



CPRI January Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 1

4 January 2007

Are Ghosts All in Your Mind?

By: Deborah Blum

MADISON, Wisconsin: When scientists wrote in a recent issue of the journal *Nature* that they could induce phantom effects — the sensation of being haunted by a shadowy figure — by stimulating the brain with electricity, it made perfect neurological sense. One could even argue that the existence of such sensations explains away the so-called supernatural. In fact, as *The New York Times* reported, the researchers promptly concluded that ghosts are mere "bodily delusions" — electrical misfirings and nothing more. The report does look like a kind of proof — albeit very small proof, as this was a study of two people — if one happens already to believe that ghosts are no more than biological quirks. But to those inclined to believe as much, it can also look like proof that ghosts are real entities. Scientific study of the supernatural began in the late

19th century, in synchrony with the age of energy. As traditional science began to reveal the hidden potential of nature's powers — magnetic fields, radiation, radio waves, electrical currents — paranormal researchers began to suggest that the occult operated in similar ways. A fair number of these occult explorers were scientists who studied nature's highly charged circuits. Marie Curie, who did some of the first research into radioactive elements like uranium, attended séances to assess the powers of mediums. So did John Strutt, Lord Rayleigh, who won the 1904 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work with atmospheric gases. Today in Opinion Saddam's ugly death New Congress, old challenge Big hero in the big city. Rayleigh would later become president of the British Society for Psychical Research. He would be joined in that organization by other physicists, including the wireless

radio pioneer Oliver Lodge, who proposed that both telepathy and ghostly appearances were achieved through energy transmissions connecting living minds to one another and perhaps even to the dead.

Lodge argued that the human brain could function as a kind of receiver, picking up signals at a subconscious level. Along the same lines, he thought it possible that a spirit's appearance was really just its specific energy signal stimulating a response from the receiver's brain.

I suspect that we'll dwell forever in the haunted landscape of our beliefs. To many people it's a world more interesting — bigger, stranger, more mysterious — than the one offered by science. Why choose instead to be creatures of chemical impulse and electrical twitch? We would rather gamble on even a tiny, electrical spark of a chance that we are something more.



Are Spirits all in our heads?

Inside this issue:

CPRI Spotlight	2
RRC Lectures for Jan	2
Paranormal Conference	2
UFOs @ O'Hare	3
New Certificate Program	3
James Randi Challenge	3
CPRI and AudioMartini	4

CPRI to Guest Star on Ghost Hunters in March!

CPRI Founder and Director, Bobbie Atristain filmed an episode of *Ghost Hunters* at the infamous Chesapeake House in October. The episode is set to air this March! Keep checking our website for the exact date—once we know it we will pass it on to you.



Special points of interest:

- CPRI's founder and Director Bobbie Atristain to guest star in a March episode of *Ghost Hunters*
- CPRI is now an official affiliate of the AudioMartini Radio Show
- Info about the Paranormal Conference in May
- James Randi updates his million dollar paranormal challenge

CPRI Spotlight: Grant Wilson



Grant Wilson, co-founder of TAPS and star of the SciFi hit Ghost Hunters.

Grant was awarded honorary member status in the Spring of 2006. TAPS (The Atlantic Paranormal Society) is headed by Jason Hawes and Grant Wilson and includes a close-knit group of paranormal researchers. Built on Jason and Grant's mutual interest in getting to the bottom of everyday, paranormal occurrences, TAPS is an eclectic but unified bunch — and certainly not what you'd expect to find at the forefront of paranormal investigation. They're neither Ph.D. scientists, nor zany, theatrical hotline psychics. Jason and Grant are plumbers by trade, and their TAPS colleagues are in similarly ordinary professions. Factory worker, office manager, teacher — these are respected

members of a small, blue-collar Rhode Island community where many of the TAPS members were born and raised. Upon meeting, Jason and Grant became fast friends; both possessed a marked interest in paranormal research. Soon, they began to seek out others like themselves — people with a level-headed, driving interest in the paranormal. Within a year, TAPS was formed, and through word of mouth it developed a reputation for helping people with unusual domestic problems. Originally headquartered in a spare room of Jason's apartment, TAPS fields phone calls, e-mails, and personal visits from people who have — or claim to have — a nonphysical entity

interfering with their lives. Depending on the nature of the haunting, a select group of TAPS field researchers will load equipment into a van and drive sometimes as far as 300 miles to investigate. Despite the expenses they incur on gas, equipment (infrared cameras, night-vision goggles and the like) and time off from their day jobs, they know they could never charge for their services — that would make them much more likely to be labeled charlatans. When he's not hunting ghosts or holding down a day job, Grant enjoys whipping up a mean Italian dish (he spent two years in Italy and speaks the language fluently).

“The Rhine Research Center in Durham, NC offers informative lectures every Wednesday.”

Lectures at the Rhine Research Center

Wednesday, January 17, 12-1pm: An Overview and Demonstration of the HeartMath® System (developed by the Institute of HeartMath in Boulder Creek, CA). A presentation by Margaret Heath, a Licensed HeartMath 1on1 Provider from Chapel Hill. Joseph Chilton Pearce in "The Biology of Transcendence" says that HeartMath has "lifted thinking in the heart" from the con-

finer of poetry and myth, which have not changed human nature, into the realm of biology, which can. HeartMath's program can free us from the survival defenses of our archaic brain structures and open us to higher heart frequencies. What we do once liberated is up to us." Joe Pearce will be an Invited Speaker at the RRC's Consciousness Today conference in Myrtle Beach,

SC on March 24 (see below).

For more information please visit <http://rhine.org>



John Zaffis, Jason Hawes and CPRI members pose at last year's conference.

CPRI Paranormal Conference in May

May 19th and 20th 2007
CPRI will host its second annual paranormal conference on May 19th and 20th in Richmond, VA. We will be hosting lectures and paranormal related activities that relate to our re-

search. Keynote Speakers will include Troy Taylor, Rosemary Ellen Guiley, Spirit Medium Barb Mallon, John Zaffis, L.B. Taylor and other prominent researchers.

Tickets will go on sale later this month. Please visit <http://vaparanormalconference.com> for more info and to purchase tickets!

UFOs @ O'Hare?

CHICAGO (AP) -- Federal officials say it was probably just some weird weather phenomenon, but a group of United Airlines employees swear they saw a mysterious, saucer-shaped craft hovering over O'Hare Airport last fall.

The workers, some of them pilots, said the object didn't have lights and hovered over an airport terminal before shooting up through the clouds, according to a report in Monday's Chicago Tribune. The Federal Aviation Administration ac-

knowledged that a United supervisor had called the control tower at O'Hare, asking if anyone had spotted a spinning disc-shaped object. But the controllers didn't see anything, and a preliminary check of radar found nothing out of the ordinary, FAA spokeswoman Elizabeth Isham Cory said.

"Our theory on this is that it was a weather phenomenon," Cory said. "That night was a perfect atmospheric condition in terms of low (cloud) ceiling and a lot of

airport lights. When the lights shine up into the clouds, sometimes you can see funny things." The FAA is not investigating, Cory said.

United spokeswoman Megan McCarthy said company officials don't recall discussing any such incident from Nov. 7.

At least one O'Hare controller, union official Craig Burzych, was amused by it all.



Are UFOs in Chicago?

Certificate in Parapsychology

Parapsychologist Loyd Auerbach has teamed up with HCH Institute in Lafayette, CA to present a Certificate Course in Parapsychological Studies!!! This course is registered with the California Bureau of Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education is approved for CE Units for MFTs, LCSWs and RNs.

Parapsychological Studies: The Study of Psychic Phenomena (the Basics)

Contrary to what so many believe, the field of Parapsychology studies much more than

ghosts and hauntings. Parapsychologists are generally not very psychic (and psychics are rarely parapsychologists). Parapsychology is not "paranormal psychology." So, what's the field all about? Just who are the parapsychologists and what do they do? This 60 hour course series is an overview to the field of Parapsychology, and the main areas of research and investigation: ESP, PsychoKinesis (mind over matter), and Survival of Bodily Death. Included will be a general discussion of where the field came from, where the major centers of research are

today, and where the field might be headed. Students will have an opportunity to review some of the basic research in the field and to apply the theories and applications to their current helping profession or to pursue parapsychological field investigations on their own. All courses may be taken individually for Continuing Education Credit or just for fun! The program and course descriptions, schedule of classes, and costs can be found at: <http://www.hypnoterapytraining.com/parapsych.cfm>

“Contrary to what so many believe the field of Parapsychology studies is much more than ghosts and hauntings....”

One Million Dollar Challenge from James Randi

The Foundation is committed to providing reliable information about paranormal claims. It both supports and conducts original research into such claims.

At JREF, we offer a one-million-dollar prize to anyone who can show, under proper observing conditions, evidence of any paranormal, supernatural, or occult power or event. The JREF

does not involve itself in the testing procedure, other than helping to design the protocol and approving the conditions under which a test will take place. All tests are designed with the participation and approval of the applicant. In most cases, the applicant will be asked to perform a relatively simple preliminary test of the claim, which if successful, will be

followed by the formal test. Preliminary tests are usually conducted by associates of the JREF at the site where the applicant lives. Upon success in the preliminary testing process, the "applicant" becomes a "claimant." To date, no one has ever passed the preliminary tests.

Visit randi.org for more info.



James Randi stands at the bank vault.

The Center for Paranormal Research and Investigation

info@viriniaghosts.com


CPRI,
Inc.

Hours of Boredom, seconds of panic

We're on the web!

Viriniaghosts.com



CPRI is now an official affiliate of the AudioMartini Radio Show.

The Center for Paranormal Research and Investigation is a non-profit organization based outside of Richmond,VA. We conduct investigations into the paranormal in a non-metaphysical manner. One of our main goals is to seek out allegedly "haunted locations"* and to assist those who are experiencing problems with the paranormal. We then look for authentic evidence of the paranormal and try to determine if the location is haunted*. We are seeking genuine evidence and are careful about the presentation of this evidence... insuring that it is legitimate, re-searched and analyzed before being presented to the general public.**

We use strict SCIENTIFIC methods to obtain TANGIBLE evidence - Evidence that leaves no doubt about its origin, cause and effect. Evidence that will be reproducible under controlled testing conditions. (example - If a ghost is residing in a home and is able to be clearly picked up by videotape, then it should be able to be clearly picked up upon testing replication.)

We are skeptics and not debunkers - skeptic means to question and debunk means to expose while ridiculing.

CPRI Becomes Affiliated with AudioMartini

Audiomartini is a one-hour radio interview show hosted by Rick Wood. For the past five years Rick has produced the show on WEBR radio in the Washington, D.C., area. Audiomartini deals with claims of the paranormal from a skeptic's viewpoint. Rick hosts debates as well as individual interviews, with no call-ins, allowing for in-depth discussions. The focus is on a fair and cordial exchange of information, even those with whom he disagrees

Rick has interviewed and exposed Holocaust deniers, phony mediums, and others making spurious claims in the

field of paranormal research. His shows have also addressed pressing social and political topics. Recent guests have included Rep. Bob Filner (D-51-CA), the only historian of science in the U.S. Congress; science journalist Chris Mooney, author of "The Republican War on Science"; and he has hosted a debate between Michael Shermer, executive director of the Skeptic Society and William Dembski, senior fellow of the Discovery Institute, on Intelligent Design.

Audiomartini is the most widely syndicated skeptically based radio program in the

world, with affiliate stations throughout the United States and Great Britain. The show is sponsored by the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. CSICOP encourages the critical investigation of paranormal and fringe-science claims from a responsible, scientific point of view and disseminates factual information about the results of such inquiries to the scientific community and the public.

Please visit <http://audiomartini.com> for more info.