

'A richly sourced and stimulating review of aspects of the paranormal in contemporary popular culture, grounded in a reading of the historical developments which are behind current practices and beliefs but primarily relying on original and illuminating data collected by the author'.

John Corner, *Visiting Professor in Communication Studies, University of Leeds, UK*

'In this fascinating and scholarly book, Annette Hill explores the revival of interest in spirits, ghosts and psychic experiences in a variety of popular cultural forms. Her previous interests in reality TV and audiences run through the book as she examines the way that popular culture and everyday life mingle in the construction of identity and experience'.

Peter Lunt, *Professor of Media and Communications, Brunel University, UK*

## THE PARANORMAL HAS GONE MAINSTREAM.

Beliefs are on the rise, with almost half of the British population, and two-thirds of Americans, claiming to believe in extrasensory perceptions and hauntings. Psychic magazines like *Spirit* and *Destiny*, television shows such as *Fringe*, *Ghost Whisperer* and *Most Haunted*, ghost-cams and e-poltergeists, bestselling books on mind, body and spirit, and magicians like Derren Brown have moved from the outer limits to the centre of popular culture, turning paranormal beliefs and scepticism into revenue streams.

*Paranormal Media* offers a unique, timely exploration of the extraordinary, unexplained and supernatural in popular culture, looking in unusual places in order to understand this phenomenon. Early spirit forms such as magic lantern shows or the spirit photograph are re-imagined as a search for extraordinary experiences in reality TV, ghost tourism, and live shows. Through a popular cultural ethnography, and critical analysis in social and cultural theory, this ground-breaking book by Annette Hill presents an original and rigorous examination of people's experiences of spirits and magic. In popular culture, people are players in an orchestral movement about what happens to us when we die. In a very real sense the audience is the show. This book is the story of audiences and their participation in a show about matters of life and death.

*Paranormal Media* will be a highly interesting read for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as academics, on a wide range of television, media, cultural studies, and sociology courses.

**Annette Hill** is Professor of Media at the Communication and Media Research Institute, University of Westminster, UK. She has authored numerous books and articles on television and popular culture, including *Restyling Factual Television* (2007) and *Reality TV* (2005).