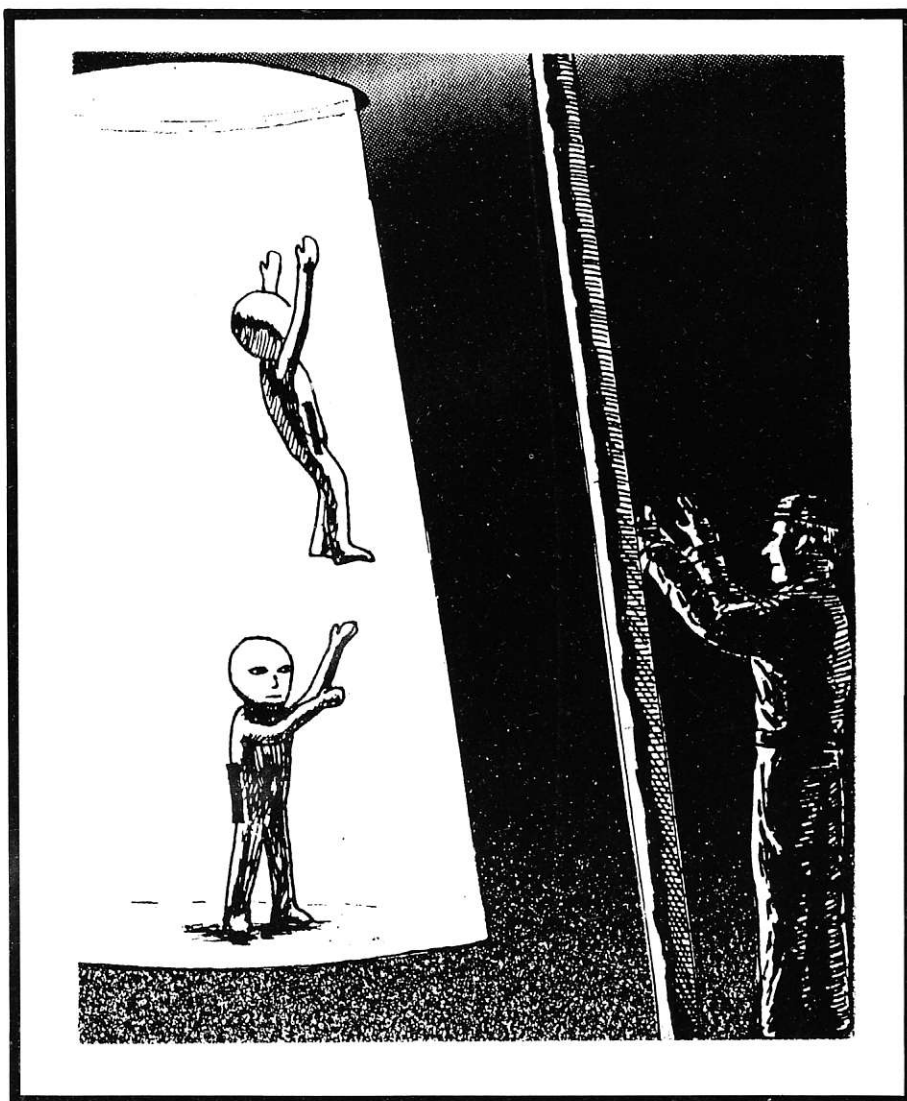


UFO TIMES

Number 10 November 1990

ISSN 0958-4846



RENDLESHAM

INSIDE

During the last days of 1980, strange things overtook the festive atmosphere of two air force bases in Suffolk. In a special feature both Jenny Randles and Ralph Noyes reflect on Rendlesham Forest - 10 years on.

In the first of a two part series, Onay Faiz presents an in-depth review of the 'Phantoms of the Sky' conference.

And from Germany. Hans-Werner Peiniger reveals his own perception research findings.

Plus..... News, Congress '91 news, Skywatcher, reviews, and more.....

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It is also the policy of **UFO Times** not to publish the names or addresses of witnesses who are not in the 'public domain'. The material and personal details of witnesses who have been published in the media will be treated with care and empathy by the editorship.

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(by guarantee)

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AIMS

1. To encourage, promote and conduct unbiased scientific research of unidentified flying object (UFO) phenomena throughout the United Kingdom.
2. To collect and disseminate evidence and data relating to unidentified flying objects (UFOs).
3. To co-ordinate UFO research throughout the United Kingdom and to co-operate with others engaged in such research throughout the world.

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Membership is open to all who support the aims of the association and whose application is approved by the executive committee. Applications, forms and general information can be obtained from BUFORA's registered office.

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UFO TIMES

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Contents

4. **Editorial**
5. **Rendlesham Forest: 10 Years On Skycrash?**
Jenny Randles
7. **Rendlesham Forest: 10 Years On A Property Still Secret**
Ralph Noyes
12. **Phantoms: Fiction or Reality part 1**
Onay Faiz
19. **Reliability of Magnitude Estimation**
Hans-Werner Peiniger
22. **Skywatcher**
Edited by Gary Anthony
24. **Letters**

We apologise for the delay in sending this issue of UFO Times. I hope that we can meet our January deadline to bring the 1991 schedule back on time.

UFO TIMES

EDITORIAL

Beware, the Satanist

Over the past few months, I have carefully watched with grave concern the reports emanating from the media relating to the many cases of alleged ritual sexual abuse of children.

Christian fundamentalists have made an overpowering stand, claiming that this form of abuse has the hallmark of satan. These self righteous people go further and are turning their over zealous energies to the many unassuming people who immerse themselves in areas like the tarot, palmistry, mediumship and ghost research and are currently tainting them with the same satanist brush. These fanatics state that once you are interested in these subjects it is only a matter of time before you are involved in satanism to the full, which will invariably lead to the sexual abuse of children.

Recently, there were several calls from the church for Halloween to be banned. To them, Halloween is a frightening inlet for children to be drawn to the occult and the abusers that apparently flourish in that area. Further they have stated that 'trick or treating' is simply extortion and must be stopped.

What utter rubbish.

Halloween, or All Hallows Eve which precedes All Saints Day, a very Christian festival which replaced a pre-Christian symbolic act marking the beginning of winter, has been part of the British culture for centuries. To the vast majority of people, it is no more than a bit of fun. However, the 'trick or treat' fad imported from the United States is new, but no more extortive than children showing some enterprise by carol singing at Christmas.

Most of the claims of ritual sexual child abuse made by the fundamentalists and naive social workers has amounted to little. Yes, there is child abuse and it must be stamped out. But its connection with Wicca, Thelama or Crowlean magick is a claim made without any foundation, or more importantly, proof. Those who pour scorn over 'dabbling' in the occult usually have little or no knowledge of the subjects they denigrate. For instance they always call occultists 'satanists' or 'devil worshippers', but you could not be further from the truth. To be a satanist you have to believe in the Christian faith, as satan is only synonymous with the Bible and has no connection whatsoever with other doctrines such as the Book of the Law for example.

Most occultists are normal people who are not interested in the common faiths but prefer to believe and practice alternative religions.

Connection?

You may be asking what is the connection of all this and UFOs? Firstly, there are parallels between parapsychology and UFOs, especially when one looks at the close encounter experience. The Occult too, can be seen in the background. Warning messages concerning the planet relayed by abduction witnesses are similar to those gathered from the likes of goddesses like Sekhmet or Isis. My worry is that fundamentalists will eventually turn to ufology and claim that it too is evil and satanic, turning the subject upside down and possibly leaving witnesses (especially those involved in high strangeness cases) in utter turmoil. This will only make them confused further by more than just the experience itself. That cannot be tolerated.

I am not an anti-Christian. People should be free to decide whether they want to follow a faith or not and if so decide the faith they want to follow themselves. It appals me to see the Christian faith use children to uphold a flagging following by tarnishing other religious orders in such an evil manner.

Rendlesham: 10 Years On

SKYCRASH?

by

Jenny Randles

Ten years ago, in December 1980, something very strange happened in an English woodland outside twin NATO bases, Woodbridge and Bentwaters in Suffolk. As I was destined to play a role in the aftermath of this episode it is an interesting exercise for me to look back through the decade since the incident occurred. However, that is no easy task, just as this is no easy case.

To me the most puzzling aspect of the affair is what we DID find out, as opposed to the secrets that may still lurk in some official sources.

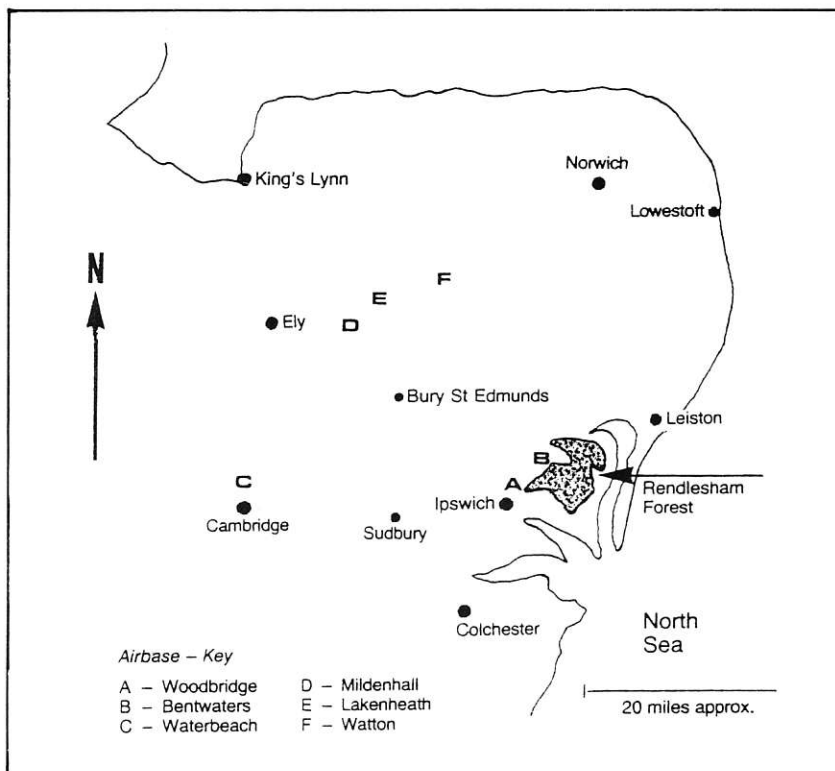
I heard about it a couple of weeks after the incident, via a loose acquaintance who channeled a report from a radar officer. This officer had approached a friend (my acquaintance) in a local pub and openly TOLD him that his base (RAF Watton near Norwich) tracked an anomalous target, reported it officially and was then visited by USAF intelligence operators who 'needed' to view the tapes. Why? Because the radar

track might well prove to be a UFO that came down in Rendlesham Forest. Senior base officers had gone out to confront it and an alien contact had ensued between one commander and little beings hovering in beams of light beneath the 'craft'.

Now I don't know about you, but the strangest aspect of this tale was not the story itself. That was no more than typically weird. I just could not fathom out WHY this story would be so liberally and rapidly finding its way via my friend (who was also a writer on the paranormal) to me (a UFO author) - just

like that. When I satisfied myself that the radar man was apparently sincere the big question was WHY USAF intelligence officers should NEED to explain this astonishing truth to a few junior ranking RAF guys and civilians (since my radar contact was not even a military man).

Frankly, I never overcame the 'bad smell' about all this. On the one hand we are expected to believe that the US government keep crashed UFOs covert for decades and appropriate millions of dollars for 'above top secret' projects. On the other hand that they would stroll into Watton and - without any restrictions - reveal the ultimate secret of this



astonishing case to a junior civilian who is then allowed to pass it onto UFOlogy.

Disinformation

My suspicions that maybe the information was really carefully contrived 'disinformation' were hardly removed by subsequent events. Amateur UFO sleuth Brenda Butler was fed an almost identical story by a USAF security police sergeant she befriended on base. Some said he might have told her what she wanted to hear, or braved security for a friend. Were this on its own the case would remain just an intriguing 'soldiers tale'. But, the actions of USAF intelligence men taking official records for study from a British base could seriously jeopardise the 'special relationship' between the USA and Britain if they too were only 'feeding out wild rumours'.

No - together these two remarkably convenient bizarre tales (injected intravenously into the heart of UFOlogy) convinced me almost from the start that the most likely explanation for this event was that something OTHER than a UFO landing had actually taken place. These attempts to get UFOlogists to believe in the most extreme of alien contacts was, perhaps, designed as a smokescreen to destroy the credibility of the story in the eyes of any investigative journalists who dared to snoop.

I have been told this would have been far too incredible a risk and would simply draw attention to the case. But did it? For over two years all we had were a bunch of rumours that nobody believed - even in British UFOlogy. Most colleagues told Brenda and her friend Dot Street that they were wasting their time and me that I was 'desperate' for a story. There were not enough facts to establish anything (which was probably a key factor). But if some incident had occurred and lots of people had witnessed things they should not have done, then the authorities would have known that the situation was uncontrollable. At some point someone credible might say something sufficiently plausible to start serious



A 'Deep Throat' source provided this sketch, based on the contents of the files of Colonel Halt.

enquiries. To me the idea could have been to USE innocent pawns to discredit the story from square one by helping them to give UFOlogy an exaggerated version of the truth. Those who saw something might already have been half convinced they saw a UFO through understandable misinterpretation of what WAS going on.

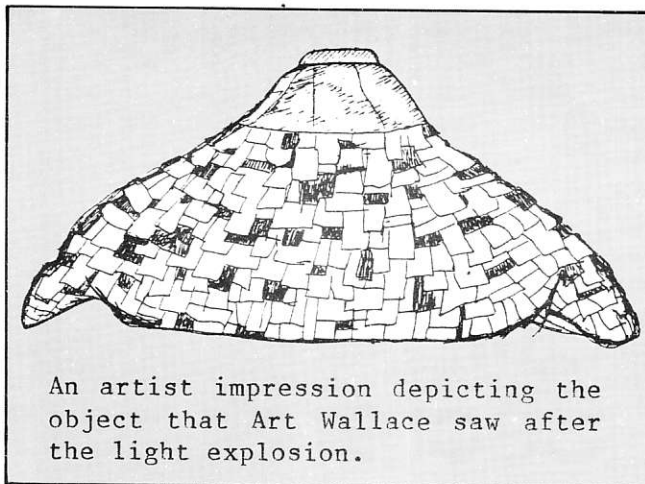
This solution is compromised to some degree by the eyewitness testimony. I have talked at length to some of these (civilian and military). In my opinion there is no doubt they saw something they do not understand. However, I am equally convinced after talking to them that the alien contact so widely forced from the start NEVER actually happened.

Many questions remain about this case. It has always been a source of regret that 'Sky Crash' (the book I put together with Brenda and Dot) became to some extent a part of the mythology rather than the solution. It was written very early, when we had masses of contradictory evidence but no real understanding of how to figure it all out. But it had to be written.

It was quite a successful book in some regards (it sold more copies than any of my other UFO titles). It also stimulated new leads after the fact. However, I doubt very much that it undid any of the harm that the News of the World front page story in October 1983 innocently wrought. Although the paper did a good job its reputation alone was enough to do the damage. Overall, I believe the actions of everyone throughout this saga (not excluding myself) played right into the hands of governmental powers who used and abused us (or rather allowed us to manipulate ourselves).

Countless big questions are outstanding. If not a UFO landing - what REALLY happened? Did any of the participants (indeed anyone on base) know the truth, or were they all used like everyone else? (many clearly were and it could be that even key officers were actively misled). And can UFOlogy ever clear its name or show that there really is any fundamental reality behind this episode, or will it forever be lost in myth and mystique?

I dread that last suggestion. In ten years time the case will probably be as controversial as ever within UFO folklore and revered by UFOlogists for all the wrong reasons. Ralph Noyes was scathing of our enquiries in his commentary in 'The UFO Report 1990'. But I think he fails to recognise how difficult it was making sense of what was then a large grab-bag of distorted rumours (some, in my view, deliberately given to us) at a time when there was no track

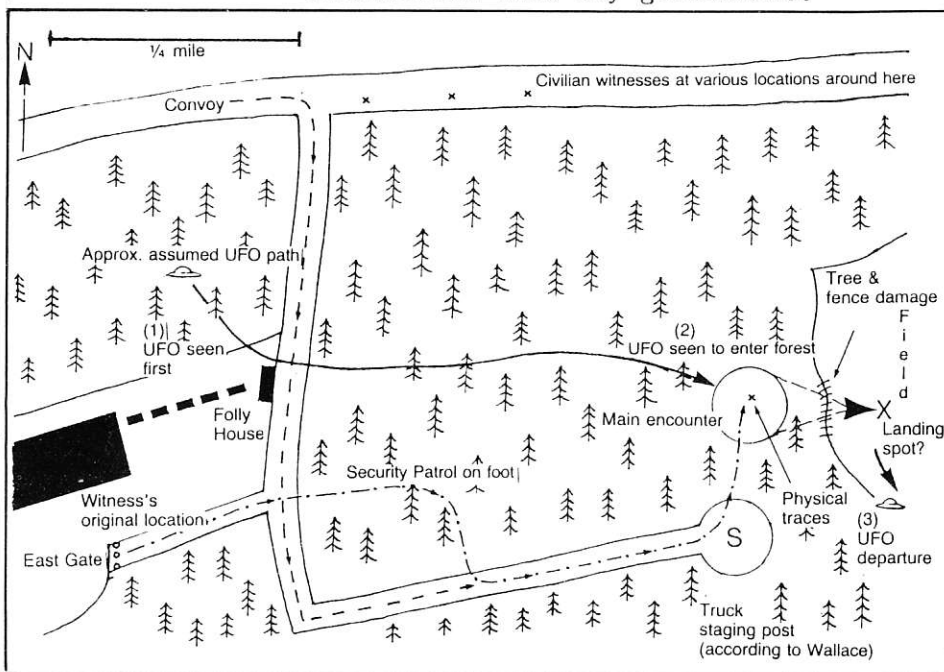


An artist impression depicting the object that Art Wallace saw after the light explosion.

record of interest from any part of serious UFOlogy. One of the world's best known UFOlogists even told a journalist when asked recently about our work on this case that it was a failure and a mess and that secrets remained to come out about the case.

The secrets still haven't come. Perhaps they never will. Perhaps only more rumours exist circulating around UFOlogy and turning into 'fact'. But we should remember the Rendlesham scam because it teaches vital lessons that ought now to be reapplied to much more recent cover-up matters.

When I see some cases I get more than a touch of deja vu about their nature, official purpose and how UFOlogy has been handling them. But more than that cannot be said for legal reasons unconnected with any government.



Rendlesham: 10 Years On

A Property Still Secret

by

Ralph Noyes

It will soon be ten years since Colonel Halt told the British Ministry of Defence of his encounter with marvellous events in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, near the USAF base at RAF Woodbridge.

Readers will remember that a 'vehicle', uncomfortably large for the clearing in which it 'materialised' (from a green fog), was seen by Halt and his posse of American servicemen in late December 1980. Silver suited entities of a sub-human size, floated in the chilly winter air around and beneath the object. Shadows of Halt's companions cast by the powerful night-lights they had brought on site, marched across the backdrop of the visiting 'craft'. A communication with these visitors is said to have taken place.

Classified

Risking his career, as some would see it, Halt told a little of all this in a classified memorandum to the British MOD (and he doubtless told at least as much to his American superiors). The MOD smothered his report despite diligent enquiries by Jenny Randles and colleagues, with whom she later wrote 'Skycrash' (1) - and then surprisingly, almost casually, let it drift in the public arena in 1983. Those who wish to remind themselves of the facts need only

glance at the first three references at the end of this article.

The Mole at Whitehall

For me, the Rendlesham case was crucial. It caused me, having left the MOD some five years earlier, to join BUFORA (to the dark suspicion of some of its members who saw me as a Whitehall mole - see 'Sky Crash passim, see Jenny Randles' 'The UFO Conspiracy'). It also prompted me to write a piece of fiction about the UFO phenomenon, 'A Secret Property (4), which is rather remotely related to the Rendlesham events. A wry satisfaction was also gained by teasing former colleagues in the MOD, pressing what I thought were right questions to produce at least an acknowledgement that something remarkable had occurred at Rendlesham in December 1980.

My motives for taking this last step (and of encouraging Lord Hill-Norton, former Chief of the Defence Staff, to bring his far greater weight to bear on Defence Ministers) have often been questioned. I have gone on record several times with my answers (5, 6, 7), but I will summarise them now by saying that it was a belated form of repentance!

I had been convinced for decades past, sitting behind a Whitehall desk, that we had hard evidence for the repeated manifestation of a mysterious something which was able to leave traces on film and radar, to run rings round advanced aircraft, to appear and vanish entirely at its own whim and to act with a strong look of intelligence. And I had done absolutely nothing about it except to stonewall questions from the public!

Spooky Thoughts

I can only add in self-defence that nobody else (not even Lord Hill-Norton) had gripped the nettle either. If we had spooky thoughts, we kept them to ourselves. Such is the way of rational and busy men when faced with inexplicable intrusions into what is, on the whole, a rational and busy world. Such is the way of police officers and local authorities at a poltergeist


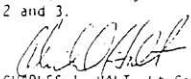
haunting, of firemen confronting Spontaneous Human Combustion, even of good scientists in the face of meteorites at the beginning of the nineteenth century and reports of ball lightning up to about the middle of this one. I think I must ask to be forgiven if, in company with the rest of the Ministry of Defence, I Shrugged off the UFO evidence.

But in 1983, in a pleasantly irresponsible state of retirement, with no career to damage and jolted by the sheer moral courage of Halts's decision to place 'nutty' facts on the official record, I decided to have a go at my successors in the MOD, ruefully aware of the embarrassment they might feel that a former colleague had lost his marbles but hopeful of squeezing out at least some grudging statement which might be useful for serious research. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the MOD proved as suavely capable of evading awkward questions as I had been brought up to be myself!

So my gamekeeper-turned-poacher ploy turned out to be abortive and I think that the very nature of the UFO phenomenon is such that we never shall get a useful statement from Whitehall or Westminster. We may, on the other hand one day do so from the Society of Psychological Research...

My decision to join the SPR (of which I now have the good fortune to be Hon. Secretary) arose - though somewhat indirectly - out of my interest in the Rendlesham case. While I was vainly pursuing the MOD and putting together the material for 'A Secret Property', my name came to the notice of a certain person whom I will call DD. Those who have met him (under what was pretty certainly only one among a number of pseudonyms in his troubled passage about the world) will recognise the initials.

DD came to see me five times during 1984, filled with mysterious messages. He was, for example, convinced that his mother had come from the Pleiades, submitting to his brute of an earthly father solely so that DD should be begotten here. He assured me several times that I should ignore rumours reaching me that he had ever committed murder. He knew that he had a mission - to convey to people of influence (he mistook me for one of them) a momentous message about the history of the human species and a terrible danger now facing us. He also carried a notebook which contained in minute a crooked writing (though I was never allowed to do more than glance at it) a great array of symbols, numbers, planetary signs and

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS 21ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (USAF) APO NEW YORK 0715		
REPLY TO ATTN OF:	CD	13 Jan 81
SUBJECT:	Unexplained Lights	
TO:	RAF/CC	
<p>1. Early in the morning of 27 Dec 80 (approximately 0300L), two USAF security police patrolmen saw unusual lights outside the back gate at RAF Woodbridge. Thinking an aircraft might have crashed or been forced down, they called for permission to go outside the gate to investigate. The on-duty flight chief responded and allowed three patrolmen to proceed on foot. The individuals reported seeing a strange glowing object in the forest. The object was described as being metallic in appearance and triangular in shape, approximately two to three meters across the base and approximately two meters high. It illuminated the entire forest with a white light. The object itself had a pulsing red light on top and a bank(s) of blue lights underneath. The object was hovering or on legs. As the patrolmen approached the object, it maneuvered through the trees and disappeared. At this time the animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy. The object was briefly sighted approximately an hour later near the back gate.</p> <p>2. The next day, three depressions 1 1/2" deep and 7" in diameter were found where the object had been sighted on the ground. The following night (29 Dec 80) the area was checked for radiation. Beta/gamma readings of 0.1 milliroentgens were recorded with peak readings in the three depressions and near the center of the triangle formed by the depressions. A nearby tree had moderate (.05-.07) readings on the side of the tree toward the depressions.</p> <p>3. Later in the night a red sun-like light was seen through the trees. It moved about and pulsed. At one point it appeared to throw off glowing particles and then broke into five separate white objects and then disappeared. Immediately thereafter, three star-like objects were noticed in the sky, two objects to the north and one to the south, all of which were about 10° off the horizon. The objects moved rapidly in sharp angular movements and displayed red, green and blue lights. The objects to the north appeared to be elliptical through an 8-12 power lens. They then turned to full circles. The objects to the north remained in the sky for an hour or more. The object to the south was visible for two or three hours and beamed down a stream of light from time to time. Numerous individuals, including the undersigned, witnessed the activities in paragraphs 2 and 3.</p>		
 CHARLES I. HALT, Lt Col, USAF Deputy Base Commander		

other kinds of 'esoteric' graffiti.

Any of us who take an interest in 'fringe' topics are sooner or later called upon by unbalanced minds. We learn to treat them with courtesy, to listen with great seriousness to what they tell us, never to mock their messages and always to keep our back to the nearest wall. Scott Rogo's recent death is a grim reminder of this. I felt - perhaps with a kind of bourgeois arrogance - that I knew DD's kind, though I had not encountered it before in quite so intense a form. I considered that his messages were the usual rubbish. I took him seriously only in thinking that he needed help and wondering how this could possibly be obtained without driving him into the trap of forcibly incarceration under the Mental Health Acts (about which I feel nearly as much unease and scepticism with as I do about visitations from the Pleiades).

But here's the sting in the tail...

At our fifth meeting, DD told me that I would be given a sign, pointing me to a celebrated author with whom I should get in touch with in the interests of furthering DD's 'mission'. Waking one morning about a fortnight later, I saw a UFO in the dawn sky - not the familiar flying saucer which a recent adherent to BUFORA might have expected, but a triangle of white lights, suspended in the air at an uncertain distance. All I could do was to estimate the angular separation of these lights, their angular diameter and their elevation above the horizon. This was in the middle of Chelsea. I have never heard that they were seen by anybody else. Much later, I discovered that this apparition, which lasted about two minutes had hovered silently above the apartment of the celebrated author with whom DD had wanted me to get in touch with (though, as far as I know - short of cryptomnesia - this fact was unknown to me at the time).

I decided never to see DD again! I also threw away all my papers on the UFO phenomenon and spent much of the

U.K EYES 'B'



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HS

Telephone (Direct Dialling) 01-218 [REDACTED]

(Switchboard) 01-218 9000

Dear [REDACTED],

As you know, OSI has completed a report on the landing of a craft of unknown origin crewed by several entities near RAF Bentwaters on the night of December 29/30 1980.

Interestingly, OSI reports that the entities were approximately 1½ metres tall, wore what appeared to be nylon-coated pressure suits, but no helmets. Conditions on the night were misty, giving the appearance that the entities were hovering above ground level.

Tape recordings were made on which the entities are heard to speak in an electronically synthesized version of English, with a strong American accent. Similar transmissions intercepted irregularly by NSA since 1975. (See attached - Flag A)

According to OSI, entities had claw-like hands with three digits and an opposable thumb.

Despite original reports (Flags B - G), OSI said the craft was not damaged but landed deliberately as part of a series of visits to SAC bases in USA and Europe. Reports that craft was repaired by US servicemen or was taken on to the base are not confirmed by OSI.

Landing is not considered a defence issue in view of the overt peaceful nature of the contact, but investigations by DS8 are to be continued on [REDACTED] authority. Precautionary plan for counter-information at a local level involving [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED] [REDACTED], is strongly recommended.

Sincerely

A probable hoax letter that was sent to the research team

ensuing couple of years abroad.

After long thought, I joined the Society for Psychical Research: they do, after all have a track record in the sober study of that strange borderland which is haunted by things neither quite material nor wholly imaginary.

Understanding the Borderline

This little anecdote remains irretrievably personal. We have probably all experienced oddities of this kind without usually getting the conclusive evidence which might persuade others. I place it on record, partly out of the fellow feeling for poor Colonel Halt, partly in difference to DD. DD is clearly a gifted man, one of those strange souls who seem able to alter the

nature of other peoples experience of the world (even if at a great cost to themselves). He and his kind might well be able to contribute to our understanding of the borderland. I doubt that the Ministry of Defence will ever do so.

Unsolved Classics

Rendlesham is now in my opinion a closed case. It takes its place among our other unsolved classics. I can only feel grateful that it (and DD) have brought me via this circuitous route to the conviction that UFOs and other quasi-material entities have more to do with us and our interaction with the world than with government departments or solid visitations from aloft.

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News Lines

BUFORA BINDERS BOUGHT

The latest offer to come from the BUFORA Head Office in Burgess Hill will soon be delivered.

Magazine binders embossed with the BUFORA logo have been ordered and will be dispatched to members (who have already sent their £5.00 deposits) very soon.

Each binder can house up to 18 magazines and are available in A4 and A5 sizes. So if you have not ordered yours yet, get writing to 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST now!

METEORITE SENSATION

Reports have reached BUFORA that a bright meteor sped over the english countryside and apparently came to earth in Northamptonshire. The multicoloured spectacle was seen by a BUFORA member on Sunday, 18th November at approximately 1.00am and immediately contacted the

Association.

All reports of this event received by BUFORA will be passed to the British Astronomical Association for analysis.

CONGRESS '91 *UFOs - A Global View*

August 16th - 18th 1991
SHEFFIELD LIBRARY THEATRE

This is an advance announcement of the **biggest UFO conference ever to be staged in Britain** - attracting speakers from around the world.

Speakers already include: Betty Cash and Vicky Landrum, Cathy Davies, Budd Hopkins and Jenny Randles.

Congress tickets cost £6.00 for each day or £15.00 for the full three days. For more information and booking forms write (enclosing an s.a.e) to Andy Roberts 84 Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 2QR.

Congress '91 - UFOs: A Global View will be sponsored jointly by ICUR, BUFORA, The IUN and MUFON.

Phantoms Fact or Fantasy?

Report by Onay Faiz

Ufology is no more than a modern mythology. Ufology is a dead subject - we ought to give it up. We should be looking at spiritualism for explanations of the phenomenon. We've encountered the little greys in a university laboratory. These are just some of the startling comments which came out of this year's international UFO conference in Sheffield. Onay Faiz reports.

Phantoms of the Sky, the 1990 international UFO conference, was hosted by the Independent UFO Network to whom congratulations are in order for the quality of the speakers. For at the Sheffield Central Library, delegates were challenged for two days with strong proposals as well as what some may regard as evidence for the extraterrestrial hypothesis, and a few surprisingly alternative ideas.

The international flavour of the conference was somewhat muted with only USA's Budd Hopkins putting in a dual appearance for the non-UK contingency. But it wasn't through lack of trying; red tape prevented Vladimar Rubstov from Russia from getting across here in time, and Perry Petrakis from France also disappeared off the agenda.

Nevertheless, the speaker quality was good and the lack of international presence compensated by delegates from countries as far afield as Finland, Sweden and Norway.

All the lectures maintained an excellent level of understandability without any speakers resorting to ufology gobbledegook - a good ploy, particularly for the general public's day on Saturday.

Subjects varied, from looking at ufology as a science, corn circles, case studies, abductions, earth lights to the

modern view of UFOs.

A couple of notable features of the conference were the bookselling and information services mounted in the foyer outside the lecture hall. Andy Roberts ran his excellent secondhand bookstall and newcomers to ufology could subscribe to the various organisations and publications available. Perhaps the only criticism here was the space problem in the tiny foyer - it would have made sardines in a tin feel privileged. But at least you could literally rub shoulders with the eminent characters in the field.

Room for Investigations

One superb idea organised by the IUN was the special investigation room available for people to make reports. Many a visitor disappeared quietly off up the stairs to make use of this; it also gave the press and television crews somewhere quiet to go to talk to people - a very important feature if we want to accommodate them and encourage coverage.

It must be said that the whole conference offered excellent value for money at just 4.00 per day, but it did live up to its usual sparkle when it came to food; only a small kiosk was available to feed the marauding hungry delegates after a tough morning's session. Perhaps we can come with a few ideas on sustenance for the next one.

Now onto the speakers...

UFO'S, PHANTOMS OF THE SKY by ANDY ROBERTS

The 1990 conference borrowed its name from David Clarke and Andy Roberts' new book 'Phantoms of the Sky', so it seemed appropriate to let one of the authors kick off the talks on Saturday morning.

'I am not a believer, nor a debunker,' began Andy Roberts. Instead, he claims to be treading the fine line that runs somewhere between the two.

He put forward his firm view that ufology is simply a modern mythology, quite literally, a sign of the times.

We have no proof, he told delegates, that there are visitors to this planet; there are lots of stories, but no hard evidence to hand.

Interpretation

"And if you think ufology dates back only to the 1940s, you're very much mistaken." History and mythology is littered with mysteries and stories, he points out. You only have to look at 'War of the Worlds' which was written by H.G. Wells as far back as 1897. What we're seeing today is not a new phenomenon, just a difference in interpretation, he concludes.

"What we're actually dealing with isn't an objective reality but a mythology, based on a variety of factors; we don't know exactly if it's cultural, psychological or sociological.

"But it **is** a modern mythology because we have to have mythologies.

"Every time has a mythology. We can't examine it very closely now because we're living it! You can't dissect your own mythologies at the time." To illustrate his argument, he reviewed the abduction experience.

Some of its key features, he pointed out, have common roots throughout history: periods of missing time, a portion of life which cannot be

explained adequately, an interruption or disturbance of one's normal life pattern...

"None of this is new! It's all extremely old." Missing time accounts are found frequently in folklore texts from every country, particularly in Britain, he claims. He quotes an 1887 account of a servant who gets abducted and loses three hours of time. It does have underlying features very similar to a modern-day abduction report, except that in the servant's case, the abductors were described not as aliens, beings or entities, but as fairies.

"The fairies," he says. "Where are they now? "If that man had this experience now, he'd be reporting a UFO abduction!" Fairylore has been ignored by UFO investigators, he believes, even though it offers many parallels to modern ufology.

"It needs looking at again," is his conclusion.

True enough, there are common abduction 'symptoms' which just beg comparison: trance-like states prior to and during the abduction, enchantment, being 'under a spell' these link to today's reports of Oz factor conditions and altered states of consciousness.



Human contact with non-human beings, the memory of a light or entrance are further common features. Fairy encounter stories often refer to 'an entrance to another world' on the ground. Today, abductees report a landed craft or a light on the ground.

Could there be a connection between historical reports and modern day experiences? Andy Roberts believes there

is.

Modern day abduction experiences are interpreted according to culture and social beliefs, according to one's own mythology, he argues.

BVM or Bust

Take people from highly religious Catholic countries, such as France, Spain and Italy, he told delegates. They often report visions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and yet abductions reports are comparatively few in these countries when compared to the numbers in the UK and USA where the UFO phenomenon is rife.

Whatever these experiences are, he says, they are interpreted within the individual's own belief systems. (This supports the talk given last year by Cynthia Hind whose research on African natives showed that they believed the being in the silvery suit which appeared to them was the spirit of a dead ancestor.) "It is a part of normal human repertoire to have such experiences, whether artificially induced under certain circumstances, or accidentally entered into.

"If you've been fed UFO mythology all your life through the media, books, and films, when you enter a different state of consciousness - a different 'reality' - in some circumstances you're going to have a UFO experience.

"It's not mental illness, it's normal and perfectly healthy... and you can all go home and practice it tonight!" My question to Andy Roberts would be: why does abduction or UFO experience seem so real? It's doesn't seem to have the same qualities of 'realness' as, say, a night- or day- dream experience of flying pink elephants? Why can we distinguish the elephants as dreams while the UFO experience seems much more real? The UK and USA are at the forefront of reported abduction cases, he reports, but is it simply coincidence that 'both cultures are saturated with the myth of extraterrestrial visitation'? Is it coincidence that the Catholic countries have more reports of BVMs than alien abductions, he asks.

In the whole catalogue of experiences, abductions or otherwise, there is always one common underlying factor, he points out. The human mind.

To appreciate just how susceptible the mind is to misperceptions, Andy Roberts urged his audience to consider highway hypnosis. Most drivers at one time or another have experienced what is akin to a missing time period, when, for example, they cannot remember the last thirty miles just driven.

They experience a waking sensation, where they regain awareness of their surroundings, only to find themselves at a different point in the road than the one they last remember. Nor do they have any recollection of driving the last thirty 'missing' miles.

Perhaps abductees are simply feeling a more intense version of something like highway hypnosis under particular circumstances. The human mind can play tricks.

Drawing the strings of his arguments together, Andy Roberts challenged delegates: are we simply relabelling as ufology what was in the past fairylore or folklore? Do we have a need for a modern mythology? "Strieber seems to have touched deep into the heart of the need for a modern mythology," he refers to the mass of attention which accompanied Whitley Strieber's books and abductee organisations.

But before genuine abductees rise up to throttle him along with his ideas, it must be said that he doesn't dismiss ufology, nor the apparent realness of the abduction experience.

"Abductions are real - they take place. It's the **reality** we need to work out.

"It seems to be belief that causes the event to be described in terms of fairies, BVMs, aliens, or whatever. That an experience of some sort takes place is absolutely beyond doubt - it's just the trigger and the nature of the experience that's far from decided.

"It's all a human-conjured thing and involves interaction with culture and our society." Virtually every

psychologist would confirm that our previous experiences and exposure to life determine the way in which we interpret events. There is little doubt that more often than not, we squeeze perceptions into a shape that we recognise rather than perceive it for what it really is.

There are psychological tests which prove this. Try this simple one for yourself: flash briefly this sentence to a colleague and ask them to write it down (Write it in large letters on a big sheet of paper, but copy it exactly as below:)

There is Spring
snow in the
the forthcoming
months

Keep the exposure brief but allow enough time, say two to three seconds, for the person to read it. More than likely he or she will write down 'There is Spring snow in the forthcoming months', missing out the double repetition 'the the'.

The reason why? It's typically because the reader expects it to read as a proper, normal sentence - as he is conditioned to do. His perceptions are inaccurate because expectations take over and squeeze the perception into a recognised form.

So, we cannot dismiss the modern mythology theory entirely. We must accept that perceptions can be fooled even perhaps to the extent that Andy Roberts implies.

But where does that leave the abductee or UFO witness who believes his experience really happened? What are we to make of inexplicable body scars, unusual ground marks, earth lights photographic 'evidence', simultaneous sightings by several people at once... can all this really be swept under the carpet of modern mythology?

THE ILKLEY ALIEN
by **PETER HOUGH**

Next on the agenda was Peter Hough, chairman of the Manchester UFO Research

Association. He is considered one of the major authorities on the Ilkley Moor, West Yorkshire green alien. [see UT

He gave a full and detailed update on the case of Philip Spencer's unusual photograph and his abduction experience, commenting that he was fully satisfied with the authenticity of the witness's story.

Three attempts to computer enhance the photograph have resulted in little additional information. Two independent companies believe the picture to be a hoax, suggesting a foam rubber model or something similar was used.

An interesting aspect of the case is Philip Spencer's compass which reversed its polarity, apparently as a result of the encounter. Could this be evidence?

Dr Spooner of Manchester University looked into it and, following several hours of experiments, determined that the magnetic effect of the compass needle could be reversed by using simple household gadgets and electrical currents. The process, however, would be dangerous and it seems unlikely that Philip Spencer would have had such knowledge. It took the qualified Dr Spooner several experiments and hours to discover it for himself.

MIBs form the MoD

There was a visit by the elusive Men In Black, or MIBs, following Philip Spencer's experience, who allegedly wanted to know the whereabouts of the photograph. Unusually they didn't pursue questioning when Mr Spencer told them that he did not have it. Although the MIBs claimed to be from the Ministry of Defence, later checks came to nothing; the MoD denies any connection with the visit.

The unfortunate press coverage resulting in The Star's 'Man from the Pru' explanation was effectively dismissed.

The case was well presented by Peter Hough and the decision to accept the evidence left open to the delegates.

UFO ABDUCTIONS
by BUDD HOPKINS

At the end of the first day, delegates warmly welcomed Budd Hopkins, author of 'Missing Time' and 'Intruders', to the stage.

The charismatic guest speaker from America gave a well-practised slide show and talk on his abductions research. The slides were so impressive that he even had the audience gasping at his 'evidence'.

He included pictures of the ongoing Kathie Davies case, real name Debbie Tomey, (a possible guest at next year's conference) who is the focal study in his book 'Intruders'.

There were convincing pictures of body scars and unusual scoop marks which appeared overnight on victims' arms, legs and backs; they suggested a strange, bloodless method of cutting where the process allowed the skin to grow over the injury without scar tissue forming.

At all times, Budd Hopkins was careful to avoid drawing any strong conclusions, but he did put forward questions or proposals. He refused to give his own real view both during the question session after his talk and later at a social event when asked.

"I don't know what the bottom line is of this entire UFO phenomenon," he told delegates, "but I can say with assurances, based on years of investigation, that it is at least some of the time intensely physical.

"It is so physical that it can do things to the ground, to shrubbery and to peoples' bodies. It can turn up on photographic film, radar and so on.

"At the same time it has a psychic aspect." The abduction experience, he said, causes a great deal of psychic injury and subsequent psychological traumas.

Counter-acting the Andy Roberts claim that these experiences are present in our history, disguised under mythology and folklore, Budd Hopkins says:

"Something new is occurring without any doubt."

And, he notes, psychologists, with whom he's worked for over eight years, are the first to say that this does not fit into any psychological model.

He looked at a number of inconsistencies within various cases and also the striking similarities.

Why are some people floated out of room while others are walked, he asked. Why do some go through a door and others recall no doorway at all, only a light?

Although Budd Hopkins illustrated subtle differences between the kind of aliens he was coming across, the similarities were amazingly close, calling back to mind John Spencer's question at last year's conference - Why do all the Hopkins aliens look the same?

Despite subtle differences in head shapes, pointier chins, varying shades and textures of skin tone, (as drawn by witnesses) they all basically displayed the enlarged cranium, large almond-shaped eyes, thin line-like mouth, barely any nose at all and very slim neck - the typical Whitley Strieber entity.

None resembled the Ilkley Moor green alien with long arms and big ears. What then are we to conclude? Are abduction experiences area-specific when it comes to the non-human beings? Is America seeing one race while we are seeing another? This is not borne out by the fact that some British abductees are also seeing the Hopkins alien.

One interesting psychological and perhaps key point is Budd Hopkins' observation of his abductees having their stories confirmed in some way. It is a violent and psychologically disturbing reaction. He quotes the example of the time he showed Kathie Davies another abductee's drawing of an 'alien'. The drawing was so strikingly similar to her own that Kathie thought it was hers.

"She told me that she saw this, realised it wasn't hers and said 'I just had this wave of nausea, I went upstairs and I

went into the bathroom and I threw up'.

"This is a basic fact about practically every abductee in the world - as soon as there is some degree of confirmation of their story, of their memories, it comes as an upsetting fact rather than a calming fact."

Budd Hopkins thinks he knows why this realisation is such a blow.

"Everyone wants these experiences to be out there somewhere," he gestures away from himself with his arm, "not real, not really, really real, but somehow only vaguely real."

Another interesting story he drew from the Kathie Davies case was the model which she'd made of the alien entity; it was a neck, shoulders and head model which was made to size and painted - apparently, it disappeared from Kathie's house without trace. But luckily, not before Budd Hopkins had taken a couple of slides.

Of growing concern to Budd Hopkins is his belief that there are increasing numbers of reports coming from young children, two and three year olds. His last slide of a pretty but sad little girl, whose mother has written a moving plea for help to rid her child of these nightmarish abductions. This picture reduced the delegates to dewy-eyed, open-mouthed, helpless onlookers, each with a lump in his throat at the possibility of all this being real. (Steven Spielberg eat your heart out!)

As is characteristic of the American approach to ufology, Budd Hopkins gave a very convincing, charismatic, almost show-like talk pertaining to the ETH. His slides spoke volumes and begged even more volumes of questions.

If you wipe away the glamour that seems to accompany anyone on stage with an American accent, you'd find a very personable, warm man. The key characteristic about Budd Hopkins is his empathy - he feels a very strong, caring bond with his abductees. You could criticise this quality as either endangering him to being blind and too subjective in his research, or equally it may be benefit him because his

abductees confide in him. But without a doubt, he charmed the conference delegates and those of us who spoke to him personally; he had time for everyone.

AETHERIUS SOCIETY **by PAUL WHITE**

If Andy Roberts raised hell with the audience, the Aetherius Society was expected to start World War III. But in fact, it didn't.

As a relative newcomer to the field, I'd heard one or two less than pleasant things said about the Society, that they were less than solid when it came to the mental department and so on, and sure enough the Aetherians are used to severe criticism. Paul White, however, gave a reasonable account of the Society, its philosophy, and his reasons for joining it.

The Society touches on the spiritual side of ufology in a way that other research organisations tend to ignore. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves what makes us so sure that the Aetherians are completely out of their tree in this subject?

Why indeed should everything resort to a nuts and bolts explanation?

Paul White gave the audience a sharp reminder that we shouldn't be confined to the limitations of our sciences, that we should embrace science and spiritualism and religion at the same time. I suspect he may have lost a few credibility points for believing stories about fling yogis, (but then who are we to say they do, don't or didn't exist?). Thereafter, he took a safer route and carefully reiterated the Aetherian view that ufologists who are searching for nuts and bolts evidence won't find their answers in a laboratory.

"This is where some ufologists get cold feet because you're leading into the realms of telepathy, healing and psychokinesis. A lot of people, especially the nuts and bolts people, say 'No way, we don't want anything to do with that - we're going to prove it in the laboratory'" (which incidentally

is precisely the approach which Jenny Randles recommends in her talk).

"You will never prove it in a laboratory!" retorts Paul White. "You won't prove the existence or the nature of UFOs in one of our laboratories. It's a lost cause. What's necessary is a leap into the dark - an intuitive leap. Intuitive feelings do come into it."

After explaining how he searched and found the right kind of group to join, how he got thrown out of UFO groups for talking too spiritually and out of spiritual groups for talking UFOs, he went on to define the Society's beliefs.

"There is a phenomenon, a higher intelligence, that wants to help us, but believes in a code of conduct, the like of which we can only guess at.

"I believe, and the Aetherius Society believes, that some of these UFOs are intelligently manned and those intelligences are benign on the whole.

"If they weren't, we wouldn't be walking about on the streets at the moment; if they really wanted to colonise the Earth, they'd have done it long ago.

"They wish a more open contact with us, but what stops them is our reluctance to take a step towards them. They would not interfere with our free will. It's important we make our own minds up, in freedom and with lack of coercion."

"You've got to make your own minds up," he told the delegates. "We feel this is part of the process - it's like growing up."

Perhaps he should ask some of the Budd Hopkins abductees about their feelings on coercion. But if all of this sounds just a little too much like a religion, Paul White confirms yet a further belief: that the roots of all religions are the same and extraterrestrial.

Nodding in agreement was Gary Harlow, who claims to be a contactee himself, and who not long ago proposed to the Northampton UFO group that the Bible contains several examples of alien

intervention. The star of Bethlehem - a travelling UFO? Could Christ have been from another world? Did his miracles represent a higher, more sophisticated technology? When the Ark of the Covenant spat fire at those who tampered with it, was it just an advanced defence mechanism of some sort? The questions are endless, but cannot be entirely dismissed.

The Aetherius Society claims to have predicted a number of world events months before they have happened by means of extraterrestrial messages. This alone, says Paul White, merits investigation. Although these ideas might at first seem outrageous, we should not ignore them. After all, how many abductees report having seen visions of the future or warnings about events? The answer is many.

Note also that abductees typically experience the onset of a greater psychic ability - how can this be explained with nuts and bolts theory? Should we not consider the 'evidence' or at least the experience from the spiritual side of things?

The Aetherius Society has made up its mind, perhaps prematurely, on what it believes to be the truth.

Paul White believes that what we are dealing with is the 'single most important subject on the face of this Earth, because it holds the key to every other subject and every other problem'.

"We're not so much interested in investigating individual sightings because, by now, there are enough which have been correctly corroborated to sink the Titanic!" says Paul White. "And many more, I don't think is going to add much to the sum total of human knowledge."

(I think I'd politely disagree here).

"What we're interested in," he told listeners, "is getting the official bodies the people that most people believe, rightly or wrongly to come clean. We know they are not coming clean. We know they are covering up. This is not just a guess. We know it!"

Continued on page 23

This contribution is a summary of a statistical examination that has been made from the "Gesellschaft zur Erforschung des UFO-Phänomens (GEP) (Society into research of UFO phenomena) P.O. Box 2361, D-5880 Lucdenscheld, West Germany. GEP is editor of the German Journal for UFO Research.

With the use of questionnaires as part of field investigation, we try to ascertain the apparent size of the observed flying object. With this value it is hoped to gain some insight into what has actually been seen. In a few cases where examples of heights of clouds and observation angle are known it is possible to estimate the smallest and the largest diameter of a flying object.

Unfortunately, not enough people were asked to collate a full statistical analyses. Therefore the following analyses are not exact statistical declarations, but merely indicate a trend.

Reliability of Magnitude Estimation

by Hans-Werner Peiniger

Figure 2. shows the relationship between age-group and estimation of diameter. We can see that the curves for the age group of up to 20 years lie relatively close together, but the age-group of up to 40 years veers very high. We can also see that males have a tendency to overestimate the diameter of the sun and underestimate the diameter of the moon. The reason for this may be that the brightness of the sun for men appears to

make the sun look larger. This is also a similar trend in the females. It may be that the age-groups of 20 - 40 seem to see bright objects much bigger, than the same object which is not so bright. With the increase in age the accuracy in estimation with males is higher than in females.

Inaccurate

Estimations of this nature can be less than accurate. With this in mind, a study of 238 people who were asked to estimate the size of the sun and moon by picturing what they are like in the sky in their minds, gave a valuable insight of how inaccurate these approximations can be. To complete the study, the people had to then read from a centimetre measurement with their arms outstretched. For age-group results see figure 1.

age-groups

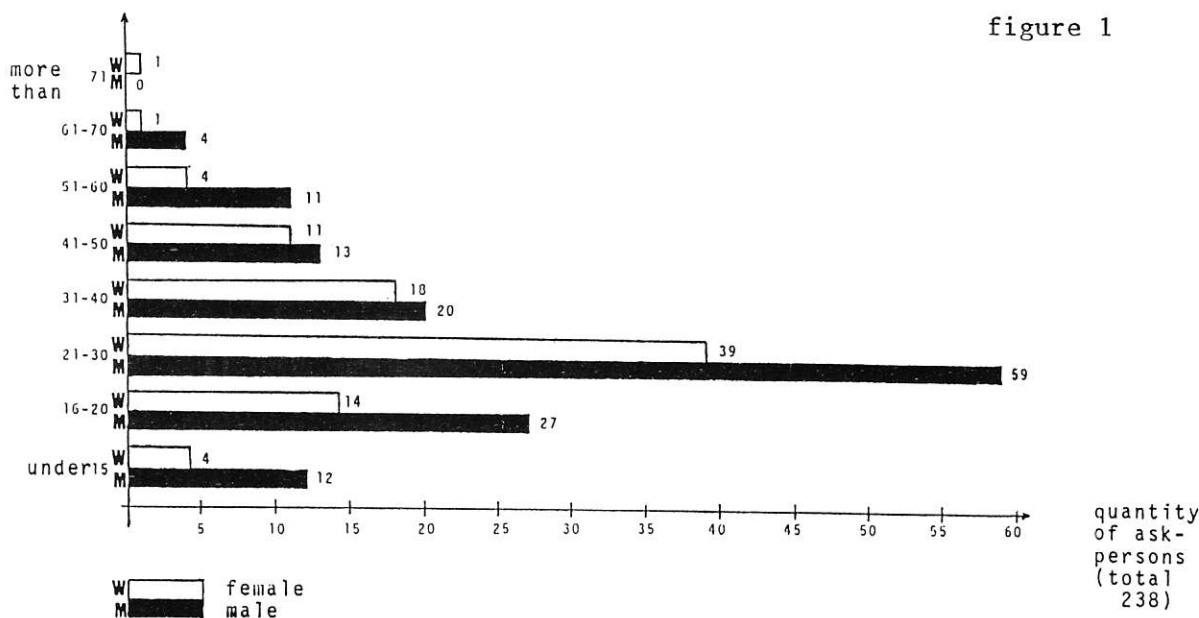


figure 1

As, we can see the average estimation starts with a diameter of 4 cm. the apparent diameter of the full-moon and sun lies at 0.5 cm. You can see from the diagram how much is overestimated from the correct value.

Conclusion

Firstly, it seems that the people asked overestimated the size bright objects more than dark objects. This inference is known in perception

averaged diameter in cm

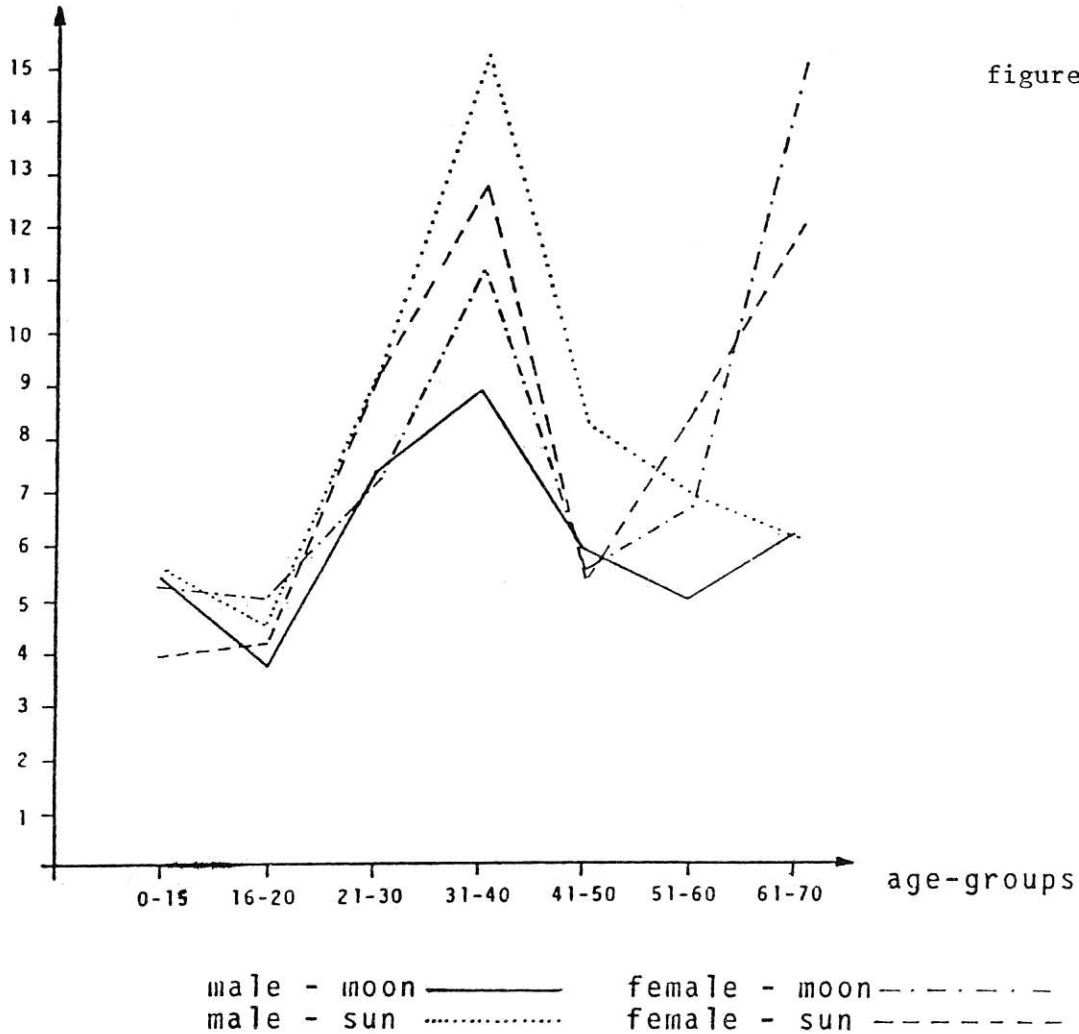


figure 2

In the complete comparison (Figure 3) we can see that from 238 people, only 8 had the value of 0.5 cm., 37 people estimated a value between 0.6 and 1 cm. This means that only 20% of all the people asked gave the estimated value between 0.6 and 1 cm. Nearly 32% had a value between 2.6 and 3 cm. 38% had an estimated value of over 8 cm. The moon had an average diameter from 7.05 cm, the sun with 7.98 cm lies higher. Taken all together we get a value of 7.5 cm. This is 15 times greater than the actual value of 0.5cm. Therefore the dimensions of an object given by the witness tend to not be very reliable.

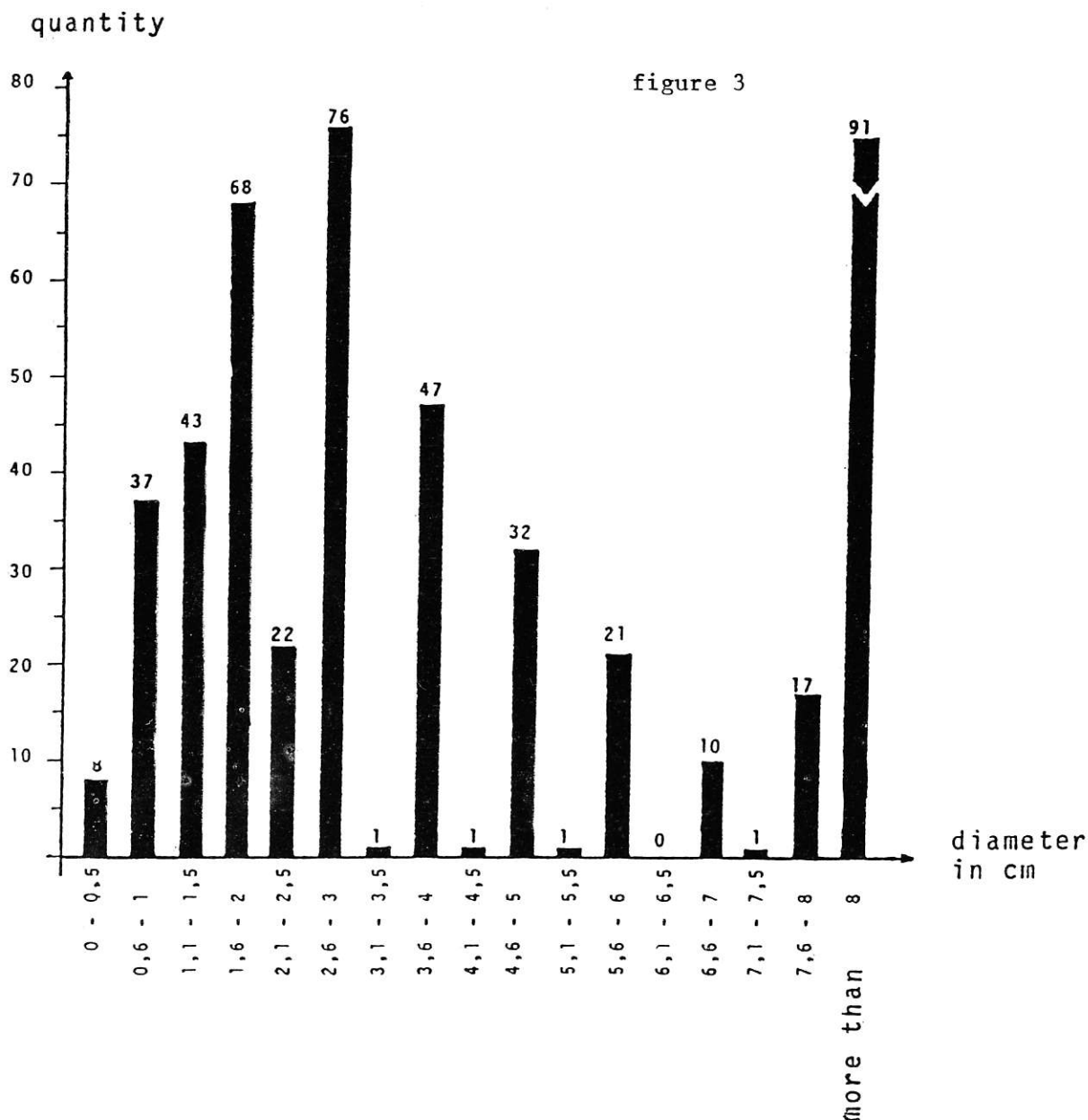
psychology as "astraydiations appearance". This shows that bright on dark backgrounds are overestimated in comparison to dark on bright backgrounds.

I have established that the apparent diameter of well known and often seen celestial bodies (ie the sun and moon), in a cross-sectional analyses, is overestimated by more than 15 times. From this the question that should be posed is: what will the estimation be if the object was at a shorter distance. Unfortunately, we should get higher values. One should

also note that the interval between original sighting and investigation will have a detrimental effect on the accuracy of estimation of this nature. The accuracy of estimations can also be compromised by the proximity to buildings and the

surrounding landscape.

In final conclusion, I do not believe that we can rely on estimated size and diameter values from witnesses. The summary indicates that field investigators should view these values with critical eyes.

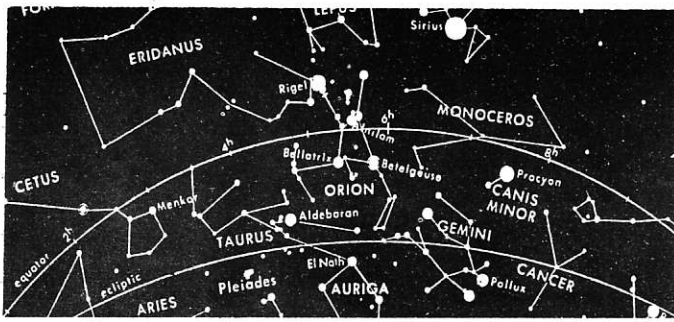


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Skywatcher

Edited by Gary Anthony

Introduction

The Hubble Space Telescope is not a complete failure after all. The ESA's on-board Faint Object Camera is relaying some remarkable pictures back to Earth. Skywatcher focusses on one of these images of the symbiotic nova, R Aquarii and includes all the regular features.

The Planets

VENUS - November. Reaches superior conjunction on the 1st and after this date becomes an evening object. The planet will remain very low in the south-west, setting a few minutes after the sun.

December. Venus is an evening object at magnitude -3.9, visible in the western twilight and setting about an hour after sunset by the 31st.

MARS - November. Mars reaches opposition on the 27th being above the horizon all night. The planet will be at magnitude -2.4 and will be north of the reddish star Aldebaran in Taurus. The moon is to the north on the 4th/5th.

December. Mars is a prominent feature of the night sky, just south of the open star cluster Pleiades. The planet will set before 05hrs on the 31st. The moon is near on the 1st and 29th.

JUPITER - November. The planet is at magnitude -2.2 in Cancer, it rises at 23hrs on the 1st and at 21hrs later in the month. The moon is near on the 9th.

December. Jupiter is in retrograde in Cancer, rising in the east by 19hrs on the 31st. Moon passes to the south on the 6th.

SATURN - November. Sets by 19hrs by the 30th. The planet is at magnitude 0.6 and is visible in the south-western sky in the early evenings. The moon is to the west on the 22nd and to the east on the 23rd.

December. Saturn is nearing conjunction, visible for an hour and half after sunset in the south-west. Thin crescent moon slightly to the east on the 19th.

skydata

NOVEMBER				1990		DECEMBER			
	2nd	22 h		Full Moon	2nd	08 h			
	9th	13 h		Last Quarter	9th	02 h			
	17th	09 h		New Moon	17th	04 h			
	25th	13 h		First Quarter	25th	03 h			
				Full Moon	31st	19 h			
RA		Dec		Venus	RA		Dec		
----	South-West	----			--	South-West	twilight--		
03h >	05h	10° >	+30°	Mars	03h >	05h	+10° >	+30°	
07h >	09h	+10° >	+30°	Jupiter	07h >	10h	+10° >	+30°	
----	South-West	----		Saturn	--	South-West	twilight--		
Meteor Showers									
Name	Begins	Maximum	Ends	Max ZHR	Radiant Coordinates				
Leonids	Nov 14	Nov 17	Nov 20	varies	152°	RA	+14°	Dec	
Geminids	Dec 7	Dec 13	Dec 15	50+	113°	RA	+32°	Dec	
Ursids	Dec 17	Dec 22	Dec 24	5+	217°	RA	+80°	Dec	

Note: All co-ordinates refer to the 'equatorial system'.

SPACE NEWS

FOC Redeems Hubble Trouble

Despite major set-backs with the Hubble Space Telescope, ESA's onboard Faint Object Camera (FOC) has sent back some very detailed images of stellar anomalies. The FOC has peered into the inner core of a nearby 'symbiotic nova' named R Aquarii, revealing new features of this exploding star.

R Aquarii is one of the nearest stars to undergo violent eruptions, spewing out huge quantities of processed nuclear material into space, 700 light-years distant from Earth.

The star was studied by Edwin Hubble and colleagues in the 1930's and 40's, who tried to understand the mechanism which powers such a cataclysm. Unfortunately, in those days, instruments were not as advanced as they are today. Astronomers could only observe the outer rapidly expanding fringes of this fireball star. Conjecture has led many to suppose that the origin of R Aquarii's explosion is 600 years ago, however today, it is clear that the star has actually undergone a series of eruptions; the latest probably occurring in the late 1970's.

White Dwarf

Symbiotic Nova are a class of double stars and it is speculated that the outburst occurs near or on the surface of a hot, compact and probably old star which has already shed its outer layers to become a white dwarf. This star is violently reactivated by large quantities of fresh material falling onto it from a very close stellar companion. Fortified with this material, the white dwarf produces rapid bursts of nuclear energy.

The energy released is enormous, powering the ejection of a good portion of the stars outer layers at speeds up to several hundred thousand miles per hour. and releasing chemical elements

heavier than hydrogen and helium.

Heavier elements like carbon, nitrogen and oxygen are critical building blocks for lifeforms such as our own. Stars like R Aquarii may prove to be fascinating scientific focal points for years to come.

All information courtesy of ESA and NASA.

If any investigator requires astronomical information to help with the evaluation of case investigations please write to:

Gary Anthony, BUFORA ARP, 119 Askew Avenue, Hull, North Humberside, HU4 6LT

Phantoms..

Continued from page 18

Left hanging on a note like that, the delegate reaction was one of immense interest; Paul White found himself swamped in people wanting to know more. I could picture Andy Roberts sitting smugly at the back with a smile on his face knowing this is simply man's craving for a mythology...

The final half of Onay Faiz's in-depth review of the Phantoms conference will continue in the next issue of UFO Times.



LETTERS

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROP CIRCLES

I note with interest editorial comments on the crop circle mystery and the letter from Stan Conway (UFO Times July 1990), which adopted a cautious line on the meteorological theory. As readers know, Paul Fuller and myself have been strongly committed to this solution for some years now and the 1990 'pictograms' apart (for me, to be honest, a very suspicious 'apart' I have to say!) recent events have only served to emphasise that view.

I wanted to respond to Stan's letter in particular and explain from my own perspective why I feel that what I am doing is correct.

Egos

Firstly, I will discount his commentary about outrageous egos and 'all encompassing theories' promoting books, whilst 'adding nothing to a valid scientific judgement', even though I found them needlessly insulting (to say the least). His claim that personalities are more important than ideas in today's UFOlogy is unfair to all the hard work that people have put in on this issue, since facts and evidence have been of over-riding importance to Terence Meaden, Paul Fuller and myself. In the meantime we have had to put up with plenty of abuse from quarters where this philosophy seems not to apply, including being called 'monumental and egregious liars' by one 'respected' UFO magazine (which - unlike some - we chose to accept as part of life). Why this response to our work? Because we dare accept that in the case of the circles, science may well have the principal answers without recourse to supernatural myths, higher

intelligences and other curiosities?

I trust that nobody would be foolish enough to judge a book on an order form written by a publicist some weeks before publication. Rather CROP CIRCLES should be judged on its merits or lack of them in its 250 pages. It is heavily analytical and factual and avoids personalities, except where serious mistakes which fundamentally effected public perception of the crop circles undeniably exist. We have no option then but to point these out.

Both Stan Conway (and Ralph Noyes in issue one of the 'Cerealogist' magazine to a lesser extent) accuse Paul and I of, you might say, cooking the books to make our ideas work. Stan says that at the Oxford meteorology conference we 'blatantly proceeded to relate specially selected UFO cases in a bid to prove that the actual subject itself should no longer be considered worthy of too much serious effort'. He adds that at the Sheffield conference the following month a pronounced the death of the UFO.

Now, if claims that our data was specially selected are to be borne out then those who make such charges must produce a similar number of detailed case studies to those Paul Fuller and I discuss in our book. That is, let us say, 50. Unlike those we debate, Stan's examples must completely refute any explanation within the parameters of Meaden's ionized vortex. If he or Ralph come up with these case histories, then we can start to argue the consequences.

In Abundance

Our point is that case after case that we came across suddenly made sense when interpreted in the light of a rotating atmospheric vortex. We did not specially select them. They are there in abundance within the UFO data amidst our most detailed and puzzling evidence; especially that which refers to vehicle interference effects, physiological effects on witnesses and ground traces. To us the clues were unmistakable and the new light they bring to bear on baffling cases highly revealing. Anyone can take a different line to us, but they have to start by presenting hard facts.

variety and other rarer events) virtually all (if not all) the unexplained data seems to be accountable by using a mix and match COMBINATION of these hypotheses.

It is true that the one area of potential inexplicability is the alien contact. However, as we show in our book even that is surprisingly vulnerable to the Meaden vortex (and this certainly surprises me as I would be quite happy to accept that such cases are entirely different from the Meaden style UAP with some other - quite peculiar - type of explanation).

On this last point I should close by commenting on Stan's odd remark about the Elsie Oakensen case, as he makes a number of serious errors in his notes on my association with this affair. I did NOT bring it to attention via my book 'Abduction'. It was published at least twice before then; although I did probably present the most detailed discussion of it in print to date. However, I have NEVER given a pseudonym for the witness, as Stan alleges. Elsie has always been happy to allow her real name to be used. As Stan says it was 'considered to be a valid UFO abduction' before Sheffield. Indeed! I have many times appeared with Elsie on TV or radio for that very reason. The case DOES stand up. But it is nonsense to claim that I now imply the events to be no longer valid.

In my book 'Abduction' I discuss theories about abduction cases at some length. Eventually two are brought to the fore as what I consider the most probable to fit the facts. One is that witnesses are undergoing some kind of visual and psychically triggered contact in 'inner space' with entities that are NOT physically here but in tune via our consciousness. The other is that the altered state of consciousness which typifies this experience is not artificially triggered by any intelligence but is the natural result of exposure to a localised and intense radiation field interacting with the mind (as Dr Michael Persinger has long suggested). Both those remain valid options. All I am saying is that in the three years since writing 'Abduction' the research Paul and I conducted into

crop circles has very much strengthened the possibility that natural causes are the correct trigger factor; to the point where I find it overwhelmingly more likely that there is no actual alien contact taking place during the CE 4.

This is only an affirmation of my stance within 'Abduction' and to claim that it suddenly makes Elsie Oakensen's case, or any other valid abduction for that matter, no longer 'genuine', simply misunderstands the entire point. No - a case can be genuine, puzzling, valid and exciting without it necessarily having to be explained in terms of alien spaceships.

Sad Testament

I guess that, in some eyes, if a researcher such as myself argues that an abduction is probably caused by strange atmospheric forces stimulating weird visionary experiences, or that we now have the basic answers to much of the UFO data (but a great deal still to learn about those answers, of course), then I am 'really' saying abductions don't happen and UFOs don't exist. That in itself is a sad testament to what is wrong with UFOlogy.

The truth is that I am saying no such thing - in fact the very opposite. UFOs and abductions both **DO** exist and, along with the crop circles, represent fascinating challenges to modern science (to borrow a phrase used by Jacques Vallee 25 years ago when I first got interested in UFOs). Our primary task as a UFOlogist is to seek explanations that adapt and extend the boundaries of knowledge. It is always preferable to do that within the limits of what is scientifically acceptable and we have no absolute need to come up with exotic solutions just because we may want them to make life interesting or personally regard them as more pleasing or exciting.

Those who do not see it this way are presumably committed to an exotic evaluation of UFO data within themselves and so regard my position as 'debunking'. I can do nothing about that, except point out that I believe in 'UFOs' more than I ever have. In fact it is no longer a belief, but a scientific

In the book, for instance, are cases from Japan (where a UFO sucks seawater up through a tube), or the car stop case at Hook (where electrical impedance and physical sensations point indisputably at an atmospheric force as the cause) or Mundrabilla, Australia, which created world headlines in 1988. Look at this in conjunction with the theory and it transforms contradictory data into a jigsaw puzzle whose pieces suddenly form in front of your eyes.

To me that is exciting. It is exactly why I got interested in the UFO field in the first place - to look for answers and solve the puzzles. I do not consider it a betrayal of the field to be saying that we are now finding these answers, or for saying that we must re-appraise UFOlogy in the light of them. Frankly, it is just basic honesty about the work that we do; however palatable or unpalatable the answers may be they must be faced up to.

Provocative. Yes!

My paper at Sheffield was deliberately provocative. However, whilst I did suggest that UFOlogy should consider liquidating itself as a movement I also pointed out that I knew this would not/could not happen. And, at no time did I say that we were all suddenly redundant. My argument was that we now had to accept that the old school of UFOlogy - the view that UFOs are the product of an alien power or some exotic intelligence - can finally be discarded. I do not consider UFOlogists finished as a consequence. Now that we have strong evidence that the phenomenon is going to reduce to a series of questions on the fringes of various mainstream sciences we have to accept the implications of that. This means working with these scientists openly, which will forever be a problem whilst we are instinctively associated with the media and public image of the UFO -ie nutters chasing alien spacecraft. My proposal was that we acknowledge that we can never alter the powerful mass tabloid lobby or the way it effects society at a grass roots level, so we need to disassociate ourselves completely from the UFOlogy represented by this distorted image and, in effect, 'start over'.

I do not pretend this is an easy problem with a simple resolution. Nor do I say that it is a choice I should force onto others. Serious UFOlogy, as reflected in the first instance by BUFORA itself as a body, must take the decision as to how it perceives the way ahead. In many respects there is far MORE for us to do now that we are no longer chasing shadows and actually have a clear idea of where the real data may be found. Those UFOlogists alert to the possibilities should feel excitement rather than fear or resentment at what is going on. We really are faced with a major challenge and an opportunity to legitimise our field. Our job is to rise to that chance, not throw it through pointless personality squabbles.

Incidentally, I would add that Stan is also wrong to suggest that Paul Fuller and I propose the Meaden vortex as the solution to all UFO phenomena. We quite clearly state otherwise in our book and have been saying so within our lectures. For the record my current viewpoint is as follows:

95% of all UFO reports are misidentifications of many different mundane phenomena.

Of the remaining 5% these mostly represent close encounters. Whilst relatively small this still comprises a large body of significant scientific data longterm, world-wide.

These 5% include reports of several (at least three - and probably more than three) types of anomalous phenomenon for which the term 'UFO' is just a convenient catch-all for data merely re-discovered in this modern era.

These phenomena will extend our knowledge of various areas of science; notably atmospheric physics, geophysics, psychology and parapsychology.

The Meaden vortex is a particularly powerful 'new' discovery that unlocks the key to many previously baffling and intriguing PHYSICALLY REAL cases.

When taken alongside the other novel phenomena we are beginning to understand (eg geophysical UFOs of the earthlights

conviction of factual certainty that they exist based on solid evidence AND (more importantly) a working scientific theory to account for them. I no longer accept that there are aliens or exotic intelligences behind the data after years of studying the data and interviewing countless witnesses.

But I know one thing. . . Stan, whatever you think, this view does NOT sell books! This is a much misunderstood illusion. In the field of bookselling on topics like UFOs, the cold, hard truth sells far less well than dreams or wishful thinking. If I wanted to make money, I know perfectly well how to do it. I would be agreeing with you and hard at work on 'The UFO beast from Proxima Centauri' or 'They came from Outer Space!. . . Now where is that floppy disk.

Jenny Randles,
Stockport, Cheshire

Editor's comment: Thank you for your detailed reply to Stan Conway's article in UT9.

Speaking for myself. Yes, I have reservations concerning Meaden's meteorological explanation of the crop circle enigma. If this phenomenon involved simple single circles or standard patterns then I would be in full agreement. However there is a degree of pattern evolution (not including this years pictograms which are highly suspicious) and an exponential explosion of circle numbers. However, bearing in mind the effects of the massive media hype and the lack of general expertise in identifying clever hoaxes, this argument can be vigorously debated either way.

My main reservation is that Meaden tries to explain **every** circle with his theory, even the hoaxes! I am sure that he is in danger of blowing his own theory apart with his eagerness to be right. But in support of Meaden, as I said at a recent BUFORA lecture, "out of scale of 1 to 10, vortex theory gets about a 5 where as all the other mumbo-jumbo theories get about a minus 15!"

Dear Editor,

I would like to recommend that all BUFORA members who are interested in abductions should read a recently published book by Brian Ingles called 'Trance - A Natural History of Altered States of Mind'. There is much in it that is relevant to UFO researchers and in particular the authors' discussion of hypnosis.

It seems that there is abundant evidence to show that people are very receptive to telepathic communication when hypnotised. This undermines all the efforts of abduction researchers to avoid using leading questions etc when regressing witnesses, since there can be no way of ensuring that the researcher's own knowledge of abduction cases does not contaminate the mind of the hypnotised witness. This might also explain the Lawson - Mc Call imaginary abduction experiments and their startling similarity to supposed authentic abductions.

Personally I am still undecided about abductions, but this information makes it even more necessary for researchers in this field to come up with a case where third party witnesses have observed the beginning or end of the abduction. Or are we to believe that the aliens are really so smart that they're never ever going to get caught 'grey-handed'?

Michael Buhler,
London.

Editors comment: Interesting possibility there Michael, your reservations about the use of hypnosis in relation to abductions is certainly not without foundation. It is my firm belief that we should not highlight hypnosis as our panacea for retrieving 'lost' memories from witnesses suffering from the likes of time lapse experiences etc.

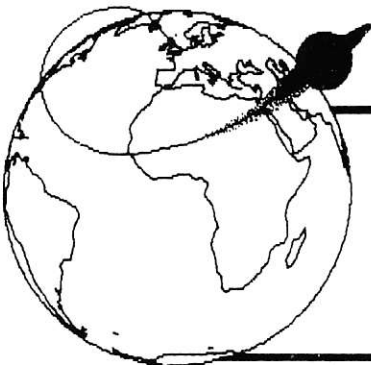
To date little is known about human consciousness. However, the mechanics of how the human mind operates is paramount to the understanding of the UFO experience, especially high strangeness cases. The Unlocking of the mystery of consciousness will undoubtedly lead to the unlocking of most esoteric and unexplained phenomena we baffle ourselves with today.

DIARY

- 1st Dec BUFORA London Lecture **The Betty Hill Star Map**
Speaker John Spencer
- 7th Dec Centre for Crop Circles Studies Lecture **Circle Research: The Way forward in 1991** Speaker Prof. Archie Roy. Starts 7pm at Kensington Central Library, Phillimore Walk, London W8. Admission £3.00
- 5th Jan 91 BUFORA London Lecture **Sense and Sensationalism**
Speaker Lynn Picknett
- 19th Jan **BUFORA Regional Meeting - Northampton**
Speaker: Ken Phillips. Friends Meeting House, Wellington St. Starts 1.30pm
- 2nd Feb BUFORA London Lecture **Conceptions, Coincidences & Comparisons**
Speaker Norman Oliver

BUFORA London lectures are held every first Saturday of the month at the London Business School, Sussex Place, Outer Circle, Regents Park, London, NW1. The LBS is only a five minute walk from Baker Street tube. Lectures start at 6.30pm. Entrance £1.00 members, £2.50 non-members **All are welcome.** Full lecture programmes are available from BUFORA (LP), 16 Southway, Burgess Hill, Sussex, RH15 9ST.

If you have an event that you wish to publicise on this page **free of charge** then write to the editorial address (page 2) with your request, three months in advance.



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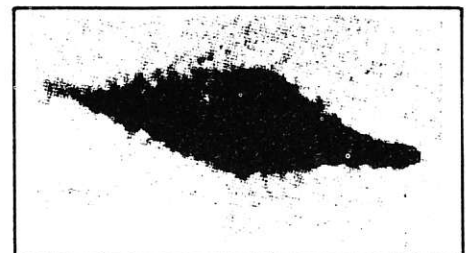
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