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**OSTENSIBLE ABDUCTIONS, REAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

by

**Timothy F. McCauley**

**A Thesis  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts  
Department of Anthropology**

**Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan  
December 2000**

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2000

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A debt of gratitude goes to all my informants and members of the UFO/abduction research community whose knowledge and cooperation were essential to this study.

This thesis is dedicated to my grandfather, Thomas Richard McCauley.

Timothy F. McCauley

## OSTENSIBLE ABDUCTIONS, REAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Timothy F. McCauley, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 2000

A gap has developed in the research agenda of contemporary anthropology with regard to a phenomenon which has received notable attention from research professionals in other fields, such as history and psychiatry. What has been called the "alien abduction phenomenon" has had considerable impact, not only on those who sincerely believe these events are an everyday part of human experience (called "abductees") but also on the changing tapestry of American culture. Alien abduction accounts are closely related to the Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) phenomenon, a theme which has shaped American culture since the turn of the century. This thesis represents research into these unusual and complex phenomena, their historical foundations, and their impact on the social sciences and various subcultures. The intent of this research is to explicate the nature of the UFO/alien abduction phenomenon in anthropological terms, and to survey its impact on related subcultures as well as the broader context of American culture.

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## CHAPTER I

### AMERICAN CULTURE AT THE INTERSECTION OF ANOMALY

A gap has developed in the research agenda of contemporary anthropology regarding a phenomenon which has received notable attention from research professionals in other fields, such as history and psychology. What can be called the *alien abduction* experience has had considerable impact, not only on those who sincerely believe these events are part of their personal human experience (called *abductees* in the literature) but also on the changing tapestry of American culture.

Notable also is the impact these alleged experiences have had on the academic community in terms of their recognition as actual experiences, given the weight of the physical and anecdotal evidence manifest in research reports of a number of pioneering individuals. Two such pioneers are psychiatrist John Mack at Harvard University and historian David Jacobs at Temple University. Both researchers have devoted a great deal of time to the study of UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) and alien abduction phenomena, which have been associated with each other since the early 1960's (Jacobs 1992). Since then, the alien abduction phenomenon has been a central focus of the UFO research community, has inspired much popular interest, and has become part of the wider American culture (Jacobs 1992, Mack 1994).

In this paper, I will deal with this complex phenomenon in relation to society, rather than in its own right, as other researchers have made this the focus of their studies. The intent of my research is to explicate the phenomenological nature of the alien abduction experience, to place it in a cultural and historical context, and to survey its impact on society, specifically in relation to subcultures which have arisen in reaction to the UFO/abduction phenomenon.

More specifically, I will argue that the alien abduction experience, given its effects on individuals and groups, warrants anthropological attention. The UFO/abduction phenomenon, as represented by the UFO research community and abductees, has serious social implications and, as such, demands sober research, eschewing the prejudice and ridicule usually associated with unusual claims. Recently, a panel of scientists at

Stanford University has concluded that some UFO sightings are accompanied by physical evidence, and thus deserve scientific attention (Internet A 1998). While the panel was not convinced that the phenomena represented an extraterrestrial or alien intelligence, it acknowledged that UFOs are manifested in physical evidence, including photographic and radar evidence, vehicle and aircraft equipment interference, apparent gravitational or inertial effects, ground traces, damage to vegetation, physiological effects on witnesses, and debris. Also noted were some reports that witnesses to UFO encounters have experienced injuries, and thus UFOs might represent a serious health hazard.

The Stanford panelists suggested that the UFO problem represents a complex issue which defies simple, universal answers. They also concluded that whenever there are unexplained observations, the possibility exists that science will benefit by studying them. This study should concentrate on cases that include as much independent physical evidence as possible, so that cooperation between the UFO research community and physical scientists would be productive. Finally, the panel stated that institutional support for UFO research is warranted (Internet A 1998).

#### Alien Abductions and Scientific Inquiry

The alien abduction experience is characterized by a number of researchers and abductees as unlike anything else encountered in human experience. Abductees describe unusual events such as UFO sightings in association with strange beings who take them onto the waiting craft where medical-like experiments are performed on them. When they are returned to their normal environment, abductees often only have vague recollections of these events, or seem to forget them completely until later in life. I will explore the nature of the abduction experience in greater detail in Chapter III. What is important to note at this point is that the scientific community has for the most part ignored the claims of abductees and researchers of the UFO/abduction phenomenon, despite the great body of data which exists in support of these claims. If nothing else, UFO-related reports constitute an important sociological phenomenon.

Mack, who is an authority on the subject of alien abductions has stated it succinctly:

The abduction phenomenon is...of great clinical importance if for no other reason than the fact that abductees are often deeply traumatized by their experiences. At the same time the

subject is of obvious scientific interest, however much it may challenge our notions of reality and truth. (Mack, in Jacobs 1992, 9)

Further, I would argue that it is precisely because this phenomenon is anomalous, i.e., outside normal, everyday experience, and as such represents a challenge to scientific notions of reality and truth, that special attention be given to it, especially when claims are supported by evidence contrary to these scientific assumptions. This begs the question as to what happens when an anomalous claim, ignored by science, later turns out to be true.

Examples of this situation can be seen throughout the history of scientific thought and practice and are called *hidden events*. A hidden event occurs when the dominant scientific paradigm ignores claims of observations which run contrary to accepted theory.

If what is contrary to theory is rejected, it is not likely to be reported. If it is not reported, its existence may not even be suspected. Therefore, in some situations, *the anomaly may be a hidden event*, one almost invisible to the society at large. (Westrum 1986, 40)

Consider the following hidden event in science. 18th century reports of stones falling from the sky, called "thunderstones" by witnesses, were often dismissed by scientists as having such an extraordinary origin, even upon examination. For the most part scientists disputed these claims without making the connection between these stones, which would now be identified as meteorites, and the meteors which had been observed numerous times by scientists and non-scientists alike. At the time the thunderstones represented an anomaly to prevailing scientific notions of reality, thus observers were ignored and their testimonies rejected outright, being described by one physicist as witnesses to "an obviously wrong fact, of a phenomenon physically impossible." (Westrum 1986, 38)

Other particularly infamous examples of ignorance based on "scientific" dogma have had more serious social consequences, such as the failure to recognize or widely accept the fact of child abuse within families, prior to the 1950's. Even when these events were confirmed by medical professionals, the reality was denied by the community and the public alike because it was contrary to accepted ideas about family life. The *battered child syndrome*, as it is known now, was as much of an anomaly then as the alien abduction experience is today. The notion that such phenomena could go unnoticed or ignored by science attests to their *hiddenness* as actual events.

To discover the nature of these experiences is indeed an important goal of a general research agenda. In terms of an anthropological agenda, the goal is less a matter of proving a reality as it is a matter of representing what these abductees experience as reality, and how these experiences become manifest in the ideas and behaviors which shape culture.

An important aspect of this phenomenon which is central to this thesis is the growing impact it has on shaping an American subculture. The subject of aliens, abductions, and UFO related experiences inundate the average American consumer of culture in a wave of popular interest. Evidence of this can be seen in the products we buy, the television programming and films we watch, and the ways in which this popular interest is expressed by groups of people who share common assumptions about these phenomena.

To say that the interest generated by these experiences is solely a media driven agenda or a popular fad, is to simplify the issue. There seems to be a genuine fascination with these phenomena, which strike a nerve with particular groups of people in American culture, some of whom go to great lengths to understand these issues and make sense of experiences which seem to defy prosaic explanation. As such, it ought to be of interest to anthropologists. Yet, the field of anthropology needs to play a game of catch-up with other disciplines, already at the forefront of what many consider to be a cultural revolution of sorts and what is, in the very least, an enigmatic and succinct set of beliefs, knowledge and actions with dramatic societal implications.

## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY

When I started research for my thesis topic, I was already aware of the large body of literature and media sources which dealt with the UFO phenomenon and, in particular, abductions. My current interest in this topic started as a childhood fascination with how it was portrayed on television, in books and movies, and by the people who claimed to have experienced a variety of UFO related events. In time, I formed the opinion that the people who believed in UFO related phenomena, particularly alien abductions, form a kind of UFO subculture. This "Alienist" subculture is characterized by a unique set of norms, assumptions, symbols and language, and thus is open to anthropological inquiry. For the ethnographic part of my study, I used a mostly qualitative methodology, including participant observation and unstructured interviews. (For a discussion of this methodology, see Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein 1997.) In addition, I used media sources such as popular literature, television, movies, and the Internet to gain data on this subculture, as well as research and scientific literature dealing with UFO related topics.

Over the years, I have become a collector of UFO associated literature and paraphernalia. This collection has grown particularly as a result of my graduate thesis work. My current study draws on these sources as part of a multi-stage research strategy. First, I examined textual sources, both within the anthropological literature and without. Research of the anthropological literature posed a problem, though, considering the lack of precedence in studying issues usually considered "paranormal."

Some anthropologists have addressed paranormal phenomena in their treatment of various religious traditions, such as indigenous shamanisms (Eliade 1964, Harner 1972, 1980, Levi-Strauss 1963, Tsing 1993). But only a handful have ever mentioned the UFO phenomenon specifically (Lett 1991, Saler, Ziegler and Moore 1997), and even then UFO abduction accounts are given scant attention or are ignored altogether. Anthropologists have yet to develop a specific methodology for dealing with phenomena of this kind.

Fortunately, this issue has been examined in greater detail outside of anthropology (Hopkins 1981,

1987, 1996, Jacobs 1992, 1999, Mack 1994). Such research represents an important step towards a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and greatly contributed to my understanding of the UFO abduction genre. From these sources I gained insight into how such phenomena have been studied in other disciplines, such as history and psychology. This helped me structure my own research and gave me important references to other sources of information.

In addition to the abduction-specific literature, there exist numerous magazines, journals and newsletters devoted to the study, reporting, and critical analysis of other UFO related phenomena (Appendix A). When possible or available, I scanned this literature for insights into the workings of the UFO community in general.

My next step was to search the internet and the popular media, such as television and movies for data. The internet provided a wealth of information regarding how widespread the UFO subculture is, and in what ways it is manifested at the cutting edge of information technology. Literally thousands of web pages have been created about every imaginable facet of the UFO phenomenon, especially abductions. My exploration in "cyberspace" turned up many important images and symbols which have become icons within the UFO subculture. Other sites provided rare documents, or interviews with well known figures, in the UFO research community.

Paying attention to popular television programs, commercials and recent big screen movies was also helpful in determining the amount of interest that exists in all things related to UFOs and aliens (Appendix B). All of these sources reflect widely held cultural assumptions and beliefs surrounding the phenomenon.

Fox network productions such as *The X Files*, *Millennium*, *The Simpsons*, and *Frasier*, just to name a few, have all dealt with UFO abductions or have made them a staple of their storyline. ABC, NBC, and CBS have also jumped on the alien band-wagon through talk shows, news programs, and dramatic series. Cable networks have aired documentaries about alien abductions, UFO sightings, and even alien autopsies. Even Comedy Central's popular cartoon *South Park* features aliens as a recurring theme (Figure 1). This theme has become part of modern American folklore.

Over the course of my research, I tracked the popular media of television for "alien oriented" programs

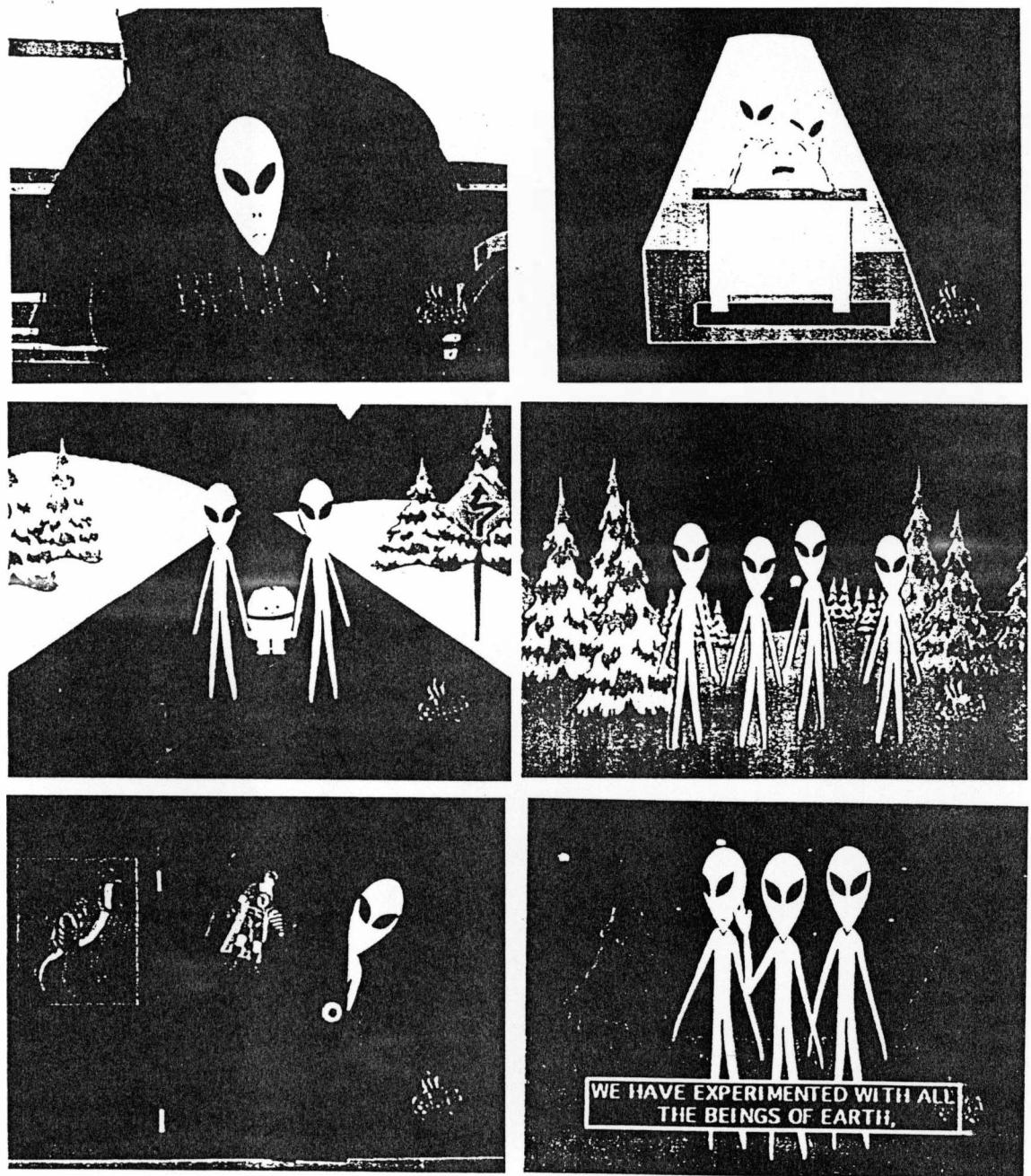


Figure 1. "South Park" Aliens.



Figure 2. Products Marketed With Alien Theme

and commercials by taking notes on their content. These data provide an invaluable source of information inasmuch as they illustrate where the current "pulse of the people" is in relation to the UFO/abduction phenomenon. I also noted the obvious tie-in to marketing products using cultural associations with the UFO/alien abduction theme in Kalamazoo, MI (Appendix C, Figure 2).

### Fieldwork

During the fieldwork stage of my research I took photographs of alien imagery and references to UFO topics, interviewed 50 individuals from Michigan and Virginia, and conducted an interview with an individual in the UFO research community itself.

My fieldwork began, after academic approval, on July 3rd, 1997, when I attended the MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) International Symposium in Grand Rapids, MI. All interviews were conducted after this date and prior to July 1998.

Attending the MUFON International Symposium provided me with an opportunity to gather information from some of the most well known and respected names within the UFO research community. Anthropologically speaking, this event represents a most important ritual for participants, serving as a clearinghouse of ideas, a time to affirm bonds and identity, and a place to gain knowledge as well as recognition as a group by the media and general public.

It also gave me great insight into the people who occupy a crucial niche in this sub-culture. While at the symposium I took notes on various presentations and collected information relating to special interest areas of UFO/abduction research (Appendix D). I attended this conference to get a better understanding of the issues which are important to the UFO research community. I was also interested to find out how members of this community represented themselves as UFO-specialists and experts on alien abduction.

### Interviews

My informants numbered 50 men and women between the ages of 18-56. The interviews varied in duration, as I preferred to conduct unstructured interviews. This provided a more conversational format where my

informants directed most of the discussion, while I sat back and listened. In the beginning, I tried to rely upon a scripted set of questions, each with their own assumptions and expectations on the data, but soon found this to be an unproductive and awkward way to interact with people. Over time, my interview style developed to flow more easily, as with casual conversation. I did, however, stick with a small list of questions to cover the information essential to my study (Appendix E).

My informants were largely self-selected individuals from four cities in Michigan and Virginia. My choice of interview locations was circumstantial, depending on where I was during the term of my fieldwork. In many cases, I would sit at a table in a public location with images and objects relating to the UFO phenomenon displayed in front of me. As individuals would pass by, some would stop and either ask what I was doing or if I wanted to talk about the objects, at which point I told them about my research and asked if they would agree to an interview. Only five of my informants were known to me prior to conducting this research.

In each case, my informants were more than willing to speak with me about UFO abductions and were aware that they could terminate the interview at any time. All informants were self-selected and showed an interest in talking prior to my telling them about my research. The anonymity of informants was protected and pseudonyms were used when necessary. It is also important to note that all of my informants seemed genuinely interested in the subject matter, and in many cases felt free to question me about my knowledge of the subject matter, following our interviews.

## CHAPTER III

### SUBCULTURES, FOLKLORE, AND SHAMANISM

I will begin Chapter III by focusing my discussion on the concept of subculture, specifically as it relates to the UFO phenomenon. I will also show how the notion of UFOs and alien abductions have been treated as an American folkloric tradition. Following this, I will note the connection between accounts of alien abduction and traditional shamanic journey accounts as presented in the anthropological literature. Finally, I will examine the typical alien abduction scenario as presented by the UFO research community.

The concept of *subculture* is well defined in anthropological literature (Crapo 1993, Haviland 1989, Howard & McKim 1983). A subculture can be identified by its distinctive set of beliefs, traditions and behavior patterns. Kottak defines subculture as "different symbol-based patterns and traditions among subgroups in the same society...subcultures are based on ethnicity, class, region, and religion" (Kottak 1987, 29).

Individuals within any subculture will share common assumptions, social and psychological characteristics, and worldviews, and this holds true for UFO-related subcultures. Sociologists have identified three prominent subcultures which have arisen in reaction to the UFO phenomenon, specifically the notion of extraterrestrial intelligence (Westrum, Swift and Stupple 1984). The first consists of individuals and religious groups which believe UFO occupants are actively communicating with chosen individuals on Earth for the purpose of human enlightenment and salvation. These groups are collectively called the *Contactees* by the UFO research community. In 1997, one group of Contactees made national headlines when they committed mass-suicide in Rancho Santa Fe, California. Thirty-nine members of this group, called *Heaven's Gate*, took their lives in hopes of reaching the "next level" of human existence, with the help of alien beings which were believed to be trailing behind the tail of comet Hale-Bopp in a UFO. The media portrayed the Heaven's Gate group as an obscure cult, but UFO researchers were all too familiar with the mixture of religious rhetoric and claims of alien contact, as indicative of the Contactees.

The second group, identified as *UFOlogists*, are groups and individuals who investigate UFO

phenomena, including accounts of alien abduction. Members of this UFO research community consist of interested amateurs, a small number of scientists, and a number of skeptical critics. UFOlogy is manifested by various official organizations, study groups, clubs, and individual investigators. Current UFOlogical organizations include the *Mutual UFO Network* (MUFON), based in Seguin, Texas, and the *Center for UFO Studies* (CUFOS) in Chicago, Illinois. Both organizations have a world-wide membership base numbering in the thousands.

The third subculture consists of scientists who are involved in research related to the discovery of extraterrestrial electromagnetic signals. These scientists have formed groups, with government and private funding, such as the *search for extraterrestrial intelligence* (SETI). These groups, by and large, tend to think of the UFO phenomenon as irrelevant to the search for alien contact (Westrum, Swift and Stupple 1984). The assumption is that if intelligent life does exist elsewhere in the universe, it is more likely to be discovered in the form of electromagnetic signals from distant civilizations than in the form of visitations by extraterrestrial beings.

Members of this community are made up of astronomers, engineers, astrophysicists, and biologists who theorize that intelligent alien life may exist. One of the major theoretical tools used by scientists who allow the possibility of extraterrestrial intelligence (ETI) is the *Drake Equation*, created by prominent SETI astronomer Frank Drake (Swords 1989). This mathematical equation hypothesizes the number of existing intelligent alien civilizations, based on a variety of astronomical and ecological factors which stand as prerequisites for the development of intelligent life. This subculture is firmly rooted in the dominant western scientific paradigm, and as such is less likely to encounter criticism and skepticism from the broader scientific community and general public (Westrum, 1979).

#### The Alienist Subculture

Over the course of my research, I have come to identify another subculture which owes its existence to the UFO phenomenon. I have chosen to call this group of people *Alienists*, given their association with fundamental aspects of the UFO phenomenon, in particular, accounts of alien abduction.

The Alienists are not typical of other subcultures which might be bounded regionally, or by class association or religious affiliation. This subculture is unique in that it can be described as an affiliation based on a

*belief in, awareness of, or identification with* the notion of *alien abductions* as portrayed by UFOlogists, the media, and popular culture. My research will show that this is a subculture with a wide distribution spatially, in age, gender and ethnicity.

There are a number of factors which bind the Alienists together as a whole and identify them as a concrete subculture:

1. They share a set of common assumptions and beliefs about the nature and reality of the alien abduction phenomenon, such as that UFOs are piloted by extraterrestrial aliens, who are abducting people on a regular basis.
2. They have an in-depth awareness of the phenomenon as presented by the UFO research community and various sources in the popular culture.
3. To some extent, they identify with the idea of "being alien" in one's own culture by association with extraterrestrial aliens.
4. Alienists also seem to identify with each other by using a common language of buzz-words and phrases (such as "the truth is out there," and "the greys"); references to alien pop-culture, historic events, and personal experiences (such as UFO sightings).
5. Alienist identity is also characterized by a prevalence of specific symbols and signs which relate to the UFO phenomenon and alien imagery (Figure 3).

It is important to note that individuals within the Alienist subculture do not necessarily think they've been abducted by aliens, nor do they necessarily call themselves Alienists, or apply any other commonly held title, although, during the interview process, I found that three individuals identified themselves as *aliens*. In each case, I found the term 'alien' was being used symbolically to denote a sense of ambiguity and separation from the rest of society, literally feeling 'alien-ated' in their circumstances. I will present a more in-depth look at the Alienist subculture and its characteristics in Chapter V.

#### Folklore and Abductions

Numerous social scientists and folklorists have noted a connection between modern UFO stories and

alien abduction accounts, and traditional folklore narratives in many countries (Bullard 1989 and 1991, Hufford 1982, Mack 1994, Malmstrom and Coffman 1979, Rojcewicz 1984 and 1987, Saler, Ziegler and Moore 1997). UFOlogists have tended to associate folkloric dimensions of UFO phenomena with what is known as the *psycho-social hypothesis* (Clark and Coleman 1975). This theory holds that all UFO related phenomena are psychological and cultural in nature, and as such will be interpreted according to the prevailing dominant worldview. This theory contrasts with the *extraterrestrial hypothesis* (ETH), which contends that the phenomenon is likely physical in nature, and as such represents extraterrestrial visitation by alien beings. The extraterrestrial hypothesis will be discussed at greater length in Chapter V.

The psycho-social hypothesis of UFO phenomena saw its beginning as early as 1958 in Carl Jung's book *Ein Moderner Mythus von Dingen, die am Himmel gesehen werden*, which was later translated into English as *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies*. Jung believed that UFOs (or 'flying saucers') represented an archetype of psychic unity due to their usually circular or spherical shape (Jung 1959).

He also admitted that psychology alone did not fully explain UFO sightings.

In an extended passage, Jung writes,

we could be satisfied with the psychological explanation and let it rest at that. Unfortunately, however, there are good reasons why the Ufos cannot be disposed of in this simple manner...it remains an established fact, supported by numerous observations, that Ufos have not only been seen visually but have also been picked up on the radar screen...either psychic projections throw back a radar echo, or else the appearance of real objects affords an opportunity for mythological projections. (Jung 1959, 107).

It was astrophysicist and UFO researcher Jacques Vallee, who laid much of the groundwork for the psycho-social hypothesis in UFOlogy (Vallee 1965, 1966, 1993). He also proposed a direct connection between UFO phenomena such as accounts of alien abduction and traditional folk narratives, such as were represented in W.Y. Evans-Wentz' (1911) and Thomas Keightley's (1878) folklore studies.

In many cases, folklorists looking at the alien abduction phenomenon have found analogies in everything from traditional Devil stories, supernatural kidnap narratives, supernatural assault-in-the-night stories, fairy dances around toadstools and Incubus/Succubus accounts throughout history (Bullard 1982, 1989, 1991, Little 1994, Rojcewicz 1984). From these folkloric accounts, a comparison has been made with elements of alien abduction narratives to the effect that what was traditionally described as demonic kidnap and fairies around

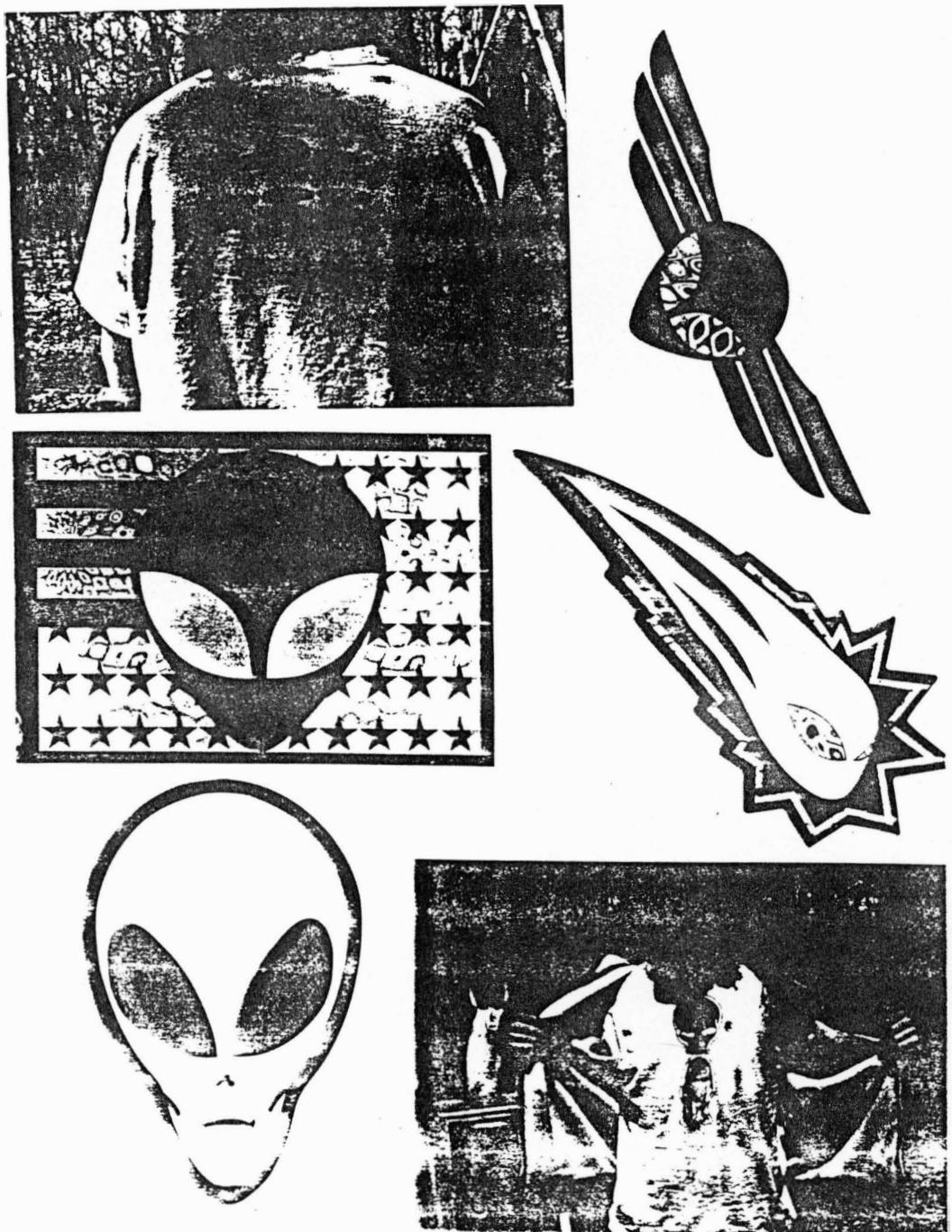


Figure 3. Alienist Identity: Symbols and Signs of UFO/Alien Imagery.

toadstools, will now take on a more modern appearance, that of alien abduction and UFO occupants.

It is interesting to note, however, that abduction accounts seem to show more consistency between separate accounts than do other folktales (Bullard 1991). What is implied is that accounts of alien abduction are something wholly different from what is represented in folklore. One prominent folklorist, Thomas Bullard, conducted a large scale comparative analysis of all known abduction stories in 1989. He states, "abduction stories remain more consistent than we would expect, given how readily narrators improvise on folk narratives such as urban legends, varying them with exuberance even when media sources stress only a single version. A comparable burst of creativity never strikes abduction reports." (Clark 1998, 16).

#### The Typical Abduction Scenario

When the possibility of alien abductions initially became part of UFOlogy, many researchers were torn between what had previously been considered a largely commonplace phenomenon (UFO sightings), and what at that point represented something strange and unheard-of. It is not my intention here to theorize about the reality or nature of the abduction phenomenon, as others have done (Appelle 1989, 1995/96, Hopkins 1981, Jacobs 1992, Mack 1994, Powers 1994, Rojewitz 1989, Wilson 1990). Rather, I will outline what can be considered typical elements of all alien abduction accounts. While not all accounts are exactly alike in form or content, there are striking similarities and consistencies between these accounts.

These common themes were first discovered by abduction researcher Budd Hopkins, in more than two hundred abduction cases he examined over fourteen years of research. He found a phenomenon that had the characteristics and consequences of real experiences, which repeated itself in similar ways from person to person. Abductee accounts were found to be highly detailed and had consistent narratives when compared to each other. These experiences also had intense emotional and physical impact upon the abductees, some of which showed physical scarring in various locations, strange skin discolorations, and even tiny objects implanted beneath the skin. Some common themes found had to do with the nature of abductions, such as witnessing a UFO, seeing the same kinds of beings, and having to undergo similar physical and psychological procedures.

Psychologists have likened the psychological trauma associated with abduction experiences to Post-

Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other traumatic conditions (Mack 1994, Wilson 1990). Sociologist and UFO researcher Ron Westrum has also noted this condition and has dubbed it *Post Abduction Syndrome* (PAS) (Westrum, personal communication).

Much work has been done to systematize the common events and descriptive content of alien abduction accounts (Clark 1998). Bullard and others compared more than 1800 abduction cases from two separate studies in 1987 and 1995, and came up with a series of events typical in abduction accounts (Appendix F).

Jacobs also provides his own *common abduction scenario matrix*, where he comments,

(a)fter studying abductions for several years I began to realize that the procedures I was uncovering fit together into a graphic form. This matrix represents the results of my investigations into diagramming the structure of the common abduction...By examining this matrix, we can get a visual sense of the continuity of these remarkable events. (Jacobs 1992, 329).

This matrix, which separates abductions into physical, mental, and reproductive procedures, can be seen in appendix G. Not all of the terms used in this matrix will be clear as they relate to events described elsewhere in Jacobs' book. I include it here simply to demonstrate the repetitive nature of the phenomenon.

I will now relate an example of what a person might experience during a typical abduction event, based on actual abductee accounts in the literature (Fowler 1990, Hopkins, 1981, Roper Poll 1992). In a typical abduction history, the abductee generally remembers the first abduction as taking place at an early age.

The individual is taken from his or her normal setting, typically against their will, by small, gray-skinned beings with large almond shaped eyes who seem to use a technology beyond our understanding to achieve this purpose. These beings have been called "the greys" in the literature (see appendix H for other types of aliens reported). The person is taken into a waiting UFO, stripped of their clothing and placed in a room on a table. The greys then begin to perform various procedures on the individual, including bodily fluid and tissue sampling, physical examination, and implantation of objects beneath the skin. The individual is usually aware of what is taking place, but has no power to stop what is happening due to the greys' ability to immobilize them.

Following the physical procedures, many abductees report some form of psychological testing or are given various tasks to perform by the greys. For example, individuals might be placed in front of a screen and told to watch a series of images, or are given an object to hold or manipulate for some unknown purpose. The reason

for these tests are unclear, though others speculate as to their purpose (Hopkins 1981, Jacobs 1992, Mack 1994).

Finally, the individual is returned to their normal environment, often with little or no memory of the event having taken place. Some individuals take note of the time and realize that a number of hours have passed without their recollection. This realization is referred to as the "missing time" phenomena (Hopkins 1981). In many cases, only fragments of the abduction event are retained in the individual's memory and may be distorted, by some ability of the greys, to cover the memory of the abduction event (Fuller 1966).

Other common events during an abduction are as follows:

Abduction experiences are often accompanied by inexplicable humming, beeping or buzzing sounds which, though perceived by the abductee, are usually inaudible to others in the same vicinity. Unusual visual phenomena, such as bright lights or floating, maneuvering balls of light inside one's room are also reported frequently...Direct sightings of unidentified flying objects as well as vivid dreams about these objects...interiors and occupants – are also frequently reported by UFO abductees. (Roper Poll 1992, 13).

Once uncovered by researchers of the phenomenon, abduction events are reported throughout adulthood, with a focus on the human reproductive system sometime around adolescence. Abduction researchers have traditionally used hypnosis as a tool for uncovering these suppressed abduction events. Much has been written, pro and con, on the use of hypnosis in eliciting abduction accounts (Baker 1990, Bullard 1989, Jacobs 1992, Mack 1994). Hypnosis, however, remains one of the primary tools used to recover abduction accounts, which according to researchers have been repressed or were "erased" by aliens using some unknown technique.

### **Abduction Narrative and the Shamanic Journey**

More recently, social scientists studying the alien abduction phenomenon have noted a connection between abduction accounts and the shamanic narratives of various cultural traditions (Bullard 1991, Little 1994, Mack 1994). In both alien abductions and shamanic journeys, the individual first undertakes a kind of transformation from normal consciousness into a "non-ordinary state of being," (Mack 1994, 8) or what one anthropologist describes as a *shamanic state of consciousness* (SSC) (Hamer 1990). This is similar to what anthropologist Mircea Eliade calls an *ecstatic state* or *ecstasy* (Eliade 1964) and what abduction researchers identify as a "subtle shift of consciousness" (Mack 1994, 33).

While in an SSC, the shaman's spirit travels to an *underworld* or *upperworld* realm with the intent to contact various spirit allies or *totems*, and to enlist their help in the task of healing a patient or bringing back helpful information from these realms (Eliade 1964, Harner 1990). Frequently, journeys are undertaken as an initiatory ritual of shamanic practice. Samoyed shamans will journey to meet strange totem beings who will proceed to capture the initiate and tear his body apart, only to reassemble it later when the initiate is thought to be restored with new shamanic powers (Eliade 1964, Harner 1990). Many times a small object such as a crystal, simple rock or even a small snake is placed somewhere in the shaman's body, which is said to give power (Eliade 1964, Evans-Pritchard 1937). Sometimes, the shaman will remain in an SSC, what would appear to an onlooker as unconsciousness, for several hours or even days before awaking into normal consciousness. The initiate will usually have little recollection of time passed while in an SSC.

Alien abduction accounts portray similar circumstances and experiences. I have already noted the shift in consciousness that seems to accompany abduction accounts. Other parallels with shamanic journeys include a sensation of flying, encountering alien beings, physical procedures such as medical-like examinations (including separation/reassembly of body parts and object implantation), time lapse experienced after abductions, and a life-transforming aftermath of the experience (Bullard 1991, Hamer 1990, Mack 1994).

Anthropologists also talk about shamans or *mediums* having sexual relations with beings and children in the journey-world (Eliade 1964, Schieffelin 1976). Also common in shamanic journey narrative is the transformation or representation of various beings into animal forms (Eliade 1964, Middleton 1967). Each of these experiences have a parallel in alien abduction accounts (Hopkins 1981, Jacobs 1992, Mack 1994). In sum, these parallels suggest the question to what extent similar experiences may underly both, abduction accounts and accounts of shamanic journeys, but only further research by anthropologists and/or psychologists familiar with both phenomena will settle this question.

I will now turn to a more in-depth examination of what can be considered a typical alien abduction experience as represented by UFOlogsts based on their continuing research of stories and experiences of the abductees themselves.

As we have seen, there are many groups which have seen their origin as a result of some aspect of the

UFO/alien abduction phenomenon. The Alienists represent just one group with common assumptions about alien beings and their interest in humans. The abductees represent another group with similar assumptions, common experiences and perceptions of the strangeness of abduction events when compared to normal, everyday events.

Both the Alienists and the abductees share certain concepts and phrases that characterize these experiences, and to some extent identify with others who either share in these experiences or hold these assumptions and perceptions in common. This indicates that the Alienists, like the abductees, form a subculture within the US culture. As with many other subcultures, a research community has developed around these subcultures, trying to find concepts and models that might help to describe it in normative terms, and to make sense of it to those outside of it.

## CHAPTER IV

### HISTORIC BEGINNINGS - UFOS THROUGH HISTORY

In order to better understand the UFO abduction phenomenon in a cultural context, it is important to know when abductions and talk of 'aliens' entered into the discourse of popular belief. (The importance of a historical perspective for understanding key cultural issues can be found in Ortner 1989). By studying the history of the UFO phenomenon, important transformative events, common trends and recurring themes, long existing cognitive structures or important cultural institutions can be discovered.

Before I look at abduction accounts historically, which occur rather late relative to the UFO phenomenon in general, I will examine the logical precursor to these abductions, namely historical accounts of UFOs and the first associations of 'aliens' with these craft.

At first glance, the question of UFOs would seem to be a relatively recent one. In fact, some research suggests the phenomenon may have its roots in ancient history, going back to sightings of "chariots that flew in the sky, flying palaces that shined and moved about in the sky..." (Rojcewicz 1991, 481). The Romans in the fourth century recorded "(u)usual sky phenomena... sometimes manifesting as stars, fires in the sky, crosses, lights, or beams (which) would often simply disappear or sometimes leave their mark" (Mack 1994, 7). Roman historians such as Livy and Dio Cassius were known to have recorded unusual aerial phenomena, which were frequently thought of as religious omens (Clark 1998). One Roman writer in the 4th century, Julius Obsequens, wrote a book of similar content, based on Livy's history (Clark 1998). Throughout the middle ages, people reported mysterious objects flying about the skies and recorded them as illustrations and woodcuts in Germany and Switzerland (Figures 4 & 5).

Whether the phenomena witnessed in ancient times correlate directly with modern sightings has been the subject of much controversy (Bullard 1991). However, ancient and modern sightings of aerial phenomena might be based on similar visual sightings, interpreted according to respective cultural models available. What was seen as a "flying shield" by Roman witnesses might be seen as a "flying saucer" by a modern observer. Such

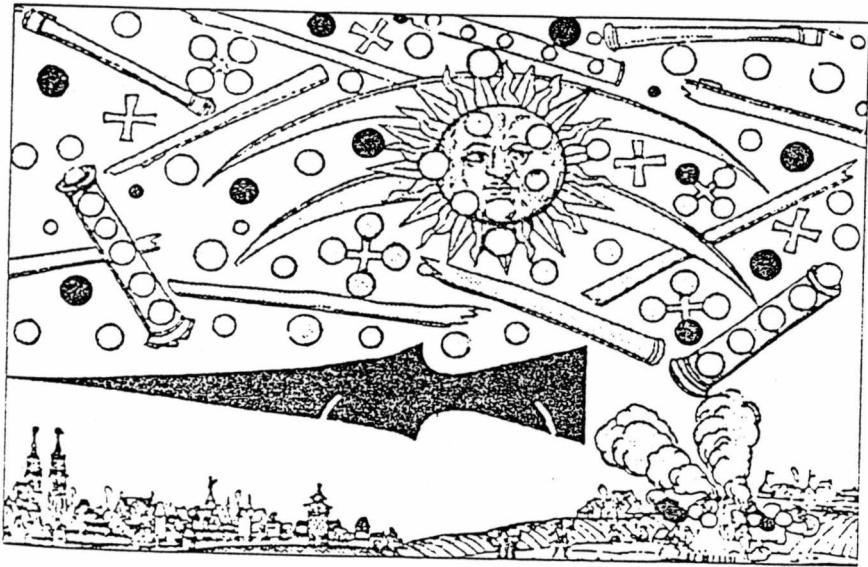


Figure 4. German Woodcut Illustration.

an understanding of historical and modern reports begs the question of what phenomena in the sky, or in the minds of observers, trigger such reports. Whether or not these reports have a factual basis, however, is beside the point. It is enough to know that a sub-culture and a whole genre of folklore have sprung up around them to justify ethnographic inquiry.

#### From Airships to Aliens - UFOs in the Nineteenth Century

Late in the nineteenth century, stories of mysterious "airships" spread throughout the Western world. In California in 1896, there was a series of sightings which sparked the "great American airship scare" (Clark 1998, 27). The airships typically were said to resemble balloons seen travelling lengthways, or large black cigar-like shapes which travelled at tremendous speeds. Newspapers all over the United States covered the strange sightings for six months, beginning in November of 1896. Clark reports "(n)o history of aviation reports flights of large, piloted dirigibles and other aircraft over the western United States at any time in the nineteenth century"



Figure 5. Swiss UFO Woodcut Illustration.

(Clark 1998, 26). The sightings would seem to represent a genuine mystery, though many at the time attributed such craft to the ingenuity of unknown American inventors.

In reality, some of the first human designed dirigibles were flown short distances as early as 1884. A French engineer, Albert, was the first to equip a balloon with an electric motor in 1883. The 1884 flights were accomplished by Tissander and also by Renard and Krebs (Sanarov 1981, 164). The story is a little different in America where dirigible flight was not accomplished until 1900 by A. Leo Stevens.

One well known American inventor, Thomas Edison, plays an interesting part in the airship stories of the late nineteenth century. Apparently, Edison considered the idea of unknown airships to be a complete hoax. One source states, "[Edison] wrote in 1897 that it was absurd to imagine that anyone could construct an airship and keep it secret for so long" (Sanarov 1981, 164). It is not hard to imagine the influence such a well known and respected man of science had on the popular mindset. It is likely that the effect on public opinion was to cast doubt on many of the sightings.

In fact, there has been some research to this effect. Westrum talks about UFO reporting patterns in association with what he has defined as the "hidden event," implying that what is unexplained tends to remain nearly invisible because it is not taken seriously (Westrum 1982). He also talks about the effect of "expert opinion" of scientists and the military on reporting patterns. Traditionally, scientists and the military have been quick to reject UFO reports: "...military authorities tend to be condescending toward reporters of UFO experiences, as do scientists...Sighters are not infrequently dismissed as mentally ill persons, alcoholics, liars, or fools" (Westrum 1979, 150).

Of the California sightings mentioned earlier, one incident stands out as unique because it is the first to link airships with alien beings and possible abductions. In November of 1896, a man named Shaw reported to a local newspaper that he and a companion had encountered three seven foot tall beings in association with a 150 foot hovering airship.

In the report, Shaw describes the beings' appearance and behavior. "Their faces and heads were without hair, the ears were very small, and the nose had the appearance of polished ivory, while the eyes were large and lustrous..." The beings tried, according to Shaw, "to lift me, probably with the intention of carrying me away..." Failing this, the beings went back to the airship and quickly flew out of sight. Shaw concluded by saying, "those we beheld were inhabitants of Mars, who have been sent to earth for the purpose of securing one of its inhabitants" (Clark 1998, 31).

It is unknown whether Shaw was just seeking publicity, intentionally perpetrating a hoax or being sincere in his report. What is important anthropologically is that a dialogue of extraterrestrials, in association with spacecraft and abductions, first enters into popular folklore.

#### UFOs and the Modern Era

Reports of flying airships and unidentified objects of all shapes and sizes continued into the twentieth century (Clark 1993, 1998; Jacobs 1975). With the advent of human-made dirigibles and airplanes, people became accustomed to the idea of flying machines. Recognition of human-designed and piloted aircraft, however, still did not account for many UFO sightings of fast moving 'cigar-shaped' or 'disk-shaped' craft which soon

became predominant in sighting accounts of the early twentieth century (Sanarov 1981).

After 1913, reports of unidentified flying objects as 'airships' began to diminish from the printed media. Sightings of disc-shaped craft became more frequent throughout the 1910's-20's, along with continuing sightings of cigar-shaped craft (Clark 1993). In the 1930's, witnesses even reported anomalous ball-shaped craft in the air and on the ground.

Between 1940-46, numerous sightings were made of what were called "foo-fighters" and "ghost rockets" -unidentified flying objects which baffled military forces and citizens all over the world. During World War II, both axis and allied troops in Europe and the Pacific reported a wide range of these unexplained craft, which were suspected to be secret military devices (Clark 1993).

According to Jacobs (1975), the so-called *foo-fighters* were first sighted when allied bomber pilots reported unusual balls of light and disk-shaped craft following their flights over Europe and Japan. It was only after the war that the American public learned of German and Japanese sightings of the same types of objects pacing their planes and suspected to be allied secret weapons.

After the war, *ghost rockets* were spotted between 1946-48 over the skies of Western Europe and Scandinavia. These craft resembled the sightings of cigar-shaped objects encountered in the United States. Sightings of both foo-fighters and ghost rockets remained consistent with previous and subsequent UFO sightings, only differing significantly in their identification with wartime secret weapons.

June 24, 1947 is the date commonly cited as the beginning of the "modern era" of UFO sightings in America, also known as the "age of flying saucers" (Clark 1993, 390; Jacobs 1975). It was on this date that Kenneth Arnold, a businessman and experienced private pilot, spotted nine disk-shaped objects while flying near Yakima, Washington. He reported that the objects were flying in loose formation over Mount Rainier at an estimated speed of 1,200 mph. The movement of the objects resembled, as Arnold would later recount to the press, "a saucer skipping over water" (Jacobs 1975, 31).

As reports of Arnold's sighting spread throughout the media, the phrase "flying saucer" was coined and entered into the discourse of popular culture. What is significant about the Arnold sighting is the fact that it was reported not as a fantasy or hoax, as many past sightings had been, but as a serious news event (Jacobs 1975).

This has been attributed to the fact that Arnold was a 'reputable citizen,' being a pilot, businessman, and deputy sheriff. One researcher states, "(p)erhaps the greatest importance of the Arnold story is that it encouraged people all over the country to come forth with their own reports about strange objects in the sky" (Jacobs 1975, 32).

Officially, the U.S. Air Force became actively involved in the study of UFOs between 1947-1954, under the various names Project Sign, Project Grudge, and later Project Bluebook. Early on, the Air Force investigations were predisposed to debunk or dismiss all UFO sightings as either psychological aberrations or conventional, explainable phenomena (Clark 1993, Jacobs 1992). "Although there was no evidence that UFO witnesses had serious psychological problems, it seemed 'right' to suggest that this might be the case. Therefore this scientific judgement, based on no evidence whatsoever, was issued to the public as fact" (Jacobs 1992).

Following a wave of UFO sightings in 1951, the renamed Project Bluebook, under the revised supervision of Lt. Edward Ruppelt, continued investigations without prejudice as to the reality of the phenomena (Clark 1993). As more dramatic UFO sightings continued to be reported, the Central Intelligence Agency became involved and organized a small group of skeptical scientists to study Project Bluebook's findings in 1953 (Clark 1998).

The Robertson Panel, as it is now known, investigated six years worth of data in only twelve hours. Their official findings were that UFOs were not a threat to national security, but that *UFO reports* themselves did pose such a threat.

The scientists agreed that since most sightings could be explained, surely the rest could be accounted for with further investigation, which would be a 'great waste of effort'...the Air Force should deemphasize the subject of UFOs and embark on a 'debunking' campaign that would 'result in reduction of public interest in flying saucers.' (Clark 1998, 514).

By the time Lt. Ruppelt left Project Bluebook in 1954, he was for the most part convinced, despite the Robertson Panel's findings, in the reality of UFOs as possibly extraterrestrial in nature. After this, the Air Force's investigation of the UFO phenomena was steadily coming to a close. "Never again would the government scientifically investigate the UFO mystery...No one within the scientific community critically examined the government's actions." (Jacobs 1992, 34).

Sightings of unidentified flying objects continued throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, periodically culminating in a rash of reported sightings, or a "flap" as it is known in the UFO research community.

Sighting *flaps* have occurred in 1947, 1952, 1957, 1973 with a wave of Michigan sightings in 1966 which received national attention when they were explained away as "swamp gas" by researchers. Following the Michigan flap in 1966, Project Bluebook came under much criticism from the press and the U.S. Congress. Bluebook's Air Force representative and scientific consultant, J. Allen Hynek, suggested that an independent civilian panel of physical and social scientists, "examine the UFO problem critically for the express purpose of determining whether a major problem really exists" (Clark 1992, 395).

In a contract with the Air Force, the University of Colorado organized what was intended to be an independent scientific study of the UFO problem. This study, informally called the Condon Committee, after its director, Edward Condon, was criticized for its bias against admitting the UFO phenomenon might be real (Swords 1995/96).

Hynek said later that the Condon Committee...was essentially a setup. Its purpose, knowledgeable Air Force sources told him, was to rid the service of its UFO albatross. Condon made little secret of his antipathy to the subject...Two investigators who disagreed with Condon's views were fired...a book and a *Look* magazine article exposed what they characterized as hypocrisy and incompetence within the project. (Clark 1993, 395.)

After the Condon Committee released its findings, titled the Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects in 1969, Project Bluebook was cancelled, thus ending the government's official involvement in the UFO phenomenon. According to the study, "further scientific study of UFOs probably cannot be justified in the expectation that science will be advanced thereby..." (Clark 1993, 395).

#### Alien Abduction and UFOlogy

Most interesting throughout the history of UFO phenomena are reports of occupants sighted in association with these anomalous craft (Clark 1998, Jacobs 1975, Sanarov 1981). As noted previously, these reports began to appear in print in late nineteenth century airship sightings, and continued into the twentieth century. As we approach the modern UFO era, the number of *reported* occupant sightings increases, which is not to say that occupant sightings themselves saw an increase. It is known that witnesses were more likely to come forward with UFO occupant reports after the famous Arnold sighting, now that such things as Aliens and UFOs were hypothetically real (Clark 1998).

Starting in the early 1950's, groups of individuals, dubbed "contactees," came forward with claims of ongoing physical or psychic communication with benign extraterrestrial "space brothers" (Clark 1993). Temple University historian and UFO researcher, David Jacobs, identified the contactees as one of two groups that made the most of burgeoning UFO sightings.

In the early and middle 1950's two groups in American society exploited the sensational aspects of the phenomenon...the Hollywood movie industry entered the scene early, capitalizing on the growing audience for stories associated with UFOs. But the group that captured public attention most was the contactees... (Jacobs 1975, 95).

Contactees believed that angelic alien beings from Venus, Mars, Saturn and other planets were here not only to bring humanity a message of intergalactic peace and love, but also to issue a warning against being aggressive and warlike. Some contactees may have had dubious motives for telling their tales, such as financial gain or public notoriety. Many popular contactees of the time would fake close-up UFO and occupant photographs as proof of their supposed contact.

The contactees represented an entirely different type of UFO witness. They exhibited behavior consistent with the assertion that they fabricated hoaxes. They did not report their 'experiences' to a reputable investigatory agency. Instead, they publicized them by writing books and articles, presenting lectures, and appearing on radio and television shows. (Jacobs 1975, 96.)

By and large, these groups were usually considered a *lunatic fringe* by many in the UFO research community due to their seemingly fantastic claims and sometimes questionable methods and motives. "Most UFO proponents found these [the contactees] theories ridiculous and dangerous - ridiculous because they had no basis in evidence from the reports, and dangerous because they gave the field a 'fringy' aura and invited ridicule." (Jacobs 1975, 220.)

It was also found that contactees typically had some involvement with occultism and so-called "New Age" religious beliefs (Clark 1998, Westrum 1984). This may have subsequently brought ridicule on witnesses of any UFO related phenomena (Jacobs 1975).

Similar to the stories of the contactees, and even more bizarre are the numerous accounts of *alien abduction*, which began to attract the attention of UFOlogists in the early 1960's and which continue to the present day (Clark 1993, 1998, Fuller 1966, Hopkins 1981, 1987, Jacobs 1992, 1998, Mack 1994).

According to these sources, reports of human abduction by alien beings occur predominantly in the

modern era of UFO sightings. The first such case to receive some attention by UFOlogists was initially suspected of being a hoax, or the result of a fantasy-prone imagination, due to the highly implausible nature of the account and some similarity to the stories of contactees. In time, however, this report would take on all the bizarre characteristics of a typical alien abduction account, and would differ considerably from the stories of the contactees in many ways.

#### The Villas-Boas Abduction

It was in November of 1957 that a Brazilian farmer's son, 23 year old Antonio Villas-Boas, first reported being dragged from his tractor by alien beings into a waiting UFO. Once inside, the small-bodied, large-headed beings removed his clothing and performed various tests and procedures before leaving him alone in a circular room with a white plastic couch. According to his report, a beautiful naked female being then entered the room. She was small with thin blonde hair, large slanted eyes, a sharply pointed chin and a human-looking body. The being reportedly began to hug and caress Boas, whereupon he became sexually excited. They had intercourse twice, after which the female collected a semen sample and put it into a container. Before leaving the room, she pointed to her belly, then the sky, perhaps indicating that their baby would be born on another world. Moments later, two other beings entered the room with his clothes. He dressed, was given a tour of the craft and then released (Clark 1998, Jacobs 1992, Little 1994).

The Villas-Boas case was first publicized in 1965, inviting skepticism from UFO researchers who were already suspicious of the contactees' stories of alien visitation a decade earlier. A closer inspection of Boas' story and actions, however, found little resemblance to those of the contactees. Boas was not given any messages or missions for the good of humanity, was not a willing participant, and did not actively seek publicity or monetary reward for his story. By all accounts, Boas' story signalled a new event in the history of UFO related phenomena, the alien abduction.

#### The Betty and Barney Hill Abduction

The next major abduction account received much more attention and is considered by many within the

UFO research community to be the most important and well known case of alien abduction (Clark 1998). This is the story of Betty and Barney Hill, a New Hampshire couple whose experiences sparked great debate and controversy not only among UFOlogists but also in the imagination of the American public.

In September of 1961, the Hills were driving from Montreal to Portsmouth, NH when they spotted a UFO which appeared to be following their vehicle. The couple stopped twice to get a better look at the craft. At one point, Mr. Hill got out to look with binoculars and saw a group of strange figures inside the craft, behind a long row of windows. They all appeared to be wearing uniforms of some sort and were described as having large slanted eyes (Fuller 1966). Certain that he was about to be captured, Barney Hill ran in fear back to the car and drove off down the road.

Betty Hill looked out the car window, but the craft was nowhere in sight. Then suddenly, an electronic beeping sound was heard apparently emanating from the trunk. The couple became drowsy and an unknown amount of time seemed to pass, during which the Hills had no conscious memory. Sometime later, they became aware of another series of beeps. They soon realized that they were nearly 35 miles south of where they had first heard the peculiar beeping sound.

The day after the sighting, having arrived at their destination, Betty Hill called a local Air Force base and the official investigation began. The Air Force eventually concluded that "no evidence was presented to indicate that the object was due to other than natural causes." (Clark 1998, 278.)

Following a series of disturbing UFO related dreams, Betty Hill decided to write a letter describing the whole event to one of America's leading UFOlogists at the time, Donald E. Keyhoe. Keyhoe then contacted a Boston astronomer and local UFO investigator, Walter Webb, who conducted a six-hour interview with the Hills in October of 1963. It was found that the trip from Montreal to Portsmouth, which should have taken less than four hours, took more than seven hours to complete. Barney Hill later remarked to author John Fuller, "[e]ven if I allowed more time than I know we took at those roadside stops...there still were at least two hours missing out of that night's trip." (Clark 1998, 282.)

Following this, other individuals in the UFO research community became involved and set up a series of hypnosis sessions for the Hills with psychiatrist Dr. Benjamin Simon, in the hope that more details of the event

in question could be discovered. The sessions were conducted over a six month period in 1964. Under hypnosis, the couple recalled being 'flagged down' by small, grey human-like beings with strange shaped eyes. These beings then removed the Hills from their car and escorted them to a large craft which had settled in the middle of the road. One prominent abduction researcher, Dr. John Mack, summarizes the events that followed.

After being taken from their car the Hills said that they were led by the beings against their wills onto a craft. Each reported [independently] that on the craft they were placed on a table and subjected to detailed medical-like examinations with taking of skin and hair 'samples.' A needle was inserted into Betty's abdomen and a 'pregnancy test' performed...a sperm sample was taken from Bamey...The beings communicated with the Hills telepathically, nonverbally, 'as if it were in English.' The Hills were 'told to' forget what had happened. (Mack 1994, 14.)

Dr. Simon, admittedly a skeptic when it came to the UFO phenomenon, was convinced that while the Hills sincerely *believed* their experience was real, what had actually happened was some sort of shared dream or fantasy.

Their story would not become public until 1966, when a bestselling book, The Interrupted Journey, was published detailing the events surrounding the Hills' UFO encounter. This was the first published abduction account to attract widespread public attention. In 1975, the book even inspired a made-for-T.V. movie, "The UFO Incident," which featured well-known actors James Earl Jones and Estelle Parsons as the Hills.

The Hill case was also the first of its kind to attract the widespread attention of UFOlogists, many of whom already subscribed to the theory that UFOs were possibly piloted by intelligent beings from a distant planet. This theory, which has been given serious scientific scrutiny, has been called the 'extraterrestrial hypothesis' or ETH by UFOlogists (Swords 1989). The ETH contrasts sharply with another theory, the 'psychosocial hypothesis,' which attempts to explain all UFO related phenomena as "culturally shaped hallucinations and visionary experiences." (Clark 1998, 212.)

While the 1950's and 60's saw many UFO occupant reports, dubbed 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind' (CE3's) among UFO researchers, few were ready to believe that these UFO occupants were going about the business of capturing humans for experimentation. The UFOlogists were at this point divided as to whether the Hills' experiences had actually happened. In any event, the Hill case made the subject of UFO kidnapping (or *alien abductions*, as they eventually were called) a distinct possibility and brought the study of UFO phenomena into a new era. "Ufologists were beginning to sense that the phenomenon might be more complicated, more

strange, than anyone had suspected in the first two decades of the UFO era." (Clark 1998, 98.)

### The Era of Alien Abductions

In the years to come, numerous accounts of alien abduction would find publication and popular interest (Fowler 1979, Lorenzen and Lorenzen 1976, Walton 1978). By 1980, there were a few dozen abduction reports in print, many of which were considered dramatic, albeit rare, forms of CE3. It was not until 1981 that the idea of alien abductions *per se* entered the UFOlogical and popular discourse, with the publication of Missing Time, by Budd Hopkins. Hopkins, a New York based artist, is considered one of the pioneers of abduction research (Clark 1998, Mack 1994). What follows is an excerpt from his book.

Since 1976 I have been involved to varying degrees with the investigation of nineteen...abduction cases involving thirty-seven people. These nineteen cases have yielded clear patterns...At this time in the unfolding history of the UFO phenomenon, it seems to me as if these quite similar abductions constitute some kind of systematic 'research' program, with the human species as the subject. (Hopkins 1981, 7.)

Missing Time was important to those interested in UFO research because it was the first to detail basic elements common to alien abductions. In other words, Hopkins had uncovered a pattern behind all alien abductions. In his second book, Intruders (1987), he reconfirmed his original findings and defined certain sexual and reproductive elements that have come to be associated with alien abductions (Mack 1994, Swords, personal communication).

By 1987, abduction accounts had come to the forefront of UFO research (Clark 1998). That same year, another book was published on the subject of alien abductions which remained on the bestseller list for some time. This was Whitley Strieber's controversial non-fiction book, Communion, which dealt with Strieber's personal abduction experiences. This book was controversial for a number of reasons. Strieber was already well known as a popular horror-fiction writer. This fact alone would cast serious doubt on the credibility of his abduction accounts. However, in 1989 the already popular book was made into a movie, echoing a previous book-into-movie treatment by Strieber based on his bestseller The Wolfen, a novel about werewolves. This led some researchers to question Strieber's motives, believing he might have constructed the abduction story for publicity

reasons (Westrum, personal communication).

Communion also received notable attention due to the book's cover illustration, which portrayed the image of a large-eyed, almond-shaped alien's head. It was this image that would become associated, in popular culture, with what a "typical alien" should look like (Clark 1998). Actually, many different types of UFO occupants had been reported in the literature up to this point. The "communion-type," or "greys" as they have become popularly known, seem to have dominated American abduction accounts since the publication of the Hills' abduction in 1966 (Nickell 1997).

By the end of the 1980's, "the abduction phenomenon had become a staple of popular culture, and reports proliferated along with books, movies, television programs, and conferences on the subject" (Clark 1998, 111). It was clear that certain individuals in the academic community were interested in the issue of abductions as well. In 1992, Temple University historian David Jacobs published the results of his own research into the abduction phenomenon in Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of UFO Abductions. Jacobs' work was instrumental in refining events he claimed might be central to all abduction accounts (Jacobs 1992). He, like Hopkins, asserted that abductions followed a certain pattern of events which could be structured according to a "Common Abduction Scenario Matrix" (Jacobs 1992, 330).

Another prominent academic to study alien abduction accounts was Harvard psychiatrist John Mack. His 1994 book, Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens, was the result of three and a half years research with nearly one hundred abductees. The book presented the case-histories of thirteen abductees and largely confirmed the previous findings of both Hopkins' and Jacobs' research.

Throughout the 1990's, many more publications, movies, television programs and conferences dealt with the issue of alien abductions. Abduction research also continues, led by the same individuals who pioneered and popularized the phenomenon since the early 80's.

*Recent years have seen the growing professionalization of UFO study. This is partly the result of a natural maturation process, but it also has to do with the influx into ufology's ranks of social scientists and mental-health professionals intrigued by UFO-abduction experiences reported by apparently sane and sincere persons. In the early 1990's systematic work on the phenomenon commenced as efforts were made to determine whether such experiences were internally or externally generated (Clark 1999, 84)*

## CHAPTER V

### ABDUCTIONS AND AMERICAN SUBCULTURES

Up to this point, I have only introduced the concept of sub-culture as it relates specifically to individuals who possess an *awareness of, belief in, or identification with* aliens or the alien abduction phenomenon; the *Alienists*, as I have chosen to call them. In chapter five, I will first discuss how UFOs, and the abduction phenomenon in particular, have had considerable impact on a broad spectrum of groups and institutions in American culture. By doing this, I will attempt to show how a phenomenon as bizarre and challenging to traditional world views as alien visitation and abduction, can inspire and influence a whole range of sub-cultural groups, behaviors, and ideologies.

Following this, I will discuss the results and observations I obtained from my fieldwork and interview sessions with individuals who participate in the *Alienist* sub-culture. During the course of my research, I have also had the opportunity to speak with an individual who identifies himself as a *UFOlogist*, that is, a member of the UFO research community. Information and observations gained as a result of this interview will also be presented.

#### The Aliens Among Us

During the modern era of the UFO phenomenon, many American institutions and sub-cultural groups had been influenced or were created as UFO sightings, and the reports that followed, steadily increased (Jacobs 1975). In particular, the United States government by way of the Air Force was obligated to investigate these reports, which might have been of interest to national security. It is known, for example, that the Air Force was seriously interested in the idea of extraterrestrial intelligence, based partly on advice given by astronomical and technical experts that such visitation, while not likely, was also not impossible (Swords 1992).

Many individuals in the general public formed UFO clubs or research organizations. They believed UFOs represented a truly anomalous and possibly extraterrestrial phenomenon, a subject worthy of investigation,

and in some cases, of religious worship (Westrum 1984). Still other groups capitalized on the idea of extraterrestrial visitation, such as the movie industry and various businesses, in hopes of making money because of the popularity of all things UFO and alien related.

What seemed to be a truly *unidentified* phenomenon, quickly developed into speculations of secret weapons, spaceships from other planets, and aliens among us.

### The UFOlogists

Of the many groups that arose in reaction to UFO related phenomena, it is the grassroots research organizations that I will focus on at this point. These groups represent the sub-culture of UFOlogy, described by one sociologist as, "the courageous struggle of inquisitive amateurs to bring to light events that the scientific community would just as soon ignore" (Westrum 1984, 39).

The 1950's saw the formation of four organizations, all of which have become defunct or were subsumed by later organizations. The first group to organize in UFOlogy was the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO), which was created in 1952 by private citizens, Jim and Coral Lorenzen. According to their constitution, the purpose of APRO was to, "promote the eventual enlightenment of the people of the world in regard to the truth of the saucer phenomena - that they are in fact interplanetary vehicles" (Clark 1998, 24). They also distributed a newsletter, *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin* which became one of the most widely read UFOlogical publications of the time.

Other groups to organize around the UFO issue were Civilian Saucer Intelligence (CSI), Civilian Research, Interplanetary Flying Objects (CRIFO) and the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). NICAP, created in 1956, eventually became one of the largest UFO organizations, boasting more than 10,000 members at its peak. This organization was founded by physicist T. Townsend Brown and retired Marine Corps major and UFO author Donald Keyhoe. Brown left the organization early on, amid charges that his ideas threatened the group's scientific credibility, but Keyhoe continued on as director (Clark 1998). NICAP also published a newsletter, *The U.F.O. Investigator*, which supported the extraterrestrial hypothesis in regard to UFOs and criticized the growing numbers of *contactees*. The organization had also

cooperated with the University of Colorado UFO Project in the mid 1960's, a fact that probably contributed to the group's decline when the project's findings were released, essentially dismissing UFOs as unworthy of scientific attention (Clark 1998). NICAP steadily lost membership and eventually disbanded in 1980.

Two other groups came to the foreground of UFOlogy in the 60's and 70's, the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) and the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS). These groups are still in existence today and make up the bulk of serious UFOlogy, including research into alien abductions. MUFON was created in 1969 when former APRO member, Walter Andrus, left APRO with a number of followers. Over time, MUFON became the largest and most active UFO organization in the United States. MUFON's publication, *The MUFON UFO Journal* is available to the almost 5000 worldwide members on a subscription basis.

The following is an excerpt from MUFON's membership information packet.

The Mutual UFO Network, Inc. is an international scientific organization composed of people seriously interested in studying and researching the phenomenon known as unidentified flying objects (UFOs) by combining their mutual talents, areas of expertise and investigative efforts...MUFON's Board of Consultants, most of whom are PhDs or MDs representing 45 areas of science, technology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, theology, engineering, astronomy, communications, political science, photo analysis, etc., are readily available as an advisory group to apply their expertise to UFO cases under study and to conduct advanced research in their respective field (MUFON 1994).

The organization also sponsors an annual convention, one of which I attended in 1997 in Grand Rapids, MI which I will discuss at length later in this chapter. While MUFON does boast an affiliation with the scientific community, scientists themselves constitute a small minority among all UFOlogists (Westrum 1984).

One group has worked to become one of the most scientifically rigorous organizations in UFOlogy, the Center for UFO Studies. CUFOS was founded in 1973 by former Air Force Project Blue Book scientific consultant J. Allen Hynek.

The Center for UFO Studies is an international group of scientists, academics, investigators, and volunteers dedicated to the continuing examination and analysis of the UFO phenomenon...The mission of [CUFOS] is the scientific collection, evaluation, and dissemination of information about the UFO phenomenon (JUFOS 1990).

The organization's headquarters in Chicago, IL continues to be one of the largest UFO information clearinghouses in existence. Reports of thousands of UFO and alien abduction experiences are stored there and are available upon request. Hynek's book, UFO Experience, continues to be one of the first truly scientific

examinations of the UFO phenomenon (Westrum 1984). Hynek continues to be known for his coining of the term "close encounter of the third kind," and received popular acclaim as technical advisor to Steven Spielberg's film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." CUFOS also publishes a periodical, the *Journal of UFO Studies*, which continues to present some of the highest quality writing on the phenomenon.

Even so, the field of UFOlogy is constantly plagued internally with difficulties ranging from financial hardship, fluctuating membership and organizational problems, factionalism and failure to report UFO sightings or abduction experiences (Westrum 1984). External difficulties are also numerous. UFOlogy has consistently faced harsh criticism from scientists, influential skeptics, debunkers and even the US government. Some of the biggest opponents to UFOlogy have been Phillip Klass, senior editor of *Aviation Week*, who claims that all UFO phenomena have conventional, non-extraterrestrial explanations; and well known astronomer Carl Sagan, whose public treatment of UFOlogy was largely negative.

I will conclude my discussion of UFOlogists with a concise summary by sociologist Ronald Westrum:

The UFO investigation community, then, consists of a large number of interested amateurs, a small number of scientists, and a handful of active critics. This community has developed its own literature, its own folkways, its own jargon, and its own knowledge base (Westrum 1984, 41).

#### UFOs and Popular Culture

Since the late 1800's, the subject of space travel and alien beings has fascinated and inspired the public's imagination (Simon 1979). One of the earliest literary references to alien visitors can be found in French philosopher Voltaire's short story, "Micromegas," which predates the beginning of the science-fiction genre of the late 1800's (Simon 1979).

Through literature, radio, film, television and eventually the internet, American culture has become inundated with stories and images of extraterrestrial invasion, flying saucers, intelligent life on other worlds, and strange alien beings of all shapes and sizes (Clark 1998, Kottmeyer 1990).

Internationally respected authority and historian of the UFO phenomenon, Jerome Clark, has already noted the connection between the abduction phenomenon and popular culture (Clark 1998, 111). A recent television documentary about alien abduction, *Confirmation: The Hard Evidence of Aliens Among Us*, stated that

the UFO phenomenon is currently the second most popular topic on the internet, the first being pornography.

Recent years have seen the film adaptation of numerous abduction accounts, "The UFO Incident" (1975), "Communion" (1989), "Intruders" (1992), and "Fire in the Sky" (1993), just to name a few. I recently had the opportunity to speak at length with one of the "pioneers" in the UFO/abduction research community, Budd Hopkins, about his latest book, Witnessed: The True Story of the Brooklyn Bridge UFO Abductions (1996). At the time I spoke with Hopkins, there were plans to turn the book into a major motion picture. As stated previously, one of Hopkins' previous books, Intruders (1987), had been the inspiration for a made-for-t.v. movie of the same name. The tradition of book-into-movie deals has been a common practice for abduction stories. Since 1975, as many as four books detailing alien abduction accounts have been made into movies, some with multi-million dollar budgets. Hopkins was sure that if the movie deal was accepted by the motion picture company in question, there would be a similar treatment, which seems to show the amount of interest and popularity the alien abduction phenomenon has generated.

Television shows dealing with some aspect of UFO phenomenon are almost too numerous to mention (Klass 1996). The popularity and prevalence of recent UFO oriented shows, such as "Unsolved Mysteries," "Sightings," and "The X-Files" points to the surge of interest in the topic. Cable T.V.'s The Learning Channel annually hosts a weeklong series, *Alien Invasion Week*, which features programming dealing with all aspects relating to UFOs. Even the award winning network news program, *48 Hours*, has dealt with this controversial subject. In my interviews, nearly all of the individuals I have identified as Alienists enjoy and identify with such programming. "There are many TV shows that promote belief in the reality of UFOs, government coverup [of UFO issues], and alien abductions. And they attract very large audiences - typically tens of millions of viewers. Often they are broadcast a second, possibly even a third time" (Klass 1996, 30).

Psychologist Armando Simon studied how UFO sightings and the idea of extraterrestrials have affected science-fiction film-making and vice versa, since the 1890's. He notes that the peak period in films about extraterrestrials, the 1950's and 60's, seems to coincide with the modern era of UFO sightings (Simon 1979). Between 1950-59, nearly ninety films were made which featured spaceships, mainly of the flying saucer type, and alien beings, compared to less than fifty in the previous five decades (table 1).

Simon also notes that the morphology of the aliens in these films is nearly always humanoid, which seems to mirror abductees' accounts of short, bug-eyed, big-headed *humanoid* aliens (Simon 1979). Whether this has more to do with budgetary concerns of creating unique, non-humanoid aliens over the much simpler (and cost effective) method of dressing a human actor as an alien, is hard to say. In either case, the question could be asked of which comes first, the actor as alien or the humanoid alien as abductor? The answer, with regard to my thesis, has to be, "it doesn't matter."

The main point is not whether the fictional preceded the ostensibly real, but that popular culture, via film, literature, the internet and all the various media, has a direct relationship with how the UFO phenomenon is perceived, interpreted and symbolized by American (and Alienist) culture (Kottmeyer 1990). Anthropologists have known for some time that ritual serves to create new, and reinforce existing, cultural traditions (Turner 1969). Many Alienist groups organize ritualized events to commemorate a wave of UFO sightings or celebrate an important UFO connected 'hot spot.' In this way, it is the Alienists themselves who influence popular culture. Such is the case in Roswell, New Mexico, where a festival is held yearly to celebrate a supposed UFO crash there in 1947. Celebrants dress up like typical "grey" aliens or build fanciful saucer-shaped floats for a downtown parade (Figure 6).

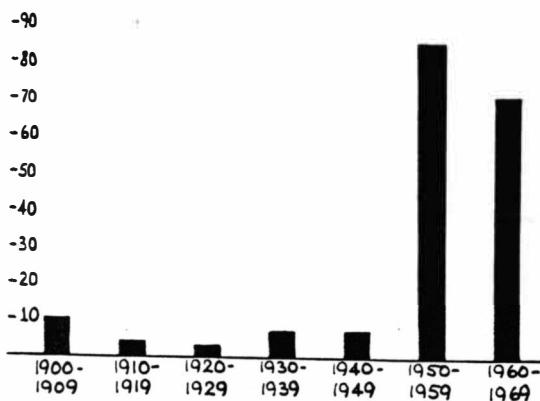


Figure 6. Simon Frequency Graph of UFO Movies

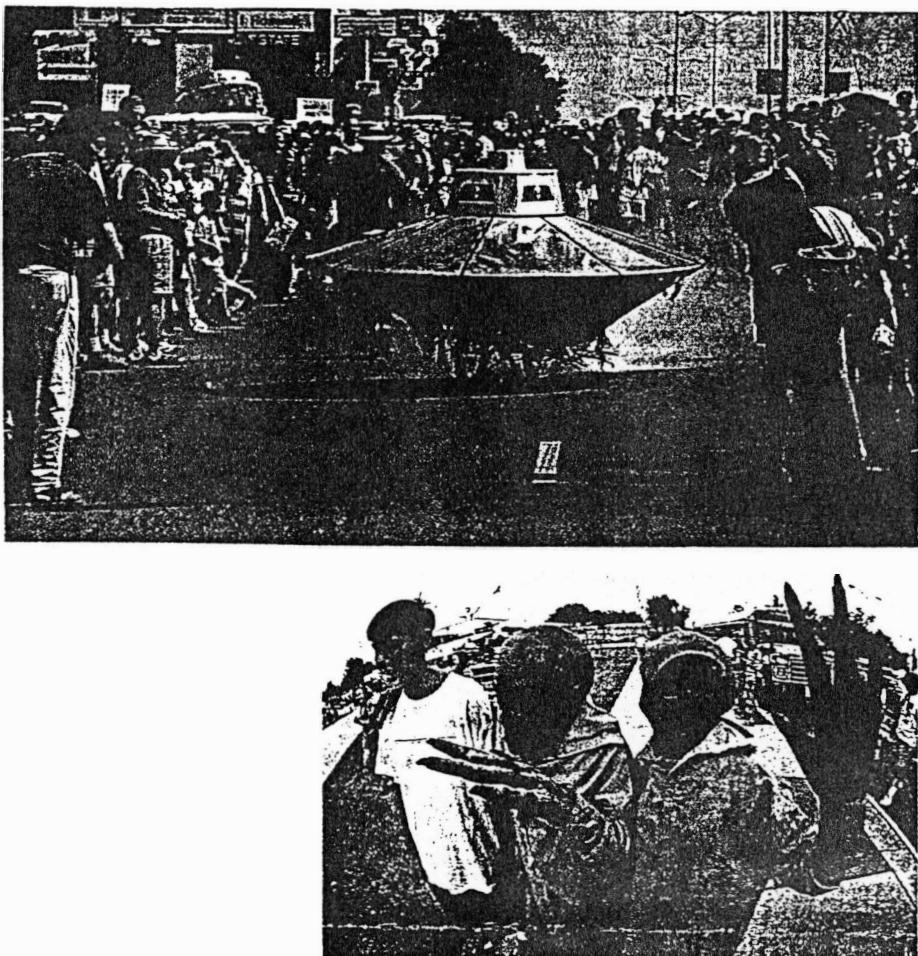


Figure 7. Photographs of Roswell, NM Parade.

1997 marked the 50th anniversary of the UFO crash at Roswell and public attendance was estimated at more than 40,000 people, nearly double Roswell's population (A.P. 1997). The weeklong celebration was an incredible boost for the city. Mayor Tom Jennings stated, "It's been very beneficial for the local economy, the cottage industry, and the state...There's nothing wrong with capitalizing on this. Three years ago, Roswell had virtually no name recognition" (A.P. 1997).

Apparently, media members showed up to witness the event from France, Germany, Japan and New York. The following year's celebration was smaller, and one city official was quoted as saying, "[t]his is not the 50th anniversary. You can't expect the same (amount) of people. The media didn't cover the event like they did last year" (A.P. 1998).

This is also the case in Belleville, Wisconsin, where an annual UFO festival is held around Halloween to commemorate a string of UFO sightings there in 1986. Village Clerk Kathleen Bainbridge states, "[a]lot of adults do dress up as Martians and alien creatures and do hang around town" (A.P. 1998). The festival boasts a parade and costume contest, among other alien-oriented events.

I have attempted to show how popular culture can influence the Alienist sub-culture and vice versa. I will now move to a brief discussion of how aliens and abductions have become a tool for capitalist interests and how businesses seem also to be maintaining an alien agenda.

A recent internet search of UFO-related businesses turned up more than 50 sites where private companies sell UFO and alien merchandise, such as: clothing, souvenirs, tours, books, artwork, jewelry, greeting cards, Chateauneuf-du-Pape wine, beer, and even drug paraphernalia (Internet A 1999) (Figure 7). The concept of Aliens represents big business for companies large and small. Images and symbols representing UFOs or aliens, familiar to Alienists, have been widely used in advertising and television commercials, or are sold as objects of interest in and of themselves. (Figures 8, 9, & 10) (Appendix I)

A colleague has commented,

(r)ecent years have seen an explosion in images of aliens and alien metaphors in youth culture. College radio stations broadcast 'music for aliens' and the 'space sounds' of 1950s and 1960s science fiction are regularly used in popular music. Avant garde clothing is either made by and/or for aliens...(Naruta 1996, 2).

Bill Pope, CEO of the Roswell, NM Chamber of Commerce, commented on what the UFO phenomenon

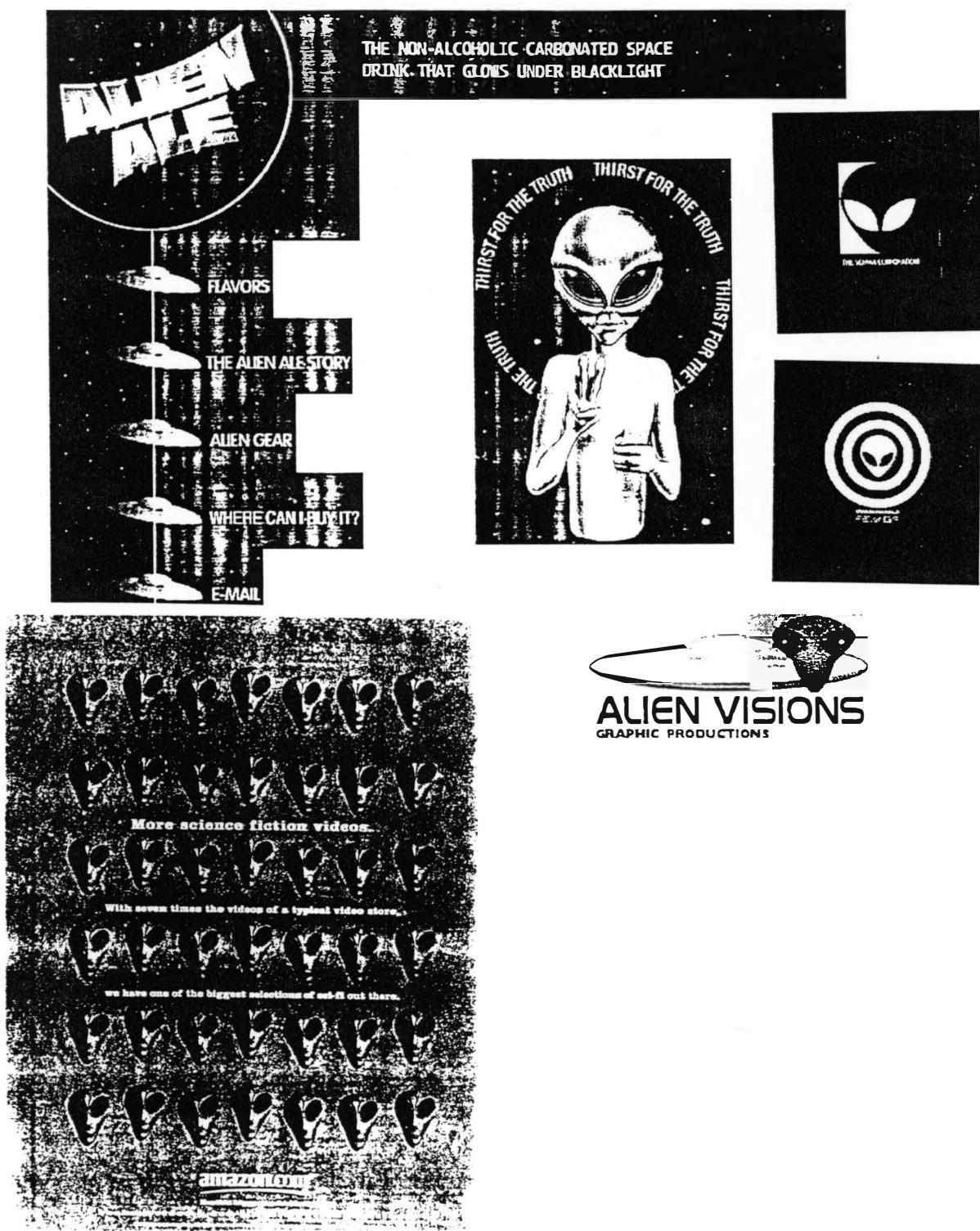
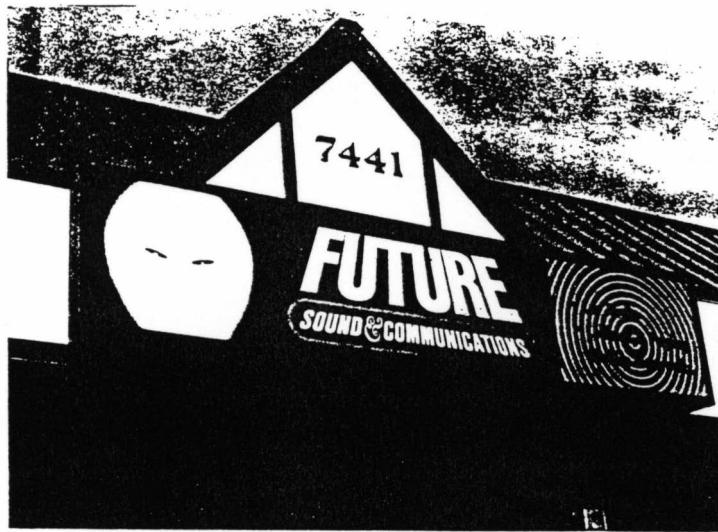
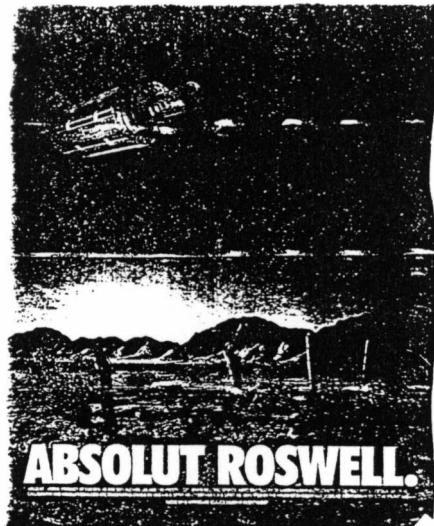


Figure 8. UFO Related Marketing on the Internet.



1996 Le Cigare Volant



Figure 9. UFO/Alien Images in Advertising: A.



"AlienLogo Ship"



NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE,  
Be A Street Marketing REP!!

- Hands on experience with various major and indie record labels!
- Opportunity to work with such artists as Bjork, NIN, Jamiroquai, Cr Method, Smashing Pumpkins, Tool, Chemical Bros., and Sneaker Pimps
- Chance to get into the underground music scene in your area!
- FREE Concert Tix!
- FREE Music!

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
call us ☎ 800.69.BLUNT

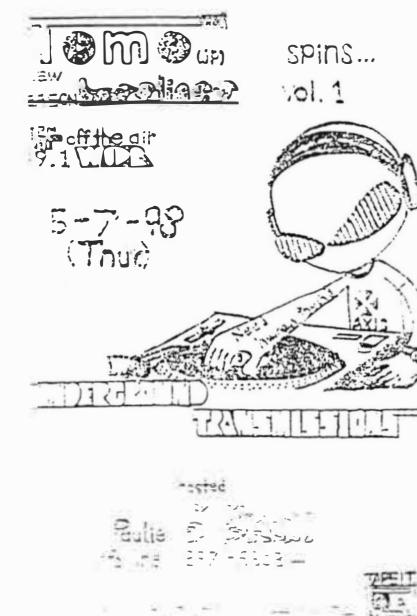
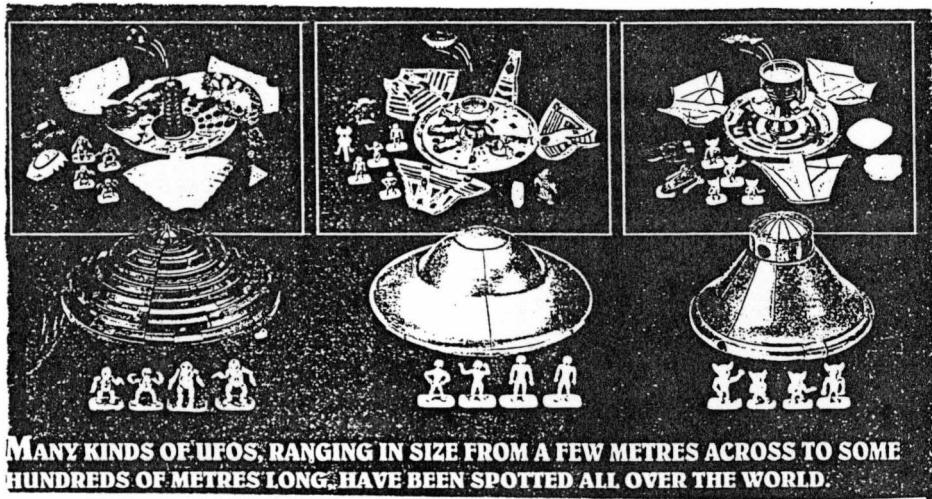


Figure 10. UFO/Alien Images in Advertising: B.



**MANY KINDS OF UFOS, RANGING IN SIZE FROM A FEW METRES ACROSS TO SOME HUNDREDS OF METRES LONG, HAVE BEEN SPOTTED ALL OVER THE WORLD.**

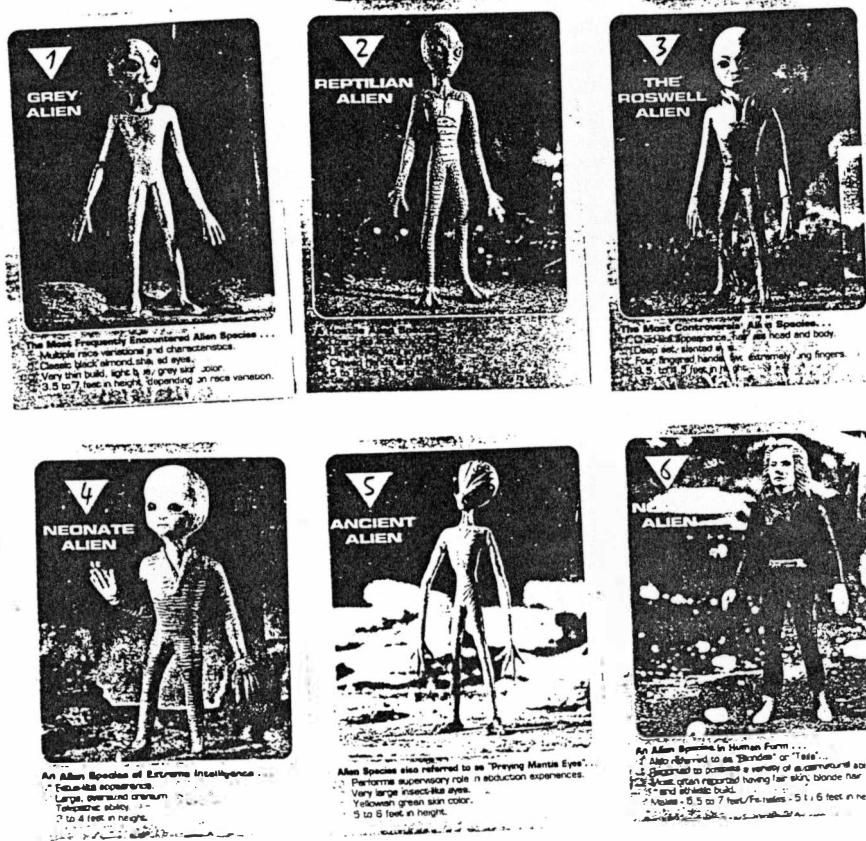


Figure 11. UFO/Alien Objects and Toys.

means to him: "[w]hat it all comes down to is having something to create an interest in your community. And we have something to create interest, and that interest creates an inflow of people, and that creates dollars, and that's what we're all about" (Time 1997, 63). To restate, the more interest there is in all things alien, the more people there are to *buy* all things alien.

### Alienist Ethnography

My fieldwork was conducted in three phases, which I will discuss in order. In phase one, I attended a conference of the prominent *UFOlogy* organization, MUFON. What follows is an account of my experiences and observations there.

Phase two represents the results of my interview sessions in search of *Alienists*. Here I will discuss what I've found to be the defining characteristics of the Alienist sub-culture. I will present commonly held beliefs, assumptions, symbolic representations and popular buzz-phraseology that is inherent to this sub-culture.

Finally, in phase three of my fieldwork, I had the opportunity to interview a member of the Michigan UFO research community who identifies himself as a *UFOlogist*. Here I present a number of issues, such as how one member of that community defines himself in relation to other researchers, and how he came to be a *UFOlogist* in the first place.

### The MUFON Symposium

Early in July 1997, I attended the Mutual UFO Network's International Symposium in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This event coincided with the 50th anniversary of the alleged UFO crash at Roswell, NM. As the story goes, on July 8, 1947, the Roswell Army Air Field issued a press release stating that they had recovered a "flying disk" on a nearby ranch. The headline in the *Roswell Daily Record* read, "RAAF Captures Flying Saucer On Ranch in Roswell Region" (Clark 1998, 128). This story, now famous in popular culture, was one of the featured session topics. The symposium featured topics and exhibitions representative of a wide range of issues relating to the UFO phenomenon, including alien abductions (Appendix D).

The symposium began at 8:00am on Friday, July 11 and continued until 5:35pm on Sunday. I planned

to attend as many sessions as possible, but specifically those dealing with the alien abduction phenomenon as presented by UFOlogists. I was able to obtain an unofficial schedule ahead of time from the internet, which gave me information on session topics and who would be presenting. Two prominent abduction researchers, Budd Hopkins and David Jacobs, were scheduled to present during the Saturday evening session. This gave me an excellent opportunity to hear the experts speak on the UFO phenomenon and abduction related issues first hand. I also hoped to speak with Hopkins and Jacobs informally about these issues, time and circumstance permitting.

A number of years ago I attended a small seminar in Ann Arbor, Michigan, organized by sociologist and UFOlogist Ron Westrum, which featured Hopkins and Jacobs as lecturers on the abduction phenomenon. I was unable to talk with them then due to time constraints and the nature of the seminar, which was geared toward informing mental health professionals about the phenomenon. It seemed that the MUFON symposium might provide more access to these individuals, and others in the UFO research community, whose knowledge and expertise would be of value anthropologically. Rather than describe each session topic one by one, I will instead focus on three presentations and a roundtable discussion which were pertinent to my research.

The first presentation, "Sightings from an African Casebook," was given by the MUFON Continental Coordinator for Africa, Cynthia Hind. Hind, a longtime MUFON member and resident of Harare, Zimbabwe, talked mainly about how cultural interpretations of UFO phenomena differ among native groups in Africa. She told how one native tribe referred to UFOs and their occupants as "ghosts of the ancestors" who wore "shiny suits," referring to the unusual silvery uniforms the beings were wearing, which contrasted sharply with the traditional tribal garb.

She also recounted the story of what was supposed to be the first in-depth UFO investigation to take place in Africa, as well as showed a short film detailing a mass UFO occupant sighting. The occupant sighting occurred at a schoolyard where some sixty school children witnessed a UFO land and its occupants exit the craft at the schoolyard periphery, some 200 meters away. Many children reported some form of telepathic communication with the aliens, who gave a message with ecological implications. Reportedly the children were told, "don't pollute your planet" and "look after the ecology of your planet." Hind firmly argued for the reality of the sighting stating that media influence could not have been responsible, and that the children knew little if anything

of outside popular culture.

Hind also reported that alien abduction accounts *per se* were rare in Africa, but that visits by "ghosts" might possibly represent what is known among UFOlogists as a "screen memory" of an alien abduction account.

The second paper of interest was titled "UFOs at Fifty: Some Personal Observations," and was delivered by David Jacobs, UFOlogist and Temple University historian. Jacobs initially talked about the history of UFO research and his own interest in it, citing his dissertation on the history of the UFO controversy in America. He stated that at the time, his was one of two dissertations written on the subject of UFOs, the other being in journalism.

According to Jacobs, the study of UFO sighting patterns and abduction research has not proven an extraterrestrial origin for UFOs and their occupants, only that a "Superior Being Hypothesis" could be stated based on the evidence to date. Jacobs claims that UFOlogy has tended to interpret the "bizarre" nature of the phenomenon as implying extraterrestrial origins, when in fact all that can be said is that the UFO beings witnessed seem to possess knowledge and technology far in advance of any human culture, thus the Superior Being Hypothesis.

Jacobs also talked about the popular view that the U.S. Government has explicit knowledge about the UFO phenomenon, as well as a secret contract with alien beings. This belief is typically expressed among UFOlogists and Alienists as the "government cover-up" scenario. Jacobs explained the idea of a government cover-up and contract as comforting as it implies a sense of human control and rules governing alien behavior. Jacobs also addressed abduction researchers' use of hypnosis as a memory enhancement tool. As noted in chapter three, the use of hypnosis in memory retrieval is considered a controversial method, especially where abduction events are concerned. While Jacobs candidly admitted that hypnosis seemed to be "the stupidest damn thing that has ever existed," he also admitted that when used correctly, it can be a very useful tool.

There was a note of optimism, when Jacobs pointed out the fact that more scientists and academics were taking the UFO abduction phenomenon seriously. He also mentioned that the abduction research community was on the verge of solving the mystery of alien abductions, a sentiment that is verified in his most recent book, The Threat (1998), but cautioned that UFOlogy can't invite young academics and professionals to

study this phenomenon as an academic endeavor because it is not an accepted field of study by the scientific establishment. Rather, scientists in tenured positions and well-established professionals such as gynecologists, neurologists, urologists and others in the medical community need to study the existing data. Jacobs' optimism echos an icon of popular culture, Fox Mulder, fictional UFO investigator on T.V.'s *The X Files*, who regularly proclaims, "the truth is out there."

As to UFO sightings' purported association with religious or spiritual interests, Jacobs expressed a general opinion when he emphasized that the UFO phenomenon had nothing to do with "New Age" thinking and urged researchers to be, if anything, more scientifically rigorous and systematic in their search for answers.

The third presentation, by abduction researcher Budd Hopkins, was titled "The UFO Phenomenon and the Suicide Cults - An Ideological Study." This made Hopkins' topic the most timely, considering that the Heaven's Gate mass suicides had occurred just four months previously, in March 1997. While the subject of suicide cults was touched on by Hopkins, the bulk of the presentation was geared toward the "healing and personal transformation" of the abductees themselves.

The presentation addressed the topic of miracles in relation to UFOs and suicide cults. Miracles were described as wonderous events that are not explained by natural laws, but are attributed to a supernatural source. In this context, Hopkins defined UFOs as "all miracles, no beliefs." In other words, UFOs represent wondrous, unexplained events which defy attempts to understand or categorize them. Any statement of belief that is made regarding UFOs is likely to fall short of the reality behind the phenomenon.

Defining suicide cults as "all beliefs, no miracles," he implicitly suggested that the UFO phenomenon had no relationship to the most recent suicides at Heaven's Gate other than as fanatic inspiration. Hopkins and others at the symposium seemed to want some separation between UFOlogy and the "lunatic fringe" that has tended to associate with the UFO phenomenon for decades. He ascribed the source of religious attitudes regarding UFOs, alien beings and even a possible government connection, to a human fear of death and hope for divine protectors. Ironically, the underlying theme in religious attitudes, according to Hopkins, is to "trust no one." This admonition is reflected among Alienists as well, who generally believe that to "trust no one," especially the government is the best way to keep an open mind.

Hopkins focussed primarily on the aliens' use of deception and implanting what have been called "screen memories" in the minds of abductees. It has been noted in chapter three that the abductees usually experience amnesia following an abduction event. According to researchers, they are also given screen memories, which are false memories imposed by aliens to cover up an abduction experience in the mind of the abductee. For example, while driving, a person might remember seeing an airplane landing on the road only to find out later that the event was actually a screen memory of a UFO. This theme is quite common in the abduction literature (Mack 1994).

Hopkins also made the observation that the deceptive alien beings will specifically tailor abduction experiences to the expectations and cultural background of the abductees. Thus, some individuals will report angelic visitors or demons, while others might see talking animals or ghosts of ancestors. In any case, Hopkins comments that where aliens are concerned the best policy is to "trust no one." He suggests instead that abductees rely on the support of professional therapists knowledgeable on the subject of alien abductions, close friends and family and abductee support groups. The best work abductee researchers can do, according to Hopkins, is to provide an environment where abductees can find personal healing and transformation.

In dealing with many abductees over the course of their research, those who study abductions have seen many psychological patterns emerge. One important point which Hopkins makes has to do with the abductees' sense of helplessness and lack of control experienced during abductions. For the most part, abductees are unwilling participants, subject to the aliens' total control. For this reason, Hopkins characterizes the aliens as deceptive, cold and selfish. This opinion seems to be shared by abductees and abduction researchers alike, though some believe there is a greater good being served within the abduction phenomenon which warrants further scrutiny (Mack 1994).

At one point there was some discussion about the ethical nature of the aliens as essentially benign beings. This sentiment signifies a difference of opinion and two schools of thought regarding the alien abduction phenomenon. These two paradigms can be described as 'upbeat,' where aliens are seen as essentially good and helpful towards humanity, and 'downbeat,' where aliens are seen as indifferent, selfish and a threat to humanity.

During an hour-long question and answer panel, discussion seemed to center around the alien

abduction phenomenon, which has been a pivotal topic in UFOlogy since the 1980s. Questions were asked pertaining to alien movement and physical characteristics, networking among abductee therapists and physicians and abduction related terminology. For the most part, participants were interested in fairly functional details of the abduction phenomenon itself. Jacobs described what he called "the prize" in abduction research as, "who they are [the aliens], and what they want."

I had the opportunity to question the panel about the recent popular culture explosion of UFO and specifically abduction related products, television programs and movies. My question had to do with whether or not the recent popularity of 'all things alien' was good for the cause of UFOlogy. In general, I noted a negative reaction toward the popularization of UFO phenomena, which was seen as detrimental to furthering the cause of scientific credibility. This was somewhat ironic, considering that the popularity and awareness generated in these issues was to a great extent the result of many UFOlogists going public with abduction stories. There seemed to be consensus among the panel that the recent popularity was problematic, because the public was not being selective or discriminating with the quality of information presented. That is, people were so interested in these issues, they were willing to accept everything, good and bad, at face value.

#### Abductee Art and Marketing the Alien Agenda

The symposium also featured a number of vendors tables, selling various products and books relating to UFO and abduction phenomena (Appendix J). Some of these tables were devoted to various ongoing research projects, a research funding organization, major UFOlogy organizations and UFO collectables. A majority of the products for sale can be found in any bookstore or retail outlet, though some publications were available only through the vendors represented.

There were two abduction research groups represented as well, PEER (the Program for Extraordinary Experience Research), founded by abduction researcher John Mack, and IF (the Intruders Foundation), founded by abduction researcher Budd Hopkins. Both groups focus their study on alien abductions. The Intruders Foundation cooperates with other well known UFOlogy organizations, such as the Center for UFO Studies, the Fund for UFO Research, the Mutual UFO Network and Citizens Against UFO Secrecy. John Carpenter, a

prominent UFO author, also had a vendor table where he sold monographs and advertised his internet site on UFO related issues (Appendix K).

One of the more interesting attractions at the symposium was the *Abductee Art Project*, a collection of original artwork by abductees. The art depicted abductee experiences and images of alien beings witnessed during abductions. Photography and video recording devices were not allowed in the exhibit, to protect the anonymity and artwork of the abductees. Much of the artwork seemed to reflect the strong, negative emotions experienced by abductees following their abductions. A few of the abductee artists were on hand to answer questions about their artwork and experiences, which made this exhibit all the more fascinating.

The artwork took the form of paintings, illustrations and objects inspired by or depicting aspects of abduction events. The images depicted all manner of spacecraft and lighting effects. Grey aliens were portrayed in portrait-style frames or were shown performing disturbing procedures on unwilling abductees. One particularly moving piece showed a grey in chiaroscuro, waiting to abduct a sleeping woman from her own bedroom.

A handout from the exhibit listed frequently asked questions and answers, one of which explains why abductees feel it necessary to express themselves through art. "Many abductees will tell you they are frustrated, perplexed. Compelled to express themselves through art or other creative mediums. Abductees often report feelings of 'having to do so' or an urgency; almost 'as if it were necessary' to create these works." (*Abductee Art Project Brochure 1997.*)

#### Interviews and the Alienist Subculture

Of the fifty interviews conducted, I have found eleven informants who could be identified as Alienists. However, not all of these individuals display all of the characteristics of Alienist subculture, as outlined in Chapter III. Likewise, not all individuals who display certain characteristics of Alienist subculture, such as wearing a t-shirt with an image of an alien on it, can be considered Alienists. The Alienists I have identified ranged in age from 19 - 56, were both men and women and came from many ethnic backgrounds. This suggests that the Alienists may represent a segment of the American population with a wide distribution in these areas.

In Chapter III, I noted that Alienists represent a subculture defined by their association with certain

aspects of the UFO phenomenon, in particular alien abductions. Alienists are individuals who believe that there is some truth to the stories of abductees. They also possess detailed knowledge of the alien abduction phenomenon, namely its typical events, sequence and substance. They have an awareness of the physical characteristics of UFOs and aliens based on abductee accounts, and seem to identify with the alien image and other symbols and signs of popular culture with an alien content.

Alienists also identify, to some extent, with the idea of being alien in their own culture by their association with the abduction phenomenon. Alienists see the abductees as an estranged group in society, who are ridiculed because their beliefs seem different from the rest of society. The Alienists identify with this sense of being social outcasts because their beliefs also seem very different. For this reason they also identify with the aliens themselves, who are by definition not of this culture or this world.

Alien imagery, as signs of outward expression of Alienist identity, can be found in clothing, jewelry, artwork, bumper stickers, and numerous other objects (Figure 11). One particular alien image has become the archetype for this kind of expression and is commonly referred to as a "grey alien" (Figure 12). The grey alien has become a symbol of difference, and takes on many meanings for the Alienists. At the most obvious level, the alien is a hypertrophic sign for the abduction phenomenon itself. On a deeper level, the alien symbolizes that which is totally foreign to American culture, and as such defies definition and understanding. The grey is also seen as an ageless, sexless, peace-loving and non-ethnic being whose physical characteristics and grey color symbolize the desire for a world without stereotyping based on gender, age or ethnic background (Figure 13). The grey alien has also come to represent high technology, high intelligence and even great wisdom (Figure 14). Some Alienists even think of the grey aliens as the next evolutionary stage for humanity, given their somewhat human-like appearance.

#### Markers of Alienist Identity

There are a number of factors which bind the Alienists together as a whole and identify them as a common subculture. I will now take a look at each of these factors as they relate to specific interviews conducted during my research. The first point I wish to make is that the Alienists share a set of common assumptions and



Figure 12. Alien Imagery on Clothing, Jewelry, Art and Bumper Stickers.

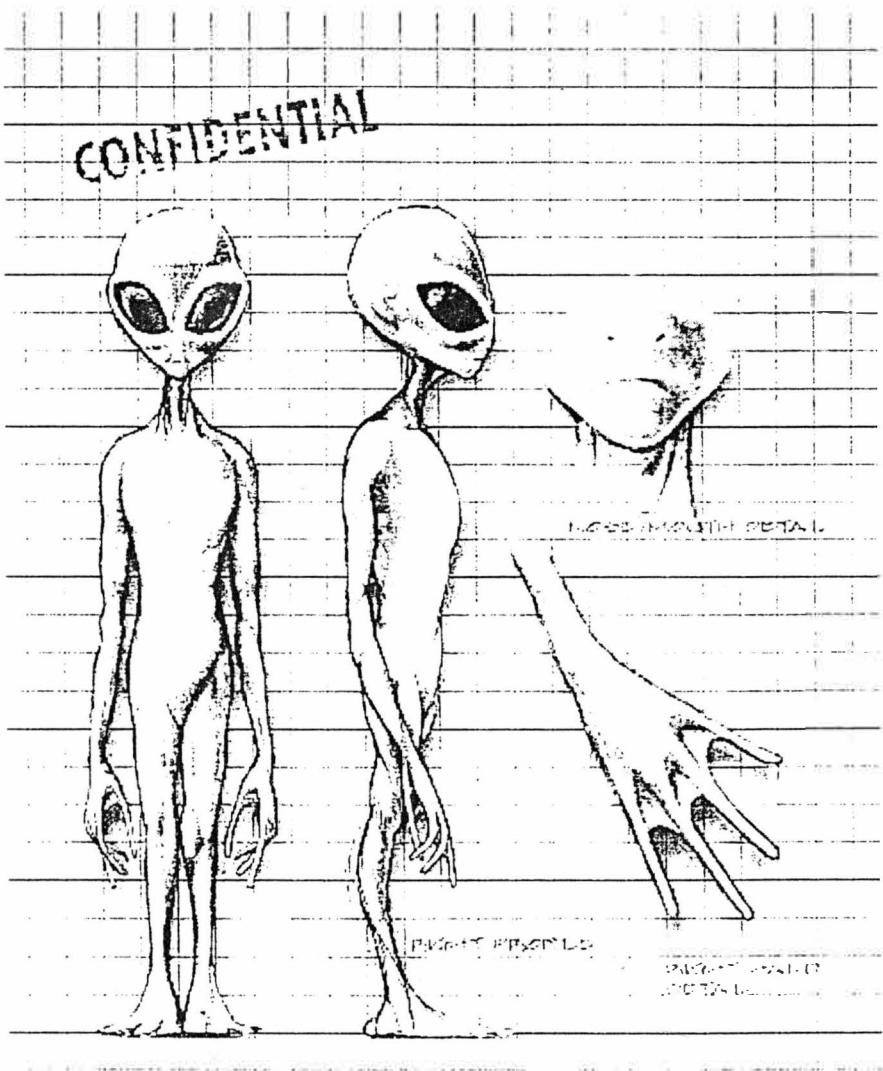


Figure 13. Typical "Grey" Alien Figure.

beliefs about the nature and reality of the alien abduction phenomenon. There is a common belief among Alienists that alien abductions are actual events, and that the abductees are for the most part sincere in their belief that these experiences are real. When asked if she believed abductions were really happening, one informant told me,

yes, not at the rate that people say it is, but yes...people believe that they're being taken by aliens, people from other planets, and most people think that they're being studied...in the books that I've read or on t.v. series and movies, people talk about being held in white rooms and having strange things put in them...

Another informant commented,

Are alien abductions really happening? The evidence seems to indicate that this phenomenon is real, I mean, when you look at the evidence out there, it's hard to dispute it, and I'm a skeptic. I guess you could come up with all sorts of explanations for what seems to be happening, but from what I've read...none of the debunkers' arguments stand up without replacing one set of bizarre explanations for another. I mean, I've read a lot about this phenomenon...pro and con, and there is a lot of fuzzy logic coming from the skeptics and debunkers of it (the alien abduction phenomenon)...even when there is physical proof of UFOs or abductions, it all gets thrown out by the majority of skeptics.

This informant is reacting to what is commonly referred to as the *extraordinary claims/extraordinary proof* assumption among skeptics. Some skeptics of the abduction phenomenon believe that such extraordinary claims demand extraordinary evidence. Some UFO and abduction believers, on the other hand, make a counter claim that an extraordinary phenomenon, such as alien abduction, demands extraordinary examination.

One informant told me when asked about the reality of the phenomenon,

it's hard to say without hard-core evidence...their [the abductees] belief of them is real, but since there's no real definitive evidence or proof of the existence of UFOs and proof of the abductions...like some sort of tell-tale sign...it's amazing what the mind is capable of.

In fact, abductees claim that there are tell-tale signs of the abduction phenomenon, such as mysterious bodily scars and discolorations, and even implants which show up on x-ray examination.

The debate over proof signifies another common assumption among Alienists, usually stated as, "if the aliens wanted us to know about them, we would..." This implies a belief that proof of alien abduction and UFOs is somehow mediated by the aliens themselves, who are also assumed by Alienists to be more technologically and intellectually advanced than humans. Alienists also realize that alien abductions and other UFO phenomena have become an important part of popular culture. As one informant stated, "everybody's into aliens nowadays." Aliens



Figure 14. "Grey" Alien Popularly Depicted as Peace-loving, Ageless, Sexless and Non-ethnic.



Figure 15. "Grey" Alien Popularly Portrayed as Highly Intelligent, High Technology, Great Wisdom.

have been described as "cool," "trendy," "faddish," and "the in-thing." I was told,

it's definitely something that's been woven into our popular culture...The Halloween episode of the Simpsons, [a popular primetime cartoon series] y'know where the aliens come down and abduct Marge...it's definitely a major, major part of our popular culture whether or not it's truth or fact or fiction, I don't think it really matters, it's what a lot of our culture enjoys.

Another informant talks about how aliens have entered the mainstream of popular culture,

since it's become what we call mainstream, I think more people are open to talking about it...(people are) pretty fanatic about it...you can go into any store and get something with an alien on it, unless the store was very specialized. Cars have stickers all over them, all kinds of alien stickers...The typical one that everybody knows, that's the popular one right now [referring to a typical "grey" alien]...I've seen alien costumes, alien suckers...it's just unreal...it's like a big fad right now.

One recent television show, *The X Files*, in particular has captured the public's imagination and interest by making the abduction phenomenon the primary story line. Most of the Alienists I have identified are fans of the program and try to watch it on a regular basis. In general, Alienists are genuinely interested in the abduction phenomenon and will identify with any portrayal of it in the popular culture.

Another common assumption among Alienists is that the U.S. government knows more about the UFO phenomenon than it is admitting publicly. There is a belief among many Alienists that our government is in possession of a UFO that crashed some time in the past, and that aliens may be being held hostage. It is also believed that UFOs are being "reverse engineered" to understand their advanced technology, so that it can be put to use by our government as secret weapons. This type of belief is commonly referred to as a *conspiracy theory* among Alienists, who generally don't trust the government to tell them the whole truth about UFO and abduction phenomena.

Alienists also tend to believe that some UFOs may be secret government projects. One informant commented,

they [the U.S. government] probably know more about...government generated UFOs, like the military (produces). I'm sure there's a bunch of events that were reported as UFOs, that the government knew what was being referred to, because it was some military experiment.

Another informant stated, when asked if the government knows more about the phenomenon,

I would say so...they at least know what some of these objects that we can't identify are in the sky...whether or not they're aliens, they [the government] probably know what they are, if they're top-secret planes or whatever they are, I'm sure they know...I'm sure it benefits them to have people thinking it's (an alien) UFO.

Some Alienists liken alien abductions to human experimentation on animals or think of aliens as anthropologists from another planet.

Some people think (the aliens) are doing (harmful) experiments...I think it could be just communication, the same way we go out and study people...we want to learn, and generally if something is below us on an evolutionary scale, or so we think, then we have no problem with taking them and doing experiments, especially if we don't understand them.

Another informant stated,

it makes really good sense that it [abductions] could probably happen, I mean, why not? We go into forests and abduct little ants and birds and stuff like that, and put them into cages and study them...(to aliens) we're just another species...if they're a civilization living on one of those other planets they're probably going to be more advanced than us...so they're going to want to study us, it's like an anthropology experiment.

Another factor that defines Alienist identity is an in-depth awareness of the phenomenon as represented by the UFO research community and various sources in the popular culture. Alienists often read books and magazines about alien abductions, and watch television programs and movies about them, even noting when some aspect of the alien abduction phenomenon is portrayed in other popular television shows or commercials. One Alienist states, "I've seen a bunch of commercials where they use moving lights and aliens to highlight some...product, but I can't remember any of them very vividly."

One Alienist reports the same thing:

Yeah, there are a lot of commercials and shows that try to use aliens and abduction themes, sometimes to sell a product, but usually they are playing on some sensationalized aspect of it, like the big-eyed greys...I've seen commercials (referring to alien abductions) for Pepsi, McDonalds, Rice Krispies cereal, Chili's restaurant...car companies use an alien theme, Polaroid cameras...t.v. shows too, like the Simpsons, South Park, News Radio, Frasier, The X Files...usually comedies that poke fun at it in some way...but most of them seem to recognize that it's hugely popular to talk about aliens.

Alienists also note the prevalence of alien-related products in the marketplace. One informant talks about the predominance of the grey alien in this context:

It seems like in the past ten years or so that we've had like a revival (of alien interest)...in the past few years we've had a lot more...maybe a few years ago, I could go to Target or K-mart and not see aliens, at least not in that (the greys) form. You would see Star Trek aliens or Star Wars aliens...but it's not the same as this alien...Now you think of aliens, and you think of that little green or grey alien with the big eyes, it's very specific.

All fifty of my informants, Alienists included, know what aliens look like because of various sources in popular culture. The grey alien form has become the archetype for all aliens. These aliens are usually called "the

greys," referring to the color commonly reported by abductees (Figure 15). Alienist informants describe what the aliens look like. Typically their descriptions match the following:

It's popular to view them or assume their visage as that of a uh, see I know this from *The X Files*, as a grey. You know, the big, bug-eyed, spindly, weakling looking...being that's got a big head, big almond-shaped eyes, two slits for a nose, maybe a slit for a mouth...long, thin, gangly, noodle-like arms and legs and a sort of a grey...pale complexion.

When asked what occurs during a typical abduction, one informant responded,

According to certain sources, you might have a guy who is driving in his car, or sitting in his house at night when everybody is asleep, or maybe (the aliens) stop time. They come and they take somebody and they do a series of experiments on them, maybe implant something in his brain or in his heart, which would equate itself to...tagging a bird...so that you know which one it is...Maybe they take some eggs out or some sperm...(like) some movie I saw where they've been making alien babies...they've been doing gene experiments, which would make sense because then you could study the biology...the person won't remember, so it won't affect them later on.

Another informant describes her version of an abduction event,

According to everything you see and hear and read, it's usually at night, for some reason. For example, *Fire in the Sky* [a recent movie adaptation of a well known abduction event], all the books, *X Files*, they are all at night for some reason...and normally the person would see a bright light or they'd see an alien form...usually the light beams them up into the ship, or at least that's how they portray it.

There's that way and then there's...the people who feel they've been visited at night by aliens...and they don't really know what happens to them, they just know that time has passed...(they) get taken up onto the ship and...there is an almost sterile, hospital-like environment, with beds...and people talk about being scared and there being instruments and needles...it's like going to the doctor against your will...then the aliens perform all kinds of experiments and tests on the people...

Some people report sexual abductions where the aliens take genetic material from humans to make alien/human hybrids...there is a whole range of experiences that people report...then the people are returned from where they were originally taken, sometimes without remembering that they were even taken to begin with... they recall what happened usually through hypnotic regression by abduction researchers.

These accounts can be compared to the typical abduction scenario, as presented by the abduction research community, in chapter three for accuracy and detail. Alienists seem to possess a thorough grasp of the abduction literature, and are discriminating when fictionalized accounts are seen on television or in movies. Typically, an Alienist can separate the facts presented by actual abductees from the stories presented by the entertainment industry.

A third component of this subculture is that some Alienists identify with the idea of "being alien" in one's



Figure 16. "Grey" Alien as Depicted by Abductees.

own culture by association with the abductees and even extraterrestrial aliens. One individual talks about a sense of disillusionment with the rest of society by saying,

My ideas just seem *different* from other people's, and that puts them off or pisses them off and makes me feel like I don't belong here. And I'm sure abductees feel like this when they tell what happened to them and aren't believed...they're alienated, they're *alien*.

Another informant states, "I'm an alien, I mean I *feel* like one most of the time...I like being different...other people said I look like an alien."

Alienists also seem to identify with one another by using a common language of buzz-words and phrases. Many of these are references to alien pop-culture, television shows and movies, historic events, and personal experiences, such as UFO sightings. Common phrases include, "trust no one," "the truth is out there," "government cover-up," "the Roswell incident," "area 51," "aliens are everywhere," and "I want to believe."

Some phrases relate specifically to the unpleasant experiences of the abductees, and are uttered with a sense of mixed horror and humor, such as, "the anal probe," or "alien sex." Even the phrase, "alien abduction" itself has become a buzzword of popular and Alienist culture, along with "UFO," "flying saucer," "the greys," and "alien implant."

My informants were asked to identify a list of 24 names and look at a series of 25 buzzword flashcards that are related to the UFO and abduction phenomenon (Appendix L). I included this information to further show how the alienist subculture is characterized by a shared language of buzzwords and phrases. The names selected were either prominent UFOlogists, known abductees, UFO witnesses and other public figures related to UFO phenomena. Buzzwords included identifiable words from abduction literature and the popular culture related to UFO/abduction phenomena. Most Alienists correctly identified more than half of the names and a large majority of the buzzwords, and could even give detailed information about the relationship of the name or word to the UFO/abduction phenomenon.

As noted previously, Alienist identity is characterized by a prevalence of specific symbols and signs which relate to the UFO/abduction phenomenon and alien imagery. When asked about alien related items, one informant responded, "there's a lot of the grey alien stuff, so apparently, that's the most popular one...bumper stickers, key chains, necklaces, t-shirts...posters. I think I saw an alien air freshener once, bracelets...dolls...with

the grey alien."

Many of the Alienists I spoke with own some of these kinds of products, but all of my informants have seen them and know what their relation is to the alien abduction phenomenon. One informant claims, "you can't go ten feet without running into an alien, you know, an alien toy or sticker...I see them all the time when I'm driving; I even look for them...I'm amazed at how popular this all is...I guess other people are into aliens as much as me."

#### Interview With the UFOlogist

During the course of my research, I was fortunate enough to have interviewed a man who identifies himself as a UFOlogist, that is, a member of the UFO research community. This individual, who I will call 'Allen', is a 35-year old Michigan resident with a long history of interest in the UFO phenomenon, its history, local events and UFO sightings. He is currently writing a book on UFO sightings, which will be a fictionalized account of UFOs based on Michigan lore.

Allen, the son of an english professor and a musician, is currently unemployed and lives with his wife in Kalamazoo, MI. I made arrangements to speak with Allen at his home one evening in November 1998. During the course of our nearly two and a half hour interview, Allen talked about his own research into the UFO phenomenon, including his knowledge of alien abductions. Well spoken, Allen is somewhat of a rogue researcher compared to other UFOlogists. He is not a member of a recognized UFOlogical organization, and describes his sense of antipathy towards them,

I thought about joining MUFON but...all of these (UFOlogy) organizations...they're very elitist in structure and...whenever I run into that, it really bothers me...They (MUFON) will not provide their databases to the public. The best you can do, really, is order their newsletters...they say, 'if you want to know about it, become an investigator,' which means you give them a lot of money, spend a lot of time learning how to do things *their way*, which I have some problems with...

He describes the training that MUFON offers as, "like an indoctrination. An education would be much better. That's what I asked them for." Allen's intent was to access the data available in order to conduct statistical analyses of UFO morphology and seasonal sighting patterns. It is of interest to note that Allen has no formal training or education in statistical methods or any other branch of science. This fits with Westrum's

characterization of some UFOlogists as, "interested amateurs..." (Westrum 1984, 41).

Initially, we talked about how UFOlogy has progressed in terms of the technology used to capture and analyze UFO images. This led to a discussion of how UFOlogy has also come into its own as a more scientific field of study. When asked if he considered himself a UFOlogist, he stated, "Yeah, sure. Why not, for lack of a better word?...considering what the term 'UFOlogist' is, you don't get a degree in it, you can't..."

Even Duke University, which would tackle anything else, wouldn't touch UFOs...(they) used to have the Parapsychology Department. There are certain colleges that will offer it (courses relating to the UFO phenomenon) in the curriculum, but they (Duke University) actually had a degree that you could get in parapsychology [the study of anomalous phenomenon]...everything from ghosts, poltergeists, hauntings, and they did some serious work...but they wouldn't touch UFOs.

While he wouldn't describe himself as a skeptic, Allen's attitude is somewhat cautious with regard to the UFO phenomenon. He claims,

the first postulate is...don't believe in anything unless you see it for yourself. You learn that pretty quickly...I'm leary of falling into one sort of belief system or another. There is really a lot of good work and good evidence...in almost every related phenomena, like abduction or crop circles...There is tangible support for any hypothesis, really, but the problem is...I don't want to fall back on the...postulate of extraordinary claims deserve extraordinary proof...

Allen also talked about the nature of the UFO phenomenon and witness testimony,

I can't say one way or another what these things (UFOs) are, all I know is that they exist, people see them. That's the one constant, no matter what...people keep seeing these things, they keep getting pictures of them. They keep getting corroborating evidence, enough to know that they (the UFOs) were there.

Following a detailed account of the 1994 UFO sightings in Michigan, we began to talk about alien abductions, and the research that has been done up to this point. Allen does not work with the abductees himself, though he has done much thinking and reading about alien abductions. He seems to have some very strong opinions about the research currently being done.

He talked about how two prominent abduction researchers, David Jacobs and John Mack, were recently involved in a set-up where people posing as abductees were able to convince the researchers that their experiences were real when, in fact, they were fabricated. According to Allen, this "proved that they (the experts) were willing to believe anything that they were fed, as long as it was convincing." I looked into this claim but was unable to find a reference for it in the literature.

Allen went on to say that one abduction researcher, Budd Hopkins, seems guilty of leading some individuals to believe they have been abducted by "programming" them with experiences they have not had. "I think that's what's happening with a lot of abduction stuff now. You're getting very well meaning... hypnotherapists who are convincing people...that they've been abducted by aliens."

He suggested that there is some truth to the claims of abductees, however, by saying,

I think the core group, the initial thing, that was based on people coming forward with a trauma and...very much like Betty and Barney Hill...saying, 'I've got no explanation for this. I've got missing time. I've got scars on my body. I have these weird memories...I really want to know what's going on'...Originally, there were enough people coming forward with the same story that you could say something is going on.

While he does believe that alien abductions are happening to some extent, he also notes the modern preoccupation with alien abductions in popular culture, and the influence of the media, as detrimental to the study of alien abductions.

The whole thing has been very obfuscated, and you can't trust anything that anyone says, for one thing, because there is so much of it in the media now, with *The X Files* and whatnot. I was actually doing this (studying the UFO/alien abduction phenomenon) way before *The X Files* and thinking, when that show came on, 'well, that's it...you're going to get all of this stuff out in the public eye and there won't be any more actual legitimate research because we will become so saturated with all of these ideas...Now it's contamination, is what I would call it.'

Previous to many popular television shows dealing with the phenomenon, there were a number of authors writing about alien abductions. Allen recalls when Whitley Strieber wrote his first book about his own abduction experiences, Communion.

When he published that book, he very intentionally put the (grey) alien on the cover because he believed at the time that people would recognize it, and they did....I think all of that (alien oriented books and television) really led up to it becoming sort of iconized in American pop-culture...

Allen also talks about how the abduction phenomenon has been interpreted by the public at large, which seems to imply his theoretical take on the matter. What he describes amounts to a uniting of the extraterrestrial hypothesis and some aspects of the psycho-social hypothesis for the UFO abduction phenomenon.

We're faced with this human inability to be in the dark about something, to just live with something as a mystery...I think the alien hypothesis is very possible, even probable, but the fact of the matter is, we have to accept anthropomorphisms...ethnocentrism...we're going to interpret this as who we are...you can be objective, but only up to a point.

Like most UFOlogists, Allen is forced to approach the study of UFO phenomena

as a hobby, which is just collecting sighting reports and talking to people...How that happens, the networking for doing that, is usually just word of mouth...The reason why I'm doing this is I hope to get in on the ground floor of a flap, and actually see something...a flap being defined as an event where they (UFOs) are hanging around for a while. Lots of people are seeing them, and lots of people are reporting them.

When asked about how he initially became interested in the subject of UFOs, he replied,

The way I got actually involved in seriously studying, it's always been sort of a cool thing, I've been watching science fiction since I was three, and so I've always (had) this sort of mindset of liking stuff of that nature...in 1989 or so, there was this (UFO related program) on t.v...I was mesmerized by that. I kept thinking...'I really ought to look into this.' I think shortly after that, I read Communion and sort of put it onto a back burner.

He went on to explain that his interest in the UFO phenomenon was piqued again during a conversation he had with a couple who had seen a UFO follow their car near Grand Rapids.

Since then, Allen has thought of writing books based on peoples' UFO sighting accounts in Michigan.

He states,

My research for Michigan shows that for the last 50 years, the same thing has been seen up and down the...western coast of Michigan, a saucer about 30 feet across, red, white and green lights rotating around the rim. Friends of mine have seen it; it's in all of the big journals...Here we have in our society...this anomaly...that no one can do anything with, other than (study it). Maybe when I was starting off, I was thinking well, I can get to the bottom of this [the UFO phenomenon], you quickly are educated otherwise...I haven't seen anybody actually be able to make a career out of it (UFOlogy).

Following this, we talked more about the attitude of caution taken by UFOlogists, including Allen, when dealing with a phenomenon of this nature. When asked if there was an aspect of this phenomenon that could be considered incontrovertible, he replied, "Incontrovertible? People see it, take photographs of it, they print on radar. If you put it all together, it's incontrovertible. Something is happening."

At the conclusion of the interview, I asked Allen to identify and make observations on a number of UFO and alien related items, including recent UFO magazines, books, toys, and images. When he came across an image of a typical grey alien he commented, "The only time you ever see this image of the bug-eyed alien was on books [dealing with alien abductions]. It's an icon now, it really is." He was also asked to identify the same series of buzzword flashcards my other informants were shown. Allen was able to correctly identify 23 out of 25 cards and give very detailed information about those identified. When asked to identify the same series of names shown to my other informants, he was able to identify 22 out of 24, and give detailed information on these as well.

As stated previously, UFOlogy is represented primarily by a large number of interested amateurs, a small number of scientists, and their critics (Westrum 1981). Allen seems to fit in to this definition as an interested, knowledgeable, amateur. When asked if he was concerned about gaining professional credibility, he stated, "The only reason I would be worried about credibility, is if you didn't have credibility along a certain line, people wouldn't talk to you...the worst thing you could face is people that won't talk to you."

From my interview, I learned that even UFOlogy is not immune to the "contamination," as Allen would say, of popular interest in the alien abduction phenomenon. Much of his own interest in the abduction phenomenon was generated by Whitley Strieber's first book on abductions, which still remains one of the most popular books on the subject. Television programming, popular alien merchandise and the motion picture industry are all influenced by stories of alien abduction and the research that followed. There seems to be a great deal of interest in 'all things alien' at the level of popular culture. My interviews indicate that such interest can have a great effect on American culture, even inspiring new subcultural identities, such as UFOlogists and the Alienists.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The notion that intelligent alien beings are coming to our planet in spacecraft to kidnap humans, using advanced technology and mental abilities, to carry out some unknown agenda would seem to be the stuff of science fiction. However, individuals and groups throughout the world, including scientists, are convinced that just such an event is happening and may have profound consequences for all of humanity. Whether or not these claims are verified by science, the subject of UFOs and alien abductions is important anthropologically, especially when we note the effect these events have on shaping human culture.

There is still much that is unknown about the UFO/alien abduction phenomenon. What is known represents an anomaly to prevailing scientific notions of reality and has inspired the creation of a number of subcultures, each having their own complex systems of belief, language and behavior. American culture, in particular, has reacted to the UFO/ alien abduction issue by developing unique subcultural traditions, where these events are the central themes. Other cultural traditions, such as represented in folklore and shamanic narrative, seem to share similarities with accounts of alien abduction and as such might be of anthropological interest as further study is warranted.

I have examined the UFOlogists, a subculture which has developed for the purpose of studying all aspects of the UFO issue. One researcher describes UFOlogy as, "the courageous struggle of inquisitive amateurs to bring to light events that the scientific community would just as soon ignore...This community has developed its own literature, its own folkways, its own jargon, and its own knowledge base." (Westrum 1984, 39-41.)

It was found that UFOlogy is represented by a majority of interested amateurs, a small number of scientists, and critics of such study. UFOlogists try to pattern their research methodologies along empirical lines, which suggests their desire for recognition as a scientific discipline. As such, UFOlogy can be considered a "proto-science" in the sense that its practitioners are using such methods to research these phenomena.

However, since most of this research is currently being done by largely self-styled and self-educated individuals, there is some doubt as to the future of UFOlogy as a widely accepted field of study.

The anomalous nature of UFOs and alien abductions make it difficult also to gain legitimacy and acceptance among other branches of science. Also, the scientists and professionals interested in this research are, conceptually and methodologically, not well-equipped to handle the topic because science does not have the vocabulary and methodology to deal with such paranormal issues.

Over the course of my research, I have also identified a new American subculture, the *Alienists*, who are identified by their belief in, identification with, and awareness of the UFO/alien abduction phenomenon. Alienists are people who, having no formal organization, share certain beliefs, language, behaviors, and symbolic expression relating to these issues. These individuals pay close attention to the events, marketing, and media in popular culture having some association with UFOs, aliens, and abductees. They possess in-depth knowledge of abduction events and can differentiate between fictional accounts of abductions, as represented by popular television programs for instance, and actual abductee accounts as represented by the abductees themselves and the UFO research community.

Alienists are also highly motivated to discuss these issues with others and are aware of others like them who think and act in similar ways. In this way they identify with each other in an overt manner. It was also found that Alienists share a common set of signs and symbols relating to the UFO/abduction issue, and that many of these representations reflect their identification with each other as well as the idea of *being alien* themselves.

Because they lack formal organization, and don't adhere to traditional boundaries of ethnicity, region or religion, the Alienists can be considered a *subculture of transcendence*, which is to say that Alienists exist as a group beyond the traditional bounds of subculture. The notion of transcendence also refers to the Alienist's sense of reality as something more than what is currently accepted or admitted to by science and positivistic thought. Their beliefs, assumptions and behaviors reflect their desire for a world where traditional stereotypes and assumed differences between people and cultures are cast aside in favor of a more universalistic identification with all of humanity. These values are seen as lacking in the world and represent something truly alien to the Alienists, who desire a world where human beings can treat each other as equals.

## The Role of Anthropology

While the UFO/abduction phenomenon has received notable attention from the social sciences in general, anthropology has all but ignored the cultural implications such a topic represents. Only a handful of anthropologists have dealt with the UFO issue specifically and even then from a skeptical stance or only as a passing reference to issues usually glossed over by the discipline (Lett 1991).

Traditionally, anthropologists have had occasion to study countless cultural traditions which would seem alien to the Western scientific paradigm, including issues we are more familiar with in Western cultures such as the belief in UFOs, psychic powers or Bigfoot. All of these issues have been described as "grist for the anthropological mill and can...be studied scientifically." (Cole 1978, 357). However, it is occasionally these scientific assumptions that decry the study of such issues by passing judgement on them before in-depth study is done.

Anthropologist John Cole calls for a more scientific, empirical discipline and claims,

(a) final category of anthropology potentially awry is the uncritical acceptance of informants' versions of reality without empirical testing...The cultural relativist viewpoint, which refuses to judge people, need not rule out scientific evaluations of their *claims* as objective reality. (Cole 1978, 359).

He admits that, "(l)ike most scientists, anthropologists are simply not trained to judge alleged paranormal phenomena." (Cole 1978, 359) I believe such judgement should be suspended altogether for fear of ignoring or dismissing these complex issues simply because they are contrary to what is accepted by, and thus worthy of, scientific study. Westrum has already commented on the *hidden event* phenomenon in science, which I discussed in my introduction. If alleged events, such as alien abductions, are dismissed by science, they are likely to be ignored or not given in-depth attention.

Another anthropologist, James Lett, talks about the *paranormal* nature of such things as UFOs and states that the study of the paranormal in anthropology would include anything that was traditionally called magical, religious, occult, superstitious or pseudoscientific (Lett 1991). He also notes that for the most part anthropologists have not been at the forefront of studying potentially paradigm shifting phenomena such as psychic abilities, reincarnation, nonhuman hominids such as Bigfoot, or extraterrestrials. Certainly, if these

phenomena were proved to be real, then our anthropological understanding of human nature or primate evolution would be incomplete (Lett 1991). Lett, like Cole, seems preoccupied with determining the reality of such phenomena, even before these issues are fully understood.

It is important to note that both Cole and Lett are overt supporters of the paranormal debunking organization CSICOP (the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal), whose publication, the *Skeptical Inquirer*, is predominantly biased against the serious, in-depth study of such things as UFOs and alien abductions. Lett goes so far as to describe paranormal beliefs as, "illogical, inconsistent, and evidentially unfounded." (Lett 1991, 305).

Lett argues against "irrational anthropology" and says of paranormal claims,

the facts are abundantly evident and surpassingly clear. The simple truth is that there has never been any compelling evidence for any paranormal claim offered by anyone in any place at any time, and that includes all evidence collected by any and all professional investigators inside or outside academia. (Lett 1991, 308).

This kind of argument has tended to set the standard for expectations on the evidence available and is often used as justification for not doing the kind of research necessary to answer these kinds of questions in the first place. In essence, it represents an epistemological bias against claims regarding these phenomena, which puts the burden of proof solely on the believers, when what is warranted is a more agnostic stance where such judgement is suspended until the data have been fully explored by an objectively minded scientific discipline.

With regard to UFOs and alien abductions, this is far from the case. Much more scientific research needs to be done and serious study is indeed warranted, if the recent Stanford University panel discussed in chapter one, regarding the UFO issue, is to be believed. If such is the case, anthropology would play a significant role in this research agenda as the phenomenon has significant cultural implications. Any anthropological agenda would include an in-depth ethnographic study of the UFOlogist and abductee subcultures, particularly in the form of life-histories of individual abductees and their families.

In this thesis, I have attempted to show how the UFO/alien abduction issue has impacted on American culture and subculture. The prevalence and popularity of UFO oriented media, entertainment and marketing alludes to the significance American culture assigns to the unknown and the extent to which it will go to portray these issues. The existence of numerous subcultures interested in the phenomenon shows the value we place on

understanding or identifying with the unknown. Individuals belonging to these subcultures spend a great deal of time and effort studying the subject matter and organizing their lives around it.

The subject of UFOs and alien abductions are thought of by many in the general public and scientific community as delusions, unexplained but natural phenomena, or outright fabrications to name a few proposed explanations. As I mentioned previously, there are any number of proposed explanations. One researcher groups various explanations of abduction experiences into psychological, psychiatric, cultural and exotic categories.

Psychological explanations suggest that abductions are generated in people's minds for a variety of emotional reasons. These explanations do not come from people who suffer from organic brain problems or mental illness...Psychiatric explanations...suggest that [abductions] originate either from organic brain problems or from serious mental disorders...Cultural explanations maintain that abduction accounts originate from the influence that prevailing culture and society have upon the individual. (Jacobs 1992, 283-297.)

Exotic explanations are given where the previous explanations do not apply, and where there is no apparent basis in objective reality. Examples of these kinds of explanations would refer to a "collective unconscious," birth trauma theory, or even the possibility of alternate realities. Jacobs goes on to say of these explanations,

All of these...fail to account for critically important aspects of the abduction event...Abductees tell essentially the same story regardless of their age, race, religion, upbringing, occupation, economic status, educational level...life-style, or ethnic or cultural background. (Jacobs 1992, 302.)

Despite these explanations, people continue to believe in the reality of these events and continue to have these unexplained experiences. Either these experiences have a foundation in objective reality, or they are in some fashion products of the human mind, or they have a nature that is as yet beyond our understanding. In any case, the study of these phenomena, portrayed by witnesses and abductees as actual experiences and having physical and psychological effects on these individuals, makes good anthropology. The simple fact that people are reporting these experiences as real makes this study anthropologically relevant

## **Appendix A**

### **UFO Magazines, Journals and Newsletters**

Magazines:

*Alien Encounters*, Paragon Publishing, Ltd., Bournemouth, England  
*Flying Saucer Review*, FSR Publications Ltd., Buckinghamshire, England  
*Fortean Times*, John Brown Publishing, London, England  
*The Unopened Files*, Quest Publications International Ltd., Otley, England  
*UFO Files*, GCR Publishing Group, Inc., New York, USA  
*UFO Magazine*, Quest Publications International Ltd., Otley, England  
*UFO Universe*, GCR Publishing Group, Inc., New York, USA  
*UFO Universe Special*, Goodman Media Group, Inc., New York, USA  
*Uncensored UFO Reports*, GCR Publishing Group, Inc., New York, USA  
*Unsolved UFO Sightings*, GCR Publishing Group, Inc., New York, USA

Journals and newsletters:

*AFU Newsletter*, Archives for UFO Research, Norrkoping, Sweden  
*Bulletin of the Intruders Foundation*, Intruders Foundation, New York, NY, USA  
*CUFORN Bulletin*, Canadian UFO Research Network, Inc., Downsview, Ont., Canada  
*Fund for UFO Research - Quarterly Report*, Fund for UFO Research, Mount Rainier, MD, USA  
*International UFO Reporter*, J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, Chicago, IL, USA  
*The Journal of UFO Studies*, J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, Chicago, IL, USA  
*Just Cause*, Citizens Against UFO Secrecy, Stoneham, MA, USA  
*MUFON UFO Journal*, Mutual UFO Network, Seguine, TX, USA  
*Saucer Smear*, Saucer and Unexplained Celestial Events Research Society, Key West, FL, USA

*Skeptical Enquirer*, Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, Amherst, NY,  
USA

*Skeptics UFO Newsletter*, Philip J. Klass, Washington, D.C., USA

*SUFOI-News*, Scandinavian UFO Information, Gentofte, Denmark

*UFO Times*, British UFO Research Association, Batley, England

*Zetetic Scholar*, Center for Scientific Anomalies Research, Ypsilanti, MI, USA

## **Appendix B**

### **Popular Television Programs and Movies with Alien Abduction Content**

Television Programs:

*South Park*

*Frasier*

*Unsolved Mysteries*

*Sightings*

*Sci Factor*

*The X Files*

*The Simpsons*

*Millenium*

*Project UFO*

*U.F.O.*

*Roswell*

*Dark Skies*

Recent Movies:

“Independence Day”

“Intruders”

“Fire in the Sky”

## **Appendix C**

### **Local Products Marketed With Alien Themes**

*Absolut Vodka*, Tiffany's Liquor Store

*Aliens Fruit Snacks*, Harding's Supermarket

*Alien Candles, jewelry*, Ethnic Creations

*Alien Head Candy Suckers*, Quick Stop Gas Station

*Alien Jewelry*, Tarrapin

*Alien Memo Book*, Dollar Bills

*Alien Workshop Skate Gear*

*Asylum Tattoos and Body Piercing Parlor*

*BIC Alien Pens*, Meijer's Supermarket

*Future Sound and Communications*

*Hallmark Greeting Cards*, Harding's Supermarket

*Laser Storm - Lazer Tag Game*

*Old Town Tattoos Parlor*

*Schwa Corporation Stickers*, Holiday Lanes Bowling Alley

*Smoking Paraphernalia*, Discount Den

*UFO Toys, objects*, K-Mart Store, Big Lots Store, Meijer's Supermarket, Harding's Supermarket,

*Spencer's Gift*

## **Appendix D**

### **MUFON Symposium Event Schedule**

**1997 MUFON**  
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



**THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF UFOLGY**

JULY 11-13, 1997  
AIRWAY GRAND HOTEL  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Vendors	Emerald Room, West Concourse, Friday - Sunday Crown Foyer, Saturday - Sunday
Abductive Art Exhibit	Lyon Room, Friday 2-5; Saturday 10-1; 3-7; Sunday 10-1; 3-5
Symposium Registration	Open each day at 8:00 a.m. and remains open throughout the symposium Friday in the Atrium Lobby; Saturday and Sunday in the Crown Foyer
Executive Meetings	Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. State Directors, Pearl Room, Dr. John C. Kasher moderating Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Board of Directors, Pearl Room
<b>FRIDAY, JULY 11</b>	
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Investigator Training Workshops, Atrium Room Dan R. Wright, John S. Carpenter
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Press Conference, Atrium Room
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	Reception, Pontiac Ballroom Bruce MacEacher at the piano, Hors d'oeuvres, cash bar
<b>SATURDAY, JULY 12</b>	
9:00 a.m.	MORNING SESSION Ambassador Ballroom Welcome to Grand Rapids..... Linda C. Murphy Co-State Director for Michigan MUFON Director of Public Education
9:10 a.m.	Greetings from the Mutual UFO Network ..... Walter H. Andrus, Jr. International Director
9:15 a.m.	"Dedication to Kenneth Arnold" ..... Walter H. Andrus, Jr.
9:30 a.m.	"Connections: A Lifetime of Shared Experiences" ..... Beth Collings and Anna Jamerson
11:05 a.m.	Coauthors of "Connections: Solving Our Alien Abduction Mystery" Symposium Proceedings Dedication ..... Walter H. Andrus, Jr.
11:15 a.m.	LUNCH (place of your choice)
<b>AFTERNOON SESSION</b>	
1:00 p.m.	"Encounters: Now and Then" ..... John S. Carpenter, MSW MUFON Director for Abduction Research
2:00 p.m.	"Five Themes: Further Findings of the Abduction Transcription Project" ..... Dan R. Wright, MA Manager, Abduction Transcription Project Monroe, Michigan

3:00 p.m.	BREAK
3:30 p.m.	"The God Hypothesis" ..... F. Joe Lewis, PhD MUFON Consultant in Communications
4:30 p.m.	"The Roswell Story, 1997" ..... Stanton T. Friedman, MS MUFON Director of Special Investigations
5:30 p.m.	DINNER (place of your choice)
7:00 p.m.	EVENING SESSION Ambassador Ballroom "Sightings from an Africa Casebook" ..... Cynthia Hind MUFON Commercial Coordinator for Africa
8:30 p.m.	"UFOs at Fifty: Some Personal Observations" ..... David M. Jacobs, PhD Author and Abduction Researcher
9:30 p.m.	"The UFO Phenomenon and the Suicide Cults - An Ideological Study" ..... Budd Hopkins Author and Abduction Researcher
SUNDAY, JULY 13	MORNING SESSION Ambassador Ballroom
9:00 a.m.	"An Analysis of the 1940 Warren Case: Discovering the Alien Agenda" ..... Warren P. Atson UFO Researcher
10:00 a.m.	"The Beginning of the UFO Era" ..... Jim L. Aldrich Project 1947
11:00 a.m.	LUNCH (place of your choice) CHURCH
<b>AFTERNOON SESSION</b> Ambassador Ballroom	
1:00 p.m.	"Monitoring Air Force Intelligence: Spain's 1992-1993 UFO Declassification Process" ..... Vice-Jean Ballister-Olmos MUFON Representative for Spain
2:00 p.m.	"Ufology in the Far East: China, Japan and Korea" ..... J. Antonio Hernanz MUFON International Coordinator and FATE Magazine UFO Editor
3:00 p.m.	BREAK
3:30 p.m.	"June 24, 1947: How It All Began: The Story of the Arnold Sighting" ..... Bruce S. MacCallum, PhD Maryland State Director Consultant and Photo Analyst Sabillasville, Maryland
4:30 p.m.	Question and Answer Panel: Composed of All Speakers
5:30 p.m.	Walter Andrus, Moderator Invitation to MUFON 1998 International UFO Symposium in Denver, Colorado, July 3, 4, & 5
5:35 p.m.	ADJOURNMENT

## **Appendix E**

### **Interview Questions**

- 1. What are alien abductions?**
- 2. Do you believe alien abductions are really happening?**
- 3. What does an Alien look like?**
- 4. What goes on during a typical abduction?**
- 5. Are you interested in these issues, if so, to what extent?**
- 6. Do you own or have you seen alien related merchandise?**
- 7. Have you ever seen a UFO or had related experiences?**
- 8. What does the government know about these issues?**
- 9. Have you read any literature or seen any television programs or movies inspired by these issues?**
- 10. In your opinion, what is the biggest question or mystery yet unanswered regarding these issues?**

## Appendix F

### Bullard Common Abduction Event Matrix

Story Event		1987	1995
<b>I. Capture</b>		100%	
Restlessness, anxiety, premonition that something strange will happen	34	32	
UFO appears	60	45	
Vacuum effect, stillness, silence, absence of traffic	22	24	
Paresthesia, creeping lethargy	50	55	
Missing time (loss of memory)	88	44	
Full consciousness maintained	8	7	
Silence appear	58		
Abductee floats or feels sensation of floating	36	37	
Abductee enters craft suddenly or with momentary memory loss	46	48	
<b>II. Examination</b>	70	68	
Abductee lies on examination table	77*		
Manual inspection (beings touch body or use handheld instruments)	37*	42	
Eye-like device scans abductee	49*		
Instrumental examination (devices probe abductee's body)	34*	30	
Beings take samples of blood or other bodily materials	29*	31	
Reproductive examination, removal of genetic materials	24*	24	
Implant inserted or removed; close attention to head	37*	45	
<b>III. Conference</b>	46	38	
Beings show abductee images of cataclysm	17*	19	
Assignment of task or mission	32*	26	
Warning against some human activity (e.g., environmental damage)	23*	29	
<b>IV. Tour of Ship</b>	13	28	
Visit to incubator/nursery	16		
<b>V. Journey or Otherworldly Journey</b>	27	24	
View of barren, desolate, dim, or devastated landscape	30*		
View of bright, lush landscape that seems enclosed or underground	18*		
<b>VI. Theophany (spiritual experience, observation of ritual)</b>	9	9	
<b>VII. Return</b>			
Beings say farewell or impart final message	23	20	
Abductee sad to leave, feeling of rupture	17*	28	
Abductee leaves the craft suddenly or with momentary memory loss	33		
<b>VIII. Aftermath</b>	71		
Immediate or short-term aftereffects reported	48*		
Eyes irritated, watering, burning	18*	18	
Dehydration, unusual thirst	11*	20	
Dizziness, headache, problems with motility, balance	18*	17	
Cuts, cuts, puncture wounds	10*	37	
Intermediate aftereffects reported	61*		
Vague anxieties, fear of specific situations (e.g., doctor's office)	15*	31	
Nightmares, sleep disturbance	34*	36	
Long-term aftereffects reported	63*		
Encounters with Men in Black	15*	14	
Experiences with apparitions, poltergeist phenomena	33*		
ESP develops, psychic experiences increase	18*	39	
Changes in interests, habits, personality, lifestyle	19*	28	
Additional abductions, UFO sightings, entity encounters	55*	62	

Story Elements		1987	1995
<b>Circumstances</b>			
Taken from bedroom	23*	57%	
Taken from vehicle	43	26	
Abduction lasts 1-2 hours	36	43	
Abduction lasts more than 2 hours	39	21	
First abduction after age 35	21	14	
<b>Type of Being</b>			
Beings are humanoid in form	78	76	
Beings are short gray ("standard") humanoids	56*	66	
Beings are short to average height	77*	74	
Tall humanoids	23*	20	
Nordic beings (tall, blond, graceful, attractive humans)	8	10	
Hybrids (human-humanoid mix)	16		
Monsters, oddities, robots, apes	6	7	
<b>Description of Humanoid Beings</b>	83		
Head large, pear-shaped, with narrow or pointed chin	65*	74	
Hairless	80		
Large eyes	84*	81	
Eyes slanted, almond, "Egyptian," or wrap-around in shape	77*		
Nostrils vestigial-holes only, slight protrusion, or nothing	79*	81	
Ears are vestigial-holes, small structure, or nothing	74*	84	
Mouth is small, ill-kept, a slit	94*	92	
Skin is gray, pallid, white, ashen	85*		
Body build is thin, frail, lacking in musculature	62*		
Clothing is one-piece, coveralls, jumpsuitlike	80*		
<b>Behaviors of Beings</b>			
Communicate with abductees by telepathy	83*	84	
Control abductee with instructions to forget, coercive reassurances	42	48	
One being serves as leader or liaison	80*		
One being (usually the leader) seems more caring than the rest	43	43	
Beings behave in a cold, businesslike way toward the abductee	59	62	
Beings are warm and considerate	15	14	
Beings are polite and reassuring, but perhaps manipulative, insincere	53	48	
<b>The Craft</b>			
UFO, object, or light received without hypnosis	73		
UFO is disk, domed, or Saturn-shaped	57*	59	
Interior includes examination room	83*	86	
Examination room is round, domed, smooth	64*	75	
Examination room is square, wedge, or pie-shaped	16*	14	
Lighting is diffuse, indirect, fluorescent	74	67	
Ambiance is chilly, damp, misty	59*	62	
Examination room contains bed, table, or recliner	81*	82	

## **Appendix G**

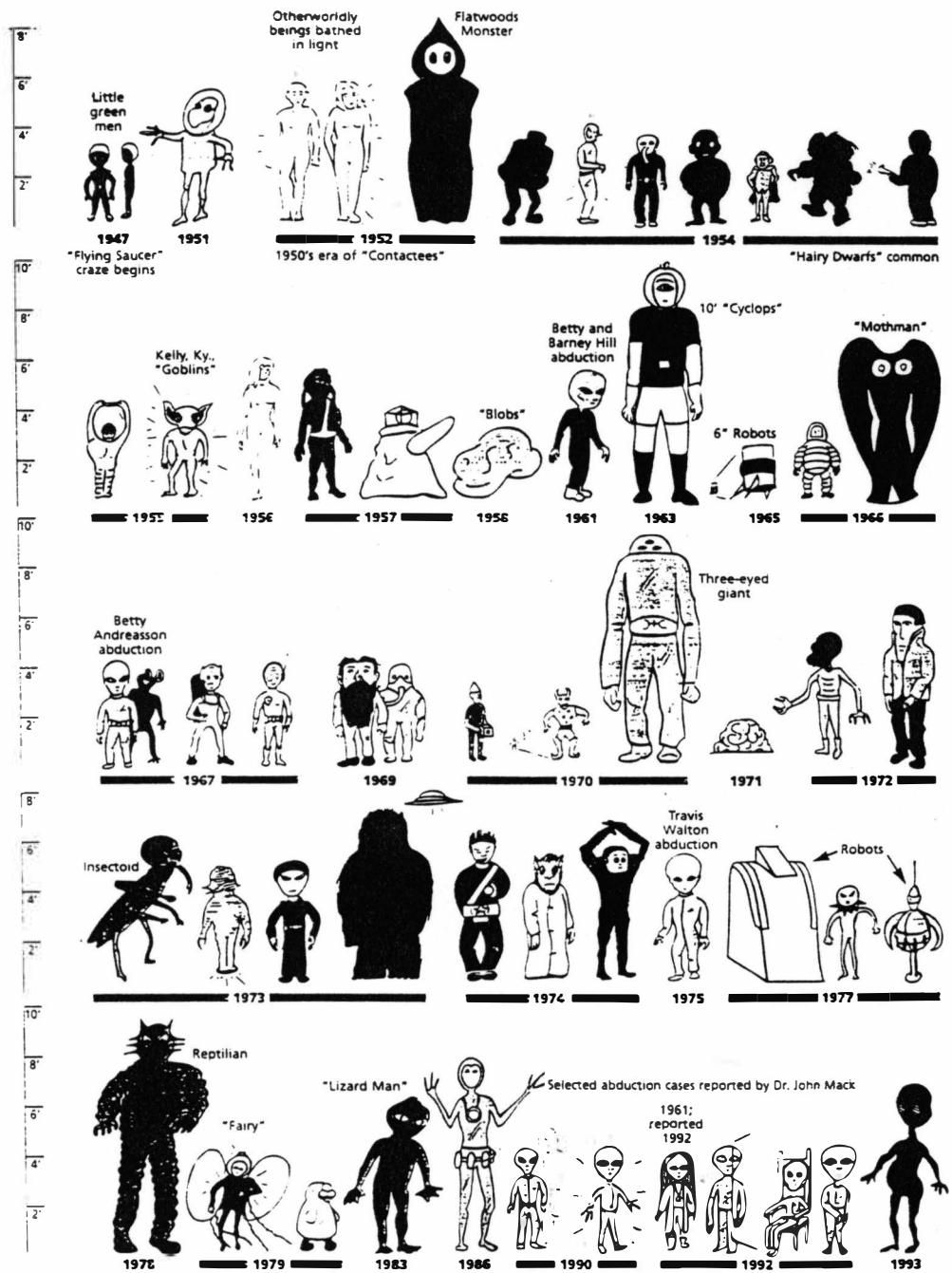
### **Jacobs Common Abduction Scenario Matrix**

### COMMON ABDUCTION SCENARIO MATRIX

	Primary	Secondary	Auxiliary
S	<i>Examination</i>	<i>Machine</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Physical</i>
E	Tissue Samples Implants	Enveloping Scanning Light Miscellaneous	Surgery Pool Cures Pain (Proto-People)
R			
U	<i>Staring</i>	<i>Visualization</i>	<i>Miscellaneous Mental</i>
D			
M	Mindscan Onset Calmative End-Pain Sexual Arousal	Imaging Envisioning Staging Testing	Media Display Knowledge Information Transfer
E			
C	<i>Urological-Gynecological</i>	<i>Child Presentation</i>	<i>Sexual Activity</i>
O	Egg-Sperm Collection	Incubarorium Nursery Baby Toddler, Youth Adolescent	Involuntary-Compulsive Humans Hybrids
R	Embryo Implanting Fetal Extraction		
P			

## **Appendix H**

### **Alien Types Reported**



## **Appendix I**

**Television Commercials using UFO/Alien Theme to Sell a Product**

*Airwalk Footwear* (UFO/alien abduction theme)

*Budweiser Beer* (Aliens abduct "UFO nut" for beer)

*Buick Century* (Alien family with dog in car)

*Butterfinger Candy* (Abduction theme with Simpson's tie-in)

*Butterfinger Candy* (UFO conference theme)

*Chili's Fajitas* (Grey alien/UFO contact theme)

*Coca-Cola* (Grey alien/abduction theme)

*Classic Stereo* (UFO/alien theme)

*Folger's Coffee* (Cup and saucer as UFO)

*Freshetta Pizza* (UFO investigator theme)

*Hagen Däss Ice Cream* (UFO/alien theme)

*Kellogg's Rice Krispies* (UFO club/abduction theme)

*Kodak Film and Cameras* (Abduction/government conspiracy theme)

*McDonalds* (Alien abduction theme)

*Milky Way Candy* (UFO investigator theme)

*Naya Water* (Alien abduction theme)

*Stove Top Stuffing* (UFO/alien theme)

*Volkswagen Jetta* (Alien drivers wanted theme)

*Walgreens* (Alien costume/Halloween theme)

## **Appendix J**

### **MUFON Symposium Vendors Description**

*Greenleaf Publications* – This vendor sold a variety of new and used books and videos dealing with the UFO/alien abduction subject matter.

*CUFOS (Center for UFO Studies)* – This vendor represented a major UFOlogical organization and offered memberships and publications.

*Arcturus Books* – This vendor sold books and tapes with popular UFO related content.

*Michigan MUFON (Mutual UFO Network)* – This vendor represented the major UFOlogical organization sponsoring the symposium.

*International UFO Center* – This vendor represented another UFOlogical research center.

*Shadowbox Collectibles* – This vendor sold collectible figurines and toys with popular UFO/alien content.

*Lightworks Audio and Video* – This vendor sold audio and video tapes dealing with the UFO/alien issue.

*Operation Right-to-Know* – This vendor represented a UFOlogical organization devoted to disclosing government UFO information.

*FUFOR (Fund for UFO Research)* – This vendor represented a major UFO research funding organization.

*Jacques Paulet* – This individual sold his own UFO/alien related materials.

*John Carpenter* – This individual also sold his own UFO/alien related materials.

## **Appendix K**

**John Carpenter Website Information**

Friday, July 2, 1999

The Ultimate UFOLOGISTS WWW Page

Page: 1



## The Ultimate UFOLOGISTS WWW Page

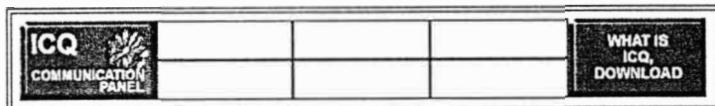
Support ...  
**CAUS** Citizens Against  
UFO Secrecy

\* [UFO Links](#)  
\* [UFO Photo](#)  
\* [UFO Logos](#) [UFO Books](#)  
\* [The Who's Who of UFOLOGY](#)

\* [Persons](#) [Groups](#)  
\* [UFO Events](#) [WWW Sites](#)  
\* [New\\_Finders](#) [ICQ Chat Room INDEX](#)

\* [Guest Book](#) [Feedback](#) [Email](#) [Upload Page](#)

**Join List**  
LISTBOTI



<http://nidwwwab.compuserve.com/homepages/AndyPage/WWWUFO.htm>

## **Appendix L**

### **Buzzword Flashcards and Name Identification List**

Flashcards:

1. M.I.B. (popular anagram for "Men in Black")
2. The Greys (typical alien type reported)
3. X File (reference to popular television show with abduction content)
4. Scully (reference to character on same television show)
5. Men in Black (as above)
6. E.B.E. (scientific anagram for "Extraterrestrial Biological Entity")
7. Area 51 (secret government test facility associated with UFO phenomenon)
8. M.U.F.O.N. (anagram for UFOlogical organization "Mutual UFO Network")
9. Fox (reference to character on above television show and television network which features same)
10. Black Helicopter (reference to popular UFO lore)
11. Majestic 12 (reference to popular UFO lore)
12. Walk-ins (reference to popular UFO lore)
13. The Nordics (another alien type reported)
14. Project Bluebook (Reference to popular UFO lore)
15. Flying Saucer (slang term for an Unidentified Flying Object)
16. Implant (reference to abduction event)
17. Crop Circle (reference to popular UFO lore)
18. Abduction (reference to abduction event)
19. Roswell, NM (reference to popular UFO lore)
20. Cattle Mutilation (reference to popular UFO lore)
21. Close Encounter (term for UFO sighting classification)
22. E.T. (popular anagram for "Extra-Terrestrial")
23. Independence Day (reference to recent popular UFO related film)
24. C.E. 3 (scientific anagram for "Close Encounter of the Third Kind," UFO sighting classification)
25. UFOlogist (reference to those who study the UFO phenomenon)

**Name Identification List:**

1. Kenneth Arnold
2. Travis Walton
3. Betty and Barney Hill
4. Whitley Strieber
5. Budd Hopkins
6. David Jacobs
7. Lt. Jesse Marcell
8. John Mack
9. Josef Allen Hynek
10. Donald Keyhoe
11. Robert Lazar
12. Edward Condon
13. Carl Sagan
14. Thomas Bullard
15. Dana Scully
16. Fox Mulder
17. Glen Campbell
18. Gordon Michael Scallion
19. Stanton Friedman
20. Rep. Steven H. Schiff
21. Jimmy Carter
22. Ezekial
23. Steven Spielberg
24. Jean-Luc Picard

## **Appendix M**

**HSIRB Research Approval Form**

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board



Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-3899

---

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

---

Date: 3 July 1997

To: Erika Loeffler, Principal Investigator  
Timothy McCauley, Student Investigator  
From: Richard Wright, Chair *Richard A. Wright*  
Re: HSIRB Project Number 97-06-06

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Ostensible Abductions, Real Anthropology" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: 3 July 1998

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