FATE
Ghosts

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INTRODUCTION

Using the Fate Accelerated Edition or Fate Core rules, you can create a ghost character or NPC exactly like you would create a human character. Using Fate Core's nameless npcs or FAE mooks to make a ghost is trivially easy. So why does this book exist? To provide a more specialized look at how to use custom FAE approaches to capture the feel and complexity of creating many different kinds of ghosts. It also includes some already-constructed ghost specific stunts, and some ready made, straight from stories, ghost npcs.

Why Approaches and not Skills?

Ghosts are not as fully realized as a person. Even though their spirit lingers and it has a person's memories, the ghost can't interact with the world in the same way. Ghosts can't drive or talk to anyone. Because they aren't really real, they can't learn things. Approaches fit this idea really well--they define what ghosts *are*. This isn't to say the ghosts can't have skills. If it's meaningful to you, then give the ghosts skills.

Will this work with Fate Core?

Short answer: **Yes**.

Longer answer: Both flavors of Fate (Core and Accelerated) basically use the same rules, mostly differing in whether characters have skills or approaches, and some methods in creating nameless npcs or mooks. But everything else works the same--stunts, fate points, the ladder, etc. As an example, one difference will be during a session when, in Fate Core, someone would defend with will. There isn't an exact match for that in FAE, so it all comes down to deciding which approach best fits the narrative of the ghost's defense. It's a little juggling in the head, but most things are pretty straightforward.

GHOST APPROACHES

Ghost abilities are tied into what kind of ghost they are and defined by the approaches a ghost has. NPC ghosts should not roll when attempting actions using their approaches - their abilities are constrained by their ratings, and they can use any effect at or below their rating. PC ghosts should be as subject to fate as any other player and roll Fate Dice as normal: the rating attached to their desired effect is their target number. Any ghost action targeting another character is defended against as normal, with the difficulty being the action's rating.

APPARITION

Apparitions are ghosts who reveal themselves to the world visibly and audibly. At a rating of 4, the apparition is able to have a fully physical form and can manipulate objects in the world as a normal person can. If the apparition wants to exceed human ability while manifested, they must also use poltergeist effects.

APPARITION RATING & EFFECT

0	Faint whispers, Light Blobs
1	Audible Voice, Human Shaped Light or Fog
2	Normal Appearance but Translucent and Insubstantial
3	Normal Appearance but Insubstantial
4	Fully Physical Manifestation

HAUNT

Haunts channel their powers into affecting the thoughts and emotions of people. Haunt can affect only one target with each action. Momentary effects happen and fade away, perhaps influencing a character's behavior. Lasting effects will persist throughout a scene and are attached as a fleeting condition to a character which can be compelled by the GM. An overwhelming effect is attached to the character as a fleeting condition, but functions as an automatic compel, offering the character a Fate Point to act with, or cost one to act against, the emotion or thought.

0	Create a Momentary Emotion
1	Create a Momentary Thought or Lasting Emotion.
2	Create a Lasting Thought or Overwhelming Emotion.
3	Create a Momentary Perception or Overwhelming Thought
4	Create a Lasting Perception

Omen

Omens exist to give messages about the future. Usually they bring messages of impending death, but any type of future event or destiny can be foretold by an omen.

When an omen reveals the future to a character, that destiny is added as an aspect to that character, which can be invoked or compelled as normal. There are a number of free invokes against that aspect equal to the omen's rating in this ability. This aspect is kept until it comes true. The character can attempt to change their fate during play, but must first exhause all free invokes. Once they have done so, an action taken contrary to the fate will remove the aspect.

Omen Rating & Effect

0	Create Aspect, no free invokes
1	Create Aspect, 1 free invoke
2	Create Aspect, 2 free invokes
3	Create Aspect, 3 free invokes
4	Create Aspect, 4 free invokes

Poltergeist

Poltergeists possess the ability to move physical objects while remaining incorporeal. The rating effect of a Poltergeist's action is determined by totalling the rating for each column of size, scale, and power. The poltergeist cannot use this aspect to attack unless they choose Violent or Destructive Movement. If the attack is successful, the poltergeist reduces the effect by two shifts (to a minimum of 0), so a successful attack still may not do any damage.

Rating	Size	Scale	Power
0	Small Object (cup)	One Item	Shake/Rattle
1	Medium Object (chair)	Several Items	Slow Movement
2	Large Object (dresser)	Many Items	Fast Movement
3	Person	-	Violent Movement
4	Very Large Object (Truck or Small House)	-	Destructive Movement

POSSESSOR

Possessors move their spirit into the body of a living creature, allowing them to control it for a period of time. The possesor's control is automatic and complete, entirely controlling the possessed's actions. Any character who has aspects, when possessed, can defend against the possession any time the possessor acts against the character's aspects. If successful, the ghost is expelled permanently.

When detrmining the effect, look at the chart below. If a rating offers +1 Duration, the ghost can extend a lower rating's effect by one step on the duration scale, e.g. a 3 rating possessor can possess a small animal (rating 0) for an entire scenario (duration of 'action' plus three steps).

POSSESOR RATING & EFFECT

0	Small Animal For One Action
1	+1 Duration
2	Medium Animal for One Scene or +1 Duration
3	Large Animal or Person for One Scene or +1 Duration
4	+1 Duration

DURATION SCALE

Action ⟷ Scene ⟷ Session ⟷ Scenario ⟷ Permanent

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53   August 1872   54

55   56

'53 to 56   Mr Sutherland

CREATING A GHOST

Like other Fate characters, ghosts have aspects, approaches, and skills. Ghosts, however, are not complete creatures. Their memories of their real lives become hazy and fade over time. Rather than being friven by reason, they become driven almost entirely by emotion.

GHOST ASPECTS

Ghosts can have anywhere from two to five aspects, as needed to explain the ghost and their purpose. Like all characters, ghosts have a high concept, but rather than having a trouble, they have an unfinished business.

HIGH CONCEPT

A ghost's High Concept is written to describe what type of ghost it is, both what approach is its most important approach, and the emotional relationship the ghost has with the world.

> *Example: Vengeful Poltergeist, Mourning Omen, Protective Apparition*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ghost characters no longer have a trouble aspect (realistically, it probably played a part in how they became a ghost), instead they have an aspect reflecting their unfinished business. For each ghost this might be different. Some ghosts might be driven to stay in the world of the living to protect the scions of their family, or to seek vengeance on those who have wronged them. When the ghost is in a situation where they are able to pursue their unfinished business, they must do so. It is considered a compel, and to take any action not directly related to their unfinished business, the ghost must pay a fate point.

> *For more information on creating NPCs, see* **Creating the Opposition** *in Fate Core on page 213, or* **Bad Guys** *in Fate Accelerated on page 38.*

> *Example: Bring my killer to justice, Destroy the gang who killed my wife, Keep the residents of Bindenhall Keep safe*

Moving On: Unlike a trouble, a ghost can complete its unfinished business. This does not require a milestone, and is instead achieved narratively. When a ghost completes its unfinished business, it faces a choice.

It can choose to move on to its unknown destination, removing it from play, or it can choose to remain. A ghost that chooses to remain, however, can no longer recover humanity for any reason. Remaining behind drives a ghost inexorably mad; it is only a matter of time.

Other Aspects

For most NPC ghosts, the two aspects should be all you need in play, but for important ghosts, provide as many additional aspects as needed.

Stunts and Refresh

Stunts and refresh are set as normal. More information on ghost stunts can be found on p. 11.

Stress and Conditions

Ghosts have three stress boxes, each absorbing 2 points of stress. These boxes can absord either physical or mental stress. Because they do not have access to the Will or Physique skills, they do not get any bonus stress boxes except as part of a stunt.

The Spirit Condition

All ghosts gain the spirit condition:

Spirit (Lasting): Spirit creatures, absent any actions to change their natures, are both invisible and incorporeal, meaning they cannot interact with the physical world. Only characters who can see spirits can see their presence. They can be touched by objects specifically created to affect spirits and cannot cross boundaries that are blocked or warded against spirits. Even objects created to affect spirits cannot be affected by spirits absent the use of the poltergeist approach.

Humanity vs Monstrousity

Ghosts exist between states of humanity and monstrousity. They are tied to their past by the unfinished business, the memories they carry around, and the trinkets they surround themself with.

This is represented by a Humanity track with five boxes. This represents how strongly the ghost can hold on to their human identity before they become a mindless creature following their high concept. Within any given scene, each time a ghost uses an approach other than apparition, they mark off a Humanity box. Once a ghost has filled their humanity track they lose all connection to their human lives.

Humanity can be regained, though slowly. By resting, surrounded by tokens and reminders from their old life, they can attempt to restore humanity. To do so, roll plus the number of clear Humanity boxes (+Humanity) versus the number of filled boxes (+Monstrousity). On a tie, nothing changes. On a success, you clear one box. On a success with style, you clear all the boxes. On a failure, you check one box.

If it is narratively possible, others may aid or create advantages for the ghost to aid them in restoring humanity, at the GMs discretion.

Ghost PCs

Once a character becomes a ghost, they will create a new character sheet to reflect their ghostly identity, using the rules in this book. They should not, however, throw away their old sheet. Should there be a way to return them to life, they would return as they were on their old sheet, but at least one aspect will need to be changed to reflect the experiences of being a ghost and what the character learned during that time.

Ghost PCs also gain the following stunt, for free:

Reaching Back

A ghost character can pay one fate point to attempt to use a skill, approach, or stunt they had access to in life. To do so, roll +Humanity versus a target of their Monstrous number. If they succeed, they are able to do the intended action and if they succeed with style, they also clear one point of Monstrousity.

Eug. Dela...
1843

GHOST STUNTS

A Helpful Spirit

Once per scene when a helpful spirit aids a mortal in a life-affirming task, they may instantly clear one box of humanity.

Beacon

There are ghosts who can command the attention of other ghosts, using their power to bring nearby minor ghosts to their aid. Once per session, a ghost can summon aid. Roll Fate Dice. For each ⊞ summon one minor ghost. These ghosts will remain under the beacon's control until the end of the scene, after which they depart.

Ectoplasm

Anything of the spirit world is constructed out a material called ectoplasm, including ghosts. With this stunt, the ectoplasm of the spirit world briefly manifests in the physical world as a residue on any object the ghost comes into contact with. It is coated in a thin slime which disappears within 5 minutes.

Electronic Voice Phenomenon

Some ghosts lack the power to manifest fully in the world, but are able to be perceived by electronic equipment such as audio recorders or cameras. When a ghost has this stunt, the effect of their Apparition approach is increased by 2, but they can only be perceived by electronic devices.

Electrical Interference

Poltergeists manipulate physical objects, and some have learned how to go further and manipulate anything running on electricity. They can turn things on or off, overload circuits, power something that isn't plugged in, and other such abilities. The size and number of devices is the same as if they were being physically manipulated.

Holding TIghtly

Ghosts, by their nature, are holding on to a world they are no longer part of, but some hold on stronger than others. These ghosts gain a stress box that can absorb 2 shifts of damage. This stunt can be taken repeatedly, each adding one more 2-shift stress box.

Nightmare

While most ghosts can move about and be active day or night, some choose to forego acting while the sun is in the sky in exchange for greater power in the darkness. A nightmare ghost can only take actions between sunset and sunrise, but gains +2 to all haunt effects.

Psychic Assault

Normal ghosts use haunt to create emotions or thoughts, but they cannot use it launch a direct mental assault. Ghosts which have given up some of their humanity can learn how to directly assault the mind. Once per session, they may roll +monstrousity as an attack which deals mental damage. For each two full points of monstrousity, the shifts of damage increase by one. To do this, the ghost must check off one box of humanity. If the ghost is not able to do so, it cannot remember its humanity well enough to make a mental asault.

Revenant

Possessing a living creature is usually the best course of action - people expect living things to be moving and usually one will come to the ghost sooner or later, ripe for possession. But if a ghost can find an acceptable dead body, the ghost can possess it too. Ghosts with the Revenant stunt can use possession on a dead creature and receive +1 duration if they do so.

Spirit Shaping

A ghost using this stunt is not limited to their normal appearance when using the apparition approach. It is able to change its appearance in any way it likes as long as it remains insubstantial. When fully manifested, it still must maintain an appearance that is about the same size as its normal appearance; e.g., an appraition could look like a housecat as long as it remained insubstantial, but if it fully manifested, it would manifest as a person-sized housecat. Whatever form of manifestation, however, the ghost receives no additional abilities from its appearance.

Tethered

Some ghosts are closely tied to a place or an object. When inside the place or near to the object they are tethered to, a tethered ghost gains +1 to all actions. However, if the tethered ghost is outside or away from their place or object, they take a -1 to all actions. If the tether is destroyed, the ghost loses this stunt and all its effects.

GHOSTPEDIA

Minor Ghosts

Like Fate Core's 'Nameless NPCs,' minor ghosts are insignificant to the story and are not meant to provide much of a challenge to the PCs unless they are found in groups. Most minor ghosts have long ago lost their humanity and act wholly toward their high concept.

In these stat blocks, the name of the creature is its high concept and will also have a note whether the ghost is analagous to an average or fair nameless NPC.

Reenacting Apparition

A reenacting apparition is caught in a loop, reliving and displaying the circumstances of its death. If it has unfinished business, it is probably related to its body not having been properly buried or its killer remaining unpunished.

> #### Reenacting Apparition (average)
> Approaches: Apparition2, Haunt 1

Hateful Haunt

Hateful haunts are vicious ghosts, often the result of suicides, who desire to drive others to end their lives. Often they create despair and in groups they can create a consistent and overwhelming internal monologue of negativity.

> #### Hateful Haunt (Fair)
> Approaches: Apparition 1, Haunt 2, Omen 1
>
> **Stress:** ☐

Warning Omen

A warning omen is a helpful spirit, from its point of view. Other people believe the omen doesn't just notify people of their fate, but is the cause of that fate. It tends not to have much interaction with the living, mostly limited to cryptic warnings.

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WARNING OMEN (AVERAGE)

Approaches: Apparition 1, Omen 2

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MALICIOUS POLTERGEISTS

A malicious poltergeist fits the standard mold of the poltergeist: whenever people show up near it, it wants them dead or gone. These poltergeists are a little weak to be violent, and are more likely to try and annoy people into leaving.

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MALICIOUS POLTERGEIST (FAIR)

Approaches: Apparition 1, Haunt 1, Poltergeist 2

Stress: ☐

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TRICKSTER POSSESSOR

Trickster possessors love to create trouble and chaos. They spend most of their time finding situations which can be "improved" and wait for the right person to come along. Usually possessing small animals like cats and squirrels, they will cause car accidents or make noise to give away those who are hiding from those who seek.

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TRICKSTER POSSESSOR (AVERAGE)

Approaches: Omen 1, Possessor 2

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Major Ghosts

Unlike minor ghosts, major ghosts are spirits of considerable power. While some are archetypal, many major ghosts are unique—the remaining imprints of powerful individuals.

For major ghosts, the stat block will list its name or type, which is distinct from its high concept, listed within the stat block.

The Angel of South Street

Criminals on South Street have started talking about a woman who warns victims away or gets in their heads to stop crimes in progress. Most everyone think this is a silly story a few goons are using to cover up their incompetence, but they're wrong. The Angel of South Street is both real and has turned her sights on the rampant crime that killed her—a passer-by—when a drug deal went awry.

THE ANGEL OF SOUTH STREET
Protective Possessor
Unfinished Business: Justice for her killer

Apparition 3, Poltergeist 2, Possessor 4
Humanity: ☐☐☐☐☐
Stress: ☐☐☐
Stunts: *A Helpful Spirit*

Eleanor Brendt

When Eleanor lived, her house was a good walk outside of town in the farmland. The isolation was only part of the reason for her unhappiness—her (much older) husband was abusive and her babies were loud and demanding. One day she... had enough. She killed her husband and children then drowned herslf in the nearby river. Unfortunately, Eleanor did not find the oblivion she sought, her spirit instead remaining in the house that embodied her misery.

Over the years the house has changed hands and gradually the town expanded beyond it. However no families remained in it for long. The ghost of Eleanor, half-mad from her own death and the never-ending years following it, was driven to recreate the misery of her life over and over again—driving spouses to abuse, forcing parents to kill children, causing suicides. The house has seen many tragedies, each pushing Eleanor further into her monstrousity.

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Eleanor Brendt
Murderous Haunt

Apparition 2, Haunt 3, Omen 2
Stress: ☐☐☐☐
Stunts: *Holding TIghtly, Tethered*

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General Thorval

When the General retired after the first Gulf War, everyone thought he had changed. Even a few years before he had been a serious, but still generally kind and focused person. After, he reacted to every slight, real or imagined, with cruelty. He began hoarding and spending time investigating conspiracy theories.

Eventually his family made the difficult decision to put the General in a care facility. Cut off from his stacks of newspapers and spools of red string, the General seemed to waste away and died within a year.

His house, passed on to a new owner, started having odd occurences. Pencils and newspapers would congregate in the dining room at first, eventually being pinned to wall and having phrases circled and lines drawn all across them. If they were removed, the next day they would return. The General, as a ghost, wanted to continue his work.

When the living residents of the house objected, he began to toement them. When moving furniture and constant noice wouldn't drive them away, he began to try direct violence so he could continue his obsessive conspiracy research.

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The General
Obsessed Poltergeist
Unfinished Business: Regaining his sanity

Apparition 2, Haunt 2, Poltergeist 4
Humanity: ☐☐☐☐☐
Stress: ☐☐☐
Stunt: *Beacon, Psychic Assault*

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The Mouse Lady

Everyone in town knows the story of the Mouse Lady, part of it anyway: any tme someone is going to die untimely, the Mouse Lady will leave a dead mouse near them one week before they die. What they don't know is that the young girl, Jenny, had fallen into a pit and her body, never found, was eventually eaten by rats. Scared of her famliy's response, she's never shown herself to them, but doesn't want anyone

else's death to go unnoticed. So whever she knows someone will die, she possesses the corpse of a mouse and leaves it as a warning.

JENNY THE MOUSE LADY
Concerned Omen
Unfinished Business: A proper burial

Apparition 2, Omen 4, Possessor 2
Stress: ☐☐☐
Stunt: *Revenant*

THE PUMPKIN FARMER

When Gregory was alive, he wouldn't sell a single acre of his farm no matter how much money was on the table. His children, on the other hand, couldn't wait to sell it piece-by-piece once he died. Eventually, only the farmhouse and a small pumpkin patch remained owned by the family.

While everyone had thought Gregory's spirit had passed on, he was driven to protect and keep his farm, so much that even death would not stop him. With every piece sold, Gregory became more and more furious, eventually beginning to prey on the people who bought and used the land that had been his, trying to drive them away, carrying his rusty sickle ready and willing to leave the blood of the trespassers on the ground.

PUMPKIN FARMER GREGORY
Apparition Against Change
Unfinished Business: Keep the farm in the family

Apparition: 4, Poltergeist 3, Possessor 2
Humanity: ☐☐☐☐☐
Stress: ☐☐☐☐
Stunts: *Holding TIghtly, Nightmare*

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: "A Nun Frightened By A Ghost Playing Guitar" - Francisco Goya

p.0: "The Ballet from 'Robert le Diable'" - Edgar Degas

p.2: "Tadeus Langier, Zakopane" - Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz

p.6: [Album of Spirit Photographs] - Frederick Hudson

p.10: "The Ghost on the Terrace" - Eugène Delacroix

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p. 19 : "The Ghost of Isabella, The White Devil" - Henry Weston Keen