opinion, to avoid offending anyone. This will appear when percipients are encouraging you to explain events as paranormal, and when with others during investigation and documentation review. To try to control for this bias, it's best to actively list mundane possible explanations for perceived phenomena.

Shared Information Bias

In a ghost hunting-group, shared information bias is the tendency for group members to spend more time and energy discussing information that all members are already familiar with, and less time and energy discussing information that only some members are aware of. If you're part of a ghost-hunting group, it's best to have a curriculum for education available to all members.

Data Verification with Controls

You'll need to have someone in your life that you know to be more skeptical about psychical research. This person shouldn't be involved in an investigation or review of documentation. Instead, after selecting pictures, video clips, and audio segments that you believe might present evidence, you should send those to the other person. However, they will also exhibit biases. As a courtesy to you, they might agree with

your proposed explanation of the data. So, it's best to include data that you don't believe contains any anomalies in the data that you do believe shows evidence. Further, you should give the other person an option to say that they don't find any anomalies in the data.

For example, you could send two audio clips in an email. One clip should contain what you believe is an anomaly, and the other shouldn't. Give the person the option to say neither clip contains an anomaly with the text, "What do you hear, if anything?" If they reply that the clip that you marked as anomalous contains something to consider, that clip should be examined further.

DEVICES

Contrary to what you might have read or seen on reality television, no equipment detects discarnate consciousnesses. However, after the show *Ghost Hunters* premiered in 2004 as a result in the popularity of reality television as a studio response to the 182-day 2000 Commercial Actors Strike, a sort of neo-spiritualist movement began. Instead of relying on human mediums, ghost hunters began relying on electronic mediums such as Gauss meters, audio recording devices, motion detectors, spirit boxes, REM pods, etc. Today, there's a booming market for ghost-hunting equipment, though few take the time to investigate these devices.

One of the most invaluable devices that seem to always get overlooked is a portable, handheld carbon monoxide detector. Higher levels of carbon monoxide in a home can lead to visual and auditory hallucinations, feelings of a malicious presence, and unexplained feelings of dread. If a percipient has prolonged headaches, confusion, dizziness, weakness, unexplained pain, and nausea as well as experiencing what seems to be paranormal phenomenon, it would be ethical to explore the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Detecting Experience-inducing Fields

On the surface, experience-inducing fields are electromagnetic radiation that are purported to cause hallucinations that can be interpreted as paranormal. However, research into this field of study is often misunderstood or poorly examined.

Gauss Meter and EMF

Arguably the most popular piece of equipment used in ghost hunting is the "EMF detector". Gauss meters weren't used in ghost hunting until 2001, when Jason Rich's book, *The Everything Ghost Book*, was published, claiming that discarnate consciousnesses emit a measurable electromagnetic field.

This was based on a hypothesis by neuroscientist Michael A. Persinger (1945 - 2018). Over three decades, Michael used his so-called "God helmet" to introduce high levels of electromagnetic radiation to volunteer's temporal lobes to induce mystical and religious experiences, as well as out-of-body experiences (OBEs).

None of the volunteers had what they would call paranormal encounters or reported interaction with discarnate consciousnesses. Michael's highly contested hypothesis indicates that electromagnetic fields might cause hallucinations, and have nothing to do with discarnate consciousnesses at all.

Gauss meters detect these fields, but also electromagnetic radiation from electrical appliances, water flowing through pipes, air running through vents, moving air from electrical fans, and even smartphones. Some health risks for prolonged exposure to particularly high electromagnetic radiation include sleep disturbances, headaches, depression, fatigue, dizziness, restlessness, anxiety, nausea, and redness on the skin. Paranormal experiences aren't one of the symptoms, though. This would also remove popular REM pods and Mel meters, devices that detect changes in the electromagnetic field that they produce, K2 meters, "tripwire EMF cables", and tri-field meters from ghost hunting.

Why not test this hypothesis yourself, though? To collect data on the hypothesis that discarnate consciousnesses need electromagnetic radiation to "manifest", a Van de Graaff generator can be placed in a "hot spot", to flood the area with this type of radiation.

Geological Considerations

Parapsychologist William G. Roll (1926 - 2012) used Michael's Tectonic Strain Theory (TST), which explains that a form of electromagnetic radiation called piezoelectricity occurs when crystalline solid and/or silicon dioxide are placed under seismic stress, to hypothesize that electromagnetic radiation can be created by groundwater running over limestone bedrock. He believed that the friction of the water caused electromagnetic radiation. While further research is needed into this hypothesis, it's clear that Gauss meters aren't needed during investigations.

Geomagnetic Radiation Considerations in RSPK

Geomagnetic radiation is a disturbance in the magnetosphere in response to solar flares. They are more associated with occurrences of poltergeist activity, but further research is needed.

Infrasound

Vic Tandy (1955 - 2005) found a link between infrasound or sounds that aren't in the range of human hearing, and places that people consider "creepy". He discovered that if the resonance reaches 18Hz, that of the human eyeball, people will report seeing apparitions. Vic came to this realization after discovering that an extractor fan at a medical manufacturing warehouse company was resonating at 19Hz, causing employees to shiver, as well as see apparitions. When the fan was replaced, the "haunting" stopped entirely. Infrasound can be created by severe weather conditions, but also by man-made sources such as wind turbines, fans, diesel engines, and some loudspeaker designs. Infrasound microphones are available but are expensive.

Instrumental Transcommunication Devices

Instrumental communication can be defined as communication with discarnate consciousnesses through instrumental means, such as a radio, audio recorder, television, cell phone, etc. The most popular is an audio recorder when trying to elicit voices from beyond the grave. With the rise in popularity of ghost hunting, other devices have been released and directly marketed to ghost hunters that have questionable reliability and barely any science behind them.

Audio Recording Devices and EVP

Electronic voice phenomena (EVP) are sounds and/or voices purported to be communication from discarnate consciousnesses. It became a field of study beginning in 1959 when readers of the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* heard of photographer Attila von Szalay's experiment in recording spirit voices. With the help of parapsychologist and author Raymond Bayless, they used a reel-to-reel recorder with a microphone placed in an insulated cabinet to capture discarnate voices. Soon, Swedish painter and filmmaker Friedrich Jürgenson (1903 - 1987) experimented with recording voices in nature, and EVP became known as "Raudive voices" because of his success. His associate, Latvian psychologist Konstantīns Raudive (1909 – 1974) also experimented with recording. EVPs became known as "Raudive voices" because of their success.

It wasn't until 1999 when Tom Ogden published his book, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Ghosts and Hauntings*, that ghost hunters not attached to parapsychology became aware of the phenomenon, and started recording investigations as the book suggests.

Audio recorders have become less common since most phones can record for longer periods, and transferring audio files from them is less time-consuming. Strictly controlled and unbiased EVPs are exceedingly rare, so here are some communication tips and considerations when trying to elicit them:

1. Never whisper
2. Document any naturally occurring noises in consideration of the analyst
3. Speak approximately five feet away from the recorder
4. Wait at least 30 seconds between questions

Random Word Generators

Random word generators depend on our own biases and pattern-seeking minds to create ideas of after-death communication out of a selection of arbitrary words. Some devices have even been designed to provide readouts of a few “creepy” words, and are available for higher prices.

Frank's Box

In 2002, Frank Sumption created what is known as Frank's box also called a “ghost box”. It was an AM radio with the scan pin removed so that the radio would constantly scan stations and return snippets from radio broadcasts. He also said that the “white noise” created by the radio aided in after-death communication. These radios soon became popular with ghost hunters due to being featured on numerous ghost-hunting reality television shows.

The problem is that the snippets from radio signals need to be interpreted by persons who already believe that discarnate consciousnesses can communicate through the signals, and words, phrases, and music are automatically dismissed if they don't support the bias.

Since some believe that these snippets aren't from radio stations, but from discarnate consciousnesses, it's encouraged that you test the hypothesis.

A Faraday cage blocks out electromagnetic radiation, including radio waves. A small cage, such as a bird cage, can be sealed tightly with readily available “Faraday fabric” containing copper. The radio is placed inside, turned on, and then the fabric is closed. Or, you can build a wooden frame and close it with a copper mesh to achieve a real Faraday cage.

Ovilus

This device was designed to be marketed to ghost hunters and allegedly monitors electromagnetic fields and temperature to produce pre-programmed words. This method supposes that there is an index of a combination of electromagnetic fields and temperature fluctuations that have their own words or phrases assigned to them, which is untrue. It also relies on our biases and interpretations, excluding it from ghost hunting altogether.

Apps

There are apps for certain devices that can be used to detect electromagnetic fields, which as previously explained aren't considered in ghost hunting. There is no app, however, that will aid in searching for discarnate consciousnesses. These apps are designed to be fun for novices.

Documentary Equipment

Today, phones replace basic cameras and audio and video recording devices, but the purpose of these pieces of documentary equipment hasn't changed. There's always a hope that you'll capture a picture or video clip of an anomaly that can't be explained. However, if you have disposable income, specialty documentary equipment is available.

Cameras

There's a spiritualist belief that discarnate consciousnesses are present around us, or at least in haunted locations, but that, for some reason, the majority of people can't see them. Some ghost hunters have invested in "full spectrum cameras" that capture infrared and ultraviolet light. On-lens filters are also available to take these photos. More research needs to be done to see if there's a difference between these types of cameras when capturing anomalies in images.

There are some common artifacts no matter what type of camera you're using that you need to be aware of because they aren't true anomalies. They include:

- Orbs are seemingly balls of light that are a product of "backscatter", reflecting off of dust or moisture in the air.
- Vortexes are alleged spiritual gateways but often occur when a camera strap, piece of jewelry, or hair falls in front of the camera lens.
- Light ribbons occur at night, in an artificially lit environment, where the photographer moves while the photograph is being taken.

Video Cameras

Some ghost hunters set up infrared surveillance cameras in areas known as "hot spots", or areas where paranormal activity frequently occurs, to monitor from a device. Infrared cameras capture more light so that dark rooms can be monitored more easily.

FLIR thermal imaging and SLS cameras can capture heat signatures and are sometimes an addition to ghost hunting. The reason behind the use of this type of device is that anecdotal evidence reports that discarnate consciousnesses can cause a cold spot, or an area that is 10° cooler, in a localized area, that has no discernible cause.

Other Equipment

- Some additional equipment that you'll need to consider includes:
- Flashlights as a backup for the flashlight on your phone
- A charging cord for your phone
- Extra batteries for flashlights
- Extra batteries for any devices that you might be using

- Pen and notebook as backup for the note-taker on your device
- Two-way radios if you're part of a ghost-hunting team and separate into groups

Thermometer

As mentioned previously, cold spots have been anecdotally associated with paranormal phenomena since before the heyday of Spiritualism when fraudulent mediums would use the darkness of a séance room to blow on someone to replicate the phenomenon.

Handheld infrared is readily available, but always read the directions and specifications, and test the accuracy before each investigation.

It's important to remember that temperature variations will occur around windows, doorways, air vents, fans, etc. Also, once a person sits down and relaxes, they will start to feel cooler as their thyroid slows.

Motion Sensors

Motion sensors with alarms are available for investigations where apparitional experiences are common. Motion light balls are also available, and are used in smaller spaces so that they can be directly observed.

Laser Grid Projectors

These devices project a laser grid of blue or red light against a wall when in a dark room, and are used to detect the movement of smaller objects. Though one could be used in ghost hunting where apparitional experiences are commonplace, they're more effective when investigating cases of poltergeist activity.

PSYCHIC FACILITIES

Whether you're interested in testing psychic facilities as a psychical researcher or not, some percipients and other ghost hunters will claim to have these facilities. It's best to educate yourself on the types of purported abilities, which are divided into passive and active psi, as well as mediumship and channeling, and why certain persons might fake these abilities.

Mental Health Issues

There are a few mental health disorders that can lead sufferers to claim to possess psychic facilities, though the claims are usually untrue.

Persons suffering from borderline personality disorder are most likely to claim empathy and/or mediumship.

Persons suffering from histrionic personality disorder crave attention and are more likely to claim the facilities of mediumship.

Persons suffering from schizotypal personality disorder and not following their medication regimen are more likely to claim the facility of telepathy. Behavior to look out for that may indicate that the person might suffer from this disorder may include:

Persons suffering from narcissistic personality disorder are more likely to claim to possess reliable psychic facilities of all kinds for admiration. Behavior to look out for that may indicate that the percipient might suffer from this disorder may include:

- Frequently talks about how their life and experiences would make a good film, book, or show
- Has a lack of empathy to the point of not noticing that others are upset
- May frequently lie about their achievements and talents to make themselves seem more important
- May ask for compliments more often than normal, and will say that others are jealous of them
- Will say they're better than other people in their lives
- Will take advantage of others

Often, there's a comorbidity of personality disorders and mental disorders, and a person not managing their mental health well may exhibit symptoms from more than one of the above disorders.

Financial Incentives

If the person actively treats psychic facilities as a business, charging people a considerable amount for "readings" and "sessions", the person is probably very good at faking psychic facilities and manipulating others. They propose that they can always control their facilities when parapsychological researchers of the past have noted isn't possible.

Fraudulent Observations

Observation by more skeptical minds has uncovered some of the more common methods fraudulent people use to trick others out of their money.

Fraudulent psychics make use of publically available information, such as background check sites, ancestor research, and data mining social media, which is called “hot reading”.

Cold reading is a technique whereby the fraudulent psychic makes assumptions based on the sitter's appearance, analyzes facial features, tone of voice, and body language. The high-probability guesses employed in cold reading include:

- Barnum Statements are statements that can apply to almost anyone, for instance:
 - You tend to be critical of yourself
 - Sometimes, you feel insecure
 - Sometimes, you are very social, and at other times, you're more reserved
- The Rainbow Ruse are simple statement the fraudulent psychic uses to validate what the sitter already believes about themselves, for instance:
 - Most of the time, you're cheerful, but in the past, you've been upset
 - You're a very nice person, but when someone breaks your trust, you can get angry
 - Sometimes you are quiet and shy, but other times, you're very outgoing and sociable

Another method of convincing sitters is “shotgunning”. This is when a supposed psychic speaks very quickly, making a lot of vague statements that they say will make sense later. Inevitably, the fraudulent psychic will preface a sitting by telling the customer that the speed is due to how fast "spirits" provide information.

Passive Psi

Extrasensory perception (ESP) is the purposed facility to obtain knowledge by some unknown, non-physical means, rely on the senses, and is classily divided into categories:

- Clairvoyance is the term used when visual information is being received
- Clairaudience is the term used when auditory information is being received
- Clairgustance is the term used when taste information is being received
- Clairaliense is the term used when scent information is being received
- Clairtangency is the term used when touch or feeling information is being received
- Claircognizance is the proposed facility to have sudden knowledge of an event
- Clairsentience is the proposed facility to be able to reply in instinct and have a "gut feeling" about an event or person
- Clairemopathy is known more commonly as empathy, the proposed facility to perceive the emotions of others, without receiving cues from the other individual, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, etc.

Remote Viewing

Remote viewing is the proposed ability to perceive information, such as sights and sounds, from a great distance. During the Cold War, both Soviet and American governments sponsored remote viewing projects to spy on one another. In the United States, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) ran the Stargate Project. The program officially ran from 1991 to 1995, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)

declassified the experiments in 2017. However, research began much earlier. In 1970, a precursor project, called the SCANATE Project began, to study well-known "psychics" to test their ability to remotely view.

Telepathy

Telepathy is the proposed facility to perceive the thoughts of others. In 1931, Joseph Banks Rhine (1895 - 1980) began research into telepathy at Duke University. He designed a set of cards called Zener Cards, and a test subject, called a "receiver", and a researcher, called a "sender" would sit partitioned from one another, silently, as the sender would randomly pull a card and try to project the image to the receiver. Amazingly, receivers were able to guess the correct card that the sender was concentrating on higher than probability would allow. However, some unexpected findings presented themselves during the study. Some subjects scored much lower than statistically possible, leading Rhine to coin the term psi missing, and theorize that the receiver was somehow subconsciously missing on purpose.

German psychologist Wolfgang Metzger (1899 - 1979) took these experiments to a new level and wanted to see if receivers could perceive more complex objects and patterns. Now called the Ganzfeld Experiments, researchers would place receivers in sensory deprivation. The receivers would describe what they were perceiving. However, due to biases, it's unclear how effective these experiments were.

Precognition

Precognition is the proposed facility to perceive future events. Some of the best evidence for this facility was presented by psychologist Dean I. Radin, who showed that the parasympathetic nervous system predicts the future. The parasympathetic nervous system controls involuntary actions and functions, such as breathing, digestion, and operations of the endocrine system. He discovered that, while testing electrodermal activity (EDA), volunteers skin conductance level (SCL) reacted to stimuli before presented especially in cases where a violent or disturbing image was about to be shown. Evidence also showed that SCL reacted when volunteers were unaware that they were being stared at.

Retrocognition

Retrocognition is the proposed facility to perceive past events. Repeated experiments that show promising results for perceiving events in the past indicate it's often most effective when a subject is touching an object associated with a person or event from the past. This proposed psychic facility is known as psychometry.

Active Psi

Psychokinesis (PK), also known as telekinesis, is the proposed facility to influence items without physical action. In 1984, the United States National Academy of Sciences, at the request of the US Army Research Institute, began research into psychokinesis in hopes of finding ways for military personnel to disrupt enemy weapons. The researchers focused on micro-psychokinesis (micro-PK), and many studies in the field reported evidence for mentally induced non-random deviations from chance with random number generators and the casting of dice to achieve a certain number. Despite success, poor controls in test settings were cited, and government involvement in PK research came to an end.

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK) is hypothesized to be being most incident of poltergeist activity. This phenomenon typically occurs around a single person, called the agent. However,

items can move when the agent is not present, lending credence to PK-time displaced. This occurs when an agent's attention is away from the object that they are trying to influence, and then the object moves.

Mediumship

Mediumship is the purported ability to communicate with discarnate consciousnesses, and takes many forms, from “sensing” presences to causing physical phenomena when in contact with spirits. Mediums are people who purport to pass along information to the still-living. During the heyday of Spiritualism, from the 1840s to the 1920s, after-death communication took place in darkened séance rooms, giving unsavory characters a chance to prey on the beavered during sensational feats of alleged spiritual interaction.

The Philip Experiment was spearheaded by Dr. Alan Robert George Owen in Toronto, Ontario, in 1972, based on the assumption that all physical manifestations were psychokinesis in nature. The participants did not sit in a darkened room and were able to reproduce many of the physical effects, such as moving objects, tapping and popping noises, etc., as earlier mediums, without the need for spirit intervention.

Spiritual Discernment

The gift of discernment was mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and can be interpreted by religious persons as the ability to sense discarnate consciousnesses.

Sensitives

Sensitives are people who appear to have the facility to determine if a location is haunted, and sometimes, what types of discarnate consciousnesses are present, and their history.

Mental Mediums

Mental mediums, also called trance mediums, would slip into trances and allow their spirit guides, also known as controls, to speak through them, to facilitate communication between the deceased and the still-living.

Physical Mediums

Physical mediums did not offer much in the way of afterlife communication. Instead, they provided a sort of entertainment. In complete darkness, they would be tied up in "spirit cabinets", and would quickly escape. As the medium was changing into another outfit, helpers would sneak into the séance room and make it seem as if objects were moving. The medium would then exit the cabinet, dressed as a spirit, long enough for the sitters to catch a quick glimpse of the alleged apparition made corporal. With helpers again causing a distraction of what seemed to be spirit intervention, the medium would reenter the cabinet, change back into their regular clothes, and then tie themselves back up. With the helpers out of the séance room, the lights would go on, and the medium would be tied up in the cabinet, seemingly in a trance, and acting as if they were completely unaware of the alleged supernatural activity that took place over the evening. There was singing to "raise the vibrations" before and after the séance began, which covered up much of the noise that would have been made by the so-called medium and their helpers.

Materialization Mediums

The "spirit cabinet" was popularized by The Davenport Brothers, Ira Erastus Davenport (1839 - 1911), and William Henry Davenport (1841 - 1877). They were exposed as escape artists many times. Occasionally, writing slates would show alleged messages when the lights came on. These were trick boards popularized by Henry Slade (1840 - 1905), where the messages would be written on them before the séance.

Ectoplasm is a viscous substance that allegedly exudes from the materialization medium body to take the form of spirits. The majority of the time, this was cheesecloth regurgitated by mediums during séances, or removed from more personal areas of the body that researchers would not examine. Examples of allegedly real ectoplasm was perplexing to researchers and came to be called "ectenic force", believed to be some mysterious fluid that exuded from the medium's body to form fine, fabric-like tissue that became a gelatinous type of matter that could take forms, or move objects. It was noticed that any bright light, sudden loud noise, or contact with ectoplasm could cause the ectoplasm to suddenly retract, and cause injury to the medium.

Mixed Mediums

Mixed mediums displayed the characteristics of both mental and physical mediums. Most were fraudulent, but there were a few that, at times, seemed to possess the ability to communicate with the deceased and produce psychokinesis (PK), which is the purported ability to move objects without actually touching them.

Psychic Mediums

Psychic mediums allegedly don't need to slip into trance to allow a control to communicate with discarnate consciousnesses, nor do they produce physical phenomena. They allegedly seem more adept at predicting future events, as well. As with mediums from the past, many frauds claim to have this psychic facility.

Channelers

Channelers do not pass along information from the deceased or create physical manifestations. Instead, they claim to channel ancient personalities from obscure or mythical places, such as Atlantis, Lemuria, or Mu, most often for profit.

THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

The investigative process starts before an actual investigation and may extend to after assumed anomalies have been presented to percipients. There are many steps in the process, and they're outlined here, with some important questions that you should ask yourself. Always remember that your safety should be at the forefront of your mind at all times and that you should present yourself as a professional in every way possible.

Put Yourself Out There

How will people contact you? Will it be through a website, social media, word of mouth, or another way?

The Unpleasant Business

Will your services be free, have a price, or will donations be accepted?

Remember, there's a lengthy process and fees attached to calling yourself a non-profit. Instead, you may want to label yourself "not-for-profit". If you're using ghost hunting as a business venture, people will become quickly aware of that, and your business may not survive for long.

Limitations

How far are you willing to drive for a percipient? What sorts of cases will you not handle? It's perfectly understandable to turn down situations that you don't feel comfortable with.

First Contact

What's the procedure for first contact with a percipient? Will it be handled through messenger, text, or an app that helps you protect your privacy? Will it be through video chat so that you can get a better "feel" of the percipient?

You should always be cautious when contacting people that you don't know well. You may want to use an app, at first, which allows you to protect your personal information, until you know for certain that the person is serious. Even then, it's best to move on to video chatting before actually meeting the percipient.

First Meeting

What's the plan for the first time in-person meeting to discuss events and where will it take place? Will it be in a public space, or at the percipients location? Will you go alone, or have a friend or family member with you? Even if you have someone with you, it's best to leave your destination plans with someone that you trust.

Percipient Evidence

Will you consider purported anomalies/evidence that the percipient has already collected as valid or offer to analyze the data yourself? Remember that most "evidence" can be faked easily.

Boots on the Ground

What is the plan for the initial walkthrough of the location? Will it occur before or on the day or evening of the actual investigation? Will you go alone, or be accompanied by a friend or family member? During the walkthrough, which should take place a short time before the investigation, document any hot spots, or areas where more activity occurs.

Formalities

At what point does the percipient fill out forms? It's best to have the percipient fill these out after the initial walkthrough.

The Investigation

It's best to get base readings and take pictures and video clips of the entire location, first. Next, set up any monitoring equipment in the hot spots. Over the investigation, go from one hot spot to the next and try to illicit EVPs. Take pictures while you're asking these questions, as well.

Tedious Analysis

Who will analyze data for anomalies? If you're reviewing all information and data, will there be an independent source that was not involved in the investigation in any way that will help you avoid your own biases?

The Reveal

When should the percipient expect a presentation of possible anomalies in data you've collected? Will that information be presented in person, or over email? How will the percipient obtain copies of the anomalies?

Round Two

What's your rule on follow-up investigations?

BOOK II:
FORMS

PRE-INVESTIGATION FORMS

Permission to Investigate with Release of All Claims and Indemnity Agreement

I the undersigned hereby give [name] permission to conduct a paranormal investigation at the following address. I hereby release all investigators/experimenters of [name] from the responsibility of lost, stolen, broken and/or damaged items and of personal property and from legal recourse from damages including damage to personal reputation, community opinion, insurance difficulties, etc.

Please consider releasing possible paranormal evidence, including photographic, video and/or auto anomalies to [name] for distribution. *Check your preference:*

<input type="checkbox"/> [name] cannot release any/all information and/or anomalies collected or present any paranormal evidence for public consumption.
<input type="checkbox"/> [name] can release possible paranormal evidence, including photographic, video and/or auto anomalies to [name] for distribution, excluding the address of the location, identities of percipients, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> [name] can release/publicize any and all information.

Date	
Print Name	
Sign Name	
Address	

Investigative Informed Consent for Percipient(s)

Though not covered under the 1974 National Research Act, because [name] is not conducting any type of behavioral research, we feel a full disclosure policy helps potential percipients better understand our methodology.

Confidentiality: Unless requested, we maintain a rigid privacy policy, and your information will never be shared with outside individuals.

Full Disclosure: After submitting a request for a paranormal investigation, you will receive a reply from a case manager with [name] asking when an appropriate day and time would be to contact you via phone. After you reply, a case manager will call you and discuss either a public place to meet, to discuss perceived paranormal experiences, or a day and time to complete a cursory tour of the location

where you can explain your paranormal experiences. Usually, at least two investigators will be present for the initial meeting. When the investigation has been scheduled, no more than six investigators will be present. Investigations are usually scheduled for weekend evenings. Investigators may be present between three to six hours, depending on the size of the location, and paranormal activity. Investigators will begin by taking “base readings” of the electromagnetic radiation and temperature of each room and ask you to explain any paranormal encounters that you may have experienced in each room; this will more than likely be videoed. In each room, investigators will try to elicit after-death communication by asking questions with audio and video monitoring equipment present. One or two investigators present may have consistently scored higher than chance allows on extrasensory perception (ESP) tests. If said investigators are present, you will be informed, and there are protocols in place to prevent these investigators from obtaining information about the specific location. Information presumably gained by ESP can be provided to you upon request, but will not be included in the official investigation report unless backed by evidence. Following the investigation, analysts will thoroughly review photographs and audio and video recordings for anomalies. If anomalies are documented, or you request a follow-up investigation, attempts to elicit after-death communication will again take place in areas where initial anomalies were documented. It may take up to two weeks for analysts to scrutinize photographs, audio, and video recordings. After a conclusion has been reached, and evidence compiled, you will be contacted by the case manager. When investigators feel they have collected enough information, no more than three investigators will sit down with you and explain the evidence collected. They will offer multidisciplinary perspectives and explanations. If you have chosen to allow only initials and city or county to be listed so that the official investigation report, may be published on our website and/or social media platforms.

- *Risks:* Many percipients are under the erroneous impression that eliciting communication with purported discarnate consciousnesses (i.e., ghosts) will “make things worse”. There is no evidence to support this supposition, except in the case of intelligent hauntings. Once a spirit realizes that it can communicate, said spirit might try to communicate more for a couple of weeks.
- *Benefits:* Among the most important benefits of hosting a paranormal investigation is peace of mind for your health. Please inform yourself of the risk of constant exposure to electromagnetic radiation. We cannot, however, guarantee that attempts to elicit after-death communication will be successful or that photographic, audio, or video anomalies will be definitive. You will be offered multidisciplinary perspectives and explanations from experienced paranormal investigators, though.

Expectations: [name] is not a source of entertainment. Please do not invite several friends and family members to an investigation. This will cause the immediate withdrawal of investigators from the location. Other reasons an investigation will be terminated prematurely include manufacturing paranormal events, unsanitary and/or unsafe conditions, hostility towards one or more investigators, etc. If at any time, the group perceives family members are in imminent physical danger, the case manager will immediately contact authorities. If there is a member of your household who is under 18-years-old who shows signs of physical harm, the case manager will immediately contact the Department of Child Services.

Additional Information: If investigators suspect recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK), formally known as poltergeist activity, the focus of the investigation will be adjusted to center on individuals in the home, not rooms. Individuals may then be tested for indications of psychokinesis (PK).

Emergency Contact Information

Full Name (Print)	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Voicemail <input type="checkbox"/> Text/SMS
E-mail	

Emergency Contact #1	
Name	
Relationship	
Phone	

Emergency Contact #2	
Name	
Relationship	
Phone	

Medication Allergies	
Food Allergies	

Percipient/Client Questionnaire

Date	Interviewer(s)

Percipient/Client Information

Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Renter/Lease Holder <input type="checkbox"/> Manager
Address	
Phone Number(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Voicemail <input type="checkbox"/> Text/SMS
E-mail(s)	

Location Residents/Employees

Name	Age	Relationship to Percipient/Client

Location Residents/Employees

Are the percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) in a state of liminality (moving, remodeling the location, changing jobs, going through a divorce, going through puberty or menopause/andropause, transitioning gender, new to the community, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are the percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) in a state of marginality (new to the culture of the community, a minority in the community, have a different sexual orientation, have a different gender identity, are elderly, have a disability or disabilities that limit them in some way, have a language barrier, have a family of personal and/or family incarceration, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does any percipient/clients/employee(s) have a diagnosis of epilepsy, Tourette syndrome, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, or Hyperthyroidism?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) believe in parapsychological phenomena?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) typically consume supernatural and/or	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

religious-themed thriller/horror movies, shows, podcasts, vlogs, documentaries, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) believe in psychic phenomena?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) contacted local authorities about the purported parapsychological phenomena?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) contacted any media outlet about the purported parapsychological phenomena?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have percipient(s)/clients(s)/employee(s) contacted any other parapsychological investigative group(s) previously?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has the location been investigated already by a parapsychological investigative group(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Notes

Purported Parapsychological Phenomena

What was the <i>first</i> purported parapsychological phenomenon?
Who was present during the phenomena?
When did the phenomena occur?
Where did the phenomena occur?

What was the *last* purported parapsychological phenomenon?

Who was present during the phenomena?
When did the phenomena occur?
Where did the phenomena occur?

What was the <i>most egregious</i> purported parapsychological phenomenon?
Who was present during the phenomena?
When did the phenomena occur?
Where did the phenomena occur?

Types of Purported Parapsychological Phenomena

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable movement of objects (metaphysical levitation, disappearing and/or reappearing objects, objects moving on their own, etc.)
Notes

--

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable noises (knocking, tapping, voices, music)?
Notes

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable smells?
Notes

<input type="checkbox"/> Apparitional experiences (mysterious lights or shadows, or persons/humanoid figures)?
Notes

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable physical sensations (touching, pushing, etc.)?
Notes

--

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable temperature changes (hot or cold spots)?
Notes

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable and sudden extreme mood changes (fear, horror, disgust, anger, sadness, etc.)?
Notes

<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccountable impressions (strange and vivid dreams, or the feeling of an unseen “presence”?)
Notes

Locations of Concentrated Purported Parapsychological Phenomena

What room(s) have the <i>most</i> purported parapsychological phenomena?
--

What room(s) have the *least* purported parapsychological phenomena?

What room(s) have *no* purported parapsychological phenomena?

Additional Notes

Deed Research Form

Book	Page(s)	Date	Grantor (Seller)	Grantee (Buyer)	Notes

EVP Session Log

Room	
Start Time	
End Time	
Persons Present	
Notes	

Room	
Start Time	
End Time	
Persons Present	
Notes	

Room	
Start Time	
End Time	
Persons Present	
Notes	

--	--

Room	
Start Time	
End Time	
Persons Present	
Notes	

BOOK III:
RESEARCH AND DICTIONARY

CEMETERY AND GRAVEYARD RESEARCH GUIDE

When researching local folklore or the alleged deceased attached to a person or home during an investigation, there are clues about a deceased person's life in their final resting place.

Resting Places

Graveyards are attached to churches, while **cemeteries** aren't. **Outlying graves** are outside of the cemetery or graveyard proper because the person was not part of the faith or committed some perceived horrible deed, especially suicide. They may or may not be oriented to the rising sun, a tradition stemming from the Christian belief that judgment will come from the direction of the rising sun.

Burial

Columbariums are buildings where the cremated remains of the deceased are interred.

Crypts are underground chambers where the deceased are interred.

Mausoleums are usually for the public, and are usually a building where multiple deceased are interred side-by-side, and on top of one another.

Sarcophaguses are stone, above-ground coffins.

Tombs are usually for families, and are usually a small building where the deceased are interred side-by-side, and on top of one another. They often have a coping, or stone low-hanging roof, over them.

Grave Markers

Footstones appear as bolsters, which are cylinder-shaped, and initial stones, which have the initials of the deceased engraved in them.

Grave fences are metal, stone, or concrete fenced-off areas, erected to designate plots for families.

Headstones lay at the head of the grave.

Ledger stones are stones that cover the whole grave and were once used to cover the grave of a deceased person who was interred in a wooded or remote area, where remains could be scavenged by wildlife.

Urns indicate that the cremated remains of the deceased are interred in that spot.

Tombstone Shapes

Angels that are praying represent an appeal to the Divine to admit a person into Heaven. A sitting or standing angel is an appeal to angels to watch over the soul of the deceased.

Apples indicate an educator.

Arches represent the passage and admittance to Heaven.

Beds or Pillows represent that the deceased is finally at rest.

Beehives indicate a member of the Freemasons and Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Benches are often erected by the severely bereaved

Bodies sleeping usually indicate that the family feels that the deceased is temporarily at rest.

Broken columns indicate life is cut short.

Butterflies represent the transformation of the body into a soul.

Chairs that are empty represent a great loss in the family.

Circles represent eternal life.

Dogs represent loyalty and are an appeal for a supernatural force to watch over the soul of the deceased.

Draped or Veiled Columns or Urns represent mourning.

Empty furniture represents an unfulfilled life and usually indicates the resting place of a child.

Hearts represent love or relationships. A single heart represents love and affection from the bereaved. Double hearts usually indicate a couple who were married in life.

Lambs indicate a child's grave.

Lions represent Divine might and are an appeal to the Divine to watch over the soul of the deceased.

Obelisks represent a show of the finances of the bereaved.

Orbs represent oneness with the universe.

Pianos represent uplifting the spirits of the bereaved and usually indicate the resting place of a pianist.

Scrolls represent life, time, and wisdom. If either end is curled up, it usually indicates that a part of the person's life should remain hidden. It is often held by a hand, indicating the desire of the bereaved that the deceased's name will be recorded in the Christian "Book of Life", and the soul will be admitted into Heaven.

Teardrops usually represent the grief of the bereaved.

Tree trunks or Stumps represent a life cut short, but indicate the resting place of a member of the Modern Woodmen of America or Woodmen of the World.

Triangles represent the Holy Trinity.

Triquetras represent the Holy Trinity.

Waterfalls represent life everlasting.

Urns represent the soul.

Women:

- *Clinging to a cross* is usually a show of wealth by the bereaved for a deceased family member who lived a life outside of the church.
- *Holding an anchor*, and with one finger usually pointing toward the sky, represents the soul's journey to Heaven.
- *Holding a cross* indicates a wealthy and devout deceased individual.
- *Weeping or robed* usually indicates a wealthy woman's grief over the loss of the deceased.

Headstone Symbol Meanings

Acorns and oak leaves represent patience in faith.

All-seeing eyes are engraved on a Freemason's tombstone.

American flags are usually engraved on a military veteran's tombstone.

Anchors represent hope, but can also be engraved on a sailor's tombstone. A broken chain or rope indicates life is cut short.

Angels represent innocence and are usually engraved on a child's grave. Angels blowing trumpets represent victory over death and admission into Heaven. A flying angel represents the flight of the soul to Heaven.

Anvil and hammers are usually engraved on a blacksmith's tombstone.

Axes represent a life cut short but are also often engraved on the tombstone of a member of the Woodmen of the World.

Balloons are often engraved on the tombstone of a child who has passed away.

Bells represent the desire for the Divine to admit the deceased into Heaven, instead of waiting for judgment.

Bibles or Books indicate a member of the clergy.

Bird:

- *Doves* represent love and peace. A dove with an olive branch in its beak represents admission into Heaven. A dove with a cross in its beak represents the Holy Spirit. An ascending dove represents the soul leaving the earthly plane. A descending dove is an appeal for the Holy Spirit to retrieve the soul, and admit them into Heaven.
- *Ducks* represent crossing over to the spiritual plane.
- *Eagles* are engraved on a person who served in the military or a particularly patriotic person's tombstone.
- *Hummingbirds* are a reminder from the bereaved to appreciate the time that we have left.

Boats or Ships represent crossing over into the afterlife but can be engraved on a sailor's tombstone.

Caduceus is engraved on a doctor's tombstone.

Candles represent the hope that the deceased will be guided to Heaven.

Chains that are broken represent a loss in the family.

Compass and squares indicate a Freemason.

Corn represents rebirth, and is occasionally engraved on a farmer's tombstone.

Cornucopia represents someone who lived a rich and fruitful life.

Crosses are a symbol of Christianity.

Crowns represent triumph over death and are usually engraved on a tombstone for a person who attended church regularly. A crown with a cross is sometimes engraved on a Freemason's tombstone.

Eastern Star is engraved on a Freemason's tombstone.

Father Time and the Weeping Virgin represent a life cut short.

Ferns are usually engraved on a tombstone for a person who was perceived to be exceptionally humble and sincere.

Fish represent Christianity.

Flowers:

- *Calla lily* represents rebirth.
- *Daisies* represent innocence and are usually engraved on a tombstone of a young person.
- *Dogwood blooms* represent resurrection.
- *Easter lilies* represent resurrection.
- *Lily of the Valley* represents purity and innocence.
- *Morning glory blooms* represent renewed life.
- *Passionflowers* represent Jesus.
- *Poppies* represent eternal rest and are usually engraved on tombstones of those who passed during conflict.
- *Roses* are usually engraved on the tombstones of children. The more open the bloom is, the longer the child lived. A broken stem usually indicates a very young child.
- *Sunflowers* represent devotion and are usually engraved on a tombstone for a person who attended church regularly.
- *Tulips* are usually engraved on the tombstone of someone who was considered particularly elegant and graceful.

Frogs represent rebirth.

Garlands represent victory over death.

Gates represent the passage into Heaven.

Grapes represent Jesus and admission into Heaven.

Hands:

- *Clasped hands* represent union in death, either with the Divine or with a spouse that has already passed away. It was also used by early Freemasons and the Independent Order of Oddfellows.
- *Hand pointing up* represents admission into Heaven.
- *Hand pointing down* is usually engraved on a tombstone of a non-religious person, or person who led a life outside of the norms, or someone who has committed suicide, as an appeal for the Divine to reach down and admit them into Heaven.
- *Hands reaching down* represents admission into Heaven.
- *Hands holding hearts* are typically engraved on the tombstone of a person who was considered charitable and generous in life, but can also indicate that the deceased was a member of the Shakers religious movement.
- *Hands praying* represent devotion to the Divine.

Harps represent life cut short.

Holly represents Christianity.

Horses and Horseshoes are usually engraved on tombstones of persons who worked closely with horses. A white horse symbolizes that the person was a hero in life.

Hourglasses are a reminder to the still-living that they too will pass away.

Infinity symbols represent eternal life.

Ivy represents friendship.

Keys represent the desire of the bereaved that the deceased will enter the nicer parts of Heaven.

Keystone with Letters HTWSSTKS, which stands for, "Hiram The Widow's Son Sent To King Solomon", is engraved on a Freemasons tombstone.

Knots represent marriage.

Ladders or Stairs represent the soul's ascension into Heaven.

Lambs represent Jesus. If the lamb is standing, with a banner, it represents admission into Heaven. If it's sitting, it is a plea to judge the person innocent and admit them into Heaven.

Lamps or Lanterns are usually engraved on a deceased person's tombstone as an attempt to convert others to their religious beliefs.

Laurels represent the bereaved left behind by the deceased.

Lighthouses represent guiding souls to the afterlife.

Lizards represent regeneration.

Mountains represent constancy, eternity, firmness, and stillness.

Musical Instruments or Notes are typically engraved on a musician's tombstone.

Oxen represent strength, but can sometimes be engraved on the tombstones of persons who crossed vast expanses of land in covered wagons to find a new home.

Palm represents victory over death and admission into Heaven.

Peacocks represent the desire for incorruptibility of the deceased person's body.

Pentacles are engraved on the tombstones of a person of the Wiccan faith.

Phoenixes represent resurrection.

Pinecones represent everlasting life.

Plows represent the end of life and are often engraved on the tombstones of farmers.

Rings represent marriage. If they are interlocked, the couple stayed together in life. If they are broken, however, it means they were divorced.

Roosters represent Jesus and are an appeal for a supernatural force to watch over the soul of the deceased.

Scales are usually engraved on the tombstones of judges.

Sacred Hearts represent divine intervention, charity, and piety.

Star of David, or the Seal of Solomon, or a hexagram represents a person of Jewish faith.

Scythe and Hourglasses, sometimes carrying arrows, represent death itself. They are reminders that the still-living that they too will pass away.

Shoes, with one usually overturned, indicate the tombstone of a child.

Skulls are reminders that the still-living that they too will pass away.

Suns represent life everlasting. Most engravings are of a sunrise or sunset, symbolizing death.

Swans represent eternal peace and tranquility.

Torches with Flames represent a guiding light, and life everlasting. An inverted version of this represents death and decay of the flesh.

Trains represent a journey to the afterlife.

Trees that are broken represent a life cut short.

Wheat represents death.

Willow trees represent mourning and loss.

Wreaths represent victory in the afterlife.

Tombstone Inscription Meanings

Alpha and Omega represent the Divine.

Chi Rho is the first two letters in the Greek name for Jesus and represents Christianity.

Deo Vindice means, “God will vindicate”, and is engraved on a Confederate Soldier’s tombstone, or an iron cross.

IHS is the name of Jesus in Greek, and represents Christianity.

In Hoc Signo Vincens means, “In this sign you shall conquer”, and is engraved on a Freemason’s tombstone.

Testina Lente Edax Rerum means, “Make haste slowly, time devours all things”, and is engraved on a tombstone to remind the still-living that they too will pass away.

Tombstone Patterns

Eggs with Darts are common on the edges of tombstones and represent resurrection.

Vermiculation patterns, also called worm tracks, are a reminder of bodily decay.

Items Left on Graves

Coins:

- *Pennies* mean that a civilian stopped to pay their respects to deceased military personnel.
- *Nickels* mean that someone who attended the same boot camp visited deceased military personnel.
- *Dimes* mean that someone who served with deceased military personnel visited the grave.
- *Quarters* mean that someone who served with a deceased military personnel, and the deceased died when they were with the still-living, visited the grave.

Food at a gravesite means that the person is trying to sustain the soul of the deceased.

Stones or Pebbles on a grave or tombstone are a Jewish tradition to honor the deceased when they visit the gravesite.

Three X’s indicate the grave of someone who practiced Voodoo, and the person visiting has made a wish that they hope the spirit will make come true.

PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL DICTIONARY

A

After-death Communication (ADC): Also called post-mortem communication; literally communication with the deceased. Induced After-death Communication (IADC) are images of the deceased produced through suggestion while a person is hypnotized.

Agency: The imaginary ghost created for group psychokinesis experiments in a séance-type setting.

Agent: A person who is usually unaware they are the cause of poltergeist phenomena.

Altered States of Consciousness (ASC): Also called altered states of awareness; a state of mental relaxation where people become more susceptible to impressions.

Anomalistic Psychology: An area of psychology pioneered by Leonard Zusne and Warren Jones in 1982 that deals with seemingly paranormal experiences.

Anomalistics: Formerly known as Fortean phenomena; the study of unusual phenomena.

Apparition: A term used somewhat incorrectly to describe the appearance of a discarnate personality.

Apparition of the Dead: The image of someone deceased.

- *Deathbed Apparition:* Also called take-away apparition; believed that a deceased family member has come to escort a gravely ill or generally unresponsive person to the afterlife.
- *Haunting Apparition:* Also called continual apparition; Images that appear repeatedly and to various percipients in the same location.
- *Postmortem Apparition:* This is an apparition of a deceased person that appears within twelve hours of death. If there is a longer timeframe, the image is called a delayed postmortem apparition.

Apparition of the Living: The image of someone who is not deceased.

- *Bystander Apparition:* This apparition is puzzling in that it appears to the wrong person or a stranger to let its presence be known to the person to whom it should have appeared.
- *Crisis Apparition:* This is the sudden appearance of a person who at that very moment is going through a crisis or has just died. Though it is rare, there have been instances of delayed crisis apparitions where a person's image appears 48 hours after the crisis.
- *Double:* The image of a living person. It is different from astral projection because the person is unaware of what their image is doing at the time it appears. In Germany, this phenomenon is labeled a doppelganger; in Norway, it is called vardoger; in Greece, it is called larva; in Wales, it is called fye or waft; in England, it is called fetch; in Tibet, it is called delok; in Scotland, it is called taslach.
- *Experimental Apparition:* This is the intentional projection of one's image. Such experiences are considered a strong argument for out-of-body experiences.
- *Premonitory Haunting:* Premonitions of death sometimes appear as an apparition. The most common are so-called familial apparitions. Some old families may have a portent of impending disaster in the

form of a phantom. For instance, corpse candles are mysterious balls of light that are viewed as harbingers of death for a family member when seen in family cemeteries.

- *Soulless Apparition*: This is a seldom-used phrase that describes the ghostly appearance of inanimate objects.

Apparitional Experience: Encountering a ghost.

Apport: French for “to bring;” an object that appears and is accredited to spirits and occasionally poltergeists.

Area Focusing: When the same area is the focus of poltergeist activity continuously.

Arrival Case: A situation where someone dreams or has a hunch they will meet someone and soon does.

Asport: French for “to send;” an object that disappears and is accredited to spirits and occasionally poltergeists.

Automatism: Automatic behavior without conscious self-control.

Autoscope: An instrument that facilitates undetectable automatism of the wrist to facilitate clearer movements. The most popular autoscope is the planchette, an object used on the modern-day Ouija board.

Autosuggestion: Influence on the senses by belief and expectation.

Automatic Drawing: Automatism that creates drawings that are allegedly influenced by the deceased.

Automatic Painting: Automatism that creates paintings that are allegedly influenced by the deceased.

Automatic Speech: Also called spirit messages; automatism in the form of speech that is allegedly influenced by the deceased.

Automatic Typing: Automatism that creates messages through a typewriter or computer keyboard.

Automatic Writing: Also called psychography; automatism creates written messages that are allegedly influenced by the deceased.

- *Direct Psychography*: Communication written on paper.
- *Mechanical Psychography*: Messages received with unconscious control of practitioner’s hand, while the practitioner’s attention is elsewhere.
- *Semi-mechanical Psychography*: Messages received with conscious control of the practitioner’s hand, allowing them to stop communication at any time, turn pages, etc.
- *Indirect Psychography*: The use of an Ouija board to receive so-called spirit messages.
- *Inspirational Psychography*: Messages that are written down when someone feels inspired while in contact with a spirit.
- *Intuitive Psychography*: Messages that are contained in regular text.
- *Presentient Psychography*: Communication that is in another language unknown to the practitioner.

Automatism: Uncontrolled muscular twitches all over the body that many Spiritualists attribute to the inspiration of spiritual entities.

Autophany: Also called heautoscopy: seeing your double.

Autoscopy: An experience where someone who is having an out-of-body experience sees his or her physical body.

B

Billet Reading: A form of cryptoscopy; the alleged ability to perceive information sealed in an envelope. Crafty fraudulent mediums were once able to perpetrate this trick by soaking the envelope in rubbing alcohol when given an opportunity. The alcohol will make the envelope temporarily translucent, but dried quickly enough not to signify any mischief.

Bilocation: Also called multiplication; the alleged ability to appear in two places at one time.

Book Test: A test once proposed to mediums where they were required to prove their clairvoyant abilities by reading a certain pre-selected passage in a chosen book.

Brutch: An area of psychic disturbance.

Basic Technique (BT): Parapsychologists take a card from the deck and without looking at it, place it face down on the table and wait for the subject to guess the symbol.

Before Technique: the test subject calls out their impressions of what symbol is on a card before the parapsychologist pulls it out of the deck.

Blind Matching Technique: The test subject is seated across from five sealed envelopes, each with a card with a different symbol on it. The subject is then asked to place the cards with corresponding symbols onto the envelopes.

C

Card Test: Also called card-guessing experiment; a standard test parapsychologists once used to assess potential extrasensory perception with special cards. There are several techniques used by different institutions:

- *Open Deck Test:* An ESP test where the cards are chosen at random.
- *Down Through (DT) Technique:* Trying to guess cards from the top to the bottom of the deck.
- *Up Through (UT) Technique:* Trying to guess cards from the bottom to the top of the deck.
- *Cancellation Effect:* Low scores in one section of a test bring down the average of the high scores of another test.
- *Change Effect:* Also called differential effect; a term used to describe the temporary drop in a test subject's scores when rules were changed halfway through the run.
- *Decline Effect:* Subjects score lower the longer the test runs, leading some researchers to suggest boredom plays an important role in failure.
- *Displacement Effect:* Instances when a test subject picks the next card in the deck, not the one the sender is concentrating on.
- *Incline Effect:* Subjects seem to score higher when they know the end of a test is forthcoming.

Call Case: The phenomenon when someone mysteriously hears their name being called.

Chair Test: A once-popular test for precognitive abilities where the test subject would be asked to predict what chair a certain individual would sit in once in the room.

Channeling: The alleged ability to receive messages from the deceased.

Circle: In Spiritualism, a group of individuals gathered for a séance.

- *Development Circle:* A group of people that gather in hopes of attaining the spiritual gift of mediumship.
- *Home Circle:* An informal group that gathers without a medium in hopes of communicating with the deceased in a home-like setting.

Clairaudience: French for “clear hearing;” the alleged ability to hear voices of discarnate beings, conversations going on over long distances, etc.

Claircognizance: French for “clear knowing;” the phenomenon when someone “just knows” something.

Clairhambience: French for “clear tasting;” the alleged ability to taste foods being eaten by someone else.

Clairkinesthesia: Also called bio-perception; French for “clear touching;” the alleged ability to feel physical contact with discarnate entities, experience physical sensations of someone else, etc.

Clairofactor: French for “clear smelling;” the alleged ability to smell scents that are associated with spirits or past experiences, scents being experienced over long distances, etc.

Clairsentience: French for “clear feeling;” the supposed ability to sense the presence of a spirit.

Clairvoyance: French for “clear seeing;” also called telaesthesia, introscopy and telopsis; the alleged ability to see spirits, events taking place over long distances, the location of a missing object, what others are doing outside of the field of vision, etc.

- *Medical Clairvoyance:* The alleged ability to psychically diagnose diseases.
- *Platform Clairvoyance:* The alleged ability to see the dead.
- *Precognitive Clairvoyance:* Also called prevision; quite literally seeing the future.
- *Traveling Clairvoyance:* Now called remote viewing.
- *Waking Clairvoyance:* Alleged clairvoyant facilities that can be accessed without slipping into a trance.
- *X-ray Clairvoyance:* Allegedly reading letters in envelopes and closed books.

Cognitive Error Hypothesis: An error in judgment where someone should have gone with his or her instincts but did not for some reason or another.

Cold Reading: A process fraudulent psychics and mediums use where they offer vague evidence that can relate to anyone’s life and interpret the reaction.

Cold Spot: A localized column of cold air that is believed to signal the presence of a discarnate being.

Collective Apparition Case: A case where two or more percipients accurately describe the same ghostly image they experienced together.

Collective Phenomena: A paranormal event experienced by more than one person.

Communicator: A spirit that speaks through a medium.

- *Drop-in Communicator:* A spirit who appears unbidden to a séance.

Community of Sensation: The alleged physical link between a materialization medium and the image produced.

Confabulation: Confusing imagination and experiences stories for personal memories. Some skeptics believe this plays a large part in alleged past life experiences.

Conjurer: A term once used to describe a fraudulent medium.

Control: Also called a gatekeeper, spirit operator, communicator or guardian; allegedly a discarnate personality that communicates with sitters through a trance medium and acts as an intermediary between the medium and the spirit world.

Crosstalk: A term used by mediums when they allegedly receive information from more than one communicator at the same time, leading to confusion and mixed messages.

Crypto-conscious Mind: Also called psychic dissociation; an area of the subconscious that seems to have a will of its own, frequently considered during poltergeist outbreaks.

Cryptomnesia: Greek for “concealed recollection;” An event where something has already been learned or experienced but has been forgotten. When someone is confronted with the information again, they seem to inherently already know it and think they are experiencing déjà vu.

Cryptoscopy: Receiving words in a sealed envelope, book or in another location via extrasensory perception.

D

Dazzle Shot: Gary E. Schwartz uses this to describe a piece of information that a psychic or medium supplies that is amazingly accurate and could not conveniently fit into just anyone’s life.

Death Compact: A deal between two individuals that the first one to die will try to contact the other to prove the survival of the soul.

Deathbed Vision: Also called a deathbed apparition; a fairly common occurrence where someone who is deathly ill will begin staring into a corner or suddenly begin holding conversations with people no one else can see or hear.

Déjà vu: Also called paramnesia; French for “already seen;” it describes the eerie feeling that you have already experienced things before when you are confronted with them for the first time. French psychical researcher Émile Boirac divided the experience into four classifications:

- *Déjà rêvé:* French for “already dreamed;” belief that a dream has been seen before.
- *Déjà senti:* French for “already felt;” believing you remember something being talked about.
- *Déjà vécu:* French for “already lived;” this is actually what most people consider to be Déjà vu.

- *Déjà visité*: French for “already visited;” the belief that a new landscape before.

Delusion: False belief that is usually an apperception: reflecting the inner turmoil of the mind of the percipient.

Dematerialization: The disappearance of an object or spirit form.

Depossession: The release of an earthbound, obsessing spirit from the human host.

Derma-optical Perception (DOP): Also called skin sight, eyeless sight, cutaneous vision, extra-retinal vision, paroptic vision and bio-introspection; the alleged ability to touch colors and guess them accurately or read words while blindfolded.

Dermography: Scratches and even writing that inexplicably appears on someone’s skin.

Dice Test: Also called dice-throwing experiment; a standard test parapsychologists used to test for potential psychokinesis where dice were used.

- *Around-the-die Technique*: A test where subjects are asked to influence dice to land on the same number again and again.
- *Singles Test*: A test where subjects are asked to influence dice to land with a specified face up.

Direct Drawing: A drawing allegedly done by a spirit.

Direct Painting: A painting allegedly done by a spirit.

Direct Typing: Messages from a typewriter or computer keyboard allegedly done by a spirit.

Direct Voice: A voice that seemingly issues from thin air and is attributed to the deceased.

Direct Writing: Written messages allegedly done by a spirit.

Discarnate: Without a body.

Divination: Also called fortune telling.

Doorway Test: A cunning test some parapsychologists use to verify whether or not someone can see auras. The subject is asked behind which unattached door a person is standing.

Dowsing: Also called biolocation; using a forked stick or two L-shaped metal rods to facilitate automatism to discover underground water or ore.

- *Map Dowsing*: Also called teleradiesthesia; holding a pendulum over a map to try to locate out-of-sight objects. This method became very popular during the Vietnam War, where it was useful in discovering secret tunnels and landmines.

E

Effluviography: More commonly known as “aura photography.”

Ectomist: An unexplainable fog or mist in pictures or on video.

Ectoplasm: Also called teleplasm and psychode; Greek for “externalized substance;” once used to describe an odd substance mediums allegedly produced that would take the form of disembodied spirits.

Electronic Voice Phenomenon (EVP): Also called Raudive voices and psychophonia; alleged voices of discarnate souls caught on an audio recorder.

Electrophotography: A word used to describe so-called Kirilian photography.

Empath: Also called telepath; a person with the alleged ability to perceive the emotions of others far beyond what is capable by empathy alone. Most detractors, however, believe a person who claims this facility is simply projecting their own emotions.

Ethereal: “Of Heaven.”

Etherialization: The partial physical manifestation of an apparition.

Extra: An anomalous image that appears in photographs.

Extrasensorimotor Phenomena: Information received outside of the normal scenes or muscular capabilities.

Extrasensory Perception (ESP): Also called anomalous cognition, cryptaesthesia, supernormal cognition, extraordinary knowing, anomalous communication, anomalous knowing, receptive psi and bioinformation; the alleged ability to receive information outside of the five senses.

- *General Extrasensory Perception (GESP):* Also called exceptional fluctuations of the human body; the alleged ability to use telepathy and clairvoyance in combination.

Experience-inducing Field (EIF): Naturally occurring emanations that are somehow conducive to paranormal experiences, such as electromagnetic field (EMF) radiation, infrasound, solar flares and geomagnetic fields, radon emissions, etc.

Experient: A person who is the agent of psychokinesis.

Extrachance: Not due to chance alone.

Externalization of Motricity: Psychokinesis in synch with hand movements.

Externalization of Sensitivity: Expansion of senses outside of the body.

F

Falsidical: Parapsychologists use this to indicate a false or mistaken statement or experience.

Fishing: A procedure used by fraudulent psychics and mediums where they ask subtle but leading questions.

Focus: Spiritualists who believe poltergeist phenomena are actual spirit communications use this to designate a natural medium whose latent psychokinetic talents are exploited by the earthbound entity.

Forced-choice Experiment: A test where the subject must choose from a small number of choices.

Free Response Test: A method of testing clairvoyance where subjects are welcome to draw any impression from a huge number of possible targets has many times come under fire since it is quite possible for any abstract drawing to be considered a hit to any number of particular pieces.

G

Ganzfeld Experiment: Initiated by Charles Honorton's Psychophysical Research Laboratories in Princeton, New York. Subjects are tested lying down with eye coverings and white noise hissing through headphones to put them in a sort of altered state of consciousness that is believed to leave one open to telepathic suggestion.

Gestalt Impression: Drawing a picture that matches up with a picture previously sealed in an envelope of which the subject had not seen.

Glottologues: Mediums who speak in tongues.

Gravity Hill: Also called gravity road and magnetic hill; a convincing optical illusion where a road looks like it is sloping one way when it is gently sloping the other.

H

Haint: A Southern Appalachian term for a ghost, derived from the word "haunt."

Hallucination: Perception of stimuli that aren't present, but are believed to be genuine.

- *Place-related Hallucinations:* Hallucinations that occur over some time and in a specific place to different persons independently.

Haunted: A place that is allegedly plagued by frequent supernatural occurrences.

Haunting: Also called place memory haunting and place residue haunting; frequent visitation by seeming paranormal phenomena.

- *Object-centered Haunting:* Paranormal events that seem to surround a particular object.
- *Person-centered Haunting:* Once used to describe poltergeist phenomena.
- *Place-centered Haunting:* Used to describe a location where alleged paranormal events frequently take place.
- *Intelligent Haunting:* The strongest argument for the survival of the human personality or soul after death besides out-of-body and near-death experiences come from encounters with disembodied entities that retain memories, personality traits and faults in death as in life. Unlike the play-like antics of a residual memory, a spirit is not confined to a certain location but may stay there of their own volition.
- *Residual Haunting:* Also called place memory haunting, place residue haunting or stone tape theory; memories that somehow engage certain people under different circumstances, especially when they enter an altered state of consciousness from fatigue or boredom. These images do not acknowledge the living but repeat the same patterns continually.

Heteraesthesia: A sensitivity that is seemingly outside of the normal means.

Hit: In parapsychology, this word is used to indicate a correct response.

Hot Reading: A process used by a fraudulent psychic or medium who has foreknowledge of someone's history but claims the knowledge comes from otherworldly communications.

Hot Spot: An area of seemingly paranormal activity.

Human-machine Interaction: The presence of a person inhibits or helps electronic equipment.

Hypermnesia: An uncanny ability to vividly or completely recall information filtered by the conscious mind but still contained in the subconscious. In parapsychology, this could account for seemingly psychic information when a person isn't aware that their subconscious has retained bits and pieces of information and pieced them together.

Hypnagogia: A fairly common hallucination that occurs while falling asleep. This condition can create auditory and visual hallucinations, feelings of impending disaster or doom, perception of a malevolent presence, the inability to breathe or move, etc. People who suffer a severe episode cannot be convinced that it isn't real.

Hypnopompic Hallucination: Hallucinations that occur while waking up.

I

Ideomotor Effect: Uncontrolled muscular movements.

Illusion: Parapsychologists use this word to indicate naturally occurring phenomena that can be mistaken as paranormal.

Imitative Fraud: Coined by W. Edward Cox to explain conscious control by imitating real poltergeist phenomena.

Imitative Noise: Perceived emulated noises such as moving chairs or breaking china but upon investigation, no such damage or movement can be substantiated.

Incombustibility: A term used to describe a person who seems flame-retardant.

Incorporeal Personal Agency (IPA): A phrase used by psychical researcher Frederic W. H. Myers to describe a discarnate human consciousness.

Indigo Children: Certain children born after the late 1970s are believed to be at a higher stage of evolution. They are typified by increased empathy, creativity and psychic abilities. However, they will not comply with authority figures and are always unconventional. Detractors are right when observing this New Age philosophy offers a more spiritual angle when it comes to the very real Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Autism and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

Inkfish Effect: Also called the shyness factor; a term used to describe the frustrating tendency of paranormal phenomena to occur when the attention of investigators and their equipment is elsewhere. Poltergeist phenomenon, for instance, seems to always occur as soon as an investigator leaves a room.

Instrumental Transcommunication (ITC): Anomalous phenomena through electronic devices such as telephones, televisions, cameras, camcorders, audio recorders, etc. that are allegedly evidence of spiritual activity.

Intersubjective Phenomena: Experienced by more than one individual independently.

Interpenetration of Matter: Also matter passing through matter; an event where solid objects seem to pass through walls, doors, panes of glass, etc.

Intra-mediumistic: Information that could have only been obtained through a medium actually in contact with a deceased individual, not by ESP.

Intrasomatic Hypothesis: An idea published by Karlis Osis and Donna McCormick that states that the soul doesn't leave the body during a so-called out-of-body experience, but that the information is gained via extrasensory perception.

Intuition: To know something without reasoning.

L

Liminality: A state of dissociation where a person becomes disoriented and loses their sense of self. Self-proclaimed trance mediums often describe this ambiguous state before they begin to allegedly channel a spirit.

Linger Effect: When an object moves after the agent of psychokinesis has been removed from the area.

Linkage Hypothesis: Maurice Clement Marsh believed that for a sensitive to “tune in” to another person, they must have a personal object from that person, called linkage material.

Lithoboly: Also called clodding; the strangest phenomenon in poltergeist cases where rocks and other solid objects inexplicably fall from the sky or from the ceiling in a house.

Luminous Phenomena: Anomalous light that appears in pictures or video.

M

Manabee: A term that comes from the Southern Appalachian Mountains that describes a small, inanimate object that seems to be attached to a ghost.

Materialization: An object or spirit allegedly taking form.

Medium: A channel for alleged discarnate spirits to use to communicate with the living.

- *Clairaudient Medium:* A medium that allegedly hears the voices of the deceased.
- *Clairvoyant Medium:* A medium that exhibits platform clairvoyance and reportedly sees the dead.
- *Direct Voice Medium:* A medium that slumps into a trance so the voice of a supposed spirit can communicate with the living, seemingly out of thin air.
- *Healing Medium:* This sort of medium “channels” healing energy and not the personalities of the deceased.

- *Mental Medium*: A medium that verbalizes messages from the deceased, sometimes called psychophony. Most mental mediums claim to have controls, spirits who convey messages from discarnate entities.
- *Materialization Medium*: A medium that claims to be able to conjure the image of a deceased individual as long as they were secured away in a cabinet. The apparition, looking very much like the medium, would walk out in glowing clothes, called spirit drapery.
- *Mixed Medium*: A medium that is in conscious control of their faculties the whole time, does not slip into a trance, and somehow acquires veridical information but is more often incorrect.
- *Physical Medium*: A medium that allegedly produces physical manifestations that indicate a discarnate intellect.
- *Psychic Medium*: A medium that seems to communicate without slipping into a trance.
- *Trance Medium*: A medium that slips into a liminal state of mind and allows another personality to speak through them.
- *Part Trance Medium*: A trance medium that is fully aware of the communication.
- *Full Trance Medium*: A trance medium that is completely unaware of the communication.
- *Transfiguration Medium*: A medium that allegedly takes on the physical appearance of the deceased.
- *Trumpet Medium*: A medium allegedly able to cause a trumpet to levitate to facilitate the direct voice of the deceased.

Mediumistic Induction: A process whereby a medium seems to transfer his or her gifts to a sitter during a séance.

Mentalism: Stage magic that simulates telepathy.

Metaphysical Levitation: Levitation by supernatural means.

- *Autolevitation*: The alleged ability to levitate oneself.

Metetherial: A term coined by Frederic William Henry Myers used to describe an invisible world “behind our own” where spirits reside.

Minition: A word coined by psychical researcher Frederic William Henry Myers to describe a message the offers council or a warning about a disaster. Charles Richet, however, uses this word to describe spontaneous instances of the paranormal.

Miss: In parapsychology, this word is used to indicate an incorrect response.

O

Object focusing: When the same object is the focus of RSPK continuously.

Operator: A label used in parapsychology to designate the subject of tests to verify psychokinesis.

Orb: An orb is a glowing sphere of light that sometimes appears on camera and film that some believe to indicate the presence of spirits. Most detractors, however, believe this is a backscatter of dust particles, precipitation, bugs, etc.

Out-of-body Experience (OBE): Also called an ecosomatic experience; the phrase was coined by Celia Elizabeth to describe the phenomenon where it seems the consciousness leaves the body behind, most frequently reported in near-death experiences.

Ownership Resistance: A theory proposed by parapsychologist Kenneth J. Batchelder that most people would reject the idea that they may have psychic facilities.

P

Parakinesis: Psychokinesis through touches but not enough to explain the distance and trajectory of an object.

Paranormal: Literally, “beyond normal.”

Parapsychology: Called psychobiophysics in Brazil and psychotronics in Czechoslovakia; German psychologist Max Dessoir coined the term in 1889 to replace the term psychical. The term is Greek and means, “outside psychology,” and is an umbrella term used to describe anomalistic phenomena that cannot be readily explained in the context of conventional science. Some parapsychologists now prefer the term paraphysics.

Paraidolia: The human mind is pattern-seeking and will make faces out of abstract pixels in photographs and voices out of strange noises that appear on audio recordings. Think of an inkblot test.

Paroptic Vision: Coined by Jules Romains to describe the ability to perceive written words and colors without having contact with the page.

Percipient: A term used by parapsychologists to indicate the subject of supposed paranormal experiences.

- *Collective Percipience:* A paranormal event observed by more than one individual.

Perispirit: A term used in Spiritism, founded by Allan Kardec, to describe a spiritual body or ghost.

Persination: The alleged process where a medium takes on the emotions, behavior, characteristics and mannerisms of a deceased person, but is still conscious of their own identity.

Phantasm: An imagined apparition.

Phantasmagoria: A once-popular show where ghost-like forms were projected on stage with performers.

Phantom: A general term for a ghost or spirit.

Phone-voyance: Termed by Vincent N. Turvey to describe the alleged ability to perceive visual information over the phone.

Pithecanthrope: Coined by Gustac Geley to describe an animal visible through a materialization medium.

Piezoelectricity: Also called ball of light (BOL) phenomenon; a mysterious natural phenomenon appearing in every country under several titles including ignis fatuus ("fools fire"), will-o'-the-wisp, corpse candles, corpse fire, hobby lanterns, spook lights, ghost lights, cemetery lights, etc. They are balls of plasma light that frequent deserted places. If they are encountered in family cemeteries, locals believe they proceed a death in

the family. The scientific name for these anomalies is piezoelectricity. These are due to ribbons of crystal placed under seismic stress.

Pneumatographers: A direct writer.

Poltergeist: German for “noisy spirit.” Most parapsychologists now use the phrase recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK) because it appears the physical manifestations are unconscious manifestations of inner turmoil. A poltergeist can imitate a haunting in many ways, including phantom footsteps, unexplained cold spots, inexplicable electrical problems, mysterious disappearance of items, foul odors with no discernable source, strange rapping, popping or scratching noises, movement of furniture, scribbles that no one will admit to, discarnate voices or animal sounds, etc.; apparitions are rare in poltergeist cases.

- *Assaultive Poltergeist:* Described as a phantom presence biting, scratching, pinching, pulling hair, pushing, etc. and is often called “demonic.”
- *Fire Poltergeist:* Baffling outbreaks of small fires are not unheard of in poltergeist cases, but the damage is usually minimal because the fires seem to extinguish as soon as they start.
- *Liquid Poltergeist:* The unexplainable poltergeist flow of fluid that mysteriously cumulates in homes but cannot be accredited to leaking pipes is not unheard of. Accumulation and even falling rain inside a house usually leave no moisture on the ceiling or walls.
- *Proto-poltergeist:* Hans Bender named this division for the unexplained electronic disturbances created in poltergeist cases.
- *Talking Poltergeist:* A poltergeist that seems to have its voice.

Posthumous Letters: Letters allegedly from the deceased.

Pre-disasters Syndrome: Growing unease the closer time progresses to a future tragedy.

Precognition: Literally, “prior knowledge;” also called proscopy in Russia; knowing something before it happens.

Prediction: Foretelling the future.

Preferential Effect: An observation that test subjects do better when they are allowed to pick the test for psychic facilities.

Premonition: A “vision” about a future crisis or disaster.

Presentiment: An emotional response that can only be described as precognitive, such as a feeling of dread before impending disaster.

Pseudopod: A “false limb” created from so-called ectoplasm produced by a physical medium.

Psi: From the twenty-third letter of the Greek alphabet, meaning, “mind/soul,” parapsychologists use this to designate what seems to be psychic phenomena, and is usually divided into two categories:

- *Psi-Gamma:* Also called passive psi; cognitive paranormal abilities such as extrasensory perception and remote viewing.

- *Psi-Kappa*: Also called active psi; seemingly uncanny abilities such as psychokinesis. Experiments in psi have created two terms to describe the evidence.
- *Psi-hitting*: Achieving higher than chance results in a parapsychological test.
- *Psi-missing*: Achieving lower than chance results in a parapsychological test.
- *Psi-conducive*: An environment that has a positive impact on the test subject and results in higher-than-average test scores.
- *Psi-inhibiting*: An environment that hurts the test subject and results in lower-than-average test scores.
- *An-Psi*: Shortened from Animal Psi, used to describe animals that allegedly have psychic abilities, such as birds fleeing before a natural disaster, dogs warning owners of impending health problems, etc.
- *Post-psi Distress Syndrome (PPDS)*: Coined by Sharon Solfuin to describe the psychological impact terrifying psychic events can have on a person.
- *Proximal Psi*: Called psi-field hypothesis by William G. Roll; an observation that “psychic forces” are better received the closer the sensitive is to the source.
- *Psi-afferentation*: A term coined by Doctor Vernon M. Neppe to describe anomalous phenomena that seem to indicate extrasensory perception.
- *Psi-mediated Instrumental Response (PMIR)*: A theory proposed Rex G. Stanford to explain clairvoyance without conscious awareness to fulfill life’s needs. For instance, changing travel plans at the last minute because of a “feeling” only to find out the percipient could have been in an accident.
- *Psi-related Experience*: An experience that is believed to be paranormal without question.
- *Psi-trailing*: Amazing capacity some animals have allowing them to travel long distances to be reunited with families.
- *Psi Dexterity*: A phrase coined by termed was coined by Elsie Anna Grace to describe success in a test that indicates an earthbound spirit assisting a test subject.
- *Psi Experimenter Effect*: An instance where it seems the experimenter somehow affects the outcome of a test subject’s scores.
- *Theta Psi*: Also called super-psi, hints at psi abilities, such as telepathy, in discarnate entities.
- *Transcendent Psi*: A psychic experience that leaves the percipient more spiritual.

Psychic: A person who has frequent experiences with extrasensory perception and is often credited with the ability to see into the future.

- *Anapsychic*: Receiving clear visions.
- *Catapsychic*: Receiving fragmented visions.
- *Parapsychic*: A term used by physical researcher Joseph Banks Rhine to indicate a high-scoring subject in psychic tests.

Psychic Archaeology: The use of alleged psychic facilities to locate archaeological digs and to “read” items unearthed.

Psychic Body: Also called *nervengeist* in Germany; the vessel that contains the soul and resembles a living person. Spiritualists believe that this shell is what parapsychologists call residual haunting apparitions.

Psychic Contagion: An idea that is mysteriously transferred cumulating in mass hysteria.

Psychic Detective: A self-proclaimed psychic that uses their facilities to help police in investigations; this term has replaced paragnost.

Psychic Diagnosis: The alleged ability to receive information about someone's health problems via extrasensory perception; usually used in place of x-ray clairvoyance.

Psychic Dream: A dream that seemingly contains information about future events, usually divided into three categories:

- *Displaced Psychic Dream:* These dreams usually contain precognitive information but it seems the person, place and/or times are completely wrong.
- *Literal Psychic Dream:* These dreams are very vivid, and analytical and the dreamer tends to be aware that they are indeed precognitive.
- *Symbolic Psychic Dreams:* Dreams that contain information in the future, only the message is wrapped into dream symbolism and is very hard to discern.

Psychic Echo: Also called phantoms en masse; a group of apparitions or a scene from the past.

Psychic Force: Also called exo-neural action of the brain by Sir William Crookes, odic force by Baron Carl von Reichenbach and ectenic force by Marc Thury; a “nervous atmosphere” emanating from the physical body that is thought to be responsible for psychokinesis. It was proposed that this field sometimes congealed to form ectoplasm.

Psychic Healing: Also called parapsychosomatic; healing allegedly done with the power of another's mind alone.

- *Absent Psychic Healing:* Also called remote healing; healing that is not done in the presence of the patient.

Psychic Noise: Coined by Douglas G. to describe interference with supposed psychic abilities because of the interference of rational thinking.

Psychic Pathology of Everyday Life: Proposed by Doctor Jule Eisenbud and describes slip-of-the-tongue statements that turn out to be seemingly precognitive.

Psychic Profiler: A self-proclaimed psychic who works with the police by providing specific details about a suspect.

Psychic Research: The study of alleged psychic facilities.

Psychic Rod: Coined by William Jackson Crawford. He theorized that an invisible force he called a “psychic rod,” issued from a physical medium to move objects in the environment.

Psychic Threads: Microscopic threads that allegedly issue from the fingers of a medium and are accredited with physical phenomena during a séance. These fibers are almost invisible, flame-retardant and seal together again when cut.

Psychical: Pertaining to the spirit world.

Psychic Surgery: A form of faith healing where a practitioner allegedly makes an incision removes matter and seals the wound with mental abilities alone.

Psychobolie: The belief that the “evil eye” is malicious psychokinesis.

Psychokinesis (PK): Also called psychoenergetics in Russia; the term was coined in 1914 by American author-publisher Henry Holt and adopted by his friend, American parapsychologist Joseph Banks Rhine and is more favored than the previous term telekinesis (“mind movement”), which was coined in 1890 by British psychical researcher Frederic William Henry Myers. This is the alleged ability to move objects with the mind. Rhine divided this ability into two separate classifications:

- *Macro-PK:* Also called directly observable psychokinesis; Psychokinetic effects that can be seen with the naked eye.
- *Micro-PK:* Subtle psychokinetic influence that influences seemingly random events, such as causing dice to roll to high numbers.
- *Collective Psychokinesis:* Coined by Count Agenor de Gasparin coined this phrase in 1854; supposed psychokinesis by a group to perform what is known as table tipping, when a spirit allegedly moves a table during a séance.
- *Domestic Psychokinesis:* Psychokinesis in a home setting.
- *Isolated Spontaneous Psychokinesis (ISPK):* Also non-recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis, spontaneous psychokinesis and psi-efferentation by Doctor Vernon M. Neppe; an isolated incident of alleged psychokinesis.
- *Psychokinesis on Living Targets (PK-LT):* Also called bio-PK and direct mental influence on living systems (DMILS).
- *Psychokinesis on Moving Targets (PK-MT):* Tests where subjects are encouraged to slow down a moving object, deflect its trajectory, etc.
- *Retroactive Psychokinesis (Retro-PK):* A strange occurrence where items are influenced after the test subject has left the area.
- *Static Psychokinesis (Static-PK):* Alleged movement of stationary objects by the power of the mind alone.
- *Psychokinesis Party:* A gathering of individuals with the expressed purpose of creating feats of mind-over-matter, especially spoon-bending.
- *Psychokinetic Metal-bending (PK-MB):* The seemingly paranormal ability to bend metal through mind power alone.
- *Psychokinetic Placement:* An attempt by test subjects to direct objects to a certain location using only their minds.

Psychomanteum: A room where the walls are mirrors. It is believed that sitting in a darkened room like this will cause the mind to hallucinate an apparition.

Psychometry: Also called psychoscopy by W. H. E. Tenhaeff and token-object reading; Greek for “soul measure” and coined by Joseph Rodes Buchanan and is the alleged ability to receive impressions or past events from physical objects.

- *Psychometric Premonition:* A form of clairvoyance where sensitive individuals allegedly receive future knowledge when in contact with an object.

Psychopannychism: Literally, “soul sleep;” the belief that after death the soul slumbers.

Psychophony: Founder of Spiritism, Allan Kardec, uses this term to describe a spirit using a medium’s voice to speak.

Psychorrhagic Diathesis: A term used to describe a person who for no reason lets their soul wander about without any consciousness of doing so.

Pyrogenesis: The alleged ability to control, ignite and extinguish fire using the mind alone.

R

Radiesthesia: Also called radionics; the alleged sensitivity to subtle and undetectable radiation given off by living things, underground water, ore, etc.

Radio Voice Phenomenon (RVP): Voice of a spirit coming through a radio.

Radiotelethesis: Allegedly unintended taking on the emotional turmoil of a spirit.

Receiver: A person who allegedly can receive information through extrasensory perception (ESP) from a sender.

Recurrent Spontaneous Psychokinesis (RSPK): A term used by parapsychologists who do not prefer the earlier term of poltergeist, believing such phenomena are the result of sudden and unconscious discharges of psychokinetic energy.

Releasement: The exorcism of a ghost or spirit from a particular location.

Remote Staring: Used to describe the event when someone is being stared at without their knowledge, yet they somehow perceive it.

Remote Viewing (RV): Also called remote perception; this phrase was invented by Russell Targ and Harold Puttuff of the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) to replace the phrase, traveling clairvoyance. It is the alleged ability to “see” distant places.

- *Associative Remote Viewing (ARV):* A clairvoyant describes the location or person through “yes” or “no” questions asked by a parapsychologist.
- *Outbounder Remote Viewing (ORV):* A person who has a dominant, Type A personality is sent to the location to “send” information to the clairvoyant.
- *Predictive Remote Viewing (PRV):* Developed by researchers Simon Turnbull and Charles Scarf to predict future stock market fluctuations.
- *Precognitive Remote Perception (PRP):* Experiments where a subject is asked to describe the place the sender will visit shortly.

Retrocognition: Also called postcognition; the alleged ability to receive information through extrasensory perception (ESP) about the past.

Retrofitting: A trick used by fraudulent psychics who want to elicit confidence when they make a statement to a sitter that can only be verified later.

Reverant: An apparition of a deceased person.

Ridicule Factor: The assumption that most people will not report unexplainable experiences for fear of mockery by their peers.

S

Séance: French for “sitting;” a group of people gathered together in an attempt to contact the deceased.

Sender: A person who sends information to someone being tested for extrasensory perception (ESP).

Sensitive: Used to indicate someone that allegedly can “sense” spirits of the dead. In France, such a person is called a Metagnome.

- *Electrical Sensitive:* A person who allegedly causes electrical disturbances.

Sheep-goat Effect: Coined by Doctor Gertrude Schmeidler to show that believers in psychic abilities score higher on ESP tests than skeptics.

Silver Cord: Also called St. Paul’s cord; an ethereal cord that supposedly attaches the soul to the physical body when a person is astrally projecting. This belief comes from Ecclesiastes 12, where “breaking of the silver cord” equals death.

Sitter: A person attending a séance.

- *Proxy Sitter:* A person representing someone else who could not attend a séance to rule out the possibility of telepathy.
- *Sitter Group:* A semi-personal gathering of people in a séance-like setting in hopes of witnessing physical phenomena.

Skotography: From the Greek skotos (“darkness”) and graphein (“to write”), was coined by Felicia Scatcherd, a member of the London chapter of the Society for Psychical Research. It describes instances where spirits appear or write messages on unexposed film.

Somatography: Reading a human aura with dowsing rods or a pendulum.

Soul Loss: The belief that the soul leaves the body during extreme stress, during a crisis, or during an accident or death of the physical body.

Specter: A fake paranormal event.

Spirit Baby: The alleged offspring of a medium and a spirit, though this is an easy cover for adultery.

Spirit Photography: Photographs that are said to contain images of the dead, called extras.

Spiritoid: Also called a symbolic apparition; a term coined by Emile Boirac to describe an apparition that is symbolic and is trying to communicate a message by whom they appear to, what times, what they are wearing, what they are doing, etc.

Stigmatized Property: A piece of property, usually a dilapidated, abandoned house, that is believed to be haunted for no reason other than looking “creepy,” and is a frequent hangout for vagrants and persons of ill repute. Such property is an insurance liability and usually a hard selling point.

Spontaneous Human Combustion (SHC): The unthinkable event when a person’s body seems to burst into flames for no reason whatsoever. Skeptics believe that all cases of SHC are caused by a mishap with fire and that the fat inside a person accelerates the flames to consume only the body of the person.

Spontaneous Phenomena: A once-in-a-lifetime paranormal encounter.

Super-ESP Hypothesis: This is a popular hypothesis in parapsychology that states a person's natural clairvoyant ability will generate an internal hallucination to create an apparition (a spiritoid). This seeming interaction between a spirit and subconscious mind is usually symbolic and explains why the same type of spirit is seen wearing different clothing by different percipients.

Superconscious: A term used by “sleeping prophet” Edgar Cayce to describe Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung’s theory of the collective subconscious, a reservoir of all human experiences and from where Cayce believed, psychic information was channeled from. In the philosophy of Theosophy, this dimension was called the akashic records.

Supernatural: This word is almost always interchangeable with paranormal.

Supernormal: Used before parapsychology.

Survivalism: The belief that the consciousness or soul survives physical death.

Synchronicity: A term coined by Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung, to describe meaningful coincidences that seem to have been arranged by the subconscious mind.

Synesthesia: This Greek phrase means, “union of sensation.” It is a neurological conditional where the senses are coupled. For instance, a person can perceive sound as vivid colors (this sometimes happens on psychedelic drugs).

T

Table Tipping: Also table-turning, is where a small group of people gather around and lay their hands on a table, and wait for it to move under the supposed spiritual influence.

Telepathy: Also called mind-reading, thought-reading, thought-transference, mental report, telepsychosis and biocommunication in Russia; this term was coined by Frederic William Henry Myers. It is a Greek phrase that means, “distant feeling,” and is the alleged ability to perceive the thoughts of others:

- *Active-Agent Telepathy:* Used to indicate when the sender of information accidentally causes an emotional or behavioral change in the receiver.
- *Latent Telepathy:* Also deferred telepathy; the alleged ability to receive information through extrasensory perception, though there is a noticeable time difference in transmission and receiving the thoughts.

- *Precognitive Telepathy*: The alleged ability to receive information about a person's thoughts before the person thinking them.
- *Unconscious Telepathy*: A "message" from the subconscious mind that dictates a person's actions.

Teleportation: A Greek phrase meaning, "distant moving;" the term was coined by American writer Charles Fort to describe an object or person who moves through from one place to another instantly.

Telesomatic: A term used as a substitute for materialization by Alexander N. Aksakof.

Telesthesia: A term coined by Frederic William Henry Myers for "perception at a distance," such as feeling emotions, impulses and even wounds at a distance.

Telluric Force: Also called rhabdic force; the alleged force that moves dowsing rods.

Theta: Eighth letter of the Greek alphabet synonymous with death. Parapsychologists used to use this symbol to indicate Survivalism, that the consciousness or soul survives physical death. Theta is also an altered state of consciousness (ranging from 4-8 Hz) complimentary to trances when some mediums allegedly communicate information from discarnate beings.

Thorybism: Rene Sudre uses this term to describe poltergeist disturbances.

Thoughtography: Also called dorchagraphy and nensha in Japan; the term was coined by Professor Tomokichi Fukurai. This is the alleged ability to "burn images" from one's mind onto an object. It was also studied in the 1960s by psychiatrist, Jule Eisenbud after his work with the out-of-work, heavy-drinking Ted Serious of Chicago. Ted was allegedly able to imagine an image, cover the lens of a Polaroid camera, and impress the mental image onto the instant film.

- *Negative Thoughtography*: Parapsychologist C. T. K. Chari noticed that some subjects could cause some sections of a picture not to be exposed.

Traction of the Human Body: Violent push or pull of seemingly limitless strength is sometimes observed in poltergeist cases.

Transpersonal Psychology: A branch of psychology encompasses the whole being, even the spiritual side. This field is more likely to think favorably of anomalous, religious and parapsychological phenomena.

Transposition of Senses: The phenomena where a sense seems to move to another part of the body, such as seeing through the stomach or hands.

Trilocation: The image of a person appearing in two separate places away from their physical body.

Typtology: Communication with rapping noises believed to be spiritual in origin and characteristic in poltergeist cases.

V

Verbal Transformation Effect: Also called auditory pareidolia; a phrase psychologists use to indicate an auditory illusion. Detractors of electronic voice phenomenon (EVP) believe this is all there is to the anomalous sounds.

Veridical: Parapsychologists use this term to indicate a truthful statement or event as opposed to a false, or falsidical statement.

Vibes: "Feeling vibrations" off of people, places and objects.

Vile Vortices: The term was coined by Ivan T. Sanderson to explain twelve areas at sea where electronic and guidance systems fail, there are strange sky and sea conditions and ships and planes mysterious vanish. The most famous of these is the so-called Bermuda Triangle.

Vortex: Also called phantasmogenic center by Frederic William Henry Myers and localized psi; the term was coined by Graham Watkins to explain residual haunting. He theorized that a vortex was created when a subject created a "psychic field" in a fixed space that stayed for centuries after the person's death.

W

Witness Inhibition: A theory proposed by parapsychologist Kenneth J. Batchelder that most people unconsciously stop producing feats of mind-over-matter when they witness it.

Wrath: The Scottish word for an apparition.

Z

Zener Cards: Cards designed in the early 1930s by Karl Zener to test alleged ESP/telepathic abilities. Each card has a different symbol out of 5 symbols (a square, a star, a circle, a cross and wavy lines) and a person is asked to describe the card the experimenter is looking at.

Zones of Disturbance (ZOD): Used by Paul Devereux to describe a geographic area he believes is conducive to paranormal experiences