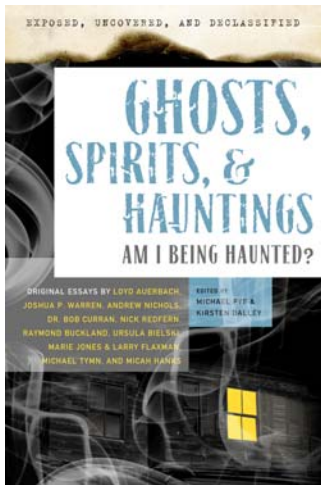


GHOSTS, SPIRITS & HAUNTINGS

By Andrew Nichols, PhD

BOOK SUMMARY

Haunted Houses: Theatres of the Mind



The essay focuses on the concept of hauntings as ESP/psychological projections, and include brief case studies, as well as a discussion of "de-haunting".

In spite of the determination with which many paranormal investigators cling to the *spiritistic* model of haunts, there is actually little convincing evidence to support this view. The focus of this essay is the hypothesis that some haunt-type experiences can be explained by an interaction between the human psyche and unusual environmental factors (*e.g.*, anomalous geomagnetic/electromagnetic fields). This model is supported by anecdotal reports, empirical observation,

laboratory experiments, and field measurements. Elements of this hypothesis include:

1. Perceptual experiences in haunt-type cases (Visual apparitions, voices, footsteps, sense of presence, etc.) are usually subjective hallucinations, and represent projections of material from the subconscious mind. Therefore, ghosts cannot be photographed, recorded or detected by electronic instruments.
2. The phenomena associated with Hauntings are typically experienced by individuals who have a particular psychological profile (sensitives), and usually have a history of prior paranormal-type experiences.
3. Locations in which haunt-type experiences are reported often have unusual electromagnetic or geomagnetic properties, and thus are potential 'ghost hatcheries', triggering unusual perceptual experiences in people who happen to be sensitive to such fields.
4. Such unusual magnetic fields may also amplify latent *psi* (ESP & PK) abilities in certain individuals, resulting in poltergeist-type disturbances.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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ANDREW NICHOLS, PsyD, PhD, is an American psychologist and parapsychologist specializing in the psychology of superstitions, paranormal beliefs and experiences, and is an investigator of apparitions, haunted houses, and other paranormal phenomena. He is currently Professor of Psychology at City College in Gainesville, Florida, and is director of the American Institute of Parapsychology. He has published more than 50 articles, scientific papers and book chapters and has authored or edited 3 books. His television appearances include *48 Hours*, *Unsolved Mysteries*, *Feed Your Mind*, *Real Ghost Hunters* and *Ghost Detectives* on the Discovery Channel.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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- What is a ghost?
- Can anyone see a ghost?
- What are the different kinds of ghosts?
- Can ghosts be photographed or recorded?
- Can ghosts be studied in the laboratory?
- Why are some places more haunted than others?
- What do you think of amateur ghost hunters?
- Can a ghost be artificially created?
- Does human consciousness survive death? (Is there an afterlife?)
- What is parapsychology?
- Why is parapsychology important?
- Why is there so much public interest in the paranormal these days?