

# 读奇闻怪事 学英语

Paul O'Hagan 编著

洪翠薇 译



含  
MP3  
光盘



华东理工大学出版社  
EAST CHINA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PRESS

## 单元内容

- 算命说的话能左右命运？
- 尼斯湖除了水怪还有什么？
- 阴宅里鬼影憧憧？
- 良药未必医百病
- 搭着飞碟的外星人绑架人类？
- 天底下没有那么好的事
- 媒体、广告背后暗藏的讯息？
- 知人知面不知心
- 骇人的都市传说
- 新居落成面面观

Don't Text to Talk  
Don't Believe Everything You Hear

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*From Text to Talk*  
*Don't Believe Everything You Hear*



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## 读奇闻怪事学英语(含 MP3 光盘)

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## Introduction: *Intelligent Skepticism*

For thousands of years humanity has been finding out about the world we are living in. We have made a lot of progress and today science and technology are making our lives healthier and more comfortable than ever before. Furthermore, many more people are being educated to higher levels than could have been imagined even 40 years ago.

And yet people are still too willing to believe too easily. There are a lot of scams<sup>1</sup> out there and plenty of people who want to trick you out of your money. However, you can lose more than your money; you can lose your family, your health, your sanity and even your life.

However, this book also discusses various paranormal<sup>2</sup> ideas and what in English are called “tall tales<sup>3</sup>.” These do not cost you any money, at least at first. But if you believe in ghosts uncritically, it may only a matter of time before you are giving your hard-earned money to some scammer who tells you that you need his help to get good luck. It is a ghost who is following you around, he says, causing all your troubles and it is going to cost you some money to get rid of it...

However, I do not necessarily dismiss<sup>4</sup> all stories of the paranormal. I myself, as told in another book, have also had an odd experience. What I want is for you to evaluate in a balanced way what you are told and to not to believe every superstition you are told. Superstitious people are gullible<sup>5</sup> people and a leader can exploit<sup>6</sup> this for his own purposes.

This book has been written in the hope that by getting people to question advertisers, salespeople, politicians, religious leaders and even such professionals as lawyers and doctors, it will save them much heartbreak. You need to be more skeptical<sup>7</sup>, to question what others tell you. It is a dangerous and difficult world and it does not get any easier for people who believe too easily what others tell them. I do not claim that by following this book you will avoid every trick and scam. However the more care people take, the harder it will be for the scammers.

In many countries, car theft and burglaries<sup>8</sup> have gone down a lot



because security devices today are so advanced they are making these kinds of theft very difficult. In the same way, the harder it is for scammers, the more discouraged they will be and the less these kinds of scam will occur. Look after your interests or the scammers will give you a lot of pain, stress and loss. In an age of weapons of mass destruction it is even possible for madmen to destroy the world. Think critically; be skeptical—in a balanced way.

## **Word Bank**

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1. **scam** [skæm] *n.* a scheme for making money by dishonest means  
骗局
2. **paranormal** [pærə'nɔ:məl] *a.* unable to be explained or understood in terms of scientific knowledge 超自然的; 超出正常范围的
3. **tall tale** a fanciful or greatly exaggerated story 荒诞不经的故事
4. **dismiss** [dɪs'mɪs] *v.* to decide that something or someone is not important and not worth considering (从头脑中) 去除; 不考虑
5. **gullible** ['gʌlɪbəl] *a.* tending to trust and believe people, and therefore easily tricked or deceived 易受骗的
6. **exploit** [ɪk'splɔɪt] *v.* to use someone or something unfairly for your own advantage 利用; 剥削
7. **skeptical** ['skeptɪkəl] *a.* tending not to believe or accept things but to question them 怀疑的; 多疑的
8. **burglary** ['bɜ:gləri] *n.* the crime of entering a building to commit a felony, usually theft 抢劫; 盗窃

## 导论：明智的怀疑

数千年来，人类就一直在探索我们所生活的这个世界。我们进步了许多，现今的科技让我们过得比以前更健康、更舒适；此外，有更多人接受了即使在四十年前也难以想象的高水平教育。

即使如此，人们仍然太容易相信一些事情。社会上充满许多骗局，有很多人想骗走你的钱。然而，你失去的可能不只是金钱；你可能会失去你的家庭、健康、神智，甚至你的生命。

而这本书也讨论了各种超乎常理的观念，和英语世界中某些“夸大的故事”。听听这些故事不会花掉你一分钱——至少一开始不会；但如果你不加鉴别地一概就相信鬼魂，那总有一天，你会将自己辛苦挣来的钱，交给那些骗徒，因为你以为必须靠他的帮忙，你才能交到好运。他会说有个鬼魂到处跟着你，害你诸事不顺，而你必须花点钱才能摆脱它……

不过，我并不完全排斥所有关于超自然的故事。在我的另一本书里提到，我自己也曾有过奇异的经验。我希望的是各位能以一个平衡的观点，来评估你听到的每件事，并且不要迷信，随便就相信每件你听到的事。迷信的人容易上当受骗，那些邪教领导人就能利用这一点，达成他自身的目的。

写作这本书的目的就是希望大家开始质疑广告、推销员、邪教领导人，甚至像律师和医生这样的专业人士等，能减少伤神又伤心的情况。各位必须抱持更怀疑的态度，对别人告诉你的事提出质疑。这是一个险恶的世界，对那些太轻易相信他人的人来说更是如此。我并不是在说，只要遵循这本书所说的，你就能避开所有的陷阱和骗局，不过只要各位愈小心，骗子就愈难以得逞。

在许多国家，偷车和窃盗案已经减少许多，这是因为现今的保安设备十分先进，使得这些窃盗案的犯案难度变得很高。同样的，骗徒愈难完成他们的目标，他们就愈灰心，于是这些骗局就会愈来愈少。各位要保护自己的权益，否则骗徒会带给你许多痛苦、压力和损失。在这个拥有巨大毁灭性武器的时代，连疯子都有可能摧毁世界。让自己学会批判性的思考方式，并以平衡的观点去怀疑事物。

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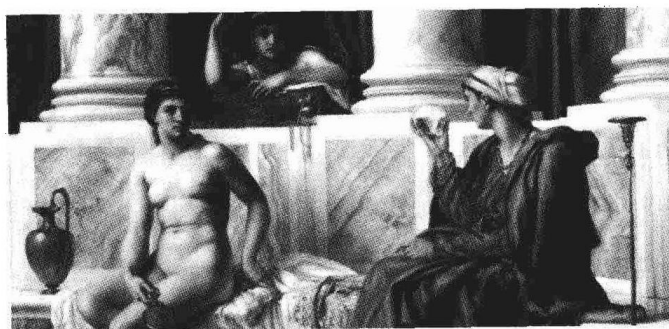
# Unit 1

## Fortune Telling

### 算命

#### Text 1

MP3 1



The fortune teller

For thousands of years, fortune tellers of all kinds have been making a living, sometimes a very good living, supposedly telling people what their future is going to be. In the West, people used to perhaps look briefly in the astrology column to see their future. Now it is becoming more popular for people to go to psychics<sup>1</sup> and hopefully make their plans from what they say.

好几千年以来,各式各样的算命师靠着预知人们将来的命运维生,有的还因此过得相当富裕。在西方,以前的人可能只靠看几眼星座专栏来预知未来;而现在,越来越多人寻求通灵的人的协助,希望能靠通灵的人说的话,来制订计划。

#### Word Bank

1. **psychic** ['saɪkɪk] *n.* somebody who is, or is believed to be, sensitive to nonphysical or supernatural forces 通灵的人;巫师

## Talk 1

MP3 2

M: Mark D: Dolores

M: Ok, let's see what the stars are going to show us today.

D: I just cannot believe this! You're going to plan your day on what an astrologer says in a newspaper?

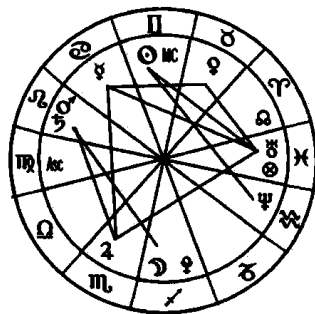
M: Oh c'mon, lighten up<sup>2</sup>, will you? It's just a bit of fun. I don't take it seriously.

D: Yeah? Well then why bother even looking at it?

M: You never know. They say there's something in it.

D: They? Who the hell are they? And what makes them experts in astrology?

M: President Reagan went to an astrologer. A lot of people use them to make plans.



马 克: 好,咱们来看看今天星象要告诉我们什么吧。

多洛雷斯: 我真不敢相信! 你要靠报纸上星座专家的说法,来决定你一天的计划?

马 克: 拜托,放轻松点好吗? 只是好玩嘛,我没有太认真看待这件事啊。

多洛雷斯: 是吗? 那你为什么还要特地去看?

马 克: 世事难料嘛,人家说里面是有文章的。

多洛雷斯: 人家? 人家是谁? 而且是谁称他们为星座专家的?

马 克: 里根总统就有找过占星家,很多人也靠占星来计划将来的事。

## Word Bank

2. **lighten up** to become less gloomy, serious, or angry 变得轻松、愉快

## Text 2

MP3 3

We hear that President Reagan and his wife Nancy used to consult an astrologer and then we begin to worry. Is it really a good idea that at least one leader of the strongest country on Earth, a major nuclear power is known to have used a fortune teller to make decisions? Do we want the





Ronald Reagan (1991 - 2004)

听到里根总统和总统夫人南希过去找过占星家咨询,我们不免开始担心了。当地球上最强大的国家——同时也是主要的核武强权——有个领导者曾听从算命师的话来做决定,这是一件好事吗?我们希望世界的命运,仰赖着某个占星家对总统说的话吗?我们怎么能确知,这些占星家真的能做到如其所宣称的事呢?

fate of the world to depend upon what an astrologer says to a president? How do we really know if these people can do what they say they can?

听到里根总统和总统夫人南希过去找过占星家咨询,我们不免开始担心了。当地球上最强大的国家——同时也是主要的核



## Talk 2

MP3 4

D: Dolores M: Mark

D: Yeah, like that's really reassuring. A guy with his finger on the nuclear button is asking a star man what he should do. You know, I'm amazed we haven't had World War Three already.

M: So what do you suggest?

D: I suggest we don't want the fate of the world to depend on what an astrologer says to a president. How do we really know if these people can do what they say they can?

M: Well they've done some kind of statistical<sup>3</sup> tests.

D: Ok and what do the statistics say?

M: That there's some kind of connection between what happens in the stars and what happens on Earth.

D: Really? Well now, that's interesting. What effect do you think the new planets are going to have?

M: What do you mean?

多洛雷斯:那可真是令人放心啊,一个随时可以按下核弹发射钮的人,还要问星座专家该怎么做。像这样还没爆发第三次世界大战,真令我惊讶。

马 克：那你有什么想法？

多洛雷斯：我的想法是，大家不会想把世界的命运，仰赖在星座专家对总统说了什么上面。我们怎么知道，这些占星家是否能预测到这些咨询者的行为与举动？

马 克：嗯……有人做过一些统计。

多洛雷斯：好，那统计的结果是？

马 克：星象的动态和地球上发生的事，两者之间是有某种关联的。

多洛雷斯：真的吗？喔，这可好玩了。你认为新的行星会造成什么影响？

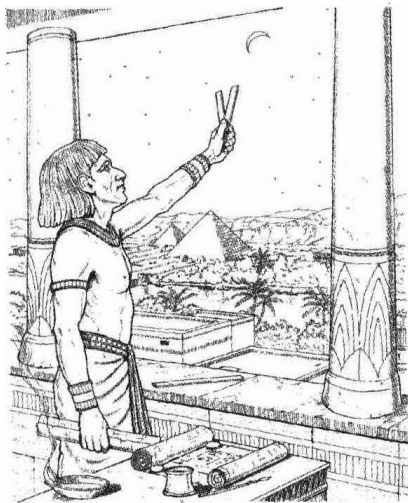
马 克：什么意思？

## Word Bank

3. **statistical** [stə'tɪstɪkəl] *a.* relating to statistics, the science of using information discovered from studying numbers 统计的

## Text 3

MP3 5



There are various problems associated with fortune telling. Let's start with astrology, probably the most popular type of fortune telling. In ancient times, astrology probably developed for two reasons which were both connected with each other.

In those days, all societies depended on agriculture in one form or another. Even in desert regions, people living there would have to know when to move their flocks of animals from one area to another to allow them to find food. In other areas which had much more water, crops could be grown. In either case, farming communities needed to understand the coming and going of seasons. This was vitally<sup>1</sup> important.

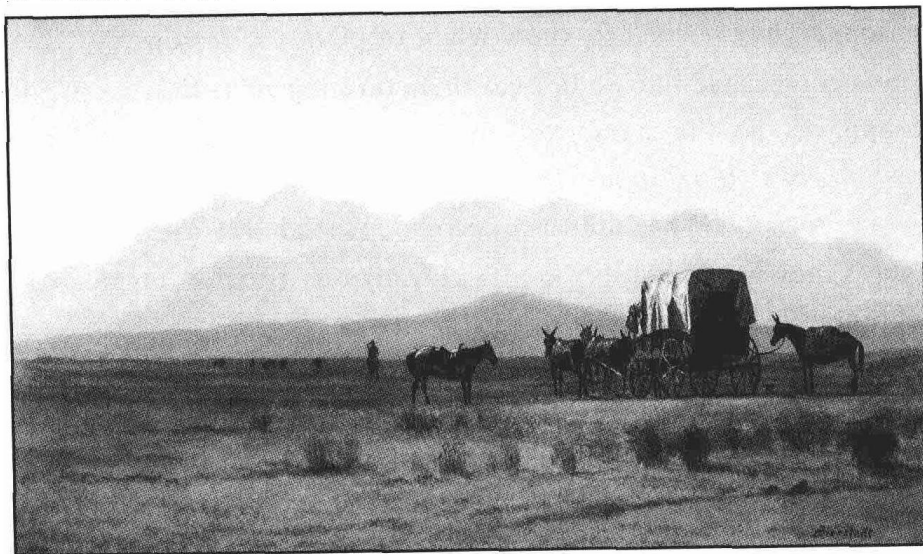
Remember, when the first English settlers arrived in America they almost starved<sup>5</sup> because they did not understand the local seasons and weather conditions (they were saved by the local Native Americans who

showed them where to find food). If the farmers did not understand when to sow and when to reap<sup>6</sup>, they and their families starved. And the key to knowing the changing of the seasons was to look at the night sky and study the movement of the stars.

关于算命,有许多不同的问题。我们先从占星术开始看起,它大概是古代最流行的算命方式了。在古代,占星术的发达可能基于两个彼此相关的理由。

在当时,所有的社会仰赖着不同形式的农业。即使在沙漠地区,人们也必须知道何时该将他们的动物迁徙到另一个地方,才找得到食物;而在水源较充裕的地区,就可以种植农作物。不论是以上哪一种情况,农业社会的人们必须懂得季节如何交替,这是十分重要的。

请记住,当第一批来自英国的拓荒者抵达美国时,他们因为不了解当地的季节和气候而差点饿死(美国当地的居民给予他们帮助,让他们知道哪里可以找到食物)。如果农夫不了解何时该播种,何时又该收割,他们和他们的家人都会挨饿。想得知季节转换的关键,就是观察夜空,研究群星的运作。



### Word Bank

4. **vitally** ['vaɪtlɪ] *ad.* extremely or indispensably 极其;十分
5. **starve** [stɑːv] *v.* to cause to become very weak or die because there is not enough food to eat 因饥饿而死
6. **reap** [ri:p] *v.* to cut and collect a grain crop 收割;收获



## Talk 3

MP3 6



D: Dolores M: Mark

D: Let's start with the reasons people in ancient times were interested in the sky. Any ideas?

M: [*Thinks*] Hmm. I would imagine it had something to do with the seasons. They needed to know when to plant their crops.

D: That's correct. If they didn't get their farming right they were going to go hungry. So the stars were important to them for this very basic reason. Now think about what happened to things that were important for one reason. What did they become associated with?

M: I guess they would get mixed in with religion, ritual... magic. Ah, I'm beginning to see what you're getting at.

多洛雷斯：我们从古代人对天象的兴趣开始吧。有什么想法吗？

马 克：（思考）嗯……我猜大概跟季节有关吧，他们要知道何时该栽种农作物。

多洛雷斯：没错，如果他们不能正确适时地栽种农作物，就得挨饿。就因为这个非常基本的理由，星象对他们来说很重要。现在想想看，那些本来只为了一个原因，而变得很重要的事物会如何。它们会和什么东西连接在一起？

马 克：我猜它们会和一些东西结合，像宗教、仪式……魔法。啊，我开始了解你的观点了。

## Text 4

MP3 7

So farming was probably the main reason for getting to know the sky well. The second reason, in time, was for navigational<sup>7</sup> purposes. We are beginning to realize that many thousands of years ago people were making long sea voyages<sup>8</sup> out of sight of land. To find their way before the invention of the compass, they had to know the star patterns. They were not sailing blindly about.

These voyages also suggest something else; they must have known—or at least have been very sure—that the world was not flat and that there was no edge from which they would fall off. In the fifteenth century before the voyages of Columbus, many people were afraid they would fall off the “edge of the world.” We know this because it is on record that ships would not sail far from land.

The Europeans were slowly exploring the coast of Africa, kilometer by kilometer. They were very cautious<sup>9</sup> until Columbus sailed straight across to America (and even he had trouble with a frightened crew<sup>10</sup>). We also know that one Greek philosopher realized the world was round and it seems the ancient people did too which suggests a great interest in the sky.



Christopher Columbus  
(1451–1506)



所以,农业大概是人们会这么了解天象的主要原因。同时,第二个原因则是因为航海的需要。我们开始发现好几千年前,人们进行了长时间远离陆地的航海。在罗盘发明之前,要想找到方向,就要懂得群星的运行。他们并不是盲目地到处航行。

这些航海的旅程也说明了另一件事:他们一定知道——或至少很确定——世界不是平的,他们也不会从世界的边缘掉下去。在十五世纪哥伦布航海前,许多人担心自己会从“世界的边缘”掉下去。现在我们会知道这件事,

是因为记录显示当时的船只不会远离陆地航行。

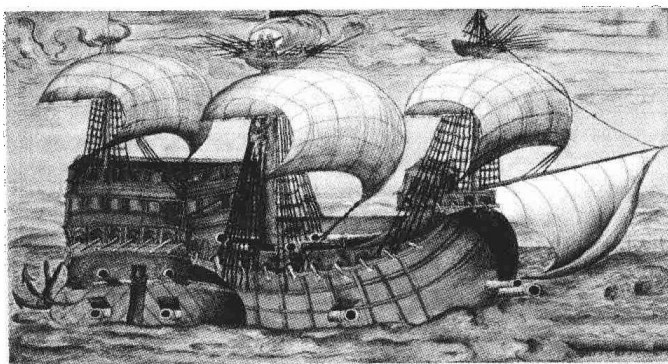
当时的欧洲人正在慢慢地、一点一点地探索非洲海岸，一直到哥伦布直线航行到美洲之前，他们都非常小心翼翼（就连哥伦布也面临船员害怕的问题）。我们也知道，一位希腊哲学家发现世界是圆的，而似乎古代的人们也明白这件事，这显示他们对天象有着浓厚的兴趣。

## Word Bank

7. **navigational** [ˌnæviˈgeɪʃənəl] *a.* of or relating to navigation, the plotting and directing of the course of a ship, aircraft, or other vehicle 航行的；航运的
8. **voyage** [ˈvɔɪdʒ] *n.* a long journey, especially by ship 航海；航行
9. **cautious** [ˈkɔːʃəs] *a.* having or showing care, thoughtfulness, restraint, and lack of haste 十分小心的
10. **crew** [kruː] *n.* a group of people who work together, especially all those who work on and operate a ship, aircraft, etc. 全体船员

## Talk 4

MP3 8



D: Dolores M: Mark

D: Yeah? And it didn't stop there. The sky was important in several other ways.

M: Yes of course! People navigated by the stars for thousands of years. It was an important part of their main way of transport. So there must have been serious interest in the night sky.

D: So there was interest in it from a scientific, philosophical, religious and magical standpoint. A Greek philosopher figured out the Earth was round.



M: Really? Then it's not too surprising that something like astrology developed.

多洛雷斯: 对吧? 不过我还没说完呢, 天象还有其他几种重要性。

马 克: 对, 当然了! 好几千年来, 人们都靠星象航海。那对他们主要的运输方式来说, 是很重要的一部分。所以当时的人一定对夜空很有兴趣。

多洛雷斯: 所以说, 以前的人是从科学、哲学、宗教和魔法的观点, 对星象产生兴趣的。一位希腊哲学家发现地球是圆的。

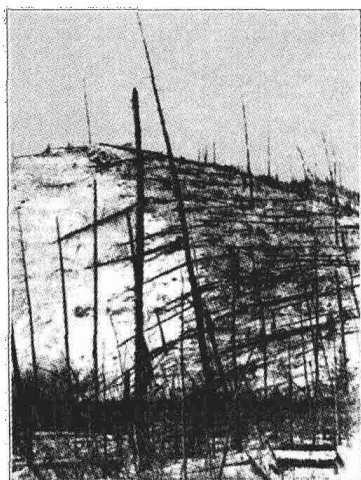
马 克: 真的吗? 那会发展出像占星术这样的东西, 也不会太令人意外了。

## Text 5

MP3 9

In addition to this, there are also some ancient legends about disasters from the sky. Records tell us there was some kind of gigantic explosion in the air over Tunguska in Russia in 1908. It was common for people to fear the coming of comets<sup>11</sup>. There is a theory that perhaps some comets or asteroids<sup>12</sup> from space hit the Earth two or three thousand years ago and destroyed a civilization.

除此之外, 也有一些关于天空所引发灾难的古老传说。记录显示, 1908 年俄罗斯的通古斯卡, 在空中发生过巨大的爆炸事件, 人们普遍畏惧彗星的到来。有个理论说, 也许两、三千年前, 有来自太空的彗星或行星撞击地球, 摧毁了一个古文明。



Tunguska Event

## Word Bank

11. comet ['kɒmɪt] *n.* an object that moves around the sun, usually at a great distance from it, that is seen only rarely from Earth as a bright line in the sky 彗星
12. asteroid ['æstərɔɪd] *n.* an irregularly shaped rock that orbits the Sun,



Asteroid: Eros