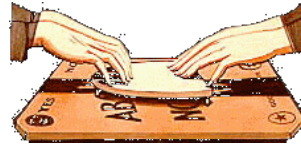


Are the Ouija Board or Ask the Glass Game Dangerous?

by Jussara Korngold

The Origin of The Ouija Board



There are several names used to this supposedly game: *Ask the Glass*, *Spirit of the Glass*, *the Moving Wineglass*, or the more elaborated form, the Ouija board.

The Ouija board is any flat surface printed with letters, numbers, and other symbols, to which a planchette or movable indicator points, supposedly in answer to questions from people at a seance. The fingers of the participants are placed on the planchette that then moves about the board to spell out messages.

According to some sources, the first historical mention of something resembling a Ouija board is found in China around 1200 B.C., a divination method known as Fu Ji (扶乩). Other sources claim that the philosopher Pythagoras already used it, in 540 B.C.

However, the first undisputed use of the talking boards came with the Spiritualism movement in the United States in the mid-19th century. It began when two sisters; the Fox sisters claimed to actively communicate with a spirit on a regular basis. They used a series of knocks and raps that answered “yes” and “no” and eventually assigned a code for letters of the alphabet. In this way, they were able to spell out longer and more detailed messages.

Word traveled fast about the sisters' talent of contacting the dead and soon everyone from America to Europe wanted to do the same. As Spiritualism grew in popularity, those with an interest began to establish what were called “home circles”, small groups of friends and family members who would gather around and attempt to communicate with spirits. They experimented with the knocking and rapping sounds and later with Table Tilting, which was accessible to everyone and no professional mediums were needed.

In 1853, a French Spiritualist named M. Planchette invented a device that could do much more than tap on the table. The “planchette” was a small, heart-shaped table with pencils attached to its legs. The invention was often used by the mediums as a more elaborate form of communicating with the beyond, but it really did not hold wide appeal for the general public.

However, a short time later, another invention would come along that could be used by everyone, the Ouija board. No experience was required and no real psychic skills were needed.



A man named E.C. Reiche created a new method of communicating with the dead. He devised a wooden lap tray with the letters of the alphabet arranged in two lines across the center of the board. Below these letters, he placed the numbers 1-10 and the words YES and NO in each lower corner of the board. Reiche, later on, sold the invention to his friend, Charles Kennard, because he was more interested in spirits than making money.



How does the Ouija Board or Ask the Glass Game work?

The Ouija Board is perhaps the most controversial method of spirit communication, mostly because it can be used by anyone and requires no special powers to navigate. This is the reason why most serious people who possess knowledge on mediumship discourage the use of the board. It enables the average person to produce “medium-like” effects without an experienced medium actually being present. The fact is that, as a rule, adults and teens alike probably shouldn’t mess with it unless they are prepared to handle whatever consequences may come up.

The supposedly game starts with the sitters, usually two or more people, lightly touching the base of the wineglass or the planchette, with at least one hand each, asking a question and then waiting patiently for it to slide to the different letters, spelling out the answer.



The problem is that even if the sitters have a certain knowledge regarding the occult and invisible world, and will try to invoke a “willing and good” spirit to communicate, this is no guarantee that just by asking they will have the presence of a good spirit instead of a negative one. The presence of a good spirit will completely depend on the intentions of the sitters. A knowledgeable and enlightened spirit will not come to answer questions regarding trivial things; the most common reason why people gather in the first place to talk to spirits.

Its use is not recommended particularly to children, teenagers, overly emotional people or anyone not equipped to handle what may occur as a result of the board's use. Of course, there is always the risk of people, or specially teens, to become dependent upon, or even obsessed with, the Ouija.



In addition, there are many accounts of adults and teens using the Ouija and then discovering that “things” begin to happen. Some of these experiences are the hearing of voices and the movement of objects in their home; they may be opening a doorway to the other side. The use of these games may leave people unprotected and thus they may attract “lower entities” that will linger in their homes afterwards.

Is one really contacting a Spirit/Ghost?

There are several possibilities that can happen during the attempt of contacting a spirit while playing with the ouija board or the ask the glass game. Before one can properly answer that question one should ask "Who could one be contacting?" Some of the options are:

1. A positive person who is physically dead and helps/guides people. Often termed a "spirit guide".
2. A negative or mocking spirit.
3. Someone who is physically alive but may be on an out of the body experience (OBE). They could be a positive person, negative, or somewhere in-between.
4. Someone who is dead and doesn't know it. What many people would refer to as an "earthbound spirit".
5. There is always the possibility that a sitter may be intentionally, or unintentionally, moving the pointer themselves (without any spirit input).

A person cannot be absolutely sure of what kind of communication one is receiving. In order to be able to do that one needs to be properly trained in the area of mediumship, which is not the case with the people who use ouija boards.

What are the dangers one may face?

The board itself is not dangerous, but the form of communication that you are attempting often is. As you can see from the above mentioned, most often the spirits that are contacted through the Ouija are those that reside on the lower spiritual plane. These spirits are often very confused and may have died a violent or sudden death; murder, suicide, etc. Therefore, many violent, negative and potentially dangerous conditions are present to those using the board.



Some of the spirits will intentionally pretend to be a certain spirit when they aren't. Why? Sometimes to mislead people. There are malicious people dead as well as alive. At other times this is done as a joke. Many discarnate spirits have a loud laugh to themselves as gullible ouija sitters believe that they have contacted a particular dead friend/relative when they haven't. Or believe that some "highly evolved soul" is communicating when they aren't.

You might think that if that is all that can go wrong with an ouija session then as long as one doesn't take things seriously then there is no harm done. Unfortunately that isn't the case. When one sets up the circumstances where spirits can communicate with physical people then a group of spirits will assemble to do just that. If some of these spirits are negative then they are the sort of spirits that you do not want to attend the evocation at all, let alone "hang around" afterwards.

Often times several spirits will attempt to come through at the same time but the real danger lies when you ask for physical proof of their existence! You might say, "well, if you really are a spirit, then put out this light or move that object!" What you have just done is opened a doorway between the physical and spiritual world and allowed them to enter. As a result, future problems can and often do arise.



Simply finishing the session doesn't mean that any of the discarnate spirits will leave the area. Some of them may decide to stay around one, or more, of the sitters for years and/or stay around the room/house the ouija session took place in.

This alone would be likely to precipitate a number of negative experiences for people but as if that wasn't enough even worse can happen. One, or more, of the sitters can end up with spirit obsession/possession problems. And the list goes on...

One can never be too prudent when trying to communicate with the dead, because this can open the door to bad spirits that will latch onto whomever they can control. Therefore, any attempts to communicate with spirits should not be taken lightly, and should not be done by those who have no knowledge whatsoever of the spiritual life and its inhabitants.

If you are invited to participate in one of these sessions, you'd better excuse yourself. A good indication you may have whether to use or not an ouija board is to follow your intuition. If it doesn't feel right, don't use it.

Sources:

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THE X-MEN IN:
THE TALKING BOARD

Story: Jeff "Paranormal" Parker
Art: Colleen "Creepy" Coover



