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Robert E. Bartholomew, Joe Nickell
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#2356484 in Books 2015-06-19 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.21 x .50 x 6.14l, .0 #File Name: 1440839689172 pages | File size: 38.Mb

Robert E. Bartholomew, Joe Nickell : American Hauntings: The True Stories behind Hollywood's Scariest Movies from The Exorcist to The Conjuring before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Hauntings: The True Stories behind Hollywood's Scariest Movies from The Exorcist to The Conjuring:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Well written and logical
By Mystic Seer
Let's start with the critique: The Exorcist chapter is rushed and is short on detail compared to other chapters in the book. Further, Of all chapters, this chapter demands the most investigation and scrutiny due to the extreme and wild nature of the claims. It would be nice to see a revision of this chapter with much greater detail in a later expanded edition (hopefully a free update to us Kindle users who paid an astronomical \$35.00 for the eBook). There is another investigator who investigated the 1949 case and he provides exhaustive detail from the perspective of Father Halloran himself. Halloran categorically denies anything paranormal in the case and provides a fascinating perspective. I suggest this research be examined for inclusion in a future revision of the book. This story is available on-line if one looks for it for those curious.
The Pros: The book really shines for those who appreciate logic and reason. The authors provide indisputable analyses for many mis-perceived paranormal events. Most chapters are packed with excellent case details and my favorite aspect, case analysis. The authors take great care as to not be "ignorant skeptics" and only provide the facts paired with logical deduction and analysis; not a condemnation or lecture of your belief system. This is very difficult to find as most authors can't find the balance between being an ardent believer or skeptic without injecting their own ideology; kudos to the authors for finding a way to do this in an objective way.
Next, the book provides excellent research (even going as far as to cite references throughout the book). This book should be required reading for fringe disciplines like parapsychology that could stand to better understand "completeness of investigation" before making knee-jerk conclusions. There are numerous examples in the book of people making quick conclusions only to eat Crowe later due to a lack of critical thinking skills. I don't give 5 star ratings easily, but I can honestly say I would give this book 5 stars if The Exorcist chapter was expanded. I will update to 5 stars in the future if this is done.
An excellent read!
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Productions like The Amityville Horror
By Bruce E. Dettman
The oft posted on-screen notice of Based on a true story promises the viewer in no uncertain terms that the upcoming celluloid experience will indeed be grounded in some semblance of fact and reality. This seems particularly true of late in the genre of supernatural movies where paranormal activity and ghostly incidents are depicted on screen as having been based on factual accounts and real life experiences. Productions like The Amityville Horror, An American Haunting, Poltergeist and The Conjuring, all covered in this volume, are said to be fact-based or least to have been inspired in part by legitimate and sincere testimonials of those experiencing such ghostly and paranormal phenomena. But is this really the case? How accurate are the events depicted in such films and how do they stand up to serious and untainted investigatory scrutiny? This was the question that authors Robert Bartholomew and Joe Nickel, set out to answer in their new book American Hauntings. Both men have impressive credentials as writers and researchers and they more than prove their worth as they surgically and dispassionately dissect and separate those hauntings and spectral visitations depicted on the big screen and said to be genuine, from the recorded and documented truth of what actually transpired during these alleged incidents. There are no axes to grind here, just a highly commendable desire to get at the truth. Kudos to this duo of researchers for their tireless efforts in doing their best to achieve this.
1 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Not a bad book, but his facts on The Amityville Horror ...
By KarenFan
Not a bad book, but his facts on The Amityville Horror are completely wrong and misconstrued. There was a legitimate demonic force in that house, one that existed beyond human comprehension. Look, either you believe or you don't. Bartholomew comes off as being in the same camp as Dawkins, Hitchens, etc, when it comes to this stuff, stating that belief in the supernatural--or any belief system period-- is simply delusional and childish. Won't go into the details here of why I came to believe the Amityville case was legitimate, that's beyond the scope of this review. However, I would render this book a "C". He needs to do a little bit more in depth research and not rely on third party sources or hearsay for his information. Not a keeper. I donated this one to the Goodwill.

We investigate seven of America's greatest hauntings; cases so compelling that they have been hailed as genuine by parapsychologists, and turned into major media productions in Hollywood. Just how accurate and reliable are media portrayals of these 'true life' hauntings, and how strong is the evidence supporting the original claims? We scrutinize the evidence behind such films as The Exorcist, The Amityville Horror, An American Haunting, The Conjuring, and The Haunting in Connecticut. Also examined is the reliability of popular TV shows such as Unsolved Mysteries and Paranormal Witness.

A delightful and enlightening romp... American Hauntings is certain to become a classic. Scott Lilienfeld, Professor of Psychology, Emory University With surgical precision, they adeptly separate myth from reality in this engrossing expose... Bruce Dettman, author of The Horror Factory ... [A] meticulously researched analysis of some of the most well known cases of haunted houses and poltergeists. ... a spellbinding and engaging read. Keith Petrie, Professor of Health Psychology, University of Auckland In American Hauntings, Robert Bartholomew and Joe Nickell... give us the facts behind the stories, and natural explanations for apparently supernatural phenomena, demystifying while illuminating the wonders of human psychology. Dr. Michael Shermer, columnist, Scientific American; author of The Moral Arc I really enjoyed American Hauntings. Beautifully written and lucidly argued, with a dry sense of humor, and all the citations my heart could desire. Kyla Lee Ward, coauthor of Prismatic, winner of the 2007 Aurealis Award for

Best Horror Novel "I do not believe in the supernatural or the paranormal, angels or demons, or poltergeists or exorcisms, and yet so powerful are the Hollywood films that portray such phenomena as real that even I get chills watching them. If a skeptic can be so moved, imagine the effect such films have on general believing audiences. In *American Hauntings*, Robert Bartholomew and Joe Nickell, the world's foremost ghostbusters, give us the facts behind the stories and natural explanations for apparently supernatural phenomena, demystifying while illuminating the wonders of human psychology." (Michael Shermer, Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, and author of *Why People Believe Weird Things*, *The Believing Brain*, and *The Moral Arc*) "Not to be missed . . . Bartholomew and Nickell are demon researchers with no agenda save getting at the truth. With surgical precision, they adeptly separate myth from reality in this engrossing expose of the real stories behind a crop of successful Hollywood films reportedly based on legitimate ghostly manifestations." (Bruce Dettman, author of *The Horror Factory*) "A delightful and enlightening romp through the little-known scientific evidence underlying seven supposed hauntings, all immortalized in familiar Hollywood films. This is a much-needed reminder that the facts behind allegedly paranormal events are almost always more fascinating than the fictions. *American Hauntings* is certain to become a classic." (Scott O. Lilienfeld, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Emory University, and Coauthor of *50 Great Myths of Popular Psychology*.) "A meticulously researched analysis of some of the most well known cases of haunted houses and poltergeists. Bartholomew and Nickell apply their considerable detective nous and skills in critical analysis to expose and examine the evidence behind each haunting. The result is a spellbinding and engaging read." (Dr. Keith J. Petrie, Professor of Health Psychology, School of Medicine, University of Auckland) About the Author Robert E. Bartholomew, PhD, is a medical sociologist who teaches social sciences at Botany College, Auckland, New Zealand. Joe Nickell, PhD, is a prominent paranormal investigator and former resident magician at the Houdini Hall of Fame.