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Q-and-A with *The Rabbit Hole Experience* Authors Paul Conroy and Michael Robartes

Q. There are many books about ghosts and Sasquatches on the market. What distinguishes *The Rabbit Hole Experience* from the rest?

PAUL: *The Rabbit Hole Experience* is unique in three ways.

First, most books relating to the topic focus on the debate regarding whether the subject matter exists. Ours is just as much about the witnesses and their *interpretation* of their experience.

Second, the parallels we've drawn between the worlds of cryptozoology and spirit investigation give us a broader perspective. I'm a better investigator because of my relationship with Mike and the experience he brings to the table.

Third, plenty of books address Sasquatch and plenty more deal with ghost phenomena. Our book includes both. TWO BOOKS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE! In trying economic times, *The Rabbit Hole Experience* makes for a sound financial investment.

Q. Do you investigate together, on separate teams, or both?

PAUL: We are members of separate teams, but Mike has accompanied me on many investigations. He is as knowledgeable about Sasquatch investigations as anyone I know. At this point, we've become a team unto ourselves.

MICHAEL: Our experience in different fields makes for a good balance. When we work together, we bring different skills and ideas to the table.

Q. Where do you investigate and how do you choose your locations?

MICHAEL: My team focuses almost entirely on residential cases. People call us when they're experiencing what they believe to be paranormal activity in their homes. My main criterion for choosing an investigation is whether I feel we will help the people involved and leave them in a better state than when we arrive. Expecting to find paranormal activity is not the issue, although sometimes we find activity where we least expect it. You have to go in with an open mind.

PAUL: For Sasquatch investigations, large tracts of wilderness or undeveloped land. Over years of talking to witnesses and other investigators, I've learned to identify territory with a high concentration of reported experiences.

Q. *You've both been investigating for years. At what point did you become interested in the people who experience strange phenomena as much as the phenomena themselves?*

MICHAEL: From the beginning. I entered the field because of my own history of experiences. I didn't need any more evidence to convince me these phenomena are real. My purpose was always to help other people deal with their experiences.

PAUL: My interest deepened after encountering a broad range of feedback from witnesses over the years. Seeing a Sasquatch is a downright spiritual experience for some—and a primal fear for others. A few witnesses gained an immeasurable open-mindedness regarding limitless possibility. There are many people having extraordinary experiences and interpreting them so differently.

Q. *Each of your endeavors produces enough stories to fuel a book of its own. Why did you join forces to write one book?*

PAUL: *The Rabbit Hole Experience* was born over fireside conversations about Mike's investigations and my fieldwork with the Sasquatch phenomenon. Each field certainly is compelling on its own. But our creative fire was sparked by the idea of marrying experiences from both. Like a song—a big, hairy, ghostly song.

MICHAEL: Our focus in the book is the common ground between our fields—the psychological impact on a person who encounters something they don't believe is real. Seeing this impact from the different angles offered by our individual pursuits helped us better understand what was going on. We hope our book will do the same for our readers.

Q. *When you were writing *The Rabbit Hole Experience*, who did you envision your readers would be?*

PAUL: A few types of people: The skeptic who wants insight into people who claim to see what has been deemed impossible. The believer who wants more than a documentation of sightings. The witness to the unexplained—people who have fallen into the hole and need to validate their experience and know that they are not alone.

Q. *What do you most hope to accomplish with your book?*

MICHAEL: We are at a critical juncture in the paranormal field. We've reached a point where collecting more evidence to prove the existence of these phenomena is of marginal value. It's time to shift the focus of our inquiry from gathering evidence to examining what it means that people have these experiences. I hope our book can help steer the conversation in that direction.

PAUL: For me, the hope is simply to share what we've found over a decade of poking our noses into areas where many don't—or won't. I hope people read *The Rabbit Hole Experience*, apply their own knowledge and experience, and develop a broader sense of the “real” versus the “unreal.”

Q. *How has investigating affected your belief systems and approach to life?*

MICHAEL: My belief system expanded to incorporate spirit phenomena long ago. However, on the Bigfoot side, I have still not crossed that line. Above all, investigating has humbled me to just how little we actually know about the way the world works.

PAUL: The most enriching part of investigating is the constant reminder we *don't* have all the answers. There are still mysteries to unravel that require our open-mindedness and the exchanging of ideas.

Q. *What is the next step for the two of you?*

MICHAEL: I'm interested in the nature of time and how it relates not just to paranormal experience but to human experience in general. Many paranormal experiences don't play well with our linear ideas about time, and I think there's something very deep there that can be learned. If we can adjust our view on what time is—or even on what it isn't—it may make the rabbit hole seem a lot less dark and twisty.

PAUL: I want to continue having new experiences and broaden my horizons regarding where I conduct investigations. I also want to either produce or witness new evidence that brings us to the next step in the study of the Sasquatch phenomenon—and possibly branch into other areas of the unexplained.

For example, we have become interested in stone chambers found throughout the Northeast that have inspired a lot of debate regarding their significance. Strange happenings have often been associated with the chambers, and Mike and I have often been associated with strange happenings. We look to dig deeper into the Rabbit Hole.