

1. Look at each of the 3 urban legends. Choose TWO of them and do the following:

LEGEND ONE IS....

A. Analyze the fears/ life-lessons addressed in the myth. Just like “Little Red Riding Hood” was about knowing what you’re eating, who you get in bed with, and who you trust, what life-lessons does the legend teach?

B. What characteristics does the urban legend have in common with the myths and fairy tales you’ve read before? What differences?

LEGEND TWO IS....

A. Analyze the fears/ life-lessons addressed in the myth. Just like “Little Red Riding Hood” was about knowing what you’re eating, who you get in bed with, and who you trust, what life-lessons does the legend teach?

B. What characteristics does the urban legend have in common with the myths and fairy tales you’ve read before? What differences?

Beyond “Urban Legends” are modern folk stories, which often take the form of ghost tales or stories of the pseudo-scientific. For each of the following tales, you need to do THREE things:

- 1. Give the event or creature a name (this will require a little inductive reasoning, critical thinking and research.*
- 2. Tie the creature or event to a reason. What is it that keeps the story being re-told? (i.e. ghost stories keep getting told because they touch on our fear of death; a ghost ship story is told to explain an actual event that we don't understand) Yes, there are lots of potential answers for this...give me a good, logical one that you can argue for if I challenge it.*
- 3. Give me an opinion...should it count as a folk tale or just a superstition? What's the difference?*

Location: Chicago

Type of phenomenon: spectral manifestation

Frequency: occasional, over the course of 70 years

Description: A young woman appears to be walking down Archer avenue, usually in winter, dressed in a white party dress too thin for cold weather. Motorists offer her a ride and then witness her vanishing from their car. These drivers can describe the girl in detail and nearly every single description precisely matches the previous accounts. The girl is said to have light blond hair, blue eyes and is wearing a white party dress. Some more attentive drivers sometimes add that she wears a thin shawl, or dancing shoes, and that she has a small clutch purse.

Others have even more harrowing experiences. Rather than having the girl vanish for their car, they claim to actually run her down in the street. They claim to see a woman in a white dress bolt in front of their car near the local cemetery and actually describe the sickening thud as she is struck by the front of the car. When they stop to go to her aid, she is gone. Some even said that the automobile passed directly through the girl. At that point, she turns and disappears through the nearby cemetery gates.

Location: jungles of central Africa countries of Congo, Cameroon, and Gabon

Type of phenomenon: Unidentified creature

Frequency: Rare

Description: Natives of the above countries report an animal with a long neck and a long tail which leaves tracks with a rounded shape and three claws. The closest known animal that sharing these characteristics is a sauropod dinosaur. When some of the local people of the Likouala region draw in the dirt or sand a representation of the creature, they draw the shape of a sauropod dinosaur. Then when they were shown a picture of a sauropod dinosaur they identified the picture as being the creature in question. The name given to the creature means "One that stops the flow of rivers." French priest in the region called it "monstrous animal."

The creature has been described as an animal with a long neck and tail. Its body size is estimated as somewhere between the size of a hippopotamus and an elephant. Specifically, its length has been reported to be between 5 to 10 meters (16 to 32 feet). The length of the neck is between 1.6 to 3.3 meters (5 to 10 feet). The length of the tail is between 1.6 to 3.3 meters (5 to 10 feet). The reports out of Cameroon have reported the creature to be up to 75 feet in length. Some descriptions also report a frill on the back of the head. The frill is like the comb found on a cock (male chicken). There have also been reports of it having a horn on its head.

The color of the skin is reported as predominately reddish-brown with a color range from gray to brown. There are no reports of hair on the animal. It leaves tracks in a rounded shape between 30 to 90 centimeters (1 to 3 feet) in diameter with three claws. The distance between tracks is about 2.1 to 2.4 meters (7 to 8 feet).

Location: New Orleans

Type of phenomenon: Building – supernatural manifestations

Frequency: common

Description: In the early 19th century, the mistress of the house had a reputation as a lady of supreme taste and luxury, but also as being a cruel and sadistic mistress to the slaves that made her social status and parties possible. A steady stream of slaves were purchased and brought into the home but none ever seemed to leave. It was an open secret among New Orleans society that the mistress and her husband, a physician, used the slaves for purposes of sadistic torture and gruesome medical experiments. This sadistic behavior went on for years unchecked, until a fire, supposedly set by a desperate slave, brought the authorities. In an effort to put out the fire, the fireman broke into the upper floors of the house and stumbled upon a gruesome sight. In the attic were many slaves, dead and alive. Some were literally chained to the walls of the attic in various hideous conditions. Many had internal organs exposed and in various stages of dissection. Others who had died had been left, still chained, to rot. Skeletons of some slaves were found in the torture chamber along with dismembered body parts and various sadistic tools of torture. When the information of the discovery was revealed, there was a public outcry and the owners of the house were forced to flee New Orleans.

Since their disappearance, their home has been renovated many times and used for many purposes, both residential and commercial. Stories of the house being haunted have survived until the present. Occupants have reported seeing ghosts of murdered and dismembered slaves roaming the attic and making loud screaming and moaning noises. The ghost of the mistress has also been sighted; one occupant even reported being awakened to find her choking him as he slept. The apparition of a black male slave, shackled and chained, has been seen walking down the long staircase from the attic numerous times by visitors to the house. Presently, the house is used as an apartment building. However, the reports of haunting still persist.

Location: Haiti and other nearby countries

Type of phenomenon: alterations of the living

Frequency: rare

Description: Specialized process linked with religious tradition in which an individual is treated with a powerful toxin which simulates death. The believed active ingredient in coupe poudre, or the preparation, is tetrodotoxin, which is found in the liver and the ovaries of some species of Puffer Fish. Five hundred times more deadly than Cyanide, tetrodotoxin is a potent ion channel blocker which while it can be fatal, in smaller (minuscule) doses leads to a near-death state wherein metabolic functions are so depressed that the poisoned person is thought to be dead. The horrifying upshot of all this is that total body paralysis is induced, although the brain and senses stay alert. This is not good news for the victim, who is thus mistaken for dead and buried, much to their horror.

The individual is then revived, usually by the person who initially administered the drug. Psychologically traumatized and occasionally physically brain damaged, the individual is then kept on a regimen of drugs and psychological brain washing and bombardment which effectively makes them a seemingly mindless slave to their druggers.