

scratching our heads.

There has been an enormous amount of research done during this period. Thousands upon thousands of reports have been collected from all over the world. More photographs and videos than you can shake an alien at have been collected. Countless books, videos, magazine articles and TV specials have been produced..... and still we don't know.

My personal interest in investigating UFOs started in about 1965. Some of my highschool friends and myself became interested in UFOs, and we decided to form a small group to study them. (This had to be more fun than math or English) We even started a project to figure out a way to build a UFO. (It's amazing what you think you can do when you're young)

After highschool, I joined the Air Force, to hopefully pursue a career in Electronics. To my amazement, I soon found myself working for the Aerospace Defense Command, maintaining the equipment that provided radar feeds to NORAD. Yes, I saw some very strange blips on my radar screens. Craft that flew faster and higher than anything we had at the time. (I plan to write an article on the TRUE nature of UFO radar reports) I had already been collecting data during highschool, and now my interest was piqued more than ever. I read everything that I could find on the subject. I was determined to find an answer. After what I thought was a rather uneventful 4 years in the Military, (I found out later that maybe it wasn't so uneventful after all, just the opposite - another article?) I returned to civilian life and continued my research.

I organized the first MUFON group here in Birmingham, in hopes that I could meet with others that held additional pieces to this puzzle. I trained to properly conduct a real investigation. (My first investigation was a real nut case. As soon as I got out of my car, the witness started pointing at stars in the night sky. There's one... there's another one over there. I still feel that something strange was going on in the area, ...maybe not UFOs, supernatural maybe, but the witness could not be relied on for any kind of accurate information) I was discovering that interviewing people about lights in the sky wasn't leading me anywhere. Also, being in charge of a MUFON group (A very good group of people) was taking away my research time.

At the present I'm on extended leave from my computed network troubleshooting job, while I pursue my new career in real estate. I've had time to reflect back on my own research notes and rummage through my overflowing file cabinet, containing all the data that I've collected for over 30 years. I've learned to look beyond the lure of the major events of the past 50 years and concentrate on what was happening on the sidelines. What I'm seeing now is stranger than I anything that I had ever expected to find. (Hopefully a book can come out of all of this.)

While I was a part of MUFON, I had the opportunity to meet, and talk to, some of the big names in UFO research. After the initial shock of being able to talk to them face-to-face wore off, I began to realize that they didn't seem to know any more about any of this strangeness than I did (even though they had some very interesting ideas). Any one of you readers out there has just as good a chance of researching and unraveling this mystery as anyone else.

With that said, here are my views as to what we've discovered with 50 years of research.

[1] Unconventional objects are flying around in our skies and near space.

These objects have many different shapes, and have flight characteristics that far surpass anything that we believe any Government in the world is capable of producing at the present time. They range in size from tiny points of light, to several miles across. Many of these objects are undoubtedly secret military craft that are unknown to the general public, like the Aurora, or the Navy A-12 Manta. We don't know that the technology behind them originated from an extraterrestrial source, only that it is more advanced. (The government may know, but they're not telling)

Note:

I have actually had one of the "triangles" fly directly overhead at almost treetop level. Believe me, they exist!

[2] Sometimes these objects crash.

There are too many reports from all over the world from too many witnesses. The same pattern always emerges, with a military (or military-like) unit isolating the area, and cleaning up the crash site. Coverups and disinformation campaigns then cloud the issue further. Research shows that some type of incident did occur at Roswell. There are also very important revelations concerning Roswell that still aren't being addressed. (The military was already in the area with scientists and crash teams ready to be activated. I hope to do an article on this in the near future)

[3] Technological advances made in the last 50 years appear to be in excess of what would normally be expected. These jumps in technology are now pointing back to the late 40s and early 50s.

Linking today's present level of technology to an alien source may be our best bet in forcing this mystery out into the open.

[4] Various types of Aliens appear to be involved.

When I say alien, I don't mean in an extraterrestrial sense. I'm not saying that they aren't ETs, only that they're just alien to us, and we don't know for sure where they come from.

Note:

The most common type of aliens are the Greys. If reports about them are true (That they don't have a reproductive or a digestive system), I would guess that they are nothing more than biological robots, created to serve a certain purpose. (Maybe even to create the illusion of aliens. The concept of aliens deserves to be covered in a separate article later)

[5] The abduction phenomena is real.

Too many people are giving the same details for this not to be real. The question is, are these abductions physical or spiritual, or a combination of both? I like the new term, experiencers, better. The fact that experiencers are sometimes floated through closed windows, and appear to enter a realm that resembles our concept of the afterlife, seems to give parts of the abduction phenomena a paranormal feeling.

Note:

I feel that some researchers are depending too much on hypnosis to get answers. Hypnosis is only a tool, and its use requires formal training in order to insure that the experiencer is not "led" in the process of retrieving data. Researchers point to the fact that different witnesses are giving the same information. But, they could all have been given similar screen memories. So, I do think that certain persons are going through this phenomena, but, I don't feel as if we are seeing the deeper true experience that is really happening.

[6] UFOs are taking energy from our electrical power grid, and water from our oceans, rivers, lakes and reservoirs.

Numerous witnesses have observed UFOs hovering near, or following, electrical power lines. On several occasions the an object was observed extending a rod-like device onto the power lines. This could have something to do with the mysterious causes of major power blackouts.

It's also a well known fact among researchers that UFOs are attracted to large bodies of water. Witnesses have reported them even entering into and emerging from these bodies of water. They've also been observed taking in water, either by the extendable rod, or by a hose-like device.

[7] Separate paranormal events are associated with UFOs.

Researchers and witnesses alike are recipients of these paranormal events. Witnesses have reported all kinds of strangeness after going through a UFO related experience. These may include enhanced ESP and psychic abilities, poltergeist-type activity around them, unusual interactions with electrical or electronic devices (blowing light bulbs more often, street lamps turning off when they walk under them, devices that won't work or seem to

WASHINGTON -- The mysterious "Face on Mars" is not an optical illusion or a natural feature on the Red Planet, a scientist reported Wednesday at a major astronomical conference.

Dr. Tom Van Flandern reached the conclusion after new studies of the Cydonia region, where strange-looking landforms have excited science fiction and life-on-other-worlds buffs for decades.

His report, presented at the 191st national meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS), attracted unusual attention because sharp new images of the "Face" may soon be available. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Global Surveyor spacecraft, now orbiting Mars, is scheduled to begin imaging in 1999.

Global Surveyor's camera is capable of making images with 30 times the resolution, or sharpness, of the Viking cameras. It can distinguish objects as small as 4.6 feet across, and will try to image the "Face."

Van Flandern holds a doctorate in astronomy from Yale University. Until 1991, he was chief of the celestial mechanics branch at the U. S. Naval Observatory, a respected astronomy facility. He then founded Meta Research, an organization based here, that fosters research on topics that conflict with mainstream theories in astronomy.

The "Face on Mars," he explained, certainly fits that bill. Some people claim that images of the Cydonia region, taken in the 1970s from the Viking spacecraft, show a gigantic human face, a pyramid, and other structures left by some ancient extra-terrestrial civilization.

In the eyes of some, the "Face" bears a striking resemblance to the "death masks" that ancient Egyptians used to adorn the sarcophagus of King Tut and other rulers. Indeed, some hint that the "Face" may be part of an immense tomb on the Red Planet.

Believers have come up with all kinds of intricate mathematical relationships between the Face and several associated landforms that supposedly prove the structures are artificial.

Conspiracy theories, charging NASA and the military with a cover-up, also abound.

"The conventional view is that this is all nonsense," says Dr. Michael C. Malin. He is chief investigator for the Mars Global Surveyor Orbiter Camera.

Cydonia, he explained, is a desert-like region that has undergone the same kinds of weathering that carve weird landforms in terrestrial deserts. He regards the features at Cydonia as strictly natural, the result of Martian weathering and erosion.

Van Flandern said his study undermines the main argument against an artificial origin for the "Face:" Its apparently random orientation on the Martian surface.

"No apparent purpose is served by a face monument looking upward toward space if it is not oriented right-side up and in an attention-getting location with respect to the surface of the planet," he said.

On Earth, one such location, visible for great distances from space, might be right on the equator, he indicated.

Van Flandern analyzed data from previous studies showing that the Martian north and south poles occupied a different position in the past. A meteor impact or other cataclysmic event relocated the poles to their current position millions of years ago. He concluded that the "Face" originally was in a much different location.

"It was a great shock to me to discover that the Cydonia area was right on the old Martian equator," he said.

Further analysis showed that the "Face" is oriented perpendicular to that old equator. The bridge of its "nose" is oriented almost exactly north-to-south.

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