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Seeing Things...

The first great contactee came not from the Californian saucerites of happy memory but from Hollywood in the form of the allegorical S.F. drama *The Day the Earth Stood Still*

Magonia

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PETER ROGERSON'S NORTHERN ECHOES



IN an interesting collection of U.S. ghostlore and folklore recently acquired,* there is an account of "The Dead Baby of Hill House". Hill House

was an immigrant welfare centre in Chicago, and in 1913 the rumour swept various immigrant communities that a distressed couple had deposited a child at the House in the likeness of the devil. Hundreds of people besieged the building for a glimpse of the baby. There were a number of versions of the rumour:

The Irish Version - an Irish girl refused to confess a pre-marital affair, for which sin she was forced to give birth to the devil, and took the child to the House. When staff tried to baptise the little fiend it jumped out of its swaddling clothes and danced away with a devilish laugh.

The Italian Version - an Italian woman married an atheist against the wishes of her family. When the pious wife put up a picture of the Virgin Mary her husband, on his return from work, ripped it up, saying he would rather have the devil himself. This allowed Satan to possess the unborn child. On its birth the child ran around the kitchen table, chattering and pointing his finger at his atheist father.

An Orthodox Jewish Version - a woman who had a pre-marital child told the rabbi that the child born after her marriage was actually her first child, and paid the rabbi the first-born fee. For this her third child was Satan.

Another Jewish Version - the youngest daughter of a pious Orthodox family married a gentile without her parents' knowledge, still less their approval. When her father found out he flew into a rage, saying "I would rather have a devil as a grandchild than a

gentile as a son-in-law." Naturally, in the way of folktales, his wish was granted, and the horrified parents took the child to Hill House.

A Somewhat Rationalist Version of Jewish Origin - an unmarried mother-to-be and a friend had gone to see the play *Faust*. There a neighbour had seen her looking too intently at Mephistopheles, thereby imprinting the baby with his likeness.

Popular rumour added further details: with its first breath the child had cursed its father, had grabbed the cigar from his mouth and was now driving round Chicago in a big red motor-car!

Many of the motifs show that the Secret Child was a classic changeling 'old before its years', which had fled before holy water. It was the punishment for substituting free republican ways for the traditions and mores of the old homeland. The 'changeling' itself in some ways represents the new world, the new life in the New World. He is the trickster, the symbol of capricious nature.

There is something reminiscent of the comic-book about a baby stealing his father's cigar and driving a red (!) motor-car through the streets. This is the sort of thing we imagine an infant Popeye or Desperate Dan would have done. The 'heroic' child refuses to know its place, and snatches at two cultural symbols of American patriarchy. It is a symbol of the fear of the future which will eventually supplant us and stand witness at our funerals.

* SCOTT, Beth and NORMAN, Michael. *Haunted Homeland*, Warner Books, 1986

UFOs are never seen in a cultural vacuum. The very terminology we use helps dictate what is 'seen' and/or reported. In the past we had chariots of fire, will o'the wisps, phantom airships, foo fighters and ghost rockets as some of the main frames of reference for interpreting weird things in the sky. Indeed, the very frame of reference can help cause people to see these 'things' in the sky, or make them report sightings they would never otherwise have thought twice about.

Seeing Things



By Nigel Watson

A good example of this kind of thinking is displayed in Brian Burden's article "The Andreasson Affair" and "The Time Machine"; Was H G Wells an Unwitting Contactee? (1) Recently, but not altogether surprisingly, Whitley Strieber notes that his fear of abduction by spacemen in the mid-1950's, predated any possibility of his having come across such ideas in the media available to him at that time. (2) This blatantly ignores the vast range of science fiction magazines and films then on release in the USA. A brief look at Martin Kottmeyer's article 'Entirely Unprejudiced' (3) notes the 1953 vintage **Invaders from Mars** and the 1954 **Killers from Space**. Other films of that period featuring flying saucers and aliens are **The Day the Earth Stood Still** (1951), **The Thing** (1951), **It Came From Outer Space** (1953), and **War of the Worlds** (1954) to name but a few!

As usual, Peter Rogerson, many years before anyone else, was able to put this matter into a better perspective. He noted that in the first few years of the creation of the UFO myth as we know it today, it was:

"... nurtured, not primarily by the

absurd UFO cults, but by the professional myth-makers, the comics, films, science fiction writers, even advertisers. The first great contactee came not from the Californian 'saucerites' of happy memory, but from Hollywood; in the form of the allegorical science-fiction drama "The day the Earth Stood Still". (5)

Where did Hollywood get the template for such ideas? Step forward John Keel. He asserts in his typically over-stated manner that Ray Palmer's publication of the 'Shaver' stories in the magazine **Amazing Stories** in the 1940's supplied the foundation of the UFO myth. (6) **Amazing Stories** might have exerted a powerful influence, though other factors, such as the Fortean Society and general social conditions, could well have sustained ufology as a subject without Shaver. Indeed, Keel ignores the fact that other countries which did not have such a high exposure to **Amazing Stories** (if any at all) rapidly took an interest in flying saucers.

Bertrand Meheust has pointed out that much earlier science fiction contains stories very similar to those related by the UFO

1. BURDEN, Brian. 'The Andreasson Affair' and 'The Time Machine: Was H G Wells an Unwitting Contactee?'. **Awareness**, Vol. 9, no. 3, pp.5-7.

2. STRIEBER, W. **Transformation; the Breakthrough**, Arrow, 1989., p.101.

3. KOTTMEYER, Martin. 'Entirely Unprejudiced', **Magonia**, no. 35, Jan 1990.

4. A more comprehensive review of SF films with such themes is included in: WATSON, Nigel, 'The Day Flying Saucers Invaded the Cinema', in **UFOs 1947-1987**, Fortean Tones, 1987, pp.333-337.

5. ROGERSON, Peter. 'The Mythology of UFO Events and Interpretations', **MUF08**, Vol. 5, no. 3, summer 1972, pp.19-23.

6. KEEL, John. 'The Man Who Invented Flying Saucers', **Fortean Times**, no. 41, pp.52-57.



7. Meheust's book *Science-Fiction et Soucoupes Volantes* is reviewed in: EVANS, Hilary. 'The Actor's Dog', *Common Ground*, no. 7, pp.25-27.

8. WILSON, Mark. 'The History of Israel Jobson, the Wandering Jew', quoted in: FRANK, Joseph, (ed.), *The Doomed Astronaut*, Winthrop Publishers, Mass., USA, 1972, pp.81-89.

witnesses, contactees and abductees of today. He notes a 1920s French story of an abduction that parallels a 1970's 'real' Brazilian abduction. (7)

A quick look through my book collection reveals a story written as long ago as 1757. It tells of Israel Johnson who is in a deep state of despair on top of Penyghent Hill, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. His prayers are answered by a cloud of mist that covers the mountain:

"... and an Ethereal Chariot descended with a Messenger from the Regions of Bliss. No Language can describe the Port and Glory of an Angel. He commanded me to Erect a small Pile of Stones as a Monument of Antiquity, and ascend the Chariot; I gladly obey'd ..." (8)

The 'chariot' takes him to the Moon, where he meets members of the local population who are made of metal. On Mars he sees the sexless inhabitants who are

see the secular trappings of ufology being stripped away to reveal more clearly than ever the religious yearnings of abductees and contactees.

Ufologists have noticed that the phantom airships seen in the USA in 1896-7 and in the USA, Europe and New Zealand during the early years of the 20th century can be compared with the airships described in the fiction of the period. The question is 'did the reports inspire the fiction or did the fiction inspire the reports?' This question is asked by Iain Johnstone. (11) He puts forward the idea that the phantom airship/scareship panics were caused by the 'secret' experiments of inventors who had created aerial vehicles. Looking at mountains of this material a simple cause and effect model cannot be advocated. As ufologists we have tended to look at the phantom airship reports in isolation, or when other factors have been considered, they are used as evidence for the ufonauts's (or aeronauts') master plan.

As Ron Miller notes in his excellent article 'Jules Verne and the Great Airship Scare' the descriptions of phantom airships are very similar to the real and fictional aerial inventions of the period. He sums up the situation by stating that all the phantom airship sightings in America during 1896 to 1897:

"... could be either imaginative interpretations of anomalous and amorphous phenomena, simple 'bandwaggoning', or even outright hoaxes. In other words, nothing that we haven't seen taking place in so many modern UFO reports. Those of a century ago are different only in using 19th century visual references." (12)

Certainly there was never any lack of visual stimuli that might help create a suitable template for observations of phantom airships or aircraft. Special air exhibitions and fairs featured balloons, kites, airships, plus models, plans and illustrations of even greater types of air vessels. Images of aircraft were just as much a part of 19th century popular culture as images of rockets and spacecraft were in the 1950's. The achievement of the Wright brothers in 1903 and the continuing airship work by Zeppelin, showed that aircraft would make major contributions to civilian and military enterprises.

Newspapers, magazines, comics, cartoons and plays featured real and fictional aircraft. A new source of influence, particularly on the working classes, was the cinema. British filmmakers in 1909 borrowed heavily from the popular invasion-scare sub genre. The image of the airship or aeroplane - especially since both types of aircraft were being constructed and refined with far greater vigour abroad - was a powerful and highly photogenic expression of foreign

With the publication of Whitley Streiber's *Transformation* we can see the secular trappings of ufology being stripped away to reveal more clearly than ever the religious yearnings of abductees and contactees

9. See for example the reported experience of Charles Woodward recorded in: WATSON, Nigel, 'Green Monsters', *Folklore Frontiers*, no.9, 1989. Jimmy Goddard notes further parallels between this case and Christian imagery in the following issue of *Folklore Frontiers*.

there to glorify the vision of the Creator. He sees the splendours of Jupiter and Saturn, goes beyond the solar system, and nearly reaches the gates of paradise when he is quickly sent back to Earth. It is easy to compare this with the writings of contactees who also report such splendid journeys accompanied with quasi-scientific descriptions of the heavenly bodies and theological discussions with angelic guides.

Many SF-type stories from the distant past, or visionary experiences pre-dating 1947, are littered with religious reflections and interpretations. (9) Since the nineteenth century, what we have now come to call science-fiction has been overtly secular in outlook, and the same applied to ufology. Yet the writings and ideas in both areas still attempt to address the fundamental issues of 'why are we here', 'what is the meaning of life' that are usually not very far from, and conditioned by, religious viewpoints. The difference is often only in the use of terminology rather than in a fundamentally different and secular outlook on the world and our universe. With the publication of Whitley Streiber's *Transformation* we can



intrusion - though other wonderful technological weapons were often used alongside or instead of aircraft, such as armoured trains, submarines, battleships, etc.

Many of the films had to include a 'love interest'. In the case of Walter R Booth's film **The Airship Destroyer**, a young inventor is rejected by his girlfriend's parents. The destruction of his romantic aspirations are paralleled by the destruction of English aeroplanes and railway lines by an enemy airship. Attacked physically and psychologically, the inventor uses a remote controlled aerial torpedo to destroy the airship and in consequence gain favour with his girlfriend's parents. They don't make narrative closures like that anymore!

In Percy Stow's film **The Invaders** two lovers are finally saved by the Territorial Army. The story begins when soldiers disguised as passengers on a ship land on our shores. They bring with them an artillery gun hidden in a crate (perhaps they should have been going to Iraq?). Once they unpack the gun they shell Dora's home on a hill. the tranquillity of English domestic life is shattered by this untimely and obviously unwanted intrusion into their little home. Dora's lover is blasted and knocked unconscious by the weapon's onslaught. Fortunately Dora sends a note by pigeon to the Army that in the nick of time saves them from the foreign hoards.

The army that lands on English soil in **Invasion: The Possibilities** produced by Charles Urban is repelled by an armoured train, demonstrating that English ingenuity and invention is always ready to save our darkest days.

Leon Stormont's treatment of an invasion in **England Invaded** was more unusual because it included fictional and factual film segments as well as live action, songs and recitation. It opened at London's Coliseum Theatre on 22 February 1909 and went on tour later in the year.

The technology of the cinema brought to its audience images of how other forms of technology could have a dramatic influence on their lives and the future. The overwhelming message of the invasion films was that if we are not vigilant the foreign enemy will infiltrate our cosy insulated land and disrupt everything. Certainly this was a great concern of the ruling classes who had to contend with the suffragettes and trade unions who aspired to greater political power within Britain, and the empire-building aspirations of Germany which could only expand by taking over the lands ruled by other European powers.

The interest in airships caused by the scareship panic in the early part of 1913 brought about the production of a play called **Sealed Orders**. This was presented at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London from 11th September 1913. Cecil Raleigh and Henry

Hamilton's play has more twists than a political manifesto. It involves a man who is friendly with a foreign diplomat. They blackmail an admiral's wife to obtain some important sealed orders. the man gets the orders and takes his daughter to a waiting airship. The plan is to use the airship to deliver the orders to the man's foreign contacts. The scheme is foiled when the spy finds that the pilot of the airship is an old adversary. they fight and fall to their deaths. the daughter is rescued by the Royal Navy, and the orders are saved.

The play got mixed reviews, but the life-size airship suspended over the stage was nothing less than impressive. After the declaration of World War I the play was revived, and the foreign diplomat was clearly identified as the German ambassador.

Another play, **An Englishman's Home** was staged at Wyndham's Theatre, London, in January 1909. It was made into a

The overwhelming message of the invasion films was that if we are not vigilant the foreign enemy will infiltrate our cosy insulated land

film in 1914 and released shortly after the outbreak of war. The Guy Du Maurier story involves a Territorial soldier who seeks the hand of Joan Brown. her father doesn't like her suitor. It is only when the Germans invade and shoot his son in front of him, that he is pleased to have the aid of the Territorials. In May 1939 the play was revived at the Prince's Theatre. One reviewer claimed it was "... the sort of story that depends for its success on the audience's mind being full of fear and doubt and dark imaginings about sinister foreign enemies." (13)

The fiction of the pre-World War One period certainly exploited and encouraged public worries. William le Queux made a career out of scaremongering. His book **The Invasion of 1910** published in 1906, was made into a film in 1913 titled **If England Were Invaded** and was not released until after the outbreak of war. In this the Germans, who are coyly called the Nordeners, pose as holidaymakers at a seaside resort. Their devious plans are thwarted by a Post Office girl and a lieutenant on holiday.

Stolen plans and papers featured

10. This kind of religious connection is put more forcefully by John Paul Oswald (in a Commentary privately circulated in May 1990) who asserts that we must acknowledge the reality of God, that Jesus is our teacher and saviour, and that in harmonious unity with them: "we have the UFO-Aliens in their role as the operative agents of Christ's installment for overt control." In other words the UFO-Aliens are paving the way for the Second Coming predicted in the Book of Revelations. This isn't a new idea amongst UFO contactees, but with the ending of the century we can surely expect much more of this thinking within mainstream ufology.

11. JOHNSTONE, Iain. 'The Aeronauts of Victoriana', **UFO Brigantia**, no. 25, Mar.-Apr. 1987, pp.18-23.

12. MILLER, Ron. 'Jules Verne and the Great Airship Scare', **International UFO Reporter**, vol.12, no.3., May-June 1987.

13. **Manchester Guardian**, 23 May 1939.



Captioned "Early 19th Century, the French or 'Boney' Threat" (left) and "Early 20th Century, the German or 'Airship' Threat", this cartoon from the 1st March 1913 issue of *Pall Mall Gazette* satirizes the airship rumours by comparing them with earlier invasion scares.



prominently in *England's Menace and Wake Up!* both released after the declaration of war in August 1914. In the first, directed by Harold Shore, a daughter of a lord discovers discarded wireless messages carelessly left by a foreign spy. One of them reports that an enemy fleet is sailing towards England. She immediately dashes to 10 Downing St., whereupon the Prime Minister mobilises the army and navy. Using a radio and the enemy's secret code he orders their fleet to return. War is averted due to the quick-witted action of the young woman. In *Wake Up!* the Secretary of State for War is all for compromise and playing golf. When war does come his daughter helps recover the plans for the defence of the eastern coastline from the hands of the enemy.

From this brief survey we can see that even poorly-read members of the working class would be aware of the threat of Germany, and would, through film shows, posters, cartoons, etc., be aware of the appearance of aeroplanes and airships. Perhaps one reason why so many of the phantom airship sightings, during the British 1909 and 1913 scares were made in cities was due to the greater exposure of the urban public to the cinema. Though it should be added that most airship reports detailed in the newspaper were made by middle-class male witnesses - the visions of workers and

women were not given so much attention, or were briefly mentioned to back up the prime witnesses' sighting.

Having established that most members of the public were familiar with the image of the airship or aeroplane, especially in the context of warfare, it is worth looking at how such images might have played an important part in creating and/or maintaining airship scares.

The best example is provided by the 1909 New Zealand airship scare. the sighting that created the most interest took place at noon on 23 July 1909. It was reported in this manner:

"There is not the slightest doubt that the airship was seen at Kelso yesterday at noon. I have eyewitnesses to prove this. It is cigar or 'boat' shaped, and is pointed at each end. Those who saw it had no idea of the probable height it could be above them. It did not appear to be very long in build, but was very broad. The children who saw it say that it had a pontoon-shaped part above the boat and a short pole or mast in the centre, it blew over and past the school ground, turned round, and went back the way it came. It was flying very easily, and had no trouble in turning. It came from the direction of the Blue Mountains and over the wooded hill above Kelso, and started to make back direct to the mountains again. It was seen by at



least five persons, and their statements are all in accord."

This prompted many more people to report seeing airships in the sky. for example:

"On Tuesday (27 July), about 10 o'clock in the forenoon, Mr Allan Mitchell, son of Mr J R Mitchell... and Mr Alex Riach, while working on Lambourne, near the mouth of the Pomahaka River, saw high in the air, apparently over Messrs Begg Bros. at Pukepito, a large boat-shaped structure floating in the air. They stopped and watched it to make sure they were not being deceived. It appeared to be coming straight towards them, and they expected it to come over their heads in the direction of the Blue Mountains. It dipped up and down in the air with an easy motions and they could see it easily and had a good view of it, the distance away being about two miles and a half, and pretty high in the air. Their first impressions as to shape were confirmed. it was distinctly boat-shaped, and they could see on the top of it what appeared to be a long pole. It continued with a dipping and ascending motion towards them for some time, and then swerved to the west and crossed the river and headed across by Whitelea and disappeared in the direction of the sea at a fairly fast rate of speed. The broadside view disclosed the same large boat-like appearance, with a mast on top... By its movements it appeared to be under control in some way... It will be seen that this corresponds almost exactly with what was seen at Kelso..." (15)

Two dredgehands at 5.00 am on 30 July also saw a similar airship. From their location, just north of Gore, they saw a narrow boat-shaped craft. It carried a light at both ends and inside the craft they could see two figures. After circling the district for several minutes it went away in the direction of Otakarama. (16)

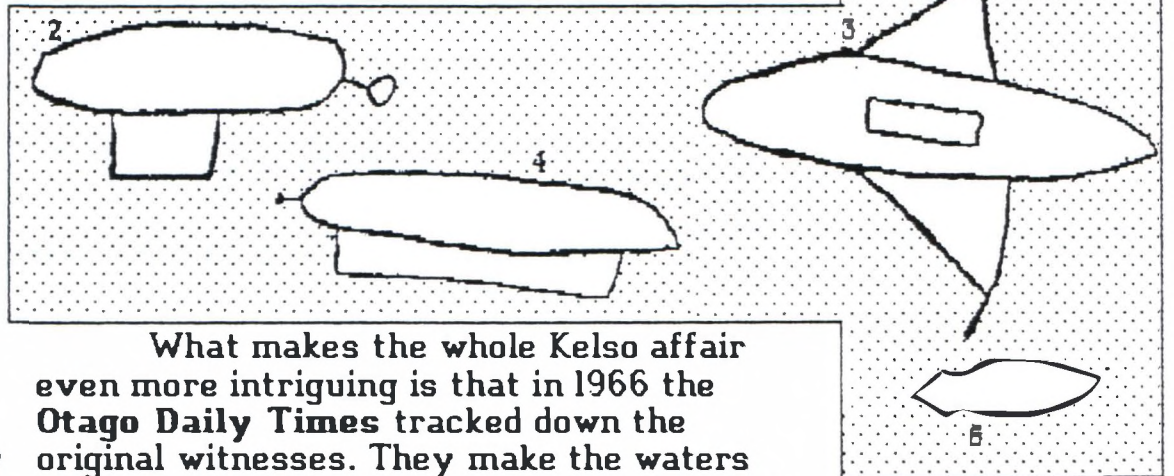
Another sighting that had a striking similarity with the Kelso report occurred a 3.00 am on 2 August:

"Mr Thomas Robertson, a baker in the employ of Mr Irvine, saw plainly a large boat-shaped body passing over the north end of Oamaru, a short distance this side of Sumpter's Hill... He also saw silhouetted against the brightness beyond what he took to be two figures in the structure. these, however, he says, may have been parts of the airship, but to him they appeared to be men." (17)

This evidence might suggest that there was a real airship flying over New Zealand at that time. The eyewitnesses agree that the thing was boat-shaped, carried two pilots and had a mast-like structure on top of it. The problem with such an idea is that when a reporter finally went to see the original witnesses to the Kelso manifestation their story was different. They had not seen a mast-like structure or two pilots. The

children, and one adult, who saw the craft were asked to make drawings of what they saw. the resulting illustrations look nothing like boat-shaped aerial vehicles. Apparently the original Kelso report was made by a local correspondent who had half-guessed what the children had seen. In some quarters it was felt that the childrens' drawings had been influenced by what an airship should look like from a recent copy of the **Windsor Magazine**. Elsewhere it was noted that a children's comic called **Chums** had featured an airship story titled 'The peril of the Motherland'.

We are left to wonder if the Kelso story was deliberately used by local pranksters or hoaxers to fabricate their own stories, or that they actually witnessed something ambiguous in the sky that was easily 'seen' in the terms previously described in the newspaper. Or, as in the case of the Kelso story itself, it was easy for reporters to put flesh on the bones of a sighting report.



What makes the whole Kelso affair even more intriguing is that in 1966 the **Otago Daily Times** tracked down the original witnesses. They make the waters even more murky. Agnes Falconer who had been prominently featured in the 1909 accounts and had one of her drawings of the airship reproduced in several newspapers, now said she hadn't seen anything. Plus, she said, "I'm very positive i didn't draw anything. I can remember the reporter coming to school, but I wasn't in the class he interviewed... There were a lot of rumours. It created a big stir at the time, but whether there was anything in it, I really don't know."

None of the other witnesses were willing to say the whole incident was a hoax, on the other hand none of them gave much credence to the sightings. George McDuff, who saw an airship over Kelso on 24 July 1909, said, "The children had been reading certain magazine articles (describing an airship) and daydreaming. I put it down largely to that."

Are phantom airships, UFOs and the like all daydreams trying to become reality? Does or fiction and/or our thoughts about technology, combined with social circumstances 'produce' the very things in the sky we expect to see? I don't think there are such things as flying saucers but we have had to invent them - they are eloquent expressions of out inarticulate wonder and angst at our tinkering with nature. ◀◀

Sketches allegedly made by Kelso (N.Z.) schoolchildren describing the airship. Agnes Falconer who drew sketch 4 later denied ever being interviewed by reporters

- 14. **Otago Daily Times**, Dunedin, 26 July 1909.
- 15. **Otago Daily Times**, 31 July 1909.
- 16. **The Dominion**, 31 July 1909.
- 17. **The North Otago Times**, 4 August 1909.



Martin Kottmeyer



A UNIVERSE OF SPIES

1. HEARD, Gerald, *Is Another World Watching?*, Harper, 1951

2. ERSKINE, Allen Louis, *Why Are They watching Us?*, Tower, 1967

3. BORD, Janet and Colin, *Are We Being Watched?*, Angus Robertson, 1980

4. HAINES, Richard F, 'A review of proposed explanatory hypotheses for unidentified aerial phenomena', *Flying Saucer Review*, 32, 2 (February 1987), pp. 4-8

5. GROSS, Loren E., *UFOs: A History, Volume 1, July 1947-December 1948*, Arcturus Book Service, 1982, p. 12

6. GROSS, Loren E., *Charles Fort, the Fortean Society and Unidentified Flying Objects*, privately published, 1976, p. 79

7. STRENTZ, Herbert J, *A Survey of Press Coverage of Unidentified Flying Objects, 1947-1966*, Arcturus Book Service, 1982, p. 127

8. GROSS, CF, *op. cit.*, p. 93

Is Another World Watching? (1951) (1)
Why Are They Watching Us? (1967) (2)
Are We Being Watched? (1980) (3)

These three titles culled from the UFO literature introduce us to a dominant anxiety fuelling the UFO mythos. Once the existence of UFOs is accepted, their purpose must be addressed. The possibilities number in the neighbourhood of two dozen, but thinking tends to gravitate to the idea of secret, stealthy, or covert observation. (4)

Ufologists have preferred the terms reconnaissance or surveillance to describe these operations. Some, like Keyhoe, are more precise and call it spying. Spies evoke connotations of furtiveness, moral ambiguity, and psychological complexities which the other terms skirt.

It is my feeling that no psychohistory of the UFO mythos will get very far without an understanding of how the aliens-are-watching-us anxiety came to occupy a central place in ufological thought. A review of the concept seems a logical starting place to this exploration. Explaining it all will be deferred to till after we prove there is something here that really does need explaining.

The flying saucer era opened in an atmosphere of deep intrigue. Kenneth Arnold saw nine objects brush by Mount Rainier at speeds far beyond that of anything then being tested by the US Air Force. Arnold believed they

were unconventional craft being tested by the government. The public was fascinated. The Pentagon was, however, confused. It wasn't anything of ours, they were fairly sure. Was it something of the Soviets? They got a lot of German scientists from World War II and we knew the Nazis had a lot of wild ideas. But why fly it here? It set a lot of heads scratching in the intelligence community.

One of the cuter ideas to get kicked around was that the Soviets were trying to stir up a hysteria to make us fear the A-bomb was not the ultimate weapon. The FBI was asked to do background checks of saucer reporters to see if they had Communist leanings. By late July of 1947 it was determined that notion at least was wrong. (5)

The linking of flying saucers to extraterrestrials happened very quickly. Within four days of his sighting, Arnold said some woman rushed into a room, took one look at him, then dashed out shrieking: "There's the man who saw men from Mars!" (6) Hal Boyle, an Associated Press columnist, spoofed going on a trip in a flying saucer with a green Martian named Balmy. (7) DeWitt Miller spoke of the objects being not just possibly from outer space, but from other dimensions of time and space. (8) On 8 July, the Army issued a statement expressing assurances that the devices were

neither bacteriological devices of some foreign power or secret Army rockets, and they were *not* from outer space. (9) On 10 July Senator Taylor expressed the wish that saucers would turn out to be from outer space so as to unify earth. (10) This idea was apparently common coin for it had been satirised already two years earlier in a favourite Fritz Leiber story "Wanted - An Enemy". The plot consisted of an earthling trying to convince peace-loving Martians to make a token invasion and looting of the earth. He explains wistfully that mankind needs an enemy to unify him. The discussion convinces the aliens that they should reconnoitre the earth and verify that our psychology was as the visitor claims. If true, they would exterminate us. Why take chances? (11)

Amid these extra-terrestrial speculations can be found an early expression of the idea that aliens are watching us.

Loren Gross has found a little news article dated 8 July bearing the headline "Eyes from Mars". In it R L Farnworth, a Fortean and the president of the US Rocket Society, noted that spots in the sky were nothing new and opined, "I wouldn't even be surprised if the flying saucers were remote-control eyes from Mars". (12)

Despite the talk of Martians in the air, few took the idea seriously. Of 853 cases collected by Ted Bloecher for his *Report on the Wave of 1947*, only two witnesses openly expressed the opinion that the objects they saw were space ships. Kjell Qvale was first and dates to 5 July. (13) The other one was by John H Janssen and is of a rather special nature. To begin with, he is one of the few witnesses who took a photograph of the saucers. He states: "I really believe these craft to be operated by an intelligence far beyond that developed by we earth-bound mortals and am inclined to agree with the theory they are space craft from outer space." He theorises about magnetic and antigravity propulsion methods, then continues: "In all probability these are reconnaissance craft and as they have been seen all over the world and not only in this country, are probably making a thorough study of us and our terrain and atmosphere before making any overtures." It is all reminiscent of Keyhoe, but undeniably precedes him by two years. Several weeks after this sighting, Janssen has another encounter. His plane is stopped in mid-air for a number of minutes while being scrutinised by a pair of discs hovering nearby. Since this makes Janssen a repeater, Bloecher counsels suspicion. The case is, however, an instructive microcosm of reconnaissance beliefs generating reconnaissance experiences in a period when practically no one had such expectations. (14)



A woman rushed into a room, took one look at Arnold then dashed out shrieking "There's the man who saw men from Mars!"

A Gallup poll in August showed 29% of the public thought the saucers were optical illusions or imagination. Ten per cent thought they were hoaxes. A fair percentage, 15%, agreed with Arnold that the saucers were a US secret weapon. Only 1% thought they were Russian secret weapons. If anyone volunteered the opinion that the saucers were extraterrestrial, the pollsters did not bother to tally them. (15)

The intelligence community continued to ponder the mystery in the months following the 1947 wave and was less inclined to dismiss it as imagination. A letter between General N F Twining and Brigadier-General George Schulgen in September demonstrates belief by the intelligence community that the phenomenon was real and either a domestic high-security project or a foreign nation had developed a new form of propulsion, possibly nuclear.

(16) Sometime in this period a school of thought grew which held that the phenomenon was probably interplanetary. A Top Secret Estimate of the Situation by some of these people allegedly exists which recommended the military be put on an alert footing. The Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt Vandenberg, however, vetoed any such drastic official action. (17)

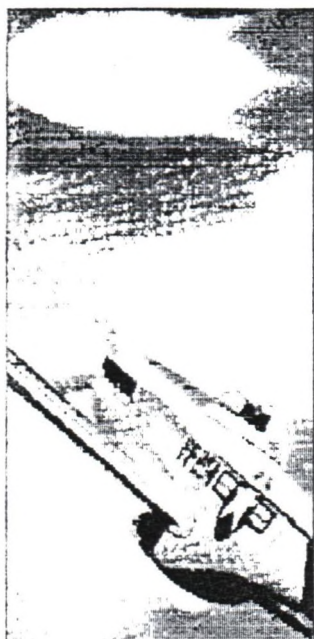
An Air Intelligence Report dated 10 December 1948 concluded that the flying objects were probably Soviet and pondered the reasons for the flights: 1) Negating US confidence that A-bombs were the ultimate defence; 2) Photographic reconnaissance; 3) Testing US defences in advance of a one-way all-out attack by strategic bombers; 4) Familiarising their pilots with our topography. The report expressed doubts about each of these ideas. With regard to the reconnaissance notion the report pointed out that sightings rarely involved areas we considered strategic. Maybe it was an effort to fill in gaps that were left from intelligence the Soviets gathered in liaisons with American industry in World War II. Some sites like Oak Ridge, Las Cruces, and the Hanford works which had sightings would not have been accessible to them. (18)

Almost simultaneously, in a report for Project Sign dated 13 December 1948, James E Lipp offered the first thoughtful analysis of the notion that extraterrestrials were involved. From the text it is evident that various people had begun taking the possibility seriously. One paragraph dealing with the reconnaissance concept is particularly notable.

One other hypothesis needs to be discussed. It is that the Martians have kept a



- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 97
- 11 LEIBER, Fritz, *The Best of Fritz Leiber*, Ballantine, 1974, pp. 42-56
- 12 GROSS, CF, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99
- 13 BLOECHER, Ted, *Report on the UFO Wave of 1947*, privately published, p. 11-5
- 14 *Ibid.*, p. IV-6
- 15 Gallup poll, 15 August 1947
- 16 GILLMOR, Daniel S (ed.), *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, Bantam, 1969, pp. 894-895
- 17 GROSS, *History I* (August-December 1948), pp. 1-2
- 18 ANDRUS, Walt, 'Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79', *MUFON UFO Journal* #207 (July 1985), pp. 3-18



The Mantell case, in particular, in January 1948 seemed to remove the possibility it was all some kind of joke.

a long-term routine watch on Earth and have been alarmed by the sight of our A-bomb shots as evidence that we are warlike and on the threshold of space travel. (Venus is eliminated here because her cloudy atmosphere would make such a survey impractical.) The first flying objects were sighted in the Spring of 1947, after a total 5 atomic bomb explosions, i.e. Alamogordo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Crossroads A and Crossroads B. Of these, the first two were in positions to be seen from Mars, the third was doubtful (at the edge of the Earth's disc in daylight) and the last two were on the wrong side of Earth. It is likely Martian astronomers, with their thin atmosphere, could build telescopes big enough to see A-bomb explosions on Earth, even though we were 165 and 153 million miles away, respectively, on the Alamogordo and Hiroshima dates. The weakest point in the hypothesis is that a continual defensive watch of Earth for long periods of time would be dull sport, and no race that even remotely resembled Man would undertake it. We haven't even considered the idea for Venus or Mars, for example.

Lipp didn't foresee the possibility that the watch could be turned over to computers and photoelectric sensors and other monitoring devices like remote satellites which would leave Martians free to consider more exciting pastimes and still be alerted to special developments when they happened. Still, the paragraph was not the sort that could be dashed off in a couple of minutes. Determining the visibility of A-bomb blasts from Mars is no simple matter. Lipp also cited problems which rendered the saucers being space ships inconsistent with known physical principles. He also remarked on the lack of purpose apparent in various cases. (19)

In another appendix to Project Sign, G E Valley did a little brainstorming of the various possibilities. He astutely remarked of Soviet secret weapon theory: "It is doubtful a potential enemy would arouse our attention in so idle a fashion." He toyed with the idea of space animals explaining saucer behaviour. He junked notions about ships propelled by rays or magnetic fields on straightforward physical considerations, but held out the possibility of an antigravity shield. The notions that seemed to be left were mass psychology or extraterrestrial visits prompted by A-bomb development. (20)

The public knew little more than the fact that saucer sightings kept popping up from time to time. The Mantell case, in particular, in January 1948 seemed to remove the possibility it was all some kind of joke. The Air Force seemed to be taking it seriously, but it still downplayed the materiality of the phenomena as well as the Soviet or outer space notions about their origin. The editor of *True* magazine thought their behaviour was "damned queer" and called in Donald Keyhoe to snoop around aviation circles to see if he could turn up anything. (21) Keyhoe thought the Air Force's treatment of the Mantell case looked like a cover-up. He was also unimpressed by their handling of the Gorman

and Chiles-Whitted cases. A former intelligence officer provided Keyhoe with a scenario in which saucers were remote-control "observer units with television eyes sent from an orbiting space base". This would be a prudent preliminary step to determine if we were a "fiercely barbarous race" before exploring the world in person.

These contentions formed the basis of Keyhoe's infamous article for *True* magazine "The Flying Saucers are Real". Its conclusions included:

- 1. For the past 175 years, the planet Earth has been under systematic close-range observation by living, intelligent observers from another planet.
- 2. The intensity of this observation, and the frequency of the visits to the Earth's atmosphere by which it is being conducted have increased markedly during the past two years.
- 3. The vehicles used for this observation and for interplanetary transport by the explorers have been identified and categorised as follows: Type I, a small nonpilot-carrying disc-shaped aircraft equipped with some form of television or impulse transmitter; Type II, a very large (up to 250 feet in diameter) metallic disc-shaped aircraft operating on the helicopter principle; Type III, a dirigible-shaped, wingless aircraft which, in the Earth's atmosphere, operates in conformance with the Prandtl theory of lift.
- 4. The discernible pattern of observation and exploration shown by the so-called "flying disks" varies in no important particular from well-developed American plans for the exploration of space expected to come to fruition within the next fifty years. There is reason to believe, however, that some other race of thinking beings is a matter of two and a quarter centuries ahead of us. (22)

The *True* article was one of the most widely discussed magazine articles of its time. It was discussed by prominent newsmen like Walter Winchell and Frank Edwards. The article was expanded into a book bearing the same title later that same year. In May 1950 the Gallup poll showed the American public was leaning to Arnold's view. Twenty-three per cent now believed saucers were an American secret weapon. Those who believed they were illusions or hoaxes had dropped to 16% of the sample. The Russian secret weapon idea now garnered 3% of the public. The pollsters had to add a new category called "comets, shooting stars, something from another planet" and placed 5% of the public into it. (23)

Keyhoe's book contained material from documents in the intelligence community which had been released. Keyhoe saw contradictions which he thought indicated a cover-up, but which are more simply explained by the fact that intelligence had not come to any consensus. Keyhoe claimed many scientists had come to believe the saucers contained "spies from another planet". Even Nazi scientists believed

- 19 STEIGER, Brad, *Project Blue Book*, Ballantine, 1976, p. 205
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 193-201
- 21 GROSS, Loren E, *UFOs: A History, Volume 2: 1949*, Arcturus Book Service, 1983, p. 73
- 22 KEYHOE, Donald E, 'Flying Saucers Are Real', *True*, January 1950, reprinted in GIRARD, Robert, *An Early UFO Scrap Book*, Arcturus Book Service, 1989, pp. 4-9
- 23 GALLUP, George, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, Volume 2 (1949-1958)*, Random, 1972, p. 911

we were being observed by space observers, according to Keyhoe, and their conviction had led to their experimentation with circular aerofoils. (24)

Keyhoe bolstered his observer unit theory by pointing to what he perceived as a pattern of focused interests. In the 19th century, interest was on the most advanced part of the globe -- Europe. It shifted to America in the late 19th century as industry and cities sprang up. Then came surveys on both continents as aircraft were developed. Observation increased in response to the V-2s during World War II. Still more increases followed our A-bomb explosions and a second spurt followed Soviet A-bomb testing. Recent interest had focused on our Air Force bases and atomic testing areas. Encounters like the Gorman incident were viewed as a test of our aircraft capabilities. Keyhoe concluded that observation had become intermittent and that the long-range survey would continue indefinitely. Their plans concerning us were incomplete so no contact seemed evident. (25)

Three years later, Keyhoe came out with a sequel, *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*. He articulates in greater detail the clustering of saucer sightings over various locales. These are: 1) Atomic energy plants at Oak Ridge, Hanford, but most frequently over Los Alamos; 2) Air Force bases; 3) Naval bases; 4) The high-altitude rocket base at White Sands; 5) Aircraft plants; 6) Major cities. The repetitive nature of some of these saucer visits leads to the speculation "it looks like they're getting ready for an attack". The dominant theme, however, remains that this is a new phase of "surveillance by some planet race" prompted by radio and television signals. Keyhoe unmodestly quotes a friend as saying: "But one thing's absolutely certain. We're being watched by beings from outer space. You've been right from the very start." (26)

The Robertson Panel looked at the same clusterings and was not so sure. Yes, they saw the cluster round Los Alamos. Maybe it had to do with the overalertness of security at such a secret installation. In counterpoint, it was noted that similarly sensitive atomic energy establishments showed no saucer clusters. They also noted that many of the sightings over areas with no strategic worth whatsoever. They concluded that the evidence of any direct threat from these sightings was wholly lacking. Concern that these sightings might clog emergency channels with false information or be used by the enemy for purposes of psychological warfare led to the recommendation that a program of education be set up "to reduce the current gullibility of the public". Aime Michel would also speculate that Keyhoe's clusters resulted from the atmosphere and hyperalertness present at secret atomic and military facilities. People end up fearful of many things in such establishments. (27)

Keyhoe's thesis in these early books was impressionistic and airy speculation. He cites no evidence of downed saucers with TV cameras. He cites no alien informants explaining their

missions. We don't even see talk of glints of sunlight off telescopic lenses. If Keyhoe heard of the Janssen case, which seems doubtful, he never used it. Janssen was the only person in the 1947 wave who had the impression the saucers were scrutinising him. Everyone else more or less described saucers going along just being amazing. A couple describe them making alarming swooping motions. Loren Gross points to five cases of UFOs making circling motions which he felt could be indicative of spying, but such behaviour is also consistent with birds getting navigational bearings or travelling on thermals. (28) There really wasn't any evidence to build on. Some of the cases even argue against it. Keyhoe expresses the opinion: "The Mantell case alone proves we've been observed from space ships," yet the object was nonsensically huge from a reconnaissance perspective. Why utilise a thousand-foot craft if they possess speedy, manoeuvrable devices only 6 to 8 inches wide as supposedly proved by the Gorman case? (29)

Whatever their faults in retrospect, Keyhoe's writings were seminal in directing the future course of the UFO mythos. Keyhoe was read by many, heard in the media by many more. Ufologists adopted his thesis sometimes explicitly, often implicitly.

Albert Bender in the first issue of his fannish publication *Space Review* (1952) spoke of the Earth being "under observation of some greater power in space". (30) Harold T Wilkins wondered aloud if the saucer men had terrestrial spies and spoke of small observation discs sending information to half-mile wide "brain ships". (31) Morris K Jessup referred to some UFOs as "small, agile observers" which are sent out on exploratory missions from larger vessels dwelling in the "earth-sun-moon gravitational neutral". (32) Aime Michel, despite his doubts over Keyhoe's clusters, nevertheless believed that aliens have been watching us for some time. (33)

Gavin Gibbons followed Keyhoe in some detail. In *The Coming of the Space Ships* he reported on a pattern of sightings in his vicinity in England which led him to believe there was little doubt saucers represented a "reconnaissance preparatory to a landing in force". He offers a fourfold typology of saucers in place of Keyhoe's threefold typology. His consists of: I) vast metallic discs; II) cigar-shaped craft; III) scout craft; and IV) unmanned scanners, small spheres, remote-controlled, non-metallic and maybe liquid or vaporous. One notable feature of this forgotten book is its bringing into play a report that genuinely supports the aliens-are-watching-us concept. A person named Roestenberg witnessed strange men who gazed down at him and his family from a saucer tilted at an angle for detailed viewing. (34)

The Lorenzens of APRO added new intensity to the reconnaissance concept as the UFO mythos entered the sixties. They asserted



24 KEYHOE, Donald, *The Flying Saucers Are Real*, Fawcett, 1950, p. 8

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132

26 KEYHOE, Donald, *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*, Henry Holt, 1953, pp. 206-208, 229, 248

27 GILLMOR, *op. cit.*, pp. 905-921
MICHEL, Aime, *The Truth About Flying Saucers*, Pyramid, 1967, p. 68

28 GROSS, *CF, op. cit.*, p. 99

29 KEYHOE, 1950, *op. cit.*, p. 113

30 BENDER, Albert K, *Space Review - Complete File*, Saucerian Books, 1962, p. 3

31 WILKINS, Harold T, *Flying Saucers on the Attack*, Ace, 1967, p. 43

32 JESSUP, Morris K, *The Case for the UFO*, Varo Edition facsimile, Saucerian, 1973, pp. 32-33

33 MICHEL, *op. cit.*, p. 240

34 GIBBONS, Gavin, *The Coming of the Space Ships*, Citadel, 1958, pp. 34-35, 92

- 35** LORENZEN, Coral E, *Flying Saucers: The Startling Evidence of the Invasion from Outer Space*, Signet, 1966, pp. 198, 258-266, 278
- 36** EDWARDS, Frank, *Flying Saucers - Serious Business*, Bantam, 1966
- 37** McDONALD, James E, 'Science in default: Twenty-two years of inadequate UFO investigations', in SAGAN, Carl and PAGE, Thornton, *UFOs: A Scientific Debate*, W W Norton, 1974, p. 90
- 38** STEIGER, Brad and WHITENOUR, Joan, *Flying Saucers are Hostile*, Award, 1967, p. 1
- 39** TRENCH, Brinsley le Poer, *The Flying Saucer Story*, Ace, 1966, pp. 15, 128
- 40** LOFTIN, Robert, *Identified Flying Saucers*, McKay, 1968, p. 2
- 41** BINDER, Otto, *What We Really Know About Flying Saucers*, Fawcett, 1967, pp. 115-151
- 42** BINDER, Otto, *Flying Saucers Are Watching Us*, Tower, 1968, pp. 162, 165
- 43** GILLMOR, *op. cit.*, p. 233
- 44** FULLER, John G, *The Interrupted Journey*, Dell, 1966
- 45** STEINBERG, Gene, 'Last interview with Major Donald E Keyhoe', *UFO Universe* #6, Summer 1989, p. 26

saucers adhere to a pattern indicating the Earth is subject of a geographical, ecological and biological survey accompanied by military reconnaissance of the whole world's terrestrial defences. This pattern, they further claimed, could not be mimicked by psychic projections on the part of thousands of people. They theorised saucers represented a flotilla of reconnaissance ships concerned about protecting intelligent beings who as recently as 1877 had migrated to Mars on what are now known as its moon Phobos and Deimos. Comparatively small in number, they would be preoccupied with our future scientific and military developments. Since this pattern showed a progression not only from reconnaissance to surveying, but from surveying to hostility, the Lorenzens believed the saucer problems embodied "an urgency that defies expression". (35)

Frank Edwards, basing his work on the work of Keyhoe and NICAP, also advanced the idea that the UFO phenomenon was progressing through a series of phases. The foo fighters of World War II, for example, now represented the second phase of the alien plan and represented close-range surveillance by instrumented probes. The seventh phase was to be the "Overt Landing" and was due, by his reckoning, in 1968 or 1969. (36)

James E McDonald, another major figure of the sixties, expressed a belief in patterns indicating "something in the nature of extraterrestrials engaged in something in the nature of surveillance lies at the heart of the UFO problem". (37) The popular books of Brad Steiger suggested the existence of a "steady pervasive program of invasion or antagonistic observation". (38) Brinsley le Poer Trench also believed the Earth has been under constant surveillance for a very long time. He added for good measure "... and how could we possibly reject it?" (39) Rank-and-file ufologist Robert Loftin also concurred that UFOs engaged in surveillance. (40)

Far and away the best argument for the surveillance concept was made by Otto Binder in his 1967 magnum opus *What We Really Know About Flying Saucers*. In the finest empirical tradition he cited a series of reports which at least do show aliens engaged in activities suggesting a programme of observation. Saucers are shown manoeuvring around objects in an inquisitive manner; aliens are shown taking samples of soil, vegetation and animals; aliens are shown to be watching people; and saucers are shown bearing searchlights. With this array of evidence he concluded with a measure of logical force that a Project Earth Reconnaissance exists which could mean either future conquest or



Brinsley le Poer Trench also believed the Earth has been under constant surveillance for a very long time. He added for good measure "... and how could we possibly reject it?"

peaceful scientific exploration. Against the idea of future conquest Binder noted that 20 years had, by then, already passed with no concerted hostile move and thus he predicted that no secret takeover was in the offing. (41) In a sequel titled *Flying Saucers Are Watching Us* Binder backdates the saucer phenomenon into deep history. The human body's many mysteries speak to our world being a vast biological laboratory and breeding ground. "A vast, never-ending world-wide game of observing humans under all kinds of conditions and situations" seemed apparent. (42)

Sensible as Binder's argument is, it is compromised by the fact that Keyhoe's argument had altered people's expectations. By 1968, 40% of the public believed people had seen space ships that did not come from this planet -- a far cry from 1950 when pollsters did not even give the idea a category to itself. (43) The belief was generating experiences which proved it. This is evident in *The Interrupted*

Journey when Betty Hill read one of Keyhoe's books *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy* and soon after had a nightmare involving aliens examining her out of neutral curiosity. (44) While Keyhoe could not accept it 100%, he would include an account of it in a later book as possible evidence. (45)

Validation of the concept could be seemingly straightforward, such as when saucers hovered alongside ships or a saucer followed a train "as if inspecting" the crew, or when saucers shadowed people. But it could take on peculiar aspects as in a case reported in Hynek's *The UFO Experience*. A 3-foot luminous spheroid "appeared to be examining a tree rather closely" for several minutes. It moved deliberately and purposefully in its inspection of the tree, pausing slightly at apparent points of interest and giving the distinct impression of "intelligent" behaviour. Intelligent it does sound like, albeit no greater than that of a hummingbird and seemingly less meaningful. Granted, there is no a priori reason why aliens can't love trees as much as humans, yet it still seems a problematic point of surveillance interest. (46)

As ufology entered the seventies, doubts about the reconnaissance concept began to grow, even among advocates of the ETH. James McCampbell surveyed cases in Jacques Vallee's catalogue of Type I UFO events for evidence of the reconnaissance and came away puzzled. He did find the cases of aliens gathering flowers, plants, grass, animals, water samples, soil samples, stones and boulders. He also found an

alien observing abandoned oil derricks and a contact where an alien revealed their philanthropic and scientific motives. But McCampbell felt a thorough study of the Earth would require an enormous range of activities and these cases weren't even coming close. He concluded: "The idea that the UFO people are conducting any kind of organised and thorough scientific study on Earth is not sustained by the available information. Instead their activities on the ground are strangely haphazard and disorganised...Instead of conducting a comprehensive survey of Earth, the UFO people appear to be snooping around for some natural commodity on Earth, either vegetable or mineral." (47)

In his final book in 1973 Keyhoe still defended the reconnaissance thesis, but had to concede it was a "strange surveillance". A group of Keyhoe's assistants which included anthropologists, educators, psychologists and communication experts almost unanimously concurred that aliens could not get a true picture of our world by distant observation. The implications were serious. Aliens would be seriously misled by the protocol evident in their study of us. Instead of rejecting the ETH, Keyhoe decided we urgently needed to force contact with the aliens to rectify their procedural error. This prompted Keyhoe's advocacy of Operation Lure, a fantastic cargo cult scheme to draw UFOs down to Earth. (48)

Long-time critic of ufology Peter Kor took Keyhoe's book to task as an anachronism. His reconnaissance thesis may have had a certain plausibility in 1950, but the operation had become inconceivably long. The showdown predicted by so many people inspired by Keyhoe's concept had never come. (49) Frank Salisbury echoed that he had problems believing reconnaissance would be extended as long as UFO history suggests. Even granting aliens might survey a planet in a way we would not, Salisbury had a tough time believing aliens would do the things UFOs were reported to do. (50) Ian Ridpath, another critic, reiterated that the purpose of all the scrutiny implied by the volume of reports was unclear. He expressed the surprisingly Fortean scepticism that such belief builds on the basic fallacy that we are important enough for other people to be deeply interested in us. (51)

Leonard Stringfield maintained that we know incontrovertibly that UFOs exist, but agreed it was "disturbing to not know its source, its nature, and the purpose of keeping Earth under constant surveillance". He cited among many cases an incident which suggested a UFO intended either to spy on a missile base or take some type of provocative or offensive action. (52) B Ann Slate also mentioned that the alien surveillance of key military and research installations, and defence manoeuvres was continuing, based on witnesses she had talked to. (53) Kolman S VonKeviczky was unabashedly maintaining in 1976 that authorities "must after all seriously assume that the galactic powers

operation clearly indicates a centrally conducted 'interstellar reconnaissance' with the ultimate objective of a landing operation on earthly soil". (54) Yurko Bondarchuk, in 1979, was surprisingly excited over an intensifying pattern indicative of increased earth occupant surveillance. He can even be seen exclaiming: "UFOs are engaged in data-gathering activities!" He felt their behaviour suggests a preoccupation with monitoring Earth's natural habitat, our technological development and our physiological-behavioural make-up. (55) Raymond Fowler considered among many ideas the notion that the aloofness of aliens might be a strategy of advanced reconnaissance parties awaiting the main force of a classical invasion. (56)

The eighties has seen both reticence and devotion to Keyhoe's concept. The most significant devotee to the Keyhoe tradition has been Budd Hopkins. He e of cities in the 19th century, progressing to a study of aircraft in the forties, then to military and atomic installations, and ending in abductions. The patterns in the abductions have led to the inescapable inference that the surreptitious behaviour of UFOs relates to a very long-term, in-depth study of a sample of humans involving monitoring implants. They've been observing us for many years. (57)

Hilary Evans, in *The Evidence for UFOs*, allowed the possibility that structured artefacts of extraterrestrial origin were engaged in some kind of surveillance operation, but, if so, it was being conducted in a "remarkably sporadic and unworkmanlike manner". (58) The authors of *Clear Intent* were likewise tentative and felt the purpose of UFOs was unknown but "may be related to an extended surveillance of what may be termed a primitive, embryonic society". (59) Whitley Strieber took a mystical tone and asserted that the visitors' activities go far beyond a mere study of mankind. (60)

In 1987, Timothy Good felt "surveillance has intensified" since we have endangered our planet and expanded into space. The modern wave began with the development of nuclear weapons and rockets. Activity around nuclear missile sites demonstrated their continuing interest. He also felt Earth held spectacular attractions for tourists. (61) This last sentiment is an interesting conceit relative to a fifties notion that Earth was a prison. (62)

A recent tract on abductions by Dr Edith Fiore has flatly affirmed: "ETs are monitoring and watching people throughout the world." (63)

The latest exercise in the Keyhoe tradition was some speculation advanced by Richard Hall about UFO patterns. ETIs, according to him, have been watching our technological progress, especially our propulsion capabilities, our actions in warfare, our nuclear technology, and our reaching out into space. His private studies convinced him that interest has focused on atomic energy facilities and petroleum-related activities. Hall makes explicit the corollary Ridpath felt ufologists were obliged to make: the persistence of ETIs implies a strong interest in us. (64) Aime Michel went further,

46 HYNEK, J Allen, *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry*, Ballantine, 1972, pp. 54-56

47 McCAMPBELL, James M, *Ufology*, Celestial Arts, 1973, p. 141

48 KEYHOE, Donald E, *Aliens from Space*, Doubleday, 1973, pp. 1, 72, 290-302

49 KOR, Peter, 'Keyhoe's last stand', *Flying Saucers*, September 1974

50 SALISBURY, Frank, *The Utah UFO Display*, Devin-Adair, 1974, pp. 192-194

51 RIDPATH, Ian, *Messages from the Stars*, Harper Row, 1978

52 STRINGFIELD, Leonard H, *Situation Red: The UFO Siege*, Fawcett, 1977

53 SLATE, B Ann, 'UFO vigil over top-secret Air Force base', *UFO Annual 1977*

54 HERVEY, Michael, *UFOs: The American Scene*, St Martin's, 1976

55 BONDARCHUK, Yurko, *UFO Sightings, Landings, and Abductions*, Methuen, 1979

56 FOWLER, Raymond, *UFOs: Interplanetary Visitors*, Prentice-Hall, 1974, p. 272

57 HOPKINS, Budd, *Missing Time*, Richard Marek, 1981, pp. 217, 237

58 EVANS, Hilary, *The Evidence for UFOs*, Aquarian, 1983, p. 150

59 FAWCETT, Lawrence and GREENWOOD, Barry, *Clear Intent*, Prentice-Hall, 1984.

60 STRIEBER, Whitley, *Communion*, Avon, 1988.

61 GOOD, Timothy, *Above Top Secret*, Sidgwick, 1987.

62 KEYHOE, Donald, *Flying Saucers - Top Secret*, Putnam, 1960

63 FIORE, Edith, *Encounters: A Psychologist Reveals Case Studies of Abductions by Extraterrestrials*, Doubleday, 1989, p. 321;

WILLIAMSON, George Hunt and McCOY, John, *UFOs Confidential*, (Authors), 1958; HUDSON, Jan, *Those Sexy Saucer People*, Greenleaf Classics, 1967, pp. 13-17

64 HALL, Richard, *Uninvited Guests*, Aurora, 1988.

65 STORY, Ronald, *Encyclopedia of UFOs*, Dolphin, 1980.

66 LEM, Stanislaw, *One Human Minute*, 1936

earlier in the decade, and acclaimed that humans must be something rare and "cosmically precious". (65)

There are no signs that the aliens-are-watching-us idea is going to disappear from the UFO mythos. Despite blows to its credibility in the seventies, it continues to garner adherents. From the standpoint of historical development, it seems indisputable that the idea arose less from scientific necessity or force of evidence than from the habit of the intelligence community to regard deception and furtiveness as the natural order of things. No one questioned the fact that aliens would a priori behave immorally and indulge in questionable tactics to mislead humans about their existence. No one questioned whether or not aliens would be behaviourally and ideologically diverse. All behaved like it is the most natural state of affairs to believe the universe is filled with spies to the exclusion of curious extraterrestrials imbued with a spirit of open enquiry or mutual exchange.

As Keyhoe was told, a programme of scientific enquiry cannot be done from a distance. Face-to-face interaction and participation in affairs of life are the proper ways to conduct anthropological investigation. If covertness is essential to avoid infusion of alien concepts, reconnaissance could be done by bioengineered mimics of humans, dogs, cats, insects or dust motes. Instead of glowing UFOs, an advanced culture would engineer mimics of conventional objects like planes, choppers, balloons, clouds, or the moon. They wouldn't invite questions by presenting an identifiably alien construct. (66)

The reconnaissance idea never pulled together into a coherent framework more than a minor fraction of Type I cases. As McCampbell found out, no more than 2% of the cases implicate the existence of alien investigators. A crashed or captured reconnaissance disc has never been tendered for display at MIT or the Smithsonian. Predictions based on the concept have consistently been proven wrong.

Given the persistence of the idea and the irrational nature of the arguments that supported it, a question arises: could it be that ufologists are telling people something they need to believe?

In the next issue of *Magonia*, Martin Kotmeyer tries to answer this question.

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Satanism Update

Roger Sandell summarises recent developments in the 'Satanic Child Abuse' cases discussed in Magonia 38:

The Rochdale 'Satanic Abuse Case' referred to in the last issue of *Magonia*, in which seventeen children were taken into care has ended with a court hearing after which all the children were returned to their parents, except one where a suspicion of non-ritual child abuse still existed.

Although the hearings were held in private, the verdict of the judge as published contained some interesting information. The case had begun when a child in school had told stories of ghosts and knowing of a "ghost family" who gave him a drink which made him fly. Later tales had apparently included one involving "a

monster with a big eye" and even a very UFO-abductee-like tale of floating out of a window to meet beings in silver clothes.

The judge ascribed such tales to the viewing of horror videos by the children. Without having heard the proceedings it is hard to know what evidence there was for such a suggestion, which seems quite plausible. However, playground rumours of sinister and supernatural events are much older than videos. A 1954 case in which a mob of children invaded a Glasgow cemetery to do battle with "a vampire with iron teeth" was at the time blamed on the influence of horror-comics. Indeed, screaming skulls and the like are long established themes of oral tradition, and it may be that in some communities such traditions are more active



Those interested in following these matters in more detail are recommended to read *ORCRO Magazine* (BCM Gevurah, London WC1N 3XX. £2.00 per issue), the publication of the group Occult Response to the Christian Response to the Occult. Although *Magonia's* editors do not share the pagan/occultist views of the publishers, this journal consists largely of reprints of material from other sources, including press articles, evangelical manifestoes and academic papers. As such it is valuable reading towards an overview of this topic.

than many realise. In particular a figure mentioned by one of the Rochdale children, "The Black Ghost of Huddersfield", seems straight out of the world of 18th century chap-books.

It was also revealed at the hearing that the parents of the child with whom the tales had begun had some years earlier reported the presence of a poltergeist in their council flat. This had been exorcised by a clergyman. While this seems unlikely behaviour for Satanists it does indicate how easily the type of stories told in Rochdale may be transferred from one frame of reference to another. It might also give pause to those clergy who are prepared to give credence to exorcism and tales of Satanism.

The process whereby such tales develop is illustrated by two newspaper items that have appeared recently. *The Guardian* (20 February 1991) quotes extracts from the diaries of the children in the Nottingham case. Although the writers accept the reality of Satanist abuse, the diary extracts printed suggest the nightmares of children traumatised by non-ritual sex abuse are being moulded into something more plausible. Thus at one point a child describes witches pouring blood into a jug, and adds "they have a lion in there. It jumps at us." The foster parent expresses disbelief, and when the child returns to the subject of the lion two weeks later she

Rogerson has suggested that some Satanic abuse stories - and some abduction reports - may be related to the traumatic effects of hospitalisation on young children.)

A figure mentioned by one of the Rochdale children, "The Black Ghost of Huddersfield", seems straight out of the world of 18th century chap-books



A rather different account of an investigation appeared in the *Independent on Sunday* (30 December 1990) describing the story of Caroline Marchant, a young woman from a disturbed background who became a member of an evangelical Christian group. She told members of the group a series of grotesque tales about her previous involvement with Satanic human sacrifice, 'snuff movies' (which incidentally have all the characteristics of another contemporary myth), gun runners, the IRA and the Baader-Meinhoff gang. These fantasies were taken seriously by the anti-Satanist Christian group *Reachout* who offered Caroline their own 'counselling'. When this took the form of a letter telling her she was

'an instrument of death, murder and destruction' and instructing her to confess her sins or wander the earth like Cain, she committed suicide.

In spite of this article *Reachout* still seems to be taken seriously, not merely by other Christians, but by some social workers. Its influence is alleged in the latest ritual abuse case which as we go to press is taking place in the Orkney Islands. Unlike the Nottingham and Rochdale cases, this seems to involve articulate, middle-class families who seem to have

A young woman from a disturbed background who became a member of an evangelical Christian group told members of the group a series of grotesque tales about her previous involvement with Satanic human sacrifice



adds: "It's a person dressed up".

The article states also that a girl in the Nottingham case who claims to have had her stomach cut open in a Satanic ritual, but says nothing about the claims of the Nottinghamshire police that these scars had in fact been traced to an early childhood stomach operation. (Peter

considerable support within the local community, where protest meetings have been held in support of the parents, whose children have been taken in 'dawn swoops' by officials arriving by plane at remote islands.

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I found the discussion of the 'ritual abuse' panic in *Magonia* 38 both timely and fascinating. However, I'm surprised that none of the articles mentioned the parallels between abduction by 'greys' *et al* and the removal of children by social workers, and where this allows us to place the 'bogus social worker'.

In order to understand these parallels, it is important to keep in mind that both the Rochdale and Nottingham 'ritual abuse' cases took place on large council estates. Given the increased social stratification that has occurred in the UK in the past decade, this indicates that the families involved are likely to have been those at the bottom of the socio-economic scale. In many of our cities people on these large estates are increasingly marginalised from the cosy world of jobs and mortgages. To such people, the so-called underclass, social workers, with their privilege of education, status and income, their impenetrable procedures and jargon and, in many cases, their designer socialism (perhaps more prevalent in popular perception than reality) represent a truly alien culture.

Furthermore, the social workers present themselves as representatives of a powerful group which knows what is best for the ordinary citizen, and which is prepared to impose its authority on the citizens for their own ultimate good. So far, so true of many professions, but the exercise of power, in the case of social workers, is typified in the popular mind by the removal of children from their homes, and this is especially true on estates where the media image is reinforced by everyday experience.

Thus in the pantheon of contemporary demons, the symbolic embodiment of alien authority taking children in the name of the greater good, can materialize from the Town Hall as from the mothership. In the case of the Cleveland affair, we even have the motif

of 'bizarre' medical examinations of intimate body areas. It also, of course, has the same kind of inconclusive ending that typifies many Fortean narratives. As far as I am aware, it is still a moot point as to whether the doctors involved were shown to have been using unsound methods, or whether they discovered a much higher than 'acceptable' level of abuse amongst 'normal' families.

It seems to me that as bogeymen, social workers fulfil much the same function as both 'satanists' and 'greys'. In the context of my work with an 'inner city' education authority, I come across many parents who express almost simultaneously, fears that their children will be abducted and molested, and fears that they will be taken into care. In passing it should be noted that neither of these are particularly irrational fears. I would argue that it is the synthesis of these fears which leads to the strange figure of the 'bogus social worker', a mythic figure who represents child-stealer as outlaw and law-enforcer rolled into one.

If this argument is correct, it seems to me that we should find 'bogus social worker' reports clustering around the lower end of the socio-economic scale, and to be most prevalent in areas, such as estates, that have a high level of social work 'input'. It would also be interesting to examine the relationship between social groups reporting bogus social workers, and those reporting more 'classical' abduction agencies.

Yours sincerely, J T Kirkwood
Stockport, Cheshire.

Dear John

Magonia 38 is superb. At a time when journals in this area are getting worse by the month, *Magonia* improves consistently.

I await, however, a clear explanation from Bullard, Goss or whomever as to what, exactly, "variations in accounts" has to do with anything. I may very well be missing the point, but "variations in accounts" (Goss, *Magonia* 38, p.14) has, for ufological purposes, about as much to do with the central core of meaning of a piece of folklore as the colour of an automobile has to do with the principle of an internal combustion engine. My experience in listening to Bullard present his ideas is that the notion of "variation" is used promiscuously to support his beliefs (a certain amount of variation supports the reality of the reports, or a *lack* of variation supports the reality of the accounts, as needed). It seems to me that it is the mysterious central meaning or experience that we are trying to get to - not wading in the layers of personal, social and cultural modifications to the original experience. Perhaps these concerns about "variation" (which, in my opinion have not been made clear *at all*) are of importance to professional folklorists when in their natural habitat, but they seem to me to have only peripheral significance when dealing with abduction accounts.

Scientifically speaking it is the discovery of similarities which allows us to form a concept. And these folkloric similarities have been more than amply pointed out by Goss and many others (let alone the science fiction parallels brought forward by Kottmeyer). Whether the brick is red or green is not going to influence the rate at which it falls. I get the feeling that Bullard argues the abductionist position as follows: "It looks like a duck, it sounds

like a duck, it smells like a duck, it feels like a duck, but the ducks are all different colours so they're aliens!" (or, as he occasionally puts it: "They're all the *same* colour, so they're aliens!" Perhaps the notorious *Skeptical Enquirer* has finally cut through the ducky-doo: they recently listed one of Bullard's papers in their bibliography of recommended *skeptical* readings

Best Regards, Dennis Stillings,
Archaeus Project, St Paul,
Minnesota



Dear John

Hilary Evans has every right of course to slam my **UFOs in the 1980s** (Magonia 38). He is however hardly the logical choice to give the book an objective review, any more than I would be if I were asked to judge a book that was critical of my own views and theories. Unfortunately, rather than address the clear and significant weaknesses I cite in his and other writings of the 'psychosocial hypothesis', Evans elects to shoot the messenger.

Like any book, mine has its shortcomings, and I have attempted to correct them in the next **Ufo Encyclopedia** volume, **The Emergence of a Phenomenon**, which is nearing completion. But Evans's major complaint seems to be that my book "is simply not an encyclopedia" and it is "short on fact though generous with opinions". Nonsense. Library journals - i.e. those whose job it is routinely to pass judgements on reference works and presumably know an encyclopedia when they see one - have uniformly praised the book. **Library Journal** called it "the most thorough treatment yet on this puzzling phenomenon.". In the UFO press Dennis Stacy, who unlike Evans is not criticised in the book, remarks in a review "Clark strives manfully for objectivity."

It is true that the book, like any book including an encyclopedia, inevitably expresses an occasional point of view. Any book short of a telephone directory does that, and I make no apology. But Evans's charge that the book is mostly me carrying on about my particular obsessions is plainly false. I can't imagine that any reader without Evans's particular axes to grind would agree with him. What distresses me, and the only reason I am writing this letter, is that for many European readers this will be the only review they see, and I fear they will be led to believe Evans's is an accurate representation of the book's contents and a typical response to them.

Second, to John Rimmer's rejoinder to my letter on page 19. In common with most psychosocial-hypothesiser prose, it sounds good but doesn't mean anything. Most hard scientists who have actually investigated UFO reports have come to be partisans of the ETH. Many social and behavioural scientists are coming to the same conclusion. Now surely *that* means something? Incidentally the only serious effort to determine astronomers' and astrophysicists' views of the UFO phenomenon was conducted by Peter Sturrock in the mid-1970's. Sturrock found a significant degree of openmindedness about - not as Rimmer would have it "zero' support for" - the subject. He also

learned that astronomers who knew the least about UFOs were the most likely to dismiss them. Is Rimmer defending the case against ETH by citing astronomers who are the most ignorant of the UFO evidence? In any case as Michael D Swords has shown (**Journal of UFO Studies**, 1989) ufology's ETH is eminently defensible from a scientific point of view and in no way conflicts with what many astronomers believe about alien life and technology.

Sincerely, Jerome Clark
Canby, Minnesota.

John Rimmer writes: If I have missed any significant statements of support for the ETH from professional astronomers in Britain or America, perhaps Jerome Clark could cite the academic journals in which they are contained.

Dear John

I do not feel I can let this issue go by without congratulating John Harney, our Editor Emeritus, on his 25 years in UFO journal publishing. Yes, a quarter of a century since the first duplicated copies of *Merseyside UFO Research Group Journal* were produced. At the time they were revolutionary, with their satirical comments about UFO groups and conferences and editorial scepticism.

John was one of the first writers in Britain to emphasise the value of landing reports, and the first to suggest these indicated that it was to psychology we must turn for answers, at a time when most British ufologists were supporters of the ETH and the contactees, and many saw ufology in terms of setting up reception committees for the space brothers.

John's progressive ideas proved too much for his group and in 1968 he founded *Merseyside UFO Bulletin*, our direct ancestor, creating a space in which new ideas could be developed. Without MUF0B few of the good developments in British ufology would have been possible. We all owe John Harney a considerable debt.

Best Wishes,
Peter Rogerson
Urmston, Gtr. Manchester

MOORE, William L. and SHANDERA, Jaime H. **The MJ-12 Documents: An Analytical Report**. Fair Witness Project, Burbank, CA. 1990.

This long awaited report on the (in)famous MJ-12 documents has finally appeared, just when everyone thought MJ-12 was dead and buried. It is billed as "the best researched and most important book ever published on the subject of the great UFO cover-up". It should be read in conjunction with Stanton Friedman's own report published a few months earlier; since M & S confine themselves purely to forensic matters and refer readers to F's paper for other pro-MJ-12 evidence.

In addition to the three primary papers the authors present a whole host of documents, some authentic, others decidedly dubious, going back to 1977. Although they claim these papers are necessary for an understanding of the wider issues they look as though they are included more as padding. The shady semi-official character 'Falcon' pops up over and over again, and the former AFOSI agent Richard Doty is also heavily involved in these associated documents.

The thing that stands out above all else is the authors' insistence that all the documents under consideration are either genuine or, if not, are partly 'official disinformation'. They will not concede that any are fakes pure and simple by a private individual. The reader is thus conditioned to see things from this narrow cloak-and-dagger viewpoint only.

Sceptic's arguments are dissected one by one and demolished with a wealth on in-depth analysis, some of which looks good, some very contrived. An example of the latter is the idea that illenkoetter dictated his briefing papers into a dictaphone for transcription by someone else. The authors suggest this explains why the word 'liaison' is misspelt twice, since illenkoetter (with "his background in French") would never have done this himself. A ridiculous idea since, apart from increasing the security risk of the top-secret MJ-12 operation, he would still have had to read his own dictation to check its correctness and would have discovered the misspellings then.

Among the many omissions of antiMJ-12 data in the report are: Doty's later fall from grace in the USAF; Dr Wescott's later change of opinion on the illenkoetter-Eisenhower paper; the lack of a single other document written in Cutler's name during his absence abroad in July 1954; the failure of the authors to admit they possessed the Truman-Bush memo (i.e. the one containing the signature that was lifted to go on the Truman MJ-12 memo) at least two years before December 1984, when Shandera

BOOK REVIEWS

received the film; their failure to display the cryptic postcards (allegedly sent from New Zealand) that led them to the National Archives to find the Cutler memo; and the failure to acknowledge that despite all their research efforts not a single valid example of a zero-in-a-date has turned up in official files, and that no ufologist apart from Moore seems to adopt this dating style.

The Menzel red-herring in brought up yet again. This is the argument that, because nobody could have known about Menzel's so-called 'double life' before Friedman discovered the doctor's long post-war association with the US military, no forger could possibly have put Menzel on the MJ-12 list. Of course a forger could, and did, for a good reason.

the swipe at "high school educated researchers" on p.51 is offensive, and the third paragraph on p.71 is a good example of the loft stance taken by M & S throughout the report. they insist that they alone are onto something big and important while other ufologists are stumbling about blindly, unaware of the larger UFO picture around them.

Although the meticulous typewriter analysis is very interesting (with resolution, it is claimed, down to 10 microns in places!), it reveals almost an obsession with typefaces, photography, rubber stamps, official styles, formats, etc. In fact, reading between the lines any rational thinker should be able to deduce how the forgery was done.

The report will help, temporarily, to regenerate interest in a topic that had virtually sunk without trace. At \$25 for 110 pages it is perhaps better value than Friedman's report; but it is undoubtedly



Donald Menzel:
introduced as a red-herring

wise, taking the authors' own words, to treat it as part dis- or mis- information, part spy fiction, with a moderate dose, here and there, of fact.

Christopher Allan

GOOD, Timothy. (Ed.) *The UFO Report 1991*. Sidgwick & Jackson, 1990. £9.99.

Better than the previous year's effort, with a really good chapter by Ralph Noyes: 'Abduction: the terror that comes', comparing and contrasting the Hag and abduction experiences. There are alternative accounts of the Belgian sighting and the Russian UFO wave; Bob Pratt on the Brazilian cases at the centre of Vallee's *Confrontations*; George

Wingfield on the crop circles (separately reviewed); Stanton Friedman on yet more MJ12 nonsense. There is also an unverified claim about a US plane abducted over Puerto Rico; a routine piece by Paul Dong, and more on cattle mutilations - more notable for what is left out than anything else.

Peter Rogerson

DELGADO, Pat & ANDREWS, Colin. *Crop Circles: the latest evidence*.

Bloomsbury, 1990. £5.99

NOYES, Ralph (ed.) *The Crop Circle Enigma*. Gateway Books, 1990. £14.95

WINGFIELD, George. 'Ever Increasing Circles', *in The UFO Report 1991*, op. cit.

These three accounts show how complex the crop circle phenomenon and its attendant belief systems have become. A study of the photographs contained therein will dispose of any idea that these circles are entirely generated by vortices. Indeed, Meaden's article in *Enigma* suggests the vortice theory is rapidly becoming a catch-all, explain-everything 'theory', rather typical of pseudo-science. (already the Star of Bethlehem and the vision of Fatima - next week Ezekiel's Wheel and England's poor cricket performances? What the photographs do suggest, nay insist, is that the circles are the work of intelligence: human intelligence

Whether one calls them hoaxes is a moot point. Technically they are; and yet, even if sheer fun or tourist promotion were the original motivations, consciously or otherwise they have become works of profound mystical and religious art. Images of the circles are beginning to permeate our national life, and around them curious cults are developing. In the presence of the circles people have a variety of anomalous personal experiences, and claim to develop or enhance shamanistic powers.

Perhaps the most curious feature of the circle episode is that as the fact that at least a good proportion of the circles are the work of human ingenuity, the resistance to such an idea grows among the cereologists. On the one hand the Meadenites invest ever more complex properties on the vortices, whilst the Delgadistas invoke 'circle-makers' who are gods in all but name. This can reach quite hilarious proportions, as when the message 'We are not alone' neatly lettered between tractor lines is seen as a message from the circle makers. Presumably is crop messages read 'Kevin Loves Tracy', Manchester United Rule OK', or 'Delgado is a Prat', mystic forces would still be involved!

One can think of a variety of reasons for this attitude. Perhaps a

profound anti-humanism, of the kind which ascribes the pyramids to space people, and which tends to see humans as a wretched excrescence on the face of 'holiest earthe', or a variety of egocentric considerations - no-one as clever as me could possibly be duped by hoaxers. Chief amongst these considerations is the possibility that if the circles are the work of human artists, they may come forward and become the centre of attention, have exhibitions in galleries, perhaps even proclaim themselves the chosen agents of the mystic forces - or claim copyright on all circle photos!

The only evidence against the hoax-art hypothesis is the testimony of eyewitnesses and history. Ralph Noyes points out that 'eyewitness accounts' of circle formation are very heterogeneous, and show typical ufological cultural tracing: in this case tracking the development of Meaden's theories. Bob Rickard shows the folklore background to 'circles' and 'rings', but suggests there is little evidence to connect these with modern crop circles. Indeed, if the crop circle had always been with us this would permeate folklore, popular antiquities and old-fashioned natural history books with many strange and curious 'explanations', as did the much less spectacular 'fairy rings' and Balls of Light, for instance.

It would be foolish to deny that there are no cases where poorly characterised natural phenomena leave marks on the ground, and it may be that some of the eyewitness testimony relates to this. Some of Meaden's ideas may well explain some UFO reports - indeed I suspect Meaden's ideas may have more relevance to general ufology than to the crop circles themselves. This may offer a clue as to why some of our more scientific ufologists seem to lose some of their sceptical faculties when contemplating the circles, and the scope for career enhancement they might offer.

Peter Rogerson

BELOFF, John. *the Relentless Question; reflections on the paranormal.* MacFarland, 1990. £22.45.

A book summing up the mature reflections and experiences of Britain's elder statesman of parapsychology would have been of considerable interest. Unfortunately this book is not it: it is yet another non-book, a collection of previously published material, some nearly thirty years old. At least the editors have avoided the tiresome repetition found in the Hyman work reviewed previously, and Beloff provides updating footnotes. He also provides a



Beloff at times comes close to a magical view of the world.

rather unrevealing autobiographical introduction, which nowhere tells us exactly how he became interested in the paranormal.

Beloff seems to be one of those parapsychologists who is constantly lowering the 'boggle threshold', almost to the point where nothing is excluded. As Beloff admits to no great success in his own experiments nor any spectacular paranormal experiences, this belief must be based on what other people tell him, which seems indeed to be the case. What emerges here is Beloff's respect for the 'great scientists' who are assumed to be truthful, insightful, objective, accurate reporters (unless they are sceptics, of course) who could not be victims of the wily proles.

Rejecting both theism and materialism (that old-fashioned bugbear of the inter-war intellectuals) Beloff often comes close to endorsing a magical view of the world. At other times he seems to endorse a philosophical dualism which simply ignores much neurology, for example. Memory is assumed to lie in the brain not because of philosophical speculation, but because brain damage affects memory, and different types of brain damage affect different aspects of memory. Brain damage can *fundamentally* alter character. Dualists have to address that with empirical studies if they are to be taken seriously.

Of course, sceptics should not assume it all *must* be nonsense. If there was a new Eusapio or D D Home who could perform miracles while being videoed from a range of camera angles, then some

of the questions Beloff raises might be answered.

Peter Rogerson

SCHUMAKER, John F. *Wings of Illusion; the origin, nature and future of paranormal belief.* Polity Press, 1990. £29.50

thinking among ufologists will be interested in the way Schumaker connects paranoia with other forms of monoidential disorders such as anorexia nervosa, and obsessive compulsive disorder. He argues that these are substitute 'personal' religions which seek to gain control of reality by narrowing the focus of attention and concern. In the pre-onset stage such people are hyper-suggestible, but when delusion is fully developed, they become hypo-suggestible, and cannot be persuaded from their beliefs. Western psychiatry seems helpless in such cases, but traditional healers use ritual to enhance suggestibility, and provide a substitute communally acceptable, belief system. Paranoids and anorexics cannot be reasoned with, but they can be converted: this clearly allows us to realise the effectiveness of exorcism. Should abductees be sent to witch-doctors?

The 'paranormal belief' which Schumaker discusses is much wider in scope than the sort of beliefs looked at in *Magonia*. It covers all 'self transcending' beliefs, not only traditional religions but such secular ideologies as Marxism, capitalism, consumerism and the cult of 'having'. All these seek to deny the essential tragedy of the human condition.

Schumaker is a convert to rationalism from what appears to have been a particularly savage brand of traditionalist Catholicism, and perhaps shows a conversion syndrome. His realism has a deeply pessimistic, not to say apocalyptic tone, not far removed from clinical depression.

Peter Rogerson

CLARK, David. *Vanished: Mysterious Disappearances.* Michael O'Mara, 1990. £12.95.

What can one say about a book which, not content with trying to at least half-rehabilitate the Bermuda Triangle and the long-putrifying legend of the 'Missing Norfolks', goes on to present the Allende Letters nonsense as a genuine mystery. The book opens with undocumented foaftales about a man disappearing while climbing a lighthouse and a racing driver disappearing at Silverstone. More conventional disappearances are also included - all of which have been dealt with in greater depth and erudition elsewhere. PR

SPENCER, John (Ed.) **The UFO Encyclopedia**. Headline, 1991. £16.95.

I'm not deliberately trying to sound like Prince Charles, but this really is appalling. Hilary Evans gave Jerome Clark's Encyclopedia a bit of a pasting in the last *Magonia* and by and large I go along with him. Jerry perhaps did allow too much of his personal opinions to intrude into what should be the neutral tone of a reference work, but at least it could actually be *used* as an encyclopedia, with worthwhile articles on important aspects of ufology. With all its faults, Jerry's book is a hundred times more useful than this book. Anybody reading it or dipping into it would get some impression of what ufology is *about*. Such coherence is totally lacking in the volume under review.

The bulk of Spencer's encyclopedia entries are the names of obscure witnesses with a few lines of the barest outline of their experience, or the vaporings of every petty government bureaucrat who ever made a mildly pro-UFO comment. Most of the names are so obscure that you are only going to be able to look them up if you already know all about them! There is a distinct emphasis on Scandinavian and Soviet cases presumably reflecting the author's own preoccupations, with relatively little on, for instance, French cases. (an encyclopedia which makes no mention of

Trans-en-Provence or Ciergy-Pontoise is just a bad joke). None of the cases listed are referenced in any way to allow the interested reader to seek more information, instead there is a pitifully inadequate book and magazine listing at the back. There is no attempt to build up any overall context, each entry is scrappy and isolated. Although there is some cross referencing, most of the entries are unrelated. Why have separate entries for 'Celtic Legends' and 'Fairies and Folklore' without even a cross-reference between them? There are, unlike Clark's book, very few entries for broader topics, and the few included are totally inadequate: 'Extraterrestrial Hypothesis' gets a brief dictionary-type entry of six lines; 'Fairies and Folklore' half a page. Most entries seem to be included at a whim: what contribution did Hugh J Addonizio or Nikolai Sotchevanov make to ufology - not enough to make it worthwhile buying this book to find out. And yet there is no entry for Carl Jung. An omission of this magnitude is, quite literally, unimaginable.

Some peculiar policy decision seems to have eliminated any entries for ufologists or UFO periodicals, with a few bizarre exceptions: why should Eddie Bullard be included, but not Jenny Randles; why include ASSAP's *Anomaly* which covers ufology only marginally, but ignore *UFO Brigantia*, *Northern UFO*

News, *International UFO Reporter*, or, no false modesty, *Magonia*?

The whole book is haphazardly put together. One illustration makes a good example. You would think it would be the easiest thing in the world to produce a photo to show a sample of the "hundreds of UFO magazines published each year", just pull a few off your bookshelves and snap them. Instead a picture-library photograph is used. Of the six magazines it shows the most recent appears to be dated 1978, and four of the six have long since ceased publication. There is no excuse for this kind of sloppiness, it is just an insult to the reader. Even more insulting is the fact that such nonsense as the 'Vanishing Norfolks' (uselessly indexed under 'Hill 60') is included, with the statement 'no explanation of the event has ever been given'. This is a lie, pure and simple.

This 'encyclopedia' is a cynical disgrace, both to its author and publisher, and more importantly a source of shame to BUFORA whose name is emblazoned on the cover and title page. I do not understand how such a travesty could have been published, and how BUFORA allowed itself to be associated with it. Did no one on the BUFORA Council read the manuscript before publication? Was no one able to see just how bad it was? Ufologists are owed some sort of explanation, or better still apology. **J.R.**

RANGLES, Jenny, and HOUGH, Peter. **Scary Stories; a supernatural yearbook**. Futura, 1991. £3.99

Read simply as accounts of what people say happened to them, these stories are quite satisfactory, provided they are presented simple as 'stories people tell'. With this proviso some of the tales in this collection are quite fascinating even in the absence of any investigation or insight. There is the little boy who talks about the 'other Mummy' and the 'dead boy' in his house who give him 'forbidden knowledge' about the Battle of Waterloo (I hope all you social workers out there have your notebooks ready!) There are also numerous accounts of multiple Anomalous Personal Experience (A.P.E.)

The problem comes when one tries to make judgments about whether individual stories are 'true', or point to some transcendental reality. Despite the authors' categorical statement "certainly those involved in the bizarre experiences are not lying" they include Borley Rectory, the subject of a detailed critique by Hall, Dingwall and Goldney (which Randles and Hough do not allow their

readers to know about) which gave good reasons for believing that Harry Price and Margaret Foster *were* lying. In another case, I was present when one of the first-hand investigators told an audience which included the authors that the case was built on sand. At the same meeting I heard Jenny Randles express doubts about the veracity of the witness in another case in the book. If investigators are publicly presenting stories about which they have private reservations, what is the reader to believe?

Peter Rogerson

MATTHEWS, John and POTTER, Chesca.(Eds.) **The Aquarian Guide to Legendary London**. Aquarian, 1990. £7.99.

This is a fascinating guide to the mysterious aspects of London which are now buried under seas of concrete, hidden by monstrous Palumboesque carbuncles, or in a few cases miraculously preserved in half-forgotten byways. The contributors cover the legends of London, London's goddesses, the history of witchcraft in the capital, and

the leys and earth mysteries of London. As well as commissioned essays from writers such as Nigel Pennick, Paul Devereux and Caroline Wise, there is also a selection of extracts from earlier writers. The book functions as a collection of essays and as a gazetteer and guidebook

Not the least attractive feature of this book is the illustrations. Many are reproductions of old prints, others are re-workings of traditional motifs in the distinctive style of Chesca Potter.

This book helps give the lie to the assumption of some earth mysteries books that the true spirit of the planet can only adequately be communed with by bobble-hatted backpackers plunging waist deep into soggy peat marshes in the wilds of Caledonia. It is a rather perverse form of puritanism which causes these people to ignore or disparage the chosen habitat of our planet's dominant species. In fact there is as much mystery, history, insight and revelation to be found along the route of the number 9 bus as in any desolate stretch of the Celtic fringe.

John Rimmer

SUSTER, Gerald. **The Truth About the Tarot**. Skoob Books, 1991. £4.99.

So, we're waiting for The Truth, and it's one paragraph into the introduction when we are presented with the usual fantasy, nonsense and downright lies about the tarot: "All we know for certain is that the Gypsies brought the cards to Europe at some unidentifiable point prior to the fourteenth century and used them for purposes of fortune telling." At least the author does manage to hold back some of the even more fanciful nonsense (Egypt, ancient Sumerians, etc.), dismissing it with an ambiguous "possibly so...", or, as I would put it, "definitely not".

A moment's thought will dismiss this Gypsy nonsense. Where were the Gypsies, a nomadic people, going to keep the printing equipment and wood-blocks needed to produce a tarot deck? Why were none of the Gypsy tarot decks ever described by contemporary writers? Why in every lie, misrepresentation and

persecution that has ever been levelled at the Gypsies were they never accused of using the tarot for evil purposes? Why are the oldest known tarot cards lavish productions for princely courts, hardly the sort of people who would even come into contact with Gypsies? Why did no writer on the Gypsies, George Borrow for instance, ever notice this rich tradition of Romany tarot reading until well into the twentieth century? Why did none of the famous mystics of the Renaissance (could I mention our patron John Dee?) ever record even the whisper of tarot cards in their copious writings?

It cannot be repeated too often when confronted by nonsense like this that the tarot cards were devised for use in a series of card-games of a distinctly non-mystical secular nature. There was no suggestion that they could be used for divination until the eighteenth century when a barmy French wig maker called Alliette decided to move on from reading ordinary playing cards to reading the

popular but curious tarot cards he saw some of his clients playing with, presumably while they were having their heads measured.

A century later all this got caught up in the French fin de siècle occult revival, there was no stopping the great tarot nonsense spreading and burying the true facts of the tarot in a welter of occultist claptrap. Which is a pity, because the real truth about the historical tarot is fascinating enough not to need this embroidery. Even the modern tarot, with its rich variety of occult imagery, has developed enough of its own tradition and perhaps, in the hands of a skilled practitioner, psychological value not to need the shaky edifice of pseudo-history which this book, like too many others, tries to foist upon it. In fact this book describes a use of the tarot more akin to the I-ching and actually makes less of any alleged inherent supernatural qualities in the cards than most others in the field. **John Rimmer**

PICKNETT, Lynn. (ED.) **The Encyclopaedia of the Paranormal; a complete guide to the unexplained**. Macmillan, 1990. £17.99

The mysteries of this book start on the title-page, where it is described as being 'by' Lynn Picknett, who claims exclusive copyright. However on the acknowledgement page she appears as one in a list of nineteen contributors, including Hilary Evans and Brian Inglis, whose distinctive styles and opinions can be detected in particular sections. However, none of the contributions are signed and no background information to the contributors is provided. It is impossible to say who takes responsibility for what.

This results in the expected 'curates egg'. The problem being that you have to get halfway through before coming to the good bits (mainly, it would appear, Hilary Evans's). The first few pages rapidly produce a sinking feeling: they are the opinionated products of an occultist writing from a viewpoint every bit as slanted as the most traditionalist of Catholic writers. OK for a work entitled 'An Occultist Looks at the Paranormal', but quite unsuitable for an encyclopaedia. On and on the biased, half-true, credulous and unverified all muddle together. Argument from authority and assertion abound; no suggestion that statements may be contentious is allowed. We are told that the Shroud of Turin was faked by Leonardo da Vinci as part of some obscure conspiracy organised by the Priory of Sion - no evidence, no references, just assertion.

That's another thing. Readers of any encyclopaedia are likely to want to learn more about the topic under discussion, so good references and bibliographies are needed. Neither are supplied here, so readers cannot check up statements and claims for themselves. I cannot find the source for the statement that Ian Wilson believed he was cursed from beyond the grave by Doris Stokes. Calling a book without a bibliography and 'encyclopaedia' comes close to violating the Trades Descriptions Act.

On page one we encounter the statement that "for the purposes of this book the paranormal is considered to be very different from the occult", but immediately the two are confused. Aleister Crowley receives as much attention as J B Rhine. No doubt this is because much hard-core parapsychology is so mind-numbingly boring, and a dash of the occult, complete with obligatory photos of naked witches, makes a more marketable packed - which is, after all, the name of the game.

The line is constantly being plugged that all sceptics and scientists are narrow-minded bigots. What does it matter then, if some open-minded, 'there might be something in it' type of scientist, picks up this book as a first step into the paranormal, and promptly rushes off his subscription to CSICOP!

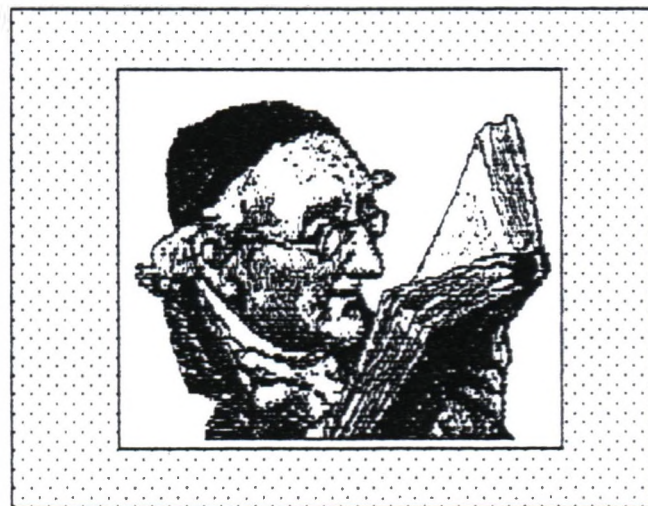
Peter Rogerson

PEACH, Emily. **Things That Go Bump in the Night; how to investigate and challenge ghostly experiences**. Aquarian, 1991. £5.99

A competent study of 'ghostly

experiences', but suffering from a couple of defects. Only one of the cases related here is less than 70 years old, many are over 100; and paranormalist interpretations of the experiences are taken for granted. Knowing what we do about the problems of eyewitness identification in criminal cases, can we really take claims that an apparition has been 'recognised' as a figure in a portrait with confidence? Nonetheless, there are some sensible comments on the problems of misidentification and the difficulties of investigation.

Peter Rogerson



DONGO, Tom. **The Alien Tide**. Hummingbird Pubs., 1990. £5.95. (Available from Excalibur Books)

A pot-pouri of every variety of current US ufolklore, from MJ-12 to abductions to new-age, all mixed up and served together with alien bases and grey meanies as appetizers. Not as untypical of UFO belief at gutter roots as some US commentators would have us believe.

Peter Rogerson

Exemplary, my dear Watson!

WATSON, Nigel. **Portraits of Alien Encounters.** Valis Books, 52A Lascotts Road, Wood Green, London N22 4JN, hardback, £10.00 plus postage and packing, 1991.

For readers of *Magonia* who have persisted with us for the past fifteen years or so, this publication will come as a welcome reminder; for newer readers it will give them an excellent insight into the type of material which informs the 'Magonia Position'. It is essentially a report, largely compiled in the period 1977 - 1980 of Nigel's case studies of 'fringe' UFO percipients, originally carried out under the aegis of the UFION (UFO Investigators' Network).

In some respects the cases in this book do represent extremes, and at least some of the people described here would generally be regarded as schizophrenic. Indeed one psychologist has described one of the cases recounted as "the clearest instance of paranoid schizophrenia I have come across outside of a text-book". The case of 'Norman Harrison' combines social isolation, absorption in religious and occult imagery and apocalyptic foreboding, and would at the very least be labelled 'schizoid'. However, it is unclear whether such labelling, which comes close to the nominal fallacy would be of much assistance. What Nigel does show, however, is that even in the most pathological experiences threads of meaning can be discovered.

Of particular interest in today's climate are the studies of the two star 'child contactees' of the late seventies, Paul Bennett and Gaynor Sunderland. In both cases we have examples of the interaction between childhood fantasy and the adult world, although here are significant differences between the two

cases. Paul Bennett's stories emerged from the playworld of a group of schoolboys, with no parental input, though his alleged late comment that "I made it all up" does not fit too well with his adult involvement with *UFO Brigantia*, and *Earth*. Perhaps one's memory of what is conscious and unconscious fantasy can vary over time. Gaynor Sunderland's world was much



"UFO percipients nurture all varieties of concern about humanity. Here Norman Harrison shows several of them"

more that of adults; schoolfriends simply don't feature in the Sunderland saga. Both cases show what comes out if we 'listen to the children'. In Nigel's case, although he took Paul *seriously* he never took him *literally*. In Gaynor's case adult opinion was less solid. In both cases the outcome, if the stories had been told to certain teachers and social workers in 1991, can easily be imagined. What they demonstrate to me is how far, even ten years or more ago, ufological and occult folklore permeated children's imaginations, both individually and collectively.

Part of the value of Nigel's book is in showing how these 'extreme' reports shade into the generality of UFO cases and other anomalous personal experiences, in an interesting discussion on 'bedroom visitor' cases and the twilight - literally and metaphorically - world of hypnogogia. These cases, reported several years before Hufford's *Terror That Comes in the Night* study, already demonstrated the traumatic nature of such experiences and the capacity of trauma to emerge from within.

No doubt a similar snapshot of British ufology taken today would show a rather greater element of 'abductions' as opposed to traditional contactee motifs, but there is no doubt that it would also so the same complex of anomalous personal experience mediated through popular lore.

I must conclude by praising the production qualities of this privately produced volume, which are really excellent, putting many so-called professional publishers to shame.

Peter Rogerson

For details of how to order *Portraits of Alien Encounters*, see page 14.

KAPPERER, Jean Noel. **Rumours: uses, interpretations and images.** Transaction Publishers, 1990. £22.95.

In a recent issue of the *Observer* magazine, Dr John Collie reported that the strangest death he had heard about was of a man wearing bathing trunks whose body had been found partially charred in the remains of an extinguished forest fire. Apparently he had been scooped up while swimming by the water-bomb planes which were being used to dump thousands of gallons of water on the conflagration. Had Dr Collie read this book he would have realised this was another of the FOAF tales and rumours concerning both the strange fate of bodies, and strange things dumped from the sky - including

vipers to repopulate the countryside.

The memory of the White Slave scare or Orleans has made the French rather more concerned than the British to make an academic study of rumour. This book is not just an academic disquisition on the origins and transmission of rumour, it is also a fascinating source and analysis. There are discussions of the 'satanic' Proctor and Gamble trademark, the phantom hitch-hiker and the LSD sticker scare (reported in this book written in France in 1987, some time before its appearance in this country last year). There are also the French ecological rumours; not just vipers but mystery cats which are seen as wild-cats introduced by the - to sections of the

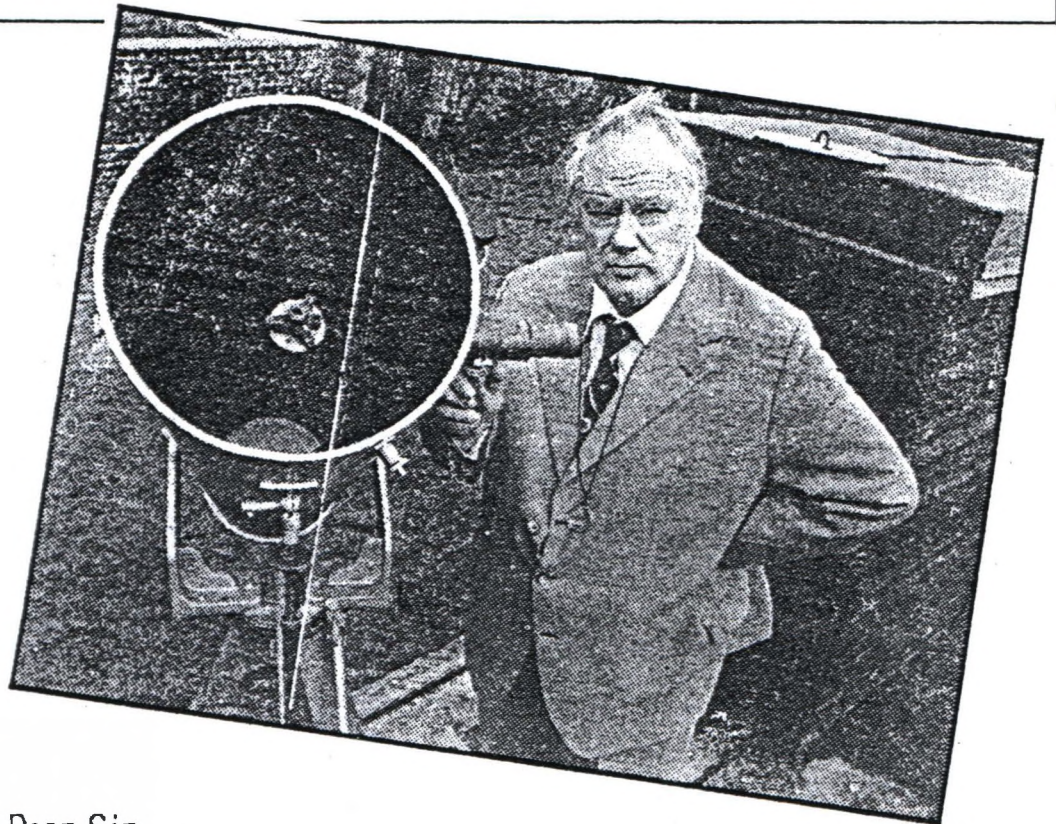
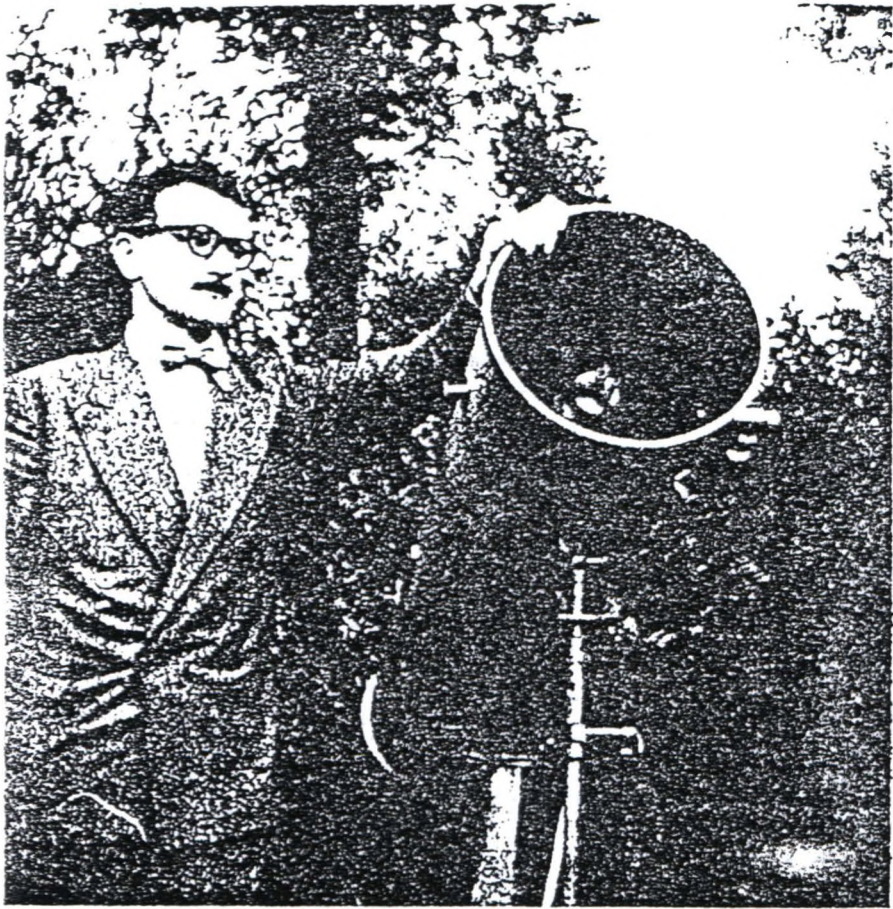
rural population - 'demonic' ecologists in their campaign to turn back habitat and restore wilderness. These are the legends which arise in the context of rural depopulation and railway line cutbacks. Soon, according to *les paysans*, the wolves will be back.

The author claims that whether in 1990 or the Middle Ages there are just nine types of rumour: the Return of Satan; the Hidden Poison; the Great Conspiracy; Artificial Scarcity; Fear of Strangers; Kidnappings; the Passions, Illnesses and Vanities of Princes - or their modern counterparts, politicians and media personalities. The price is prohibitive, but *Magonia* readers should order this book at their library. **P.R.**

HOLD THE BACK PAGE

Miscellaneous ramblings from the ufological fringe

Just Fancy That...



Dear Sir,
I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between Mr Patrick Moore the well known amateur astronomer and xylophonist (seen here displaying his magnificent 12 inch instrument), and Mr Cedric Allingham, the noted contactee of the 1950's (seen here displaying a remarkable similar 12 inch instrument). I wonder if by any chance they could be related?
Yours Sincerely
John D. Cottage, The Old Manse, Tunbridge Wells
Yes, Ed.

"Win a Corn Circle" competition winner

We are delighted to report that our great 'Win A Corn-Circle' competition has a clear winner, Tom Ruffles of East Dulwich, London. He not only reveals the next unexplained phenomenon to hit us, but hints at the one after that. The Led Zeppelin Cornfield Circles poster is on its way to him.

After the demise of corn circles, what will the next craze be? A strong contender will be provided by the mysterious appearance of small footprints on panes of glass. These will become known as the 'smallfoot' phenomenon. The prints will bear traces of mud and will appear overnight, often in places well out of reach of the ground. It will be quite apparent that they were not there before but had just not been noticed.

They will tend to be seen in the winter due to ice highlighting the mud outline, but will not cluster in particular areas of the country.

After numerous sightings, increasing dramatically in frequency, a vigorous debate will ensue between a number of factions. They will put forward competing theories of the prints' causation as the definitive explanation, each less plausible than the last. The situation will be confused by the possibility of hoaxing, though this will never be proved, and it will be pointed out that some of the prints would have been difficult to fake due to their inaccessibility. Many small children will have their feet scrutinised carefully. A spin-off of smallfoot will be the partial rehabilitation Of Conan Doyle.

Alas, after much press speculation, the setting up of specialist journals and conferences (and the unearthing of smallfoot reports going back almost to the invention of glass), the subject will go the way of the circles, and give way to yet another enthusiasm, possibly involving the prehistoric use of petroleum products.

Another 'Northern Echoes' portrait for you to keep this issue. Make sure you have the complete set ready for our Fit the Face Competition in the next *Magonia*