

Tekst 2

Seeing ghosts: it's the spirit of the age



The need to believe in ghosts may be an instinct designed to help us cope with the idea of death

Last week it was revealed that more people than in the 1950s now believe in ghosts. This is less of a scientific age than we think, says **Tessa Mayes**

1 If you've ever thought a bump in the night
was the sound of your long-gone
grandmother haunting the attic, then
you're not alone. According to a survey
5 for UKTV, 42% of us now think ghosts exist,
compared with only a third of people in 1954.

2 And there's no shortage of folk willing to
go public about their ghostly experiences. Pop
singer Kylie Minogue claims she has been
10 "visited" by Michael Hutchence, a former
lover, who died in 1997. And Russell Grant,
the astrologer, has talked of being visited by
Princess Diana in a dream and feeling "clear
signs she wanted to make contact with me".

3 15 "The enthusiasm for things like ghosts,
horoscopes, angels and pixies reflects a back-
to-the-past frame of mind," says Francis
Wheen, author of *How Mumbo-Jumbo
Conquered the World*. "It does seem odd that
20 the extraordinary technological and scientific
developments of the modern age have been
accompanied by an epidemic of superstition
and pseudo-science."

4 Groups of paranormal enthusiasts are
25 emerging all over the country. "These things
come in cultural fashions," says David
Taylor, the chairman of Parasearch, a group
of ghost researchers. "First it was UFOs
following television programmes such as The

30 X Files and now it's ghosts because of
programmes about haunted houses."

5 But while television shows on the
paranormal offer late night entertainment, can
the investigation of ghosts ever be taken
35 seriously? In 2003 Professor Richard
Wiseman of Hertfordshire University revealed
his investigations into paranormal experiences
in the *British Journal of Psychology*, the first
time a serious scientific journal had published
40 such a paper. His research team had organised
more than 450 people to walk round haunted
sites. Wiseman concluded that people
genuinely experience something but these
feelings are the result of phenomena such as
45 poor lighting and magnetic fields exciting the
senses.

6 "I don't think all apparitions are just
creations of the mind," argues Bernard Carr,
professor of mathematics and astronomy at
Queen Mary University of London. "For
50 example, there are collective cases where
several people see the same apparition at the
same or different times. There are also cases
where the apparition gives information that
55 was unknown at the time but later verified.
Although we don't fully understand these
phenomena, scientists should investigate
them."

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7 That a fascination with the paranormal has
60 risen as there has been a decline in support for
traditional religion is of no surprise to Philip
Corr, a psychologist at the University of
Wales. He says it is part of our survival
instinct. “Psychologically, the death of others
65 is a highly emotional experience,” he says.

“The belief in ghosts and religion in general
may well help people cope with the
realisation that death is inevitable and final.”
8 Of course, believers in ghosts can always
70 ask non-believers for proof that ghosts don’t
exist. But nobody can prove a negative.

The Sunday Times

■ Tekst 2 Seeing ghosts: it's the spirit of the age

- 1p **3 ■** How can paragraphs 1 and 2 be summarised?
- A British people are still more superstitious than people in most other countries.
 - B More and more people believe in the supernatural and openly talk about it.
 - C People report far more sightings of famous ghosts than of ghosts of ordinary people.
 - D The belief in ghosts has increased since celebrities started sharing their stories with the public.
- “The enthusiasm ... of mind” (lines 15-17)
- 1p **4 ■** How does this sentence relate to the phenomenon introduced in paragraphs 1 and 2?
This sentence
- A is aimed at making fun of the phenomenon.
 - B mentions harmful consequences of the phenomenon.
 - C offers a possible explanation for the phenomenon.
 - D stresses the seriousness of the phenomenon.
- 1p **5 ■** What does David Taylor suggest in paragraph 4 about the widespread belief in ghosts?
- A It is a logical effect of the large number of television programmes about aliens.
 - B It is a temporary trend inspired by the attention that TV pays to the subject.
 - C It is becoming such a hype that serious research into the paranormal is hardly possible.
 - D It is usually based on a lack of information of what the supernatural is actually about.
- 1p **6 □** Waardoor worden waarnemingen van het bovennatuurlijke veroorzaakt volgens Richard Wiseman (alinea 5)?
- “I don't think all apparitions are just creations of the mind” (regels 47-48)
- 2p **7 □** Welke *twee* voorbeelden gebruikt Bernard Carr om deze uitspraak te ondersteunen?
- 1p **8 ■** How does Philip Corr view the “fascination with the paranormal” (line 59)?
- A As a basic human instinct that has been suppressed for a long time.
 - B As a means to make it easier to accept that people do not live forever.
 - C As a phenomenon that is stimulated by the religious concept of an afterlife.
 - D As proof that modern people are guided by feelings rather than by sense.
- 1p **9 ■** What is the tone of the last paragraph?
- A angry
 - B neutral
 - C pessimistic
 - D playful