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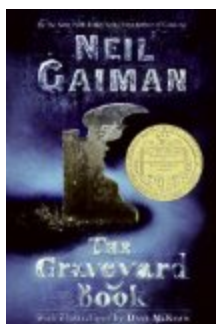
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People want to believe. Not only would proof positive give them a confirmation of life after death, but would cement those who have a deep faith in the power of the soul. None of us want to believe that this is all there is.

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[GHOST ARTICLES](#)**Superstitions - Mirrors and Number 13**

by Sarah Todd

Superstitions have been a part of our everyday life since the beginning of time. The basis for these beliefs has its source in fear. They've been with us since the dawn of time, and although they've undergone many changes they remain with us today. And there's no sign of them dying out any time soon.

Superstitions are not based on rationale and practical thought. They've evolved from ancient religious or supernatural genres, a huge resource that includes belief in specific events (Halloween), apparitions (vampires, werewolves and ghosts), charms and incantations (salt over the shoulder, avoiding pavement cracks) and predicting the future (horoscopes, palm reading).

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Another famous superstition revolves around the number 13, with the date being an inspiration for a series of horror films entitled Friday the 13th. There are many different stories that have evolved to give this date its notoriety, among them:

* The biblical reference to the Last Supper, with Judas betraying Jesus. He was the 13th guest at the table. Jesus was reportedly crucified on Friday.

* In ancient Rome a witch's coven comprised 12, with the 13th member being the devil.

* A Norse myth tells of 12 gods dining at Valhalla, their heaven. A 13th uninvited guest, Loki, arrived, persuading the god of darkness to slay the god of happiness.

Numerologists consider the number 12 a complete number for several reasons: the number of apostles, the total number of tribes in Israel, the number of months in a year, the number of Olympian gods, the zodiac signs and Hercules' labours. 13's association with bad luck is the simple, unavoidable fact that it exceeds a complete number by just one.

Another modern myth about this unfortunate number claims that if you have 13 letters in your name you will have the devil's luck. So is it a coincidence that the following characters reflect this trait?

Jack the Ripper Charles Manson Jeffrey Dahmer Theodore Bundy Albert De Salvo

The humble mirror is probably the focus of more superstitions than any other object. These stories evolved from the times when water was used as a mirror. People would look into the water to see their fates. If the image was distorted it was a sure sign of the viewer's death. As the mirror changed form, so did the beliefs. Early people gazed into a mirror in the same way that someone might gaze into a crystal ball. He imagined he saw the image of his soul. If the mirror was shattered so was the soul, and the person would die.

The seven year's bad luck seems to have evolved from the ancient Roman belief that it took seven years for life to renew itself. The Romans are also responsible for little known remedy useful for anyone who breaks a mirror - the only way to escape the seven year sentence is to bury the broken mirror pieces!

Consider the following superstitions, all very different, but relevant to the superstitious history attached to the mirror:

* There's an ancient superstition that says all mirrors in a house where someone has died must be covered.

* This prevents the soul from getting trapped in the mirror. And anyone else who's admired his or her reflection in the mirror risks losing his or her soul, because the ghost of the dead person will take it!

* If a mirror falls from a wall it means someone is going to die.

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- * Vampires and witches show no reflection in mirrors because they have no souls.
- * A mirror framed on three sides means a witch has used it to see over long distances.
- * Some cultures believe that a baby who looks into a mirror during the first year of its life will die.
- * Ancient Chinese believed that mirrors frighten away evil spirits who get scared when they see themselves; and if the mirror was broken the protection was lost.
- * It's considered bad luck to see your face in a mirror when sitting by candlelight. In your youth did you look at your faces in a mirror with a torch shining below your chin? That was a scary sight!
- * Actors believe it's bad luck to see their reflection while looking over the shoulder of another person.
- * If a couple's first sight of each other is their reflections in a mirror they will have a happy marriage.
- * Want to see what your future husband looks like? Sit down in front of a mirror and eat an apple before brushing your hair. An image of a man will appear behind your shoulder!

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I've briefly touched on some of the lesser known superstitions around two of the most superstitions topics in history. Even today **mirrors** and **number 13** have the ability to strike fear in the heart of the bravest men and women. I wonder how many superstitions will be added to these icons of superstition in the years ahead.

About the Author

The writer was born in Africa, and lived there for the first 38 years of her life. She worked in the world of public relations for over five years, running her own PR company and dealing extensively with the world of journalism and the print media. She is an author on <http://www.Writing.Com/>, a site for <http://www.Writing.Com/> Writers. Her blog can be visited at: <http://www.writing.com/authors/zwisis/blog>

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