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The

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00:00:26,360 --> 00:00:31,360

vast wheatlands of the Great Plains near the border of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

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Late summer, 1999. In a remote section of his 2200-acre farm, Carl Cohn is harvesting

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his wheat. From his vantage point atop the machine, he notices something strange.

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00:00:48,360 --> 00:00:58,360

He came home at lunchtime and said, I saw the most bizarre happening today and I know in my 40 years of farming

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00:00:58,360 --> 00:01:02,360

that this is not the norm of anything.

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What he saw was a break in the endless sea of grain, an area of flattened down plants,

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00:01:11,360 --> 00:01:17,360

a pattern swirled into the standing wheat.

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00:01:17,360 --> 00:01:20,360

What I always think it looks like is like the back of somebody's head, you know,

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00:01:20,360 --> 00:01:24,360

just the way the hair is shaped in a swirl, you know, like a colic or whatever.

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The true mystery is the lack of any discernible access trail. Even a solitary hiker would leave a wake of broken plants in the thick wheat.

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Whoever or whatever had damaged the field seems to have been levitated to the spot.

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There was absolutely no evidence of any tracks going to this area, of any footsteps.

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00:01:48,360 --> 00:01:53,360

There was nothing that indicated anything like that.

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Yet what mystified the Cohns has become familiar to farmers all over the world? Crop circles.

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00:02:01,360 --> 00:02:06,360

They are areas of flattened crop, not necessarily grain.

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They can be potatoes, corn, wheat, that range in size from about two feet across to three-quarters of a mile,

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frequently, usually, in geometric designs, but frequently also not in very random designs

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that are occurring all over the world in every country that we have contact with.

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Where they may have come from is much harder to say.

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00:02:33,360 --> 00:02:41,360

That question has been hotly debated since 1989 when dozens of the formations began popping up on farms all over England,

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00:02:41,360 --> 00:02:48,360

when everyone from the royal family to the rock group Led Zeppelin was weighing in on the subject.

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The phenomenon is so popular that it obscures the history.

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Few people, in fact, have any idea that crop circles go back any further than the 1980s.

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Yet old chronicles contain mentions of mysterious formations that come by night.

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They're often referred to as pixie circles or witches circles,

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because the folklore of the time would try to, the locals would try to ascribe these crop circles that they were seeing

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to some event that must have been going on in the night.

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So they would naturally think it was fairies who only come out at night,

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00:03:25,360 --> 00:03:29,360

or witches who were generally only about at night.

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Some of mankind's oldest records may hold clues.

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Thousands of years ago, an aboriginal artist painted this scene on a rock in Australia.

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It appears to show a man wearing a helmet beside a saucer-like shape in the air,

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below the airborne object, an intriguing swirl.

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This has been interpreted straightforwardly as a depiction of a UFO encounter.

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People and animals fleeing the scene with an object in the sky.

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What hasn't been picked up on, historically, is the fact that beneath this object

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00:04:11,360 --> 00:04:14,360

there are concentric rings depicted on the ground.

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These have been entirely overlooked by researchers until now.

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While ancient Australians may have painted crop circles on rocks,

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00:04:23,360 --> 00:04:28,360

another people may have captured them in stone.

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Mysterious rings of fantastically eroded stones called sarsens are found throughout the British Isles.

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Is there a link between the circles of stone and the circles of wheat?

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There is good evidence that a number of historical monuments, such as Stonehenge,

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do have direct connections with the crop circle phenomenon.

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And indeed it has been speculated that the stone circles are constructed,

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purely by placing stones around the perimeter of crop circles.

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And in fact, if you analyse the geometry of the stone circles,

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00:05:04,360 --> 00:05:07,360

you find that they're not actually circular.

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00:05:07,360 --> 00:05:09,360

They deviate from circularity.

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00:05:09,360 --> 00:05:12,360

They're egg-shaped or they're slightly elliptical irregular.

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00:05:12,360 --> 00:05:15,360

If you take accurate measurements of crop circles,

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00:05:15,360 --> 00:05:18,360

you find exactly the same types of deviation.

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And the location and the dimension and the shape of crop circles

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does correspond closely with stone circles.

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For now, the connection remains pure speculation.

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Ancient architects of Stonehenge and other mysterious circles left no writings.

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Historians are not even sure how they were built,

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much less why they appeared in minute crop circles.

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The first possible written record comes from the year 1678.

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It's known as the Mowing Devil.

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Strange news out of Hartfordshire, the old chronicle begins.

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00:06:03,360 --> 00:06:05,360

A farmer has a dispute with a mower.

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00:06:05,360 --> 00:06:09,360

The worker is asking too high a price to mow the farmer's field.

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00:06:09,360 --> 00:06:12,360

Negotiations are cut off with a curse.

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00:06:12,360 --> 00:06:15,360

Then let the devil mow it, the farmer declares.

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00:06:16,360 --> 00:06:20,360

That night, diabolical things seem to be afoot.

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Strange lights and unnatural sounds are said to emanate from the field.

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00:06:25,360 --> 00:06:31,360

The next morning, an oval section of the crop is pressed down neatly in the grain.

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00:06:31,360 --> 00:06:35,360

It appeared that the devil had overheard the farmer's bravado

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was up to the challenge, which is how it was depicted.

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Satan was the one who was able to make the most of the crop.

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But a closer look at the details suggests another possibility.

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There is no mention that it was cut, although the devil is wearing a sigh,

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00:06:51,360 --> 00:06:54,360

and we're looking at the picture thinking it must have been cut.

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00:06:54,360 --> 00:06:57,360

There is actually no mention that the stores were cut.

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00:06:57,360 --> 00:07:00,360

So the chances are it was a perfect crop circle.

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In actual fact, the text of the document,

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00:07:03,360 --> 00:07:07,360

and the other thing that's been said is that the devil is wearing a sigh.

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00:07:08,360 --> 00:07:12,360

In actual fact, the text of the document and the illustration,

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00:07:12,360 --> 00:07:15,360

they show the crop to be laid very neatly.

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00:07:15,360 --> 00:07:17,360

All the stems are parallel.

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00:07:17,360 --> 00:07:21,360

In fact, it says in the text that the crop was laid with extraordinary neatness.

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00:07:21,360 --> 00:07:25,360

As every indication that this is a classic crop circle,

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00:07:25,360 --> 00:07:29,360

it's the kind of illustration, the kind of account you might give

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00:07:29,360 --> 00:07:33,360

if you were to see a crop circle never having known of the phenomenon before.

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After the mowing devil was published, the history of crop circles seems to go underground.

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Over the next 200 years, there are only a handful of scattered murky reports.

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Were people afraid to speak of crop circles

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lest they disturb the dark forces behind them?

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Or as modern skeptics claim, was there simply nothing to talk about?

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With the 20th century came the proliferation of air travel.

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Flyers were struck by the quilted look of the farmlands.

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Amid the lush squares, however, were a few inexplicable circles.

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The secret of the countryside is no longer hidden.

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From the air, crop circles are fully exposed.

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As we continue, crop circles go under the microscope

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and for the first time, scientists speak out on the subject.

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The plants show four or five very clear anomalies that we can't explain.

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Wiltshire County, England is befogged and bedeviled by mystery.

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Here lies Avebury Circle, a 5,000-year-old enigma in stone.

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Nearby, the largest monument in prehistoric Europe, the pyramid called Silbury Hill.

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Strange white horses are carved into the surrounding chalk hills.

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Then, there's the ultimate wonder of ancient Britain, Stonehenge.

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Yet in the 1980s, still another mystery materializes.

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Travelers throughout the area report odd circular depressions in the fields.

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One early visitor is an electrical engineer and government official named Colin Andrews.

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What impressed me immediately was that the only track into the large circle was my own.

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00:09:48,360 --> 00:09:53,360

I could not find any damage whatsoever, any signs that human beings had been involved.

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They are simple circles, nothing like the elaborate pictograms of later years.

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00:10:03,360 --> 00:10:09,360

But Andrews is so intrigued that he co-authors a book with Pat Delgado named Circular Evidence.

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00:10:09,360 --> 00:10:13,360

The slim volume becomes a surprise bestseller.

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Within weeks of the release of the book, in 1989, everybody in every pub was talking about what these extraordinary circles were.

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This country was a light with the talk into aliens or all kinds of theories that were being put forward.

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Something was visiting the fields of southern England.

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00:10:38,360 --> 00:10:45,360

And in a greater way, we were beginning to get feedback from abroad that this was not just southern England.

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There is even a touch of panic in high places.

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The British military is alarmed that unidentified craft might be patrolling their airspace.

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00:10:55,360 --> 00:11:04,360

The National English Farmers Unit posts a reward of £1,000 for information leading to the prosecution of any of damaging their crops.

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00:11:04,360 --> 00:11:09,360

The call for the first official investigation comes from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

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00:11:09,360 --> 00:11:14,360

It goes out to Colin Andrews, who devotes the next ten years to a study of the phenomenon.

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There is something I think fascinating and extremely important occurring here,

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and science must soon begin to understand what it is that causes them.

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A scientific investigation is already underway.

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Researchers are taking samples of grain from crop circles and shipping them back for analysis to a lab run by American biophysicist Paul Levengood.

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What Levengood finds opens a lot of eyes.

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Once he examined those original samples and found a number of anomalies, one of which was completely missing seeds.

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00:11:56,360 --> 00:11:58,360

There were no seeds in the seed head.

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We have sampled something like 400,000 to 450,000 formations in eight different countries.

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00:12:05,360 --> 00:12:11,360

And in fact, these early anomalies, the bulk of them have been replicated over and over and over again.

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00:12:11,360 --> 00:12:16,360

The plants show four or five very clear anomalies that we can't explain.

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00:12:20,360 --> 00:12:26,360

One of the more telling deformities shows up at tiny joints in the stems called nodes.

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00:12:26,360 --> 00:12:31,360

In samples taken from some crop circles, the nodes are blown out.

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00:12:31,360 --> 00:12:37,360

They have been exploded from within, not unlike what happens to living tissue in a microwave oven,

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00:12:38,360 --> 00:12:41,360

which is close to what may be happening.

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00:12:43,360 --> 00:12:48,360

Levengood suspected that a heating agent, and we suspected his microwaves,

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00:12:48,360 --> 00:12:52,360

was in fact interacting with the moisture inside the plant's stems.

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00:12:53,360 --> 00:12:56,360

So the plants have been zapped, but by what?

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00:12:56,360 --> 00:13:03,360

Some believe that it is alien spacecraft burning circles into the grain with blasts of microwave energy.

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In fact, there is anecdotal evidence to support this.

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00:13:08,360 --> 00:13:12,360

Crop circles often appear in conjunction with UFO sightings.

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00:13:12,360 --> 00:13:17,360

The strange moving lights called glow balls captured in these photographs

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00:13:17,360 --> 00:13:20,360

are often seen in the vicinity of crop formations.

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00:13:20,360 --> 00:13:26,360

Researchers have found that one-third of all crop circles can be linked to UFO reports.

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Levengood's team thinks the answer might be more down to earth, but hardly less exotic.

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00:13:33,360 --> 00:13:39,360

Crop circles they feel are the result of poorly understood forces called plasmas.

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Plasmas are simply masses of electrified air particles.

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00:13:45,360 --> 00:13:49,360

A common example of a plasma discharge is a lightning strike.

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00:13:49,360 --> 00:13:52,360

Another one would be the auroral borealis.

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00:13:56,360 --> 00:14:01,360

And the findings in the plants and the soils all indicate the presence of strong magnetic fields,

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00:14:01,360 --> 00:14:06,360

electrical pulses, and some sort of heating, probably microwave radiation.

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00:14:10,360 --> 00:14:15,360

By 1990, another theory has gained widespread acceptance.

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A physicist named Terrence Meadon suggests that crop circles are created by the weather.

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In Meadon's theory, a vortex like a small tornado descends to the ground.

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00:14:28,360 --> 00:14:32,360

As it evaporates, a circular depression is left on the field

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00:14:32,360 --> 00:14:37,360

in a distinct, swirling pattern etched by spiraling winds.

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00:14:41,360 --> 00:14:44,360

Finally, here is an idea that makes some sense

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00:14:44,360 --> 00:14:48,360

and satisfies people who won't accept a supernatural explanation.

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00:14:48,360 --> 00:14:54,360

For a time, particularly among scientists, the vortex theory of crop circles prevails.

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00:14:58,360 --> 00:15:04,360

Then something happens. Crop circles suddenly become more than, well, circles.

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00:15:08,360 --> 00:15:15,360

Some formations now have straight lines connecting the circles, creating so-called dumbbell patterns.

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00:15:16,360 --> 00:15:21,360

Then the first of the pictograms or elaborate designs begin to appear,

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00:15:21,360 --> 00:15:25,360

and the weather vortex theory no longer makes as much sense.

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00:15:27,360 --> 00:15:31,360

A vortex could conceivably make a simple circle, but this...

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00:15:33,360 --> 00:15:36,360

Nature prefers design and produces design everywhere,

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00:15:36,360 --> 00:15:39,360

but some of these designs do stretch that imagination.

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00:15:40,360 --> 00:15:46,360

Some find the new patterns mesmerizing, but a lot of skeptical eyebrows are raised.

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00:15:46,360 --> 00:15:49,360

Are these patterns that would be found in nature?

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00:15:51,360 --> 00:15:56,360

In 1990, when suddenly two circles were connected by a straight line,

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00:15:56,360 --> 00:16:01,360

everything changed after that day in May, 1990.

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00:16:01,360 --> 00:16:04,360

And I do believe that that was the day.

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00:16:04,360 --> 00:16:10,360

The first artists or the first hoaxers entered the fields and began to contaminate the sea.

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00:16:19,360 --> 00:16:24,360

As we continue, crop circles are credited with everything from elevating your mood

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00:16:24,360 --> 00:16:29,360

to short-circuiting your cell phone to something called the Viagra effect.

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00:16:30,360 --> 00:16:39,360

Personally, I've experienced things that defy logic, defy what I've ever learned about how we interact with our environment.

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00:16:47,360 --> 00:16:51,360

In the early 1990s, crop circles add a startling twist.

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00:16:51,360 --> 00:16:57,360

The once-symbol designs go psychedelic, assuming the shapes of Celtic crosses.

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00:17:00,360 --> 00:17:05,360

Adopting the so-called sacred geometry of five balanced shapes,

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00:17:06,360 --> 00:17:09,360

suggesting spiral galaxies,

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00:17:10,360 --> 00:17:12,360

phases of the moon,

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00:17:13,360 --> 00:17:15,360

astrological signs,

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00:17:17,360 --> 00:17:19,360

magic symbols,

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00:17:20,360 --> 00:17:22,360

and unknown alphabets.

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00:17:23,360 --> 00:17:27,360

Each year, the formations become more complex.

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00:17:27,360 --> 00:17:31,360

It is as if a higher intelligence is trying to get our attention.

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00:17:31,360 --> 00:17:40,360

Some people take them literally, believing that in fact, a great circle maker is initiating us into deeper and deeper mysteries.

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00:17:40,360 --> 00:17:47,360

Its superior intelligent human beings in the past acknowledge that we've lost,

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00:17:48,360 --> 00:17:50,360

and it's set in the landscape.

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00:17:51,360 --> 00:17:55,360

I've realized that there is some sort of a higher intelligence.

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00:17:55,360 --> 00:17:59,360

There definitely is something that is behind this,

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00:17:59,360 --> 00:18:06,360

and guiding not only the formations that appear, but also, I think, quite possibly the people who are making them.

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00:18:06,360 --> 00:18:10,360

And it's interacting with us all.

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00:18:12,360 --> 00:18:16,360

Whoever or whatever is making the circles, there's a captive audience.

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00:18:16,360 --> 00:18:21,360

Each summer brings more and more researchers and devotees to the circles.

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00:18:21,360 --> 00:18:26,360

They are called croppies, and they come from all over the world.

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00:18:26,360 --> 00:18:30,360

Remote wheat fields become international hotspots.

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00:18:30,360 --> 00:18:38,360

It almost was becoming hysterical, and people were flocking down to the formations and visiting them.

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00:18:41,360 --> 00:18:44,360

Among farmers, though, there's another name for the croppies.

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00:18:45,360 --> 00:18:47,360

Trespassers.

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00:19:05,360 --> 00:19:10,360

Unable to keep out the uninvited visitors, some farmers reach a compromise.

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00:19:10,360 --> 00:19:14,360

They put up donation boxes at the entrance to their fields.

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00:19:15,360 --> 00:19:19,360

The proceeds more or less pay for the damage to the grain.

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00:19:23,360 --> 00:19:28,360

In England, circle mania blossoms into a full-blown scene.

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00:19:28,360 --> 00:19:33,360

A centuries-old canal pub in Wiltshire becomes the place to be.

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00:19:34,360 --> 00:19:40,360

The back room of the barge is given over to croppy art and postings of the latest formations.

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00:19:43,360 --> 00:19:47,360

A field beside the pub becomes a croppy campsite.

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00:19:47,360 --> 00:19:52,360

On a summer's day, it can resemble a hippie enclave from the 1960s.

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00:19:53,360 --> 00:19:56,360

It's like any phenomena that comes along.

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00:19:58,360 --> 00:20:00,360

Like you've got one in America like Bigfoot.

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00:20:00,360 --> 00:20:06,360

It starts off with a photograph or a footprint, and then it's captured on camera.

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00:20:06,360 --> 00:20:11,360

It gets bigger and bigger, and you get people coming in exploiting it.

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00:20:11,360 --> 00:20:14,360

This is the same, but this phenomena is real.

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00:20:14,360 --> 00:20:19,360

The magic that's coming out, people are jumping on it without even thinking.

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00:20:21,360 --> 00:20:26,360

What draws these pilgrims to the formations is more than pretty designs.

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00:20:26,360 --> 00:20:31,360

The spaces within the formations are thought to be fountains of mysterious energy.

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00:20:34,360 --> 00:20:37,360

There are a lot of effects in this. Did you hear some of the things?

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00:20:41,360 --> 00:20:46,360

Electronic instruments are known to go haywire. Batteries go dead.

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00:20:46,360 --> 00:20:51,360

Compasses spin wildly. Wrist watches spontaneously change time.

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00:20:52,360 --> 00:20:57,360

Some male visitors even experience erections upon entering a crop circle

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00:20:57,360 --> 00:21:01,360

in what's come to be known as the Viagra effect.

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00:21:02,360 --> 00:21:06,360

I've had lots of strange effects, most of which I keep to myself because you think

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00:21:06,360 --> 00:21:11,360

I don't want to get locked in a lunatic asylum. I want to be able to travel around and breathe it.

223

00:21:11,360 --> 00:21:16,360

But there are lots of strange things that go on, and you just have to sort of fire them away.

224

00:21:17,360 --> 00:21:24,360

Personally, I've experienced things that defy logic, defy what I've ever learned about how we enact

design.

225

00:21:30,360 --> 00:21:35,360

My father walked into a center in a circle, and he came over very faint and fell on the ground.

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00:21:35,360 --> 00:21:40,360

I had to help him up and take him out of formation with another chap, which was in formation at the top room.

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00:21:40,360 --> 00:21:42,360

These things happen quite regularly.

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00:21:43,360 --> 00:21:49,360

Explanations range from ambient radiation to rogue electromagnetic fields,

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00:21:49,360 --> 00:21:53,360

but no one knows for sure what's causing all these bizarre effects.

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00:21:53,360 --> 00:21:58,360

Still, they keep on happening, generating hundreds of reports.

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00:22:01,360 --> 00:22:09,360

There's a reason why we keep coming back, besides the current theory that as the English say, they're nutters.

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00:22:13,360 --> 00:22:18,360

By June 1991, the craze reaches royal proportions.

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00:22:18,360 --> 00:22:23,360

After Prince Charles discovers some circles on his property, he becomes fascinated.

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00:22:24,360 --> 00:22:33,360

Charles and Diana ask Colin Andrews to give them a personal tour of the season's crop circles, but then word leaks out.

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00:22:34,360 --> 00:22:40,360

It hit the national headlines here in the Today National newspaper, and all of the plans were canceled.

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00:22:41,360 --> 00:22:47,360

Shortly thereafter, Andrews and crappies everywhere would receive more unwelcome headlines.

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00:22:47,360 --> 00:22:52,360

September 1991 brings a thunderbolt in the world press.

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00:22:52,360 --> 00:22:57,360

Two men from southern England claim to know the secret of the circles.

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00:22:57,360 --> 00:23:11,360

As we continue, the great Hoaxer controversy, and how to make your own crop circle.

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00:23:11,360 --> 00:23:15,360

My name's John Lumberg, I'm a circle maker, and these are tools of my trade.

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00:23:20,360 --> 00:23:25,360

The debate continues to swirl whether crop circles are the work of extraterrestrials,

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00:23:25,360 --> 00:23:34,360

freak storms, or two guys named Doug and Dave.

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00:23:39,360 --> 00:23:42,360

Douglas Mauer and David Charlie, that is.

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00:23:42,360 --> 00:23:51,360

In September 1991, the pair from southern England come forward to claim a 10,000 pound reward offered by a British newspaper.

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00:23:52,360 --> 00:23:58,360

Crop circles are all a hoax, they say, and it is they who are the Hoaxers.

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00:23:59,360 --> 00:24:03,360

According to Bauer, the idea dates back to the 1960s.

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00:24:03,360 --> 00:24:09,360

He is living in Australia at the time when the country is swept by a wave of UFO sightings.

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00:24:09,360 --> 00:24:14,360

They are linked to mysterious circular impressions left in grass or grain.

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00:24:14,360 --> 00:24:22,360

And it became popular to call them UFO nests at the time, which is why a lot of people thought that crop circles were caused by UFOs.

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00:24:22,360 --> 00:24:26,360

And even to this day, some people still believe that, although the majority of us don't.

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00:24:27,360 --> 00:24:32,360

Bauer then moves back to England, only to run into still more flying saucers.

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00:24:32,360 --> 00:24:43,360

UFO sightings are epidemic in the Wiltshire area in the 1970s, but they never leave behind any tangible proof for Bauer or anyone else to see.

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00:24:43,360 --> 00:24:53,360

So one day he decided that if he couldn't see anything inexplicable, he wanted to give a gift actually to other people to put something down that was seemingly inexplicable.

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00:24:55,360 --> 00:25:01,360

Bauer recruits his drinking buddy, David Charlie, into his circle making conspiracy.

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00:25:01,360 --> 00:25:07,360

From 1978 to 1990, they make many simple crop circles.

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00:25:08,360 --> 00:25:16,360

The circles that we created in 1978 with the standing walls of corn as if they'd been cut out of pastry with a knife.

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00:25:16,360 --> 00:25:21,360

They were our doing and we started it way back in that time.

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00:25:21,360 --> 00:25:30,360

Then, when Dr Meadon's vortex theory seems to account for simple formations, it is Doug and Dave who up the ante.

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00:25:31,360 --> 00:25:37,360

And the way they did this was to make, instantly, make the circles more complex.

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00:25:40,360 --> 00:25:47,360

To add a few straight lines, the suddenly Terence Meadon's theory kind of went out the window because he was desperately trying to explain why suddenly now,

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00:25:47,360 --> 00:25:54,360

rather than the circles, we had groupings of circles, circles of rings, circles of lines and bars coming out of them.

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00:25:54,360 --> 00:25:57,360

So obviously he eventually kind of gave in.

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00:25:58,360 --> 00:26:09,360

After confessing to the press in 1991, Doug and Dave retire from circle making, but they are soon followed by the so-called copycats.

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00:26:11,360 --> 00:26:15,360

My name's John Lundberg, I'm a circle maker and these are tools on my trade.

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00:26:15,360 --> 00:26:21,360

This is a surveying tape that we use for marking out a geometry and this is called a stalk stomper, which we use to flattening the crop.

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00:26:22,360 --> 00:26:34,360

John Lundberg claims that he has made more than 100 crop circles, but he refuses to say which ones, believing that much of the impact of the designs comes from their aura of mystery.

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00:26:38,360 --> 00:26:44,360

It's problematic, as an artist, I can't claim my work because if I claim it, I destroy it. But it comes with the territory.

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00:26:45,360 --> 00:26:54,360

Fabricating a crop circle is a three-step process. First, the surveyor's tape is paid out to a specific diameter.

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00:26:54,360 --> 00:26:59,360

Then one person holds the tape while another paces off the circle in the crop.

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00:26:59,360 --> 00:27:09,360

Finally, the whole circular area is flattened down with a stalk stomper, which is abhorred about four feet long with a simple rope handle.

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00:27:10,360 --> 00:27:15,360

Complex patterns are created by multiplying the circles and adding flourishes.

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00:27:15,360 --> 00:27:20,360

More than 1500 circles can go into the making of a single formation.

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00:27:20,360 --> 00:27:31,360

Circle makers often encode the patterns with sacred geometries and magic symbolism, conveying the all-important sense of mystery to the audience.

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00:27:32,360 --> 00:27:39,360

I mean, they basically project their own belief systems onto our formations. You could say that the actors like huge Walsh Act tests, like an ink block test.

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00:27:39,360 --> 00:27:45,360

So we put these ink block tests down and kind of writ large in the fields of Wiltshire.

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00:27:45,360 --> 00:27:58,360

Some people see this as incredible art. Some people see it as healing centers. Others as extraterrestrial communication. And others simply vandalism.

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00:27:59,360 --> 00:28:06,360

With the confessions of these very human circle makers, comes a collective sigh of relief.

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00:28:07,360 --> 00:28:11,360

The public talk was of, well, it's all been a hoax then, hasn't it?

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00:28:14,360 --> 00:28:20,360

At three quarters of the public immediately lost interest. We've never ever recovered the numbers that we had interested in that time.

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00:28:20,360 --> 00:28:26,360

And a lot of people, when you talked to them, they said, well, I thought that was all explained. It was these two people, Doug and Dave, that were doing it.

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00:28:29,360 --> 00:28:34,360

Mystery solved. Crop circles explained. Where are they?

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00:28:35,360 --> 00:28:45,360

There appear to be large gaps in the Doug and Dave story. For one, of course, there were the UFO nests in Australia that inspired Bauer in the first place.

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00:28:46,360 --> 00:28:54,360

Then there is the matter of geography. From 1978 to the early 90s, they claim they were the only ones making circles.

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00:28:54,360 --> 00:29:00,360

But how can a worldwide phenomenon be explained by two guys with a tape and a board?

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00:29:01,360 --> 00:29:11,360

They, of course, have never been able to explain away how they made the circles in Australia and Canada and the United States and in Russia.

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00:29:12,360 --> 00:29:21,360

Very clearly, we did not have an international conspiracy on our hands. We had one local claim, which was accepted by the media for reasons I cannot explain.

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00:29:25,360 --> 00:29:37,360

A number of other arguments are marshaled against the hoaxers. One is based on the scientifically measurable condition of the plants. Some circles contain plants that look mangled.

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00:29:39,360 --> 00:29:44,360

In others, they seem to have gently fallen over, untouched by human hands.

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00:29:45,360 --> 00:29:54,360

What we're really looking for is to see if any weight has been applied. And when people go in with stomping boards and planks, that's applying weight, and you damage the crops.

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00:29:55,360 --> 00:29:57,360

In the genuine ones, the crops are totally undamaged.

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00:29:59,360 --> 00:30:10,360

A new picture of the phenomenon begins to emerge. There are the man-made or hoaxed formations, which are generally the most complex, and which appear mostly in southern England.

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00:30:11,360 --> 00:30:20,360

Then there are the so-called genuine crop circles, which occur throughout the world. These tend to be simple to design, though subtle in detail.

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00:30:21,360 --> 00:30:29,360

When you come in view of a genuine crop circle, everything you'd thought you'd be able to explain so easily is noxide waves.

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00:30:29,360 --> 00:30:41,360

You're suddenly faced with this pristine geometric shape in a serial field with no tram lines, no visible means of access, and you're hooked.

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00:30:45,360 --> 00:30:48,360

And the longtime experts, the farmers, seem to agree.

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00:30:49,360 --> 00:30:59,360

There's a big difference between the simple ones, which we term, which is the phenomenon of the earth or something like that, the knees, fancy-dance, you want.

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00:31:03,360 --> 00:31:13,360

And slowly, but surely, the Doug and Dave story lost its ground in credibility, and more and more so, the people began to once again question, well, why are they still occurring?

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00:31:14,360 --> 00:31:32,360

Indeed, every year in the mature grain, the baffling formations return. And slowly, so do the cropies. Incredibly, the phenomenon has staged a comeback. Can crop circles, after all, be more than a hoax?

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00:31:33,360 --> 00:31:48,360

As we continue, the most compelling evidence yet comes to light, and this time it doesn't come from science, but from history.

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00:31:49,360 --> 00:31:57,360

The research that I've done has demonstrated, beyond doubt, that the crop circles go back well beyond 1978, well before that, right through the decades.

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00:32:03,360 --> 00:32:12,360

The 1991 hoaxing scandal devastates the crop circle community, but for historians among them, it is a blessing in disguise.

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00:32:12,360 --> 00:32:26,360

If they can find proof of crop circles before 1978, the year that Doug and Dave started operating, the hoaxing argument would be discredited, the mystery restored. Historians set out to build their case.

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00:32:27,360 --> 00:32:36,360

Before 1980, we recorded some 400 circles in about 290 odd cases, some of which were multiple cases.

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00:32:39,360 --> 00:32:46,360

That's not to say that's a total sum, but they were the ones that were actually documented, and we can find a hard copy for.

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00:32:46,360 --> 00:32:58,360

The research that I've done has demonstrated, beyond doubt, that the crop circles go back well beyond 1978, well before that, right through the decades.

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00:32:59,360 --> 00:33:05,360

It is a particularly sinister report from Minnesota that seems to clinch the argument.

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00:33:06,360 --> 00:33:15,360

At first, the farmer does not even notice the crop circles. What does alarm him is his dead calf, which has been mutilated.

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00:33:16,360 --> 00:33:42,360

Now what's of great importance, the site at which this calf was found was flown over a couple of

days later, and a photographer, he looked down at the field and he found 47 crop circles scattered across this field, in long chains around the edge of the field, 47 separate circles, all in the same field.

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00:33:43,360 --> 00:33:53,360

The year was 1975, three years before Doug and Dave began making circles, and thousands of miles away from their home in England.

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00:33:54,360 --> 00:34:06,360

To find 47 circles in a field in the 1970s is something which at the time was utterly unprecedented. We don't have any numbers even approaching that many until well into the 1990s.

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00:34:06,360 --> 00:34:11,360

So this is an important historical finding a quarter of a century ago now.

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00:34:16,360 --> 00:34:24,360

The phenomenon seems to have come full circle, bringing us back to the original question, where do crop circles come from?

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00:34:25,360 --> 00:34:36,360

Here's the information, hard facts, scientific evidence, real good stuff that we can get engaged in here, and already the scientific debate has begun.

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00:34:36,360 --> 00:34:49,360

In August 2000, Colin Andrews announces a major development in his decade long study into the phenomenon. It makes news all over the world, and for both crappie and skeptic, it is a shocker.

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00:34:50,360 --> 00:34:58,360

There will be more evidence. It is earth shattering if people are not prepared for the fact that we are being deceived.

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00:34:59,360 --> 00:35:08,360

Andrews concludes that 80% of the complex formations are man-made. Old-fashioned detective work makes for part of his findings.

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00:35:08,360 --> 00:35:17,360

Andrews hires people to stake out fields and tail known circle makers. In several cases, he catches them in the act on camera.

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00:35:19,360 --> 00:35:33,360

The evidence was being stacked up, some of it on film, low light and image intensity fire cameras, that some of the more complex intricate, very beautiful patterns were being made by artists or just simply hoaxers.

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00:35:33,360 --> 00:35:39,360

There are tracks underneath the plants from access points like the tractor tire marks entering the field.

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00:35:39,360 --> 00:35:48,360

There are tracks that are three inches in width, which coincides with the width of the shoe, the human shoe, to the very points where they need to stand to construct them.

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00:35:48,360 --> 00:35:53,360

That's good evidence to start with if you're looking for people as a possibility.

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00:35:53,360 --> 00:36:06,360

But what of the remaining 20%? Andrews believes that some of these may also be the work of hoaxers. An intriguing few, however, show no signs of being man-made.

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00:36:07,360 --> 00:36:27,360

Andrews' best guess is that these, the so-called genuine crop circles, are the product of electromagnetism. Strong electromagnetic fields not only zap the plants and cause electronic instruments to fail, they also leave their fingerprints on the scene.

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00:36:27,360 --> 00:36:45,360

We have a small number of them in which we've now recorded that the Earth's magnetic field is mimicking the crop design in the field. It's not only retaining the pattern, it's amplifying the level of magnetism, the magnetic force, and is rotating it by about three degrees.

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00:36:46,360 --> 00:37:03,360

Andrews' announcements have done little to quell the controversy. Hardcore crappies reject his estimate that 80% are hoaxes. Skeptics reject the notion that any circles are genuine. The only thing everyone agrees on is that the circles are here to stay.

326

00:37:04,360 --> 00:37:17,360

If anything was going to explain a way to circles, the theory that they're all man-made would have done it. That theory was posed 10 years ago, and we're still here sitting talking about crop circles. So the mystery is stronger than ever.

327

00:37:18,360 --> 00:37:36,360

The real phenomenon continues to be there. It's where it was when it began. I'm sure it'll be where it is when the hoaxers and the artist return to London. It's ongoing. We're looking at perhaps hundreds of years here of a phenomenon we still have not got anywhere really near, completely answering.

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00:37:39,360 --> 00:37:40,360

Year later.

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00:37:40,360 --> 00:37:44,360

The circles are still where they were, and they look the same. They haven't changed much.

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00:37:44,360 --> 00:37:57,360

In the years since three crop circles appeared on Carl and Pat Coon's wheat farm, the mystery has actually deepened. Nothing has grown in two of the circles, not even weeds.

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00:38:01,360 --> 00:38:12,360

One circle has no weeds growing in it. Nothing. I really mystified at that. I just don't know what could cause something like that. It would be nice to be able to harness something like that.

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00:38:13,360 --> 00:38:25,360

Nor has the year yielded any clues on who or what might have created the circles. But one thing seems sure. If hoaxers made these circles, they weren't publicity seekers.

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00:38:27,360 --> 00:38:38,360

No one else would have even thought of going there, would have had no reason to go there, because it's out in the middle of nothing nowhere.

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00:38:38,360 --> 00:38:49,360

Few over it would have been no challenge for anyone to do something like this, because I'm sure it would have never been discovered, had it not been for the harvest time.

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00:38:59,360 --> 00:39:07,360

You don't think there's any possible way that winds of some kind could have done this? You've never seen anything like this in your farming time?

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00:39:09,360 --> 00:39:10,360

No way, though.

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00:39:11,360 --> 00:39:12,360

That's very bizarre and unknown.

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00:39:15,360 --> 00:39:33,360

So bizarre that some people think it is literally out of the ordinary. There is a fourth dimension, they say, a parallel reality that conventional science cannot explain, and of which we only catch fleeting glimpses, such as perhaps crop circles.

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00:39:34,360 --> 00:39:43,360

What I'm seeing is the possible enlargement of what we perceive to be reality, which is absolutely fascinating.

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00:39:45,360 --> 00:39:54,360

What does the goldfish make of the fingerprints on the bowl? They appear near feeding time, perhaps, when you walk around and perhaps on Friday afternoons they get polished away, and another one appears.

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00:39:54,360 --> 00:40:04,360

And it's much the same with crop circles. They may well be some being or some force reaching us from another dimension, and this is the input they leave behind.

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00:40:05,360 --> 00:40:13,360

Strange imprints that appear by night and vanish with the harvest, but linger long in the imagination.

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00:40:13,360 --> 00:40:29,360

We've come on in such leaps and bounds that I do believe this phenomenon stands a chance of being explained eventually, but I think everybody has to keep an open mind and say, well, the jury is still out.

344

00:40:44,360 --> 00:40:57,360

You can't build an empire in one day, but a week should be just enough. The History Channel brings you a whole week filled with the empires and emperors who ruled the world.

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00:40:58,360 --> 00:41:00,360

They moved very fast. They were excellent portion.

346

00:41:02,360 --> 00:41:06,360

The Great Empires Week, all this week at 8, on the History Channel.