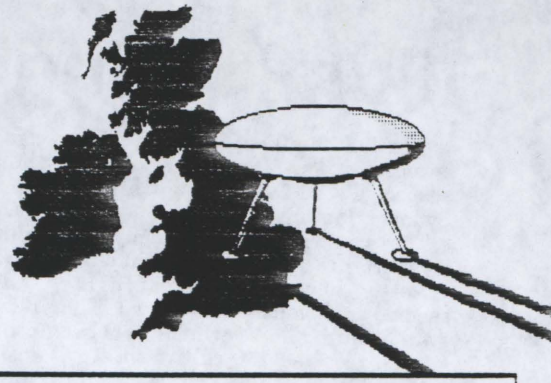


UFO NEWSFILE



Number 3

A BUFORA Publication

£1.00

The men from the UFO

DO YOU believe in men from outer space? Millions of people do all over the world — and in the Westcountry the belief in aliens has left its mark: remember the Cross in the Sky episode a few years back?

You would think that the more scientifically minded you become, the less you would believe in the phenomena, but this is not so. Scientist Dr Jacques Vallee certainly believes in UFOs.

He became interested when, as an astrophysicist, he saw the destruction of tracking tapes of unknown objects at a major observatory and asked himself: why is everyone so afraid?

He began a systematic investigation of UFOs based on scientific principles which has lasted more than 20 years. He has yet to see an alien himself, but he has seen the ground marks left behind by the visitors and the physical effects they have had on humans.

The model for the French scientist played by Francois Truffant in Steven Spielberg's Close



Encounters of the Third Kind, he has no doubts about alien existence and in **Confrontations** (Souvenir Press, £14.95) puts forward the evidence he has gathered over the years.

Unlike many people, however, he is not sure that they are visitors from outer space — he contends that they might be the manifestation of a complex technology from within our own atmosphere.

He also believes that not enough truly scientific research is being done and calls for a thorough investigation into the forces which he says are malevolent towards the human race.

WESTERN MORNING NEWS 20.06.90

Beadle's Day



THIS was the day in 1952 when Washington was invaded by UFOs at around 10pm. For some hours, five strange blue and white lights danced in the sky around the White House and surrounding countryside. They came back exactly a week later in great strength, and between six and 12 of them ran rings around an F.94 jet interceptor sent up to investigate them.

Keep up good work on UFOs

■ RE numerous articles in your newspaper over the past month or so. All I can say is keep up the good work. I run a small UFO group in Southampton called SUFOG (Southampton Unidentified Flying Object Group) which meets once a month at my home address.

It seems a shame that the subject of UFOs is taken so much as a big joke, not only by the media, but the public at large. Surely one is not so naive as to believe there is only life on this planet, or even in this galaxy. Surely another form of life, some 200 years more advanced than our own could have mastered the art of space/time travel. You only have to look at our history over the past 100 years.

One hundred years ago, the car was just appearing and replacing the good old horse/coach. Forty years ago space travel was only just becoming a reality. Now man is building/thinking of living in space stations and on the moon and we are exploring the outer limits of space.

The whole idea of E.T. and UFOs is not to be scorned. I believe it is only a matter of time before the human race contacts some other form of life from outer space (if he hasn't already, if we are to believe the Americans and the retrieval/crash landing of UFOs in America, i.e. Roswell, New Mexico 1947; and the alleged recovery of alien bodies in South Africa in the 80s, when an alleged UFO was shot down and bodies found).

If another form of life has developed on a planet that has such a hostile environment, then their appearance would be very different from our own i.e. large almond eyes, small nostrils, no ears, etc. (these are some of the described features people have seen on alleged UFO-nauts). Also the wearing of space helmets and space suits would be comparable to those of our own astronauts, to protect them in space. If anyone is interested in joining our group,

please contact me. — S. Gerrard (SUFOG), 25, Weston Grove Road, Woolston, Southampton.

■ "IT'S Myopic to Dismiss UFO Reports" ran the headline on a letter from J. A. Wright, of Southsea. How true, but we must not allow ourselves to be left open to labels of "cranks" or "eccentrics."

Mr. Wright alleges that the Freedom of Information Act in the U.S.A. brought forth admissions of 14 crewmen from two alien craft being held at a top security base in Alabama.

Hard as I've searched my files, which extend from 1947, I cannot find any such admission! Rumours abound, some with affidavits sworn by ex-airmen, etc. There are some dramatic accounts of a similar scenario with an alien craft being shot down over South Africa in 1989, the crew being transferred to the States where they were again allegedly swapping technical secrets! It remains to be seen whether this is another rumour which grew into fact in ufology — notwithstanding that such craft DO exist.

In view of this, I find it puzzling to read of £65m. research, mostly channelled through NASA, to begin in 1992, aimed at finding life somewhere among (and I quote top scientist Frank Drake): "Ten thousand to one hundred thousand advanced civilizations in the Milky Way alone!"

Backing up my research and personal experiences, news items on UFOs have produced two formerly unheard of and unreported Portsmouth sightings.

I estimate that only ten per cent of any sightings reach the media or even the UFO experts. One man told me that his sighting in 1965 changed the whole of his life — for the better. I assured him he was, like me, only one of thousands. — Ernie Sears, Crichton House, Rotary Court, Netley Abbey.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECHO 19.07.90 THE NEWS 26.07.90

UFOCALL 0898 121886

Illuminating mystery rings bells

Startled families feared a close encounter was imminent with a suspected UFO circling around Swindon last night.

They could see a cluster of mysterious rotating lights in the night sky.

As the hours wore on the lights seemed to hover over the town. The switchboard at Swindon police station received 150 calls from worried and disbelieving people seeking an explanation for the phenomenon.

The Evening Advertiser was also deluged with calls from residents

convinced that someone, or something, from outer space was about to land in their street.

One caller described the eerie white lights as like something out of the film Ghostbusters.

But the mystery was not a UFO piloted by aliens wanting to make contact with the Earth after all — just powerful searchlights raking the sky to let the world know about the coming opening of Cairo's nightclub, at Shaw Ridge Leisure Park, West Swindon.

The club was delighted with the interest in the town caused by their publicity stunt.

"I think it is fascinating," said club spokesman Ian Freeman. "I think if a UFO was around it would probably come to Swindon. It is one of the nicest towns I have been to."

The lights were flashing between 8pm and 10.30pm.

Tonight they will be flashing again to mark the club's official opening celebrations.

■ Club opens — pages 10 and 11

EVENING ADVERTISER 29.11.90

Mysterious light baffles students

THREE trainee teachers who spotted a mystery light over Exmouth at the weekend have asked if anyone can explain exactly what it was they saw.

The three students at Rolle College reported the UFO sighting to Exmouth police but checks with coastguard and other authorities have failed to come up with an answer.

Coincidentally, police all over the Westcountry received numerous calls at the weekend after what is thought to have been a meteor was reported to have "scorched" across the night sky before coming down with a "bang" in Bridgwater Bay.

Falling

The Exmouth students say the strange moon-sized orange ball of light they saw was moving East to West and falling towards Lyme Bay off Exmouth — the wrong direction for the Bridgwater reports.

First year B.Ed. students Lee Jones, 19, from Weston Super Mare, and Mark Marsden, 20, from

by GEOFF NAISH

Sussex, were watching a video with fellow third-year American exchange student Stephanie Glover, 20, in a ground floor flat at Kingsthorpe Hall of Residence, Rolle Road, at 9.45 pm on Sunday evening.

They said their attention was attracted to the strange light in the dark night sky through the seaward facing window of the flat.

"We saw this light like an orange ball moving very slowly across the sky from our left to right. We saw it go down very, very

slowly then go out of sight below the trees on our horizon," said Mr Marsden.

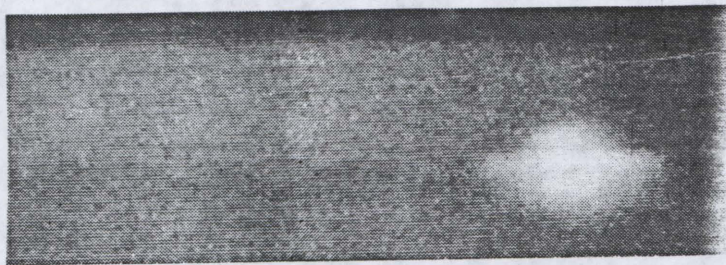
"It was like nothing we had ever seen before. We went down to the beach to see if something had come down in the sea but we could see nothing and two people we spoke to who were walking their dogs along the seafront said they had seen absolutely nothing," he added.

The three have been the subject of some attention from fellow students since reporting the sighting and would now like to know if anyone else saw anything or can explain what the mystery light was.

WESTERN MORNING

NEWS 20.06.90

Nursery fun pulls in galaxy of stars!



A MYSTERIOUS UFO has been spotted in the skies over Cust House — enjoying a look in at the 60th anniversary celebrations at Edith Kerrison Nursery School.

A video taken of the event in July has revealed a white circular object with a ring around the middle. It is only glimpsed briefly at the start of the film, before moving out of vision at the top of the picture.

The object has left staff at the school puzzled.

Headmistress Ann Childs said:

"I didn't notice it the first time I watched the video.

"It is only when you look closely you see it. It is all very odd.

"People have suggested a number of different explanations but none of them seem plausible.

"The only thing I could think of was an aeroplane but there does not appear to be any signs of a vapour trail on the film."

Other stars, invited to attend the school event, were London's Burning actor Glen Murphy, and East-Enders star Michelle Gale.

NEWHAM RECORDER

20.09.90

'Orange star' UFO sighting

POLICE have informed the Ministry of Defence after an unidentified flying object was spotted in Grimsby last night. Two neighbours in Miller Avenue, off Carr Lane, saw the UFO which they described as star-shaped, orange and extremely bright.

It was only visible for about 10 seconds at around 10.40pm and they saw it heading off in the direction of Wonderland, at the end of the North Promenade in Cleethorpes.

The UFO was said to hold a level course but its speed was unknown.

One of those who spotted it was 36-year-old Jim Parrott, who saw it coming from the east while he was chatting on his doorstep to Chris Hinson.

Mr Parrott explained: "These bright orange lights came from behind the house. It is strange to explain but it was like a string of lights and one lot would go out and then light up a bit further along."

"Another strange thing was that, when you see an aeroplane move, it goes with the curve of the earth but this was going in a perfectly straight line. It was bright orange and about four or five times bigger than a star, with the centre just pure black."

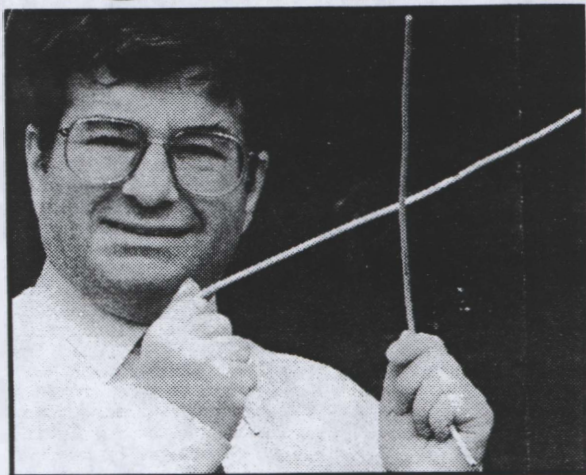
The police have to inform the MoD of all UFO sightings but Cleethorpes police have suggested that the last night's sighting might have been a distress flare.

GRIMSBY EVENING TELEGRAPH 24.07.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

UFO CAPITAL!

Where spacemen go to town...



PROBING... Ron Halliday with dousing rods.

GREAT balls of fire! Sleepy Blairgowrie has become the flying saucer capital of Scotland.

The Perthshire town is usually better known for its strawberries than spacemen.

But it has had such an amazing concentration of crop circles and UFO sightings that the Strange Phenomena Investigations group are probing reports of:

- Balls of fire shooting across the ground:
- Spaceships making circles in crop fields — such as appeared at Ardblair in May last year:

By LEWIS THOMSON

- A ball of fire in a bush:
- A spaceship with flashing lights.

The SPI want to find out if this concentration of weird happenings in Blairgowrie is linked to high-energy 'ley-lines,' running under the town.

The SPI say that, over the last two years, there have been five crop circles in the Blairgowrie area and 12 reported UFO sightings over the last 30 years.

Ron Halliday, who works in SPI's office at Stirling University, said: "Blairgowrie is now the paranormal centre of Scotland."

"It's had an amazing number of sightings for such a small area."

"The ley-lines which run under Blairgowrie are a source of energy which flows all over the world. We track the surface energy by using dousing rods."

"We think that all the phenomena are linked and we're trying to find people who have seen lights in the sky, which could be UFOs or products of the energy."

"The work of the SPI and our magazine, Enigmas, is to come to an understanding of events outside scientific explanation."

POLICE

"Such as people seeing balls of fire which shoot across Blairgowrie not far from the ground."

"In 1987, a woman saw a ball of fire in a bush."

"When she looked up, she saw a spaceship several hundred feet long, with lights all around it."

Local police deny that they have had reports of UFOs.

One officer said: "People may be getting mixed up with the Northern Lights."

Strange lights in the sky

MYSTERY lights in the sky above Stratford have left police baffled.

They were called out on Sunday morning when a woman living in Loxley Road reported seeing a string of light appear in the sky shortly after hearing two explosions.

The police force helicopter searched the area and extensive inquiries were made but both failed to uncover any clues.

"The woman was in her kitchen when she heard a loud explosion and looked out of the window," said Insp John Bloxham.

"She heard another explosion and saw a big flash of light in the sky and a long string of smoke with three lumps in it, believed to be towards the direction of the Welcombe Hills."

Concerned

"We were rather concerned about this because we are aware that quite often a number of light aircraft are around and so scrambled the Warwickshire Constabulary helicopter. We sent various police cars out and talked to quite a number of people but couldn't find anyone who had seen or heard anything."

Police called off the search after checks with civil and military authorities confirmed that no aircraft were missing.

Police received a second call from a woman living on the Tiddington Road the next day, Monday. She also had heard an explosion and saw what she described as a 'flash' in the sky, but hadn't reported it immediately.

It's those crop circles again

From: David Reynolds, TORRO, Somerford Mill Farm, Brewood, Stafford.

SIR — I must correct errors

made by Montague Keen (FN September 14) on the subject of crop circles.

a) I did not say basic explanations for linear features, accompanying around only 1 per cent of all circles, are already being made available. Some are being developed privately, others are being prepared for publication. Keyed formations were not known before the TORRO conference, so they could hardly have been explained then. It has taken since 1980 to establish the crop-circle phenomenon and to produce a comprehensive explanation of a single circle, so critics should not yet expect comprehensive explanations for formations that have been known for only a few months.

b) Historical examples have been found for most pre-1990 circle formations, and there is no reason why this should not eventually apply to this year's formations. Any escalating (hoaxed formations aside) is more apparent than real. Prevailing weather conditions should be considered — dry, warm weather will result in drier soils and lower water tables, thus more dust to hold an electric charge. "Thousands" of circle spotters have not been scouring the landscape since the early 80s; there were very few spotters at that time.

c) Mr Keen claims that no other sort of weather or atmospheric phenomena can produce geometrical and sometimes symmetrical patterns. Aside from a wide range of halo phenomena, rainbows, hail (conical and spherical) and snowflakes exhibiting geometry etc. atmospheric conditions are also able to produce vortices, which are essentially cylindrical thus geometrical/symmetrical.

d) From most crop circles, windspeeds are insufficient to damage individual plants. However, in powerfully flattened circles, plants may be pulled bodily out of the soil and ejected onto the neighbouring undamaged crop canopy. The vortex solution does account for the "unpredictability" of the crop rotation. Vortices may rotate either way.

Mr Keen states that the vortex solution is an unproven hypothesis. Is it mere coincidence that crop circle frequency decays exponentially from hills, that they form when micro-fronts pass overhead, that most occur in very quiet anticyclonic conditions, and that 'eye-witnesses describe whirlwinds? Is it scientific to ignore this? These are facts, nothing more, nothing less.

There is no mystery as to what creates the circles, the challenge is how vortices create them.

FARMING NEWS 05.10.90

SUNDAY MAIL 13.01.91

STRATFORD UPON AVON HERALD 21.12.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

Mysterious corn circles stripped of demonology

A MYSTIC set of signs and circles carved into the country's crops are not the handy-work of Satan.

And investigators studying the phenomenon say ghosts, electrical force fields, whirlwinds and little green men from Mars are also innocent in the affair.

But at the end of a year in which crop circle hysteria swept England, experts admit they are no closer to finding an explanation.

Now author and investigator Maria Ward of Louvain Road, Stone, has taken up the pen in a bid to beat rumours.

She said: "People are too quick to dismiss the circles because they cannot understand what causes them."

"There seems to be a fear among scientists about taking the matter seriously in case they are accused of being cranks."

But Mrs Ward, who rates among the top circle experts in the country, says the phenomenon has been with us since 1918. And the symbols have been reported from around the world.

For 35 years signs have appeared in one Cobham field and others have been seen at Istead Rise and Meopham.

"England leads the way in the number of circles it has. But a lot of farmers are afraid to report them because crowds tramp across their crops," said Mrs Ward.

The tale of the circles is packed with mystery. They are most common in Wessex where ancient hill forts and mystic standing stones are found.

One investigator decided the signs looked like those drawn by North American Indians. He took aerial pictures to one tribe and showed them to its elders — they started crying and claimed they recognised the symbols.

Closer to home, photographic film has allegedly been wiped clear and a BBC camera crew which went to Wiltshire was said to have had its equipment wrecked by some unseen force.

It is also claimed people have been made physically sick after entering the circles while others have been thrown clear by a sudden surge of power.

Mrs Ward, who says she has also suffered while standing in the rings,

■ by Douglas Kempster

said: "It's terrifying. You feel awful but can't see what is causing the pain."

"Many people have strange experiences after visiting the sites — they see lights and other phenomena. We just can't explain why."

The pictures, once thought to have been drawn by the devil, can be created in seconds and be miles wide.

"An investigator was watching a field one night — he turned away for just 20 seconds and when he looked back a massive circle was there. There had been no wind, no lights, no people — it just appeared," said the author.

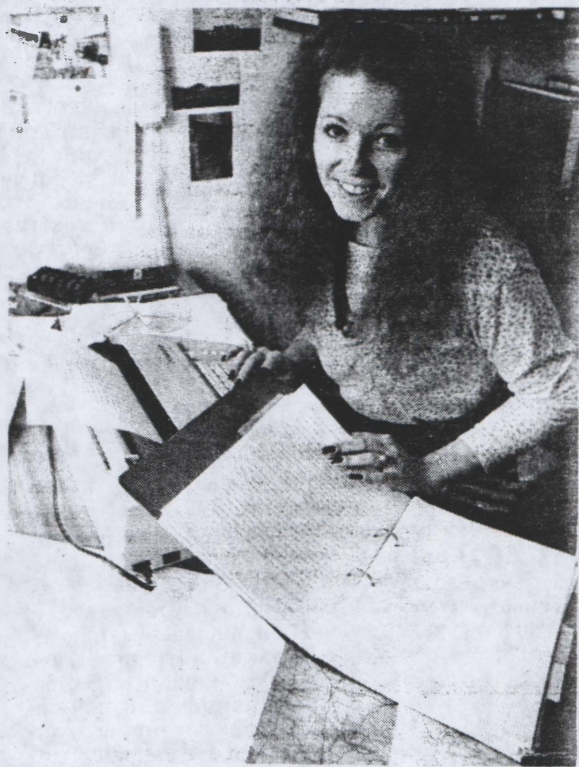
Scientific analysis has revealed corn flattened by the signs has changed its molecular structure. None of the plants are damaged and they continue to grow.

Mrs Ward said: "It's impossible for a human to do this. Some of the stems are so fragile they break at a touch, but they were bent over and unharmed."

"In Japan the paddy fields have been hit and tons of water just disappeared."

Now Mrs Ward is searching for other circle enthusiasts who have experienced strange phenomena after visiting the sites. Some stories could be included in the book.

If you can help write to Crop Circles, Kentish Times, 31 Pier Road, Eriton, Kent DA8 1TA.



● Maria Wood, out to beat rumours.

XB/1916/12



● Crop circle in Wiltshire.

Contributed

DARTFORD TIMES 15.11.90

Strange
lights
from
above

UFO Experts are investigating reports of strange lights in the sky over the West Country early yesterday.

A police inspector saw what he believed was a meteor over Henlade near Taunton at 2.45 am, it exploded and lit up the sky with blue and white lights.

Police officers in Bridgewater also reported seeing the phenomenon travelling from south to north and disappear over the Bristol Channel.

The strange light was also seen by a Taunton milkman who saw a white object with a tail in the sky over the River Parrett at Bridgewater.

Coastguards checked the area but failed to find anything.

The air traffic control centre at West Drayton in London say there was a blip on their radar screen at the time of the sightings.

BUFORA NEWSCLIPPING SERVICE

THE scientist at the sensitive radio receiver was baffled by the strange signals apparently coming from deep space. "The thought flashed through my mind that the disturbances I had observed might be due to intelligent control . . . The feeling is constantly growing on me that I had been the first to hear the greeting of one planet to another."

No, this is not a piece of science fiction. Nor is it an account of a contemporary NASA researcher into SETI (the search for extraterrestrial intelligence). The scientist was Nikola Tesla, tuning into "the ether" back in 1899.

Despite a few suspicions of this kind, no one pursued SETI seriously until 1959, when interest in the subject suddenly exploded. Since then, hundreds of radio telescopes around the world have been pressed into service to scan the sky for intelligent signals from other civilisations. Because this was only 30 years ago, and because SETI caught the imagination largely of the younger researchers, almost all the pioneers of SETI are alive.

This makes SETI an ideal science for a sociologist to investigate, but the subject also sheds unique insight into the workings of the scientific mind. SETI research is not alone in its youthfulness, of course: molecular biology is of the same vintage, and the science of chaos a great deal younger. But SETI is a science like no other. Here we have a field where some of the greatest minds of a generation have been "studying" something that may not even exist.

Unlike most scientists, SETI researchers go into their field knowing that they may spend a lifetime without achieving any positive result. On the other hand, the successful detection of other beings "out there" will change our gut feelings about the cosmos more profoundly than at any time since Copernicus and his younger contemporaries showed that the Earth is not the centre of the Universe. The first successful SETI researcher will etch a personal place in history as surely as Copernicus or Neil Armstrong. For these reasons, a dedicated SETI scientist may well differ—in motivation and character—from an "ordinary" scientist.

David Swift, a sociologist at the University of Hawaii, has provided an invaluable record of just what makes the original SETI pioneers tick. His basic technique has been to fire the same set of questions at all the pioneers of SETI—mainly in

Is anyone out there?

SETI Pioneers by David Swift,
University of Arizona Press, pp 434, \$35/£32.50

Nigel Henbest



Extraterrestrial snapshot: some claim that SETI has succeeded

person, but occasionally over the phone or through a colleague attending a scientific meeting—at some point between 1980 and 1984. Fortunately, he managed to catch all the scientists involved in the great expansion of SETI in the 1960s, including the Soviet physicist Iosef Shklovskii, who died in 1985. (Problems of finding a publisher delayed the appearance of the book till late last year.)

The book is a goldmine of original information, containing as it does the verbatim answers to all the questions that Swift asked the 16 researchers. Unless you are a SETI groupie, the minutiae of the responses may make for a fairly turgid read: "What religious beliefs did your parents have?", for example, provokes few riveting replies.

But the answers do build up a consistent picture of the philosophy and methodology of SETI that, for me at least, produced some surprises. For a field that seems to have attracted so many bright and inquiring minds, the researchers by and large hold to a consensus view that dates to the first meeting on SETI, held way back in 1961. Promoted by such skilled popularisers of science as Carl Sagan, this view has become the orthodoxy of SETI research: among the American

SETI establishment, in particular, all other views have been stillborn.

Among its implicit assumptions, the SETI research community believes that any alien race is similar to us in thought patterns and will communicate by using radio waves at some special frequency that we can work out from the basic physics of atoms and the abundances of these raw materials in space. According to the consensus view, we can calculate the number of "intelligent communicating civilisations" in our Galaxy from a formula called the Drake equation—first committed to blackboard by American radio astronomer Frank Drake at that 1961 meeting. The Drake equation involves multiplying together several impressive looking terms, such as "the probability of finding a planet in the habitable zone around a star".

The most refreshing contribution to Swift's volume is from Australian electrical engineer Ron Bracewell, who has refused to follow the orthodox line. He believes, for example, that small uncrewed spacecraft are a much more effective means of communication than radio, and has no faith at all in the Drake Equation. In essence, the Drake Equation gives an estimate of the

number of civilisations by multiplying together a guess for the rate at which new civilisations evolve with a guess for the average lifetime of a civilisation. No more sensible, Bracewell argues, than estimating the number of cats in Palo Alto by multiplying a guess at the feline birth rate in the city with a guess at the average cat's lifespan: despite its impressive mathematic formulation, such an approach is no more likely to be correct than a straightforward guess at the number of cats in the city.

Although the SETI pioneers were located at many institutions, mainly in the US, Swift digs out some common factors that may have led to the development of SETI when and where it did. Not surprisingly, most of the pioneers read avidly as children about space and science fiction, and many were involved professionally in radio research. Most were born in cities, and brought up near the strong scientific centres on the East and West Coasts.

Although the pioneers believe that they each became interested in SETI independently, Swift traces the ancestry of SETI in the US back to the influence of an eminent astronomer that many of them had encountered in their younger days. Otto Struve—who had fled to the US from the Soviet Union after the revolution—never participated in SETI research personally, but in the 1950s firmly promoted the idea of intelligent life elsewhere in the Universe. Many of the researchers had also been involved with Cornell University: although there was never any "cell" of SETI enthusiasts there, Frank Drake suggests that it was a "very friendly place for creative, unusual ideas".

Swift's in-depth questioning has revealed one common factor that links all the SETI pioneers—every one is either an only child or a first-born son. This may come as little surprise to sociologists: it is well documented, for example, that first-born children are more likely not only to attend university but to attend the most prestigious colleges.

Sociologists have also found that the first-born children are more curious, more likely to ask questions and more likely to be dissatisfied with a given answer. Although this seems no reason for them to have adopted a consensus view on SETI, it perhaps helps to explain why these people have devoted their lives to the biggest unanswered question of our age: are we alone in the Universe? □

NEW SCIENTIST 09.03.91

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

Mystery crop circle solution meeting



CROP CREATION: Paul Fuller points out a corn circle.

THE author of a book which claims to have solved the crop circles mystery is to meet with farmers this week on a fact-finding mission.

Paul Fuller, who wrote *Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved*, is to talk with members of Winchester's National Farmers' Union branch about the mystery shapes appearing in fields.

But with the controversy surrounding the science — which has been the subject of many hoaxers — it will be held behind closed doors.

Mr Fuller, a statistician with Hampshire County Council, wanted Thursday's talks to be held in private to protect farmers from more publicity.

"I understand that some of the farmers are very displeased with the publicity which has occurred in the last two or three years.

"I always feel it is my duty to have their interests at heart," said Mr Fuller, who works with the Tornado and Storm Research Organisation.

He added: "We have spent five years trying to tell the Press what is going on and no-one has taken a blind bit of notice."

The writer, of Tavistock Close, Romsey, said important theories behind the shapes — which have also appeared in the snow and on dusty roads — have gone unreported.

He said evidence gained from accounts by about 20 eye-witnesses showed the shapes were being caused by a natural energy force.

And people who claimed they had seen a UFO have really witnessed an electrically charged vortex — which can be illuminated at night.

Mr Fuller wants farmers to learn more about the formations to try to win support for meteorological experiments in their fields.

The meeting is being held at the city's tennis and squash club in Bereweek Road.

Mystery lights

IT wasn't a bird, plane, Superman or even a UFO that lit up the sky last week — in fact, it was a complete mystery.

Calls flooded into RAF Northolt when strange lights lit up the sky on Wednesday and Thursday night, and many called the police to find out what was happening.

Shirley Rous, of Beacon Close, Harefield Road, said: "I saw a collection of coloured lights. They were very strong and peculiar and very bright. I rang the police, who said it was something to do with a promotional video. The lights were elongated, fuzzy and diffused with circular movements."

At RAF Northolt, Sqdn Ldr Gordon Luffman said: "We've had lots of calls. As far as we understand, the lights are coming from Wembley, like the ones at the Paul McCartney concert."

Wendy Pearcey, of Windsor Avenue, Hillingdon, said she saw the lights on Wednesday and Thursday night and they looked like searchlights in the sky. At Uxbridge police station, the community liaison officer, Insp Laurie Clark, said he had also seen the lights, which he assumed were from Wembley.

Wembley press officer Amanda Carpenter said it was not them, however.

Anyone who can solve the mystery please call reporter Barbara Fisher on 0895 58290.

SOUTHERN EVENING

ECHO 07.11.90

UXBRIDGE AND HILLINGDON GAZETTE 19.12.90

UFO joins in the rail party

WEIRD sightings of UFOs in Scottish skies have flooded into a research unit.

And they include a flying saucer joining in the Forth Rail Bridge centenary party.

The reports of sightings came following the *Sunday Mail's* story last week that Blairgowrie, Perthshire, had become Scotland's UFO capital.

Ron Halliday, of the Strange Phenomena Investigations group, said there had been an amazing response.

He said: "We got a phone call from someone who had seen a torch of light come from the sky and enter their car."

And UFO fever has spread to Lanarkshire where workers saw a flying saucer hover above their factory.

Mr Halliday said: "At the centenary celebrations for the Forth Rail Bridge, according to the woman who phoned me, a round-shaped spacecraft hovered above the bridge for over five minutes."

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

SUNDAY MAIL 20.01.91

Heard the one about flying saucers?

ONE big talking point in the pubs in the north east (apart from the vile weather) is the phenomena of strange lights in the sky.

The lights, which move in

a circular pattern, have been seen as far apart as Whitley Bay and Durham.

More than one reveller, heading for home after a night on the town, has

thought they've seen a UFO.

And more than 400 people have rung the police and the Met Office reporting sightings.

But I can reveal the truth behind the mystery.

They are, in fact, search lights from the Metro Centre at Gateshead, reflecting on low clouds.

MORNING ADVERTISER 14.12.90

UFOs just sun spots seen in the mist

TWO pale orange lights, which mystified a Hayling Island woman, were actually sun spots refracted through a heavy mist, says a Hampshire astronomer.

Richard Judd, chairman of Hampshire Astronomical Society, said yesterday's sighting by Norma Greenfield, of Sinah Lane, was not an U.F.O. as she earlier believed.

"When it is a misty morning with the sun rising high, the mist can act as a filter knocking out the glare," he said.

"I was looking at the sun through the mist, and there were several sun spots."

Mrs. Greenfield, who was out walking her dogs Kelly, Nicky, and Mace, near Par Three Golf Course, rang The News when she noticed first one and then two "car headlights" as high up as a small aircraft.

At first she dismissed it as a flare, but could not believe it was a helicopter either, because there was no noise.

"I just stared in amazement at what I was seeing," she said.

"It could have been a light at the end of a pole, but there was nothing round it."

Mrs. Greenfield, a word processor operator at John Horwood Consultants, on Hayling, said she had not believed in U.F.O.s until now, but kept an open mind.

■ Mr. Judd said he would not recommend anyone ever looked directly at the sun, or through a lens such as a telescope or binoculars.

Intelligent message

The pictograms or crop circles referred to by Mark Mason (WMN Books) are in my view the most significant event of 1990, a vintage year in more than one respect.

How they are formed is of secondary importance to the message that these pictograms are trying to convey.

First we must accept that they are messages, and that they are being sent by intelligent beings. Having established this let us use every available means to unravel the code. Computers, competitions, school projects, should all be used in an attempt to find a common denominator.

J C Harding
Withycombe Park Drive
Exmouth

WESTERN MORNING
NEWS 20.12.90

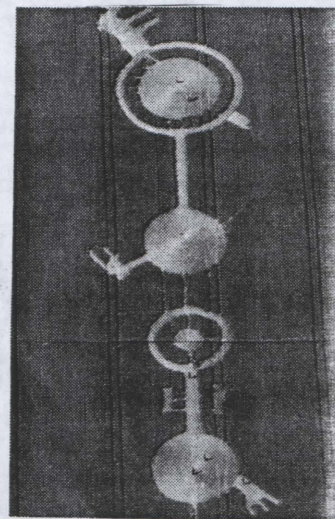
French say corn circles are a hoax

French students have blamed the Wiltshire corn circles on hoaxers using garden rollers.

The eight students visited Alton Barnes, near Marlborough, last June to unravel the mystery of the circles that have been blamed on everything from randy hedgehogs to UFOs.

They said the shapes could be made by a man walking through the tram lines in a corn field without marking the crop, and then producing circles with a garden roller, keeping out of sight under the height of the corn. They claimed to have proved the theory by creating their own set of patterns in just over an hour.

Donald Shirreff, a part-time teacher in astronomy at an observatory in Marlborough,



French connection... the circles at Alton Barnes.

ough, shares the theory.

Colin Andrews, of the Circles Phenomena Research Group, said: "There are very good reasons why we know that this theory is not so. You cannot create such a change of the structure of the plants, corn circles make much more fundamental changes."

EVENING ADVERTISER 11.01.91

Aliens secret held by — Bob's trousers!

PSYCHICS could solve one of the world's best known UFO mysteries...

By examining a West Lothian man's old, torn trousers.

But while that idea has not impressed Bob Taylor, he did reveal some startling news — a new UFO puzzle has landed on his doorstep.

In November, 1979, ex-forestry worker Bob claimed to have had a close encounter in a hillside wood near Livingston.

Part of his story centred around rips on the trousers he was wearing at the time.

The idea to have psychics examine the trousers came when three research

groups — Scottish Research Into UFOs, Strange Phenomena Investigations and Scottish Earth Mysteries Research — held a meeting at East Calder Community Centre last Friday.

Organiser Ron Halliday said: "We still have the trousers Bob was wearing and we're planning to carry out a psychometric exercise on them."

According to Bob's story, he stumbled across a flying saucer in a clearing.

While he watched the craft, two objects shaped like sea-mines fell from underneath it and rolled up to him.

Bob lost consciousness and when he came to, there were rips on each side of his trousers.

"The tears could indicate that Bob was lifted up in some way," said Ron. "What we're hoping is that the psychics just might pick up something to explain exactly what happened."

This week Bob was sceptical about the idea when he spoke exclusively to the Courier from his retirement home in Blairgowrie, Perthshire.

"I haven't heard anything about the trousers since the police took them away for forensic tests 11 years ago," said Bob.

"But the UFO people can go ahead with whatever they think best."

THE NEWS 29.11.90

LOTHIAN COURIER 02.11.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

Crop riddle scientists going round in circles

Mystery
of field
patterns
deepens



By Peter Hopper
Agricultural
Editor

THE MOST amazing thing about the crop circles phenomenon is that after 10 years investigation since they first appeared in the fields of southern England, scientists still have not solved the riddle.

In fact, the mystery has deepened further this year with the appearance of intricate patterns or pictograms within a regional triangle bounded by Wantage, Warminster and Winchester.

They have led to serious suggestions that the answer must lie beyond the realms of present-day scientific knowledge or explanation.

Two new books on the subject offer no conclusive proof that any of many and varied theories will suffice, and the overriding impression is that the experts are still just as baffled as anyone else.

Some 400 circles and patterns were seen in the UK during the summer of 1990, many more complex than ever before.

Update

Crop Circles — the Latest Evidence (Bloomsbury, £5.99) is a 1990 soft cover update by Pat Delgado and Colin Andrews, authors of *Circular Evidence*, published last year.

The other account forms part of a wider investigation of phenomena in *The UFO Report 1991*, edited by Timothy Good, author of *Above Top Secret*. It is published by Sidgwick and Jackson in both hardback (£14.99) and softback (£9.99).

Delgado, a retired electro-mechanical engineer, and Andrews, chief electrical engineer with the Test Valley Borough Council, spent the spring and summer investigating the many pictograms that appeared in growing crops in ever-increasing complexity.

The two men are founder members of an organisation known as the Circles Phenomenon Research Group.

Their research in 1989 and again this year involved them in experiences which they neither understand nor for which they can offer any logical explanation.

To give but a flavour of the unknown, I refer to Colin Andrews' account of what happened at Etchilhampton, a mile and a half southeast of Devizes, in July.

During a three-week intensive surveillance called Operation Blackbird, a new type of pictogram had formed in a field of golden-brown cereal just below an ancient hill fort.

Of the many tests carried out by the team only one showed encouraging results. An electrostatic-detection device revealed an unusual fluctuation in one part of the flattened crop.

"A most strange event was about to happen," Andrews reveals. "We had completed another heavy schedule of television work and it was a day of record high temperatures.

"That evening after we had all left for home, Mike Carrie, a director of Cloud 9 (the television company), decided to walk into the circle and take a closer look. He wished he had not.

Placed

"While standing in the area of the single ring, he bent over to look into a soil recess and was greeted with a loud noise around his head.

"He later told us that from his technical experience he recognised how powerful the energy must have been that was responsible.

Asked if he had seen anything, Carrie had replied, "Nothing could be seen, but whatever caused it was right around by head, just inches away."

The noise he described was the same as Colin Andrews himself experienced during the filming of crop circle at Beckhampton, and similarly on another occasion at Kington in Hampshire.

The two authors say that the requirements necessary to cover all the conditions found in crop-formations, must take into consideration a number of factors.

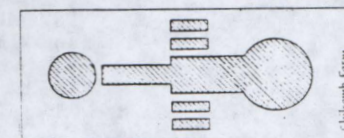
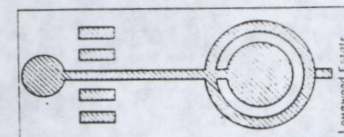
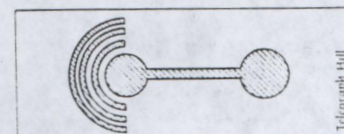
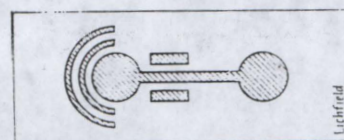
These are: Remotely placed rectangular boxes or troughs where floors are laid straight and flat, and some of which contain

a contrailow or flattened crop; long straight pathways connecting two circles; and semi-circular ring pathways, some of which have adjacent ones flattened in opposite directions.

For the most likely explanations, Delgado leans towards there being some form of energy as yet undiscovered and possible concerned with evolution.

He concludes, "The development of this phenomenon was never more obvious than in the first half of 1990. The incredible designs now appearing in fields, surpassing all subtleties of previous years, are a demonstration of energies and an intelligence beyond the realms of scientific dogma."

'Energies
beyond the
realms of
scientific
dogma'



EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES 09.11.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

by
MARK BEALES

MENTION Star Trek, ET or little green men to Ron West, the chairman of the Essex UFO Research, and he threatens to beam you up.

Although most people may dismiss sightings of lights in the sky as the result of too long down the pub, Mr West looks for a sober explanation, and he is not alone.

There are 54 members of the research team, which includes scientists, accountants, policemen and their own hypnotist.

They take all of their 2,500 reports a year seriously and about 300 of them are termed unidentified.

Their files date back to 1906, but are kept in a secret place as there have been raids on UFO centres.

Now some of the information is kept on computer while other data is closely guarded by a member whose identity is known to only a few in the group.

Mr West's description of a UFO is: "Anything that is unidentified; it could be space debris, the re-entry of satellites or aircraft."

One of the latest sightings was reported by one of their members, clairvoyant and medium, Mark Parnham, 36, from Clacton. He explained: "My fiancée and I left Point Clear at about 12.15am and started to drive at a sedate pace. We were roughly half way across St Osyth creek when she shouted at me to stop.

"We saw this object. It was just incredible. It was 400ft above the ground and was coming to earth in an anti-clockwise manoeuvre. It had cherry red



A corn circle at Great Holland photographed from the air in August.

lights and was coming down at a 45 degree angle when it turned on its axis and shot off. The sky was clear and there was no breeze; it was so smooth and silent it could not have been a plane."

Mr West contacted the Stansted and Southend airfields, the military and the coast-guard, but no one knew anything and nothing had shown up on any radar.

Their theories for these phenomena are not exactly conventional. "Some of the cases we have investigated have had an inter-dimensional aspect, some have been extra-terrestrial, some involved time travel from the future and the last, which is perhaps the hardest for the public to understand, is the inner world," explained Mr Parnham.

The inner world is based on the assumption that the world is basically hollow. According to Mr West, one scientist, Admiral Byrd, went to the north pole and continued for another 1,700 miles where he allegedly man-

aged to get under the Earth where he claims he stumbled upon rivers, lakes, forests and fields.

Why other governments, or indeed anyone else, has not made similar discoveries is slightly unclear, but Mr West thinks that more than one government may have already done so and they are keeping quiet.

People who lose themselves in time is apparently not unusual either. One Clacton couple left the town at 8pm heading for Corby where they were due to arrive between 10pm and 11pm. While they were driving a strange horse-shoe shaped light appeared, and hovered 400 yards to their left. They went on and arrived in Corby at 1am, having apparently left two-and-a-half-hours behind somewhere.

Mr West stressed that this case had been extensively investigated and the subjects had been put under hypnotic regression.

Most of the theories and explanations are closely guarded and Mr West is

not overtly enthusiastic about revealing them to all and sundry, basically because he feels the public would not understand about underground worlds and time travel. Surely not.

All reports are treated with confidentiality and if the team think it is necessary, they arrange a skywatch. Up to 25 of the group head for the hills with a pair of high power binoculars and set up watch, although the best they have seen so far is a passing satellite.

One memorable report occurred last year when the team was inundated with callers claiming to see lights in the sky. The reason was fairly down to earth, it was an Ipswich nightclub celebrating its first anniversary with a spectacular lightshow. However the team still received calls telling them of a triangular-shaped object at Elmstead Market.

Obviously the corn circles had to be mentioned and it seems Mr West is not too happy with some of the theories put forward. "They have said it was hedgehogs, wind, hoaxes, energy from the earth, then from the sky and finally one doctor told us it was a plasma vortex. I can assure you that none of those were the reason."

Mr Parnham had a message last year that the circles would take on a more complex, geometric design, but then, he is very good with predictions.

He added: "It is now generally accepted by ufologists that England, and especially this area, is becoming the UFO centre of the world. There are literally hundreds of thousands of people who have seen things but they keep their mouths shut as they are afraid they may be labelled as cranks."

Anyone interested in joining the research team should phone Les Stacey on Colchester 211442.



Strange sights in the sky like this object seen in Miami are worth investigation says Ron West.

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

Explosive moonlit mystery

UFO witness hunted

AN ABERDEEN man who claims he saw a "Hiroshima-scale" explosion of light in the sky as he drove along a North-east road is desperate to find someone else who witnessed the moonlit mystery.

Mr David Wood from West Cults Road, was driving with his fiancée Diane Milne, to a cottage in Rickarton along the South Deeside Road at about 6pm last Saturday when a massive beam of light flashed across the night sky.

He was so shocked he immediately stopped his car and switched on the radio — convinced he would hear of some terrible tragedy in the skies over the North-east.

But he heard nothing and after phone calls to a number of sky watching institutions is still mystified but is convinced others will back up his story.

He said: "I am sure someone

► JAMIE MACASKILL

else must have seen it. It was huge, like the Hiroshima explosion, and covered at least 50 miles of sky.

Mr Wood thinks the flash came from over Ballater.

The Astrology Centre in Edinburgh said it would have expected to have heard of such an event but said Mr Wood had been the only caller.

A spokeswoman did, however, give three possibilities of what Mr Wood had seen.

"We have heard of incidents like this and there are three trains of thought. One is it is a meteor burning up as it enters the earth's atmosphere. The second is a UFO."

But she added ominously: "Sometimes it is seen as a prophecy of war, which is chilling considering the Gulf situation."

EVENING EXPRESS 28.12.90

Gripped by alien clause

YOU HAVE insured your car, your jewellery and your house; your furniture and carpets; your china and glass; and even your life.

But haven't you forgotten something?

Are you insured against being kidnapped by space aliens?

Some 4,800 oh-so-careful Americans are — and they stand to receive £10 million compensation if they are ever whisked away by little purple men.

Each individual pays £7 a year to the UFO Abduction Insurance Company of Altamonte Springs in Florida for the policy.

There is one small drawback to claiming their money if the unlikely ever does happen.

They have to prove it.

SUNDAY EXPRESS 27.01.91

Circling round the crop circle enigma

CROP CIRCLES are wonderful things.

There weren't many around a decade ago, but since then they have made thousands of appearances, almost as if they are responding to the growth of interest in them.

This summer there seemed to be hundreds appearing all over the country — and at least three turned up at Lewes, Wilmington and near Ditchling.

Crop circle books are also a current vogue.

The latest, *The Crop Circle Enigma* (Gateway Books, £14.95), edited by Ralph Noyes, is a spirited attempt to get to the bottom of the mystery.

It fails because no-one as yet has the remotest idea why crop circles appear where they do and why.

The only people sure of their facts are those who believe they are all hoaxes!

Busty Taylor's crop circle photographs are what makes the book fascinating. The pictures say it all. The circles appear in a weird combination of shapes in the remotest fields. They are indeed an enigma.

Some of the explanations however are verging towards the potty.

One subscriber sees 'the earth goddess as lover' in one crop circle shape, and a 'divine hermaphrodite' in another.

Fine. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. But it doesn't help sober, inquiring readers to reach theirs.

The book is up to the minute. There is a passing reference to our summer Sussex circles. But at the end of the day I know no more than before. Unless it is true the earth mother is behind it all.

SUSSEX EXPRESS AND COUNTY

HERALD 04.01.91

Couple spot UFO

A BRIERLEY couple were held spell-bound in the early hours of last Wednesday morning by the antics of a strange shape in the sky.

Tony Fletcher, aged 27, of Oddroyd Cottages, and his girlfriend Julie Creasey, aged 19, spotted a bright, diamond shaped object in the sky hovering over the Great Houghton area at about 1.20 a.m.

They watched it for several minutes when it suddenly started darting erratically in different directions.

"At first we thought it was an aeroplane but it was just hovering. It suddenly started darting all over the sky at a high speed and then went back to its orig-

inal position and hovered again. We watched it for about 40 minutes and it repeated this several times. At one point it came closer, then dipped and drew away and we could clearly see it was a diamond shape with a rounded front end, it looked something like a sting-ray.

There was no noise from it, but it was sending out bright red, green and white flashing lights and was about as large as the North star," said Mr. Fletcher who works at the Southside Coal Preparation Plant, Grimethorpe.

He added: "We are really puzzled as to what it could have been and wondered if anyone else in the area had seen it."

BARNSELY CHRONICLE 25.01.91

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

MYSTERY OBJECT STARTLED PLANE CREW

A BRITISH AIRWAYS pilot logged a UFO report after an in-flight encounter last month.

The pilot had the startling experience during a night flight from Rome to Gatwick.

Flying over Genoa he was stunned to see what he described as a large silver disc with three points of light in an arrow formation and a fourth light behind.

The bright, mystery object was travelling at phenomenal speed and was visible to the pilot, co-pilot and two cabin crew.

Reported

The pilot, who said he'd never seen anything like it and couldn't explain what it was, reported the incident to British UFO experts.

But after investigation over the past few weeks the mystery sighting has become one of the 95% of cases which can be explained.

"The sighting by the BA pilot was actually a piece of a Soviet satellite," said Jenny Randles of the British Unidentified Flying Object Research Association.

Excellent

"It was one of those little-known ones launched by the military and was coming back down in a blaze of glory. It was witnessed by a lot of people over northern Italy but the crew of the plane had the best view.

"The report was typical of those by pilots because they are trained observers who are excellent judges of speeds, distances and so on and are naturally very aware of what's out of the ordinary.

"Because of all the space junk that's starting to come back to earth we are getting a growing number of reports which turn out to be caused by this.

"But it's the majority which can be explained which make the other 5% all the more exciting."

Anthony on aliens trail

THE ALIEN invasion could be upon us — and a Nottingham man intends to compile the facts.

UFO fanatic Anthony James of Bulwell has been delving into Alien research since the early 1970's when he picked up a library book on

By Rhona Lindsay

Unidentified Flying Objects.

Fascinated by the discoveries he found had already been made, Anthony decided to dig deeper.

And now — 17 years later — Anthony has set up the East Midlands Unidentified Flying Object Research Association.

Anthony firmly believes that some kind of alien life form is fit and well and living in outer space.

"There has been research in the USA which proves that aliens do exist," he said.

Anthony believes reports that USA officials have captured aliens from crashed UFOs and have formed communications with them.

A tall story you may say — but many people claim to have seen UFOs.

What Anthony wants to do is encourage those who see something strange in the sky to contact him so he can make a register of sightings.

"A UFO is classified as a flying object that cannot be readily identified," Anthony explained.

"As many as 95 per cent of UFO sightings can be explained as aircraft, light beacons, air balloons and other things — about five per cent of sightings cannot be explained.

"This is the section I am interested in."

So if you think you see a star shining a little too brightly and darting across the sky at incredible speeds, or anything up above that you can't quite understand — contact Anthony on Nottingham 275623 and help him make start to his register.

NOTTINGHAM HERALD AND POST 09.01.91

Professor brings the UFO down to earth

UNIDENTIFIED flying objects are bunk, a physicist from the Queen's University Belfast told a meeting of the Royal Astronomical Society in Armagh last night (Nigel Hawkes writes).

John Earnshaw said that 90 per cent of all UFO sightings could easily be explained. Some were astronomical objects such as the Moon, Venus, meteors, halos around the Sun and Moon, and mirages. Aircraft and weather balloons were also culprits.

The other 10 per cent, he said, fell into three categories: hoaxes; things that people do not remember properly; and uncommon natural phenomena. There was no need to invent beings from outer space to explain them. Professor Earnshaw spoke as the latest reports of UFOs came from Maracaibo, Venezuela, where five glowing objects were sighted on Tuesday.

If such objects were really extraterrestrials, Professor Earnshaw said, it was hard to imagine how they would reach Earth. The nearest planets that could harbour life lay far beyond the Sun.

Times 04.04.91

What happened to Phil?

Did a former police officer REALLY photograph an alien on Ilkley Moor in 1987?

It seems he did.

Early on the morning of December 1, Philip Spencer, 24, set off from Ilkley across the moor to visit his father-in-law. He carried a camera to photograph the town from the hilltops.

Along the way, he was startled by a green creature,

four and a half feet tall, with long arms, long thin legs and large, dark eyes. He managed to take one picture before the creature disappeared into the bushes. Seconds later a disc-shaped UFO shot upwards and vanished into the sky.

A confused Philip returned to Ilkley to discover that almost two hours had gone from his life.

What followed was an intense investigation orchestrated by Peter Hough, writer and Vice Chairman of the Manchester UFO Research Association.

The results, which will include the help of Kodak, scientists and clinical psychologists, will be presented in a slide lecture at Abram Library on Thursday, January 10 at 7.30pm.

WIGAN OBSERVER 03.01.91

WEEKLY NEWS 08.12.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

Warming – and why I believe in UFOs

■ A RECENT letter in The News about global warming seems to state that no one cares. Of course we do, but have not the power to change things.

We spend billions on satellites and there are more and more 'planes. Why don't people travel by ship – it is more relaxing. They should leave 'planes to business people. Surely 'planes and satellite launches must break up the cloud formation and give us the freak weather conditions we seem to have now.

Could not the billions be put to better use cultivating land where people go hungry?

Then we read about the circles in British cornfields. Of course

there are people from another planet. When you have seen one you believe.

I saw a UFO many years ago near Portsdown Hill when the radar station was being built.

When I looked up a second time, the UFO sped across the sky and vanished. Could it have been taking photographs? I never mentioned this to anyone in case of being laughed at, yet, later, several sightings were reported in the area.

In the summer, my eldest sister who lives near Sellafield said several people had reported seeing UFOs.

The following spring there was a radioactive leak at Sellafield

and farmers had had to empty milk down drains.

My younger sister had gone to visit her sister and told me about hedgerows being burned. This was not reported on radio or TV or in the papers. It was hush hush.

Then, one night, soon after my brother-in-law had gone out to check on the lambs because of foxes, leaving my sister alone, she tidied up and went to put some waste in the bin outside.

She looked up and saw a large round object with many coloured lights coming down. She said it made no noise.

She was scared and hid behind the bin but kept watch. She said it

seemed to come down behind the trees. She said she was too afraid to go indoors. After a while she saw it again and it then went over the sea.

What puzzles me is how did they know about the fall-out and did they take samples of the soil back with them? These people seem to be very intelligent.

Some think the circles are a warning – so perhaps they are. – Mrs. Cummings, Leigh Park, Havant.

■ SEND your letters to: The Editor, The News, The News Centre, Hilsea, Portsmouth Hants, PO2 9SX.

THE NEWS 12.07.90

A STRANGE corps of scientists, sceptics and magicians have taken on the job of policing the paranormal. Called the Csicops, they are the true ghostbusters, although they prefer more intellectually demanding tasks like investigating unidentified flying objects, religious miracles, or corn circles.

James Randi, a magician from Plantation, Florida, is one of the Csicops team – the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal – which met in Brussels at the end of last week to review the sceptics' creed and find better ways of busting UFOs or demystifying the Pyramid of Cheops. Mr Randi is a sceptic, but he can bend a spoon, as if by magic, and by concentrating his thought processes make time go backwards.

"My expertise is in knowing how people can be deceived," Mr Randi said. "I know what people will believe. I don't tell them what to believe. I make my hand look empty and they believe that it is."

'Dowsers say they can detect E-rays which cause cancer'

Mr Randi borrows a wrist-watch and demonstrates a paranormal time warp. While the attention of the audience is distracted he levers out the winder with a finger nail and twirls it. Mr Randi is equally dextrous in bending cutlery, but reluctant to say how he does it – even the sceptical magician needs to keep a few secrets.

Fellow sceptic, Professor Ray Hyman from the University of Oregon, has no such scruples. "The best way to do it is to bend the spoon several times until the metal is fatigued," he explained. "It is still stiff enough to bang on the table, but it will bend easily and break in two dramatically with a little rubbing."

Csicops spend a lot of time advising governments not to spend money on some of the loony projects mooted in the paranormal world. Mr Randi is advising the West German government, which has just spent DM400,000 (£135,000) on tests of dowsing.

"Dowsers say that they can detect E or earth rays which are supposed to cause cancer and headaches, although this has never been proved," Mr Randi said. "In Germany civil servants have insisted on having desks

moved and hospital beds have been moved for fear of E-rays. No one has ever detected E-rays by physical means. I have offered a \$10,000 (£5,300) prize to any dowser who can prove that dowsing works. They can't do it."

Professor Hyman also began as a magician and became a sceptic later. He was an keen palmist, until one day a friend challenged him to read a palm backwards. "I did it for fun, but was shocked when the subject said it was the best reading she ever had."

Professor Hyman now works with a committee of the National Academy of Sciences in Washing-

ton, which advises the US army and the CIA on techniques for the enhancement of human performance from meditation to vision at a distance.

"Very few experiments in remote viewing have been controlled scientifically," he said. "Although there is no credible ev-

idence for these phenomena the military go on being interested – usually because some officer has been to a spoon-bending party or had a personal experience of getting out of his body. It is a bit depressing that all the scientific work we do makes so little impression.

"The most persistent idea to come out of the military's interest in the paranormal is the First Earth Battalion of Delta Force, developed when the army started to imagine what wars of the future might be like. They went to California and participated in human potential movements such as Esalen. The concept, proposed by a Lt Col Channon, was that the First Earth Battalion would be warrior monks.

"The army would never say that the Delta Force was an official idea, nor would they say it was unofficial. We did a report on it. The army is a bit embarrassed about their interest in the paranormal, but there are still some pockets pushing it. For example,

'The First Earth Battalion would be warrior monks'

Uri Geller was brought to the Salt negotiations."

The out-of-the-body experiences that have so impressed the US army have been most thoroughly investigated by Susan Blackmore, a Bristol University psychologist. The experiences may happen during sleep or to people who have been revived when near death. Many speak of going down a long tunnel with a bright light at the end and experiencing tremendous peace and calm, finally reaching a beautiful shimmering world of cool green.

The paranormal explanation is that an astral body, which resides inside our familiar physical body, is liberated on death. Dr Blackmore's explanation is more banal: as the retina at the back of the eye becomes starved of oxygen, nerve cells begin to fire at random. There are more nerve cells in the most sensitive part, the fovea, so a bright spot that looks like the end of a tunnel is seen.

"The idea of self is dissipated. There is still experience, but for a time no experiencer," Dr Blackmore said. "Once the self has crashed down like that it may be changed. People are often transformed by such experiences."

The Independent
13.08.90

BUFORA NEWS CUTTING SERVICE

The latest UFO craze is focusing on S.A.

by Craig Phelon

TO MY KNOWLEDGE, I never have been abducted by aliens and taken away in a UFO. I've never even seen a UFO.

That makes me an oddity to an ever-growing circle of San Antonians.

Suddenly people all around me are becoming convinced they've made contact with flying saucers and 3-foot aliens.

There's even supposed to be a support group in Alamo Heights for people who believe they have been kidnapped and examined by non-human occupants of spacecrafts. I imagine a lot of the group's talk revolves around a UFO pit stop, of sorts, that some believe may be hidden somewhere in Olmos Basin.

What the heck is going on? Is this some type of mass hysteria?

A lot of it has to do with a couple of books written by former San Antonian Whitley Stineber.

He has made a name for himself as a novelist with successful science-fiction books such as "The Wolfen" and "The Hunger." He also co-authored "Warday" and "Nature's End."

BUT THEN HE WROTE "Communion: A True Story," which he claims to be a non-fiction account of his repeated encounters with strange beings. Stineber says he first had these encounters as a child growing up in Terrell Hills.

He followed up with "Transformation," an introspective sequel to "Communion," about his attempts to deal philosophically with the wonder and terror of his UFO experiences.

And people all over the country believed him.

"Communion" reached the top of the New York Times non-fiction best-seller list and stayed on the list through the summer. The book also has been made into a movie, scheduled for release in February.

Suddenly UFO watching, a subject more or less stifled since the 1950s, is back in vogue.

Incredible stories once relegated to check-out-line tabloids are surfacing in the mainstream press. UFOs and extraterrestrials are the latest and hottest talk show topics. Oprah Winfrey, Phil Donahue, and Russ Shafer on "The Late Show" have made "ufologists" into celebrities. Even Morton Downey Jr., the archconser-

ative talk-show host, has laid claim to a UFO experience.

In fact, hundreds — maybe even thousands — of people around the country are claiming to have made contact with alien life forms.

What's happening? And why is it happening here?

San Antonio seems to be in the running for the title of "UFO Capital of the World."

Some may dismiss it as coincidence, but it just so happens that Walter Andrus Jr., international director of the Mutual UFO Network, a group that investigates alleged UFO sightings, lives in Seguin.

MUFON is forming a UFO abductee support group, in addition to the more secretive Alamo Heights group.

Besides that, San Antonio journalist Ed Conroy is digging out even more local UFO information in a follow-up on Stineber's adventures, a book titled, "Report on Communion." That book will be released in mid-1989 by the same firm that published Stineber's books, William Morrow & Co.

Both Conroy and Stineber were recent guests on a special segment of "The Late Show" dedicated to UFOs. MUFON's Andrus has been a guest on the Oprah Winfrey show.

Now another San Antonian, Ron McAtee, has come forth with an intriguing story about sightings.

Our first stop is Cambridge Elementary School in Alamo Heights where McAtee says he saw a UFO about 30 years ago.

McAtee is 37 and works as an energy consultant, advising businesses on conserving energy costs. He seems perfectly normal: a guy you'd probably immediately like if you met him at a party.

He seems genuinely puzzled by his strange experiences and even jokes about them.

But he is deadly serious in his belief that he saw a UFO. He says he's been obsessed for several years with the need to learn more about it.

Stineber mentions part of McAtee's story in "Transformation," but he doesn't use McAtee's name.

At the school, McAtee stands outside the chain-link fence that surrounds a playground. Nearby is the building that

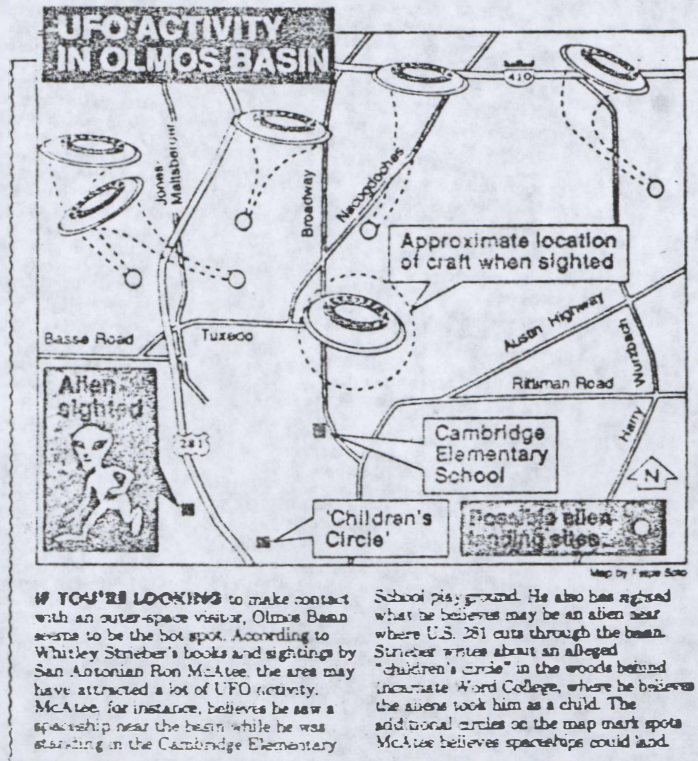
"And then the other one came in, a little more authoritative, a little deeper and said, 'We're not to be seen.'"

"And then the last thought was, 'We must leave.'"

Conroy says the three-part conversation fits the pattern of alien speech Stineber mentions in his books: the thesis/synthesis approach.

"At that point, the rotor started to go very fast and the ship just shrunk and disappeared," McAtee says. "Now it may have accelerated very rapidly or it may have just gone into another dimension — went through the void, whatever. I don't really know."

THE EXPOSURE lasted less than a minute, McAtee estimates. He remembers telling his mother about it, but he doesn't remember her response.



IF YOU'RE LOOKING to make contact with an outer-space visitor, Olmos Basin seems to be the hot spot. According to Whitley Stineber's books and sightings by San Antonian Ron McAtee, the area may have attracted a lot of UFO activity. McAtee, for instance, believes he saw a spaceship near the basin while he was standing in the Cambridge Elementary

School playground. He also has sighted what he believes may be an alien near where U.S. 281 cuts through the basin. Stineber writes about an alleged "children's circle" in the woods behind Incommune Word College, where he believes the aliens took him as a child. The additional circles on the map mark spots McAtee believes spacecrafts could land.

school playground. McAtee points to the spot where he stood as a 5 or 6 year-old boy looking up at what he says was a white kind of spacecraft.

"I don't know how far away it was, because I don't know how big a ship it was," he says. "I don't know whether it was 20 feet in circumference or 100 feet, because I didn't have anything to judge it by."

"I just looked up and there it was. I said to myself this can't really be. I must be looking into the sun and it's coming me to see this thing. It was just so incredible."

"AND SO I LOOKED over into the other (part of the) sky and there was the sun over there. I wasn't looking at the sun. So then I looked back and it was still there. That's when I knew it was real. This thing was really up there."

McAtee says the object was not the classic silver disk frequently shown in science-fiction films and photos that claim to depict UFOs. It was a "pinwheel-like" craft that appeared to have a central core when the occupants apparently rode and an outer portion that rotated around the center. The rotating part had nozzles attached to each side.

McAtee says he saw the flames from the nozzles. He is also sure he saw a clear image of the craft. It was not hazy or blurry.

He also believes he heard voices coming from the craft or what seemed to be an extraordinary level.

"The weirdest thing was that you could understand what they were thinking on the ship," he says.

"There were three thoughts that came out. They were like music voices talking, kind of low, but not like a 'Death Vader' voice. The first one said, 'We're being watched.' That was the first thought. Just like that."

We ask McAtee if any other children saw the craft.

"There was another kid, and I still remember his name," he answers. "In fact, I called him on the telephone two or three years ago and he didn't remember the incident. Maybe if I took a drawing of the craft over there. But, you know, it's kind of embarrassing. Do you remember this spaceship?"

"I don't know what it really proves. If he remembers it, fine. If he doesn't, it won't make me believe any less that it happened."

McAtee says his mental image of the

UFO still is clear, but for years he put it in the back of his mind, telling himself it must have been his imagination.

"I didn't really think about it a whole lot until I read the Philip Klass book, 'UFO: The Public Deceived.' He detailed a lot of these UFOs, but I thought, 'Oh, my God. It really happened,'" he says.

This was in the mid-70s, and McAtee started his own investigation of his UFO experience. This jogged his memory about another experience that, in retrospect, seemed curiously connected to this sighting.

It may have been within weeks of the Cambridge School incident — he doesn't remember exactly when it was. McAtee, his brother and father were enjoying one of their frequent walks in what is now the soccer field area of the Olmos Basin.

All three came over a ridge and spotted what looked like a small naked man running at great speed through the woods.

From the parking lot near the soccer field, McAtee points out the wooded area where he believes he saw the naked figure.

"It was probably the middle of winter," he says. "You could see into the trees, because they didn't have any foliage. I would say he was a good 50 feet into the woods."

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"WE ALL SORT of crunched down — and I don't know why we were afraid of him because there were three of us and obviously he wasn't carrying a concealed weapon. We had the dog with us and we were trying to hold the dog back."

"He was light-colored, that's why we thought he was asked, but he was a white guy, too. I don't remember whether he had hair on his head or any pubic hair. I just can't remember. Maybe he was just too far away to make something like that out. Why we thought it was a man, I'm not sure. I don't remember any breaths, so I guess it

wasn't a woman. He was maybe about 5 feet tall. He wasn't really big."

"It must have been kind of hard to run through the woods without shoes," he says.

But when McAtee began to retrace his strange encounters several years later, the idea that there might be some sort of alien life in the basin kept haunting him. Following little more than his intuition, he kept searching.

"I was sort of drawn to this area," he says. "I kept coming back and started exploring further and further into the woods. I finally crossed over the dam. I wasn't sure what I was looking for, but there was a spot that seemed to be drawing me in. Finally in the early '70s I found this spot."

We drive to another part of the basin, behind Inconspicuous Wood College. We walk into a wooded area and down a path.

WHEN WE finally arrive at the spot, we find the stone foundation of an old mill. McAtee says he knew this was the spot he was looking for because he had an intense psychological and physical sensation when he found it.

"It was quite an emotional experience," he says.

Conroy says it is either significant or else a strange coincidence that the area that obsessed McAtee is the same area Strieber writes about being drawn to in "Communion."

But McAtee was drawn to the spot years before "Communion" was written. McAtee and Strieber never met until after "Communion" was published.

McAtee contacted Strieber and shared his story. The two, along with Conroy, later visited the area and Strieber confirmed it was the same area he wrote about — the possible site of the "children's circle."

The children's circle is one of Strieber's early memories dredged from his subconscious by hypnosis. He remembers meeting other children in the wooded area where they were taught various things by the alien creatures.

McAtee, however, says he has no memory of participating in a children's circle.

We hike out of the woods and sit down at a coffee shop where McAtee contrasts to explain his quest to understand his experience.

He says he went to a hypnotist in Houston about 10 years ago to see if that would help him recall more details about his UFO sighting, perhaps an exact date.

"I don't think he really successfully hypnotized me, because he said, 'In a minute, your arms are going to raise up,' and mine never did," McAtee says. "But I was very relaxed and I was able to recall some things."

A date flashed across his mind. He says he still isn't sure it was the actual date he saw the craft, but it was the date that came to mind under hypnosis — Nov. 7, 1967.

McAtee went to the Express-News library and searched through he micro-filmed copies of the November 1967 newspapers hoping to find something that might

confirm his sighting of the UFO. He made an interesting discovery.

The front page of the Nov. 8, 1967, Express contains a story about a UFO sighting over San Antonio — witnessed the previous day by 15 Express staff members.

UNDER A headline that reads: "Round Ball 'Whistler' Seen Over Alamo City," the story tells of an object hovering for about 10 minutes over the city in the south-southwest sky at about 7:30 p.m. Nov. 7.

Many citizens also saw the object and called local authorities. On the same day, another UFO was reported in Waco and residents in New Braunfels, Uvalde, Edinburg and Boerne reported seeing mysterious bright lights.

An Associated Press story printed in the Express a day later reported area "whistlers" most likely were weather balloons. Army officers at Fort Hood in Killeen

said the meteorological battalion of the 14th Field Artillery released nine large illuminated balloons between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m. in order to gather wind data.

However, that does not necessarily explain the sighting way down in San Antonio nor McAtee's sighting, which would have been earlier in the day. Nor does it conform with McAtee's description of the craft.

An official Air Force report of the San Antonio incident, obtained by Conroy through the federal Freedom of Information Act, makes the same conclusion there is insufficient data to judge the object's identity.

It also is interesting to note that, perhaps coincidentally, Nov. 7 was an especially anti-space-oriented news day. Out of 10 front-page items on the following day, six were related to space.

Besides being the day of the UFO sighting, Nov. 7 happened to be the day the Soviet Union launched its new rockets through Red Square in observance of the 40th anniversary of the communist revolution and the day President Eisenhower named the new head of the U.S. space program.

There also is a story about plans to retrieve the Russian space probe, then circling Earth in Sputnik II; a contest about American astronaut being embarrassed because of Sputnik; and an editor's note about an upcoming series of stories on UFOs.

However, the current UFO craze involves much more than examining the skies for flying saucers.

The search has turned inward, thanks mostly to Strieber.

The search extends into psychology, rather than physics or astronomy, and considers such

phenomena as "screen memory," where the mind replaces actual images with symbolic ones in an apparent attempt to preserve its sanity.

For example, according to Strieber, the memory of seeing owls may replace that of seeing a space being.

In a telephone interview, Strieber says he admits there is no hard, physical, irrefutable evidence that non-human visitors or UFOs do exist.

At the same time, he believes we shouldn't ignore the experiences reported by hundreds of people and that he, himself, claims to have encountered.

Many of Strieber's critics say "Communion" and "Transformation" are nothing more than additional examples of his science-fiction writing skill.

In fact, a recent review of "Communion" in

The Skeptical Inquirer, a magazine fostered by the academic establishment, puts forth the opinion the book is pure fiction.

"It's a physical experience as far as I'm concerned," Strieber counters. "I have a gut feeling there's a great effort being made on the part of the visitors to keep their own secrets, because as long as they remain secret, they also remain in complete control of the situation."

However, Strieber says he believes we eventually will make open contact with these alleged beings. They're just waiting until we're ready.

He views his book and the other UFO stories people are coming out with as preparation for future contact.

"If they come out into the public eye, it's going to be scary, but I think it's going to be the best thing that ever happened," he says.

"I think the visitors are working along the lines of a very specific timetable, on an accelerating curve," he says.

"IF YOU LOOK at the modern experience from the late '40s, you can see that they have been coming closer and closer to us. There were UFO sightings in the '50s. By the time the '70s rolled around, there was a smattering of reports of these so-called abductions and now in the '80s a certain number of people have been reported to have had relationships with the individuals."

Strieber says he's gotten thousands of letters from people reporting what they think may be contacts with aliens.

"I get 20 or 30 letters a day every day and have since 'Communion' was first published," he says.

Strieber says he isn't planning a sequel to "Transformation."

"I'm writing a novel right now," he says. "If something happens — someone proves the visitors are real, for example, I might write something else. If not, I'll go back to being a novelist. I've sort of said my piece."

Strieber, a leader of the UFO renaissance, is a genuine San Antonio product — like it or not.

His late father, Karl Strieber, was a prominent attorney. His mother, Mary, long active in civic and charitable groups, still lives here.

His younger brother, Richard, works in the law firm of Oliver Heard.

His older sister, Patricia Simpson, lives in Houston where she and her husband operate a merchandising business.

Mary Strieber, in a phone interview, says Whitley started reading at 4 1/2, all her children did.

"He started talking about being a writer when he was about 9 years old," she says.

"He just always had a big imagination and was really telling me stories."

"He was a pretty little kid."

Although she doesn't remember any specific mention of aliens or UFOs, she remembers what some say consider typical childhood terrors.

"I can remember one night when he woke me up screaming," she says. "His bed was right by the window and he said there was something there. I remember when he was real little he wouldn't go outside for a long time because he thought something was out there."

She says she personally has had no UFO encounters and has a hard time associating with that sort of thing. "I thought 'Communion' was kind of scary," she says.

Strieber's story apparently has convinced a lot of people there really is something "out there."

But much of the alienate community remains unimpressed.

RICHARD BARTIS, professor of physics at Trinity University, has taught courses on the possibility of extraterrestrial life.

"I'm assuming we know enough about our solar sys-

tem to rule out life existing on other planets," he says.

He adds that, while it may be logical to believe equivalents to Earth are circulating around other stars, the likelihood of any beings from there reaching here seems beyond reason.

Based on current Earth technology, our fastest spacecraft would take more than 50,000 years to reach a planet around the nearest star, he says. Even considering that other beings might have more advanced technology, the distance barrier most likely would be insurmountable.

"I do think the UFO phenomenon is very interesting, but from a psychological, sociological and religious point of view," Bartis says. "The connection between the UFO reports and the powerful human need for religion is quite obvious and has been commented upon by many persons."

Psychologists have put forth various theories to explain why people feel so convinced they've seen little creatures or have been abducted by UFOs. One of the most prominent theories involves temporal-lobe epilepsy, a condition that may distort perceptions of reality.

But Strieber claims to have been fully checked out for any psychological or physical dysfunctions.

Strieber and other ufologists also contend they're not necessarily talking about beings who dropped in for a visit from another planet. They say these beings may have been with us for thousands or even millions of years.

IN THAT CASE, the theoretical possibilities seem endless — and many of these theories have been explored in B-grade science-fiction movies.

"It's all right for your imagination to become engaged when you're dealing with the unknown," Strieber says. "We're sitting here on a little speck of dust in this enormous spectacular display of nature. It's not to be more exciting than we think it is."

Of course, imagination is as wide as the other end of the spectrum, as well. Many visions of UFOs and true believers are seeing steady mental reflections of objects dangling over their heads that these visions were aliens.

Strieber says even if the visitors turn out to be mere mental images — a theory he doesn't believe — they have expanded people's expectations about the universe.

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