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**Location:** [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1997](#) -> [Dec](#) -> [Au revoir](#)

## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Au revoir

From: [DevereuxP <DevereuxP@aol.com>](mailto:DevereuxP@aol.com)  
Date: Tue, 9 Dec 1997 23:56:06 EST  
Fwd Date: Wed, 10 Dec 1997 03:42:35 -0500  
Subject: Au revoir

Dear List,

My stirring of the pot has certainly brought forth a lot of froth and bubbles!

As this will be my last statement on this list for a while, and perhaps for ever, I trust you will allow me to leave you with the main points I was trying to make, lest they be lost amid all the kerfuffle. They were modest enough.

\* FOLKLORE.

I was not saying that the UFO event, whatever it is, is folklore. I was saying that ufology is comprised of folklore, and we ought to recognise that. The folklore might well point to a real phenomenon - or, more likely, a set of differing occurrences that get lumped together under the umbrella of "UFO" - in the manner indicated by my "Old Bill" folktale, but is unlikely to be literally true. It is important to become aware that most versions (at least) of the ETH are folklore - and that is so even if it turns out that things-seen-in-the-sky are physically real craft. If we are not aware that the nature of ufology, the human penumbra surrounding the UFO enigma, is essentially folklore, we get seduced into belief systems and waste years, decades, going down conceptual cul-de-sacs.

It is clear from the generally hostile response that has met this modest observation that this is a real issue. It's a problem. After 50 years, we should perhaps more actively and consciously address it. It is such a problem that even people like Jerry Clark, who dismisses the observation of the presence of folklore in ufology as of no value, is a victim of it too. Invisible folklore can damage your understanding. Visible folklore can perhaps be used to reach greater understanding.

\*THE ETH.

As ufology has now turned 50, I suggested that it might be a good idea if we did a stock-take of ufological assumptions, and especially of the ETH as it has been unproductive and slippery over the course of that half-century. I suggested that it should stay on the table as an option for explaining things-seen-in-the-sky, but that perhaps we should lessen the mental energy that goes into it. I called for a deepening and widening of thinking within ufology that did not rely so heavily on the ETH, and one way of doing that was to put the ETH aside for a while, as an experiment.

I further pointed out that there was not, in any case, such a thing as the ETH, and that it amounted more to a motif. Its insidious nature is such that we do not always notice how it drives apparently other aspects of ufology. (For example,

government UFO conspiracies are subjects in their own right within ufology, but they revolve around the issue as to whether the government is covering up alien bodies, craft and technology. This strand of ufological research is therefore \*informed\* by the ET motif. Another example would be the discussions about the "alien autopsy" footage: the technical matters concerning the age of film stock, types of suits and equipment used by the characters shown on the film, the arts of Special FX model making, etc. are not in themselves anything to do with the ETH, but they revolve around the question as to whether or not a real alien body was involved, whether or not an alien flier had been obtained from a crashed saucer by the government decades ago.) I offered this suggestion in order to enhance ufological thinking, and did not presume to state what UFOs were. I assure you I did all this in good faith, and it is false characterisation to make me out to be "out to lunch", "bombastic" and all the other names I have been called.

If a suggestion that we take stock, and put less reliance in one particular explanation, is met with such hostility, how can the subject area move forward? If people like Jerry Clark find themselves unable to come out from behind their emotional barricades, fruitful discussion cannot even begin. I am particularly disappointed that Jerry could not respond in the manner of a scholar and take part in some model-building, at least in the spirit of experiment. But he is so far away from such a possibility that he actually denied that the ETH still dominates ufology in one form or another. I therefore attempted to move this disagreement outside the scope of mere opinion, and presented a 100-sample tester of this list, UpDates. The result of this indicated that the majority of postings were concerned in one way or another with the ET motif. This was not my opinion but a methodological demonstration. It can be repeated by Jerry Clark or anyone else. Yet Clark refused to accept the result, and continued to make his denials.

Jerry did make the point that ETs should not be confused with aliens, and that they could be dimensional as well as spatially extra-terrestrial. I accept this, but we are still dealing with the hypothesis that physically real non-humans in physically real craft are involved. This is a rose by any other name.

#### \*ALIEN ABDUCTIONS.

I have argued that the literature in a range of other areas of human experience, such as lucid dreaming (especially), sleep paralysis (to some extent - it is a precondition of a certain state of consciousness), escomatic or out-of-body travel, shamanic traditions of spirit flight, narcolepsy, and other conditions, can leave no doubt in the minds of anyone who studies them that the same class or group of experiences are involved. I have had what I took to be OOBes, and I am actively and experientially studying lucid dream research. In the course of that research, using carefully developed techniques, we successfully had an experiment in which I was able to approach within 20 feet of what appeared to me to be a flesh-and-blood alien (if aliens have blood!) while what I call waking consciousness was replaced by another mental reality, another sensorium, of equal realism. Jerry Clark claimed that this was anticlimatic, and of no relevance to the abduction experience. It is difficult to credit such an attitude in any serious researcher, let alone a man who claims to be an agnostic with regard to alien abductions. His claim and his behaviour do not match, and I made it clear that I consider him an apologist for a literal interpretation of the alien abduction experience, and not an agnostic. When the truth of all this comes out, I will not let him forget his stance, and I put him on notice of that here and now.

Whatever one's beliefs about alien abductions, to not merely dismiss but to angrily abuse me for the information I impart means that there can be no serious discussion concerning the alien abduction experience within the confines of ufology as it currently exists, if UpDates is a fair cross-section of ufological thinking.

I specifically left my views open about the aliens encountered in this profound, bizarre and important experience - this is because I do not (yet, at any rate) know their nature, though I have some ideas. The nature of the experience and the aliens encountered need and deserve intense study, and that is beginning to happen - but not inside ufology itself. We do not understand the nature of

the experience, but of one thing I am certain - it is a mental reality situation, not a physical one (though it might, possibly, have physical side effects). I am therefore not debunking the experience (indeed not, I am fascinated by it and suspect it holds great teachings for and about us), but I am trying to get at the experience without the hindrance of labels such as alien abductions (or, for that matter, OOBES - a more useful interpretation, but an interpretation nonetheless). I am just asking that we try to understand what is happening, and I am further saying that enough literature and research already exists to at least determine that we are dealing with a mental situation (and I mean neurological wiring, not merely "psychological" as some critics have complained on this list) - even though we do not yet know for sure what lies beyond that mental gateway.

If people are not acting from a belief posture, but a genuinely investigative one, there should be no antagonism towards what I am suggesting. Especially as research can show my viewpoint to be backed up by powerful evidence. It seems, however, judging by the main response on this list (but thank you for the more thoughtful postings), that an investigative posture does not exist. Only postings that support a favoured view can be tolerated, it seems.

\* GENERAL.

Jerry Clark, who has been the most vociferous in these exchanges, stated that my work does not figure in the references of the major debunkers such as Phil Klass. This is because I am not a debunker, and I am saddened that Clark is unable to make the distinction.

I do, however, feel that those of us within ufology do need to take more stock of where we are going, make visible assumptions and attitudes that may currently be transparent to us, and to try to broaden and deepen our field. But that brings me back to where I came in.

In the exchanges of the past weeks and months, I have become conscious that a relatively small number of us have been hogging the cyberwaves, so to speak. I apologise for my part in that. My only defence is that I have stayed silent for long periods when others were discussing other matters, and I chipped in this time - and then, really, unintentionally - first because of a point made regarding folklore, a subject I am published on and can offer some opinion on, and then because I thought I could make a difference by suggesting some fresh avenues that might prove fruitful. I must declare that I have never experienced such a torrent of abuse or sarcasm for my efforts, however imperfectly I may have carried them out.

The silent majority of you out there in list-land will have to decide what kind of ufology you want. As it stands, as far as the alien abduction theme goes, the classic experience, Betty and Barney Hill's interrupted journey, involves what we are to take to be an encounter of two ordinary people with a physically real alien craft and occupants, which traversed unknown interstellar reaches or inter-dimensional warps, with a technology beyond our capability and possibly beyond our imagination, which then used equally magical technology to abduct these human beings, in order to ask questions like: "What is a vegetable?"

If this type of interpretation satisfies you, then so be it. If it does not, then you might find that you will have to forego being silent in order to help fashion a ufology more worthy of the enigma involved. That will also necessitate going outside the literature that currently gets labelled "ufological".

Anyway, enough. Thank you for allowing me to re-iterate my position.

Now it only remains for me to grant Jerry Clark his Christmas wish, and to "get out of the kitchen". I am travelling for the next few months, so would be unable to take part in discussions on Updates in any case, so I am asking Errol to unsubscribe me - for the time being at least. I thank him for his sterling service in maintaining this list.

Some of my travels involve further practical research on the alien abduction experience, with workers and laboratories in different parts of the world. So, though I am leaving this particular kitchen, I'm certainly still cookin', let there be no

doubt about that.

My best wishes to all of you for a happy holiday season.

From your legal alien in the USA,  
Au revoir.

Paul Devereux

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