

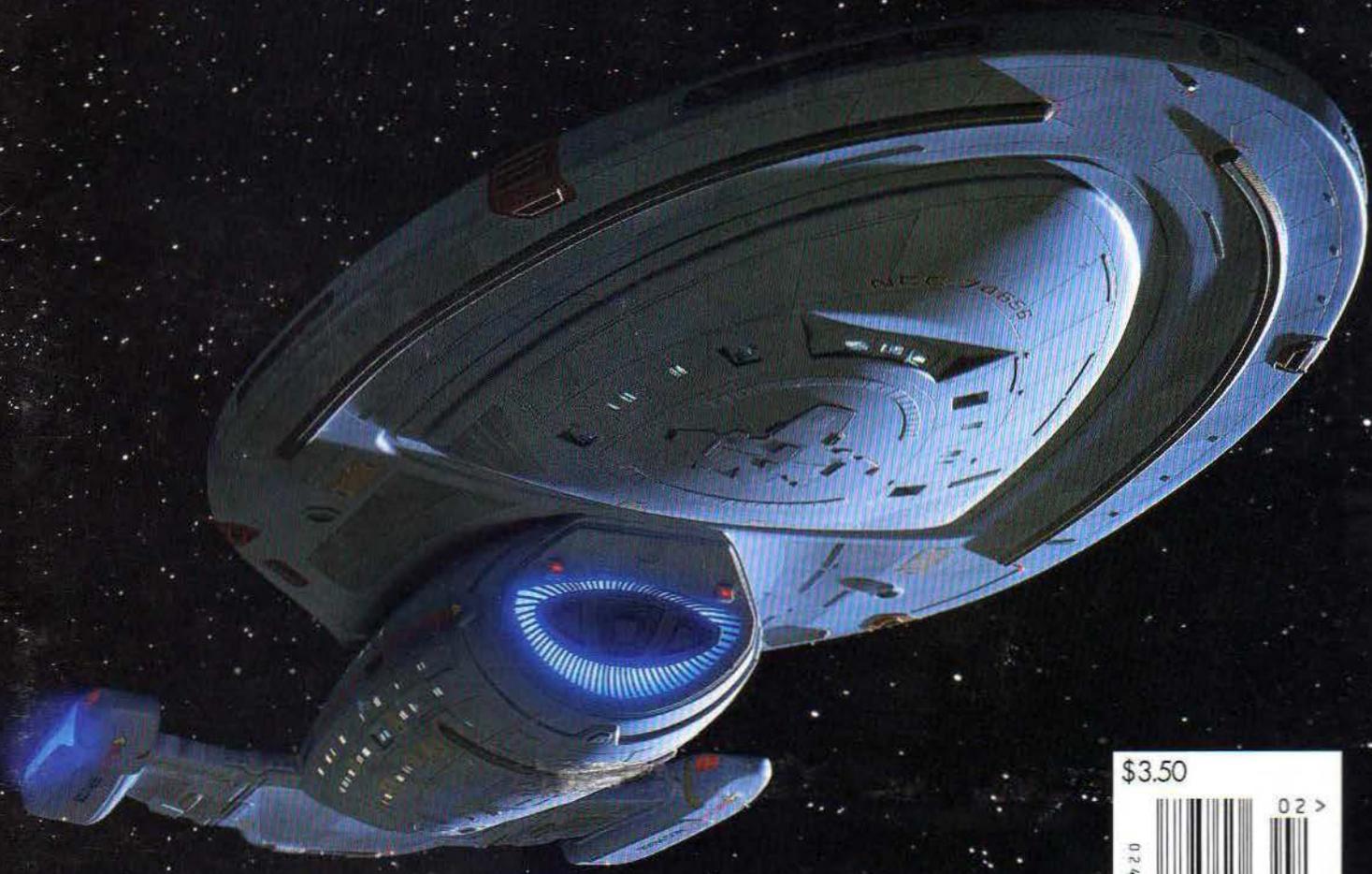
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# ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

FEBRUARY 1995

## **STAR TREK:** LAUNCHING VOYAGER

**UFO CONTROVERSY: ABDUCTEE VS. THE MILITARY**  
**EXPLORING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**



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# ANATOMY OF AN ABDUCTION

INVESTIGATED BY A. J. S. RAYL

## PRIMARY WITNESS:

Leah A. Haley

## VITAL STATISTICS:

Accountant, mother of two, from  
Columbus, Mississippi

## SUMMARY:

By 1990 Leah Haley had begun recalling unsettling dreams of visits aboard spacecraft with aliens; the images were at once so "strange" and so "real" she sought professional help. Her therapist, Springfield, Missouri, social worker John Carpenter, known for his work with UFO abductees, says Haley's case is special. "The details were amazingly

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOYCE TENNESON

specific and corroborated unpublished details from the best case data we have so far." What's more, he points out, Haley's story had a spin: Her "recollections" apparently involved the United States military, which she claimed harassed her so she wouldn't go public with her tale.

After undergoing hypnosis, Haley has come to believe her abduction dreams were real. She eventually went public in 1993 with a self-published book, *Lost Was the Key*, after legally changing her name to Leah A. Haley "to protect my family and children."

#### Inventory of Claims

*Memories from the Deep.* In 1960 Haley, then nine years old, and her brother, then seven, saw what they thought was a spacecraft landing in the woods near their home in Gardendale, Alabama. "I saw three objects, two of which quickly darted away," she explains. "The third was silver, completely spherical in shape, and it sat still for a long time in the sky."

Decades later, in July 1990, Haley visited with her mother and brother in Alabama, and during a conversation about extraterrestrials sparked by a newspaper article, Haley recounted a "strange, very real dream. I was in a spaceship, in a round room, lying on a platform with small chalky white creatures with big black eyes doing some kind of medical things to me," she recalls.

After the dreams increased, she contacted John Carpenter in hopes of finding some mental illness or disorder to explain what was going on. Instead, during 15 sessions of hypnotic regression, she recalled countless specific abductions starting at age 3. She even conjured an undersea alien facility, complete with alien craft and a captive soldier, held against his will.

*Military Intervention.* During hypnosis and in flashbacks, Haley also recalled her abduction by military personnel. For instance, she told of an alien craft that she believes crashed near a beach while she was aboard, after which military personnel escorted her away. Comments Carpenter, "That episode unraveled as vividly as any I've heard."

Since September 1990, Haley claims, she has been "followed by military types in navy blue or white cars," and occasionally by black unmarked helicopters. She also claims she has been monitored via her telephone and in person, because, she now speculates, "I was on that alien craft when it crashed and the military wanted to glean infor-

mation and make me shut up."

In April 1991, Haley charges, military harassment made its most insidious appearance at the Columbus Air Force Base in the form of Major (then Captain) Tracy Poole, whose wife was in Haley's accounting class. Haley says Poole extended "an unusually persistent invitation" to view space shuttle *Endeavour* during its stopover at the base. Armed guards surrounding the shuttle and signs posted around the spacecraft warning that "Deadly force is authorized," Haley notes, explain why she considered the invitation "a possible setup to interrogate or kill me."

*Technology Gone Awry.* Haley also reports loosened locks and window screens, disturbances in the phone line, and the spontaneous disarming of her security system, not to mention strange sounds throughout her house, leading her to believe someone or something was inside.

*Weird Body Marks.* Haley has found "more than one hundred strange

me that the actual experience was a sexual molestation. It is my professional opinion," he concluded, "that you suffer from delayed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to childhood experiences, complicated by a paranoid state caused by the hypnosis sessions, and I've recommended you undergo treatment by a licensed M.D. or Ph.D. certified in hypnotherapy to help you resolve these issues."

In the fall of 1992, Haley also completed a Fantasy Prone Test given to numerous abductees by the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS). According to Carpenter: "It revealed that she was less likely than the normal person to be fantasy prone. She fell in the frank, down-to-earth, conservative range."

#### The Investigation

*Memory Lane.* Like most abductees, Haley has recalled her alien encounters primarily through hypnotic regression. "Haley deliberately did not read anything and did not want to be an abductee or involved in any of this," says her hypnotist, John Carpenter, who has to date regressed 90 other abductees. "Under hypnosis, she had the classic response to all this; it brought tears."

Haley's brother, who is a law enforcement officer with the state of Alabama and, as such, requested anonymity, was present at the first two hypnosis sessions. "Carpenter did not

ask leading questions; rather he tried to lead her away from anything having to do with aliens," he says. After the sessions, he says, "she was in disbelief, denial, shock, but there was no doubt in my mind that she was deeply affected by what she was remembering."

All this, say critics, does not prove Haley's recollection to be real. Robert A. Baker, psychology professor emeritus at the University of Kentucky, who has studied psychological anomalies, says, "These 'encounters' are really hypnagogic images, essentially waking hallucinations or dreams, and nothing more." Adds Baker, researchers like Carpenter may be putting aliens in people's heads.

"Baker has not looked at my work or my methods," responds Carpenter. "My trademark is deliberately suggesting logical responses to the point of misleading these abductees. These abductees come from all walks of life and economic status, and yet they all tell the same story about the same little guys. It doesn't make sense that these

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marks" on different parts of her body, including injection marks, scoop marks, and red, circular vaccinationlike marks, apparently made with three separate prongs. She also reports other physical anomalies, such as "Morse Code-type beeps" in her ears, intense back spasms, voices and imagery, and frequent soreness in her ovaries. On numerous occasions, she says, "I have felt dazed, unable to concentrate or focus."

*Sane Psychometric Profile.* Haley visited Florence, Alabama, psychiatrist Thomas G. Shafer three times in 1992. Shafer, who has no connection to the UFO field, concluded that there was "no evidence of organic psychoses such as schizophrenia, organic brain syndrome, or bipolar illness." In a letter to her and released to *Omni*, he wrote: "It is my opinion that you suffered some sort of extremely traumatic experience in the woods that day long ago as a child. Your descriptions of being naked, lying powerless, having your body explored suggest very strongly to

# ABDUCTION

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are all falsely created from the individual imaginations."

But Ronald K. Siegel, associate research professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences at UCLA and author of *Whispers: The Voices of Paranoia* (Crown), does not agree. "Those details don't point to anything more than a common mental experience, not unlike parasitosis, the belief you're being infested by parasites," Siegel says. "Medical history documents that people who suffer from parasitosis reported the same parasites and drew the same drawings, with the same details. Given an infinite variety of stimulations, the brain responds in a finite number of ways."

"Theoretically, Haley could be experiencing an altered state of consciousness—caused by anything from a food allergy to a physical problem in the brain—and having these fantastic experiences in which she has seemingly real feelings and images associated with being abducted by aliens, and which can even include physical manifestations," adds psychologist Keith Harary, research director of the Institute for Advanced Psychology in San Francisco.

*Military Coup?* Acting as tour guide, Haley drove *Omni* around the Columbus Air Force Base looking for a one-story building where she believes she was taken and interrogated. No building, however, seemed familiar. Haley also gave *Omni* the name of a disgruntled civilian employee at Columbus she said might know about the UFOs. When *Omni* tracked this man down, however, he said, "I just don't have the kind of security clearance to know about these things."

As for Major Poole, he has confirmed that he did give his wife, a student in Haley's accounting class, a space shuttle *Endeavour* pass to give to Haley and did invite her to view the shuttle on its stopover at the base. "But it wasn't a personal invitation," he says. "We have standard roped-off areas, where the public can stand and take pictures, and that's what I invited her to do. On the night in question, I did go to the classroom, but it was to wave to my wife."

*Official Denial.* Have UFOs ever been tracked over Columbus Air Force Base? According to Sergeant Debbie O'Leary, Columbus AFB Public Affairs: "No, there have been no UFOs tracked

here, and we have not interrogated here any people who claim to have had an alien encounter."

Tammy McBride at the POW/MIA office at the Pentagon, meanwhile, conducted a search for one Larry Mitchell, a name that appeared on a soldier's uniform in the underground alien facility Haley described under hypnosis. McBride found three Larrys and one Lawrence all with the last name of Mitchell. All four were killed in action in Vietnam. All bodies have been recovered.

*Vehicular Interference.* Tony Scarborough, physics professor at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi, and state director for the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), confirmed that "a graphite-black helicopter came over a building where Haley was speaking and scared the students to death" in the summer of 1991. "A year later, a similar helicopter came over my house, then flew at about 500 feet, traveling parallel to me on my way to meet her at Delta State University," he adds, "but the connec-

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tion between these helicopters and Leah Haley is, of course, speculative."

As for Air Force cars following her, Poole says, "We have cars running up and down Highway 45 all the time."

*HomeBodies.* John Beard, who heads up Golden Triangle Security Alliance in Columbus, the company that installed Haley's home security system, confirmed that Haley has experienced an inordinate amount of trouble. "This particular system had an inherent engineering and design flaw, which the manufacturer has admitted. Consequently, we no longer sell it, and we have had to go out and change components on most of the systems we installed. There are at least 20 other customers who have had the same problems."

Haley's former housekeeper, Eunice Eggleston, however, insists there were strange things happening inside the house. "One day I was upstairs cleaning, and I heard chords clearly on the piano. I was sure the house was all locked up, and I was the only one there. In addition, the answering ma-

chine would start without the phone ringing, and the air vent once dropped on the floor."

But these events, says psychologist Harary, who has studied the psychology of coincidence, don't add up to much. "A string of seemingly inexplicable events that occur around the same time are not necessarily related," he says. "You would have to thoroughly investigate each and every one. Sure, there could have been someone physically in the house; unfortunately, no one was seen, and it's almost impossible to get to the bottom of what was happening after the fact."

*Body Scoops.* The plethora of unusual marks on Haley's body would seem to be significant physical evidence; however, everyone agrees that without a thorough examination of her environment and sleep patterns, they mean little in the end.

"Strange marks appearing overnight is just not that unusual, and without observing Haley close up during the times these things occur, you cannot draw any kind of valid conclusion about what's going on," says Harary. "We would have to rule out all conventional explanations, including, for example, the possibility that she could be doing these things to herself in an altered, or even an ordinary, state of consciousness."

*Get Out the Ink Blots.* While Shafer stands by his evaluation of Haley, psychologist Siegel insists Haley may test out as sane because "there's an internal reality that everyone shares." Abduction imagery is a manifestation of the limbic system, not outright insanity, Siegel says. "Haley is truly an abductee, but the aliens are not out there—they're in her own brain. The scary thing is, we all have the same details in our nervous system; anybody can become an abductee."

## Conclusion:

Despite the fact that some UFO researchers have called the Haley case one of the most intriguing and apparently best-documented abductions ever, without more data it's impossible to know what Haley has experienced, and why. There is no hard evidence and no conclusive circumstantial evidence that proves abduction by extraterrestrial biological entities. Given the caveat that this investigation remains incomplete, there is also no conclusive evidence that Haley has been monitored or harassed by military operatives. ☐