



A Natural History of Ghosts

By Roger Clarke

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The fascinating true history of ghosts - how we see them and why we believe in them, from Roger Clarke What explains spectral sightings? Why do we fear the supernatural? What proof is there? Growing up in a haunted house, Roger Clarke spent much of his childhood trying to see a ghost. From the terrifying true events behind Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* to the frenzy of the Cock Lane poltergeist, he takes us on a journey of belief with ghosts of every kind.

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Editorial Review

Review

Beautifully written ... lithe, complicated and hugely rewarding -- James McConnachie Sunday Times
Simmering as it is with personal reflections, this handsome volume ... is bursting with a giddy passion, buoyed further by an expert's thirst for abstruse facts. The main pleasure of reading this book is Clarke's own enthusiasm, intelligence and seriousness ... a deeply interesting, revealing read Book Hugger Splendid ... compelling ... Clarke manages to give goose-flesh and a giggle while informing the reader - an enviable feat Scotsman A highly enjoyable (and disturbing work) ... I am in awe of [Clarke's] intrepidity Guardian
Outstanding ... Clarke's dissection of the shocks, sadnesses and sexiness of the seance tables from the late Victorian era is brilliantly done ... The book is deeply enjoyable, hugely informative and at times distinctly unsettling Shade Point Britain has over 500-years' worth of ghost stories in the cupboard and in The Natural History of Ghosts, Roger Clarke makes them dance ... the most original and readable book exploring our ghost-rich culture to appear for years ... fascinating Fortean Times Clarke's examination of the need people have to believe remains insightful and illuminating throughout Observer Roger Clarke explores the endlessly fascinating subject of the dead who won't lie down, the places they haunt, as well as the hysteria and panic they inspire. Why and how over 500 years their existence has never been scientifically proved - but at the same time, never disproved. Ghosts are masters of the elusive and ambiguous, but Clarke is a master investigator -- Fay Weldon Daily Mail An intriguing, shivers-down-the-spine book The Lady Lively and absorbing ... [Clarke] has proven himself an ideal guide to this troubled and disorderly realm Literary Review Roger Clarke tells ... gloriously weird stories with real verve, and also a kind of narrative authority that tends to constrain the sceptical voice within. There's simply so many of these accounts, each unique to its own setting but having much in common with the rest, particularly poltergeist activity and ghostly apparitions. What prevents the reader from casually dismissing it all as the delusions of disturbed minds is the frequent presence of some unflappable English person unlikely to be rattled by a mere bump in the night ... [an] erudite and richly entertaining book New York Times A fascinating social history ... exceptionally well written and researched Starburst Magazine Why do ghosts wear clothes? This is just one of a number of interesting questions raised by this jaunty book ... In a series of short, snappy chapters, Clarke examines the evidence for just about every ghost who ever drew, or withdrew, breath ... but A Natural History of Ghosts is also haunted by another story, lurking not very far beneath: the story of the author's childhood need to believe in ghosts, and the gradual erosion of that belief -- Craig Brown Daily Mail A gripping history that traces the scientific and social aspects of ghostly sightings Telegraph Compelling ... Research into the paranormal necessarily involves a fair degree of debunking, and Clarke is careful to be sceptical. The narrative of ghost-hunting is simultaneously a history and exposure of fraud and popular delusion ... [yet] Clarke retains a boyish and ... well-informed enthusiasm for his subject Independent [A] voyage through the half-lit world of lost souls ... tales told with ghoulish relish Telegraph

About the Author

Raised in a haunted house, Roger Clarke is best known as a film-writer for the Independent newspaper and more recently Sight & Sound. He was the youngest person ever to join the Society for Psychical Research in the 1980s and was getting his ghost stories published by the The Pan & Fontana series of horror books aged only 15, when Roald Dahl asked his agent to take him on as a client. A published poet, his libretto for The Man with the Footsoles of Wind was performed at the Almeida Theatre in London in 1993. This is the book he always wanted to write.

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