

What is a ghost?

If we are to perform serious scientific research in the field of paranormal haunting, then we must level the playing field concerning what it is we are stalking.

So, just exactly what is a ghost anyway? If you ask this question among those of us who participate in the paranormal community, you will get a mixed reply. Let's look at some posted definitions.

From About.com – Paranormal Phenomena:

From [Stephen Wagner](#),
Your Guide to [Paranormal Phenomena](#).

“A ghost - or spirit or apparition - is the energy, soul or personality of a person who has died and has somehow gotten stuck between this plane of existence and the next. Most researchers believe that these spirits do not know they are dead. Very often they have died under traumatic, unusual or highly emotional circumstances. Ghosts can be perceived by the living in a number of ways: through sight (apparitions), sound (voices), smell (fragrances and odors), touch - and sometimes they can just be sensed.”

From Think Quest

“It is the spirit or soul of a dead person which is believed to be able to manifest itself to the living. “

From Wikipedia.com:

“A **ghost** is usually defined as the apparition of a deceased person, frequently similar in appearance to that person, and encountered in places he or she frequented, or in association with the person's former belongings. The word "ghost" may also refer to the spirit or soul of a deceased person, or to any spirit or demon. Ghosts are often associated with haunting, which is, according to the Parapsychological Association, "the more or less regular occurrence of paranormal phenomena associated with a particular locality (especially a building) and usually attributed to the activities of a discarnate entity; the phenomena may include apparitions, poltergeist disturbances, cold drafts, sounds of steps and voices, and various odors.”

From Ghost Web, IGHS:

“Ghosts are departed souls who have lived and died on this earth, but for some reason have elected or been forced to remain on this earth plane after death. It is my belief that the intelligence and the emotions that made up who we were in this life survive the death process. This energy may be considered as our souls, energy that can't be destroyed at death, but is transformed into another configuration. This energy is detectable with EMF meters that measures

milligauss units. Since we can measure the physical energy emitted by these entities, we know that ghosts are not figments of our imagination as some skeptics suggest. “

And finally from psychicadvice.com:

“A ghost is a spirit that has died physically and gone to the other side. Even though they have died to the body they still live on in spirit. Ghosts are not scary. They can be your mother, father, sister, brother, or other people you love. They retain the personalities that they had on earth. So just because you die doesn't mean you quit living, life goes on. “

There are many sites that attempt to define “ghost”. From our perspective, however, they all have one major flaw; they are metaphysical opinions of a source for specific phenomena rooted in folklore, with no scientific supporting evidence to enrich the definition with truth. In other words, scientifically, there is no such thing as a ghost, by this definition. So let's redefine what we are researching.

I propose that a “ghost” is a term applied to any non-ordinary phenomena that manifests itself in the physical dimension upon which we exist with out appreciable physical properties, but which leave markers in the environment that can not be readily explained. I am sure we could build upon this basic definition to flesh it out more, but you get the idea. So we are charged with a mission, should we choose to accept it, of further defining this phenomena we have labeled a “Ghost”. In order to do this, we must understand everything that is going on surrounding the event.

The occurrences encountered are many, and the types of activity are varied. We may have strange clouds that appear in our photographs; we may read anomalous energies from various parts of the spectrum; we may even record what appear to be human voices. But all of this evidence is lacking a common thread to tie them all up together in a neat bundle. So far, this has eluded us. Because the phenoemena is so transitory and varied, constant monitoring of the environment and collecting uninterrupted continuous data will be required to find the answer.

What we must do is trace back all effects to a source. In order to do this, we must look beyond the actual effect and try to discover the source. This will require using fixed sensor data logging devices monitored by a computer. It will require a search for the source using hand held localized detection instrumentation. We must measure things we haven't thought to measure, and document these things across a wide variety of places and conditions. Only then will the source begin to “materialize”. It may well be that everything we have encountered has a scientific and natural explanation. Or it may be that we have evidence of life beyond death. It may be that life after death IS a scientific and natural explanation. Only

discovering the source of the effect will tell us this answer, and it is this we must hunt impeccably. These things are the real phantoms we are seeking, and in a very real sense, “ghosts”.