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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

From: Mark Cashman <[mcashman@ix.netcom.com](mailto:mcashman@ix.netcom.com)>  
Date: Sun, 7 Feb 1999 01:15:32 -0500  
Fwd Date: Sun, 07 Feb 1999 14:06:42 -0500  
Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

>From: Kevin Randle <[KRandle993@aol.com](mailto:KRandle993@aol.com)>  
>Date: Sat, 6 Feb 1999 09:44:20 EST  
>To: [updates@globalserve.net](mailto:updates@globalserve.net)  
>Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

(Enormous snip)

>Let's not reject an idea simply because we find it unpleasant.

My comments were not a "rejection" but simply a clarification of what I, personally, require as proof from psycho-social theories.

Just as I require evidence to support pro-UFO hypotheses, I also require evidence to support anti-UFO hypotheses. And, in both cases, I am opposed to hypotheses which remain essentially unprovable.

Statements which claim that the witness "might" have seen something in the media which suggested some feature of the case are, frankly, not hypotheses, because they are, as Kevin's discourse on the might-have-been's of the Schirmer case demonstrated, essentially unable to be proved or disproved.

In addition, I attempted to indicate that there were a number of factors involved in memory which do not necessarily support such claims. Basically, the range of possible causes for UFO or abduction phenomena can run the gamut from

- 1) A fantasy, based on psychological needs, and perhaps grounded in existing cultural resources.
- 2) A real event, memories distorted by fear reaction.
- 3) A real event, memories embellished due to the psychological need of the witness.
- 4) A real event, but not at all related to the witness interpretation (i.,e. a misperception).
- 5) A real event with some aspects distorted, omitted, or added due to perceptual, cognitive, and emotional factors.
- 6) A real event, reported largely as it occurred, within the perceptual or cognitive limitations of the witness.

In the above, except for (4) "real event" means what happened was substantially what was reported.

As I mentioned in my post, opinion in the psychological community is divided as to the effect of trauma and fear on memory. I think that ignoring this, or calling it "convenient" for the witness completely misses the point. The point is "we don't know". Thus, we would be wise not to claim more certainty than existing information and experiment can provide.

As an example, the claimed absence of helmets in more recent occupant cases.

This assertion has been made many times, but I have yet to see substantial research confirming it. One must also consider the selection effects which might be present in any catalog used for such a purpose.

I have been able to find helmet-wearing cases in recent times, such as

013 4 Feb 1973 KIMBA SA 2150hrs  
Secs Hunt/Finkler/Degnor/Inglis

Four people, in three separate vehicles, reported seeing an orange object in a clearing on a deserted stretch of country road. A man, driving alone reported seeing an orange, rectangular shape on the side of the road. A young couple said they saw a three metre high by two metre wide rectangular shape. One of them said they saw a two metre tall "man" in a white space-suit floating in the middle of the rectangular shape. The other saw an orange rectangle with a white blob on top of it. Later, a semi-trailer driver reported to police that as he passed a clearing he noted what looked like an open doorway and a figure. The police checked the clearing by going there within an hour, but found nothing to account for the observations.

There are also 1950s cases with no helmets:

021 1951 HALIDON SA Morning

Mrs A was out with the dog rounding up cattle on a property. She saw an unusual object resting on 4 legs. Three figures floated down from underneath the object. They were described as normal adult height. Normal human facial features, with very clear, blue eyes. Their skin seemed smooth. Clothing was a tight fitting, silver coloured suit with silver boots and a hood over their heads.

Some cases are ambiguous - were there helmets?

055 1975 Near COFFS HARBOUR NSW

A woman, her daughter and a child in a car came across a lighted object on the road ahead. They slowed down and a group of some four to six entities with pointed heads and no discernible facial features, surrounded the car. A beam of light shone on the car. They drove away at speed. It is said that the woman received permanent damage to one of her eyes.

All cases from Basterfield's Australian Entity Catalog

<http://www.temporaldoorway.com/entweb.htm>

Hasty theorizing without testable hypotheses remains the bane of this field. Psycho-social hypotheses are not immune from the requirement that clear discriminators be provided and that observations be made to determine the status of the hypothesis.

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Mark Cashman, creator of The Temporal Doorway at

<http://www.temporaldoorway.com>

- Original digital art, writing, and UFO research -

UFO cases, analysis, classification systems, and more...

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