

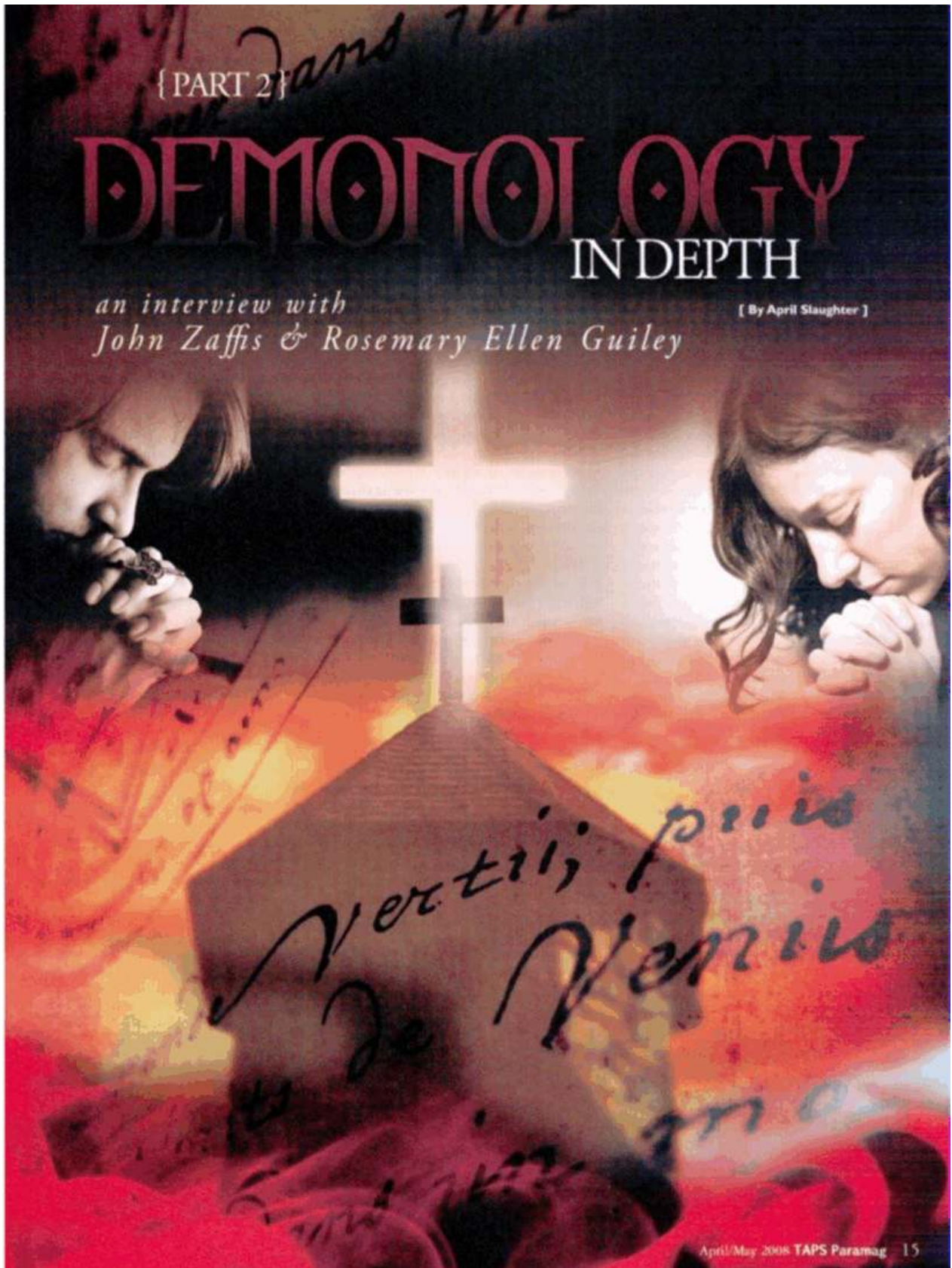
{ PART 2 }

DEMONOLOGY

IN DEPTH

*an interview with
John Zaffis & Rosemary Ellen Guiley*

[By April Slaughter]



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EMONOLOGY HAS LONG BEEN THE SUBJECT OF PARANORMAL INTRIGUE, AND NO MORE SO THAN THE LAST FEW YEARS.

Its rise in popularity is largely due to the amount of press the subject has been getting in print, films, and especially in the plethora of paranormal reality shows on television today. When it comes to working with negative influences, terrifying hauntings or exorcisms, what exactly IS reality? TAPS Paramagazine wanted to confront the issues and get the facts from the most experienced people in the field. John Zaffis has worked in the field of Demonology for the past thirty years. Rosemary Ellen Guiley, a close personal friend and colleague of John's, has researched nearly every paranormal subject and provides us with an alternate view on the subject of demons and negative influences.

TP: John, do you work exclusively with any specific paranormal groups, or are you open to working with anyone in need of your experience?

JZ: I try to help everyone, whether they are established paranormal groups or new to the field. When we all intertwine we are more able to assist one another. A major concern I have in the field today is that so many people have an interest in demonology, exorcism, and possession that it's scary. People are going into it very cold and wide open, not realizing what the ramifications are or how intense these things can be. A lot of the time, I will interact or become involved with a group who will tell me they never really believed any of this stuff actually happens or exists. Sometimes even members within a group are experiencing some of these phenomena themselves and I try to bring them as much information as I can.

TP: Rosemary, what types of things would you warn people against getting involved in to avoid becoming prey to possible negative influences?

REG: People are more vulnerable to negative occult influences when their physical, emotional and spiritual health is at a low. Upset, depression, stress, anger and illness wear down defenses. These are not good circumstances for engaging in paranormal activities. Excessive drug and alcohol consumption also can make people vulnerable. Defenses vary, so what makes one person vulnerable may not apply to another. I also caution against jumping into the paranormal without grounding or discernment. It's not

entertainment. Take some time to become informed about paranormal phenomena and the spirit world, and ways to keep your natural buffer, the aura, in good shape. Even a few minutes of prayer or meditation daily, or as often as possible, will help immensely. Attempting to conjure spirits or dabble in magic without knowing what you are doing can create problems. Conjuring opens a door – you may not be able to close it.

TP: Are there any warnings you would give regarding who to contact for help, or suggestions on who not to trust?

JZ: You have to remember to ask what belief systems these people abide by. It is important to find out if they have involved themselves in different practices. It doesn't matter if you are Christian, Wiccan, Pagan or whatever. I will always advise that you try to talk to someone who has had experience in your particular belief system for a substantial amount of time. That knowledge is what you need. I tell people to be very cautious and guarded with anyone brand new to the field, and not because I have a desire to be 'Top Dog'; I could care less. Experience and knowledge in the field is necessary for reliable help in this area. People need to understand what they are getting involved with, whether it is a paranormal investigator or a family.

TP: What would your advice be to investigators who find themselves involved in a demonic case?

JZ: My philosophy is this: due to the law of recognition and attraction, oftentimes activity will increase in the location you are investigating. They seem to know when you are around and the activity will be heightened. I would advise anyone to be very guarded if someone has been

brought in to assist and they begin provoking the entities in the home. They go in to capture EVP or anomalies in photographs and then just leave the family hanging. I deal a lot with these sorts of situations lately and people genuinely get scared and wonder who they can really trust to help them. It then in turn gives us twice as much work to try and get them to understand that we are there to help and will not put them in the same situation.

REG: Don't play cowboy – get expert advice and help. Trying to deal with a situation that's over your head is another way to invite trouble. Things can go haywire in a hurry with negative entities. Expertise is gained through study and training. Reading a book or attending a lecture is a start, but does not make a person an instant expert. I don't hesitate to seek advice and insights from colleagues and experts I know concerning all sorts of paranormal situations. It's common sense.

TP: Rosemary, Have you ever been involved in a case where an exorcism has been performed?

REG: If you are referring to Catholic demonic exorcisms of possessed people, no. Clearings of unwanted negative presences from environments, yes. I use the term "negative presences" because "demon" is a loaded word.

TP: John, in your experience, do demons work as a collective group?

JZ: Spirit attracts spirit. If you have a negative human entity and a non-human demon entity, they can in a sense band together. This is not at all unusual. Sometimes people will ask me if an initial exorcism is 100% successful, and I have to tell them that it doesn't always happen that way. It's like an onion that you have to keep stripping back the layers to get to the cause of the problem, and several exorcisms need to be performed before the cause is found and dealt with. It can be a very long and drawn out process. One case I was involved in took well over four years and about sixteen exorcisms to free this particular woman.

TP: Have you ever lost anyone to an exorcism?



JZ: Not because of the exorcism itself, no. I have been involved in several cases where people could not handle the torment and stress of the situation and have committed suicide. These people get so tired, and they feel as though they cannot fight anymore. It is always hard to be involved in a case like that, because we don't always walk in other people's shoes and we don't have a real understanding of what they are personally going through. It is a difficult thing for me because I often sit back and wonder if there was anything else I could have done to help this individual. It comes down to the free will of the person, and the choices they make. A lot of times there is nothing further that could have been done, but it is still devastating when it happens.

TP: *Following an exorcism, is an individual more susceptible to being plagued by paranormal activity in the future?*

JZ: When a person goes through a haunting, whether it's a human spirit haunt or something on a negative level such as demons, what I am finding is that more and more people are using the paranormal as a crutch. It becomes the reason that anything and everything in their lives is going wrong. They often don't want to take any accountability in trying to free themselves from the influence. It is a very difficult thing for me because I genuinely want to help, but you have to take responsibility and do your best to move on in a positive direction.

TP: *Have you ever been involved in a case where you dealt with a particular demon, spirit, or entity that you later encountered on an unrelated case?*

JZ: Yes. Here again, there is a positive and a negative perspective. Do I believe that deceased loved ones can visit us at different times and help us with situations in our lives? Yes, and I view that as a beautiful and positive thing. On the negative side, I have indeed come across demons and entities that I had encountered previously that rear their ugly heads. The most bizarre thing is when I work on a case with an individual dealing with possession and they will throw out key things from prior cases that this person could not pos-

sibly know. It is my indication that I am dealing with a particular demon I have encountered in the past all over again. There is recognition there and it can throw you. This has happened to me several times over the years.

TP: *Have you ever been seriously harmed during an investigation or exorcism?*

JZ: The worst that has ever occurred with me happened during a couple of exorcisms, where I found that my arms had been inexplicably burned during very intense situations. There would be odd burn marks that would appear, but it wouldn't take long for them to go away. When I first got involved in the work, it was very frightening for me. You hear a lot of folklore and then you actually go into a situation to help with an exorcism or deliverance and all sorts of different things happen. It is not always what is portrayed or what you would expect. These situations can be very unpredictable and inconsistent depending on the specific situation.

TP: *What is your opinion on the use of things such as Ouija boards, dowsing rods, etc.?*

JZ: I am not a big believer in using these types of things on investigations. If you are dealing with a haunting and there is paranormal activity going on, you don't have to go into a location and try to provoke to get activity to occur. A lot of the times, you can simply go in and set up your recording equipment and measure the level of activity. It seems that everyone wants things at a one, two, three pace. They want evidence right here, right now. Investigating takes time and the best way to approach it is to go in, set up your equipment and hopefully leave with good documentation of activity. Everyone has their own method, but I would be very guarded in using these different types of tools for investigating.

TP: *Rosemary, do you believe it is possible for objects to be possessed as well as people?*

REG: Objects can indeed become "possessed" in the sense that a spirit, perhaps a malevolent one, attaches itself to an object. Spirits can ride into homes attached to objects such as occult items or ritual tools, especially those obtained second hand. They can also attach to furniture,

jewel-ry, clothing and other objects — in short, just about anything. Sometimes even new objects have invisible residents. Not everything that becomes attached



or possessed is "demonic." I once bought a small wicker étagère in a second hand shop, and when I got it home, I realized it had an inhabitant. It was not a "demon," but a small spirit that had a depressed and unhappy energy to it. Had it remained in my home, it probably would have had a negative effect on the atmosphere. There might have been small poltergeist disturbances. I disposed of the étagère and tried to send the spirit on its way to find a happier home, but it stubbornly trailed along after the wicker.

TP: *Are there many people like you out there assisting in exorcisms & possession cases?*

JZ: Absolutely. We have our little network of individuals that we work with. There are a lot of us that have been around for many years, and if someone needs assistance they can do a little bit of research and find someone reputable to help them out. We do what we can to share information and get people the assistance they need.

The Demonology In Depth series will continue with more insights from John Zaffis and Adam Christian Blai.



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