

# Is abduction experience psychological or real?

Tor. Star 26 DEC 1987

**S**EVERAL months ago, CBC producer David Cherniack asked me to be part of a team of experts he was gathering for the filming of an episode of *Man Alive*, a long-running television series hosted by Roy Bonisteel. We were to spend three days at the Bonisteel home near Trenton to discuss recent developments in UFO research.

Cherniack had read some of my writings on the UFO phenomenon and thought I would be interested in the project. I told him that I had quit doing active UFO research years ago, and what investigating I had done was generally limited to cases with possible astronomical interpretations. Still, he wanted me to be involved. I went to the session expecting nothing new, but what I heard and saw was surprising and bizarre, and ultimately deeply disturbing.

UFO researcher Budd Hopkins described his extensive interviews with dozens of "abductees," people who claim they have been taken — against their will — into a flying saucer and examined by alien creatures. On the face of it, Hopkins said, this stuff sounds like the pages of the supermarket tabloids. But the "victims," as he called them, are not publicity seekers; they are otherwise normal people with no history of psychosis or mental disease. Hypnosis was often required to pull details of the abductions from suppressed memories.

Abductees describe the creatures in significant detail in very similar terms — about four feet tall with grayish skin, large heads and huge black eyes — and report undergoing the same types of physical examination. "The amazing part is the similarity of detail in these accounts," Hopkins said, "there is no known explanation for it." Later in the session, I witnessed a hypnosis of an abductee conducted on-camera.

Hopkins maintains that the abduction reports, "either represent some new and nearly universal psychological phenomenon, or they represent honest attempts to report real events."

You can decide for yourself. The *Man Alive* show is being rebroadcast on CBC television Tuesday evening (Dec. 29) at 9:30. It was first aired last April. Producer Cherniack said that particular program received the highest audience rating of any episode in the 20-year history of *Man Alive*.

When Hopkins presented his findings to me and the others gathered for the filming, I was bowled over. I described it at the time as "the worst possible scenario," referring to my deep disappointment that this apparent black hole of imponderables was where UFO research had finally wound up.

Due to prior commitments I had to leave the *Man Alive* filming early, but I have since read Hopkins' books (*Intruders* and *Missing Time*) as well as discussed the phenomenon with other researchers. Journalist Whitley Strieber, an abductee who wrote a book about his experiences, says he "by no means accepts the extraterrestrial explanation." Neither do I.

I am convinced the abduction phenomenon has nothing to do with intelligences from other planets. Until someone retrieves one of the tiny alien homing devices said to be implanted in some of the abductees, I'm not persuaded that it is a physical occurrence at all.

In my opinion the explanation of the abduction phenomenon is entirely earthbound and generated by human, not alien minds. I do have sympathy for the abductees who seem to suffer very real stress and torment, but this is not how we are going to find out about our cosmic cousins.

It's back to the telescope for me.

□ Terence Dickinson's most recent book, published by Camden House, is *The Universe And Beyond*.



**Similar reports:** Aliens are about four feet tall with grayish skin, large heads, huge black eyes.

ROBIN S.