

Another day, another 'Psychic'

Psychic Encounters – Margaret Birkin, hosted by Mark Kirstain, 22 Oct 2003; Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL Club.

It's like some sort of weird torture, like being trapped in a time-loop. I keep going to see these stage 'psychics' only to find the same thing over and over. Bad cold reading. I will not bore readers with all the details of Margaret Birkin's act, it was the same shtick Skeptics have seen many times and I was able to dissect every routine she pulled.

However there were a few disturbing moments with unsuspecting au-

dience members reduced to tears when convinced they were getting messages from the dear departed.

Birkin also went out on some very strange and disturbing tangents, at one point explaining that cot-death is nothing more than a soul using up the left over years from a previous life that also ended too early. (You figure it out.) Margaret Birkin is also known as a channeler, channelling an entity called "Maitreya" although on the day she stuck to cold reading. A pity as I have yet to see channeling in action. I wonder if Maitreya knows Carlos?

The question that always remains

unanswered with these stage 'psychics' is, do they actually believe in this drivel themselves? I can only guess. One thing was certain, at no time was any psychic, clairvoyant or paranormal ability displayed.

I end with a plea to all stage 'psychics'. Please, PLEASE improve your acts. For heaven's sake, buy Ian Rowland's *Full Facts of Cold Reading* book. At least try to give us some entertainment. And a plea to any real psychics out there. Please do something about all these bad cold readers muscling in on your turf!

Richard Saunders

