

Book Review

Talking To The Dead

by George Noory and Rosemary Ellen Guiley

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George Noory is the well-known host of the Coast To Coast AM radio show that delves into all things paranormal. Rosemary Ellen Guiley, a repeat guest on George Noory's shows, is an expert on the paranormal who has written more than forty-five books in the field. She also conducts field investigations and does research into spirit communications. The following excerpt from the introduction sets forth their existing beliefs and where the book will take you:

"The developments in spirit communications over recent decades have been nothing short of astonishing. Whether you can accept the evidence or not, the results are impossible to dismiss. To us, the evidence is clear: we already have the tools for establishing real-time, two-way contact with the dead, as well as entities who perhaps live in parallel worlds to ours, and possibly even with versions of ourselves in parallel dimensions. This book focuses on exciting technological developments for talking to the dead. The field is constantly changing with new developments, not only involving the transmission of voices, but images as well."

The technology for communicating with the dead was originally referred to as "Electronic Voice Phenomenon" or "EVP." Early experimenters used tape recorders and would make recordings while asking questions of the departed spirits. When the tape was played back, sometimes the listener would hear apparent responses to the questions that were not audible to the human ear as the recording was made. The theory to explain this was that perhaps the spirit entities could somehow tweak the white background noise in the room to produce voices on the tape. Researchers then built more complicated devices which could provide more diverse sources of background noise to be tweaked. This included devices that would scan across the radio frequency spectrum. Some of these devices were no longer dependent upon playing a tape recording back to see what responses had been recorded. Some devices allowed the response to be heard in real time after the researcher's question had been asked.

As researchers with technical scientific backgrounds got more involved in this research, even more high tech gadgetry was used. Some researchers reported that messages in the form of text would appear on their computer screens. Other researchers reported receiving static images of the deceased on television monitors. At this point, with visual communication now added to the voice communication, some researchers decided to refer to the phenomena as "Instrumental Communication," a broader term with emphasis on technology and not the human sensory input involved. Mention is also made in the book of persons receiving telephone calls from the dead. This phenomenon is initiated from the other side, however, and has not been something that researchers here have been able to initiate.

There are fabulous stories told in the book about some of the early technically minded researchers who, after their deaths, came back with EVP communications from the other side,

in order to help their colleagues still among the living improve and perfect their gadgetry for better communication.

A hardened skeptic would fault the book and its authors for not demanding scientific proof, via standardized testing under controlled conditions that could be repeated, that the phenomenon is real and not the product of hoaxers, fakers and deluded true believers. Although the introduction to the book, quoted above, makes it clear that the authors are believers in the phenomenon, they do objectively report the claims of skeptics against certain researchers. Although some researchers may have falsified some results, I believe, based on my study of this phenomenon and my own research in a similar phenomenon, that this phenomenon is a real one.

If the phenomenon of receiving voices out of seemingly thin air is real, questions arise as to who or what is producing the voices. Are they really the voices of the dead? The authors spend a lot of time going over a range of possibilities. The answers, which are not mutually exclusive, include communications from the dead person presumed to be the source, from some evil entity or spirit, from someone in another dimension, and from your own higher self.

I found tidbits throughout the book that were interesting. For example, persons with psychic abilities appear to get better results with the devices. Some devices only work well with one or two users. A number of communications from the other side indicate that the use of these devices would not be necessary if one attuned his mind properly on a higher spiritual plane; the device is a crutch used by someone with an undeveloped spirit. Researchers in EVP or Instrumental Communication need to take precautions mentally to protect themselves since there are entities with evil intent who would like to bring harm to them. This same warning is given to anyone wanting to experiment with a Ouija board. Entities which identify themselves with a group number, e.g. Group 2033, have been reported as negative energies. One entity that identified himself as Technician to a number of researchers facilitated useful communications. One interesting experiment involved communication with a living person who was known to be asleep at the time of the experiment. The EVP communication involved the reception of correct, accurate answers to the questions asked. This raised many more questions about the source of the answers and what happens to our mind when we sleep.

I think the authors could have produced a more exciting, interesting book if they had included a CD with samples of EVP that have been recorded. Most people have not heard samples and this would give them a better idea of what rewards accrue to researchers who persist in studying the phenomenon. However, doing so could have put the book beyond the desired price point and reduced the number of sales.

-Mark Commerford

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