



Paranormal Media: Audiences, Spirits and Magic in Popular Culture

Annette Hill

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The paranormal has gone mainstream.

Beliefs are on the rise, with almost half of the British population, and two thirds of Americans, claiming to believe in extra sensory perceptions and hauntings. Psychic magazines like *Spirit and Destiny*, television shows such as *Fringe*, *Ghost Whisperer* and *Most Haunted*, ghost-cams and e-poltergeists, bestselling books on mind, body and spirit, and magicians like Derren Brown have moved from the outer limits to the centre of popular culture, turning paranormal beliefs and scepticism into revenue streams.

Paranormal Media offers a unique, timely exploration of the extraordinary, unexplained and supernatural in popular culture, looking in unusual places in order to understand this phenomenon. Early spirit forms such as magic lantern shows or the spirit photograph are re-imagined as a search for extraordinary experiences in reality TV, ghost tourism, and live shows. Through a popular cultural ethnography, and critical analysis in social and cultural theory, this ground-breaking book by Annette Hill presents an original and rigorous examination of people's experiences of spirits and magic. In popular culture, people are players in an orchestral movement about what happens to us when we die. In a very real sense the audience is the show. This book is the story of audiences and their participation in a show about matters of life and death.

Paranormal Media will be a highly interesting read for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as academics, on a wide range of television, media, cultural studies, and sociology courses.

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