

Chicago's Most Haunted

Name _____ Per _____ Date _____

Consider the following items presented in the news story.

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| | On December 30, 1903, there was a fire at Chicago's Iroquois Theatre. | | |
| | Six hundred twenty-seven people died in the fire. | | |
| | To this day, spirits remain at the site of the theatre fire. | | |
| | One ghost appears a screaming figure made out of the bricks. | | |
| | Some spirits can be sensed by the psychic detective. | | |
| | Some spirits appear as round, floating orbs in photographs. | | |
| | Many people died from falling from an unfinished fire escape. | | |
| | One spirit appears as mist in a photograph. | | |
| | Above a sewer main, one of the schoolchildren killed in the blaze reaches for the hands and clothing of young families passing by. | | |
| | The spirits roam the alley to try to convince the living to set up a memorial to honor the dead. | | |

1. Which items were reported as fact; which as speculation? Speculation in a news item is often identified by the presence of alternate explanations. In the single column to the **left** of each item, write an "F" for the items *reported* as fact and an "S" for the items *reported* as speculation.

2. Which items would skeptics most likely question? In the first column to the **right** of those items, write an "X."

3. Which items can be established as fact? In the last column to the right, place a check mark ("√") for each item that could be historically verified.

4. What "weasel words" or phrases were used by the newscasters to evade true journalistic responsibility? (Such words or phrases allow them to claim they weren't reporting any of the story as fact.)

5. To what extent was a skeptical point of view represented in the piece? Discuss.

6. Provide a natural (or “rational”) explanation for
a. the ghost that appears in the bricks, themselves.

b. the floating orb ghosts that appear only in **flash** photography... at night... when there are snow flurries blowing around.

c. the psychic detective’s demonstrated ability to sense the spirits and identify their exact locations.

d. sewer main ghost boy who is said to reach out to young families.