

Disk Craze Continues



NOT A FLYING DISC—Major Jesse A. Marcel of Hounia, La., intelligence officer of the 509th Bomb Group at Roswell, New Mexico, inspects what was identified by a Fort Worth, Texas, Army Air Base weather forecaster as a ray wind target used to determine the direction and velocity of winds at high altitudes. Initial stories originating from Roswell, where the object was found, had labelled it a "flying disc" but inspection at Fort Worth revealed its true nature. (AP Wirephoto)

Army Disk-ounts New Mexico Find As Weather Gear

FORT WORTH, July 9.—(P)—An examination by the Army revealed last night that a mysterious object found on a lonely New Mexico ranch was a harmless high-altitude weather balloon—not a grounded flying disk.

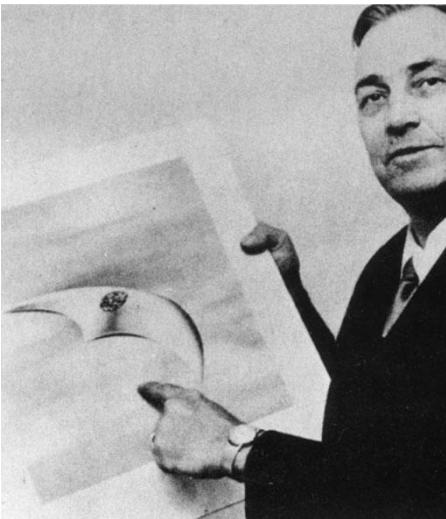
Excitement was high in disk-concious Texas until Brig Gen. Roger M. Ramey, commander of the Eight Air Forces with headquarters here cleared up the mystery.

The bundle of tinfoil, broken wood beams and rubber remnants of a balloon was sent here yesterday by army air transport in the wake of reports that it was a flying disk. But the general said the objects were the crushed remains of a Ray wind target used to determine the direction and velocity of winds at high altitudes.

Warrant Officer Irving Newton, forecaster at the Army Air Forces weather station here, said: "We use them because they go much higher than the eye can see."

LOST PURSE HOLDING DIAMONDS IS FOUND, BUT MONEY MISSING

Somewhere in Corsicana Wed-



Are they out
there?

An examination

of UFO

sightings

by Eric Jones

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1949 10-13144	
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMISSIONER OF CONTRACTS	
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION	
TYPE	Special Agent LOU J. CHRISTIANSEN
ACTIVITY	US FIA, Hill AFB, Utah
DATE	25, 26 May 1949
OFFICE	US FIA, Hill AFB, Utah
STATUS	CLOSED
CHARACTER: SPECIAL INQUIRY	
REFERENCE: Formal request of District Commander, 14th District, USAF, Hill Air Force Base, Utah, for investigation of flying objects seen over Hill Air Force Base, Utah, and near Hill Air Force Base, Utah. (See attached statement of Hill Air Force Base, Utah, dated 26 May 1949.) Inspector General's Office, US Air Force, Hill Air Force Base, Utah, now the second object, but did not see the first object. (See attached statement of Hill Air Force Base, Utah.)	
INVESTIGATION REQUESTED BY CAPTAIN PHILIP A. LOVETT, District Commander, 14th District, USAF, Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in connection with the second object seen over Hill Air Force Base, Utah. (See attached statement of Hill Air Force Base, Utah, dated 26 May 1949.) Inspector General's Office, US Air Force, Hill Air Force Base, Utah, now the second object, but did not see the first object. (See attached statement of Hill Air Force Base, Utah.)	
- CLOSED -	
APPROVED: DOWN RANK OF INVESTIGATOR: PERIOD: DATES: CARS: DATE: SIGNATURE: 05-26-49	
INVESTIGATOR:	CO, LAF, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio (Temp DO PS)
INVESTIGATOR'S SIGNATURE:	Philip Lovett MAJ in USAF Captain, USAF
FILE NUMBER:	05-26-49



Introduction:

When I approached this project, I was looking for something quick. I, at the time, was thinking I could get done with the nanodegree in a certain amount of time, but I was recalled from furlough and have been okay with stretching this out. However, as I approach a billing cycle, this is my last project and I need to hurry. I searched Google for some quick, ready-to-go data sets and this was one of them, from Kaggle. Little did I know, this was not going to be a quick analysis to throw together some graphs and move on.

I am in no way a UFO nerd. I think the subject is cool, but never really dived in. From a data standpoint, this would be an amazing project to get knee-deep in. This data makes me feel like a data nerd. As a data nerd, I like to research the topic I'm analyzing, and this is a very involved subject. So, I need to be pragmatic for the sake of this program.

Essentially, I don't believe most of these cases are genuine. I believe them to be a product of flight and fancy from pop culture. However, I don't believe ALL cases are to be discarded. So, this attempt is to analyze possible factors that make a sighting, for whatever it might be, a genuine sighting.

Thanks, and enjoy the show.

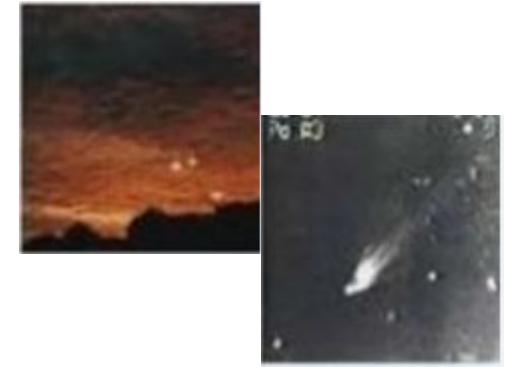
Data Sets:

- 1 Kaggle pre-cleaned set of NUFORC UFO sightings data (1910 - 2014)
- 1 nuclear bomb testing set (1945 - 1998)

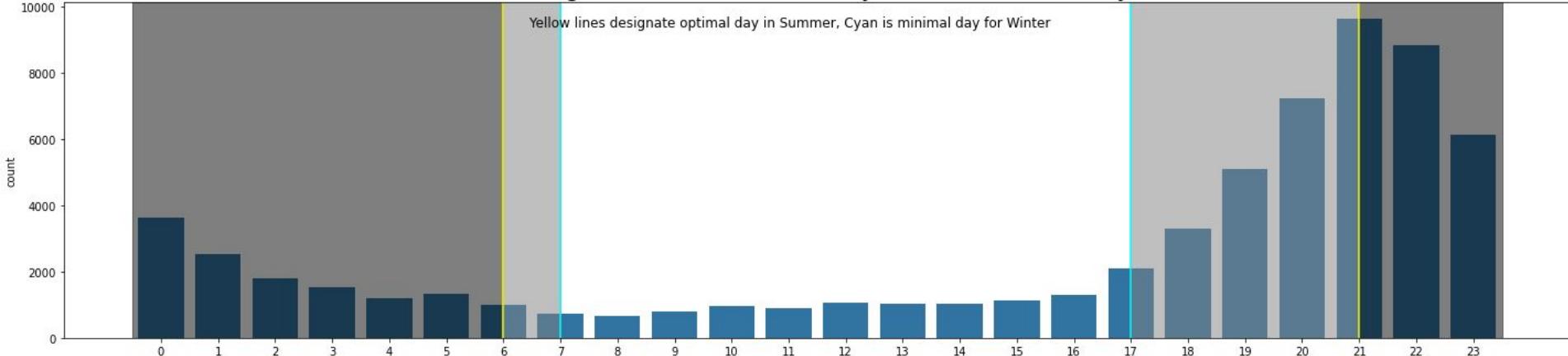


A First Look

In our UFO data, we have hour, day of week, month, and year per sighting. As an initial pass, we can see how often a sighting happens (overall) by hour of day. I have marked the regions where Summer and Winter day and night changes occur by hour. It is very interesting that sightings happen during the night at a peak time of 9PM or 2100 hrs. A question to ask might be, do sunrises and sunsets play with the clouds or craft in the sky to make people think they've seen a "UFO?" Do elements of space, such as meteorites (or falling stars), contribute to a UFO sighting? Just broad-sweeping speculations here.

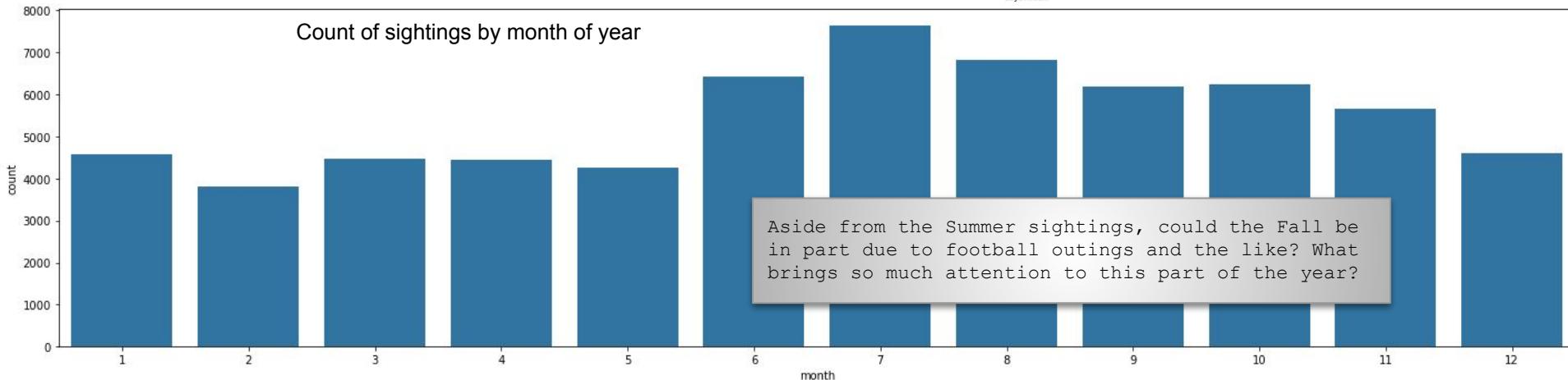
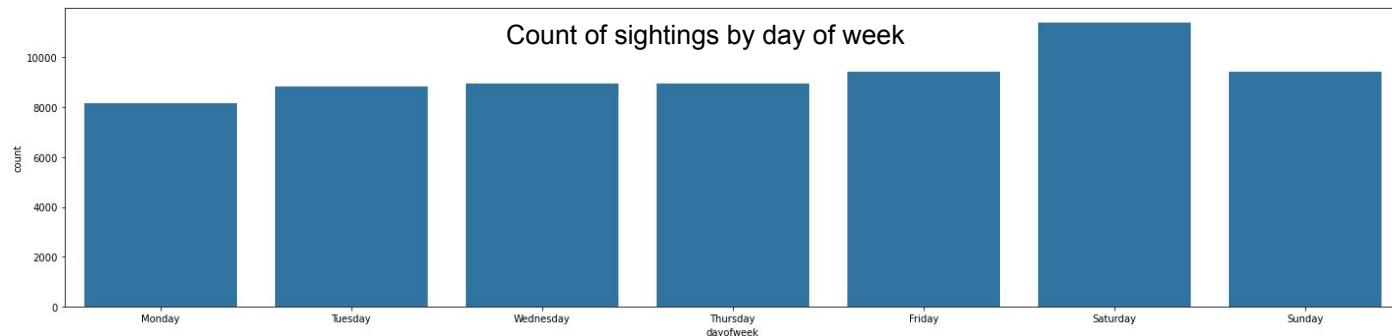


Reviewing distributions for hour, day of week, month, and year



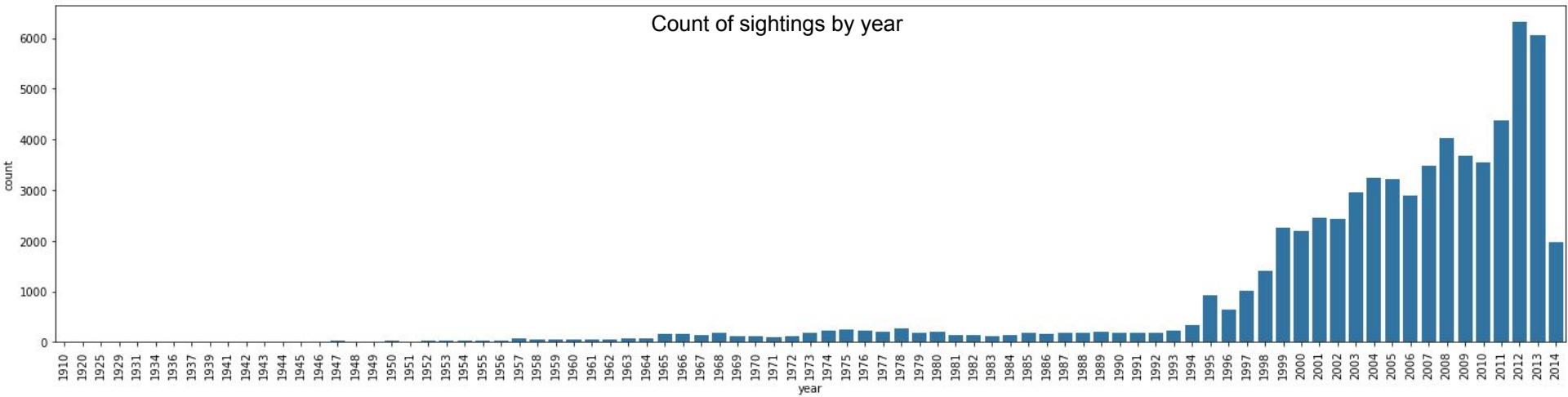
Continued Basic Charts

Saturday is definitely a peak day, while Summer months show a lot of sighting activities. Is it surprising? Or is it as more people are on their free time, the higher likelihood they will spot something?



Over the years

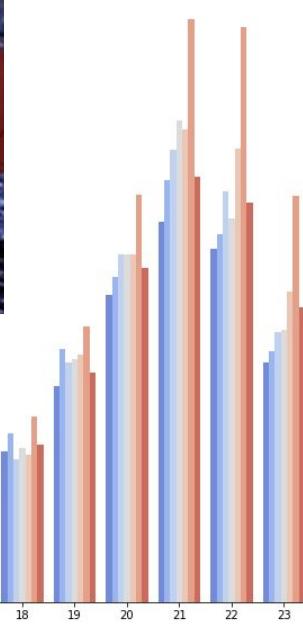
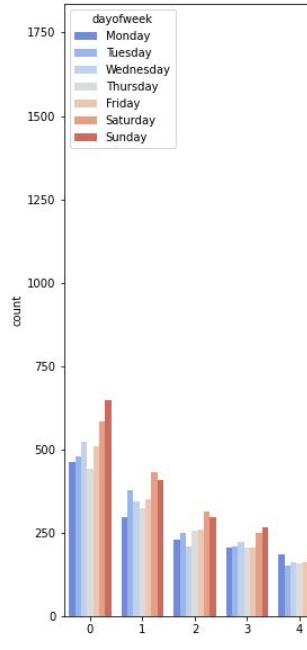
It is incredible the swell of sightings beginning in the early 90s. One possible explanation is perhaps the popular sci-fi TV series, *The X-Files*, has created a sensation. *The X-Files* aired September 10, 1993 until May 19, 2002 with a return of only 6 episodes in 2016 and 10 episodes in 2018.



"I saw Elvis in a potato chip once"

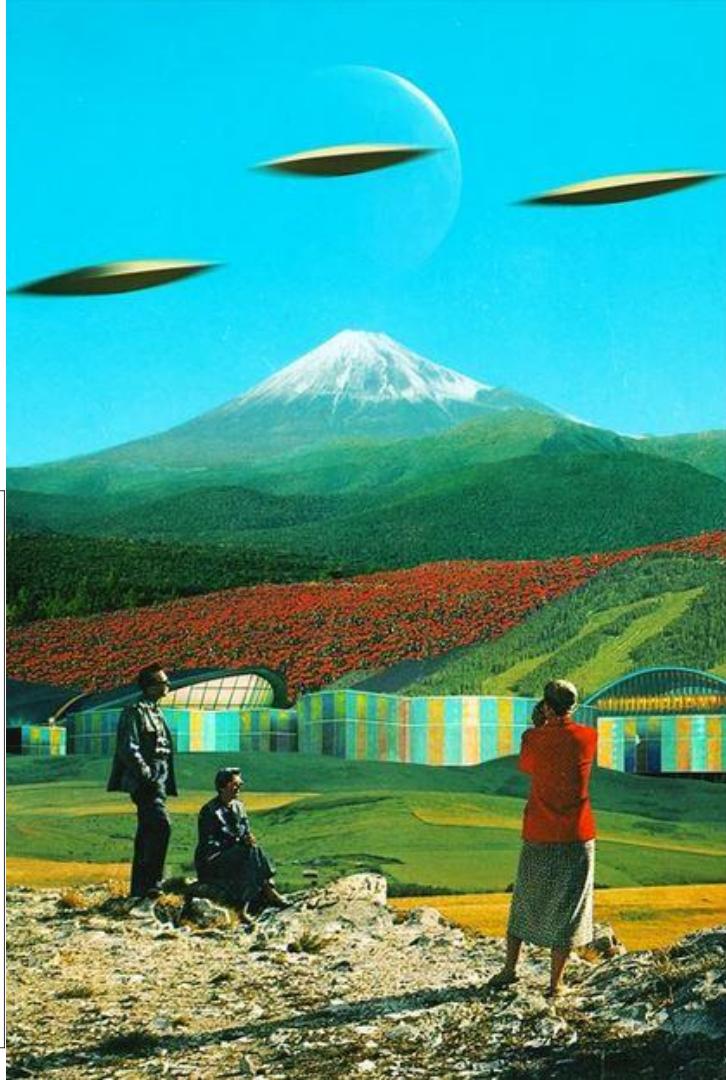
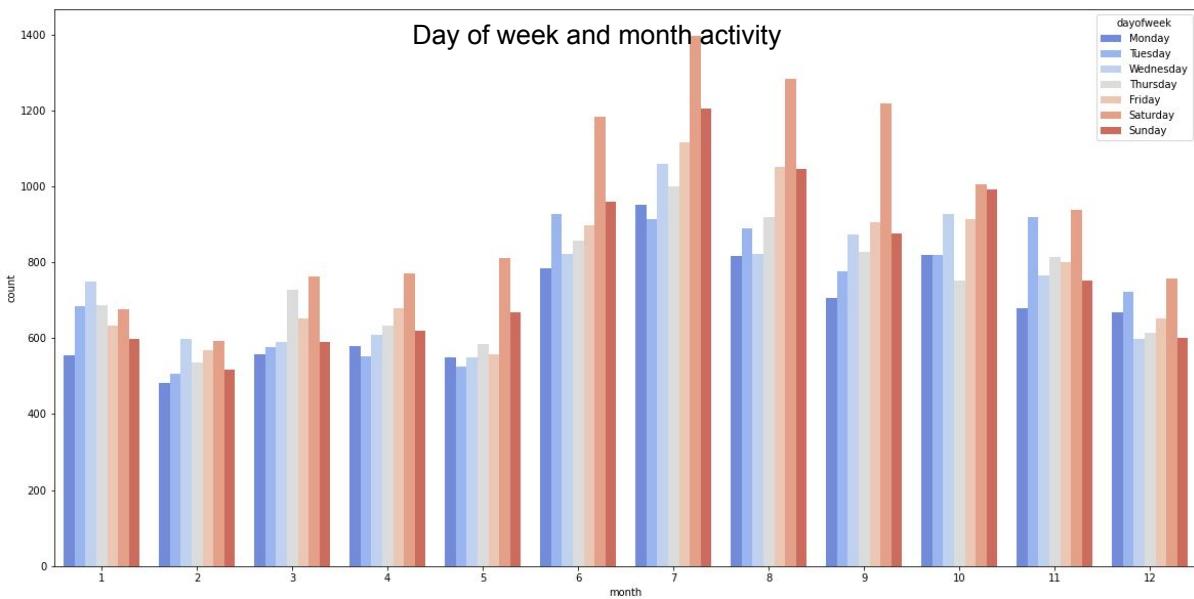
If we go back and combine hour and day, Saturdays definitely take a priority, especially after dusk and lapses a little bit into the beginning of Sunday. Freetime could really open up the chances of seeing something.

This is a sort of chicken-and-egg moment: Are we seeing a lot because we have the time to invest in the fantastic or is there a lot of activity going on that finally gets noticed? To think of the vastness of space, it's hard to consider the Earth is a billboard of the intergalactic highway.



Weekends are king

It is very curious that the winter months have some beginning-of-the-week activity, but largely weekends gain the most sighting time.



The New York Times

NEW YORK, MONDAY, JULY 21, 1969

TEN WALK ON MOON STRONAUTS LAND ON PLAIN; COLLECT ROCKS, PLANT FLAG

From Moon:
Astronauts Land on Plain;
Collect Rocks, Plant Flag

**A Powdery Surface
Is Closely Explored**



AP Wirephoto. Astronauts walk on the surface of the moon after landing.

TELEVISION

See page 2

More details about the walk on the Moon will be shown on television tonight. The Moon landing will be shown on all major networks.

On the Moon, the astronauts will be shown in their spacesuits, which are designed to protect them from the extreme heat and cold of space.

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Technology



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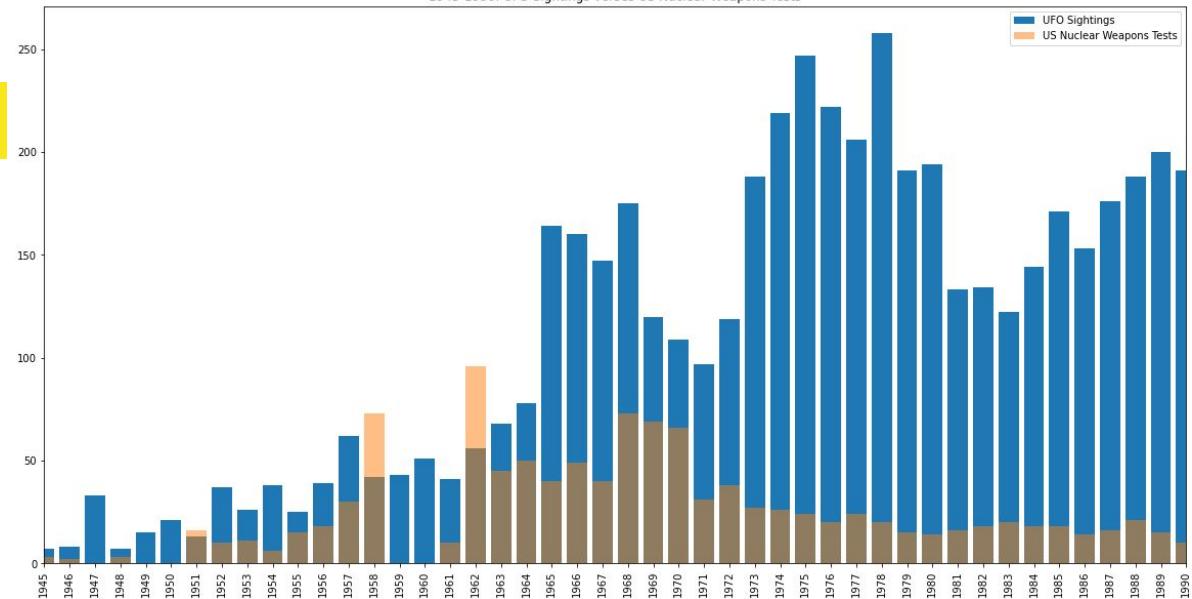


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Sky's the limit!

The famous incident in Roswell, New Mexico was in 1947; 1957 was the launch of the *Sputnik*; nuclear testing accelerated into the 50s and 60s. It could be the case with technological testing and advancement in the military that sightings increased, especially in the 1960s.

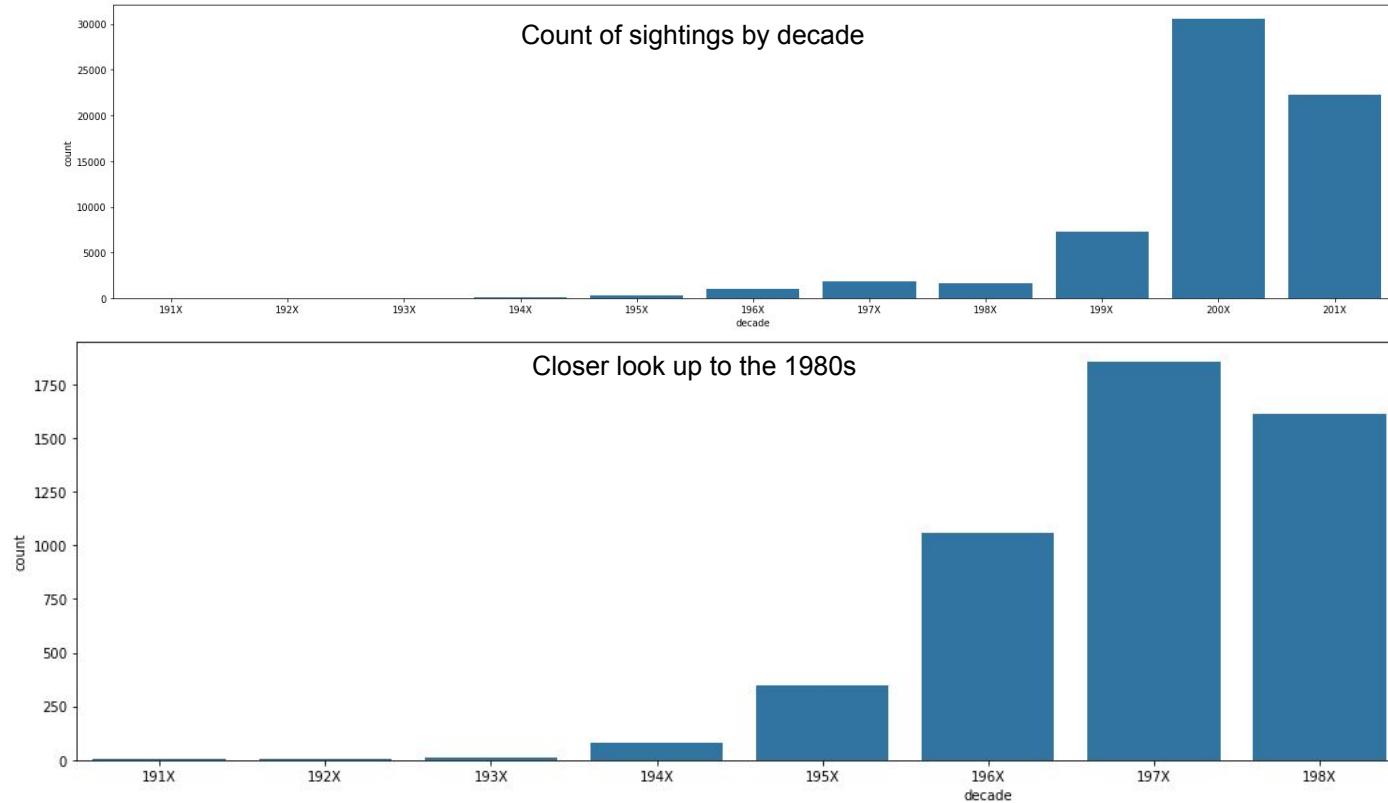


Jet propulsion was put into use by the Germans during the latter part of World War II, but jet propulsion was being developed through Europe before then. The US did develop a working concept also during the war, but did not have working models in the war like the Germans. Operation Paperclip, a US secret operation to recruit German scientists after the war propelled US aerospace programs through the 50s and 60s.

An attempt with a quick and easy-access data set nuclear testing, we can make some inference that technology - military flights possible carrying nuclear materials, especially - that technology may have had influence. Further historical research in technological advancements may reveal why the surges happened when they did - space flights from the US and USSR might be of interest; civil and (if possible) military air travel would be interesting as well. For example, Pan-Am put to service jet aircraft in 1958 with the Boeing 707, a model used into the 70s.

Decades of Progress

By decade, we see the surge from the 40s into the 70s, but a drop off in the 80s before a sharp increase from the 90s. The Cold War waned in the 80s, but the space race cooled after the US stopped making trips to the moon with the Apollo missions. General speculations here, but it could be accounted for by the swell of development of technology and transportation. It might be the case, too, that the beginning of the internet in common households of the 90s may magnify people's exposure to information and inspiration to possibly find UFOs.





Local Deputy's 'Saucer' Pictures

These pictures of flying objects were made about 15 miles southeast of Ann Arbor by Sheriff's Deputy David

Fitzpatrick. The pictures were taken March 16 and released yesterday after the miniature film was processed in New

York. The picture at left was made at 5:30 a.m. The picture at right was from the same location 45 minutes later.

'Saucer' Pictures Intrigue Nation

Sighting Duration

was unable to see. When the accident investigation was completed Schneider was released by Sheriff Doug Graham said the object had a half-dozen

while Eastern Michigan University students in Ypsilanti also said they saw strange flying objects.

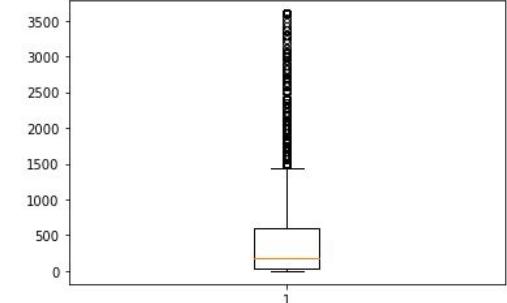
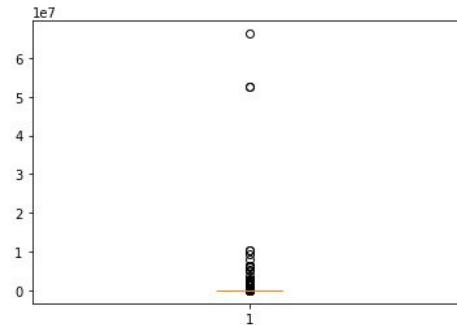
Since the first sightings Detective Harold Kerr, chief photographe for the department, has been placed on "call" in Bangor, Maine, John King, 22, told police he fired four

A Wrinkle in Time

This data set contained unusually long durations (in seconds). Having over 1 million seconds is equivalent to 11 days. Surely, identification could be made on something appearing for that long of exposure. The median for the duration is 180 seconds (3 minutes) without filtering. Given the concentration of data points, it was decided to narrow this exploration to an hour, or 3,600 seconds - the median remained.

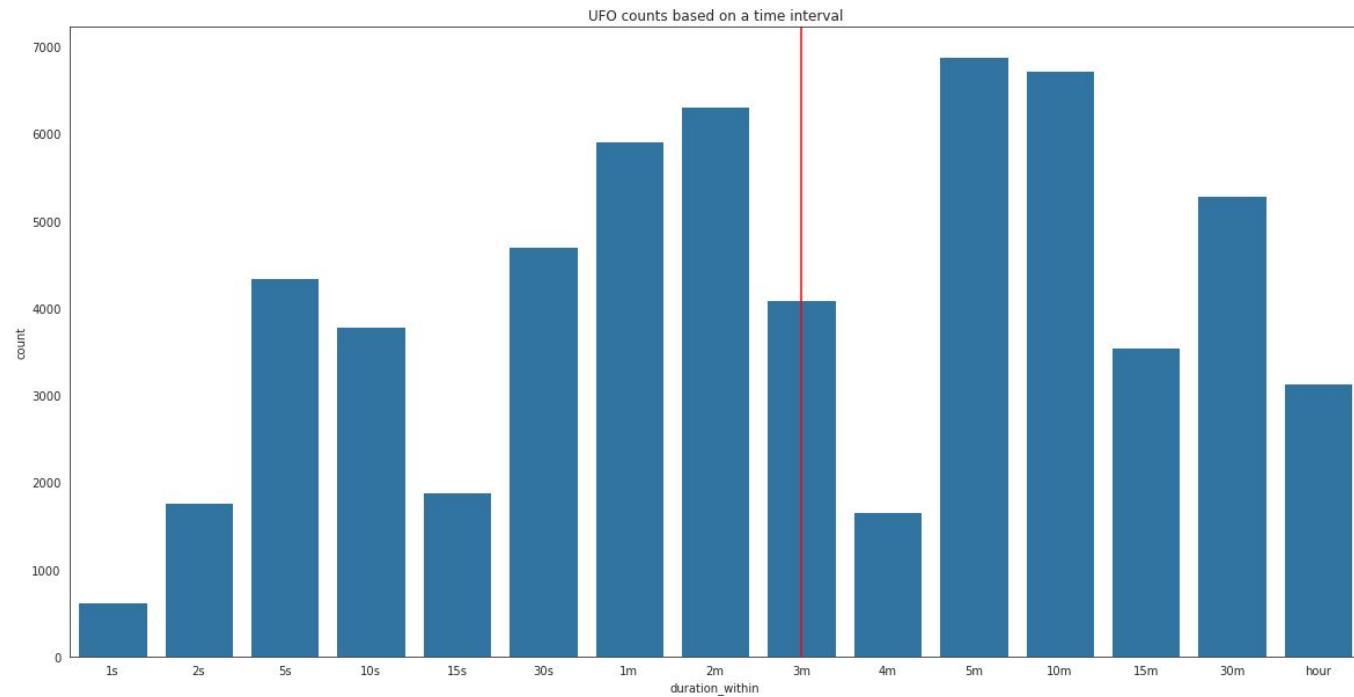


Before filtering, the boxplot is not even displaying fully. With so many points on a somewhat continuous scale, an hour seems reasonable to pick as it is difficult to define a range for authentic sightings. The stigma is usually something in the air for a brief amount of time.



Can we find anything in the duration?

Bucketing the continuous durations into specific time buckets, we start seeing a type of pattern. Roughly four different distributions in this: 1-15 seconds, 30 seconds to 4 minutes (the red line is our median), 5 to 10 minutes, and 15 minutes to an hour. Perhaps this might tell us something.



Perspective

Remembering the median is 180s or 3min, what can we draw from this?

If a person was lying in an open field with low grass to prevent obstruction, how long could they potentially view an aircraft in the vision exactly from left to right (or right to left)?

R120 degrees is a person's field of vision (FOV) from left to right if they look straight ahead. So, in this case, a person is looking straight up from the ground and registering an object from periphery and through the "area of focus" into periphery while keeping their eyes fixed straight up.

By today's standards, a typical passenger jet flies about 550mph at an altitude of around 7 miles. We need to find the arc length of the top of a cone (the plane travels the arc of the Earth) and calculate how long the jet will pass. Considering 7 miles is perpendicular to the ground and the beginning of the jet's journey into our periphery is the top of a 90 degree triangle, we need find the length of the hypotenuse to use for the radius of our cone, which is simply,

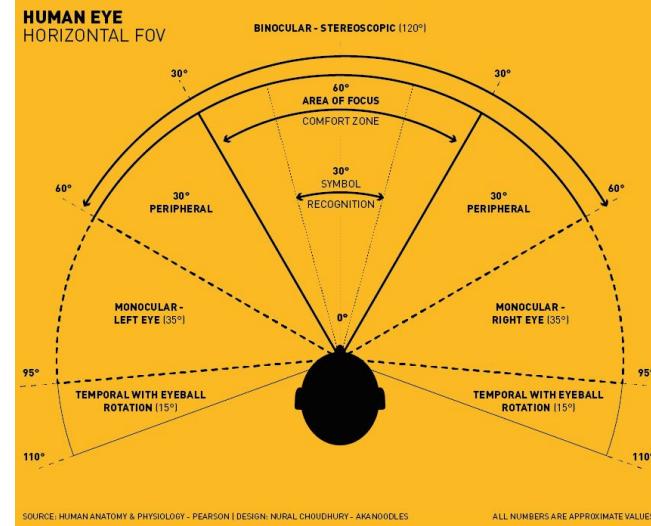
$$r = \frac{7 \text{ mi}}{\sin(30^\circ)} = 14 \text{ mi}$$

$$L_{arc} = \frac{\theta\pi r}{180} = \frac{120^\circ}{180^\circ} \cdot \pi \cdot 14 \text{ mi} \approx 29.32 \text{ mi}$$

$$t_{travel} = \frac{29.32 \text{ mi}}{550 \text{ mi}} \cdot 60 \text{ m} \approx 3.2 \text{ m}$$

Interestingly enough, that is roughly the median of our durations. So, it could be said that this is a baseline on how to gauge durations. Longer durations could mean something moving very slowly (blimp, far-away helicopter or a propellor-driven plane) or seemingly sitting still. Of course, UFOs of strange qualities have been said to hang in the air and suddenly disappear. Recall we've found four different groups, which possibly indicate the different "kinds" of sightings. Without more dimension, it's hard to say how to focus on each group and dissect them, however.

These groups were explored, but not much could be said from them until we look at the data differently, which is toward the end of the presentation.

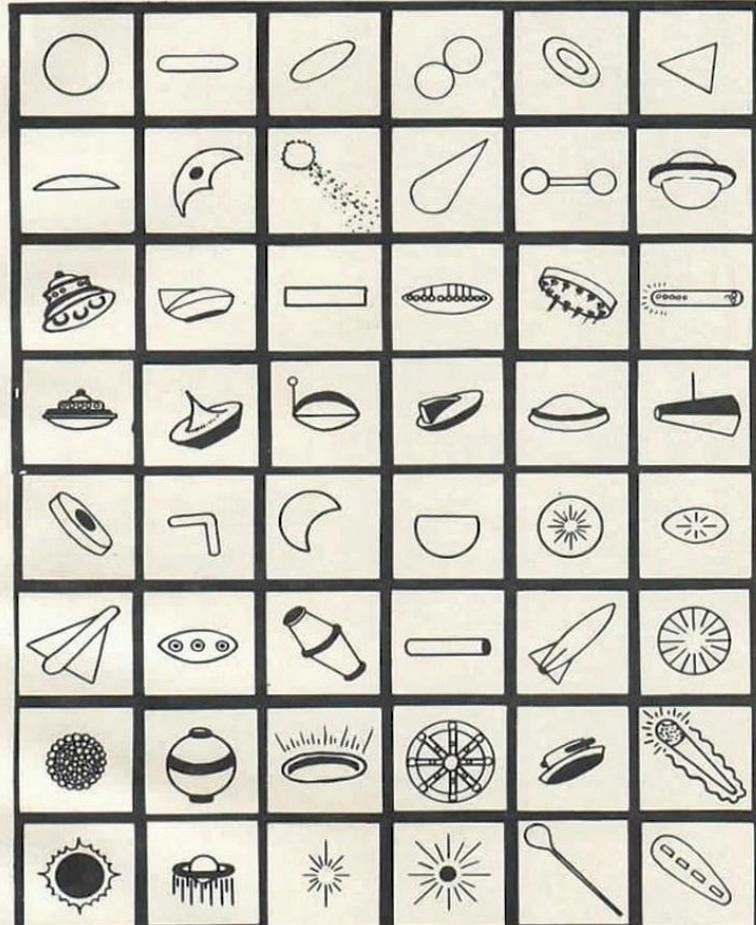


SOURCE: HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY - PEARSON | DESIGN: NURJAL CHOUDHURY - AKANDOOLIS

ALL NUMBERS ARE APPROXIMATE VALUES

Shapes

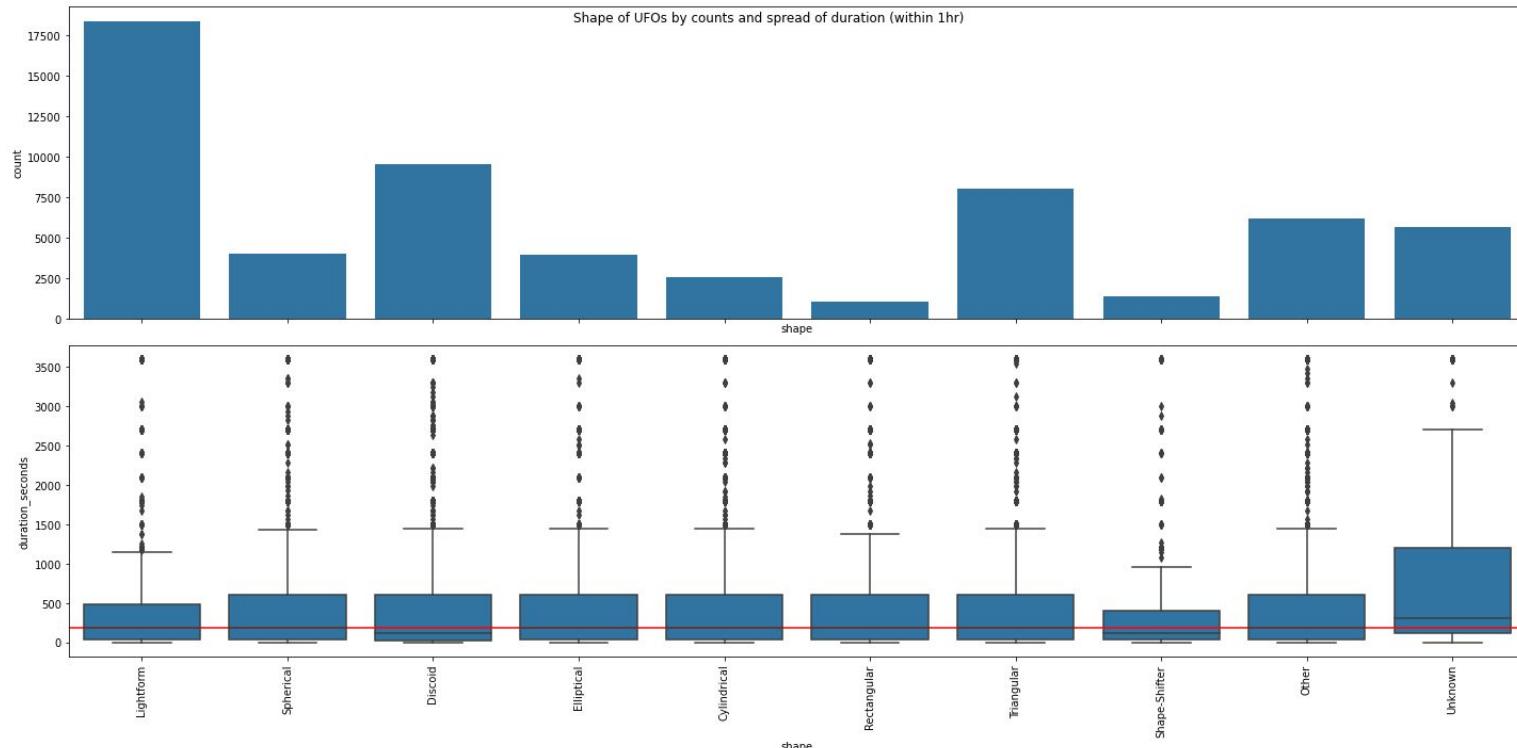
Shapes



The variety of reported UFO shapes, formations, and maneuvers is nearly as great as the number of witnesses who see them.

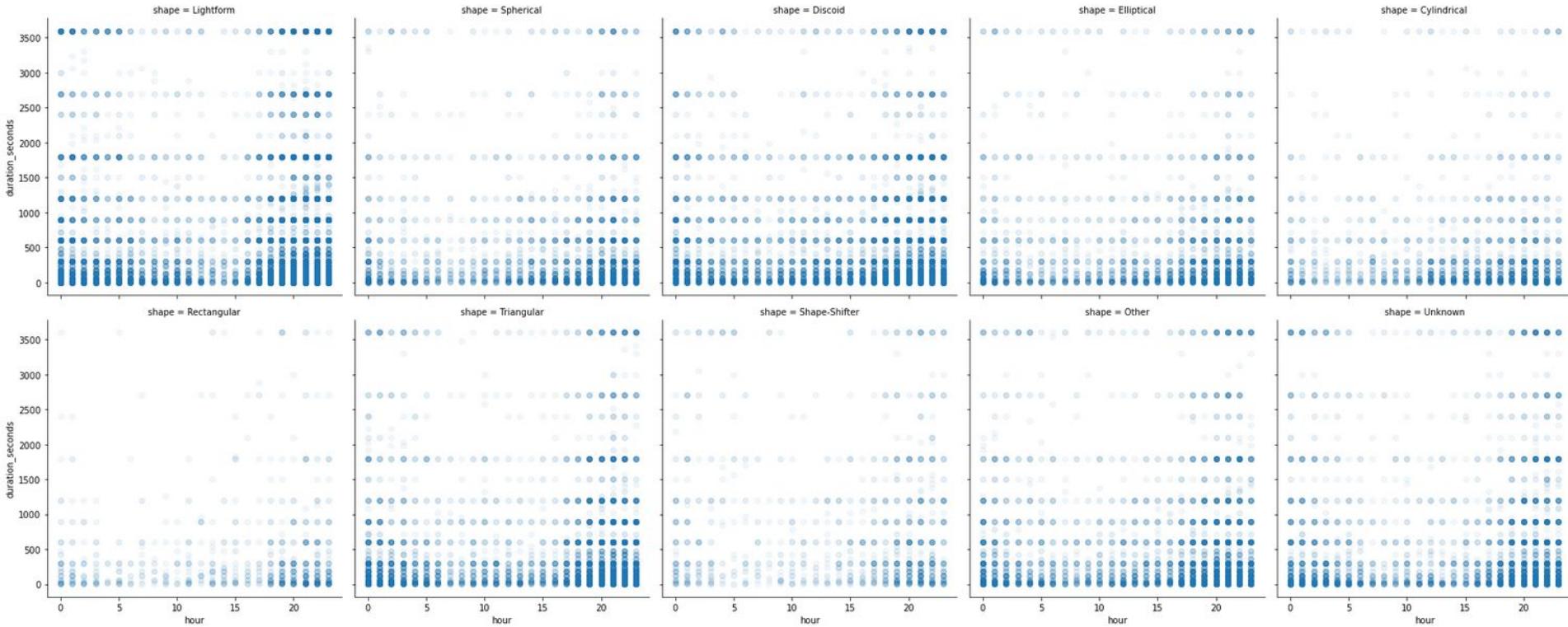
“shaped object”

There were quite a few different shapes in this data set, and some with very few entries. So, I had to find a way to summarize basic shapes. “Lightform” is the most common, while “Discoid” and “Triangular” are the next most frequent. Lightform being the most common has a rather short duration time than the other two. Aside from “discoid,” could these simply be fast military/civil aircraft at night?



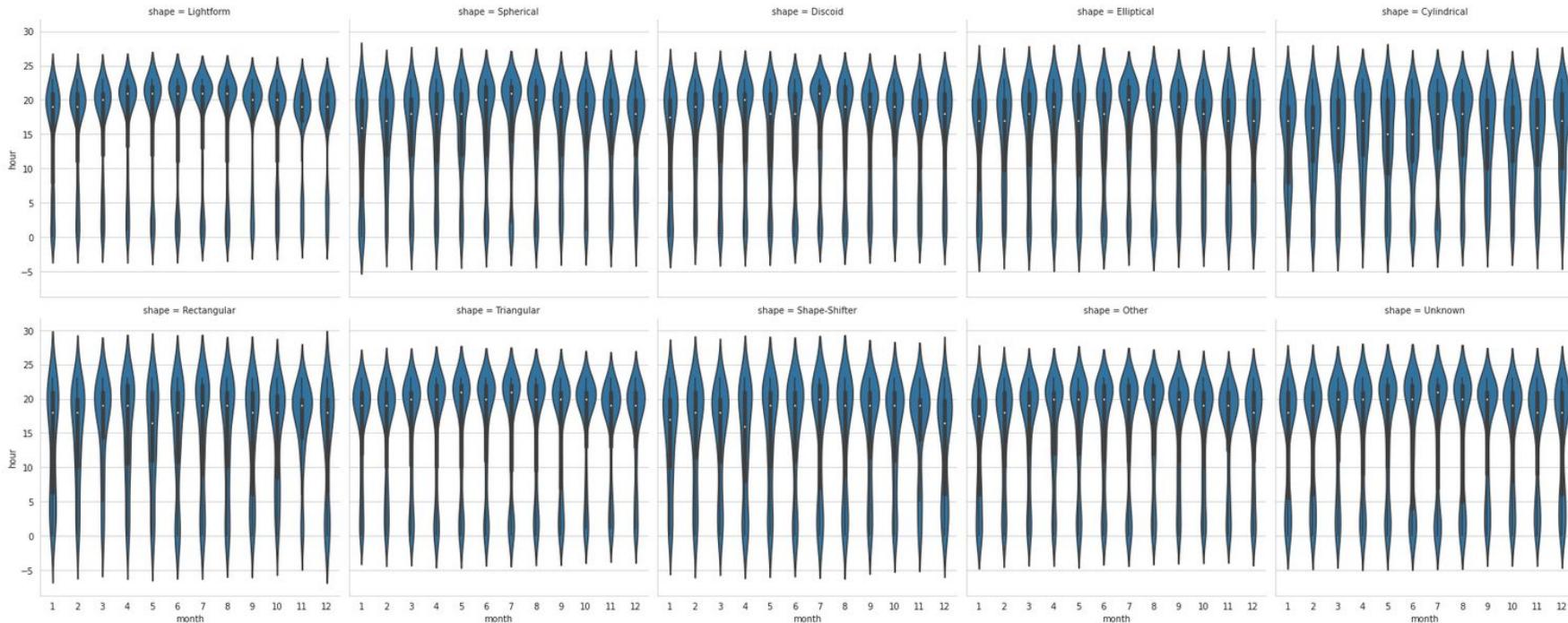
Night Travelers

Of course, we've seen how generally most activity is at night. Breaking this up by shape helps us to understand to some degree what the sightings could mean. Lightform definitely has more nighttime activity as well as up to noon, while discoid seems present throughout the day with heavier activity at night. Triangular is similar to lightform. Rectangular and shape-shifter seem to exhibit similar nighttime activity. Spherical and elliptical have more afternoon through evening activity. Cylindrical has somewhat constant presence from noon til midnight. No exact conclusions, but we have a pattern.



UFO Seasons

If we look at these through the months, lightform has the tightest pattern to nighttime activity. Triangular has some morning activity before sunrise more so than lightform. The outline of an eye can be seen in these to show the seasonal changes of the length of days during these months. Nothing is really standing out from what we've observed before. Even though there are fluctuations with some patterns, nothing is really saying there is favor during a time of year for a shape over other times.

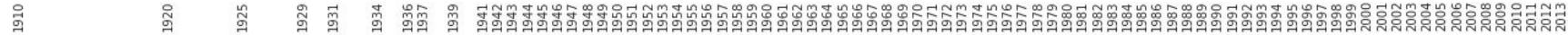


UFO Shapes in Time

1910-2014: UFO Shape Counts

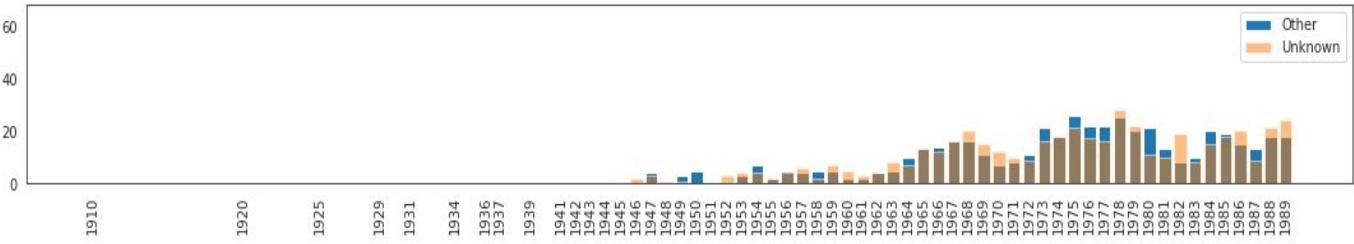
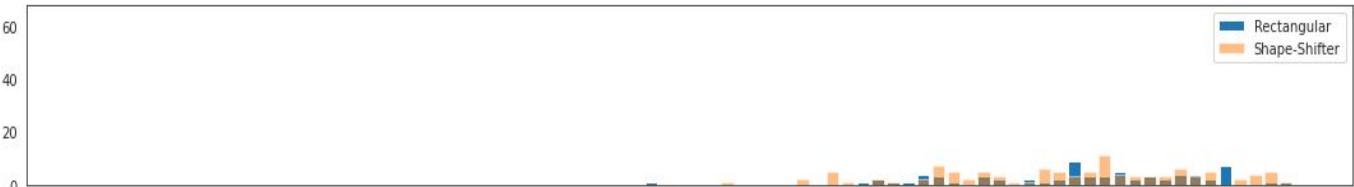
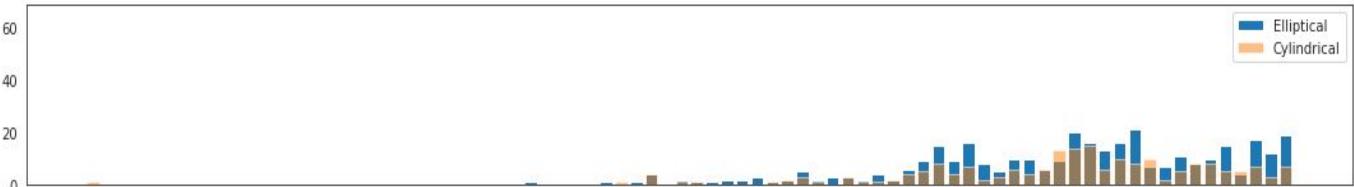
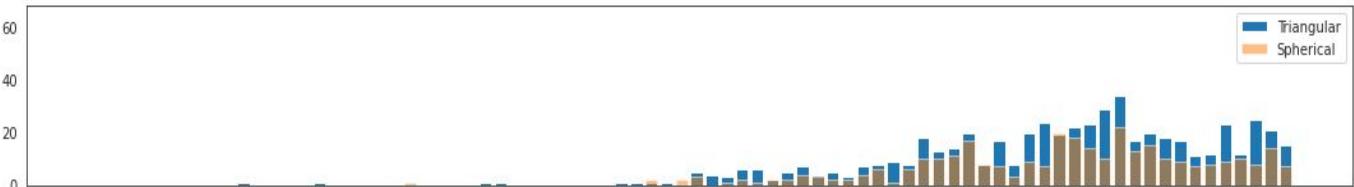
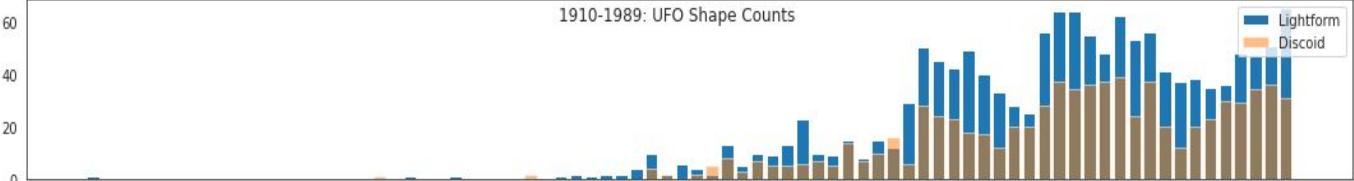
There is some pattern here, but it is felt by most shapes, which raises more questions. Lightform is the most popular through time, but none seem to dominate suddenly over another. They all show similar rise in sightings.

- Lightform
- Discoid
- Triangular
- Spherical
- Elliptical
- Cylindrical
- Rectangular
- Shape-Shifter
- Other
- Unknown



First Phase

1910 is definitely something to wonder about, especially anything before common commercial flight of the 50s - trains were king before that. This could be weather balloon or airship sightings. Lightform and discoid come into view in the 40s with triangular and spherical to follow. Elliptical and cylindrical seem to have a late start into the 60s, and rectangular and shape-shifter have a mixed timeline also starting in the 60s.

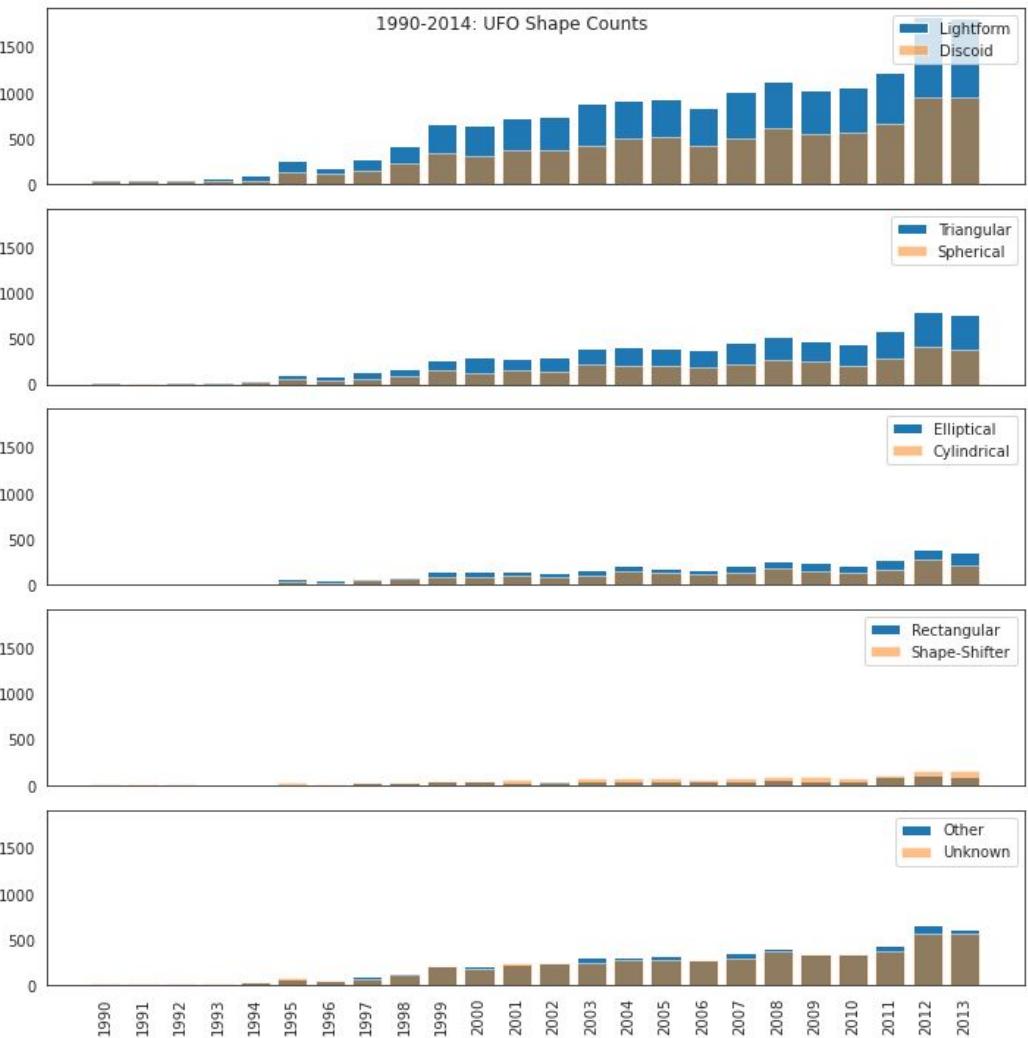


Second Phase

Seems like there is not much to be said as it seems most of these follow along with each other, just on different magnitudes, which makes you question what we might be looking at here. It is very peculiar to have such rhythmic rise and fall between each shape during this latter period as opposed to the prior period.

As before, could we really say a TV show has magnified the reaction to spot UFOs and this is some odd reflection in the data of what people claim to see?

What would be really interesting is to find where military bases and public airports were located over time. At least, what cities they were near. From there, calculate a distance for each sighting using the latitude and longitudes from each designated base/airport. Using the distances, can we come up with something more telling? Can we isolate down to less noisy and probably mistaken sightings? Could we, indeed, see some sort of "popular" shift before and after 1994?





note Possible light seen
time to east very high
blue light
UFO
Three bright red
fireball
Strange
It was moving at
bright red
orange orb
green fireball
fireball
at high
bright green
orange orb
green fireball
very fast
orb
sky
fast looking
at high
at the horizon
Two best to
bright green
orange orb
green fireball
the night
moving light
red light
the night
green light sky at li

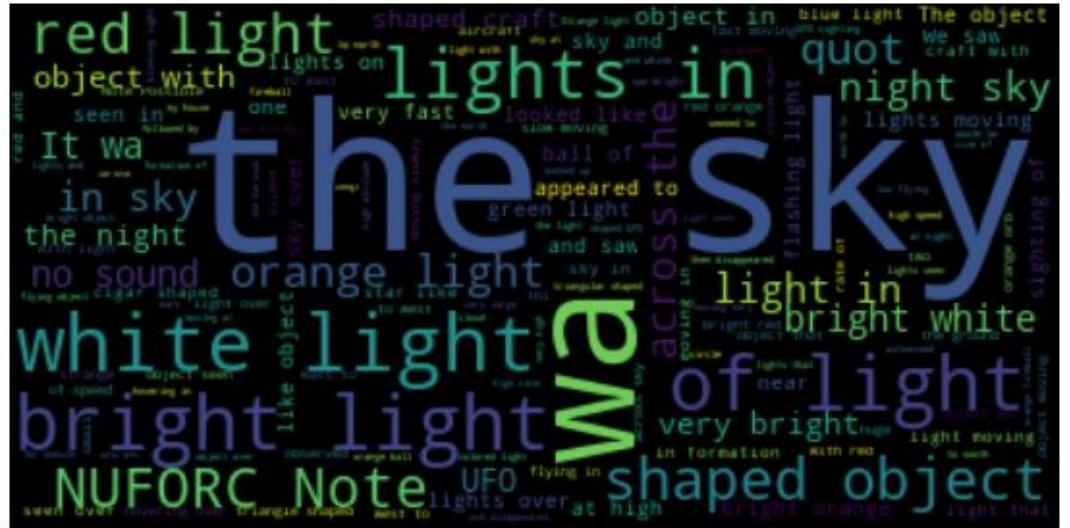


When they spoke

There is a lot here to say that much of these sightings are some form of mistaken identity in that it's popular to see UFOs at night, during time of leisure, and that the magnitude of technology in the sky and space could lead to false assumptions. But about their accounts, something that is not easily put into a graph? What have people said?

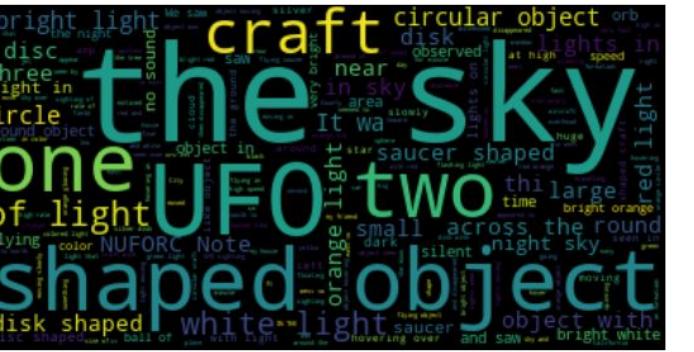
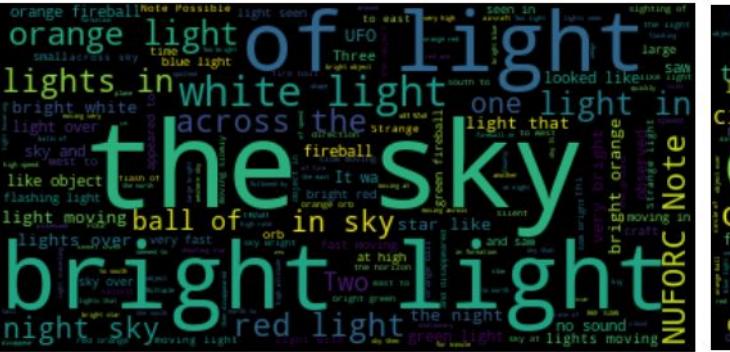
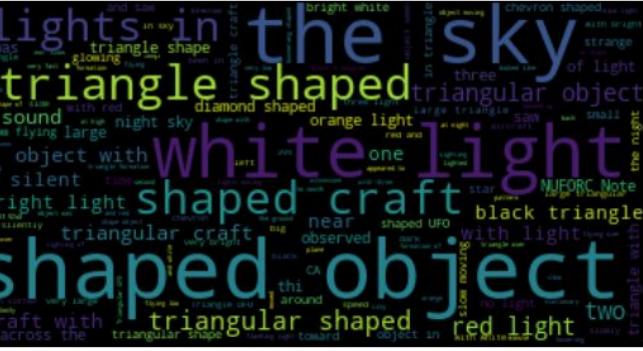
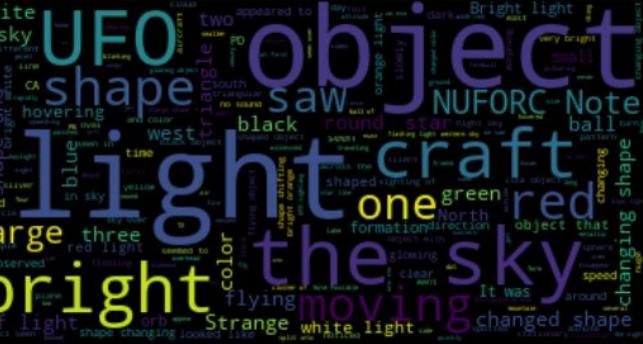
This is a view of all our data without filtering for the duration. There is some noise from the reports, such as "NUFORC Note" which is from the National UFO Reporting Center www.nuforc.org. This seems to come up anyway in some instances despite filtering, as we will see.

Overall, the reported comments show a lot of "light" and nothing too specific. Once the 1-hour duration data was looked at, this is essentially what we see - a kind of "average" appearing.



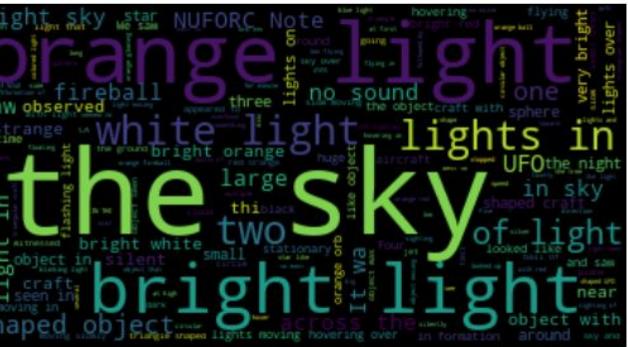
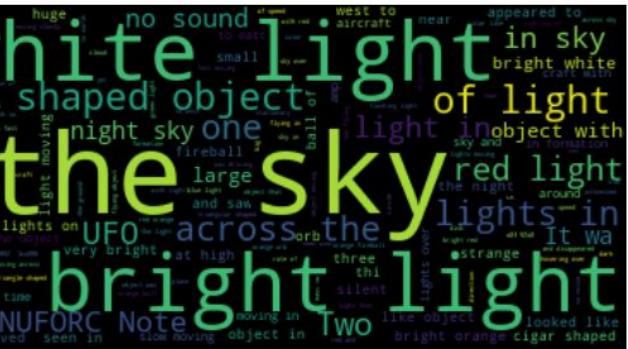
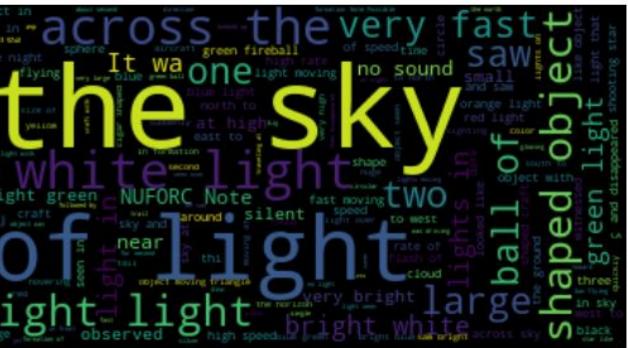
“the sky”

Starting from bottom and moving right an upward, we have light form, discoid, triangular, and for curiosity shape-shifter. Each one of these basically says the shape we're looking for except for shape-shifter where we can see a "strange" in the mix. Still nothing really telling otherwise.



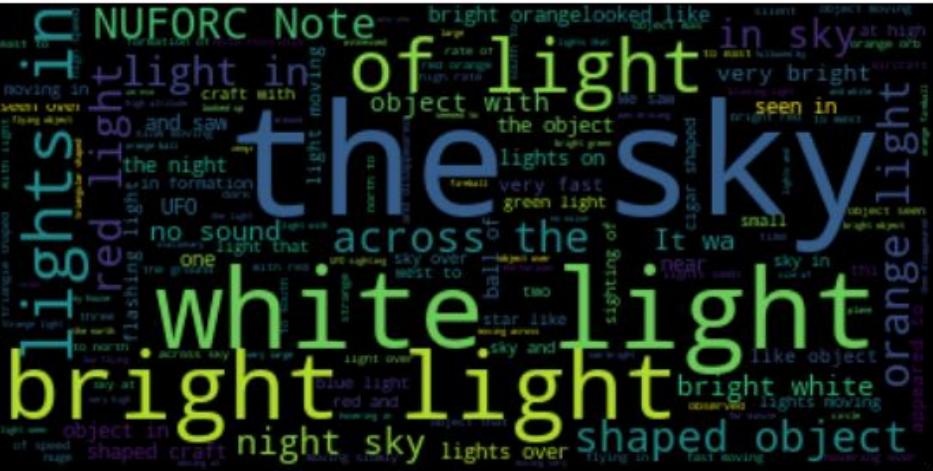
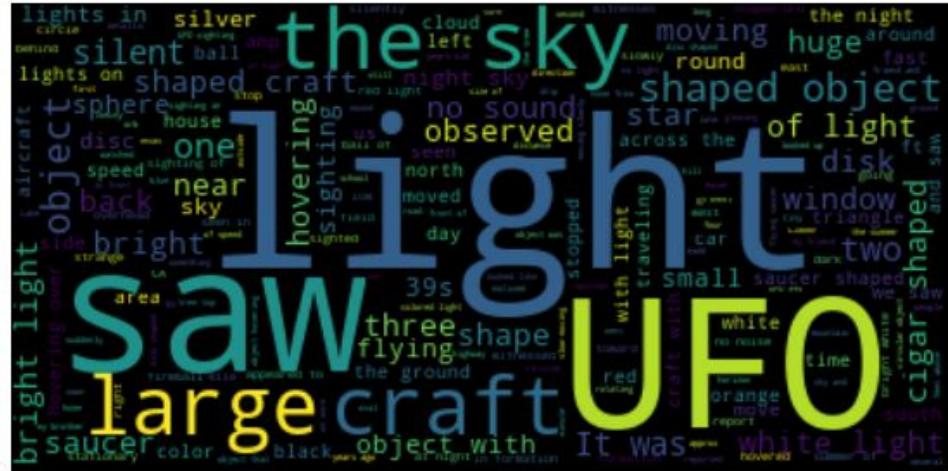
"very fast"

When taking a look out our four groupings of time duration, 1-15s, 30s-4m, 5m-10m, and 15m-1hr, we do seem to get some sort of different activity, 15m-1hr excluded since it did not have anything of significance except for "NUFORC Note" front and center. Length of duration, shortest to longest, is viewed from top to bottom.



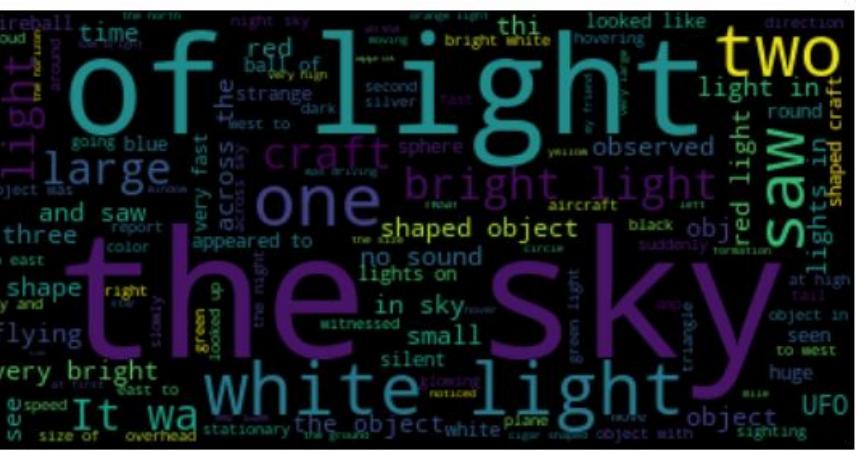
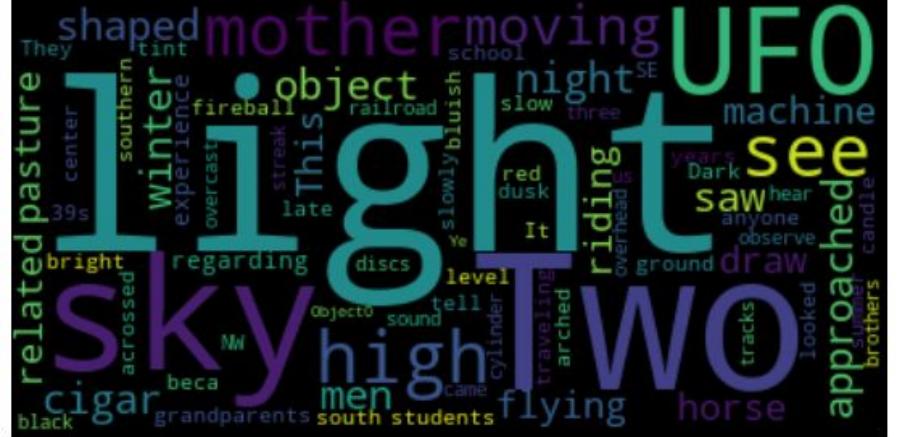
Two “epochs”

If we look at 1910-1989, and then 1990-2013 (2014 is incomplete), we seem to get a different behavior. Even though “light” is largely emphasized in the first half, more specific kinds of light are mentioned in the second half. The first half seems to have some specificity of the shape, but the second half wants to emphasize the light aspect.



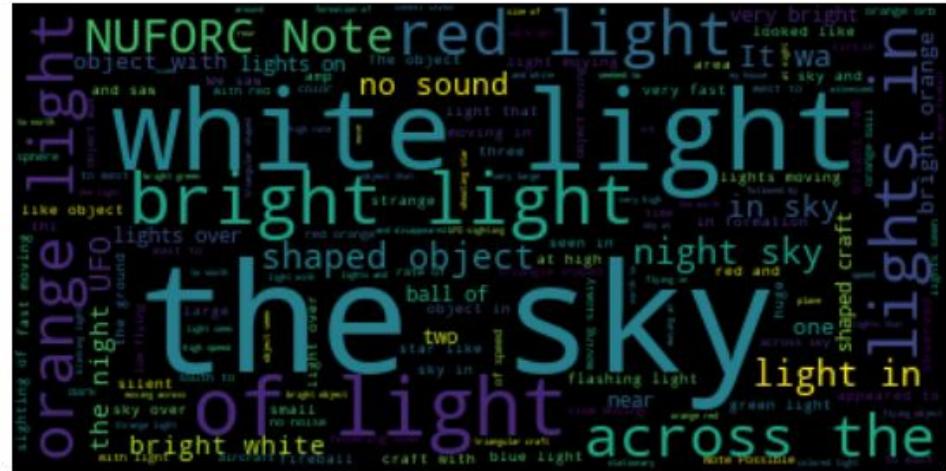
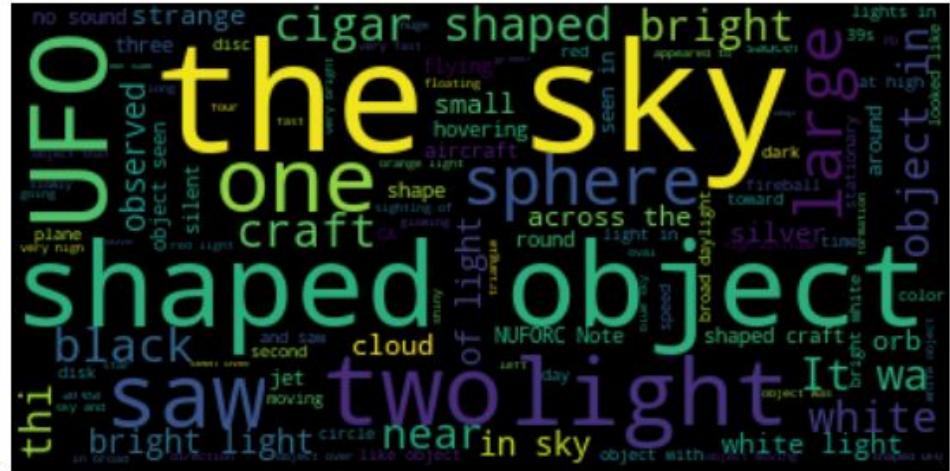
Through the decades

1910s had very few reports, as well as the 1920s. With more data, moving into the 30s, we see some rural activity with words like "railroad," "machine," "pasture," "horse," "cigar," and "candle." Moving into the 40s, 50s and 60s, we see things like "silver," "white," "star," "glowing," and "saucer," potentially more reflective aircraft in aluminum of its day. The 60s saw some emphasis on "sphere," as well. (Nuclear testing? Limited locations, of course.) (1960s second on the bottom.) As we move to the 90s, light takes more shape. (Top right.)



"Like night and day"

Within our 1hr duration data, if we step aside and look at a day - for all intent and purpose, "day" will be between the phases of the seasons, 7AM to 4PM, and "night" will be before 6AM and after 9PM - and night, there are differences since night focuses on the types of light that day does not as it's more about shapes. Of course, that seems like common sense, but it does make you wonder if the data were broken up in many various ways for word clouds, would we see patterns of note or not? At this level, though, that seems like going down an exhaustive rabbit hole since so far we have not seen anything strikingly clear about authentic sightings.





Air Force Says Saucers Freaks 'Objects' No Menace To Security of U. S.

By VERN HAUGLAND

AP Aviation Reporter

WASHINGTON — The Air Force says it's checking into all reports, but that "at present there is no evidence to support the claim of one thing: the saucers—whatever they are—constitute a threat to the security of the United States. Most of the sightings traced to date have turned out to be natural phenomena."

A flurry of reports that scores of unidentified objects had been spotted by radar in the Washington area during the past 10 days caused the Air Force to call a special news conference yesterday to tell what it knew—or thought—of the matter.

The official Air Force conclusion, announced yesterday:

About one-fifth of the sightings reported are "from credible observers, of relatively incredible things

such as birds, meteors or aircraft," two top experts on aeronautics. The other is Maj. Gen. Roger Namey, director of operations. Both attended the news conference yesterday.

The Air Force College, the Texas Air College, as well as a number of local civic leaders to discuss the project.

Sanford and Namey announced yesterday that the Air Force had analyzed about 2,000 reports of sightings of strange objects in the sky.

The bulk of these, after cross-checking, have been reasonably well identified as the product of friendly aircraft, out-and-out hoaxes, or electrical or meteorological

phenomena, he said. About 10 percent of the sightings remain unclassified.

White out of the 10 days he spent for life for slaves, he killed two men at Ophir, Utah, 1900.

ATE NEWS IN BRIEF

Conclusions

—so we keep on being concerned about them."

The one-fifth for which there are no reliable reports, but that "at present there is no evidence to support the claim of one thing: the saucers—whatever they are—constitute a threat to the security of the United States. Most of the sightings traced to date have turned out to be natural phenomena."

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THE AUSTRALIAN

NUMBER 4439

MONDAY OCTOBER 23 1978

Saucers Still Mystery Two Threat to U.S., Air Force Says; Weather May Be to Blame?

**'Hit-'Em-First'
Advocate Given
Army Reprimand**

Einstein Unconcerned
About 'Saucer Scare'
Lewis Meeting
With Operators?

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON — John L. Lewis reportedly has begun talks with operators of commercial flight-line saucer reporters, but it's uncertain whether he will try to lay the groundwork for follow-up contracts.

Other people have seen some recent reports. While it is not known exactly what he is doing, Lewis is in town, and he has had his first conference with the industry, Tuesday.

**Suspect Held in
'Healer' Killing**

**"If Ike Was Dem,
We'd Vote for Him'**

TO MYSTERIES
is a long shape ... coming for
ht now ... hovering on top of
vanishes after
metallic noise'

By ROBIN SOUTHEY

MASSIVE sea and air search was continuing last night for a light aircraft which vanished over Bass Strait seconds after the pilot reported his was being followed by an unidentified flying object.

The pilot, Mr Frederick Valentich, 29, of Avondale Heights, a Melbourne engineer, was on a flight from



OSHKOSH, WIS.—A trial tale of two men, split opinion phenomena and with healing powers, led to a conviction of a bullet from an automatic pistol, came into court for the last time yesterday. The conviction was upheld by a three-judge panel of the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Violin Held in Secret.

The Indianapolis, Indiana, trial judge held that even since the actual event occurred, Dr. Herbert J. Mueller charged that he was innocent.

Dr. Mueller, 50, of 1127 E. 10th St., Indianapolis, 46204, was held in jail for 10 months on a charge of first-degree murder, based on a shooting he allegedly committed on Aug. 14, 1976, during an argument with his wife, Mrs. Herbert J. Mueller, 47, of 1127 E. 10th St.

Dr. Mueller was held on a Democratic ticket.

Tolson expressed approval of the guilty plea of Dr. Mueller, who was serving a 25-year-old Oklahoma man on

ATLANTA (UPI)—Gen. Norman Taggert today told Dwight Eisenhower he would be "a good Democrat" if he ran for president in 1980. "People could vote in Georgia if 'people could vote,'" Tolson said. "I think he could run on a Democratic ticket."

On the one-fifth for which there are no reliable reports, but that "at present there is no evidence to support the claim of one thing: the saucers—whatever they are—constitute a threat to the security of the United States. Most of the sightings traced to date have turned out to be natural phenomena."

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No panacea has ever been found.

Recap

This data is a bit high-level, and something of this subject matter really needs more detailed study and granular data. Due to time, as well as practicality of this project, this is where I stop. I believe, for the most part, we can generally see a pattern of coincidence. With the rise in technology through land or space, air travel by way of commercial or military, and potentially the sensation of TV and theater, many speculations are mistaken identities. This would make for an excellent data dig to try and find potential genuine UFOs in the literal since - unidentified flying objects - and what their factors might be. These unexplained instance could be compares with historical and well documented occurrences.

This was a very fun and amusing data set, and I would love to play with this more with more advanced tools and certainly carefully gathered data for other elements, such as air and space travel, base locations, managing to create a catalog of city size (an aspect not covered due to more favorable elements to review here), and other interesting aspects of the decades with technology and media focuses.

