

THE TRUE ACCOUNTS OF THE PARANORMAL  
INVESTIGATORS FEATURED IN THE BLOCKBUSTER FILM  
***THE CONJURING***

**THE**  
**DEMONOLOGIST**

THE EXTRAORDINARY CAREER OF  
**ED & LORRAINE**  
**WARREN**

**GERALD BRITTLE**

A black crow is perched on a dark, gnarled branch that extends diagonally from the bottom left towards the right. The crow is facing left. The background is a dramatic, cloudy sky in shades of grey and white.

**THE  
DEMONOLOGIST**  
The Extraordinary Career  
of Ed + Lorraine Warren

**Gerald Brittle**



GRAYMALKIN  
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**To M.M.**

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Spirit: (spir.it), A supernatural, incorporeal, rational being or personality, usually regarded as imperceptible at ordinary times to the human senses, but capable of becoming visible at pleasure, and frequently conceived as troublesome, terrifying, or hostile to mankind.

—*The Oxford English Dictionary*

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# Contents

[I. Beyond Amityville](#)

[II. Art and Apparitions](#)

[III. Annabelle](#)

[IV. Unnatural Phenomena](#)

[V. A Conjuring Book for Christmas](#)

[VI. Of Unworldly Origin](#)

[VII. Infestation: The Process Begins](#)

[VIII. Oppression: The Strategy Revealed](#)

[IX. A Family Under Attack](#)

[X. Deliverance](#)

[XI. A Servant of Lucifer](#)

[XII. The Entity Returns](#)

[XIII. A Soul in Hostage](#)

[XIV. The Enfield Voices](#)

[XV. One More Question, Please](#)

# I

## Beyond Amityville

Outside Ed Warren's office in Fairfield County, an old chapel clock ticked away the passing moments with quiet, mechanical precision. All else stood still. It was the middle of a cold, dark night in New England.

Inside the office, a brass lamp lit the desk where Ed Warren, a pensive, gray-haired man of fifty, sat working. Hundreds of books surrounded him, most bearing strange, arcane titles on the mysterious lore of demonology. Above the desk hung photographs of monks and grim-faced exorcists, standing with Ed Warren in abbeylike settings. For Ed, working in the still silence of night, it had been a wicked day—one that was not yet over.

Just before the hour, the clock movement came alive in a series of clicks and relays, finally churning up three somber, resonating bongs. At the third stroke, Ed looked up, listened into the darkness, then went back to writing. It was three o'clock in the morning, the true witching hour, the hour of the Antichrist. And now, unbeknownst to him, Ed Warren was on borrowed time.

Only hours before, Ed and Lorraine Warren had returned to their home in Connecticut after having been called in to investigate claims of a “haunted house” on Long Island’s south shore, in a pleasant residential suburb of New York City. In December 1975, the house had been purchased by George and Kathleen Lutz, who moved into it around Christmas of that year with their three young children. A year before the Lutzes bought the house, the eldest son of the previous owner murdered the six sleeping members of his family at 3:15 in the morning of November 13, 1974, with a .35 caliber rifle.\* On January 15, 1976, the Lutzes fled from the house, contending that they had been victimized by manifest supernatural forces. It was a case that later came to be known as *The Amityville Horror*.

By the end of January 1976, the press had become fully aware of the Lutz family’s claim of a bizarre experience in the house, and promptly called experts into the case. The experts brought in were Ed and Lorraine Warren. The Warrens were consulted because, in professional circles, they are considered to be perhaps this country’s leading authorities on the subject of spirits and supernatural phenomena. Over the course of some three decades, Ed and Lorraine Warren have investigated over three *thousand* paranormal and supernatural disturbances.

The question the news media had essentially wanted answered was whether there was a “ghost” in the house at the time.

The answer the Warrens gave at the end of their three-day investigation, however, was something no one had bargained for. Indeed, their answer literally strained credulity.

“Yes,” the Warrens disclosed at the time, “in our judgment, there was a *spirit* that had plagued the Lutzes in the house. But,” they also concluded, “*no* ghost was present.”



What did this paradoxical statement mean? Did this imply there were *other* kinds of spirits than ghosts?

Incredibly, the answer the Warrens gave was “Yes!”

“There are two types of spirits that are encountered in true haunting situations,” the Warrens explained on March 6, 1976. “One is human; the other, however, is *inhuman*. An inhuman spirit is something that has never walked the earth in human form.”

The Warrens’ sobering information was not merely well-intentioned speculation—because fully two weeks before, Ed and Lorraine Warren had been confronted by an inhuman spirit in their own home. The visitation happened to Ed first.

Ed Warren’s office is located in a small, cottage-sized building attached to the main house by a long enclosed passageway. As Ed sat working on preliminary details of the Amityville case that fateful February morning, the latch at the end of the passageway snapped open, followed by the percussive boom of the heavy wooden door. Footsteps then started toward the office.

Ed leaned back in his chair, waiting for Lorraine to enter with a much-needed cup of coffee.

“In here,” Ed Warren called out. Long moments passed, however, and she did not appear. “Lorraine?” Ed called out again, but there was no reply.

What he heard instead, building in the distance, was an eerie, howling wind. It was not the whistling of wind under the eaves, but rather the menacing roar of a distant cyclone. Goose flesh rose on his arms.

“*Lorraine?*” he asked forcefully. “*Are you there?*” But still there was no response.

As the ominous swirling sound built in power and intensity, Ed quickly thought back over the last few moments. It then occurred to him that he’d heard only *three* footsteps in the passageway—not the continuous tread of a person walking. Something was wrong!

Suddenly, the desk lamp dimmed to the strength of a candle flame. Then, abruptly, the temperature in the office plunged to that of a walk-in freezer. A rank, pungent smell of sulfur rose in the room.

Suspicious of the unnatural clamor, Ed Warren opened a desk drawer and withdrew a vial of holy water and a large wooden crucifix. He then got up and walked a few steps out of his office into the anteroom. As he did, there swirled out of the passageway a horrendous, conical whirlwind.

Pointed at the bottom, broad at the top, the thing was blacker than the natural blackness of night. Far larger than a man, the swirling black mass moved into the dimly lit room and drifted slowly to Ed’s left side and came to a halt some ten feet away. As Ed watched, it appeared to grow even denser and blacker than it was before! Indeed, within the swirl, he could see that something was beginning to take shape. An entity was beginning to manifest in physical form!

As a demonologist, Ed Warren knew he had to act quickly, to take the initiative before this fearsome black mass transformed itself into something even more forbidding and dangerous.

Holding the cross toward what was now rapidly changing into a macabre hooded spectre, Ed Warren stepped forward. The moment he did, however, the entity moved defiantly *toward him*!

Ed stopped and stood his ground as the form slowly drifted forward. When the swirling black mass was no more than a few feet away, Ed methodically, and with absolute determination, showered the thing in the sign of the cross with the contents of the holy water vial. Then he spoke the ancient command: “In the name of Jesus Christ, I *command you* to leave!”

For eternal seconds the black mass stayed motionless, no more than a foot away from the cross. Then, slowly, it began to back off—though not before giving Ed a clear vision of himself and Lorraine involved in a potentially deadly automobile accident along a highway. With that, the entity withdrew into the passageway from whence it came.

An enormous sense of relief came over Ed Warren as he stood, sweating profusely, in the freezing cold room. Yet, as he attempted to collect his thoughts, the vicious snarl of fighting animals suddenly erupted outside the house. Immediately, Ed realized there were *no* animals fighting: the visitation was still in progress. The entity had simply moved upstairs to attack Lorraine!

Avoiding the passageway, Ed flung open the side door to the office and ran up the back steps of the house.

He would be too late.

Upstairs, Lorraine Warren sat in bed reading the biography of Padre Pio, a remarkable Capuchin monk whom many believe is destined for sainthood. No matter how exhausted, Lorraine nevertheless will not sleep when Ed must work alone late at night in the office. After a lifetime of work in the supernatural, both Ed and Lorraine Warren know they are never alone, ever.

As Lorraine sat quietly reading, a dreadful pall swept over the room. Then, setting the book down, she too realized that something was wrong. *Very* wrong!

“I was terror-stricken,” Lorraine recalls, “but I didn’t know what I was afraid of. I looked around the room, but nothing was there. I then looked down at our two dogs, asleep beside the bed. They were absolutely motionless. Except the hair on each dog, from head to tail, was standing straight up in the air! Then, out of nowhere, complete pandemonium started up.”

The swirling black entity that Ed had repelled only a minute before had apparently moved back through the passageway and into the house. The horrendous invader announced its arrival by producing a thunderous, pounding noise that sounded to Lorraine “like someone beating on sheet metal with a hammer.” The violent bashing sound jolted her—then, within seconds, the heat was totally drawn from the room, leaving Lorraine quaking in the cold. After that, the terrible pounding stopped, and she too heard the swirling sound of a whirlwind coming toward her. The menacing, ungodly noise came from the direction of the passageway one floor below. Terrified, she listened as the whirlwind came up the stairs, and swirled into the kitchen, then the dining room, the living room...

“Whatever was out there seemed to be *searching* for me,” says Lorraine. “What was it? Why was it here? Then instantly a swirling black cyclone flew into the bedroom and confronted me.

“I could not begin to relate the sheer desperate terror I felt as that morbid black thing inside the whirlwind came closer and closer to me,” Lorraine remembers. “I tried to move, but I *couldn’t*. I tried to scream, but no words came out! I felt a sense of doom then that I have never felt before.

As a psychic, I knew this was a spirit of death. But it seemed to want even more than death: it wanted *me*, my self, my being.

“Then it got worse,” Lorraine continues. “I felt myself being drawn *into* that raging black thing. And there was nothing I could do to prevent it! Mechanically, I did the only thing I could think of: I called out in the name of God for protection. Then, somehow, I got the ability to make a cross—a great *big* cross—in the air between it and me. That stopped the thing. But it wouldn’t go away! I didn’t know what to do next. At that point, thank God, Ed came running into the house. As he did, this thing swirled into the next room, went right through the bricks and up the chimney. Then it was over. Nothing was broken; nothing was smashed afterwards. Nevertheless, this was not *out first* physical encounter with an inhuman spirit!”

What confronted Ed and Lorraine Warren in those early morning hours was not a ghost. (Nor was it something seen only by them. The same swirling black mass has been reported by others.) Rather, this was the appearance of something far more ominous than a ghost could ever be: the manifestation of a comparatively rare phenomenon known as an inhuman demonic spirit. A preternatural entity, the inhuman spirit is considered to be possessed of a negative, diabolical intelligence fixed in a perpetual rage against both man and God.

What this spirit is, what it can do, and what its existence ultimately portends is the work and concern of the demonologist.

Until recently, few except other professionals and the exorcist clergy knew much about Ed and Lorraine Warren. Their work, by necessity, was not public. Instead, the Warrens remained in the background, either working privately with individuals experiencing *true* spirit-related problems, or as investigators, performing on-site research where strange or unusual phenomena were in progress.

The Warrens began investigating spirit phenomena in the mid-1940s, but not until the 1970s did they really come into public view. Wherever bizarre or ominous activity took place, it seemed the Warrens were always there. In 1972, for example, the ghost of a nineteenth-century manservant became active in the superintendent's mansion at West Point—and began harassing guests of the commanding general! It was the Warrens, the New York papers later reported, whom the Army called in to confront this rogue spirit and put a stop to its antics.

Early in 1974, the Warrens were again in the public eye. This time they were briefly seen at the conclusion of a case where exorcism by a Roman Catholic priest had to be performed in a home that was being plundered by invisible vandals that were even attacking people! Later in the year, the Warrens were again in the news, this time on network television, when a home in southern New England was being rocked by some of the most incredible “poltergeist” activity on record. “The cause of the disturbances in both cases,” Ed says knowingly, “was *demonic*.”

But not until 1976, when they were brought in to investigate reports of yet another outbreak of “demoniacal activity” in Amityville, was national attention fully trained on Ed and Lorraine Warren, and their extraordinary work in the field of supernatural phenomena.

Who are these two people seen in the background of news photographs, but hardly ever identified? What are they like? And why do they do the kind of work they do?

Although one would think that people who involve themselves in demonology must necessarily be caught up in the macabre, Ed and Lorraine Warren are not occultists or eccentrics, nor are they engaged in some kind of religious crusade. On the contrary, the Warrens' perception of life is

anything but negative. Indeed, the Warrens are effective in their work only *because* they are such positive people.

Ed Warren was born in Connecticut in September 1926. Burly, barrel-chested, and good-natured, Ed looks more like the corner grocer than a demonologist. Distinctly unpretentious, Ed gives no clue to the mysterious knowledge—and power—he carries with him. Calm and easygoing, he exudes the air of competence one finds in people who have learned what they know the hard way.

Lorraine Warren, born a scant few miles from her future husband in January 1927, is slim and attractive, with an ever-ready smile. Judging from her appearance—that of a fashionable New England housewife—one would never assume that she is a penetrating clairvoyant and light-trance medium. Yet, Lorraine is endowed with the Biblical gift of discernment of spirits, which St. Paul spoke of in his First Epistle to the Corinthians.

Together, Ed and Lorraine Warren are a cordial, happy couple in their mid-fifties who have a unique friendship in marriage, and a distinctly positive outlook on life. What the Warrens have seen, however, and what they have learned over the course of their extraordinary combined career, has given them wisdom way beyond their years.

Today, not surprisingly, the question most frequently asked of Ed and Lorraine Warren is, “What *really* happened in the Amityville case?” Although no brief reply could answer that question, perhaps the most comprehensive explanation the Warrens have so far given was at a benefit lecture held in their hometown of Monroe, Connecticut, during the summer of 1978.

The lecture was held in the town’s tidy brick municipal building on a pleasant, balmy evening in late August. Ten minutes before Ed and Lorraine

are scheduled to speak, the seats in the new, well-appointed auditorium are already filled to capacity. Those who can't find seats wander down the aisle and sit cross-legged in front. There is great bustle and chatter in the crowd. Words like *ghost*, *spirit*, and *exorcism* pop up in conversations all around. It seems like everybody, at least this night, has a ghost story to tell his neighbor.

On stage are two lecture platforms, a slender chrome microphone attached to each. At eight o'clock the house lights dim, a hush sweeps over the audience, and a moment later the Warrens walk out on stage. Lorraine is dressed in a long tartan skirt, ruffled blouse, and black velvet waistcoat Ed wears a blue blazer and matching tartan tie.

"This evening, ladies and gentlemen, Ed and I would like to share with you some of our experiences inside a number of haunted houses that have recently been in the newspapers. We'd like to show you what we discovered in those houses, as well as discuss some of the information that came through in cases where communication with the haunting spirits was possible."

Ed nods to the projectionist who switches off the stage lights. A swell of anxious voices rise in the room. "Oh, no, they're going to show pictures!" exclaims a young girl who promptly slides down in her seat.

"Here we have a *real* haunted house," Ed declares, once the first slide comes up. "I say the house is haunted because that kindly-looking lady you see there standing by the window on the ground floor is a ghost."

And so it begins.... This is why the Warrens lecture: not to tell ghost stories, but to present valid case histories showing that supernatural phenomena exist, in order to explain how and why it occurs.



As Ed explains it, “The existence of spirits is not a matter of belief; it’s a matter of evidence. In fact, the question is not so much a matter of *whether* the phenomena is there, but *why* is it there. And why is it so incredibly meddlesome in human affairs?”

The reason why the Warrens present public lectures goes back a decade or so, to the late 1960s. Then, amidst experimentation with alternate lifestyles, a sudden renewed interest in the occult sprang up. Closed for almost a century, the door to the “underworld” was suddenly thrown open, followed by a drastic upswing in reported incidents of negative spirit phenomena. Almost immediately, the Warrens were inundated with what proved to be genuine cases of negative spirit oppression and possession.

Most of those affected at the time were persons of college age. Concerned about this grave development, the Warrens embarked on a program of campus lectures, wherein they warned students around the country about the dangers of the occult. Supporting their statements with documentary evidence—slides, photographs, tape recordings, and physical artifacts—Ed and Lorraine Warren made an indelible impression on those to whom they spoke. The general public soon became fascinated with their firsthand experiences and ongoing research.

Although nowadays they lecture primarily to college audiences, the Warrens also speak to community groups and appear on radio and television when time allows. It is their honesty and experience that have made them popular. Their relaxed, informative, matter-of-fact style has changed many a skeptic into a believer. Yet although Ed and Lorraine offer an articulate explanation of spirit phenomena, they are aware of the gravity of their statements. Thus, the Warrens say nothing they cannot substantiate with credible evidence and documented case histories.

During the slide lecture, the Connecticut audience sits silently as Ed and Lorraine detail case after case of spirit phenomena, illustrating their comments with slides of ghosts, psychic lights, levitations, and materialized objects. (Dan Greenburg says in his book, *Something's There*, that if the Warrens said they saw a ghost, they saw a ghost!) When the auditorium lights come back on, dozens of hands immediately shoot up in the air.

An integral part of the Warrens' public lectures is the question-and-answer session that follows their talk. Here, people can sort out the whole strange topic of spirits for themselves, because it is possible to ask the Warrens a question and get a straight answer in reply. For Ed and Lorraine, this is neighbor talking to neighbor now.

"Now that you're all ready to move into a haunted house," Ed kids the audience, "let's take the first question!" An older man with gold-rimmed glasses stands up.

"I'm old enough to be your father, Ed Warren, but in my whole life I've never seen any of this sort of *phenomena*, as you call it. Have you seen a ghost yourself? Have you ever *seen* these objects levitate?" He sits back down.

"In my lifetime, I have seen many, many materialized ghosts," Ed tells him over the microphone. "The ghosts you saw on these slides tonight were photographed by me, or by psychic-photographers working with me on investigations. Later this year, in fact, we're going to England to try to get a photograph of the Brown Lady of Raynham Hall—Lady Dorothy Walpole, one of the most famous ghosts there is. Not far from there is Borley, the most haunted area in England. Both Lorraine and I have seen the Borley Nun walking along the road, and this time we'll try to photograph her too."

Taking a sip from a glass of ice water, Ed continues. “As for levitations—yes, I have seen levitations of all kinds. This case I showed you tonight was demoniacal activity, not ghosts. During the progress of the case, I witnessed a four-hundred pound refrigerator lift off the floor. In another case, I watched a console television set rise slowly in the air, then come down with a deafening, explosive crash. Yet, not one tube was broken! Those are just two instances that come to mind, although levitations occur in many cases where spirits—both human and inhuman—are behind the disturbance. So to answer your question, sir: yes, I *have seen* a ghost; yes, I *have seen* levitations occur.”

Ed points to a tall blonde-haired lady who stands up to speak.

“In *The Amityville Horror*, the author cites an old belief that evil spirits can’t cross over water,” she says. “Is that true?”

“No, that’s just an old superstition,” Ed tells her. “Spirits are not affected by physical boundaries—or by distance, for that matter. Simply by *thinking* about a particular spirit is enough to draw that spirit to your side.”

Lorraine calls on a teenage boy who’d been sitting up front by the stage. “What do you mean by *supernatural*?” he wants to know.

“If you looked the work up in a dictionary, you’d find that ‘supernatural’ means activity caused by God or His angels,” Lorraine tells him. “But most people don’t relate to the term that way. So, instead, we use the word in the way it’s most commonly understood: that is, activity caused by any force or agent that is not part of our physical, earthly realm. Technically, the phenomena caused by *inhuman* spirits are called preternatural activity. To put it another way, the phenomena caused by inhuman spirits could be considered negative miracles.”

Next, Ed points to a woman in the middle of the crowd. “If *I* were to die tomorrow,” she asks, “would *I* become a ghost?”

“It’s possible,” Ed replies, “but not probable. Still, if you died suddenly and unexpectedly—say in an accident—and you refused to accept the fact that you’re physically dead, then quite likely you’d remain earthbound until such time as you realized that you were out of the game; that you were dead. In the meantime, while you’re trying to sort this problem out as a spirit, you’d probably remain earthbound in familiar surroundings—like your home. Nothing would seem different to you: you’d be able to see and hear other members of your family just like before, but they wouldn’t be able to see or hear you. ‘What’s the matter?’ you might ask, ‘why don’t they pay attention to me?’ So, frustrated, you find a way—through mind over matter—to start causing objects to move, or you slam doors in order to get attention. Of course, all you’ll really succeed in doing will be to scare the wits out of your family. At that time, your folks might get hold of Lorraine and me, who would then come to the house and have a little discussion with you as a spirit—so you’d be able to pass over correctly.”

“How did you two originally become involved in the Amityville case?” a tanned gentleman in a rugby shirt asks the Warrens. “Also, what did you *do* during your investigation that the others didn’t?” The questions enliven the audience; it’s apparent they want to hear the answer too.

“Your long question, sir, requires a long answer,” Lorraine warns him graciously.

“That’s okay,” he calls out.

“All right then,” Lorraine begins, “our involvement started the last week of February 1976, when we received a telephone call at our home from a young woman, a television producer in New York City. She wanted to know if