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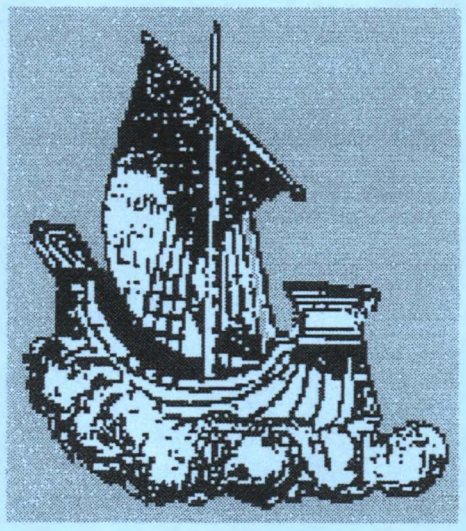


MiGS, ROSWELL AND CRASHED UFOS

THE TRANSFORMATION OF UFOLOGY

A VERY BRITISH UFOLOGY

BOOK REVIEWS :: THE PELICAN :: NORTHERN ECHOES



MAGONIA 95

INCORPORATING MUFOB 141

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EDITORIAL NOTES

A VERY BRITISH UFOLOGY

At last, it seems, the Warminster revival is getting underway. With the publication in 2005 of Dewey and Reis's *In Alien Heat* (reviewed in *Magonia* 91) an almost forgotten aspect of British ufological history was brought back into focus. Two recent books also revisit the site of England's biggest UFO flap. Andy Roberts and David Clarke's *Flying Saucerers: A Social History of Ufology*[1] places Warminster into the broader context of UFO development in this country, and Kevin Goodman's *UFO Warminster: Cradle of Contact*[2] presents the place and the events associated with it into a more personal context. All three books, I believe, reveal Warminster as an intrinsically English phenomenon, and part of a very distinctive national UFO tradition.

Roberts and Clarke begin their survey with the usual brief account of the 1947 events in the USA, starting with Arnold's sighting on June 24. Amazingly, it took just six days for the saucers to cross the Atlantic; Britain's first UFO report came from a vicar's wife in Kent who saw a 'dark ring' in the sky as she waited at a level-crossing near Sandwich.

Even in this pioneering report some of the classic characteristics of the mass-media UFO report were apparent: the immediate search for, then dismissal of, a prosaic explanation: "I am positive it was not a smoke ring from the passing engine"; the immediate linking with other reports: "Flying saucers were also reported yesterday as having been seen during the last couple of days over Denmark, Johannesburg and Sydney"; then as a clincher of authenticity: "The United States Army Air Force announced at Roswell, New Mexico last night that a 'flying disc' was found last week on a ranch near Roswell, and was now in the Army's possession."

So within days of Roswell, UFOs were already established in the UK. 'Ufology' as an organised pursuit began with the foundation of small clubs, mostly just groups of friends, like that founded in Hove by Richard Hughes, called simply The Flying Saucer Club. It was organised to the extent of issuing membership cards and publishing a magazine, *Flying Saucer News*.

Clarke and Roberts outline the development of the earliest years of British ufology in some detail, but there is clearly a great deal of material still waiting to be discovered. But what is very clear, even from the limited amount of material available to us, is that ufology in this country, even in the earliest years, developed differently from its American counterpart. Perhaps significantly ufology in Britain attracted a number of 'establishment' figures, and in the early years, like much else in Britain in the 1950s, had a distinctive class profile.

Early British saucer enthusiasts ('ufologists' is perhaps too strong a word) included a number of high-ranking RAF personalities, most notably Lord Dowding. For some reason the minor Anglo-Irish aristocracy were also to the fore in early British UFO research with Brinsley le Poer Trench (Lord Clancarty) and Desmond Leslie, with family links to Sir Winston Churchill and a castle in Ireland. The aristocratic connection even reached to the Royal Family, with both Lord Mountbatten and Prince Philip expressing keen interest in the subject. (Gordon Creighton claimed that Philip was a subscriber to FSR, but whether this meant more than just that Creighton sent him a copy of every issue is hard to say).

Class divisions characterised much of British ufology on a less rarefied level as well. Throughout its history BUFORA (now defunct but once Britain's leading UFO organisation) was riddled with factional in-fighting, which often showed a class overtone. Many of the founders and senior figures in BUFORA were primarily occultists, to whom UFOs were a way of challenging scientific values; so that groups and individuals who wanted to bring a scientific approach to the organisation were seen as a hostile force challenging their own occult agenda.

A classic example of this attitude was displayed by BUFORA veteran John Cleary-Baker when involved in a spat with the scientifically-oriented Cambridge University UFO group, dismissing them as "these white-coated godlings of the laboratory".

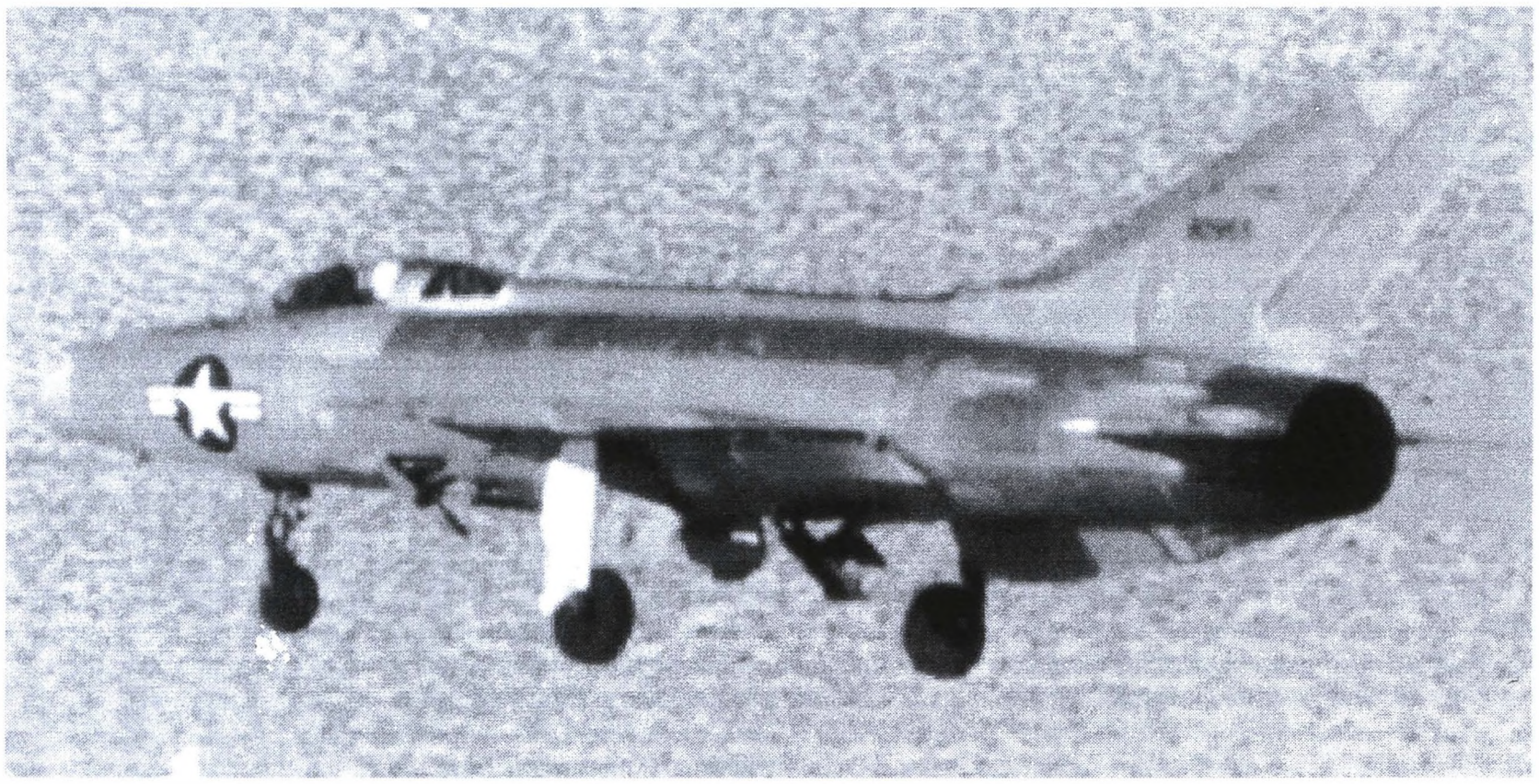
British ufology took some strange paths in the 1960s and 1970s, and Andy Roberts's descriptions of the ufological foundation of the Findhorn Community (an early version of which appeared in *Magonia* 89) shows how the founder, Peter Caddy, was drawn into the flying saucer world through his involvement with the aristocratic, spiritualist Attingham Park group, with included figures such as Sir Victor Goddard (a former Air Marshall) and Sir George Trevelyan.

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THE**ROSWELL INCIDENT**
YF110AND**CONSTANT PEG**

What the U.S. Air Force did with two dozen "Unknown Aerial Vehicles"



Curtis Peebles

Stanton T. Friedman has recently made several significant changes in the Roswell mythology. He now claims that numerous U.S. aircraft have been lost in dogfights with flying saucers. At the 4th Annual UFO Crash Retrieval Conference, held on November 10-12, 2006, Friedman stated that he was investigating "at least 7 specific cases in which the UFOs zapped attacking Earthling aircraft." He added that he was also "working on a claim by a pilot that UFOs took out 20 of our planes in Europe in the early 1950s." [1]

Friedman did not give aircraft types, serial numbers, crew names, or other specific details of these losses. He was challenged on this, and wrote "One critic wanted signed sworn statements and full investigative reports of the destroyed planes which of course but not surprisingly, I don't have." [2]

At the same time, Friedman also greatly expanded the scale of the alleged saucer recoveries. This was no longer limited to the one (or two) saucers from the Roswell incident, but now, he stated, "I would say we've probably retrieved dozens of crashed saucers." As with other crashed saucer stories, details are lacking, the claims are unsubstantiated, and nothing in the way of evidence is offered. Nor does Friedman or other individuals give any indications that they understand what would be done with such vehicles if they were actually recovered. [3]

During a debate on UFO Updates in early 2005 about the impact of captured saucers on Cold War history, Friedman wrote, "Why would we be told about a connection between Roswell and what happened in the outside world?" He continued that, "Changes on the inside are not the same as changes on the outside. Remember you can't tell your friends without telling your enemies. Without access to the data, there is no way to know...what the impact has been." [4]

Friedman's argument shows an inability to understand that secret actions have public consequences. This was indicated by a comment he made in the documentary *Hangar 18: The UFO Warehouse* in late 2006. Referring to the recovery of "unknown aerial vehicles," he said, "But it doesn't matter whether you're talking about airplanes or saucers." [5]

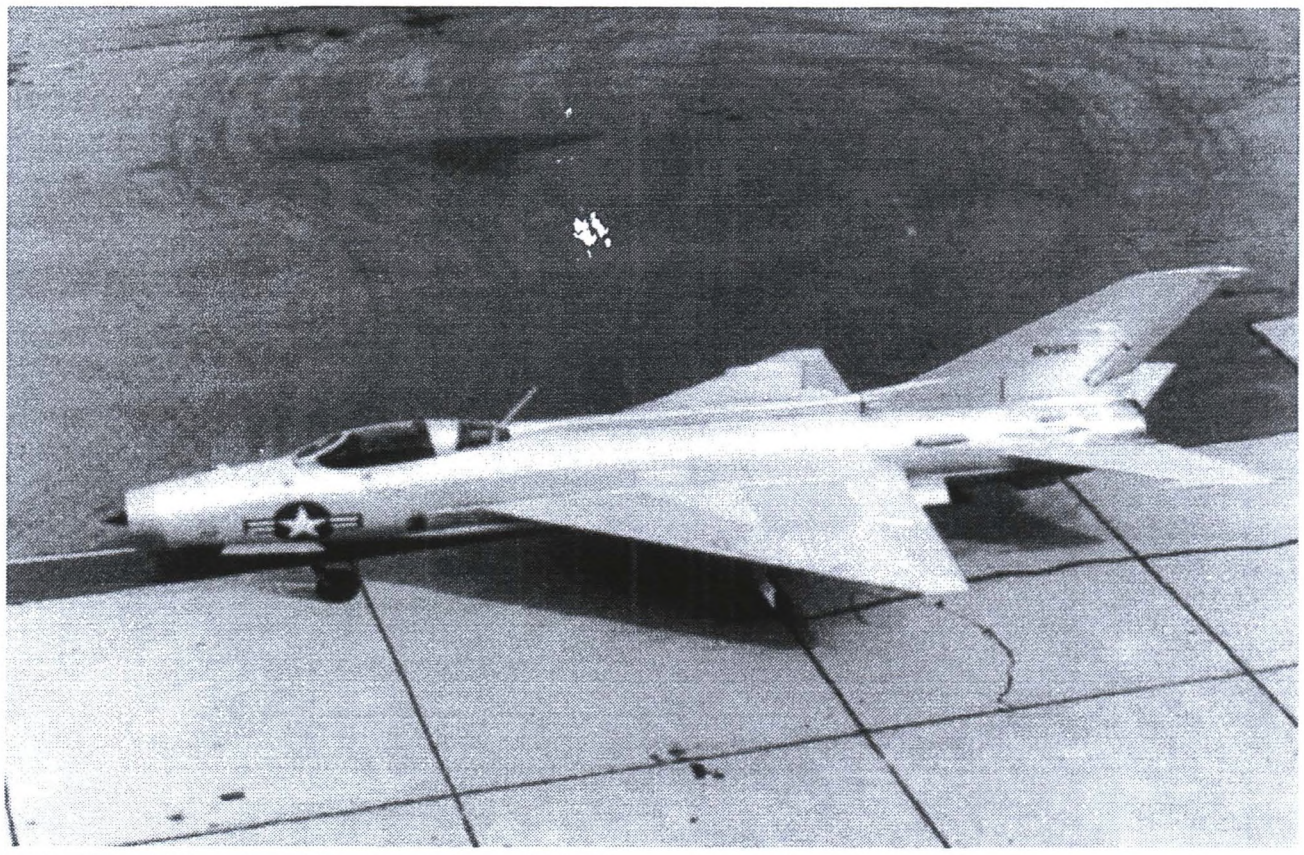
It is ironic that Friedman should draw the analogy between captured aircraft and crashed saucers, without recognizing the consequences for the Roswell incident. It is doubly ironic that he is correct in both the scale of the U.S. aircraft losses, and in the number of captured "unknown aerial vehicles." The analogy and its consequences was a realization I made nearly a decade ago, after reading reports on the "YF-110B."

Have Doughnut

A major threat facing U.S. pilots flying against North Vietnam in the late 1960s was the MiG-21. In part this was because American fighter pilots had received little training in air-to-air combat tactics. Between October 5, 1966 and January 14, 1968, a total of 21 U.S. Air Force aircraft were destroyed by North Vietnamese MiG-21s. These were ten F-105Ds, five F-4Ds, three F-105Fs, and one F-4C, one RF-101C, and one EB-66C. [6] By the end of 1967, the

U.S. military realized that changes had to be made. The first step was to "know your enemy." To do this required a MiG-21. This was soon arranged.

"Have Doughnut" was the code name for the examination and flight tests of a MiG-21F-13 aircraft. This was a joint project between the Foreign Technology Division (FTD) and the Air Force Flight Test Center



(AFFTC). Although FTD, located at Wright-Patterson AFB, was best known for Project Blue Book, its primary responsibility was collection of technical intelligence on Soviet aircraft and missiles. The AFFTC, at Edwards AFB, had responsibility for the flight testing of U.S. Air Force aircraft. Have Doughnut would also involve pilots from the Fighter Weapons School at Nellis AFB and Navy test squadron VX-4 at Point Mugu.

Have Doughnut began with the departure of the thirteen man team at 1600 hours local time on January 13, 1968 aboard a C-141A transport plane. Their equipment, which included a truck, two trailers, three aircraft jacks, a large supply of plywood and lumber, two radial and two saber saws, five sets of metric tools, six tarpaulins, twenty overalls, and ten pairs of gloves, was also aboard the C-141A. The team arrived at the "acquisition site" at 1340 hours local time on January 15. The equipment was unloaded after nightfall for security, and the transport then flew to a staging site.

The disassembly of the MiG-21 was scheduled to take seven days, but was actually completed in five days. This involved removing the aft fuselage, wings, stabilizers, and afterburner section. By 1800 hours local time on January 20, the aircraft parts were loaded on trucks, and taken to a C-133A transport, which had replaced the C-141A due to maintenance problems. The C-133A departed the acquisition site at 0200 hours on January 21.

The return journey took nearly three days. The C-133A finally arrived at the "test site" late on the evening of January 23, and reassembly began the next day. All the parts were uncrated and inspected for any damage. The reassembly was completed on February 7, 1968. This was a complicated process, as it involved not only putting the MiG back together, but also simultaneously adding test instruments to the vehicle, conducting a 50-hour phase inspection and the "subsystem exploitation." [7]

The subsystem exploitation is the first element in the analysis of any captured enemy aircraft. It involved a detailed examination of the MiG, from its complete systems on down to the individual parts. For Have Doughnut, this was conducted by two different teams from the Aeronautical System Division at Wright-Patterson AFB.

The MiG-21's hydraulic system, for example, was found to have a conventional design, with a main and a boost system, and an emergency electric motor system. The aircraft also had a pneumatic system, with a main and emergency system. The fire protection system was considered unusual, however, as it used methylene bromide, which is highly toxic and required a bulky plumbing system.

The MiG-21's radar and gun sight systems were similar in capabilities to U.S. equipment of the early 1950s. The Soviet system's major improvement was an increased radar range gained by a novel antenna design and the missile launch computer. The SRD-2MK radar lacked any features to counter jamming. The ASP-5ND optical sight was a conventional gyro system that provided lead computation for air-to-air gun fire and rockets, and an aiming reference for missile launch, air-to-ground gunnery and bombing. The VRD-2A missile computer signaled the pilot when he was within range to fire the Atoll infrared-guided missiles.

The structure, materials and construction methods used in the MiG-21 were also examined. No unique manufacturing techniques were found, and the aluminium alloys used in the MiG were comparable to the 7075 and 2024 alloys used in U.S. aircraft. The use of large aluminium panels in the construction of the aircraft nose was considered unusual, as were the many steel components in the aircraft. There were no indications of structural weakness or metal fatigue.

The aero-dynamic smoothness of the aircraft was marginal. Many rivet heads on the MiG protruded well above the airframe, and there was a general waviness to the structure between the airframe frames. There were also gaps and mismatches between sections of the aircraft skin. This reflected the Soviet design philosophy of focusing on the engineering and construction of components critical to operation, reliability, or maintainability. Other elements received little care or attention. [8]

One unusual aspect of the exploitation effort was the examination of the markings on aircraft parts. From these, analysts determined that the aircraft's R11F-300 jet engine was produced at Plant 26 in Ufa, during the fourth quarter of 1963, in the sixth series, and was engine production number 065. Markings showed that most of the MiG's other components were also built during the 1963 time period. [9]

The MiG-21 was also given an "alias." Military pilots recorded their flight time in a flight log. An airplane's crew chief is also required to fill out reports on his aircraft after all flights and repair work. These documents recorded the aircraft's type and its serial number, and were unclassified. To hide the aircraft's real identity in the paperwork. the designation "YF-110B" was created for the MiG-21F-13. The aircraft was also given the serial number "68-0965." This was a real Air Force serial number, but it had belonged to a Falcon AGM-4D air-to-air missile. The serial number was painted on the tail and U.S. insignias were added to the nose. [10]

The first flight of the MiG-21 was made on February 8, 1968, by Lt. Col. Joe B. Jordan, who was the Tactical Air Command project pilot for Have Doughnut. The flight time was 30 minutes, with the MiG-21 accompanied by an Air Force F-4D as chase plane. This flight was to determine the MiG-21's handling and performance characteristics. The MiG-21 and its chase plane climbed to 10,000 feet, then conducted acceleration comparisons, afterburner and engine response tests, manoeuvring qualities tests, slow speed handling evaluations, and avionics and sight system analysis. When the tests were successfully completed, both aircraft landed. In all, 29 flights of the MiG-21 were made over the following two months for performance and stability data. [11]

The MiG-21 was found to be easy to fly and had no dangerous characteristics. The aircraft's turning performance and roll rate and response was good throughout the flight envelope. The MiG's basic stability was also considered good. The engine acceleration was very slow even at high power settings. The MiG's most serious problem was that at altitudes below 15,000 feet and at airspeeds between Mach 0.96 and 1.15, the aircraft vibrated so severely that the MiG pilot could not engage a target. The cockpit instruments

vibrated to the point that they were almost completely blurred. This was due to the bumps on the aircraft's surface. [12]

Have Doughnut's primary goal was the testing of U.S. aircraft and air combat tactics in mock dogfights against the MiG-21. The MiG would either "attack" the U.S. aircraft, be "attacked" by the U.S. aircraft, or the engagement would start with neither aircraft holding an advantage. The "victor" in each dogfight was determined by which pilot was able to get into a position where a "kill" of the other aircraft could be made. The "Mission Summary/Comments" for Mission 43, flown on March 2, 1968, gives an idea of the type of testing, the results, and what was learned. This flight involved a pair of F-4E fighters vs. the MiG-21 (referred to as the "test aircraft"):

"Initial conditions for the first head-on engagement were established at 15,000 ft, 450 [knots]. No radar contact was obtained by the F-4's throughout the 40 mile converging track. Visual contact was not established and a 180° level turn was executed by the F-4's and the test aircraft. During this turn-around, the test aircraft sighted the F-4's and initiated an attack, closing to missile range on F-4 Nr. 2, overshot and switched the attack to F-4 Nr. 1. The F-4's were unable to visually acquire the test aircraft until missile launch was called. F-4 lead then called for a hard turn reversal as the test aircraft overshot F-4 Nr. 2. After a series of vertical manoeuvres, the test aircraft remained in an offensive posture and the engagement was terminated.

"A converging flight track was set up for the second engagement with the test aircraft at 25,000 ft, [Mach] .9, and the two F-4E's at 15,000 and 20,000 simulating two elements in a fluid four formation. F-4 Nr.1 achieved a radar lock on the test aircraft at 15 miles and turned toward the target. A climbing attack into the test aircraft was performed by both F-4's and after several cycles of vertical 'yoyo's', both F-4E's aircraft were in the rear hemisphere of the test aircraft. Nr.1 F-4 obtained an auto radar acquisition at 3,500 ft and closed to gun range.

"The third engagement was initiated at 15,000 ft with the test aircraft in the offensive and initiating the attack from an abeam position of the F-4 element. At 3 miles range...the F-4's turned into the attacker. A defensive split was performed by the F-4's as the attacker closed to 3-4,000 ft range. F-4 Nr. 2 started a high G descending spiral and F-4 Nr. 1 pulled into a climb while waiting for the attacker to become committed to one target. Test aircraft elected to pursue the descending F-4 Nr. 2 and F-4 Nr. 1 reversed down and effected a sandwich with the attacker. After 360° of turn, the test aircraft and F-4 Nr. 2 maintained a 180° [angle] and F-4 Nr. 1 was able to sandwich and achieve a missile and gun kill position on the test aircraft.

"'Bingo' fuel level was called by the test aircraft and it returned to base for a normal landing.

"Radar detection was successful in the second engagement as the test aircraft was 5,000 ft higher than the F-4's providing a look-up aspect. The defensive split was successful as the subsequent sandwich achieved a kill. During the high G defensive spiral by F-4 Nr. 2 in the split, the test aircraft was unable to achieve a tracking solution. The [F-4] auto radar acquisition was used with success; however, to be more useful, the effective range capability of this mode should be expanded to 5 miles." [13]

Between February 8 and March 30, 1968, the MiG-21 made a total of 102 flights. Of these, 58 were simulated air combat missions while 29 were the performance tests. Another 10 were infrared measurements flights. There were also a pilot familiarization flight, a gunnery test of the MiG's 30 mm cannon, two flights to test the MiG's radar against the jamming equipment on a B-52 and a B-58, and a photo flight. [14]

The project was now completed. Disassembly of the MiG-21 began at 1200 hours local time on April 3, and continued for the next three days. The C-133B arrived at the "test site" at 1200 hours on Sunday, April 7, 1968, and loading began an hour later. The MiG and the other equipment were on board the cargo plane by 1600 hours. The fourteen team members received a "site security debriefing" at 1615 hours. The C-133B departed the test site at 1215 hours on April 8, and arrived at the acquisition site the morning of April 10. As before, the unloading of the MiG was delayed until after sundown for security. The reassembly process was dogged by technical problems, the need for rechecks, and bad weather. Finally, on April 24, the MiG-21 competed its acceptance flight and the "host country" accepted its return. [15]

"Throw a Nickel on the Grass..."

By late 1968, three reports on Have Doughnut were completed. The first was the "Have Doughnut Volume I Technical" report, which was 601 pages long. This document included a Navy vulnerability evaluation, an AFFTC performance and stability evaluation, a Strategic Air Command evaluation of the MiG-21's effectiveness against electronic countermeasures, a set of radar cross section measurements, propulsion system results, the finding from the assembly and disassembly of the MiG, an instrument evaluation, modifications made to the MiG for the test program, maintenance work done on the MiG, aircraft weights, marking analysis, aircraft visibility, and acoustic and infrared measurements of the MiG.

The "Have Doughnut Volume II Tactical" report detailed the results of the mock dogfights between the MiG-21 and different U.S. fighter and attack aircraft types. The 310 page report consisted of evaluations by the Tactical Air Command, the Navy, and the Air Defense Command. The third volume, "Have Doughnut Special Distribution," was a 525 page compilation from volume 1, with the Strategic Air Command evaluation deleted, and a lengthy description of the assembly and disassembly process added. The three volumes were classified "Secret."

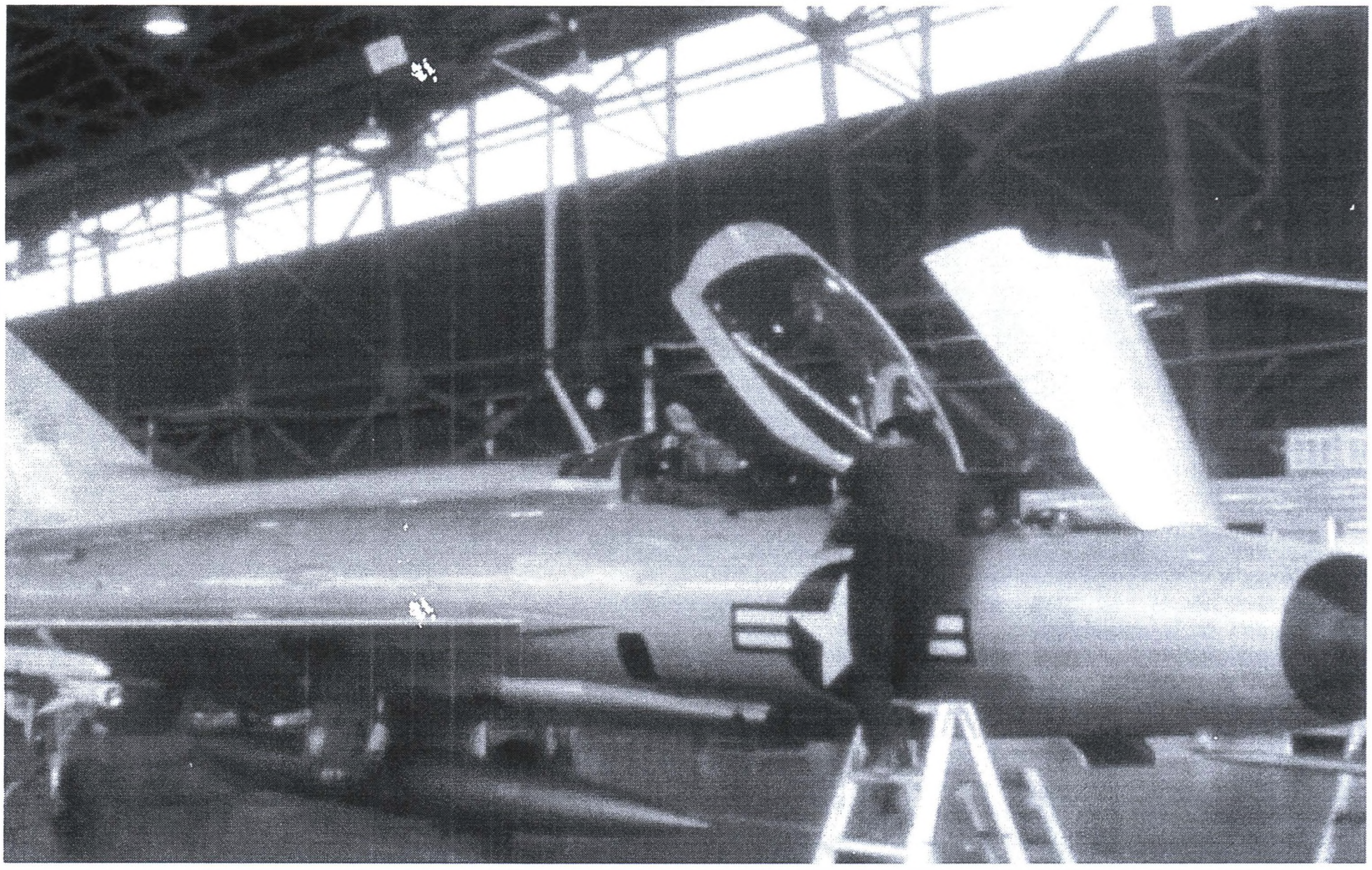
The three reports were highly detailed, but with a total length of 1,436 pages, the information was not in an easily digestible form. This was particularly important for those with the most direct need for the information – the pilots and aircrews fighting the MiG-21 over North Vietnam. This was provided by a training film, titled "Throw a Nickel on the Grass," which was shown to U.S. fighter, interceptor, and attack pilots.

Despite Friedman's repeated claim that "you can't tell your friends without telling your enemies," the film made no attempt to hide the existence of the captured MiG-21. The film's narration began, "An ideal way to develop combat skill against an enemy aircraft would be to fly the enemy aircraft yourself before you had to fight it. Of course, that's an impossible ideal. Or is it?" Video and still photos were shown during the film of the MiG-21 in U.S. markings at the test site.

The presenters, Colonel Jordan and Navy Commander Thomas J. Cassidy, Jr. of VX-4, began with a brief technical description of the MiG-21, and then moved to its vulnerabilities. The MiG pilot's poor visibility was one such shortcoming. The 4-inch thick bullet-proof windshield made it hard for the MiG pilot to see approaching aircraft head on. An F-4 could only be spotted at 3 to 5 nautical miles, and smoke trails at up to 15 miles. There was no aft visibility in a 50 to 60 degree cone to the rear, while a metal flap on the top of the ejection seat blocked upward visibility. The pilot could not see another aircraft to either side if it was 20 degrees below the horizon. This large blind area was a major tactical shortcoming of the MiG-21.

The film then detailed the strengths and weaknesses of different U.S. aircraft against the MiG-21, as indicated by the simulated dogfights. These were the F-4, F-8, F-105, F-106, F-100, F-104, F-111, and the Navy's A-4, A-6, and A-7 attack aircraft. The MiG-21 was highly manoeuvrable below 500 knots, and could outturn the U.S. aircraft. The MiG's low speed acceleration was poor, however, and several seconds were required for the engine to reach full power. In contrast, the U.S. aircraft were more powerful, and could easily out-accelerate the MiG-21 at low altitude.

Jordan and Cassidy ended by summing up the tactics for use against the MiG-21. Rather than getting into a low-speed dogfight, where the MiG-21 held the manoeuvring advantage, U.S. pilots should keep their speed above Mach 0.95, and drive the fight to low altitude. This would put the MiG at a disadvantage, as it would be vibrating severely and be unable to engage the U.S. aircraft. Forcing the MiG into a hard turn would cause it to slow abruptly. The Soviet aircraft's poor acceleration meant it could not quickly regain speed. The U.S. pilot could then use his plane's superior power to either attack or outrun the MiG. A U.S. aircraft attacking a MiG-21 could also exploit its large blind area to get into position and fire a missile before the enemy pilot realized the threat. [16]



Showing "Throw a Nickel on the Grass" to pilots who would soon be flying combat over North Vietnam risked exposure of Have Doughnut. A captured pilot might break under interrogation and talk about the film. But intelligence is only valuable if it is used. If the knowledge about the MiG was withheld, aircraft and crews would be lost unnecessarily, and the whole effort would have been pointless.

The large number of people who now knew about the MiG-21 from participating in the effort, reading the reports, or seeing the training film made a press leak inevitable. This came in the February 17, 1969 issue of Aviation Week & Space Technology. The item read:

"Soviet MiG-21 fighter was secretly brought to the U.S. last spring and flight tested by USAF pilots to learn first-hand its capabilities and design characteristics. The aircraft, which engaged in simulated combat against U.S. fighters, was highly regarded by the pilots who flew it. The MiG-21 was particularly impressive at altitudes over 25,000 ft. The evaluation was part of a broad effort by USAF to detail the threat of Soviet air power in planning new aircraft, such as the F-15 fighter." [17]

Constant Peg

Have Doughnut soon had public consequences, both in the design of new U.S. fighters and also in aircrew training. The Navy established the Top Gun program. The Air Force counterpart was Red Flag, a large scale war game carried out over the Nellis AFB range. Both programs had "aggressor pilots" flying F-5s to simulate MiG-21s. Top Gun and Red Flag were widely publicized. "Constant Peg" was not.

Constant Peg involved a secret squadron of about twenty-five MiG-17s, MiG-21s, and MiG-23s established in 1977. The MiG-21s still used the designation of YF-110B, while the MiG-23s were called "YF-113Bs" and "YF-113Es." The unit operating the MiGs was designated the 4477th Test and Evaluation Squadron (TES) and operated from an airfield on the Tonopah Test Range in Nevada. The first 4477th TES commander was Col. Gaillard R. Peck. (The "Peg" in the code name was his wife.) [18]

The Air Force, Navy, and Marine pilots selected to fly against the MiGs in Constant Peg deployed for two weeks. They initially made a familiarization flight to observe the MiGs in flight and study their characteristics. Peck recalled the reaction of the young pilots at seeing a real live MiG: "They would pull up beside you in formation, and you could almost see their eyeballs popping out of their heads. It was that exciting for them." This was followed by one-on-one simulated dogfights, and then two-on-two missions. The scale of Constant Peg was remarkable. Between 1977 and 1988, a total of about 6,800 pilots flew against the MiGs. [19]

Constant Peg faced many unusual demands. Little in the way of technical data was available on the MiGs, and spare parts were, to say the least, difficult to acquire. This resulted in a poor safety record. The 4477th TES had 100 accidents for every 100,000 hours of flight time. The normal Air Force accident rate was 4 in every 100,000 hours. [20] The unit stopped flying MiG-17s following an accident in 1981. Capt. Mark F. Postai crash landed a MiG-17 in the desert following an engine failure. He survived the accident, but died in a MiG-23 crash during 1983. He was one of two 4477th TES pilots killed during Constant Peg. [21]

The 4477th TES pilots were not only from the Air Force, but also included Navy and Marines. They usually had backgrounds as Top Gun and Red Flag aggressor pilots, or were weapons school instructors. The enlisted personnel were usually senior non-commissioned officers. The 4477th TES pilots would fly as many as three missions a day in the MiGs, lasting an hour or less each. [22]

The assessments of the MiG-21s and MiG-23s by the Constant Peg pilots were very different. The MiG-21 was judged to be a highly manoeuvrable pure fighter. The MiG-23, on the other hand, was considered an unsuccessful attempt by the Soviets to build a multi-role fighter bomber. The MiG-23 was fast, but had poor stability. All the 4477th TES commanders considered it too dangerous to fly. [23]

Constant Peg was a "Black" project. like Have Doughnut a decade before. The personnel assigned to the Tonopah Test Range wore civilian clothing to avoid attracting attention, and could not discuss their assignment with their families. The next of kin of the two pilots killed during the program were not told how they had died. The MiGs were kept in their hangars or sent into the air whenever Soviet reconnaissance satellites were overhead. Any military pilot who made an emergency landing at the airfield signed a secrecy agreement not to discuss what he had seen. [24]

But also like Have Doughnut, Constant Peg was soon an open secret. The first major leak occurred at the same time as the project started. The Armed Forces Journal

International issue for September 1977 carried the article "Soviet Jets in USAF Use – The Secret MiG Squadron." It said that the MiGs were used in the training of U.S. pilots, and speculated that the U.S. could have as many as 20 MiGs of different types. [25]

The sheer scale of Constant Peg, both in the number of pilots participating and the number of MiGs involved, made it impossible to keep the effort secret. Pilots would quietly discuss their experiences at officers clubs. At least one sighting of a MiG-21 in flight was made by a civilian near Edwards AFB. Constant Peg was closed down in 1988, due to its cost and the ending of the Cold War. In the early 1990s, more information began to emerge. Pictures were published of both the Have Doughnut aircraft and other U.S. MiG-21s. The YF-110 and YF-113 designations became known, as did the broad outlines of the effort. Eventually, both MiG-21s and MiG-23s were put on display. The code name "Constant Peg" was public long before it was finally declassified in November of 2006. Finally, any doubts about what aircraft were flown by the 4477th TES were eliminated by the unit's name – "Red Eagles."

MiG History vs. Roswell Mythology

Stanton Friedman's analogy that there would be no difference between captured aircraft and crashed saucers has validity on several levels. From a narrow military viewpoint, flying a military vehicle within U.S. airspace or attacking U.S. aircraft are both acts of war. Whether the vehicles were Soviet or Martian does not matter. They were a threat that had to be analyzed and countered.

Have Doughnut and Constant Peg gave the U.S. access to flyable MiGs. But tactical evaluations were also conducted without a flyable enemy vehicle. Project Feather Duster was conducted between May and October 1965 at Nellis AFB. Like the Have Doughnut mock dogfights more than two years later, Feather Duster evaluated tactics for U.S. aircraft against the lighter and more manoeuvrable MiG aircraft they were now facing over North Vietnam. As no real MiGs were then available, F-86H fighters served as stand-ins. The very same procedures were used in both cases – pre-planned engagements to see which tactics worked and which did not. The F-86Hs could not exactly simulate the higher performance MiGs, but within these limitations Feather Duster showed similar results to the later Have Doughnut tests. The Feather Duster results, like those from Have Doughnut, were distributed to U.S. fighter pilots. [26]

The analogy between crashed saucers and captured aircraft has major consequences for the Roswell mythology. If the U.S. military had recovered any crashed saucers and/or if its aircraft had engaged alien spacecraft in dogfights, then the exact same procedures as with the MiGs would have been followed. Further, these analyses would be distributed widely, as numerous intelligence organizations, military units, and individual pilots would have a "need to know." And, just as with the MiG data, it would leak to the press and public.

The analogy between U.S. MiG operations and Roswell also point out the difference between history and mythology. The Have Doughnut and Feather Duster reports and other documents, photos of the MiG-21, and the "Throw a Nickel on the Grass" training film are now declassified. The MiGs are on display and participants in Constant Peg have described their experiences. This is historical evidence, of such a scale and type to prove beyond doubt that these activities occurred.

The Roswell mythology paints a very different picture. The historical evidence available for the U.S. MiG operations is totally lacking with the Roswell incident. There are no technical reports on alien crash debris or the "dozens" of recovered saucers. There are no counterparts of the Feather Duster or Have Doughnut reports on tactics for use against flying saucers.

Indeed, the proponents of the Roswell incident reject historical evidence. They dismiss the lack of records for a nurse named "Naomi Selff," who Glenn Dennis claimed participated in an alien autopsy at Roswell, and later died in a plane crash. No nurse with this name was stationed at Roswell or ever served in the U.S. military. None of the five nurses at the base in July 1947 were involved in a plane crash. Friedman said that he "located someone who had been stationed at the base and confirmed recalling nurse Naomi Self[f] and described her the same way Glenn had." [27]

Crashed saucer proponents also dismiss historical records which indicate the metal foil, balsa wood sticks, and rubber fragments found near Roswell were from a Project Mogul balloon flight. Instead, they prefer decades old recollections of witnesses as to the debris' alleged exotic nature and the amount of material. In a memorable sound bite, Dr. Mark Rodeghier, the Center for UFO Studies' scientific director. made clear this attitude. He said, "There is no way that the amount of material in a Mogul balloon would fill up the area as described by the witnesses on the Roswell debris field. Now right there that's enough for me." [28]

Have Doughnut, Constant Peg, and other MiG operations made clear how serious a threat the U.S. considered these Soviet aircraft to be, and how far it would go to counter that threat. How serious a threat the U.S. considered flying saucers was also made clear by the lack of any similar efforts against alien vehicles.

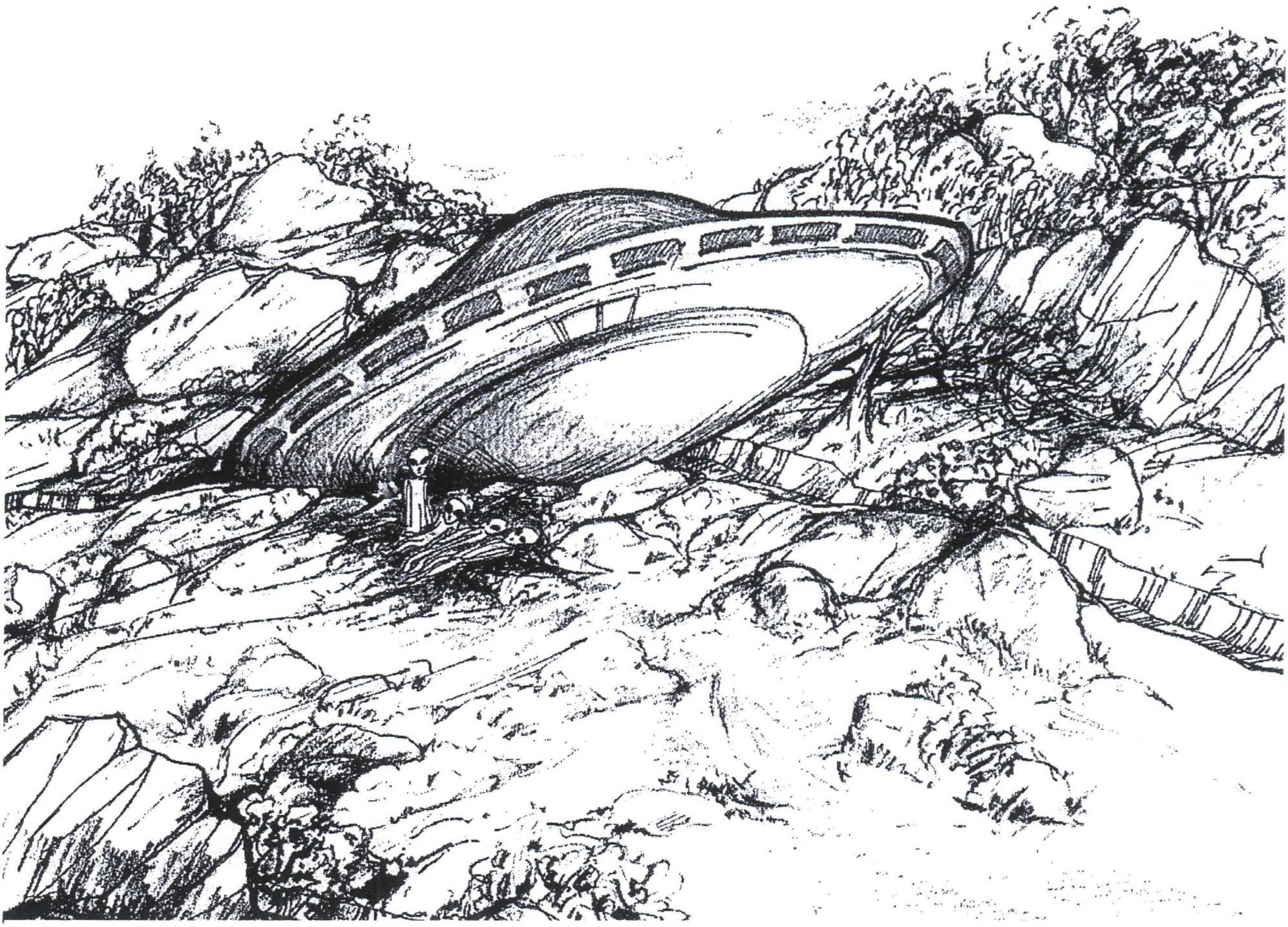
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8

THE**TRANSFORMATION**OF **UFOLOGY**

Matt Graeber



There has been a great deal written about the "Transformational Effects" of the UFO experience upon the observers and the interfacers with alien creatures. Many times these incidents are alleged to have produced an enhanced form of spiritual awakening, heightened awareness, or a realisation of one's cosmic connection with the universe and its many intelligent life forms. In extreme instances, the UFO experience is even said to have produced "Hybrid" half-human and half-alien beings that are presently walking amongst us.

This folly is further expanded by a form of unbridled one-upmanship, in which stories are routinely topped by more outlandish and embellished yarns, and we even find that not only have some fellows claimed to have discovered and identified more than 86 separate alien species presently visiting our planet but, there is an American abduction expert who proclaims that the "Greys" (small statured bulbous-headed alien creatures), actually absorb life-sustaining nutrients in the air through their skin.

As far as I've been able to determine, the expert doesn't mention the rather delicate matter of how the Greys might un-absorb their body's waste materials. Perhaps, they don't, and that's why they smell so horrid on the numerous military bases' autopsy tables!?

But, rather than rehashing the claims and the counter-claims which these many yarns have provoked from the saucer zealots, UFO enthusiasts, sceptics and debunkers - I will discuss the 'Transformation of Facts' that the unobjective ufologists quite often bring to fore concerning their misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the significance of their truly poor quality reports.

Example No.1 (A blast from the past!)

I attended a UFO conference which was held in a high school auditorium at Pottstown, Pa. back in the early 70's, and the director of the UFO group speaking at the event presented a number of photographic slides of purported UFOs for the audience to view.

Many of the photos were rather old case images and were frequently written about by the popular UFO authors of the day. However, several were new to me and I found myself particularly interested in one slide that featured a pair of copper-coloured disks flying in tight formation amidst the backdrop of a brilliant blue sky.

The disks were photographed from an approximate angle of about 40-45 degrees, and showed the pair of identical craft from the bottom with a pronounced leading and side edge. I was taken by the fact that this photo was very clear, well-centered in the frame, and did not have any distortion which might have been attributed to the craft's movement, camera movement, or the blurred, fuzzy and slightly out-of-focus character of many other UFO photos also being displayed.

When the speaker's presentation ended, and the lights were rekindled in the school auditorium there was a question and answer period in which inquiries were fielded by the speaker. At one point during this period, I raised my hand and asked the speaker if he might share a bit more information about the photo of the copper-coloured UFOs with us. He readily admitted that he didn't know very much about the photo's origin except that it came from a small village in South America.

I asked if he could tell us something about credibility the person who took the photo, when it was taken, where it might have been taken and how it ended up in the assortment of photos he had presented. The speaker seemed to be a little stunned by my questions and replied that the photographer is unknown and presumably died in a mudslide that destroyed his entire village.

The speaker didn't know the name of the village or, the date of the disaster. He also didn't know when the photo was taken. So, it would be virtually impossible to link the photo to a mudslide catastrophe that was published in newspapers somewhere in South America without at least knowing the approximate location or year of the incident. Even with knowing that, it would still be an investigative stretch to assume one positively knew anything about the reliability of the photos themselves.

When I mentioned the fact that these photos were probably not the best examples for audience presentation, an obviously annoyed lady seated in the front of the auditorium challenged my statement with a rather vehement remark. It was then that I first realized that pointed questions, and opposing points of view were not very welcome within the established UFO group community. (i.e., it appeared that many of the conference attendees hadn't come to learn anything. They just wanted their preconceived beliefs on UFOs to be confirmed and/or bolstered by the presenters).

Interestingly, I had collected coins as a youngster, and suspected that these copper discs were actually coin planchets that hadn't been struck at the mint. (e.g., American Revolution period large cents), for both appeared to have well-defined nicks along their outer edges, much like circulated coins viewed under magnification. I never got to mention this to the speaker, who shrugged off my questions by proclaiming that 'he thought' the photos were interesting and that's why he presented them at the conference. In other words, the UFO photos were not investigated for authenticity and photographer credibility before being presented to the audience.

It was then that I first realized that pointed questions and opposing points of view were not welcome within the established UFO group community

I later reproduced the appearance of the UFO photo, by placing two large cents on a piece of transparent Plexiglas and viewed them from a similar angle with the sky as the background. The result was astonishingly similar to the mysterious South American photo shown at the Pottstown conference. This was the first of many disappointing experiences with the fawning group enthusiasts and their leadership I would have during my eight year stint as the director of UFORIC the Philadelphia-based UFO Report and Information Center, 1972-80. (Although, I've been semi-active in the field for the last 33 years).

Example No.2 (Implants anyone?)

I attended a speaking engagement at a gathering of the Society of American Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in 1976 - in which I was to follow an elderly gentleman who had been researching UFO reports for decades. As I entered the dining room of the hall I encountered a young man assisting the primary speaker (we'll call him Mr. Compton), who was quite visually handicapped and poking about in a upright dining room cabinet which doubled as the speaker's podium and had a microphone affixed to its top. Inside the cabinet both small oil and vinegar bottles were stored before being placed on the dining tables with the dinner salads.

Although the young man was repeatedly telling the speaker that only vinegar and oil bottles were stored in the cabinet, the legally blind speaker persisted in rummaging about in the cabinet as if looking for something else to be there. (It was quite strange and an oddly-amusing affair). I do not recall learning what Mr. Compton actually thought might have been nestled within the cabinet.

As the speaker finally settled down behind the podium and the microphone was adjusted to his satisfaction, the lights in the dining room dimmed and the slide presentation and the experts lecture simultaneously began.

The first slide was a photo of an unfurled American flag. Mr. Compton said, "I always show this slide first because I believe in truth!" A voice from somewhere the darkness chimed in with something about "leaping tall buildings in a single bound" but, Mr. Compton didn't seem to be distracted by this comical comment as he continued, "I've been investigating UFO reports for many years, and let me make it perfectly clear, I'm no contactee! However, I do know a few, and if you listen to what I have to say you will be endowed by the friendly saucers and able to protect yourself from the hostiles"

Then a barrage of slides was shown in rapid succession with a quick explanation concerning the credibility of the photographer-witness, and the date and location of the alleged incident. Many of the photos were quite old and were obviously borrowed from UFO books and group journals. Most were poorly centred in the frame, blurry and of quite distant or small objects. (Were they insects on the wing, birds, Frisbees or alien space ships, stars or planets? It was quite difficult for anyone to tell with any degree of certainty).

Then Mr. Compton warned the audience of the dangers of approaching the Globe, Football-shaped and Beehive-like UFOs and how to thwart their attacks with a common hand-held flashlight. Apparently, one could also use the flashlight to perform a 'UFO Friendship Test', which was fully explained in Mr. Compton's 32 page pocket-sized booklet which was on sale in the rear of the hall.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of Mr. Compton's presentation concerned his revelations concerning a middle-aged woman (Mrs. Brotmann), who was out walking her beagle puppy at sunset on a summer's eve when she was struck down by fleeting a 2½ to 3 inch diameter UFO.

According to Compton, Mrs Brotmann had just been bending over while adjusting her puppy's collar and as she was starting to straighten up she was shocked to see the tiny UFO flying straight towards her face. She tried to take evasive action but, the glowing UFO was travelling so fast that it hit her squarely in the forehead knocking her to the

ground, lodging itself in her brain!

Although a bit dazed and bewildered, Mrs Brotmann finally regained her composure and was amazed to realize that there wasn't a mark on her face to show where the UFO had entered her cranium. Amazingly, after this incident Mr Brotmann's IQ was greatly enhanced and according Mr Compton she is now an engineer - type not specified.

Would it be a stretch of sceptical speculation to point out that the flag slide and the 'engineer' connection in the Mrs. Brotmann story seems to be a bit 'American' Society of Mechanical and Electrical Engineers' directed!?

An obviously concerned lady seated near the podium asked Mr Compton if he had taken Mrs Brotmann to the hospital to have X-Rays taken of her head injury. Compton quickly replied that he wanted to do so but, Mrs Brotmann flatly refused treatment because of the voices in her head. Apparently, these were the voices of the UFO operators who did not want their presence publicly revealed. Moreover, the X-Rays would be lethal to the tiny Venusians who reportedly have been visiting Earth since the dawning of mankind.

This was the very first of the many so-called 'implant stories' I've heard of over the years. Compton dates the alleged incident to the early fifties. Naturally, I was quite shocked by the character of Mr. Compton's presentation and followed up with a rather capsulated talk on investigative methods employed at UFORIC. After this experience I decide to avoid public speaking engagements on UFOs, Press interviews and I rarely participated in radio talk show programming on the phenomenon. However, I did answer questions from the public over the phone at UFORIC because we were in fact, a UFO 'report' and 'information' centre.

While the above may sound too bizarre to be factual, I can assure you that it is quite factual, and that even stranger/wilder yarns are presented at many UFO conferences and websites. So is there any wonder why mainstream scientists feel that something is not quite right about these wacky UFO experts and enthusiasts? Is there not a reason to suspect that they avoid and ignore the subject for fear of being associated with the kooks and crack pots who have always populated the largely unchecked and totally unregulated ufological landscape.

Moreover, why is it that if someone does question the validity of a reported incident, the UFO groups generally do not appreciate and applaud that individual's objectivity and tenaciousness - rather, they label him or her a sceptic and debunker while leaping to the defence of many less than credible eyewitnesses and fantasy-prone self-proclaimed UFO experts who bandy these yarns about.

All this while the so-called serious UFOlogists have never proven that UFOs actually exist in the nuts and bolts sense of the word in 60 years of intensive inquiry, by thousands of group members and field investigators- not to mention the combined efforts of hundreds of professional consultants in the disciplines of metallurgy, psychology, optics, astronomy, biology, etc. etc.



The entire alien creature fossil affair reminded me of a time as a youngster, when I first saw an authentic "Jackolope" at a hunting lodge. From what I later learned a taxidermist was producing the spoof-creature (A jack rabbit with small horns) for fun-loving hunters who wanted to bamboozle younger, less-experienced sportsmen in their group

Moreover these same groups invite abduction experts, implant researchers and reverse-engineering promoters to their conferences to speak about aliens absorbing nutrients through their skin, telepathic communiqués from benevolent alien races, and the mass production of hybrid babies aboard colossal motherships which are reportedly laden with human foetus' in liquid-filled jars.

What are we to think of these deluded folks who inflict themselves and their half-baked theories upon the unsuspecting public, the all-to-eager UFO group members and press with "wild" and completely "bogus" UFO tales? What are we to think of so-called serious research UFO group leaders who stand by and permit these same individuals to thrust themselves upon their membership? I actually came across a fellow (we'll call him Fred), who had achieved some degree of acclaim in UFO circles with his outrageous crashed saucer investigations, alleged alien and MIB encounters, not to mention his own abduction report. Fred was actually an individual dealing with serious mental heath issues.

Yet Fred, and the small group he is an important member of, has a growing internet following consisting of many young people who are Yahoo members, and quite a number of senior citizens who are interested in the group's specialized senior services, such as prayer groups for those with spiritual, emotional and physical wants and needs.

Additionally, Fred had proudly posted information about his own improving mental health status and active MH volunteer contributions on the internet for all to read yet, other UFO researchers continually posted his UFO stories and reports at their sites, often thanking Fred for his contribution to serious Ufology. Fred was even the focus of an article in a leading European UFO magazine. Obviously, all had taken his reports at face value and never looked into the matter of his health and veracity before listing such hokum as credible UFO sightings and alien encounters reports.

I guess that a schizophrenic could have a reliable sighting experience but, how would one be able to establish such a report as factual vs. hallucinatory in nature?

So, the question immediately arises, who is at fault here? The mental patient or the shoddy UFO researcher's who post such potentially delusional material for UFO enthusiasts to read and readily accept as reliable data? Even the very best computer virus scans and Firewalls cannot protect a serious researcher's UFO database from that sort of contamination.

Example No.3 (Fossil remains of Mythical Creatures and Saucer Pilots).

In a 1996 book on the discovery of many mythical creature fossils, a Texas fellow, said to be a palaeontologist, is suspected of actually sculpting and otherwise fabricating the so-called skeletal remains of mythical creatures, which included mermaids from both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, leprechauns and several other creative works. Although the books titled clearly identified it as being about the discovery of 'Mythical' creatures. one of the major UFO group leaders of the day was very much captivated by a photograph of the alleged skeletal remains of a small creature that was imbedded in a concave plaster of Paris cast - sort of like a little alien on the half-shell.

The ufologist thought that the skeletal remains closely resembled those of a downed saucer pilot who reportedly crashed his spacecraft just prior to the turn of the 20th century at Aurora, Texas. Indeed, a UFO report involving the landing of two cigar-shaped objects at Ledonia, Texas was reported to have happened on April 16th 1897, and the Aurora crash (about a hundred miles away) was said to have occurred the following day. The fossil find

story was cautiously but favourably promoted in the UFO group's journal where it received wide attention by the membership. After all, if the group's leader thinks there's something to this story. Well, there must be something to it!

As time passed, and the story started to unravel, the group leader decided to retire albeit, without ever fully acknowledging that he'd been mistaken about the significance of the bogus alien fossil finding at Ledonia. Jim Moseley of the zany UFO newsletter Saucer Smear, had been gently chiding the 'Czar' as he called the group leader, about the bogus fossil; and I even drew a cartoon concerning the controversy which compared the fossil to that of Warner Brothers cartoon character Marvin the Martian, who as you may recall is actually Bugs Bunny's outer-space nemesis.

The entire alien creature fossil affair reminded me of a time as a youngster, when I first saw an authentic 'Jackolope' at a hunting lodge. From what I later learned a taxidermist was producing the spoof-creature (A jack raboit with small horns) for fun-loving hunters who wanted to bamboozle their sons and younger, less-experienced sportsmen in their group. It's the hunter's equivalent of 'snipe hunting' with young boy scouts at camp for the first time.

So if we find such "UFOOLogy" flourishing at the very top of the heap in the sub cultural community of Saucerdom or (Saucerdumb), take your pick. One wonders, how deeply might such a malady infect the group's internet list membership and the independent serious UFOlogists who look to these groups and lists for database resources?

Example No.4 (On the demise of 20th Century-style Ufology)

While hearing from a researcher about the recent 'Mexican Roswell' report. and the sad state of contemporary ufology in general, the subject of the Carbondale, Pa. 1974 UFO crash came up. He was somewhat amazed to learn that a small group from Wisconsin had managed to revive the long-ago hoax, and was currently claiming it to be a genuine saucer crash that was covered up by the military and the government.

In fact they wanted people to 'think' Carbondale-Roswell, since they believed the case was actually much more significant than Roswell, and had many more reliable eyewitnesses. Claims which are not only completely incorrect, they're absolutely ridiculous too!)

This group (BUFO), is headed by an aggressive internet impresario (Mary Sutherland), who not only dabbles in saucers but, also operates an online matchmaking service and prayer services for those in need- while also featuring psychic readings for those daring enough to peek into their future at very reasonable rate of just $2.95 per minute. But, that's just the tip of the iceberg on her UFO-paranormal internet enterprises which include an Abductee Support Group and an array of items for sale at her online store and Gift Shoppe in scenic Burlington, Wisconsin.

The serious UFO researcher, who had long been studying a particular variety of UFO sighting seemed to be somewhat dismayed that all this was going on while most of the fellows he had been contacting on 'The List' probably felt that the Carbondale case was indeed a complete and clumsy hoax. Additionally, the Wisconsin group had established a dominate presence on the net at the 'carbondale.pa.UFO crash' site. and was even skilfully promoting their crash and cover up yarns on internet radio (audio) and TV (video) links.

Of course, there is a so-called 'Mexican Roswell', there is the Kecksberg, Pa. incident which is often touted as 'Pennsylvania's Roswell' and the Carbondale, Pa. hoax which the Wisconsin group is actively attempting to "turn" into a Roswell tourist and entertainment industry - and of course, even the Rendlesham forest case is being foolishly called the UK's Roswell.

It seems that if you prefix or suffix the name of any downed or un-downed saucer story with the word 'Roswell' the story automatically takes on an added dose of mystery, conspiracy and authenticity which far over-shadows any amount of obviously embarrassing evidence that might dismiss the entire incident as a fabrication or misidentification.

For many in the UFO community, Roswell is the line in the sand over which brutally vehement controversy rages. There is little middle ground on the topic, either you believe or you do not! If you do not, you are labelled a sceptic, a debunker and someone who has simply gone over to the other side.

Even though I never publicly said I do not believe the Roswell incident is very accurately portrayed in the vast saucer literature. I have become something of a piranha in the field simply because I questioned the veracity of two alleged star- eyewitnesses concerning the Roswell incident. (Both of whom were later discredited and believed to have been discredited by other proponent UFO researchers).

A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES (e-mails from the Ufological upper crust)

Let's see what the 'List' and the 'Leaders' have to say about this growing internet UFO group phenomenon in their midst. How do they feel about their own organizations dwindling membership, declining journal subscriptions and public appeal in the age of the internet saucer-hucksters? (I have changed the names of the e-mail writer's on this topic to avoid embarrassing the complacent and/or woefully inattentive).

Matt Graeber to Albert Benson, (a pseudonym) 12/12/2005

Most e-mail entries cited herein have been capsulated and edited by the author.

Albert, I'm wondering if the list members would be willing to post something on the growing internet presence of the Wisconsin group (BUFO), that is attempting to turn the Carbondale hoax of 1974 into another Roswell-like incident. There seems to be a rash of crash and non-crash saucer stories that are being promoted as Roswell-like events. If the list would log on to 'Carbondale.pa.ufo crash', they can see for themselves how outlandish the yarn has become.

Mr Benson did contact his friends and colleagues on the list concerning the request. Here are several of the replies he received on the matter.

From Rick Yost to Albert Benson & the list: 12/16/2005

"Hey Al,
Particularly the ectoplasm and orbs they found at the portal....
The Carbondale 'crash' was first promoted by the late flying saucer evangelist Robert D. Barry. He was PR man for the late right wing preacher Dr Carl McIntire's 20th Century Reformation Hour ministry. Barry operated its one man press arm. He later had a weekly Saturday midnight TV show, 'ET Monitor' on McIntire's TV station. They are both passed, now, but looks like other nuts are milking it."
By the way, Barry was the first one to report in 1989, about the same time same sort of claims were first made about Roswell, that the Kecksburg PA crash involved the recovery of alien bodies. He later withdrew that claim as an error, which was a surprise to me since I don't think Bob ever heard a UFO story he didn't like."

I wonder how many young saucer enthusiasts ever heard of the Reverend Carl McIntire or, knew that the Roswell story didn't include alien bodies until 42 years after the incident was first reported?

Albert Benson to Rick Yost & the list: 12/16/2005
Rick, I'm not talking about Kecksburg, but the Carbondale hoax of 1974. If you are interested to find out more about this blatant nonsense, log on to 'carbondale,pa.ufo.crash, and check out the buffoonery at any BUFO site or link. Those pushing this hoax as " Pennsylvania's Roswell" are without doubt in need of an urgent reality check".
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To Albert Benson, Rick Yost & the list from Scott Morris a major UFO group leader: 12/16/2005

"My observation of Barry, who used to write regularly for Saga and its UFO magazine, was than nearly everything he said - excluding perhaps banal observations about the weather - could be automatically discarded. Too bad that one of his tall tales is still with us.

I think the people who log on to the Carbondale UFO crash site should be alerted to this observation by one of Ufology's major group leaders and long-time researchers.

From Albert Benson to the list 12/17/2005

It's bad enough that the bizarre crowd at BUFO (Burlington UFO & Paranormal Radio) is pushing the Carbondale hoax of 1974 as a genuine occurrence, but they're not content to confine their idiocy to that alone. Now they're involved in an internet fantasy asserting that the little town of Olyphant PA. which is located about six miles from Scranton, is situated at the 'centre of the universe' and modelled after ancient Egypt by alien race! This would almost be funny if it weren't for the fact that for the uninformed public and the media, this is what passes for the face of Ufology."

Albert Benson continues, And this type of crap only makes it more difficult to convince the scientific community that the UFO phenomenon is a real mystery that merits the most serious investigation on their part."

Scott Morris replies on 12/18/2005

"Al, I agree that this is pretty dumb, but it doesn't amount to anything consequential, much less a problem with scientists. My experience is that scientists who are so willing are perfectly able to separate Ufology's sensible claims from the absurd ones. Scientists who are hostile simply use the latter as an excuse not to bother with the more substantive issues. Hard as it may be for some to believe, not all Urologist's problems are Urologist's fault."

The Carbondale silliness is perhaps worth noting , but nothing to get worked up about. UFOs and Ufology were long ago relegated to the fringes, and something relegated, even if unjustly, is going to attract fringe types. Surely, we have better things to do with our time than to waste it with ritual denunciations of the many nut jobs and liars who are out there, and have always been out there. They're certainly an irritation, but they're also no more than a sideshow."

Yet another valuable observation that is limited to the list membership. Scott is correct to point out that the list has far better things to do with it's time than denounce the internet kooks ... However, one wonders what might they do that they haven't already done over the course of the last sixty years?

From Tim Connolly (a list member) to Albert Benson & the list: 12/18/2005
At least this kind of thing provides fodder for 'Ufology-ology', which consists of remote viewing history texts which will be written on distant planets in the future of a parallel universe."

Egads, more material for BUFO to promote!

Joel Simpson (a list member) chimes in: 12/18/2005

Watch any established field on investigation (nutrition, astronomy, genetics, linguistics, etc.) and you'll always find the same sort of nuts looking for attention, and a great deal of confusion in the media....." I agree with Tom that the term 'Ufology' as understood by the world at large (not just by us) covers every conceivable aspect of modern culture, from Bermuda Triangles to flying lights, crystal skulls, dogu statuettes, Uri Geller, exobiology and Nostradamus. I'd rather avoid using it. When asked I certainly never say I research UFOs, and usually mumble something about 'a strong interest in cataloguing unidentified phenomena recorded throughout history.'

I fully understand Joel's embarrassment, and it's too bad that those visiting BUFO / Carbondale sites and links are not privy to his insightful and candid remarks. I would also like to point out that ufology is not actually an established field of investigation, rather, it is an investigative (and occasionally obsessional) hobby that has produced little if any evidence to verify the physical presence of UFOs in our skies. I certainly wouldn't put it up there with Astronomy or Genetics, etc.

So, the question arises, "why" should the serious UFO researchers feel obligated to point out the absurdities, inconsistencies, contradictions and the fabrications of the many internet saucer zealots, charlatans and hucksters? The answer is quite simple. Not to do so is a failing of character, ethics and moral compass that would serve to protect the unsuspecting and the ill-informed from the distortion of repeatedly reading and hearing about, and finally accepting as true, the suspicions, fabrications and "delusions" that have been bandied about and thrust upon them via the net regarding the true nature of the phenomenon.

For baseless rumours and distortions that are left unchecked foster beliefs, expectations, fears and suspicions that not only are completely unwarranted, they are dangerous too. I've read lies about the character and professional efforts of an acting police chief who diligently worked shoulder-to-shoulder with UFO field investigators during the Carbondale PA incident of 1974, while also managing to professionally serve and protect his community, the many volunteers and the policemen under his supervision at the site.

Only to have his name and efforts dragged through the BUFOrian muck and malicious fabrications about him by internet saucer-hucksters like Mary Sutherland, and her investigator Ronald T. Hannivig who not only never met or interviewed the acting police chief, they were not even present at the scene while the incident was being investigated in 1974

Yet, these same self-appointed experts also alleged that the acting police chief (Francis X. Dottle), wantonly participated in a cover up of the incident by tossing bogus evidence into a pond. They even went so far as to post the malicious remark that this fine public servant was not then, at the time of the incident, nor is he now, a friend of the people in the community he served.

These silly fabrications appeared at the carbondale.pa.ufo.crash site which you may log on to and read for yourself. I ask, is it really 'inconsequential' that a man's reputation be besmirched by individuals who may be totally deluded and lacking any scruples? Should serious ufologists continually turn a blind eye to this sort of behaviour and self-serving promotional propaganda because it might be unpleasant, beneath their dignity and embarrassing to deal with?

Is it not shameful to remain silent and allow this sort of chicanery to infect the minds of young and elderly ill-informed people who search the net for reliable information on the phenomenon? I've even received two e-mail forwards from a researcher in which the communiqués sender claims that one internet huckster is involved in fraudulent online business practices and directly involved in the suicide death of a teenage group member.

Naturally, there are two sides (or more) to every story, so I'm currently attempting to learn and verify more about the matter. I'll report my findings in a future *Carbondale Chronicles* entry for those who are interested in this rather shocking and sad story.

Is there not a lesson to be learned in the fact that few European politicians and intellectuals of the day took the National Socialist movement in Germany very serious when it first came on the political scene. So,

impressionable young people, far too young to remember who Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill were, sit at their computer's keyboard and unwittingly log on to saucer-huckster sites who are like sharks lurking in the internet's waters for careless surfers to happen their way.

Interestingly, my grandson's high school French teacher recently told me that 65-70% of his students thought that Germany had attacked Pearl Harbor in 1965 or 67. So, should the serious UFO researchers simply assume that this kind of historical ignorance is limited to today's high school students? How could serious ufologists be so blind (and passive) as to believe that their not setting the record straight on the chicanery and many lies about the UFO enigma is matter of little or no consequence? If that's the case, why the hell do they even bother to research the phenomenon at all?

If one thinks it's silly to compare the absurd online UFO propaganda to that of the Nazi's, one might do well to recall that well over fifty percent of the adult voting population of this country believe in the 'reality' of UFOs and would probably support a candidate who shared in their saucer enthusiasm. Perhaps a candidate who would simply promise to release any and all government papers on UFOs could win a close election, especially if that candidate were also a popular entertainment or sports celebrity.

So, while the studious UFO researcher's utilize the same internet technology to e-mail pithy and complimentary notes for each others enjoyment, and an occasional pat on the back, many youthful UFO enthusiasts slip into the jaws of the saucer-hucksters deception, delusions, lies and distortions. In fact, in some cases they may even be gobbled up by a hucksters chronic, habitual and/or pathological lying.

But, the rub lies not in exposing the internet huckster(s) as a blemish on the face of ufology, rather it lies in the fact that many serious UFO researchers and organization leaders themselves have participated in their own brand of saucer-huckstering over the years (directly and indirectly - unwittingly and consciously). Moreover, calling attention to the speck in the eye of an internet huckster might provoke a response from the debunkers about the beam in the eye of the UFO organization and/or its leadership.

So, it seems that the boundaries between the proponent UFO camps are not very well defined any longer. There once was a sharp line between the organized groups and the kooky contactee movement. Now it just seems that some of the saucer group leaders and experts are more eloquent spokesman, (a.k.a. classier salesman) than the internet throng. Yet all seem to be well-versed in the art of putting a particular spin on a UFO incident or the phenomenon in general.

Considering that the organized groups have been doing so for almost sixty years, does point to a habitual behaviour pattern, especially since that pattern of behaviour has produced absolutely no incontrovertible evidence or data concerning the phenomenon's true nature or origin.

What we have is a great deal of speculative fantasy, which stems not from hard spikes discovered in an objective database but, all-too-human wants, needs and desires concerning the phenomenon's assumed importance and meaningfulness to mankind, and the equally-assumptive importance of the researcher's own investigative efforts.

This near-obsessional behaviour pattern was first established by the baby-boomer 'nuts and bolts' school of ufology which is presently on the verge of extinction. The bare bones of their contribution to ufology will be that they successfully managed to dangle a promised carrot before the noses of the American public, the media and themselves for six decades.

It was they who pampered, endured and invited the hucksters of Ancient Astronaut tales and Bermuda Triangle yarns to their conventions and symposia, and they even participated in the proliferation of saucer crash fantasies and the abduction mania. They did all this to promote membership numbers, draw larger crowds to their conventions, make book deals and seek increased journal subscriptions.

One asks just how much 'objective researching' is to be found in these business pursuits? For example what percentage of the monies collected actually went for research, after operating costs and salaries for the group's top brass were siphoned away? Moreover, if the internet hucksters are following in the path of the old guard with better and far more dynamic internet UFO presentations to entice the curious and the gullible, is that not but an extension of the sins of UFOlogists past?

The sociologists and folklorists of the future will look back upon the late 20th and early 21st century's transformation of ufology into an "unbridled" entertainment industry - or 'UFOOLogy' as it is more accurately described - and realize that the two terms differ only in the addition of one vowel.

Ufology is no longer, nor has it ever truly been a purely pseudoscientific pursuit - it has blossomed into a full-blown sub cultural entertainment industry that has profound romantic appeal within our youthful society. Its roots lie in America, which Dr Carl G. Jung once called the land of science fiction and fantasy - but the American UFO malaise is now becoming a pandemic that is spreading throughout the entire planet via the World Wide Web.

The fossil remains of it all will point to a mid-20th century belief in the existence of and pursuit of phantoms of the skies. 21st century UFOOlogy will probably seek out the phantoms through paranormal or spiritually-based investigative avenues, assumptions and beliefs - some of which may be serious, while most will probably be pure humbug. However, the answer will always seem to lie just beyond their grasp, around the next corner, over the next hill. (Much like the nuts and bolts camp's carrot).

Such is the nature of true phantoms; they antagonise, mesmerize and befuddle the blind man who senses their presence but, can offer no definitive description of them.. except for hearing the curious beating of their wings and catching a faint whiff of their fleeting presence. Could it be that UFOs are modern man's harpies?

The pantheon of UFO experts will continue to come and go, along with the parade of witnesses and the few remaining organized saucer groups. The UFOs however, will persist and endure the many ups and downs of UFOOlogical fantasy, theorizing, speculation and assumption - and in time, a new generation will take up the quest and start swinging their white canes at the fleeting phantoms. Could it possibly be that the canes will always be far too short, and the answer to the riddle of the UFOs will simply remain beyond our physical and mental grasp?

Example No.5 (UFOs from inner-space?)

Perhaps in some strange way the UFOs "are but a reflection of ourselves", as James Moseley suggests - aimlessly flitting about like the modern man's hopes, fears and aspirations on the phenomenon. Perhaps our ancestors were better equipped to assimilate these 'signs in the skies' for in their lifetimes things like these aerial displays were not only anticipated and readily interpreted, they were actually prayed for.

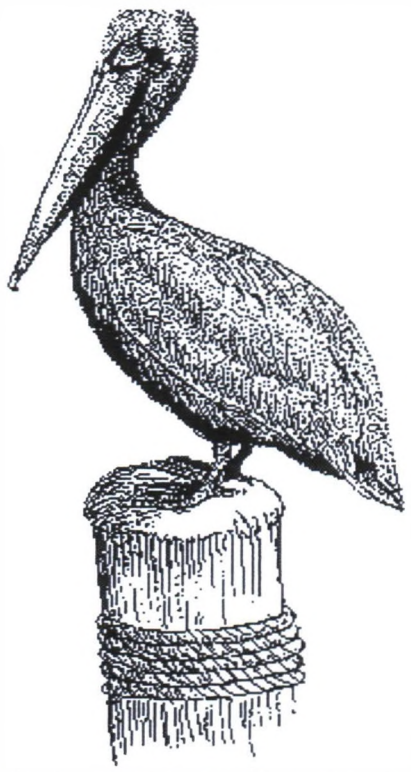
Have we somehow lost touch with the facility of mind that once fostered beliefs in visions, portents, divine warnings and angels yet, search the skies to once again experience? Or is it all just a growing new age mysticism and religiosity appearing in the guise of technological marvels that *homo technos* currently beholds in awe, wonder and masked reverence?

Has the emotional and spiritual nature of our inner being been schooled out of us by the customs, demands and the technological advancements of modern-day living? Indeed, does everyone really think that such powerful human emotions would simply dry up and blow away because it was no longer chic or, politically correct to speak of them?

The organized group elites may scoff at such thoughts, in the same manner which they scoff at the internet huckster movement in their midst. They seem to have an overly confident Colonel George Armstrong Custer attitude about what they perceive to be nothing more than a small hostile encampment that they 'look down upon' from their lofty UFO research headquarters. However, their status in saucerdom, with the press, the entertainment media and the American public's focus of interest is most assuredly headed for UFOOlogy's happy hunting grounds.

THE**PELICAN**WRITES

El Pelícano es fuerte en sus apreciaciones, pero muy razonable



The Pelican is amused by the tendency of Serious Ufologists, of the nuts-and-bolts ETH variety, to assume that by expressing the belief that some UFO reports can be classified as "True UFOs", which might even be described as "structured craft", that they are somehow morally superior to sceptics who regard the UFO phenomenon as something to be investigated by psychologists and sociologists.

This, of course, is the religious principle of faith being a virtue. Our reviews editor, Peter Rogerson, has been aware of this for many years. For example, in his review of Volume II of Richard Hall's *The UFO Evidence* (1), he wrote:

"Just as religious folk in past times assembled collections of saintly miracles or divine providences to convince the atheist of the truth of God's presence, Hall assembles his book as a collection of evidences for the ETH." (2)

Rogerson goes on to note how witnesses are presented as victims in a manner remarkably similar to "the Christian tradition of the suffering Witness for Christ and the Gospel". Also: " ... this is a distillation of some of ufology's sacred texts. If there are several texts relating to the same event, Hall chooses the most ufologically orthodox, and these are presented in a largely unquestioning manner. With a few exceptions the confusions, complexities and vagueness affecting many of the actual incidents are smoothed over. The raw vision has to be interpreted into the official theology of extraterrestrialism."

Ufology is not simply a substitute for conventional religious beliefs, though. Some people combine a faith in the ETH with an adherence to one of the mainstream Christian denominations, which is not surprising as they are not incompatible with one another.

For some, though, an obsession with UFOs and belief in the intervention of extraterrestrials in human affairs does seem to have arisen as a substitute for a rejected religion.

A good example of this can be found in a recently published UFO book (3) in which the author describes how he rejected his family's Catholicism. He writes:

"I didn't rebel as such, but I had got to the stage where I felt that the enforced teachings of the Church weren't for me. I had begun to look elsewhere for answers to my questions about 'the meaning of life'. My father, noting my interest in UFOs, managed to obtain some UFO-related books from one of his work colleagues. I read these avidly, all the time moving further from my Catholic upbringing, and further into Fortean realms."

Another example is the American ufologist Dr Lynne Kitei, whose book on the controversial sightings known as the Phoenix Lights details her increasing credulity and interest in New Age thinking and beliefs, rather than investigating the phenomena scientifically. (4) In her case, she did not reject religion, but was brought up in a non-religious family:

"I am proud of my heritage and its spiritual and moral foundations. Throughout my childhood, I was blessed with a strong, loving family, based on these values. But the fact is that organized religion didn't enter our lives."

In this case, UFOs and New Age beliefs fill the gap left by the absence of religious belief and practice in her family.

Belief in "true UFOs", either nuts-and-bolts, or as manifestations of spiritual or etheric beings, as a substitute for - or even as a supplement to - religious belief, is a theme which runs through the history of the development of ufology, "serious" or otherwise. However, the nuts-and-bolts ETH ufologists are the ones who deny this and insist that their interest in the subject is purely scientific. Why then, asks The Pelican, do they constantly attack those who offer possible mundane explanations for their favourite UFO cases, such as those described in Richard Hall's *The UFO Evidence*? Their attacks frequently include name calling and gratuitous insults. Their constant arguments that the existence of extraterrestrial "structured craft" can be demonstrated, in the absence of even one case where such a conclusion is the only rational one, simply by amassing large numbers of dubious reports, is pathetically silly. They have the same need to believe as those who see the UFOs as psychic, or "ultra-terrestrial" phenomena, but attempt to hide it beneath a veneer of apparent scientific respectability.

The lack of convincing evidence, of course, is the result of a vast conspiracy of secrecy which the US government somehow manages to impose on the whole world. Sceptical ufologists are accused of being government agents, paid to distort or suppress the Truth about the alien visitors.

A new book by David Clarke and Andy Roberts (5) explores these ideas in detail and, unlike most ETH believers, the authors recognise the importance of hoaxes in the development of ufology. The notion that UFO hoaxes are rare is stressed by the ETHers because they are afraid that some of their favourite sightings, where the ETH seems an obvious (to them) explanation, could turn out to be hoaxes. To suggest, for example, that Trindade and Trans-en-Provence, and perhaps even Socorro, were hoaxes is guaranteed to infuriate them. A number of the more interesting British UFO incidents have been exposed, sometimes after several years, as hoaxes, and some of these are described in this book. However, the True Believers are in denial about the prevalence of hoaxing and they often refuse to accept that some UFO incidents are hoaxes even when full details are given by the hoaxers.

In their concluding chapter, after discussing the evolution of, mainly British, ufology, Clarke and Roberts state: "Apparently, rather than indicating a desire to solve a mystery by the scientific process, belief in flying saucers is a personal search for meaning." The Pelican couldn't have put it better himself.

Notes

1. Richard H. Hall, *The UFO Evidence: Volume II: a thirty year report*, The Scarecrow Press, 2000

2. *Magonia* 76, November 2001. Also available online at magonia.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk

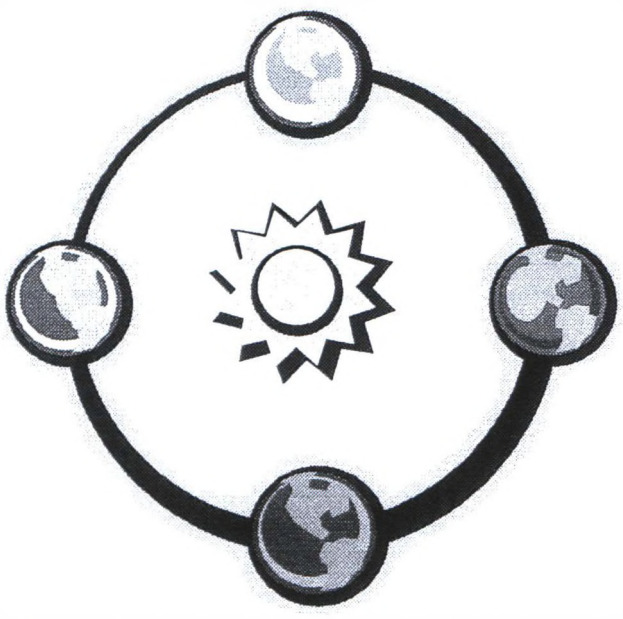
3. Kevin Goodman, *UFO Warminster: cradle of contact*, Swallowtail Books, Southampton, 2007

4. Lynne D. Kitei, *The Phoenix Lights*, Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Charlottesville, Virginia, 2004

5. David Clarke and Andy Roberts, *Flying Saucerers: a social history of ufology*, Alternative Albion, Loughborough, 2007

PETER ROGERSON'S

NORTHERN**ECHOES**



The other week I was looking at a pamphlet history of our local evening paper the *Manchester Evening News* written at the end of the 1960s. Among the major continuing stories that the paper dealt with, it reported, were reports of Flying Saucers. This made me realise how times have changed. Today such things make barely a mention in the British press.

These things have a cycle, of course. When I first became interested in the subject in the early 1960s, flying saucers were already seen as a topic from early post-war history, the product of atomic age mass hysteria. The books I eagerly read nearly all dealt with events from the early 1950s. Then, starting with the Socorro landing UFOs, as they were now re-titled, surged back into public view. Forty years ago, in 1967 they were at the peak of their popularity.

This was a time rather like our own, with America and its allies bogged down in a deeply unpopular and divisive war, Britain had an unpopular Labour government widely seen as having betrayed its principles. There was economic crisis and a major foot-and-mouth epidemic. One thing was different - UFOs were everywhere.

Within another three years they were gone, apparently exorcised by the Condon Committee. By 1972 ufology seemed as dead as the dodo. Then there was Watergate. From the late summer of 1973 UFOs swarmed back into public view to stay for another five-year high. By 1980 they had gone again. Indeed in mid-1981 I wrote a long article for *Magonia* entitled 'Why Have All the UFOs Gone?' practically writing their obituary. Then mid-decade the Bentwaters story - which at the time had been (correctly) dismissed as a load of nonsense - was resurrected, and Roswell reappeared. The decade of crashed flying saucers had begun. Along with this came the revival of the abduction stories which were to dominate the field in the 1990s. Significantly however classic UFO reports were in short supply. With the rise of *The X-Files* (remember them, folks?) the subject became big business. As in the late '60s and late '70s, by the late 1990s publishers were vying with each other to produce UFO books, no matter how absurd or banal. Put UFO or something like it in the title, and it would be published.

No doubt this glutted the market, for as the new millennium began UFO books began to dry up, second-hand booksellers found they could not sell them and they vanished from the shelves of high street book shops. On previous UFO anniversaries in 1967, 1977, 1987, and 1997 UFO books and magazines made a comeback. Not this time. It is significant that Dave Clarke and Andy Roberts' new book has been published by a small specialist publisher; no major firm would take an interest in such a book now.

UFOs are not the only subject fading from the shelves, works of popular science are getting rarer also. The fashion of the day is history and genealogy. As Clarke and Roberts note there are still stories and books on supernatural beliefs and anomalous experiences, but significantly the best-selling topics in these areas are ghosts, spiritualism, pseudo-history and pseudo-archaeology. The visions and beliefs of the new millennium are not looking forward to the bright super technological dawn of the ETs and their flying saucers, but searching for a contact with a lost history, a need to connect with a vanishing past. This obsession with 'history' takes some very strange forms. *Bookseller* magazine now actually has a whole section entitled 'Misery' which consists of long reams of auto-biographies and pseudo-autobiographies in which people bemoan their traumatic childhoods. We look back into the past with a mixture of nostalgia and horror. In the tales of childhood woe, or the melodramatic tales told by psychics we long to find the clue to where it all went wrong

Is this obsession with history in all its forms - a searching for contact with that which is lost or the attempt to exorcise a past which refuses to lie down - simply a mourning for the century of today's adults' youth? Or is it that no one wants to look to a future of global warming and short term contacts? If at the end of the nineteenth century Matthew Arnold spoke of the " melancholy, long withdrawing roar" of the sea of Christian faith, then at the beginning of the twenty-first are we seeing the "melancholy, long withdrawing roar' of faith in technological progress? Interestingly two of the most popular TV science fiction series recently are *Dr Who* about a time traveller and *Primeval* about rips in time and visitors from a remote past. One should note that in the latter, when visitors from the future come they are not the hypercephalic dwarfs of popular imagination or the futuristic superfolks in paper robes, but instinct-fuelled super bats from a broken post-human world.

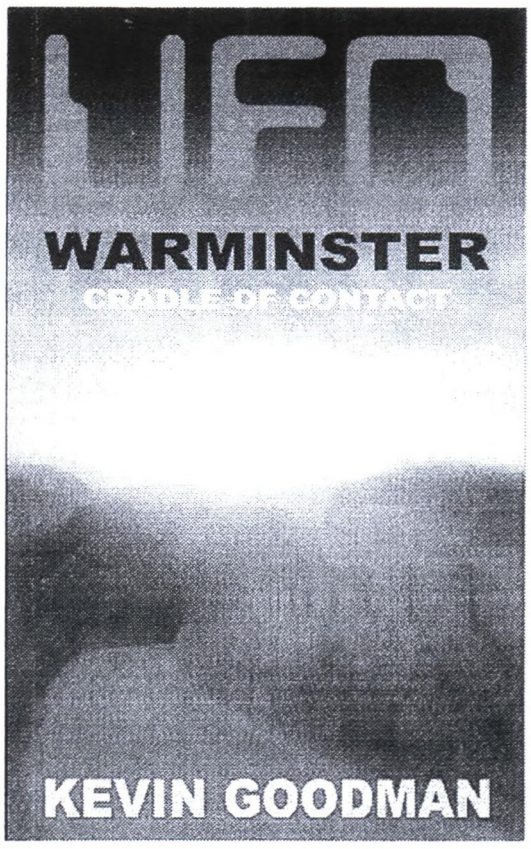
The 'ignorant armies' that are battling now are fuelled by rival Christian and Islamic fundamentalism, which by their very shrillness imply their own fundamental anxiety and doubt. The equally shrill responses of groups like CSICOP suggest that their much vaunted rationalism is as hollow as a honeycomb. The desperate desire to find evidence for something or other points, by its very desperation, that those engaged in it don't really believe that they will succeed.

The UFO myth failed not just because the naive faith in technological progress faltered, but because in the end it could not even hold out a vision of human unity against the imagined non-human other; but in its last paranoid twitchings started to take its first steps on the long road to the pogrom. That perhaps was the moment the whole thing imploded.

The UFO myth may be dead, at least for a generation, but the hopes and fears it articulated live on, and surely new visions and beliefs will arise to continue that articulation. Will, however, the innocent world of the skywatch and the flying saucer detector ever return? Has light pollution made us blind to stranger lights in the sky? Will the very physical terrors of the night deter all but the most foolhardy soul? Just consider the 'health'n'safety' implications of a Warminster-style skywatch, and the forms the council would make you fill in! Will the CCTV cameras and the eternal surveillance finish off the work of the electric light and banish the ghosts and boggarts? Could any little UFO group meeting in a dingy church hall compete with 'reality' (i.e. total unreality) TV.

And when the CCTV tannoys don't just tell us to pick up the litter, stub out the ciggie and warn us that we are going over our regulation approved weight, but tell us that we are off work without our masters' permission and to report back at once, we will finally know who the Greys were: they were us all along.

From page two





Roberts's description of the 'hippie'-UFO connection (again outlined in a preliminary article in *Magonia* 87) shows just how much ufological ideas permeated the underground culture of the era, linking it with ideas about leys, Glastonbury and 'the Matter of England'; and also how these ideas emerged into a broader culture of mysticism, occultism and anti-rationality, which has continued through to contemporary obsessions with crop-circles.

It is interesting that the development of the crop-circle community has followed the same class-based divisions that marked the early stages of ufology, with an élite of minor aristocracy and the Aga-classes blithely lording it over the lower-middle-class foot soldiers; a situation hilariously described in Jim Schnabel's *Round in Circles* and P. D. Rendall's *Cereal Killers.*

But the British UFO story is not confined to an aristocratic clique. There are ordinary people in it too, and Clarke and Roberts tell their stories as well. People like Cynthia Appleton, the young housewife who gave birth to a star-child after meeting an Adamski-style alien in her terraced house in Birmingham. Where is the would-be Saviour now? Despite determined investigation the authors were unable to find any trace of him.

Unknown to me until I heard Roberts's talk at the FT UnConvention last year, is the strange phenomenon of the Flying Saucer Vicars, in the great tradition of eccentric Church of England clergymen (and a few other denominations as well), like characters from an Ealing Comedy. Although some saw saucers as evidence of God's omnipotence possibly offering, literally, new worlds for evangelising, others found evidence of the devil's works of entrapment and picketed cinema's showing UFO films.

Britain has only ever produced one UFO cult worthy of the name, the Aetherius Society, and the account given here of its founding by George King is vigorously disputed by the current leadership; but there is something encouragingly British about the idea of it being conceived in a Soho drinking club and ending up at the less fashionable end of Fulham Road like some 'fifties *demi-mondaine.* The Aetherius Society is usually dismissed as a fringe organisation of no account to 'serious ufologists, who ignore the fact that it has a much higher profile to the public and the media than most 'serious ufologists' are prepared to admit. Clarke and Roberts are surprisingly sympathetic to it, finding its members genially eccentrics.

And now to Warminster, that most English of UFO flaps. Clarke and Roberts devote a chapter to it, outlining the major stages in its growth, and look at some of the curious individuals involved. Greatest of all, of course, was Arthur Shuttlewood. The account of Warminster in *Flying Saucerers* is a straightforward account of the events in the small town from the events leading up to the famous town-hall meeting in 1966, to the gradual fading away in the 'seventies.

One thing that comes across clearly in this account, and which distinguished Warminster from American experience, is the almost total lack of military involvement, despite the enormous army presence in and around the town. The ufologists and the sky watchers were careful to distance the phenomenon from the military, which featured in their accounts as the source of a few (very few) UFO misinterpretations, and a minor nuisance to keen sky watchers who wanted to wander across the countryside at night. No crashed saucers in sinister hangers, no secret retrievals, no Men in Black.

Another new book gives us a much more personal, view of the Warminster phenomenon. Kevin Goodman started visiting the Wiltshire town in 1976, a few years after the 'Great Days', and when establishment ufological interest had moved on. Warminster was being seen as a bit of an embarrassment to many British ufologists. The original stories of 'The Thing', strange noises and mysterious objects in the sky had developed into a complex of contactees, hoaxes and the semi-coherent New Age ramblings of Arthur Shuttlewood's later books. But to the enthusiastic seventeen-year old and his friends from the Midlands, Warminster still held the magic of the previous decade; it was a place where one could sit on a starlit hillside and be virtually guaranteed to see UFOs.

By the time Kevin arrived, the centre of the Warminster scene had largely moved from Arthur Shuttlewood, who was suffering from increasing ill-health, to Peter and Jane Paget at the Star Foundation in Fountain House. This was a full-on New Age establishment promoting meditation and spiritual healing more than ufology.

The story of Kevin's time at Warminster is told in his recently published book *UFO Warminster, Cradle of Contact.* This is a fascinating account of the Warminster scene from the mid-seventies through to the late nineties, when most ufologists had given up any interest in England's major UFO flap.

It is also a very personal story of friendship, enthusiasm, trust and even betrayal, and gives a fascinating insight into the cultism surrounding organisations such as the Star Fellowship. And, as the title implies, it is the story of UFO contact.

Well, not quite. The contact events, experienced by the author and his friends, are subtle and ambiguous. No blonde-haired Nordics striding down ramps from shining discs, but more a low-key 'psychic' contact, conducted through dream and meditation. Although the 'contactees' receive messages and images that suggest an extraterrestrial connection, Goodman and his friends are too intelligent and self-aware to take this all at face-value. They are as puzzled by what is happening to them as we are, reading about it.

I have spoken to a number of English contactees and abductees, and have in every case found that they are aware of the ambiguity of their experiences - there is none of the evangelical zeal, the 'believe me or else' attitude that comes across from many American contact accounts.

There has recently been a movement to write the contactee experience out of the 'real' UFO narrative, not a suitable subject for 'serious ufologists'. But it is clear from stories such as that of Kevin Goodman that there is no real division between the contact experience, the abduction experience, and the UFO experience in its widest form. The simple 'abductees good; contactees bad' dichotomy which is being promoted is hopelessly crude.

Too often now, especially on the Internet, we see 'ufologists' who have little or no knowledge of the history of the subject, and who are constantly trying to re-invent the wheel. These two books are an invaluable antidote to that ignorance. Clarke and Roberts give a sound social and historical description of 'ufology in one country': Kevin Goodman gives an account of someone who explored one facet of that history, became a part of the experience, but retained the objectivity and self-awareness to give us a fascinating account of a journey to Magonia.

These are both important books, please read them.

1. David Clarke and Andy Roberts. *Flying Saucerers; a social history of ufology.* Alternative Albion, Heart of Albion Press. £14.95
2. Kevin Goodman. *UFO Warminster; cradle of contact.* Swallowtail Books, £9.99.

BOOK**REVIEWS**



All reviews by Peter Rogerson, except where indicated



Deborah Blum. *Ghost Hunters: William James and the search for scientific proof of life after death.* Century, 2007.

In a review of the newly published *Phantasms of the Living* in *Science* magazine in January 1887, Harvard psychologist William James wrote " the next 25 years will then probably decide the question. Either a flood of confirmatory phenomena, caught in the act will pour in, in consequence of their work; or it will not pour in - and then we shall legitimately enough explain the stories here preserved as mixtures of odd coincidence with fiction".

Here we are 120 years later, and the questions raised by the founders of the SPR are just as unsettled as ever, The SPR will be 125 years old this year yet its quest seems ever more tenuous.

This book explores the heroic early years of Psychic Research in Britain and the United States, against the background of the life of William James. Psychical research began as an attempt to create some sort of middle ground between traditional religion and the rising tide of science, and perhaps that was its failing. Reading this book confirms what we already knew about psychical researchers, that most weren't looking for answers, they were looking for The Answer, for proof of some transcendental aspect of the human personality which could survive bodily death. Some went about this task with an admirable critical faculty, others with breathless enthusiasm which went far beyond the borders of credulity, but they shared a common goal.

In those early years it looked as though they might just find it. Deborah Blum shows how amid the mountains of trivia, a mental medium like Leonora Piper could time and again produce stuff which made people think "how on earth did she know that", and amid all the crude fakery from time to time physical mediums such as Eusapio Palladino would produce something which made them ask "how on earth did they do that."

For some there were easy choices, for Alfred Russel Wallace it was that of total belief, for most mainstream scientists it was one of total disbelief. James was one of those who could never quite get off the fence. He was sure something very strange was going on, occasionally it looked as though it might be 'The Answer'. but then it would fade away again. Mrs Piper produced a control called 'George Pellew' who seemed to know all sorts of things about friends and acquaintances lives that only the real Pellew could know. Yet when it came to himself and its own interests and outlook, there was an emptiness. Much of what was revealed also happened to be 'of a private nature', presumably about their sexual or financial indiscretions, and never to be ever revealed.

Early on the self destructive nature of psychical research revealed itself: either the phenomena would self-destruct (just when after a number of really puzzling episodes you think that proof is at hand, there is crude cheating) or the investigators self-destruct. Several of the founders of psychical research died comparatively young. Two, Gurney and Podmore, in suspicious circumstances which nobody could be quite sure were accidents or suicide. Myers almost literally willed himself to death to join his lost great love. Sidgwick died of a sudden cancer and Hodgson dropped down dead with a heart attack. William James died well before 70. They had worn themselves out on this obssessional quest. Others just lost all sense of perspective.

As the 'Golden Age' closed within the first quarter century of the SPRs existence, its leaders would become obsessed with the Cross Correspondences in which the putative founders sent a whole string of cryptic classical messages to their earthly followers. On the Continent psychical researchers would scramble to endorse one dodgy physical medium after another.

There would be a post war revival from the late 1940s to the late 1970s, in which psychical research became respectable, in which almost everyone thought "there must be something in it". Then came Uri Geller, the exposé of Sam Soil's seminal experiment, the one that made most of the agnostics sit up and take notice, and the birth of CSICOP. Parapsychologists and psychical researchers responded by either retreating into a world of statistical abstraction where no-one without a degree could follow, or descended into ever deeper circles of the pit of credulity.

Of course there are those who proclaim that 'The Answer' is just round the corner, but after 125 years that must be a great leap of faith. We are still where we were in the days of William James, too many anecdotes to lay the whole thing to rest, story after story which if accurately reported remain very puzzling, yet nothing is ever pinned down or proven.

As to what happened with Leonora Piper and Eusapio Palladino, well that is truly lost in the mists of time.

William Kalush and Larry Sloman. *The Secret Life of Houdini: the making of America's first superhero.* Atria Books, 2006. £18.99.

While it is the claim that Houdini was some sort of secret agent which has created the most attention for this book in the mainstream media, the aspect which is most likely to interest Magonia readers is the account of Houdini's battles with the Spiritualists. These show that interwar spiritualism was a much darker and more convoluted affair than has previous been thought. For example, Lady Doyle the wife of the creator of Sherlock Holmes, was a channeller very much in the J Z Knight tradition. Her prototype Ramatha. Phineas didn't just go in for the usual spiritualist consolations, but declaimed prophecies of the end of the world, the cataclysmic overthrow of the world order, and the destruction of the enemies of spiritualism. It is not clear whether Lady Doyle named this alter ego after the character in Greek mythology, or Phineas, a character in the Old Testament who went around killing idolaters.



The fulminations against Houdini and his friends, who had set up what amounted to a private secret service to oppose the mediums, suggest that the latter is not entirely implausible. Dolye was well in with Le Roi and Mina 'Margery' Crandon who were at the centre of the American spiritualist/psychical research communities. 'Margery' was a notorious and very physical medium whose performances made the notorious Eusapio Palladino look like a prude in comparison. She seems to have seduced or tried to seduce just about every well-known figure in psychical research on either side of the Atlantic. This may partly because there is evidence to suggest that her husband's interests were more in the direction of teen and pre-teen boys, several of whom the Crandon's tried to 'adopt' only for them to mysteriously disappear. This couple were obviously a very strange and sinister pair indeed. All of this suggests that the world of interwar spiritualism and psychical research is desperately in need of detailed historical study.

The authors more than suggest that Houdini may have been murdered by the

Spiritualists, whether to protect the criminal activities of fake mediums, or because they had fallen for the worst superstition of them all, that the end justifies the means. That doesn't mean that all the fault was on one side, for Houdini too was caught up in an increasingly fanatical crusade, and what we have here is the birth of a war in microcosm, with both sides increasingly demonising the other and resorting to ever more violent language and actions.

If the Spiritualists did kill Houdini, I can't help, after reading this book, wondering whether they might committed a far greater crime than they can possibly imagined. Is it possible that if Houdini had lived, there would have been one last great crusade for him to embark on, the supreme escape act for the master escapologist, using his fame, contacts and resources to organise that escape of who knows how many of his fellow East European Jews from the clutches of Adolph Hitler?

Craig R Myers. ***War of the Words: the true but strange story of the Gulf Breeze UFO.*** **Xlibris, 2006. £14.00.**

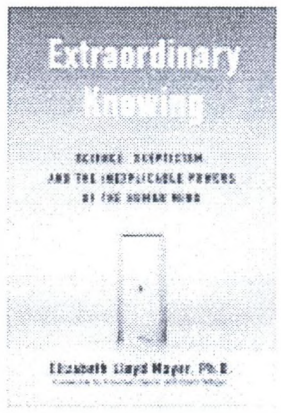
Nostalgia lovers will like this trip down memory lane, to the incredible story of 'Mr Ed' Walters and his amazing flying tea urn. Craig Myers was a journalist on one of the local newspapers, the *Pensacola News Journal*, and the story was promoted by their hated rival the *Gulf Breeze Sentinel*, which might account for at least some of Myers scepticism and cynicism, compared to which this dear journal is the epitome of sweetness and light. Of course, the main reason for the said cynicism and scepticism is the much simpler one, of Walter's photographs being risibly bad fakes. Nothing about them gives off the slightest aura of being genuine, in fact if they awarded prizes for quality of fake UFO pictures, Eds would stand a good chance of getting the booby prize.

This, of course, did not stop the notorious MUFON and its Dear Leader and Gret Helmsman Walt Andrus from endorsing this crap as the genuine article, and defending the photos and Ed despite exposé after exposé. Members of MUFON who investigated the case, and concluded what any half-intelligent 10 year old could have told them in the first place, that the photos were phoneys, got summarily expelled from MUFON for deviationist hysteria and like thought crimes.

The main value of cases like Gulf Breeze or the crop circles is in providing a litmus test for various investigators ability to make judgements. A number of significant figures failed in that test, and there seems little reason to pay any attention to their claims on any other topic.

Elizabeth Lloyd Mayer. ***Extraordinary Knowing: science, skeptisism and the inexplicable powers of the human mind.*** **Bantam Books, 2007 $26.00**

Elizabeth Mayer, a Freudian psychoanalyst, employs a dowser to help recover her daughter's stolen harp. The positive results impels her into the world of psychical research, and she soon finds that her colleagues, like any



other random group of people at a dinner party, can recount their own anomalous experiences. These are the sort of things that they normally keep secret, especially in the authoritarian world of the American university hospital. There are rumours of the 'horror stories' about what happens to those who don't keep quite about these things. These 'horrors' turn out to be pretty small beer, no one is arrested, tortured, imprisoned, raped, executed, had their house fire bombed or their children thrown out of school for these infractions, the 'horror' consists of various impediments in their climb up the academic greasy pole.

Mayer, being a Freudian psychoanalyst, had started off being sceptical of such things, after all there has to be someone to look down on. Truth to tell, parapsychology, at its best any rate, is much more of science than Freudian psychology. Parapsychologists at least try to act like scientists, conducting real and often well devised experiments, and not just quoting the quasi-religious mantras of a master. Once the wall of scepticism is breached it is difficult to know where to stop. For Dr Mayer there must indeed be limits, for the narratives she quotes are missing tales of ghosts, poltergeists, UFOs, bigfoot, nameless night visitors and talking mongooses and racoons, to say nothing of meetings with Jesus, Mohammed, the Virgin Mary or the fairies at the bottom of the garden. Which points out that there are cultural fashions or norms in such folklore, with differing subcultures having differing approve anomalous experiences.

If Meyer's pilgrimage into the paranormal begins with the finding of her daughter's harp, it ends with the claim by the dowser that he also repaired it by means of psychokinesis, whereupon she has a hard collision with her own personal boggle factor.

In the end neither she nor veteran physicist Freeman Dyson can work out what to make off all this. Dyson suggests that these anomalies are part of an 'effervescent mental world' which can never be caught by science. Yet this is itself of the artefact of selection among the anomalies. Perhaps one way of applying this idea across the board is to argue that they are breakdowns in the way human beings organise their perceptions of the world, rather than belong to the world out there. If they are 'out there' then perhaps they are nothing more than the residual chaos of things, in a world which is far more lawless than good, well brought=up physicists want to believe.

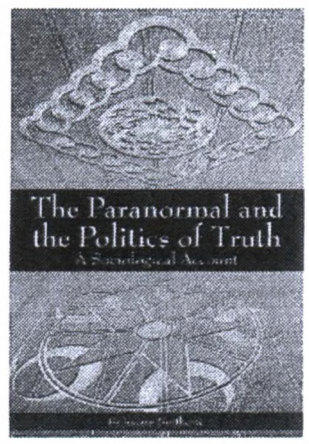
Sam Stall. ***Suburban Legends: true tales of murder, mayhem and the minivans.*** **Quirk Books, 2006. $15.99**

The American suburbs are perhaps the epitome of habitat, the well manicured and carefully cultivated havens of domestic bliss. But, as Sam Stall, shows in this grimly amusing book, the ultimate wildness of all things cannot be kept at bay for any length of time. In the events and legends recounted here, this wildness takes the form of ghosties in the attic, polts in the parlour, bigfoot on the lawn, graveyards under the patio, ufos over the roof, and the friendly neighbourhood serial killer next door, or even sharing your bed. The "worst thing there is" isn't something you can escape from by hiding in a gated community, it is inside everything.

That suburbs are strange places is not something that only Americans feel, the same goes for Britain also. Years ago we in Magonia pointed out that strange stories and Fortean experiences seem to cluster around new estates, places where habitat is edging into the wilderness. It scarcely matters whether such stories are "true" or "unexplained" in the sense that ufologists and psychical researchers use the term, they are "true" in that they are concrete expressions of a more general dis-ease, an apprehension of the fragility of the world of daylight reason and common sense.

Jeremy Northcote. ***The Paranormal and the Politics of Truth: a sociological account.*** **Imprint Academic, 2007. £14.95**

Why disputes between 'believers' and 'skeptics' in the paranormal and related topics become so heated is the subject of this book, which is clearly based on a PhD thesis, now revamped for public marketing. Northcote interviewed a number of people on both sides of the debate and attended various conferences, etc. He explores the processes by which both sides demonise the other, and come up with a call for a more gracious dialogue.



In a sense this very polarisation masks the complexities of both sides, and it has to be said that at its most raucous this argument seems to be largely confined to the United States and Australia - from where Northcote is writing, and may be contingent on specific cultural circumstances.

From the testimony of people like Susan Blackmore we can see that the various activist organisations are not, despite their lip service to 'unbiased scientific investigation', actually much bothered about finding out exactly what causes anomalous experiences, but of defending rival ideological infrastructures.

In the past I have argued that both sides in these debates are essentially rival religions, both heir to different aspects of the Judeo-Hellenic heritage, whose disputes are fuelled by opposing ideas of the sacred and pollution. For each the rival ideology is seen as threatening the very core of their being. For the 'believers' the sceptics seem to be attacking the existence of the transhuman and transnatural realm which they regard as the repository of real values, for the 'skeptics' the believers seem to be polluting the harmonious world of the

natural order and right thinking with intrusive and transgressive anomalies.

Rob Irving with John Lundberg, edited by Mark Pilkington. *The Field Guide: the art, history and philosophy of crop circle making.* Strange Attractor Press, 2006. £8.99

Issued to the general public for the first time, this book tells the inside story of the crop circles from the viewpoint of the circle makers. By circle makers, of course, I mean human artists, not supernatural entities, for this book presents circle making as art form, complete with a do it yourself guide. With any luck this book will get crop art its due recognition, though I suspect that crop art is just too aesthetically pleasing to be well regarded by the contemporary art establishment.

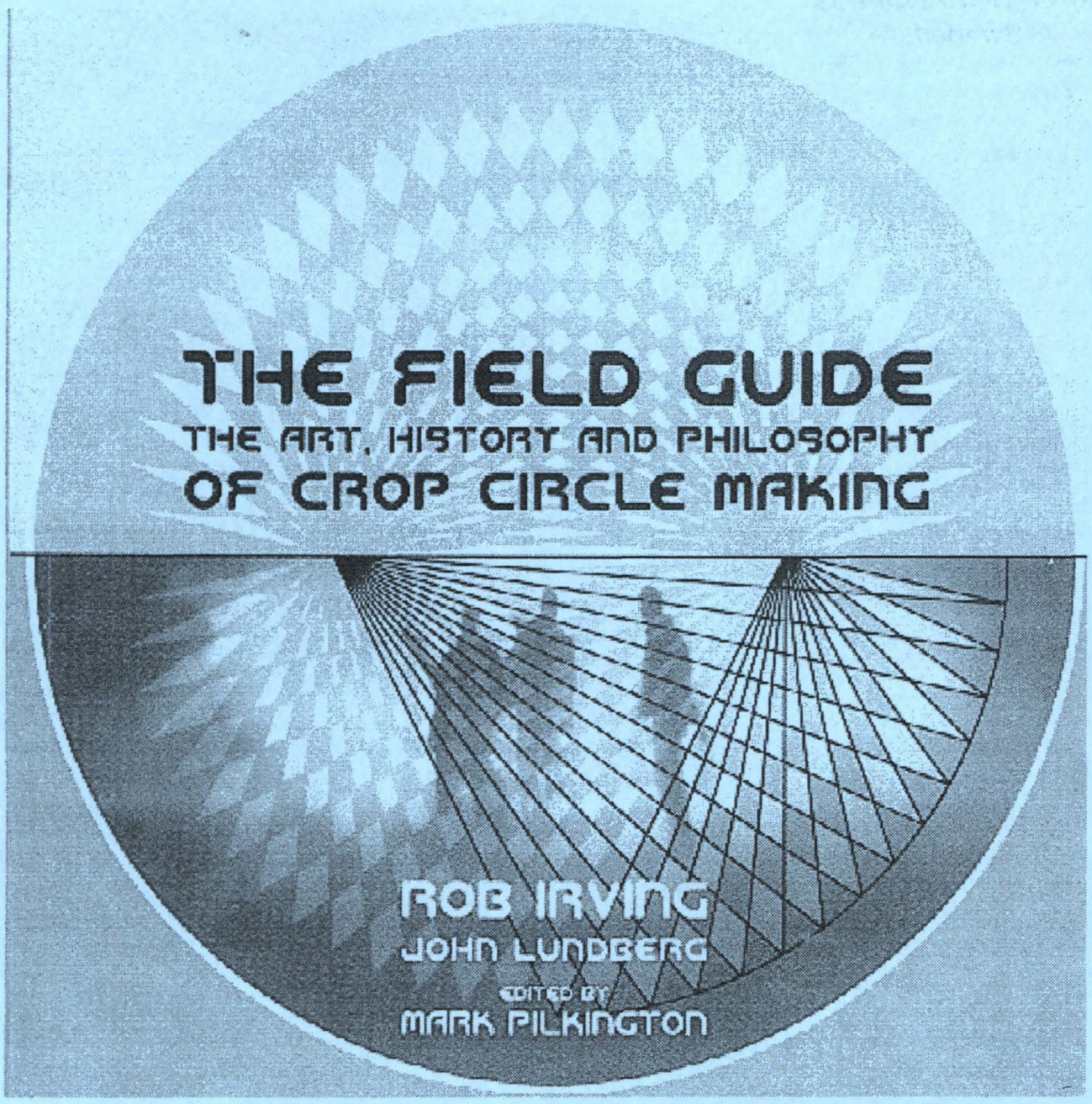
To an extent all art is in the eye of the beholder, and that is certainly the case here. Crop circles function as a kind of pure, anonymous art, free from the tyranny of the signature. Viewers can read what they wanted into it.

The book explores in some depth the symbiotic relationship between the crop artists and the cereologists. Perhaps, because crop artists deliberately tapped into the well of modern folklore of UFOs and 'saucer nests', they were able to create an audience which could not accept that the works in front of them were the works of human artists. Perhaps they could not accept human beings can produce beauty or pieces of genuinely moving and inspirational art, or perhaps they simply took the view that if they could not produce such works then no-one else could.

The motives of the artists themselves are ambiguous. The pioneers, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley, though both at least semi professional artists, denied that their works were in fact art; they were hoaxes, tricks; here we have the artist as the trickster. In that sense they might be thought of as heirs of the artists who used their talents to produce the fake old masters and other big signatures, to expose the pomposity and greed of the gallery establishment. And the pseudo-scientific establishment of the cereology industry were indeed every bit as self regarding and pompous as any art critic. They were certain that they could distinguish the real works of their extraterrestrial Vermeers and Picasso's from any jobbing fake. Needless to say they couldn't.

The science of the cereologists bore only a semantic similarity to the real thing, mostly it was a science nerds rendition of the art critic's pseudery, meaningless technospeak, emperors whose rampant nakedness could be seen clearly by any science mad 10 year old.

Irving and Lundberg parade a great line up of the croppie pseuds, the eccentrics, the cranks, the chancers, charlatans and downright crooks, and it is not always entirely clear which category some people fit into. Of those who were more or less honest there seem to be two main categories, the stupid and the clever, with the former trying hard to emulate the latter, who were so blinded by their own cleverness that they just couldn't see the obvious.



Under Irving's eye the claims made by the cereologists just wilt away, evidence presented turns out to be misunderstood (polemical 18th century political pamphlets presented as though they were factual reports) or downright dodgy (a tale told by a notorious physical medium-cum-anomaly-groupie presented by Terence Meaden as a sober scientific report, a well touted film of a ball of light producing a crop circle a well produced fake etc.).

The crop watchers mistook their sense of awe at a human work of art as some kind of external force. Their imaginations did the rest. Perhaps people really were healed in crop circles by some sort of placebo effect - the new art is placebo art.

Magonia has always argued that hoaxes of all kinds are works of art, some good, some bad. George Adamski's models became iconic images of 'flying saucers', people then 'saw' them and copied them, and maybe even 'healed' by them.

For the tricksters of the 21st century there is quite a challenge. Ufologists and paranormalists are just too easy a target, hoaxing them is like stealing candy from children. Its time to take on the big boys, could someone pull of a hoax which would cause genuine consternation in official circles, get the scientific mainstream making total asses of themselves, and persuade a sizeable chunk of CSICOP or whatever it is called nowadays, to defect and start believing in half a dozen impossible things before breakfast?

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Richard Morris. *Harry Price: The Psychic Detective.* Sutton, 2006. £18.99

Jonathan Betts. *Time Restored: the Harrison timekeepers and R. T. Gould, the man who knew (almost) everything.* Oxford University Press/National Maritime Museum, 2006. £35.00

We at Magonia have often thought of writing some sort of historical fancy centred on the larger than life characters of the interwar paranormal scene, in which Charles Fort, Rupert T Gould, Harry Price, Eric Dingwall, Nandor Fodor, Aleister Crowley, Dennis Wheatley, and the many luminaries of the Society of Psychical Research would feature in some bizarre adventures. These books suggest that the truth may have been even weirder and wilder than any novel. One of the central characters is painted by his biographer as the womanising charlatan son of a paedophile, with an unhealthy interest in Hitler's Germany, the other as a manic depressive "mental sadist"

The son of the paedophile was Harry Price, a man for whom the words 'fantasy prone' seem to have invented. He was born in one of those parts of London which could best be described as down-at-heel genteel. His father had lost much of his business when, in his mid 40s he got a fifteen year old girl pregnant. Today of course he would have ended up inside and on the sex offenders register, then honour of a sort was satisfied by him marrying her.

HP seems to have grown up as a lonely child and to have escaped into a world of fantasy, a trait which was to follow him into adult life. According to Morris, Price entered

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psychical research after a non-too-successful career in archaeological fraud. In this role, the paper bag salesman who left school at fifteen could pretend to be a scientist. His less than aristocratic or academic background made him an outsider to the Society for Psychical Research, and set him on path of rivalry which forced him into a series of on/off relationships with a variety of spiritualist bodies, and a succession of publicity stunts, each one of which just pushed him further away from the academic respectability he desired.

Price was perhaps the paradigm of the "investigator" who actually created the very phenomena he was supposed to be investigating, either by exaggeration of actual events, or pure and simple fraud. Morris more than hints that Price was responsible for faking some of the phenomena of his pet medium and possible mistress Stella Cranshaw, and perhaps also of the Schneider brothers. He certainly faked a fair bit of the 'phenomena' at Borley. Even today the gullible believe these sorts of tales.

If the first biography of Price, by Paul Tabori, was a whitewash and practically a hagiography, this definitely could be called an anti-hagiography, or less politely a hatchet job. Every interpretation of events is skewed to present Price in the worst possible light often on the basis of slender evidence. It is probable that his PA Lucy Kay's love child was his, but there is no conclusive evidence; it possible that Stella Cranshaw was his mistress, but evidence is inconclusive; and on the evidence of a letter in which she described being sick in the morning Morris concludes that she was pregnant with Price's child, and that he forced her into an abortion.

This tendency shows itself nowhere more so than in his account of Price's dealing with the Nazis, where Morris is determined to prove that Price met Hitler; something for which there is no evidence at all. Nor is there any reason to believe that Hitler was interested in psychical research or Price's activities. The justification for this connection appears to be that Price had a collection of photographs of Nazi architecture, and a foolish letter that Price wrote to Dingwall in which he talked of asking Hitler for a comfortable seat at the next Nuremberg rally (in 1939 of all times). What this demonstrates is the appalling mental blinkers worn by the sort of people who cannot see beyond their own little world, and Price's by then almost complete detachment from reality. Although Price, unlike many of the more staid members of the SPR seems to have taken an interest in the general field of Forteana, which was tp bring him into contact with the subject of the next biography.

Rupert T Gould was born into rather more prosperous circumstances than Price and his life seemed destined to follow a classic upper middle class course with an assured naval career. There was just one snag in this: Gould was a depressive and probably manic-depressive who had recurrent bouts of practically catatonic depression, and was chronically haunted by fears of hell fire,



lightning and revolution. Here was someone who seemed to feel the fragility of the safe rational world of daylight reason and common sense. The First World War tipped him over the edge into a complete breakdown.

On his recovery he managed to find work in the Navy's Hydrographic Office. It was while there that he encountered the marine chronometers of John Harrison, then lying in a ruined condition in the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. The restoration of these became his life work. To call this an obsession would be an understatement, for its pursuit would ruin his marriage and almost ruin his life.

It is this aspect of Gould's life that Betts, Senior Specialist in Horology at the National Maritime Museum is chiefly concerned.



Rupert Gould (top) and Harry Price, pioneering forteans of the 1930s and 1940s, with extravagant private lives

For *Magonia* readers however it is Gould's involvement in Forteana and cryptozoology which are going to be of chief interest. This is clearly a field in which Betts feels rather out of his depth, and relies much on help from Mike Dash and Peter Costello. There does not appear to be any evidence that Gould met Charles Fort, though he clearly read Fort's books and the dust jacket of *Oddities* features his own illustration of Fort's 'Procession of the Damned' (a reference Betts fails to pick up). The procession made reference to various aspects of Gould's own life. At this time Gould was himself one of the damned, following a messy separation from his wife, who having run off with her lesbian lover, decided that attack was the best form of defence and portrayed him as a violent, drunken lunatic with an unhealthy interest in sadistic pornography. Gould described himself as 'mental sadist' but swore he would never physically harm a woman. His willingness to commit this aspect of his life to paper suggests certain recklessnes, and as a result Gould was sacked and some of his oldest friends deserted him. From then on he had to make his money as a freelance writer, broadcaster and one of the first media stars. His first Fortean books *Oddities* and *Enigmas* were essentially money making ventures. There were to have been others, but these, along with other works, were never finished. He did however write two pioneering works of cryptozoology, *The Case for the Sea Serpent* and *The Loch Ness Monster and Others*. His conclusions in the latter were odd to say the least. Interpreting the LNM as a plesiosaur or a long necked otter of some sort are, from today's standpoint. zoologically implausible but not intrinsically crazy. However Gould's explanation of 'a giant newt' (reminiscent of Wodehouse's Gussie Fink-Nottle) clearly gives the impression of mind whose hinges are showing some sign of strain.

Sadly there is no real discussion in this book as to Gould's relationship with the wider Fortean, paranormal world, though we know he corresponded with Harry Price, Eric Frank Russell and Arthur Conan Doyle, whom he practically called an imbecile. One would love to see some of this correspondence. His sexual proclivities might suggest somewhere he would have encountered Eric Dingwall at the British Museum!

Despite the scandal, within the decade Gould started his final career as a radio star: 'The Stargazer'. Fortean style topics featured along with many dozens more, and by the war years he was one the regulars in *The Brains Trust*. What John Reith's reactions would have been if he had known that one of the broadcasters to the nation's innocent little children was having group sex with prostitutes doesn't bear thinking about.

One suspects there is much more to be said about both characters. There is clearly much scope for a more collective biography of the Forteans and paranormalists of the interwar years. Over to you Dr Dash?