

2 Challenging death

Doc 1. Discover "The Ghost Club"



If you were to travel back in time to ask a number of 19th-century people to name their topmost concerns, you'd likely find that not a few of them would discuss the problem of...



5 Ghosts.

Along with Abolitionism and Feminism, one of the most significant movements to emerge from the Victorian era was Spiritualism, and it was a serious business, in both an idiomatic and economic sense. Psychics and mediums preyed on credulous and grief-stricken¹ people hoping to reconnect with lost loved ones. Hoaxes² abounded, sceptics and true believers formed societies and published literature. You might say that for Victorians, "Spirits" had all the cultural power that UFOs³ had for post-war Americans. So influential was Spiritualism

that it inspired many of the leading intellectuals in England to found an exclusive club devoted to pursuing the paranormal.

Of course many people disapproved of such investigations, considering them heretical to religious, philosophical, or scientific doctrines. Therefore, the Ghost Club "kept scant⁴ records of their meetings, so members were able to speak freely about their beliefs without fear of ridicule—sort of a 'Spiritualists Anonymous.'"

openculture.com, 2017



▲ "Spirit" photograph claimed they could photograph ghosts or spirits.

1. extremely sad because of the death of sb 2. canulars 3. OVNI 4. limited

- Look at the picture and read the title of the article. Imagine what the "Ghost Club" was.
- Read the article and explain the success of Spiritualism in the 19th century.
- Find out why this club had to be secret.