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UFOs and Mental Health
by Bob Teets
Headline Books, 1997

Reviewed by Katharina Wilson
[(15) = information was quoted from page 15 of Teets' book.]

Bob Teets, author of "UFOs and Mental Health" won more than 30 state and national press awards while working as a journalist in West Virginia in the 1980s. UFOs and Mental Health "is a work in progress - a primer to spark interest in the subject of UFOs from the mental health community." The majority of Teets' Introduction is geared toward his sincere acknowledgments of thirty-year veteran psychologist and UFO researcher Dr. Leo Sprinkle.

"UFOs and Mental Health" covers several loosely associated subjects while attempting to relate them to UFO phenomena. Remote viewing, the church of Satan, and spirit possession are also covered. In view of this material, it is interesting that Teets does not mention Dr. Sprinkle's personal involvement with the phenomenon of channeling and also does not cover the subject of channeling in this book.

"UFOs and Mental Health" purports to be a book for "healers," Teets' preferred term for mental health professionals and their non-degreed equivalents. Nevertheless, he is marketing his book to ufologists and abductees. Teets also makes it very clear at the beginning of this book that he believes abductees have misperceived their experiences. He writes, "...if you are a UFO 'experiencer' [his emphasis] in search of answers to or relief from perceived problems associated with UFOs, you will often discover that the answers you find and/or the degree of relief you experience may well depend on which healer you choose." (15)

One of the things I find most disturbing about "UFOs and Mental Health" is Teets' use of the Heaven's Gate tragedy. He uses the sad demise of this cult as a tool in his effort to pry ufologists and abduction researchers away from mainstream America; to make them appear intellectually and morally inferior to those on the "outside," in effect, making them appear as villains. A prime example follows:

"For sure, events like this will make - or should make - people think twice about any 'revealed truths' perpetrated by supposed UFO experts, believers or prophets. From now on, and in order to lead people in any march toward 'UFO truth,' these UFO myth perpetrators and prophets will surely have to convince their followers to keep their 'eyes on the skies' while ignoring beneath them the dead bodies of 39 more followers over whom they must tread." (25)

Teets perpetuates the "us and them" belief that social psychologists often warn against when attempting to build cohesion and understanding between groups of individuals with dissimilar belief systems. I find this incompatible with introducing the "healers" of this country to the subject of ufology. I find this especially damaging to the many abductees who need and deserve much better than this from an "award winning journalist" addressing the mental health community.

It should be noted that MUFON, CUFOS, ORTK, and CAUS neither supported nor endorsed any writings or thinking remotely similar to what the Heaven's Gate cult was about. Had Teets done a little research, he would have seen the difference between these grassroots organizations and cults.

Mistakes

Other mistakes Teets makes - whether intentionally or not - include his comment about the Stockholm syndrome. He jumps around between what abductees feel and what John Carpenter, Whitley Strieber, and John Mack, M. D. have stated. He then throws this comment out: "The Stockholm Syndrome, recognized in victims of

terrorist-like captivity, is seemingly overlooked by these researchers." (33) Had Bob Teets done his research, he would know that (the late) Karla Turner, Ph.D., spoke and wrote about this syndrome on more than a few occasions. In addition, her mentor, Barbara Bartholic has done the same.

This brings me to a problem with this and other books written by journalists as well as some non-experiencer ufologists. For reasons unknown, they either refuse or are hesitant to read and cite information directly from the sources. The "sources" in the abduction phenomenon are not so much the non-experiencer-researcher, but the abductees.

Teets published one article in his book by Donna Higbee titled "Are Abductees Being Brainwashed?" which I admit was nice to see, but what about books that have been authored by abductees? Why don't these so-called "award-winning journalists" look at Dr. Karla Turner's self-published works, "Taken: Inside The Alien-Human Abduction Agenda" and "Masquerade of Angels;" or my books "The Alien Jigsaw," its related "Researcher's Supplement," and "Project Open Mind"? What about Leah Haley's "Lost Was the Key"?

There are also countless monographs that have been written by abductees, as well as important books by abductees that managed to weather the major publishing houses editing "machine" but, nevertheless, still contain valuable information. One of the latter examples that immediately comes to mind is Debra Jordan and Kathy Mitchell's "Abducted!"

Having provided these references to Teets, I must admit that I dread what he will do with our information. God forbid we should all end up - as Mack and Strieber did in this book - in a chapter titled "The Prophets"!

Another research mistake Teets makes is with his comment relating to the movie "Phenomenon" starring John Travolta. (58) Teets writes,

"Another way that this phenomenon can take a person is on a ride of educational weirdness, as researcher Robyn Andrews Quail contends she's seen demonstrated in people whose IQ's shoot up immediately after a close encounter... John Travolta did a movie not long ago which sort of highlighted this, entitled 'Phenomenon.' "

It is obvious that once again, Teets did not do his research. The movie "Phenomenon" had nothing to do with UFOs! Travolta's character had a brain tumor which, in the end, killed him.

There are portions of this book that ramble on so much, I simply gave up at times and had to put the book down. Sentences that contain 45 words? Please! It is fortunate the book has an index, otherwise I would not have known where (in Chapter Five) Dick Farley's "discussion" ended and Teets' anti-ufologist sermon began again. (58)

Another critical point I want to mention is Teets' statement that "all hypnosis is self-hypnosis," as he claims "we are taught early during our hypnotherapy training. (77) Teets also describes hypnosis as a form of passive mind control. I will leave the bulk of this argument for someone else to write about, but from experience and study, I can tell you that there is nothing passive about mind control and nothing could be further from the truth than to claim "all hypnosis is self-hypnosis." Being hypnotized by someone else is entirely different from self-hypnosis. Teets is bordering on recklessness by making these accusations.

The reason, however, that I brought this up is because while searching for the "stats" on dissociation that Walter Bowart referred to, I came across this strange comment again. Bowart is quoted in Teets' book as saying, "Be sure you don't overlook the stats on the number of dissociative cases in [sic] among the 'abductees.' Tests that have been given indicate it to a high percentage. See "Alien Discussions," the MIT thing..." (92)

While I searched for these statistics in my copy of "Alien Discussions," I came across this comment by psychiatrist George Ganaway. "At our center I've treated over 250 patients now over the past several years, and I have several colleagues who have

treated many others. Since we don't know what causes dissociation, the most replicable finding is that they're all hypnotic virtuosos. *All hypnosis is self-hypnosis*, when it comes right down to it..." [my emphasis] ("Alien Discussions," pg 521; "Therapist Panel: Helping The Abductees.")

Are psychiatrists (and journalists) really taught this "mantra" in hypnotherapy school - or did Teets discover this little saying by reading Ganaway in "Alien Discussions?" Like Teets, I'm not an expert in hypnosis, but I have read enough - and experienced enough to know that all hypnosis is NOT self-hypnosis. This sounds like a convenient way to place the responsibility for whatever memories that do surface - and any associated problems with those memories - squarely on the shoulders of the person being hypnotized. This includes people remembering childhood sexual abuse and abductees.

Accusations

Teets makes a lot of accusations in his book. I will only touch on a few that I believe are the most important. Teets accuses Corso "and others in government" who are retired, of going public with their information because they "... prefer to cash in on the current 'UFO rage,' rather than face civil rage after a Presidential release of information about past roles in Project Paperclip..." (61)

Two easily detectable flaws in Teets' logic is that public knowledge of Project Paperclip is *not new* and there has been, unfortunately, very little civil rage about it. Secondly, Colonel Corso is an old man. If Corso is becoming wealthy off of his book, he is not likely to live a long time to enjoy the fruits of his labor. In addition, if Colonel Corso was interested in making money, he would have begun decades ago with the alleged extraterrestrial technology he possessed. Perhaps an investigative journalist could look into Corso's past to at least see how many high-tech patents he holds.

Bob Teets also accuses Whitely Strieber and John Mack's writings of being so similar with cult leader Marshall Applewhite's that, "It does, indeed, seem quite difficult at times to tell these men's writing apart." (40) He labels Mack, Strieber and other ufologists and researchers as "UFO Prophets," and alleges that these prophets are "making the rounds and making a lot of money." Since Teets is so concerned about who is making money off of UFOs, he should add his own name to his list of imaginary conspirators.

One accusation by Teets that is sure to ruffle a few proverbial feathers is made in Chapter Five - "The Grassroots: Highlights and Discussion:" "...joining the U.S. Air Force and CIA in opposing (and defusing) Rockefeller's efforts were our long-present 'UFO investigation' organizations, clearly tied to government through their memberships and leadership." (63)

The longest existing grassroots UFO investigative organization in the United States is MUFON, The MUTUAL UFO Network. Teets knows this as well as anyone involved in the investigation of UFOs and abductions. Is Teets saying that MUFON, their board of directors and its International Director Mr. Walter Andrus, Jr., have been trying to defuse Laurence Rockefeller's efforts to encourage governmental openness regarding the UFO phenomenon? If Teets is indeed an "award-winning" journalist, where is his proof to back up this claim?

On the Positive Side

There are some positive mentions made in "UFOs and Mental Health." One is the chapter on remote viewing. After bashing David Morehouse (author of Psychic Warrior) we get a relatively positive spin on remote viewing. I suspect this is because the United States Government supported research into remote viewing for nearly 20 years and, as Teets states, "Lyn [Buchanan] once gave me and a few other friends a long lecture about remote viewing, then allowed us to try it. We all scored quite well. And I must admit I've often thought about taking Lyn's training."

It is curious that Teets seems to have so much faith in remote viewing after only having one short experience with it. I wonder if Teets would be a "believer" of abductions if he ever had to listen to the screams of his children being taken at night while

he lay paralyzed in his bed?

There are also new labels for abductees that can be gleaned from reading and purchasing the books Teets promotes in "UFOs and Mental Health." A couple of examples are "anomalously sensitive persons" and "information virus" syndrome. Two examples of books that are promoted are "Virus of the Mind" by Richard Brodie and "Unmasking the Enemy," by Nelson Pacheco. A paraphrased quote by Teets from the latter follows: "If you want to do UFO research, one clear way is to follow the trail of bodies." (27)

Teets' good friend William J. Baldwin, Ph.D. and the author of "Spirit Releasement Therapy: A Technique Manual" is also promoted. Quoting Teets: "One of the traits Baldwin sees in many of his clients, and which he writes about in his book, is a sort of possession of a human being by an interstitial extraterrestrial-type entity. Where it gets interesting is at the point where this extraterrestrial is found to itself be possessed by a classic demon, or jinn." (29) Where's Mulder when you need him...

Bob Teets states in his Introduction, "The UFO phenomenon...has very little to do with aliens and exotic space ships visiting earth and interacting with humans..."

*** "UFOs and Mental Health" has very little to do with the subject of UFOs and even less to do with mental health. --
Katharina Wilson

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