

AMAZING NEW THEORY OF SIGHTINGS

Are UFOs all in the mind?

WITH the number of UFO sightings increasing all the time, people could be forgiven for thinking that the skies are alive with mysterious visitors from outer space.

But just how many of these unidentified flying objects are examples of other life forms or simply false alarms?

An intriguing new book, *UFO's: A British Viewpoint* (Robert Hale, £5.25), puts forward the case that 90 out of every 100 sightings can be explained rationally.

The book, by Jenny Randles and Peter Warrington, cites the incident when several people reported seeing a mysterious ball of fire at Rochdale, Lancs.

But what they had actually seen was the reflected light from a quarry, where old tyres had caught fire—causing

pockets of burning gas to rise.

Then there was the driver who claimed his car had been paced by a flashing object near Manchester. But more likely, said a UFO investigator, was that his car headlights had been shining on a reflecting TV aerial.

Dramatic

But what about the other 10 per cent of UFO sightings that seem to be real? The authors have a dramatic new theory that they *do* exist—but only in the mind of the person who spots them.

It certainly does happen that when two people are standing near each other and one reports a sighting, the other sees nothing at all. Or two people give completely different descriptions.

That was the case when security guard John Byrne

and a colleague were patrolling the Cairo Mill at Oldham on October 8, 1972. Mr Byrne heard a humming sound, then saw a strange craft at about 200 feet.

"I estimated it to be about 100 feet in diameter because it almost seemed to fill the sky completely," Mr Byrne recalled. "It then raced away at amazing speed." Yet no one else saw this enormous object, not even his colleague.

One sinister theory is that mediums, people with psychic abilities, are sending the pictures for us to pick up.

"What we seem to be dealing with," says Jenny Randles, "is the ability of such people to manipulate energy in their minds and to make this appear on a physical plane in the apparent shape of a real UFO."

The book also cites a

curious case that occurred near the village of Thaxted in Essex on August 3, 1977. Musician Mike Stevens was driving along in a new hire car when he saw a peach-coloured glow through some bushes, and then two oval objects hovering.

He tried to speed away but the engine wouldn't go over 35mph for the first 400 yards . . . then surged almost uncontrollably to 50mph.

Bodywork

Was it just his imagination? He had the car checked with an identical one, in fact with the next registration number. Magnetic readings of the bodywork proved completely different. He couldn't explain it.

Could you?

Tisha Browne