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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: British Ufology Has Been Reborn!

From: **Mark Cashman** <mcashman@ix.netcom.com>
Date: Sun, 14 Nov 1999 09:33:29 -0500
Fwd Date: Mon, 15 Nov 1999 08:23:19 -0500
Subject: Re: British Ufology Has Been Reborn!

>Date: Thu, 11 Nov 1999 20:26:53 +0000
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: John Rimmer <jrimmer@magonia.demon.co.uk>
>Subject: Re: British Ufology Has Been Reborn!

>>What is particularly interesting is that despite this, the
>>appearance of UFOs did not change to follow the explanation. I
>>must wonder how this can be used to support "myth" hypotheses,
>>since with regard to myth one would expect exactly the opposite.

>And just how would you expect the appearance to change? Would a
>Russian secret weapon necessarily look different to an
>extraterrestrial craft? As witnesses would have no idea what
>either looked like there is no reason why the descriptions
>should change. In fact there was quite a long period when both
>"explanations" overlapped.

I think it is reasonable to assume that the populace would think that "Russian secret weapons" or even "American secret weapons" would look like aircraft. Advanced aircraft, maybe with highly swept wings, but aircraft, not wingless disks, spheres, and cylinders.

I would expect that the switch to belief that UFOs were extraterrestrial would convert the most common descriptions to non-aircraft-like geometries which would fit the most common current model of what "alien spacecraft" would look like. I don't believe people thought alien spacecraft and secret weapons would look similar.

Do you have evidence to the contrary?

>I'd be interested to know what Mark Cashman thinks *is* the
>unchanging appearance of a "true UFO".

>In fact, UFO descriptions are constantly changing. Where were
>the triangles before the 1980s? Why does no-one now see classic
>flying saucers with "conning towers"? Whatever happened to
>Arnold's croissant-shaped objects? Was the Socorro craft an
>unsuccessful prototype which was seldom seen again?

In fact, they are not constantly changing. The UFO geometries shown in the 1964 UFO Evidence are evident in reports from 1947 and from 1997.

Triangles of one sort or another appear in pre 1980s reports and are one of the classifications in the 1964 UFO Evidence. That they are more common now than in the past is not something yet

empirically verified, but even if that were the case, it is not any sort of "proof" of the non-existence of UFOs.

UFOs with "towers" do appear in a number of reports from 1949 through 1967 and possibly into the 1970s. That geometry has always been among the least common. The most common geometry, the domed disk, continues to be frequently reported. In addition, the tower, unless displaying a luminosity of its own, would probably be invisible in night sightings.

Arnold, in case you didn't bother to look at the sketches in the Blue Book report, depicted lenticular disks. As for large wing shaped objects, they have been reported at least since 1951 and continuing through the 1990s. Many of these could be interpreted as having a "croissant" shape.

The Socorro geometry (an ellipse) has been reported probably only secondary in frequency to the domed disk. There are many reports of noisy near ground behavior, and blue luminosity as well.

Please familiarize yourself with more than the popular accounts - read the case literature before making statistical pronouncements.

BTW, even if UFO shapes kept changing, it would not be evidence of their mythological nature. Aside from dealing with multiple witness cases, the ground traces, the radar detection, the medical evidence, etc., proof of the mythological nature of the UFO, would require showing it tracking cultural depictions of the concept to which UFOs are attached. A test such as that which I mentioned (UFO geometries reflecting the common concept of the explanation accepted at the time) would seem to be to be a basic discriminator of the hypothesis. Are you saying it is not? Is that because it does not support your hypothesis?

>The only thing all these shapes have in common is that, as a
>previous contributor noted, they were prefigured in 1930s
>science fiction.

As I have pointed out before, statistically, the vast majority of pre-1950s spaceship depictions were either streamlined cigars with fins, cones with wings, or, for the really advanced stuff, submarine shaped objects with giant rivets and rows of ship-like portholes. Also, there are no reports of Flash Gordon like objects, despite the popularity of that serial.

Where are these in the reports of the time? Also, where is the evidence that UFO reporters were science fiction readers or fans of SF serials?

Finally, keep in mind that cultural context goes both ways, and after 1947, most people in the US had a pretty good idea of what UFOs looked like. Also keep in mind that Jerry Clark and others have shown that a large number of the 1897 airship wave reports, especially those with human occupants, seem to have been journalistic hoaxes.

Let's remember that scientific explanations, including sociological explanations, require one to follow the scientific model:

- 1) Observations to be explained.
- 2) Hypothesis to explain them.
- 3) Discriminators to determine the truth or falsity of the hypothesis.
- 4) Observations/experiments to detect the discriminators.
- 5) Peer review of the results and attempts to duplicate.

If you are interested in any sort of acceptance for your views, you will need to follow these guidelines.

Mark Cashman, creator of The Temporal Doorway at
<http://www.temporaldoorway.com>
- Original digital art, writing, music and UFO research -

UFO cases, analysis, classification systems, and more...
<http://www.temporaldoorway.com/ufo/index.htm>

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