

UFO

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Letters

DEFINING TERMS

Editor:

Michael Miley's intelligent and very welcome review of David Jacobs' book, *UFOs and Abductions* (Vol. 16, No. 1), brings up a number of important issues within what he rightly calls "this very contentious abduction field." I appreciate his description of my approach as "realist"—we all prefer to be thought of as realistic rather than unrealistic—but then he contrasts my "realist" approach to what he calls John Mack's "more 'positive' paranormalist" approach.

I do not believe that the differences between the views of John and myself can be helpfully described by the terms "realist" and "paranormal." As we have noted many times, we both receive essen-

tially the same data from abductees, and for both of us it is thoroughly paranormal (alien beings, enforced paralysis, abductees passing through walls, communicating telepathically and so on).

Our central differences can be simply stated. One has to do with the degree of hopefulness and optimism with which we regard the long-term effects of abduction experiences upon children, women and men. The second has to do with the source of positive personal transformations every abduction investigator hopes to see in each of those we work with. I believe the essential transformational source is the human spirit responding to a life of extraordinary—and traumatic—UFO experiences.

My friend John Mack, however,

tends to feel that the aliens are consciously aiding those transformations. Because these differently inflected positions involve data interpretation, they are the kinds of differences that colleagues can easily entertain without rancor.

Budd Hopkins

*Exec. Dir., Intruders Foundation
New York, NY*

HEADS UP, ACADEMIA

Editor,

I would like to commend both Michael Miley and George Earley for their thoughtful and very supportive reviews of our book *UFOs and Abductions*, edited by David Jacobs. Obviously, I'm pleased that they are favorably impressed with the contributions of the book's

authors and are encouraging their readers to pick up the book. But I'm also grateful that they understand that the book's existence under the imprint of an academic press is itself an important and relevant part of the book's value and importance. Until the academic world and intellectual establishment become much more involved in this area of research, UFO studies will continue to struggle for respectability.

We hope that our somewhat risky decision to publish *UFOs and Abductions* will help expand the overt participation of scholars and intellectuals from the innumerable disciplines that seem directly or indirectly applicable to the study of UFOs. What a shame if such individuals failed to seize upon such a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the nature of our world, humanity, and perhaps the cosmos. Simple old-fashioned scientific curiosity, if nothing else, should argue for their ultimate engagement with the field.

In any case, my thanks to Mr.

Miley and Earley, as well as to *UFO Magazine* for the consideration and support.

*Michael Briggs, Editor-in-Chief
University Press of Kansas*