



Ghostly Encounters: The Hauntings of Everyday Life

Dennis Waskul, Michele Waskul

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“In the top corner of the window a pale, milky-white wisp is rising almost to the top of our ten-foot ceiling.... I am startled but not afraid.... Mostly, I am engrossed; I have never seen anything like this before (or since) and it fascinates me.”

Dennis Waskul writes these lines—about his first-hand experience with the supernatural—in the introduction to his beguiling book *Ghostly Encounters*. Based on two years of fieldwork and interviews with 71 midwestern Americans, the Waskuls’ book is a reflexive ethnography that examines how people experience ghosts and hauntings in everyday life. The authors explore how uncanny happenings become ghosts, and the reasons people struggle with or against a will to believe. They present the variety and character of hauntings and ghostly encounters, outcomes of people telling haunted legends, and the nested consequences of ghostly experiences.

Through these stories, *Ghostly Encounters* seeks to understand the persistence of uncanny experiences and beliefs in ghosts in an age of reason, science, education, and technology—as well as how those beliefs and experiences both reflect and serve important social and cultural functions.

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