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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Hypnotic Abuse

From: **Jenny Randles** <[nufon@currantbun.com](mailto:nufon@currantbun.com)>  
Date: Wed, 23 Jun 1999 14:06:48 +0100  
Fwd Date: Thu, 24 Jun 1999 07:12:44 -0400  
Subject: Re: Hypnotic Abuse

>From: Roy Hale <[roy.hale@virgin.net](mailto:roy.hale@virgin.net)>  
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <[updates@globalserve.net](mailto:updates@globalserve.net)>  
>Subject: Re: Hypnotic Abuse  
>Date: Tue, 22 Jun 1999 12:23:17 +0100

>>From: Tim Matthews <[matthews@zetnet.co.uk](mailto:matthews@zetnet.co.uk)>  
>>To: <[updates@globalserve.net](mailto:updates@globalserve.net)>  
>>Subject: Re: Hypnotic Abuse [was: Re: Budd Hopkins]  
>>Date: Sun, 20 Jun 1999 22:26:28 +0100

>>No group in Northern England sanctions is as far as I can tell  
>>and this has been in force for many years - which is perhaps  
>>why we don't have as many 'alien abductions' over here...?

>Hi All,

>Regarding the above I wonder if this is the case for most  
>Southern UFO Research groups? be interesting to find out.

>So here is the question: If you are a member of a Southern UFO  
>Research team do you use the methods of hypnotic regression when  
>dealing with alleged Alien abductees?

>Roy..

Hi,

I should clarify the position regarding hypnosis in the UK. It was not uncommon between 1978 (first use) and 1988 and I was involved in around 20 cases first hand. The decision to issue a moratorium on its use followed restrictions that at first did not in any sense ban its use. These were introduced in our 1982 Code of Practice. The code was agreed between many UK groups (certainly a few from the south - eg SCUFORI in Swindon). This ensured that hypnosis could only be done by a medically qualified practitioner to protect the witness. There was already a trend of 'DIY' hypnosis by ufo investigators learnt by watching doctors and employed to save money. This offered no security to the witness, hence the code.

When we set up the code I tried to persuade as many groups as possible to adopt it. I published it in my book 'Science and the UFOs' in 1985 (ironically the one that triggered the Streiber abduction memory that has probably done more than any case to boost the use of regression - maybe someone was trying to tell me something with that one!) A large number of groups did adopt this code - not just BUFORA, but MUFORA (now NARO). SCUFORI, ASSAP, etc.

The code was useful but hypnosis continued. Then came the

debacle with an epileptic witness in a none BUFORA case that did not follow the code. This, plus growing doubts over hypnosis as useful testimony, led to the voluntarily decision for a five year hiatus taken not by BUFORA council by autonomously by the team of investigators that I then supervised. We made the informed choice ourselves after a proper and frank debate. We agreed to abide by the majority vote (although i recall only one or two voted no). The moratorium was a unilateral BUFORA plan. So far as I know even groups who supported the code did not adhere to the ban. NARO - for instance - still uses hypnosis through a fully qualified clinical psychologist (Dr Moyshe Kalman) and I have sat in on some of that work post the moratorium myself - as recently as 1996 in fact. But I have not personally initiated nor recommended to any witness that this process be adopted in their case. Indeed I always advise against.

The BUFORA moratorium was renewed as a permanent ban after I left as Director of Investigations. The belief in it has grown since 1988, not lessened, through awareness of false memory syndrome, fantasy prone personality research, SRA and the like. But I still think far less groups - even in the UK - have an outright ban like BUFORAs as opposed to a sensible restrictive and medically supervised approach.

Personally, I dont think hypnosis works, but I am not actually opposed to its use provided the witness goes into it fully informed and at their own conscious insistence (not through agreeing with the subconscious desire of a UFO investigator to try to come up with the next big case). Also provided the code is strictly adhered to and the regression is conducted by a medical doctor who monitors the percipient for blood pressure, etc , at all times. I think it is useful to have comparative data between hypno and non hypno cases.

However, I feel that Britain is really taking a stand against indiscriminate use of regression in some other parts of the world - where, to generalise, young people can without any breach of rules be regressed by non medically qualified people. That, in my view, is wholly inappropriate for this subject and if it needed BUFORA (as we did) to possibly over-react through an outright ban and send a message out. It was worth doing. I am merely sad, that in the usual muddle of BUFORA, nothing like enough was ever done to make the world aware of our moratorium or why we were taking these decisive steps. As a result it has been an empty gesture to some extent. But I am very glad we made it even so. Because we showed that what counts in a case is the welfare of the witness above all else. Too often ufologists selfishly judge the need for hypnosis on their desire to get a good story out - even if they dont realise they are doing this. Self regulation through a code of practice seems like a 'nanny state' thing as people have told me. But it is better than a free for all. It shows witnesses, science and the public that we are thinking about our responsibilities so I remain 100% committed to the code of practice and urge all those groups out there (probably 90% of UK groups and 99% of world groups) who have not signed up - or in many cases dont even know such a thing exists - to consider taking the plunge. At the moment BUFORA and a few others are a drop in the bucket. One day the bucket will fall apart.

The experience of a certain ufologist and his (sorry - I mean not his) abduction (sorry - I mean not an abduction) on a US road only emphasises the point. (I am being deliberately obscure here as names are unimportant and I've been asked not to repeat them). What matters is that this mans experience involved no UFO, no aliens, just a possible missing time and the hypnosis created a deeper memory (or in my view here most likely a fantasy). Even the witness (sorry - not the witness) now seems to feel the hypnosis did not uncover an abduction. He has the background and can judge this tough issue. Most people pressured (often subtly) into this process of revealing a hidden memory cannot and are left with a legacy of confusion. Thats why those who have been through it like this (non witness) or myself (see my book Star Children) have an obligation to speak up for the good of others. But its his choice and he has chosen no.

I have seen several cases where a non existent time lapse was assumed, regression applied and a memory unravelled that cannot be real because there was never a time lapse to start with. There is the infamous UK case of a woman who video filmed a weather balloon. NARO investigated immediately as that woman

called me within hours of her sighting via Jodrell Bank. Our case investigation was objective and I think showed very clearly what this woman saw that day. There was no hint of a time lapse. Later another UFOlogist and she retraced the case, decided there was now a time lapse and regressed her. Do we here see the start of an abduction memory emerging via a case which in my view cannot be an abduction since there was never a UFO present, just a balloon? It is a tricky matter but a far from unimportant one.

To be sure these issues are complex and hardly simple choices. But it is surely obvious that there are enough good reasons to be wary of the value of hypnosis if not enough to do what BUFORA has done and take a brave stand against it.

Best wishes,

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