

PSYCHIC ANIMALS | FBI DOCUMENT | DR KAREN STOLLZNOW

THE BENT SPOON

MAY 2011

Where extraordinary claims
meet rational answers

THE COMING APOCALYPSE

COULD IT BE SOONER THAN YOU THINK?



MISSION STATEMENT

In the landscape of paranormal media, there are traditionally two unique, yet separate, brands. One geared toward the believers, and the other more skeptical in nature. The problem is that the true believers rarely, if ever, embrace a skeptical attitude or ask tough questions of their community; instead preferring to surround themselves with likeminded individuals that reinforce their own belief systems. And the skeptics, likewise, promote science and critical thinking largely to those already open to it, or who are active participants in the skeptical community. This results in an echo chamber effect, wherein the same ideas are bounced back and forth, guru-student relationships are inadvertently created, and neither side ends up learning much about the other.

Enter: The Bent Spoon.

The Bent Spoon is a skeptical magazine for the true believer. Within its pages you will find Q&A between those with opposing viewpoints, interviews with leading investigators and thinkers, as well as articles which will not only provide in-depth analysis, but also be critical of both believers and skeptics alike. Along with reviews, comic strips, and other lighter fare, The Bent Spoon hopes to foster an attitude of outreach, forming a middle ground where believers and skeptics can come together and have a conversation about the issues and questions we've all given thought to.

The Bent Spoon. Where extraordinary claims meet ordinary explanations

Nicholas Callis- Founder, graphics, layout, contributor

Bobby Nelson- Founder, contributor

Jason Korbus- Contributor, Soupernatural

Kenny Biddle- Contributor, Skeptical Investigation

Speacial thanks:

Dr. Karen Stollznow

Brian Dunning

Blake Smith

Bryan Bonner

Mathew Baxter

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Dr. Karen Stollznaw

Guest interview.

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Why wait for 2012?

The Apocalypse is coming sooner than you think
Bobby Nelson

Will the world be ending on May 21st, 2011?

It will be according to the Harold Camping, host of Open Forum on the Family Radio

Network. Camping claims to have absolute proof that this is the date, he "guarantees it".

So what is the amazing evidence Harold claims to have

obtained? What is the secret code? All the details to this revelation are inside

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How Extraordinary! by Bobby Nelson

Often times when I am interviewed on radio shows about my skepticism, I will undoubtedly be asked one question, “what would I take for you to believe in ghosts or the paranormal?” Without hesitation I will reply with “empirical evidence, something that is backed up by science.”

Personally I don't think that is such a difficult thing to ask, yet for some reason paranormal enthusiasts can't seem to grasp this concept. I am often told that science can't explain everything; this concept frightens me because science never makes the claim that it can. This only means one of two things, people are being willfully ignorant or they just don't understand how science works. Furthermore, I feel that if someone who makes the claim “science can't explain everything,” they really have no business appealing to science when they feel it supports their idea. This is something I see on a regular basis in the paranormal, people claiming to be doing science, praising it when they feel it backs up their claims and dismissing it when they are shown that it doesn't. You can't have it both ways, you either adhere to the scientific method or you don't.

One of the first things I wish people in the paranormal field would understand is a quote by the late Carl Sagan, “extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.”

To show how this works, I often recite the dragon in the garage story (a quick reconstruction of Carl Sagan's invisible dragon scenario).

Say we met at some paranormal convention and we were sharing our experiences to one another. After a short while I told you about a fire breathing pet dragon that I owned. At first you look at me like I am crazy but I assure you I can prove he exists. We exchange contact information and a couple weeks later I have you and a few of your friends over my house for a barbeque. After a while you nicely inquire about the pet dragon I say I own. I quickly explain that he is housed in the garage and I would be glad to show him off. Quickly we all make our way to the garage

and when the door is open the only laying on the ground is an empty chain which is bolted to the wall. After a couple seconds someone asks “well where is the dragon?” In which I respond “he is laying right here, oh I forgot to mention that he is invisible.”

I have no doubt in my mind anyone in this scenario would get upset enough to storm off and leave. Wondering why someone could believe they were so gullible to believe in such nonsense. The reason is, because you would require some extraordinary evidence for this claim, not just a chain bolted to the wall. Remember, extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.

So what exactly does this mean? The easiest way to put it is that any claim that is outside of everyday experiences requires proof, meaning none of the evidence in support of that claim should be left up to interpretation. For example, if a scientist were to say I added 2 parts hydrogen and 1 part oxygen and got

The biggest problem with the people in the ghost hunting community is that they are at a standstill.

water, this is an ordinary claim because we have a firm understanding of basic elements and chemistry. However if someone says they have evidence of the afterlife or ghosts, this is an extraordinary claim and it requires something tangible. This is why pictures, videos or E.V.P. (electronic voice phenomena) will never be sufficient evidence for the existence of ghosts, if it were; they would have been recognized by science a long time ago.

Let me see if I can illustrate this with a better analogy. It is Christmas time and your 5 year old child is acting up. As most parents do, they threaten them that Santa Claus is watching and they better be good or they won't get any presents this year. Almost instantly the child will calm down, because to them, Santa Claus is a real person who delivers toys every year.

One day while at the local mall the child

finds himself standing in a long line to finally meet the big guy to tell him what he wants for Christmas face to face. The child is placed on Santa's lap and a picture is even taken of the two. Does the child now have sufficient, extraordinary evidence that a real Santa Claus exists? If a child approached you and said they have proof of Santa's existence and presented you with a picture would that be enough to sway you? Most likely not and again the reason is because you would require something more than just a picture and a story to support substantial evidence for the existence of a real Santa Claus. Again you need extraordinary evidence to support the extraordinary claim, I can't reiterate that enough.

The biggest problem with the people in the ghost hunting community is that they are at a standstill. Using methods that will never advance and that frankly make no sense whatsoever. If we know that anomalous “voices” on tape recorders and fuzzy pictures or videos will never equate ghosts scientifically, I think it logically makes sense to move past these techniques and try to progress. Otherwise nothing will ever be accomplished. We also have to be able to admit when we are wrong and when certain things just don't make sense. For example: an E.V.P. is captured on a recorder, at best you have an anomalous sound, but this is where the idea should stop, it logically can-

not go any further. Anomalous sound does not equal a ghost voice, it is a logical fallacy called the argument from ignorance. Saying “I hear a voice, I wasn't speaking at the time of the recording nor was anyone else present, therefore it is a ghost,” doesn't hold credence. Remember, not being able to explain something doesn't mean paranormal. You have to be able to back your claim up with evidence that can stand over scientific scrutiny, sure it may be hard, but isn't that the point?

Bobby Nelson is a skeptic, writer, co-founder of “The Bent Spoon” and co-host of Strange Frequencies Radio

His personal blog can be found at

www.PorkRhine.com

IN THE NEWS

YOUTUBE EDITION

Alien body found in Buryatia?

The video of the alleged alien corpse found in Buryatia has turned out to be a fake. Posted on April 17th, the video quickly went viral, scoring over three million views and sent the paranormal community into a flurry. Many postulated a connection to what was called a "UFO event of Roswell proportions" in the Irkutsk region of Siberia, in which a large craft, according to some accounts, was witnessed by thousands of locals as it hurtled towards Earth. This, of course, would be seen as corroborating evidence to the UFO proponents pushing the authenticity of the alien video.

Three days after its original upload to youtube, the video has been discovered to be a fake, confirming many people's assumptions, including skeptical author and paranormal investigator Benjamin Radford, quoted as saying, "It's clearly a hoax. The first "big red flag" is the way the video was shot, he said. Instead of just stumbling upon the alien, the camera man gives the viewer a wide-angle so-called "establishing shot" of the landscape before zooming right onto the alien as he and his friend find it. "This is film-making 101. We see this in sitcoms, we see this in virtually every film in order to establish a place and scene for the viewer," he said. "It makes sense in the context of a fake film but it does not make sense in the

context of someone suddenly finding this alien creature"

While this was keenly observed and is typically a very helpful clue, in this case, the observation may have been slightly presumptuous. Translation



of the video reveals that the alien was not stumbled upon, but had been previously discovered, within the context of the hoax. "We found him over there. ... We found him around two hours ago. ... It must have been lying here for days"

While Radford's presumption was, in fact, correct, it serves as an example of not jumping to conclusions when investigating claims. His next suggestion, though, was more on the mark,

"The video is fuzzy enough to be compelling, but that still doesn't mask the reality that the video's

alien was likely handmade with some clear Jello and animal or chicken skin.

"You look at it and it's not badly done -- it took somebody probably a couple of hours to make," he said. "There's probably a butcher shop somewhere missing some pieces. ...It's no alien."

In a confession to the police, the creators of the body confessed to it being comprised of chicken skin filled with bread. Originally thought to be the body of an infant, speculated by the chief editor of the local Kabansk-Info newspaper, the police immediately began an investigation seeking the creators of the video.

While most of Radford's claims were estute, they were made in the absence of any evidence, before the confession was released. While any piece of alleged paranormal evidence might seem fake or "just not feel right", we as skeptics should not jump to conclusions or investigate with preconceived notions. We must examine the evidence and if there is none, we must admit that we do not know the answer for the time being. Typically, the answer eventually comes to light, but in some cases, they will be deemed unexplained and remain so. This does not infer a paranormal relation, nor is it a defeat. It is simply, straight-

-NICHOLAS CALLIS

NORTH CAROLINA MAN CAPTURES BIGFOOT ON FILM

Gigantopithecus americanus giant hoax?

On March 22nd in North Carolina, Thomas Byers allegedly captured five seconds of video containing the elusive Gigantopithecus Americanus, known to residents of Cleveland County, Ben Knobby Knob.

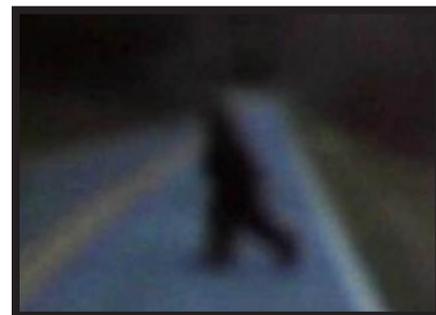
Resident of Shelby, NC, Thomas Byers witnessed what he claimed to be a sasquatch crossing Golden Valley Church road that Tuesday evening. "It ran across the road and into the woods right in front of us and I was able to film it," he stated in an email to NewsChannel 36.

In response, News anchor Jeremy Markovich had this to say: "Byers and his friend Carolyn were driving to a

cemetery to shoot some video when they saw something climbing up a road bank. Byers stopped the truck and got out the camera. Bigfoot looked at him. He threw up his hands and snarled. Then he took off into the brush..." "... He described the Sasquatch was around seven feet tall, 300 pounds, with yellow teeth. It left behind six-toed footprints. It gave off the stench of decay, and it also had something that's not found on most gorilla costumes. "It was very clear to both of us that it was a male," Byers said, fumbling around for the most polite words. "I mean, you could see, I don't want to say, trying to think, uh, you could see its private parts."

While many have called this video a hoax, stating that "it looks like a guy in a gorilla suit" and "he waves at the camera", it's unfortunately just speculation. I'd like to agree with the critics of this video and also point out that the growling sounds like a cheesy sound effect and it appears that the actor in the suit is trying to hold his gorilla pants up, but a fair analysis that would not

make. There is one large, screaming red flag, though. This five seconds is mid encounter. Why does the video stop so abruptly? This is the most common aspect of video hoaxes, they are incomplete. The scene is established, the creature runs across the frame, gesturing, and the curtains fall. With that in mind, I feel confident when I add this to the list of most poorly executed hoaxes of all time.





Yeti's are not Psychic:

A Psychic Challenge to
Eric "The Yeti" Risinger – Epic Fail

by Bobby Nelson

About two weeks ago I was told that an old acquaintance of mine had officially joined the woo circuit. Eric "The Yeti" Risinger, host of PEMA TV, an internet television show, claims to have become a psychic after participating in a sensory deprivation experiment (the Ganzfeld test). On his personal psychic profile, he does seem a bit aware that the skills he claims to have obtained may not be fully developed, however, Eric does feel his skills are progressed enough to charge \$2.26 per minute. You can read the rest of his personal statement for yourself by going to www.keen.com/Eric%20the%20Yeti.

After receiving this information I did the only thing I felt appropriate to do, test Eric by offering him a challenge.

The Psychic Challenge

The challenge was easy really; the only thing Eric had to do was exactly what he claims he can do. I came up with 3 parts of the challenge, which I felt was fair being that he claimed so much in his personal profile. If Eric were to accept my challenge these were the 3 things I asked of him.

A public or private reading, where I am told specific information and not asked questions such as: "does this make sense," or "tell me about the older woman that has passed away." No vague information that can be applied to the masses; I want specific information that only relates to me.

Eric, since you claim that we all possess the ability to achieve psychic powers, this means you have been able to identify the mechanism that allows this. I want to know what this mechanism is. It can't be an unknown, unquantifiable or unidentifiable otherwise you cannot say this is something everyone possesses.

If this is something that everyone does indeed possess, what moral right do you have to charge for it?

I was anxious to see what Eric would say. I knew he would deny my challenge, but what would be the reason? Would it be

that I am too skeptical? Or would it be that my mind isn't open enough to accept the facts? I wasn't quite sure what to expect.

After a few days of waiting, Eric finally responded to my challenge.

Although he has since deleted his comments, his response was a little hostile. He explained that he was on the road and would be responding when he arrived home. Also he told me not to flatter myself and that my little test didn't scare or intimidate him in anyway.

Now if we were playing poker, this is what is called a "tell." I never accused Eric of being scared or intimidated and actually came at him respectfully and honestly.

What he did was try to switch it up by putting the guilt on me, the accuser. This is something people typically do when they are lying.

Anyway after a few hours, Eric finally responded in full to my challenge.

Eric: "Well first let me apologize to bobby for a face book post this morning, Myself and my wife where returning from a trip to the Shanley Hotel in New York. I replied considering this an attack and it is not exactly that, so I do apologize bobby.

Lets take this point by point :

1. When you start off by saying " by joining the woo circuit" puts any thought of this being an open minded helpful experience out the door, and that is probably why I responded the way I did.

2. The very close friends I have that are psychics will also never read for family or close friends simply because they become jaded by all the information they have about that person, the experience becomes more about personal opinion than a true psychic reading. Now given that me and bobby for an extended period of time have talked, and I do know things about him I could not give him an accurate reading, and even if I did i already know that whatever I did see or was told would be twisted and discounted because of this.

3. In my personal opinion, the abilities come from our caveman ancestors, I

believe they are the reason why you feel you should not go into places, or don't like certain situations, even though your "mechanical" sense cannot detect a reason NOT to go into these places. Another example would be why does the hair on your arm stand up when there is no mechanical reason for it to like a temperature change? Could we be sensing electrical or magnetic fields much like many animals do? I do not know, I cannot state from medical journals why this happens, or specific studies. These are simply my theories as to an explanation.

4. Lastly, you asked what gave me a moral right to charge? Who gives you the moral right to question? I think bobby knows me well enough to know that i am not an immoral or evil person, but i also dont have to answer to bobby for what i do in my life. Once again this is one of those things that could be taken as an attack, bobby has my skype and could very easily have gotten a hold of me and asked me about all this in private, but he choose not to, he choose his own forum.

So to conclude, No bobby I will not do a reading for you because no matter what I say or how i say it to you I am already a "wooster". This was a no win situation for me from the get go and I will respond to it and then forget about it because in the big picture this means very little to me and much more to bobby. Hug the gang for me bobby, and yes i still consider you a frieind.

The Yeti"

I would like to respond to a few things in Eric's response. First we see that I am accused of not having an open mind. I would like to say although I don't believe in psychics I am very open to the possibility that they exist, if positive evidence can be shown. The fact no positive evidence exists is not my fault and if Eric could simply do what he claims, I would be open enough, based on positive evidence, to reevaluate my conclusion.

The next reason given was that Eric didn't want to read for me because we have had conversations in the past and I would just

chalk it up to talks we have had before. Fine I will grant that to Eric; however there were other folks who offered to volunteer, who know nothing of Eric, however the challenge was still declined. I wonder why?

Next Eric said he believes these power come from our caveman ancestors... what? This explanation made no sense whatsoever. What Eric describes is something simple and it has nothing to do with spirit guides or our caveman ancestors, it's called gut instinct.

Also, how do we even know gut instinct is right? We only hear the negative stories when people say "I should have listened to my gut instinct." But in order to test this properly we would have to take all the cases when someone went against their gut instinct and nothing happened. So I think a fair question to ask, if we go against our gut instinct and nothing negative happens was our psychic intuition wrong? Also if our caveman spirit guides are the ones helping us am I to assume that they have the same moral values as we do today?

As for Goosebumps, this is a pretty easy explanation and again it has nothing to do with psychic intuition. Goosebumps occur when the tiny muscles on each hair contract. Though this is not a psychic mechanism we did inherit this trait from our ancestors. Goosebumps in humans is a useless trait because we don't have a fur coat like other animals do. In animals the coat will rise to act as insulation to help keep them warm.

However when we release adrenaline in our body it also causes goosebumps. This is why when we are watching a scary movie or listening to a song we love or just excited we get the chills or goosebumps.

When I asked Eric to explain what moral right he had to charge someone for something he claims everyone has, he weaseled out of it by asking me what right I had to question him. I like to think this question hit him so hard; there was no way for him to answer it and be right. It is why I felt he took offense to it, by asking me the questions instead and telling me this could be taken as an attack. Well

I will ask another question, how could this be taken as an attack? It is a simple question, what moral right does anyone have to charge someone for something that they already possess?

Now one thing I did find humorous in this whole thing, is that a good friend of mine, Kenny Biddle, gave a reply about the Ganzfeld method.

Kenny: "So, he takes a test designed to test telepathy, which puts you in a state much like when dreaming, causing random stimuli to be produced internally.... and he now believes he can talk to spirits an guide people in their lives.

And we all have this ability? Then why would anyone need him? Hmmm...I did know, when I read the title of this article, that Bobby was going to list criteria for the challenge. Maybe I am psychic? Or perhaps I relied on my experience and knowledge of Bobby, and anticipated what he would write. A much more logical conclusion.

I would like Eric to at least explain/describe the experience he claims convinced him of his psychic ability, so that may be a chance to find a rational explanation... as well as to see if it is repeatable.

As for specific information, it's not going to happen. Most likely, "that's not how it works" or "it doesn't work thy way" will be quotes given (or a variation there of) to ward off the attack of simply wanting a straightforward answer. If specific information could be obtained by him, or "more experienced" gifted people...murderers would be prevented from killing, bodies would be found within minutes of a reading, missing or lost children would be found easily and quickly (like that same day), thousands of lives would be saved from, say...an earthquake off the coast of Japan."

Eric: "kenny?.....can you prove they are random? and if so how? that is making an assumption. Get a light source, a red bulb, and a ping pong ball, and white noise to listen to through earphones, try the experiment yourself"

Before I give Kenny's response, notice

how Eric avoids providing proof, but has the nerve to ask for proof. Also he is accusing someone on making assumptions, when that is all his argument on being psychic is based off of.

Kenny: "During sleep (specifically REM sleep) the brain is without outside stimuli, random neurons fire producing random sensory stimuli – which is why dreams are sometimes a bit...off. In this test, you're effectively numbing the senses of sight and sound. Touch and smell will go numb from lack of changing stimuli. Taste sense is irrelevant. Depriving the senses as such is putting you in a trance-like state. I would expect random stimuli to be produce internally. The brain is always active.

How to prove it's random? Have the same person undergo the test several times, recording the results. You still haven't related the experience which convinces you that you have any psychic ability. And again, is it repeatable? Have you done the test again? Multiple times to verify the results? Or is this a one-time "ok, I believe it" kind of thing?

You're making an assumption that you have some ability to communicate with spirits that will give you information on how to guide people's lives...while charging for it. Is there a money back guarantee when you're wrong? Or when you give bad advice and someone loses everything, based on your "coaching"? My assumptions are based on science, research and common sense. Your assumption has the potential to cause false hope, pain and needless suffering."

Sadly Eric never sent a response to Kenny's last statement and I thought all was over until the next day, when my best friend Jason Korbus chimed in.

Jason: "Eric (and other psychics), I have a question about this that will maybe help with my overall understanding.

Now, I know that it is considered unethical in the paranormal community to charge for ghost investigations. We can't prove conclusively that a house is haunted, we can't guarantee removal of any ghosts present, and we have no specific

certified training to offer the clients we deal with. We honestly have admitted we have no hardcore proof ghosts even exist at all. I've never charged for an investigation for these reasons and others, and it's rare to find a ghost hunter who feels it is acceptable to charge. Why, then, should someone be able to charge for a psychic reading?

To me, similar reasons could be given. For instance, no psychic can prove conclusively that they are obtaining information in any type of paranormal manner (or, at least...none have been able to perform their professed abilities under controlled conditions as of this writing). And, again, we have to admit there is no hardcore proof that psi exists. All evidence for ghosts, psychic abilities, etc is anecdotal and has thus far been unconfirmed by peer reviewed controlled scientific experimentation. So, why is it okay to charge for one and not the other? Am interested in your thoughts on this. Thanks for your time."

I felt this was a very good question and I felt was similar to my "what moral right do you have" question I had asked previously. Eric's response shocked me more than I thought it could.

Eric: "Almost anything involving the brain applies to this jason, a psychiatrist or therapist can offer no tangible evidence they have done anything, simply advice. Neither of those are questioned for charging. I make no claim of being either one i am simply offering advice to people."

Even rereading that response still gives me goosebumps (JOKE). The fact that he compared himself with a psychiatrist is absolutely asinine. Psychiatrists go to school for 7-8 years and they are called hmmm doctors. Psychiatrists can also prescribe medication and can perform medical procedures on patients. Also psychiatrists can be sued for malpractice, if Eric is wrong, what repercussions does

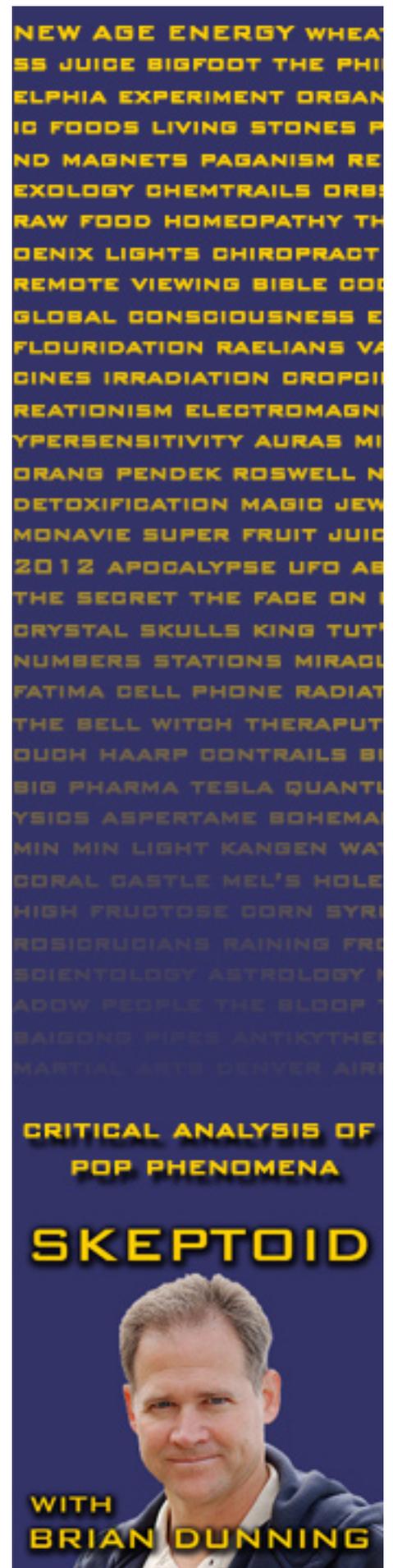
he have to undergo? I felt this was an insanely poor and irresponsible analogy and when I criticized him about it, this is what he said.

Eric: "no i did not claim to be either one, simply stating that they offer no TANGIBLE physical evidence, they help people feel better about themselves and their situations. People seek advice where they may bobby. This will also be my last post on this, keep in touch bobby."

Though Eric said he wouldn't respond anymore I still had a few things to say. First of all I didn't claim Eric said he was a psychiatrist, I criticized his irresponsible comparison. I simply let him know that what he was saying was this, since psychiatry doesn't offer tangible evidence and I don't offer tangible evidence, this is ok for me to do. I also found it disturbing that someone who can't even distinguish between criticism on a comparison and me saying things I didn't say is offering life experience advice.

But the one thing I find most entertaining about this whole ordeal is that I was accused of not being open minded. Basically saying that I am a person who would overlook evidence just so I can say how wrong someone is or that anything the opposing side said wouldn't be good enough. However if Eric would have just executed his claims, we could have gone from there, but he declined. One of the reasons Eric claims to have refused the challenge was because he didn't want to give me a reading, being that he knew a little personal information about me; however he also rejected when others he didn't know stepped in to be tested. Is Eric afraid of being proven wrong? One also has to ask if Eric was shown that he was not a psychic, would he remain close minded and still proclaim that he had supernatural powers? Or would he be open minded enough to admit he was wrong?

Bobby Nelson



FEATURE

Judgment Day May 21st, 2011 by Bobby Nelson



Why worry about 2012? The end of the world is coming May 21, 2011.

At least that is what host of Family Radio, Harold Camping is prophesying.

Though the Bible (which Camping claims is the authentic, absolute word of God) specifically states in Matthew 24:26: "But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Harold must

timeline of careful Biblical study, Camping claims that in the year 4990 B.C. God destroyed the earth with a worldwide flood. It is said in the Bible that on the 17th day of the 2nd month of that year God shut the door of the Ark.

Now let us jump 5,000 years to 2 Peter chapter 3. In this chapter there is mention of the worldwide destruction by the flood, but also there is a section in this chapter when God mentions the

Now we have to jump back another 5,000 years to Genesis, not that we haven't been confused enough already. Genesis 7:4 says: "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."

So now that we know one day is 1000 years to God, we know that the seven days in the passage from Genesis 7:4 really means 7,000 years (notice Harold doesn't apply this rule to the 40 days and nights). So when God told Noah he had 7 days to escape the destruction of the flood and get onto the ark, according to Camping, God was also saying that in 7,000 years he will destroy the world on Judgment Day. This all makes perfect sense right? Just wait, it gets better.

So we take the year of the flood, which Harold says is 4990 B.C. and the 7,000 from the Genesis 7:4 and 2 Peter 3:8 combo and we get 2011 A.D. So the Camping formula looks something like this: 4990 (year of the flood) + 2011 (present year) - 1 (this represents year 0) = 7,000 The kicker in the eyes of Campingites is that May 21st, 2011 is the 17th day of the 2 month of the Biblical calendar of our day, the same day God shut the ark door. GASP!

This is seriously what Harold Camping and Family Radio are claiming is proof positive that the end of the world is coming in May of this year. After all, the Bible guarantees it.

"This is seriously what Harold Camping and Family Radio are claiming is proof positive that the end of the world is coming in May of this year. After all, the Bible guarantees it"

have either overlooked this verse or he is calling shenanigans, because this amazing prophet has figured out the puzzle.

So let us break down Harold's science and look at how he came up with this date as the Judgment Day. Through a

destruction of the earth by fire. But the one verse Camping claims is important in the chapter is 2 Peter 3:8: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." This in a sense is the key to the whole mystery.

Some more "proofs" proclaimed by Camping: He maintains that the date of the crucifixion happened precisely on April 1st, 33 A.D. on the modern day calendar. With precise and amazing calculations (sarcasm) we can see that there are exactly 722,500 days from April 1st,

33A.D. until May 21st, 2011. Camping claims that this again is irrefutable proof given by God. The way Camping concocted this number was by taking $5 \times 10 \times 17 \times 5 \times 10 \times 17$. Below we will find out why these numbers are so amazingly important.

Harold Camping has stated he finds significance in 5 numbers: 3, 5, 10, 17 and 23.

According to Camping, the reason why the number 3 is so significant is because it represents God's purpose. There were 3 denials made by Peter, an apostle of Jesus; there were 3 crosses, 3 nails, 3 cock crows, 3 apostles in the garden with Jesus, etc.

The number 5 represents atonement. The reason Camping gives for this is because in Exodus 30:15 it says: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when [they] give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls." The key word in this passage is half (.5).

Also in Numbers 3:47-48 it reads: "Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll, after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs:) And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons."

The number 10 supposedly signifies completeness. Now it isn't just the number 10 that is important—Camping plays this off by saying all multiples of 10 are great, for example: 100 sheep, Satan being bound to hell for 1,000 years, 1 day is like 1000 years to God and so on.

The number 17 represents Heaven. The reason Camping sees this as significant is because in the book Jeremiah, God instructs Jeremiah to purchase a field for 17 shekels of silver. This was done as a guarantee by God, that there will be a time when Israel would again occupy Jerusalem. Camping says this means that people will again go to Heaven.

The number 23 represents destruction. In Numbers 25:9 it says: "And those that

died in the plague were twenty and four thousand." Wait...I thought it was supposed to be 23, but this verse clearly states 24. Well Camping said that in the total of 24,000 people destroyed, 23,000 did die in one day (according to 1 Corinthians 10:8), so this associates the number 23 with destruction.

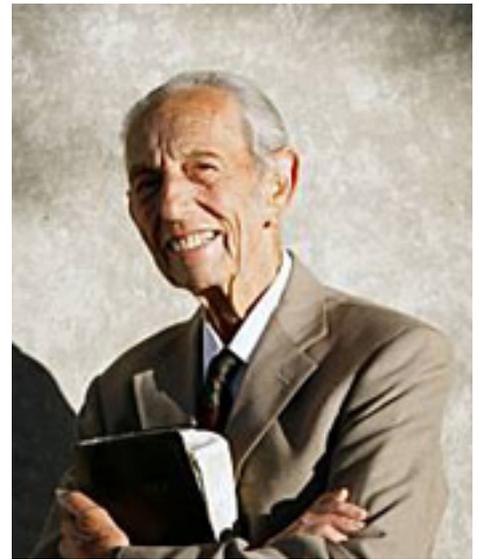
Also in Daniel 8:13-14 13 "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" Verse 14 continues: "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Here, Camping explains, we see that Satan will rule over all the churches of the world for 2,300 days while God brings destruction down upon the churches.

So now quickly going back to the $5 \times 10 \times 17 \times 5 \times 10 \times 17 = 722,500$, this means, and I quote from Camping "The atonement or redemption demonstrated by Christ's suffering and death on April 1, 33 A.D. (the number 5) is 100% completed on May 21st, 2011 (the number 10) when all true believers are raptured into Heaven (the number 17). Remarkably, this number sequence is doubled to indicate that it has been established by God and will shortly come to pass (Genesis 41:32)."

However, end-of-time predictions are nothing new. Camping has even made previous predictions of the end in 1988 and 1994, both of which obviously didn't come true. Harold is what is called an apocalyptist, someone who adheres to the teachings of apocalyptic literature concerning the signs and events preceding the end of the world. Another apocalyptist in the Bible has a pretty big name in the literature, and that is Jesus.

Even Jesus has made vague predictions of the end of the world that didn't come

true. In Matthew 16:28: Jesus is recorded as saying: "...there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Again we see a parallel verse in Mark 9:1: "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Once more in Luke 9:27: "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God."



Harold Camping

Obviously these predictions made by Jesus (God) himself didn't come true. So I guess the easiest question to ask is, If God can't successfully predict his own second coming, can Harold Camping? I find it highly humorous that an omniscient God can't get it right, but through elementary mathematics, Camping solved the puzzle. I think it is a safe assumption that nothing is going to happen on May 21st of this year, the date will come and go just as all the other end-of-times predictions have. Harold was wrong once before; hopefully, this will end his number games and he will hang up his mic for good.

SOUPERNATURAL

PSYCHIC ANIMALS by Jason Korbus

Could animals be psychic? That is the question posed by Fortean writer Nick Redfern in his latest "Lair of the Beasts" blog post for Mania.com. In the article, Redfern discusses at length an event that transpired in the early 1950s between the U.S. Army and renowned psychic researcher J.B. Rhine, in which the latter was tasked with determining whether two dogs could use ESP to determine the location of buried mines.

Redfern reports that, "On repeated occasions, dummy mines were carefully buried beneath the sands, and Tessie and Binnie were brought in by their handler, as the experiment

However, the horse, magnificent though she was, likely possessed no powers of the sort. It took a magician by the name of Milbourne Christopher to prove otherwise. He was able to show that Lady Wonder was picking up on inadvertent visual clues by her owner and that, when a question was posed to the horse that no one present knew the answer to, her results dropped to zero.

The process, known as the ideomotor effect, is a well known psychological phenomenon which occurs when our bodies make motions unconsciously. It is completely responsible for such seemingly paranormal occurrences as Ouija Board planchette action, and dowsing.

"As is too often the case, we are blinded by our own desires. We ignore evidence which challenges our beliefs, and accept evidence which confirms them."

to locate the mines began." Rhine himself is quoted in the article saying, "The success was high enough that it was soon evident that the dogs were alerting the mines before they set foot on the surface above them." The Army itself remarked that the first day's trials were successful 86% of the time.

Now, there is no way to determine conclusively if these two dogs were displaying psychic abilities merely from reading Mr. Redfern's blog. But I can say that this was familiar territory for Mr. Rhine, as he had found himself duped on another occasion by an animal he considered to be psychic.

Now, a horse is a horse, of course, of course. Unless, of course, it's a psychic horse. And this horse in question was Lady Wonder, a mare said to be able to perform a variety of psychic feats. Among them, telling the date on a coin she couldn't see by knocking over corresponding numbered blocks with her nose, as well as spelling out the names of people she hadn't met - again, all with lettered blocks.

Several doctors, writers, and townspeople were flummoxed. They simply couldn't understand how the horse was accomplishing these tricks. Rhine himself investigated and, in 1927, deemed the horse to be telepathic.

Stated bluntly, we are moving the planchette or dowsing rods ourselves and not realizing it.

A similar instance occurred in 1891 when William Von Osten began publicly showing his horse, known as Clever Hans, performing mathematical tricks by tapping his hoof the correct number of times to signal an answer. Again, the ideomotor reaction was found to be the cause when a research assistant in a psychology lab named Oskar Pfungst investigated the case.

It must be said that none of this is being written to put down Mr. Redfern's article or the work of J.B. Rhine. Sadly, it is often said by both skeptics and cynics that Rhine was a fool for thinking a horse could be psychic to begin with, or that he was woefully unaware of how the scientific method worked. I disagree. Rhine was a thoughtful, intelligent man as well as being a trained scientist. However, it is my opinion that he simply had biases, and perhaps let those get in the way from time to time throughout the course of his studies. What scientist, at some point or another, hasn't? Martin Gardner, often called the father of the modern skepticism movement, was quoted as saying about Rhine, "He is an intensely sincere man, whose work has been undertaken with a care and competence

that cannot be dismissed easily, and which deserves a far more serious treatment."

So, no, it is not my goal to put down anyone in this article. But could it have been that the two dogs, Tessie and Binnie, referenced at the beginning of this story were being mistaken for having psychic powers, when really it was just another instance of being fooled by the ideomotor reaction? Were the experimenters, or the trainer, perhaps, unknowingly alerting the dogs to the mine's locations? The article by Redfern is not specific, but it does not sound as if the experiment was double blind-ed. A more proper method would have been to ensure that NO ONE who knew the locations of the "dummy mines" was present at the time the dogs were led in. Similarly, how do we know that the dogs couldn't simply smell them out? Dogs are used to sniff out bombs as it is now. So, was this even a proper test of psychic ability at all?

The information is lacking.

As is too often the case, we are blinded by our own desires. We ignore evidence which challenges our beliefs, and accept evidence which confirms them. It is clear that Rhine wanted desperately to prove that psychic phenomena was real, and that this desire likely led to him occasionally using less than adequate controls in his experimentation. Had he taken the necessary steps to blind his experiment, perhaps we would have never heard of Lady Wonder. And if the veritable avalanche of Ouija board practitioners, dowsers, Ghost Box aficionados, and psychic animal trainers alike knew more about controlling and testing their own claims and perceived abilities, well, wouldn't we all be a little closer to the truth and a lot better off, too?

http://www.mania.com/lair-beasts-creatures-psychic-kind_article_129428.html

<http://richmondthenandnow.com/Newspaper-Articles/Lady-Wonder.html>

<http://www.randi.org/encyclopedia/Lady%20Wonder.html>

<http://www.skeptdic.com/cleverhans.html>

<http://www.stacyhorn.com/unbelievable/?p=257>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oskar_Pfungst

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DR KAREN STOLLZNOW

author and skeptical investigator with a doctorate in linguistics and a background in history and anthropology.

INTERVIEW

Dr. Karen Stollznov

She is an associate researcher at the University of California, Berkeley, and a director of the San Francisco Bay Area Skeptics. A prolific skeptical writer for many sites and publications, she is the “Naked Skeptic” Web columnist for the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, the “Bad Language” columnist for Skeptic magazine, a frequent contributor to Skeptical Inquirer, and managing editor of CSI’s Scientific Review of Mental Health Practice. Dr. Stollznov is a host of the Monster Talk podcast and writer for the Skepbitch and Skepchick blogs, as well as for the James Randi Educational Foundation’s Swift.

First, I would like to know what skepticism means to you.

Skepticism has many meanings to me – it’s about common sense, discovery, solving mysteries, understanding the world better, and seeking truth.

When it comes to women “in” skepticism”, are there any particular issues that they face? Do you have any personal experiences where your gender may have been a factor in your perceived credibility or how you were treated?

I don’t think there are any particular issues that “women in skepticism” face. There are always issues that individuals face, as in any organization or group, and for women, these may involve sexism or stereotypes.

I don’t want to polarize the movement, or marginalize any members. Skeptics are skeptics. I’m not one to bemoan the lack of any “type” of skeptic in our movement; I want more skeptics and more skepticism, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity or background, or whether new skeptics even “join” the movement.

I’m interested in knowing what you would pinpoint as a particular problem in the skeptic community. What do you feel that “the community” needs to be working on?

I’d say our biggest problem is also our biggest goal: outreach. The community needs to work on taking skepticism beyond the community.

I’ve been talking about skeptics as a community. Do you think this is an accurate description?

Some object to the notion of skepticism as a community or a movement; I don’t. There are many skeptical organizations and groups and events, but overall, we’re a group (or a community or a movement) of people with common interests and goals.

There is a prevailing sense by others that the term “skeptic” have become a bit of a marketing scheme. Is this accurate? Is this a good thing or a bad thing for skepticism?

Some think of “skeptic” as a negative label, but the alternatives like “critical thinker” or “bright” don’t mean the same thing, and have their own negative connotations and ambiguity. “Skeptic” can also be a positive label that enhances credibility and perceived scientific legitimacy.

The fact is there are several different senses of the word. I think we need to define the term every time we use it, to distinguish ourselves from “Global Warming skeptics” or those who appeal to the term for credibility.

I don’t want to abandon the word. I see the ubiquity of “skeptic” as a strength; it’s up to us to explain our usage of the word.

Paranormal researchers and investigators tend to attach scientific terms to their work when it is not scientific, or claim to be skeptical thinkers when that may not be the case. Why do you think that is?

I think there are several things happening here. It seems that sometimes the people who use these terms (e.g. “quantum”) simply don’t understand the words and concepts. Unfortunately, by using these words so prolifically, they are also creating new, pseudoscientific, senses of the words. Also, they may use these words deceptively to enhance the reputation, credibility and legitimacy of their claims, devices, beliefs and theories. This last point also accounts for those who claim to be skeptical thinkers when they are not.

Something I haven't mentioned in this interview yet is that you have a PhD. In linguistics. How, if at all, does this help you in your work as a skeptic?

The doctorate itself has led me to become a better researcher. I may not have the answer, but I know where to look for the answer.

As for the degree being in linguistics specifically, this has taught me to think critically about language, to recognize bias and subjectivity in thinking about language. There are many applications for language in skepticism too – graphology, automatic writing, Bigfoot languages and psychic readings, to name just a few topics.

In a recent issue of Skeptic Magazine I read an article you wrote about foreign accent syndrome. For the benefit of the readers could you touch on this subject a little? What it is, the science behind it and what really is going on?

This phenomenon is when a person appears to develop a new accent suddenly. This really happens, albeit rarely, but it's a linguistic illusion; the patient merely sounds like they have adopted a new accent. This is a type of brain trauma caused by accidents, tumors or strokes, that affects speech production. Foreign Accent Syndrome is not an established name for this condition, which is more generally known as aphasia. Xenoglossia is a pseudoscientific slant on this phenomenon; the belief that a person can instantaneously speak a differ-

ent, unknown or alien language, or develop a new accent.

I am wondering if you have ever investigated claims of glossolalia (aka speaking in tongues). If so, have you ever found a case that didn't appear to have an explanation?

I have investigated claims of glossolalia, and I've been a subject. I once underwent a ceremony conducted by members of a charismatic church in Sydney. When people "speak in tongues" they are not speaking at all (...nor is the Holy Spirit). It's not the language centers of the brain but the emotion parts that are activated during glossolalia.

One last question, what advice do you have for people who are interested in becoming active in skepticism but have no idea how to start?

Read Daniel Loxton's (Ed.) What Do I Do Next? Leading skeptics discuss 105 practical ways to promote science and advance skepticism which can be downloaded from the Skeptics Society's website - <http://www.skeptic.com/downloads/WhatDoIDoNext.pdf>

My simple advice is: become a part of the community, both face-to-face and online. Listen to skeptical podcasts, read skeptical magazines, books, blogs and forums; but don't just observe, participate. Create podcasts, write articles and blog posts, and attend conferences, lectures and social events. You'll end



LEAKED FBI MEMO PROOF OF UFO COVER-UP?

BY NICHOLAS CALLIS

Shotty journalism sends echos through the paranormal community with sensationalist, tabloid headlines claiming proof that aliens have indeed landed on Earth. The “smoking gun” evidence of which leans solely on the “newly released” FBI document dubbed “the Guy Hottel memo”. The memo, in fact, was not newly released, but has been available for some time. More over, it was never classified to begin with. The confusion is likely based on the FBI’s updated website “the Vault”, created for the purpose of easier veiling of their public documents. The memo in question had been added to the updated site on December 6th of 2010 and can be viewed here: <http://vault.fbi.gov/unexplained-phenomenon>.

Clearly if this document can be claimed as proof of alien life on Earth, it must be pretty substantial, one would assume. Unfortunately, it is only a retelling of an account passed on word of mouth, in a long game of telephone. Part of the history of this tale can be deduced from the contents of the memo:

The following information was furnished to SA [censored] by [censored]

An investigator for the Air Forces stated that three so-called flying saucers had been recovered in New Mexico. They were described as being circular in shape with raised centers, approximately 50 feet in diameter. Each one was occupied by three bodies of human shape but only 3 feet tall, dressed in metallic cloth of a very fine texture. Each body was bandaged in a manner similar to the blackout suits used by speed flyers and test pilots.

According to Mr. [censored] infor-

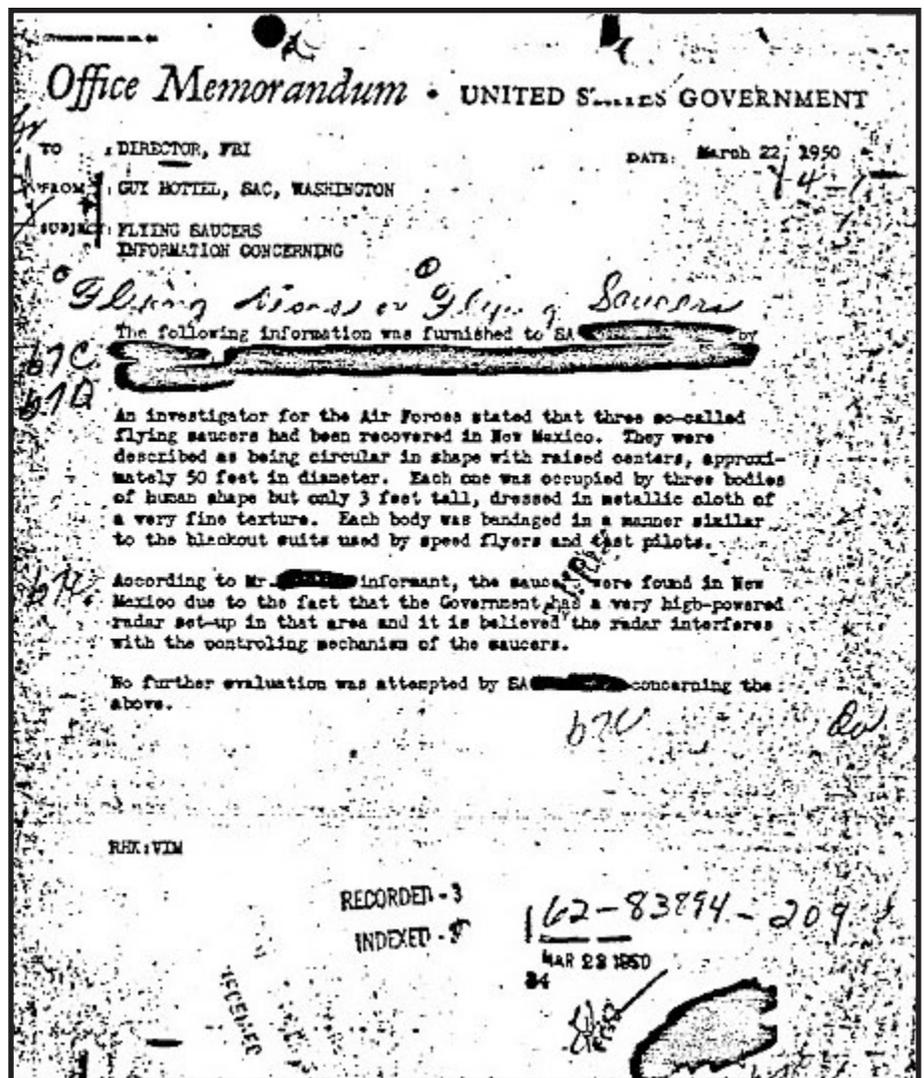
mant, the saucers were found in New Mexico due to the fact that the Government has a very high-powered radar set-up in that area and it is believed the radar interferes with the controlling mechanism of the saucers.

No further evaluation was attempted by SA [censored] concerning the above.

This story, recounted several times before appearing in this document, is thought to have originated from a hoax perpetrated by two “Doodlebug” (a dowsing instrument) peddlers, Leo Gebaur and Silas Newton. Their account was broadcasted

by radio advertising manager George Koehler. It was then passed to used car dealer Rudy Fick by two other men who had heard the story from a man named “Coulter” (George Koehler). Fick reported the tale to the Wyandotte Echo, a Kansas City newspaper, from which Guy Hottel nearly copied into the memo.

Like with many conspiracy theories, the idea of there being a massive cover-up hiding the remains of a crashed extraterrestrial saucer, kept secret for over sixty years, while information pertaining to it is freely open to the public is absurd. If the government is so apt at keeping the information secret, then we wouldn’t know about it. On the other hand, if they are so lax that they let “secret documents” leak out onto the internet, they clearly don’t have the capacity to maintain a massive conspiracy.



SKEPTICAL INVESTIGATION

Addressing The Safe Range EMF Meter

A K-II EMF Meter Experiment

by Kenny Biddle

In the last few years, a simple device has become a phenomenon onto itself.

No, not the broken radio one (well, at least not this time around)... I'm talking

about the now-famous "K2 Meter". Since it's "debut" on a popular "ParaVision"

show on the SyFy network, the K2 EMF Meter has become a "must have"

device in every ghost hunter's equipment box. In fact, it's hard to find a team

or television series that isn't using the K2 Meter, sometimes as their main

source of "ghost detection".

After seeing the device in action on TV and well over a thousand YouTube videos,

many patterns began to come to light. The most obvious is that no one is using the

device as it was originally designed - as an EMF meter. The sole reason many

investigators and ghost hunters purchase an Electromagnetic Field Detector is to

help them locate ghosts. Furthermore, the sole reason the majority of these ghost

hunters purchase a K2 meter is to communicate with spirits. Everyone should take careful note here; Neither of these reasons are what an EMF

detector does, nor was ever designed for these purposes. The purpose of any EMF meter is to locate sources of electromagnetic radiation and to

offer a reading of the relative strength (and direction if you are a skilled and competent operator) of the EM field.

The K-II meter, which is actually called the Safe Range EMF, is a simple, single-axis Electromagnetic Field

meter. The device runs on a single 9 volt

battery. The case is made from a hard plastic, with a pressure sensitive Power button (Push and

hold to power up

the device). There are modified versions available that add a toggle switch, allowing the power to stay on without

the need to constantly hold the button down. Once power is switched on, the device performs a Self-Test - it

flashes the LEDs in succession...from the first light to the last, then back down to the first green LED. It does this

twice in a row (an important fact to remember later on). This self-test is performed each time power is applied

to the device.

The display is made up of five LED lights; 2 Green, 1 Yellow, 2 Red. The LEDs divide the meter's measurements into five levels;

* 1st LED (Green) = Less than 1.5 mG

* 2nd LED (Green) = 1.5 mG to 2.5 mG

* 3rd LED (Yellow) = 2.5 mG to 10 mG

* 4th LED (Red) = 10 mG to 20 mG

* 5th LED (Red) = Over 20 mG



The device operates on a 50 & 60 Hz level - It can detect Extremely Low Frequencies* (50 to 1,000 Hz) & Very Low Frequency range (1,000

to 20,000 Hz). The response time of the K2 is almost instantaneous. As mentioned, it is a "Single-Axis" meter, which means that it only reads

one axis (left to right). This means that in order to get an accurate reading, the meter needs to be rotated on all three axis (X, Y and Z) in order

to obtain the most accurate reading. From my own tests, the device best reads fields directly

in front of it - holding the device so the LEDs are facing you, and are at the top... and an

EMF source is on the opposite side of the device

(facing the back of the device.

Once you open the device up and take a peak inside, we see how simple this device is. As

you can see in the photo here, there isn't much to it. Once you take the plastic case away,

you're left with a circuit board and a 9-volt battery.

It is produced by a company named K-II Enterprises®. The company also produces three

other devices; The Dazer II® (an ultrasonic dog deterrent), the Pet-Agree® (Ultrasonic pet

trainer), and the Tattle Tale® (A vibration alarm for training pets and security). The device

weighs in at 3.8 oz., and measures 5.5 inches long, 2 inches wide and 1 inch in depth. While going through the company's website

(<http://www.kiienterprises.com/index.html>) , I found no mention of it's use as a paranormal detection device... what-so-ever.

The Claim

The K2 meter has gained a considerable reputation after appearing in the third season of the ghost hunting TV show, Ghost Hunters.

Introduced by Chris Fleming (of the TV show Dead Famous), it was claimed that the device allowed communication from spirits by

manipulation of the LED lights on the meter. In an episode covering an investigation of the Manson Murders, Grant Wilson states

"The K2 meter measures magnetic fields, and it's been specially calibrated for paranormal investigators". I have yet to uncover

exactly how this is possible (but he's on TV, so he must be right...right?). and in case you're wondering if he really said that, feel free

to review the episode on the DVD or simply click on over to YouTube and search for it.

Communication with the other side is achieved by asking questions, and the spirit or entity answering you would cause the LEDs to

flash in one of two ways; 1 - the LEDs will light up in rapid succession to the third, fourth or fifth LED, then just as rapidly back down

to the first green LED. 2- All of the LEDs would light up in rapid succession, then back down.

Those asking the questions would enforce a standard code - flash once flash for "No", twice for "Yes".

A quick search over the all-knowing internet produces a plethora of websites and YouTube videos showing how the K2 meter works,

how to modify it, and how well individuals believe it detects spirit entities. Not surprisingly, there are just as many videos and websites

that also show how easy it is to manipulate the meter to produce the desired results of ghost hunter fans everywhere. Most notable of

these is finding the "sweet spot" on the Power Switch, will allow the operator to cause the LEDs to dance like crazy and/or flash

twice on a constant basis.

The Experiments

In light of the popularity of the devices, I decided to perform some simple experiments to see just how the device would work on an investigation by people who, although open to the idea

that spirits are among us, are not so easily convinced to jump on the band wagon just because

someone on TV used it. Along with the Safe Range meter, I'll be using a Gauss Master meter

as a Control to compare the sensitivity of the Safe Range meter (K2). All the tests were done by this author, with additional help from Mike F. (of PIRA), Steve S. and Scott (of PAPS).

Experiment Details for #1 to #3

I was able to borrow the two K2 meters from members of the Philadelphia Area Paranormal Society (P.A.P.S.), for use in the first

of these experiments. These meters were used in conjunction with a Gauss Master EMF Meter, in order to have a different model

(used for a control) in use side-by-side with the meters in question. As seen in the photograph here, all three meters were placed on

the floor, with no more than three feet between the two set farthest apart. The beach ball and blue ball (ha ha) were part of another

experiment going on at the same time, in conjunction with the K2 testing.

Once the devices were in place, the three investigators settled down. At no time were any of the devices held by any of the investigators.

There was a recorded, steady measurement of just under 2 mG, which we used as our base line (verified by the Gauss Master).

Experiment 1 - Powering on a Video Camera Test

This test was unexpected, as one of the investigators simply turned it on to

record the session. A Sony Handycam video camera was powered up

approximately seven feet from K2 Meter 1 and the Gauss Master. The K2

registered a spike to the 3rd LED (Yellow, 2.5 mG to 10 mG), while the

Gauss Master momentarily increased to just over 2 mG. Repeating the Power

Cycle of the Video camera two additional times repeated the results.

Experiment 2 - Energizing a Slave Flash Test

Using a Nikon D5000 with a Nikon Speedlight SB-600 shoe-mounted flash, we waited for

the flash to go into "Stand by" mode. The shutter release was given a half-press to "wake up"

the flash unit. The moment the flash powered up, K2 meter #2 registered a spike to the 3rd

LED (Yellow, 2.5 mG to 10 mG). K2 meter #1 registered a spike to the 2nd LED

(Green, 1.5 mG to 2.5 mG).

However, on a second attempt, none of the meters registered any type of spike or fluctuation.

On a third and consecutive attempt, a spike to the 3rd light was recorded again. We found

that this issue was due to the initial charging of the flash when coming out of sleep mode. Our

second attempt was done immediately after the flash unit was already charged. Allowing the

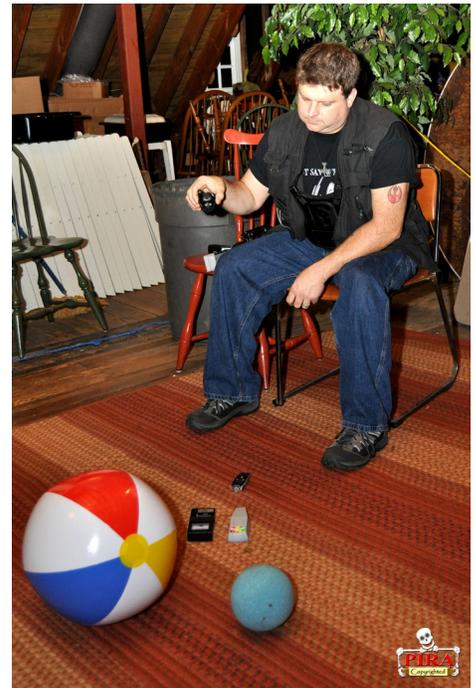
Flash Unit to go into Stand By again, the third attempt showed the spike again.

Experiment 3 - Two-way Radio During an Investigation

Using a two-way radio, Kenny positioned himself

approximately 3 to 4 feet away from K2

Meter #1 and the Gauss Master, and 5 to 6 from K2 Meter #2. The "Talk" button was quickly



depressed and released once. We observed that both K2 meters illuminated up to the 3rd

LED (3rd LED (Yellow) = 2.5 mG to 10 mG) - the Gauss Master meter did not register

any change from the Base Reading. The "Talk" button was depressed several more times,

with the LED display flashing up to the 3rd LED, and sometimes 4th, with each activation of

the two-way radio.

Taking this test further, the two-way was distanced approximately ten (10) feet from K2 #1 &

Gauss Master. This distance was used at four positions, with the K2 meter laying flat on the

floor; it was positioned forward of the meter, to the rear, to the right of the meter and above the

meter. As before, the "Talk" button was depressed several times. From these four positions, it was

found that the meter registered the highest readings when I was positioned to the right of the meter,

with the antenna (of the two-way radio) pointed towards the meter. Maintaining the ten foot distance,

I was able to manipulate the K2 meter to illuminate up to the 4th LED with each depression on the two-way radio.

Experiment 4 - EVP Session Test

During the EVP Session, we did not set a standard "Two spikes = Yes, one spike = No". This was to avoid any confusion between

a possible "hit" (manipulation of the device by an unknown entity) and the normal operation of the Self-Test that the device does

(which cause it to automatically flash twice). To make this test as easy as possible, we were simply looking for a noticeable manipulation of the device, rather than multiple, specific actions. A general guideline was spoken out loud, while the device was

active - "If there are any spirits here, please answer our questions by causing the device to illuminate".

Transcript of Questions;

1 - If there is anyone here besides Myself, Mike and Scott... could you cause the device to illuminate?

2 - You can, in theory, cause the lights to light up simply by moving close to this device. Would you move to stand next to the device?

3 - Can you try to pick up the device?

4 - Can you please touch the device?

5 - Would you sit it this chair? (positioned next to the K2 meter)

6 - If you Need to Say "Yes", try to make the device flash its lights twice. Can you do that?

7 - Can you jump on the device?

8 - Can you try to push the device off the table?

9 - Is there anything you can do to manipulate the device to illuminate?

10 - Last chance, make the device light up or we're through with you.

After these questions, we allowed the K2 Meter to stay on during the rest of the investigation session. At no time did the meter register any fluctuations.

Experiment 5 - Two-Way Radio, Hand in Hand with K2 Test

This was a simple experiment that reproduces the most common usage of the

meter seen on the various TV shows on the "air"; Holding the meter in one

hand, and having a conversation with a two-way radio in the other hand. Honestly, this

is the worst thing you could do when using a device like this during a "Ghost Hunt".

In some cases, the "investigators" place the meter down on the floor, bed, or table.



The investigator sits a few feet away (sometime on the bed with the device), asking

questions. However, they also hold a two-way radio in hand and begin filling in the

other team members of what's going on. The simple fact that any ghost hunter within

25+ feet of the K2 Meter has a two-way radio should render any and all readings.

In close proximity to each other, the radio causes the LED lights on the K2 meter to

flash extremely rapidly. With some practice, I was able to cause the K2 LEDs to dance

in various patterns by manipulating the "Call" button on the two-way radio. The results

of this test were consistent in each attempt to manipulate the device.

Experiment 6 - Two-Way Radio at Three to Five feet

In Experiment 5, we held the meter only 16 to 20 inches away from the two-way radio. This distance simulated an average

distance when a ghost hunter would be holding the meter in one hand, while speaking into the two-way radio with the other...radio

held up to their mouth. Here in Experiment 6, we'll get the two devices a little bit further away from each other. This experiment

is to simulate the situations where a ghost hunter would place the K2 on a bed or table, and then sat down next to it.

It was interesting to see that I was able to illuminate three to four lights on an almost consistent basis. Yes, this test did not produce

identical results with each pressing of the "Call" button on the radio. Sometimes the meter would "spike" into the 5th red LED,

while a few times I was only able to cause the first two green LEDs to dimly flutter. The cause? It really had to do with the

position of the meter, the position of the radio and how quickly I pushed the "Call" button in and out. The orientation of both

devices would cause a higher or lower reading. This fits in nicely with many of the videos out there in YouTube land,

where

certain ghost hunters can be seen repositioning the meter several times during a session (in order to get the best orientation/"connection"

between the meter...and their manipulation device).

It was also during this experiment that I discovered just how "conductive" the human body is. While holding out the radio to the

distance of five feet, I began manipulating the CALL button, while holding in the power switch of the K2. After several attempts,

and seeing that I was getting a spike each time...I jammed a dime into the switch on the K2, and held the radio out again. This

time, the meter was only lighting up three LEDs, (and the fourth one illuminate ever so slightly once). The thought occurred to me

that the EMF field was being transferred through me to the device, causing the previous, higher reading. I put my hand on the K2

and activated the radio...and the reading was stronger. By removing and replacing my hand on the K2 Meter, I found that there

was a definite cause of higher levels being measured while in contact with an EMF generating device.

Experiment 7 - Two-Way Radio Distance Test

This experiment was performed in the second floor hallway of my home. I simply set up the K2 Meter against my bedroom

door (standing up, with LEDs facing me), and laid out a Measuring Tape to its full extension, which came to 12 Feet.

With a Two-Way Radio in hand, I stopped at several distances and tried to manipulate the meter with the K2 meter. The

stops were at two, four, six, eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, and finally sixteen feet distances from the meter. The radio was set

the radio to Channel 1, Sub-channel 1, and the experiment began.

The test was simple; I began pressing the "Call" button several times, turning the radio in different directions. . Depending on

the position I held the two-way radio, I was able to get a consistent spike of three LEDs each time the "Call" was not only

Depressed...but also when it was Released. Of course, this consistency decreased with distance. When I reached sixteen

feet, I could no longer manipulate the meter. At fifteen feet from the target, I was still able to get two to two LEDs to illuminate

. I did find that when I changed the radio channel to 22, it had a decreased effect on the manipulation of the K2 meter. Having

a distance of fifteen feet to manipulate the device would allow "spikes" to be produced from another room entirely.

Experiment 8 - Call on a Blackberry Cell Phone Test

I've received reports from several friends that the K2 will register a "Hit" when they receive or transmit a call on their cell phones.

Of particular interest was the use

of many of today's "Smart" phones; Blackberries, iPhones, etc. The issue is that these phones

are constantly updating the information on the phone, from Text messages to Facebook Status Updates. So, with K2 meter in

hand (and Quarter jammed into Power Switch), I played around with my Blackberry Storm.

The method was simple; play with the different functions and see what, if any, effect it would have on the K2 meter's scale. I found

that it was really a "Hit or Miss" thing; Sometimes the meter would pick up a Facebook update from about 5 inches away,

sometimes it wouldn't. While making a call, I found that it would spike the K2 from anywhere between 7 to 10 inches away from

each other. I also found that it didn't matter whether I was making the call...or receiving one - both caused the same results.

Take note, this did not happen every time I tried it (I made 63 calls to my house, and 64 from my house to my phone...it drove

my kid nuts). However, it should be noted that 7 to 10 inches is the average distance you would hold the meter from your

phone - with phone hooked to the belt and meter held in hand in a relaxed position (not way out in front of you). When viewing

footage of people using the device on investigations, it was found that the majority of people hold the meter in this relaxed

position. Honestly, it's a very natural position to hold it, which can easily lead to some false readings; Some teams, such as

P.I.R.A., require you to silence your cell phones

DIST.	E.L.F.-ZONE	GAUSS MASTER	K-2 METER
2	2 LED*	MAXED OUT**	5 LED
5	2 LED*	MAXED OUT**	5 LED
7	NO READING	MAXED OUT**	4 LED
10	NO READING	9-10 MG	3 LED
15	NO READING	3-4 MG	3 LED
18	NO READING	2-3 MG	5 LED
20	NO READING	1-2 MG	4 LED

*Illumination was for less than a second, and only when the "Talk" button was initially pressed and then released

**The needle maxed out (over 10mg), then immediately went back down to a zero reading. This occurred at the initial pressing of the "Talk" button.

during investigations. If you receive a call while "scanning" for EMF anomalies,

you could get a Spike, and never realize that it was your phone.

Experiment 9 - Computer Mouse Test

Honestly, this was an experiment I stumbled on. I had just finished doing

Experiment 5 (again), when I noticed something interesting. I had set the

meter down on my desk, right in front of me, and started moving the mouse

as I was working on this article. The flashing LEDs of the K2 meter caught

me attention. Yes, three to four lights were flashing...well, more like pulsing.

I moved the meter from six inches from the mouse, all the way to 26 inches

away. Once again, this depended on the orientation of the meter in order

to read the highest level of the EM field being emitted by the mouse.

Experiment 10 - Three Meters with Two-Way Radio

I was actually done testing the meters with two-way radios, until I received another (different) EMF meter from the crew

over at Strange Frequencies Radio. From one of their weird contests, I won an E.L.F.-Zone Electro-magnetic Field Detector

from ENZONE. I decided to re-visit this experiment now that I had three different meters to use. In the research I've done, I've

found that these three meters are the most common meters used by ghost hunting teams across the United States and Canada. I

set the three meters up in a row, against a cardboard box backing. I laid out a tape measure to 20 feet, and set Test Intervals

at 2, 5, 7, 10, 15, 18 and 20 foot distances. The results were interesting, to say the least. The results are displayed in the chart (left).

There were two reactions that should be noted here. First, at a distance of up to 5 feet, I found that the K2 Meter would

rapidly, and continuously, flash the

four LED lights as long as I held the "Talk" button in on the two-way radio. This result

was dependant on whether I had the radio facing the meters, or facing the opposite direction (the 4 LEDs flashing was with

the "face" of the radio towards the meters). With the back of the radio towards the meters, there was a weak pulsing of the

2nd LED light on the K2.

The second note of interest is what happened when the two-way radio was waved around in a quick motion. By shaking the

radio side-to-side, the K2 meter would flash up to all five LED lights from a distance of 12 feet. This distance was not set

in stone; depending on how I held the radio, angle it was pointed, and various distances...gave different results. At times I

could get all five LEDs to light from 18 feet, while other attempts at ten feet would get a weak 2 LED response, or none at

all. Although the meter was unpredictable at times, it was consistently easy to manipulate.

Discussion

There are several...ok, a lot of reasons this device should NOT be used during any investigation into the paranormal. The

first concern is the Power Switch itself. With a little practice, it was very simple to locate the "sweet" spot; the pressure to

which the button will easily go between on/off without seeing or hearing the entire switch come to the "At Rest" position

(Power Off). We know that the device's Self-Test causes all five LEDs to light up twice. We also know that when power

is interrupted, the first LED will go out. With this simple information, we can look back at the early TV appearance and see

that it was the result of fakery, rather than "spirit Communication". When the device was used, it was easy to see that the

first LED light would go out...signaling that the power had been interrupted and reapplied (the pressure switch was

manipulated).

After this information was discovered and spread

around (becoming common knowledge to most ghost hunters), there needed

to be another way to cause the device to respond to questions. After all, some people were making a lot of money from the

sale of this device to others who didn't take the time to do any of that "research" many claim to do. Not to worry, another

way wasn't hard to find. The two-way radio, a common tool used by just about every ghost hunting team there is, was found to

cause the K2 meter to light up like a Christmas tree. You could be anywhere in the room, or more importantly...off-camera, and

the LEDs on the meter to dance. Uh oh, the scam-artists were found out again.

However, the damage has already been done. There are scores of "science" based teams that claim the K2 Meter has consistently

proved communication with spirits. Video segments usually show only the device as it lights up, or a room full of people where not

everyone is on camera...or with their hands in view. Despite the few people that have actually tested the device, and the results

that show the K2 is not a spirit communicator, thousands of ghost hunters and para-celebrities still claim it works. Where is the

evidence? No where...

The device is much more sensitive than other EMF meters you'll find on the market. However, I did find an interesting note

from the GhostMart website, where they did their own testing. Here's a short quote from their write-up; "We then began side

by side testing with some of the higher end EMF Meters we offer, the Lutron EMF 822-A, Sper Scientific Digital EMF,

AlphaLab TriField Natural, and the General Tools Tri-Axial Datalogging Digital EMF Meter. When used side by side with these

high end digital models one thing became very clear. The readings produced by the K-II were simply not consistent. It was in

fact very responsive to EMF fluctuations but there was no pattern to the level of the EMF measured by the K-II Meter."

With my own testing of the K2 meter, I also found that the device was inconsistent with its read-

ings. This was clear with

Experiment 10, where I had various readings depending on how I held the meter, regardless of the distance. Of course, we

should take into account the various other devices being used on an investigation (video cameras, still cameras, digital recorders, etc.).

They will have varying EM fields depending on start up sequences, if they cycle on and off, if power usage stays constant, etc. Still, using

a two-way radio displayed some very interesting results and patterns during testing. Every video segment that was presented as proof of

"spirit communication" could easily be duplicated by manipulation of the common two-way radio. When you consider that just about every ghost

hunting team uses two-way radios as standard equipment, its easy to see how false readings and outright fraud is made simple. When

you think about it, who hasn't seen a YouTube video or Para-Vision show where someone was getting "hits" on a K2 meter, while a

guy standing two feet away was telling the rest of the team that the meter was going crazy? What can I say, but ... "Duh?"

The bottom line is that this device was not designed or manufactured for use in paranormal research, it was designed to read

electromagnetic fields from household devices and give a general measurement. Adding a toggle switch does not make it "modified

for paranormal research", nor does endorsements from para-celebrities who, when questioned, have no idea how the device

works. The Safe Range EMF meter performs as it was intended to perform, nothing more.

The popularity of this device, like many other devices (Frank's Box, Ovilus, etc.), lack any scientific testing by qualified

personnel or the hard data to back up their fantastic claims. When you get down to it, there is absolutely no evidence or

data to back up a claim that ghosts (if they really do exist) have any effect on the electromagnetic field...what-so-ever.

A major issue within our community is that so many groups, as well as so many who consider themselves "professional"

and serious investigators, will so easily accept a

device and concept simply because they saw a few clueless people use

it on a TV show designed for entertainment purposes so the network can sell commercial time. Yes, these groups are

buying the K2 Meter, and other equally worthless (as they pertain to the paranormal) devices, simply because they saw

someone on TV use it.

This article detailing the experiments I've done is simple, yet it shows how easy it is to manipulate this device. It shows that

small, everyday devices such as cell phones, video cameras and even just a camera flash...all can effect this device. These

devices, and more, are common items on the ghost hunting equipment inventory list...used on each and every investigation.

Although I didn't cover every device used by ghost hunters, I believe the point has been made.

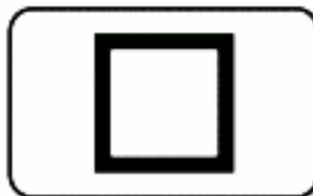
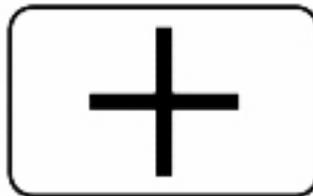
Final Conclusion - As a meter to locate Electromagnetic Fields, this device operates just like any other meter designed and

manufactured for that specific purpose. As a tool for locating ghosts, or establishing communication with spirits...this is NOT

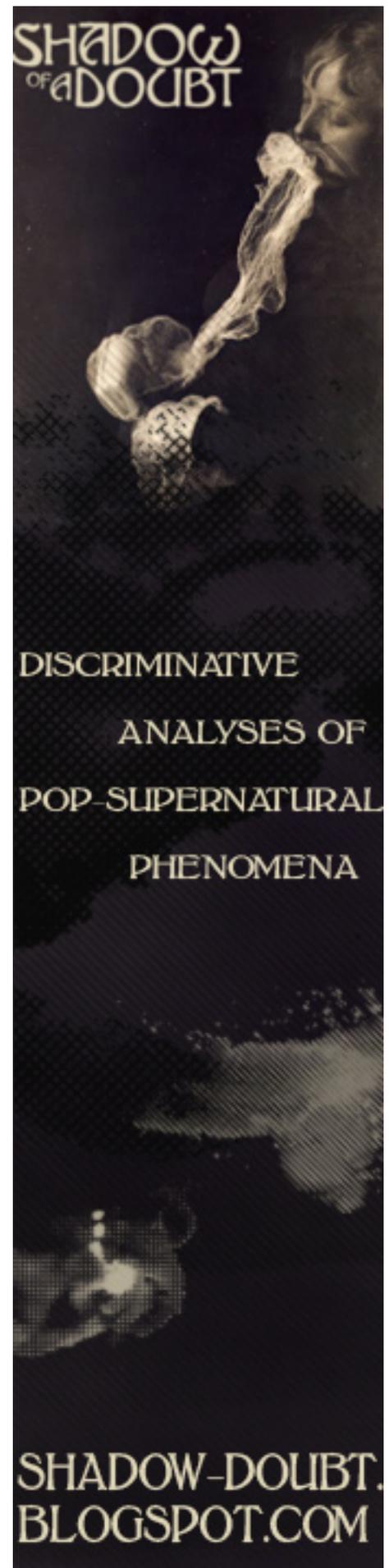
a tool for that purpose, nor anywhere near it. With the lack of any research on whether ghosts have any effect on the EM

field, an investigator would be better off purchasing a cheaper device to be used simply to detect EM Fields within an area

or building for the gathering of data...nothing more.



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QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

I experienced a shadow person standing above me while I was in bed about ten years ago before my father's death.

I did not know the term "shadow person", what they were, what they looked like but only did research after the fact. It did scare the heck out of me and I can see why people are skeptical if they have never experienced it firsthand. Luckily I am a credible person, a teacher, do not drink, smoke or do drugs so it was not a hallucination and I am not an attention-seeker by any means. In fact, I do not tell people I do not know well because of the perception. My daughter would tease me about it through the years, but then she had the same thing happen to her in her bedroom one year ago. We know we cannot convince anyone who has not seen it, so hopefully it will happen to you sometime in your lifetime! It's scary but cool.

-Pam

Pam,

The first thing that I noticed when reading your comment is that these experiences that happened to you and your daughter occurred while in bed. This is usually a red flag when someone is describing a paranormal occurrence. Reason being is it is probably a hypnagogic hallucination. Hypnagogic hallucinations or hypnagogia is that transitional period between wakefulness and sleep. Visual, auditory, tactile, and kinetic sensations can all be experienced during hypnagogic hallucinations. Some of these hallucinations can be very scary, such as a linger shadow standing over your bed. These occurrences can be brought on naturally and do not require drugs and or alcohol to experience them.

Also, I don't question your credibility or your honesty about your depiction of what happened. However I must say, honesty and credibility do not make you infallible to perception. These experiences seem very real when they occur and if you have no previous knowledge on these experiences can happen naturally it can seem very supernatural.

Another thing I wanted to bring up is that fact you are assuming I have never experienced this before. I actually suffer from chronic sleep paralysis and I have witnessed many creepy things which felt very real, things ranging from shadow people to little alien gremlins that would bite my foot. Even today when these happen, they are still frightening but I know how to control them, telling myself it will be over in a couple minutes.

I hope this information is helpful and thank you.

-Bobby Nelson

A lot of paranormal teams claim that their members are skeptics. From your experience, do these teams really use a skeptical point of view? Why or why not?

-Ben

I'll try to answer this without painting with a broad brush. In my experience, this claim seems to go hand-in-hand with the similar idea that somehow these teams are using science. While this is the correct approach to investigate unexplained phenomena, I don't believe it is being employed correctly. Typically, in reference to their skepticism, they will describe the method of "trying to debunk the claims and whatever is left is paranormal". At first glance, this sounds completely reasonable and I think that's why many teams use this philosophy, but it's not a truly scientific process.

First, it assumes that all explanations are readily available to the team and within their limits of understanding. These phenomena are uncontrolled observations, typically with too many variables involved to make accurate correlations.

For instance, if you notice that a glass has fallen off of the counter, you can typically deduce the cause of which, but not with complete certainty. More often than not, there are too many factors to rule out and the paranormal investigator gives up prematurely, which will usually result in labeling the phenomena "unexplainable" rather than unexplained.

Second, the concept of "whatever is leftover is paranormal" supposes that there are paranormal factors in existence and since there are no known parameters or characteristics that define what is paranormal, there is no process by which we could deem an occurrence paranormal. Such a characteristic would have to be accepted by the community at large, be measurable and repeatable, and be specific to said paranormal event, meaning an effect that has no other cause than that of the paranormal event.

All in all, I believe that paranormal teams have good intentions when they claim to approach claims with skepticism, but their methods need some fine tuning. Understanding and applying science would immensely improve their methods and results.

-Nicholas Callis

Since we only use what, 5% of our brains, is it possible if we were to use/ unlock the remaining part that we didn't use, are psychic /mind to mind communication, etc possible?

-M. Whittman

Yes this is a very common claim within the paranormal community. It is however a complete myth, human beings actually use 100% of their brain. We may not use it all collectively at once but nonetheless we do use all of the brain.

No one is really sure where this myth originated from; some speculate it came from Einstein. Albert Einstein once told a reporter that his brilliance came from using more than 10 percent of his brain. Another possible source is that less than 10 percent of the cells in the brain are nerve cells, called neurons, the rest of these cells are called glial cells. To sum it up, neurons are cells that have the function of receiving and transmitting the neural impulses and glial cells are the cells that support, feed and insulate the neurons.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Author and fellow skeptic Ben Radford has written on this very topic. Radford states that this argument that psychic powers come from untapped part of the brain is a logical fallacy called the argument from ignorance (this doesn't mean you are stupid). In this logical fallacy, something has to be either true or false merely because it has not been proven or refuted. So basically, even if 90-95% of the brain is untapped by most humans, it doesn't mean that being able to use any of that 90-95% would give anyone psychic powers (or any other paranormal mental powers).

Here is another way we can think about this. If we only use 5-10% of our brain then that would mean we could live without 90-95% of our brain and function no differently than we do every day. I often wonder if the people who really believe that we only use 5-10% of our brain, if they would be willing to test this by removing the other inactive 90%? I would also think that head trauma and head injuries would happen a lot less, because they would have to only occur in the useful 10% area of our brain.

Before ending, I would like to quote something said about this topic that written in Scientific American, "Ultimately, it's not that we use 10 percent of our brains, merely that we only understand about 10 percent of how it functions."

I hope I helped answer your question and thank you for your submission.

-Bobby Nelson

How can our own eyes, brains, and senses fool us while we are investigating? -Mark

Hey Mark, thanks for the question.

It's interesting, really. Our brains and senses are fooled so often that it is almost incredible to realize we don't notice it more often than we do. But it's nothing

to be embarrassed about. In fact, I find it kind of funny when these things are pointed out to me.

Forget about paranormal investigation for just a moment. Let's look at common, everyday examples of how we are tricked by our brains and senses. Have you ever been in your bedroom, for instance, and smelled something delicious? Maybe it smelled like a big tub of buttered popcorn. So, you got up and went to the kitchen to check it out...and, alas, there was nothing there? Or, perhaps the food you were smelling seemed like popcorn, but ended up being sausages instead. Furthermore, have you ever thought about your favorite food for a few minutes, then started smelling it almost immediately? All of these are a few common ways our brains play little tricks on us and cause us to sense something that isn't accurate.

Now, let's check out a few common optical illusions. Check out this website: <http://jayesh.profitfromprices.com/LSenses.htm> If you're an intelligent person, with a fully functioning brain like most Bent Spoon readers, you'll see black dots where there are none in Figure 1, wavy lines when they are really perfectly parallel in Figure 2, and struggle to say the correct color out loud without saying the word spelled out in Figure 3, and so on. In simple terms, what is happening is that the communication between our eyes and brains is having a little hiccup... and it causes us to interpret visual data incorrectly.

So, what about paranormal investigation? If you are like most, you have probably experienced similar situations to the scenarios outlined earlier in the daytime. And you likely were taking a look at those optical illusions in decently lit conditions as well. Now think about being on a ghost hunt. Are the lights off? If so, this puts your senses at an even bigger disadvantage. Human beings are not nocturnal animals. Our eyes work best in

the light. Putting us in the dark impairs our ability to interpret our surroundings.

Not only will we see things that aren't there (generally out of the corner of our eyes; see: <http://www.assap.org/newsite/articles/Corner%20eye%20phenomena.html>), but we will also mistake the length, width, and depth of the things that really are! But even if you are investigating in well lit conditions, we are susceptible to bias. Because we are at a location which is believed to be haunted, we are often hoping or expecting to find evidence of ghosts. Having these expectations can lead us to misinterpret ordinary smells, noises, and other events as paranormal in origin when, in fact, they are not. But that is a matter for further exploration in psychology, and perhaps a topic for another day.

I hope this helped you out, Mark. Thanks again for the question!

-Jason Korbus

**DO YOU
HAVE
QUESTIONS
OF YOUR
OWN?**

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BOOK REVIEW

by Jason Korbus

Tracking the Chupacabra: the Vampire Beast in Fact, Fiction, and Fokelore by Benjamin Radford

When I was about 17 years old an animal began knocking over the garbage cans in my family's backyard during the night. It quickly became a regular occurrence and, though we figured out pretty fast that it was a raccoon, I told my little brother it was a Chupacabra <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chupacabra>> . We decided to make a game of it. For the next few weeks, we would camp out in the yard with our flashlights and have stakeouts, waiting for the "Chupacabra" to make an appearance. It was all in good fun. I didn't actu-

Never one content to provide mere armchair speculations, Benjamin Radford recounts his own expeditions to Puerto Rico in a sincere effort to track the Chupacabra for himself.

ally believe the now infamous "goat sucker" was knocking over our garbage cans. But it was a goofy way for me and my brother to scare each other, while simultaneously waiting to catch a glimpse of a nocturnal animal.

Of course, the story of a previously unknown beast that was decidedly not a raccoon and, in fact, was said to be a blood sucking monster that fed on goats and chickens, was just starting to take its hold of popular culture at the time. We had all heard the eyewitness accounts of the Chupacabra, seen an artist's sketch, and otherwise just wondered what in the heck this creature was that had seemingly come from out of nowhere. In Benjamin Radford's latest book, "Tracking the Chupacabra: The Vampire Beast in Fact, Fiction, and Folklore <<http://www.amazon.com/Tracking-Chupacabra-Vampire-Fiction-Folklore/dp/0826350151>> ," he aims to answer that very question. And, in my humble opinion, he has done just that.

Granted, I am biased. I count myself as a Ben Radford <<http://www.radfordbooks.com/>> fan. He is one of a handful of people I regularly credit with having helped turn me from a paranormal true believer to one who exercises much more critical thinking skills when approaching paranormal mysteries I find in my own studies. His case reports have proven valuable enough to me that I can often

quickly spot deceptions, or at least equip myself better to test paranormal claims I come across, simply because I have read of various examples in Radford's writings <<http://www.csicop.org/author/benradford>> where his problem and solution were similar.

Still, that being said, I think "Tracking the Chupacabra" is a book you will enjoy if you are anything like me and intrigued by mysteries of the paranormal realm. The mystery of the Chupacabra, in particular, was one that

has been around for over 20 years, and has baffled people on multiple continents. It is said that, aside from Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster, the Chupacabra is the most famous monster in the world. What an extraordinary claim for Mr. Radford to make, then, when he claims to solve this mystery in his book. Well, folks, I believe he has done it.

The book starts off with a history of the beast itself, including a brief description of the original sighting in Puerto Rico <<http://www.ufodigest.com/chupa.html>> in 1995. Radford also touches on the fascinating aspect of how descriptions of the monster have changed over the years. He then moves into the folklore of vampires, and discusses how the Chupacabra made such a quick transition from something no one had ever heard of before, to one of the bigger pop culture sensations in paranormal lore.

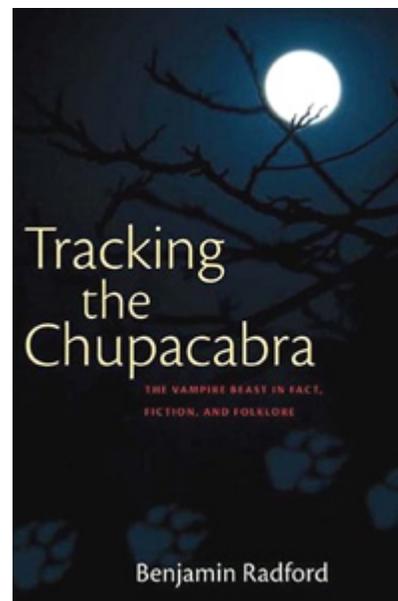
Never one content to provide mere armchair speculations, Benjamin Radford recounts his own expeditions to Puerto Rico in a sincere effort to track the Chupacabra for himself. Along the way he finds out just how many of the locals take the reports seriously, as well as reports on the anti-American and conspiratorial sentiment expressed by many Puerto Ricans - a key aspect to the solving of this case. It was this latter point that I found quite sobering, at times finding that I had failed to

breathe for extended stretches while reading because of the sadness I felt in my heart for the Puerto Rican people.

Some of the more exciting chapters in the book for me were his analysis of a variety of "Texas Chupacabra <<http://www.cuerochupacabra.com/>> " style cases, wherein mangy dogs or coyotes were held up as proof positive of the mythical beast's existence. Radford reports on the DNA results, scientifically refutes the claims of the mystery-mongers, and does it all while keeping your eyes darting through page after page, wanting to see what happens next as quickly as possible.

Of course, the conclusion of the book is what people want to hear about the most. How was the mystery solved? What is the Chupacabra, really? Though I do not want to reveal too much and spoil the ending for potential readers, I will say that if you read this book with an open mind, you will finish it with your questions answered. Radford deftly applies elements of psychology and scientific investigation techniques, and breaks down original eyewitness Madelyne Tolentino's own testimony, resulting in a definitive and satisfying end to the mystery.

This book has it all, gang. It has legend and lore. It has case studies. It has science and psychology and, at the end of the day, provides a worthwhile conclusion. If you've ever been interested in the Chupacabra, and want to read for yourself a complete investigation report of how the mystery was solved, you can do no better than to pick up this impeccably researched and terrifically written book by Benjamin Radford.



PAREIDOLIA OF THE MONTH



Pareidolia of the month goes to Roisin McCourt. McCourt found this miraculous sign of God on a towel as she was removing laundry from her dryer.

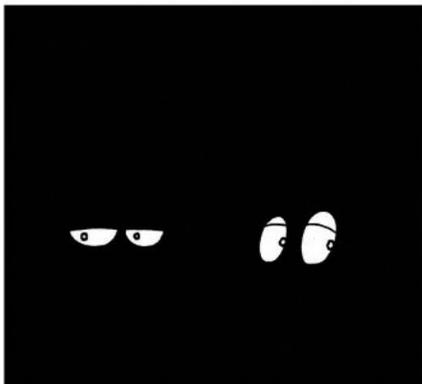
McCourt says, “I could see it was Jesus straight away. I took it to my husband and he agreed with me. I don’t even know what the stain was made from; I hadn’t seen it before I had put it in the washing.”

Normally, I would assume people would chalk this up to coincidence, but not McCourt. Roisin says, “I know some people will think it’s crazy and I feel a bit silly saying it but I really believe that it is His face.”

Well McCourt, you were right about one thing, this is crazy and you should feel a little more than a bit silly.

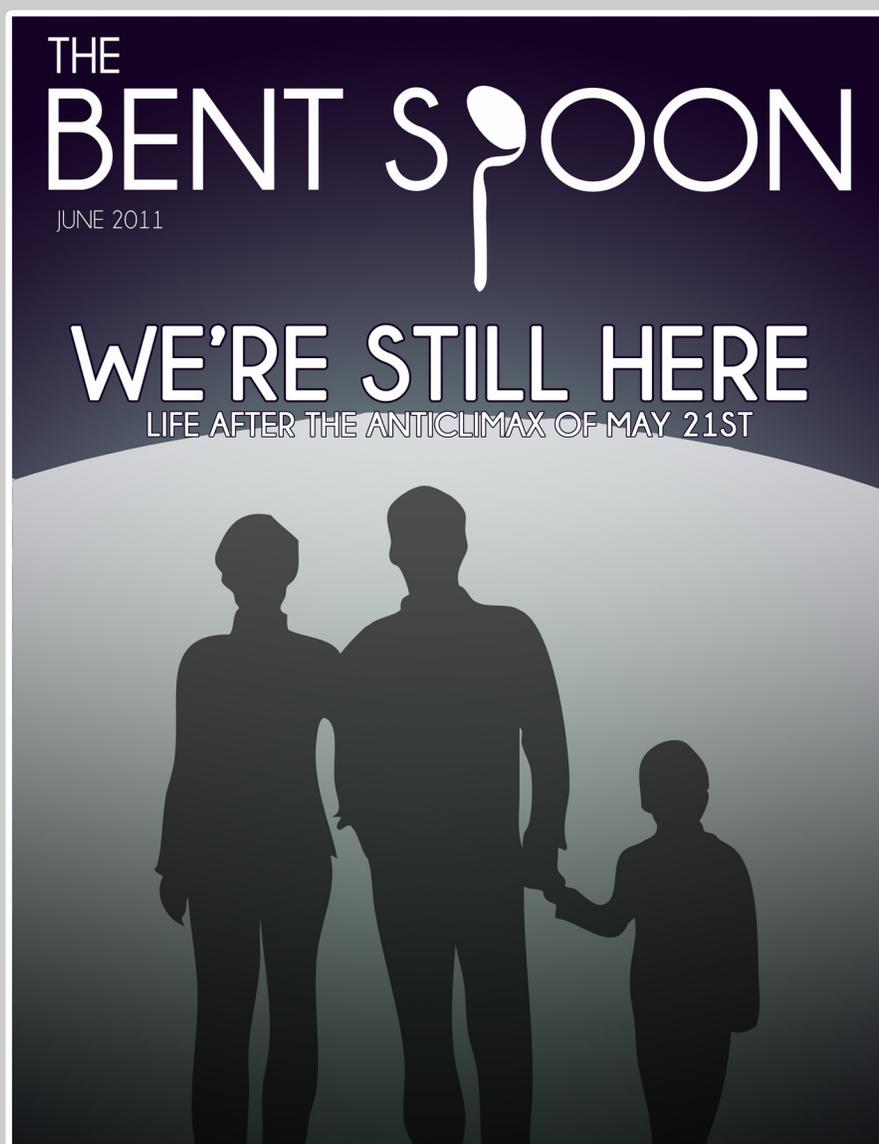
BELIEVER VS. SKEPTIC!

Bobby Nelson and Andre Frattino



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NEXT ISSUE



COMING THE FIRST
WEEK OF JUNE