

SOURCE A

Taken from Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle's "The Edge of the Unknown" (1930)

In this extract Arthur Conan-Doyle, best-known for writing the Sherlock Holmes stories, gives an account of his personal beliefs in - and experiences of - the supernatural.

One instance occurred some years ago. It was in my bedroom at Crowborough. I wakened in the night with an awareness that there was someone in the room, and that the presence was not of this world. I was lying with my back to the room, acutely awake, but utterly unable to move. It was physically impossible for me to turn my body and face this visitor. I heard measured steps across the room. I was conscious (without seeing it) that someone was bending over me, and then I heard a voice saying in a loud whisper, "Doyle, I come to tell you that I am sorry." A minute later my disability disappeared and I was able to turn but all was black darkness and perfectly still. My wife had not awakened and knew nothing of what had just passed.

It was no dream, I was perfectly conscious all the time. My visitor gave no name, but I felt that it was a certain individual to whom I had tried to give comfort when he was bereaved. He rejected my offer of support and died himself shortly afterwards. It may well be that he wished to express regret.

I had a second interesting experience some years ago. There was a church in the neighbourhood which had the reputation of being haunted. The party consisted of my wife and myself, my two sons, my daughter and a friend. It was ten o'clock when we presented ourselves at the door of the church, where we were met by an elderly villager. Swinging a lantern, he led the way to the choir end where we all seated ourselves in the stalls which the ancient monks once occupied.

For two hours I had sat in the dark upon my hard seat. The lights still came and went behind the altar, but they only flickered over the top of the high expanse which faced us, and all below was very black. And then suddenly, quite suddenly, something occurred which no sceptic could explain away.

It may have been forty feet from where I sat to the altar, and midway between, or roughly twenty feet from me - there was a dull haze of light, a sort of glowing cloud, a foot or so across, and about a man's height from the ground. We had been rustling and whispering, but the sudden utter silence showed me that my companions were as tense as I was. The light glimmered down, and hardened into a definite shape--or I should say shapes--since there were two of them.

They were two perfectly clear-cut figures in black and white, with a dim glow all their own. Their colouring and arrangement gave me a general idea of a priest's clothing. Whether they were facing the altar or facing each other was more than I could say, but they were not misty figures, they were solid shapes. For two or three minutes we all gazed at this amazing spectacle. Then my wife said loudly, "Friends, is there anything which we can do to help you?"

In an instant they were gone and we were peering into unbroken darkness with the lights still flickering above.

SOURCE B

Taken from *Discovery Channel News*, Oct 21st, 2011

DO GHOSTS EXIST? EXPLORING THE PARANORMAL

Despite the efforts of thousands of real-life ghost hunters over the past decade, the evidence for ghosts has not improved. Typically, the types of evidence offered for the paranormal fall into a few categories:

Personal Experiences

Ghost hunters often report personal feelings and experiences like, "I felt we were being watched," or "I felt like something didn't want us there." They also describe, for example, getting goose bumps upon entering a room or panicking at some unseen presence. There's nothing wrong with personal experiences, but they are not evidence of anything other than that people scare themselves in dark, spooky places.

Orbs

Many ghost hunters and books on hauntings claim that ghosts can be photographed, appearing as round or oval white shapes called orbs in the images. Many things can create orbs, including insects, dust and flash reflections. Orbs may seem otherworldly because they appear only in photographs and are usually invisible to the naked eye. To those unaware of the real explanations, they can be spooky, but there is nothing paranormal about them.

Ghost Equipment Results

Ghost investigators often use unscientific and unproven equipment and techniques in their search for spirits. Some use psychics to try and communicate with ghosts. Others use dowsing rods, which have never been scientifically proven to find anything (including water and restless spirits). Still others, striving for some semblance of science, use high-tech devices such as electromagnetic field detectors and infrared cameras. These devices are commonly sold as ghost hunting gear, but there is no logical or scientific reason to use this equipment when looking for the paranormal. EMF detectors measure electromagnetic fields, not ghosts; infrared cameras reveal the infrared spectrum, not ghosts. There is no evidence that ghosts have anything to do with electromagnetic fields, infrared images or changes in room temperature!

Electronic Voice Phenomena (EVPs)

Most ghost hunters, including the "Ghost Hunters" team, use handheld voice recorders in an attempt to capture a supposed ghost voice, or EVP. Often an investigator will hold the recorder while standing in the middle of a room and addressing the supposed spirit, or while walking around. He will later go back and review the recordings at high volume, listening for any faint murmurs, sounds or noises, which may be interpreted as ghost voices. For example, a ghost hunter may ask out-loud, "If there's a spirit here, what's your name?"

Often the investigator will get no answer at all; other times, if the ghost hunters wait long enough they'll hear some random sound that could be interpreted as a faint, mumbled name. The problem is that microphones are very sensitive and may record anything from someone whispering in the next room, to wind blowing, to ordinary random sounds from the environment, or even sounds from the ghost hunters themselves.

Q1: Read Source A, lines 12 to end.

Choose four statements below which are TRUE.

- Seven people were present for the haunting in the church ☐
- The two ghostly figures seemed to glow ☐
- The ghosts floated over the heads of the seated observers ☐
- Conan-Doyle's wife evidently saw the two ghosts also ☐
- Conan-Doyle thinks he imagined seeing the two ghosts ☐
- The apparitions seemed to vanish when they were addressed ☐
- Conan-Doyle's wife scared the ghosts away ☐

Q2: Refer to Source A and Source B. Write a summary to explain the different attitudes of the two writers towards the paranormal.

Aim to write 100 – 150 words.

Q3: Refer to the extract below, taken from Source B.

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How does the writer use language to suggest their disbelief in ghosts?