

Space Engineer Links Sickness To UFO Sightings

By Dennis Hannon
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

If you chance upon a flying saucer — or any other form of airborne dinnerware — don't stand around rubbernecking like someone from a Steven Spielberg movie. Those things can be dangerous.

That's the advice of John F. Schuessler, a space industry engineer who has been studying such encounters for 18 years.

He told a meeting of the UFO Study Group of Greater St. Louis on Sunday that many persons who reported experiences with UFOs had exhibited many of the symptoms of acute radiation poisoning.

Schuessler is writing a book about a UFO experience near Dayton, Texas. In December 1980, Betty Cash, 54; Vickie Landrum, 59, and Mrs. Landrum's 9-year-old grandson, Colby, were driving through the woods, taking a detour home after abandoning their search for a Bingo game.

Colby noticed a flash from an object descending from the sky to about treetop level. Ms. Cash skidded the car to a halt, about 135 feet from the object.

The odd thing was that the flying object — an elongated, diamond shaped thing — was being pursued by about 20 large, double-rotor helicopters similar to those used by the U.S. armed forces.

Although the car became almost unbearably hot, Ms. Cash and the Landrums managed to drive home. Later, all three developed severe nausea, then sunburns. In about two weeks, Schuessler said, Ms. Cash and Mrs. Landrum began to lose their hair, and skin fell from their faces in clumps.

Both women since have suffered various degenerative ailments, and Ms. Cash eventually developed cancer, he said.

Schuessler accompanied his talk with slides that showed Ms. Cash and Mrs. Landrum in their pre-encounter days and in the deteriorated state in which they have more recently appeared.

The missing element in what Schuessler calls the "Cash-Landrum Case" is hard proof: physical evidence, records, multiple witnesses.

Schuessler said he had found three witnesses to helicopter flights in the vicinity of the woods that night and one man who had seen a diamond-shaped flying object. The armed services at first gave an informal confirmation but now deny that a large number of helicopters were operating in east Texas that night, Schuessler said.

Ms. Cash and Mrs. Landrum filed \$10 million damage claims against the U.S. Air Force but lost their case because they could not prove their suffering was a result of anything done by earth-based craft, Schuessler said.

Schuessler calls the possibility of extraterrestrial visits a "working hypothesis," rather than a demonstrable fact. But he scorns the habit of dismissing such reports as mere lunacy.

"That is answering a mystery with a mystery," he said. "I don't subscribe to that. I'd rather say I don't know."

Schuessler says he hopes to see "a responsible solution to the problem" in his lifetime.

"As long as there is a mystery, why not work on it?" he said.

Chicken Little Strikes Again Unmarked Helicopters Circle the City

"Mysterious" unmarked helicopters have been spotted in recent weeks by a growing number of Denverites — many of whom share an active interest in UFOs.

"We've been asking because we've heard about them," said Bill Swenson, president of the Denver UFO Society. "I've seen one myself and I don't understand it. On the unmarked choppers, God knows who they are."

Federal Aviation Administration officials say all airborne vehicles (including military helicopters) are required by law to carry identification letters, numbers or insignia. But "mysterious chopper" enthusiasts consistently describe either olive drab or black "military-type" helicopters which lack any markings.

Officials at Lowry Air Force Base and Buckley Field have received several citizen inquiries concerning anonymous 'copters; but they deny any knowledge of origin — as do public information officials at Fort Carson and Peterson Air Force Base.

Denver UFO expert Vance Reed (a recent guest on KOA Channel 4's "All Night Live") mentioned at least "six people who have experienced several (anonymous) helicopter sightings" in broad daylight since the first of the year. "One woman told about two recent sightings at the last (March 25) meeting of the UFO Society," said Reed. "She said they flew over her car at Cinderella City and they made no noise. We think these helicopters could be connected to cattle mutilations."

Adding to the mystery, Denver University student Glenn Larkin reported a black helicopter (unmarked) flying south above Interstate 25 out of the downtown Denver area around March 1. "I noticed after a moment that it stopped moving and started spinning in place," said Larkin. "It looked like it crashed and I heard a thundering type noise after it went out of sight." He was

unable to find verification of the alleged incident.

Denver University professor Dr. Carl Raschke told the *Creek* that on "six occasions since mid-February," black or dark green unmarked military helicopters have flown low over the D.U. area. They were seen circling the university campus on two occasions, he said.

As a popular professor of religions at D.U., Raschke is a frequent recipient of wild rumor:

"Since last fall," he said, "I've heard from at least three individuals . . . that these black helicopters belong to some international military consortium . . . and that they are spraying a form of flu virus which makes people listless. The cumulative effect of this biological warfare conditioning supposedly makes the population manipulable." Raschke questions such speculation as do local military spokesmen.

Lowry A.F.B. information specialist Sergeant Chuck Kubin offered one logical explanation: "In combat dress, helicopters may be painted dark green with flat black (identification) markings — which might be hard to detect from the ground. And if the sky is reasonably bright behind it, spotting a bird is hard enough."

According to Buckley public affairs director Doug Abbots, helicopters are frequently routed along I-25 on an approach to various military installations. Thus, unidentified helicopters could originate from a variety of sources. With combat markings, black/green aircraft could appear unmarked.

However, for several Denverites including Blue Cross/Blue Shield service representative Lois Avery, unmarked black helicopters remain an entertaining mystery.

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GREAT UFO RIDDLE

ROME: Italian flying saucer addicts are worried. There has not been a single UFO sighting reported for more than a year. "It's a mystery," said Roberto Pinotti, President of the UFO Society of Italy. In 1978 there were 700 reported sightings. By 1981

the number had dwindled to a mere 60 and absolutely nothing for 1982 or so far this year. "They seem to have stopped all activity over Italy," said Mr. Pinotti, "and we are worried about what the cause could be. All we can say is that something strange is happening."

INFORMATION, DATA, COMMENTARY AND SPECULATION

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Brother not satisfied with Army's findings in mysterious death of pilot

NEW FLORENCE, Pa. (AP) — When 1st Lt. Paul Byron Whipkey, a 26-year-old pilot and company commander, disappeared from Fort Ord, Calif., on July 10, 1958, the Army listed him as absent without leave.

In time, the Army charged him with desertion. Twenty-four years passed.

But his family refused to believe the Army. For all those years, they demanded an explanation for why the young officer had vanished so mysteriously.

Then, in April 1982, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records held a three-day hearing and concluded Whipkey died the day after he disappeared.

The board's report, issued July 1, said, "His unauthorized absence . . . (is) excused as unavoidable . . . (and) his death was incurred in the line of duty, not due to his own misconduct."

On Aug. 26, the Army Adjutant General's office issued a certificate of honorable service and acknowledged Lt. Whipkey's death, without explanation.

But Carl Whipkey will not give up. "The government knows what happened to my brother," he said. "There are so many questions still unanswered."

Carl Whipkey, 55, a thoughtful, soft-spoken communications technician living about 65 miles east of Pittsburgh, has accumulated thousands of documents in his 25-year work on his brother's fate.

The continuing unknown, and his failure to pierce the Army bureaucracy, has led Carl Whipkey to suspect the sinister: that his brother was a secret agent killed by fellow agents, that his aircraft was shot down over the Soviet Union, that he is suffering or has succumbed to illness from secret Army nerve gas or atomic tests of the 1950s.

The blond, 5-foot-8 Lt. Whipkey was an all-American and a superior officer. He grew up in Pittsburgh's suburbs, earned a civil engineering degree and his Army commission with honors at Pennsylvania State University in 1954, then won his Army pilot's wings and was assigned to Fort Ord in 1956.

On July 10, 1958, Lt. Whipkey told fellow officers at Fort Ord that he was "going to get a drink" in town.

Several hours later, hundreds of miles away in Mojave, Calif., Lt. Whipkey checked into a motel, said the FBI, which investigated the officer's suspected desertion after the routine 60 days had passed. The next day, July 11, Lt. Whipkey bought 14 gallons of gasoline in Mojave, according to the FBI findings included in the Army's 1982 report. It appears he was never heard from again.

Carl Whipkey, informed that his brother was missing, said he became suspicious July 12 when he telephoned Fort Ord and was told officers were finishing a job begun July 11 — packing his brother's belongings for shipment home.

Five weeks later, California fish and game officers found Lt. Whipkey's red and white 1956 Chevrolet in "a desolate and forbidding region" of Death Valley, according to the Army.

The car — 15 miles from the main road, 150 miles from Mojave, 400 miles from Fort Ord — was "found to be in very neat order," the Army report said, and contained Lt. Whipkey's suitcase, personal belongings and dog tags. There was no sign of the officer.

"It appears that (Lt. Whipkey) may have wandered out into the desert . . . and succumbed in the extreme heat," the Army report said, "and that the shifting

sands have made it a near impossibility to find, or recover, his remains." The Army then closes its public files on Lt. Whipkey.

Army spokeswoman Margaret Tackley recently referred an Associated Press inquiry about Lt. Whipkey to the board's eight-page report, which said the passage of time has made it "remote, if not impossible," to "end all questions concerning (Lt. Whipkey's) disappearance."

Last week, after another AP attempt to obtain an official statement about the disappearance, the Army said it would have no further comment.

In June 1977, Carl Whipkey sought information from the FBI under a Freedom of Information Act petition. In 1978, he said, the FBI told him it had destroyed field files on the case in December 1977.

Carl Whipkey said he has discovered a dark side to his brother's career. Carl Whipkey said his brother flew in five atomic test explosions in Nevada. He said he suspects his brother was exposed to radiation and, in his duties in the testing area, may have seen evidence of classified experiments involving humans.

The Army report said Lt. Whipkey was assigned to temporary duty as a pilot at Camp Desert Rock, Nev., from July to October 1957. But it makes no mention of atomic tests and contends that "extensive investigations" failed to support Carl Whipkey's assertions.

The Army report said that soon after Lt. Whipkey's Nevada duty, he developed black moles on his body and plantar warts on his hands. His brother and the Army agree that the lieutenant complained of not feeling well, constant colds and weight loss, and that his personality changed, becoming more nervous.