

To See Ghosts, You Must Believe In Them

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Do ghosts like Halloween?

"Not particularly," said Mark Turck, director and founder of the International Society for the Investigation of Ghosts.

"People like to talk about ghosts around this time of year, but ghosts don't seem to notice, at least from my experience."

But Turck has an open mind about ghosts (a sometimes dangerous activity. He says he was almost killed by a person whose mind was possessed by a ghost).

Before you laugh, better look over your shoulder. Ghost research is no longer sneered at in all the more polite scientific circles.

Decades of parapsychology research have begun to convince rational thinkers that there is much to the human mind still not understood.

And there is much beyond the human mind not understood, either.

Turck, a modishly-dressed, slightly studious-looking young man of 28, moved to Santa Cruz about a year ago. He hopes to do advanced study in parapsychology here.

Why, he was asked. Are there a lot of ghosts in Santa Cruz?

"Oh, I believe every area has its fair share of ghosts, especially places with a long history. No, it just seemed like a good place to live."

Naturally, though, he would like to investigate any local denizens of the dark, such as the reported ghost of the old McCrary hotel on beach hill.

Has he seen a ghost?

"I believe I have seen and heard things that could be ghosts. But I'm familiar enough with hypnosis and the subconscious mind to realize there are other possible explanations of what happened to me."

"From reports of other people, though, I am convinced ghosts do exist, and they very probably are the spirits—the energies—of the dead."

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something pops up again. That's the trouble with so many ghost stories—there's nothing really recorded that can be checked later."

Turck has some purported pictures of ghosts, but reluctantly said they were given to him only on condition they be published in proper book form, and could not be released for newspaper use.

Persons who have seen ghosts usually don't shout the news around, because they can be subject to harassment and ridicule. Sightings reported to Turck are kept confidential, if the person involved asks it.

He has found some good ancient and modern ghost stories, though. There was the well-recorded case of the phantom battle of Edge Hill in the English Civil War of 1642, where the king and the rebel Parliamentary forces under Sir William Balfour met in combat.

The real battle took place in the afternoon, with the king's forces at first victorious in breaking the rebel lines, but then a rebel counterattack almost captured the Prince of Wales. An indecisive battle, but one which produced a strange phenomena two months later on a Saturday night, shortly after midnight just before Christmas. A small group of "shepherds, countrymen and travelers" were passing by the battlefield when they heard drums, and the agonizing cries of dying soldiers. The astonished watchers then saw the entire battle re-created before their eyes.

The terrified spectators notified the local minister and the justice of the peace. The following evening not only the people of Keinton, but "all the substantial inhabitants" of the

Both telepathy and telekinesis have some scientific grounding as actual phenomena, while ghosts themselves are yet to be proven "real". You yourself may be producing the phenomena of what you see as a ghost.

Turck, who received his bachelor's degree from USF and his master's as Fresno State University, has taught classes in parapsychology, and

likes to work with hypnosis to contact ghosts. Often, he finds not ghosts but other psychic phenomena such as telepathy or precognition (foreseeing the future).

"I put Louise under hypnosis for an interview with station KPIX in San Francisco. She told us she saw someone trying to break into the television truck outside. The technician ran outside and no one was there, so they had a good laugh on us. The following night, though, while they were out with us, a policeman chased away someone trying to get into the truck. So it was our turn to laugh," Turck recounts.

Turck's father was interested in psychic research, and developed a close telepathy rapport with his son, which is why Turck continues to be in-

terested. Why study ghosts? "The proof of the existence of ghosts may be a direct lead into the proof of the existence of the soul, which may be one of the greatest scientific breakthroughs of all time," said Turck.

"If the immortality of the human soul can be proven, I

believe it will have a marvelous effect on people. People will be kinder, more humane, when they believe they are to live on after death."

So, if you know of a ghost, Turck meet him or her through the address mentioned. have a happy Halloween.

Custom Picture Framing

Take his visit to the Whaley House in San Diego, supposedly a much-haunted spot. Photos have been taken there of strange lights, shadows, and so on.

Turck has some pictures, too. All they show, though, is a chain blocking off a room from part of a tour of the house. "The tour guide was talking, and I was thinking to myself, 'If there is a ghost here, I wish he would do something to let me know he's here.'"

At that very moment, the chain four or five feet away began unaccountably to swing gently back an forth. "After watching it in surprise for about 30 seconds, I told the tour guide. He just nodded, and said, 'It happens all the time,' and went on with the tour."

Turck uses the term "he" but one shadow picture of the house shows what looks like the shadow of an elderly woman, one of the Whaleys who presumably still haunts the place.

From his apartment at 369-J Western Drive, Turck can look at the sometimes-gloomy canyon where fog sweeps in, and just up the street is the home where two victims of killer Herbert Mullin met their deaths.

It doesn't in the least disturb him. With his fiancée, Louise Schaefer, who is editor and secretary-treasurer of Friends of Ghosts, they work to compile ghostly sightings from all over the world.

"We try and check carefully on some of the more plausible ones, but the main thing is to get them recorded. Then, in the future, there will be a record if

notified the local minister and the justice of the peace. The following evening not only the people of Keinton, but "all the substantial inhabitants" of the neighboring villages again witnessed the phantom battle.

This took place again the following Saturday and Sunday, and the king himself sent a committee to investigate. The committee was astounded to recognize Sir Edmund Verney and several other combatants! In all, the battle was seen at least eight times.

In Turck's view, the ghosts could have been a "psychometric imprint" made on the area because of the fierce emotional level of the battle, and the energy imprint lasted after the death of those who fought.

Turck has many more modern ghost stories, of course, including the famed reappearance of the great escape artist, Harry Houdini, through the medium Arthur Ford in 1928. But Turck notes that such cases are framed in controversy.

For his work, Turck prefers to get ghost reports from people who do not, or at least did not, believe in ghosts before they saw them. And, of course, the more people who see the ghost, the better. Any "solid" evidence such as tape recordings or photos help immensely.

But if you want to see a ghost, it helps a lot if you truly believe in them. The only problem with this is that there are modern explanations, such as telepathy (mindreading) and telekinesis (moving objects with the mind) to account for it.



Mark Turck