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CONFESSIONS OF A UFOLOGIST



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Contributions of articles, notes and letters for publication are welcomed, and should be sent to the Editor at the address shown.

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EDITORIAL

When MUFOB was restarted at the end of 1975, after the Great Hiatus, it was felt advisable to maintain a continuity with the magazines original incarnation as 'Merseyside UFO Bulletin'. The need to maintain the familiar acronym explains our convoluted and little-used full title of 'Metempirical UFO Bulletin'.

In the four years that the new MUFOB has been published the character of the magazine, and indeed the readership, has undergone a number of important changes. There is now little of the original local emphasis of the Merseyside bulletin, many of our original readers and exchange editors have now faded, gracefully or otherwise, from the scene. And MUFOB itself, has, we believe, become something more than a UFO enthusiasts bulletin.

With its next issue, MUFOB will have notched up fifty issues since that first painstakingly duplicated issue was mailed out in 1968, and we feel this is as good a time as any to make the change which we feel is inevitable. The next issue will therefore see the end of MUFOB, as we adopt our new title - MAGONIA.

The significance of this title will

be apparent to our present readers. It is a name used in medieval Europe to describe the fabled land which was the source of all manner of visions and wonders, and became known in a ufological context when it was unearthed for the title of Jacques Vallee's seminal Passport to Magonia.

In adopting this title we are aware of the implications - that the UFO mystery is just a part of a wider enigma, and that we are dealing in visions, rumours, beliefs and human experience.

Readers will probably not notice any sudden radical change in the material in our pages. We have always, to the delight of some and the fury or bafflement of others, published more or less anything that happened to take our fancy, so long as it had even a peripheral connection with UFOs. Our new title really just legitimised our policy! But we do hope that eventually we will be able to attract writers not involved in the UFO scene, but who yet have something of relevance to say about its infinite ramifications.

MAGONIA will always be a UFO oriented magazine, but one that will always be

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A new book by Jacques Vallee is always a major ufological event, from his pioneering work in Challenge to Science and Anatomy of a Phenomenon which established a scientific background to the study of UFOs, to his Passport to Magonia, which provided a rallying point for those attempting new and radical ways of looking at the UFO enigma. His latest book, Messengers of Deception, has already received a critical and controversial reception in the USA. In view of the potential importance of this book, we have asked two of MUFOB's Editorial Panel to examine some of the issues raised by Vallee, and to give their own commentary on them, and are presenting their reviews as our main feature article.

DECEPTION AND PERCEPTION

In what is bound to be his most controversial book to date, Jacques Vallee examines the growth of the 'myth' of extraterrestrial intervention, and how the myth is promoted and manipulated by various cult and fringe political figures, and also perhaps by intelligence agencies. Vallee argues that the UFO experiences are manifestations of a 'psychic technology' (meaning a technology that aims to produce psychological effects). Whilst agreeing that UFO experiences certainly do produce these effects, this reviewer is unhappy about the involvement of a technological deus ex machina.

However, no matter what the origin of the beliefs, the 'myth of the extraterrestrial intervention, as reflected in the literature of the UFO cults, tends to produce several effects. Only one of these, a belief in planetary unity, has much potential for human benefit. The others: reliance on faith and the rejection of science (aided by the scientific community's own unwillingness to handle the UFO problem); the pervasive denigration of human effort and the belief in miraculous salvation from outside; covert and sometimes overt racism; and the development of contactee religious sects which have strongly authoritarian structure and belief systems.

Valle draws on his own personal, and often very funny, experiences with the contactees and cult leaders on both sides of the Atlantic. He was twice accused of being a Venusian spy! The ufologist may well be surprised to know just how active these 'fringe' groups are, for this second generation of contactees, unlike Adamski, Green, Fry and their ilk, make little effort to set up 'UFO Groups', or attract wide membership. Their tendency is away from pseudo-science and towards religion

These new groups seem to attract not just the proverbial little old ladies in tennis shoes, but also the discontented offspring of the 'haute bourgeoisie'; the children of the technologists in California's 'Silicon Chip Valley' being especially vulnerable. The appeal of these groups, as with the Moonies and other cults is the 'liberation from freedom'. In a world of confused values and social change, where many people are uncertain of their social roles they offer a sense of security, certainty and 'knowing ones place in the world.'

Vallee's impression of these groups is roughly the same as that reached by the Editors of MUFOB (see e.g. John Rimmer's article on the politics of UFO cultism in MUFOB 4,4). It was this reviewer who first drew Vallee's attention to the connections between the veteran American fascist William Dudley Pelley, and George Hunt Williamson, and the latter's relationship with the Stanford brothers, to say nothing of George Adamski. The roots of American fascism themselves lay in occultist movements such as Guy Ballard's I AM, and the anti-semitic strains of the populist remnant led by such people as Tom Watson, who perhaps coined the phrase 'The International Jewish Bankers'. This is a facet of American history which merits far more detailed study.

We can also match the authoritarian message of the French contactee Claude Vorilhon: "You must eliminate elections and votes that are completely ill-adapted to the current evolution of man", with that of the British Contactee Derek Sampson, who claimed to be a reincarnation of Jesus and Hitler, and filled his journal with polemical pieces about the 'International Zionist Conspiracy'. He

formed a crypto-fascist political party, and informed our former Editor that Britain "needed to be run by a rod of iron"

It may be that Vallee is in danger of falling into the same trap as I did, and assuming that such belief systems are an incidental aberration to ufology, manipulated by "small groups of politically motivated men and women" (to misquote Sir Harold Wilson). It seems possible that authoritarian belief systems are endemic to the whole UFO field. Recent, as yet unpublished, sociological research in Britain suggests that extreme right-wing and UFO groups draw upon the same socio-economic backgrounds for their members, who share similar ideologies.

The suggestion that intelligence agencies are involved in the UFO field, indeed that the modern UFO phenomenon is a hoax generated by them, is startling. It is a pity Vallee does not use some of the material he could have to support this argument; for example the judiciously positioned 'leaks' to people like Keyhoe, the curious affair of the crashed saucers, Fred 'Maury Island Hoax' Crisman's role as a CIA agent. He seems to present the case in an unnecessarily exaggerated and fanciful form apparently as a result of the prompting of an ex-intelligence officer called 'Major Murphey', who directs Vallee's attention to the UFO cults. Once scents the smell of the 'plant' here, and it is interesting to note that intelligence agencies may have had more of a role in the militaristic 'UFO myth' rather than the contactee 'flying saucer myth'. As 'common enemies' the alleged hostile UFOs would have far more use than a faked 'take over' by the Space Brothers.

Certainly the role of the military cannot be ruled out in the affair of the cattle mutilations which Vallee discusses at some length. He finds that the generally accepted explanations are not altogether satisfactory, and muses on the possibility of psychological warfare, as a way of undermining basic security.

Yet is this not all too dangerously like the very cult beliefs that Vallee rightly sees as threatening basic humanistic values? Is not Vallee's blaming the CIA or a small group of politically motivated people for unwelcome social attitudes just a way of avoiding the real questions which such beliefs raise? And in the end isn't Vallee's 'control system' just another, even more dehumanising myth reducing man still further to the level of the laboratory rat?

It strikes me that the UFO is less the cause than the result of social malaise; that the surrender of human ingenuity causes the desire for the gods to return. The

millenarian beliefs of the UFO cultists, the fears of technology manifest in the abductee and 'UFO as Demon' myth are symptoms of deep fundamental anxieties of Western society. If ufo experiences are not directly mediated by mysterious technologies, but are variants of visionary experiences as old as humanity, experiences which both influence and are influenced by belief systems, then are we not dealing with an unconscious control system?

It is perhaps a measure of Vallee's capacity for objectivity that he is able to see the tendency towards conspiracy theory in his own writing, and to draw back from it. Following a strange coincidence in his research he speculates on a world in which paranormal phenomena would make sense, and in which information and meaning would have to replace space and time as the connections between events. It is ironic that an incident which would have sent many other UFO writers over the edge seems to have pulled Vallee back.

My own guess at present is that, yes, there are manipulators and deceivers, some of them politically motivated cliques, some cultists, some intelligence agencies, all jumping on bandwaggon and giving them a few helpful pushes. But the real manipulators are you and me. The people ourselves, using the symbols of our dreams and those provided by the 'psychic technology' of the mass media.

The book has a useful epilogue by Sociologist David Swift whom, while not endorsing all Vallee's conclusions, commends his documentation of UFO cults and calls for further research. We for one would be happy to publish such research.

PR

Although ufologists frequently berate astronomers and other scientists for their lack of interest in the phenomenon, it is the lack of interest by sociologists that is more surprising. There are only a few social studies of contactee groups, and as far as I know none at all of any major UFO waves, therefore this study of the various contactee sects is a very welcome addition to the UFO literature.

Vallee analyses the contactees religious and political ideas, which they claim to have received from the space people, and concludes that, while some are explicitly racist or anti-democratic, the remainder are equally anti-human in their values, since they believe that humanity is incapable of solving its own problems, and that a utopia will be achieved by following the dictates of the extra-terrestrials. He considers that in a time of uncertainty and growing suspicion of

science these groups could become mass movements of irrationality

The descriptions of these cults will contain much that is new and fascinating to even experienced ufologists, and to general readers will probably come as a revelation of a previously unsuspected subculture. However I cannot help feeling that what is presented is only part of the picture. The American 'benevolent UFO' cults described seem to be largely confined in California, and to be to some extent hangovers from the 1960's Underground (1), but there is no discussion of the rival rumours of malevolent UFOs, as reflected in MIB stories and the Hollow Earth cult. (2) While believers in such matters do not seem to group themselves into organisations as much as contactees, their ideas seem to be tied up with the revival of demonology and fundamentalist apocalyptic religion (3), cults which, although they seem to have little in common with the contactees, in fact represent the same alienation and lack of faith in humanity and belief in authoritarian solutions to contemporary problems.

To many ufologists all of this may be irrelevant or of only interest in enabling researchers to eliminate 'hoaxes' and concentrate on 'real' UFOs. However as Vallee argues, it is impossible to make such distinctions. He looks at the strong case against an extraterrestrial explanation, and shows that even some apparently straightforward 'nuts and bolts' cases have features that seem incompatible with this idea. (It would have been interesting, in this context, to see some discussion of the cases that start off as straightforward UFO sightings, but later develop mystical and contactee elements (5).

Where does this leave us? Vallee looks at the striking experiments conducted at California State University in which subjects were hypnotised into believing that they had experienced a UFO abduction, and as a result described many motifs common to 'real life' cases. He suggests that UFOs may be "physical devices used to affect human consciousness" and goes on to ask what the source of such manifestations might be. The hypotheses of some operation by intelligence agencies or by a private occultist group are considered, only to be rejected, (It is important to make it clear that these ideas are rejected, since one can imagine the parts of the book where they are discussed quoted out of context by some of the most paranoid and unsavoury elements in ufology) and the book ends on a rather puzzled note as Vallee appears to abandon his earlier ideas of UFOs as "physical devices" to suggest the possibility of alternative

models of "the relationship between psyche and matter" in which UFOs and other paranormal phenomena "would be natural aspects of the reality of human consciousness".

This concluding section struck me as the weakest part of the book. It makes no attempt to put the phenomenon into a historical context. There are brief mentions of the visions of Joan of Arc and Joseph Smith, but no wider discussion of the similarity between the emergence of UFO cults in the present and the appearance of similar cults at periods of rapid and violent social change. Vallee states that while compiling this book he "filled a shelf with curious books and pamphlets" about mystical cults of the past, but he does not tell us in any detail about the conclusions he drew from them. He states that such groups are "beneath the dignity" of official history, whereas in fact there are several serious studies of the importance of these groups at different crisis periods. When studied these can give some interesting insights into UFO cults. (6)

I am not as convinced as Vallee that 'physical evidence' is a major problem for the ufologist. This usually turns out to be at best vague and inconclusive (?). Vallee devotes quite a lot of space to the wave of cattle mutilations in the USA over the last few years, the relationship of which to the topic is doubtful, despite their very mysterious nature.

However, in spite of these reservations this is an important book, which one hopes will stimulate a more detailed sociological study of the phenomena.

NOTES:

- (1) And from some older Californian cults. A 1930's California group with ideas similar to the contactees was 'Mankind United'. This organisation claimed to be acting on behalf of a secret group of wealthy men with access to futuristic technology, including space travel. They were seeking to frustrate the aims of the Hidden Realm, another group of wealthy men responsible for wars and financial crises. It would be interesting to find out of there are any links between this group and modern contactees.
- (2) For a wide variety of malevolent UFO stories, see the later issues of the American Magazine "Official UFO".
- (3) For attempts to explain the UFO in terms of these ideas see Clifford Wilson's 'UFOs and their Mission Impossible', and Wilson and John Weldon's 'Close Encounters, a better explanation'.
- (4) Significantly, one of the most influential of these cults, that of the Dero, was originated by Richard Shaver, a worker on a car assembly line, the ultim-

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ate symbol of human subjugation to the machine. Shaver claimed he heard voices of the Dero coming out of the assembly line machinery.

(5) For one such case, see Nigel Watson's 'Stranger in the City' in MUFOB New Series 14.

(6) Such cults during the disruption of the Middle Ages are described in Norman Cohen's Pursuit of the Millennium; during the English Civil War in Keith Thomas's Religion and the Decline of Magic and A L Morton's The World of the Ranters; and during the Industrial Revolution in chapter 11 of E P Thompson's The Making of the English Working Class. The visions that inspired the leaders of some of these cults seem similar to contactee stories involving supernatural visitors and signs in the sky.

(7) The parapsychologist Celia Green in her book Apparitions, which argues that ghost reports are visionary experiences, has an interesting discussion of cases in which ghosts allegedly interact with and alter their physical environment, for instance a case where a ghost allegedly blew out a candle. She concludes that the following possibilities exist:

The interaction is merely part of the vision (ie. the candle was not really blown out).

A change in the physical environment triggers off the vision (ie. the vision could have been provoked by the candle blowing out.)

The change in the environment is carried out by the percipient in the visionary state. (ie. the percipient himself may have put the candle out while experiencing the vision).

The change in the environment is produced by paranormal means

Although in UFO cases one can usually rule out the first possibility, the range of explanations seems to apply quite well to such UFO physical evidence that is not merely the result of fraud or misinterpretation.

RS

Jacques Vallee's Messengers of Deception is published by And/Or Press at \$6.95 in the USA. It is available in the UK from Compendium Books, 234 Camden High Street, London N1, price £4.50, plus 40p postage.

Editorial - continued

ready to look beyond the artificial limits of classifications and definitions that many ufologists seem anxious to build around our field in an attempt to give it a spurious 'scientific' respectability. We have been appalled at the rush to define ufology into a tight little positivist box before we have any idea of what its limits may be, that has been manifest in such operations as the 'Working Party on Definitions' at the recent BUFORA International Convention.

It is foolish, unnecessarily limiting and totally impossible to attempt to come up with a set of definitions for a phenomenon which most of us have not yet even agreed on how to recognise!

Elsewhere in this issue is an important statement from the noted American ufologist Allen H Greenfield. It is both a letter of resignation and a reaffirmation of purpose, and it reflects some of the reasons why we are making our change of title at this time.

The next issue of MUFOB you will receive will be simultaneously MUFOB 50, and MAGONIA 1. Subscriptions will be carried through unchanged. We hope you will approve of our move, and by your own contributions of material, opinion and advice help us carry on and expand on the work we have been doing in MUFOB.

We apologise to our readers for the delay in the publication of this issue of MUFOB. This has been due to the traumas involved in a recent house move.

Please note that our new address, and the future address of MAGONIA magazine is:

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CONFESSIONS OF A UFOLOGIST

Allen H. Greenfield

Over the years that I have been an observer and participant in the UFO subculture in the USA I have made considerable efforts to place on the public record my own observations of trends and customs in the field. In the sixties I watched NICAP under Major Donald Keyhoe and Richard Hall reach the heyday of its position as the civilian UFO organisation. Later I saw the Midwest UFO Network and the long-enduring APRO come to overshadow NICAP. I got in early enough to see the last flowering of the classical contacteeism, and saw the birth of a new, more 'acceptable' contactee phenomena, beginning with the Hill case. I was saddened by the deaths of many of that first stellar generation of near-legends of ufology: Adamski, Edwards, Palmet, Shaver, and too many others. I saw flaps come and go in 1964, 65, 66 and 73.

There was great diversity of opinion during all this period as to the way ufology should go. In the early sixties, in the NICAP period there was a thrust, a goal-orientation if you will, towards criticising the Air Force investigation on one hand, and calling for serious governmental recognition of the problem on the other. After congressional investigations, the negative results of the Condon Committee, and possibly the decline of NICAP's influence on the field, this goal orientation became blurred.

There was great diversity too, in the theoretical area. At the beginning of my involvement in 1960 the ETH seemed to be the near universal belief among ufologists. But by the later years of that decade the influence of John Keel was making itself felt (though it seemed more so with British ufologists than their American counterparts), opening the door to speculation about psychological aspects, alternate realities, paranormality in UFO cases and suchlike. The only thing that seemed beyond the pale of open discussion within

ufology was the possibility that UFOs were a misapprehension of natural phenomena -- in essence a rumour, without basis in objective reality.

This barrier of non-acceptability created some bizarre effects. In effect it created a de facto belief system under which UFO investigations operated. Individual cases could be evaluated and considered explained in conventional terms, but the general assumption was that this was a part of the process of proving that UFOs did exist; separating the signal from the noise assumed that there WAS a signal in there somewhere. People who looked into the UFO phenomenon and openly held the view that UFOs were not real were classified as 'sceptics', rather than as ufologists who held a negative view. In other words, to be a UFOLOGIST one could not, by definition, be a sceptic. It should be noted that one or two ufologists of this period may have been sceptics in fact, but their writings at the time are so cryptic that it is unclear to me even at this remove, just exactly what they believed at the time. In any event the rigid definition carried forward into the 1970's, and remains to this day. Even the critical ufologists themselves seem to have adopted this mode, and one can note this same artificial division in the most current UFO literature.

In reality though, the lines have never been as rigid as the formula specifies. Menzel's contributions to FSR mark him as an early contributor to ufology, and in his last years one could find friendly, cordial letters by the late Dr. in amateur saucer publications. Dr Condon attended the giant 1967 UFO Convention in New York, an event which was the quintessence of the amateur ufology movement. J Allen Hynek the Air Force Consultant becomes J Allen Hynek the leading ufologist - but only after he put swamp-gas and the Air Force behind him. The 'new wave' sceptics Klass, Sheaffer and Oberg all have

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had interactions with "pro-UFO" ufology. The line blurs in practice, but remains rigid to this day on an 'official' level. Even the sceptics seem to accept it, though they are certainly ufologists.

But there is something new in the wind. I few years ago I became gradually aware that a number (and I say "a number" for reasons that I shall illuminate in a moment) of people long established as 'ufologists' as opposed to sceptics have decided that the UFO phenomenon does indeed boil down to a series of misidentifications of conventional events. I suspect, but can't prove, that in the history of ufology there have been any number of instances where such has happened before. The difference is that in the past the conviction that UFOs aren't real has resulted in a decision to leave the field, perhaps through disillusionment with a previously held belief system, or perhaps through just not knowing what to do with this new found conviction.

The difference this time round is that the latest group of ufological converts to scepticism do NOT seem to be leaving the UFO field. But on the other hand neither have they spoken out to their fellow ufologists nor formed a distinct faction in the field. Their reasons can only be guessed at.

Here are some educated guesses:

A. Nobody wants to Kill Santa Claus; the UFO belief-system is a very deep, emotional one explainable in part in terms of the psychology of the religious faculty. Such a change of conviction from belief to scepticism may have brought about a crisis of values of major proportions, and though some may have resolved their own personality crisis, they may feel reluctant to inflict this on their still pro-saucer fellows.

B. Fear may also be involved. People deeply involved in ufology over a long period will have developed any number of social ties in the field and may fear a negative, even hostile response from their previous allies. Still, they have not left the field, and this too is a mystery.

To my mind there are at least two UFO mysteries. Firstly, what are UFOs? Where do they come from? What is their purpose in being here? This is the question-context which has been the major focus of ufology since its formation - including the sceptics. But there is another question which is not so easy to formulate, although Jung took a stab at it in the fifties, and over the years a few scientists with no direct involvement with the first question have examined aspects of it. Namely, what are we too make of the whole world-wide

rumour-complex? Leaving aside for a moment the question of whether there is anything to the rumour, what are we to make of the rumour - the UFO mythos? It is my contention that the second question may be of more ultimate importance than the first.

It's time for me to say something on the record - perhaps past time. In 1960, when I joined NICAP, I was already a true-believer; UFOs were real and they were interplanetary. I was interested in evidence which supported this premise, and hostile to people who opposed this point of view. As the years past I began to entertain doubts about the ETH as such, but in adapting other theoretical positions I continued to be emotionally attached to the notion that, in some sense, UFOs were real, nonconventional phenomena. By the mid 1970s however, I had begun to seriously examine the sceptical case, getting a series of inputs from both inside and outside ufology. I had to admit that a number of cases I once considered prime were much more doubtful in the light of investigation. My personal clashes with the ufological establishment caused me for the first time to take a look at the structure of ufology and the personality make-up of many ufologists from the outside, not as a committed copartisan. I reviewed my own past investigations with new eyes, and what I saw of the influence of belief was none too flattering. I was moving towards a sceptical viewpoint. When I realised this I twice tried to write a candid article explaining to my fellow ufologists this honest change of view, and was twice unable to bring myself to do it. For a long time I floated around in a depression not unlike the depression that followed the loss of my childhood religious convictions at the time of the death of my father in 1971. Eventually I emerged, not without a sense of loss, but with a new, meaningful life-framework with which I have some measure of inner peace. This too is precisely what took place after my earlier crisis in values. I have not made the mistake of falling from one cultic belief-system into another, but rather have tended to place greater emotional involvement in my other long-time interests including music, the exploration of consciousness, speculations about the future, etc. For example, during this period I moved from being a long-time armchair political theorist to being a political activist.

It was this latter, with the attendant realisation that cultic belief systems probably carried some of the responsibility for preventing many people from getting involved in real-world problems - waiting for pie in the sky, or

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Compiled by Peter Rogerson

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Part 20

862 20 December 1958 0155
DOMESTEN (SWEDEN) Students Stig Rydsberg and truck driver Hans Gustavsson were driving home to Halsingborg from Hoganas in misty weather along the coast road, when they stopped at Domesten to answer the call of nature. They saw a strange glow in a spruce wood and went to investigate. The glow came from a circular body emitting a very bright, white light. It stood on a tripod in a glade some 30m from the road. It was 3-4.5m diam, 60-75cm thick, and the legs were 25cm thick. The light seemed hazy and appeared to be concealing a darker body. A strange smell like 'ether and burnt sausage' was noticed. They got within 12-15m of the object when they saw three or four small figures 1.35m tall. They were a luminous dark-grey colour. They rushed around the object in an aimless manner which reminded the witnesses of flies. No features could be distinguished on these beings. The two men were attacked by the beings. They were held in a (non-human) grip "like elastic rings or spirals", which started to bind up their hands then arms. The pair were unable to get a grip on the elastic, jelly-like body. The beings seemed to understand the men's intentions and when Gustavsson got his arms free, they went for his legs instead. The men's fists bounced off the creatures. Gustavsson clung to a pole and Rydsberg managed to get free and sounded the car horn. As he did so, Gustavsson, who was being held horizontal by the beings was released and the entities rushed to the craft and disappeared between the legs of the tripod. The object rose with an intense high-pitched noise that "pierced the marrow", its light intensifying. It took off westwards towards Denmark only seconds after the horn sounded. The whole affair lasted in the region of five minutes. The creatures had a 'raw'

smell and chattered in thin high-pitched hummings. No traces were found. Both men were shocked when they returned home, and only reported the incident after prompting from Ryberg's mother. Despite press and official ridicule they both stuck to their account. (Carl-Axel Jonzen & UFO Notala - First hand. Document supplied by Courtesy V-J Ballester :: Lor Ia - Rehn)

863 20 December 1958 (appx) 1600 hrs
A disc 20m diam. was seen, and caused damage on the ground. (M478 - Quincy)

864 28 December 1958 Afternoon
PORTLENGCONE (ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND) Farmer Joseph Bennett was walking in the fields when he heard a strange noise, like a rushing wind. He looked up and saw a round dark object 2.1m diam., approaching at 6m alt. from the south. It went through a row of trees, dividing two nearby trees, then sliced through the 60cm thick trunk of an oak tree, about 2.5m from the base, felling the tree. The object had vanished by the time the tree hit the ground. Experts found that the wood at the spot was rotten, but were puzzled by the cleanliness of the cut. (FSR 5,3,p.7)

865 31st December 1958 2355 hrs
LA NERRERIA (SEVILLA, SPAIN) Rafael Salas (48) a businessman, and his driver Mr Acosta, had stopped just before midnight to celebrate the new year. At that moment 1.5m from their truck door, a cylindrical object with a pointed end shot straight up. As Salas tried to get out, a second and identical object shot up in the same manner. They were 2m high, 30cm in diam., reflected the headlights of the truck and gave out a sound 'like a beater'. They were travelling at 'extraordinary' speed, and the witnesses could not follow their trajectory. (B28 - FSR 14,4,p.11 - V.J. Ballester - Manuel Osuna)

866 1959 0005
KOLDING (DENMARK) Farmer Nielsen saw a strange light in his field and "suction marks" were found in the snow. (Phillips p 23(129) - FSR)

867 1959 Night
LAKE GUALLETUE (MALLECO, CHILE) Dr Claudio Crocquevielle and a friend were fishing in Lake Gualletue when they saw a luminous object which was approaching circuitously. It passed by them within 30-40 cms of the witnesses, who threw themselves into the water in fear, and hid among the plants for about an hour. The object, 2-3m diam, was flying in circles, rising and falling rapidly until moving away, and stopping to hover for a while in the distance. The shape could not be made out, because of its brilliance. A photograph

appears to have been taken (Heiden - Petrowisch - Letter from witness to UFO Chile)

868 January 1959 1715 hrs
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON (WARWICKSHIRE, ENGLAND) Labourer Leonard Hewins (43) of Tredington, had just finished work and had gone to collect his bike from the rear of the refuse tip near the carpark in Arden Street, when his attention was caught by a fiery object resembling the setting sun, coming from the east. It descended slowly, coming to rest about 100m away. As it stopped the light went out and a blue haze about 3.6m high began to form and hover just above the ground where the object was. He then saw three tall, human-like figures moving in the haze. One of the beings was facing him. He could see the head, and the arms, which they raised as they appeared to sit down on something with a clumsy movement. A fourth figure was seen, as they sat, two in the front, two behind. The blue haze rose slightly and gradually faded. The glow then reappeared, the bottom of the red coloured light touched the ground. The light then became very bright and rose swiftly, leaving a trail of multicoloured stars. He heard a sound like rushing water. The object disappeared towards the west. Hewins was terrified and unable to move while the object was on the ground. (FSR, 13, 5, p.15 + UFOLOG no.49 - Dennis Llewellyn and BUFORA Stratford-upon-Avon)

869 January 1959 1800 hrs
VERONA (ITALY) Soldier Aldo Valeri, (23) was travelling by train between Ortona and Verona when he saw a metallic disc. It was 6m diam and was hanging horizontally at an alt. of 10m, about 200m away. Its underside was black while its upper part was bottle green. At the extremities were two lights, red and azure. In the centre there was a green light. In the top part were what looked like portholes on a central cabin which was slightly luminous. The sky was clear and the witness felt an emotion of great security. (Maurizio Verga)

870 8 January 1959 0920 hrs
WISDON (TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA) Two M&C employees saw an object 2.7m long disappear between buildings. Three other objects were seen in the sky, and a fourth which resembled an inverted skittle with a ball on a handle, eventually appeared to dive into the River Derwent. (Basterfield - Tasmanian UFOIC files)

871 13 January 1959 0700 hrs
PYMATUNG LAKE near GREENVILLE (PENNSYLVANIA) Robert Collins of Linesville was driving his pickup truck towards Greenville on the spillway over the lake, when he saw the lights of what he thought was an air-

craft making an emergency landing on the ice covered lake. He slowed his truck, and was amazed to see the lights approach from the east, merging into a single light as blinding as an arc light. It hovered over the truck for 3-4 mins while the vehicle's electrical system failed, the engine and radio dying. (TYPE ONE STATUS DOUBTFUL)

872 February 1959
KAKTOVIC (ALASKA) 320km east of Umiat a party of trappers saw a red coloured disc about 3.5km away. It rose and descended to just above ground level several times, then flew slowly in a tight circle before disappearing. (FSR 5, 3, p.9 - Lee R Munsick)

873 February 1959 (appx)
BAHIA BLANCA (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA) A manufacturer from the town of Camodoro Rivadavia, who had been spending the night in Bahia, was just about to drive off from the hotel, when a dark mass enveloped the whole car. He lost consciousness, and when he came to a few minutes later he was away from his car in a deserted part of the countryside near Salta, 115km northwest of Bahia. Further details are lacking, but some popular accounts mention a strange lighted object which made the witness dizzy and faint (Heiden - Kolosimo 1968 p.379 + Ribera III, p.75 :: FSR 11, 2, p.14 - Crighton - Diario de Cordoba :: FSR 11, 4, p.10 - Olanidez - Cordoba 3rd & 17th October 1959 & 28th February 1960 :: FSR 6, 4, p.28 - Edith Reinert) THE LATTER REFERENCE IS THE SOURCE OF THE IDEA OF THE 'CRAFT' AND OTHER DETAILS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE ABOVE ACCOUNT.

874 February 28, 1959 Evening
CEDAR CITY (UTAH) Gerry Irwin was driving from Nampa, Iowa towards Cedar City on route to Fort Bliss, Texas. At Cedar City he turned onto route 14, driving through sparsely populated mountain territory 10km from the turnoff he became aware of a glowing object cross over the roadway, illuminating the surroundings. It disappeared over a nearby ridge, where the light went out. Thinking he had seen a plane crash he left messages for help on his car, and set out to investigate. Irwin was found unconscious and there was no trace of a crash. He remained unconscious for 23 hrs, and subsequently suffered from fugues and compulsions to return to the scene, before deserting some weeks later. (Lor V p 347 :: Vallee IIIa, p.87)

875 March 1959
KOLOBRZEG (POLAND) Soldiers, coastguards and civilians saw the sea become agitated and a triangular object 4-5m long rise out of the water and circle the district, finally ascending at speed. Searches by divers and the army were fruitless (M483

- Courrier Interplanetare n056 :: Cramp II p.129 (Gives date as April 1957) :: Vallee Ib, p.144 :: Wilkins Ic, p.314)

876 13 March 1959 0210 hrs
PURNONG (SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA) Percy Briggs, a carrier, of Purning, was driving towards Mannum carrying a load of vegetables. With him was a passenger, Carl Towill, the postmaster of Claypens. They had just crossed the river Murray and had just mounted Gournamont Hill, about 1.6km from Purnong Ferry, when they saw a dome-like arrangement of red and blue lights about 30m diam. which reminded them of the lights of a circus tent. As they got about 100m closer the contraption rose at an angle of 15° and began to move away to the SW, the 8 or 9 separate lights becoming one. As they drove along they saw the light receding in the sky for 10mins. When the object was on the ground the lights were half blue, half red, then would switch round. The individual lights were 6m apart. At one point they felt that something in the object was observing them. Local residents spoke of the men's reliability. (FSR, 5, 5, p.6 :: FSR 5, 3, p.9 :: Hervey Ia, pp.127+135 :: Basterfield - First hand + Australian Saucer Record 5, 2, p.2)

877 22 March 1959 0355 hrs
MANCHESTER (GREATER MANCHESTER, ENGLAND) Solomon Aronwich (59) of Middleton was at the Cleaning Depot, Wilmslow Lane, Miles Platting, when he saw, for about 50 secs. a large blue-green circular object, the bottom part darker than the top. It travelled quickly SSW, at 15m alt. (3m above the works' roof) It suddenly darted off behind a building. He noticed a tingling at the back of his neck, but heard no sound. (DIGAP files)

878 24 February 1959 2200 hrs
VICTORVILLE (CALIFORNIA) The attention of a teenaged boy was caught by a bright, steady, white light shining into his bedroom, and reflecting on the wall opposite his window. Realising that it was too intense to be car headlights, and because he was in charge of his younger brother while his parents were at night-school, he dressed and went to investigate, and to let out the dogs which had begun to howl. From the porch he sighted, in the west 20° above the horizon, an elongated egg-shaped object about 25m away. It was 45m long, and half that in thickness. Despite its brilliance the object had a dull red colour, with purple waves moving through its extremities. It made a loud, high-pitched humming and swishing sound. It descended towards him, passed over the house and came within 3m of the ground, then veered to the NE. The boy was puzzled that he could only hear the craft when he

saw it, and could not hear it from the rear. He went back inside to calm his younger brother and the dogs. When he returned five minutes later he saw the object approaching from the west as if for a still closer pass. Terrified he ran back for a gun. As he did so the brother saw the object through the slits in the living room blind. It made three closer passes, the last time the whole house vibrated, and during the time this was happening the radio was clogged with intense static. As the object passed over the boy heard a crackling sound like a giant spark. Neighbours also had disturbances on radio and TV. When the parents returned home at 2300 the dogs were still whimpering and cowering under the furniture. (Hynek IIa, p.165 - Atic)

879 12 March 1959 Night
PURNONG LANDING (SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA) Kim Marks (6) was preparing for bed when he saw a man in a red jacket and trousers with white trimmings. He was about 1.5m tall and crimson faced. The boy watched the man for about 90 secs., during which time the dog did not react to the presence. (Basterfield & Chalker - first hand)

880 23 March 1959
ADELAIDE (SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA) Two men saw a strange object, at first apparently on the ground, then afterwards in the sky. It remained in view for about 10 minutes. (Hervey Ia, p.134)

881 25 March 1959 (or following day) 1245 hrs
CORSICA (PENNSYLVANIA) An 83 year old man and his daughter were on the back porch of their farmhouse in a rural area near this town when they observed a barrel-shaped object like wingless plane, pointed at one end, squared off at the other, with metal bands. It was bright blue, 6m long, 2m wide, and hovering above the treetops at 12-15m alt about 600m away across the valley. After about 3 mins the object settled behind the trees and disappeared. (Official Guide to UFOs p.182 - Atic)

882 31 March 1959 2330 hrs
GOOLWA (SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA) Mr Harry Neale, operator of the Port Elliot cinema, was driving home to Goolwa. On an undulating, straight stretch of road about 1.5m from home he passed a low hill known as Graham's Castle. Beyond it, between 450-550m away between the road and the sea, was a domed object, glowing bright red-orange, with a row of evenly spaced portholes through which shone a brilliant white light. The red glow from the object illuminated trees behind it. As he approached he estimated it was about 300m from

the road. He then turned off the main road to approach it, but when he reached the site it had gone. Getting out of his car he saw it climbing in the eastern sky at 45° and watched for about 8 secs. before it faded into the distance. No traces were found. (FSR 5,5,p.6 :: Hervey Ia, p.135 :: Basterfield - Adelaide News, 2 Apr 59 + Australian Saucer Record 6,4,p.14) HERVEY GIVES INCORRECT DATE.

883 15 April 1959 Evening
SVENDBORG (DENMARK) Between Svendborg and Nyborg, meat packer Ove Christensen cycling home from work was stopped on the road by a disc-shaped object spinning at ground level. After 5 mins it began chasing him, flying 6m above him for 5 km. It was luminous and seemed to be made of glass. (#486 - FSR 5,3,p.iv & 7) SOURCE OF VALLEE'S DATA NOT KNOWN.

884 12 April 1959 2000 hrs
MONTREAL NORD (QUEBEC, CANADA) Local residents saw a red object which hovered low over a field then climbed rapidly. It threw out sparks from its underside. About the same time a red object hovered over the nearby St Hubert's Air Base, then accelerated away. (UFO Evidence p.118 - UPI 13 Apr 1959)

885 17 April 1959 (Appx)
DAWNEY near GUATRACHE (LA PAMPA, ARGENTINA) Workers at the La Carlotta farm observed an aeroplane of strange shape like a cigar with a trail. It landed then took off again immediately at high speed. (FSRCH 12,p.9 - Uriondo 14 + Sanchs 18 - La Razon 25 apr 1959)

886 27 April 1959 0310 hrs
SAO PAULO (SAO PAULO, BRAZIL) A young man had seen a red light in the sky on the night of the 25th and at about 4.30 the next morning was awakened by a strange feeling. He found in the garden a note, telling him to be at the spot at 0310 the next morning. The memory of this event only occurred to him at the appointed time when he went into the garden in a kind of trance. He felt himself paralysed as a circular object 6m diam appeared at 100m alt. A human figure spiralled down from a wedge-shaped door. It was clad from neck to foot in a plastic suit, with a helmet and transparent, glassy gloves. The being poked the man, seized the paper from him and ordered him to return to the spot on the 30th. He then spiralled back to the craft, which vanished a minute later. (FSR 13,3,p.7 - Creighton - Buhler)

887 29 April 1959 2230 hrs
GRASSEY PLAINS (BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA) Jerry Monkman was driving home with his friend Alex Gillis when, as they topped

a rise, they encountered an egg-shaped machine about 4m wide, with a light shining through the top, sitting in the road. It was slate-grey colour. After a few minutes it disappeared silently, as if it had risen straight up at a terrific speed. The witnesses delayed reporting the event for a month through fear of ridicule, before going to the RCMP. (FSR 5,6,p.20 - Vancouver Sun n.d. :: Vallee Ib,p.140)

888 30 April 1959 0205 hrs
SAO PAULO (SAO PAULO, BRAZIL) As per instructions the young man in case 886 returned to the rendezvous where a disc shaped object reappeared and a being spiralled down. The figure looked at a tiny object on its wrist and said "0205 hrs Earth Time" the witness, trying to look at his watch found himself paralysed. The being then asked if everything was normal. The man replied "Yes", whereupon the being vanished in the by now familiar manner. The he, or another, reappeared, greeted the witness, his helmet moving up and down, apparently studying something. He excused himself, and the whole performance was repeated again. This time the being asked for a sheet to write on, and the witness, now mobile, got a notebook, which rose into the object. Moments later it returned, with an incomprehensible scribble, which the being said an earthman must decipher. The being then spiralled back into the machine. (FSR 13,3,p.5 - Creighton - Buhler)

889 20 May 1959 1730 hrs
TRES LOMES (BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA) Antonio Sanchez and Ernesto Fogliani were out hunting when they saw a shiny metallic discoid machine 2.5m high, with a cupola 1m diam, and a surface resembling aluminium or dull glass. It was resting on the ground 150m away. When the machine had left, the grass at the spot was found to be flattened. (Vallee IIB,p.53 :: FSRCH 12,p.9 - Uriondo 15 - La Razon 25 May 59 :: Sanchs 18)

890 18 June 1959
PIQUEROBI (BRAZIL) The Governor of Piqueroibi, Julio Banabi, and several students travelling on the Santa Anostacio to Piqueroibi road saw an intensely brilliant glowing object with a dome, manoeuvring close to the ground. Its violent movement back and forth frightened the witnesses. (UFO Critical Bulletin III,5,p.3)

SOME INTCAT ABBREVIATIONS:

Lor II. Lorenzen, G & J Flying Saucer Occupants; Lor III, Lorenzen's UFOs over the Americas; Lor IV. Lorenzen's UFOs, the Whole Story; ATIC. USAF files, Projects Sign, Grudge and Blue Book; Lor I and Lor Ia. Lorenzen's Great Flying Saucer Hoax,

ufology as an opiate of the people - that has moved me towards writing this article. But... I haven't quit ufology, and I haven't quit being a ufologist. My reasons for this are by no means simple.

Let me admit that I do have deep social ties to ufology, and a great many of my personal friends are ufologists. I am in for one reason - because many of my friends are in ufology, and for another because I really cannot imagine NOT being in ufology.

But this isn't my only reason. Over the last few years I have come to a greater and greater realisation that the SECOND question I mentioned earlier -- the question of the meaning of the spread and mythologising of the UFO rumour -- is an important one, whether UFOs are spaceships or meteors, psychic projections or swamp gas. In fact the question becomes even more important if we assume for the moment that all UFOs are explainable as misidentifications or hoaxes. Riddle: Why are people looking at birds, balloons, meteors, spots in their eyes, and seeing spacecraft, etheric ships, marvellous phantoms? Riddle: Why have hundreds if not thousands of ordinary people all over the world made fraudulent claims that they have seen little men, giant beings, things that hum, beings that give messages? Riddle: What are to we make of a belief system that spread from obscure events in World War Two all the way to "Close Encounters"?

Of course these questions, at least as framed here, apply only if the phenomenon has no unconventional basis, which brings me to yet a third reason why I am still active in ufology, still writing, still publishing: To wit, I may be wrong. Most of the established sceptics don't seem to give much room to this, but I am not at all sure of my new convictions. Since 1960 my theoretical journey has taken me from the ETH, through the Alternative Reality theory to that hazy borderline between real and unreal, subjectivism; and now to a considered, measured, but no longer reluctant scepticism. With this much evolution of thought one develops a sense of detachment, even from ones present belief system. I would not be surprised if the weight of events again moves my viewpoint back to something old, or on to something entirely new.

I'm not at all sure. There are many cases over which I remain truly puzzled, and these include cases which have been thoroughly gone over by the sceptics. I say only that enough cases that I once considered 'good' evidence for unconventionality have had enough doubt cast on them

that there is for me enough doubt about the case for the UFO itself to move me in to a sceptical stance.

I don't know if UFOs are real or not. I feel not, but I don't know. But I tell you that there is more mystery, more beauty more numinous meaning in this universe than was ever dreamed of by little green martians dreaming dreams at sunrise on the Red Planet. Your very being in ufology shows that you are in search of those mysteries, and you have but to look to see them. UFOs may indeed not be there, but flying saucers are real!

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Readers may wish to be reminded of the original reference to Magonia, from the writings of the Archbishop Agobard of Lyons in the ninth century:

"We have, however, seen and heard men plunged into such great stupidity, sunk in such depths of folly, as to believe that there is a certain region, which they call 'MAGONIA', whence ships sail in the clouds, in order to carry back to that region those fruits of the earth which are destroyed by hail and tempests; the sailors paying rewards to the storm wizards and themselves receiving corn and other produce....

"Out of the number of those whose blind folly was deep enough to allow them to believe these things possible, I saw several exhibiting in a certain concourse of people, four persons in bonds - three men and a woman who they said had fallen from these same ships....

"But truth prevailed...."

Don't say we didn't warn you!

UFOs... By Appointment!

DIRK VAN DER WERFF

This report was submitted to MUF0B via the UFO Investigators' Network. It continues our series of case studies of so-called 'psychic-contactees'. Although many cases of this kind are ignored as 'subjective' by physical-sciences oriented ufologists, it is increasingly being felt that the study of the background and beliefs of the percipients are of greater importance than many of the reported details of the 'UFO'. The following case indicates clearly how an individual's belief-systems structure, and indeed provoke, their perception of the UFO phenomena.

Mr Van Der Werff is a newspaper reporter working in the north-east of England.

The case of Rodney Stewart is the kind where you find yourself able to testify to the sincerity of the man and his experiences, but his firm beliefs of the subject of UFOs and his seeming contact with them are open to interesting discussion.

Rodney is a young man in his early twenties living with his mother in a terraced house in South Shields, Tyne & Wear. Like many young people, since he was 15 or 16, has sought out different religions, cults and beliefs in a personal search for faith. He is currently involved with those he found most satisfactory: Eastern ethics and philosophies, and the thought that UFOs are "nuts and bolts" craft piloted by benevolent beings. Rodney believes he is totally responsible for the appearance of a craft which he viewed from the bedroom window of his previous house in the summer of 1976. He has been told by members of a spiritualist group (which he visited in his quest for belief) that he has the power of healing and strong psychic abilities. He feels he may have inherited this from his mother, who has had precognitive and other psychic experiences.

During the summer of 1976 Rodney was surprised by his success with meditation and the way he could totally relax and direct his thoughts to anything in particular. He decided it would be interesting to try and channel specific thoughts to any 'alien craft' circling the Earth in our atmosphere. He lay out the symbols of the Space Committee as printed in George Hunt Williamson's Other Tongues Other Flesh,

and began to meditate on it. During his fifteen-minute period of intense meditation he felt strangely confident of success.

"I asked if I might be privileged enough to see their sign in the sky some day". It must be added that during the time these meditations took place Rodney was undergoing a very unhappy and emotional period owing to family upheaval, and it has often been noticed that psychic activity sometimes takes place when a person is emotionally upset. He actually found solace in his belief that somewhere out there the Space People were constantly patrolling the sky, watching over us and the Earth.

After his meditation session ended, between twelve and one o'clock Rodney retired to his bed, which at the time was a mattress and blankets on the floor of his bedroom facing the south, looking out through a large bay-window. He meditated the same message the following night. On the third night, after repeating the one-way 'communication', stood at the window gazing at the night sky. A small star-like object caught his attention. It moved from left to right in an irregular pattern.

"Hello, I wonder if this is it", Rodney remembers thinking at the time, as it slowly ambled into the distance after a period of about forty seconds in view. He thought about possible explanations, but ruled out a satellite or planes from nearby Newcastle airport, with which he was familiar. He commented: "I was sceptical to the last, but I suppose I was quite willing to believe this was a UFO, and that it was in connection with my mental efforts to communicate with them".

During his meditation over the next two nights, he thanked the Space People for their sign in the sky, but had to admit that "perhaps I have been privileged, but I'm not quite sure that it was you", adding "If you don't mind, how about just a little bit more". He remembers thinking at the time "The cheek of it". The third night after his initial experience Rodney went through the same fifteen minute routine, and settled down to bed, facing the bay window.

"I suppose I began to moan to myself, thinking that I had been a witness to something very privileged, and that now I was asking too much. Who do I think I am?"

Just then, high in the sky through the bay window he could clearly see a bright explosion, like a flare. He rushed to the window, standing on a table with his face pressed to the glass.

"I had absolutely no doubt that I was witnessing a display of a craft piloted by intelligent beings. This was it - I must have been near to tears as it put on an amazing display, moving in an exaggerated wave motion, often stopping momentarily, and then continuing its course until it disappeared from sight. It was a roundish, very bright golden orb with a halo around it. It stayed still for a few seconds, then began to move from right to left, straight along then down to start the wave-like motion. I really don't know how long it was in view, probably thirty or forty seconds".

The object was very high in the sky and did not light up any of the buildings around, and made no noise that could be heard behind the pane of glass. Rodney went back to bed and meditated, thanking the space people for their display.

"I've never asked again, or for that matter sent any further thoughts out into space for evidence in the sky. The two incidents have been totally amazing, and I consider myself very lucky to have had the honour to have witnessed them. What more can I say? I am by no means a sensationalist or a liar... the account is the truth".

Rodney's only other sighting of a UFO since these events was in January 1978 when he spotted a small silver disc trailing behind a jetliner from Newcastle airport as it passed over the house he is presently living in. It followed the aircraft for a distance, then broke away and silently moved off into the distance.

Rodney also has had two interesting paranormal experiences to relate. One, when he was five years old he was just about to throw a dart at a board. In front of both his mother and his father the dart just disappeared from his hand. Even after several thorough searches of the room, no trace of the dart was ever found.

Whilst in his proper bed at the end of 1975 he found himself unable to sleep. At around twelve thirty he sat up and was very disturbed about a feeling he could sense around him, and he became aware of a buzzing noise all around him in the bedroom, becoming louder, but from no specific point. At this time he was extremely frightened as his body had become extremely torpid, and he found himself unable to move. He now had a feeling something very unpleasant was about to happen. He shouted loudly, but no sound came from his mouth, and he felt his head moving involuntarily

to the left, towards a window which he knew could not be opened. But now the curtains started to move as if by the wind. "It must have been like a scene from a Friday night scare film", he comments. Suddenly there appeared a Victorian looking table with spindly legs. On it was a vase with dead flowers wilting over the side.

"Slowly I saw the flowers come back to life - they changed from a withered bunch to being in full bloom. It disappeared, the sound stopped, and I ran from that room as fast as I could."

Rodney also mentioned to me that when he was a young boy he remembers having a particular dream more often than any other. He saw himself looking at the sky watching classic "Flying Saucer" shapes flying around. This was many years before he had heard about UFOs. Rodney believes that we are all capable of such things as astral travel, and has had some interesting OOB experiences. Mostly these have been spontaneous, although he has had some experience of controlled projection. He feels himself being dragged at tremendous speed down a tunnel, more often than not when on the verge of sleep. In these experiences he has touched solid objects and tasted food.

"When I have met people in this state they have just laughed at me when I asked where I was". In one experience he walked out of a window, down to a churchyard where people were walking and talking, but were apparently oblivious to his presence. He was conscious that he was in the middle of a projection at the time. He got on a bus, where the first person to see him was a young boy who claimed that Rodney was a ghost.

Rodney's feelings are that UFOs are actual craft piloted by benevolent beings. This comes after his many years of reading and study of UFOs. There is evidence, he says, towards there being hostile UFOs, but sees them as part of opposing good and bad forces in other worlds.

What Rodney Stewart experienced was real enough, but what it was or where it originated is personal opinion, and will, like many other cases of the kind, be open to many hours of discussion.

All issues of MUF0B from New Series 8 onwards are still available, price 40p each, including postage. Many back issues of the old series are also available. Please send a stamped addressed envelope, or international reply coupon, if you would like full details.

AN ABDUCTION SYNDROME IN HAITIAN FOLKLORE

Peter Rogerson

I have earlier suggested that popular accounts of "white slave" traffic be examined for similarities to modern UFO abduction stories (1). As yet, no research has been done on this topic. However, in anthropologist Alfred Metraux's Voodoo in Haiti (2) I have uncovered some interesting information on borderline abduction beliefs.

At an undisclosed period, probably in the 1940's, a panic gripped the Haitian peasantry concerning a motorcar which was said to abduct people. In the capital Port-au-Prince the car was known as the auto-tigre (tiger-car); in Marbial where Metraux conducted his fieldwork, it was the motor-zobop, a vehicle supposedly driven by the zobop, members of a secret society of sorcerers having many of the characteristics of traditional witches. This car had bluish beams for its headlights.

One person who experienced such an abduction was the herb-doctor Divoine Joseph. He went out on a Sunday night, despite such ill-omens as bad luck in the day's cock-fight, and stubbing his left foot on a stone. As he approached a patient's home he felt a sudden anxiety, but it was not until he was on his way to a cross-roads for part of the ceremony he was conducting when:

"Not far from La Gosseline I was blinded by a white light. This time fear made me lose consciousness. When I came to my senses I was in a car surrounded by hideous masked people. In my horror I cried out... my captors offered me money if I would keep my mouth shut and never tell what had happened to me. The car stopped and I was made to get out. I woke up in my bed; I asked my woman whether she had found any money on me. She said 'You behaved like a

raving lunatic, you threatened everyone with a banana-sucker, but you hadn't a penny on you'. In the evening I had terrible hallucinations and wandered in my mind... I repeated ceaselessly 'they have got me'. I was cured thanks to the attention of a hangan (voodoo priest)"

When Metraux spoke to Divoine the man still showed extreme agitation, gesticulating and repeatedly beating his breast; laughing and frowning for no reason, and pouring out his words. He believed that his escape was due to the fact that being a voodoo himself indicated that he was under the special protection of a loa, or voodoo spirit.

A voodoo priest himself was also captured by the motor-zobop, whose occupants had already put him in a coffin before he became possessed by his guardian loa, the god Brise, and thus had his release secured. (3)

The perceptive reader will have noticed the close parallels with modern UFO stories: the light, the paralysis, the absurd behaviour of the abductors, the setting down in a remote place, and the psychological after-effects. The similarities to beliefs of fairy abductions: the taboo sod, the ominous run of bad luck, the dangerous nature of cross-roads. The rumours of gangsters driving around in fantastic motor-cars would seem to connect with European panics about the "white slave traffic".

What we are witnessing here is a process of the secularisation of traditional beliefs at a period of social change, in which the motor-car had assumed many of the attributes of the 'diabolic machine' which would later be ascribed to the UFO.

In case anyone wishes to try and dismiss this as merely the sort of backward belief that could arise in a poverty-ridden, superstitious backwater like Haiti, I should point out that in the 1930's there were several social panics concerning phantom vehicles in Britain! (4,5)

Other similarities may be discerned between Haitian traditional beliefs and modern ufo-lore. The notorious loup-garou (werewolf cum vampire) travels across the sky leaving luminous trails that bear some resemblance to comets and are known as werewolf clusters. The days favoured by the loup-garou for these night excursions are the 7th, 13th and 17th of each month. (UFO statisticians, please note!) (6)

The epiphanies of Voodoo lore have more than a passing resemblance to UFO contact stories. When the priestess Lorgina and her husband were out fishing her

boat was hailed by another boat, the captain of which was a handsome mulatto with green eyes. Whilst husband and crew were terror stricken, Lorgina recognised the figure as the god Agre. The god wished them well with the journey before vanishing (7).

Haitian beliefs are means of coping with the social and physical environment, and are transformed by changes within that environment. We might well expect to see similar transformations to take place in Western UFO beliefs.

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7. Metraux, p.142.

LETTERS

Dear John

At the risk of being labeled an 'ethno-historical chauvinist', I would like to take issue with Peter Rogerson's review of Worlds Beyond in the last issue.

Peter seems to be using Vallee's quote about the emergence of man as a big stick with which to beat mankind's aspirations into the ground (painful!), whereas I am sure Vallee only intended to point out the irrational component in the makeup of human society is far from inactive. Bernard Shaw wrote "we are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars". Gerard O'Neill (who, like Bernard Shaw and this writer, is Irish - how's that for chauvinism?) is one of those few men who has the vision and daring to conceive and fight for a future for mankind which is exciting, filled with challenge, and original.

In the cynical 'how much will it cost' and 'how safe is it' mood of the seventies this type of vision is out of fashion. J F Kennedy (another Irishman) would have got as far as 'I believe this nation should dedicate itself' before being shouted down by the House Ways and Means Committee if he had made his famous speech in 1971. A society which protest about power-stations, not bombs, which doesn't bother

to vote in the first multi-national elections, which builds its buildings flat on the ground (in the gutter) is a society badly in need of vision.

The ufologists, with their secret or not so secret, yearning for salvation from the stars fit in perfectly with the mood of the times. They may be sane in comparison with the Gerard O'Neills, Governor Browns and Timothy Learys of this world, but on the same comparison they are also crushing bores!

John Hind

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NOTES

A new large-format illustrated book to be published this autumn, contains a section on UFOs written by MUFOB/MAGONIA editor, John Rimmer. The book, Mysteries of the World, edited by Christopher Pick, is being published by Lyric Books, and will cost £4.95. Other chapters, on contemporary and historical mysteries are by such authorities as Geoffrey Ashe on the Arthurian legends, Bob Rickard on religious stigmata, and Tim Dinsdale on the Loch Ness Monster.

BUPORA's International Convention, alluded to elsewhere in this issue, provided a fine opportunity for MUFOB's editors to meet many of those people who up to now have just been names on a mailing list. It was a particular pleasure to meet so many of our overseas readers.

Although many of the individual contributions were excellent, the conference as a whole suffered from the problems of trying to compress so much into a fairly short length of time. It is difficult for anyone to adequately appreciate a long and sometimes complex lecture on first hearing in conditions which are often far from favourable (as seems inevitable on these occasions, the air conditioning failed). The length of time spent in serried ranks in the conference hall reduces the time available for socialising, which is the real benefit of these meetings, and question times were hurried or non-existent.

Perhaps the best idea would be for organisers of these events to circulate summaries of the papers in advance, the speakers to fill in the details in their talks, and spend as much time as possible in question and discussion periods.

Such an arrangement however, would depend on an intelligent and informed audience who would be prepared to make some sort of contribution to the occasion.

BOOKS

HOLROYD, Stuart. Alien Intelligence. David and Charles, 1979. £5.95

Holroyd seeks to conduct an examination of the spectrum of 'non-human intelligence', from the sign language abilities of chimps, to ufonauts. An interesting concept but one which largely defeats the author. In the area I am familiar with, parapsychology and UFO research, Holroyd is uncritical in the extreme, with a tendency to quote outdated and discredited sources. Thus the Hamilton kidnapping hoax and Lunan's messages from Böttes turn up yet again. There are a number of silly factual errors, notably when we are presented with a picture of a "particularly vivid ectoplasmic materialisation of a face" - alas, this manifestation is well known to be a cut out from Paris-Match, and the medium Eva (not Mary C as Holroyd says) a well-known fraud. The chapters show a lack of intellectual consistency; those dealing with scientific topics like animal communication or ET life lie uneasily with the more esoteric chapters. Have two books been cobbled together to make this one? (PR)

ASHE, Geoffrey. Miracles. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979. £4.75

In his latest book Geoffrey Ashe tries to link the miracles of the Bible with the alleged supernatural powers of the Lamas, and to suggest that meaningful coincidences are an example of minor miracles.

Ashe's main argument is probably the weakest. The discussion of Biblical miracles is over-literal in parts, and he again relies far too much on the travellers tales of Madame David-Neel.

In discussing the Marian miracles and tradition, Ashe comments that the idea of human beings having a special relationship with the supernatural can be paralleled in certain eastern traditions. A closer parallel and possible common origin is that of the shaman, among whose vocations is to plead for the cause of humanity before the supernatural beings.

Ashe examines the growth of the cult of the Virgin Mary and examines the apparitions at Lourdes and Fatima. In accordance with what I believe is the orthodox Roman Catholic viewpoint, he gives his approval to Lourdes, but not to Fatima. In the latter case he points out that the much vaunted "Messages of Fatima" concerning communism and the conversion of the

Soviet Union date from 1936/37 and 1941/42. These were produced under the aegis of the Salazar dictatorship, and reflect the 'party line' of that administration, and the entire coterie of clerico-fascists who were in varying degrees of collaboration with the Axis powers. All of these unsavoury forces saw Fatima as a rallying point, including the Croatian leader Pavelic, whose regime is still considered by some historians to be the most brutal in recorded history.

As regards the alleged miracle itself Ashe suggests the original facts are now so underlain with legend as to be ungraspable. As far as I can gather most of the current accounts of Fatima are derived at the earliest from Marianist tracts of the 1920s; including the discredited Fatima: Esperance du Monde, with its photograph of a solar eclipse passed off as the miracle of the sun.

Ashe goes on to suggest that minor miracles happen all the time. By this he refers to synchronicity, and provides examples from his own experience. As with other paranormal phenomena (including UFOs and the Loch Ness Monster) they remain elusive, hinting at a depth to reality beyond the world of "daylight reality and commonsense". Ashe calls this reality 'The Divine', which in the context seems inappropriate. Otto Rouks term 'the numinous' or 'the Dreamtime', or even 'Magonia' seem more suitable to me. (PR)

HAROLD, Clive. The Uninvited: a true story. Star Books, 1979. 95p.

Though this account of the Ripperstone Farm case reads like a pulp novel, and is by a writer for Womans' Realm, it throws some interesting light on the UFO experience.

Although the author may have dramatised considerably at times, the story is 'true' in the sense that Mr Harold has not invented the Coombs family or their saga. Whether what the family say happened to them really did is rather another matter, and one which cannot be decided on the evidence available. Nevertheless, this book does, unwittingly, show the development of a 'UFO Wave', and the interaction between psychological and sociological factors in the development of the experiences.

The 'giant' which haunts the family seems to have originated in the nightmares of one of the small daughters - nightmares which coincided with poltergeist effects and power outages. The Giant belongs in the long line of vague hallucinatory figures associated with poltergeist cases (Old Geoffrey at Epworth, for instance), and contemporary poltergeists

have a penchant for electrical equipment.

Poltergeist outrages are generally recognised to be associated with family tensions, and it is perhaps significant that the incidents on the farm (a very isolated place) died down for a period when Mrs Coombs had a seasonal job, and the eldest daughter was living with her grandparents.

What separates this story from many other poltergeist cases is the fact that the newspapers were full of UFO stories at the time. Assuming that the hallucinatory effects which are typical of poltergeist and haunted houses are generated both by the underlying anxieties which provoke the experiences, and the anxiety which is aroused as a result of those experiences, it is easy to see that they could be structured along 'ufological' as opposed to 'spiritualistic' lines because of this press publicity. So, instead of monks or malicious old ladies, the Coombs family 'see' UFOs and giant spacemen.

It appears that the original UFO panic in Dyfed was stimulated by the schoolyard panic at Broad Haven, on February 4th, 1977, which in turn was probably generated by the publicity attached to the Joyce Bowles story - which itself or originated from a background of poltergeist effects. Furthermore the Little Haven/Dale humanoid wave, as this book makes clear, did not involve independent, isolated witnesses, but rather spread across a tightly knit group of relations, friends and acquaintances, who all knew of each others experiences, and mutually reinforced each others beliefs. Thus we are dealing with a case of 'Social Haunting'.

When we see emerging from this cocktail accounts of the mysterious transportation of cattle, to add to the exploding TVs and strange visions, we are immediately reminded of the witchcraft panics of the 16th and 17th century. Without a doubt even less than a century ago, the events at Ripperstone Farm would have been attributed to either witchcraft or the fairies. And indeed, when we read of doors opening and closing in Stack Rocks and strange beings entering and leaving, we are clearly in the realm of Fairyland!

The events at the farm appear to have concluded with Mrs Coombs having a hypnagogic vision/dream of being on board a UFO with beings telling her that things were all right.

The result of all this is to induce a feeling of frustration - here we have a series of experiences of great sociological and psychological interest, but where were the sociologists, psychologists and parapsychologists at Dyfed (or Warminster,

or Banbury)? If the events took place in anything like the way suggested by this book there was a wealth of data to be collected by UFO investigators - what did they do?

This is one of many questions left unanswered by this book, for though we know that the roles of the UFO investigators Randall Jones-Pugh and the late Ted Holliday were crucial in this case (and in others in Dyfed) they are nowhere mentioned in this book, and Harold's account of Stack Rocks is very different from Jones-Pugh's. But nor do we have any real clue as to Clive Harold's own role in this drama. Come to that we don't have such basic information as a plan of the farm, a dramatis personae of the people involved, any details of their background, or anything which would allow an independent judgement to be made. Looming above all this is the ethical question of using a family's personal experiences as a means of providing a 'good shudder' to vicarious thrill seekers - most of whom probably do not know that there is independent confirmation that the family does exist and that events at least partially comparable with those described here have taken place, and will treat the book as a novel.

Though there is nothing in the book which supports such a conclusion, Harold tries to fit the events into an extraterrestrial framework. This is the explanation that the media, Mr Harold and the UFO researchers have given the Coombs family; perhaps for the best, as a couple of years earlier the papers were full not of UFOs, but of demons and exorcism. One suspects that it would have been in that framework that the Coombs would have interpreted their experiences. With who knows what results? (PR)

BEGG, Paul. Into Thin Air: people who disappear. David and Charles, 1979. £5.95

In his study of alleged 'mysterious disappearances' Begg has done what few Fortean writers bother to do - go back to the original sources. The result is a thoroughly admirable piece of 'Fortean Corrigenda' which disposes of several great mysteries. It is especially pleasing to see the 'mystery of the missing Norfolk' laid to rest once and for all. The Bermuda Triangle takes a further bashing, as does the endlessly repeated saga of David Lang, alias Charles Ashmore, a.k.a. Oliver Larch or Thomas. It is not without significance that amongst the worst offenders in the spreading of false stories without checking are the writers of UFO books. (PR)

RANDLES, Jenny, & Peter WARRINGTON UFOs:

a British Viewpoint. Hale, 1979 £5.25.

Miss Randles seems to be a controversial figure in the British UFO scene (at the recent BUFORA convention in London the very sight of her name in a back issue of MUFOB provoked one prominent BUFORA hierarch to spluttering incoherence, and a favourable mention of her from Allen Hynek from the platform produced a deal of amusing grimacing from other personalities). It will come as a surprise to many, therefore that this long-awaited book is for the most part a sober and interesting account of the contemporary range of the UFO mystery, illustrated by up-to-date, UK reports, in the main from UFOIN reports.

Such potential traps as military involvement (yes, but not so sinister), and physical evidence (not proven), are looked at sensibly, and the chapter on the role of UFO investigators and groups, while it may raise a few hackles, does not seem calculated to provoke too much huffing and puffing. The bulk of the book is an exposition of the amended Hynek classification scheme that the authors have adopted, adopting much the same format as Hynek's UFO Experience. Although most of the cases described will not be new to the most assiduous UFO magazine reader, they are mostly collected in book form for the first time here.

Towards the end of the book the authors tackle the more contentious subjective dimensions of the UFO experience, and detail some of their own involvements with the notorious 'Gary' affair. This will give the general reader a glimpse of the wierder shores of ufology, whilst still dealing with it in a rational way.

If the book had ended here, I think I could have recommended it almost without serious reservation. However the final chapter destroys the credibility which has been assiduously built up to then. We are back in the world of 'vibrations' and idle speculation. Having carefully explained the dubious and equivocal nature of the physical and photographic evidence, pointed out the essentially subjective character of the experience and been honest about the contradictory nature of much of the evidence, the authors (or is it just one of them?) seem to pull back, and desparately cobble together a vague, crypto-scientific 'explanation' that will enable then at the very end to fall in with the old slogan: "UFOs are real". The reasons for this are I think dealt with eloquently in Allen Greenfield's piece elsewhere in this magazine.

So, I recommend this book, up to page 218. From then on, you're on your own!

(JR)

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