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Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1999](#) -> [May](#) -> **Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)

From: Jerome Clark <jkclark@frontiernet.net>
Date: Tue, 18 May 99 12:34:22 PDT
Fwd Date: Thu, 20 May 1999 10:14:22 -0400
Subject: Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)

>Date: Mon, 17 May 1999 18:09:46 -0500
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: Dennis Stacy <dstacy@texas.net>
>Subject: Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)

>>From: Jenny Randles <nufon@currantbun.com>
>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>>Subject: Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)
>>Date: Sun, 16 May 1999 21:14:43 +0100

Hi, Jenny and Dennis,

>>But I am glad he [Hynek] is not around to see some of today's
>>ufology. I fear he would be sad at some of the mercenary
>>exploitation that goes on. Allen was far above all that.

>And you're right -- Allen was above all that. So much so that he
>sold the rights to what became "Close Encounters of the 3rd
>Kind" -- one of the highest grossing movies of all time -- for a
>miserable pittance and a song. (\$10,000 if memory serves.) Too
>bad. CUFOS could have used the extra money. Now more than ever.
>Are you aware that they're in severe financial difficulties and
>may not survive the millennium?

Allen, who was a wonderful, kind, and witty guy, great fun to be around, was virtually the definition of an absent-minded professor. He was certainly no businessman. Not even his worst enemies could accuse of an excessive interest in profit-making. He certainly could have made far more than he did from his post-Blue Book association with UFOs. He deserved it. And if he had, as Dennis suggests, CUFOS would also have benefited.

>Look, I liked Allen as a person, too, but let's not turn the man
>into some sort of beknighted UFO saint he wasn't. By some
>accounts, he came to like the microphone and camera a wee bit
>too much in his later years -- and his own UFO research suffered
>accordingly. He did much, just as he left much undone, an
>epitaph I'm sure most of us would be happy to share.

I think Dennis has it about right. Allen had his virtues and his faults, like all of us, and he made his share of mistakes. There is no point in turning him into a plaster saint, and any rounded picture of him as a figure in UFO history has to take into account the late James McDonald's hard-hitting criticisms of Allen's blunders, occasional opportunism, and intellectual timidity. On the other hand, if UFOs one day are proved to exist, history will surely be much kinder to

Allen Hynek than many of his contemporaries were.

Jerry Clark

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