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Beyond Death

Hans Holzer
Philip Solomon
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The afterlife is back in vogue. With movies like The Sixth Sense, TV shows like Crossing Over with John Edward, and best-sellers by mediums such as James Van Praagh and Sylvia Browne, it seems like everyone is trying to receive a message from across that greatest of divides. Regardless of what one's beliefs are regarding contacting the dearly departed, the subject has fascinated humans since the Witch of Endor raised the spirit of Samuel in the Old Testament.

Solomon and Holzer are no strangers to the world beyond the veil of death. Solomon is a well-known British trance medium and psychic; Holzer is a respected parapsychologist and author of more than 120 books, most dealing with the paranormal. This book sets out to explain day-to-day existence on the other side.

Solomon established contact with spirits ranging from the drunken Irish liveryman Patrick Kelly to the likes of Elvis and Princess Di, and conducted question-and-answer sessions with these spirits. These sessions ascertain whether the afterlife includes sex, work, or pets; describe the seven levels of existence; examine the afterlife effects of suicide; and discuss what happens to evil individuals.

The first order of business one encounters on the other side is to be convinced by a departed family member that one is actually dead. The surroundings are similar to those known in life. Habits such as smoking and drinking are available, but they gradually become less necessary for happiness. Those who were happy at their earthly work can continue after death; in fact, any desire is only a thought away. Evildoers will spend some time in healing houses to become rehabilitated.

The more materially minded may spend more time on the first level of existence, close to the things they treasured in the earthly world. The more spiritually inclined go directly to the second level, where they can help the living, or work in other ways to prepare themselves for progressing to higher levels of being.

The book relays the basics of existence after death in a matter-of-fact manner. The inclusion of celebrities in the otherwise very plausible and articulate roster of spirit communicators is questionable, but who can begrudge Elvis his opportunity to air his gripes about the Colonel? Skeptics who can get past their biases may just be comforted by the world that Solomon and Holzer say awaits them.

DAN BOGEY (July / August 2001)

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