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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: Jerry Cohen <rjcohen@li.net>
Date: Mon, 24 May 1999 18:54:03 -0500
Fwd Date: Mon, 24 May 1999 23:36:42 -0400
Subject: Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)

>From: "Bill Stockstill" <slicklru2@email.msn.com>
>To: <updates@globalserve.net>
>Subject: Re: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)
>Date: Sun, 16 May 1999 12:11:00 -0400

>>Date: Sat, 15 May 1999 19:38:43 -0700
>>From: Dr. Virgilio Sanchez-Ocejo <ufomiami@bellsouth.net>
>>To: UFO UpDate <updates@globalserve.net>
>>Subject: Dr. J. Allen Hynek (1910-1986)

>>One of the finest ufologist in the USA was Dr. Hynek, and we
>>lament that the new generation, involved in the most ambiguous
>>aspects of the UFO phenomenon, such as abductions, sometimes
>>don't even reconize his name.

><snip>

>I totally agree that Dr. Allen Hynek should not be forgotten. He
>did make a huge impact on giving credibility to Ufology, with
>CUFOS being his legacy. But what I can't stop wondering about is
>why did he not try and present these totally unexplainable cases
>to his fellow scientists while he was a consultant to the Air
>Force. Where would we be now if prior to the Colorado
>Investigation (Condon Report) he had presented all the data from
>the unexplained cases to the scientific community in the
>appropriate setting.

JC: Bill, your first question is certainly valid, however the
second, where we would be right now is definitely of lesser
importance. It's a "could have"/"should have" question which
psychologists tell us time and again not to bother ourselves
with. What is important is where we are now, where we can get to
from here & how to get there.

Getting back to your first question; it does have some good
answers if one really looks closely at what actually happened
back then and what things were really like.

>Reading Forbidden Science, written by perhaps his closest friend
>and colleague Jacques Vallee, Hynek's reasoning is that he did
>not want to upset the Air Force by disclosing the quality
>unknown cases to the scientific community. His fear was that he
>would be denied further access to the data.

JC: You have to admit, this certainly qualifies as a valid
point to the person gathering data. He was the only civilian
scientist that I'm aware of that had any kind of close proximity
to the military data. For many years the military was looking to

downplay the data. Since they hired Hynek, I think it is reasonable to assume that Vallee was right. Some of the other members of this list have a better grasp of this early material than I do and could adequately demonstrate this to you. I can see at least several other reasons as well.

1. When Hynek was first hired by the Air Force, it was to disprove the reality of UFOs. Hynek himself admits to scoffing at the whole subject. (Hynek, *The UFO Experience*, 1972) However, his opinion changed over the years. Please see the following quotes from Hynek re his evolution located at:
<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.3b.html#anchor75480>

2. Not being a scientist I may not be stating this perfectly but, as I understand it, one important part of the scientific discipline says that other scientists must be able to recreate the results of any hypothesis in a laboratory, field setting, etc. for undeniable proof to be communicated to all scientists.

3. The data back then simply wasn't strong enough to display in a thoroughly scientific, mathematical, etc. setting; but reports definitely existed that were certainly "out of the norm" and not easily explainable in scientific terms. My guess is that privately, to some people he felt safe with, he probably did discuss some cases that puzzled him. Indicative of this, please see comments by Walter Webb (astronomer at Charles Hayden Planetarium, Boston):

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.3b.html#anchor904745>

But Hynek was a good scientist. He knew the type proof he needed before he could prove any hypothesis conclusively. One is foolish to shout something too loudly if you can't prove it. (Yet, the longer he studied all of it, the apparent quality and quantity of certain type cases seemed to suggest hypotheses that really stretched the boundaries of our thinking; dimensional approaches, etc) Dr. Hynek wasn't sure what the answer was himself but he wanted to see it seriously studied.

4. UFOs were not always (or ever? ..possibly in his latter years) his main line of work. For a few insights into his life please see:
<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.3a.html>

5. UFOs have not displayed themselves for "study which lends itself to duplication." They don't normally appear on command when you want them to. For the most part, a person has no idea where to set up his instruments if he wants to measure it, etc. Studying this phenomenon isn't much different today except we've had some more time to gather what small amounts of solid data are available for analysis. (Trace cases, radar tracks, gun camera film from various military sources.. the majority of which is probably top secret, etc. films or videos people claim to have taken, etc.)

6. One must also remember that people react differently in a group setting than they do individually. What a scientist would say to Hynek in private certainly might easily be different than what that person might say in a committee setting when funding and scientific reputations were on the line. Hynek was well aware of this. Remember, the University of Colorado Study was one perfect example of this. Look what happened on the project. Who funded it? the U.S. Air Force. Does anyone else see a slight conflict of interest here?

Colorado Project

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/condon.html>

Dr. Condon Page at UFOMind

<http://www.ufomind.com/people/c/condon/>

7. The lengths we have seen some radical skeptics go to disprove the reality of UFOs (i.e. when they sometimes construct hypotheses that don't really fit the original facts) is proof enough to know what a person is facing when he shouts to the world, "We have visitors and they're not from here." In other words, you'd better darn well be able to prove it conclusively, or else. (and rightly so for the rest of the world's sanity.) Years ago they used to burn people at the stake. Today, ostracism and loss of funding & reputation takes its place.

>>From the Wednesday, June 8, 1966 entry in *Forbidden Science*,

>Dr. James McDonald, professor of atmospheric physics at the
>University of Arizona was authorized to spend two days at Wright
>field (Blue Book Headquarters), requesting to see all cases
>attributed to "globular lightning". "He was amazed and horrified
>at what he saw: case after case that obviously had nothing to do
>with electrical discharges in the air". Next he asked to see the
>general files, "getting increasingly upset as he kept on
>reading". He realized the official explanations where
>"bull****".

JC: Yes, but the official explanations weren't specifically Hynek's. Hynek would submit his report to the Air Force who would then decide what they really wanted to say about it. Hynek told us this in his letter to Colonel Sleeper, his boss when working at Blue Book. (Hynek, The UFO Experience, 1972) There were periods in the Air Force's history where, for various reasons, some legitimate some not, they just wanted to play down the cases as if they didn't exist at all. Also, Dr. Hynek stated in his book that they didn't let him see all of the cases (and probably not the radar/gun camera data either). At Blue Book, he wasn't allowed to go in and just peruse the files. Please see URL below. Scroll down to:

ON HYNEK'S ROLE IN BLUE BOOK (GUESSING GAME PLAYED)

Appendix 4, Section A, Paragraph 9

Taken from his 1972 book, The UFO Experience

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.5a.html>

>After reading the official files, later that day he confronted
>Hynek asking, "How could you remain silent so long?". Vallee
>jumped in on the side of Hynek, "If Allen had taken a strong
>position last year the Air Force would have dropped him as
>consultant and we wouldn't be here talking about the
>phenomenon". McDonald reply was, "I'm not talking about last
>year. Its in 1953 Allen should have spoken out!"

JC: Bill, back then there were some incredible reports as well, but unfortunately the scientific data actually available was even less than today. I've listed one such case, "Kirtland" under the James McDonald URLs below. Read Hynek's "The UFO Experience" and compare other analyses by various authors and you should understand. Any scientist will immediately realize this.

>This is burned in my mind. The data obviously was there and the
>official explanations were bogus. Yet, Hynek did not start
>talking about this until after Blue Book was dissolved. Most
>then probably thought him a disgruntled scientist, his
>multi-decade consultant job eliminated as the result of the
>Condon Report's recommendations.

JC: O.K., then put some salve on it and redirect your focus a little. :-)) It certainly wasn't all his fault. To most of us, survival is a basic instinct. Your next paragraph should give us all a clue regarding this. Please note, Hynek definitely surpassed McDonald in this regard. This is not to denigrate any of the marvelous research Dr. McDonald performed and illuminated us with. I hope you understand what I'm trying to say. A person can be 100% right and still not survive.

>After accessing the Air Force data, McDonald spent much of the
>next 3 years studying UFOs. He spoke to the American Association
>for the Advancement of Science, 134th Meeting General Symposium
>in 1969 trying to convince them that the data on UFOs was being
>inadequately investigated and needed to be seriously studied.
>Yet, his words fell on deaf ears. He killed himself in the early
>70s. Some attribute his suicide to the negative effect his
>interest in UFOs had on his career .

>Perhaps while we are remembering scientists, we should remember
>Dr. John McDonald. If he were the Air Force's consultant on
>UFOs, imagine where we would be now.

JC: BTW, that's James not John. Absolutely, this is why I defended both these gentlemen to James Oberg when he made some disparaging remarks concerning them while discussing Gordon Cooper's claims. This and all the history quoted herein has been located for the past couple of years at:
<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/index.html>

Yes, Dr. McDonald was definitely important. Amongst other

things, his revelations on the Kirtland AFB case interest me greatly; especially because of other cases that occurred right in that same time period. One of them appears below. A neighbor of mine was dating someone from the Sebago when that incident occurred. Because of this, I personally know the case is legitimate and as stated.

Sebago Case (11/5/57)

<http://www.evansville.net/~slk/sebago.htm>

McDonald's Critique of the handling of the Condon "Kirtland AFB Case"

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.7c.html#Anchor1323>

McDonald's Own Analysis of "The Kirtland AFB Case (11/4/57)"

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.7b.html>

McDonald's Credentials

<http://www.li.net/~rjcohen/ocr.7c.html#anchor187593>

and I'd certainly be totally remiss if I didn't include Brad Zeiler and Jean van Gemert's excellent website which includes some important papers by James McDonald, including:

<http://www.primenet.com/~bdzeiler/papers/aaas1.htm>

But, just remember one thing; after McDonald died, Hynek was still here pressing for further study in CUFOS, etc. Whatever else one might accuse Hynek of, he was brave enough to stay the course, amazingly without ruining his reputation, until his death in 1986. This could only occur if he was an honest, cautious scientist. We've seen what this topic can do to people if they foul up. If people read the early issues of CUFOS from the period when Hynek was alive, most will see his honesty evident therein. He did his best to apply a proper scientific approach to every case that appeared there. Their website address appears below. Because of Dr. Hynek's work and the many excellent papers and editorials I have seen published in the CUFOS journal, I thoroughly respect that organization and the people therein.

CUFOS.J. Allen Hynek

<http://www.cufos.org/org.html>

Respectfully,
Jerry Cohen

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