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The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits

Rosemary Guiley

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The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits, Third Edition includes more than 600 entries about ghosts, hauntings, related paranormal phenomenon, the people who investigate them, and the key theories about what causes them. Widely regarded as the definitive reference in the field, this encyclopedia provides comprehensive coverage written in an engaging style. the most current theories about what causes ghosts and the many new haunting cases documented since publication of the second edition. The third edition has been updated substantially with the addition of more than 130 new entries, more than 20 new black-and-white photographs, and an updated foreword by Troy Taylor, founder of the American Ghost Society. Many entries include biographical listings for further reading. Demon; Eastern State

Penitentiary; Electronic Voice Phenomena; Haunting; Lizzie Borden House; Myrtles Plantation; Possession; and, Shadow people.

From Publishers Weekly Four hundred entries arranged A-to-Z flesh out our beliefs about all that haunts. Illustrations. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This encyclopedia is about as fair as one can expect about a subject that many people think doesn't exist. The author (Harper's Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experience , LJ 8/91) has tried to read much of the skeptical literature and at least to report what it says. Yes, the believers get much more coverage, but there is an attempt to present both sides. The accuracy of the book is also fairly high. A number of errors do occur, which, surprisingly, seem not to have been copied from other sources but to have resulted from misremembering. These small errors do not significantly affect the utility of the book. A useful addition to the reference collection of any academic or public library.- Gordon Stein, Univ. of Rhode Island, Kingston Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The tone of this volume is set in the foreword, where Tony Taylor, of the American Ghost Society, announces that proof of ghosts can consist solely of accumulated testimonies: Scientific debunking be damned we have just historically proven that a house is haunted and that ghosts do exist! Guiley in her introduction says, Can I prove ghosts exist? No. But skeptics cannot disprove ghosts either. This is a book by believers for believers, and when this is understood, the work can be useful. The book is in dictionary format, with good use of white space and illustrations. The quality of the photographs is not good, but quality reproduction of old photographs is neither easy nor cheap. More than 600 entries (up from more than 500 in the second edition, published in 2000) range from a few paragraphs to a couple of pages, and although there is no bibliography, each article indicates further reading. There are extensive see and see also references and a detailed index. Unlike some of Guileys other works, this one indexes some hoaxes, including the Cottingley fairies, which deceived and embarrassed Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; but there is no separate article on fraud. The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal has a brief, dismissive entry. Believers and skeptics alike seeking information on various phenomena will find this book useful, and there are some fascinating biographies of individuals ranging from Harry Houdini to various mediums. Academic and public libraries with folklore and popular culture collections will want to consider this, as will larger public libraries with demand for materials on the supernatural. --Kathleen Stipek