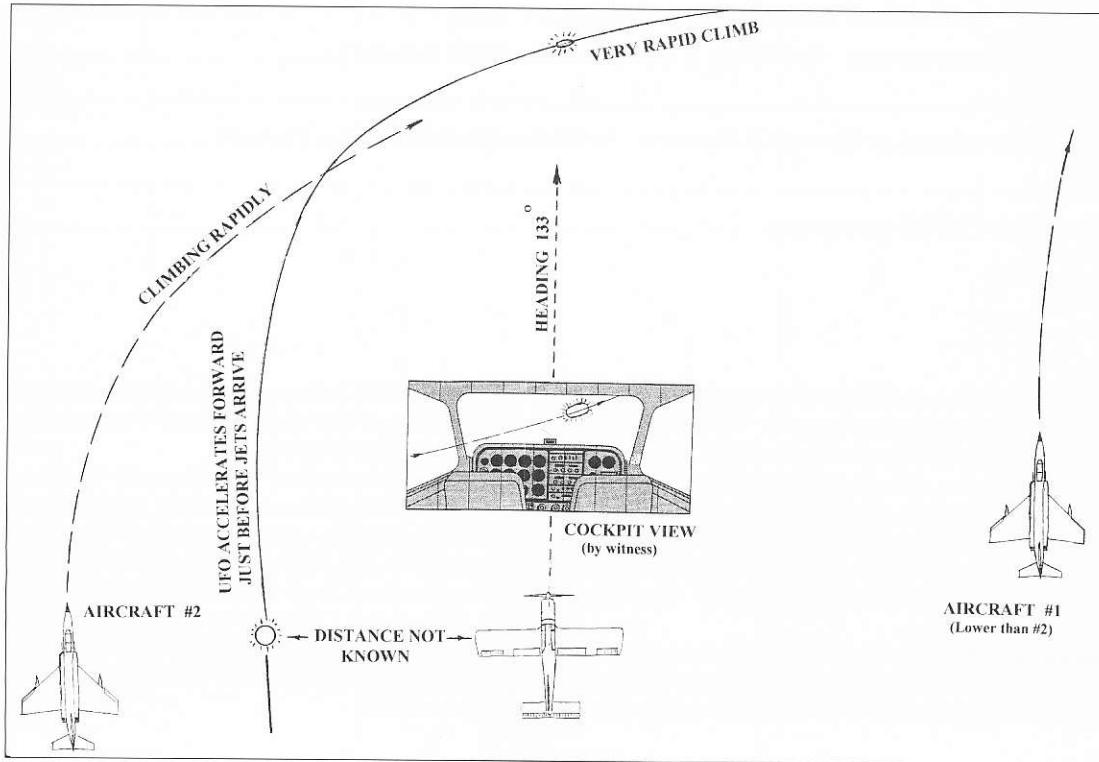


AN AIRCRAFT/UFO ENCOUNTER OVER GERMANY IN 1976



INTERNATIONAL

UFO

REPORTER

Editors:

Jerome Clark
George M. Eberhart
Mark Rodeghier

Contributing Editors:

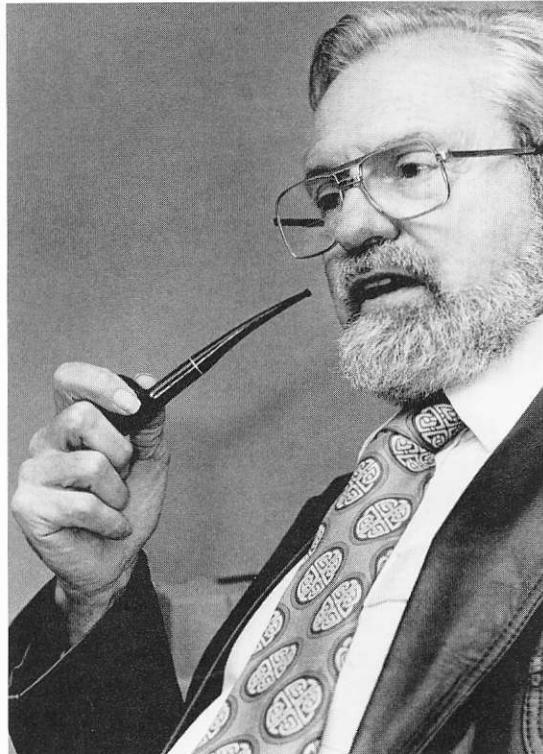
Bill Chalker
Richard F. Haines
Richard Hall
Kevin D. Randle
Jenny Randles
Chris Rutkowski
Jennie Zeidman

Web site:

www.cufos.org

E-mail:

Infocenter@cufos.org



J. Allen Hynek
1910-1986

AN AIRCRAFT/UFO ENCOUNTER OVER GERMANY by Richard F. Haines.....	3
UFO BEINGS, FOLKLORE, AND MYTHOLOGY: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES by Lisa Oakman	7
COMMENTARY by Thomas E. Bullard	12
MACK BRAZEL RECONSIDERED by Thomas J. Carey and Donald R. Schmitt	13
BOOK REVIEW	19
THE FORGOTTEN LETTERS OF EDWARD J. RUPPELT by Michael Hall and Wendy Connors	20
LETTERS	28
OF INTEREST TO CUFOS ASSOCIATES	31

International UFO Reporter (ISSN 0720-174X) is published quarterly by the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited. Copyright © 2000 by the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies. Third-class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois.

Advertisements accepted for publication in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies.

Address all article submissions, letters to the editor, and other editorial correspondence to *International UFO Reporter*, Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago,

Illinois 60659. Address all subscription correspondence to *International UFO Reporter*, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659.

The *International UFO Reporter* is a benefit publication mailed to Associates of the Center for a contribution of \$25.00 or more. Foreign Associates add \$5.00 for delivery. All amounts in U.S. funds. Other publications also available for contributors of larger amounts. For details, write to the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659, USA. **Postmaster:** Send Form 3579 to CUFOS, 2457 West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659.

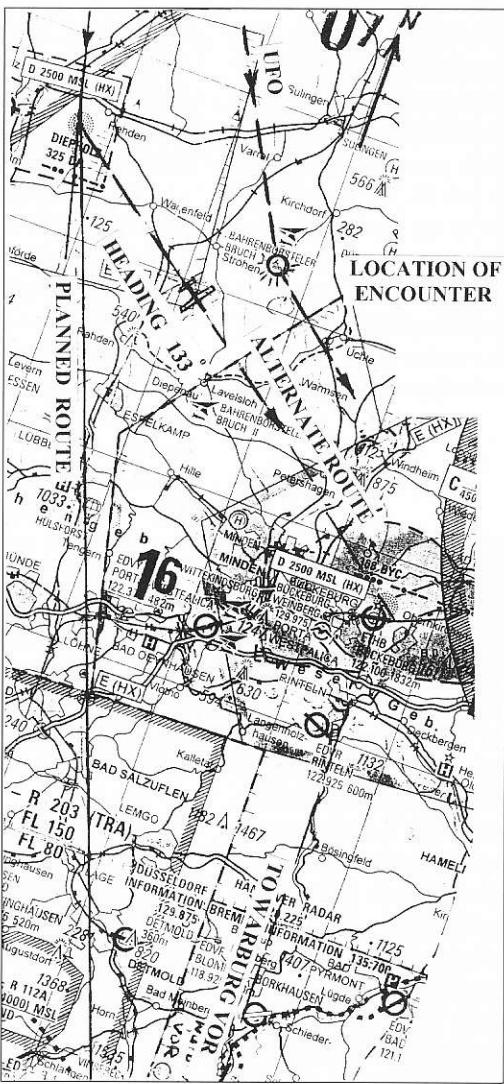
AN AIRCRAFT/UFO ENCOUNTER OVER GERMANY IN 1976

BY RICHARD F. HAINES

Private pilot D. W., 33 years old, took off from Reichelsheim, West Germany, with a passenger at about 8:30 a.m. local time on August 13, 1976, in a rented Piper Arrow PA-28 (R-200). The weather was good, with only light winds out of the north at 10–15 knots. The flight north to the small island of Wangerooge on the North Sea coast of Germany went smoothly. After dropping his passenger off at the island's small airport, D. W. took off again, landing at Wilhelmshaven airport for fuel at about 3:30 p.m. After refueling, he took off toward a VOR (very high frequency omnirange station used for navigation) located to the south near Diepholz ($52^{\circ} 36' N.$, $8^{\circ} 20' E.$) on the Hunte River. The time was now about 4:20 p.m. He climbed to 3,500 feet above mean sea level (all altitudes are reported using this scale) and trimmed the airplane for straight and level flight on a heading of 133° using its aileron autopilot control. His cruise speed was about 120 knots (22 inches manifold pressure/2400 rpm). The flat and gently rolling ground below him varied little in altitude (typically 50–100 feet).

The air pressure was high and the sky was clear. The sun was at $261^{\circ} 20'$ azimuth and $24^{\circ} 56'$ altitude, and the moon had not yet risen. Winds remained relatively constant out of the north at 10 knots. Nothing out of the ordinary had occurred up to this point.

Richard F. Haines is a retired research space psychologist and CUFOS Scientific Board member living in the Bay Area.



SIGHTING DETAILS

At about 5:00 p.m., D. W. was on a heading of about 115° true halfway between Diepholz and Petershagen (approximately $52^{\circ} 22' N.$, $9^{\circ} E$) when he noticed a strange light approaching from the northeast at about his 9 o'clock position. On the left is an aeronautical chart of the area. The "planned route" shown here was to be used to retrace the one he had taken on his trip north that morning; however, he changed his mind near Diepholz and used a new radio navigation fix (Bückeburg) to the east in order to fly over different territory.

Initially the UFO seemed to be a great distance away, but over a 3–5-minute period, it came closer and closer, taking up a fixed position off his left wing for several more minutes at an unknown but apparently near distance. The object was always seen against the blue sky background throughout the nine-minute-long encounter. It was oval-shaped and very bright yellow in its center with an indistinct flame-orange boundary. He said it looked like a "headlight"; its diameter subtended about $3\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of arc. (Compare to the full moon, which subtends only one-half a degree.) Pictured on the cover is a rough sketch made for the author on August 24, 1999, in Ottobrunn, Germany, by the pilot in relation to his left wing. An enlarged drawing of the object is also shown.

Suddenly his aircraft went into two rapid 360° clockwise rolls from which he had to recover manually. For many years the witness assumed the roll was due to a misadjustment

of rudder trim. He discovered that he had dropped about 500 feet during the roll-and-recovery maneuver. (Loss of altitude is not uncommon during a roll and its early recovery.) When he next checked his instrument panel, he discovered that his magnetic compass was spinning in a clockwise direction so fast that he couldn't read the numbers in its square window. Checking outside again, he saw that the UFO was still beside him, suggesting that it too had lost the same amount of altitude. He began to climb back to his cruise altitude and called on the radio (the only such report made) to flight control at Hannover airport to the east of his position. He reported what had just happened and also that the strange, oval, yellowish light was still beside him.

The air traffic controller told him that the radar showed both his airplane and another object nearby him. He said aircraft would be sent to investigate. Little more than four minutes later, two USAF F-4 Phantom jets arrived on either side of him travelling between 400 and 500 mph (his rough estimate). The jet on the right side was slightly lower, closer, and ahead of the jet on the left. D. W. was certain they were American airplanes. Just as the jets arrived, the UFO accelerated forward and then upward at about a 30° angle above the horizontal and turned right, passing in front of his aircraft. It quickly outdistanced its pursuers and was out of sight (see sketch on cover) in a matter of seconds. The compass eventually returned to normal operation after the UFO departed.

THE INTERROGATION

The pilot was directed to change heading to the left and land at Hannover airport some 45 miles east-southeast of his current position. He made his approach, landed there in another 15–20 minutes, then was directed to taxi to a special area and secure his airplane. Importantly, his compass operated normally during this flight leg.

Within minutes of his landing, a military van without license plates pulled up to his plane and five men in business suits got out. They would not identify who they worked for. He was taken to an underground room on the airport property where a man sat behind a desk. Two of the original men left the room. The others then began asking him detailed questions in German about the sighting; he had the impression, however, that one of the men was an American. This questioning went on for about three hours; he had to repeat the entire event many times as well as answer technical details (perhaps to test the level of his knowledge as a pilot). At one point he was politely asked to read and sign a form printed in German. It stated that he agreed never to disclose the details of his UFO sighting. He could not remember if it was a generic form or whether it had the words/initials "UFO" printed on it. The pilot bravely declined to sign the form despite the fact that it was firmly suggested that his pilot's license might be suspended if he did not do so. After this, they finally let him go.

The now tired D. W. left the room to discover it was

dark outside and that he could not fly home because he did not have the required night-flying certification. He stayed overnight near the airport at his own expense.

The next morning he returned to the airport and made sure that his aircraft was flightworthy, including the compass. Everything was normal, so he took off and flew home without further mishap.

AFTERMATH

Although the airplane had just passed a required 50-hour flight inspection shortly before D. W.'s flight north, its owner later discovered that parts of the aircraft's landing gear and engine crankshaft were strongly and permanently magnetized. They had to be replaced at a later date. The magnetic compass was also replaced (date and location not known); he recalled clearly that it functioned normally during his return trip from Hannover. He told me that the rental plane had crashed years later and was destroyed.

I first met D. W. in August 1999 in Ottobrunn at the invitation of ufologist Illobrand von Ludwiger, who set up the meeting. A long and thorough taped interview ensued. I was impressed with his forthrightness and his technical knowledge on many topics. He never hedged on answers to any questions and told me he "had suffered greatly from this event [because of] . . . not being able to produce any definite proof after 23 years and also because, after the questioning in Hannover, a feeling of threat arose in me." He also offered the view that "the subject of unknown flying objects is a case for public ridicule and is fought in every way. It can lead as far as destroying someone's whole existence. The best minds of this country have been successfully forced into exile." (Personal communication, November 1, 1999.)

He said that he did not experience any abnormal physical symptoms during or after his sighting and that his airplane operated normally during his flight home from Hannover. As would be expected under the circumstances, he was emotionally upset by these events.

THE EVENT IN PERSPECTIVE

To fully appreciate why D. W. may have been subjected to an intense interrogation, we must understand the times during which this aerial encounter took place. The Cold War was raging between Soviet-bloc armed forces in the east and North Atlantic Treaty Organization forces in the west. The U.S. Air Force was stationed at many bases in West Germany and routinely flew training missions near the border between the two Germanys. Of course, pilots of both the Soviet Union and East German air forces performed similarly provocative maneuvers. This probably explains the great speed with which the F-4s arrived at the pilot's location just southeast of Diepholz and about 90 miles west of the East German border. They certainly had to have been in the air already and relatively close when the pilot radioed in his report. This case also underscores the

close working relationship between German civil and military air traffic controllers, as well as between the German and American controllers at that time.

Perhaps the ground authorities thought that the UFO was some new Soviet reconnaissance vehicle or offensive military system well inside NATO territory, in which case both the Germans and Americans would have been very concerned. It is also feasible, however, that ground radar had already been tracking the UFO before the pilot's radio call.

DISCUSSION

This case presents a number of interesting details of potential scientific value. *First, the alleged radar contact with the small airplane and the UFO*, both of which reflected pulsed microwaves in the ultrahigh frequency range (the L radar band, approximately 50 cm wavelength) of the electromagnetic spectrum. This wavelength is typical for air traffic control radar. Thus, the UFO did not exhibit stealth characteristics by masking its radar signature (assuming it was under intelligent control).

Second, the very intense magnetic field that apparently originated with the UFO and left permanent and measurably large traces in several ferrous-metal parts of the airplane. Such magnetic-field effects upon aircraft systems have been reported previously in the UFO literature. (See Richard F. Haines, "Fifty-Six Aircraft Pilot Sightings Involving Electromagnetic Effects," in Walter Andrus, ed., *MUFON 1992 International UFO Symposium Proceedings*, pp. 102–131). It is not possible to determine the strength of the magnetic field either at the source or at the aircraft's sensor without knowing the distance to the UFO and the threshold sensitivity and dynamic damping characteristics of the gyrocompass. Most of these devices rotate at about 18,000 rpm and are electrically driven. (A gyrocompass consists of a spinning gyroscope which can freely rotate in a horizontal direction.) The reported high angular rate of clockwise compass revolution during the close encounter is also intriguing since these systems are deliberately designed to dampen out such perturbing effects. It is not likely that some change in the inertial field caused the compass card to rotate rapidly.

Third, the unexpected roll of the aircraft without the controls being moved. This could have been due to the effect of an invisible but powerful wake vortex left behind by another swept-wing aircraft; this is a common problem when small planes follow larger ones. However, the pilot said he did not see any other aircraft before the UFO encounter. The roll also could have been caused by a change in the output of the plane's simple autopilot control system, which is designed to keep the wings level. This control system employs a gyrostabilized aileron control that the pilot switches on after getting the aircraft stabilized in wings-level flight. The cause of such an unexpected, transient, autopilot output is not known.

Fourth, the reported hue of the oval-shaped object's center was a deep yellow (approximately 580 nanometers in wavelength) surrounded by an orange, ring-like halo (approximately 600 nanometers) that extended about 25% of the object's diameter from its apparent edge. Could this have been a magnetically contained plasma of some kind?

Fifth, the debriefing of a civilian pilot by unidentified aviation officials is unique as far as I am aware. However, it is not at all uncommon for military pilots to be closely interrogated by military intelligence after reporting an event such as this.

This case is strikingly similar to the DC-10 encounter on March 12, 1977, with another round, intense white light which apparently influenced the airplane's compass system and also its coupled autopilot (operating in "heading mode"). (See Peter A. Sturrock, "Physical Evidence Related to UFO Reports," *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 12, no. 2 (1998): 197–199.) In this instance, the magnetic-field effect was also transient, with all compass systems returning to their normal and original headings shortly after the light source departed.

One last point of interest is the *controlled high-speed response of the UFO to the approaching jet interceptors*. This fact strongly suggests an intelligently controlled response by the UFO. Did it accelerate, turn, and then climb out of sight because it did not want to be fired at or photographed?

OTHER UFO REPORTS

At least 50 UFO sightings were reported in August 1976 around the globe. Seventeen of these sightings (34%) occurred in Western Europe, England, and North Africa, based upon a current edition of the *U* UFO database (available for a fee from Larry Hatch, 142 Jeter Street, Redwood City, CA, 94062, or on the Web at www.jps.net/larryhat/). These cases are summarized as follows:

August (unspecified date), 1017. Lake Bolmen, Sweden. Swedish J-35 jet pursued six delta-shaped silver objects in formation until they accelerated out of sight. *AFU Newsletter* (Arkivet för UFO-forskning), no. 18 (January–March 1980).

August 2, 0330. St.-Pierre-sur-Mer, France. Domed saucer seen at 5–6 meters altitude; orange lights went off and on slowly. *Lumières dans la nuit*, no. 166, p. 26.

August 3, 2325–2330. Al Munastir, Tunisia. Tunisian Air Force pilot made radar contact for five minutes at very high altitude. Lawrence Fawcett and Barry J. Greenwood, *Clear Intent* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 80.

August 4, 2350. Al Munastir, Tunisia. UFO followed Air France airliner on landing approach to airport. Fawcett and Greenwood, p. 80.

August 6, 0020–0145. Sukrah, Tunisia. Four small "helicopters" seen in the sky; no radar confirmation. Fawcett and Greenwood, p. 81.

August 7, 2348–2412. Hawmat as Suq, Tunisia. Two commercial pilots had a radar/visual sighting; UFO landed near airport. Fawcett and Greenwood, p. 81.

August 8, 1950. Sidi Ahmed Airport, Bizerte, Tunisia. Radar tracked an unknown object. Fawcett and Greenwood, p. 81.

August 10, 0500. Albufeira, Portugal. Two ground witnesses saw a huge object. Ignacio Darnaude, "Spies in the Supernumerary Attic?" *Flying Saucer Review* 23, no. 3 (1977): 20–21.

August 11, 2300. La Línea, Spain. Two young men saw a nocturnal light for two minutes at high altitude entering a larger object. "UFO Blacks out Lighthouse," *Flying Saucer Review* 23, no. 1 (1977): iii.

August 13, 2250. Kabdrup, Denmark. CE-2 event. "Denmark E-M Case Investigated," *MUFON UFO Journal*, no. 106 (September 1976): 10–12.

August 15, 0300. El Real de la Jara, near Sevilla, Spain. Bright nocturnal light hovered as 20 automobiles stopped on the highway. "Some Recent Spanish Reports," *Flying Saucer Review* 22, no. 6 (1977): 27–29.

August 21, 1200. Nordbygda, Norway. Dark, hissing disk observed. Anton Lidstrom, "Reports from Norway," *MUFON UFO Journal*, no. 144 (February 1980): 9–10, 15.

August 21, 2230. Forêt de Moulière, near Poitiers, France. Long (30-meter) cigar descended from 4,000 ft., rose again; humming sound, odor experienced. Michel Figuet and Jean-Louis Ruchon, *OVNI: Le premier dossier complet des rencontres rapprochées en France* (Nice: Editions Alain Lefevre, 1979), p. 627.

August 22, 0001–0400. Dossenheim-sur-Zinsel,

France. Eleven witnesses saw luminous orb, 3–4 meters in diameter, with antennae, flying at low altitude. *Lumières dans la nuit*, no. 166, pp. 17–20.

August 22, 0900–0930. Ringsaker, Norway. Noiseless, bright cylinder observed above church. Lidstrom, "Reports from Norway."

August 25, 1230. Reddish, Stockport, England. Four people saw beings in polished-silver suits and a saucer rising upward from a schoolyard. David Rees, "'Floating' Entity at Reddish," *Flying Saucer Review* 25, no. 2 (1979): 29–31.

August 28, 0000. Mosjøen, Norway. Square UFO with windows seen by people in two cars; EM effects; heard "crack" sound. Lidstrom, "Reports from Norway."

Another case took place almost one month later (on September 19, 1976) and involved two U.S.-built F-4 Phantom jets of the Iranian Imperial Air Force pursuing an intensely bright UFO in the vicinity of Tehran, Iran. This important and well-known case is included here since both of the Iranian jets experienced UHF and interphone-system interference when near the violet, orange, and white UFO. When the pilot of one aircraft armed his AIM-9 missile system to fire at the unidentified luminous object, the system malfunctioned and could not be fired. The UFO departed at "many times the speed of sound," according to one of the pilots (Lieut. Jafari). The pursuit of the present UFO in northern Germany by two USAF F-4 Phantom jets no doubt contributed to the official American interest in the UFO aerial encounter in Tehran (Fawcett and Greenwood, pp. 82–84). ♦

JOURNAL OF UFO STUDIES

New Series, Vol. 7, 2000

NEW!

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

Geophysical Parameters and UFO Sighting Frequencies	Edward J. Zeller and Gisela Dreschhoff	1
A Search for Possible Causal Associations between UFOs and Perturbations in Recorded Geophysical Data	Joseph S. Accetta	11
Project Sign and the Estimate of the Situation	Michael D. Swords	27
Evaluating Degrees of Anxiety and Perceptions in a Group of Abduction Experiencers	S. Peter Resta	65

LITERATURE REVIEW

Abductions Under Fire: A Review of Recent Abduction Literature	Thomas E. Bullard	81
--	-------------------	----

BOOK REVIEWS

<i>The Biological Universe</i> , by Steven Dick	David M. Jacobs	107
<i>At the Threshold</i> , by Charles F. Emmons	Ron Westrum	111
<i>The Cash-Landrum UFO Incident</i> , by John Schuessler	Richard Hall	113

Now available for \$21.00 postpaid from CUFOS, 2457 W. Peterson, Chicago, IL 60659.

Purchasers outside the United States add \$3.00 per volume for mailing.

UFO BEINGS, FOLKLORE, AND MYTHOLOGY: PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

BY LISA OAKMAN

I lived well into middle life without ever suspecting that I was the veteran of many encounters with beings. In this article, I want to describe the process I went through to learn this, and some of the signposts I used along the way. Based on my experiences, I then want to offer some thoughts on a mythic understanding. Applying myth and folklore to ufology is not new; the best-known example of it is probably Jacques Vallee's *Passport to Magonia* (1969). I want to explore similar ideas.

BEFORE THE KNOWLEDGE

Never at the conscious level did I have any indication that I was an experiencer until I was in my late thirties. I have degrees in journalism and psychology. I worked as a writer, an editor, and in the field of mental health. My interests are prosaic—I like classical music, good books, and travel.

I never thought about the subject of UFOs. It never came up as a topic of conversation, because I wasn't interested in it, and neither were my friends or coworkers. So I had no reason to examine my own feelings or behaviors on the subject.

If anyone had ever asked me what I thought about UFOs, I would have replied that they were impossible, and anyone who believed in them was deluded. I never read about the subject, because I thought it was hogwash. I did in fact have odd, subtle feelings and behaviors, but I just thought they were ordinary quirks like everyone has.

For example, I had several fears I thought so unremarkable that I never discussed them with anyone. One was an intense fear of flying. However, I was not afraid of crashing; I was afraid that I would never return to earth again. I took ground transportation whenever possible.

I also feared people coming through the walls and windows. I therefore slept with a light on, to be better prepared if they came. I never—as a child or an adult—slept with the windows open. They had to be closed and locked, then I drew the blinds.

Lisa Oakman is a pseudonym. The author lives in an urban area of the northeastern United States. She works for a social service organization in the mental health field.

I always feared eyes. I could hardly look people in the eye when I spoke with them. I was always first to break off a gaze. I especially disliked pale eyes. My actual fear was quite specific: I was afraid that by looking into someone's eyes I was placing myself under their control.

On the other hand, there were some things I was always drawn to. I loved to look at sparkling light—a flashing lighthouse, snapping fire, or twinkling star. Above all, I loved the sparkle of sunlight on water. I also loved the colors gold and blue. I was drawn to all hues of gold, but only one shade of blue—bright, deep azure.

My favorite reading subjects from early childhood were religion, mythology, and folklore. This is still true. But I always had one specific interest: books about beings and their activities. I loved the elves, fairies, and trolls of folklore; the gods, angels, and demons of religion and mythology. I wanted to know about their lives and their dealings with people. I especially loved reading memorates—a term coined by Swedish folklorist C. W. von Sydow to describe a tale, based on an actual happening, that is believed to be true.

I was also attracted to certain religions. One of these was Hinduism, because of its stories about the complex hierarchies and relationships of beings. Another was traditional shamanism, which had many accounts of the sometimes dangerous interactions between humans and land guardians or animal spirits. Finally, I loved the fairy traditions of the Celtic countries, which described so many kinds of beings: brownies and selkies, pookas and banshees. I was fascinated by the descriptions of their dealings with people.

Then there was the Bible. When I was 10, I worked extra jobs in order to buy an illustrated children's Bible. I only wanted it for one thing—the pictures of the angels described in the New Testament. I spent hours looking at those few portrayals.

THE KNOWLEDGE

I was not prepared for the sudden opening of my memory. Though I disliked ufology, I had a minor interest in the paranormal and occasionally traded books with an acquaintance. One day he brought out John E. Mack's *Abduction*

(1994). I had never heard of the book or its author. My friend asked if I thought such things were real. To my great surprise, I answered yes. He asked if I wished to borrow the book. I suddenly felt strongly that I did *not* want to borrow it, but didn't want to say so. I took the book home but, again surprising myself, hid it under a pile of other books for several weeks.

I started to feel like a coward, so I forced myself to read the book's introduction. Immediately, a memory began to surface of being abducted by greys. A deep terror came with it, the kind of absolute terror that accompanies the unknown. I stopped reading, and shoved *Abduction* back under the other books. Then I panicked. If that memory had really happened, I didn't want to know—it was too weird for me. With a mental iron hand, I shoved it back down. I kept my mind inflexibly closed against this material for the next six months. I was petrified. I remembered that when the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* came out (1977), I had crossed the street rather than see the posters advertising the film.

But during that six months I felt a continuous, burning pressure, and I knew I was going to lose the battle to keep the memories down. I finally found a good therapist whose field was trauma. It didn't occur to me then that the usual definition of "trauma" for a psychologist did not include the trauma of anomalous experiences. We had some rocky times at the outset over this issue. But he was willing to work with me and see where it would lead.

My memories came up in an orderly, layered fashion. The memories of abductions by greys returned first. At the time, I did not know that this was the classic abduction scenario. Then came memories of encounters with many other kinds of beings. Some acted evil, others mischievous, still others noble and wise. My childhood bewilderment surfaced as well. I had no way to categorize all these beings, so I named them based on their characteristics: big eyes, apricot-fire beings, little lavenders, animal goblins, tea beings.

None of the memories were initially at conscious level; I had never known I was an experiencer. But once memories began pushing up, I was able to retrieve them in therapy using only focused concentration. Therapy was therefore fairly simple, since I needed no hypnosis. I often closed my eyes to remove myself from the outside world as I retrieved memories. If a memory was particularly overwhelming, however, my mind would balk and blank out. Then the therapist used a relaxation technique to calm my fears. He didn't elicit material, but merely reiterated that I was safe and could remember everything.

I discovered there were two kinds of repression that kept memory unconscious. The first was my own. I repressed the encounters out of fear and an absolute terror of the unknown. Throughout my childhood and teen years I had no support system that could help me integrate them all. Therefore, I pushed them out of my conscious mind, where they would not interfere with daily life. This is a well-known

psychological reaction to trauma.

But the second kind of repression was different. This was done by the beings themselves. I apparently entered into an altered state when encounters occurred. It seemed to be an altered energy or time field created by the beings. Everything fell silent. The air felt heavy, like liquid crystal, and it seemed to carry nonverbal information between the beings and myself. Time slowed and eddied in strange ways. Beings usually informed me (telepathically in most cases) that I would not remember the events until much later. As they communicated this, an opaque screen formed in my mind, and the encounter began to feel dim, even while it was still occurring. Additionally, when the encounter ended, the altered field also dissolved. Merely exiting the field also cloaked the memory.

Bringing the memories to the surface felt like swimming up through a tunnel. I could free myself from my own panic and terror. But I had to reenter the altered state in my mind in order to retrieve the memories at all. It seemed the events had occurred in a state-dependent field; memories could only be reexperienced by returning there.

The encounters were at the root of my odd fears and behaviors, which slowly dissolved. The reasons for my focused reading also became clear. As a child I had many experiences, but there was no one who could help me with them. I had to have some kind of framework to make sense of it all. In the books I found a wealth of material about beings—their habits, history, and interactions with humans. I found helpful categorizations. Most crucial was the division of beings into the noble and benevolent; the puckish and mischievous; and the demonic and evil. The classifications were similar enough to help me know what kinds of beings I saw and behavior to expect, even though different cultures described different beings.

Based on both experience and reading, I had developed my own cautious typology, even as a child. There were land beings who lived in a single place. Like most beings, they were apparently able to manipulate energy, or were made of a subtler form of matter, so that they and their dwellings were invisible unless they wished otherwise. There were other beings who lived in another dimension or world. Some were more closely linked to humanity or the earth than others. But all the beings ran the gamut of moral types. Manipulative beings had highly sophisticated emotional and energetic tactics. Noble, compassionate beings were intensely holy. Interaction with them produced in me theophany and awe described only in the literatures of religious ecstasy. Almost all kinds of beings understood humans extremely well; their commerce with us appeared to be ancient and complex.

THE BEINGS

As my memories revealed, I had encounters with beings once a week or more through my early 20s. I thought this was normal. I was much surprised when I started reading

UFO literature to find that most people reported fewer encounters. I was also surprised to find that most accounts concentrated on the greys, with some emphasis on a few other species such as reptilians, praying mantises, or Nordics. I saw many other kinds in addition to these. Here are some examples.

Giants. I sometimes saw beings who were six to seven feet tall, with brightly colored skin—red, purple, blue, green, orange. They had long black hair. I always saw them in groups of at least three. I never saw them coming in ships; they always appeared when I was walking alone, usually in wild places. They never abducted. They were primarily interested in the health of the land and its plants, and communicated this to me.

Fairy rulers. Another type of beings I describe (using folkloric terms) as fairy rulers. I was usually fetched by spindly, mischievous, pale-skinned beings, and entered a tunnel apparently going underground. There I saw palaces blazing with light and beauty. Many kinds of beings were there: some small and misshapen, others gangly and hairy, yet others opalescent and lissome. The rulers were tall and queenly, aristocratic and aloof, with extremely beautiful, androgynous faces. They were usually dressed simply, in plain gold or white robes, but wore intensely sparkling, glorious jewels. I very much wanted to kneel and pay homage to them.

Goblins. I had many encounters with small, goblin-esque beings. Some were mottled and pale; others had shifting, rainbowy skin, like bright chameleons. These latter often appeared on the windowsill of the bathroom when I was a child and pulled me outside. They pixy-led me around my own yard, so that I did not know whether I was climbing a mountain, fording a river, or flying. In reality, I was stumbling around on the grass. ("Pixyleading" is an old folkloric term for this kind of tricksy, mischievous behavior.)

Guardians. Sometimes I felt a joyous desire to go outside. A ship appeared that looked like a brilliant, flawless diamond. The beings from it were about five feet tall and slender; they looked like they were made of flashing gold or silver light. They wore tight-fitting tights and caps that looked to be made of shining fish-scales. I always saw at least two of them together. They never abducted; I only went to the ship if I so desired. They seemed to be guardians of some kind, for they explained how to deal with dangerous beings and sometimes rescued me from their clutches.

Ameboid suckers. I sometimes experienced horrible, nightmarish beings. They were ameboid in shape, fluid, and bruise-colored. They had ugly, moist snouts. They never came on ships or abducted. They simply entered directly into my bedroom, always at night. They fastened themselves to me in fleshy areas and sucked, leaving ugly, round purplish-red marks. Some appeared to suck energy, others blood. I was so terrified I couldn't scream and just lay there paralyzed until they left. Then I screamed the house down.

Nordics. Sometimes I was abducted by beings whose ship had a rainbow of lights around it. Even the beam of light extending from it was often colored. The beings looked like tall and lovely humans. Often blue-eyed, they were very graceful and seemed kind. They told me (often verbally) that I was special and worthy, and had important work to do. They promised to return and instruct me in it. They showed me the technology of their ship and explained it in terms that made no sense to me. They said they came from Venus or other planets. Even though I saw them occasionally, I never did find out exactly what "important work" I was supposed to do.

Animal guardians. There was another kind of being I saw rarely—only one at a time and only when I was walking alone in a wild area. These never abducted, but appeared before me as if through a veil. Sometimes they were male, sometimes female. They had a luminous, perfect human form. But there were antlers on the head, or a bearlike shape around the body, or the intense eyes and coloring of the mountain lion. In the presence of one of these beings, vivid imagery of animals' lives and struggles ran through my mind. I thought these beings were rulers of, or guardians over, wild animals.

Serene ones. Other beings came directly into my bedroom, usually in twos or threes. Their eyes looked like golden light. They had serene, androgynous faces of great beauty. Their garments seemed made of light and energy and were a deep, luminous azure. They entered the room as if through a veil, preceded by a wavering and thickening of the air, and then a wave of sparkling. They never abducted. I felt nobility and compassion from them, though I was frightened of them when young because they were so different. I always wished to kneel in their presence.

Most of my childhood and teenage experiences occurred when I was alone. Sometimes beings came into the house, either through the windows and walls, or through a veil that seemed to open in the air near me. I often had experiences when walking alone in wild places. Other times I felt pulled to go out to the yard at night, where the beings or a ship awaited me. Sometimes, feeling the beings' pull dragging me outside, I ran to my parents' room and tried to wake them up. But they were so heavily asleep I thought they were dead—I couldn't wake them even by hitting and screaming.

A few times my mother was with me when I saw the guardian beings in the house. She also saw them, and described them exactly. But she was terrified. The memory seemed to drain from her even more quickly than from me. Several times, on the ship of abducting greys, I saw my parents, also being examined. In the morning, I saw that they had scoop marks or inflammations identical to mine. But when I inquired, they just said, defensively, that they had merely had odd dreams.

Apart from my parents, I was rarely with anyone else during these experiences, though I often wished I could be. It seemed to me that the beings often waited for me to be alone and even pulled me towards solitude, so that they could appear freely.

COPING WITH THE KNOWLEDGE

As the memories piled up, I felt myself receding from ordinary concerns. I worked mechanically. I felt frustrated talking to friends, since I could not describe my real struggles. I wasn't only overwhelmed by feelings from the past; I was also groping to find a more inclusive paradigm. I started preferring the company of religious people, though I was not conventionally religious. But I was dismayed to find that many of them felt the beings described in their traditions were mere stories. They held a conditional belief that it might all be true, but essentially they disbelieved it. As I was living direct, raw experiences, such watered-down attitudes didn't help me much.

It helped me more to meet other experiencers, when I finally got strong enough to do it. I was with others who had also known direct contact. I was only frustrated that many experiencers seemed to lack a solid framework that would explain the whole pattern of contact.

Ultimately, I came to accept the encounters, but it was a mind-shattering battle. I used to berate myself for being so weird as to think about visitations, abductions, and beings in my house. I finally felt comfortable in daily life again. However, I have little patience with narrow, fundamentalist attitudes, whether scientific, religious, or secular. I didn't change jobs, but I now feel most drawn to work that helps people. I also prefer to read about new discoveries in consciousness studies, anthropology, and religion.

I also had to accept that I still frequently have experiences, generally when I am alone. I have learned the signs of having had one, as I do not remember them consciously. If I have a strong emotional response to a place, or sleep heavily and long, or suddenly desire something intensely, I usually find an experience underneath. They seem to happen about once a month. I can recall them in therapy. I feel uncomfortable about still having encounters, though therapy is helping me understand that I seem to be, for whatever reason, likely to have them now, and probably always. I sometimes rebel at this—I would like to be a normal person.

The therapist, having done some reading, now understands that experiences do happen. It helps me much more now that he is accepting and more knowledgeable. Working with me has also changed his worldview. It seems to have been a struggle similar to mine.

AFTERMATH

Unearthing the experiences gave me many new ideas. In this section, I want to present some of these.

It is occasionally stated that experiencers must have

something to teach the rest of the world merely by virtue of having had experiences. Some writers look for evidence of a new spirituality or wisdom. I think this is a mistake. Descriptions are important so that researchers, the public, and other experiencers can compare notes. Interpretive frameworks have to be erected on that foundation. But wisdom and understanding do not arise just from the experience. That is just raw data—shocking, traumatizing, overwhelming. The struggle for a sensible paradigm is part of the process that leads to real understanding. This is often a slow process. It is tempting to rush to judgment, since everyone is uncomfortable with the inexplicable.

Neither experiencers nor ufologists have to start the search at ground zero. The mythology, religion, and folklore of the world comprise a vast and helpful corpus. At its most basic level, this material describes encounters with many types of beings. This kind of superficial comparison is often used in ufology: comparing Ezekiel's vision to modern UFO reports, or fairy changelings to the abduction scenario.

But it could also help researchers and experiencers gain a deeper conceptual grasp of interaction patterns between beings and ourselves. It also provides a fine road map to the origins of religions. All religions seem to have interactions with beings as a fountainhead, from which flows entirely new cultures, ethical obligations, and mythic structures. Interactions with beings are at the core of human mythologies. Perhaps beings have done this on purpose. But it is certain that myth is one of the most powerful shapers of our culture and thought. Most of my experiences, as well as those I have read about, are deeply mythic—appearing in themes and images that are part of religions the world over. This means that understanding myth and its influence will help us understand patterns of contact with beings.

Joseph Campbell, the great mythographer, gave a definition of mythology that I think extends perfectly to ufology:

Functioning as a "way," mythology and ritual conduce to a transformation of the individual, disengaging him from his local historical conditions and leading him towards some kind of ineffable experience. Functioning as an "ethnic idea," on the other hand, the image binds the individual to his family's system of historically conditioned sentiments, activities and beliefs, as a functioning member of a sociological organism. This antinomy is fundamental to our subject, and every failure to recognize it leads . . . to a misunderstanding . . . of the force of the mythological symbol itself, which is, precisely, to render an experience of the ineffable through the local and concrete . . . to amplify the force and appeal of the local forms even while carrying the mind beyond them.¹

Myths, like experiences, have both local and universal aspects, which interact to mold our perceptions. Beings sometimes appear in culturally correct forms. Other times, experiences are similar across cultures. But they always

seem to be agents of change to the prevailing worldview.

For example, the Oglala Sioux visionary Black Elk described his vision and the illness that accompanied it. Starting when he was nine, Black Elk heard voices but saw no one. He became ill and swollen. Then, lying in the tepee one day and looking at the clouds, he saw two men coming down, headfirst. They called to him. "Then they turned and left the ground like arrows slanting upward from the bow. When I got up to follow, my legs did not hurt me any more and I was very light. I went outside the tepee, and yonder where the men with flaming spears were going, a little cloud was coming very fast. It came and stooped and took me and turned back to where it came from, flying fast."²

Some obvious comparisons with modern experiences spring to mind here. They are important because they help decode the puzzle of cross-cultural experiences. But it is also noteworthy that Black Elk's encounters were considered sacred and provided the basis for a rich, visionary wisdom that nourished his people in a time of great trouble.

Interactions between beings and people are replete with events that swing from local to universal, from absurd to sublime. Apparently, this has always been true. Myth and folklore, rooted in oral tradition, don't usually qualify as experiencer data. But they outline patterns. These patterns seem custom-designed to change and renew the local experience of the universal.

Katharine Briggs was a well-known folklorist, with many years of studying the fairies and other beings, especially of the British Isles. She noted that many tales show a strong dependence of the fairies upon mortals, however much they might deny it:

The fairies appear to have an independent existence of their own, to lead their lives in subterranean or subaqueous countries, or on enchanted islands across the sea. They ride, revel, dance and hold their fairy markets . . . and yet from time to time we come across extraordinary examples of their dependence upon humanity. The commonest stories about them are of their thefts of human babies and their periodic need of a human midwife to the fairies . . . Mortal blood seems needed to replenish the fairy stock. . . . The other most obvious example of dependence was on human food. . . . in Ireland in particular, human strength is needed to give power to the fairy arms in faction fights. . . . Indeed, however much the fairies seem to resent human prying and infringements of fairy privacy, it would appear that the affairs of humanity are of more importance to them than they would wish us to suppose.³

All the things that bedevil modern researchers, such as beings of light, visions, prophecy, invisibility, levitation, entry into another world, and malicious behavior such as animal mutilations, chasing panicky victims, and changing the weather, are all mythic and folkloric themes. The question is whether these patterns are straightforward and predictable or part of an invisible, shifting scheme to

reshape human perception. Folklore is often unclear on this point, though Briggs implies that the patterns she noted were continuous and, in general, predictable.

One problem in ufology is poor categorization. Sometimes it is said that all experiencers are really seeing the same beings, regardless of the beings' differing behavior and appearance. Other researchers delineate a few kinds of beings and their potential relationships to each other. But in my experience there are many kinds of beings, and they interact. They are found in many places—dimensional, physical, energetic. Sometimes they live in hierarchies. Often they are enemies, fighting each other with the earth and humans caught between the battles. Hinduism is particularly rich in descriptions of battles between gods and demons. They had similar supernatural powers, and they both coveted various things—rulership of the world, the wisdom of speech, ambrosia, unlimited power. Ufology has sometimes dismissed some kinds of beings as not being able to fit the existing typology. But it is the typology that is at fault. A more sophisticated one would help illumine the purposes of contact, and perhaps also its meaning.

Walter Evans-Wentz was a well-known scholar of religion. He did what few others have done before or since: He went to the people in the Celtic countries who saw the fairies and asked about their experiences. He did not flinch from uncanny material. For example, he asked an Irish seer to classify the *Sidhe* (pronounced "shee," the fairy people). The seer replied, "The beings whom I call the *Sidhe*, I divide, as I have seen them, into two great classes: those which are shining, and those which are opalescent and seem lit up by a light within themselves. The shining beings appear to be lower in the hierarchies; the opalescent beings are more rarely seen . . ."⁴ He described the latter as shaped of opalescent air; through the body ran a radiant fire. They

had flaming, wing-like auras and were about 14 feet tall. Asked where beings lived, the seer replied, "The shining beings belong to the mid-world; while the opalescent beings belong to the heaven-world. There are three great worlds which we can see while we are still in the body: the earth-world, mid-world, and heaven-world."⁵

This is but one example of a kind of encounter rarely recognized by ufology. Yet comparing old and new encounters of this kind could yield real understanding of how we are influenced or—perhaps—are being asked to change.

Which people see which beings is a very complex issue. I would cautiously say that there is some interface between a person's own consciousness level, other life experiences, and perhaps her genetic makeup, combined with decisions by beings or some other controlling force, that accounts for it. It is clear that interaction patterns are



specific. This is exemplified by the Scottish folklore about selkies. Selkies were the seal people, who could shapeshift between seal and human form. They appeared principally to those who had done kindness to seals or who were killing them wantonly.⁶

In Hinduism, Krishna was a god, but more accurately, he was an avatar of the great god Vishnu. Yet he was also incarnated in human form as a cowherd who made love to milkmaids. Only a few of the humans around him could perceive anything of his true nature. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna reveals himself in full splendor to Arjuna, a warrior who is reluctant to fight at the opening of what comes to be a terrible war. His appearance to Arjuna was like the appearance of a thousand suns. Krishna tells Arjuna that fools scorn him for having taken on human form; the deluded world does not recognize him.⁷ A systematic study of which people see which beings in traditional sources might help us understand a similar conundrum now.

Experiences seem so archetypal and fundamental that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that they are meant to be so. There is a process that seems to happen regularly with encounters: First a framework of understanding develops, then it grows into, or becomes part of, religion. Finally it deepens, abstracts, and changes the culture. In the Hindu battles between gods and demons, for example, there are detailed descriptions of the gods' power and might. They had weapons such as a "discus that subdues demons," which was curved, unblunted, and shone like the sun.⁸ In later strands of Hinduism, accounts like these became templates for abstract moral virtues and struggles. Similarly, for those American Indian peoples with a tradition of the vision quest, the result of the vision, if substantial and powerful, was incorporated into the religion and understanding of all the people: ". . . among Plains and Prairie peoples, dreams and visions are a fundamental means for social and cultural transformation. . . . the results of the vision can act as a source for an ongoing transformation of religious thought and behavior."⁹

We will do ourselves a great disservice if we fail to search mythology, religion, and folklore. Ufology is seek-

ing desperately for paradigms of understanding, and there is much insight to be found in these fields. It seems that interface with beings is part of the human condition. The questions are: Can we understand it? If we were more aware, could we learn more, or participate more directly, or avoid some serious mistakes?

Human culture has been deeply influenced by beings. Major religions have arisen around some of their appearances. Mythic symbols rule human understanding, and many of these have apparently been shaped by beings. Modern experiencers learn from beings, whether paranormal powers, channeled information, or the desire to strike out boldly in new directions. Such learning has always been there, as we can read from the histories of many great visionaries and leaders. Maps of this territory are rare. Let us fully use the ones we have as we seek to chart new ones.



REFERENCES

1. Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God* (New York: Viking, 1959), p. 462.
2. Joan Halifax, *Shamanic Voices: A Survey of Visionary Narratives* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979), pp. 96–97.
3. Katharine Briggs, *An Encyclopedia of Fairies: Hobgoblins, Brownies, Bogies, and Other Supernatural Creatures* (New York: Pantheon, 1976), pp. 96–97.
4. Walter Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries* (London: H. Frowde, 1911), p. 60.
5. Evans-Wentz, p. 62.
6. Duncan Williamson, *Tales of the Seal People: Scottish Folk Tales* (New York: Interlink Books, 1992); and David Thomson, *The People of the Sea* (London: Turnstile, 1954).
7. A. L. Basham, *The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), p. 90.
8. Wendy O'Flaherty, trans., *Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin, 1975), p. 279.
9. Lee Irwin, *The Dream Seekers: Native American Visionary Traditions of the Great Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), p. 189. ♦

COMMENTARY

BY THOMAS E. BULLARD

Readers owe a debt of gratitude to Lisa Oakman for sharing her experiences. No report brings us closer to the abduction mystery than the testimony of the experiencers themselves, and she serves in a double capacity, providing both the data of experience and their scholarly interpretation.

Thomas E. Bullard, Ph.D., a member of the CUFOS board, has written extensively on the UFO-abduction phenomenon.

In Oakman's account we recognize a combination of the familiar and the unusual. Any student of abduction identifies the lifelong history of quirky fears and seemingly meaningless behaviors, the reaction to alien images and abduction literature that appears all out of proportion to the stimulus itself. We have heard one account after another of individuals bedeviled by unclear memories and baseless

(continued on page 32)

MACK BRAZEL RECONSIDERED

BY THOMAS J. CAREY AND DONALD R. SCHMITT

Were it not for William Ware "Mack" Brazel (1899–1963), there would never have been a Roswell Incident—at least not one known to the general public. In July 1947, the 48-year-old Brazel was scratching out a living as foreman of the J. B. Foster sheep ranch located 30 miles southeast of the small cattle town of Corona, New Mexico. The family lived in Tularosa, while Mack stayed on the ranch in a shack without a telephone, electricity, or even running water. The nearest neighbor was 10 miles away.

As has been reported many times before, one day he discovered a mass of material strewn over a section of the vast hardscrabble grazing grounds and thought it strange and significant enough to warrant notifying the Chaves County sheriff, probably on July 6, who in turn called the Roswell Army Air Field. He did this not just because of a sense of patriotism, but also because the material was interfering with ranch operations, as the sheep wouldn't cross the debris field.

The military, in the persons of Maj. Jesse Marcel and Capt. Sheridan Cavitt, followed Brazel back to the ranch that same day. After spending the night, they spent the next day inspecting and collecting the debris, which they took to the base by the early morning of July 8. In short order, Col. William Blanchard, the commanding officer at Roswell, issued a press release stating that a "flying disk" had been recovered. Almost immediately after Blanchard's astonishing claim, Brig. Gen. Roger Ramey, his superior in the chain of command, held a press conference in Fort Worth, Texas, in which a battered balloon-borne radar reflector was said to be the "disk" found by Brazel.

A follow-up article in the Roswell newspaper on July 9 is the only contemporary published record of what Brazel

said ("Harassed Rancher Who Located 'Saucer' Sorry He Told About It"). It was based on an interview conducted in the offices of the *Roswell Daily Record* on the afternoon of July 8. The description of the debris he furnished sounds much like a small part of a Project Mogul balloon array, similar to that from weather balloons, which is the accepted skeptical explanation today for the event. Though Project Mogul was indeed a top-secret project, the neoprene rubber balloons and paper-backed aluminum foil radar targets used in it were not. In the article, Brazel describes a collection of "tinfoil," "tape," "sticks," and "rubber," which was so limited in size that it could be rolled up in a small bundle. But then he said the debris took up an area about 200 yards in diameter, vastly greater than the remains a Mogul array would produce.

Apparently unnoticed and certainly unappreciated by reporters at the time were Brazel's final comments. The article concluded by noting that Brazel had previously found weather balloons on the ranch on at least two occasions, and he firmly

stated, "I am sure what I found was not any weather observation balloon."

Brazel concluded by venting obvious frustration, saying that with the possible exception of a bomb, he would never report another object found on the ranch. The contradiction between his mundane description of the debris and his claim that this was not a weather balloon would reverberate almost endlessly when the Roswell controversy exploded into public consciousness.

THE HISTORICAL MACK BRAZEL

With that, Brazel and the Roswell disk faded into obscurity. It was not until 31 years later that Marcel spoke out, saying that what he found at the Foster ranch was "not from this Earth." Roswell was revisited by researchers, who produced persuasive circumstantial evidence indicating that the original Blanchard disk story was closer to the truth than



Maggie and Mack Brazel in 1951, four years after the Roswell Incident. Photo courtesy of Bill Brazel Jr.

Thomas J. Carey is a CUFOS board member specializing in the Roswell Incident; Donald R. Schmitt is a longtime investigator and coauthor of two books on the subject.



The Brazels' final resting place in Tularosa, New Mexico.

the weather-balloon explanation.

What follows is an attempt to piece together the historical Mack Brazel and his role in the Roswell events. To this end, we have relied on the recollections of family, friends, and the few others who had contact with him during the critical days of July 1947. You may have read some of this information before, but in this article we refine our picture of Brazel's role and present new findings about what he may have discovered.

In preparing this overview, we have relied on the original interviews made and published by William Moore, Stanton Friedman, Kevin Randle, and Donald Schmitt when he was Randle's research partner, as well as our own recent field work.

W. WARE “MACK” BRAZEL

We'll begin with his nickname. Most accounts refer to him as “Mac,” partly because researchers heard the name and applied the most logical phonetic spelling. And his family tells us he was so named after former President William McKinley. However, family documents show that the spelling “Mack” was always used. Indeed, the inscription on his tombstone reads *W. Ware Mack Brazel*.

In addition to the first-person interview with Brazel at the *Roswell Daily Record*, we know of three other interviews. The first was done on the spur of the moment by Roswell radio station KGFL announcer Frank Joyce on Sunday, July 6. Joyce made it a practice to call Chaves County Sheriff George Wilcox for news leads. It happened that Brazel was in Wilcox's office at the time, relating his discovery of strange debris. Wilcox put Brazel on the telephone, and Joyce proceeded to interview him.

The second instance was an interview conducted at the home of Walt Whitmore, the owner of KGFL. This was probably done late on Monday, July 7. The interview was recorded on a wire recorder, which was the technology

available at the time. The interview was meant to be aired as a scoop, but was never played on the air. Unfortunately, the recording has been lost to us because it was confiscated by the Army on the afternoon of July 8 and never returned during their operation to kill the original disk-retrieval story and remove all contrary evidence.

The third and last interview was conducted by an El Paso radio station. We know only that it took place, and can only guess that Brazel repeated the story he gave the *Roswell Daily Record*.

Based on our investigations and reasonable deduction, it seems almost certain that only the Joyce and Whitmore interviews presented Brazel's story in honest, undistorted fashion. At some point on July 7–8, Brazel was placed in military custody at the base. His statements during this period are therefore suspect and may be the result of coercion. Family members believe that Brazel was frightened or bought off by the military, and that his July 8 *Roswell Daily Record* interview, in particular, was, at least in the main outlines, dictated to him by the Army. One of the goals of our reinvestigation of Brazel has been to determine why he, alone among Roswell witnesses, was detained by the military.

THE HARASSED RANCHER

Mack Brazel's name first surfaced in public in the July 9 *Roswell Daily Record* article. Although the paper did not print a photo of Brazel, many other papers throughout the country did. Apparently his picture was the first Wirephoto electronically transmitted from Roswell. When this picture appeared in the *Albuquerque Journal*, it alerted his son Bill Jr. to the fact that his father was the center of a large controversy and that he might need some help.

The same page of the *Journal* carried the debunking story from Ramey's Fort Worth office, headlined “Gen. Ramey Empties Roswell Saucer.” Brazel is also mentioned by name in this article.

FAMILY LORE

Mack Brazel died in 1963 at the age of 64, and his wife Maggie died in 1975 at the age of 73. Thus both were dead well before any researcher could interview them about the events in 1947.

But there remain a number of family members who can fill us in on Mack's character and personality. They tell us he was a throwback to the “old-time cowboys.” Frank

Joyce, the KGFL announcer, described him to researcher William Moore as "A dirt-in-the-pores-of-the-skin type of guy." Joyce continued, "He didn't say a whole lot," and "[he] was a man of few words," but "his word and handshake were bond."

Mack's son Bill was interviewed by various researchers, including Moore, Friedman, Randle, and Schmitt. Bill maintained that he was able to learn very little directly from his father about the Roswell events. Moreover, Bill says that his father confided nothing about it to his mother. But Bill believes that

Mack did pass on at least some fragments of the story to Bill's wife Shirley, but that she was never given all the facts. Shirley Brazel died in 1996. Randle and Schmitt interviewed her on several occasions prior to her death. It has never been clear which details of Bill's recollections of his father's Roswell adventures came from discussions with Mack or from what Shirley told him.

Bill Jr. believes that his father "... took the most part of what he knew to the grave with him." His father did tell him that he was upset and bitter at being "put in jail" for a week for simply doing what he thought was a "good deed." All family members interviewed by Moore gave it as a truism that Mack had been sworn to secrecy for reasons patriotic, and that he took his oath very seriously because he was a man of his word. Other relatives swear that the military threatened his family. Another family story has it that Mack was particularly incensed at having endured a "head to foot" physical examination by the military before they would release him and allow him to return home.

Mack's older sister Lorrene Ferguson died in 1983, but she confirmed for Moore her brother's extreme reluctance to talk about the events. This is also confirmed by Mack's daughter, Bessie Brazel Schreiber, who was 14 years old at the time of the Roswell events. She told Carey and Schmitt



Floyd and Loretta Proctor, Brazel's nearest neighbors in 1947, who saw a piece of debris and advised Mack to go to the authorities in Roswell.

in a July 1999 interview, "We were told not to talk abut this at all." She testified to her father's veracity most emphatically, saying, "If Dad said something happened, it happened! No ifs, ands, or buts about it." Mack's youngest child, Vernon, was 7 years old at the time of the incident. Unfortunately, he disappeared under mysterious circumstances in 1960 and has never been heard of again. Another son, Paul, died in 1997. He was employed running a ranch in Texas for the same J. B. Foster that employed his father in 1947, but when interviewed said he had no direct knowledge of the events.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

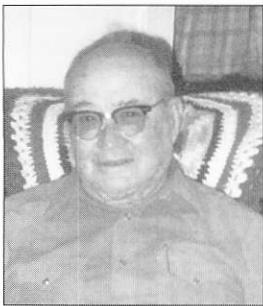
Brazel's friends and neighbors had much to say, particularly about his "change of life" after his return from military custody. According to his nearest neighbor, Floyd Proctor (d. 1987), when interviewed by Moore in 1979, Mack was in a state of excitement and very talkative about his discovery when he saw Proctor a day or two prior to his trip to Roswell and the sheriff's office. According to Proctor, Mack "just wouldn't shut up about it." Proctor's wife Loretta said Mack was returning her 7-year-old son Dee, who had been visiting the Foster ranch that day. He had brought a small piece of the wreckage with him to show the Proctors, who encouraged him to report it to the authorities for the \$3,000 reward offered for proof of "flying disks."

Proctor confirmed for Moore that Brazel had been kept in military custody for about a week, after which he would not talk about the event, preferring instead to change the subject or briefly repeat the balloon story if pressed. Proctor also described being in Roswell with another neighbor, L. D. Sparks, during the period of Brazel's detention. Brazel was surrounded by about half a dozen military escorts as he walked down the street. He was behaving



KGFL as it appeared in the 1940s (left); today the old station site is a hair salon.





L. D. Sparks, who saw Brazel under military custody in 1947.

Mexico, described a 1959 encounter with Mack Brazel. Scoggins had gone to a local restaurant for lunch with a friend who pointed out Brazel sitting alone at another table. Against his friend's advice, Scoggins got up and approached Brazel, and asked him about the 1947 incident. Without saying a word, Brazel clenched his fist tightly, grimaced, and contorted his face, and then slowly rose out of his chair. Fearing for his personal safety, the surprised Scoggins backed away, while Brazel slowly stalked past him and out of the restaurant, leaving his food on the table. "It was like watching one of those werewolf movies, when the star turns into the monster," said Scoggins almost 40 years after the encounter.

A former ranch hand of Brazel's, Ernest Lueras, was recently interviewed by the authors at his Corona filling station. Lueras recalled a time when he and Mack drove from Corona to Tularosa, a drive that on today's modern roads takes three hours to complete. The trip was made sometime after the 1947 events but before Mack left Corona for good to open his own business in Las Cruces (a meat-packing enterprise). The reason Lueras recalls this drive so vividly after all these years is Brazel's very odd behavior. After making several attempts at conversation, Lueras finally gave up. The rest of the trip was made in total silence. Lueras was nonplussed, and did not know what to make of the silent treatment from his boss. Today, Lueras states his belief that "They [the military] really messed him up."

WHAT BRAZEL FOUND

As related by William Moore in *The Roswell Incident*, Mack told friends and family that the debris came from an airborne explosion—not a crash—because it consisted of separate pieces spread over a large area. Vegetation in the area of the debris was singed. The debris was like nothing he had ever seen before: "very odd . . . the strangest stuff he had ever seen." The metal was different from any metal he was familiar with because he could not cut, scratch or whittle it with his knife.

Strange writing or symbols on some of the Roswell debris have been described by other witnesses, such as Maj. Marcel and his son, Jesse Marcel Jr. Mack told friends and

strangely, according to Proctor, and pretended that he did not recognize Proctor and Sparks when they passed. This episode was corroborated in a 1998 interview we conducted with Sparks in his Roswell home, and also by Leonard Porter and Bill Jenkins, two other neighbors of Brazel who were there at the time.

In a 1998 interview, former real estate salesman Howard Scoggins of Las Cruces, New

family about seeing similar markings, including Bill Jr., Mack's older sister Lorrene Ferguson, and Proctor. Bill recalled his father describing the writing as like "figures," and thought his father meant it resembled the ancient Indian petroglyphs or rock figures common in the Southwest. On the other hand, Ferguson and Proctor recalled Mack's description as being more like the "wiggles" one finds on wrappers of Chinese or Japanese firecrackers, and that they were in various pastel colors.

Of great importance is Bill Jr.'s statement that his father told him the Army had admitted they had definitely established that "it wasn't anything made by us." Mack may well have been told this during his detention as a means to convince him of the need for his cooperation. However, there is nothing in the record to indicate that either Mack, his family, or friends ever raised or broached the topic of bodies.

BRAZEL SEES THE SHERIFF

These maddeningly fragmentary descriptions are all we can gather from Brazel's family and friends, conveyed to them at first enthusiastically, and later most grudgingly. Whatever it was that fell on the ranch, Brazel packed a small amount of it in a box and delivered it to the Chaves County sheriff. When the military was advised of the discovery, they found it so provocative that they immediately dispatched two senior officers to follow Brazel to the remote site to investigate—on Sunday of the Fourth of July weekend.

Significantly, those officers were the head intelligence officer of the 509th Bomb Group and the officer in charge of the CounterIntelligence Corps unit at Roswell. They were not accompanied by any other enlisted personnel, another fact underscoring the extraordinary importance and sensitivity the military lent to Brazel's story. A fair speculation is that the Foster ranch discovery was not the first anomalous debris to be found in the Roswell area. This would explain the quick, high-level military response to Brazel's account.

FRANK JOYCE RECALLS "W. W."

Joyce was not interviewed until 1982 when Moore, following a tip, located him in Albuquerque. In 1947, Joyce was a 24-year-old announcer for KGFL in Roswell. He was also a stringer for the United Press wire service, meaning that he would place interesting stories on the press wire for national pickup. It was in this capacity that he got into trouble with the Army Air Force for placing the Blanchard "captured disk" release on the UP wire. This made the claim an international sensation, instead of a story confined to Roswell. Joyce left town in 1948, never to return, and settled in Albuquerque where he worked in radio and television as a news and features announcer for over 40 years.

Joyce said the Blanchard press release was delivered to him by hand by Lieut. Walter Haut, the Roswell public information officer. At the time of the interview with Moore, Joyce was still leery of talking about his involvement in the 1947 events, citing his reluctance to reveal information about what seemed a top-secret topic that could harm national security if disclosed, as well as concerns about his job as a media personality. So it would seem that, understandably, Joyce told the truth to Moore then, but not the entire truth.

According to Joyce, he had been "spinning records" and reporting the local news on his Sunday afternoon radio show on July 6. As was his habit, he called Sheriff Wilcox while a record was playing to inquire about newsworthy items. Wilcox put Brazel on the telephone and Joyce interviewed him off the air. Joyce then suggested to Wilcox that the military be contacted, and Wilcox followed the advice.

Curiously, Joyce went into detail for Moore about what Brazel did *not* tell him he found during that first interview, such as "balloon parts" and "balsa parts." But there is nothing about Brazel's description of what he *did* find, which must have formed the substance of the interview. Instead, Joyce talked about Brazel's frame of mind during the conversation, characterizing him as "terrified," but without elaboration or explanation.

He then discussed a second interview that he had with Brazel. We didn't mention this earlier because, unlike the other four interviews discussed previously, this second interview with Joyce is the only one where Brazel admitted he was coerced. Joyce described how Brazel came into the radio station a few days after the Sunday phone call to change his story. Upon hearing the new version, Joyce confronted Brazel off the air. "Just a minute!" said Joyce, "You know that this story that you've told me now in no way matches the story you told me on the phone." After a pause, Brazel leaned closer and told Joyce, "Look, son. You keep this to yourself. *They* told me to come in here and tell you this story or it would go awfully hard on me *and you*" [emphasis added per our interview with Joyce in 1998].

"I CAN'T GO INTO THAT"

Moore asked Joyce if Brazel had mentioned bodies to him on the phone. Joyce's cryptic response was, "I can't go into that. I don't want to say." Moore pressed for more, but Joyce concluded by saying, "I think I've said all I want to on that. I made up my mind a long time ago that I would only go so far with that part of the story. That rancher apparently died with what he knew.... Whatever that thing was, the rancher *saw it all*, and it didn't originate on this planet. What I heard later about the Air Force having bodies of little men from space . . . was totally consistent with what I had heard at the time." We have to wonder about this last statement. Heard from whom at the time?

It is interesting that when this interview was done, the topic of bodies at Roswell had never been raised. The only

flying-saucer account that mentioned bodies and seemed to fit the Roswell/Corona timeframe was that of Barney Barnett (d. 1969), who placed a crash with bodies on the Plains of San Agustin, 150 miles west of Roswell.

Although Moore wrote extensively on Roswell after this interview, he apparently never interviewed Joyce again, as the information in his articles from Joyce remained essentially unchanged.

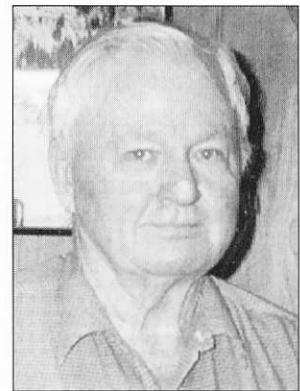
JOYCE TALKS TO RANDLE AND SCHMITT

Joyce was approached again in 1989 by the team of Kevin Randle and Donald Schmitt. Joyce was still nervous about talking and refused to allow the interview to be taped. He repeated much the same story he had given Moore seven years before, but provided a few minor additions. Joyce said that Sheriff Wilcox was not impressed with Brazel's story and did not believe it. Because of this, Brazel asked Joyce for advice, and Joyce told him to call the air base. This is a minor change from his first version, where Joyce claimed he told Wilcox directly to call the base.

Joyce told Randle and Schmitt that Brazel had related "everything" on the telephone, but, as in the Moore interview, then refused to say more or answer specific questions about what it was that Brazel had found. Now he added that when Brazel visited the radio station several days later, there were several military men waiting outside in the lobby. And in this retelling, Joyce added a new and extremely provocative detail. "As he was leaving, Brazel turned and said, 'You know how they talk about little green men? Well, they weren't green.'"

Randle and Schmitt interviewed Joyce again in 1990. Joyce appeared to be more open and forthcoming, but little new was learned, although Joyce again reiterated that Brazel had told him the "whole story" during that first phone call. And he ended his account with Brazel uttering the same "little green men" line.

Joyce was interviewed four more times by Randle and Schmitt between March 1991 and September 1992. He added details to his previous accounts, such as where Brazel was standing during the discussion at the station, and how he (Joyce) conducted himself during what seems to have been a very lively discussion between the two men. He added that Brazel had said nothing during the telephone conversation about his family being at the ranch (an important point, given later claims by Besse Brazel Schreiber about her presence there). Also, the size of the debris field Brazel described in the telephone conversation was much larger than that conveyed during the later meeting.



Frank Joyce today.

And when Joyce retold the part where he confronted Brazel about the discrepancies between the first and second accounts, he now quoted himself as specifically saying, "The story is different, especially about the little green men." To which Brazel replied, "Only they weren't green."

Researcher Karl Pflock interviewed Joyce in 1992 and got the same account. Joyce repeated this version for the *Albuquerque Journal* during the 50th anniversary of the Roswell Incident, capping the "little green men" statement with, "And that is Gospel."

So there has been an evolution over the years from "I won't talk about it," to "The stories about bodies are consistent with what I heard at the time," to "Brazel said, 'You know how they talk about little green men?'" to Joyce asking, "What about the little green men?" This evolving testimony took 10 years for Joyce to produce the current, and presumably final, version. Interestingly, Joyce says he did not speak about Roswell at all for 20 years after the event. Why has he slowly revealed more that he knows? Are the changes in his original account believable? Perhaps he feels more secure as the years have passed and the Roswell Incident has become known to a wide public. In our judgment, the trend in Joyce's story has been in the direction of a more complete recounting of his exchanges with Mack Brazel, rather than confabulation or falsehood. We conclude that Joyce is a credible witness, whose story is substantially correct.

Given Joyce's testimony, we must seriously consider the idea that Brazel saw bodies associated with the crash. Maybe the military showed Mack a body to convince him to keep quiet. But that doesn't make sense. Why show the find of the millennium to a civilian? So despite all the interviews with Joyce, we felt another was important to clarify this matter.

JOYCE TALKS TO CAREY AND SCHMITT

In May 1998 we visited Frank Joyce. After preliminary niceties, Joyce turned into a man on a mission. "I'm going to tell you fellows something I've never told anyone. Don't stop me once I get started, or I might realize what I am doing and shut up."

"When Wilcox put W. W. [Joyce calls Brazel "W. W."] on the phone, I could tell right away that here was a very distraught man on the other end of the line. He started in complaining about a lot of stuff scattered all over his ranch, and that the sheep wouldn't go around it to get to their usual watering place."

The following is a reconstruction of the original telephone conversation between Brazel and Joyce, based on Joyce's comments to us in this interview.

Brazel: [angrily] Who's gonna clean all that stuff up? That's what I wanna know. I need someone out there to clean it up.

Joyce: What stuff? What are you talking about?

Brazel: [somberly] Don't know. Don't know what it is. Maybe it's from one of them flying saucer things.

Joyce: Oh, really? Then you should call the Army air base. They are responsible for everything that flies in the air. They should be able to help you or tell you what it is.

Brazel: [At this point, according to Joyce, Brazel really started "losing it."] Oh, God. Oh, my God. What am I gonna do? It's horrible, horrible, just horrible.

Joyce: What is? What's horrible? What are you talking about?

Brazel: The stench! Just awful.

Joyce: Stench? From what? What are you talking about?

Brazel: They're dead.

Joyce: What? Who's dead?

Brazel: Little people.

[At this point, Joyce thought to himself, "This is crazy!" He decided to play the role of devil's advocate to a story he did not believe.]

Joyce: What the . . . ? Where are they? Where did you find them?

Brazel: Somewhere else.

Joyce: Well, you know, the military is always firing rockets and experimenting with monkeys and things. So, maybe . . .

Brazel: [Shouting] God dammit! They're not monkeys, and they're not human!

With that, Brazel ended the conversation.

Joyce continued, "A day or so later W. W. called me at the station to tell me that he didn't have the story quite right the first time. So, I invited him over to the station. When he arrived, I could see the military waiting for him outside in the lobby, and he appeared to be under a great deal of stress. He then told me the new story, and that's when I challenged him about it and made the little green men comment, referring back to our original telephone conversation. That's when he replied that they weren't green, and out he went.

BRAZEL AND BODIES

Did Brazel find bodies? Even though we consider Joyce to be a credible witness, his testimony needs independent corroboration, particularly with such an important claim. It is one thing to say, as Marcel said many times, that the debris was "not of this Earth." But adding bodies—also not of this earth—raises the stakes immensely.

Just before she died in 1985, Wilcox's widow Inez stated that her husband was informed about the incident by "someone who came into town." Then her husband "Went out there to the site. There was a big burned area, and he saw debris. It was in the evening. There were 'space beings.' Their heads were large. They wore suits like silk."

Recall that the family and the neighbors and friends of Mack Brazel were told nothing about bodies by Mack. On the other hand, there exists a collection of testimony to the effect that alien bodies were recovered. Some parties state this plainly, others are circumspect. A review of all this testimony is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that Joyce's version of Brazel's statements finds consider-

able support, including new information that we have uncovered. Here are two examples.

We have located a woman currently living in Ruidoso, New Mexico, who recounted an intriguing story involving her ex-husband, who had been an enlisted man stationed at Roswell. It was the summer of 1947, and she remembers him coming home one evening in a state of high excitement. She tried calming him down, and it was then that she noticed an unusually foul smell coming from his uniform. After she got him calmed down, she was able to get from him that he had been sent on a detail to a ranch "up near Corona" where some bodies had been found. She immediately washed his clothing and he took a long shower to remove the smell, which lingered.

We are in contact with the family of the late Meyers Wahnee, who was a pilot and air crew commander of the 714th Bomb Squadron, 448th Bomb Group. His picture is stamped on the back, "Official Photo, Air Force Photo Services, Roswell, New Mexico." The "Chief," as he was called, told his family of the 1947 Roswell events during the last year of his life (he died in 1981). He told them that the incident was true and that he was involved. He said that there were *three* separate sites. Bodies were found and first flown to Texas. Of special interest to us here, besides his mention of a third site, is his testimony to his wife and two children about "decomposing body parts" found among the debris at the Foster ranch. "It really happened," he told them. We can speculate that he felt free to talk about the events in 1981 because Roswell had become widely known.

Finally, there is this bit of evidence. Five years ago, the 81-year-old Loretta Proctor became extremely ill. With a life-threatening blood clot in her neck, her reclusive son Dee felt compelled to drive her to a remote location on the former Foster ranch where he told her that Mack Brazel had found "something else." This site is located about 2.5 miles east-southeast of the debris field. Loretta Proctor eventually recovered, but what was it that would cause a son to risk the health of his mother to embark on such a dangerous and uncomfortable trek? The question now seems to us to have been answered. Loretta will not volunteer anything beyond the "something else" statement for now, and Dee, who is now 59, will not talk to anyone.

SOME THINGS ARE BETTER LEFT ALONE

Clearly, in light of the new information presented here regarding Mack Brazel's role, there are more questions that require answers. We are confident our investigation is heading in the right direction, whatever the outcome. The reticence of some witnesses only adds fuel to the suspicion that something more was involved than debris.

Like so many others involved, former KGFL owner Walt Whitmore took secrets to his grave. Near his death, Joyce visited him and the talk turned to Roswell. Joyce asked the critical question: Were there bodies? Whitmore replied, "Some things are better left alone." And he would say no more. ♦

BOOK REVIEW

Captured by Aliens: The Search for Life and Truth in a Very Large Universe, by Joel Achenbach. Simon & Schuster, NY, 1999. 415 pages. \$25.

What happens when mainstream journalism decides to tackle the subject of extraterrestrial intelligence and UFOs is a familiar story by now to most ufologists. In what is supposed to be a dispassionate, first-person account, the journalist attends a couple of UFO conferences to get the "feel" of his subject, armed with the foreknowledge of the few books he's read. Inevitably, he retires to the bar with a suitable interview subject—who turns out to be a flaming UFO crackpot. (The one major exception to this rule-of-thumb approach thus far would seem to be C. D. B. Bryan's *Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind*.)

Washington Post staff writer Joel Achenbach succumbed to the same temptation in his *Captured by Aliens: The Search for Life and Truth in a Very Large Universe*. Thus we get quotes from the likes of Frank Stranges and Richard Hoagland, and the heads of such alleged UFO organizations as the Aetherius Society and the Unarius Academy of Science, all of whom come across as living smack dab in Loop Land. And of course there is the now

(and one fears for all future time) obligatory chapter on the Heaven's Gate cult. In the process of compiling his book, the author goes on field trips in search of the Roswell crash site and an underground Pleiadian base in Nevada, the better to cast himself as someone in search of the truth who just happens to find his guides and companions on these journeys mostly deluded, driven by the will to believe in the cold face of evidence against those beliefs.

In other words, we've seen this schtick before and many of us can only wonder (if somewhat self-righteously): How come a sane ufologist such as myself never gets interviewed for one of these things? Why is it always the West Coast nuts and weirdos who get all the ink? I could straighten this guy out in short order, if only he'd ask.

If that were all that Achenbach's book did, I probably wouldn't recommend it. I only read it in the first place after I heard the author interviewed on a National Public Radio program, where, when given the opportunity to disparage ufology and UFOs, he didn't, although his bent on both was decidedly skeptical.

What sets the author apart from the usual put down of the field is his contention that both camps—ufology and mainstream science—are captured by the idea of the alien: They just use different techniques of investigation and expression. For the most part, so far, they both lack the kind

(continued on page 27)

THE FORGOTTEN LETTERS OF EDWARD J. RUPPELT

BY MICHAEL HALL AND WENDY CONNORS

Edward James Ruppelt served as project chief of Air Force investigations into unidentified flying objects from November 1951 to September 1953. This brief time stands out more prominently than earlier or later periods because Ruppelt personally documented these years. If not for the presence of his memoirs, there would be little perspective from which to study the early case files. Published in 1956 and revised in 1959, his book *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* chronicles many aspects of the Air Force's early UFO investigative endeavors. It was during Ruppelt's tenure that the famous code name Blue Book came into use. It designated the official UFO investigations being conducted by the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) out of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Ruppelt was the one responsible for popularizing the acronym "UFO." He disliked the more sensational phrase "flying saucer" and understood that the Air Force was dealing with a complex situation, if not a real phenomenon. Ruppelt served as an inspiration for those who wanted the issue addressed seriously.

In honor of his memory, we present these excerpts from his personal papers, held in Michael Swords's capable care for CUFOS. Never published before, they provide unique insight into the story behind Ruppelt's landmark book.

Many of us remember the magic and excitement we felt the first time we read Ruppelt's book. Because his writings continue to serve as an inspiration, he is a man with whom

Michael Hall has worked as the executive director of the Montgomery County (Indiana) Historical Society since 1987 and is a graduate of Western Illinois University. Wendy Connors, a retired teacher, is the director of the Project Sign Research Center and is a graduate of the University of Iowa.

we wish we could have talked. Unfortunately, this is impossible. He died nearly 40 years ago on September 19, 1960, from a heart attack at the young age of 37.

It would be interesting to speak to Ruppelt because he was not at liberty to discuss all he knew in his famous work. Just imagine what interesting insights he might convey. Fortunately, his personal papers provide further understanding of his unique role in UFO history and his personal history after he left the UFO project and the Air Force.

For example, Ruppelt's papers tell us that after leaving Blue Book he kept in touch with his former right-hand man and key office assistant, A1C Max G. Futch. In his correspondence, Ruppelt not only referred to Futch as his sergeant but also as a trusted friend. He also maintained a good working relationship with others at ATIC, even though he had relocated by that time to Long Beach, Calif., after accepting an offer by Northrop Aircraft. Part of his job as an engineer there required him to serve as liaison with his former ATIC unit.

About this time, Ruppelt got the idea for writing a book on UFOs. It was sparked on by an article he wrote that appeared in the May 1954 *True* magazine, detailing his UFO experiences. The piece was to some extent ghostwritten for Ruppelt by journalist James R. Phelan. (Phelan, incidentally, in 1976 wrote *Howard Hughes: The Hidden Years*, which gave Americans their first inside look at the lifestyle of the reclusive billionaire. He died in 1997.)

Phelan, a neighbor of Ruppelt's in Long Beach, had composed a short article on the former Blue Book chief the year before in his *Independent Press-Telegram* column. That first post-Blue Book look at Ruppelt, which actually quoted him as saying UFOs were not real, may have served as the germ for the whole idea of telling his story to begin with. Phelan was certainly a talented newspaper correspon-



Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt, head of Project Blue Book, 1951–1953



Airman First Class
Max G. Futch

that Phelan occasionally corrected Ruppelt's tendency to use the passive voice. Phelan may have also convinced him to end a few of his chapters with more open-ended remarks than Ruppelt would have been inclined to do on his own.

Interestingly, Ruppelt's cousin Phyllis Ruppelt told us that the real artistic force behind the book came from his mother Bess, who worked closely with him to polish the original manuscript.

Unfortunately, it was not an easy chore for him to finish the last part of the book. Despite continued visits to ATIC, it became increasingly more difficult to stay abreast of the UFO situation once Futch left the Air Force on December 30, 1953. By this time, Capt. Charles Hardin had settled in as the new chief of Blue Book and Ruppelt lost a direct line to what was going on in his former office.

Hardin and ATIC chief Gen. Harold Watson were strong UFO skeptics. They became a real bottleneck that prevented Ruppelt from getting his hands on interesting case material. Thankfully, UFO-friendly Col. William A. Adams of the Topical Division of Air Force intelligence headquarters (AFOIN) in the Pentagon was still around from the heyday of the 1952 wave. Adams corresponded with Ruppelt and seems to have been of significant help in acquiring statistics from Air Force files.

As a result, the first edition of his memoirs published in 1956 by Doubleday did include useful observations on the post-Ruppelt period at Blue Book. For example, he was able to provide a number of interesting reflections on the later mood prevalent in AFOIN as well as a UFO wave in Europe in 1954.

Ruppelt confirmed that in the two years following his tenure, the Air Force tried to crack down as much as possible on the release of UFO information, although it is doubtful he ever knew the full impact of the Robertson Panel in early 1953. That CIA-directed meeting had privately recommended to the National Security Council that UFOs were not dangerous per se but belief in them was. The panel worried that UFO sightings could cause a hysteria that might hamper American defense systems. Regrettably for Ruppelt, he left the Air Force before being fully briefed on that new stance, which was soon adopted hook, line, and

dent. His expertise made Ruppelt's *True* article a national sensation and virtually guaranteed interest in a full-length book. That feature also rewarded Ruppelt and Phelan with a \$2,000 stipend. Soon Ruppelt would be offered speaking engagements of up to \$400 an appearance (worth over \$2,400 in current dollars).

The book that Ruppelt began writing in late 1954 was not Phelan's, however. Copies of the original manuscripts prove this. Admittedly, passages do suggest

sinker by the Air Force.

Three years later, Ruppelt revised his book for a second edition. By then, he had a different outlook. Another Blue Book chief, Maj. Robert J. Friend, was supplying him with officially authorized information for three new chapters that Ruppelt was simply tacking onto the end of his book. These additions took the UFO story up to the end of the 1950s.

In those pages, Ruppelt's objective and open-minded stance on UFOs, which had so characterized his 1956 book, changed drastically. For instance, in the concluding sentence of his earlier manuscript, he flatly stated, "Maybe the earth is being visited by interplanetary spaceships. Only time will tell." Perhaps that was just a Jim Phelan touch, but by 1959 when he was composing the additional chapters, Ruppelt appeared to become more doubtful of an extraterrestrial origin. This is reflected in the concluding statement of his second edition, published in 1960:

No responsible scientist will argue with the fact that other solar systems may be inhabited and that some day we may meet those people. But it hasn't happened yet and until that day comes we're stuck with our Space Age Myth—the UFO.

The following paragraph, from a rough draft of Ruppelt's last chapter that never saw print, is even harsher:

The Air Force emphasizes the belief that if more immediate detailed objective observational data could have been obtained on the unknowns, these too would have been satisfactorily explained. And I agree wholeheartedly. Of the thousands of UFO reports I've read, there wasn't one which could not have been satisfactorily explained.

The following correspondence from two former associates of Ruppelt's may have influenced this new opinion. This first letter is from Anderson Flues, a member of Ruppelt's Blue Book staff:

May 12, 1959

Dear Ed:

. . . I do have a statement to make concerning my feelings regarding unidentified flying objects, and I hope that it is not too late for my thoughts on this matter to be enclosed in the rewrite of the book which Doubleday is publishing. I agree with you that in our investigations we did not find anything solid enough to warrant the conclusion that we were dealing with interstellar space vehicles. While we were conducting the investigation, and in my specific case up until about the end of July of, I believe, 1952, I had the feeling that the possibility definitely existed that we might have been dealing with some form of interstellar space objects. However, the crux of the matter is that, as you know, within the framework of our capabilities, we tried to do a pretty thorough job of investigation of the very best reports.

To my knowledge, during this period of an extraordinary number, both visual and electronic, even taking into consideration the highly qualified backgrounds of some of the people who made visual sightings, there was not one single case which, upon the closest analysis, could not be logically explained in terms of some natural phenomenon.

There were three particular cases which come to mind. These were the Dayton sightings, about which you wrote in your book, the Presque Isle sighting, and the Port Huron, Michigan, sighting. At the outset of the investigation in each of these cases, I felt that they would be insolvable without incorporating some interstellar space vehicle theory. However, as you know, upon close analysis they broke down into what always seemed to become a normal pattern. The same thing occurred, of course, when you and Bob Olsen [sic Olsson] went to West Palm Beach. Therefore, I must conclude that, since we explained the difficult ones in this matter, ones which were of lesser quality and which we did not have time to investigate would undoubtedly have fallen into similar patterns had we had the inclination or the resources to analyze them thoroughly.

I do not think, however, that we can say that the project was worthless. In the first place it was something which simply had to be investigated as bearing on the Air Force's mission for the security of the United States. Secondly I believe that everyone connected with the project, however remotely, gained a new insight into the incredible variety of natural phenomena in the atmosphere, of the malfunctioning characteristics of theoretically foolproof equipment, of the tricks which can be played upon the human senses, and last but not least of the quirks of human psychology.

I certainly hope that you can use these paragraphs of mine in your book. Please feel free to edit or change them in any way you see fit.

However, I do ask that out of some loyalty to your old comrade in arms you maintain the pure essence of my extraordinary thoughts in this matter. . . .

Sincerely yours,

Anderson G. Flues

The second comes from astronomer J. Allen Hynek who served as a scientific consultant in various capacities to the Air Force throughout its 22-year investigation of UFOs. At that time, Hynek had a cautious and healthy skepticism:

28 May 1959

Dear Ed:

Sorry to be so late in answering your letter of 1 May. In answer, I think I can quite safely say that we have no record of ever having received from our MOONWATCH teams any reports of sightings of unidentified objects which had any characteristics different from those of an orbiting satellite, a slow meteor, or of a suspected plane mistaken for a satellite.

MOONWATCH teams are, of course, usually watching only for satellites passing at predicted times and I imagine might be reluctant to report anything else, unless it were of a very definite and most unusual appearance.

As far as quoting me in your revision is concerned, I think I could say simply that I am rather surprised that reported sightings continue to come in. We all believed, of course, back there in 1947-48, that this was all post-war craze that would disappear as quickly as the hula-hoop and many other recent popular pastimes. The fact that it hasn't to me indicated primarily the great interest in, and even awe for, any events in the sky. This is all the more so since the advent of the Satellite Age. I continue, however, to be surprised also at the uncritical nature of many of the reports; this again to me implies a strong element of wishful thinking. I believe that there is no doubt that many people would honestly like to believe that outer space is populated and that we are occasionally the recipients of visits. And because of continued reports and the continued interest, it is clear that the subject of UFOs continues to constitute primarily a most interesting public relations problem and one that offers a fine chance for the demonstration to the public of the operation of the scientific attitude. I still will hope, as I have done in the past, that open ridicule and a refusal even to accord a sympathetic look at reports, does not constitute the scientific method and, particularly in this day, I believe it is important that the public's confidence in science and scientists be enhanced, by demonstrating to the public how in the interesting case of UFOs the scientific attitude works.

Sincerely yours,

J. Allen Hynek

Associate Director

Ruppelt quoted from both of those letters in his additions to *Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*. The only problem is that evidence shows that Project Moonwatch volunteers did report UFOs. Flues, at one time at least, was one of those on the Blue Book team who seriously questioned what UFOs might be.

When Ruppelt had completed his three more skeptical chapters he was still working for Northrop Aircraft. It was rumored but never proven that Northrop, a major government contractor, pressured Ruppelt to tone down his open-minded position on UFOs.

However, nothing in his personal papers suggests this. If anything, the opposite is true. Apparently their UFO-hunting author/engineer generated a fair amount of favorable publicity for Northrop. Here is an internal memo in the Ruppelt papers from Northrop's vice president of engineering:

Book, dated Jan 27, 1956:
NORTHROP AIRCRAFT, INC.

MEMORANDUM

To: ALL ENGINEERING PERSONNEL
From: VICE PRESIDENT, ENGINEERING
Subject: ENGINEERING DIVISION ACTIVITIES
Date: 27 January 1956

. . . 2. Engineer Author

Since 1947, when the first reports of "flying saucers" were made, many of us have wondered about the validity of these accounts. It is likely that we shall have to continue to speculate, since we still have no concrete evidence that the reports are based on any actual, unknown objects. However, a very interesting book, revealing much of the Air Force's work on the evaluation of hundreds of such reports, was published last week. We may have a greater interest in this book than the public at large, not only because it deals with an "aeronautical" subject, but because it was written by one of our engineers.

The book "The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects," is the work of Ed Ruppelt, an aeronautical engineer who is working in our Weapon Systems Analysis department. A World War II bombardier, Mr. Ruppelt was recalled during the Korean War and assigned to the Air Intelligence Center at Wright Field. In 1951, he was given the job of evaluating UFO reports compiled by the Air Force. Later, he was selected to head the project which continued the work of compiling and evaluating UFO information. The book is an account of his experiences and observations during his two-year assignment to Air Force Project Blue Book (the intelligence agency which evaluates UFO reports).

In his book, which was published by Doubleday and Company, Mr. Ruppelt implies that, while many of the UFO sightings cannot be explained as hallucinations, no country now has the ability to produce aircraft such as those reported. The Air Force, although it approved the publication of the author's report, has not changed its position that there is no reason to believe in the existence of UFOs.

Regardless of the reader's position in this controversy, he will find that the book is well written, and is probably the only really inside viewpoint ever released on this subject.

The other accusation from some researchers is that the Air Force exerted pressure on Ruppelt. We know Ruppelt had to submit both his original manuscript and the revision to Air Force Classification Review in December 1955 and mid-1959. Yet, there is no indication in 1955 that the Air Force used this process to pressure Ruppelt in any way and it seems his original book had no difficulty receiving final clearance. (There are, however, some suggestions that Col. Adams may have lent some assistance.)

It is true that by the time of the book's second edition the Air Force had become very defensive over the UFO subject. This stemmed primarily from the creation in 1957

of the largest and most successful civilian UFO research organization in history, Donald Keyhoe's National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP).

NICAP's primary aim was to generate enthusiasm for Congressional hearings regarding the conduct of the Air Force's UFO investigations. Members hoped that NICAP could bring to light undisclosed government information. NICAP hoped the hearings would either push the Air Force into serious investigative work or convince it to step aside and let NICAP assume a leading role.

This presumption on NICAP's part so infuriated and worried Air Force officials that diligent attempts were made by the Pentagon over subsequent years to circumvent those Congressional inquiries. In fact, nothing upset a military man more than an irate congressman questioning his conduct, especially when it concerned administrative matters. Thus the well-intentioned efforts of NICAP only served to make the Air Force more vindictive toward UFO investigators and organizations. As the Cold War intensified after the launch of Sputnik, the USAF wanted to focus on what it was good at—military aviation. In this, airmen were unequaled because they could train for it. UFOs, whatever they were, seemed too elusive and controversial to pin down.

By 1959 when Ruppelt was writing his second edition, the infamous Air Force UFO debunker Maj. Lawrence J. Tacker of the Pentagon's Public Information Office and Maj. Friend at Blue Book both tried to exercise some influence over him. It was obviously, in part, a reflex action to the public excitement that NICAP had already stirred up. The last thing they wanted was another UFO book with many open-ended questions, especially one written by the former head of Blue Book.

Ruppelt's revised book, however, was to be simply an update to the original. Its three new chapters dealt mainly with the 1957 wave of UFO sightings and the rise of NICAP. Apparently, the Air Force (via Blue Book) did attempt to make its provision of the release of new cases to Ruppelt conditional on ATIC's review of his writing. A joint memo from Friend and Col. Gordon C. Hoffman of Air Force Intelligence to Tacker and Maj. James F. Sunderman of the Pentagon's Office of Information Services detailed everyone's concerns. The memo stated with regard to releasing information to Ruppelt:

May 21, 1959

It is with the understanding that close control will be exercised on the Ruppelt manuscript, and that the ATIC will be allowed an active part in reviewing that the enclosed information is forwarded to your office for release to Mr. Ruppelt.

In the final analysis, the Air Force did not ask Ruppelt to correct anything in his previous chapters, which remained unchanged. Barring minor factual errors in his three additional chapters, Sunderman did not exert censorship as this letter proves:

17 July 1959

Office of the Secretary

Dear Ed:

Following our telephone conversation this morning I am enclosing a copy of the comments to your manuscript. These were accrued during its coordination.

The three chapters have been forwarded to Tim Seldes at Doubleday. They have been cleared for publication just as you wrote them, with no amendments.

The comments are sent to you just for your information and use, if you see fit. They revolve about several minor factual inaccuracies. You are in no way required to make any changes in your manuscript as a result of these comments. In several instances you have inferred ATIC knowledge of cases. ATIC has no official knowledge of these cases. There is no record of them in their files.

I hope you can drop by the office during your next trip to Washington.

Sincerely,

James F. Sunderman
Major, USAF
Chief, USAF Book Program
Office of Information Services

It seems doubtful that Ruppelt ran into trouble writing his updated book other than getting good information on the 1957 wave. It is obvious from Ruppelt's papers, for example, that he was attempting to attain more cogent answers on the Levelland, Texas, sightings than he was able to get from Blue Book. Ruppelt eventually gleaned useful information on those incidents but had to go to private sources to do so.

After Ruppelt's death, his wife Elizabeth claimed that he had actually changed his stance due to constant agitation from the so-called contactees and their followers. Contactees claimed to be in communication at will with UFOs. Such stories from people like George Adamski significantly hindered a serious study of UFOs in the late 1950s.

But did Ruppelt really lose interest in UFOs? Let's back up and consider Edward Ruppelt, the man. There is still much to ponder.

First, it is unlikely Ruppelt ever had fanatical beliefs on UFOs one way or another. Like many present-day researchers, he wavered back and forth through a range of emotions, trying to understand a vastly complex phenomenon. Personal interviews with seven individuals who knew him revealed to the authors that he never openly expressed any beliefs regarding UFOs during his tenure at Blue Book. Dewey Fournet, who served as Pentagon liaison to Blue Book during Ruppelt's tenure, told the authors:

... I found Ed to be very objective, extremely competent technically. . . . He was exceptionally qualified to

handle his Blue Book assignment. And I also feel that all of this is reflective in the wonderful work that he did, and he certainly deserved the plaudits of the USAF, which unfortunately were not always forthcoming.

We also corresponded with Albert M. Chop, who was assigned to the Pentagon's press section to assist with media inquiries into UFOs during 1952 and part of 1953. Since that time, Chop has expressed much more straightforward opinions on UFOs than Ruppelt and is convinced that the phenomenon represents some tangible reality. This stood in contrast to Ruppelt, who Chop always understood to be rather skeptical at heart about UFOs:

August 25, 1999

Dear Mr. Hall:

. . . Ed was one of the finest people I have ever had the pleasure to work with. He had that rare combination of intelligence with patience to finish every assignment no matter how difficult.

Through the years we had many discussions on the UFO problem. Despite our different opinions we always remained best of friends. Ed was not present at National Airport during the now famous radar sightings. If he had been there I believe he would have altered his beliefs . . .

Sincerely,
Al Chop

All Ruppelt's former associates admired him for the professional and objective approach he displayed in his duties. Col. Nathan Rosengarten, the man who actually assigned Ruppelt to Blue Book, concurs. He said in a personal interview that Ruppelt was an extremely objective, directed man with a keen analytical mind. He also made the statement several times that Ruppelt never spoke to him at any point about his personal beliefs on UFOs.

Former Blue Book assistants Max Futch and Kerry Rothstein also stressed that same point to the authors. Futch wrote:

January 29, 1999

Dear Mr. Hall:

I remained in close contact with Ed Ruppelt subsequent to his reassignment to the Air Defense Command and release from active duty in early 1953. Subsequent to his release from active duty, I furnished him with a considerable amount of specific unclassified data on various sightings/reports for the first edition of his book.

Ed Ruppelt was considerate of others and was articulate in investigating sighting reports, analysis of reports, and communicating with the Pentagon, general officers, technical experts, observers of unusual phenomena, news reporting agencies (data not released by



*Albert M. Chop,
Pentagon press officer*

our press agent [Al Chop] at the Pentagon), base intelligence officers, and Project Blue Book staff.

Not only was Ed Ruppelt a personal friend, he had sufficient respect for my ability to recommend me as acting director of Project Blue Book when his release from active duty became imminent. He was hesitant to recommend a fellow commissioned officer who was not knowledgeable with the project and its mission as correlating agency of the Air Technical Intelligence Center.

Sincerely,
Max Futch

The following letter from Donald Keyhoe does suggest that Ruppelt actually retained a healthy skepticism on UFOs even before he began writing his memoirs. It addresses a number of issues that were still being talked about from the 1952 flying saucer flap. Keyhoe must have interjected some of these statements in order to try and get Ruppelt's reaction:

March 11, 1954
Dear Ed:

. . . I'll be interested in seeing your *True* piece; I knew it was coming. As I understand it, you play down the saucers, but leave a loophole. As you know, we don't agree on many angles about UFOs but I do wish we could get together and talk them out. I am frankly puzzled, since you undoubtedly saw the Gulf of Mexico report (Dec. 6, 1952) and others in the book (you cleared them, I know) and I honestly don't understand why the weight of evidence hasn't convinced you. It occurred to me that maybe the AF encouraged you to do the *True* piece, to help play down the present public interest, and if so I can readily understand it, especially if you are still in the Reserve. But I do remember our talk, and although your comments could have been inspired by the official policy, I wasn't sure. Regardless, I hope we can talk the whole thing over some time.

You mentioned the idea of turning some of your knowledge into cash. It's possible you could do a book, but having gone on record with the *True* piece, you'd have to follow that theme, unless you discovered some new information which warranted a drastic change. If you happen to come East, I'd be glad to talk it over with you, the writing possibilities, I mean, even though we do seem on the opposite sides. . . .

To go back to the idea of your turning your ideas into cash. . . . If you should stumble on brand-new information, which backs up my belief, I would of course be interested in working with you, although you're perfectly capable of writing the material yourself. But since you apparently have presented the negative side, in *True*, it might be easier to collaborate if you ever do find reason to support the affirmative. Right now, I

don't plan another book, I don't intend to go on just repeating myself. But if I find any strong, new facts, I'll do a book or some articles. I've already had some offers, but I'm holding off. And I want to get back to other writing, after all, I am a professional writer, and I don't want to stick with just the one subject. . . .

Didn't mean to write such a long letter, Ed, but maybe a few ideas will be of interest. If you have time, I'd be glad to hear from you, and I won't take so damned long to answer, next time.

Meantime, best of luck in everything.
Cordially,
Don Keyhoe



Donald E. Keyhoe,
founder of NICAP

Keyhoe obviously wanted to help Ruppelt write the book. But Ruppelt went on to do it himself, maintaining a very objective position even though he expressed his own great personal interest in between the lines. And as said, some of those nuances were undoubtedly attributed to Jim Phelan.

Ruppelt worked diligently at acquiring information for his book. The following excerpts from letters he wrote discuss the early stages of his book project, but also the movie *UFO*, released in 1956 by Greenhouse Productions. Later picked up by United Artists, the semi-documentary film was based on Ruppelt and the Pentagon assistants to the Blue Book project, Fournet and Chop, and focused on the great summer saucer wave of 1952. These comments show that Ruppelt expressed eager interest in UFOs at that period, late 1954 to mid-1955. Admittedly, this does stand in great contrast to his more guarded attitude later. This first extract is from a letter to Donald Keyhoe on December 8, 1954:

. . . I have been dickering with a publisher for a book, but it isn't firmed up as yet. I have about seven chapters finished. I think that the book will surprise you. It will tell the whole UFO story, which, I can assure you, has never been told before. This is providing that I can get it by security review, but I think that I have this all figured out. As you know the *True* piece wasn't cleared and I had a different outlook on things then. The movie is coming along slowly. I'd say that it will also be a bang up deal. They have some stuff that will shock a lot of people.

This next excerpt is an amazing historical document. It comes from a letter written January 25, 1955, to Fred Durant, who had worked for the CIA in late 1952 compiling information in preparation for the Robertson Panel meeting. Obviously, Durant and Ruppelt had become friends in those earlier days preceding the Robertson Panel.

I am in the process of writing a book on UFOs for Doubleday and Co. There seems to be a "flying saucer" outbreak in Europe at the present time, consequently I

would like to include something about these sightings in my book. I have read that you were in Europe not too long ago and thought that possibly you had picked up some fairly recent information.

I fully realize your position and am asking only for what you may have picked up in "bull-sessions" and would care to pass along. I would be honored to be able to use your name as a personal friend who is merely interested in UFOs for interest's sake. But if this doesn't appeal to you for any reason, I assure you that there will be no hint of where the information came from.

If you feel that you could help me please let me know and I'll either try to get to Washington to see you or detail more of what I'd like to have in another letter.

In 1955, Battelle's Project Stork UFO study was released as *Blue Book Special Report 14*. As a whole, the statistical survey was used by the Air Force to debunk UFOs. At the time, Ruppelt wrote to UFO investigator Max Miller and criticized its findings. He stated:

This was a shock to me because I was the one that had had this study made. . . . the answer was, statistical methods were no good for a study like this. They didn't prove a thing. . . . I had written it off as worthless. . . . The report was finished in September 1953 and it wasn't released as the "latest hot dope" until October 1955.

With the new wave of sightings in 1957, Ruppelt's book gained a wide readership. Soon after this, however, Ruppelt stated that he was leaving the UFO controversy. Several events led to this decision. First, he had become agitated because Keyhoe and NICAP were not only pushing hard for Congressional review of the Air Force's conduct in UFO investigations, but it seemed that a formal hearing was imminent in 1958. This infuriated Ruppelt, who considered it bad timing with the social problems then going on in America.

Civil rights had become such an inflammatory issue by September 1957 that President Eisenhower was forced to order the 101st Airborne Division into Little Rock to allow nine black students their opportunity to an equal education.

Ruppelt's book tells us that in the midst of all this, before a better-known unofficial hearing the next year, the U.S. Senate Committee on Government Operations launched an inquiry concerning UFOs. Navy Inspector General Rear Adm. Roscoe Hillenkoetter also announced publicly that two committees on Capitol Hill were investigating the UFO controversy. Ruppelt was called to give testimony before Senate committee members in November 1957. It must have been during this time he shifted to the opinion that the uproar that NICAP was generating was unwarranted.

He considered this especially true in light of the many other important societal issues then at hand. The launch of Sputnik on October 4 shocked American scientific and government officials, who feared that Western rocket tech-

nology had been forever surpassed. The Soviets' early leap into space did more to cause a reevaluation of American science and education than any other single event in our history.

America was changing, and changing fast. UFOs were being pushed further out of the mainstream of serious discussion. Yet some, like Keyhoe, who dedicated himself to a serious though at times overenthusiastic study of the subject, would not let the issue die.

The pressure of pending Congressional hearings led the Air Force to believe it was to some extent Ruppelt's writings that had contributed to the situation. This, in combination with other more vocal and speculative books like those by Keyhoe, was thought to have overexaggerated the importance of the UFO phenomenon. Ruppelt's work was viewed as a "kiss and tell book." This was largely due to the fact that by the summer of 1958 Keyhoe had drummed up even more interest within Congress.

About this same time, Ohio Rep. John E. Henderson began urging Congressional oversight of the UFO investigation. Henderson, to Ruppelt's consternation, sent a list of questions to the Air Force that were based on his book. The Air Force in turn was forced to provide a briefing for Henderson and other interested congressmen. At this meeting, the full text of the Robertson Panel was first revealed and subsequently impressed Congressional leaders that UFOs could possibly be exploited by the Soviets to slow American response time in the event of an attack. As a result, most congressmen became much less eager to respond to the growing demand from their constituents for open hearings on the subject of UFOs.

For that reason, the one unofficial House hearing conducted on UFOs became closed to the public and went unrecorded save some minor transcripts. Held on August 8, 1958, John McCormack, a strong NICAP advocate, chaired a session of the House Subcommittee on Atmospheric Phenomena. (This was a part of the House Select Committee on Astronautics and Space Exploration and was more in the nature of a briefing by the Air Force to Congressional members than an actual hearing.)

After interviews with Air Force officials, the Congressional members felt satisfied, and in fact complimented the military on its approach to UFO investigations. One reason for the glowing recommendations arose from the fact that the subcommittee merely took the Air Force at their word and undertook no private fact finding of their own. Capt. George T. Gregory, Harding's successor and Friend's predecessor at Blue Book, did most of the testifying. He gave no indication of the lackluster manner in which ATIC was then handling UFO reports. Name-dropping of such scientists as Hynek was done to legitimize the Air Force's "research." This is ironic because Hynek, who had by then become nationally known for his work on satellite tracking with the Smithsonian, quietly began pushing for a more intense study at Blue Book.

(continued on page 30)

BOOK REVIEW—*continued from page 19*

of hard evidence they would prefer and are forced to rely, in the main, on probability arguments, i.e., the universe is such a large place that therefore there must be plenty of life, intelligent life included, out there *somewhere*. We just haven't conclusively confirmed it yet.

In Achenbach's words: "Most observers make a sharp distinction between legitimate exobiology and 'kooky' ufology, but I think of them both as part of a fabric of curiosity. Everyone has different methods; some methods will hold up better over time. The common thread is a sincere desire to understand the universe, to find truth and meaning in a time when we are overwhelmed with astronomical data. . . . Some of us are crazier than others, but we're all searchers. We're all scientists of a sort. Even if you don't buy into the invasion scenario, it's hard to go through life without pausing to wonder what's out there."

To his credit, Achenbach recognizes that many of the people he interviewed are on the fringes of mainstream ufology, as he comes to realize that there are individuals on the fringes of mainstream science as well, people just as obsessed with the Out There and its implications as those crazy ufologists. In fact, the whole century has been captured by aliens, including much of the media, popular culture, with capitalism never far behind. There must be reasons for this fascination with things extraterrestrial, and Achenbach proves a fairly reliable inquisitor and commentator in trying to sort the situation out.

Achenbach takes the reader on a guided tour of the present state of thinking in both ufology (in its widest cultural definition) and in various scientific disciplines, including chemistry, biology, astrobiology, and space technology. Though the chapters jump back and forth between subject matter and points of view, the overarching figure that ties the book together is astronomer Carl Sagan and his very public persona.

Whatever you think of Sagan (he was a prodigious self-promoter as well as science popularizer, among other things), the picture that emerges here is of a man conflicted by his own inner faith that we can't conceivably be alone in the universe (it would be an inefficient use of all that space, matter and energy, for one thing), yet frustrated by his inability to supply definitive evidence to the contrary. In Achenbach's view, Sagan had some pretty loopy ideas of his own. For a while he toyed with the idea that Phobos, one of the two small moons of Mars, might be an artificial construction. He also suggested that a flashlight be attached to the Viking lander, so it could be turned on at night to see if it attracted any Martian moths. Despite his own longings, at the end of the day Sagan would come down on the side of hard science and evidence, or the lack thereof.

"Over the course of forty years," Achenbach observes, "Sagan became the gatekeeper of any serious discussion of extraterrestrial life. He became the go-to guy for anyone with a new idea. Sagan managed to think through virtually

every angle on the topic, entertain every possibility, even the ones that evaporated in the harsh light of day. Only he could decide, as gatekeeper, if a creative idea should be allowed into the lecture hall or instead left outside, panting on the sidewalk."

It was Sagan's role as gatekeeper that first beckoned to ufologists, then ultimately frustrated and infuriated them. "The ufologists needed Sagan," writes Achenbach. "If he could get inside the Ivory Tower despite talking about all this alien business, then surely so could [they]. Or so they hoped."

But Sagan "could be maddening in his oscillations between imagination and skepticism," and few were more maddened by these pendulum swings than ufologists. On the one hand, Sagan could successfully argue that the Mars Global Observer should re-image the Mars face (thereby enraging Michael Malin, who had designed and directed the spacecraft's onboard camera); on the other, he infuriated ufologists by never quite opening the doors to the Ivory Tower and welcoming them inside. He would tantalize with his popular pronouncements on the plurality of life in the universe, gnaw on this or that aspect of ufology, then withdraw his final acceptance of the evidence, falling back on the dictum (first proposed by Marcello Truzzi) that extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof. Relations eventually soured on both sides.

But Sagan himself was besieged within and without. Denied tenure at Harvard, he was also subsequently rejected for admission into the National Academy of Sciences. In the end, even Carl Sagan was refused entry into the Ivory Tower, giving him something more in common with the average sane ufologist than he probably ever realized. He had flirted once too often with them than establishment science deemed comfortable or appropriate.

Obsession with the alien isn't just a personal predilection or peccadillo, either, as Achenbach makes abundantly clear. Organizational politics and budgets are involved, too, along with personal prestige and a possible (if not inevitable) Nobel Prize for whoever comes up with the first confirmable proof of extraterrestrial life.

NASA needs strong, convincing evidence of extraterrestrial life, however primitive or promising, to continue to justify its own budget expenditures as a government agency (otherwise our collective outward urge may be at stake), as much as ufology needs its own comparative evidence and justification to satisfy itself. Seems we've both gambled our assets on the same issue, and have both come up relatively empty-handed to date.

The difference, best I can tell, is one of activity vs. passivity. Whether publicly or privately funded, the exploration of Mars and the SETI program continues apace. Meanwhile, largely bereft of serious funding and public support, ufology awaits its White House landing—or the UFO equivalent of a Mars rock. ♦

—Dennis Stacy
San Antonio, Texas

LETTERS

DEBRIS DETAILS

To the editor:

In his "Probing the Roswell Thin-Strut Debris" (*IUR*, Fall 1999, pp. 8–12, 30), Robert Galganski relies heavily upon Jesse Marcel Jr.'s claim to have seen a metal I-beam among the debris that his father brought home from the alleged UFO crash site. At the same time, he conveniently ignores the telling statement made by Jesse Marcel Sr. during a tape-recorded interview with Linda Corley on May 5, 1981: "Jesse [Jr.] said they looked like 'I' beams but it wasn't [sic]. Jesse didn't have that right to begin with."

Galganski also chooses to ignore the sketch the elder Marcel did for Corley that shows the rectangular cross-section of the beams, and Marcel Sr.'s many statements to many interviewers over the years that the beams looked and felt like wood and were, as he told reporter Bob Pratt on December 8, 1979, "rectangular members" that were "perhaps three-eighths of an inch by one-quarter of an inch" and "[w]eightless. You couldn't even tell you had it in your hands—just like you handle [sic] balsa wood." (See my *Roswell in Perspective*, p. 123.)

These facts, while inconvenient to those still trying to make more of Roswell than the evidence allows, are nonetheless facts—and a stick in the eye of the case for Roswell as an extraordinary event.

Karl T. Pflock
Placitas, New Mexico

The editors and the author respond:

In 1998, Linda Corley submitted to CUFOS a book-length manuscript comprised of the transcript of her May 1981 interview with Jesse Marcel Sr. and a lengthy commentary. She suggested that it might be suitable for publication by the Center. We were eager to see the transcript because it appears that this was the last interview granted by Marcel. It is also the only known interview of his wife. He was 74 years of age and debilitated by emphysema, a condition that led to his death five years later.

Corley did the interview as a writing assignment for a college course. She had a copy of *The Roswell Incident* by Moore and Berlitz (1980) and knew that Marcel, who lived nearby, was a central figure. The interview was held at the Marcel home in Houma, Louisiana. Marcel's answers were always short, often cryptic and at times maddeningly vague. But the ambience was friendly, and we learned much about the family, if not about Roswell.

After reviewing the manuscript, we decided it was too long for publication, even as an "occasional paper." There was little in it that either could not be found in previously published interviews or added substantially to our knowledge of the Roswell Incident.

Whether the entire transcript will be published for the research community remains to be seen. We felt obligated

to print Karl Pflock's letter in which he quotes from the transcript, apparently with Corley's permission. A reasonable reply is only possible by reference to several further extracts from the transcript. We believe this to be fair use of Corley's work.

Pflock quotes one provocative passage that also caught our eye: "Jesse [Jr.] said they looked like 'I' beams but it wasn't. Jesse didn't have that right to begin with."

It would have helped to quote the entire passage in which this statement appeared. Corley introduced the topic of the strange symbols on the debris. Mrs. Marcel said she was the first to note the symbols when she, Marcel, and their son inspected a cardboard box full of debris that the Major had dumped on the kitchen floor.

[Note to the reader: The use of three consecutive periods in the Corley transcript denotes a pause in the spoken words, not an editorial deletion of words.]

Mrs. Marcel: I said, "Hey, that's hieroglyphics!"

Corley: You can still see that in your mind. I wish you could draw it. You think you could draw it?

Marcel: Oh, Lord!

Mrs. Marcel: Little Jesse tried to draw it.

Marcel: Jesse tried to draw . . . it was so irregular . . . I mean.

Corley: Why don't you try it?

Mrs. Marcel: There wasn't anything to it. Let me see if I can find it. [searches for the drawing done by Jesse Jr.]

Marcel: Maybe she can probably.

Corley: Yeah, but you saw it a lot. Just give me an example. That would be fantastic!

Mrs. Marcel: Let me see if it's still in here.

Marcel: No, no. Jesse didn't have that right, to begin with.

Mrs. Marcel: Well, OK. You draw it then.

Marcel: He said they looked like "I" beams. But it wasn't. [Draws rectangular shape of stick, draws sample symbols, describes color of the markings.] Yeah, they were purple and pink, kind of a, the main character might be pink and the one behind it was purple. The others were purple and switched around.

The drawing clearly shows a rectangular cross-section. This is consistent with Marcel's descriptions to other interviewers.

Jesse Marcel Jr. handled only one "stick," but he studied it with great care. It seems extremely unlikely that his detailed description, repeated over the years and elicited in 1997 during six hours of interrogation by a forensic psychologist specializing in memory enhancement, would be faulty on the one aspect he recalls so vividly: the "I" beam cross-section of the stick.

How does one account for this discrepancy? Pflock does not offer an explanation.

One possible reason for the difference is that Maj. Marcel had spent a very long day at the Foster ranch

collecting a vast amount of debris. From the transcript: "Anyway, we had a truckful and I had a counter-intelligence agent working for me you see. And I sent him to the base with the stuff. And I loaded my '42 Buick to the hilt with it and I came on home cause I was late getting there." Later in the transcript, Marcel said he had little time to study the debris. So in this interpretation, the "I" beam member was exceptional and the bulk of the "sticks" that were laboriously picked up by hand on the ranch were of simple rectangular shape, though apparently also imprinted with the strange symbols reported by the Major, Jesse Jr., and Mrs. Marcel.

Why this discrepancy should be raised to the level of demolishing "the case for Roswell as an extraordinary event," is equally puzzling.

The Roswell skeptics, particularly those who adhere to the Mogul-balloon hypothesis, can take little heart from the rest of the Corley interview. For example, Pflock reminds us of "Marcel Sr.'s many statements to many interviewers over the years that the beams looked and felt like wood. . ." But this is hardly the full story, and Marcel explained to Corley how the material differed from wood. From the transcript:

Marcel: [Referring to the beams] "Nope. You couldn't make a mark on that stuff. Like these little members there [pointing to drawing of beam]. I took my cigarette lighter and tried to burn some of that. It wouldn't burn."

Corley: On that wood and stuff . . . nothing burned?

Marcel: What appeared to be wood . . . It wasn't wood.

Corley: It wasn't wood?

Marcel: Uh uh. But what was it . . . I still don't know.

Elsewhere in the transcript, Marcel made these comments: "I can't prove factually because I've given away all the materials I had. Everything I picked up. The Air Force has it. They're still sitting on it."

"I knew it wasn't a weather balloon. And General Ramey knew it wasn't a weather balloon."

"I think they still have it. Cause nothing has ever been let out by the Air Force of any materials that I ever picked up. They had materials there that I had never seen before."

Corley: And all the balloons . . . other balloons you've seen . . . they didn't have stuff like that wood and the hieroglyphic stuff?

Marcel: Hell no!

ALIENS OUT OF THE GENE POOL

To the editor:

Raymond Reddy should be congratulated for his hypotheses on human-alien hybridization (*IUR*, Summer 1999, pp. 29–30). However, it is only fair to point out that they still lack biological plausibility.

For instance, he is correct in pointing out that convergent evolution would produce aliens of general humanoid appearance and function. It undoubtedly has. However,

convergence, by definition, is only superficial. Deer and antelope are classic examples of convergent evolution. They even evolved from the same stock, on the same planet. Yet they cannot interbreed.

Reddy's other hypotheses all assume that the aliens come from the same gene pool as humans. Maybe. But for hybridization to occur, the species have to be very close indeed. Whatever their ultimate origin, it should be obvious that, for example, the greys are now very, very different from human beings—much more different than horses and donkeys, and we know what problems they have producing fertile offspring.

This is not to say that some of the very humanlike UFO occupants, such as the Nordies, may not be real human beings bred in an alien environment. Indeed, that would appear to be a logical conclusion from the recent DNA analysis of alien hair ("Strange Evidence," *IUR*, Spring 1999, pp. 3–16, 31).

However, hybrids between humans and true aliens are so extremely unlikely that it is best to save the speculations until they have been proved to exist.

Remember: No one has ever seen a hybrid. What they have seen are beings assumed to be hybrids—mostly by people with no biological training. That is quite a different thing altogether. The first rule of science is to separate the observed facts from the interpretation of the same.

Malcolm Smith
Brighton, Queensland, Australia

ASTRONOMERS RAISE THEIR HANDS

To the editor:

The recent articles by Cordova, Reid, and Eberhart on astronomers and UFOs in *IUR*, Fall 1999, sent my mind back 30 years to the summer of 1969 when I attended an open forum on UFOs sponsored by the National Amateur Astronomers (NAA).

I learned of it by chance while vacationing in Colorado, drove nearly 100 miles to Denver to attend the meeting on August 22, and found myself listening to six of ufology's top scientific investigators: James Harder, Leo Sprinkle, J. Allen Hynek, David Saunders, James MacDonald, and Frank Salisbury. I subsequently wrote an article on the events of that evening: "Scientists Urge New UFO Studies," *Fate* 23 (April 1970): 38–48.

The nearly 500 people in the audience were divided roughly 50–50 between NAA members and interested outsiders. The final third of the three-hour evening presentation included some interesting interaction between the panelists and their audience.

Sprinkle, when asked if there was "any stigma attached to a belief in UFOs," said a survey had shown that more people will report seeing a crime being committed than will report seeing a UFO. "It seems," he smiled, "that it is worse than a crime to see a UFO!"

Panel moderator Jim Peterson, managing director of

Denver's radio station KBTR, picked up on that and asked the astronomers in the audience if they, who spent many nighttime hours watching the skies, had ever seen anything that they could not satisfactorily identify. About 75 hands went up (only eight remained when Peterson asked how many of them had reported their observations to anyone—the USAF, local authorities, or private UFO groups).

Hynek then commented that this response made him wonder just what the percentage of unreported UFO sightings really was.

In all, it was a most interesting evening and my article contained a number of fascinating observations by the panelists on the saucer scene only a few months after the Condon Report was released. Of them all, the one concerning the unreported UFO observations of dozens of skilled amateur astronomers remains my most vivid recollection of that evening 30 years ago.

George W. Earley
Mt. Hood, Oregon

THE LUBBOCK PROFESSORS

To the editor:

In the Fall 1999 *IUR*, Frank John Reid wrote about the reaction of astronomers to UFOs and asked if readers had any examples of this disapproving reaction by scientists or academics.

Sometime around the year 1958, I visited Lubbock, Texas. This is where Carl Hart Jr. took two photos of the UFO formations on August 30, 1951. On August 27, 1951, petroleum engineer W. L. Ducker of Texas Tech College, along with chemical engineer A. G. Oberg and geologist W. I. Robinson, saw two strange formations like strings of beads in crescent shape move across the sky over Lubbock.

When I arrived at Texas Tech College in Lubbock, I asked a member of the administrative staff whether I could talk to one of the professors. The administrator said yes and picked up his telephone. When the call came through, the administrator asked the professor the following question: "Oh, yes, Doctor, there is someone here to see you. By the way, are you still seeing flying saucers?"

I did finally get to see the professor and asked him various questions about the 1951 sightings. But he did have a guarded and cautious attitude and wanted to know if I was from some newspaper or a magazine. I said no, that I was simply doing some research on my own.

You can see the Lubbock photos in the 1952 book written by Kenneth Arnold and Ray Palmer, *The Coming of the Saucers*. (See also Kevin Randle's article on "Carl Hart and the Lubbock Lights," *IUR*, Sept./Oct. 1993, pp. 17–19.) Oddly, the Lubbock photo of the V-shaped formation is very similar to the films taken by citizens who saw the huge V-shaped object over Phoenix, Arizona, on March 13, 1997.

Kenneth Larson
Los Angeles, California

ANOTHER CYBERSPACE CASUALTY

To the editor:

This is to officially announce that the Canadian UFO Research Network has ceased to exist after 22 years. At the same time, the *CUFORN Bulletin* is no longer being published after a 19-year run.

The amount of information on the 3,081 or so UFO Web sites has meant that we can no longer attract readers to CUFORN. Our membership dropped by 75% in the past two years.

IUR has been one of the best UFO magazines in the world—up there with *Nexus*, *Flying Saucer Review*, and the *MUFON UFO Journal*. We wish you all well, and a happy millennium.

Lawrence J. Fenwick
Founder, CUFORN
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

RUPPELT—continued from page 26

On top of this, Gregory drove home the point that UFO groups like NICAP were exaggerating the situation and threatened national security, just as the Robertson Panel warned they could. It is more than likely that after Ruppelt's own testimony to Congress the previous year, he first learned the real reason the Air Force was cracking down so hard on UFOs. Just as during the later 1958 hearings, it centered around the fear of UFO reports generating hysteria and in turn disrupting national defense networks. Whether he knew this was the real thrust behind the Robertson Panel and the true reason that the CIA initiated a debunking policy through the Air Force and key media and entertainment personalities, is unknown.

Ruppelt had written the 1956 edition of *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* to detail what was then a story with great national interest. At the time, his approach perhaps reflected his honest but naive Iowa farm-boy heritage. Ruppelt never dreamed that his story would offend Air Force officials as years went on. Nor did he think it could ever become so controversial. Ruppelt above all else had taken pride in service to his country. Being a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross in World War II, he had risked his life for his country in long hazardous B-29 missions out of India as a lead bombardier in the 677th Squadron, 444th Bomb Group, 58th Wing of the 20th Air Force. Later he flew missions from the small Pacific island of Tinian where he became involved in some of the worst low-level fire bombing missions over Osaka, Japan.

After his death, his wife commented that Ruppelt had once confided in her that the Air Force had personally expressed its displeasure to him over his book. This apparently did not happen until the late 1950s, during the controversy generated by NICAP. But it obviously left Ruppelt deeply disappointed.

By 1960, with a failing heart condition, he was also emotionally heartsick over what Air Force officials had felt

OF INTEREST TO CUFOS ASSOCIATES

SAUCER SMEAR

Oldest UFO publication in the USA and possibly in the entire galaxy! Gossip, humor, cartoons, skepticism, exposés, and occasional unintended libel. Be the first kid on your block to send \$2.00 for a sample copy. Jim Moseley, P.O. Box 1709, Key West, FL 33041.

REACHING FOR REALITY

"Reaching for Reality: Seven Incredible True Stories of Alien Abduction" is light years beyond any book about the strange and controversial subject of alien abduction you have ever read or heard of." —Whitley Strieber. Illustrated first-hand accounts compiled and annotated by psychotherapist Constance Clear, M.A., M.S.W. \$16.95 plus \$3.00 S&H. Send to P.O. Box 15994, San Antonio, TX 78212.

UFO CENTRAL HOME VIDEO PRESENTS THE LARGEST SELECTION OF UFO VIDEOS AVAILABLE ANYWHERE!

Wide variety of videos covering such topics as:

- Exotic Phenomena
- Propulsion Systems
- Hyperphysics
- Forbidden Archeology
- Tesla Research
- and more . . .

With videos featuring noted researchers and authors:

- J. Allen Hynek
- Zecharia Sitchin
- Rupert Sheldrake
- Stanton Friedman
- Kevin Randle
- and more . . .

International UFO Reporter special: THE FOOTAGE ARCHIVES 4-TAPE SET

300 of the best original UFO film clips ever from 27 countries of four continents from 1950 through 1998. This is not a documentary but a complete archive of UFO film and video clips. All clips are assembled in chronological order with individual stats including time and location for easy reference.

Tape One (78 min.)	1950-1989	\$29.95	All 4 tapes for only
Tape Two (78 min.)	1990-1992	\$29.95	
Tape Three (75 min.)	1993-1995	\$29.95	\$69.95
Tape Four (100 min.)	1996-1998	\$29.95	when you mention this ad

UFO Central Home Video 800-350-4639
2321 Abbot Kinney Bl. #200, Venice, CA 90291

FUND FOR UFO RESEARCH

As a partner with CUFOS in the UFO Research Coalition, the Fund for UFO Research has long been engaged in the support of scientific research and education. Tax-deductible contributions can be sent to: Fund for UFO Research, P.O. Box 277, Mt. Rainier, MD 20712.

UFO RESEARCH REPORTS

Two unique, specialized, long-range UFO research reports, by veteran UFO investigator and researcher George D. Fawcett, titled *What We Have Learned from UFO Repetitions* (1947-1984) and *Human Reactions to UFOs and UFOnauts Worldwide* (1940-1983), which tells what UFOs and their occupants do and how people react to their presence before, during, and after. These reports consist of the eyewitnessed sightings, sketches, charts, statistics, references, credits, recommended publications, etc. Available from Fawcett, 602 Battleground Road, Lincolnton, NC 28092. \$21 USA, \$23 overseas in U.S. dollars (check, money order, or cash).

BULLETIN OF ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCE

The complete five-year, 31-issue run of the newsletter on the UFO abduction experience, ufology and paranormal experience is now available on CD-ROM for \$20 postpaid (\$23 outside of North America). For more information write David Gotlib, 614 S. Hanover St., Baltimore MD 21230, email: dgotlib@jagunet.com; visit www.jagunet.com/~dgotlib/bae.htm.

FLYING SAUCER DIGEST

Published since 1967, FSD is your source for no-nonsense coverage of the UFO scene. Each quarterly issue contains recent UFO reports, thoughtful speculative articles, as well as commentary and media reviews. Four issues for only \$10.00 from: FSD, 377 Race St., Berea, OH 44017.

ADVERTISE IN IUR

A maximum of 45 words is available to current Associates for \$35.00. A three-time insertion (\$105.00) earns a duplicate fourth insertion at no charge. Additional words are \$1.00 each. Send a check with ad copy to CUFOS, Box 1621, Lima, OH 45802-1621. The deadline for the Winter 1999 issue is January 10, 2000. CUFOS retains the right to refuse advertising that does not meet *IUR* standards.

he had done. He was certainly fed up with UFOs. Nevertheless he had not lost his taste for writing and recording history, and he was planning to write about the history of the U.S. Air Mail Service.

It is our belief that Ruppelt had not lost all of his interest or objectivity about UFOs. Apparently he possessed quite a satirical wit. Thus the famous concluding word "myth," which he so strikingly used in the very last line in his second edition, may not mean what many take it to mean. Myth, after all, has two very distinctly different meanings. Yes, most associate myth with fallacy. But another meaning infers legend. Certainly, most will agree that the history of UFOs has today become legendary, as this last excerpt from Ruppelt's correspondence suggests. He was writing to a Carlos H. Rolff, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on November 26, 1957:

Thank you very much for your letter. . . . I personally have never seen any evidence to convince me that UFOs are real objects. However, I have talked to enough very responsible people who have seen some type of object and are convinced that they are an interplanetary vehicle that I am still willing to be convinced. . . .

THANK YOU

The authors thank Capt. Ruppelt for his contribution to ufology and his devotion to the United States Air Force. ♦

UFO BEINGS—*continued from page 12*

fears until a crisis comes, a point of no return where the old ignorance becomes more dreadful than the stormy voyage of discovery that lies ahead. We have listened with sympathy to descriptions of the harrowing yet exciting therapy sessions where abduction scenarios emerge and all the loose ends of a lifetime suddenly tie together. We feel no surprise when she finds herself examined by grey humanoids, or caught up in an ongoing series of encounters. We rejoice in her strength as she overcomes her fear of the unknown and makes peace with the intricate, surreal phenomena that are an intimate, inescapable part of her life.

At the same time, Oakman's history is not at all the textbook version of abduction. Most experiencers meet short grey humanoids, many people describe one or more other entities—taller humanoids, Nordics, reptiles, insectoids, or even stranger denizens of the alien menagerie. Her experiences are richer by far than most. Instead of one or two types of entities, she has seen enough entities to populate the planets of a whole star cluster. The familiar abduction types put in an appearance, but so do entities that are dead ringers for various fairy races, gnomes, animal spirits, nightmarish monsters, each with distinctive personalities and behaviors to accompany the difference in appearance. Little that she describes is unheard of in the literature of abduction, but seldom does any one individual witness such a diversity of types.

What can we make of this long parade of beings? Strict adherents to the extraterrestrial hypothesis argue that multiple races visit the earth and carry out an abduction or contact program, some with friendly motives while others are hostile.

The David Jacobs school of thought sees one race of aliens inducing illusions as a form of concealment or as part of a program of mental and emotional tests. A variety of types could result from aliens tapping the storehouse of cultural images, or from bewildered experiencers unable to grasp what they really saw, who resort to familiar images as though they clutched at various rungs on the ladder of approximation in order to speak at all.

Beyond the confines of physical extraterrestrials are notions such as Jacques Vallee and John Keel have championed when they propose that an intelligence of some sort has interacted with humans through the ages, perhaps a blind, irrational force or perhaps an inscrutable, purposeful one that promotes growth and change in human thought by upsetting its complacency with an occasional dollop of mystery.

Abducting aliens could also fit into preexisting theories of elemental spirits, inhabitants of other planes or alternate universes or unfamiliar states of consciousness that intrude into the physical world from time to time, and account for the recurrent reports of entity encounters through the ages.

For Jungians, such entities are denizens of the unconscious. For psychosocial theorists, they reflect odd sensations and ambiguous stimuli given form according to prevailing cultural patterns, to become fairies in a feudal age and aliens in the space age. For skeptics, these entities belong to anomalistic psychology or fantasies born of personal needs.

Not satisfied to borrow a ready-made answer, Oakman reflects on the undeniable similarity of the abduction experience to aspects of folklore, religion, and mythology. She looks beyond such oft-repeated parallels as fairy kidnap or changelings to recognize deeper ties, most notably a variety of entity types that appear not as separate entries in a catalogue but as life forms interacting in complex and purposeful ways.

The meanings and purposes are not clear, but they have mythic and symbolic power and a transforming influence. Abductions and other extranormal phenomena seem linked to a process of change, now as always, as any study of the growth of religions demonstrates. And therein lies the value of studying abduction in the light of folklore, religion, and mythology. These comparisons do not detract from the experiential reality of abduction, but they provide tools of understanding, the leverage of history, and perspective to make sense of these occurrences. For Oakman, understanding abduction is a work in progress. She does not offer final answers but proposes directions for research. Her call for comparison of experiences and the study of their experiencers deserves respect as a sensible and promising approach to the abduction phenomenon. ♦