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Tim White is host of "Sightings," a syndicated television series.

Nite, says while he never has had a paranormal adventure, he keeps an open mind.

Miller deals with such topics as "I'm Being Seduced by a Ghost, and I Like It," where guests claimed to have had out-of-this-world sexual encounters with spirit lovers. On the "Dead Celebrity Is Taking Over My Life" episode, Miller kept a straight face while interviewing a woman who said she was possessed by the spirit of Lucille Ball.

Locally, NBC affiliate Channel 8 decided not to air "The Other Side" this season because the station already had a strong daytime lineup. So Channel 32 picked it up.

"It's done very well for us. We get a lot of viewer reaction from it," says Channel 32 program director Bob Hughes. "In fact, whenever someone comes on the show who claims to communicate with the dead, we get up to 50 calls from people who want to talk to their deceased friends and relatives."

Prove it, says Tampa skeptic

By WALT BELCHER 5/12/95
Tribune Staff Writer

TAMPA — Self-proclaimed skeptic Gary Posner says television is giving too much credibility to paranormal phenomena without question.

Skeptics don't get enough equal time, says the founder of Tampa Bay Skeptics.

"We've been fighting a losing battle against this sort of thing for years. We've written the networks and local TV stations, and we can't make any headway with producers," he says. "It's because they get higher ratings by putting on the most sensational stories."

Tampa Bay Skeptics is a non-profit educational and scientific organization devoted to the critical examination of paranormal claims. But Posner says the public apparently does not want to hear a scientific explanation or a skeptical challenge to a ghost story, a UFO encounter or any other tale of the supernatural.

"There should be balance, especially when the television program is being presented as a documenta-

ry or news report," he adds.

"Television has jumped on the paranormal bandwagon," says Barry Karr, executive director of the Skeptical Inquirer, a New York-based publication with a worldwide circulation of 70,000.

Published by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, the Skeptical Inquirer "tries to separate fact from myth in the current flood of occultism and pseudoscience."

Karr says there's so much paranormal coverage in the mainstream media that the publication recently started a media watch column.

"We find that some of these programs will contact us and ask for a viewpoint but very often won't use it or just brush it off with token skepticism."

Mark Demopolous, a spokesman for WTVT, Channel 13, says in the past the station has given the Tampa Bay Skeptics plenty of air time on "The Kathy Fountain Show."

Ann Daniel, co-producer of the syndicated TV magazine "Sightings," says her staff researches every story and often turns to the sci-

entific community for help.

"We have interviewed some leading scientists who have informed us about the scientific aspects of some events," she says.

Posner says reasons for the apparent upsurge in interest in the paranormal include frustration with the difficult times in which we live and a retreat from technology.

"As we enter the computer age and the world becomes more complex and we have all these technological advances, some people appear to be looking for something spiritual," he says.

Indicative of this, he says, is "the recent fascination with angels, which seems to be almost a return to medieval times.

"Never mind that there's no valid proof of psychic ability or that astrology works or that aliens have landed. The viewers don't want to hear that," he says.

Posner says his organization has a standing offer of \$1,000 for proof of supernatural events, UFO encounters, real psychic powers or any accurate prophecies of the world coming to an end.