

The Supernatural and Metaphysical- Reality or Fantasy?

By

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1. Psychics in Fiction vs. Reality

It's been said that everyone is psychic, to a degree. But most people don't use their latent psychic abilities, so the ones who do seem extraordinary. In fact, we are more likely to gain any knowledge or awareness we have about people with psychic abilities from fiction, television, and movies, rather than true life experiences. Though we are fascinated with the idea of being able to use our minds in unusual ways, it seems to be more acceptable as a fantasy than a reality.

Real-Life Psychics

I have met several "real" psychics in my life, so I know they do exist. I enjoy having a psychic reading now and then, and at least half of those turned out to be accurate, meaning whatever they told me might happen was specific and verifiable. I'm not talking about generalizations that could apply to anyone, but names, dates, circumstances that no one else would know about in advance, including myself. It seems that some people can actually "read" you, and tap into something where they can tell you what may lay ahead.

A personal example- after my husband died, I got a psychic reading in Sedona, Arizona (mother of all psychic places to visit). This was actually a friend of a friend, and I did not pay her, we were just hanging out. She tapped into all kinds of stuff that was going on with me at the time, most of which was so accurate I got chills. She even predicted that I would remarry, and she saw a child involved.

I had just started dating again and being childless all my life, was against dating anyone with children or even contemplating marriage. Well, she told me I would meet him within nine months, but it only took six before I met the man I was going to marry—and his son.

Fictional Psychics

So...that is only one example, and I think it is extraordinary when people can do that. But in fiction we must have conflict, and so here are the most common types of psychics used in fiction:

Crime solvers—they can "see" where the bodies are buried, find missing children, etc.

Ghost whisperers—who can communicate with the dead

Evil psychics—played for the fear factor, their abilities used to hurt and /or control others

Comedic—played for laughs, as in Beetlejuice or Ghost (Whoopie Goldberg)

Being a romance author, I am particularly interested in psychics as people; how they interact with others, how it affects their relationships. But the nature of psychic phenomena lends itself to building tension, or conflict, since we don't know how it really works or why some people have it. It can be used for good but also things can go horribly wrong, as in my first novel, *Unexplained* (Higher Elevation Series Book One). Chris's ability to astral project brings him more than he ever dreamed, but it also puts him and his loved ones in danger.

Have you ever had a real-life psychic experience? What types of psychics do you enjoy reading about?

(If you'd like to discuss, contact info is at the end of this mini ebook. I love to hear from readers!)

2. Are You a Skeptic or a Believer? Me, too.....

When it comes to psychic phenomena, I have a decidedly split personality. I have always been fascinated by the unexplained. From ghost stories, premonitions, reincarnation and mythology, to theories of the nature of reality and the origin of the universe, I have studied them all. The enormous popularity of Paranormal and Fantasy-themed books and movies is testament to the fact that many others are also drawn to the exploration of unexplained phenomena.

Just about everyone I've met has had a personal story of something that happened to them that defied logical explanation, such as:

1. Encounters with strange "energies", apparitions or ghosts.
2. Deceased loved ones who appeared in a dream or vision.
3. Strong precognitive feelings about someone or something that came to pass, which they had no way of knowing of beforehand.
4. Thinking of someone they had not seen in years, who then calls or contacts them on social media out of the blue.

Perhaps it is these encounters, these brushes with seemingly unexplainable forces, that makes Paranormal/Fantasy/Science Fiction novels, movies, and television shows so popular. It is entertaining to live in these other worlds vicariously, but sometimes it also provides an explanation for our unanswered questions. Never mind that vampires don't really exist, that Hogwarts is not an actual school, or that zombies haven't taken over Atlanta (yet). These stories offer a glimpse into an often over-the-top scenario of "what if they really did exist?"

As fascinating and entertaining as it is to read about psychic phenomena, alternate universes, and supernatural beings, in my heart I want proof. My Geek side wants an explanation! I can suspend disbelief as well as anyone while I am being entertained. But when the writer of a novel or screenplay provides a plausible explanation for the hijinks and other-worldly shenanigans going on in their story, then I am extra-thrilled. It makes the suspension of disbelief sweeter when I can imagine that it really might be possible. It shows the author paid attention to detail and has intimate knowledge of their story world. I don't want to be distracted by glaring "that could never happen" thoughts.

What about you? Does a theory or explanation add to your enjoyment of a Paranormal or Fantasy novel? Does the lack of a plausible cause or explanation bother you?

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3. What is the Secret to the Law of Attraction?

You may have heard the phrase "Law of Attraction" before. But what does it really mean? Simply put, "Like Attracts Like" and "You are what you think about" are two phrases that sum it up pretty well. It is a philosophy which has been around for thousands of years, but has become a social movement within the past ten years or so.

The Secret

I first heard of it in 2007, when a friend asked if I had heard of the movie "**The Secret**", based on the book by **Rhonda Byrne**. It could be found online at that time, and so I ordered the DVD. It chronicles Ms. Byrne's discovery of the Law of Attraction, the principle that a person's thoughts and desires actually influence the outcome of what happens in their lives.

In other words, we can control what happens to us. We can shape our own reality.

I was pleased to hear this, but I already knew that it was true. I had been focusing, daydreaming, journaling about, and envisioning what I wanted in life, well, my whole life. And I can honestly say to this day, there is not anything that I truly wanted that did not come to pass eventually.

The Power To Manifest

This form of manifesting human desires has been around as long as humans. Prayer, chanting, spell casting, visualization...people have used their minds for millennia to bring about what they want. The trick is to be able to consciously utilize the techniques that work on a consistent basis. It is easy to become overwhelmed by life and to get in the habit of living by default, reacting to random events as though we have no control. It does take effort to manifest your desires, but like anything else, it can be learned, practiced, and improved upon.

This is not to say that once you employ the law of Attraction, you will never have anything bad happen in your life. Contrast (negative events or situations) is an integral part of life. It is how we learn what we do want, by experiencing what we do not want. It all hinges on our power of focus. Are we talking about, and/or obsessing over what is wrong, what we do *not* want? Or are we hopefully positive and expecting the things we want to arrive?

Books, Blogs & DVDs

If you are interested in finding out more about how to use your very thoughts to improve your life, you may find the list below helpful. There is so much more to this subject than I can discuss here, but I would love to know if you have any links to websites, books, movies, etc. related to the Law of Attraction.

The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne (Book and Movie)

Ask and It Is Given, by Abraham (Esther and Jerry Hicks) They have produced several books and give awesome seminars.

Maggie Shayne's Bliss Blog- Romance author and Law of Attraction Expert

Until then, remember: “Thoughts Become Things”!

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4. Using Negative Emotions As Tools

Lately I've been dealing with a big pile of regret. It sucks when you look back and realize if you'd only chosen Road A instead of Road B, you'd be much better off.

Or so it seems. The truth is, we can't predict the future (or the winning Powerball numbers, unfortunately). We can't go back and undo the past, either. All we have to work with is the here and now.

Still, in my case, if I had chosen Road A when I made a major life decision years ago, I'd be quite well off financially. I am doing fine now, and am grateful for all of my blessings, but when I chose road B, I believed I was making the more lucrative choice.

The Only Constant is Change

Of course, nothing went the way I expected it to, even though I was quite knowledgeable, had researched the situation to death, and analyzed it thoroughly. I thought it would be more profitable to hold out and take things slow over time, rather than taking a quick profit and bailing.

What I have since learned, the hard way, is that we cannot count on things staying the same. Change is inevitable. There are so many aspects of life we have no control over. I made that decision way back when partly out of fear. Taking Road A would have also meant starting over completely somewhere new, so I opted to stay with the familiar, and convinced myself it would work out better in the long run.

I also made the decision out of greed, which is a form of fear. When we are greedy, it is because we believe resources are finite. The irony is now I have so much less than I would have if I had taken a leap into the unknown and cashed out of my situation. Thus, the regret I have been grappling with. If only I had known!

Emotional Toolbox

Since I can't undo the damage that has been done, I am trying to make the best of what I have. Regret is a negative emotion, and I cannot afford to let it drag me down. So I decided to figure out a way to use my regret as a tool to help me move forward. Instead of feeling sorry over lost opportunities, I need to seek out new ones.

If you know anything about the Law of Attraction (and if you don't, you should learn about it), you know that negative emotions have consequences. The universe responds to our level of vibration, caused by our thoughts, or what our mind focuses on. Thoughts are almost always accompanied by some level of emotion, which can be either positive or negative.

How can you tell if an emotion is positive or negative? By how it makes you *feel*.

The Law of Attraction is a process, a way of thinking and behaving with the goal of bringing about that which you desire, but it's not a magic formula. It takes practice and conscious effort to live deliberately and not simply by default. For more information on what it's all about, I highly recommend the works of Abraham-Hicks, or Rhonda Byrne. There are many other wonderful books by knowledgeable authors out there, too, which can be found easily by searching online or browsing the New Age section of bookstores.

But Does It Work?

So does the Law of Attraction really work? Yes, and no. I say yes because it has worked in my own life, and I have seen real-life examples of it working for others. When you consciously focus on positive thoughts as much as possible, and behave as though what you desire is already yours, things do begin to happen. They may be coincidence, divine intervention, or serendipity. Or maybe you just notice things you would not otherwise, and take inspired action.

I say no because we often sabotage ourselves by giving in to negative thinking and focusing more on what we don't want, which only brings us **more** of what we don't want. The universe responds to what you focus on and brings you more of it, and it does not distinguish between which side of the spectrum it falls on. So negative thoughts, while sometimes unavoidable, should be handled carefully. That's why I choose to think of negative emotions as a tool to be used, instead of letting them drag me down.

How do I do this? By emotionally detaching myself from the feeling. I am still feeling regret, but I am now looking at it as a tool, which can teach me something. I feel regret because I missed out on something, I let a seemingly fantastic opportunity slip from my grasp.

The Truth

But regret is only how I *feel* about the situation, it's not the truth of it. Just as Road B turned out to be nothing like I'd hoped, Road A may have had problems or surprises that I could not imagine. Maybe there are things I found along road B (like meeting my husband?) that would never have happened on Road A.

So by disassociating myself from the negative feeling of regret, I am able to learn from it. Looking at life objectively without the emotions, even for a few minutes, can help you to get back to feeling more positive. I know I am. Who knows what lies ahead?

Have you ever used the Law of Attraction? Does positive thinking work for you?

Author's Note: Shortly after I wrote this post, all kinds of wonderful things started happening in my life. Coincidence? Maybe. But I no longer have those regrets.

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5. My Top Five Astrology Books- Useful and Fun

Does anybody pay attention to Astrology anymore? Well, probably more than you would guess. It's one of those things that fades in popularity, only to come back around again. Though it is generally regarded as nonsense, there must be something to it that interests people, since it never really goes away.

I am a skeptic, but due to my natural curiosity, I have an open mind when it comes to the unexplained. Astrology is one of those things that I don't really believe in, but I love to read about. I have found daily or monthly horoscopes (predictions) to be useless, so none of the books on my list contain those. But what keeps me interested in Astrology is this: roughly eighty per cent of the time, the personality profiles are accurate.

That said, the personality traits of the various signs are never exact, which is a good thing. It would be horrible if there were only twelve types of personalities in the world. But more often than not, I have found people to behave enough like their Sun Sign profile that many times I can guess a person's sign before I know their birthdate (surprises them every time). I have read many books and articles on Astrology, for fun and to educate myself.

The List

Many writers use Astrology to round out character profiles. Whatever you may use it for, I hope this list of my favorite, most accurate, and most useful books on Astrology will help:

Linda Goodman's Sun Signs and Linda Goodman's Love Signs- both top spots go to the most famous and popular Astrologer of the last century. In 1968, her Sun Signs book was a runaway bestseller, catapulting her to the top of the New York Times Best Seller list. This was one of the first books I read on Astrology, and I was hooked. Her anecdotal style made the personality profiles more personal, and relatable. This in-depth study of each sign and how they interact with others is a great introduction book. Though it was written long ago, it still rings true.

Her follow up, **Love Signs**, was published in 1978 and was also a best seller. Focusing on the romantic aspects, it built upon the original book, and was also written in a very personal style. Linda's writing makes you feel as though she is sitting in your living room telling stories about the various signs.

For a spicier read, try **The Celestial Sexpot's Handbook**, by self-proclaimed "Astrosexologist", **Kiki T.** (hey, everybody needs a hook). Think of this as a straight girl's guide to seduction, sign by sign. She profiles each sign, with tips on how to spot, seduce, date, and have ultimate sex with the men of each sign. While some of it is over the top, this book does spark the imagination. She even includes a "How to Dump" section, in case you find the relationship is not working out (this one might be invaluable for writers who use astrology in character profiles).

By far the funniest book I ever read on Astrology is **Darkside Zodiac by Stella Hyde**. Written with tons of snark, this book focus on the not-so-nice side of each astrological sign, with hilarious results. Hubby and I read about each sign, easily recognizing everyone we knew, including ourselves. Like any good satire, it contains a kernel of truth, and that is what makes it so funny.

The last book on my list is another one that focuses on relationships: **Astrology's Secrets to Hot Romance, by Phyllis F. Mitz, M.A.** The author details the traits of each sign, and the challenges of dealing with each one. The second half pairs up each of the signs, how and why they get along, and how to deal with the ways they don't. Also a good one for writers to utilize.

Astrology has been around in one form or another since the dawn of civilization, so it's not likely to go away any time soon. Why not have fun with it? I am still skeptical, but fascinated at the bits of truth I do find in it. What do you think?

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