

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:21,640

Some say it began in biblical times or even earlier, and they cite the story of Ezekiel

2

00:00:21,640 --> 00:00:23,560

and the wheel.

3

00:00:23,560 --> 00:00:29,760

Some say it dates from the famous sighting by Kenneth Arnold in 1947, and some say the

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00:00:29,760 --> 00:00:36,080

precise starting point hardly matters, that unidentified flying objects, or UFOs, have

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00:00:36,080 --> 00:00:41,280

been with us throughout historical times, and that they will be with us for a long time

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00:00:41,280 --> 00:00:43,280

to come.

7

00:00:43,280 --> 00:00:49,400

Ezekiel is perhaps as good a time to begin as any, for it adds a historical perspective

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00:00:49,400 --> 00:00:51,760

that may well be important.

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00:00:51,760 --> 00:00:58,920

The story, as told in chapter one of Ezekiel, starts simply, and I looked, and behold a

10

00:00:58,920 --> 00:01:05,600

whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud and a fire unfolding itself, and a brightness

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00:01:05,600 --> 00:01:11,400

was about it, and out of the midst thereof, as the color of amber, out of the midst of

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00:01:11,400 --> 00:01:20,560

the fire, what follows has been analyzed in detail by writers who are convinced that this

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00:01:20,560 --> 00:01:26,080

was a description of a machine given in his own words by a man who was unfamiliar with

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00:01:26,080 --> 00:01:31,560

mechanical devices and had no vocabulary for them.

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00:01:31,560 --> 00:01:38,800

Are they right, or are those men right who, like Dr. Donald H. Menzel, director of Harvard

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00:01:38,800 --> 00:01:45,640

College Observatory, say that Ezekiel saw a sundaw?

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00:01:45,640 --> 00:01:47,920

It is hardly important.

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00:01:47,920 --> 00:01:53,000

Accounts similar in their own way to that of Ezekiel have been handed down for thousands

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00:01:53,000 --> 00:01:54,500

of years.

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00:01:54,500 --> 00:02:00,560

At least one has come from the Egyptians who dwelt in the valley of the Nile almost 1500

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00:02:00,560 --> 00:02:06,000

years before the birth of Jesus, and there were some attributed to the days of the Roman

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00:02:06,000 --> 00:02:08,640

Empire.

23

00:02:08,640 --> 00:02:15,120

The astronomer mathematician Jacques Vallée claims in his book Anatomy of a Phenomenon

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00:02:15,120 --> 00:02:22,800

to have collected more than 300 UFO sightings that took place prior to the 20th century.

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00:02:22,800 --> 00:02:28,040

It is their very number that is impressive, that and the difficulty of assigning natural

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00:02:28,040 --> 00:02:32,160

explanations for so many of them.

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00:02:32,160 --> 00:02:37,840

The same problem holds true with modern sightings, the ones that, by general consent, are counted

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00:02:37,840 --> 00:02:43,840

from June 24, 1947.

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00:02:43,840 --> 00:02:50,560

That was the day that Kenneth Arnold, an experienced mountain flyer, sighted a flight of nine bright

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00:02:50,560 --> 00:02:56,320

disc-shaped objects in the vicinity of Mount Rainier in the Cascade Mountains of the state

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00:02:56,320 --> 00:02:58,400

of Washington.

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00:02:58,400 --> 00:03:03,200

Arnold carefully noted his own position in the flight of the objects, which he estimated

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00:03:03,200 --> 00:03:10,000

to be 45 or 50 feet in length and some 20 to 25 miles distant.

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00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:20,440

He calculated their speed at almost 1700 miles per hour.

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00:03:20,440 --> 00:03:26,400

Arnold's sighting, judgment and arithmetic have been argued ever since, but Edward J.

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00:03:26,400 --> 00:03:33,120

Rupav, who once headed the United States Air Force Investigations into UFO reports, concludes

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00:03:33,120 --> 00:03:39,080

simply that the objects Arnold saw were unknown.

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00:03:39,080 --> 00:03:44,680

The Air Force Investigating Agency has been designated by several code names, but during

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00:03:44,680 --> 00:03:49,720

most of its existence it has been known as Project Blue Book.

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00:03:49,720 --> 00:03:55,440

It has collected more than 11,000 reports of UFO sightings in the United States, and

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00:03:55,440 --> 00:04:02,120

it has frequently been accused of doing everything in its power to explain away each report,

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00:04:02,120 --> 00:04:07,420

to attribute it to some natural and known event, no matter how far-fetched the attribution

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00:04:07,420 --> 00:04:10,240

might be.

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00:04:10,240 --> 00:04:16,100

In spite of that, Blue Book carries in its file some 700 sightings of objects it designates

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00:04:16,100 --> 00:04:21,700

as unidentified, although in each of these cases sufficient information was supposedly

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00:04:21,700 --> 00:04:25,300

given to make an identification possible.

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00:04:25,300 --> 00:04:30,940

Unofficial UFO reports, submitted to a private committee with headquarters in Washington,

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00:04:30,940 --> 00:04:37,940

D.C., have on occasion run two and three times the number turned into the Air Force.

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00:04:37,940 --> 00:04:43,940

And while the Air Force counts about 6% as unidentified, the National Investigations

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00:04:43,940 --> 00:04:50,580

Committee on an aerial phenomena estimates that 20% of the reports it receives represent

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00:04:50,580 --> 00:04:52,740

genuine mysteries.

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00:04:52,740 --> 00:04:57,460

The descriptions range from the relatively conservative account given by Arnold, which

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00:04:57,500 --> 00:05:03,500

might be summarized simply in the phrase, unidentified flying objects, to accounts

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00:05:03,500 --> 00:05:09,500

of craft that have taken a variety of forms, have actually landed, and have been occupied

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00:05:09,500 --> 00:05:14,340

by strange humanoid beings.

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00:05:14,340 --> 00:05:19,140

Your are the letter reports always made by wild-eyed observers.

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00:05:19,140 --> 00:05:24,580

While pure hoaxes and practical jokes are often suspect, it is difficult indeed to account

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00:05:24,660 --> 00:05:31,660

for such a series of sightings as that which began in Northern California back in 1896.

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00:05:33,900 --> 00:05:39,740

San Francisco newspapers on November 22nd of that year were full of the story.

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00:05:39,740 --> 00:05:46,740

They greeted it with a light pen and pranksters at plenty enjoyed their hour or two upon stage.

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00:05:46,740 --> 00:05:53,260

But on November 22nd, the San Francisco Examiner was forced to admit that credible witnesses

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00:05:53,340 --> 00:05:58,740

had seen a lighted object in the skies over many parts of the state for the past several

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00:05:58,740 --> 00:06:05,020

days, an object for which there was no satisfactory explanation.

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00:06:05,020 --> 00:06:09,980

It was described as a cigar-shaped airship with what we would call propellers at either

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00:06:09,980 --> 00:06:14,580

end and a long carriage beneath.

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00:06:14,580 --> 00:06:21,340

No one at that time had built a navigable airship.

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00:06:21,420 --> 00:06:26,420

As was to be the case with later UFO reports, some astronomers at that time insisted that

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00:06:26,420 --> 00:06:33,420

people were merely seeing Mars or Venus, their light diffused by involvement with clouds.

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00:06:33,660 --> 00:06:38,700

As was to be the case later, at least one man came forward to claim he had been taken

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00:06:38,700 --> 00:06:45,700

aboard for a ride, in this instance a 24-hour, 4,400-mile round trip to Hawaii.

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00:06:46,700 --> 00:06:51,700

As was to be the case later, some of the doubters were dumbfounded.

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00:06:51,700 --> 00:06:57,300

They had insisted that the site was being taken in by a prankster in a balloon, only to shake

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00:06:57,300 --> 00:07:04,300

their heads in puzzlement when, on November 30th, the aircraft appeared flying into the

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00:07:04,300 --> 00:07:06,540

wind.

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00:07:06,540 --> 00:07:12,420

The San Francisco newspaper reports blossomed suddenly around November 22nd, like a field

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00:07:12,460 --> 00:07:17,620

of California poppies in the sun, and they faded just as quickly.

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00:07:17,620 --> 00:07:22,620

Apparently the object had left the Bay Region, but the saga was not ended.

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00:07:22,620 --> 00:07:28,020

For months afterward, there were reports of similar sightings across the country as far

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00:07:28,020 --> 00:07:31,540

east as Chicago and St. Louis.

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00:07:31,540 --> 00:07:37,940

None was stranger or more baffling than that of Alexander Hamilton, a former congressman

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00:07:37,940 --> 00:07:42,340

who maintained a farm at Leroy, Kansas.

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00:07:43,260 --> 00:07:48,260

Hamilton persuaded ten leading townsmen to sign an affidavit that his word had never

83

00:07:48,260 --> 00:07:54,260

been questioned, and that they did verily believe his statement to be true and correct.

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00:07:54,260 --> 00:08:01,260

He himself swore that on a Monday evening in April, 1897, about 10.30 p.m., he, his

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00:08:04,580 --> 00:08:10,580

son and attendant, were awakened from sleep by noise among the cattle.

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00:08:10,820 --> 00:08:17,460

They rushed outside to see an airship slowly descending upon a cowlot about 220 yards from

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00:08:17,460 --> 00:08:19,420

the house.

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00:08:19,420 --> 00:08:24,380

The three men ran to within 50 yards of the craft, Hamilton said.

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00:08:24,380 --> 00:08:31,380

It was cigar-shaped, possibly 300 feet long, and had a carriage underneath, made of glass

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00:08:31,380 --> 00:08:38,380

or some other transparent substance, alternating with narrow strips of another material.

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00:08:39,020 --> 00:08:45,300

It was, Hamilton continued, brilliantly lighted within, and was occupied by six of the strangest

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00:08:45,300 --> 00:08:47,980

beings he had ever seen.

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00:08:47,980 --> 00:08:53,260

The occupants were jabbering together, but the witnesses were unable to understand a

94

00:08:53,260 --> 00:08:55,660

word they said.

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00:08:55,660 --> 00:09:01,300

The strange visitor hovered about 300 feet in the air, the account continued, directly

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00:09:01,300 --> 00:09:05,420

above a squealing two-year-old heifer.

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00:09:05,460 --> 00:09:10,820

When the three men reached the animal, they found a red cable about half an inch thick,

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00:09:10,820 --> 00:09:13,820

fastened in a slipknot around her neck.

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00:09:13,820 --> 00:09:17,260

The heifer was tangled in a wire fence.

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00:09:17,260 --> 00:09:22,940

Unable to remove the cable, the men freed the animal by cutting away the wire, then

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00:09:22,940 --> 00:09:29,300

stood in amazement to see the ship, heifer and all, rise slowly, disappearing in the

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00:09:29,300 --> 00:09:32,740

northwest.

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00:09:32,740 --> 00:09:37,460

Last evening, Hamilton learned that a neighbor some three or four miles distant had found

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00:09:37,460 --> 00:09:44,460

the legs, head and hind, identified by Hamilton's brand in his field.

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00:09:45,100 --> 00:09:50,100

There were no tracks in the soft ground around the remains.

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00:09:50,100 --> 00:09:57,100

Hamilton had witnesses, including the neighboring farmer, and if he, a former congressman, were

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00:09:57,100 --> 00:10:02,540

given to fantasy or joking, his fellow citizens would hardly have signed an affidavit attesting

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00:10:02,540 --> 00:10:04,260

to his character.

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00:10:04,260 --> 00:10:09,260

If he told the truth, what did he see?

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00:10:09,260 --> 00:10:15,020

For that matter, what did the Reverend William Booth Gill, an ordained priest of the Church

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00:10:15,020 --> 00:10:22,020

of England, and 37 other persons at his Papuan Mission in New Guinea, see on at least four

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00:10:22,020 --> 00:10:26,660

occasions more than 60 years later?

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00:10:26,660 --> 00:10:32,460

As Father Gill told it to a reporter for the Sydney Australia Sun Herald, he actually

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00:10:32,460 --> 00:10:38,580

exchanged semaphore greetings with the occupants of a strange craft on the evening of the 26th

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00:10:38,580 --> 00:10:46,080

of June, 1959, and so did others of his group.

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00:10:46,080 --> 00:10:51,420

Father Gill described a sparkling craft which descended to an altitude of between 300 and

117

00:10:51,420 --> 00:10:56,940

450 feet shortly after dinner time.

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00:10:56,940 --> 00:11:02,780

The ship looked like a disk with a small rounded superstructure, he said.

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00:11:02,780 --> 00:11:07,500

Admitting he was a poor mathematician, the priest estimated that the craft was about

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00:11:07,500 --> 00:11:13,700

35 feet in diameter on the lower deck and about 20 feet across on the upper.

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00:11:13,700 --> 00:11:19,660

He added that it was yellowish when stationary and blue-green when in motion.

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00:11:19,660 --> 00:11:24,980

But the most important and exciting thing, he said, was that there were human beings

123

00:11:24,980 --> 00:11:29,740

aboard, four in all.

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00:11:29,740 --> 00:11:34,660

The figures looked as though they were doing something on the top deck, he related.

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00:11:34,660 --> 00:11:38,300

One figure seemed to be standing, looking down at us.

126

00:11:38,300 --> 00:11:41,420

I stretched my hand above my head and waved.

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00:11:41,420 --> 00:11:47,180

To our surprise, the figure did the same.

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00:11:47,180 --> 00:11:51,420

Others in the group of onlookers also waved and received responses.

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00:11:51,420 --> 00:11:56,560

One of the mission teachers waved and flashed a torchlight at the crew, and the craft swung

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00:11:56,560 --> 00:12:01,700

like a pendulum, presumably in recognition, Father Gill said.

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00:12:01,700 --> 00:12:09,980

But it did not land, and beyond the casual exchange of gestures there was no communication.

132

00:12:09,980 --> 00:12:14,380

Again the narrator of impeccable character.

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00:12:14,380 --> 00:12:17,780

Then the additional witnesses.

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00:12:17,780 --> 00:12:20,320

Again the question.

135

00:12:20,320 --> 00:12:30,060

If Father Gill told the truth, what did he see?

136

00:12:30,060 --> 00:12:35,780

The Leroy, Kansas and Papuan sightings, with their separation in time and space and their

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00:12:35,780 --> 00:12:41,180

description of crewmen, must rank among the most fantastic in the literature of UFOs.

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00:12:41,260 --> 00:12:47,380

But the questions they raised could be asked many times over, as report after report is

139

00:12:47,380 --> 00:12:49,260

examined.

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00:12:49,260 --> 00:12:53,940

Other unusual craft have been seen on the ground, according to independent witnesses

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00:12:53,940 --> 00:12:56,340

whose stories corroborated one another.

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00:12:56,340 --> 00:13:03,940

There have been numerous descriptions of human or humanoid crewmen.

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00:13:03,940 --> 00:13:08,700

Most people find it easier to believe witnesses who say simply that they have seen strange

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00:13:08,740 --> 00:13:14,860

objects flying at speeds far beyond those that man-made craft can achieve in the atmosphere,

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00:13:14,860 --> 00:13:20,300

or who insist they have watched them perform maneuvers that would crush a human body.

146

00:13:20,300 --> 00:13:29,260

Yet these reports too are incredible in the light of today's scientific knowledge.

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00:13:29,260 --> 00:13:34,860

Whatever the source, UFO reports frequently evoke stubborn disbelief or hostility on the

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00:13:34,860 --> 00:13:37,660

part of those who hear them.

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00:13:37,700 --> 00:13:41,860

Although a recent Gallup poll indicates that at least five million Americans think they

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00:13:41,860 --> 00:13:47,460

have seen strange objects in the skies, a great many citizens seem to find the reports

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00:13:47,460 --> 00:13:52,420

humorous or frightening.

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00:13:52,420 --> 00:13:59,420

Their reaction to UFOs, Siders, is often one of mockery, sometimes one that verges on violence.

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00:13:59,420 --> 00:14:05,740

A Michigan farmer who related that he and his son had approached a strange object in a

154

00:14:05,820 --> 00:14:10,860

swamp near their home, had the windshield of his automobile smashed.

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00:14:10,860 --> 00:14:16,860

A sign reading, Head Martian, was taped to what was left of the glass.

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00:14:16,860 --> 00:14:21,180

Hostile visitors swarmed around his farm, awakening his family in the middle of the night with

157

00:14:21,180 --> 00:14:23,180

taunts.

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00:14:23,180 --> 00:14:30,460

Windows of a truck parked on his land were broken, bottles were hurled at his house.

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00:14:30,540 --> 00:14:35,820

In Akron, Ohio, a deputy sheriff who told how he had chased a strange flying object for

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00:14:35,820 --> 00:14:42,820

86 miles in his patrol car, was so hounded he said that he quit his job and his wife

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00:14:42,820 --> 00:14:45,660

divorced him.

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00:14:45,660 --> 00:14:47,820

Reactions are usually less severe.

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00:14:47,820 --> 00:14:54,820

Nevertheless, they are strong enough so that many persons who report UFOs insist upon anonymity

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00:14:54,820 --> 00:14:56,820

to avoid ridicule.

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00:14:57,180 --> 00:15:04,180

Dr. Henry Clay Lindgren, a social psychologist and author of numerous widely used textbooks,

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00:15:05,860 --> 00:15:10,580

explains such reactions by saying that it is not normal in our culture for people to

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00:15:10,580 --> 00:15:12,660

see visions.

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00:15:12,660 --> 00:15:18,860

He refers to UFO sightings as visions because, as he explains, he does not know what they

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00:15:18,860 --> 00:15:25,860

really are and, for better or worse, the fellow citizens of the UFOs, will think of them as

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00:15:25,860 --> 00:15:28,820

visions.

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00:15:28,820 --> 00:15:35,820

We Americans pride ourselves on our rationalism and tough-minded skepticism Dr. Lindgren observes.

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00:15:36,860 --> 00:15:43,860

We are likely to regard the UFOs sighter as crazy, or at least as unstable and unreliable.

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00:15:44,220 --> 00:15:47,580

What he reports, however, is disturbing.

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00:15:47,580 --> 00:15:53,700

He may be right, and if he is right, what he has seen may affect the lives of all his

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00:15:53,740 --> 00:15:56,380

fellow citizens.

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00:15:56,380 --> 00:16:00,340

UFOs are threats merely because we do not know how to cope with them.

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00:16:00,340 --> 00:16:06,460

Their unknown threat potential arouses anxiety, or even a feeling of panic.

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00:16:06,460 --> 00:16:11,620

The sighters, therefore, must be rejected and put down.

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00:16:11,620 --> 00:16:16,620

The better educated and more sophisticated will be content to make derogatory statements

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00:16:16,620 --> 00:16:20,940

in conversation or perhaps for publication.

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00:16:20,980 --> 00:16:27,980

These well-educated and cruder types will harass UFO sighters more or less openly.

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00:16:29,340 --> 00:16:36,340

Despite Dr. Lindgren's warning and the experiences of others, people keep on seeing, or at least

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00:16:36,340 --> 00:16:39,860

reporting they have seen, UFOs.

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00:16:39,860 --> 00:16:45,420

The noted psychoanalyst Carl Jung has attempted to explain many such sightings as part of

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00:16:45,420 --> 00:16:52,420

a collective unconscious of rumors and legends that extends into the remote past.

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00:16:52,420 --> 00:16:59,420

A new type of legend, one that tends to deprecate the reports, has sprung up around the apparitions

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00:16:59,420 --> 00:17:02,420

today.

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00:17:04,420 --> 00:17:09,420

Dr. J. Allen Heineck, director of the Dearborn Observatory at Northwestern University and

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00:17:10,420 --> 00:17:16,420

technical consultant to Project Blue Book virtually since its inception, answers some

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00:17:16,420 --> 00:17:21,420

of these in a letter published in Science, the journal of the American Association for

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00:17:21,420 --> 00:17:24,420

the Advancement of Science.

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00:17:24,420 --> 00:17:31,420

It is not true, Dr. Heineck said, that only UFO addicts report strange flying objects,

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00:17:31,420 --> 00:17:37,420

or that the reports come from unreliable, unstable, or uneducated people.

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00:17:37,420 --> 00:17:42,420

Only a negligible handful of the reports submitted to the Air Force came from what Dr. Heineck

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00:17:42,420 --> 00:17:45,420

called true believers.

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00:17:45,420 --> 00:17:51,420

The most puzzling ones came from people who had given little or no thought to UFOs, and

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00:17:51,420 --> 00:17:58,420

most were from persons whom he describes as obviously intelligent observers.

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00:17:58,420 --> 00:18:04,420

Some of the very best, most coherent reports have come from scientifically trained people,

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00:18:04,420 --> 00:18:08,420

who usually request and are granted anonymity.

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00:18:08,420 --> 00:18:13,420

Commenting on the frequent declarations that UFOs are never seen at close range and are

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00:18:13,420 --> 00:18:19,420

always reported vaguely, Dr. Heineck says he has several hundred reports in his files

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00:18:19,420 --> 00:18:24,420

that are fine brain teasers and could easily become the subject of profitable discussion

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00:18:24,420 --> 00:18:29,420

among physical and social scientists.

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00:18:29,420 --> 00:18:35,420

Edward Ruppelt, the former Project Blue Book Chief, also denies that UFO reports, which

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00:18:35,420 --> 00:18:39,420

characteristicly come in waves, are self-generating.

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00:18:39,420 --> 00:18:44,420

He says that while there is some correlation between publicity and the number of sightings,

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00:18:44,420 --> 00:18:50,420

it is not an established fact that reports come in only when the press is playing up

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00:18:50,420 --> 00:18:52,420

UFOs.

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00:18:52,420 --> 00:18:57,420

Other commentators deny the oft-terred claim that professional astronomers who constantly

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00:18:57,420 --> 00:19:01,420

watch the skies never report UFOs.

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00:19:01,420 --> 00:19:06,420

They insist there are many who ordinarily avail themselves of the guarantee of anonymity,

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00:19:06,420 --> 00:19:14,420

but who include, among other notable figures, Clyde Tombow, the discoverer of the planet Pluto.

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00:19:28,420 --> 00:19:38,420

We have seen that unidentified flying objects have been reported in the skies for centuries,

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00:19:38,420 --> 00:19:45,420

and we have seen something of the fantastic shapes and behavior attributed to them.

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00:19:45,420 --> 00:19:50,420

We have considered the psychological reasons for some of the reactions to UFOs sightings

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00:19:50,420 --> 00:19:57,420

and how the popular idea that reports come only from true believers has been refuted.

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00:19:57,420 --> 00:20:03,420

It is true, of course, that the great bulk of UFO reports received by Blue Book staff members

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00:20:03,420 --> 00:20:09,420

are misinterpretations of some conventional object, such as a bright planet, sun halos

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00:20:09,420 --> 00:20:15,420

and sun dogs, balloons, known aircraft, and space satellites.

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00:20:15,420 --> 00:20:22,420

But the hard residue of unexplained sightings demands an organized scientific research effort.

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00:20:26,420 --> 00:20:33,420

Just such an effort was stimulated in 1966 by a major wave of UFO sightings.

222

00:20:33,420 --> 00:20:38,420

It was second only to an earlier wave in 1952.

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00:20:38,420 --> 00:20:43,420

Not only did the 1966 reports approach a record in sheer numbers,

224

00:20:43,420 --> 00:20:47,420

but many individual sightings were made by groups of witnesses,

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00:20:47,420 --> 00:20:52,420

and the descriptions were as vivid as they were hard to believe.

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00:20:52,420 --> 00:20:58,420

The year's major incident was a series of reports emanating from Dexter, Michigan,

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00:20:58,420 --> 00:21:01,420

and a relatively nearby college campus.

228

00:21:01,420 --> 00:21:10,420

The first sighting occurred on March 19th, near Milan, a town about 16 miles southeast of Dexter.

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00:21:10,420 --> 00:21:16,420

County police received calls that a UFO had flown over and lighted up the entire city.

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00:21:16,420 --> 00:21:22,420

Officers responding to the alarm said they saw three strange flying objects,

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00:21:22,420 --> 00:21:27,420

watched them for five hours during the early morning, and obtained photographs.

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00:21:27,420 --> 00:21:35,420

The pictures were later debunked by Dr. Heineck as time exposures of the crescent moon and the planet Venus,

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00:21:35,420 --> 00:21:40,420

an explanation which satisfied none of the witnesses involved.

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00:21:40,420 --> 00:21:52,420

The next night, in a swamp near Dexter, a strange object was described by no less than 12 police officers and at least 35 other persons.

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00:21:52,420 --> 00:21:59,420

At one point it was said to have hovered above a swamp behind the farm home of Frank Manor.

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00:21:59,420 --> 00:22:06,420

He and his son Ronald, 19, said they ran to within 500 yards of a glowing object,

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00:22:06,420 --> 00:22:14,420

which they described as about the size of an automobile, the shape of a football, and textured like coral rock.

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00:22:14,420 --> 00:22:21,420

It was Manor whose auto windshield was later smashed and defaced with the label head-mortion.

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00:22:22,420 --> 00:22:28,420

On the third night, an apparition was seen by between 60 and 90 co-eds,

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00:22:28,420 --> 00:22:35,420

who watched from dormitory windows at Hillsdale College, 45 miles southwest of Dexter.

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00:22:35,420 --> 00:22:45,420

The display was described as one primarily of pulsing, moving lights in a variety of colors that hovered for hours above a swamp.

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00:22:46,420 --> 00:22:50,420

Dr. Heineck, who made a field investigation of the Michigan Sains,

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00:22:50,420 --> 00:23:00,420

ascribed both the pyrotechnics on the Manor farm and those seen by the college girls to swamp gas released by an early winter thaw.

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00:23:00,420 --> 00:23:10,420

But William Van Horn, longtime civil defense director for the area, who saw the college display, disagreed strongly.

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00:23:10,420 --> 00:23:13,420

That was in March.

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00:23:14,420 --> 00:23:22,420

In April, Congressman L. Mendel Rivers, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, commented of the sightings,

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00:23:22,420 --> 00:23:29,420

We can't just write them off. There are too many responsible people who are concerned.

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00:23:29,420 --> 00:23:32,420

The reports kept coming in.

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00:23:32,420 --> 00:23:43,420

It was in April that Deputy Sheriff Dale Spore of Portage County, Ohio reported chasing an object that looked like two table saucers glued together.

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00:23:43,420 --> 00:23:47,420

The description was that of a fellow officer.

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00:23:47,420 --> 00:23:54,420

The chase led from a point near Ravenna, Ohio to Conway, Pennsylvania, which is near Pittsburgh.

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00:23:54,420 --> 00:24:01,420

Spore said the object appeared definitely to be under intelligent control, that it actually maneuvered,

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00:24:01,420 --> 00:24:09,420

even to the point of waiting for him when he and the other officer were delayed in what he called a mess of bridges.

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00:24:09,420 --> 00:24:15,420

The object finally disappeared near Conway, going straight up, he said.

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00:24:15,420 --> 00:24:24,420

Pressed dispatches said hundreds of persons in both Ohio and Pennsylvania reported seeing a brilliant and shiny object in the sky.

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00:24:24,420 --> 00:24:33,420

But Spore, who talked readily about his experience, in contrast to other officers who were more close mouth, suffered by it.

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00:24:33,420 --> 00:24:42,420

He was the deputy sheriff who lost his job and his wife, and who six months later said he had also lost 40 pounds.

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00:24:42,420 --> 00:24:57,420

His entire life came crashing down around his shoulders in a flood of reporters, television cameramen, government officials, Air Force investigators, and weird mail, he said.

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00:24:57,420 --> 00:25:05,420

Still the reports flowed in, and in October the first truly scientific study of the phenomenon was announced.

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00:25:05,420 --> 00:25:11,420

It was financed by a \$300,000 research contract from the Air Force.

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00:25:11,420 --> 00:25:25,420

Dr. Edward U. Condon, a distinguished physicist who formally headed the National Bureau of Standards, was chosen to direct the project, which was undertaken at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

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00:25:25,420 --> 00:25:30,420

All of the past reports from Project Blue Book were made available to the researchers.

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00:25:30,420 --> 00:25:45,420

Every new sighting reported to an Air Force base in the United States was promptly forwarded to the University at the same time that duplicate copies went to Blue Book at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, and to the Pentagon.

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00:25:45,420 --> 00:25:56,420

But Dr. Condon and his associates, whose work was subject to review by the National Academy of Sciences, had their job cut out for them.

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00:25:56,420 --> 00:26:08,420

A major task was indexing the Blue Book files so that it would become possible to make cross-references, thus comparing sightings that were similar in type, geography, and other characteristics.

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00:26:08,420 --> 00:26:21,420

Even more perplexing was the problem of devising a technique by which coherent information could be extracted from so many varying reports and reasonable inferences drawn from them.

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00:26:22,420 --> 00:26:35,420

Jacques Vallee had already proposed one such approach. It consisted of classifying UFO sightings according to types. Those that landed or hovered near the ground at not more than treetop height.

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00:26:35,420 --> 00:26:45,420

Those that were described as cylindrical and associated with diffuse clouds. Those that were seen in the skies pursuing unusual flight paths.

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00:26:45,420 --> 00:26:58,420

Those of unusual shape that remained stationary in the sky. And those that were diffuse in outline and did not, for one reason or another, appear solid or material in substance.

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00:26:58,420 --> 00:27:14,420

There would be numerous subclassifications. The astronomer mathematician who devised the scheme suggested that such a system would make it possible to code the sightings, feed the data into computers, and perhaps come up with some basic conclusions.

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00:27:15,420 --> 00:27:32,420

Computer coding was also proposed to describe the shape of the object, its motions, colors, illumination, and such characteristics as the emission of smoke, sparks, or lightning, odor and heat, spin, radioactivity, and magnetic effects.

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00:27:32,420 --> 00:27:39,420

The necessity for such detail is indicated by the variety of sightings and of the effects that accompany them.

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00:27:39,420 --> 00:27:54,420

Rupelt, in his UFO book, devotes considerable space, for instance, to a series of informal experiments which strongly indicated that at least some UFOs are accompanied by emissions which affect Geiger counters.

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00:27:54,420 --> 00:28:06,420

There are many reports by witnesses who say that their automobiles or motorcycles came to a sudden halt in the presence of strange hovering objects, apparently because the ignition system was affected.

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00:28:06,420 --> 00:28:22,420

In one striking case, however, a diesel tractor was not halted while a gasoline-driven machine in the same field suddenly stopped. The diesel engine fires its fuel by the heat of compression rather than by electric spark.

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00:28:22,420 --> 00:28:28,420

Radio sets also have gone silent in the presence of UFO-like objects.

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00:28:29,420 --> 00:28:48,420

Dr. Condon and his associates, he planned to involve as many as 100 scientists as consultants in their respective disciplines, undertook to develop a classification system which the project chief described as something along the lines that the lead proposed, although not exactly without variations.

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00:28:49,420 --> 00:29:03,420

Because of budgetary limitations, \$300,000 is not an overwhelming grant as modern research efforts go. The Condon Group could not undertake fieldwork on sightings outside the United States.

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00:29:04,420 --> 00:29:17,420

Although foreign governments have shown less official curiosity about UFOs than the United States, these sightings have occurred in large numbers, have been extensively reported in the press of each nation, and are important.

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00:29:18,420 --> 00:29:28,420

It would be extremely difficult, for instance, to judge the validity of waves of UFO reports in the

United States unless they could be compared with those in other nations.

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00:29:28,420 --> 00:29:40,420

The 1952 American wave, which included the largest number of reports yet received in a single year, was parallel by a similar crescendo of sightings in France and other countries.

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00:29:40,420 --> 00:30:00,420

Although field investigation abroad was financially impossible, the Condon Group did not ignore the foreign sightings. They asked for and received from Jacques Valais some 3,000 IBM cards that contained coded reports of UFO sightings, almost half of them from beyond the continental United States.

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00:30:01,420 --> 00:30:15,420

Thus, the University of Colorado researchers were equipped beyond the limits of their grant when they undertook their labors. They also consulted with Dr. Heineck, who had written in his letter to science,

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00:30:16,420 --> 00:30:28,420

I cannot dismiss the UFO phenomenon with a shrug. The hard data cases contain frequent illusions to recurrent kinematic, geometric, and luminescent characteristics.

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00:30:29,420 --> 00:30:46,420

I have begun to feel that there is a tendency in the 20th century science to forget that there will be a 21st century science and indeed a 30th century science from which vantage points our knowledge of the universe may appear quite different.

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00:30:46,420 --> 00:30:55,420

We suffer, perhaps, from temporal provincialism, a form of arrogance that has always irritated posterity.

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00:30:56,420 --> 00:31:00,420

To that, many of his colleagues would say, Amen.

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00:31:00,420 --> 00:31:06,420

But the UFO phenomenon is complex and an explanation difficult.

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00:31:06,420 --> 00:31:14,420

It may be, as a few serious observers have suggested, that people have been seeing spacecraft that come from other worlds.

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00:31:14,420 --> 00:31:21,420

It may be that UFOs are a social and psychological phenomenon, at least in large part.

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00:31:21,420 --> 00:31:29,420

It may be that there are natural forces at work in the atmosphere and on the surface of our planet, with which we are not at all familiar.

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00:31:29,420 --> 00:31:38,420

Speculation can be, indeed, has been, almost endless, because one question to another.

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00:31:39,420 --> 00:31:56,420

As an example, perhaps the most popular of all is the suggestion that UFOs are actually spacecraft from another world, a world which has had the Earth undiscrutiny for thousands of years, patiently watching the development of civilization here.

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00:31:56,420 --> 00:32:02,420

If so, where is that other world?

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00:32:02,420 --> 00:32:09,420

Modern astronomy offers no reason to expect advanced life forms on other planets in our own solar system.

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00:32:09,420 --> 00:32:19,420

Venus, if we are to trust the findings of the Mariner 2 space probe, is an unbearably hot world, probably a global desert.

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00:32:19,420 --> 00:32:30,420

Mars may possibly be the home of a relatively simple form of vegetation, but it's difficult to make

a reasonable argument for anything more highly developed.

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00:32:31,420 --> 00:32:35,420

And the other planets of our own system are even less promising.

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00:32:35,420 --> 00:32:40,420

Mercury is far too hot and has only a barely detectable atmosphere.

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00:32:40,420 --> 00:32:48,420

Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto, all too cold and inhospitable.

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00:32:48,420 --> 00:32:54,420

They lie outside the Sun's life support zone.

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00:32:54,420 --> 00:33:04,420

If the UFOs are extraterrestrial spacecraft then, it would appear that they must come from a planet that circles one of the distant stars.

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00:33:04,420 --> 00:33:13,420

Most astronomers agree that in all probability there are many other Suns with planets that could support well-developed life forms.

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00:33:13,420 --> 00:33:20,420

It's their distance that places an insurmountable obstacle in the path of spacecraft from such worlds,

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00:33:20,420 --> 00:33:26,420

an obstacle at least that is insurmountable in the light of our own technology.

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00:33:26,420 --> 00:33:33,420

The nearest star system to us, a triple Sun, is Alpha Centauri.

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00:33:33,420 --> 00:33:42,420

Because of the complex orbit a planet would follow in such a system, there is little likelihood that advanced life exists there.

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00:33:43,420 --> 00:33:49,420

The nearest stars where life-supporting planets may exist are at a distance of 10 light-years from us,

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00:33:49,420 --> 00:34:00,420

each light-year representing the distance that light travels in a year at a speed of 186,000 miles per second.

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00:34:02,420 --> 00:34:06,420

The problems inherent in traveling across such distances are staggering.

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00:34:07,420 --> 00:34:23,420

If we support the most efficient nuclear fuels, it would nevertheless have to carry billions of tons of fuel for each ton of its own weight on any interstellar journey to be completed within the span of a human lifetime.

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00:34:23,420 --> 00:34:32,420

If we adopt the more economical and fuel-saving plan of coasting, the method the Mariner probes used to reach Mars and Venus,

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00:34:33,420 --> 00:34:37,420

then we must reckon on a journey that lasts for many hundreds of years.

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00:34:41,420 --> 00:34:48,420

It will be a long time, if ever, before man can contemplate seriously such a venture into interstellar space.

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00:34:48,420 --> 00:34:54,420

Yet, if we are to accept the idea that UFOs have come from beyond the solar system,

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00:34:55,420 --> 00:35:02,420

we must acknowledge a civilization so far beyond ours that it can mount not a single such expedition,

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00:35:02,420 --> 00:35:11,420

but an almost casual parade of a variety of vehicles that have been making the excursion for perhaps thousands of years.

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00:35:12,420 --> 00:35:18,420

Enthusiasts argue, however, that there may be undiscovered energy sources that could make it all possible,

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00:35:19,420 --> 00:35:25,420

or that still unknown secrets of the geometry of space would make it far easier than we think.

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00:35:27,420 --> 00:35:35,420

The ramifications continue. If UFOs are visiting spacecraft, why haven't they attempted to communicate with us?

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00:35:36,420 --> 00:35:39,420

Why haven't they tried to rescue us from our own follies?

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00:35:40,420 --> 00:35:47,420

Could it be that a race so far advanced finds Earth's environment, one in which it cannot survive,

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00:35:48,420 --> 00:35:51,420

and this a problem it cannot overcome?

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00:35:53,420 --> 00:36:01,420

Or do they nearly steady us with the same detachment, the same mental and spiritual separation from their subject

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00:36:01,420 --> 00:36:04,420

that the entomologist feels for a colony of ants?

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00:36:05,420 --> 00:36:11,420

No speculation seems too fantastic for the dive in the world UFO believer.

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00:36:12,420 --> 00:36:17,420

Thus, one hears the suggestion that the visitors may be not from another world,

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00:36:18,420 --> 00:36:24,420

but from our own Earth of the distant future, that they are time travelers.

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00:36:26,420 --> 00:36:31,420

This might resolve the question of lack of contact, as any reader of science fiction notes,

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00:36:32,420 --> 00:36:39,420

such historical investigators from the future might be allowed to observe, but they could never interfere.

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00:36:40,420 --> 00:36:45,420

If they did, they would change the shape of the very future from which they came.

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00:36:46,420 --> 00:36:54,420

Travel through time, of course, has been a favorite subject for literary dreaming since the days of H.G. Wells and his time machine.

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00:36:55,420 --> 00:37:01,420

But time itself is largely a mystery, and although there is learned argument that it may be reversible,

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00:37:02,420 --> 00:37:07,420

there is equally learned and compelling rebuttal that such a thing is impossible.

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00:37:08,420 --> 00:37:16,420

Explanations of UFOs as natural, physical or psychological phenomena, plunge into equally unclunged depths,

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00:37:17,420 --> 00:37:22,420

and so every speculation about their origin ends as it began.

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00:37:22,420 --> 00:37:28,420

Without an answer, and with some who will support almost any idea that is offered.

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00:37:29,420 --> 00:37:31,420

Certain things are true, however.

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00:37:32,420 --> 00:37:37,420

If the objects that witnesses have reported are actually maneuverable air or spacecraft,

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00:37:38,420 --> 00:37:42,420

they would seem to represent something that is foreign to every nation on Earth.

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00:37:43,420 --> 00:37:47,420

If they are natural phenomena, they are strangers to our sciences.

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00:37:47,420 --> 00:37:55,420

If they are in the minds of the beholders, they represent depths of the human spirit that have so far been largely unexplored.

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00:37:56,420 --> 00:38:00,420

Whatever they are, they may well have been with us since biblical times.

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00:38:01,420 --> 00:38:06,420

They have had their counterparts in the intervening years, and they have returned in unfurl,

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00:38:07,420 --> 00:38:12,420

which may represent no more than the improvement in communications during the past twenty years.

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00:38:13,420 --> 00:38:16,420

And they are worthy of serious attention.

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00:38:17,420 --> 00:38:21,420

For when we have finally learned the truth about the myriad UFOs I use,

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00:38:22,420 --> 00:38:31,420

we may well have learned important new truths about ourselves, our world, or even, despite all the arguments against it,

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00:38:32,420 --> 00:38:35,420

about worlds that lie among the stars.