



101 GHOST HUNTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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About the Author

101 Ghost Hunting Questions, Answered

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Dedication

To my many friends and fans who make ghost hunting more fun, more interesting, and very worthwhile.

Thank you!

Sincerely, Fiona Broome

Fiona's note: Were you looking for a ghost hunting question that you didn't find here? Ask me. I'll answer it if I can, and add it to the list for my next book in this series, "*101 More Ghost Hunting Questions - Answered.*"

Introduction

Since the 1990s, people have asked me *great* questions about ghosts and haunted places. I've collected the 101 most popular questions, and — in this book — I've answered them as well as I can.

I talk about ghosts, haunted places, and how to be part of a ghost hunting group. I talk about science, politics, and safety in paranormal research. I even share my opinions about TV shows and their stars. I explain what to do if you'd like to be part of a TV series.

Of course, my answers aren't the final word. As researchers learn more about

ghosts, answers change. That's why we keep ghost hunting. Frankly, when paranormal researchers get dogmatic, we've reached a dead end. No pun intended.

Keep this in mind: There's *no scientific proof* of ghosts. Something odd is going on at haunted sites. We can't prove the cause, yet.

Keep asking questions. Look for the best answers, and share them with others. That's the only way we'll figure out what ghosts and hauntings *really* are. I hope you'll be part of this adventure.

My answers may surprise you. They're *not* what some ghost hunters

will tell you, and you'll rarely hear these opinions on TV shows.

Keep an open mind.

Cheerfully,

Fiona Broome

P.S. If you have a question that I *didn't* answer, drop me a note at Ghosts101.com. I'm eager to hear from you.

If you feel that one of my answers is really wrong, let me know. Tell me why I'm wrong. I'm interested in intelligent, alternate opinions.

P.P.S. This book has been heavily revised since its first publication in

2012. I've updated information, and corrected errors & typos. I've also added about 10,000 words to explain many points in more detail.

1. What are ghosts?

Dictionaries say a *ghost* is the spirit of a dead person. That may be true.

However, when paranormal investigators use the word “ghosts,” we’re usually talking about ghostly *phenomena*. You know... things like apparitions, strange noises, orbs in photos, and weird EMF spikes.

Some ghost hunters insist that *all* ghostly phenomena are disembodied spirits. Skeptics explain “hauntings” in very *normal* terms that doesn’t involve dead people. Some religions insist that everything ghostly is demonic and dangerous.

Most ghost hunters are between those extremes. We say the *phenomena* are real but unexplained. First, we look for *normal* things that explain what's going on. About 80% of the time, we can find a reasonable, normal explanation. The other 20% — and perhaps some of the 80%, as well — may be ghostly.

This is important: Even though some “ghostly” phenomena can be blamed on something normal, the site may still be haunted.

(To draw a sports parallel: During a football game, *most* people on the field are football players. That doesn't mean the occasional streaker is *also* a football

player. Anomalies can happen every day. Generalizations aren't reliable.)

Also, few investigators agree on *all* paranormal issues. For every person who insists that *all* orbs are ghosts, you'll find one who says *all* orbs are dust or insects. The truth may be somewhere in-between.

In fact, the “ghosts” label is too simplistic. We don't know what most ghostly phenomena are.

Let's pool our information and compare notes. Then, we might find better answers.

2. What are some terms that refer to ghosts?

Ghosts, spirits, apparitions... those words are related but they don't mean the same things. Here are some other, related words. Some refer to ghosts, others describe different paranormal entities. They can be useful.

Some people are happy to use the word “ghost” for any spirit of the dead. Others aren’t. When people are *sure* who their ghost is, notice the words they use. Some people happily talk about their granny’s benevolent “spirit.” Describing her as a “ghost” could sound harsh. She’s not haunting them, she’s

visiting. The difference is important.

Tip: Looking for fresh places to find ghosts? Search online and in books for these words and phrases. You may turn up a haunted site you didn't know about.

- Ancestral spirit.
- Angel (or guardian angel), cherubim, seraphim.
- Angiris.
- Anomaly.
- Apparition.
- Banshee (Bean Sidhe).
- Being (or glorified being, celestial being, etc.).
- Changeling.
- Coiste bodhar (coach of the dead).

- Corpse.
- Cuirp dhaondachbach (Celtic spirit in physical-appearing form).
- Daemon. (Different than a demon.)
- Deceased (usually “the deceased”).
- Demon.
- Departed (or departed person).
- Djin, djinn, genie, genii, or jinnee.
- Entity.
- Fairy, faerie, or one of the good people.
- Familiar.
- Fiend.
- Form.
- Genius.
- Ghoul, ghoulie, ghowl, ghul, ghuli.

(Definitely *not* just a ghost.)

- Goblin (or hobgoblin).
- Green Lady.
- Gremlin.
- Guardian.
- Heavenly visitor.
- Incorporeal being (or immaterial being).
- Intelligence.
- Lamassu.
- Lar.
- Manes. (Note: That's the singular.)
- Messenger.
- Penates.
- Phantom.
- Pitrīs.

- Semblance.
- Shade.
- Shadow person.
- Soul (or beatified soul).
- Specter or spectre.
- Spirit (or earthbound spirit, or vital spirit).
- Supernatural being.
- The unseen.
- Vestige.

3. What is a ghost hunter? Why would anyone want to *hunt* a ghost?

The term “ghost hunter” is slang. The person is hunting for *evidence* of ghosts.

It’s an old expression. I’ve seen it used in the early 1890s. I think it’s *far* older than that. So, don’t think a TV producer invented the phrase.

The Ghost Hunters™ TV series re-popularized the phrase in the early 21st century. The phrase is trademarked, but only for the TV series and products directly related to the show.

The *stars* of the Ghost Hunters TV series are from a research group called TAPS, The Atlantic Paranormal Society.

It was around long before the TV series started. They have their own website, separate from the TV show.

As far as I know, nobody actually “hunts” ghost. It’s not like hunting game for dinner. (Some people hunt *demons*, but that’s a different field.)

Would you like to become a ghost hunter? Do you have questions about ghosts and paranormal phenomena? If so, ghost hunting may help you find answers.

Your research may be tedious and time-consuming. Many investigations involve uncomfortable settings. The work can be fascinating. Sometimes, it’s

exhilarating. However, it's still work. It's rarely relaxing.

If you're more interested in being entertained, try ghost tours. They're fun. Many are theatrical performances. Others may reveal actual ghosts.

You might also like John Sabol's presentations. What's going on in front of you is real. It's often extreme and fast-paced. It's very different than typical ghost hunts.

If you're not sure, sign up for some ghost hunting events. Try several. No two are exactly alike. Also, some researchers and psychics are more credible than others. (I can vouch for

Gordon Ellison, Lesley Marden, Sean Paradis, and David Wells, among others.)

The key is whether you have unanswered questions, or if you're looking for entertainment.

4. How do I start ghost hunting?

Have you watched a lot of TV shows such as *Ghost Hunters* and *Ghost Adventures*? You may be ready to explore a haunted location with other ghost enthusiasts.

Learn more about the subject, first. Don't rush out to a "haunted" site in the middle of nowhere, thinking it will be fun. You might be scared (or bored) out of your mind, and wonder what you got yourself into. Sometimes it's easy to get in your car and leave. At other locations, especially if you're in "lockdown," it's not so simple. In addition, some isolated "haunted" sites are truly dangerous.

(Those dangers usually come from the living more than the dead, but both are possible.)

Best ways to learn more about ghost hunting:

- Watch ghost related TV shows. (If you're using Roku or other streaming-to-TV devices, look for ghost-specific channels.)
- Watch ghost hunting videos on YouTube, etc.
- Read books by ghost hunters (and the stars of *Ghost Hunters*, *Paranormal State*, and similar shows).
- Read about haunted places in books, magazines, and newspapers, and online.

- Listen to ghost-related podcasts.

Be sure you understand the risks of ghost hunting. You can avoid most dangers if you know what to expect.

Most real investigations include waiting for hours while nothing happens. Even at reliably haunted sites, expect a lull as long as two hours. After that, the “haunting” may only be an unexplained sound or a brief shadow seen by one person, out the corner of his eye. That’s typical, and it may be disappointing.

Now and then, an investigation seems tame for the first 20 minutes or so. Then things turn chilling. You’ll have one eerie experience after another, for an

hour or longer.

If that sounds fine to you, go to Ghosts101.com and download my free, four-week course. It explains basic ghost hunting.

Learn some of the words. Know what to expect during investigations. Try some inexpensive ghost hunting tools like homemade dowsing rods.

Some people start with public, organized ghost hunts. Often, they're advertised online, in newspapers, and on community bulletin boards.

Ghost hunting events attract dozens or even hundreds of people. You'll usually hear a talk by one or more professional

ghost hunters. Then, you'll learn about the history and layout of the location you're investigating.

After that, the audience is usually divided into smaller groups. Each group will investigate one part of the location for a while. Then, you'll swap places with another group, and see what happens there. You'll continue the rotation until you've explored the entire site.

After that, you'll share your discoveries with others at the event, including some of the professional ghost hunters.

Tip: Most professional ghost hunters

are eager to talk with people who share their interests. A *few* professionals are obnoxious. Don't take it personally. They're insulting and arrogant with me, too.

Some others — including me — can seem shy, “too busy,” or less accessible. (Talk to us anyway. Most of us are happy to chat and share insights and research methods.)

Events show you what *can* happen during ghost hunts. You'll meet people who are interested in ghosts. You'll understand more about ghost hunting.

If this isn't as much fun as you'd expected, it's okay to quit ghost hunting.

You didn't spend much money. You didn't commit to membership in any groups. You met some interesting people, and maybe a few celebrities. You have some stories to share with friends and family.

Did you enjoy the events you attended? Look for good ghost hunting groups in your area. See if you can go on a few investigations with them.

Go on investigations with several groups. Decide whether you'd like to join any of them.

No groups in your area, or none you'd like to join? That's okay. Find a few friends with similar interests. Explore

safe, popular haunted locations near you. Start your own group.

Never go ghost hunting by yourself. Even with friends, avoid isolated haunts.

Haunted cemeteries can be a good starting point. Often, you can learn about the cemetery's ghosts, online. Almost every community has a haunted grave or cemetery.

Also, ask local residents what's haunted. Read regional newspaper stories, especially around Halloween.

I like cemeteries for many reasons. For example, you can use information on headstones to research the *real* history of each ghost. (Many haunted houses and

battlefields are far more difficult to research.)

Regional books can provide extra information about haunted cemeteries. Ask at the public library. That information can make research more interesting.

My book, *Ghost Hunting in Haunted Cemeteries: A How-to Guide*, can be helpful, too. Your public library may have a copy.

5. How can I join a ghost hunting group?

Don't sign up for the first ghost hunting group you find. Check all your options, first.

Start with an online search for local ghost hunting groups.

- Examine each group's website. Is it well organized? Is it believable? Is it updated regularly?

- Are they open to visitors and new members? (Some groups welcome new ghost hunters on investigations. Others are closed. A few host only fund-raising events.)

- Read the profiles of individual

members and see if they have their own blogs. Do they sound like smart, experienced, interesting ghost hunters? Have any of the members already made up their minds about ghosts?

In other words, are they *really* investigating ghostly phenomena? Or, are they looking for evidence *to confirm what they already believe?*

Make sure the group seems a good match for your interests. You'll spend hours sitting in the dark, waiting for ghosts. If your companions annoy you, those hours can be pretty awful.

When you have found a likely group, contact them.

- Have several phone or Skype conversations before meeting anyone.
- Don't go alone. Bring a friend with you during your first meeting.
- If something makes you uncomfortable during the investigation, leave. You don't need to make up an excuse. "This isn't right for me" is enough. (If a group *keeps* trying to include you, ask them to leave you alone.)

Unfortunately, this is important: Rarely, sexual predators join (or form) ghost hunting groups. They like working in the dark. Women and children are the most frequent victims, but they're not the

only ones.

Remember: Physical phenomena are unusual. That includes ghosts that touch, pinch, or slap you.

If you feel uneasy around someone during a ghost hunt, you don't need to make up an excuse. Just leave.

Not comfortable walking away...?
Need an excuse no one will argue with?

- Say that you had fish for dinner and now you feel like you're going to throw up.

- Act as if your phone is on vibrate. Pretend to answer it, wait about 15 seconds, and say into the phone, "I'll be right home." Then, say you have an

emergency at home, and leave.

On the other hand, if the group seems like a good match, go on several more investigations with them.

Then, try a couple of investigations with another group, and so on. Identify what you like and don't like about each ghost research team *and* the locations they investigate.

If you decide to join one of them, ask what's involved. A waiver may be necessary. Read it carefully.

Things to avoid:

- A long-term commitment.
- A large, up-front fee.
- A fee to be part of the “inner circle.”

- Restrictions on who else you can ghost hunt with, what you can talk about, and so on.

After you've found a good group, you'll have plenty to learn. Be respectful. Be patient. Learn the ropes.

Continue to evaluate your experiences. No group stays the same for very long. Some changes can be good. Others, not so good.

Keep your options open. Use your critical thinking skills in every aspect of ghost hunting.

6. How can I start a ghost hunting group?

The free course at Ghosts101.com covers this subject in detail. Here's a brief summary.

First, participate in a few ghost hunts with local groups. Take part in some public ghost hunting events. See how different investigations are organized. Decide what you like and don't like.

Next, find others who share your interests. Ask acquaintances if they watch a certain ghost hunting TV series. See their reactions. If they seem enthusiastic, ask if they'd like to go ghost hunting with you.

It's that simple.

Start with more interested people than you'll actually need.

Make sure their backgrounds and schedules are a match. Try to select team members whose personalities are compatible.

Tip: If your investigations are interesting, people will rearrange their schedules. If some members are *awful*, people will make up excuses to avoid your investigations.

Avoid personality problems. Here are some things to watch for:

- Anyone who always *has* to be the leader. That includes you. This person

has always done more, seen more, and knows more than everyone else. (That's what he or she claims, anyway.)

- Loud, abrasive, sarcastic skeptics. For them, no evidence is good enough to take seriously. Worse, well-meaning team members will keep trying to change the skeptic's mind. That wastes everyone's time.

- Nervous people. They jump at shadows. They distract the group by needing comfort and reassurance. Often, they're the people you least expect to hit the panic button.

- Anyone who makes *every* ghost encounter a deeply personal, religious

experience. (However, if yours is a faith-based group, that may be an asset.)

- Over-eager believers. To them, *everything* is a ghost or spirit. Be nice. They might really enjoy ghost research. Let them continue... in someone else's group.

- Anyone who has a troubling mental health issue. Anyone with a drinking or drugs problem.

- Anyone who needs extra attention that distracts you or the group. This includes anyone whose life is otherwise fraught with non-stop problems they insist on telling you about.

-Gossips, bullies, and anyone who

ridicules other members, during or after an investigation.

Next, choose a convenient location to investigate. Meet there to see how the group works together.

If someone is being difficult, have a quiet conversation to resolve the issue. (However, obnoxious people tend to remove themselves from the group, usually loudly. Don't take it personally. They do this a lot. They're pros. Nothing you said or did would have made a difference.)

More rational people usually try to adapt to the team. Sometimes, that works out. Sometimes, it doesn't. That's the

normal ebb & flow of any group, not just ghost hunters.

It's never easy to ask someone to leave a ghost hunting group. Feelings can be hurt. However, ghost research requires focused attention. If someone is distracting members from the work, that person cannot be on the team.

Experiment. Try different locations, including haunted houses, battlefields, cemeteries, and so on. Explore private and public sites, and so on. See what the team enjoy most.

Keep good records. Maybe team members get better results at certain kinds of haunts. Also try different times

of day, or on certain days of the week.

After that, you can establish goals, decide if you need to have rules, and so on.

Take your time. It may take a couple of months (or longer) to get a clear idea of what's working and what isn't.

7. What's the best place to go ghost hunting?

The best place for ghost hunting is a location that's actually *haunted*.

I'm not being flippant. Really.

The problem is, a lot of people start ghost hunting by visiting places that are just "urban legends." There aren't any ghosts there.

Or, they visit sites that weren't very haunted to begin with, and — with lots of people trekking through — the original ghostly energy has been diluted. Even the *ghosts* are bored with ghost hunting.

So, try to verify that weird things

really *do* happen at the location you're visiting. Look for recent YouTube videos at the site, or at least recent, detailed written reports, online.

A couple of things are important, no matter where you begin ghost hunting.

- Never go ghost hunting alone. Ever.
- Be sure every site is safe to visit.

Choose sites in safe neighborhoods. Indoors, look for solid floors and few obstacles. Outdoors, you'll want level ground as much as possible. Bring your own medical-style mask. That's essential if you're entering a site that's has mold, mildew, rodent droppings, or even a lot of dust. (In 2012, an

experienced researcher died from a respiratory infection. The cause was rodent droppings. Masks weren't worn because the site had been visited — without problems — by several other teams. Since then, many of us are more careful.)

-Make certain the site is open to the public. It doesn't matter if "everyone goes there anyway." If you're at a site that isn't posted, but the police ask you to leave, leave immediately. Don't argue. In some states, the police have the right to decide a cemetery (or other public area) is off-limits.

Try to find a popular location. There,

more experienced researchers can explain the basics to you. For example, I'm usually happy to spend half an hour with a new team, showing them the best research spots. I'll also demonstrate basic, low-tech ghost hunting methods. So, say hello if you see other ghost hunters. If they're friendly, swap information.

However, don't *expect* anyone to give you a free ghost hunting lesson. Sometimes, we *must* focus on the investigation.

(Often, I'm happy to talk about the site and ghost hunting *after* the investigation. Until then, I can seem abrupt.)

Take part in ghost hunting events that are open to the public. You'll explore new locations, and you'll be among experienced researchers. That can be comforting and educational.

Is that intimidating? Some beginners prefer to start investigating with a group of friends.

- You could spend the night at a haunted hotel, or a ghostly bed and breakfast.
- You could visit a haunted battlefield.
- Dine at a haunted restaurant.
- Take a stroll through a haunted cemetery just before dusk.

You don't *have* to leap into a "lights

out” investigation. Start with whatever seems easy and comfortable for you.

8. Why do most ghost hunters investigate at night?

People ghost hunt at night because it's traditional. Some choose night investigations for convenience. If you're busy during the day, evening research is ideal.

Ghost hunting involves a variety of senses. During the day, visual distractions can be an issue. In darkness, you're able to focus on your *other* senses.

Some ghosts manifest as orbs of light or other faint, whitish forms. They're most easily seen after dark, where the contrast makes them more obvious.

For those who think “orbs” are a joke, and just dust or a camera glitch, here's a 1913 description of one kind of apparition:

“... the ghost or spirit appears as an immense glistening soap bubble, full of all the colors of the rainbow. These colors are constantly changing according to the thoughts and emotions of the man to whom the soul belongs.”

I'm not sure that's *why* orb colors change, but the rest of the description *is* good... and has nothing to do with camera errors.

A few ghost hunters believe that spirits have more power after dark. I'm

not sure that's true... but it *might* be.

Some ghost hunters have better luck after nine or 10:00 P.M. Others prefer research around midnight.

Many ghost hunters, including me, like to start investigations *before dusk*. You'll be able to see more of the physical details around you.

Then, as night falls, you'll be more comfortable in the setting. You know what's where. You can focus on any anomalies.

- *Tip:* Outdoors, shadow people can be more obvious around dusk. We rarely see them in full daylight. In total darkness, it's difficult to see any

shadows at all.

If you're an early riser, try researching at dawn. That's when a building or landscape can be eerily silent. It's one of my favorite times for research, but it can be more difficult to find others to ghost hunt at that hour.

No matter when you go ghost hunting — at dusk or dawn, or in between — darkness may be helpful.

9. What can you do to attract ghosts?

Let's say that ghosts *are* spirits of the dead.

Think of them as people without physical form in our plane. They'll behave the same as the living... more or less, anyway.

Tip: Many ghosts can be sorted into one of three categories:

1. Benevolent spirits who are simply revisiting our plane
2. Ghosts with a story to tell before crossing over, or some task to complete.
3. Petulant/obnoxious ghosts that act like two-year-olds in need of a nap.

In general, consider what might interest a living person, and cause him or her to approach you.

Don't treat ghosts as if they're aliens, hard of hearing, slow-witted, dangerous, or performers. They're not.

Some ghosts are shy. Others have been taunted (or "provoked") in the past. Be patient.

Many ghosts courageously approach investigators and establish rapport. Then, those investigators leave and never return. Often, the investigators didn't even say goodbye. Remember, ghosts have feelings, too. Treat each ghost with the same respect you'd treat a

living person.

Some ghosts quietly observe you before making themselves known. It helps to wait quietly for 20 minutes before investigating any location. The ghosts have time to get used to you.

Other ghosts might respond to specific stimuli. That could include a trigger related to the ghost's death and later hauntings. Or, you could try a trigger from happier moments in the ghost's past.

Theater ghosts are different. Usually, they respond well to direction. Politely tell the ghost what you would like him or her to do.

You may need to explain how to communicate with you. For example, you could tell him (or her) to knock once for yes and twice for no, or to speak through a device or an app.

Before investigating well-known haunts, learn what's been successful at that location. It may work for you, too.

If you're at a new location, experiment. Trial-and-error works. Take a variety of investigation tools with you, or plan enough visits to establish rapport with whatever's there.

10. Can ghost hunting groups investigate things *other* than ghosts?

Most ghost hunting groups investigate ghosts, and nothing else. When I'm with a ghost hunting team, I might note something odd but not ghostly. (If you can't tell, see my book, *Ghosts - What They Are and What They Aren't*.)

Generally, focus on one kind of paranormal energy per investigation. In my opinion, it's a mistake to spread yourself too thin.

In fact, with recent (and extreme) dangers from demonic activity, it's smart to limit your research to ghosts. Avoid demons, UFOs, crop circles,

cryptozoology, and so on, *unless you make one of them your primary study.*

Many ghost hunters are trying to answer questions they've had for a long time. Many investigate until they find the answer they were looking for. Others decide there is no answer.

After that, they move on to something else.

Tips: In general, and especially during an investigation, focus on one *kind* of entity at a time. Even if you've become interested in UFOs, ignore the skies when you're on a ghost hunt. You might miss something important. Also, for some people, the shotgun approach can

be overwhelming.

Decide what you are looking for and why. If you blur the lines between different kinds of phenomena, you may not know *what* you're looking at.

It's a relief when I see something weird and can say, "Nope. Not a ghost." I leave it alone and look elsewhere.

Of course, ghost hunting groups *can* investigate things other than ghosts. But, it's best to narrow your focus to just one group of phenomena at a time.

If you're at a haunted location and something *else* is manifesting, complete your *ghost* investigation first.

Later, you can go back to see what

else was there.

Keep the two investigations distinct.

Also, allow team members to leave at the conclusion of the ghost research. They may not be interested in other entities.

11. Why do some people become ghosts and others don't?

This is a question many of us ask.

Some ghosts appear to have died with unfinished business.

Other ghosts seem reluctant to accept that they have died.

Either way, time has passed, and they need to move on.

Unfortunately, we can't even prove that ghosts *exist*. No one can prove why one spirit becomes a ghost, but another one doesn't.

In folklore, stories such as *The Canterville Ghost* try to explain why some people become ghosts. Those

stories follow a formula.

1. Someone died.
2. He or she has something left to do or say.
3. The ghost connects with someone who's in the world of the living.
4. The unfinished business is completed.
5. The ghost is grateful for help received, and crosses over.

In real life, most hauntings aren't that simple.

- Sometimes, the ghost needs help *and accepts it.*
- More often, attempts at help are futile.

During investigations, stories can emerge. That may happen often if someone on your team is a psychic or a medium.

Notes about ghostly communications

Some ghost hunters are psychic. That attracts many people to this field. At any investigation, about 30% will say they're sensitive or psychic.

When you're at a haunted site, focus on one thing at a time. (I'll say that a lot in this book.)

Are you a medium? That is, are you the go-between – or medium – conveying messages between the spirit world and our realm? That can be an

important personal or spiritual mission.

However, that's different from *science-based* paranormal research.

Don't be offended by that comment. Maybe your psychic impulses are confirmed by your science-based tools, such as EMF meters.

Perhaps the scientific investigation is guided by your psychic insights

They're still different approaches to this subject.

Define your main focus, first.

As a ghost hunter, which path are you on? Are you both a psychic *and* a scientific investigator? (I am.)

Identify which role you're focusing on

during that particular investigation. Then, be sure your team knows what you'll be doing.

Your work as a psychic medium might be part of your team's goals. Some teams like to include a medium. At the very least, you can detect the best "hot spots" for your team to focus on, first.

Some teams refuse to let psychics join. (I'm not kidding.)

In general, keep your priorities straight. If you're like me, psychic readings can become very emotional. Make sure your team is okay with that on that investigation.

And, even if they say they're prepared

for whatever happens, be sure you're not distracting them from their research.

For example: If your team is recording some great real-time EVP, they'll be focused on these things:

- The silence (or noise) that's ideal for their EVP recordings.
- The quality of that recording. (If they're listening to it in real time, they may need to adjust each microphone until the quality is at its best.)
- How believable the recording will be. (If the neighbors are having a loud party, it's difficult to defend EVP recorded nearby.)
- Information for future study. (Note

the GPS of the microphone location. Also record where it is in the room, and its position related to nearby people and objects.)

If your psychic “chatter” (vocal or moving around) interferes with their EVP efforts, it’s reasonable for your team to object. (When I’m in “psychic mode,” I sometimes babble. I articulate what I think I’m sensing, to see if the spirit confirms it. I’m rarely loud, but even low muttering can affect EVP quality.)

Also, during a startling, scary, or purely scientific investigation, it can be easy to lose sight of the humanitarian and

spiritual aspects of this work. Be patient with yourself — and especially with others — if this occurs. Everyone has a “Dude, run!” impulse, now and then. That’s especially true of people who have a singular, skeptical view of ghost hunting.

Likewise, *you* might need absolute silence to focus on your psychic connection to spirits at the site. Some mediums find electronic devices unnecessarily distracting. However, many ghost hunting teams consider those tools the *essence* of the team’s efforts.

Remain respectful of your individual and team goals. In the heat of the

moment, don't let stress and frayed nerves highlight your differences. Remember why you're there... all of you as a team and as individuals.

Before an investigation, reach an agreement about your work. Decide how you and your team can work synergistically. (This can take some trial-and-error experimenting, over several weeks.)

During at least 90% of team investigations, I rarely mention what I perceive as a psychic. My attention is *wholly* on the scientific evidence we're collecting.

Later, I may return to the site

informally. Often, I'll invite a couple of other mediums so I get a second and third opinion. We'll focus on spiritual and energy-related research. It's *completely different* from my work with scientific tools.

I can either pay attention to my psychic impressions, *or* I can look for scientific evidence. I can't do both. It's like trying to play the piano and the violin at the same time: *Possible*, but not *practical*.

Your experiences may be different.

12. Why do ghosts usually inhabit old, creaky and drafty buildings?

I'm not sure that ghosts *prefer* old buildings that are creaky and drafty.

That kind of environment puts many of us on edge. That can heighten our awareness. It's why we're more likely to notice ghostly phenomena there. We're sensitive to subtle anomalies that we'd overlook – or explain differently – in a happier environment.

Let's say a glass object rattles on a sideboard at your (living) grandmother's house. If her house is near a busy street, you're likely to figure a heavy truck drove by. That may be exactly what

happened.

By contrast, let's say a glass object rattles on a sideboard in a creaky, drafty, "haunted" house. Your first thought might be, "It's a ghost." That may be the best explanation, but the environment set the tone.

More ghosts are reported in old buildings than new ones. That's logical. More people have lived, worked, and died in old buildings. Those sites *should* have more ghosts.

Ask me to choose between two investigation sites:

1. The shiny new town hall in the middle of town.

Or, 2. The decrepit, abandoned one a few blocks from the old burial ground.

I'll choose the old one, ten times out of ten. Even if both have great ghost stories, I'm more interested in the one with history.

However, the new town hall might have more intense and startling ghosts. Maybe I'd miss a great investigation by choosing the older location. Worse, the old site might reflect folklore and urban legends and that's all. No ghosts.

Old sites with rich history generally produce more ghostly phenomena than newer sites. That's not just because old sites are creaky or drafty. I think it's

because they have history — life and death events — that leave energy imprints and perhaps ghosts.

13. Can a ghost follow you from place to place?

No, not usually. Ghostly phenomena seem tied to locations. If ghosts *could* go somewhere else, they probably would. (If you had a choice, would *you* spend relentless years at a site where people ignore you, or are afraid of you? Probably not.)

Exceptions to this rule are rare. One of them is Judith Thompson Tyng. Her ghost moved around Tyngsboro, Massachusetts (USA) for many years. Witnesses say she's still there, over 200 years later.

According to folklore, Judith tormented

(and perhaps killed) two 18th century men responsible for her death.

One of them was John Alford Tyng, the father of her child. He killed her and buried her under the hearth of their home. Then, when Judith haunted him, he moved to another house. Judith's ghost followed him. He tried again, with the same results.

Finally, when John Tyng was dying, Judith's ghost stood at his door and prevented anyone from helping him.

Judith's other victim was a quack called "Dr. Blood." He'd pretended to be a minister or a Justice of the Peace and convinced Judith she was married to

John. When Dr. Blood was found dead on a country road, Judith's distinctive boot print was on his back. Folklore claims she'd forced his head into a puddle, and held him there until he drowned.

Of course, stories like those must be studied closely. About 99% of ghosts seem to stay in one place. Anything that moves from one location to another might something else.

For example, poltergeists can follow and torment the people they select as targets. That's why many researchers don't believe poltergeists are ghosts.

Demons can follow people or even

become attached to them. Demons can mimic ghosts.

Few credible stories describe a *ghost* changing locations. Even the Bell Witch was probably the product of several entities. Those include at least one opportunistic (and very alive) person in that community.

If you think a ghost has followed you, see a priest or spiritual minister immediately. Chances are, the problem isn't a ghost. It could be something far worse. You might be at risk.

Don't seek help from strangers, online. Not even me. Find a priest or full-time minister to help you, even if

you are *not* a religious person or a member of that congregation. (A *good* minister won't care. His or her job is to help with spiritual matters, period and full stop.)

14. Are some people more receptive to ghosts than others?

Yes. I think it depends on these kinds of things:

- Is the person vulnerable? If the person is sad, depressed, or morose, he or she may attract sympathetic ghosts. That person may also attract less benign spirits. Be very watchful if you think this has happened.

- Does the person have anything common with the ghost or entity? That can include appearance, interests, personal history, and family connections to a particular ghost. If you're a ghost hunter, know your family tree. I

investigated one Salem (MA) location for years before discovering I was a direct descendant of two of the ghosts.

- Is the person looking for contact with the ghost, or with spirits in general? If you're more open to ghosts, you might encounter more of them.

- On the other hand, if the person fears ghosts, I think some ghosts like to torment them.

- If a skeptical critic is startled by a ghost, watch out. Poltergeist activity may follow, immediately.

The most receptive people may be those with the best observational skill. Those skills often come from practice.

Can you identify normal creaking noises in a house? If so, it may be easier to identify other, unusual — and perhaps ghostly — sounds.

15. When did people start believing in ghosts?

References to spirits and ghosts predate the Bible. Whether or not people believed those were spirits of *dead* people... That's another matter.

Historians have documented attempts to release or banish ghosts in ancient Greece.

Earlier accounts of ghosts appear in Mesopotamian records. Search for information about the “*gidim*.” You may be surprised at the amount of ghost lore before Abrahamic history.

Some translations of *gidim* suggest malicious, demonic entities. Others,

breaking the word into *gi* plus *dim*, translate it to “shadow person.”

In extant Babylonian lore, many people became ghosts. Noted exceptions included those who died in a fire, and those whose bodies were left to rot in the desert. That may account for the practice of burning corpses or setting them out to rot in elevated locations “closer to the heavens.”

Records from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* (ca. 15th century BCE) describe the ghostly experiences of Enkidu after his death. In that era, people may have tried to help or appease ancestral ghosts and other spirits.

For many centuries, the topic of ghosts was controversial and dangerous. People avoided specific references to them. Especially during the most extreme years of the Inquisition, the word “ghost” suggested something demonic. Studying old diaries and correspondence, you may need to read between the lines to recognize hauntings.

We can't be sure when people began to think of ghosts as we describe them today. However, spirits of the dead may have wandered in this world as far back as recorded history.

Trivia: The Inquisition started in France in the 12th century. The Spanish

Inquisition wasn't outlawed until 1834. The Papal Inquisition was never outlawed. It was called the *Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition*.

In 1965, it became the *Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (SCDF). Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) became its prefect.

In 1985, the word “sacred” was dropped from the title.

The organization still exists, and it's the oldest congregation among the nine in the Roman Curia.

16. What is the main reason why ghosts haunt houses?

If we take folklore seriously, most ghosts have a story to tell, a wrong to correct, or unfinished business.

When ghost hunters investigate a haunted site, most ghosts seem to fit that profile.

In almost every case:

- The ghost wants something specific to happen before crossing over. Or, the ghost is afraid to cross over for other reasons.
- In some cases, the ghost refuses to believe that he or she is dead. Ask them what year it is, and you'll usually get the

year the person died.

- Or, it's actually an *energy imprint*, not a ghost (or spirit) lingering at the site.

A few tales — such as the “green lady” stories of Scotland — offer *other* explanations. Green ladies remain in homes that they loved. Those are benevolent spirits. They protect the building and the people who live in it. Each “green lady” ghost isn’t *trapped* in the house. She could leave whenever she wants to. She’s *happy* to stay there.

Green lady ghosts are like the spirits of relatives. They visit us to check on our safety and happiness.

I'm not sure that I'd call that a *ghost*. The spirit isn't trapped in our plane of existence.

By contrast, a banshee may also be a relative of the family it guards. Is the banshee trapped here? Is it a ghost, or — as much folklore suggests — part of the faerie realm? It's difficult to establish boundaries and precise definitions.

Until we're sure that ghosts exist, and what they really are, we can't be sure why they haunt houses... or any other location.

17. What makes one house haunted while the house next door isn't?

The history of most haunted houses explains why they're haunted. Each site was the scene of conflict, power struggles, tragedy and death.

However, many older homes and buildings have similar histories... but no ghosts. (Skeptics love to point this out, and they're correct.)

I believe *other* factors are involved, as well. They may explain why one house is haunted, but a similar one isn't. Unfortunately, we don't have enough information to be certain.

Historical and geographical patterns

of activity may provide some answers.

Austin, Texas

My research in downtown Austin, Texas, revealed patterns that connect — and predict — ghostly activity in that city.

As I studied Austin's ghosts, historical patterns emerged. They pointed to unique factors affecting most (not all) of Austin's haunts.

Here's one pattern: In Austin, buildings constructed with Shoal Creek clay are usually haunted. The haunted Governor's Mansion includes those bricks. So did the UT Tower, site of the terrible 1966 shootings.

I describe that in my book, *The Ghosts of Austin*. Those patterns separate Austin's most haunted buildings from neighboring sites with no ghost stories. Find houses with those bricks, and you'll find ghosts.

Ley Lines

More often, geographical patterns – usually ley lines (also called "energy lines") – seem to make a difference. Two houses can have almost identical histories, but only one of them is haunted. Why? As they say in real estate: *Location, location, location!*

Displaced Hauntings

Now and then, I discover a haunted

site where nothing notable happened at that location. A nearby location — one that's not haunted — was where violence and tragedy occurred.

The Sise Inn in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is an example. Some of the staff have reported amusing ghostly phenomena at the Inn. My favorite is the recurring, unexplained trail of ice cubes in hallways, leading away from the ice cube machine.

However, the Sise Inn site *seems* to have no tragic history. On the other hand, a nearby building has the appropriate history... but no reports of ghosts.

I'd like to see more research into

displaced hauntings. Those studies could reveal *more* elements that attract or repel ghostly energy. That could be useful as we investigate haunted places.

As ghost hunters, we're looking for more answers to why one house is haunted though a more likely prospect isn't.

18. What happens if someone sees a ghost?

The simple answer is: *Nothing happens to them*. They've seen something that looked like a ghost. That's all. They'll get used to it.

That experience may change how they look at ghost stories. Aside from the emotional and cognitive impact, I don't think anything else happens to them.

They don't die from it. They aren't cursed. They aren't personally haunted for the rest of their lives.

If you see a ghost, that's usually described as an *apparition*. Some people use that term for ghosts that look

similar to how they did in their mortal states. In other words, they look like solid or translucent people. Generally, the ghost appears as he or she wants to be remembered. Few apparitions look gory, gruesome, or even elderly.

Seeing a ghost is like witnessing any other extraordinary (but natural) event. It's an unusual experience, like seeing the Aurora Borealis, or visiting an active volcano. Maybe it's memorable. Maybe the viewer would prefer to explain it as "an overactive imagination" or "the power of suggestion."

Spiritual contexts make a difference. Seeing a ghost might be startling,

particularly if the person had been a skeptic. However, a believer might see it as an affirmation of an afterlife.

All we can say is: The person believes he (or she) saw something like a ghost. That's a personal, subjective experience.

(We can't prove that ghosts exist. So, we can only say that the person saw something *ghost-like*.)

For some people, seeing a ghost answers all their questions. After that, he (or she) might quit ghost hunting. The original goal has been achieved.

Or, the experience might trigger new questions. The researcher becomes even

more enthusiastic about ghost hunting.

Meanwhile, nothing terrible happen to a person who's seen a ghost. Real life is different from movies and TV shows.

And, to be honest, apparitions are extremely rare. Most ghost hunters *never* see a ghost... not one that they're *sure* was a ghost, anyway.

You're more likely to win the lottery.

19. What's the difference between a haunted house and one that has paranormal activity?

“Paranormal” means something that’s outside the range of normal. Hauntings are paranormal. They’re a subset of paranormal events.

In other words, all unexplained hauntings are considered paranormal. However, not all paranormal activity involves ghosts.

A house with paranormal activity could have demons or faeries. Its visitors might be creatures from cryptozoology, or aliens. I suppose vampires and zombies could be in the

mix, too.

A haunted house may have ghosts as well as other entities, including demonic activity. This is especially true of houses built on Native American sites, such as NH's Spalding Inn. Likewise, buildings near early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, such as The Falstaff Experience in Stratford-upon-Avon (England).

Though bizarre things seem to be going on in a house, the site may not be haunted. Those events may be something normal but odd. They could even be a prank or a hoax.

Never leap to conclusions when a house seems haunted. It may have

nothing to do with ghosts, but still be paranormal. Or, it might be a construction issue. It could result from tilted floors, unshielded electrical wiring, or a deep, underground spring.

20. How can you find a haunted place near your home?

Ask teenagers. They usually know every local urban legend, and some will point you to actual haunts.

Local historians can be good sources of information, too.

Ask a parent or grandparent, especially someone who's lived in the community for 20 or more years. He or she may know regional folklore.

Consult local newspapers and magazines published around Halloween. Look for back issues, published years ago. They usually include stories about local haunted places.

Regional books may describe ghosts and haunted places in your area. Check your public library and local bookstores. Unfortunately, many ghost hunting books aren't well researched. Authors and publishers threw them together to cash in on the popularity of ghost hunting. To be blunt: A *lot* of books copy from each other, and simply rewrite stories they found online.

Many websites and forums list haunted locations.

Before taking those sites seriously, verify their stories. Check other credible sources. Double-check historical records. Even famous, “everyone

knows” stories can have fatal historical flaws.

True story: Around 2004, I planted a made-up “ghost story” online. I wanted to see how many people would claim it as their own experience. The results were troubling. The story appeared in several newspapers and at least one magazine. Not one of the credited me as the source.

Worse, a media-hungry ghost hunter repeated the tale in an interview, as if she’d had a personal encounter with the ghost. (After her story appeared in a NH newspaper, I went public with the hoax.

She wasn't happy.)

Today, that “ghost story” appears on several websites in the U.S. and the U.K. Most don’t mention me or the website where I published it.

Moral of the story: Conduct your own research. Check everything against local, contemporary, *and* historical resources. If *all* the evidence is newer than 2004, and nothing else supports it, look for more credible stories.

More famous examples:

- One of America’s most famous ghosts, Ocean-Born Mary, never lived in the house she supposedly haunts.

- The Bell Witch was probably created by a schoolteacher with ventriloquist skills and secret access to the Bell family home. He had a particular interest in one of the Bell family's daughters, as well. That can't explain everything that happened, but the teacher may have been a major culprit in the hoax.

- The "Amityville Horror" house owners swear that the house is perfectly normal. (I'm not so sure of that, but if they're living there with peace of mind... good for them!)

- In 1992, a Halloween episode of "Ghostwatch" presented an investigation

of a London (England) home. The family reported having terrifying, ghostly experiences for nearly a year. The presentation was convincing. People called the police and claimed “the forces of darkness” were invading. (See Hoaxes.org and Suite101.com for more information about this and many other ghost hoaxes.)

Advanced ghost hunting tip: You can use geographical patterns of hauntings to find more ghosts. However, this technique requires considerable research and careful analysis.

The basic concept is to “connect the

dots" between three regional haunted locations. Use a ruler. All three (or more) points should line up perfectly. Most of my lines are no more than a few hundred feet wide. Others use ley lines a quarter mile wide or more.

A riskier technique is to connect three or more regional cemeteries. If they fall neatly on a single line, ask yourself if that's a coincidence.

Once you've found a good, precise line, see what other haunts might be on that line.

21. How can you tell if a place is really haunted?

The truth is, *nobody* can tell if the place is really haunted. We can't even prove that ghosts exist.

Investigators can study evidence at a location. They can say that it's *not* haunted, *possibly* haunted, or even *probably* haunted.

An investigator might say that he (or she) *believes* the site is haunted. That's a personal opinion, not proof.

For example, I believe that the following locations are among the world's most haunted locations. I've investigated all of them and they gave

me chills.

- Brennan's Restaurant (New Orleans' French Quarter, LA, USA). Visual phenomena, even in broad daylight.
- Columbus City Cemetery (Columbus, TX, USA). Ghost photos and EMF spikes, even during the day.
- Edinburgh's underground vaults (Edinburgh, Scotland, UK). Apparitions and heavy residual energy.
- The Falstaff Experience (Stratford-upon-Avon, England, UK). Apparitions, physical phenomena, poltergeists, and some activity I've never experienced anywhere else.
- Gilson Road Cemetery (Nashua, NH,

USA). Physical phenomena, cold spots, hot spots, apparitions (even in daytime), EVP.

- Golden Fleece Pub (York, England, UK). EVP, physical phenomena, psychic energy.

- Greycourt State Park (Methuen, MA, USA). EMF anomalies, apparitions in ghost photos, hot and cold spots.

- The Mount (Lenox, MA, USA). EVP and audible “ghost voices,” EMF spikes, residual energy, excellent for “ghost box” activity.

- The Myrtles Plantation (St. Francisville, LA, USA). Poltergeist activity, ghost photos, EMF spikes, cold

spots, ghostly voices and unexplained noises.

- The Salem Inn (Salem, MA, USA). EMF spikes. Excellent for Ovilus research. Cold spots and hot spots.

- The Spalding Inn (Whitefield, NH, USA). Apparitions, EMF anomalies, EVP and audible voices with no explanations.

- Hotel Wentworth-by-the-Sea (New Castle, NH, USA). Very convincing apparitions, EVP, light poltergeist activity.

- Witch House (Salem, MA, USA). Poltergeist activity, objects moving, psychic energy, ghost photos.

It takes a lot to impress me.
Reputation alone isn't enough.

For example, I'm *not* convinced that the Lizzie Borden House (Fall River, MA, USA) is haunted by anything more than residual energy. (However, I did see the “ghost cat.” It looked solid enough to be a real cat.)

I'm skeptical of the LaLaurie Mansion (New Orleans' French Quarter, LA, USA), too.

A deep personal experience can convince *you* that a site is haunted. Seek hard evidence before you make a firm decision.

Evidence to look for at most haunted

sites:

- EVP.
- Unexplained EMF readings.
- Baffling hot and cold spots.
- Other measurable evidence,

including strange photos.

However, none of that is *proof* that ghosts exist.

When weird things happen at a location, it's easiest to say that the site is "haunted." That's a description, so everyone understands the *kinds* of unexplained activity at a site.

Skeptical critics will almost always find normal explanations. If all else fails, they'll claim that the ghost hunter's

evidence is a deliberate hoax or the product of mental illness. (Some skeptics' rudeness knows no limits. Don't take it personally; they're simply bitter and unhappy people, best left alone.)

Are you pretty sure that a site is haunted? Do you have evidence that's convinced (or nearly convinced) you? That may be as good as it gets.

Remember that nobody can prove that a location is haunted. People who claims otherwise are either trying to fool you or themselves, or both.

I'm sorry if that's disappointing. It's the boring, unvarnished truth.

All you can do is learn what's normal (but kind of weird), and then see if you can rule that out when weird things happen at haunted sites.

As Sherlock Holmes once said,

“When you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”

22. What happens if a ghost gets close to you?

This is a tricky question.

To ask this, you must believe that ghosts have physical form of some kind. Even if it's mental or psychic energy, if you feel as if it's in a particular location in space, *it must have mass*. Otherwise, no "close" (near or far) is possible.

Does a ghost have physical form? I'm not sure. Consider other explanations.

- It might be something normal that we sense but cannot see, like an EMF field or a wave of infrasound.

- If it is a spirit, maybe we perceive them "through the veil" to the afterlife.

That veil may be physical energy in our plane of existence, but spirits on the other side are not actually in this plane.

- Maybe that the spirit is alive and well in a parallel realm. I'm convinced that many "ghost" encounters don't involve spirits of the dead. They're not demons or anything non-human, either. They're people like us, and we sense them, but they're in their own worlds. (If this interests you, look into quantum studies, String Theory, and other explanations for alternate realities.)

However, that *physical* form must exist in some plane, reality, or realm, or it can't be *located* anywhere.

Often, when ghostly energy is nearby, a physical reaction occurs. Unseen hands might move an object, or there may be an energy spike on an EMF detector.

At some locations – especially on some ghost tours – ghosts make physical connection with the living. That's when some people seem to receive slaps, punches, scratches, or their hair is pulled.

During routine ghost investigations, that kind of activity is *incredibly* rare. If you're touched physically — especially if it's an attack — be on your guard. First, look for normal explanations.

I know you'd *like* to believe you've

had a remarkable encounter with a ghost. Unfortunately, *ghostly* physical phenomena like that are rare. Look for other explanations, like a prank. In rare cases, it might be something paranormal but not ghostly.

During most paranormal encounters, people describe unique sensations when a ghost seems near. Sometimes, the person feels something like a breeze on his (or her) arms when the air is still. Others describe it as stepping into a freezer compartment. Still others talk about everything going completely silent, as if they'd lost hearing for a couple of minutes.

Except for poltergeist activity, there's no reason for concern if you think a ghost is near you. In most cases, it's slightly unpleasant. Injuries are rare.

If you're worried, step away from where the ghost might be. If you're still uneasy, leave the location completely. The vast majority of ghosts cannot leave the sites they haunt.

23. Can ghosts hurt people?

Generally, you have a body but the ghost doesn't. Most of the time, a ghost cannot hurt anyone physically. The exception is poltergeist phenomena which may be ghostly, but it might not.

The word *poltergeist*, translated literally, means *a noisy ghost*.

Poltergeist reports have included unexplained voices, knocking on walls and tables, the sound of musical instruments, and so on. Poltergeists have been blamed for stones raining on (or inside) a house, and people being pushed, slapped, or scratched.

Ghostly assaults are very rare. Even

then, people aren't seriously hurt. (However, if it happens around stairs, it *can* be dangerous. See my free book, *Is Your House Haunted?* for advice about stairways that might be haunted.)

Normal Explanations

In most cases, normal things explain or contribute to the problem.

Look for one or more of the following:

- Elevated levels of EMF from something like exposed wiring.
- Infrasound. This includes underground streams and highways — especially bridges — within a quarter mile.

- Unhealthy levels of carbon

monoxide. Every home should have a carbon monoxide detector. If you're regularly investigating abandoned buildings, a portable carbon monoxide detector should be part of your investigation kit.

- Something else that might alter perceptions and behaviors at that location. (Environmental allergies, drug reactions, etc.) Check the correlation between ghost reports at that location or in that area, against spikes in pollen and other allergens.

What Is a Poltergeist?

The subject of poltergeists is very controversial, even among those who

believe.

Some psychologists think that *real* poltergeist phenomena are self-generated. That is, *the victims are responsible*.

According to this theory, victims are individuals with extraordinary abilities. They can affect their own bodies, and remotely influence their environment. (They're grouped with people who receive stigmata.)

Other people, including me, suspect that *two* entities are involved.

- One is the person most consistently connected with the activity. He or she provides the energy, and – as a result –

feels somewhat drained after a bout of activity. This person may not realize anything extraordinary is happening.

- The second “partner in crime” is an entity, perhaps unknown or paranormal, that makes the activity occur. That entity is, in a way, a parasite as well as the tormentor.

The two combine to manifest poltergeist activity.

Scientists and parapsychologists are still studying poltergeists phenomena. Patterns and answers are emerging. No matter what your theory about poltergeists, the following things may help.

- Treatment seems to help when it focuses on the living person most connected with the activity.

- At other times, it's a matter of waiting for the poltergeist activity to diminish on its own.

Don't treat the situation lightly. It's not a "take two aspirin and call me in the morning" problem.

Analyze the situation from every possible angle, both normal and paranormal. If the energy involves one person, he or she must be removed from the environment. Don't just escort the person outside. He or she needs to be *at least* a dozen miles from the site.

Test that several times. If the activity always stops when the person is far from the site, *that person is part of the activity.*

You're not likely to encounter dangerous poltergeist activity, ever. Sure, you might witness an object flying across a room or a TV turning itself on or off, but even that is pretty rare.

Generally, ghosts do not hurt people. Paranormal activity may be mischievous. It might inadvertently injure someone. That's very different from anything demonic.

On the other hand, if there's any possibility that demons are involved, get

professional, experienced help immediately.

In over 30 years of investigating haunted locations, I've only been injured once. I don't believe the injury was deliberate; it was simply a prank by a childlike spirit.

During ghost investigations, keep this in mind: You have a more to worry about from the living than the dead.

24. Has a ghost ever killed anyone?

As far as I know, there is no convincing evidence of a ghost killing anyone, ever. That includes the Bell Witch.

On the other hand, I've heard first-person accounts of *demonic* attacks resulting in the death of a victim.

Demons aren't ghosts. (Aliens aren't ghosts, either. These are completely different entities.)

Be cautious about the locations you investigate. If you may have encountered a demon or other malicious entity, get professional help immediately. (Don't "wait and see what happens." Demonic

attacks aren't anything to fool around with.)

Ghosts are a small part of the unseen world. Some locations — including Vale End Cemetery in Wilton, NH (USA) — are haunted, but they're also visited by other kinds of entities. Some of them are dangerous.

Never visit a site that might have ghosts, just for “a good scare.” The scarier the site, the more dangerous it might be. (If you want a scare, go to a theme park with scary attractions, or a commercial “haunted house” at Halloween. Or, watch a scary movie with the lights out.)

Many paranormal researchers carry protective talismans. Some also use spiritual protection such as prayer or rituals. That's routine both before and after a paranormal investigation.

Generally, those are personal choices that do not involve the entire team.

Many teams gather for a moment of prayer or to request spiritual protection. If you're uneasy with that, speak up.

If a site is frightening, leave. Don't even step through the gate or the front door. You shouldn't be there. Maybe no one should.

If you feel nervous at a site, there may be a very good reason. If you feel

unreasonably frightened at any time during an investigation, leave immediately. That's especially true if the feeling seems to hit you "all of a sudden."

Demonic threats and malicious activity *are* rare. You are unlikely ever to encounter them.

Nevertheless, every haunted site has risks. Follow your gut instinct. If you feel uneasy about anything during an investigation, *say something*. In many cases, it's in your best interest to leave right away.

25. What phobias are related to haunted houses?

Paranormal research can trigger many fears and phobias. In a stressful situation, otherwise benign concerns can surge up out of nowhere and become issues.

Phasmophobia and spectrophobia are the fear of ghosts or spectres. Many people, especially beginners, are somewhat afraid of ghosts.

Necrophobia is a fear of the dead and dead things. That's not just about zombies or vampires. A ghoulish apparition can trigger paralyzing fear if someone is already worried about the

dead.

Scotophobia and myctophobia mean the person is afraid of the dark. Achluophobia is another word for that fear. Since darkness play such a big part in ghost hunting, a team member with those issues may do better in a lit area. Assign him or her a role in monitoring equipment via a laptop in a lighted room, hallway, or vehicle.

Lygophobia is sometimes described as a fear of darkness, but it's more correctly a fear of *twilight*. According to folklore, the “between times” include twilight, dusk, midnight, and dawn. That’s when some entities may be more active.

Eosophobia is the fear of dawn or dusk.

Nyctophobia is the fear of the dark or fear of nighttime darkness. Noctophobia is simply a fear of the night. Many haunted sites are active during daytime hours. Someone with severe nyctophobia can still participate in ghost research during the day.

Domatophobia, eicophobia, ecophobia and oikophobia relate to a fear of houses and/or the objects in them. Is a team member uncomfortable in other people's homes? Perhaps he (or she) should skip those investigations, and focus on outdoor haunts and public buildings.

Nyctohylophobia describes a fear of dark, wooded areas. That can be a problem at some haunted battlefields and rural homes. Also, many cemeteries are enclosed by heavily wooded areas on three sides. When I've witnessed this issue, the fearful researcher couldn't explain what was bothering her. She'd never experienced it before.

Taphephobia and taphophobia include the fear of being buried alive, as well as a fear of cemeteries. In many cases, the person can be desensitized over several visits, so this won't be an issue during investigations.

Coimetrophobia is another term if

someone is afraid of cemeteries. It's far more common than people may realize. Frequently, the phobia is very specific, such as when someone is afraid of stepping on a grave.

Other phobias can trigger anxiety among investigators. Keep them in mind if a team member seems uncomfortable on certain kinds of research. Chat with that person. Find out exactly what bothers him or her. Phobic researchers should avoid locations where there anxieties might distract the team.

26. How can I get over a fear of haunted houses?

If you're deeply and profoundly afraid of haunted houses, *don't become a ghost hunter.*

Are you certain that your fear is *irrational*? Think about that carefully. It may be your internal radar warning you to stay away from haunted houses. If it is, pay attention to it.

On the other hand, if you really want to get past your fear, you can probably desensitized yourself.

Start by visiting popular haunted houses.

- At first, stay just a few minutes and

then leave.

- After a few visits, stay longer.
- Once you've built up to an hour without panicking, go on a few ghost tours.

- Next, sign up for a public ghost hunting event with an investigation.

Keep expanding your comfort zone. After a while, most people can lose that kind of fear.

However, if you feel profound dread when you think about a *specific* haunted location, stay away from it. Trust your “gut feeling.” That’s important.

27. How can I get over my fear of ghost hunting?

There is nothing wrong with being afraid of ghosts, or being too fearful to go ghost hunting. See my answer to the previous question. Start there.

However, if you suffer from a *generalized* anxiety related to ghosts, education is the best answer.

Learn all that you can about ghosts. Read about haunted locations. Try some research tools and techniques used by ghost hunters. (Just use them in non-haunted locations, and in broad daylight.)

Remote education won't make you a

skilled ghost hunter, but it can build your confidence.

When ghost hunting tools and techniques seem familiar, you won't feel so afraid. Then, you can go on a fun, local ghost hunt. Put some of your new skills to use.

Never use medication to desensitize yourself in potentially haunted locations. Maintain your awareness of your inner alarm system.

Of course, ghost hunters shouldn't startle easily. They can't conduct research if they jump at shadows.

Still, ghost hunters should never become *so* insensitive that they place

themselves in real danger. Somewhere in-between, there is a healthy middle ground.

Remember, there's nothing wrong with being afraid of ghosts or haunted places. In fact, it could be an important warning. You might be vulnerable to malicious energy. If so, ghost hunting isn't for you.

28. Are all *really* haunted houses scary?

If you wonder if a scary house means it's haunted, the answer is no.

Most haunted houses aren't scary. Not once you're used to ghostly phenomena. Ghosts may *startle* you or *surprise* you, but they usually won't frighten you.

The more locations you investigate, the more you'll get used to ghosts. Things move by themselves. You may hear ghostly voices or unearthly footsteps. Objects may seem to move "by themselves." It's all part of a normal night of ghost hunting, if you're lucky.

Even in a really haunted house, ghost

hunters spend most of their time waiting for something to happen. I suppose it's like fishing, except you're in the dark so there's nothing to look at.

Sure, "Dude, run!" moments *can* occur. Still, experienced professionals are rarely (if ever) frightened, even in the most haunted locations. They may jump a foot or two when something startles them, but that's different from being afraid.

Scary sites aren't always haunted.

Haunted sites aren't always scary. In fact, once you're used to ghostly phenomena, haunted houses become interesting.

Fright is not an accurate way to be sure a house is haunted. We're looking for measurable anomalies, not whether a place gives you the chills.

29. Are there ghost animals?

If ghosts are real, there are ghostly animals.

I have personally seen ghostly cats and ghost fish.

The ghostly fish was very odd. It's not as if the family was especially attached to the fish. It was just a fish. It didn't even have a name, until it started haunting them.

The Lizzie Borden house in Fall River (MA) reports a ghostly cat. I've seen what I thought was a solid, living cat at the house. It never crossed my mind until the owner explained that no cat was in the house that night.

One of my own cats "haunted" us for over a year after his death. I might have chalked it up to "wishful thinking," except other people — who didn't even know about the cat — saw him as well. In a way, it was comforting, but I was just as happy when he finally decided to cross over. (That didn't happen until his brother also died.)

Many pet owners happily describe being visited by the spirit of a beloved cat or dog, too.

In addition to *ghost* animals, some paranormal creatures *resemble* animals. They're described in cryptozoology. They include Bigfoot, flying snakes, and

thunderbirds. In fact, they've been described in folklore for centuries.

Most people who encountered one of them have no doubt they're real, not imaginary.

Some early American settlers seemed to bring fantastical, cryptozoological creatures with them. One might be Maryland's "Snallygaster," from the area where the Blair Witch Project was filmed. The "Snallygaster" came from Germany, where it's known as the *Schneller Geist*, or "quick spirit."

Cryptozoology can be fascinating, but it's not ghost hunting.

However, if you're wondering if

Fluffy or Fido might be visiting you from the other side, it's entirely possible.

30. Is a banshee a ghost?

A banshee (in the Irish language, *bean sidhe*) is usually considered part faerie, part ghost. However, with the banshee, the line between those labels blurs. A banshee may represent an actual ancestor, so she's like a ghost. She may be a shapeshifter as well, so she's more mystical or fae.

Many people think a banshee causes death. That's absolutely false. The banshee protects the family she's attached to.

Other people think the banshee predicts death. That's not always the case. A banshee warns family members

about a *potential*, upcoming tragedy. Sometimes, that tragedy can be avoided. At other times, it cannot. The banshee wails because she sees the tragedy and, on her own, she can't stop it. However, another family member — someone living in physical form, at that moment — might be able to.

Most families with Irish ancestry have their own, individual banshees. They may never know she's protecting them. (Scottish families, and those with Scottish ancestry, are more likely to have a green lady. She protects the house and those in it.)

Recently, some people have

speculated that each banshee was profoundly psychic during her lifetime. So, there may be “banshees in training” that are very much alive right now. In fact, that makes sense, since the network of banshees expands with each generation.

Banshees probably aren’t trapped in our world. Not unless the banshee’s unfinished business includes guarding her descendants. I believe she manifests in this plane by choice, and she helps the family she tries to protect.

Also, her protection doesn’t usually extend to harming others, even enemies of her family. She will warn and defend

her family, but she is not an aggressor.

If you study Irish folklore and history, you'll understand banshees far better.

31. Is Halloween the best time for ghost hunting?

Halloween can be one of the best nights for ghost hunting, if you believe folklore.

Traditionally, Halloween is one of *two* nights when the veil diminishes between the our world and the other side.

Why Halloween

In the past, Halloween was better known as Samhain, the end of the agricultural year in the northern hemisphere. It's the time when the harvest is brought in and the land may be prepared for the next growing season.

Halloween is between agricultural seasons. So, it's another "between time" like dawn, dusk, twilight, and midnight. During "between times," spirits and otherworldly creatures can enter our realm. "Between times" are ideal for ghost hunting. They're also popular for faerie research, cryptozoological studies, and watching for alien craft.

In other words, the "between times" aren't just about ghosts. (For example, the old *Charmed* TV series featured the "between" in a leprechaun episode.)

Halloween has always been associated with spirits of the dead. It's associated with All Soul's Eve and, on

November 1st, All Saint's Day.

Despite efforts to make Halloween a Christian holiday, it's still a night for "ghosties and ghoulies and things that go bump in the night." Huge crowds gather at Pagan celebrations at Salem (MA) and other "witchy" communities.

Many ghost hunters schedule their most important research at Halloween. Often, they stack the "between," planning research at dusk, twilight, or midnight on Halloween.

Another legend says that 3 AM is the "devil's hour." So, some ghost hunters investigate during the wee hours of November 1st morning. I don't

recommend that, due to obvious risks.

Problems with Halloween

Halloween's popularity can present problems. Crowds of aspiring ghost hunters gather at the most popular haunted locations. They can distract you from your research. Also, too many voices from the living can interfere with EVP recordings.

Most police departments are on high alert due to pranks and vandalism on Halloween night. During October, many haunted cemeteries are off-limits and regularly patrolled.

No matter when it's an issue, if the police ever ask you to leave a site, *don't*

challenge them. Leave quietly and cheerfully, if you can. Police are among ghost hunters' best resources for information about haunted places. *Don't turn them into enemies.*

At Halloween, the police deal with belligerent "ghost hunters for the night." By presenting yourself as rational, agreeable professionals, the police may later remember you favorably.

However, Halloween isn't the only "best" night for ghost research.

April 30th

Most people don't realize that the last night of April can be nearly as good for ghost hunting.

Folklore claims that the veil is equally thin on the night before May first. That night is *exactly six months after Halloween*. In “wheel of the year” traditions, it corresponds to Halloween and keeps the universe in balance. Halloween is the Celtic festival of Samhain. May 1st (and the night before) is the festival of Beltane (or Bealtaine).

This time of year is another “between,” since it launches the new agricultural year.

Largely lost to history, April 30th and May 1st used to be just as boisterous as Halloween/Samhain, worldwide.

- In Germany, it’s Walpurgisnacht.

That night is celebrated by as many as 35,000 people in Thale (Germany) commemorating “the flight of the witches.” According to legend, witches once flew through the Harz Mountains, terrorizing livestock and people alike.

- In Rome, this time of year includes the festivals of *Floralia* and *Bona Dea*.

On the last night of April, the weather may not be warm enough for ghost hunting in some areas. Still, the significance of this “between time” is important.

In addition, the revelers who get in our way on Halloween are less likely to intrude at *Walpurgisnacht*.

32. Is it good to go ghost hunting on Friday the 13th?

Dates such as Friday the 13th can be energized by people's beliefs and fears. Paranormal research can be more successful.

In quantum terms, the observer's beliefs or fears can affect the site. (In overly simplistic terms: What you *expect* to happen may be more likely to happen, just because you're watching.)

You're not as likely to encounter crowds at haunted places on Friday the 13th. Despite that, police are more alert for trespassers at cemeteries and other well-known haunts.

If it's convenient, schedule a ghost investigation on Friday the 13th. Your results might be better than another night of that week.

Do you use a “planetary hours” system to plan your ghost hunting? That’s ancient astrological system several ghost hunters use, and it varies by location. Generally, the night *after* Friday the 13th could be a good choice. (To learn more about planetary hours, see my article at Ghosts101.com/ghost-hunting-witching-hour.)

So far, Friday the 13th hasn’t been a powerful night for my research, but it hasn’t been a bad night, either. I’ve had

better luck the following night.

33. If you're going on a date, should you suggest ghost hunting?

Except that so many people have asked this question, I would think it's a joke.

Ghost hunting is a terrible idea for a date, unless both of you are experienced paranormal investigators

Ghost hunting requires your full and focused attention. On dates, you are (or should be) at least somewhat distracted by your companion. If you're not, drop the date at home and call a few teammates for ghost hunting. That way, the night isn't a total loss.

34. How can you catch a ghost?

As far as I know, you cannot *catch* a ghost. We have no proof that ghosts have physical form in our world, so there is no trap to contain them.

Some people believe that “dreamcatchers” also snag ghosts. I’ve seen no evidence of that. However, dreamcatchers may confuse ghosts or prevent them from entering a home. That defense might help if a ghost is immediately outside your home. (Of course, that’s the opposite of attracting and catching them.)

You might convince a ghost to remain in a particular location, temporarily.

For example, if the ghost has unfinished business and you act as if you could help, the ghost might linger.

Other than that, I don't think there's any way to catch or entrap a ghost. I'm not sure why anyone would want to do that, anyway.

Some paranormal entities can be caught. For example, some believe you can trap a leprechaun — or at least a clurichaun (*clocháir-ceann*) — in an open bottle of whiskey. This requires having a clurichaun on the premises, and leaving an uncorked bottle of whiskey near him. Around dawn, the trapper must sneak up on the clurichaun and cork it

while the clurichaun is still inside.

Some people believe a bottle can hold a ghost, as well. As I've heard it, the person waits in a haunted location until shortly before midnight. (That's another "between time.") As midnight approaches, place a candle inside a bottle and light it. When any ghost is so attracted to the light, he or she goes into the bottle, cork it quickly.

That particular idea is riddled with problems. For one thing, some bottles will crack or explode if exposed to flame. Another is more obvious: If ghosts were actually attracted to light, they wouldn't be more prevalent at night.

Finally, I'm not sure how anyone could tell if a ghost enters a bottle.

I've also heard variations of Vodun and Voodoo practices involving. One “ghost catcher” uses cemetery dirt and a metal-lined (or lead-lined) box with a lid. I don't know the specifics. If someone tries to convince you that this works, run in the other direction. Vodun and Voodoo are intensely spiritual practices. The Guédé should *not* be treated lightly.

Likewise, if “summoning” ghosts is a bad idea. You might summon something much darker. Sending it back might require expert spiritual help.

35. How can you kill a ghost?

If ghosts are spirits of the dead, they don't have bodies. Not in this plane of existence, anyway.

Killing usually means destroying the body. Ghosts don't have one to destroy.

In fiction, “killing” a zombie is a gray area. Is the zombie body animated by a spirit? It depends on the story. (I’m being flippant. In some parts of the world, zombies are taken very seriously.)

In general, I’m not sure it’s possible to destroy a spirit. Someone with the most evil intentions might attempt that. I doubt they’d succeed. Either way, the effort is

likely to produce unfortunate and dire consequences.

36. Is a ghost alive or dead?

The *spirit* of the person remains alive. The *body* of that person, in this plane of existence, is lifeless. That's a semantic issue.

I believe that ghosts are as alive as you and I are. Despite that, we usually refer to ghosts as *spirits of the dead*.

Some people (and some ghosts) object to the “living v. dead” distinction. When that's an issue, I stick to words like: ghost, spirit, deceased, and entity, or I always refer to the ghost by his or her assumed name. For example, although we're not sure the most famous ghost at the Myrtles Plantation is actually called

“Chloe,” we use that name for her anyway.

Also, most ghosts seem to find very little humor related to the subject of death. The jokes and puns at Disney’s Haunted Mansion attraction may seem funny to you. (They strike me funny, too.) However, avoid using them during ghost investigations. (I’m talking about things like “dying to meet you” and “feeling dead tired,” and so on.)

37. Could ghosts exist as energy waves? Are they on planes of existence that we don't know about?

Many people believe in an afterlife. Some people believe it's *exactly* as described in their religious scriptures. To them, "ghosts" are demons and servants of (or proxy for) the Devil.

Discussing ghosts, it's easy to wander into conflicting beliefs. Even scientists avoid this kind of rhetoric.

Science simply isn't advanced enough to address the subject of ghosts, one way or the other.

- We can't prove that ghosts exist.
- We have no evidence of the world

where they might live.

- We don't know if it's actually our reality or something on the other side of an invisible membrane.

- We don't understand what connects ghostly phenomena to a location. This is true of ghosts and residual energy hauntings.

With that in mind, my answer to this question is yes. Ghosts *could* exist on energy waves or planes of existence that we don't know about, or at least can't prove.

I usually ghost hunt with a yes/no device like a loosened flashlight or Ghost Meter Pro. Early in the

conversation, I ask, “Are you alive and well and living in your own time?”

At least 20% of the time, the answer is yes.

Rosemary Guiley has described an experience where she was using a Ouija board at a haunted site. She asked, “Do you have a message for us?” The response was, “No, do you have a message for us, Rosemary?”

Many ghost hunters have had similar experiences.

I believe some “ghosts” aren’t dead. They’re just in a parallel realm, very much like ours. Their century may not be the same as ours, but everything else

seems similar to our reality. It's just from the past, the future, or an alternate present.

38. What's your theory about ghosts and alternate dimensions?

I believe that some “ghosts” are people who are alive and well in a parallel world. I’m not sure if there are geographical locations where the veil (or the membrane) between us is thinner. Nevertheless, I’m *certain* that many hauntings have nothing to do with dead people.

We’ve seen glimmers of this possibility throughout history. Stories of *doppelgangers* could be explained in quantum terms.

Even within our world and time, some paranormal researchers believe that

EVP can be a *recent* energy echo. For example, archaeologist and ghost excavator John Sabol recorded EVP that sounded *exactly like* a previous investigation by Jason Hawes and Grant Wilson at the same location.

Was that a time echo? We don't know.

Some spirits may be visiting us from the other side. If they are, I think they represent a small percentage of the entities and phenomena we label "ghostly."

I'm closely watching studies related to gravity. It's an anomaly. *Gravity doesn't make sense.*

As explained in the Wikipedia entry

about five-dimensional space, "Physicists have speculated that the graviton, a particle thought to carry the force of gravity, may 'leak' into the fifth or higher dimensions, which would explain how gravity is significantly weaker than the other three fundamental forces."

I believe that some answers will emerge as we understand more about discrepancies and flows connected with gravity and higher dimensions. They may help us understand parallel realities, the beings that inhabit them, and those that seem to interact with us.

It may sound completely "sci-fi," but

if you try and explain electric lights to some ghosts, they react with equal skepticism... and often think *we're* demons.

39. Is it OK for Christians to watch ghost hunting TV shows?

Most Christians' beliefs allow them to watch some (perhaps not all) ghost hunting TV shows. Some denominations may not. Follow your own belief system.

If you're not sure, talk with your priest, minister, or spiritual leader. Some related issues may be best discussed privately and in person. That's especially true if ghost-related TV shows make you feel frightened, depressed, or question your spiritual beliefs.

For Christians who do *not* believe in ghosts, ghost hunting TV shows may be

nothing more than farce and entertainment.

As long as ghost hunting TV shows don't disturb you, or feel like a transgression, I think it's fine to watch them.

Whether *all* ghost hunting TV shows are worthy of your time... that's another matter.

40. Why don't people go ghost hunting in Jewish cemeteries?

Some people *are* ghost hunting in Jewish cemeteries and don't realize it. Some community cemeteries include a section for the Jewish community. That section might be (technically) a separate cemetery, but you might not notice the sign, if there is one.

In other areas, Jewish cemeteries are as distinct from non-denominational, community cemeteries.

When people choose a cemetery for ghost research, they usually start with one that has ghost stories.

For my experience, most Jewish

cemeteries have no ghost stories. Therefore, there is no reason to investigate them.

I'm not sure if Jewish burial and mourning practices bring better closure to the deceased. I haven't investigated this, in comparison with other religious and cultural practices.

I have no ghost stories from Jewish cemeteries. By contrast, I have hundreds (or more) from Christian and non-denominational or community cemeteries. It's an interesting distinction.

41. Does the Bible mention ghost hunting?

There are several references to ghosts and spirits throughout the Bible. Many are in the New Testament. They include references to Jesus:

- In Mark 6:49, "...but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost."
- In Luke 24:37 – 39, "They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost... Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

That's not a religious mandate to go

ghost hunting. However, it's compelling evidence for a belief in ghosts, at least in that culture when those Scriptures were written.

Many Christians are opposed to ghost hunting on religious grounds. They use Bible references to support their arguments.

The story of Saul and the Witch of Endor is the most popular, Biblical arguments against ghost hunting. In 1 Samuel 28, the "witch" summons the spirit of Samuel. The result was tragic.

This is a personal decision. It's one you'll decide on your own, or with your spiritual advisor such as your priest or

minister.

Some people object to ghost hunting on Biblical grounds. Usually, he or she was already uncomfortable with paranormal research. If so, never try to push that person to join you on an investigation.

Whether you call it spiritual guidance or a “gut feeling,” each person should follow his or her instincts.

42. Can an Atheist believe in ghosts?

Most Atheists do not believe in God. However, that does not prevent an Atheist from believing in an *afterlife*. Many people believe that spirits of the dead walk among us. A belief in Deism isn't necessary.

Likewise, an Atheist can witness and believe in ghostly *phenomena*.

Something paranormal (or unexplained) is going on. Anyone can become a ghost hunter without referencing religious beliefs.

From my experiences so far, Atheists are more likely to focus on scientific

evidence. Spiritual phenomena or explanations may be less interesting.

First, let's prove that something is going on. Then, let's identify likely causes of it. After *that*, it's time to explore whether it's a ghost, and how that fits spiritual beliefs.

43. What are the most important ghost hunting tools?

The most important tools for any ghost hunter are your five senses, and *possibly* your sixth sense, if you believe in it.

Nothing is more important than personal observation. Never rely on tools that absorb most or all of your attention. They can prevent you from witnessing an important paranormal encounter.

During your first few ghost hunts, take only a camera that you're *very* comfortable with. (Even that can be a needless distraction. However, a great, ghostly photo confirms that something

unusual was going on at the haunted location.)

If a site is actively haunted, a lot can happen suddenly, all at once. As a beginning ghost hunter, it's easy to become overwhelmed. (That's true for experienced ghost hunters, too. I was baffled by conflicting evidence at The Myrtles Plantation. Bizarre events at the Falstaff Experience disoriented me, too.)

Even the most stoic ghost hunter can become startled when unexpected physical phenomena occur.

What's worse? Well, when something dramatic happens, and you miss it. You were too busy reviewing your photos or

staring at your EMF meter.

Don't miss the excitement of ghost hunting. Rely on your senses, not research tools.

- Look for lights and shadows and anything unusual. (Many visual anomalies are seen "out the corner of your eye.")
- Listen carefully for quiet taps, whispers, and sounds you cannot explain.
- Use your hands to detect baffling areas of hot and cold.
- Some people are sensitive to ghostly odors.
- Others, especially psychics, mention

odd, unexplained tastes.

So, your five senses are your best, first tools for ghost hunting.

As you gain experience, add new tools one at a time. Learn every nuance of each tool or device before you move on to another one. Discover how each tool responds to paranormal phenomena. Test — multiple times in different settings — to see if it works *well* for you. (Don't waste your time with any tool that requires your full attention.)

Many ghost hunters who get *great* results with one kind of tool are less successful with others. For example, I'm great with ghost photos, but not as

successful with EVP recordings. Likewise, many researchers who are adept with EVP don't have equal success photographing ghosts.

In other words, *expect to specialize.*

Try a few basic tools. See what works best for you. If certain tools don't work well for you, that's normal.

No matter which tools you use as a ghost hunter, don't let them distract you.

Your best discoveries will come from first-hand research using your own five or six senses.

44. What's the best kind of equipment for a beginning ghost hunter to buy?

The best ghost hunting equipment includes tools you can afford and learn to use, easily.

Learn from my mistakes.

Until you're confident about becoming a ghost hunter, don't invest in expensive or specialized tools.

For example:

- Cameras and voice recorders can be useful for more than ghost hunting. Mine are useful whenever I travel, not just for ghost research.
- Equipment such as expensive heat-

sensing tools could be a waste of money if ghost hunting isn't fun, after all. I've been involved in paranormal studies since the 1980s, and I still don't use my most expensive equipment very often. (Oh, I keep buying new tools that sound hi-tech and impressive. "Ooh, shiny!" toys will always suck me in. I just don't actually use them.) If I don't use them, you probably won't, either. Not as a beginner, anyway.

Stick with simple equipment. Learn exactly how your tools work.

For example:

- Some of my best photos were taken with point-and-shoot film and digital

cameras. I've gone through three low-end Nikon Coolpix cameras and take consistently surprising "ghost photos."

- I own two fairly expensive, complex digital SLR cameras. I've never made time to figure out how they work. Not well enough to rule out "user error" when I see an anomaly, anyway. So, they're dead weight (no pun intended) in my ghost hunting backpack.

The simplest (and perhaps cheesiest) tools may produce the best results.

For example:

- When my Ghost Meter Pro arrived, I couldn't believe it came a box that said "As Seen on TV." The whole thing

seemed pretty silly. However, within the first 10 minutes, I knew how to use every tool in the device. Within the first half hour, my tests showed its responses were at least 80% accurate. (I use it only as a regular EMF meter, and in “seance” mode. So far, the other settings still seem kind of lame.)

- My Ovilus III is an amazing tool. It's practically the Swiss Army Knife of ghost hunting. It's pretty and it impresses fellow researchers. It's also so complex, I use only a couple of settings. (One of these days, I'll figure out how everything works. For now, I keep defaulting to the Ghost Meter Pro.

45. How do cameras photograph ghosts?

Cameras can capture ghostly *images*. Hardly *anyone* sees an apparition *and* has a photo that shows it. That's true, even when the figure is seen by the entire team, as plain as day.

More often, your photographs will show orbs and streaks of light. *No one saw them* when the picture was taken. Usually, we have no idea why. It just happens.

Learn *exactly* how your camera works. Digital cameras capture images differently than film cameras do. Know the difference. Learn what can make

your camera take "weird" (but normal) photos.

I like digital cameras because I can take hundreds of photos during an investigation, and it costs nothing. I'll take film photos, too, but far fewer.

Do digital cameras detect ghostly energy anomalies *better* than film cameras? That's a popular but controversial theory.

In my book, *Ghost Photography 101*, I recommend using a simple camera that you're comfortable with. Then, experiment. See how that camera responds to unusual weather and light conditions. Do what you can to create

false anomalies, like orbs. After that, you'll know what to watch out for during investigations.

That's the very best way to learn to photograph ghostly anomalies. And, if you're like most beginning ghost hunters, your first genuine photographic anomaly will be a thrill.

46. How many cameras should you carry when you go ghost hunting?

Ghost hunters should carry at least two cameras.

1. Your first camera should be your favorite. It does everything you want. You can operate it with your eyes closed, or in total darkness, even without moonlight.

2. Your second camera should be a no-frills camera with few moving parts. A cheap film camera from a discount store is fine, as long as you know it's reliable. (I look for budget cameras. Usually, that's a cardboard box with a flash, a "good enough" lens, and film

inside. Then, I stock up and always keep one in my car's glove compartment.)

These days, I rarely take film photos. The backup camera is strictly for weird haunts where my regular camera balks.

Note: I've talked with several ghost researchers who are returning to film cameras for investigations. Some feel the anomalies are more credible. Others can't articulate why they think film is a better choice. Even if it's just a "gut feeling," I respect those researchers to take their views seriously.

Always have two cameras in case the location is profoundly active. The more complex the camera, the more likely it is

to fail completely.

Don't rely on the camera in your phone. Mobile phones may stop working at haunted locations. Usually, that happens before digital cameras and EVP recorders fail. If the phone won't work, its camera may not work, either.

My usual backup camera is a really old, simple, point-and-shoot Olympus. If all else fails, I rely on cheap, disposable cameras.

Always carry extra batteries for your equipment. At haunted locations, batteries — even fresh, new ones — routinely lose their charge. If you have backup batteries, and lots of them, you

increase your chances of a successful ghost hunt.

Think about this when buying a digital camera. My Nikon Coolpix digital camera uses standard AA batteries. Even if *all* of my batteries fail during an investigation, I can buy more at a nearby convenience store.

With a built-in battery, I might miss an important opportunity for great ghost photos.

Note: If your camera stops working and seems broken, *don't panic*. In most cases, the camera will work fine if you move a few feet away from the "hot spot," or after you leave the haunted

location. Rarely, you'll need to be many miles away, or wait a day or so.

Before the spring of 2012, *no* camera remained broken after I left a haunted location.

Then, the lens on my favorite digital camera stopped working. At the time, I was in a strange little NH haunt best described as "a cemetery that's not a cemetery." Eventually, I gave up and bought a replacement camera.

I want to conduct more research at that weird little site. Then, I might know if the problem was an aging camera or something more interesting. (And, until then, I won't reveal the exact location.)

It's possible that I've stumbled onto a site (thanks to researcher Sean Paradis) that's so active, it actually breaks cameras.

47. Can you use any digital camera for ghost hunting, or does it have to be something special?

If you're a beginner, use the simplest possible digital camera with a built-in flash.

If you're buying a ghost hunting camera, make sure it has a flash. Ask if it's designed to take good pictures in low light conditions, too.

Other than that, you don't need anything special.

Later, you can explore more specialized cameras. Those can include infrared cameras, heat sensing cameras, and cameras with clearer glass lenses.

(Many budget cameras have plastic lenses. The quality can be fine, but a good glass lens might produce far crisper results. Then, you can identify normal — but odd — things in “anomalous” photos.)

You might also test remote flash lighting and other devices. Still, beginners probably won’t need that equipment for at least a few months.

48. What are the best camera settings for ghost hunting?

Most people set their cameras to about 400 ISO (formerly called 400 ASA) in low light conditions. At that setting, your camera will be sensitive enough to capture subtle light anomalies.

Settings lower than 400 ISO don't detect much in low light conditions.

Some ghost photographers recommend a setting of at least 1000 ISO to detect the maximum number of anomalies. I disagree, but it depends on the camera. Usually, anything higher than 400 ISO produces images so grainy, it's difficult to figure out what I'm looking at.

Don't take my word for it. Test ISO levels for each camera you intend to use. See what works best for *your* research.

In addition, I generally set my camera so the flash will *always* be triggered. If you're taking photos of ghostly anomalies, you'll usually get better results with a flash.

Unfortunately, the light from the flash can reflect your own breath. This is especially risky when the weather is chilly or the dew point is high. Experiment so you know what your own breath looks like in photographs.

I believe that breath is the number one cause of false anomalies in ghost photos.

Be sure you know what it looks like with *each* of your cameras. Test that in a variety of weather and light conditions. Your breath can show up in photos on warm summer evenings as well as on icy, bone-numbing winter nights.

Once you're comfortable with ghost photography, experiment with other camera settings. I've seen interesting results in low light conditions when I've left the lens open for an extended period of time. I'm sure there are *other* settings you can test to see if they improve your results. Test everything!

49. What do ghosts look like in real ghost photos?

We're not sure *what* ghost photos really are. They're anomalies. They're baffling. The images may not represent actual spirits or ghostly energy.

We call them "ghost photos" because we take them in haunted places, and weird images show up. We're not sure they're actually *ghosts*.

Most ghost photos contain unexplained orbs and baffling columns of light. It is extremely rare to photograph an apparition. Most "apparition" photos have been debunked. Often, it was disappointingly easy.

Remember, you can download a “ghost photo” app. When those were first in the marketplace, I received dozens of faked photos. The effect is attractive and eerie, but if you know what to look for, you won’t be fooled.

Shadow people seem to be easier to photograph. I’m not sure why. We’re still trying to understand what shadow people are. They may be ghosts. They may be something else.

I’ve photographed a shadow person and the image was clear. I’ve never photographed an apparition that looked like a solid or translucent figure with features.

50. How do video cameras show ghosts?

Video cameras show the same kinds of anomalies we see in ghost photos. The difference is, those anomalies *move* in most ghost videos.

The main, most reliable anomalous images in ghost videos are orbs and shadow people.

Apparitions

Apparitions are ghosts that look like people. They might seem solid or translucent.

In photos, most “apparitions” are people who stepped into the frame when no one noticed. Enlarging the frame

usually helps the team identify who it was.

If possible, one team member should take a photo of everyone at every investigation. That includes staff members, visitors, and so on. Each should be a full-length photo. That way, you have a reference if someone's arm, leg, or foot shows up in the frame.

Orbs

“Floating orbs” are among the most common and controversial images. To rule out normal dust, experiment with your video camera in dusty attics and basements. Also film outdoors in fields and dirt roads.

Dust, dirt, insects, and pollen may be easy to detect. Gravity causes them to sink slowly towards the floor or ground. The exception is when a fan or ventilation duct creates an updraft. That keeps the dust (etc.) to continue bobbing along in mid-air.

Sometimes, orbs float in a steady line, or even seem to climb or bob up and down. If the activity can't be explained, those videos are some of the most interesting evidence we have.

Shadow People

Shadow people are unexplained, shadowy figures. Usually, we see them moving. Sometimes, they show up in our

photos and videos.

If you want to study those unexplained shadows, video footage is much better than still photos.

When we see an unexplained shadow in a *regular* (still) ghost photo, we must return to the site. We have to see what might have cast that shadow.

When a *video* camera captures a moving, shadowy figure, it's far more compelling evidence of paranormal activity.

Other Anomalies

Learn what's normal (but sometimes weird-looking) for your video camera. Just like regular cameras, it's important

to experiment with video cameras, too.

Test them with dust, pollen, dirt, and in locations with lots of insects.

Moths and mosquitoes are the leading culprits when you see an orb in your photos or video recordings. They're also the easiest to identify, once you know what to look for. After dark, take lots of photos and video footage of different insects. Learn the irregularities that separate highlighted bugs from anomalous orbs.

Tip: If you're not sure if the site has a lot of bugs, wait until dusk or slightly after it. Then, look up at nearby streetlights. Usually, if insects are

nearby, you'll see them highlighted by the streetlight.

If you think you've filmed a ghostly anomaly, run tests. Try to recreate the effect.

If you can't explain what the image is, that is — by definition — paranormal.

51. What's the best kind of video camera for ghost hunting?

You should be comfortable with any camera you use. Many mobile phones include video cameras, but the video quality may not be good enough.

For beginners, the best video camera is the one you'll really use. If that's your mobile phone, it's fine for now.

Later, choose a dedicated video camera for your ghost investigations. It doesn't need to be very expensive.

Your video camera should include:

- A good lens. Glass lenses are better than plastic lenses. Even if the video camera seems expensive, ask if the lens

is glass or plastic.

- A stabilizer to steady the image if your hands are shaking. Today, that's a fairly normal feature in video equipment.
- The ability to film in low light conditions.
- Also, make sure you can secure your video camera to a tripod, so you can set it up and leave it running. (If it wobbles, that can affect video integrity.)

Are you good at capturing ghosts on video? Explore specialized video cameras. Some can produce extraordinary results.

Any equipment I'd recommend in this book might be "old" and replaced by

better options by the time you read this.

I recommend watching ghost-related TV shows to see what equipment they're using. (Sometimes, they get access to specialized tools before the public does.)

Also go to public ghost hunting events, and ask professional ghost hunters which brands and models they prefer. Ask them which video camera features (what bells & whistles) are most useful. They'll probably point you in the direction of high-end equipment... but maybe not.

Always ask, "Can you suggest a good video camera for someone on a budget?" Most professional ghost

hunters started out with limited budgets. They know what's worth buying, and what isn't.

Keep in mind: Some professional ghost hunters don't really understand their equipment. Always get a second and third opinion. In some cases, the extraordinary results from a certain camera may be more about the person using it than the camera itself.

That's true of all ghost hunting equipment.

For example, I know two high-profile paranormal researchers who own "Frank's Boxes." Those boxes really were made by Frank Sumption. I've seen

Researcher A use a Frank's Box with astonishing accuracy. He has complete faith in the box.

Researcher B has a better reputation, but flits from one tool or theory to the next. That researcher swears that, after a while, Frank's Boxes stop working.

In my opinion, Researcher A gets better results because he maintains faith in the box. (He's also convinced that Frank has a unique, mystical gift that transforms each box.)

I believe ghost hunting tools work best when people are confident about the results. That's less about integrity (of the user or the tools) than the attitudes of the

person using them.

Get and use equipment you feel good about. That includes video cameras.

52. Where do I find the best *high tech* equipment for ghost hunting?

If you're asking this question, I hope you've been involved in ghost hunting for many months. Until you're sure ghost hunting is for you, don't invest in specialized equipment.

Important: Don't try to impress others with fancy equipment. Instead, learn to use basic tools well. *That* impresses fellow researchers.

I used to raise an eyebrow at "Shack Hacks," until I saw John Zaffis talk to one. Suddenly, it talked back, clearly and in context.

It wasn't his Shack Hack, and it was at

least a dozen feet away from him. (Since then — around 2009 — I've never seen anyone achieve the same results with a Shack Hack. Maybe I just haven't seen others as skilled as him.)

Where you find ghost hunting equipment will depend on how specialized the devices are.

For example, cameras and voice recorders can be purchased at any electronics store or online. Amazon and Overstock offer low prices for basic and backup-level equipment. Other retailers do, too.

Ovilus or real-time EVP devices require an equally specialized shop or

online retailer.

It's important to feel confident about your purchase. You may need to discuss your options with a store clerk or seller who's familiar with ghost research.

It's *equally* important to check reviews by professionals who've tried that equipment. It helps if they're also experienced paranormal investigators.

Some electronics wizards specialize in dedicated equipment for paranormal researchers. Digital Dowsing — the website featuring Bill Chappell's custom-designed equipment — is one of the best-known.

Others keep a lower profile. You'll

see their equipment at ghost-related events, but not in stores and rarely online. To find them, go to events, especially off-the-beaten-path events where high-profile investigators get together. That's where you'll find the most experimental tools... devices you may see on TV shows, several months later.

Investing in experimental devices can be risky. Generally, they have a 50/50 chance of working as well as hoped. Some will work great for a short time, and then break. (Most designers/manufacturers will replace the item.) Never spend money you can't

afford to lose if the seller turns out to be completely clueless about this field. That said, I rarely run into that.

In many cases, the best, specialized equipment is made in small batches, as few as two or three at a time. Expect to sign up for a waiting list. It may take months to receive the high-tech tools you want.

Like the “high rollers” tables in Vegas, this is a risky area for beginners.

53. What do electromagnetic fields (EMF) have to do with ghosts?

Unusual levels of EMF can occur at haunted sites. That's practically routine.

In the mid 20th century, some researchers talked about bafflingly *low* levels of EMF at haunted sites. In the 21st century, we hear more reports of extraordinarily *high* surges of EMF. If they can't be explained by faulty wiring or EMF-emitting devices, they're paranormal.

High EMF can disorient people. High EMF can cause headaches, nausea, and even hallucinations. So, a site with unhealthy EMF levels can seem ghostly,

when the issue is a normal, electrical issue.

Professionals must rule out elevated EMF from electrical problems. That's one reason we do a baseline sweep of each investigation site. We're looking for normal issues that can produce paranormal-like phenomena.

Often, paranormal EMF spikes are fleeting. *Those* are the anomalies that interest us... but what are they, really? We don't know.

Some people believe that ghosts manifest electromagnetic energy. Others, including me, suspect that the EMF spikes occur as a *signal* that ghostly

energy might be entering the site.

I explain it in terms of the old TV show, *Quantum Leap*. In that TV series, one character (Al) regularly traveled through time. Then, he emerged through an energy doorway.

We don't usually see that kind of doorway at haunted locations. However, energy transference – through time or between worlds — might manifest as EMF spikes.

Of course, that's just a theory. I have no proof. My guess may be completely wrong, and – by the time you read this – I may have revised it. (I try not to be dogmatic. At least 90% of what we think

about ghosts is speculation, not *fact*. We're a long way from having proof.)

Frankly, we don't know what EMF levels have to do with ghosts. We only know that we observe more unexplained EMF spikes in haunted places. For all we know, that may be a mere coincidence.

54. What's the best kind of EMF detector?

Most EMF detectors are designed to help people measure unhealthy levels of EMF energy. You'd use one to check electrical equipment like computers, microwaves, and electrical wiring.

Ghost hunters need specialized EMF devices.

K-II meters were among the first highly acclaimed EMF detectors used by ghost hunters. The K-II is still one of my favorites. It's sensitive and easy to use. However, I've discovered inconsistencies among K-II meters. Two identical K-IIs can respond completely

differently. I used one that belonged to Grant Wilson and it was great. It seemed to detect all kinds of subtle, anomalous energy.

Since then, I acquired another, identical K-II. After nearly two years of testing, it's not sensitive enough.

Today (2014), I use a Ghost Meter Pro. However, it comes in an “As Seen on TV!” package. So, I can’t vouch for consistent quality. I might have an extraordinarily good one.

I also have an Ovilus III. Likewise, it’s a good meter, but it costs about five times as much as the Ghost Meter Pro. (It also does about five times more

things. It senses temperature variations, and “talks” from a dictionary or using phonetic sounds. It does other things, as well.)

The best EMF meter is the one you use with confidence, that produces good results for you.

You have many choices. Some EMF meters make noise, others have colored lights, and some have both. Many EMF meters have a dial so you can see the precise level of EMF you're encountering.

For ghost hunting, make sure your EMF meter has at least one setting that is extremely sensitive. A standard EMF

meter from the hardware store may be great for seeing if your microwave oven is leaking energy. It probably won't be sensitive enough for ghost research.

Read reviews and recommendations by other ghost hunters. Ask friends and team members if you can try their EMF meters. See what you like, and what works well for you.

Above all, avoid EMF meters that you have to watch *all the time*. The meter should be a tool, not a distraction.

You may find gently-used EMF equipment online at a reasonable price. Check sites like eBay for good, used equipment with a money-back guarantee.

55. How does white noise help some people hear ghosts on digital recorders?

White noise is controversial.

White noise might provide spirits with sounds ("noise energy"). In theory, they can manipulate it to form words on EVP recordings. I've heard remarkable results. This theory might be credible.

It's the same reason some investigators encourage people to talk normally during EVP sessions. Using software, they can filter out the researchers' voices. They can highlight anomalous sounds and ghostly voices, too. Ghosts might use, manipulate, or

recycle ambient noise to communicate with us.

A few ghost hunters believe white noise might provide a wall or background. Against that, ghosts feel confident that their words can be heard. To me, that seems unlikely, but I could be wrong.

I'm just guessing. In this field, most of us are.

When it comes to white noise, scant scientific research exists. Until we know more, test white noise and other audio input to see if it improves your EVP recordings. (This applies to *all* real-time communications with spirits, recorded

electronically.)

You can download white noise free (or at low cost) at sites like rain.SimplyNoise.com. Also, 99-cent apps can generate white noise to use during EVP sessions.

Experiment with other “colors” of noise at
<http://mynoise.net/NoiseMachines/white1>
(Try noise calibrated with more brown or pink in it.)

You may prefer Coffitivity.com. It's not white noise, but it could be a good background for your EVP sessions.

If specialized noise makes a dramatic difference, use it. If it doesn't, don't

bother with it.

Note: Some team members are distracted by certain noises. So, be sure to check with them before conducting too many tests.

56. Do ghost hunting apps work?

I've tried several different kinds of ghost hunting apps. Many of them rely on EMF anomalies to produce flashing lights and sometimes spoken words. Some show the direction the energy is coming from.

Initially, I dismissed ghost hunting apps as toys. How could a 99-cent app do what my \$300+ tools do?

Then, I was in Canada to speak at a ghost hunting event. When a few of us went out to lunch, one of my companions took out her phone. It had a ghost app on it. I'm pretty sure it was the Ghost Radar app.

She put the phone — with the app running — on the table where we were eating.

Another companion said that, if the app really worked, she'd like a message from her mother.

The app started “talking.” It said several words, none of which seemed significant to the woman who'd asked the question.

However, as I sat there, nearly every word the app said... it described the mural on the wall, next to us.

After several minutes, I spoke up, and pointed to the mural since the words were a match.

Then I pointed to the signature on the mural, also indicated by the app. (I believe some of the words it said included “word,” “sign,” and “picture.”)

The woman who'd asked the question nearly lost it. The first name of the artist was the exact same, slightly unusual name as the her mother.

Maybe it was a coincidence, but none of us thought that. Not with the clarity of the indication, once I pointed to the mural. (To me, it had been obvious after the first three or four words.)

So, that was my first experience with a ghost hunting app. Even if that had been my only experience, it was

powerful enough to change my mind in favor of ghost hunting apps.

The second experience was a couple of years later. I was in a NH cemetery with psychics Lesley Marden and Sean Paradis. We were testing equipment, collectively. That is, each of us was working with some kind of ghost hunting equipment. We wanted to see if the results correlated. In addition, we drew on Lesley's psychic skills, since her accuracy rate is high. (Sean's is good as well, but different. Mine is not as sharp, around 85%.)

Sean was running the Ghost Radar app on his phone, and it indicated an energy

form (or ghost) approaching us. My Ghost Meter Pro was running in “seance” mode. Lesley was chatting with us when she had the strong impression of a spirit named Jonathan.

Then, the Ghost Radar suggested that the ghostly energy was within 15 feet of us. At the same time, my Ghost Meter Pro signaled the option of conversation with a spirit. Lesley was sure the grave of that ghost was outside the enclosure where we were. That seemed confirmed by both the Ghost Meter Pro (in yes/no terms, anyway) as well as the words “said” by the Ghost Radar.

So, we left that enclosure. We

followed directions given to us by dowsing rods, the Ghost Meter Pro, and the Ghost Radar, plus Lesley's guidance.

We walked about 60 feet when the Ghost Radar shouted "Pennsylvania." We laughed because we were in Concord, New Hampshire, nowhere near Pennsylvania. However, the Ghost Meter Pro also signaled something nearby. At the same time, the dowsing rods came to a halt, pointing at one very tall monument to the left of us.

When we got there, the grave belonged to a man named Jonathan. He'd been killed at Valley Forge. It's in Pennsylvania.

There is no way that had been set up by any of us. It also confirmed that ghost hunting tools can work together to refine research results. Mostly, I was very impressed that the Ghost Radar app had been exactly right. Everything it said was an exact match for the grave marker, in ways we didn't have to contrive to fit.

So, I'm now a firm believer in the merits of ghost hunting apps.

Do apps like Ghost Radar perform better with certain investigators? Are some people “lightning rods” attracting psychic energy? Does it help if they’re psychic?

At other investigations, some ghost

hunting tools have seemed worthless until the right person came along. Then, the devices went from near zero accuracy to at least 70%.

On its own, I'm not sure that the Ghost Radar app is as useful as other, dedicated ghost hunting tools. Nevertheless, for the price and convenience, apps may be worth trying.

57. How much should I budget for ghost hunting gear?

Beginners should never invest in specialized ghost hunting equipment. First, make sure this will be a long-term interest, hobby, or profession.

Whether you are a beginner or a pro, never invest more money than you can afford to lose.

- People drop things when they're startled. In the dark, you might not find whatever-it-is. (The problem becomes worse if you drop what you're carrying, and run away in terror.)

- If you drop a sensitive \$5k camera or a \$2k heat sensing device, it can

break the same as a \$40 camera or a \$15 digital thermometer. If you didn't buy a replacement warranty, or it doesn't cover that kind of mistake, you may have wasted thousands of dollars.

- Electronic equipment can fail in extremely haunted settings. In fact, many of us use unexplained equipment failure as an indicator of paranormal activity. Personally, I think EMF spikes are to blame. Most electrical devices, will glitch or fail when exposed to intense magnetic energy. That's reasonable, unless it's remarkably well shielded.

If your expensive camera or other device won't work when you're ghost

hunting, you've wasted your money. Worse, it can be difficult to return that equipment if it shows any wear, or if you can't demonstrate how it fails.

Instead, focus on just one aspect of ghost hunting. If you like ghost photography, invest in photographic equipment. If you like divinatory tools, buy or make specialized dowsing rods or pendulums.

If I were starting fresh, today, I'd probably budget \$100 or less.

- I'd get a pretty good camera, perhaps a used, refurbished point-and-shoot digital camera. For software, I'd use GIMP, or something else that's free.

(Today, I use Photoshop, but GIMP and other programs work well enough to tell if you've captured an anomaly.)

- I'd make dowsing rods from coat hangers. (If you're not sure how, see Ghosts101.com for instructions.)
- I'd use the voice recorder on my phone, or buy an inexpensive one at an office supply store or warehouse. (Make sure the microphone is omni-directional, so it picks up sounds all around you, not just in one direction.)
- I'd buy an inexpensive flashlight with a metal case. I'd make sure the light bulb housing unscrews easily, to test yes/no responses when the housing is

loosened.

- I'd get a good surgical-type mask that protects me from toxins, bacteria, and viruses around me. (Not vice versa.)

- I'd put all of that in a backpack with lots of pockets (to find things in complete darkness). I'd also add a small, inexpensive first aid kit.

Don't spread yourself too thin, in terms of learning or financial investment. Set a firm spending limit and do not exceed that.

It's easy to get carried away. Keep your ghost hunting expenses low. Don't let ghost hunting jeopardize other aspects of your personal, professional,

or family life.

58. How do ghost hunters get ghosts to turn flashlights on and off?

Ghosts don't *actually* turn the flashlight on and off. The effect comes from a loose contact between the batteries and the light bulb.

A ghost might be able to move the flashlight just enough to make the light blink on for a split second.

Or, ghosts might generate EMF energy. That's a popular theory. If it's true, a small amount of energy might reconnect the battery and the light bulb.

Either way, ghosts might be able to communicate through a loosened flashlight. That's how it's looked in tests

on TV and in the field.

You'll use the kind of flashlight that turns on and off with a gentle twist of the flashlight case. The *Mag lite* brand is the most popular. Inexpensive clones can work just as well, as long as the flashlight has a metal case, not plastic or resin. (I've talked with the staff at *Mag lite*. They were baffled by my questions. They wouldn't tell me which metals are in their flashlight cases are proprietary. Still, they insisted that conductivity wasn't likely.)

To communicate with a ghost, here's what you'll do:

- Turn the flashlight on.

- Twist the case just enough so the flashlight is off.
 - Gently shake the flashlight. If the light flickers on and off, the setting is right. (If it won't flicker easily, adjust the case until it does.)
 - Place the flashlight on a level surface.
 - Then, instruct the ghost to reply to questions by briefly turning the flashlight on if the answer is yes.

This kind of real-time communication can be exciting and produce remarkable results.

There's at least one big problem: This is far from actual, scientific

evidence. Heavy footsteps, a passing truck, a nearby train, or music with a heavy base can be enough to make the flashlight flicker. In other words, a blinking flashlight isn't proof of anything, even if it seems eerily accurate and consistent.

Generally, I ask questions with known answers: "Is my name Fiona Broome? Flash the light once for yes." "Flash the light once if I'm male, twice if I'm female." (I mix things up. I want to be sure the flashlight isn't responding to footsteps in a nearby room, or infrasound from trucks.) "Are we in [name of location]? Flash once for yes."

“Did George Washington (or some other, obviously impossible name) live here? Flash once for yes, twice for no.”

If the answers aren’t at least 75% accurate, I don’t bother with a flashlight “seance.” The responses must be more accurate than a coin toss.

If the flashlight responds accurately enough, I set up my equipment nearby. My usual tools include EMF detectors, real-time ghost communication devices, and EVP recorders.

Flashlight communication with spirits can be exciting to see. However, I believe you need more evidence, collected *at the same time*. The best

evidence includes correlated results from a variety of tools, including flashlight responses. After that, I look for documented history that supports or refutes the findings.

Unless historical evidence exists, the rest is speculation. It might seem reliable, but I'm looking for more than just a consensus from a loosened flashlight and a few other tools.

I want something on paper that's independent of any ghost investigations. That means census records, vital records (birth, marriage, or death records), court documents, and so on.

59. How do people use dowsing rods in ghost hunting?

In the right hands, dowsing rods can be useful ghost hunting tools.

First, you'll use them to detect *normal* phenomena that can make a site seem haunted. For example, dowsing rods can detect underground springs and streams. Underground water can contribute to infrasound. Its low-level frequency disorients some people. They might think they've encountered a ghost when they haven't.

Some ghost hunters use dowsing rods to identify active areas at a haunted site. For that, you may need skill and

sensitivity. You can learn the skill. I'm not sure everyone can develop the sensitivity.

Dowsing rods can respond to yes-or-no questions, as well.

Some people use just one rod. I use two, and hold one in each hand.

Hold the rods with a light grip. It should be loose enough so the rods can move without much resistance. (The exception is dowsing rods that include a casing between your hands and the rods. Since your hand won't influence the rods one way or the other, hold the casing as tightly as you like.)

Also, check the length of the rods and

what they might hit — especially your face — if they start swinging wildly. (That's happened to me a few times.)

Initially, hold the rods so they are parallel to the floor or ground.

Then, tilt your hands so the tips of the rods are at a slight downward angle... less than a 10-degree drop. This allows gravity a gentle influence on the rods. If the rods are able to swing wildly, they're useless.

However, don't let the rods point too far downward, or gravity will pin them in place.

Ideally, the rods move slightly against the pull of gravity.

I start by asking basic questions I can answer myself, such as, “Is my name Fiona Broome?” The movement of the rods tells me what the rods will do for a “yes” answer, if anything. The rods may swing in opposite directions. They might swing towards each other and cross. They might point to the right or to the left.

I try enough yes/no questions to detect a pattern.

After that, I put a coin on the floor or ground, and stand at least ten feet away. Then, I tell the rods to lead me to the coin. I do this aloud, saying something like, “Where is the coin? Point to it and

lead me there.”

In most cases, both rods point in the direction of the coin. When I get there, they either return to resting position, or — more often — they’ll cross in front of me as if to prevent me from walking ahead.

After that, I’m ready to use them on that investigation. I know how to detect a yes, a no, and how to tell where the rods are leading me.

During the investigation, I might use them for yes/no answers. For example: “Is this ghost female?” “Is this ghost male?” “Is the ghost a child?” “Did this ghost live in the 17th century?” “... the

18th century?” “... the 19th century?”

And so on.

Note: Never start by asking when the ghost “died.” Many ghosts seem to reject the idea that they’re dead.

More often, I simply hold the rods in the “ready” position, and walk around. I let them lead me to a “hot spot.”

If the rods indicate a “hot spot,” I usually walk around, testing different directions. Dowsing rods can detect underground water, water pipes, and electrical wiring. So, I see if the rods indicate (or point to) a long, straight line. If they do, I know the reading isn’t paranormal. I’ll check that same line

with an EMF meter. I'm looking for normal (but elevated) EMF levels. If I find it, I'll avoid that area as I continue my research.

If just one spot or a small area seems active, I set up my ghost hunting equipment. I'm looking for anomalous readings and responses.

You can ask dowsing rods to lead you to the “hot” areas of a haunt. You can use them, seance style, to ask — and receive answers to — questions about the ghost.

However, dowsing rods don't work for everyone. So far, we don't know why.

If dowsing rods work, but not as well as you'd like, you may need more practice. Place small objects around your living room. Then, ask the rods to lead you to a particular object. The more often you do this, the more skill you'll have with dowsing rods, and the more confidence, too.

Warning: Do not expect ghostly energy to work “through” you. Maintain firm boundaries. The ghostly energy works with the tools. You’re just propping them at the correct angle. (This is why I prefer to use dowsing rods with casing-type holders. I make no direct contact with the actual rods.) Never give

a spirit permission to enter or use your body to communicate. That may seem like a fine point, but with increasing dangers in ghost hunting, precautions are important.

Some companies – including Joey Korn at Dowsers.com — manufacture powerful dowsing rods designed for ghost hunting. I've used their larger rods (18 inches) with researchers who swear that dowsing rods don't work. So far, they've had success with those rods 100% of the time.

I've also used the Dowsers.com portable (collapsible) rods with great results. However, in my field tests,

others had weaker (or no) results with smaller rods. So, start large. Over time, work down, if the big rods become too sensitive (swing too wildly) for your research.

You don't need to buy dowsing rods. Make your own from wire coat hangers. Visit Ghosts101.com for step-by-step instructions. If you want to use a casing for handles, visit a DIY store (like Lowe's or Home Depot). Ask them to cut two small lengths of narrow, straight PVC pipe or brass piping. You'll slide your dowsing rod handles (the shorter sides of the bent coat hangers) into them. Then, your hands can't influence the rods

at all.

In my opinion, the more active my dowsing rods, the more active the haunting. If the rods barely move, not much is going on. If they respond vigorously, I'll usually see EMF spikes, orbs in photos, and other phenomena.

In rare cases, my smallest dowsing rods have swung in complete circles, repeatedly. (It can look silly, like a tiny helicopter blade.) I'm pretty sure those were active, paranormal spots.

They occurred at:

- Cambridge (MA, USA): At the mass grave of Revolutionary soldiers, buried under a mound in the Old Burial Ground

at Harvard Square. Also at the tree in front of Peet's Coffee House, 100 Mt. Auburn Street, Harvard Square. (It's the site of a "witch jail" during colonial times.)

- Methuen (MA, USA): Upstairs at Tenney Gate House, in one of the front rooms. Repeated several times before the anomaly ceased.

- Salem (MA): In the basement of 127 Essex Street. (The basement isn't open to the public. Also, excellent ghost tours leave from in front of that shop).

- Stratford-upon-Avon (England): One room in the Falcon Hotel, but only briefly. Several times at the Falstaff's

Experience (Tudor World), 40 Sheep Street.

- York (England): The Golden Fleece Pub, but only a few times, in odd spots near the entrance. Did not repeat during additional visits.

60. How do people use pendulums in ghost hunting?

Pendulums are divinatory tools. They're usually made with a weighted object suspended from the medium's hand by way of a chain, ribbon, or string.

If you're going to buy one, look for handmade pendulums that attract you. Never buy a used pendulum, no matter how pretty it is. (But, if you just can't resist it, be sure to clear residual energy off it. Submersing it in sea salt, overnight, is one option.)

Online, I trust pendulums from Sleeping Meadows. In real life, I've

bought pendulums in Salem (MA, USA) from Hex and from shops on Pickering Wharf. I like all of them, but — though I rarely use pendulums — I keep going back to my pendulums from Sleeping Meadows. They seem less formal and more user-friendly, in a weird, woo-woo, animistic way.

You can make your own pendulum, easily. A ribbon and a ring or even a metal washer can work fine. Generally, the ribbon (or chain, or string) should be around eight or ten inches long, or longer. That's one way to see if you are adept with a pendulum, and if you like using it.

In the right person's hands, pendulums can answer simple yes or no questions. Some investigators use them to determine the direction to move in, the same as others use dowsing rods to point the way.

Several remote dowsers use pendulums over maps.

Some people use pendulums with special charts. Some charts strongly resemble the symbols and alphabet — plus yes and no — on a Ouija board. You can create your own charts, too. All you need is a pen and a normal sheet of paper. On it, mark years, numbers, words, colors, or compass directions.

Really, there's no limit to to the kind of charts you can design for use with a pendulum.

Hold the pendulum over your chart. Once it's still, ask a question. The pendulum may swing along, or point to, the best answer on the chart.

Divinatory tools are not for everyone. Always direct the spiritual energy to the tool, not to or through your hand. Prayer or shielding is a good idea, before you begin your work.

In the field, I've tested pendulums with people who claimed no psychic gifts. One test involved about 20 people at haunted Gilson Road Cemetery in

Nashua (NH, USA). The results were no better than a coin flip. (Keep in mind: I wanted to see if pendulums worked accurately for *absolute beginners*.)

My own results have been okay, but not impressive enough to rely on pendulums for my research.

However, I've seen pendulums work really well for others. For example, Lesley Marden's results are impressive.

Remember, this is a controversial topic. No two researchers will answer this question the same way. Consider all opinions carefully before using divinatory tools of any kind.

61. What do scientists think about ghosts?

Scientists believe in ghosts the same as the rest of the public do. In other words, some believe and some don't. They're as likely to be skeptics (or believers) in the same percentages as non-scientists.

In public, they may not admit to believing in ghosts. Some scientists pretend they're hardcore, skeptical critics. That's to protect their reputations and their jobs.

Other scientists won't accept the reality of ghosts without *significantly* more evidence. That's a rational choice.

In general, scientists are accustomed to laboratory research. They rely on the scientific method. That's why they separate their personal experiences from their professional opinions.

Healthy skepticism is important in our research. That's why many paranormal investigators freely admit that we cannot prove that ghosts exist. We know that *something* unusual is going on at some locations. For now, trying to prove that is enough of a challenge.

I've investigated with several MIT scientists, and several regional police officers, as well. They're as interested in this topic as anyone else.

In other words, stereotypes don't apply to scientists. Whether they believe or don't believe in ghosts is a matter of personal opinion. That opinion is usually rooted in their personal experiences.

If a scientist joins your research team, don't assume he or she is going to be a skeptical critic.

62. Is there any scientific proof of ghosts?

There is no scientific “proof” of anything. “Proofs” come from mathematics and logic. Science relies on evidence, and much of it is provisional. Scientists are constantly improving techniques and research methods. Thanks to a steady supply of new discoveries, there is no final word in science. That makes it an exciting, evolving field.

So, there is no proof. If you want conclusive, scientific *evidence* of ghosts, it doesn’t exist yet. You may find an answer that makes sense to you. It

might be all the evidence you need.

Scientific evidence is something else.

We can go to a haunted site and — often but not always — trigger unexplained phenomena. However, our results aren't consistent.

In other words, ghostly phenomena can't be duplicated to lab standards. If we could reliably duplicate it, we might find better answers to many ghost hunting questions.

Whole Brain Emulation (WBE) or “mind uploading” could open doors for ghost research. It's the storage of intelligence — what's in your brain — in digital format. Engineer Ray Kurzweil

predicts that will be possible by the year 2045.

Let's say we could routinely store memories for every human being. Let's also assume we've refined communication with ghosts. Then, we could compare what the ghost tells us about his life, against his digitally stored (WBE) memories.

At the moment, that's pure sci-fi. However, it's one of many possibilities. If the data in the computer or avatar matches what's conveyed by the ghost, point for point, that could be compelling evidence.

We're also trying to refine EMF

detection. Some orbs may result from EMF that accompanies a haunting. With better research tools, we may understand more about orbs, EMF, and ghosts.

However, people have been trying to understand ghosts for centuries. We're still far from turning this into a credible science.

For now, there's no "proof." We can't convince skeptical critics that ghosts are real, either. Of course, there may never be enough evidence for that. Many people what they want to believe. After all, some people still insist the world is flat, and nothing will persuade them otherwise.

63. What did ghosts do before electricity and electronic appliances?

When someone asks me this, my flippant reply is, “They did what the living did, before electricity. They used what was available.”

Ghosts can communicate without modern devices.

Time tested, non-electrical communications include:

- Pendulums.
- Dowsing rods.
- Table tipping and table tapping. (The first involves the table moving. The other means rapping sounds on the table. Both may occur at the same time.)

- Automatic writing.
- Ouija boards and spirit boards.
- And, one of my favorites: Direct requests to ghosts. In other words, just ask them to respond in specific ways, like moving an object or making a sound.

Of course, that's not scientific. It's flashing lights, full-body apparitions, or ghostly voices on a recording.

Non-electrical communications can be entertaining, but they're not scientific evidence. Most people want more than entertainment from ghost hunting.

Today, scientists and technicians are developing high tech, paranormal research tools. They're designing

devices that might produce consistent results under laboratory conditions.

We're getting closer, but it may be several years until we have ghost hunting devices that work consistently in haunted locations.

However, for an entertaining — and often convincing — display of ghostly activity, old-school methods can be a fine choice.

If that's what you're looking for, follow the careers of two ghost hunters.

One is Brian Cano, who appeared on the “Haunted Collector” TV series. He's familiar with many old-school ghost hunting methods.

The other is paranormal researcher Sean Paradis. He's exploring very low-tech investigation tools.

64. If ghosts are just energy, how can they interact with people?

Ghosts aren't "just energy." If they're actual spirits, they have a consciousness. They're unique individuals, and each one finds unique ways to communicate with us.

If you've seen the Patrick Swayze movie, "Ghost," you've seen how he had to learn to interact with the world he'd left behind. It wasn't easy.

Is that an accurate portrayal of what ghosts deal with, trying to cross the gap between the living and those who've passed on?

I'm not so sure.

At the moment, we're using any paths that ghosts are able to use. Sometimes it's through EVP. At other times, they make noise or get a flashlight to turn on and off. Some have learned to communicate with talking devices such as the Ovilus, Frank's Boxes, Ghost Radar, and so on. Others are able to share impressions with psychics, mediums, and sensitives.

However, as communications means, they range from tedious to unreliable. They're far too primitive.

Now, I'm about to sound like the geek that I am.

First, remember that computers are

based on binary activity. That is, something is on. Then it's off. It's all zeroes (nothing) and ones (something).

Maybe the on/off flickering of a flashlight or EMF surges with K-II device could be filtered into zeros and ones.

Anything that can produce zeros and ones can convey complex data with the right interpretive tools.

At this point, the issue is speeding up the data transfer. And how do we explain this to a ghost, even one from the 20th century? (Rhetorical question. This is exactly what several researchers and engineers are working on. The question

is: Are we making this too complex with efforts at talking devices? For now, no one knows.)

Something is creating the anomalies. We're not sure what. Energy is involved. We can measure it with a variety of devices, from EMF meters to thermometers.

However, is that energy connected to consciousness? And, is it what we call a ghost?

For now, we don't know, but *something* is interacting with us.

65. Besides Ouija boards, how do people talk to ghosts?

Turn on any TV show like Ghost Hunters or Ghost Adventures. You'll see "ghosts" talking to us on a variety of tools, from loosened flashlights to EVP recordings.

However, that may not be the question. Maybe they're not asking how *ghosts* communicate with *us*; they're asking how *people* can talk with *ghosts*.

(I'm ignoring the fact that we don't use Ouija boards to talk to ghosts. Not unless the very presence of a Ouija board opens two-way communications between the worlds. It's possible, but

I'm not sure it's likely.)

So, is it as difficult for people to speak to ghosts, as it is for them to contact us? I think this needs to be considered and explored. I'm not sure if ghosts if have difficulty receiving messages from us.

In many cases, when someone is troubled by a ghost in his or her home, I say, "Just talk to your ghosts, out loud." So far, readers report success with this.

However, they may have a special connection with their ghosts. After all, they share the same space, day in and day out. That may improve communications across the divide.

When I've talked out loud to ghosts at haunted sites I've visited, I've had mixed results.

- At Gilson Road Cemetery (Nashua, NH), I get the feeling the ghosts really don't care if I talk to them or not.

Oh, they've misbehaved when I've investigated the site with skeptics. They also manifest in various ways when researchers are there. But, do ghosts actually care what we say to them? I have no idea.

- I've seen the other extreme, too. It was at Falstaff's Experience/Tudor World (Stratford-upon-Avon, England). There, at least one ghost responded to

almost everything that was said. He also seemed to read thoughts. It was disconcerting.

- In-between, ghosts have responded inconsistently, even at very active sites.

So, how *do* people talk to ghosts? So far, we just talk. Maybe we need to try other means. Many of us — including me — have assumed ghosts are hanging on every word we utter. Perhaps they hear only 10% of what we say, or less.

There's a lot to consider. Maybe ghosts can read what we write.

Can they detect EMF spikes on their side of the veil? Perhaps we could try turning EMF generators on and off,

repeatedly, to get their attention. Maybe they can hear whistling, or singing, or... well, this could be a very long list.

My point is: This is a good question. Maybe we need to explore better way to communicate with ghosts, instead of focusing on better ways to hear from them.

66. What's the connection between ghosts and demons?

Let's say ghosts are spirits of some people who once lived among us.

By contrast, demons never lived as humans. They are very different kinds of beings.

Some religions don't believe in Satan, the Devil, or similar entities. Usually, those religions don't believe *any* entity could be a significant threat to Deity. In fact, among those religions, it's *heresy* to believe in a supremely powerful, Devil-like being.

However, if spirits exist, some seem to have better intentions than others. At

extremes, some spirits may be benevolent and described in angelic terms. Others seem to thrive on evil and malicious behavior.

Many investigators use the word “demon” to describe energy representing something *profoundly malicious*. It’s a relative term with a lot of variations.

Ghosts aren’t always well-behaved. Some may be pranksters or mischievous. Some may be angry or territorial. Nevertheless, there is a distinction. Demonic energy seems intent on fooling us so we drop our defenses. Then, it attacks.

Crossovers may exist. Some ghosts

were, and perhaps still are, under the influence of demons. I'm not sure of that, but if a spirit seems malicious, I avoid it. If danger is possible, I leave. I've listened to demonologists I trust, like John Zaffis and the late Father Andrew Calder. Their tales have been terrifying and convincing.

However, ghosts do not become demons and demons do not become ghosts. So, there seems to be no direct connection between them. They're different kinds of entities in the spirit world. When they interact with us, their behaviors are very different.

67. Are shadow people demons? Are they dangerous?

Recently, I've received many emails asking about shadow people. Frankly, shadowy figures used to be so rare, I'd never thought of them with a label.

The first time I heard the phrase "shadow people," I think Grant Wilson used it. Oh, I knew what he was talking about, but hadn't realized those entities seemed to be increasing in our world. Now, it looks like they are, or maybe they're not as reticent as they used to be.

In recent years, I've seen shadow people in TV show footage. I've also taken a photo of one.

About a month ago, I turned on a ghost-related TV show. On it, I heard the star declare that shadow people are killers. She insisted they're extremely dangerous.

At this point, it's irresponsible to tell homeowners that shadows in their homes might kill them. (In *Dr. Who* episodes, maybe. In really life? No.)

If a shadow person has ever killed someone, I haven't heard about it.

Likewise, shadow people don't have features. It might *feel* as if they're looking at you. Being certain of that...? Nearly impossible. It's just the outline of a body. You can't see its face.

I have seen the Ghost Hunters' episode where a shadow person seemed to peek out from behind something. We can assume the shadow was looking in the direction of the investigators, but we can't be certain of that.

Shadow people look like shadows. While you can find a lot of speculation about what they are (and aren't), we really don't know.

They might be ghosts that manifest as shadows. Maybe they're not able to create EMF spikes or generate EVP, and they can't rap on tables, but they can create shadows. I doubt that anyone knows with certainty.

Shadow people may be something entirely different than ghosts. They're simply other kinds of beings.

At this point, anything is possible. Shadow people may be fearful apparitions, trying to hide from us. Shadow people might be minions of demonic entities. Then again, shadow people might be aliens in a form we didn't expect.

One of my experiences might indicate an alien element. (Or, it may have no connection to shadow people.)

Around 2009, my husband and I were driving from New Hampshire to Dragon*Con. It was nighttime. The sky

was fairly dark and a little cloudy.

Driving south on I-95, we saw an odd column of darkness on the left side of the road. It seemed to be in back of a stand of trees, and about 100 yards from the shoulder of the highway. It was the same kind of column created by a searchlight, but it was darker than the sky, not lighter. In that rural area, there were no spotlights or searchlights to create an illusion with contrast. (At the time, we didn't realize it was an anomaly. I asked a few scientists at Dragon*Con what might have caused it, and they said nothing like that was possible.)

Since then, we've never seen it or

anything like it.

With the increasing reports of shadow people, was that column some sort of conduit for them? I haven't a clue and it may have nothing to do with shadow people. It's just an idle thought I wanted to share.

In terms of shadow people being evil, malicious, or demonic, I'm skeptical. The shadow person I photographed was about 30 or 40 feet from me, and I sensed nothing at all from him. He was just there. His form wasn't sucking up light, like some sort of energy vampire. He wasn't menacing or cowering or sending evil death-ray energy at me.

He was just a shadow.

Until we know more about shadow people, keep your distance. That's just a precaution. So far, I haven't seen or heard credible reports to suggest they're dangerous.

Whatever they are, I don't think they're ghosts, but I may be wrong. It's fine to make note of them. Other than that, I'd keep the study of shadow people distinct from ghost investigations.

68. Are there any grants for paranormal research and ghost hunting?

No, there are no grants for ghost hunting. Most paranormal research funds are intended for parapsychologists.

Many books and movies start with an aging, wealthy individual who wants definitive proof of an afterlife. He or she hires a team to spend the night in a haunted house and return with proof — one way or the other — about life after death.

A variation of this offers a large reward to any of the group who stay (or survive) the night in the haunted

house. And, for good measure, they're locked in the house, similar to the staging for the TV series, Ghost Adventures.

Ah, if only someone would present me with that kind of offer...

In real life, I don't think that's ever happened. Not like in the movies, anyway. No decrepit billionaires offering large sums of money for evidence of life after death.

You may find grants related to ESP and other areas of parapsychology. However, you're *not* likely to find corporate funding or individual grants for ghost hunting.

This is why some ghost hunters accept individual clients or conduct readings for a fee. It's controversial. Some people say that's preying on vulnerable people who want to contact lost loved ones. Often, it is.

I'm not sure where to draw the line. Is it more *moral* to take a day job in fast food than to work as a paid psychic medium? That's something you'll need to decide for yourself.

Charging a high fee just to investigate a private residence...? I won't do that. There are more honorable ways to earn a living in paranormal research.

In other words, don't expect grants to

finance your ghost hunts. If any exist, I haven't heard of them.

69. What's the difference between a ghost hunter and a parapsychologist?

A *ghost hunter* is usually someone who is looking for evidence of ghosts and hauntings.

Parapsychology is a subset of psychology. Parapsychology deals with a wide range of phenomena including ghosts, ESP, remote viewing, and various related studies.

Some colleges and universities offer courses and symposia related to parapsychology. Due to tenuous funding for those programs, they rarely continue for more than a year or two.

Also, some interpret parapsychology

as the study of specific mental illnesses, including delusions of ghostly encounters. In many cases, that kind of parapsychologist has already made up his (or her) mind that ghosts, ESP, and so on, do not exist outside fantasy.

70. Is the ocean haunted?

Some of the most enduring ghost stories describe haunted ships and galleons.

- For over a century, we've heard tales of the ghost crew on the *Flying Dutchman*.
- Ghost ships regularly visit Salem (MA, USA) harbors.
- According to a recent PBS series, a ghost ship appears before the death of each Duke of Argyll.

Stories like those are difficult to investigate. Those ships appear without warning, and at different locations.

Nevertheless, sightings are so well

documented, it's a mistake to think all of them are folklore.

Evidence suggests a connection between ghostly anomalies and water. Colin Wilson noted the poltergeist-water connection at the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose (CA, USA).

Researchers reported far more ghosts in New Orleans' after it flooded during Hurricane Katrina. Of course, graves and crypts were disturbed or destroyed by high water. I think it was more than that.

However, I'm not sure the ocean is more haunted than land masses. Maybe it is. For example, I've heard reports of

normally stalwart divers feeling uncomfortable around the sites of sunken ships.

For now, it's an interesting question, but one I can't answer.

I think lakes may be as haunted as parts of the ocean. Visit almost any isolated but popular lake in the off-season, and see for yourself. If the lake has an island and you have access to it, rent a canoe or motorboat and investigate it.

Similarly, coastal islands seem to have more ghosts (and ghost stories) per square mile than many nearby towns on the mainland.

71. What happens to ghosts when a haunted house burns down?

I'm pretty sure the ghosts remain, whether a house is there or not. Ghosts seem to be tied to the *location* rather than the structure on it. While “green lady” ghosts may actively protect their homes, they may be unique in that kind of attachment.

A good example is the site of the November 1942 fire at the Cocoanut Grove nightclub in Boston (MA, USA). That was a tragedy with enormous impact, and it changed building codes across America.

Today, the site of the fire — at what

used to be 17 Piedmont Street — is mostly a private parking lot in Bay Village, a residential neighborhood. The parking lot is protected by a strong fence. As far as ten feet from it, ghost hunters still record baffling EMF spikes, eerie EVP, and “hot spots” (thermal). Also, we see interesting, light-related anomalies, even during the day.

I’m not sure the site was haunted before the fire. Since then, it’s one of the most unusual, highly active sites I’ve visited. So, though the original building is gone, it’s definitely haunted... intensely haunted.

Now and then, a client asks me about

her *newly-built* (but haunted) house. Sometimes, it used to be the site of another home or building. The old one either burned down, was torn down, or fell into decay. (More often, the site has a more ancient history, including Native American associations.)

In general, I don't believe any ghost is injured when the home it's attached to is destroyed. I'm not sure that it's "set free" by the fire (or bulldozing, or whatever), either.

In some cases, it appears that the ghost remains at the location. The ghost seems to wait until a new house is built on the same site. Then it may stay, or decide to

move on.

I can think of one case where a ghost (or ghosts) remained attached to the physical structure rather than its former location. That's the Tyng Mansion in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts (USA). The house was haunted long before it was destroyed by a devastating fire. (The fire was rumored to be arson.) What remained at the site — mostly charred building materials — was bulldozed. They pushed the rubble into a slightly marshy field next to the home's foundation.

(You can visit the site. It's next to the parking lot at the Boston University

Corporate Education Center on Tyng Road in Tyngsboro.)

The remaining foundation of the house seems normal and generally inactive. Instead, I've seen EMF spikes around the overgrown, somewhat marshy, rubble-strewn land next to it. That's where you'll see evidence of decaying outbuildings. You'll also find what's left of the house, after a 1982 archaeological team removed everything of historical value. (It's not a safe place to investigate, due to uneven ground, lots of brambles, and a large overgrowth of poison ivy.)

Other than that, I've never investigated

a site where the ghost (or ghosts) clung to the actual building instead of the land it had been on.

72. What's the difference between a haunted *object* and a haunted *house*?

To be honest, it can be pretty hard to tell the difference. Mostly, it's a case of trial-and-error. The *Haunted Collector* TV series presented a basic view of what's involved.

From my experience, the *size* of the haunting can be a hint. Characteristics can vary, too.

Most actively haunted houses have extensive ghostly phenomena. The ghost may appear in just one room or in a variety of locations throughout the house. You sense that a *spirit* is involved. It's aware of you. It responds

to what you do, and it's not the same activity, over and over again.

Other haunted houses might have residual energy. For example, a cold spot might appear every night at about 10 PM. It might last 20 minutes. If nothing else happens, it's probably just ghostly *energy* stored at the site. A space clearing can reduce or eliminate that kind of problem.

A haunted or cursed object can affect a small area, a room, an entire floor, or the whole house. It's smart to investigate using an EMF meter to see if one object is the focal point of the ghostly activity. Unless an object is magnetized or runs

on electricity, it shouldn't affect your EMF meter.

Remove the object. Take it several miles away. See if the problems stop.

If everything seems normal (or gradually *becomes* normal after a week or two), the problem was probably the object. *Don't burn it.* Contact someone like John Zaffis, who's an expert in that field.

Unfortunately, tests like this require a lot of trial and error. If *more than one object* in the house is haunted, the process can be nightmarish. (No pun intended.)

In the 19th century and early 20th

century, newspapers often talked about haunted and cursed objects. The Hope Diamond is a good example. Until the *Haunted Collector* TV series, the subject had been pretty much forgotten.

As a result, few ghost hunters are experts in this specialty.

I have *no* idea what percentage of haunted houses are actually plagued by haunted objects. It's too early to guess the impact of haunted objects in this field.

I *do* know that the energy from a ghost and the energy from a haunted object... well, they're *different*. It's difficult to articulate.

When I'm near a haunted or cursed object, my reaction is more like, "Uh-oh. Something is *not right*, here." In my head, I can practically *hear* the shark-is-on-the-way music from the movie, "Jaws." I'm uneasy. I feel unsafe.

Investigating, I usually zero-in on an object. That's when I'll tell the owner to remove whatever-it-is before I return for a more complete investigation. I absolutely, positively do not like haunted objects. And, among haunted objects, creepy dolls are the very worst... in my opinion, anyway. Some defaced photos and advertising images are a close second.

If you want a first-hand encounter with haunted objects, go to any old, dusty antiquities museum.

- The Hope Diamond is in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington, DC, USA.

- I'm uncomfortable with some objects at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge, MA, USA.

- Also in the U.S., John Zaffis has displayed his personal collection of haunted objects. Ed & Lorraine Warren — John Zaffis' aunt and uncle — had a similar collection in a separate museum. I'm not sure if either are open to the public. Check their websites for more

information.

- Several buildings at the Tower of London (England) contain objects that I consider haunted.

- The British Museum, London, England (UK) is another place to sense haunted and cursed objects. (And, admission is free.)

Many of those wonderful old items were donated by people who were eager to get the objects out of their homes. Bad memories or bad energy...? Beauty (and unearthly energy) may be in the eye (or “gut feeling”) of the beholder.

Note: This is different than diminishing residual energy stored in

objects. For fun, a few of us frequent antiques shops to compare notes as we “read” the energy on objects displayed.

Even at museums, haunted and cursed objects stand out. They may as well have neon arrows pointing to them.

You can learn to read this kind of energy, so you can spot a haunted object in a client’s home. Visit lots of antiques stores. They often include haunted objects, whether they realize it or not. (I regularly use an EMF meter to confirm my reactions to objects. Weirdly, no one who works at them has ever asked what the EMF meter was, or why I was using it.)

Thrift shops aren't nearly as good for this kind of research. Their objects rarely have the history — and layers of energy — you'll find at antiques shops.

The main difference between a haunted object and a haunted house is simple. If you remove a haunted object from a house, the house settles down in a day or so. If the house is haunted by a ghost or residual energy, it remains active.

73. How do ghosts affect the afterlife?

Three things are required to answer this question:

- First, you must believe in ghosts. I believe spirits visit us and sometimes interact with us.
- You must believe that the afterlife can be studied from *our* plane of existence. I'm not sure we can make many inroads there. We seem to do better studying ghosts and spirits — visitors from the realm of the afterlife — than trying to perceive where they do (or should) reside.
- You must conduct that kind of

research yourself. This is such a subjective topic, nothing I can say or speculate about would be useful.

In general, we can *speculate* that spirits on the other side are sympathetic to the plight of ghosts. I believe some spirits are trying to help ghosts cross over, just as people on this side want to help. I've wondered if ghosts represent something that pre-dated the "in limbo" concept, because that's what they're doing, more or less.

It's a great concept for fictional tales in which an angel or spirit briefly reincarnates to help a spirit (or ghost) cross over.

I also wonder if some ghost hunters — especially mediums and psychics — are prompted by spirits on the other side. Those spirits may lead the ghost hunters to sites where ghosts are trapped, and need some encouragement to cross over. It's a happy thought, but I have no basis for it.

Mostly, this is wandering *so far* into spiritual topics, I cannot address the subject credibly.

74. Has a ghost ever been reincarnated?

This is one of the stranger questions I've been asked, and I'm amazed by the number of people who ask it.

If you believe in reincarnation or past lives, this may be a credible concept.

Perhaps someone lived on earth, died, and then became a ghost for awhile, by choice or by default. After that, the ghost decided to re-enter this plane for another life experience. (That's a plot device in some paranormal romance novels and movies.)

I suppose it's possible. On the other hand, if it happened often, I think more

people would remember past experiences as a ghost.

To date, no one has shared that kind of memory with me. If you have, let me know.

75. Do ghost hunters ever become ghosts?

I've never heard of a ghost who used to be a ghost hunter or paranormal investigator. In fact, those who've left this world *intending* to convey a message from the other side – such as Harry Houdini – have yet to make a completely credible connection.

Do ghost hunters become spirits who visit this world? Maybe. That answer depends on your theology.

My spirituality is somewhat eclectic. I can't *imagine* any benevolent Deity who'd refuse to let people return here to check on the well-being of friends and

family.

So, whether you call the entity a "ghost" or a "spirit," I think it's *normal* for people to visit us after they've crossed over. That includes ghost hunters, your great-grandmother, and maybe your favorite teacher from "way back when."

Maybe you're asking: Is a ghost hunter likely to become trapped in this world, not cross over, and remain to haunt a location?

I suppose that's *possible*. It seems unlikely. Most of us have cajoled and argued with dozens (even hundreds) of spirits stuck here. Repeatedly, we've

told them to *go to the light* or *find Grandma*. So, I think we'd know what to do if we felt constrained here.

It's possible that a ghost hunter – like any other spirit — might *choose* to be a ghost and haunt some location in spectacular fashion, just for fun. It sounds pretty silly to me, but I think we all have free will, to stay here or cross over.

76. What are good books about ghost hunting?

Any book that resonates with you is a good book about ghost hunting. My judgments are very subjective, based on my experiences in this field.

- For years, I've been an almost rabid fan of Colin Wilson's books. I don't always agree with him, but I'm dazzled by his innovative ideas and research.

- I like the books by Jason Hawes and Grant Wilson, because I know them. I understand the *context* of what they're describing with each story and case.

- Troy Taylor's book, *The Ghost Hunters Guidebook*, is superb for

beginners.

- I like the speculation in Marie Jones' book, *PSIence*.

- Michelle Belanger may be my favorite authority on paranormal topics, but I'm biased. I know Michelle, like her, and I'm always impressed when someone has read more books than I have. (I'm pretty sure she has.)

- I love the insights and humor provided by Lesley Marden's book, *Medium, Rare*. And, I'm proud of my own books, including *Ghost Hunting in Haunted Cemeteries: A How-To Guide*.

- Since childhood, my favorite ghost stories have been those by Edward

Rowe Snow. He specialized in eerie folklore of New England. Many of those tales are being updated by Jeremy D'Entremont, who has a commitment to authentic stories.

- Nick Redfern isn't a ghost research, *per se*, but many of his books touch on related topics. I believe we need to look outside the ghost hunting field to maintain a healthy perspective on some of the truly weird things we encounter. Nick Redfern talks about very strange topics. When he writes a new book, my work is put "on hold" and my husband can count on take-away dinners and store-bought pizzas until I've finished

reading.

- In fiction, I still like *The Haunting of Hill House*, by Shirley Jackson.

For more complete recommendations, see my reviews linked at Ghosts101.com.

77. What are the best TV shows and movies about real ghosts?

“Best” is in the eye of the beholder. I’m very opinionated about this topic.

My favorite ghost-related movies include the 1963 version of *The Haunting*. Although the marsh scene and the ending spoiled the Daniel Radcliffe movie, *The Woman in Black*, I thought much of it was compelling. I like many dramatizations of *The Turn of the Screw*. The old Roddy McDowell move, *The Legend of Hell House*, can seem ridiculously dated and sensational. However, some elements in it are excellent.

My favorite ghost-related TV show was probably the *Ghost Lab* series by the Klinge Brothers. It seemed the most genuine, though I winced at much of the editing. When I met them — and got past my starry-eyed fangirl moment — they seemed genuine and had some great ghost insights.

I've liked many episodes of *Ghost Hunters*, mostly because I'm dazzled by the locations they visit. In terms of the show itself, I know (and like) many of the cast members, so I won't pretend I'm biased. (I also won't pretend I actually watch many ghost-related TV shows. I don't. I've seen fewer than a dozen

Ghost Hunters episodes.)

Other than that, I like about 3% of ghost-related videos on YouTube. The other 97% are so silly, hyped, or badly filmed, I can't watch. Still, when a YouTube video is good, it's often *great*.

Most movies don't accurately represent ghosts and hauntings. Likewise, TV shows are entertainment. They don't show everything that goes on at haunted places. They don't realistically portray ghost hunting.

Often, the team's research was genuine. Then, the footage was edited to amuse or entertain the viewing audience. Remember: these shows aren't

documentaries. Instead of pretending they're "reality" shows, producers call them "unscripted" shows.

If you want to know the truth about ghost-related TV series, look for interviews with former stars of *Extreme Paranormal*. They're no longer bound by the terms of their TV contracts, and they're talking about what really goes on, behind the scenes.

My answer to this question: The best way to identify good ghost-related TV shows and movies, is to become a ghost hunter yourself. Soon, you'll be able to spot what's real and what's fake.

78. Which TV show is (or was) the best, *Most Haunted*, *Ghost Adventures*, or *Ghost Hunters*?

When people ask me this kind of question, I think they're establishing my attitudes towards ghost hunting.

Each of those shows took a different approach to the subject. However, the fact is: I rarely watch American TV programming of any kind. I've seen a few episodes of most ghost-related shows, but I've never arranged my schedule to watch them. (*Ghost Lab* was my favorite ghost-related TV show, and — even now — I still haven't seen every episode they filmed.)

I've liked episodes of *Most Haunted*, *Ghost Adventures*, and *Ghost Hunters*... each for different reasons.

Most Haunted visited locations with fascinating histories. (I only watched the UK version of that show.) I'm not sure the channeled information or the stories were always accurate. If you don't take ghost shows seriously, that was a fun TV series to watch. Of the three, it entertained me the most. Yvette was far too easy to prank.

Ghost Adventures intrigued me for different reasons. I like the details included in each episode. I don't mean the narrative, but the way it's filmed.

Their cameras capture more nooks and crannies at investigation sites. I'm always interested in that. I think many viewers like seeing the stars of that show. During the few episodes I watched, the guys seemed genuinely interested in paranormal research.

Ghost Hunters has remained one of the most authoritative shows in the genre. Some episodes are far better than others. I liked every series in the franchise. I wish they'd allowed Barry Fitzgerald more input for the international episodes. I liked how Steve and Dave were portrayed in the “academy” episodes; they're both

sincere, funny, caring guys.

Ghost-related episodes of *Destination: Truth* highlighted locations that were new to me. I felt the shows were rushed, but they brought something different to the niche.

Though it's long gone and not a ghost hunting show, *per se*, I liked John Edward in *Crossing Over*. I'm aware of the criticism of the show and take most of it with a grain of salt. The reason I liked the show was its authenticity. Genuine mediums have a certain way of talking. They trust "the other side" more than the people in front of them. Those mediums do their best to articulate the

odd images and sensations that come through from the other side. Sometimes, those translations are so subjective, the medium can't get it right. That's normal, and it can be worse under the pressure of "performing" for an audience, much less a TV crew. Through his accurate readings and his shortfalls, John Edward helped me understand my own psychic gifts. Among all the TV shows with a paranormal theme, I think I got the most from his shows, and watched more of them.

Also, I'm still a fan of the really old TV b&w series, *One Step Beyond*. When I find episodes on "oldies"

channels, I watch them. The shows are dated and usually include very bad acting. Most episodes are based on true stories, and can give you fresh locations to investigate, yourself.

79. What's the worst TV show about ghosts?

Among shows I've seen, *Extreme Paranormal* was near the top of that list. Many other, short-lived series — especially “fear” style shows — have been perfectly awful, too. Don’t blame that on the stars of those shows. It’s how they’re written, directed, and edited.

From the few episodes I’ve seen, *Dead Files* is on my worst list, as well... but only if people take the show seriously. In my opinion, it’s a side show, and nearly a parody of what people like me really do.

Ghost hunting and TV shows are two

very different things. I'm interested in ghost research, not the TV shows. In general, when I turn on my television, I'm watching documentaries on PBS or BBC Four. The only reason I check ghost-related shows is to understand the context of the emails and comments I receive. When something seems to come out of left field, it's usually the result of a TV show.

80. Did any ghost hunting TV shows ever find real evidence of ghosts? Why don't people on the *Ghost Hunters* TV shows ever really find anything?

They don't find real evidence of ghost because, so far, there is none.

Investigators can show that *something* is going on. By process of elimination, they can show that it had no obvious (normal) cause. Despite that, no one can prove a ghost caused whatever happened.

Shows such as the *Ghost Hunters* franchise and *Ghost Lab* have impressed me. They've shown the world fresh,

effective research techniques and tools. However, that's not scientific ("real") evidence of ghosts.

For now, I doubt that *anyone* will produce scientific evidence on ghost-related TV shows... or in real life. I hope I'm wrong, but I haven't seen the progress I'd expected.

81. Do TV shows help give credibility to the spirit world?

Simple answer: Yes. Shows such as *Ghost Hunters* and *Ghost Adventures* increased interest in ghosts and ghost research.

As of late 2014, that interest may have peaked. Popular interest is fading. However, I think the long-term results of public awareness has been valuable in this field.

Some people watch ghost hunting on TV and mutter, “That can't be real.” At some point, many of those people want to check out “this ghost hunting stuff,” themselves.

People may joke about ghost-related TV shows, but they keep watching them. Privately, I think most people want to believe in an afterlife. Many people want to believe in ghosts, too.

Ghost-related TV shows have given the field *enough* credibility to attract new researchers. We're at least one step closer to finding real ghostly evidence.

Shows like *Ghost Hunters* and *Ghost Adventures* have moved paranormal research forward. More people are looking for evidence, and we have more tools to document what we find.

If that's all those shows did, they've still made a valuable contribution to the

field. I think there's been an uptick in belief since the shows aired. Personal field research makes a bigger difference.

82. Why do they turn off the lights on most ghost hunting TV shows?

I'm not sure.

Of course, darkness makes the show more dramatic. Night vision cameras always give an eerie look to the location and the people in it.

Normal EMF can be reduced by turning off as much electrical equipment as possible. That includes lights, especially fluorescent lights. Reducing that electrical "background noise" makes it easier to detect anomalous EMF readings.

Also, researchers' other senses can be heightened in the dark. They have to rely

on sounds, smells, and so on.

There may be other reasons for turning off the lights, but those are the ones that make the most sense, as a field investigator.

When you're on an investigation, leave the lights on as much as possible. That's for safety, so you can see where you're walking, where stairs or openings are, and so on.

83. Why do the *Ghost Adventures* team lock themselves inside haunted places?

This is a common plot device in many stories, books, plays, and movies about haunted places. It's also used in some "scary haunted houses" created for Halloween.

On TV shows, I think it increases the tension. The site may be so terrifying, team members might try to leave before the investigation is completed. That's the impression they'd like to give, anyway. (Does anyone else wonder if the producers provide a room with sofas and food? Or, a discreetly concealed

porta-potty for the team's use?)

Some *Ghost Adventures* locations look dangerous. That has nothing to do with ghosts. During filming, I'd lock the doors to keep vagrants and drug dealers *out*. Making that part of the story line — as if they're trapped inside the site, overnight — is an added bonus.

84. Why did Grant Wilson *really* leave the Ghost Hunters TV show?

It seems like this question just won't go away.

On the show and at the TAPS website, Grant explained why he left the show. It wasn't a sudden decision. It wasn't related to interpersonal relations with fellow cast members. Grant simply wanted more time for "other aspects of [his] personal life."

His decision did not surprise me. Grant has always been an excellent paranormal investigator. However, I believe that his talents are greater in music and visual arts.

Several years ago at the Spalding Inn, a few of us were sitting around. I was completing a landscape painting on the hotel's porch. I said, "When I get to the end of the road, I won't say, 'Gosh, I wish I'd investigated one more haunted location'. I'm more likely to say, 'I wish I'd painted one more painting'."?

Grant paused and said quietly, "So true." I wasn't sure if he was simply agreeing with me, or if what I said resonated with him. For many of us in the arts, it's difficult to balance paranormal research and our creative interests.

Ghost hunting, like many other

interests, can be a fascinating hobby. That hobby can evolve to the professional level. However, whether you're a professional or hobbyist, your interests may change. Many ghost hunters find the answers that brought them into ghost hunting, in the first place. Others conclude that there are no real answers. At that point, the person may quit ghost hunting or continue with renewed interest.

I haven't a clue if that was a factor in Grant's decision. Nevertheless, I applaud Grant's decision. He was ready to reprioritize. Many people reach that point when their careers become too

demanding. That's especially true when you want more time with your spouse and family.

Grant hasn't vanished from ghost hunting. He still appears at some ghost-related events and conference. He's just reorganized his time to have more time for what he loves most.

85. How do I contact the Ghost Hunters' TV show?

Visit the site the Syfy.com website. Click on the link for the Ghost Hunters TV show. You'll find several options, from direct contact with Syfy, to related forums.

To become a TAPS Family member, visit the TAPS website. That's at <http://www.the-atlantic-paranormal-society.com/>

If you want to be part of a show like Ghost Hunters, look for casting calls at the Syfy.com website. Or, search online using phrases such as "casting calls," "ghost TV shows," and so on.

86. What locations have been used for ghost hunting TV shows at Halloween?

Around Halloween, lots of TV shows feature haunted locations. As they say, “‘Tis the season!”

Usually, those sites are chosen because they look creepy. They're well-known haunts. Something dramatic (and perhaps scary) is likely to happen at least *once* during the show.

Those same locations can be great if you're looking for nerves-of-steel investigation sites, too.

Here are some of them:

- Buffalo Central Terminal, Buffalo,

NY

- Campbell House, Eugene, OR
- Essex County Sanitarium, Cedar Grove, NJ
- Fort Delaware, Delaware City, DE
- Hill View Manor, New Castle, PA
- Letchworth Village, Haverstraw, NY
- Moon River Brewery, Savannah, GA
- New Mexico State Penitentiary, Santa Fe, NM
- Pennhurst State Hospital (originally named the Eastern Pennsylvania State Institution for the Feeble-Minded and Epileptic), Spring City, PA
- Queen Mary (luxury liner), Long Beach, CA

- Sorrel Weed House, Savannah, GA
- Stanley Hotel, Estes Park, CO
- Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum (later called the Armand Auclerc Weston State Hospital), Weston, WV
- Waverly Hills Sanitorium, near Louisville, KY
- West Virginia State Penitentiary, Moundsville, WV

87. How can I pitch a story idea to a ghost hunting TV show?

Would you like to be a location scout for ghost-related TV shows and movies?

It's best to wait until ghost hunting TV shows *request* locations and story suggestions.

You'll find those online. Look for specific paranormal TV shows and the production companies that cast and film them. Also check casting calls listed at websites including

<http://www.realitywanted.com/> and

<http://www.must-see-tv.com/forum/reality-tv-show-apply-here/>

You may also find opportunities on the HARO lists.

<http://www.helpareporter.com/>

For the best success, you should:

- Know the history of the location.
- Know if it's ever been featured on a TV show (of any kind) in the past.
- Know who owns the site, and exactly how to contact them.
- Take lots of photographs at the location in daylight and during the hours the show would probably be filming.
- Have a list of witnesses to the ghostly phenomena. They must be willing to talk to TV producers about their experiences, even if they're not paid for their time.

Many production companies like to film several shows in the same vicinity. For best success, be ready to present three or four *other* haunted locations in the same town or nearby.

If you're just scouting locations, the producers might not involve you in the filming. This means no screen credit, unless you negotiate for that.

My advice: Present the *one* story that most interests you. Then, mention that you have several other nearby locations equally suited to the TV show.

Before you reveal those other locations:

- Get a written agreement that's signed

by someone authorized by the production company. (Email and phone agreements do *not* count.) This is *especially* true if you're dealing with Gurney Productions.

- Hire an entertainment lawyer to review the contract.
- Be sure you're allowed to use your professional work as a credential on your CV or resume.
- Be very clear about your *continued* obligations to the show or producers. For example, they may expect you to appear at events. Know how much time they expect, and who will pay for your expenses.
- Make sure you'll receive full benefit

of — and credit for — *all* of your work and creativity.

- Understand what you can (and can't) say during and after the show airs. Know how long your non-disclosure terms extend, after the final episode.

Remember: Some people are eager to be involved in a TV show. They can be *so* excited by what sounds like a great opportunity, they'll assume things they shouldn't. Production companies will take advantage of that, if they can.

Are you happy to work for nothing, just to know you were part of a TV show? If so, go for it.

However, no matter what is implied,

make sure you have it in writing, on real paper (not a printout). Be sure it's signed by someone with the authority to make that agreement. (Not that I spent about three weeks driving all over NH, locating hidden haunted sites, and never got paid for it, mind you. Ahem. Learn from my mistakes.)

Even well-known TV stars have put together *great* show ideas. They've lined up everything necessary for a successful TV series. *Then the show was given to someone else.* I can think of two instances of that. There are probably many others that I never heard about.

TV work is like a lottery. You have a slim chance of winning, but – if you did – it could be great. If that's not good enough for you, make sure everything you expect is guaranteed, in writing, in an iron-clad contract.

Most of my friends who work as production consultants also ask for at least half of their fees, up front. Their out-of-pocket expenses are extra, and covered as they go. They receive the other half of their fees when they complete the job.

And, one friend insists on payment in full before she does anything at all. (She's hired regularly, anyway. So,

don't think you're being "too difficult." If your information is unique and valuable, *you're* the one calling the shots.)

88. How can I get my own ghost hunting TV series?

Ratings for many ghost hunting shows have declined over the past decade. Today, few networks or production companies will sign anyone *new* to star in a ghost hunting TV show.

First, decide why you want to have your own ghost hunting TV series.

The Paycheck

If you think stars of ghost-related TV shows are well paid, think again. Many of them probably earned less per hour than they would working at a fast food restaurant.

Most of my friends who star on

paranormal TV shows... they never quit their day jobs. When they're not filming, they work at normal jobs, *just to pay the bills.*

A one-hour TV show can involve up to two travel days, then jet lag when you reach the site, followed by two or three days of filming.

After that, you'll analyze the evidence, and film the reveal. That will require additional days. With all of *that* completed, add another day or two to return home.

In other words, while it might sound *great* to be paid \$500 for a one-hour TV episode, you might need a week or 10

days to complete *just one episode*.

You'll often film shows back-to-back. Expect to work seven days a week, including weekends and holidays. You won't get time off for your mom's birthday or your child's school graduation. Even if you're miserable with a stomach bug, you're still expected to show up on the set and act as if everything's fine. As they say, "the show must go on!"

Fame

Is fame *that* important to you? If so, here are my suggestions:

Look for casting calls for existing ghost hunting TV series. See if you can

get on just one show, even for 5 minutes.

Use that 5 minutes to your advantage. Treat it like an audition. You should seem so interesting, producers will want to include you in future shows.

When your particular episode is about to air, make sure people know that you are on it. (Check your contract to be sure you *can* talk about the show.)

Also, you should have your own website, and it should look terrific.

Have you been on two or three ghost hunting shows? If they haven't called you back, get additional exposure on non-paranormal TV shows. Look online for casting calls. *Anything* on camera is

good. Get work as an extra if you must.

Plan your networking carefully. Earn the respect and interest of both the cast and the production company. However, the cast rarely have much input into the show. Impress the filming crew and any producers on the set. *They* might be involved in scouting and hiring.

After you've been on three to five TV shows, start looking for a theatrical agent. You'll have enough experience for an agent to promote you as a future star.

This can take months or longer. Attend ghost-related conferences with presentations by casting agents and producers. You'll learn more about

breaking into TV. You may also make a connection that leads to work.

Never forget that this field is full of overeager ghost enthusiasts who'd do almost *anything* to be on TV. Many of them are pushy and obnoxious. Most seem almost oblivious to the realities of working on TV... until they're actually on a TV show, that is. Then, they can't voice their disillusionment because they signed a non-disclosure agreement.

Distance yourself from starry-eyed and self-aggrandizing aspiring stars. Stand out as a confident professional. That's the best way to hear from more producers than you'd ever want to talk

to. Really.

89. What are your favorite haunted houses?

My favorites vary. It depends on the current activity at each site.

At the moment, my three favorite haunted buildings are: Falstaff's Experience/Tudor World (Stratford-upon-Avon, England), The Myrtles Plantation (Louisiana, USA), and the Witch House (Salem, MA, USA).

In the United States, in addition to the Myrtles Plantation, I like the ghosts of Houmas House. Both sites are in Louisiana.

In New Orleans' French Quarter, I always stay at the happily haunted Hotel

Monteleone. I dine at Brennan's Restaurant where the Red Room has an eerie, ghostly history. And, based on my ley line research, I spend time in a park on the edge of the Quarter... but there's no house there, haunted or otherwise.

I've been very impressed by the ghosts of the Salem Inn in Salem, Massachusetts. Also, I'm fascinated by the old pirates' tunnel beneath Essex Street. Several buildings adjoining it have dramatic ghost stories. Salem's Witch House is an interesting case with surprising physical phenomena, even in broad daylight.

In nearby Danvers, I'm drawn to the

remains of Rev. Mr. Parris's home, as well as Whipple Hill (aka Witch Hill) near Endicott Park... but the hill has no "haunted house," either.

In England, I like the Falstaff's Experience. I also like Warwick Castle, just a few miles away. So far, Falstaff's Experience is the most intensely haunted site I've been to, anywhere in the world.

Also around Stratford-upon-Avon, I like the Falcon Hotel and Ettington Park Hotel.

York (city) has more eerie and interesting haunts than I can list here. The Golden Fleece is the tip of the iceberg.

And, though it's not quite a haunted *house*, I like the Tower of London. Each part of the Tower complex has fascinating ghost stories. Usually, visitors can see physical evidence supporting the Tower's paranormal history.

As you can see, only a few haunted houses and hotels stand out among my favorites. However, my list of haunted cemeteries, parks, and lakes, and haunted beaches would be a lot longer.

90. If they really solved the Lizzie Borden case, would she still haunt her house?

If Lizzie actually haunts the house now, I think she would stay even after the crime was solved. Everything that I've learned about her point to a quirky personality. She probably likes the attention.

When I visited the Lizzie Borden house, I received very strong impressions. They've been confirmed by other psychics, and one Lizzie Borden historian. I'm not sure the house is actually haunted. Not by a ghost, anyway. When I was there, wiring-

related EMF issues were a problem. I haven't been back.

In my opinion, more than one person was involved in the murders. Also, I think several people went to considerable lengths to prevent Lizzie's conviction. Close friends did their best to protect her. That may have included murder.

For me, the most intense impressions came from the basement. Those below-ground rooms have a gruesome history. They could have inspired horror stories, even *without* the lurid murders upstairs. In addition, the basement has physical evidence best seen with Luminol

(C8H7O3N3) or fluorescein and black light. It is *not* for the squeamish.

Yes, there are logical explanations for that much blood. It's also a great smokescreen for something more sinister.

If Lizzie haunts any one room, it's probably the room nearest the front door. If you visit Lizzie's famous house and have an opportunity to sit on the sofa, do so. If you're sensitive to psychic impressions, I think you'll be impressed.

91. Was there really a Canterville ghost?

The story of the Canterville ghost was created by Oscar Wilde. It's fiction. He based it on stories he'd heard from his mother, Jane Francesca Agnes, Lady Wilde. She was among the leading experts in folklore of the British isles.

As far as I know, no haunted 19th-century British home is or was named Canterville Chase, and no town in England is named Canterville.

The plot is a solid template if you're writing ghost stories, especially with a romantic twist.

My favorite movie version is the one

with Sir John Gielgud. He's every bit as cranky as some ghosts I've encountered.

The tale makes ghosts less scary to children. That's a very good thing.

92. What's it like to live in a house that's really haunted? Do people always have to leave their haunted houses if the ghosts won't leave?

Most haunted houses are benign. I've lived in a few.

Generally, it's like living with an invisible roommate. Some ghosts can be annoying. That's especially true if the ghost likes to turn lights on and off, adjust the volume on the TV, or turn a faucet on and leave the water running. I don't mind ghosts in my house. I do mind any inconveniences they create.

One of the most persistently annoying ghosts haunts downtown Houston, Texas.

She is Mrs. Pamelia Mann, one of Houston's most famous madams.

Many evenings, Mrs. Mann strolls around the Market Square block she once owned. She visits ladies rooms in modern-day clubs and restaurants on that block. Once in each ladies room, she locks the door so others cannot enter. Then, she vanishes. The staff are not amused, because they have to keep unlocking the door at the request of impatient patrons.

However, the living and spirits of the dead *usually* find ways to stay out of each other's way.

At some locations, such as the Myrtles

Plantation, the staff regard the ghosts as friends. Many people who live in haunted houses feel the same way about their ghosts.

I know one homeowner in Salem (MA, USA) who is extremely protective of “her” ghost. Although the first floor of her haunted home is a shop, she won’t allow anyone inside if she thinks they’re looking for her ghost. That’s a little extreme.

Many TV shows and movies present scary ghosts. *Reality is very different.* Once people become accustomed their ghosts (and vice versa), some seem to forget they live in a haunted house.

When I've lived in haunted houses,
I've been unable to forget they're there.
Not for long, anyway. Sometimes, I've
been startled by an apparition floating
across my kitchen. Unearthly footsteps
still surprise me when I'm tired,
especially if the ghost has been silent for
a while.

Despite that, living with ghosts can be
easier than living with roommates.
Ghosts don't steal your food, come home
drunk at night, or leave the seat up. I'm
okay with that.

93. How much does it cost to go into real haunted houses?

If you're simply touring a haunted house, the admission price should be consistent with local museums.

Is it a ghost hunting event? Ticket prices should reflect these features:

- The quality of the guest speakers or investigators.
- Food and entertainment.
- How small or exclusive the event is.

That is, will you be elbow-to-elbow with beeping EMF meters and swinging dowsing rods? Or, will you be able to conduct research, undistracted, with a small group of people?

- How much *individual* attention you can expect from the professional ghost hunters.

Is it a simple overnight vigil? The price should match moderately priced hotels in that same area.

94. Why do some haunted houses require waivers?

Some sites have waivers due to dangerous areas that visitors must avoid. The fact is, some ghost enthusiasts take risks anyway. A waiver protects the site owners from lawsuit.

Usually, waivers are designed to create a scarier atmosphere. It's simply good theater. Consider the waiver and posted warning signs part of the set dressing. It's performance art.

Whether they're "set dressing" or not, don't ignore those signs. They might just be legitimate.

Sometimes, liability insurance

requires waivers. When you are investigating in the dark, it's easy to bump into something, trip over a loose carpet, or lose your footing on stairs. The same thing could happen if you're wandering around an unfamiliar *not*-haunted house in the dark.

Take precautions, whether you're asked to sign a waiver or not. If you see someone stumble on uneven stairs, tread carefully. Old houses and other haunts can present risks like that. That's expected.

However, if you're ever hurt at a "haunted" site due to the owner's obvious negligence, see an attorney. It

doesn't matter if you've signed a waiver. There's a *big* difference between an accident, and poor site maintenance.

95. How should I write a ghost story?

Writing convincing ghost stories can be challenging. You might think you can get away with more in fiction than nonfiction. That's not necessarily true. You're competing with accomplished writers like Jane Goldman, Heather Graham, Stephen King, and Nora Roberts. Past greats include Edgar Allan Poe, Henry James, and Shirley Jackson.

Fiction

If you're writing fiction, read lots of ghost stories. Don't skip children's literature. Those can be the best stories to study.

Watch classic movies based on haunted houses, and compare them with later remakes. There *are* formulas for haunted house stories. You can find them online.

Take careful notes during your favorite ghost-related movies. Do the same as you're reading ghost-themed books. (I take scene-by-scene, page-by-page notes to understand the structure.)

Do on-location research. Use a voice recorder to capture what you notice at every point during your visit.

Keep your voice recorder (or your phone set to record, easily) by your bed, afterward. If you wake up with

nightmares or fears related to the haunting, those are useful points to include in your story.

However, if you aren't already a fan of the genre, think carefully before proceeding. Fans of ghost stories have certain expectations. They can seem like hidden standards, but they're important. And, the reading audience is widely segmented. Some readers love a scene where the heroine goes down to the basement though it's clear she shouldn't. However, some readers will give your book a terrible review if you include that cliche.

Know your audience. Deliver what

they expect, and a few things they don't. They'll love you for it.

Nonfiction

If you're writing nonfiction, thoroughly research the site, people, and relevant time periods.

If possible, visit the location. Explore historical sites and living history museums for additional insights.

Interview people with first-person stories. Investigate the site with a professional ghost hunting team, if you can.

Your story should include all of the elements that have made ghost stories – true and fictional – enduring and

successful.

Get waivers from everyone you might quote in your book. You may also want a release form signed by the owner of the haunted site. These precautions protect you from later lawsuits.

In paranormal niches, nonfiction readers may have fewer expectations. Your book can succeed if you tell them something new and interesting or useful. Include as many details as you can. Experienced ghost hunters are looking for specific cues and clues, even if you don't consciously add them to your book.

In a book about poltergeists, I'm

looking for research notes from the kitchen, bathroom, and basement. The author doesn't need to make a big deal about that. I know the signs of a credible tale.

Regional cues can be important. An Irish or Scottish ghost is likely to protect the house or castle, as well as the family. An English ghost is more likely to care about lineage, honor (even among thieves), and the portrait gallery. Are your ghost stories set on the coast? To take smuggling legends seriously, I'll expect some reference to tunnels.

Research your stories thoroughly, whether they're fiction or nonfiction.

Then, your stories will impress readers
who are experienced ghost hunters.

96. How should I begin a realistic novel about ghost hunters?

First decide whether your story is primarily character-driven or plot-driven.

If it's character-driven, outline a rich array of characters that your readers will care about. Shirley Jackson's novel, *The Haunting of Hill House*, is a good example of a character-driven ghost story.

The first movie in the *House on Haunted Hill* series is a good example of a story that's primarily plot-driven. Many characters were shallow and unsympathetic. Viewers didn't really

care when each died a terrible death. (Towards the end of the movie, we care more about the characters surviving than what's going on in the house. Whether we loved them or hated them, we wanted to know what happened next.)

Nevertheless, the *House on Haunted Hill* franchise presented clever plot elements with *superb* timing. It's not quite a "puzzle story" like *The DaVinci Code* or *National Treasure*. Still, the mysterious sequence of events held our interest more than the characters. In that respect, plot-driven ghost stories are similar to mysteries. The reader (or audience) try to guess "the real story"

before the reveal at the end.

In a plot-driven tale, *get right to the action*. Reveal the characters and make them endearing — or dislikeable — in a story that has already begun.

Your main characters should not be cliches or stereotypes. Don't base any of them on modern-day stars of ghost hunting TV shows, or the shows they're on, either. Not closely enough to be sued, anyway. The shows are considered "intellectual property." They're protected by trademark laws and highly-paid attorneys.

If you need more ideas for rich, dimensional characters, study ghost

hunting in the past. The subject has been popular in the 1960s, the 1920s, and throughout the spiritualist era of the 19th century. You'll find plenty of material and some biographies to inspire you. Those can help you with your characters as well as your story line.

97. What's the best haunted house attraction at a theme park?

Without a doubt, Disney's *Haunted Mansion* is one of the world's most popular haunted house attractions. I like the classic style of Gracey Mansion (the real name of the first *Haunted Mansion* attraction) at Disneyland.

For size and grandeur, Disney's *Haunted Mansion* at Disney World is in a class of its own. The company constantly improves and expands the decor, too. I'm always impressed.

If you're a *Haunted Mansion* enthusiast, be sure to see the 1963 movie, *The Haunting*. It inspired many

elements you'll see in Disney's Haunted Mansion attractions.

For fans of “Hidden Mickeys” at Disney theme parks, learn their locations before you visit the Haunted Mansion. The Haunted Mansion is wall-to-wall images of ghosts and haunted places. Prepare to be overwhelmed during a first visit. Also, don't overlook the first-ever “Hidden Donald”; it's also at the Haunted Mansion.

98. Is Disney's Haunted Mansion really haunted?

For years, Disney's *Haunted Mansion* attractions have been connected with ghost stories. The Haunted Mansion attraction at Walt Disney World has the most haunted reputation. I've heard compelling first-person stories from cast members who worked there. However, in at least 100 visits, I've never encountered anything genuinely ghostly.

For a *better* answer to your question, ask *former* Haunted Mansion cast members. Some have websites. Also see true stories at TheShadowlands.net and Doombuggies.com.

For the latest ghost stories, ask cast members dressed as Haunted Mansion staff. You'll have the best luck immediately outside the Haunted Mansion's exit. Some cast members are more chatty than others.

Remember, Disney's Haunted Mansion attractions' ghosts are "all in good fun." That attraction is designed to entertain the entire family. For lurid ghost stories (real or imagined), you'll have more success *outside* Disney theme parks.

One more tip: Ask about ghosts at the *Pirates of the Caribbean* attraction. Some first-person stories from former

cast members seem credible and fascinating. That attraction may be even more haunted than the Haunted Mansion.

Don't overlook Universal Studios' theme parks in Florida, too. Search online (look for "USF ghosts"). Look for ghost stories about the *Back to the Future* attraction, later redesigned as *The Simpsons*. Some say it's one of the most interesting haunts in Orlando. (Ghost reports from the old *Kongfrontation* attraction are unreliable. Universal is meticulous about safety for workers as well as guests.)

99. Do they ever film ghost stories in really haunted places?

Yes, they do. It's happened many times.

The 1963 movie, *The Haunting*, used the Ettington Park Hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon (England). It's supposed to be delightfully haunted. The hotel is elegant and reminiscent of the famous movie.

Trivia: That movie's original — and perhaps haunted — spiral staircase reappeared in the 1999 remake of *The Haunting*, too.

Another old movie, *Hush, Hush, Sweet Charlotte*, wasn't exactly a *ghost*

story. They filmed it at Houmas House, one of Louisiana's most haunted houses.

Not far away, several movies were set in St. Louis Cemetery No. 1, at the edge of New Orleans' French Quarter. They include *Easy Rider* and *Cincinnati Kid*. Producers filmed *Interview with the Vampire* at other haunted New Orleans locations.

The Hollywood movie set for the original movie, *Psycho*, was supposed to be haunted. I'm not sure if paranormal encounters happened before, during, or after the initial filming. At night, people were visible near upstairs windows... when there was no floor to walk on, and

no possibility of a light near the window, either. Those may be urban legends, but I heard enough first-person stories to think they might be true.

Session 9 was filmed at Danvers State Hospital, Danvers, MA (USA). The former hospital and the town of Danvers have many ghost stories, often overshadowed by nearby Salem.

The haunted Yankee Pedlar Inn in Torrington, CT (USA) inspired — and later became a set for — *The Innkeepers*.

I'm sure you'll find many other movies listed, online. Look for “movies filmed at haunted places.”

100. How can I buy a haunted house?

Weirdly, early in 2013, a haunted house in France was listed at eBay *for one Euro*. I missed the listing, so I'm not sure what happened, but the details appeared on several respected news websites in the EU, UK, and US.

So, you may want to set up a Google Alert for "haunted house for sale" or something like that.

In many states in America, anyone selling a haunted house must report that the site has a ghost. So, start by checking the laws of the state where you'd like to live.

If it's among the states requiring disclosure, visit a few realtors and explain your interests to them.

However, remember the *practical* side of this. Most people don't want to live in a haunted house. So, some sellers conceal paranormal activity if they can.

If that's likely, phrase your questions carefully.

- Act as if you don't believe in ghosts. Make a big deal over the great location, the swimming pool, or the quality of local schools.

- Casually ask if the house has any "charming legends" or "colorful tales" connected with it.

- Use the word “ghost” carefully. *No* homeowner wants to be forced to admit his house has the “defect” of a ghost.

You may need to conduct your own research to find *likely* haunted houses. Then, see which of them display a “for sale” sign.

In Austin, Texas, I’d look for *any* brick home built by Abner Cook. Almost every public building he built — and several private homes — have ghost stories. However, they’re just his homes built with clay bricks from nearby Shoal Creek. His all-wooden structures don’t have the same reliable ghosts.

My ley lines maps that (literally)

connect the dots between haunted houses. If a house is on one of those lines, it may be haunted. Start with a good ley lines map. Then drive around, looking for realtors' signs and abandoned houses. (You'll find links to my ley line research at Ghosts101.com.)

Warning: Some haunted houses *are* impossible to live in comfortably. They're rare, and should be avoided.

Local ghost hunting teams might be another resource in your search. Often, they've been called in to investigate a house that the owners don't *want* to sell, but the site has activity they can't live with.

If the team couldn't resolve the ghostly problems, you may be in luck. Even if the house hasn't been listed yet, you might be the answer the homeowners need. Generally, they don't want to deal with the challenges of trying to sell a haunted house.

At the *other* end of the spectrum, a homeowner might try to use the house's ghostly history as a selling point. When that happens, the sellers ask an unusually high price. That tactic usually backfires. They won't sell the house, but they'll have plenty of visitors. For them, it's a free ghost tour.

After a while, the homeowner usually

reduces the price just to get rid of the house. *That's* the time to place a realistic bid you're comfortable with.

101. What's next in ghost hunting?

It's difficult to predict what will happen next in ghost hunting. These are my guesses.

Media-driven attention is fading, leaving mostly serious researchers in the field. That's a good thing.

TV producers and networks will seek more sensational, adrenaline-spiking ways to present ghost hunting. We'll see more silly series, and some unabashed "freak shows." (We've already seen too many.) Finally, after exhausting every *possible* idea, TV producers will move on to something else.

I believe *Ghost Hunters* will be

among the last canceled. It's retained a large following of dedicated fans.

Look for independently produced TV shows with very low budgets. They'll air on YouTube or streaming services like Roku. Fans will have to find those shows in an uncurated hodge-podge of good and bad. Nevertheless, I think they'll replace traditional TV altogether.

Ghost-related films will maintain their appeal. At Halloween, movies will portray haunted places in extreme, unrealistic ways. That's what audiences want.

In general, ghost hunters need more reliable, educational resources. Too

many people come into ghost hunting for fame, money, and power over others. That's produces drama. It also attracts con men and other criminals. We reached that phase of the bell curve around 2006. The good news is, now that ghost hunting isn't so trendy: many charlatans have moved on to other fields.

I've been in this field for over 30 years. The more I study ghosts, the more I realize how *little* we know. I have to revise my theories regularly. I spent six years studying “ghost orbs,” and had to admit my early theories were wrong. Unfortunately, mine was one of the

earliest ghost-related websites. So, my mistaken theories influenced a generation of ghost hunters. That's pretty embarrassing.

Of course, I'm not alone in my stumbles and mistakes. We're all throwing labels — verbal shorthand — on phenomena we don't really understand. We have no scientific evidence that ghostly anomalies are caused by actual *ghosts*.

We need to be flexible and open minded. Avoid dogma. If we were on the right track with this research, we'd have seen clearer, more repeatable results at least 10 years ago. We need to expand

our research to look at far more phenomena that could influence our results, not just anomalies.

We'll learn more about haunted places thanks to advanced ghost hunting tools and techniques. We'll see more specialized cameras and voice recorders. Reliable heat and cold sensors and other devices will be within most ghost hunters' budgets.

I'm interested in affordable infrasound detectors. We're overlooking an important explanation for some hauntings. Every site should be check for elevated EMF, carbon monoxide, and infrasound.

The on-off phenomena with loosened flashlight connections is interesting. The technique needs refinement and standardization. In fact, I'd like more devices that can return binary results (on/off) for communication.

The subject of Frank Sumption's boxes, usually called "Frank's boxes," is volatile. I don't think we've even scratched the surface of what's going on there. What makes some of those boxes (and clones) produce astonishing results, while others do nothing? So far, we don't know.

In general, we need to ask more "what if..?" questions. I'm not certain we've

identified *all* categories of ghostly anomalies.

For example, as I'm writing this, few people check *subnormal* EMF levels. Hot spots receive scant attention, compared with cold spots.

I'm continuing to focus on geographical and historical patterns. They might explain and even predict paranormal activity. Repeating paranormal patterns could show us why some locations are haunted.

I'm also working on techniques to better understand personal dynamics that can influence hauntings. That's what my paragenealogy research is about.

I believe we'll gradually understand the broad spectrum of phenomena we currently call "ghosts." At the moment, that goal isn't anywhere in sight.

Shows like *Ghost Hunters*, brought many new researchers into this field. We have a *tremendous* opportunity to learn more about paranormal activity in a shorter amount of time.

I hope you'll join us in this adventure.

About the Author



Fiona Broome is a researcher and author. She describes herself as a “blip analyst,” because she studies things that are odd and unexplained, especially ghosts. Most of her research focuses on the U.S., Canada, England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Fiona’s paranormal research was first

published in *Fate* magazine in the 1980s. Since then, she's been a reliable resource for paranormal researchers in a variety of fields.

She's written or contributed to over a dozen best-selling books, and she's been a consultant for paranormal TV shows and the stars on them. Fiona is the founder of one of the Internet's oldest ghost-related websites, HollowHill.com (now Ghosts101.com) and she's written more than 600 articles for magazines and websites.

Fiona has been a speaker and panelist at a wide range of international events including the New England Ghost

Conference, GhoStock, Central Texas Paranormal Conference, and Canada's annual G.H.O.S.T.S. conferences. Since 2006, she's been a frequent, invited Guest and panelist at Dragon*Con.

Fiona's past and current books include...

- Ghost Hunting in Haunted Cemeteries: A How-To Guide
- Is Your House Haunted?
- The Ghosts of Austin, Texas
- Ghost Photography 101
- Ghosts – What They Are and What They Aren't
- Ley Lines for Ghost Hunters

She's been a contributing author

for...

- Weird Hauntings
- Weird Encounters
- Armchair Reader: Weird, Scary, and Unusual

- Kick'n' Back in Texas

For more information about Fiona, visit FionaBroome.com. To learn more about ghost hunting, start at Ghosts101.com.

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