

Bumps in the Night!!!!

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Paranormal "U"

What is Matrixing and Pareidolia?

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Pareidolia is a type of illusion that involves the capacity of people to see patterns in formless data, the way in which the human brain is optimized to recognize faces. This also explains why we are so good at picking out meaningful shapes in random patterns. This phenomenon could be responsible for a host of otherwise unexplained sightings, such as the face of the Virgin Mary on a toasted cheese sandwich. In the same way, a chance arrangement of clothing, shadows, or rocks could account for ghostly figures or faces in photographs. It is the desire to see something in nothing, to connect reality to our fantasies. Everything around us is powered by, made of, and sustained by the invisible --atoms, dust, cells, microbes, molecules, genes. Even the most ordinary things are mysterious. There are almost a thousand particles of dust in every cubic inch of air (Marsching, 2003). When one closes their eyes and stares at the darkness, even nothing becomes something: a star field, a fractal simulation, a blurry halo. It satisfies our desire to place ourselves within the world--we connect the known with the unknown to create an order that is vibrant and a reflection of ourselves. Jesus was seen in a Hubble image of the Eagle Nebula. They took a small portion of the tip of one of the gaseous columns, turned it on its side, and found an image of Jesus with long, flowing hair that seems to point right at us. Never mind the fact that the light coming from there is seven thousand years old, about five thousand years older than Jesus. Their faith drove them to see the divine in a photograph of the unreachable remote (Marsching, 2003). According to scientists, the phenomenon occurs because humans tend to recognize familiar objects as a survival technique. We look at randomness in nature; clouds, trees, rock formations; and see images of the familiar (Kozlowski, 2009).

SyFy's Ghost Hunters describe matrixing as being, "...the human mind's natural tendency to find familiar shapes in complex shapes or colors. In other words, finding a face in the shapes and shadows of a collection of objects."

As paranormal investigators, we cannot stop our natural tendency to recognize patterns from occurring, but we can certainly be aware of it, and look to expect it. By examining closer what we believe we see and hear, we can then attempt to get closer to the truth. Take the time to understand how you perceive things, and how the world around us can appear differently to different people. By doing so, you will sharpen your own paranormal investigation skills.

References

- Kozlowski, D. (2009, October 13). Commentary: Human beings tend to look for patterns even when none exist. *Daily Record*.
Marsching, J. (Fall 2003). Orbs, blobs, and glows: Astronauts, UFO's, and photography. *Art Journal*.