

The Wild Places



**The Journal of
Strange and
Dangerous Beliefs**

No.2

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Opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the
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The Wild Places

42, Victoria Road
Mount Charles
St. Austell
Cornwall PL25 4QD
England



Circular Logic

by Jenny Randles

I well recall a day back in the dim distant past (August 1980 in fact) when Ian Mrzyglod - an excellent ufologist from the West Country group PROBE - first told me about some weird circles that had turned up in fields at Westbury in Wiltshire. They were just big areas where the cereal crop was flattened in a swirled circle with remarkably straight edges: not unlike the famous 'nests' said to demark some UFO landings (eg at Tully in Australia 14 years earlier, although admittedly the new ones were a bit more perfect).

Enquiries proceeded apace and it was soon evident that a fruitful liaison with Dr Terence Meaden - a physicist from the locality, and organiser of the Tornado and Storm Research Organisation (TORRO) and editor of the Journal of Meteorology (J.Met) had what looked like a perfectly adequate theory to explain these wonders of nature. They were - he suggested - caused by the circular rotation of the air stalled against a lee slope of a hill in unusual meteorological conditions. It effectively cork-screwed very briefly into the ground to produce the observed effect.

By the summer of 1983 Ian - now a BUFORA council member - had certainly persuaded me through his articles and Dr Meaden's scientific arguments published regularly in J.Met. A few more circles had been found at a number of sites. ALL fitted perfectly with the lee of a hill locations that Meaden predicted. Whilst some involved triple and even quintuple formations they were more or less the same phenomenon year in year out and relatively few in number (barely exceeding double figures in terms of discoveries in any single summer and - again predictably - more widespread in good years when whirlwind and tornado activity was high, thus cementing the bond between the patterns and theorised unusual vortex activity).

Like most of my UFOlogist colleagues who had seen the evidence mount we had no good reason to dispute the basic correctness of the Meaden hypothesis, and every reason to wish to counter the escalating media cries of an alien power behind the patterns.

The turning point came when Pat Delgado discovered the circles. He was not apparently familiar with the genesis just outlined. He had not been with the farmers who had discovered these early circles, and who themselves had accepted Meaden's diagnosis (one key site owner pointing out that his fields had sprouted earlier - if usually less perfect - circles for years, and he had always assumed the wind was the cause, although he knew not how).

Delgado forged two crucial links in 1983. He joined forces with Gordon Creighton - the new Editor of FSR (Flying Saucer Review) - which under Charles Bowen had for many years been the most influential UFO journal in the world. He also took the mystery of the circles to the national - and ultimately international - media.

The result of these two moves was either dramatic or catastrophic, dependent on your viewpoint.

FSR began to churn out regular pieces that tended to ridicule the 'whirlwind' hypothesis (as it has often been quite misleadingly termed) and all those who supported it. Presumably by coincidence, immediately after that summer - when I was widely quoted in the national press

insisting that the circles were not UFO related but were explained in terms of wind vortices - my association with FSR was unexpectedly terminated. I had been on the masthead in an official capacity for some years and wrote a regular column. Although I was not forewarned, this column stopped appearing, and my name vanished from the masthead. Instead, the editor started making occasional snide comments about me - both in terms of my public support for Dr Meaden and continuing right up to a recent 1990 issue where I am (flatteringly but - as author of more pro-UFO books than anyone else in Britain - surely quite ludicrously) likened to "the world's greatest expert on the none existence of UFOs".

In truth, all this presumably just meant that a deductive scientific approach was considered 'suspect' for a UFOlogist. Instead FSR preferred its many reports from Delgado (and later also Colin Andrews) with speculation about 'unknown fields' and 'unknown intelligences', cryptic messages and occasional rather dubious 'UFO' links (eg the infamous case history from a man who said he saw a circle created by a landed UFO whilst at a position that it took BUFORA investigator Paul Fuller five minutes of site reconstruction to demonstrate was simply not possible).

I should stress that they were quite entitled to take this line, as indeed were (and are) Andrews and Delgado entitled to their views. Just because they differ from mine is not cause for criticism, nor reason for them to be wrong. My point is that while Ian Mrzyglod, myself, Paul Fuller and BUFORA as a group had spent years trying to work on the circles as a scientific problem, had forged useful relationships with science, and were doing a sort of self-policing job for the image of UFOlogy, this quite different approach by FSR and its writers was giving the media just what it wanted. The circles were converted from a minor tale of scientific relevance to a silly season hype of ever-growing complexity and intensity. This allowed for wonderful speculations about everything from Martian tourists (1983) to major food contamination via mystic forces (1989).

It may be assumed that I am bitterly accusing 'the other side' of sharp practices. Not so. All they did was play a role they believed in. But it cannot be denied that these events turned the crop circle phenomenon on its head. From what pre-1984 was a fairly simple and constant scientific problem that was well on its way towards resolution, which might by now be well in the textbooks, and which serious UFOlogy had attacked from the first with admirable restraint, in unison with science, had now become anything but that. We had a rampant amoeba feeding on itself every summer as the media yarns resurfaced, and as newspapers battled one another to get a better story, and find ever more spectacular types of circle.

We know that as early as 1983 one newspaper faked a complex circle formation in the hope of a big story. Luckily, Ian Mrzyglod's investigation at the time uncovered this. It is absolutely certain that other similar events went on later, and that as years have gone by the rising influence of the media has vastly over-inflated the true strength of the mystery. Indeed, there is now so much sociology and belief system within the phenomenon - and there are so many hoaxes created for so many different motivations by diverse sources - that serious research into the cause (be it vortices or something else altogether) has been CRITICALLY injured.

In fact, one question is often asked of Paul Fuller or myself on behalf

of BUFORA and the growing band of scientists who support Dr Meaden's theory. This is why weather-based research initiatives like the much-vaunted Whitecrow and Blackbird of 1989 and 1990 are not being mounted. The answer is simple but, I believe, profound.

These operations thrive on the publicity. They involve many members of the public and the esoteric community flocking to Wessex like circle groupies. The media hype and promote them (eg the BBC had a key role in the 1990 exercise running a long campaign called 'Crop Watch' . . . a major American network now reportedly has big plans for 1991). To what purpose is all this effort expended? It seems to be to 'catch' a circle in formation.

Now this is curious, because at present we know of 24 cases of eyewitnesses who have SEEN circles forming. Some were filmed soon afterwards. Although nobody as yet has filmed one during formation (largely because the events often occur in the early hours, are best witnessed when they leave their marks on remote fields, and are of very short duration). In addition, I am convinced that the agent causing crop circles is far RARER than the staggering 1000 cases for the two years of 1989 and 1990 would suggest. The nine summers before that generated under 200 cases between them - a figure I believe will ultimately be seen to be much more reflective of the true state of affairs (though environmental changes could be marginally increasing the number of circles).

What went on in the past two summers simply cannot be divorced from the social factors, media hype, and huge levels of hoaxing in evidence. Therefore the 'watches' are, in effect, sideshows helping maintain public interest. They are not designed as science projects. If the 1989 or 1990 watchers had been in the right place at the right time what would have resulted? At best we would have got film to flash around global TV. But film of what? According to the eyewitnesses, who tell a very consistent story (though one which is absent from Andrews and Delgado's best-selling book 'Circular Evidence', and rarely if ever feature in either FSR or any media story about circles) it is a normally invisible rotating air mass that forms quickly, swirls the crop and vanishes. Occasionally it glows when the surrounding air is ionized by the forces involved. If seen in daylight its effects (ie loose corn being sucked up) can sometimes be noticed.

In other words, even success at one of these monitoring operations would (if we were very lucky) produce a few seconds of film that would tell us no more than we already know from all the eyewitness testimony. Testimony virtually ignored, yet crucial! As far as I know there was little in the way of the kind of complex scientific equipment on site that might have added to our detailed knowledge of these events.

So why are those researchers who are convinced of the meteorological theory not arranging this? Because to them (as to me) this media hoo-ha is the worst thing that has ever happened to crop circle research. It is a major distraction that taints the evidence so badly it makes serious research almost a complete waste of time.

However, there is no big deal about that. We do not have the need to solve the mystery for prime time TV before the ratings fall. Frankly, everyone who has studied circles since 1980 and remains convinced that we are basically dealing with a natural atmospheric force could pack up for the next few summers until the media finally get bored, the crowds go home, and you can buy T-shirts reading 'I Had a Close Encounter at the Alton Barnes Pictogram' for 10p in a car boot sale.

Dr Meaden has wisely refused to be steamrollered into media stardom. He just wants to get on with the job of doing research that will persuade science - eventually. This time will come when proper research can be mounted. I am convinced that the circles will still be there - probably fewer in number or of much less spectacular design, but free of all the time-wasting misleading hoaxes that we are being swamped with today.

Of course, this is my personal evaluation. I may be very wrong. Those who say the crop circle phenomenon is a growing, evolving and rapidly changing phenomenon might be right - in which case the attitude I adopt and the policy of 'wait until the press get bored' could prove a fundamental error. I am prepared to back that judgement because I have seen enough in ten years to be certain that we are dealing with a natural phenomenon that is global and long-standing in nature (see the oodles of case histories in *Crop Circles: A Mystery Solved* Robert Hale 1990).

I accept that I could be wrong but I believe the evidence says this is most unlikely. In which case the best course is to wait until we can study the real phenomenon again, not the real phenomenon almost completely obscured by a pseudo-crop circle mystery manufactured out of mass hysteria, media hype, widespread esoteric belief, hoaxing and (just perhaps) more subtle - even semi-paranormal - factors triggering something new into existence.

But if you want to know what I mean by "pseudo-circles of a semi-paranormal origin", then I think I had better save that for a later article!

Journal Listings

I've had to restrict these to the publications that actually appear in *News From The Front* in this issue, or they'd take more space than we can possibly spare. If you want to mention us when you send off for any of these, that'd be great!

Annals of the Enquiring From Gerry Lovell, 69, Shaftesbury Road, Weston-Super-Mare, Avon BS23 2YB. 4-issue sub. £4.

Australian Parapsychological Review From P.O.Box 445, Lane Cove, NSW 2066 Australia. \$5 (A) an issue.

Brimstone From P.O.Box 660, Marstons Mills, MA 02648, U.S.A. Sample \$6. 4-issue sub. \$20.

Caveat Emptor From 8, Gate House Lane, Edison, NJ 08820, U.S.A. Single copy \$5. 4-issue sub. \$15. Add \$1 foreign postage per issue.

The Cereologist From 2, Blenheim Crescent, London, W11 1NN. £2.50 an issue, thrice yearly.

Challenge From 24, Clare Avenue, Darlington, DL3 8SL. £1 an issue.

The Christian Parapsychologist From CFPSS, The Priory, 44, High St, New Romney, Kent TN28 8BZ. Specimen copy £1.25. 4-issue sub. £5.

The Crop Watcher From Paul Fuller, 3, Selborne Court, Tavistock Close, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 7TY. £1.25 an issue. £7 for a 6-issue sub.

Dark Lily From BCM Box 3406, London, WC1N 3XX. £1.50 an issue. £6 for a 4-issue sub.

When I'm Calling Cthulhu . . .

Starry Wisdom - The Esoteric Order of Dagon. Published - in a limited edition of 123 copies - by Pagan News Publications, Box 175, 52, Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT. Price £2.50.

Dagon Magazine Published by Carl T.Ford, 11, Warwick Road, Twickenham, Middlesex TW2 6SW. Price £1.50 an issue. Some back issues available.

Some years ago, a Magonia editorial meeting was held in the bar at St.Pancras Station. A huddled group of rogue librarians and renegade civil servants recalled the influences that had turned normal, healthy children into what they had become by that day. I will gloss over the peculiarities of Enid Blyton's 'The Magic Faraway Tree', which had blighted the young lives of four out of five of us: what would the 'ritual abuse' mob make of major characters called 'Mr Pinkwhistle' and 'Moonface'? From these difficult beginnings, we had progressed to the stories of H.P.Lovecraft. Have we ever, really, moved on?

I won't insult anyone's intelligence by giving even the briefest biography of the world's finest writer of what, to me, is the finest form of the horror story, where the horror appears in the real, human world, leading a parallel/alternative existence, sharing the same space as ourselves. It has great power: power since before humanity, from other planets, periodically contacting a few, apparently chosen, humans. The results of these contacts are usually more or less fatal, but sometimes the contact is different. It then involves breeding, and interbreeding, and creatures of mixed race living in obscure places, hidden from all but the boldest of investigators. Sometimes it involves sacrifice, and there is certainly a price to be paid for knowledge of the rituals and formulae that can establish deliberate - rather than chance - contact.

Had I the time to go through my Lovecraft books - particularly those of the 'Cthulhu Mythos', dealing with a pantheon of Gods/intelligences and their relations with humanity in the modern world - I could no doubt draw far more specific comparisons. But you can see what I'm getting at. These marvellous stories, written years before anyone had heard of UFO abductions, crashed aliens, Greys and the rest of it - long, even, before the Deros and the Teros - feature in specific terms most of the elements of current, U.S. 'we are being fished for' ufology. Impressive, isn't it?

It comes as no surprise that stories which touch with such subtlety the depths of human belief and expectation should achieve tremendous popularity. The early editions of the books are worth a fortune, modern ones still sell copiously. Films are made to try - usually with limited success - to capture the beauty of the written word on celluloid. The 'Call of Cthulhu' is one of the most successful role-playing games ever, and continues to inspire scenarios by enthusiasts in magazines the world round. Anyone who appreciates a masterly use of language, combined with a bleak but involving view of humanity and an accomplished ability to shock and surprise should find time to read Lovecraft's work.

There are several magazines - some remarkably intellectual - devoted to the stories as a whole, and the Cthulhu Mythos in particular. My own favourite is Dagon, published by Carl T.Ford, and the only purely British magazine in the field. It has grown from a 'Call of Cthulhu' role-playing fanzine into a literate, entertaining all-round Lovecraft-

ian horror journal, with stories, letters, commentary, and not a little humour. Well worth £1.50 of anyone's money, with several excellent back issues available, Carl's booklist will also take you into the wider world of Lovecraft and small-press publications.

But it's not just fans. Lovecraft - who during his life denied flatly that he had any knowledge or information beyond his reading and his imagination - is being treated as an initiate, privy to the secrets of the universe, to the obtaining of personal power, and the (very gloomy) comprehension of the struggle between good and evil. Much as observers could not accept that Houdini was not a medium and magician (I don't recall that happening to James Randi!), so there are those who believe that even if HPL was not consciously aware that he was revealing the amazing truth, then he was doing it unconsciously. And so the myth has gradually developed.

I don't know to what degree this belief group has grown from aficionados of the 'Call of Cthulhu' game: certainly, any deep involvement in such an archetypically structured belief system could easily lead a player from artifice to conviction. As I understand it, there are various groups and individuals so involved, but the one that has recently shown its colours in public is the Esoteric Order of Dagon, with its 40-page booklet Starry Wisdom, available through the excellent people at Pagan News.

I can never tell where fun ends and learning begins with PN products, and they're all the better for that. Apparently published by the Dunwich Lodge (that seems to be the U.K. end of things) of the Esoteric Order, this is a set of short essays/articles, collated with an introduction under the headings Invocations, Theurgy and Parallels. It's neat and punchy, there's background and rites and beliefs, a sound knowledge of HPL's work, and what comes over as quite a coherent little magical system somewhere among it all. I'm not sure you could live according to what's set out here, but you could certainly have some thought-provoking hours filling in the duller patches of your time. In the end, how much more substance than this is there behind most religions?

With a little luck TWP 3 or 4 will have an article by a leading Lovecraft scholar, who also writes wonderful stories, and knows a lot about belief systems from the opposite end of affairs to me. Wild Places is here to explore the crossover between events, belief, and religion, and wherever archetypes are played to the hilt - no-one playing them better than HPL - we need to be paying attention. In the meantime, give these two a try. You won't be wasting your time or money.

Research contacts

Philip Mantle is collecting UFO/Flying Saucer models and associated memorabilia (do we have another Gulf Breeze in the making here?). He'd be grateful for any offers - reasonable prices paid - to him at: - 1, Woodland Drive, Healey Lane, Batley, West Yorks, WF17 7SW.

Your Editor wants to have another look at the Egryn (Welsh) Lights of 1904 - 05. Since Sue and I put together 'Stars and Rumours of Stars' in 1980, I know there's been a lot of published material explaining the phenomena away as 'earth lights' or whatever, and I haven't really kept up with the discussion. If anyone could send references, copies, clues or whatever to what I've missed, I'd be very grateful. Results will appear in a later TWP. Thanks.

Alien Contact or Armageddon?

By Clive Potter, Philip Mantle

and Andrew Walmsley

with comments by

Dr John Shaw M.A., C.Psychol, A.F.B.Ps.S.

Four summaries of case studies. Each individual witness claims an 'alien contact' of some kind which has been carefully investigated by Clive Potter, Philip Mantle and Andrew Walmsley (IUN) of the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) and the Independent UFO Network (IUN). None of the four following case studies have ever been published in any national newspaper or magazine, one is known to a few researchers, but the other three are published here, albeit in brief, for the very first time, and are a continuation of joint IUN/BUFORA abduction/contactee research.

Each of the four cases presented below came to the attention of UFO researchers at both BUFORA and the IUN. Each percipient has given his or her approval to have their identities used for the purpose of this article, and each desires to make contact with others who have had similar experiences, and have felt the same feelings towards the future of the planet Earth. Each feels that as a direct result of their UFO contact experiences they have been given information, or a new awareness. This concerns the future, and the role they have to play in any future society, or certainly in the transition between the old and the new one. All four percipients are convinced that this information was - and in some cases still is - given to them by alien contact.

1/. Gary Harlow, Northamptonshire

Gary Harlow first came to notice in 1975 when he approached ufologist Jenny Randles at a conference in Manchester. Since then Gary has maintained his account, and has attempted to put into practice some of the new awareness that he gained from his UFO experience.

Gary is in his early forties, married with two children. He is a research technician. He claims that when young, digging the garden at his former home, he saw a luminous, multi-coloured disc-shaped object just hovering above the trees. He claims that he then saw himself looking down on himself from the object: within 6 weeks he had forgotten the event. After his marriage at the age of 22 he became interested in theology. Reading a certain passage in the Bible he remembered his UFO experience. It was as if he gained a new sense of awareness, realising he was something other than himself.

Gary says he has a particular mission to perform. This involves the changing of mankind's level of consciousness, and events foretold in the Bible, and the writings of other religions. Gary claims that there are several important artefacts that are currently concealed, and that the time is right for these to be found, and their nature revealed to mankind.

Essentially, Gary claims that the events detailed in the Revelation of St John will occur, and that he will be instrumental in bringing some of

these events about. His case is extremely complex and often bizarre (I'll go along with that - Ed.) but basically concerns itself with future changes brought about by alien involvement on Earth.

2/. David Rogers, Coventry.

This case, currently under investigation, came to our attention through personal contact with the witness. Single, in his late 30's, and at present unemployed, he has had UFO contact and psychic experiences since a young child. His first UFO sighting was of a strange light observed with a group of classmates while still at school, at about the age of 15. The same strange light made a very personal appearance to him when he was 17, at home in Coventry: the light performed large triangular movements in the sky. Between these two sightings, David had images or experiences of seeing non-human entities at his bedroom window, and of being transported through the window and on to a craft of some description in the sky. Also between the two sightings, and since for several years, David would often wander the nearby fields, and simply stare at the sky for hours on end. He felt that he was waiting for something but cannot explain what. These 'wanderings' would often leave David with a 'missing time' experience, not knowing what had happened during a certain time period.

David later developed into a clairvoyant. He has displayed all the outward signs of being a 'secret abductee', some who has missed time, has memories of entity visitation, UFO experiences, and so on. But he cannot recall all of the details, perhaps because of repressed memory, or through some other means.

David has had strong feelings about the future of the planet. He feels that there will be a nuclear holocaust, and possibly a natural catastrophe. There will be people who will survive and continue in a new society. Since developing his clairvoyance, David has received psychic messages about this future holocaust, and the fact that a particular artefact will be retrieved, to be used for some unknown purpose in connection with future changes.

3/. Patricia Mee, Manchester

Patricia Mee first contacted BUFORA in April 1989. She believes that UFO contact (alien contact) has been made with her, and she has had this feeling of alien contact (or 'knowing' as she puts it) since she was six years old: she is now in her early 30's. She is married, and works as a secretary and personal assistant.

Patricia has received information through her mind about other civilisations, and much about the universe. Much of this information has been repressed by Patricia - reason unknown - and she has stated that she feels 'different' from other people - almost alien, in fact. At the age of 6 she became aware of 'funny feelings' of not being alone, feelings which she could not understand. She felt as though she was being followed everywhere but could not see anyone: she could only feel their presence. She looked skyward, day and night, and remembers saying to herself, 'that's where they come from'. She remembers having a secret playmate who was only visible to her. This playmate looked exactly like the strange alien entity depicted on the front cover of abductee Whitley Streiber's book Communion.

Patricia has detailed numerous 'alien contacts' throughout her life, even claiming that she was shown the aliens' home planet at one stage: it is part of a three-planet system, and Patricia knows the name of the three planets.

She has suffered deep emotional feelings about herself. She does feel that

she is from somewhere else, and that she has a specific task to carry out. She feels that she has to meet people similar to herself who can help her impart the information given her through her alien contacts. She feels strongly that the Earth is moving into dangerous times, and that physical as well as spiritual changes will occur; that there is a plan to lead mankind to greater understanding and enlightenment, and that she is part of it. She feels that when that plan has been fulfilled, she will be able to return home.

Graham Allen, Staffordshire

Graham first contacted BUFORA in April 1989. He is in his mid-30's, married with 3 children, and runs his own decorating business.

In June 1979, he was driving on the A34 near Oxford when he underwent a typical 'missing time' experience often associated with so-called 'abductions'. His car radio became 'crackly', so he lowered his head to fiddle with it. Looking up again, he realised it was raining heavily: moments before it was not. He was inexplicably lost, and on an unfamiliar stretch of road. Disoriented and quite confused. Eventually Graham found his way to his destination, and reached there in some distress. He later discovered that he had 'driven' over 15 miles in a few minutes, at a speed that was quite impossible.

In November 1982, he began to experience a high-pitched sound at night, when he seemed to lose control. At times these experiences would increase in regularity. Around 1983-84, he began to receive information mentally, from an unknown source. This information related to time, space, gravity, molecular structure, positive and negative forces, even pollution. The experiences would often last all night, during which he would remain fully awake: often he experienced severe headaches after them. The experiences ended in the summer of 1984, when he was presented with a detailed description of a machine with non-frictional moving parts. Graham requested that the messages should cease as he could take no more at that time.

No more 'contact' was made for two years. When it recommenced the content was the same and reality. In December 1987 Graham awoke one morning and experienced a spontaneous recall of the original event on the road near Oxford. He recalled seeing a golden yellow haze surrounding his car, and the car itself was stationary. A man with a dog seemed absolutely motionless. He was also aware of a low humming sound, and a bright yellow light above the car. He shouted to the man, who did not respond. Then everything went black, and he became aware of being on his back. He observed three strange faces peering over him. When fully awake, Graham was convinced that this was what really happened to him on the road near Oxford.

Between 1987 and 1989 he has had regular contact with what he then began to accept as extraterrestrial beings. He could now ask questions of the aliens, and answers would be given. Graham now feels a need to speak to others about his experiences and his information, as he feels that the planet Earth is about to undergo severe physical and spiritual changes. Like other people who have had UFO or even religious or psychic experiences, the year 1992 is given as when these changes will occur.

Comments by Clive Potter, Philip Mantle and Andrew Walmsley

All these cases concern people, from a wide variety of backgrounds, who have undergone what may be termed an 'alien contact'. The percipients generally express or interpret this contact as being with aliens, but we who have researched feel the experiences could represent contact with another form of consciousness, rather than with extraterrestrial beings.

Close encounters of the fourth kind (CE4), where contact is made with UFO occupants or alien entities, often occur during sleep, itself a variety of altered state of consciousness. It could well be that the CE4 occurs in the mind of those involved: when in a receptive state, contact can occur with another realm of human consciousness. This could form part of the collective unconscious, which would in turn explain the similarities between experiences related by different experiencers. Research in this area is still in its infancy in Britain, and the assistance of well-qualified social scientists is required urgently.

CE4's are on the increase, as are messages concerning impending doom. Mediums are convinced that such messages are from the spirit world, while others like the percipients in the four cases above, are equally sure that the messages are from aliens trying to help us. But one thing is certain, in all the cases described above, and with countless other people who have received similar warnings or visions of the future. We are being told that we are in danger. Prophecies, messages of alien contact, all talk of the End Times, of an Armageddon, beginning in 1992. All of these messages, be they via mediums, the spirit world, visions, dreams, prophecies, or alien contact, are processed through the subconscious mind. This is where the message itself is broadcast. All the recipients feel an urge to seek out others and to spread the message, which is of a great time of upheaval. Pollution, ecological destruction, nuclear weapons, the greenhouse effect: all are combining to produce a possible Armageddon of truly Biblical extent.

Perhaps this future Armageddon is making ripples across time, spreading outwards so that the closer we get, the stronger and more frequent the messages become. Sensitives could pick up the information first; then from this reservoir of super-consciousness into which we can all dip, others of us may also pick out images of alien contact. The perceived images will be suitable for that person/society/culture, but the messages are the same: of impending changes that will effect the world.

Comments by Dr John Shaw M.A., C.Psychol., A.F.B.Ps.S.

. . . There is little doubt that the individuals whose accounts you quote in your article are 'sensitive'. Like Whitley Streiber they are tuned in to the fact that the planet is in a parlous state with global warming, depletion of the ozone layer etc. They are picking up in symbolic form warnings about impending problems and the possibility of cataclysmic events. As to the UFOs and the alien beings, these are at least the symbolic forms in which these warnings are expressed. The phenomenon of dreams shows us that it is not the form which is important so much as the message which the form of symbol expresses. However, we have to conclude that man has only partial knowledge of the reality in which he lives and some individuals have, from earliest times, claimed greater knowledge than their fellows. Similarly, most have only partial knowledge today, others claim more.

Streiber concluded that a non-human intelligence was at work in the phenomena and the close encounters which he experienced. However, just because the CE4 seems objectively real at the time does not mean it is real in any objective, material sense. It should be treated as a significant dream in which the message is all important - not the form.

As to 1992, I'm afraid this must be treated with scepticism. Christmas 1982 was supposed to be the time for a cosmic event which so far as I know did not occur. Already, 2000 AD and 1999 have also been given as key dates. As Berlitz says, "Announcements of impending catastrophe are now becoming more frequent: not only from psychic prophets, but also from scientists of a

variety of disciplines." When the present era will end, nobody knows for sure . . .

Note Dr Shaw is the Senior Staff Tutor in Psychology, and Director of Race Relations and Equal Opportunity Courses at the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Manchester.

The above is the latest in the continuing research programme of contactees and abductees in Britain: a research programme which is badly in need of further assistance from all aspects of the social sciences. The authors are continually searching for further, similar material. If you are a witness, an investigator or a researcher, from either the UFO field or the field of psychical research, and have material of a similar nature that you would consider sharing with the authors, then please contact: -

Philip Mantle, 1, Woodhall Drive, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 7SW.

Journal Listings

Foafale News From Sandy Hobbs, Dept of Applied Social Studies, Paisley College of Technology, High St, Paisley, PA1 2BE. £10 for, I think, an annual 6-issue sub.

Folklore Frontiers From Paul Screeton, 5, Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS25 2AT. 4-issue sub. £4.

Fortean Times From 20, Paul Street, Frome, Somerset, BA11 1DX. 4 issues for £8.

Hidden History From 5, Frederick Avenue, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1HP. 4-issue sub. £4.60.

International UFO Reporter From 2457, West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659, U.S.A. 6-issue sub. \$25. Add \$10 foreign postage.

Journal of UFO Studies From CUFOS, 2457, West Peterson Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60659, U.S.A. \$15 + \$3 foreign (surface) postage.

Kindred Spirit From Foxhole, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EB. £2 each.

The Lamp of Thoth From 6 - 8, Burley Lodge Road, Leeds, LS6 1QP. Single issue £2.95.

The Leading Edge From P.O.Box 81407, Las Vegas, Nevada 89180 - 1407, U.S.A. About \$12 an issue: they vary in length.

The Ley Hunter From P.O.Box 92, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 2XL. 4-issue sub. £7.

London Earth Mysteries Circle Journal From 15, Freshwater Court, 59a, Crawford St, London W1H 1HS. £1.75 an issue.

Magonia From John Dee Cottage, 5, James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, SW14 8HB. 4-issue sub. £4.

Meyn Mamvro From 51, Carn Bosavern, St. Just, Penzance, Cornwall, TR197QX. £1.50 an issue.

MUFON UFO Journal From 103, Oldtowne Road, Seguin, Texas 78155-4099, U.S.A. 12-issue sub. \$25. Foreign sub. \$35.

Northern Earth Mysteries From 40b, Welby Place, Meersbrook Park, Sheffield, S8 9DB. £1.15 an issue. 4-issue sub. £3.95.

REVIEWS

I sent for Whitley Streiber's Majestic - a fictionalised version of the Roswell Crash story - so that I could review it. And for Abduction - The UFO Conspiracy by David Bischoff - the guy who wrote Wargames. Unfortunately, a lack of excitement verging on boredom has left me unable to make any more headway with either of them yet, so our only review in this issue is from the highly talented SF/fringe reality author John Grant, who tackles a book that has been around for some time now, but which played an important part in the Hallowe'en scare last year, and is available in most Evangelical bookshops

Turmoil In The Toybox

By Phil Phillips Diasozo Trust 1986. 192pp

I can remember as if it were only several years ago, sitting in the Walt Disney Archives in Burbank and coming across the following passage:

" The symbolic meaning of Mickey's figure is obvious. Symbolically, we should have to call it a phallus but a desexualized one. Mickey's actions and adventures demonstrate his lack of genital interest. His audience feels that, and although he remains a mouse and a phallus, he does not stir up wishes which have to be suppressed and consequently he does not rouse anxiety."

Dave, Paula, Rose and Karen - the four dearly loved people who run the Disney Archives - picked me up off the floor and explained patiently to me that Fritz Moellenhoff's view of Mickey Mouse as a walking dildo was an idiosyncratic one. When I much later told my editor about the passage she said, through lips as clenched as only her lips ever can be, that I had a filthy mind and must have invented Mr Moellenhoff and his psychoanalytic hypothesis. Some people, she explained boredly, will try to make smut out of anything - Mickey Mouse not excluded.

Phil Phillips's business seems to be finding that smut. In this book he discovers not just filthy sensuality, but also latent satanism in such spiritually threatening figures as the Gummie Bears. There's a multi-national conspiracy, you see, of toy-manufacturers: they want to rot our children's minds by making them associate My Little Ponies with a Lucifer whom they must worship. (The erotic effect a Barbie Doll must have on Phillips is something I'd rather not imagine.)

It's worth looking at Phillips's case against the Gummie Bears in a little detail, since it exemplifies his attitude towards all the other toybox specials he so obviously loathes. I've always disliked the Gummie Bears precisely because they seem to me to be designed to be innocuous with a capital "I"; it's as if Disney were so frightened of offending anyone that they came up with the ultimate formulaic "we won't offend you in any way, buster" stuff. Phillips feels that the Gummies are undermining childhood morality because "the story behind the toys is filled with magic and the occult". Oh, if only that were so! There's a fair amount of magic in the Gummie saga, but all of it is the kind of fantasy magic that kids identify with: it works some of the time, but not all. It harms a child as much as the brewing of Gummie Berry Juice might do: not much.

I object to books by people like Phil Phillips. I do not wish to have people like him shovelling their shit into the minds of children like my daughter.

Subterranean Homesick Greys

by Andy Roberts

Observers of the UFO subject, both the committed and the curious, will have noticed that in the USA in particular, there seems to be a consensus of opinion emerging regarding the alleged alien presence. Loosely, and notwithstanding the various offshoots and blind alleys it is this:

- 1) An alien presence has been visiting earth for over forty years.
- 2) The aliens are generally small insectoid creatures known as 'greys'.
- 3) They dwell in underground bases, possibly with the aid and complicity of factions of the U.S. political administration, which seeks to prevent the public from knowing.
- 4) They come from a star group known as Zeta Reticuli.
- 5) They have a purpose here which seems to involve taking something from humans for their own benefit. Our body parts seem to loom large in this theory, as do human foetuses. This has led many researchers and witnesses to speculate that the 'greys' are a dying species who wish to revivify their species with human parts.

If this sounds like the plot for a particularly naff 1950s B-movie it is unintentional. This scenario has been clearly delineated time after time in the writings of a great many people, particularly in the USA: both by alleged witnesses to the events, and by the large community of people who study and research the subject. In short, this or similar scenarios are now believed by literally millions of people.

In this article, I will hope to give an overview of how the American way of ufology appears to many ufologists outside of America - a view reached by reading the material the American UFO community produces. Rather than look for proof of the claims - which always come back to what is essentially folk narrative - let's just look at what is being said and written and how it may have become what it is.

Please remember that this view is only that - the viewpoint of one very sceptical British ufologist. Interested readers are urged to seek out the sources themselves to draw their own conclusions. Also please remember that the subject I am writing about here is American ufology - which is completely different from British or American ufology. One of the main differences being that American ufology thinks it is the correct one!

Ufology over the past twelve years or so has become more and more homogenous. Till the late 1970s, it was an ever-changing panoply of craft of different sizes, aliens ranging from monsters to dwarves, and the origin of these beings varying from Mars to the fourth dimension. There was a high level of 'parapsychological' content. And wide though the variations were, the aliens of twelve or more years ago were consistently distant from us and their purposes, if any, lacked clear definition. Since then, the various descriptive factors have coalesced into that outlined above: a new paradigm has been established. Aliens are now the small grey type, which rather begs the question as to what the previously wide variety may have been - were they 'real' aliens, and if so have they stopped visiting Earth? But then, this subject begs so many questions.

All this may seem like 'fringe of the fringe' material, but is it? UFO abductions, crashed saucers and government cover-ups were at one time the far fringe of the subject. Now they are accepted as real, and another boundary must be created. This boundary seems to me to be the stories of underground bases, and the alleged government collusion with aliens. As fast as one set of stories is relayed and accepted another set, more strange, harder to prove, piles up on top.

I suppose that what we are really looking at is just how UFO stories (if, paranoia fans, they are just stories) are made, and from where they come. Not only what makes a UFO witness, but what makes a whole UFO community? For both exist in symbiotic relationship. Is what is printed about the subject in 'reputable' UFO journals such as Clark's International UFO Reporter or Stacy's MUFON Journal any more useful than the stories which are circulated on duplicated papers churned out by the rumour mills of small UFO investigation groups fired more by hope and enthusiasm than knowledge of the subject matter? I would suggest that while the presentation of the subject may be good, even in the 'glossy' UFO magazines the content is largely speculation, deriving from a modern oral tradition that is communicated rapidly by the modern media. This gives the impression of hard knowledge, widely shared, backed by physical evidence, when it may be far less than that.

But to return to the original questions; why greys, why underground bases, why Zeta Reticuli, why a government conspiracy? The recent rise in status of the greys and the homogenization of such stories along with the rise of the 'abduction' approach to cases, can almost certainly be traced back to the influence of two people - Budd Hopkins and Whitley Streiber. Though the experiences of many of Hopkins' witnesses predate his books - hypnotic regression placed the events prior to the publication of Missing Time in 1981, and Intruders in 1987 - both gave the American public wide knowledge of things grey and small. The 'grey' has become a staple of UFO witnesses, investigators and literature (1). Can authors generate experiences, be responsible for effects in the real world, change the direction of an area of interest? Or do they just report the facts as they happen? This is not to pass judgement on the veracity of the experiences of Hopkins' subjects - though they have said, as in other abductee/investigator relationships, that 'it could have been a dream'. The ET interpretation can be placed on the experience by an investigator steeped in UFO mythology, and the increase of reported greys in abduction experiences is directly proportional to the use of regression hypnosis, and the spread of literature about the greys. Perhaps authors can, after all, alter external reality.

Whitley Streiber's experiences also spread the word about the greys, but left the fine details to the imagination of his readers. A screen, if you will, on which to project whatever you want. But more important his books - and now the film of Communion - have made a public statement of what people knew was going on anyway. The grey on the cover of Communion stared down on billions of Americans from advertisement hoardings and bookstore windows. It was featured on T.V., and in newspapers and magazines. (2) The books sold millions, and still sell tens of thousands of copies a month. Whatever the stimulus for the experience even Zeus couldn't have done a better PR job for Greek mythology than the one seemingly set himself; or was set, depending on what you believe.

Mythology - who said that? It used to be to folklore that non-ETH believers attributed these entity experiences. But it's bigger than that now: folklore is just its means of transmission. Say it m.y.t.h.o.l.o.g.y. - dictionary definition: "A traditional story of

Gods or heroes, offering an explanation of some fact or phenomenon; a commonly held belief that is untrue or without foundation in reality". It all fits. How long does a belief take to become a tradition - with modern media communications? Five years maximum, I reckon . . .

In the absence of evidence as to how they got here sceptical researchers have often likened the greys to the characters of fairy mythology (3). A useful comparison, but less valid in America, which has no indigenous fairy lore of its own. How, there, have the greys attained the status they have today? If, of course, they aren't the real flesh and blood creatures divined by some amateur investigators, with suspected intentions to match.

Anyone familiar with ufological history will immediately see that the Betty and Barney Hill abduction in 1961 was the precursor of all this. Compare the Hills' alien with any of the subsequent ones in Hopkins' books or the general literature, and you will see a template from which subsequent aliens may have been drawn. Placed in the popular subconscious in 1966 by book and film, at the height of the 1960s American obsession with things extraterrestrial, the Hill story sat like a magic spell, biding its time until the right people made the right connections, to burst forth in the late 1970s. (4)

Personally, I see all this as a late '70s/early '80s reaction to the doldrums into which ufology had drifted, with no proof for any of the wild and disparate claims being forthcoming. Both UFO crash retrievals and abductions became popular at the same time, and along with the fashion in films and politics, the '80s became the '50s. Nostalgia returned for the pioneer days of the subject: the whimsical parapsychological/monster/time travelling view of ufology was a legacy of the late 1960s, and with the hard line of America, of Ronald Reagan, hard evidence was back in fashion. Well, ok, accept that they are here and yeah, I suppose they had to come from somewhere, but why on Earth Zeta Reticuli?

This aspect of the subject can also be traced back to the Betty and Barney Hill case, to a scenario in which Betty was allegedly shown a two dimensional 'star map' which was later interpreted by amateur astronomer Marjorie Fish as being the star Zeta Reticuli (actually two stars, Zeta 1 and Zeta 2 Reticuli). (5) The fact that the original map was in 2-D and, at least, at a conservative estimate, four other star groupings could be attributed to the map seems not to matter anymore. Since then articles have been written in many learned UFO journals discussing this place of origin in a very serious fashion, and in the world of duplicated 'folk ufology' journals Zeta Reticuli has become the place of origin. A simplistic analysis perhaps, but there is no other basis for the Zeta Reticuli proposition.

The belief of the UFO buffs that 'they' live underground on our planet can be traced even farther back in American history, past the origins of UFOs and to the comic books of the '20s and '30s. Specifically, to the stories of Richard Shaver, published 1944-48. Shaver and his editor Ray Palmer churned out these fictional stories of cave and tunnel dwellers, some of whom were intent on tampering with humans in the same way the greys are today. Just as with the current grey mythology, it was hinted that the deros and teros (as they were called) had left a dying planet to come to earth to revivify . . . isn't this where we came in? Just pulp fiction of its time, you may say, but if that was the case why then did Shaver begin to receive thousands of letters from people who claimed to have had real experiences exactly the same as his fictional ones? Why indeed? If Kenneth Arnold hadn't stolen the show with his 1947 UFO sighting we might be here pontifi-

cating about deros and teros, rather than the greys. Shaver and Palmer also promulgated the idea of a government conspiracy involving aliens from space in the middle 1940s, predating the rash of McCarthy-inspired UFO paranoia of the '50s by a good eight years. The template for underground dwelling, ex-dead planet, people tampering, government concealed aliens was there long before the UFO buffs of America knew it was! (6)

This basic idea has since been championed by many US ufologists, the cover-up by Keyhoe, the evil alien idea by Steiger, and so on. It has found its voice via its proponents over the years on thousands of radio and TV shows. This in itself is part of how modern American UFO folklore is spread, and I recently gained an insight into its modern equivalent when listening to a taped 'Billy Goodman' radio show interviewing Bob Lazar (7). Lazar claims to have worked at Los Alamos National Laboratories during 1982-3 as a technician, and was shown captured or crashed UFOs which the US military were trying to fly. He was also allegedly shown photos of dead aliens, autopsy reports of same, and so on.

Prompted by Goodman, the voices of middle America floated in through the airwaves to ask Lazar about the various craft seen in the desert area known as S - 4, or 'Dreamland', which in ufology is a joint alien/US government facility. "How did the hatch work?", "What was the furniture like?". Rather than questions that demanded proof in the answers, or suggestions as to how these claims could be verified outside of the radio studio, they were questions which suggested that the querents knew the aliens were here already, and just wanted good ol' Bob to verify a few minor cosmetic points. Many of the callers thanked Lazar profusely for revealing this web of deceit and for taking such risks, and then faded back into their communities to spread the word, to believe - for Bob had spoken.

This interpretation may sound glib but it is from and by these processes, by unsubstantiated alleged experience and the power of the media that a mythology is created and transmitted. Lazar's story about the secret base is one known across America by buffs and cultists alike. Lazar did work in some capacity for the US military. Why should he tell such tales if they are not true? These questions aside, the foregoing is a situation repeated hundreds of times a day on American TV and radio. 'Bob Lazars' are everywhere in the States, spreading the good news - fast.

But just what are Bob and his buddies revealing? It's big. It's a cover up so heinous as to make Watergate pale into insignificance, the A-Bomb cover up a public affair. A cover up which has extended over forty years, through numerous administrations and which has taken the lives of people daring enough to spill the beans and enough money to clear the third world's debt.

Readers may be familiar with the basic idea of the cover up, but this has now been extended to such claims as that the government frequently checks over and gives assent to the aliens' 'shopping list' of who is to be abducted next, and other such liberties, in exchange for military technology from the greys. In some versions, informants have let slip that all is not well with the greys/Administration pact, and that the military is testing bombs which will explode miles underground to free us from our obligations to them. Even the Star Wars (SDI) weapons system has been linked with a positive defence against those who, if it all goes wrong, come to the aid of the greys. Never mind the contradictions inherent in all this - people have told us it

is so. Ex-intelligence agents tell us about crashed UFOs kept at secret locations. Practising (but anonymous) agents tell us of alien/human exchanges, of aliens kept alive at Los Alamos, New Mexico, whose favourite food is strawberry ice cream. Ex-military men tell us allsorts.

The MJ-12 documents which surfaced in the 1980s, allegedly from 'government sources', have been used to back up many of these beliefs. Ostensibly a Presidential briefing document on the Roswell UFO crash of 1947, the several pages of MJ-12 give a schoolboys's style view of what a crash would mean to the U.S. Administration. Here was proof to those who wanted it. Official documents detailing government knowledge of aliens - small insectoid aliens at that. At last, a document from the 1940s backing up findings in the '80s. MJ-12 sadly has yet to be proved anything but a clever hoax timed to coincide with the 'back to the '50s' revival. A key signature - that of Harry Trueman - appears to have been copied from another. later document. Together with the fact that the originals of these documents are on 35mm film, and thus safe from much scrutiny, another nail is hammered into the cover-up coffin. But this has not stopped belief, and MJ-12 seems to have triggered-off a flow of bizarre 'kiss and tell' stories, which have helped to effect such a radical change in US ufology.

One of the key texts to the new revolution in ufological thinking is known as the 'John Lear' document (7). The Lear document surfaced in 1987 on a computer network bulletin board, and purported to be the TRUTH about an underground alien/US military base at Dulce, New Mexico where aliens keep bits of humans in vats, and where the real work of aliens is done. This was followed up by the 'Dulce Papers' which expanded on the Lear Statement and came with drawings! Lear himself had a chequered past as son of the inventor of the Lear Jet, ex CIA pilot and all round shady character. Nonetheless (or because of this?) the Lear documents were snapped up by the UFO public in the same way that the Shaver stories were. He has spawned a whole series of followers, people who have shared his experiences, people, as with Shaver, who KNOW.

A stream of such releases followed, the best of which is the Bill Cooper 'Secret Government' paper, telling of a conspiracy involving the greys and everything else in this article, but moving the goalposts by introducing such theories as the Kennedy assassination being committed to prevent Kennedy's imminent announcement of the presence of the greys. Obviously, he had to be terminated. This is the ultimate conspiracy theory. Cooper has even gone so far as to file legal action against Ronald Reagan, to make him reveal all. Of course, the crowds love it, and Lear and Cooper sell out everywhere they lecture. Both appear regularly on TV and radio, spreading the news with Lazar-like precision.

While the 'establishment' journals like IUR (8) and MUFON skim over all this trying, according to the whims of fashion and who holds the power in their organisation at the time, to remain objective. But they still feed on and spread this material, in the diluted forms of its adherents, the serious speculations of the many 'mad scientists' who write for these journals, and in critical articles, which in many cases aren't too critical. Other journals such as Nevada Aerial Research (aka The (9) Leading Edge) tell it like they think it is. Beneath that, the cottage publishing industries spew out books such as Linda Moulton Howe's Strange Harvest, connecting greys, conspiracies, cattle mutilations and almost every fringe subject going. (10)

But it is really in the area of the small circulation magazine that the real commentary on the Grey Mythology is to be found. As with the callers to the Billy Goodman show, these people have gone beyond belief: they KNOW. Many of them have been there, either in the secret bases or at the hands of the aliens. Or at least they know someone who has. Magazines such as (California) UFO magazine supply commentary on up to date belief in America, but other, off the (tunnel) wall publications go much further. Perhaps the most influential is Nevada Aerial Research. This is a mish mash of tunnel-dwelling greys who implant humans with subliminal messages, while perpetuating some unspoken conspiracy which seems to involve international banking, etc etc. Easy to disregard, you say, but remember the people on the Billy Goodman phone in line. They believed.

For a cogent and telling example of grass roots UFO belief in America, consider a recent letter in NAR which begins, "I have been made aware of the fact that there is a group of fourth dimensional greys working within tunnels in the mountain above my house . . ." A letter such as this to a UK UFO magazine would at least attract comment, here it is reverently accepted. Therapy by magazine perhaps? Letters and accounts such as these are printed regularly, and have taken on board the whole grey/Zeta Reticuli/tunnel mythology and are revelling in it, despite its obvious consequences if true. Maps showing tunnel locations in relation to the surrounding landscape are printed, giving the reader a chance to play at Dungeons and Dragons, and anyone with a theory can write in knowing they will be accepted. Fights between aliens and government scientists are detailed and the internal alien/US government politics are talked of as though it was news from the White House.

Shunned by the more mainstream journals for fear of exposing UFO belief as it has really become, it is left for the small press to reveal the truth to the people. Although I suspect that the reason such overt exposure of belief is shunned by the corporate U.S. ufology journals is not because, say, the people in CUFOs (who publish IUR) and at MUFON don't see any evidence for the material, but rather they are angry that they have overstepped the mark, and gone public too sensationally.

If people's beliefs about anomalous phenomena tell us something about their world view, their view of themselves, and of their fellow human beings, then digging deep into contemporary American UFO mythology reveals a barren world of paranoia and (sorry!) tunnel vision, where you are either 'us' or 'them'. As an example of the total lack of sense of humour, perspective, overall knowledge of the general field, and of the history of ufology, this extract from NAR shows just how dissent from this new world view is handled . . .

"Disinformation expert James Moseley sends his newsletter Saucer Smear trying to cause confusion among researchers by announcing that 'underground bases are fantasy' and that some prominent researchers are 'aliens in disguise'".

Criticism, humour and objectivity have long since flown the cuckoos' nest, and at both mainstream and grassroots levels, American UFO research is increasingly directed towards the extraterrestrial hypothesis in all its terrestrial glory.

What, if anything, does it all mean? Once, aliens were distant, possibly even helpful. The mainstream investigators and researchers suggest that they could be understood if we had proper information, investigation techniques etc. But the new UFO mythology knows better. No longer are

we dealing with day-tripping visitors. The evidence as it is now presented tells us that the aliens are here, living amongst us, investigating us and our governments - they know. Or better still, listen to what the abductees and the aliens tell us. What's more, the evidence seems to suggest that they have been here all along, and we are just experiments to be reaped. Charles Fort's old adage 'I think we are property' has a whole new generation of converts - who just know we are property!

But the final proof is always (just) out of reach. Witnesses and deep throat sources from the intelligence agencies clam up at the last minute. Physical evidence is never quite what it seems in the cold light of day, documentary evidence riddled with hoaxes, saucers never crash in Mr & Mrs America's back yard, but only in the arid desert wastes, curiously near secret technology testing grounds (is that a clue?) The world never ends at the hands of the aliens, and we still have our free will. It is beginning to look as though there's nothing tangible there at all.

If it is a modern mythology, then we are very fortunate to have realised it as such: we can sit back and watch the show. Battering our heads in an attempt to find scientific proof - as do some American researchers - is about as much use as looking for fairies at Cottingley, trying to change lead to gold, or stalking the Gods at Olympus. We are part of our mythologies - we get the mythology we deserve. So what have we done to deserve this? Better luck next century.

Alternatively, if it all turns out to be true, in the most horrible dark gods sense, then we are equally powerless. For as author Richard Grossinger says:

"If you think it's even remotely reassuring that we might be someone else's genetic experiment, you'd better dig deep into the darkest possible nightmares, because there is no salvation there inside or outside of history, and none in the dharma either".

And all the stories of America developing missiles and bombs to deal with the uninvited guests will be futile. Far better to sit back and watch. Humankind has been visited and violated by all kinds of strange creatures over the millennia. Why should we be any different now, just because we've got portable telephones and fax machines?

Ufology is perplexing, and American ufology even more so. To a certain extent, it is this confusion which helps fuel it. In trying to give a potted history of how things got to where they are today, we have travelled from intimations of the physical which is as yet hidden to us, to the possibility of the metaphysical which is unknowable to us.

It goes on. Letters from America tell me that implants are still being retrieved from abductees, breakthroughs are apparently imminent on the cover-up scene, and despairing of finding any physical way of stopping the little buggers some researchers (such as Ann Druffel) have resorted to getting their abductees to use mental techniques to control their defences to the aliens. And curiously enough, it works! (note from Editor - how reminiscent this is of the Dion Fortune - Psychic Self Defence area of belief).

The only greys that really matter in the twentieth century's greatest mystery may be the grey matter of the human brain, the only tunnels the aliens wander, the tunnels of the mind. The only real alien may be ourselves. Hopefully history, or a perceptive investigator, may one day settle the argument once and for all. But I doubt it. I hope this article has helped clarify what is essentially a complicated situation. Remember,

it's only one person's viewpoint - I hope the Editor invites an American ufologist to provide a different - and hopefully informed - viewpoint.

References

1. Budd Hopkins: Missing Time (Marek 1981)
Intruders (Random House 1987)
2. Whitley Streiber: Communion (Century Hutchinson 1987)
3. Jacques Vallee: Passport to Magonia (Spearman 1970)
4. John Fuller: The Interrupted Journey (Souvenir 1966)
5. Entry in Margaret Sachs': UFO Encyclopedia (Corgi 1981)
6. John Keel: The Man Who Invented UFOs, in Fortean Times issue 50
7. The Billy Goodman Show (undated tape)
8. Copies available from 84, Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorks.
9. Nevada Aerial Research (aka The Leading Edge) from P.O.Box 81407 Las Vegas NV 89180-1407 USA. Recommended weirdness.
10. Readers interested in any U.S.A. published books should write to Arcturus Books, P.O.Box 831383, Stone Mountain, GA 30083-0023, U.S.A. The proprietor, Robert Girard, provides a first rate service, and the monthly catalogues alone are a fine source of information on UFO and related subjects.

Journal Listings

Northern UFO News From 37, Heathbank Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 0UP. 6-issue sub. £6.

Pagan News From Box 175, 52, Call Lane, Leeds, LS1 6DT. 6-issue sub. £4.50 in stamps. Europe £5. U.S.A £10.

Pendragon From Eddie Tooke, Chinook, Paxhill Lane, Twynning, Glos, GL20 6DU. 4-issue sub. £4.50.

Rattler's Tale. From Anthony North Enterprises, BCM Keyhole, London, WC1N 3XX. 6-issue sub. £5.

Saucer Smear From Jim Moseley, P.O.Box 1709, Key West, Florida 33041, U.S.A. Write with a dollar bill or two and you may be lucky!

The Scientific and Medical Network Newsletter. From The Old School House, Hampnett, Northleach, Glos GL54 3NN.

Skoob Occult Review From Skoob Two, 19, Bury Place, London WC1A 2JH. £2 an issue.

The Skeptic From P.O.Box 475, Manchester, M60 2TH. Sample issue £1.60.

Strange Phenomena Investigations From 5, Tullibody Road, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, Scotland, FK10 2LL. Sample issue £1.50.

UFO Brigantia From Andy Roberts, 84, Elland Road, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 2QR. 4-issue sub. £8.

UFO Debate From David Barclay, 40, Stubbing Way, Shipley, West Yorks, BD18 2EZ. Single issue £1.50. 6-issue sub. £8.50

Yes, a regular feature, dealing with the religious publications that have come our way recently. Hope the title doesn't offend - I guess it's better than 'Oh Jesus' - the suggested alternative!

Cross Talk

The last few months have seen the gradual demise of the Satanic Child Abuse industry - much thanks, again, to the 'Mail' the 'Independent' and their Sunday counterparts. We are also seeing the end of the sad and twisted little people who seem to have been responsible for its growth, and its harsh and lasting effects. Maureen Davies, the main protagonist of this madness, has effectively been excluded from her powerbase, the Reachout Trust, as is made clear in their Autumn and Winter Newsletters (from Alpha Place, Garth Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 4LX). Reachout are now free to conduct their self-righteous persecution of Jehovahs Witnesses, Role Playing Games, the New Age, Armstrongism, and the Glastonbury Festival. At least they are now using an odd combination of personal opinion and Biblical texts to support their actions, rather than unsubstantiated lies and bigotry.

Mentioning the New Age, three monthly editions of Roy & Ray Livesey's New Age Bulletin have appeared (from Bury House, Clows Top, Kidderminster, Worcs DY14 9HX). These, in their literate way, reflect the Fundamentalist fears about World Government arising from the Gulf War. They see the East-West-Arab agreement to deal with Iraq as "Satan's Conspiracy", with "the three main conspiracy groups active at the U.N. - the Capitalist Elite, the Communist Elite, and the Church of Rome. There is nothing the Liveseys want less than people agreeing with each other without first having agreed with the Liveseys, and their extreme and intolerant beliefs. The Jan.1991 Bulletin discusses the events at Fatima in some detail, concluding of the Marian Visions that "it is all demonic", and that Pope John Paul II is "the antichrist". The Liveseys books are readily available in Christian bookshops, and are presumably considered fit for public sale.

Prophecy Today, a glossy bi-monthly (£1.60 from Nasmith House, 175, Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1 2AB, and from some bookshops) has also been very concerned about the Gulf, making great play of the Iraq = Babylon link, and equally afraid of old enmities being set aside in a common cause. To quote Editor Clifford Hill, "I believe I am hearing from the Lord concerning the Gulf crisis . . . that it will result in a significant move forwards towards the fulfilment of one of the objectives of the New Age movement (World government, World economy and World religion) are each foreshadowed in Revelation 13. Hill goes on to explain that God, "Holds the nations in his hands and will carry us through this crisis to a calmer period in which world evangelisation can proceed with an even quicker pace through the subduing of the Islamic revival. It is the intention of our God to bring about a mighty spiritual harvest sweeping multitudes into the Kingdom before the emergence of the antichrist."

This line is reiterated in later issues - I am so pleased that there is a divine explanation for all this slaughter. Clearly, Hill's God is a determined type . . . "Every time I got before the Lord in prayer, I found I could not pray, 'Peace, Peace' because I heard the Lord saying 'There is no peace'. Whoever Hill's God may be, I wish to have nothing to do with him.

Equally off-the-wall, but rather less manic is the Last Trumpet Newsletter (from Last Trumpet Ministries, P.O.Box 806, Beaver Dam, WI 53916, U.S.A.) Here the author - clearly a traditionalist - sees the Gulf, World government and so on as the work of the Illuminati and the Masons, rather than the New Agers. To quote from the January issue: -

On January 16th 1991, the forces of the New World Order attacked the country of Iraq. The horrors of war are now upon us and the Directives of Illuminism are in full operation. The attack was made at a time of great occult advantage, for it happened at the exact midway point between the blue moon of the final day of 1990 and the first full moon of 1991. The occult timing is very important to the invisible government because occultism is their religion and the religion of Lucifer.

This explanation goes on to involve Charles Manson, "part of the occult connection of the driving spirit of the peace movement even though he himself was a murderer. Charles Manson is the head of an organisation of violent witchcraft known as the "Process Church of the Final Judgement". Actually, I'm sure he isn't he certainly wasn't when I used to go there. Don't these people make life complicated?

A couple of mainstream evangelical titles have come to my local bookshops recently - both high quality glossies, very professionally produced. Christianity Today comes from Illinois, and features the Devil heavily. The lead article begins with a cheery tale of a kitten sacrificed to Satan, and goes on to explain how to detect those who have been 'demonized' - "unusual muscular strength, physical debilitation or illness". It must be tricky being a Fundamentalist doctor. Actually, there's some quite socially aware, caring stuff in here, but evangelical authors seem to be obsessed with finding enemies and scapegoats, uniting their own side by damning others.

A similar angle blights the first issue of Alpha - Christian News, Analysis and Insight. Again, this has its good side, but an article entitled 'Sad To Be Gay', "suggests how the Church can heal the homosexual". The author says that, "Those with homosexual tendencies are not necessarily demonized, but those who act them out are . . . There is an aspect of homosexuality that involves spiritual oppression - that is, a spirit of perversion or a familiar, unclean spirit." Well, that should certainly encourage readers of Alpha to tolerance and understanding. Some twisted, disarranged writer, who says he was gay, and presumably still is, blames it all on demons. How on earth does he secure a public platform for his ravings?

As I said, this will be a regular column. If anyone out there comes upon any material worth reviewing, please send it on, letting me know if you'd like it back. I think this is worth doing - if we're going to be somebody's enemy, it's as well to know what they're saying about us!



Talking to Strangers



Though this column will generally deal with the wacky world of UFO contacts, there's plenty of them in this issue already. So let's have a critical look at channelling's maiden aunt - Spiritualism.

Now don't get me wrong. When I go to London I invariably attend a meeting or two at the Spiritualist Association of Great Britain, or at my favourite church, the London Spiritualist Mission in Pembridge Place. I know few places where I'd rather spend an hour or two. And in the past I've been actively involved in churches in both East London and Oxford. I've even written for *Psychic News*! But I'm beginning to think that Spiritualism's future lies firmly behind it - and that it is no longer presenting any evidence of a standard sufficient to make a coherent case for the survival after death of the human personality.

This is no place for a history lesson, but if I had any reason for time-travelling, it would be to experience the era of materialisation and ectoplasm, to see - and judge - it for myself. If there was a real phenomenon, available on demand as to time and place, involving contact with identifiable survived personalities, with physical, testable, visible constructs, then that would surely be the leading edge of human contact with the paranormal. Far more important than the tiresome torture of ESP testing, or the untestable taradiddle of abduction and UFOs.

Much as the history of the SPR tends, at times, to look like a handful of acceptable cross-correspondences adrift in a sea of pointless collation and analysis, so too does Spiritualism rest increasingly on the memory of the 'son et lumiere' seances, when things were heard to happen and seen to happen. The days, dare I say, before Stephen O'Brien, or someone called Doris or Betty or Coral or Gordon turned mediumship into 'clairvoyance', denied any sort of audience participation in the phenomenon, asking if anyone in the front row could place the name George, or Bill, or Mary or whatever, for want of knowing where the message might belong.

Instinctively, I like O'Brien. He is cogent, succinct, and sometimes self-deprecating. I am writing this in the shadow of his rotten performance on the Wogan Show, but that in itself begs questions. Are he - and others who share the same risks - so eager for publicity that they will risk being shown to be unable to do what they can so ably talk about? And to what extent can they really produce communication from non-human sources at all?

Platform clairvoyance has, now, a very set pattern. It is much the same

in the smallest church as in the most expensive public meeting. Briefly, the medium claims to receive messages from individuals who have survived death, who have come to communicate with relatives or friends in the audience/congregation. The medium passes these messages on. The audience can see and hear nothing of the dead communicators, and the communication is seldom - if ever now - allowed or encouraged to become two-way. The recipient - often located with great difficulty - may be categorically told that his grandfather is present, loves him, takes an interest in him, has been watching over him. Yet I have never heard a recipient being invited to ask the simplest question, such as 'Hello, Grandpa, can you tell me when your birthday was?', or 'So I know it's really you, can you tell me what Gran's middle name is?' Instead, there is a vague jumble of names, anniversaries, half-hearted predictions and - a bit of real bad taste - a guess at what illness or event killed the deceased.

Let's work from the situation that the mediums themselves say they are in. That they have with them the cogent intelligence of a deceased human being, who has chosen to be there, who wishes to communicate, and who can do so through the medium. The medium will say 'He's giving me the name George' or similar. So some sort of verbal format is being used. 'He says he's been very concerned about your health.' So there's a whole sentence of verbal communication, and an implication of time spent by the deceased doing something he wanted to. 'He's holding his chest. He says he had angina. Did he pass with a heart condition?' More words, a bit of visible play-acting, the existence of memory after death, and an apparent intention to provide evidence of who is making the communication. 'He's showing you some daffodils. Did he pass around Eastertime? In the spring?' Gosh, there's symbolism, vegetation, memory of dates. The complexity of it all could be really impressive.

But it isn't. Even if the bits and pieces that are offered are accepted - and they often aren't, and weren't at all on the Wogan Show - what do they ever prove? Frankly, I don't think they begin to prove survival, which is what all of those involved claim is their only purpose. The very limitations imposed on the communications actually argue against it. If the medium can see the deceased, why is there no precise physical description? If there is verbal contact, why cannot questions be asked? If the communicators come specially, why do they achieve so little. It makes me think that whatever the medium may believe, there's nobody there at all.

I'm sorry to have to say that. I still regard myself as a Spiritualist if I have any belief at all, and I do think that there have been occasions when individual contacts have gone a long way towards proving individual survival. Personally, I suspect that the evidence does not suggest survival of all or, indeed, many - though I don't like to think through the implications of that one. But the output of platform communications - vague, brief, one-way - simply doesn't match the supposed input. Even if the deceased can't communicate without the medium, then there is no reason for them not communicating through the medium. With the recipient asking questions, and the deceased answering them; or vice versa, even?

These are essentially rhetorical questions, but they need asking, and they need answering, too: our letters column is open to any coherent response. But there is more, too. There is the recent 'drift' of Spiritualism - originally a coating of non-conformism wrapped around a centre of attempted survival proof through mediumship - towards Christianity and the 'New Age'.

It is hard for me to imagine beliefs more mutually exclusive than the individual survival of the personality after death, and Christianity. Christianity is not about a jolly nice, spiritually-developed chap - a sort of Aramaic David Icke - who preached and healed and went around doing nice things that we really ought to do as well. Unless I have it drastically wrong, the mechanics of Christianity specifically exclude immediate, individual survival. The dead wait till the last judgement to raise them, corporeal, from the dreamless sleep of death, communicating with absolutely nobody in the interim. Similarly, the Son of God lived and died with the purpose of death, resurrection and redemption underlying the whole process. None of these have anything in common with the Seven Principles of Spiritualism.

As for the New Age, apart from the fact that it looks pretty much like any other half-baked money-grubbing age I've come across (if Chaucer's Pardoner were around today, I'm sure he'd be out there selling Crystals) I can't see what it has to offer Spiritualism. Psychic News, the weekly Spiritualist paper, now features a New Age Supplement each month, and much wooly thinking a good deal more often than that. I guess that this has more to do with commercial diversification than anything else, but it also points up the lack of survival material that's worth printing. The beauty of channelling some semi-literate airhead from the Planet Zarg is that nobody seeks - or expects - any corroborative evidence. Of course, dialogue is permitted - but then it would be, wouldn't it?

So, disappointed as I am, that's how I see the state of Spiritualism in 1991. If anyone out there wants to argue, The Wild Places opens its columns to you. And more particularly, if anyone wants to offer me effective dialogue with the deceased, I'll come running!

A Short Editorial

I'm pleased with the balance of this issue - it seems like a good mixture of research and analysis, scepticism and speculation. I do hope that you'll find it thought-provoking and enjoyable.

As a new magazine it would be great if we could encourage and feature new writers, as well as the leading names in the field. Age has nothing to do with it - many of us come to these subjects later in life, and can bring invaluable experience to bear. All I ask is that what you write is legible, in reasonably good English (I'm a bit fussy about grammar and things!), has substance - experiences, facts, historical research or whatever - and is complete in itself. About 1,000 words in length for preference. You'll have worked out my own position - fairly sceptical, but ever-hopeful - from my various contributions to this issue. Don't, however, let that put you off expressing your own thoughts or conclusions - it won't put me off publishing them!

Finally, a quick prediction about crop circles. I say with some confidence that this summer will not bring any significant proof that any circle results from other than a meteorological event, or simple human construction. And that the number, size, and grandeur of the circles will increase or, more likely, diminish, in direct proportion to the degree of media interest, and the marketability of picture-books.

If my recall of the little psychology I learned is accurate, 'mixed messages' are where someone's verbal language says one thing, but their body language says quite another. Saying 'yes' while shaking your head, to take a silly example.

I'm not sure if that is entirely a fair title for our letters section, but in view of the probable subject matter, I reckon it'll do!

MIXED MESSAGES

From Matt Hopkins

Although I must congratulate you on a journal which sails skilfully between the Scylla of SPR elitism and the Charybdis of New Age all-things-to-all-persons, while resisting the Siren-song of the earth-mystery merchandisers, I have reservations about some of its content: specifically, the piece by Hilary Evans.

Actually, it isn't bad, so far as it goes: but that is precisely the point, it doesn't go half far enough. In playing three such aces as Sprinkle, Vallee and Jung, Evans hopes we'll believe he's giving us a representative sample of the full pack of available hypotheses. But of course he's doing nothing of the kind: what he's giving us is just his own version of the three-card trick.

For all that they differ in the way they interpret what's going on, his Chosen Trinity share one fatal underlying assumption. As it happens, I have personal acquaintance with both Sprinkle and Vallee, and though I never met Jung, study of his personal writings yields a fair idea what sort of person he was. And the simple fact is that all three of these gents suffer from the same visual defect: they all see the world through pink spectacles. Each in his own way - and Evans' own vision, as his latest book Alternate States demonstrates, is just as distorted - each sees the UFO/contact experience as positive and purposeful, because each is himself a positive and purposeful person, and cannot conceive a cosmic scenario on any other lines.

Which is all nice and cosy. But one glance at the witness testimony is enough to demonstrate that whatever 'they' may be, Mr Nice Guy they most assuredly are not.

Sprinkle thinks they are flesh-and-blood extraterrestrials, visiting us to help us change from planetary caterpillars to cosmic butterflies. Where's his evidence? Just because a few ladies come to his Rocky Mountain knees-up and say Look At Me, I was an unhappy housewife before the ETs came into my life and now, lo and behold, I'm a happy homemaker who can find Spiritual Meaning in doing the dishes, doesn't mean anything more positive has come into their lives than they could have found in any of the hundred Let-the-Real-You-out-of-the-Closet manuals that fill the 'psychology' sections of an average American bookstore.

Vallee is even more pathetic, believing that the extra-mural faculty of some invisible college of sub-ETs are busying themselves with educating you and me for our own good, bless their hearts if that's what they have. What can one say, except that the results they've achieved to date are as invisible as themselves . . .

As for the psychological approach proposed by Jung, with Evans perched (rather cheekily, in my opinion) on his shoulders, here we see the

Pollyanna view of individual spiritual development carried to an extreme which reveals its naivety for all to see. We are asked to believe that all these contactees and abductees - the Streibers and Kathy Davises and so on - are putting themselves through agonies of angst as part of some kind of do-it-yourself spiritual growth programme devised by their subconscious minds!

If it is hard to believe in Sprinkle's ET educators, and harder still to accept Vallee's all-too-invisible guides, Evans' every-man-his-own spiritual-counselor hypothesis is wish-fulfillment run wild. Come back, Guardian Angels, all is forgiven!

What none of these soft-hearted (but alas, equally soft-brained) gents seems capable of doing is to look facts in the face: yet the brutal facts of abduction are there to see, along with the facts of child abuse, cattle mutilation, and a host of other terrors-that-come-in-the-night which tidy-minded Mr Evans would like to sweep snugly under the rug. Whereas anyone who has got the guts to face the facts must draw the only viable conclusion: that the human race is under siege from some very nasty beings indeed.

Heaven forbid that I should find myself shoulder-to-shoulder with the editor of FSR: but let's at least give the old dear credit for not burying his head in the sand. Djinns, demons - give them whatever label you like: but whatever you call them, don't make the mistake of supposing they are members of some Galactic Peace Corps, sworn to devote themselves to educating you into a cosmic citizen and helping me to upgrade my spiritual potential. No, like everything else in the universe, what motivates them is what motivates all creation: self-interest.

Invite a Cosmic Being into your life, and it isn't going to be your life for much longer. Abductions can seriously damage your health, and it's time we saw their perpetrators for what they are - pernicious predators, perverts, rapists, manipulators, exploiters. Did someone whisper 'Communion'? We need communion with the aliens like we need a blunt instrument up the arse!

From Peter A.Hough

With reference to Hilary Evans' article The Ultimate Myth. I found the article well thought out in many respects. The three points of view regarding the possible source of UFO abduction experiences was well represented by Professor Leo Sprinkle, Jacques Vallee and Jung. However, overall, I found the article fatally flawed by Hilary's misconception that close encounter and abduction percipients believe they are being visited by extraterrestrials.

Since 1975 I have personally interviewed dozens of close encounter percipients, and latterly, several abductees in the company of clinical psychologist, Jim Singleton. Although some witnesses of UFO 'sightings' speculated on an extraterrestrial source for the phenomenon, cases involving the appearance of entities, or full blown abductions, elicited a much more guarded and objective reaction. None of these percipients have ever told me they thought they had been visited by extraterrestrials. As far as the witness is concerned, A, B and C happened, but that is as far as it goes. Even when pushed they still will not put an interpretation on the event, beyond saying it happened. And, although they are quite certain about what they consciously remember, they are more cautious about abduction 'memories' obtained through hypnosis.

So how has this misconception arisen - a misconception shared by the media? There are three possibilities. It is not so much that percipients believe in extraterrestrials, but more that down market ufologists do. It is the interpretation of the account by so called investigators with a Star Trek mentality that finds its way into the literature. Secondly, is Hilary Evans basing his assumption on American abductees, who seem more open to the idea that they were kidnapped by 'aliens'? Thirdly, is Hilary talking about close encounter percipients at all, but more about contactees and channellers? They know they have been contacted by extraterrestrials.

I think Hilary was in error to generalise about close encounter percipients in this way. I am no supporter of the extraterrestrial theory, but I can see what harm it does to the psycho-social enthusiasts when faced with close encounter witnesses who lack a belief system in visiting aliens

From Eddie Tooke

. . . I was once a dialectical materialist, but am now committed to a belief in the survival after death of the individual entity (or soul or spirit or whatever you like to call it; the words are incapable of meaningful definition anyway). Contrary to some Christian beliefs such 'entities' do not suddenly become all-wise having discarded their physical bodies but largely retain their earthly identity, personality and abilities and can, under suitable conditions, communicate with us. Such a theory is not subject to proof - in fact, according to Sir Karl Popper, theories can never be proved but only falsified. The reason for this, as I see it, is linked to the uncertainty at the heart of the atom, established by Werner Heisenberg in 1927 and now a permanent (?) feature of quantum physics. The 'hidden variables' - as they are called - suggest a basic indeterminacy underlying all things. Hence any belief system concerned with fundamentals, be it religious, philosophical, psychical or scientific, cannot be supported by hard proof but only by statistical probability. My personal views on the paranormal are merely the most economical explanation I can think of (Newton's law of parsimony and all that) regarding a mystery which will probably always remain beyond rationalisation.

Bear with me while I mention an example of the sort of statistical evidence I have received. As a materialist I first attended a Spiritualist meeting to humour a close friend who had lost his wife (and nearly his reason). The survival evidence he received restored his mind to stability: as for me, I was only there to please him. The mediums (there were three, and all refused to accept anything - even a bunch of flowers - for their services) thought otherwise, however. The following is an example of the standard of mediumship I found at this and subsequent meetings. The medium concerned, incidentally, lived some fifteen miles away from me and knew nothing of my affairs beyond the fact that I visited my mother before attending the Tuesday meetings, and that my father was 'dead'.

'You went to your mother's this afternoon, Mr.Tooke?'

'I did.'

'You did some work in the garden for her.'

'Yes'

'You were putting up some trellis.'

'Correct.'

'Your father is telling me you only had some old bent nails to do it with.'

'Quite true.'

'And while you were straightening them the head kept falling off the hammer.'

'It did indeed!'

Odds against guesswork on the medium's part? YOU calculate them! As for the facile explanation (?) - 'mind reading' - this poses more problems than spirit communication. For a start, the selection process involved would defy even the most sophisticated computer. Others may quite justifiably dismiss the above as merely anecdotal. To me, however, this and scores of other items of the same standard left little room for doubt.

In the course of my writing I have also had fairly frequent help from my 'library angel'. An instance of this phenomenon that sticks particularly in my mind occurred while in the middle of writing an article for Two Worlds. The book I was trying to find on my cluttered bookshelves was a paperback by Marvin Harris: 'Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches' I spent some twenty minutes looking in vain at each of 1500 or so titles, several times over. Eventually I gave up. My study was small, some six feet by nine, and consequently only the window and door were not covered with shelves. I stood in the middle and made my mind as quiet as possible. After about a minute my right arm moved apparently of its own volition and my forefinger came to rest on the spine of one book. 'They've got it wrong, this time' I murmured to myself and then, on an impulse, I lifted the book and its neighbours away from the shelf. There behind them, where it had slipped down . . . you've guessed it! Odds against chance coincidence no more than a hundred to one, perhaps, but replicate this event a hundred or so times, and even allowing for the few thousand occasions when the 'library angel' has been having his lunch break, 'coincidence' becomes - in researcher F.W.Holiday's words - 'a shabby blanket to cover raw ignorance'.

By their very nature psychic experiences cannot be predicted or repeated to order - any more than can the results of many quantum experiments (Schrodinger's Cat is an infuriating beast!) Attitudes of mind, however, as Helmut Schmidt and other experimenters with random event techniques have found, seem to be of critical importance. Hence Prof. John Wheeler's preference for the use of the word 'participator' rather than 'observer'. Evidence for the paranormal may, then, never be anything but statistical.

Although a firm believer myself, I am always keen to hear other points of view - if only to see if they will fit into my existing theoretical framework, or whether that framework needs to be adapted to admit these other concepts. Certainly I have more in common with sincere atheists and sceptics than with prejudiced Christian Fundamentalists, or Nazarene Nazis as I call them - mainly because I was once a sceptic myself . . .

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

A marvellous selection of magazines and journals for this issue. I've been delighted by the response to this section, and I hope it will continue to provide a service to both readers and editors. The opinions here are all my own - there is a guaranteed right of reply to any of them!

Annals of the Enquiring Jan.1991. Edited by Gerry Lovell, who has come up with a snappy "UFO/Forcean/Paranormal/Earth Mysteries" magazine. It suffers a nasty dose of DTP Disease, in which every typeface and format on a PC come together in 20 A5 pages! There's not much depth yet, no credits for what are sometimes clearly newsclippings, and the heading 'Some Proven Leys' begs several questions. But an interesting light read, and a clearly able editor bode well for the future.

Australian Parapsychological Review No.14 Edited by Harvey Irwin for the AIPR, this is impressive - solid material, professionally produced but accessible, too. This issue has Stanley Krippner's 'The Healing Process: How Native Healers Contribute to Knowledge', and the editor on 'The Near-Death Experience in Childhood'. I like the comment in the latter that "Indian experients did not have a panoramic life review, nor an out-of-body impression of their physical body, and were taken directly by 'messengers' to the after-world where a discarnate being consulted some records, decided a mistake had been made and ordered a return to terrestrial life. Because these elements of the experience are not universal, it can be concluded that the NDE is culturally influenced." Good reviews, too.

Brimstone - A Journal of the Ancient Brotherhood of Satan. Fall 1990. Well, it says 'Outrageous' on the front cover, and it is: you don't get a ready-to-sign pact with Satan as an insert in many magazines these days! Other than that, it's rude, it's tasteless, it shouldn't get into the wrong hands, and it's really rather entertaining. Like Viz magazine. The Church of Satan/Temple of Set dispute is further explored, there's some powerful graphics, intriguing letters, and much of a rather Munsterish chap called the Daimon Egan III. Grown-ups only - in mind and body.

Caveat Emptor No.23. Persists in its high standards, this time with an excellent Howard Menger (contactee) retrospective by Jim Moseley of 'Saucer Smear'. There's also an interview with 'abduction expert' Dr David Jacobs, plugging a forthcoming book and concluding that the reason for the abduction event is that, "It's a systematic program of the exploitation of human beings for the purpose of taking sperm and eggs and creating other beings". Yes David, and I'm a cardboard box.

The Cereologist No.2. Winter 1990. As elegant as No.1 in the imaginative hands of John Michell, the key to this issue is in the sub-heading on the front page, "Crop watchers victimized by circle fakers". This refers to the Bratton Castle Disaster, when Delgado & Collins got it wrong with the whole world watching. I'm sure the crop watchers are the victims of fakers, but certainly not just at Bratton Castle. In this charming journal, beautifully illustrated with photos, diagrams and cartoons, the Crop Circle Belief System finds its feet. Of Alton Barnes, George Wingfield writes first of a humming noise the night before, and of "cars in the village that would not start that morning". Then, "The beauty and mystery of this huge labyrinthine hieroglyph drew visitors like a magnet. Many people travelled from places all over the country to Alton Barnes during the next month to see this new wonder of the world. Their sense of

excitement and awe was often quite tangible to others who were there, and few of them doubted that this was some intelligently produced but obscure symbolic message". There's less of channelling and clairvoyance than in the last issue, but it's no surprise that those who seek Earth Mysteries will find just that in last summer's crop circles. Personally, I think that a pictogram that conveys nothing is a shape. But then, the 'Alton Barnes Shape' wouldn't sound so good, would it?

Challenge No.4 I've had this slightly tatty A5 magazine around for a few months now, and the fact that it's annoyed me more than once means it's probably got something going for it. It's more cynical than sceptical - scepticism requires a better subject knowledge than is displayed here - but its touch of literate offensiveness is welcome. The critique of Holy Blood, Holy Grail is years late, and flogs a horse that died some years back. The fiction's good, but seems to belong elsewhere. The cartoons are execrably drawn but often funny. The worthwhile piece is 'Fortean Get-Outs', a rare 'go' at Fortean Times, Bob Rickard and, to complete the set, Hilary Evans. It centres round what I might call the 'freak-show' element of FT, and makes some telling points, if sliding into personal attack at times. Had Stephen Doog, the writer, met the people he criticises, or if he knew his subject better, he might have concentrated his attack on the written word, and made it the more effective for that.

The Christian Parapsychologist March 1991. First, an apology. The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical & Spiritual Studies is an ecumenical body, not an Anglican one as I said. Its journal continues to juggle a sophisticated level of theology with the crudite of psychic powers and events. Its writers and readers clearly believe that this can work, though I'm not so sure. Some of CP's recent major articles - 'Christianity in spiritual & psychic studies', 'Dowsing techniques applied to Church Archaeology', 'Mystics, Psychics and Christian Orthodoxy' - are a little abstruse, but the letters, reviews and current events are always excellent.

The Crop Watcher Issues 1, 2 & 3. Edited by Paul Fuller, who seems to be constantly in motion, ably assisted by Jenny Randles and David Reynolds, this is the balance to 'The Cereologist', and darned good it is, too. Yes, it is sceptical, and is very committed to the para-meteorological explanations of Dr. Terence Meaden. Smartly produced, this tackles the many non sequiturs in the Gaia and ET theories, and is essential reading: well-referenced, researched and illustrated. Only one concern on my part - if there isn't a paranormal explanation, then the number of meteorological events + the number of hoaxes has to equal the total number of crop circles, wherever and whenever they appear. Crop Watcher covers hoaxes well, but the size and number of exotic formations presents an as yet unresolved problem. We're a long way from making it all add up yet.

Dark Lily 12 The DL editor is well overdue my thanks for her persistent endeavours in keeping me informed of all sorts of things. This issue of DL is strong on contacts and details of other journals in the fringe pagan/satanist field. Also a good piece on the Sorcerer's Apprentice Fighting Fund, and the Church of Satan.

Foaf tale News No.21 March 1991 I've seen three of these now, and they are really good! I've never been a folklore sort of person till Satanic Child Abuse came along, and these sort of 'friend of a friend' stories left me quite cold till this sort of dissemination and acceptance of absurd rumour became obvious in areas - social work and religion - that I know a little about. Most of the material in every issue is fascinating, but

particularly the lead article in No.21. This derives from Polish field research, and is titled, The Black Volga - Child Abduction Urban Legends in Poland and Russia'. Briefly, "two men (Polish priests, foreigners, or simply strangers) lure a child or children to a black or red car where they take their blood or different body organs for Arabian sheiks or people in the West." Variations are traced to different sources and locations, and it all throws such light on both UFO abductions and the SCA, knocking such stuffing as they had left out of both. This way lies sanity - and a fine read!

Folklore Frontiers 11 & 12. I reckon Paul Screeton will still be editing, informing - and entertaining - well into the next millennium. Increasingly well-presented, with almost no paste-up lines, No.11 has a charming railways story, supermarket trolleys, and an obituary of Tony Roberts that does the person I knew no justice at all. No.12 has John Michell's Bogus Social Workers and Demonic Abductors. It seems that the author believes the Social Workers were "visible illusions" caused by "satanic thought-forms". Tulpas in the sitting-room, undressing the baby? Still, this is an invaluable overview of this particular oddity of human behaviour, backed up by items on crop circles, 'four pages of photocopylore' - two of which had reached my backwater of the Civil Service - and the gratuitous toplessness that proves that all is well at Folklore Frontiers!

Fortean Times 55 & 56. The best-presented and edited magazine in the field, packed with information, most of which is spot on target. For me, it's only marred by the prevalence of quotes from the Weekly World News and the National Enquirer - both proven fibbers - supreme fibbers, even - in the world of print, and totally untrustworthy. I wonder if Fort would have bothered to collect the results of one of those 19th Century liars' contests? I doubt it. Nonetheless, with an increasing emphasis on both reports of straight paranormal events, and an intelligent sort of para-anthropology, FT's range continues to broaden, and to become even more essential reading.

Hidden History No.1 Vol.3 In which Robert Morrell mellows and produces a very pleasant mix of ancient history, archaeology, mysteries and reviews. Intelligent and accessible.

International UFO Reporter. Sometime in the life of most of us involved in this area of research, we reach the stage where we can't stand the uncertainty any longer. Some give up: become Evangelicals, or breed guppies. Others start the Search for the White Crow - the one case that makes it all worthwhile, and I think this is where Jerome Clark, the IUR editor, has got to at present. His White Crow, and that of a number of well-respected CUFOS colleagues, seems to be the Roswell Crash, into which is going increasing time and energy. In the long run, it'll probably prove no more satisfying than his New UFOlogy in the '70's - and at least that had the quality of disseminating large quantities of little known information from religious sources to a wide audience. It is hard to see what will be achieved by devoting the whole of the Nov/Dec issue of the world's best UFO magazine to nitpicking through non-evidential trivia from a case that is now clearly stale and over-researched. 'Investigator effect' is obviously at work now, with no witness untainted by the passing of time, or the wide availability of knowledge. Yes, it is hard on the ego, poor for the self-esteem to keep having to respond, "I don't know" to the question that lies at the heart of your life's work. But it's surely better than being demonstrably wrong.

Journal of UFO Studies New Series Vol.2 Let's be honest - I haven't really read all of this very serious, substantial and professional UFO journal - like IUR, from the CUFOS stable. I really can't plod through over 80 pages of 'UFOs and earth lights', for all that there's some great writers involved. If there is a crossover involved, then it supports little comparison except with LITS - and I stopped worrying about them some time ago. Maybe it's for the worse, but ufology has moved on to the exotic - for me internal - experience, related to stresses far more subtle than the merely tectonic, and more in need of psychiatry than geology. Of course, there's other excellent material in this book-size publication, with some sound abductee analysis, and a long review of ufology in Australia. It must be hard work keeping up with fashion in the UFO field - better luck next time!

Kindred Spirit - The Holistic Journal for Body Mind & Spirit. Vol.2. No.1 It's beautifully produced, in large format on good paper, with a lovely cover and plenty of colour. It has 64 pages, of which 35 are advertising, 6 of them for the magazine's own mail-order service. There are two feature interviews, one with Gabrielle Roth, whose interest in dance and self-expression apparently makes her an 'urban shaman', and one with Kevin Ryerson, an "Accredited trance channel". Accredited by whom? Who could possibly accredit a trance channel? Ryerson has apparently worked with Shirley MacLaine, and channels Bacā Flower Essences. Terrific. Otherwise, there's a bit of Warminster retrospective under the absurd title of 'The Wessex Triangle', Paul Whitehead - an FSR director - plugs FSR. There's a bit about 'Bio-Dynamic' gardening, an illustrated 'how to do it' feature on irridology, reviews, letters and news. With the possible exception of Roth's therapeutic dance, the contents of this magazine don't amount to a row of organic beans. The predominance of advertising just confirms that money has become - if it wasn't always - the motivating force of the supposed New Age Movement. Most mail-order firms supply their catalogue free. This one cost me two quid.

The Lamp of Thoth Vol.4 No.5 Because of the huge amount of work put in by the LOT editorial team on the Sorcerer's Apprentice Fighting Fund, this is the first issue for a while - but it isn't a whit below standard. In a world of titles and labels, LOT still deals with 'the occult' in most of its facets. Here we have a long and fascinating account of the attacks by Evangelicals and their supporters over recent years, marvellous letters, a great problem page, loads of inside information and some fine articles. This is one of the essential publications to any understanding of this field.

The Leading Edge No.19 Published by the Nevada Aerial Research Group, this is the one Andy Roberts refers to in his article. Really off-the-wall material relating to UFO abductions/sexual interference/man-eating aliens/infiltration of government and the rest of it. The people who write this stuff clearly believe it, and believe in it. They live in a world full of secrets, threats, terror and subjugation, and here use 93 pages to purvey more wild, unevicenced speculation than most of us could begin to imagine.

The Ley Hunter - The magazine of Earth Mysteries No.112. It's been a while since I've seen TLH - EM not being exactly my cup of woad. It's very professional, smart, carefully illustrated, and literate. It's also surprisingly New Age, with the two main features being a long interview with one Christian Ratsch, a 'cultural anthropologist' who lived in the Rainforest of Southern Mexico and researched into hallucinogens, and a

piece about a dream Monica Sjoo (a New Age 'personality') had in 1984. There are two pages about a ley, some interesting letters, a lot of reviews, and 4 pages of sub-hippy graphics. Overall, I wouldn't know from all this what Earth Mysteries are, and I'm fairly baffled as to where it's all likely to lead.

London Earth Mysteries Circle Journal No.2 Not just about London, but about the interests and work of this active London group. This is a good, varied, unpretentious magazine, with features on Stonehenge, Jacobs Well, Rosicrucianism, Sunken Tracks, Cornwall, Quartz Crystals, Gaia and more.

Magonia 38 Another cracking issue, with the best coverage to date of the Satanic Child Abuse Mythos - or Social Worker Child Abuse as the press are pursuing it in the wake of the latest debacle, on Orkney. Here we have Peter Rogerson, Roger Sandell and Michael Goss - all excellent writers - coming to grips with the psychological, historic and folkloric aspects of the subject, with articles of a very high standard. Quality reviews, too, of the Howard Blum book, and Jerome Clark's latest.

Meyn Mamvro - Ancient Stones & Sacred Sites in Cornwall. No.13 Much closer to the ground than 'Ley Hunter, this will appeal to anyone interested in Cornwall, or in EM fieldwork. This really takes you round the county, with useful photos and intelligent commentary, and would enhance a day or two out for any holidaymaker!

MUFON UFO Journal Being monthly, this has nipped through several issues since the last TWP. I guess the most notable is the Dec.1990 issue, mostly devoted to Crop Circles. With Colin Andrews providing the UK input, the lengthy piece is strong on pictures and speculation, and there is a wild passage speculating on the meaning of the messages in stunning depth. It's like an exercise in stringing together words without content. The piece on 'Midwest Crop Circles' is of more interest - the 'Circlemakers' in Missouri are clearly much less sophisticated than those in England: maybe practice makes perfect. Also of interest - while probably not correct it's a coherent and considered theory - is Martin Cannon's 'The Controllers: a New Hypothesis of Alien Abductions'. This looks to purely human, government inspired mind-control programmes as the solution to the abduction scenario, and is worth a careful read.

Northern Earth Mysteries No.44 I always liked NEM, and I still do, if only because it manages to produce a bright and intelligent read without a smidgeon of New Age 'thinking'. Informed and interesting research and investigation, with a knowledge of history and archaeology that doesn't derive from channelling!

Northern UFO News I'm delighted to say that with this, her work in 'The Cropwatcher' and her absolutely first-rate recorded talks for UFO-Call (0898-121886 and well worth a quid at cheap rate), Jenny Randles seems to be right back on form. The best regular source of UFO news, reviews and reports this side of the Atlantic.

Pagan News This maintains a very sound ongoing account of anti-Pagan/anti-occult attacks and activities, as well as supplying - with style and humour - exactly what the title suggests. The Jan/Feb issue reports on the sad story of Caroline Marchant, seemingly killed by excessive Fundamentalism, via her suicide in the home of the Rev. Kevin Logan, author of the crackpot 'Paganism & the Occult'. There's a good interview about HOBLINK - for gay, lesbian & bisexual pagans - and a lovely 'Astral Advertising' spoof.

Pendragon - Journal of the Pendragon Society: Arthurian History, archaeology and the mystery and mythology of the Matter of Britain. A charming, vital

journal edited by the same Eddie Tooke who has been good enough to contribute to our letters column.

Rattler's Tale Edited by Anthony North. Subtitled both 'A Voyage of the Imagination' and 'Bringing New Agers Together', this is a good magazine. Short stories, articles and items from many able writers, covering the paranormal, Fortean, SF, Gaia and plenty more. Arrives regularly, too!

Saucer Smear Sorry - I forgot to include this in the Journal Listings last time. Jim Moseley's excellent 8-page newsletter really is at the nub of so much that is important in the UFO field. He's been there, he's done it, and he's qualified to comment on it, too! His commentaries on Roswell, Gulf Breeze and MJ-12 are invaluable. See if you can persuade the Supreme Commander to include you on the list of non-subscribers!

Skoob Occult Review If you're ever in London, you should make your way to the Skoob Two Bookshop at 19, Bury Place, Bloomsbury, WC1A 2JA. It's near the British Museum, and has a wide and imaginative range of stock in the paranormal/esoteric field, and an unrivalled range of magazines. The journal they publish has a similar 'occult' feel, and the third issue includes a rare interview with Kenneth Grant, some fascinating Crowley reminiscences, and other excellent magical material. Good graphics are characteristic of all issues, and I foresee a great future for this one.

The Skeptic Nov/Dec 1990 This has links with CSIOOP, but we'll forgive them that if they suggest CSIOOP tackle something a little risky for a change, like, say, the Resurrection. Knocking the little people is easy enough, but put James Randi in a stone tomb for three days, seal the door and . . . ah, the mind boggles! Actually, this is a good, professional magazine, tackling demonology, past-life regression, Ray Palmer, Uri Geller, Scientology and more. There's some refreshing humour and unusual self-deprecation, but little sign of in-depth knowledge of the subjects being tackled. Skepticism for skeptics is easy enough - skepticism for believers is much more like hard work.

Strange Phenomena Investigations Nov/Dec 1990 A really lively A5 magazine from Alloa, reflecting some active investigators. There's a sighting of 'Morag', the Loch Morar Monster, an attempt to contact same via a Ouija board, local UFO reports, Stirling's Haunted Tollbooth, Witchcraft, The Cosmic Joker by Jenny Randles, and plenty more.

UFO Brigantia Nov.1990 and Jan.1991. Some very good material in these two issues. Andy Roberts' pithy (no, I don't lisp) editorial comments remain my favourite, and the input from foreign ufologies - in these, French and American - run a close second. There's plenty of crop circles, 'Communion', Gulf Breeze madness, The Barnsley UFO, Martin Kotmeyer on Apocalyptic, and some brilliant reviews. Well, at least one, anyway. Thanks to Brigantia for running inserts for us - it all helps!

The UFO Debate No.6 Dec.1990 Continuing to develop and impress, this includes a most unusual historical piece from an Iranian UFO research newsletter - a good catch by editor David Barclay. Other pieces include, 'Alien Engraving on Ilkley Moor?', 'The Anomalous Aire Valley Avian', Crop Circles, and some intriguing abduction material. I may not agree with everything David prints, but this always makes an intriguing read.
