

STRANGE DAZE

*All would be well.
All would be heavenly-
If the damned would only
stay damned
- Charles Fort.*

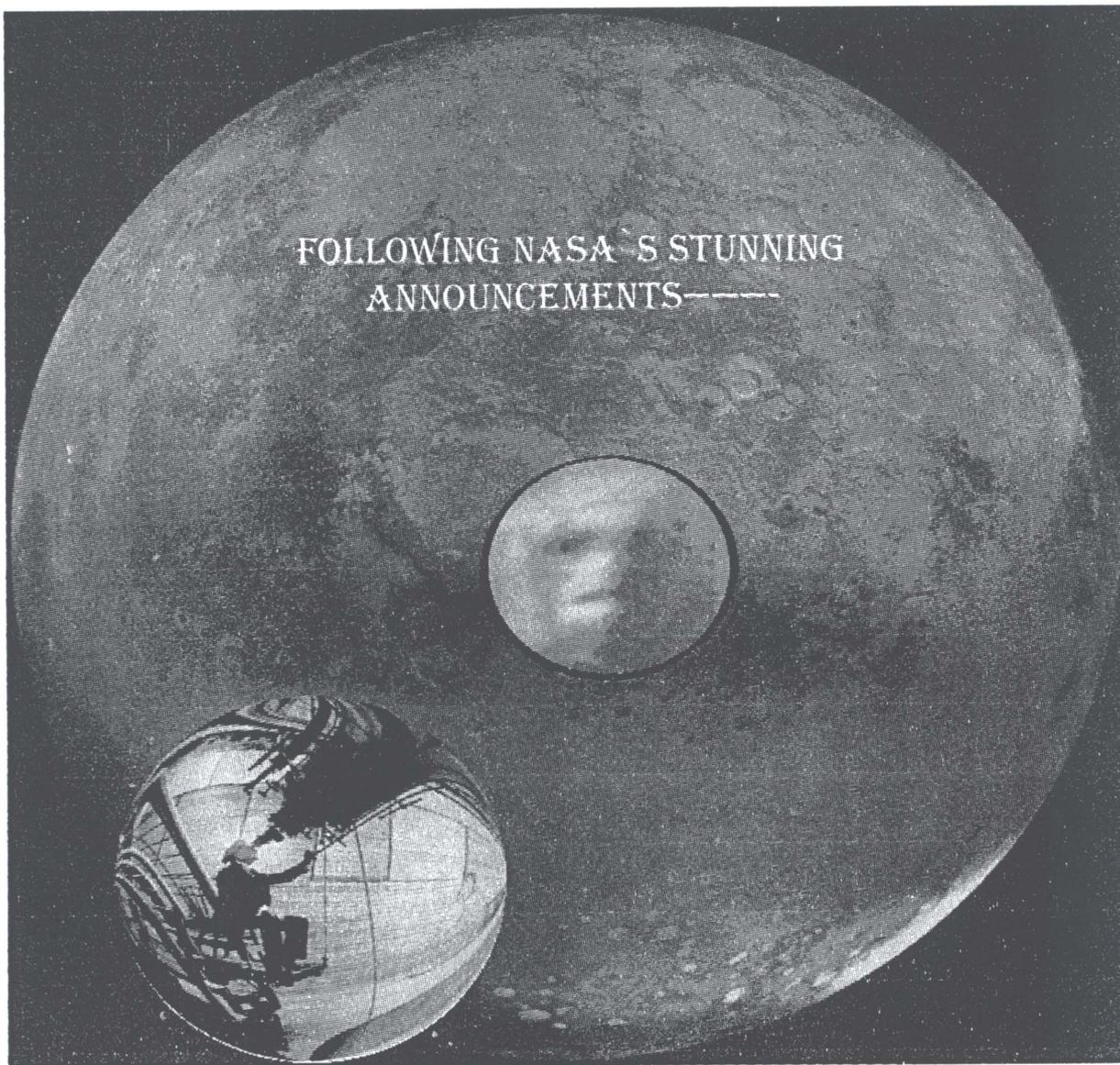


NOVEMBER 1996

NUMBER 11

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In this issue: we ask....



FOLLOWING NASA'S STUNNING
ANNOUNCEMENTS-----

WAS THERE LIFE
ON MARS?

Life on Mars! Kevin McClure! Bonnybridge! Malcolm Robinson! Invisibility! Cartoons!
What more do you want for a quid?

NUFORI Northern UFO Research & Investigation

STRANGE DAZE Number 11 November 1996

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NUFORI is a small group of UFO investigators, researchers and writers. Since UFOlogists invariably end up falling out and putting superglue on each other's toilet seats, NUFORI does not hold regular meetings. But we might risk a Christmas party if you're lucky.

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Please send letters, queries, articles and subscriptions to the above address, marked for the attention of **Dave Newton**. All matters relating to investigations and UFO sightings should be marked for the attention of **Gloria Dixon**.

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the eleventh issue of Strange Daze. Thanks to the computer now sitting in the corner of the living room, all of Strange Daze is now typed out using the high-tech, microprocessor powered lamp. I hope this means you will find the print quality better and easier to read than previous issues. I haven't completely tamed the demon in the box yet though; you will find within the articles a mixture of British and American English spellings (as the word processor only seems to use an American spell-checker) for which I apologise, and the text is still cut into columns and glued onto A3 sheets with recycled racehorses. The cut and paste is the fun bit, anyway. We have a real mix of articles this issue, so I hope that there is something for everybody.

We certainly live in interesting times. While the Hubble Space Telescope has just reached its 100,000th photograph and continues to teach us about the universe, ground based telescopes are discovering new planets at an alarming rate of knots. A team of NASA scientists have presented evidence that life may have once existed on Mars, although that evidence is not conclusive and is being hotly debated by researchers in the field. There is almost certainly no life on Mars now, but this evidence strengthens the case for sending new space missions to the Red Planet, to search for life and clear up the Cydonia "Face on Mars" controversy. The tragedy is that, had the Apollo space programme been followed through, we may have had manned bases on Mars by now. We have the technology, and I would guess no lack of volunteers ready to go to Mars. What we lack is the political desire and the funding to send men and women into space. Nevertheless, we live in perhaps the most exciting time in the 20th Century, perhaps even in the whole of recorded history. The pace of scientific, medical and technological advancement is still high, even if cars don't have chrome and fins any more (definitely a step backwards there). Scientists are now able to meaningfully discuss faster than light travel, the birth and death of the universe, antigravity, cold fusion and other fantastic concepts. Exciting, huh?

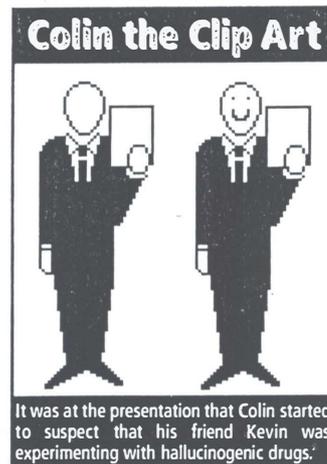
For me, trained in the sciences, yes, definitely. But what about you? Does it mean anything to you? One of the problems with modern science and technology is that everything is so specialised now. Up until the early years of this century, amateurs could make valuable contributions to subjects; all that was required was time, enthusiasm, brain power and money for equipment. But now, it seems that all the basics have been discovered and mega bucks and years of training are needed to fill in the details and make new discoveries. Take computers for example. The machine upon which I am typing this could be powered by elves pushing cogs around, although I am happier with the explanation that it is electrons rushing through transistors. Elves or electrons, it makes no real difference for most people as long as the damned thing works. However it works, it is too complicated for most people to want to try to understand. As Arthur C. Clarke once pointed out, any sufficiently advanced technology will seem like magic to a less advanced race. Perhaps our own doctors, scientists and engineers have done this to the rest of us.

We should be optimistic as we go into the 21st Century, given our achievements to date and rate of advancement. But with concerns over pollution, global warming, AIDS, overpopulation and the end times prophecies to name but a few, we seem to be entering a new era of myth and magic. There are more scientists alive today than have ever lived, but are they any more than magicians to the rest of the world? Are their ways any less mysterious and understandable than herbalists and astrologers? Is gene splicing any more understandable than faith healing, for example? Perhaps the pace of our advancement has left most of us behind.

Aliens are easy to understand, though. Especially if we are told, in simple black and white terms, that UFOs are alien spaceships; that they crash occasionally; that the aliens are space travellers, solid like us; that they come here to probe us and stick implants in us; and that the implants can be removed as solid objects and displayed for all to see. Derrel Sims, and American UFOlogist, will be in this country this November, talking at the LAPIS UFO conference in Blackpool. Hopefully he will bring the "implants" that

were surgically removed from two "abductees", in operations that were videotaped in the United States. What the objects are and where they came from is open to debate, and my opinion will possibly differ greatly from that of Mr Sims, once I have more information to go on. I certainly don't believe the latest rumour that the implants are coated with "alien skin"! (Just how would anyone know?) From the evidence I have seen here in NUFORI, there is no evidence that aliens or implants are at all solid, or that abductions really occur in the solid, normal everyday world we live in. And there is no convincing evidence that UFOs are alien spaceships, although there is evidence that some of the unidentifieds are very much solid. The whole phenomenon is very much a mystery.

The Extraterrestrial Hypothesis sells, though. Everyone loves a mystery, and the UFO phenomenon at first sight offers an up to date, continuing, *dangerous* mystery (abductions and cattle mutilations have definite gore factor) with a simple solution everyone can understand: Space aliens! It is only when you get past the glossy pages and really look into cases that it becomes clear that the solution is *anything but clear*. The extraterrestrial hypothesis is but one of many theories and I hope that in this magazine you will read several different viewpoints on UFOs and related phenomena. It might not be glossy in appearance, but I sincerely hope that the contents are more than just American-driven entertainment for the masses.



NEWS

ANCIENT LIFE ON MARS?

By now few people will not have heard the astonishing news from a group of nine NASA scientists that they believe they have evidence that primitive life may have once existed upon the red planet, Mars. The group had been working on a meteorite called ALH 84001, which was discovered in Antarctica on the 27th December 1984. Analysis of the meteorite revealed that it had been floating in space for approximately 16 million years before falling to Antarctica roughly 13,000 years ago. Until three years ago it was thought to be a fragment of the asteroid Vesta, when further analysis showed it to be much more likely a fragment of ancient Martian crust. It has been dated at some 4.5 billion years old, much older than the other Martian meteorites that have been collected, which are no older than 1.3 billion years.

The group have found several indications in the rock that ancient life may have existed on Mars: (1) tiny sausage shaped objects, that resemble primitive bacteria but 100 times smaller than those on Earth; (2) tiny grains of iron sulphide and magnetite (iron oxide) which anaerobic bacteria on Earth synthesise; and (3) the carbonates within the meteorite are infused with organic molecules called PAHs. These molecules are common, but the types of PAHs found in the rock suggest the decay of living matter.

Mars is almost certainly a dead planet now; the Viking landers in the 1970s carried soil testing experiments which did not detect life as we might recognise it. The lack of free water, thin carbon dioxide atmosphere and extreme cold make life difficult if not totally impossible. But there is evidence on the surface that many

millions of years ago the atmosphere was thicker and water ran free upon the surface. When ALH 84001 was blasted out of the surface and into space 16 million years ago, it might have carried traces of bacteria like creatures that were born billions of years ago when Mars was warm and wet. This raises the possibility that life on Earth might have been seeded from Martian material, carrying life, being thrown across the Solar System billions of years ago by a meteorite impact, rather than life developing independently on both planets. Because the Earth is closer to the Sun than Mars, it is much less likely that any fragments of Earth would reach Mars; the Sun's gravity tends to pull fragments into the inner Solar System.

Could more advanced life have developed on Mars? It may well have been possible in the early, warm, wet period of Martian history. If the NASA team's results are validated by other research groups, it strengthens the case for going back to Mars to look for fossils and looking at features like Cydonia with open eyes and minds.

Since the NASA team's press release (given below) and their full article in the 16th August 1996 issue of *Science*, the price of Martian meteorite samples has gone through the roof: samples costing \$150,000 per gram are now well over the million dollar mark.

Meteorite Yields Evidence of Primitive Life on Early Mars

August 7, 1996 - RELEASE: 96-160

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A NASA research team of scientists at the Johnson Space Center (JSC), Houston, TX, and at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA, has found evidence that strongly suggests primitive life may have existed on Mars more than 3.6 billion years ago.

The NASA-funded team found the first organic molecules thought to be of Martian origin; several mineral features characteristic of biological activity; and possible microscopic fossils of primitive, bacteria-like organisms inside of an ancient Martian rock that fell to Earth as a meteorite. This array of indirect evidence of past life will be reported in the August 16 issue of the journal *Science*, presenting the investigation to the scientific community at large for further study.

The two-year investigation was co-led by JSC planetary scientists Dr. David McKay, Dr. Everett Gibson and Kathie Thomas-Keptra of Lockheed-Martin, with the major collaboration of a Stanford team headed by Professor of Chemistry Dr. Richard Zare, as well as six other NASA and university research partners.

"There is not any one finding that leads us to believe that this is evidence of past life on Mars. Rather, it is a combination of many things that we have found," McKay said. "They include Stanford's detection of an apparently unique pattern of organic molecules, carbon compounds that are the basis of life. We also found several unusual mineral phases that are known products of primitive microscopic organisms on Earth. Structures that could be microscopic fossils seem to support all of this. The relationship of all of these things in terms of location - within a few hundred thousandths of an inch of one another - is the most compelling evidence."

"It is very difficult to prove life existed 3.6 billion years ago on Earth, let alone on Mars," Zare said. "The existing standard of proof, which we think we have met, includes having an accurately dated sample that contains native microfossils, mineralogical features characteristic of life, and evidence of complex organic chemistry."

"For two years, we have applied state-of-the-art technology to perform these analyses, and we believe we have found quite reasonable evidence of past life on Mars," Gibson added. "We don't

claim that we have conclusively proven it. We are putting this evidence out to the scientific community for other investigators to verify, enhance, attack -- disprove if they can -- as part of the scientific process. Then, within a year or two, we hope to resolve the question one way or the other."

"What we have found to be the most reasonable interpretation is of such radical nature that it will only be accepted or rejected after other groups either confirm our findings or overturn them," McKay added.

The igneous rock in the 4.2-pound, potato-sized meteorite has been age-dated to about 4.5 billion years, the period when the planet Mars formed. The rock is believed to have originated underneath the Martian surface and to have been extensively fractured by impacts as meteorites bombarded the planets in the early inner solar system. Between 3.6 billion and 4 billion years ago, a time when it is generally thought that the planet was warmer and wetter, water is believed to have penetrated fractures in the subsurface rock, possibly forming an underground water system.

Since the water was saturated with carbon dioxide from the Martian atmosphere, carbonate minerals were deposited in the fractures. The team's findings indicate living organisms also may have assisted in the formation of the carbonate, and some remains of the microscopic organisms may have become fossilized, in a fashion similar to the formation of fossils in limestone on Earth. Then, 16 million years ago, a huge comet or asteroid struck Mars, ejecting a piece of the rock from its subsurface location with enough force to escape the planet. For millions of years, the chunk of rock floated through space. It encountered Earth's atmosphere 13,000 years ago and fell in Antarctica as a meteorite.

It is in the tiny globs of carbonate that the researchers found a number of features that can be interpreted as suggesting past life. Stanford researchers found easily detectable amounts of organic molecules called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) concentrated in the vicinity of the carbonate. Researchers at JSC found mineral compounds commonly associated with microscopic organisms and the possible microscopic fossil structures.

The largest of the possible fossils are less than 1/100 the diameter of a human hair, and most are about 1/1000 the diameter of a human hair - small enough that it would take about a thousand laid end-to-end to span the dot at the end of this sentence. Some are egg-shaped while others are tubular in appearance and size, the structures are strikingly similar to microscopic fossils of the tiniest bacteria found on Earth.

The meteorite, called ALH84001, was found in 1984 in Allan Hills ice field, Antarctica, by an annual expedition of the National Science Foundation's Antarctic Meteorite Program. It was preserved for study in JSC's Meteorite Processing Laboratory and its possible Martian origin was not recognized until 1993. It is one of only 12 meteorites identified so far that match the unique Martian chemistry measured by the Viking spacecraft that landed on Mars in 1976. ALH84001 is by far the oldest of the 12 Martian meteorites, more than three times as old as any other.

Many of the team's findings were made possible only because of very recent technological advances in high-resolution scanning electron microscopy and laser mass spectrometry. Only a few years ago, many of the features that they report were undetectable. Although past studies of this meteorite and others of Martian origin failed to detect evidence of past life, they were generally performed using lower levels of magnification, without the benefit of the technology used in this research. The recent discovery of extremely small bacteria on Earth, called nanobacteria, prompted the team to perform this work at a much finer scale than past efforts.

The prime authors of the *Science* report include McKay, Gibson and Thomas-Keptra of JSC; Christopher Romanek, formerly a National Research Council post-doctoral fellow at JSC who is now a staff scientist at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory at the University of Georgia; Hojatollah Vali, a National Research Council post-doctoral fellow at JSC and a staff scientist at McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; and Zare, graduate students Simon J. Clemett and Claude R. Macchling and post-doctoral student Xavier Chailier of the Stanford University Department of Chemistry.

The team of researchers includes a wide variety of expertise, including microbiology, mineralogy, analytical techniques, geochemistry and organic chemistry, and the analysis crossed all of these disciplines. Further details on the findings presented in the Science article include:

Researchers at Stanford University used a dual laser mass spectrometer -- the most sensitive instrument of its type in the world -- to look for the presence of the common family of organic molecules called PAHs. When microorganisms die, the complex organic molecules that they contain frequently degrade into PAHs. PAHs are often associated with ancient sedimentary rocks, coals and petroleum on Earth and can be common air pollutants. Not only did the scientists find PAHs in easily detectable amounts in ALH84001, but they found that these molecules were concentrated in the vicinity of the carbonate globules. This finding appears consistent with the proposition that they are a result of the fossilization process. In addition, the unique composition of the meteorite's PAHs is consistent with what the scientists expect from the fossilization of very primitive microorganisms. On Earth, PAHs virtually always occur in thousands of forms, but, in the meteorite, they are dominated by only about a half-dozen different compounds. The simplicity of this mixture, combined with the lack of light-weight PAHs like naphthalene, also differs substantially from that of PAHs previously measured in non-Martian meteorites.

The team found unusual compounds -- iron sulfides and magnetite -- that can be produced by anaerobic bacteria and other microscopic organisms on Earth. The compounds were found in locations directly associated with the fossil-like structures and carbonate globules in the meteorite. Extreme conditions -- conditions very unlikely to have been encountered by the meteorite -- would have been required to produce these compounds in close proximity to one another if life were not involved. The carbonate also contained tiny grains of magnetite that are almost identical to magnetic fossil remnants often left by certain bacteria found on Earth. Other minerals commonly associated with biological activity on Earth were found in the carbonate as well.

The formation of the carbonate or fossils by living organisms while the meteorite was in the Antarctic was deemed unlikely for several reasons. The carbonate was age dated using a parent-daughter isotope method and found to be 3.6 billion years old, and the organic molecules were first detected well within the ancient carbonate. In addition, the team analyzed representative samples of other meteorites from Antarctica and found no evidence of fossil-like structures, organic molecules or possible biologically produced compounds and minerals similar to those in the ALH84001 meteorite. The composition and location of PAHs organic molecules found in the meteorite also appeared to confirm that the possible evidence of life was extraterrestrial. No PAHs were found in the meteorite's exterior crust, but the concentration of PAHs increased in the meteorite's interior to levels higher than ever found in Antarctica. Higher concentrations of PAHs would have likely been found on the exterior of the meteorite, decreasing toward the interior, if the organic molecules are the result of contamination of the meteorite on Earth.

Malcolm Robinson returns to UFOlogy

Many readers will be pleased to note that Malcolm Robinson has returned to the world of active UFOlogy following his period of retirement in the wake of the Dunblane massacre. In a letter to this magazine, he says,

"Due to the many letters of support, letters not only from this country but from overseas as well, and with the backing and complete support of my family, I decided to return to active participation in UFO and paranormal matters". Strange Phenomena Investigations has reformed and he is "in the early stages of writing a book about Scottish UFOlogy". Good luck with it, Malcolm. Readers wanting to get in touch can contact Malcolm Robinson at his new address: 29 Kent Road, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, Scotland FK10 2JN.

Philip Mantle/ Gloria Dixon BUFORA confusion

It appears that Philip Mantle has finally bowed to pressure and stepped down from the BUFORA director of investigations post. Philip originally planned to hand over the post to Gloria Dixon next April, but over recent months there have been many rumours that he had quit or was forced from the post and that Gloria was the new D of I. At the BUFORA National Investigators Committee meeting in Cambridge on the 28th September 1996 it was decided that the change should take place sooner rather than later, and Gloria has now taken over the post.

Yet More New Planets

The Californian astronomers Geoff Marcy and Paul Butler have discovered what may be more new planets orbiting other stars. In July they announced that a 0.6 Jupiter mass planet was orbiting the star Upsilon Andromedae, 55 light years away. They also announced that a second planet might be orbiting the star Rho Cancri, with a minimum mass of five Jupiters. Meanwhile, previous planet discoverers Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz at the Geneva Observatory in Switzerland are looking for more planets and observing five good candidates for "brown dwarf" stars, which have a mass of at least 15 Jupiters.

Comets

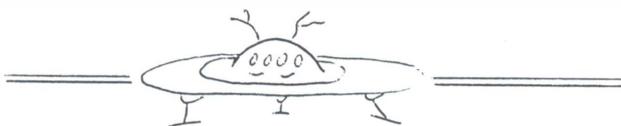
Comet Hyakutake was the first bright, naked eye comet in the skies since 1976 (Comet Halley in 1986 was faint, as will be its next appearance, due to the positions of Earth, Sun and the comet) when it rushed through the northern sky in March and April of this year. Also on the edge of naked eye visibility at the moment are Comet Hale-Bopp and Comet Tabur. Hale-Bopp is low in the West after sunset, close to the cluster M14 in the constellation of Ophiuchus at the end of October. Comet Tabur, glowing at around magnitude 6 (just below naked eye visibility at the moment from a dark sky) is better placed for observation at the start of November, moving through the northerly constellation of Ursa Major into Bootes. Finder charts are available from the Editor.

Controversy over Antigravity machine

New Scientist recently reported upon the mystery surrounding a device constructed by Eugene Podkletnov and Petri Vuorinen of Tampere University in Finland. A research paper was accepted for publication by the *Journal of Physics D: Applied Physics* after taking advice from three independent referees, but the paper was withdrawn by Podkletnov. The University has denied all knowledge of recent antigravity experiments, but has admitted to there being some research in the early 1990s; Podkletnov backed this up, saying the paper was based on experiments carried out in 1992.

Hoax? If so, it must be a very good one to get past the three expert referees who vetted the paper for the Institute of Physics, who publish the *Journal of Physics D*. Now the paper has been withdrawn it may never be published.

To quote from *New Scientist* (21 September 1996, p7), "the cylindrical device measures 275 millimetres across and contains a magnetically suspended and rotating ring of superconducting ceramic. It is said to reduce the weight of any object placed over it by up to 2 percent." This may be the first time a way has been found of "shielding" matter from the effects of gravity; if so, it could be the beginnings of a tremendous scientific breakthrough. The effect may be related to general relativity, which predicts that superconductors may generate odd gravitational effects. Rotating matter can generate a new force of nature known as the *gravitomagnetic interaction*. The rapidly spinning ions within the superconductor might magnify this force to the point where it can be detected in the laboratory for the first time. Watch this space...



CASE REPORTS FROM AROUND BRITAIN

by **Gloria Dixon**

Before documenting several unusual incidents from around the UK, I would like to take this opportunity to address the curious enigma that is being reported with increasing regularity, referred to as the abduction phenomenon. I prefer to call this the 'close encounter experience'. I believe, to define these experiences with the use of the word 'abduction' is problematic, as it appears from the majority, if not all of the documented cases, the abduction scenario emerges only from the use of regressive hypnosis. Hypnosis is full of problems and using this as a tool to elicit further memories of these inexplicable events only adds to the difficulties in our understanding of this complex phenomenon. Hypnosis, as many researchers are already aware, can be fantasy prone and totally unreliable, as well as dangerous, which worries me even more, particularly with the cases of the *false memory syndrome* that are now occurring in the United States. BUFORA and NUFORI investigators have placed a moratorium on the use of regressive hypnosis, and I hope very much that this stays in place for a long time to come. The human mind is far more powerful than we could possibly imagine and by very nature of the subject matter, the witness will be in a highly suggestible state with many memories to hand relating to the UFO experience drawn from the extensive media coverage of this subject over the past year or so. Therefore, using this method to recover 'the truth' about the event, where only fragmented conscious memories remain, cannot at any time give us an objective truth of what the experience actually was. Surely it must be better to work with small pieces of the puzzle if only because they are remembered consciously.

Because of the powerful imagery now being digested by many people, it appears that some are linking inexplicable events from their lives with a UFO/alien encounter. This may not be what is happening at all. There have always been inexplicable and mysterious events experienced by humankind and I have no doubt there always will be. These intriguing events are now being interpreted for the age in which we live and with the technology available we are able to access a near infinite amount of information, which in many ways has dramatically altered our image of the world. I believe that in trying to understand what these experiences mean we must ponder about the questions we **should** be asking, which possibly are radically different from the questions that **are** being asked. I also believe that there is a possibility we are looking at 'inner space' rather than 'outer space'. This does not mean that these reports, coming from people from all walks of life, should be dismissed or trivialized in any way at all, rather that we may be looking at something far more compelling than being abducted by aliens. I feel at the core of all close encounter experiences and indeed many paranormal events which are possibly inextricably linked, lies the human consciousness and ultimately the nature of reality itself. Are there indeed invisible worlds? I am very much reminded of Professor Paul Davies' words from his book *OTHER WORLDS* where he writes:

'The most profound puzzle of all is the fact that, whatever we may experience mentally, time does not pass, nor does there exist a past, present, or future. In its place is an existence of many universes, overlapping at their 'edges' where 'time' as we understand it is an irrelevance'

If *time* as we understand it is perceived in a different way then maybe this could be relevant to these strange experiences. It is extremely interesting to note that in many cases of the close encounter experience and other paranormal events, people remark on the fact that 'all familiar sounds ceased' or 'things seemed to be in slow motion', or possibly more profoundly 'time seemed to stand still' and 'there was a strange atmosphere'. These remarks are extremely revealing, as they are telling us something vitally important about the people undergoing these extraordinary events. It appears almost as though they enter another 'time zone' or other worlds? Surreal?...I know, but surely we must think about all possibilities. Maybe the answers are indeed stranger than the X files!

The anamnesis project which Ken Phillips initiated should become a priority when investigating these inexplicable events, as it appears that these experiences may be prevalent in a certain type of person, often people who have a life history of inexplicable or paranormal type events. We possibly need to begin at the origin, which is to look principally at the people themselves, *then* at the incidents they report. We must remember that an investigation of the close encounter experience can be in very muddied waters, and we are all amateurs where these unusual events are concerned. What we must never forget is that these events are about *people* and not just about the incidents reported. The close encounter experiences have been linked with the UFO phenomenon, but are they? - A million dollar question for which there is much controversy and major disagreement. One thing is for sure, there appears to be no one feasible theory that ever fits all the cases that are now being reported to many paranormal and UFO organizations. There is no doubt that the close encounter reports have increased dramatically over the past two years. However, I do not feel that this is because these inexplicable events have increased, people have always experienced mysterious events, but they are now being highlighted with extensive coverage by the media, many more UFO Conferences and many new UFO/paranormal magazines on the news stands; because of this people feel more comfortable in reporting these events, and also are aware of the organisations to which they can report them. However, even with the increase in these reports I feel certain that we are still only looking at the tip of the iceberg, and meltdown is not far away!

To illustrate this peculiarity with 'time' and 'strange atmospheres', I would like to document below some extraordinary events experienced by a family from West Yorkshire but who were living in Somerset at the time. It happened in the late summer of 1977.

Kate Walker (pseudonym), her husband and two young sons, aged seven and six years old were returning home to Chard from visiting relatives in Yeovil. They were approaching Windwhistle Hill, which is two miles outside of Chard and rather an isolated area. As they came to the top of the hill Kate and her family all observed a huge orange light diffused by cloud, to their left hand side and at the far end of Windwhistle Hill. It seemed to be right beside the road, not very high up, although this hill is very high. It was partially obscured by cloud, but they did not feel alarmed as there was a power station and pylons further along. However, as they drove nearer to the light, it was easier to observe and Kate states it was massive and totally static, and very low and bright. She describes it as being cigar shaped and vast in size, maybe 200-300 feet, and she estimates the light to be approximately 800-1000 feet above them. As they got closer she noticed that the pub on the right hand side of the road, 'The Windwhistle Inn', was almost in total darkness, except for a light in a small upstairs window. Kate looked at her watch to check the time as she felt it was strange the pub should be closed so early. The time was 10.10pm, and Kate looked up again at the light, which was almost on top of them by now right beside the road. She felt very uneasy and told her husband to 'put his foot down'. The next thing she was clearly aware of was seeing what she thought was a cyclist's headlamp coming the other way which seemed to appear from nowhere, and then disappear. She did not actually see a bicycle. Upon arriving home Kate discovered, curiously, that I was now 10.50pm. Their journey from Windwhistle Hill should have taken them only ten minutes. They were extremely puzzled, but decided not report it for fear of being thought of as cranks. A few days after this strange incident, Kate and her family were once again making the journey back to Chard, and as they were coming over the brow of the same hill, and about 200-300 yards from the first spot, they saw in front of them on the left hand verge, *two people*, one who appeared to be lying down, and the other standing. Their initial thoughts were that someone had been injured and went to slow down, when to their astonishment, the person standing took one step out in front of them. *One foot remained on the grass verge at the roadside and the other foot was right over the centre*

of the road! Kate describes the figure as being 'abnormally tall with legs that were horrendously long and thin' Her husband swerved to the far side of the road, and around the figure, and they kept on driving and did not look back. They all agreed that there was no one who could possibly have legs that long. Kate fully expected to hear something about this in the local paper, maybe someone being injured or taken ill on Windwhistle Hill, but she never heard anything about an incident there at all. Kate has commented to me that it seems very odd in retrospect that they all took these events so calmly and just got on with their lives, and never discussed it amongst themselves at all.

This important report becomes more mysterious eighteen years later, when Kate, remarried and now living in the North, and her sons now aged 26 and 25 years, were intriguingly finally discussing these events. Her eldest son Jeff's recollections refute the fact that they had driven under the object. He can recall Kate telling his father to 'put his foot down', but says that as he did so 'the engine died, and the headlights went out'. His father started to panic and tried to restart the car, but nothing happened. He goes on to say that at this point *'things became very strange and everything was in slow motion'*.

His father lunged across the front of the car to the passenger seat and at the same time there was a very deep, humming vibration, slow and rhythmic. He could not remember his mother (Kate) sitting in the passenger seat. He then remembers his father punching the dashboard repeatedly, but everything was still in slow motion with no sound. He felt frightened, and his younger brother, Tony, was looking out of the side window and seemed excited, but Jeff didn't know why, and his father was pointing and obviously shouting, but Jeff could not hear any sound and *somehow things were different*

He then realized his father was looking past him out of the back window and was terrified. Tony was kneeling on the back seat looking out of the rear window and pointing at something saying 'Look Jeff, look Jeff' and although Jeff could now hear him speak his lips and movements were again in slow motion. Jeff then realized that there was something behind the car and felt almost paralyzed by terror. He put his head down and covered his face and then for some reason said he had no memory of Tony either in the same way as he had no memory of his mother, Kate. He felt there was only himself and his father in the car. He could then see a white light through his fingers so he looked up and the light was everywhere, inside and outside of the car. It was a very bright white light and he describes it as *'like being inside lightning', but it didn't hurt his eyes*. His last memory is of seeing a dark shape outside the car, beside the window. He describes it as being very tall and bending toward the window looking in, and having the impression that the shape was mostly human, although he knew it wasn't, which was the reason he was so afraid. Jeff's next memory is of looking back at the orange light and seeing the 'headlamp' coming towards them only a few yards away. He then looked back and the orange light had gone. He explains that initially he only remembered seeing the orange light, the cigar shape, and hearing and feeling the hum and vibration. Through the years fragmented memories of that night have returned, but as no one talked about it he felt he shouldn't mention it.

I would like to conclude this with Kate's comments in her letter to me where she writes, *'I find it incredible, thinking about it now, all these years later, that we could have dismissed it so casually at the time. We just never discussed it, and life went on as usual. It has been a great relief to tell someone.'*

A BUFORA investigator will be conducting some research into this particular area in order to establish whether similar cases have been documented from this area. The mid-1970s has some interesting cases recording these strange events, including the Aveley case from October 1974, which involved a family traveling back from visiting relatives in Essex. This case involves a time loss and fragmented memories, although hypnosis was used in this instance whereby an abduction scenario emerged which involved a whole host of complex and bizarre events.

Location: Coulsdon, Surrey

Date: Mid July 1995

KA had been on night duty, and just before 4am was returning home. He lived at the top of a hill, and as he drove up the road to his home he became aware of a weird, ear piercing droning which seemed to go right through his head. He felt the noise was emanating from the woods on his left hand side, but as he parked his car he could still hear the noise and it seemed to be closer. He got out of his car and followed the noise which seemed to be coming from his neighbour's garden. The houses here had fences at the end of their gardens which then spread out into some woods known as Farthing Downs. As KA looked over his neighbour's fence and beyond the fence lining the woods, near the base of an old Oak tree, he observed a brilliant light. Within two minutes a saucer shaped object, about 18 feet across and grey-blue in colour rose up from the ground where it appeared to have been hovering and came into his view. At the same time, the ear-piercing noise ceased and KA comments that he felt as though he was *'in a dream'*. The object was silent and moved to about 40-50 feet high, moved over the garden and houses to the junction of the next road. It then proceeded to stop in the centre of the road about 50 yards away for three to four minutes, before moving and disappearing towards Croydon within a split second. Totally stunned by his sighting KA proceeded to rush into the house and awaken his wife, two children and dogs, who had slept throughout this incident. He could find no one else who had witnessed this object either nearby or anywhere else. He is checking for a specific date in July, which may be interesting as there was a further close encounter case involving four witnesses in West Yorkshire on 15th July 1995.

Location: Cley Hill, Warminster

Date: Summer 1982

Jeffrey W. and his family from Houghton-le-Spring, Co. Durham had traveled from the North East to Wiltshire for a summer holiday. On the way to Warminster, they drove along a road that took them to some hills, one of which was called Cley Hill. Leaving his mother and sister in the car Jeffrey and his father climbed Cley Hill to enjoy the view. It was a warm sunny day with a gentle breeze and after a few minutes, both men experienced some odd events, in that the natural country sounds seemed to disappear. They felt as though they were both suddenly drawn *'into an invisible dome'*, which closed off all familiar sounds and there was no wind, even though they could see a farmer burning his field, not far from the hill, and the wind was very obviously fueling this field fire. They then heard three 'booms' which Jeffrey felt came from underneath them. they also noticed that the hairs on both of their necks and arms were standing erect, as though we were in some sort of electromagnetic field. They could hear a faint sound, like a buzzing and it appeared to surround them. They then noticed a crop circle in an adjacent farmers field. Jeffrey ran down to the field and took photographs of the crop circle and ran to the edge of it and took more photographs, hence the trail from the crop circle. There was no disturbance in the field outside of the crop circle. Jeffrey then returned to the hill to rejoin his father, and although baffled by the circle, looked back into the farmers field which was on fire with black smoke emanating from it. In the black smoke, both Jeffrey and his father could see whirlwinds being created and both came to the conclusion that was what had created this circle. They were not sure about how long the *silence* lasted for, but suddenly, the sounds of birds singing, the wind and all familiar sounds in the distance returned.

Jeffrey and his father concluded that the circle had been there for a while, and therefore felt that the two events were unrelated to each other. However, upon returning to the car and telling his mother and sister about the experience the two men noticed that both of their wrist watches were exactly twenty minutes behind the time showing on the car clock and his sister's watch. Incidentally, their car had been parked at the foot of the hill.

I have documented the above three incidents to emphasize the significant comments these witnesses make when trying to express

their impressions of how *time seems to change*.

The final case report for this issue of *Strange Daze* involves the near death experience (NDE). In many ways these experiences reflect comments that are sometimes expressed by those who have undergone the *close encounter experience*. For readers interested in the near death experience, I would highly recommend **The Truth In The Light** by Dr. Peter Fenwick, a leading clinical authority on the NDE and President of 'The International Association for Near-Death Studies' in the UK.

Location: Almeria, Spain

Date: July 1993

Judy C from Saltburn in Cleveland had just finished her final exams at university and she and her boyfriend Ian decided to go on vacation to Spain and unwind. While in Almeria they hired a car and decided to visit Granada one day. Unfortunately a howling gale and torrential rain had started, but they decided to make the trip anyway and set off along the mountain roads. Unfortunately they were never to arrive at their destination as they hit a rivulet on a bend, they couldn't hold the greasy road and they aqua-planed into a tree. Judy fractured both bones in her right forearm, smashed her elbow and had concussion. Her blood pressure dropped to an alarmingly low level and she was unconscious when the ambulance arrived. Judy describes what happened next....

'I clearly remember somehow lifting out of my body and seeing myself laid in the ambulance. I even noticed a spot of blood on the front of my gown, which was caused by an injury I'd suffered in the crash. Sometime after the crash Ian seemed amazed when I mentioned the blue gown from the crash scene. Apparently that was put on me at the crash site because my own dress had been ripped to shreds, but because of the blood it was changed as soon as I reached the Spanish hospital, while I was still unconscious.'

During further conversations with Judy, she went on to tell me that 'this episode' as she refers to it has really changed her. She really doesn't value money as much as she used to and is not as ambitious as before, as it doesn't seem so important. She goes on to say, and I quote her words,

'I try to be kind to people. If I can help them, I will, and although I've never had a particularly ruthless streak, if I start to be negative about someone it is as if I mentally slap myself on the wrists and become more positive. I can also spot the ruthless people around me and, at the risk of sounding smug, I know they've still got a long way to go when it comes to being educated. Educated in a spiritual as opposed to a 'bookish' or scholastic sense.'

What I feel is important here is relevant again to Ken Phillips' anamnesis study, simplistically the life history of the person. Judy had a dreamlike experience in January 1989 which involved a light filling the bedroom and an odd whining or purring sound. She felt as though both she and her baby brother were being taken from

their beds and pushed through the window by a force or energy and being lifted into the light. After this everything went blank until she felt as though they were returned to their bedroom and the whirring, purring sound faded away. Judy then felt as though she was in her bedroom, but could see through the roof a huge craft in a strange hexagonal shape with a huge underbelly. She describes a constant noise coming from this that she likens to the sound of small nursery age children 'chattering'. This dreamlike experience has always stayed with her, although she has not explored it in any depth.

Interestingly, Judy had a further experience in September of that year (1989) when she and her boyfriend were sitting in her grandmother's home. They had both drifted off to sleep in the lounge when Judy describes the following incident:

'Somehow I saw, even though my eyes were closed, something hovering outside the window of the room, which was a ground floor living room. Once again it seemed to float through the glass and even though it was heading towards a nearby wall, I knew it was moving towards us. Again, it seemed to be weightless and moved or hovered like a helium filled balloon. It seemed to hover sideways and bounce off the wall, using it for momentum to reach its target. Eventually it came to rest and hovered above our heads and, though we were both asleep, I woke up in a panic and shouted 'Dale, get it, quick it's over us'. By now we were both awake, and Dale jumped up and switched on the light. IN the meantime this 'thing' had drifted towards the door and vanished. We both sat silently for a few seconds until Dale said 'did you see what I saw?' We both described the same thing. It was a triangular light, about 20cm long and 10cm high. It was orange and had strange slats, like a venetian blind on the side. The experience frightened us both and to this day, we don't know what we saw.'

This is an interesting case as here we have Judy undergoing something that she feels was a near death experience, a close encounter experience, and witnessing an object that she could not identify at close range. There are also two other events in her life of a paranormal nature, so it appears that there had been other unusual events in her life prior to the near death experience. She has now developed a great interest in all inexplicable phenomena, both paranormal and UFOs. Judy is an articulate and warm lady of 24 years old with a responsible and creative job, who is pragmatic about these unusual events. To demonstrate how she feels, I quote from a letter she wrote to me:

'Everything we have discussed is true. Things that happen in my life that I can't explain, I tend to accept as being inexplicable, then get on with living. This life, I reckon, is too short to dwell on something for too long.'

In many ways maybe what Judy says is true, mysteries will always be with us, but there are people who experience these strange and often bizarre events, who need to determine some kind of an answer as to what these extraordinary experiences mean both to themselves and to mankind itself.



BONNYBRIDGE: WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON!

By Malcolm Robinson.

We Scots are well known the world over for our warm hospitality and our charm to foreign visitors. We have many visitors each year who travel from afar to visit our scenic castles, museums and landscapes. Of course one thing Scotland also shares with the rest of the world, is that our country too has been touched by the presence of other 'visitors', strange aerial devices which have been flitting across the Scottish skies for some years now. I could write extensively on my UFO Investigations of such cases, suffice it to say that I may come back to those cases in a future article.

I felt that as I was the main principal investigator who was

there at the time when the whole Bonnybridge UFO wave began, I should make it known to the readers of this publication exactly what occurred (and indeed is still occurring !) above this particular Scottish town.

Bonnybridge lies in Central Scotland and is roughly 18 miles from the City of Glasgow and around 19 miles from the City of Edinburgh, and, as a matter of point, is only around 10 miles from where I currently live, the town of Alloa in Clackmannanshire. My position as Regional Investigation Co-ordinator for BUFORA (The British UFO Research Association) and also my investigative work for my own society, Strange Phenomena Investigations (SPI) saw me attend numerous UFO incidents throughout the years, most of which were mundane lights in the sky; apart that is, from the truly remarkable "Livingston Incident" of 1979 in which a forestry worker claimed to have seen a landed UFO in a clearing in some woods, near the town of Livingston. That was one of the biggest cases that I had worked on and even to this day, is still etched

firmly in my mind as one of the best UFO Incidents ever to have occurred in Scotland.

However life is never that simple, and UFOlogy has a habit of throwing up incidents which take us investigators into an arena of the most incredible UFO reports and which demand the utmost scrutiny and attention. This was to happen to me in the winter of 1992 when I found myself at the forefront of escalating events which would rise to immense proportions.

It all started for me, when I heard a news report (November 4th 1992) on Central F.M., a local radio station based in the town of Stirling quite close to me. The station was informing its listeners about a spate of UFO sightings above the town of Bonnybridge (near Falkirk). I immediately got in touch with the radio station and offered my assistance as the local UFO researcher and someone who would treat these sightings seriously as the light hearted tone of this broadcast was fairly typical of how the UFO subject gets treated. Central F.M. gave me the telephone number of one Billy Buchanan, a local Bonnybridge councillor and someone who was collecting all these early UFO reports. Billy was later to become something of a celebrity, probably for all the wrong reasons, but it was plain to see that Billy clearly was very puzzled by the tales of his constituents as they came to him with their UFO sightings. As I've said many times before, was Billy to turn his back on these people just because it wasn't strictly council business? Of course not. Billy was elected to serve these people, and if they were coming to him with strange tales of aerial objects in the sky, it was his duty to listen to them.

I arranged a meeting with Billy and I found him to be a good source of information, he explained that the situation was developing fast and it soon became apparent to me that this was beginning to have all the hallmarks of what's known as a "UFO wave". It was decided by both councillor Buchanan and myself that a good first step would be to contact the local Falkirk Herald Newspaper to seek out any possible further witnesses. Our article was published in the Herald and this brought a flood of phone calls to my home with people relating their own UFO experiences; Councillor Buchanan also had articles featured in the Scottish Sunday Mail and the Falkirk Advertiser.

Obviously as a researcher, one must look for the most rational explanation to account for any given UFO sighting. This I did, as I made enquiries with Glasgow, Edinburgh, and nearby Cumbernauld Airports in an effort to see if there were any aircraft in the vicinity of a specified UFO sighting. It's fair to point out that Bonnybridge is directly below flight routes to all the major Scottish Airports, but what's also fair to point out is that the witnesses that I've personally spoken to assured me that they are well aware of these flight routes, and of seeing planes in the sky, but what they were seeing were clearly not aircraft. I also checked with the local police to see if they had been contacted by members of the public in regards to UFO sightings and this I found had been the case. Other lines of enquiry were directed to some Meteorological stations for the release of weather balloons etc. and also astronomical societies and even the Ministry of Defence. During all these lines of enquiry, the UFO sightings were escalating and it became clear to me that "something" was going on.

SOME UFO REPORTS MADE TO S.P.I.

The witness in this case, James Thomson (pseudonym) resides in Bonnybridge and observed the following on Wednesday, November 11th 1992. James observed two huge bright white lights moving slowly towards him (from the Greenhill area of Bonnybridge) estimated at roughly 200ft up in the sky. The witness then heard a 'humming noise' which he likened to a washing machine on its final spin. The object then started to move from side to side as it moved above a field. There were small lights on the top of this object and a power surge of noise was also to be heard. The witness is sure as he can ever be that this was not an aircraft.

THE SLOGGETT CASE.

The following case generated the most interest during this UFO wave. It concerned the observations of two objects witnessed by a mother, daughter and son. It was in March 1992, (8 months before this UFO wave was brought to my attention) that the Sloggett

family were walking down the back road from Hallglen to Bonnybridge. During the course of this walk the time of which was 7:00pm, Steven Sloggett witnessed in the sky a large circle of light which he pointed out to the rest of his family. The light then 'landed' nearby and amazingly, they thought nothing about this and kept on walking! They looked again, and all saw a big blue light 'sitting' on the road. The witnesses described this as a very strong blue light roughly the size of a basketball. Seconds later, all the witnesses heard whilst observing this object a distinct rattling or striking of a nearby wire fence bordering a field. They felt that the rattling of this fence was in some way connected to this intense bright blue ball. SPI visited the scene of this incident, and although it was 8 months since this account, we could not detect any "differing" in the road's surface. The Sloggett family also claim to have heard the following in connection with this sighting: Firstly, a "whirring sound", then what sounded like a "door opening", then a "howl" (!) At this stage the Sloggett family took immense fright and ran for their lives.

GENUINE PHENOMENON OR HYPED UP NONSENSE?

During the course of the continuing UFO sightings above Bonnybridge, certain individuals claimed that all this was the result of hype and overactive imaginations. These armchair sceptics were not privy to the growing number of cases that I was, and although there was a small percentage of misidentifications of normal mundane objects, the skies above Central Scotland were clearly playing host to something strange that defied description and to all accounts did not resemble conventional aircraft or helicopters. But what we really have to consider in all of this is the fact that quite a lot of these UFO reports were of low level close proximity sightings; sightings which were so close that you could have thrown a stone at them. Consider the following examples:

It was on the 20th of September 1992 that 22 year old Steven Wilson was driving home from Whitecross to Maddiston (near Bonnybridge) accompanied by a friend. During the course of this journey, they both noticed a peculiar object hovering low above a field near a housing estate. The object was oval in shape, red in colour, and was sharply defined. They estimated that they observed this strange object for around one and a half minutes during which no sound could be heard. Seconds later the object rose into the sky, and was gone in seconds. Checks done by SPI indicated that no aeroplanes or helicopters were in the vicinity on the night in question.

STRANGE ARRAY OF LIGHTS

Witness Jim Walker was driving in his car from Dennyloanhead to Denny, (near Bonnybridge) during the month of January 1992. (Research by SPI indicated that these sightings did not essentially start up in November 1992, but had been a feature of the locality for many years, scuppering the ideas of those who said that this was just a publicity-hyped gimmick). About halfway into his journey, he approached a junction called 'Droves Loan' where he observed a "bright cluster of lights" hovering above the road. He initially thought that this was a helicopter. The witness then drove directly underneath this object and mentioned to me in an interview that he was very impressed by this array of lights.

The witness at this point wanted to stop, but was unable to do so owing to the build up of cars behind him. He did however have the opportunity to stop further down the road and alighted from his car and observed a triangular display of lights hovering low above the road. They were, in his estimation, approximately the width of the road with pavements combined. This display of lights was most spectacular, and he couldn't understand for the life of him why no one else was not stopping their cars for a better look. However, although the other motorists were not stopping, he did observe that these other motorists were twisting their necks up and looking through their car windscreens in an effort to obtain a better look at this thing.

The incident that I have just described here was the very first UFO report to have come to the attention of Councillor Billy Buchanan, for such was the spectacle of this sighting, that the witness raced to Councillor Billy Buchanan's door and almost broke it down in an effort to tell him all about it.

Continuing with our low level UFO accounts we also have

the strange tale of a motorist's car being "buzzed" by a low flying UFO (!) Mark Wilson (25) and his girlfriend Jane McDonald (23) were driving in the early hours of December 26th 1994 along the M.9 motorway in the direction of Grangemouth (near Bonnybridge). Jane was first to notice a large bright glowing light which she didn't at first pay much attention to. They both claim that this light source appeared to be hovering over or near Bonnybridge. However, seconds later this light source began to move in the direction of their car. Mark, who was driving, took the car up to speeds of 90 miles per hour but amazingly this object kept up the same speed and appeared to be following their car. When Mark slowed the car down, the object slowed down as well, both witnesses were very scared at this time, more so when the object suddenly shot over to the left hand side of their car whereupon it then shot over to the right hand side of their car. The object then shot straight up into the sky and was gone in seconds. From the drawing supplied by the witnesses, the object appears black (!) and is shaped like the roof of a house (!)

These are but two of the many low level close proximity UFO sightings that have been presented to our research group. During this wave of UFO sightings, SPI members frequently had skywatches in the area, indeed I was a frequent visitor to the area myself doing a number of personal skywatches, sadly I never saw a thing (!) By now the media had taken Bonnybridge under its wing and many, many reports of the strange activity were regularly featured in the press and on radio. Indeed, SPI were filmed by Scottish Television conducting a skywatch in the Bonnybridge area which drew a large amount of local people. This brought forth some individuals with their own tales to tell and proved an interesting exercise.

WHY BONNYBRIDGE ?

One of the most frequently asked questions that I've had is, "Why Bonnybridge, what's so special about it?" That of course is the million dollar question, and quite honestly I cannot answer it. For Bonnybridge, whose population is around 9,000, is just like any other similar sized Scottish town. There is nothing geographically of importance in the area, (lest you consider the ancient Pictish forts and Roman encampments!) One could also ask, "why Gulf Breeze?" or "why the Pennines?" These are other UFO "Hot Spots" - what makes them all so special ? If only we knew.

Of course, we at SPI have not ruled out the possibility that some of the UFOs seen over parts of Central Scotland may well be military in origin, perhaps even the Stealth bomber or Aurora aircraft. I'm quite sure that the military machine would be more than happy for the watching ground based observers to think that what they were viewing was a UFO, as this would take the sting out of what it actually was. This of course is all pure speculation but one has to consider the possibility. Were the military over flying central Scotland in these aircraft ? The air base at RAF Macrihanish was said to house the Stealth bomber at one stage, (this base is now officially closed !) [Editor's note: RAF Macrihanish is now run by a skeleton crew of staff but the Civil Air terminal inside the far end of the base is still open. The closure of the base came as a shock to many of the locals in Kintyre, since it came only a short time after a lot of money was spent extending the runway into one of the longest in Europe. I am a regular visitor to this part of Scotland, and some of the local businessmen can recall the stream of unmarked military lorries that used to travel only at night along the A83 (the only main road in Kintyre) into the base when the work was in progress. It could be that the runway was especially extended to allow the secret "Aurora" reconnaissance 'plane to land there.]

The UFO sightings above Bonnybridge would appear to be on the decline now, or perhaps people are more reluctant to come forward in the light of the silly press stories that have circulated about the town over the years. No one likes to be made a fool of, and I can understand the reluctance of people not wanting to come forward. UFOs are still seen in the Bonnybridge area, they haven't completely died away but it is annoying to think of the good cases that we've lost owing to the reluctance of the watching witnesses to come forward.

Not only do we have good reliable testimony coming from people from all age groups, but we also have various pieces of video footage and some photographs which claim to show these strange objects in the sky. The Malcolm family from Larbert, a small town near Bonnybridge, have not one, but several pieces of video footage which claim to show these UFOs. I've observed several pieces of video and essentially what they have captured on film are bright white light sources, some of which are flying slowly across the sky. The family are well aware that they live below a flight path for commercial airliners, but they tell me that they know them for what they are, and what they are filming is totally different. Various T.V. networks have screened some of their film, and even today they are not letting up their quest for the truth.

Photographic evidence has also come to the attention of SPI and one of the more interesting ones concerned a photograph taken by Peter Muir (pseudonym). Peter was walking with a friend near Polmont Reservoir (again near Bonnybridge) on the 12th of November 1991. Peter had been taking photographs of the B.P. Chemical Plant at nearby Grangemouth as this plant is truly a magnificent spectacle when it is all lit up at night with various gas emissions and bright lights (it's just like a small city). Anyway, their attention was soon drawn to an object which was slowly coming in their direction. The object then stopped and began to hover for five minutes, no sound could be heard coming from this object. The object then turned around and faced their direction in which it was roughly 2000ft above the ground. Then it dipped, and increased dramatically in speed to a distance of around 200 to 300ft above them. It was then that they both heard a light pulsing "hum". At this point both witnesses were quite frightened but afterwards Peter told me, they both had an overwhelming sense of excitement. (!) Peter had to actually bend over backwards to take his photograph, luckily he managed to capture something and the image seen on the photograph appears to show a round circular object which is emitting strong white light which creates a halo effect around it in the sky. Research on this photograph, has so far come up with no solutions as to what it might be. Other photographs of UFOs over Central Scotland have been taken, but apart from the Polmont Reservoir photograph and also quite a dramatic photograph of a 'daylight disc' taken at Craigluskar Reservoir near Dunfermline, none have shown anything quite as interesting.

2,000 UFO REPORTS? NOT ON YOUR NELLY!

There are many, many witnesses to what's going on in the skies above Bonnybridge, but I'm afraid nowhere near as much as the oft quoted (by media sources) 2,000 UFO sightings. I totally dispute this 'jumped up figure' and would say that in my research, the true figure lies between 250 to 300 sightings. The press always seem to add an extra zero onto figures when the story appears in print and I would like to clear up this badly misrepresented fact. So what type of shapes have we had in regards to these UFO sightings? Talking to witnesses has shown that we have three common UFO shapes that have been viewed over Bonnybridge and surrounding districts. Firstly we have coloured balls of light, red, yellow, white, performing strange aerial manoeuvres in the sky. Some of these balls of light have been reported to have come quite close to the watching witness. Then we have the Toblerone shape, witnesses have claimed to have seen a large drawn out triangular shape (something like the box that holds the chocolate toberone bar) move slowly and effortlessly across the night sky.

We then have the most common UFO shape, that of like two soup plates joined rim to rim. Some triangular objects, reminiscent I suppose to what was described flying over Belgium in the early 1990s and indeed recently over parts of England, have also been observed. There are so many interesting cases to have come out of Bonnybridge and surrounding areas, that it would take a book to document them all (but watch out, that will come !).

So what do I, as a researcher, think of what's been going on in the skies above Central Scotland ? Well, I've been associated with UFOlogy for well over 17 years and have heard many strange and interesting tales. I would say that some UFO reports from Central Scotland are indeed misperceptions of ordinary mundane

aerial objects, from aircraft, birds in flight, wind debris etc. Some sightings like I speculated earlier may be down to military activity, but a good percentage of what is being sighted in the skies above Central Scotland including Bonnybridge, could well be, dare I say it, Extraterrestrial or Inter-dimensional machines which are penetrating our air space for reasons best know to themselves.

The UFO abduction of two Edinburgh men on a lonely stretch or road back in August 1992 (around 17 miles away from Bonnybridge as the crow flies), was the case that took me off the proverbial fence, and landed me firmly into the 'believers' camp. We can only speculate if there are other such potential abduction cases 'out there' in Central Scotland, but the fact that both Garry Wood and his friend Colin Wright were catapulted into the most amazing UFO abduction only miles away from Bonnybridge does make one think as to how many other similar cases there may be, but the people are too frightened to come forward with them.

Billy Buchanan and I have come in for much criticism regarding what's happening in Bonnybridge; if it were all but hype as some have suggested, then why did we enlist the help of M.P. Dennis Canavan, in which we tried to get a Government enquiry into these UFO sightings above Bonnybridge ? Both Billy and I faxed Prime Minister John Major with numerous UFO documents to let him see what was going on. Sadly we were later told that as these objects did not pose a threat to the defence of the United Kingdom, the British Government would not seek to undertake any kind of Investigation. (How many times have we heard that, eh !) I've often said that perhaps the rise in figures in regards to these UFO reports is purely down to the local people now recognising

that they have a genuine phenomenon occurring in their area and, rather than sit in their comfortable little houses, they are now getting themselves out into their back gardens and looking skywards, something which they previously would never have done. And by doing this, they are of course putting themselves straight into the position of being able to view these objects, because, like I say, there "is" a genuine phenomenon occurring here.

SUMMARY.

In summing up the Bonnybridge mystery I would say this, the biggest sceptics of them all are the buggers who sit back in their armchair and rubbish these accounts. If they had talked to the witnesses like I have, viewed the data, saw the photographs and generally done the skywatching, then I'm sure that it would become abundantly clear to them that we do have something strange going on here.

Scotland is playing host to different visitors than those that I began this article with, but these visitors origins are, for the meantime, unknown. It is my hope that continued monitoring of the skies above Bonnybridge may throw up information which is crystal clear in its presentation, and is a piece of the so far UFOlogical jigsaw that has so far been neglected and may give us a better understanding of perhaps not only ourselves, but of those who are casting their inquisitive eyes over our affairs.

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BIG BAD WOLVES

by Kevin McClure

If your only knowledge of the world of extraordinary experiences comes from UFOlogy, you may not know that there are yet more dangerous people out there, and that not all of them want to hypnotise you, and make you recall events so sick and sad and unworlly you'll never be quite the same again. No, some of them want to exorcise you. And not just you, personally, but quite possibly your neighbourhood as well.

They want to persuade you that their own brand of very peculiar and disturbing events really happen, too. They collect accounts of these events, and publish them in books and magazines, but when challenged to provide evidence of the reality of these events, they will either plead confidentiality or, more often, ignorance. One of the greatest unrecognised stores of foaftales, or urban myths, can be found in books about devil-worship, possession and deliverance. Ouija boards are, undoubtedly, the favourite path to possession.

I haunt Christian book shops. In the city where I work there are three. One Roman Catholic, one 'straight' Anglican/non-conformist, and one - Wesley Owen - evangelical and beyond. Wesley Owen is a national chain, and its shops are cheerful and friendly, well-equipped and attractively laid out. There's a lot of music on sale, at this branch the excellent Traidcraft operate downstairs, and it's quite remarkable how much new stock - books and magazines - comes in every month.

Much of what they sell is Christian lifestyle stuff - how to live your life in Jesus, how to raise your children as Jesus wants them raising, how to persuade others to do the same, how people in history did it, how people in foreign countries do it, how to pray, how to worship, how to be married. With all this - inevitably bible-based - guidance, you could live without thinking, and perhaps that isn't always a bad thing. I'm not sure I'd want to live in line with the mores of two millennia ago, but maybe they're better than those demonstrated by the current inhabitants of Zeta Reticuli.

There's other more disturbing material, too. A range of books about the - apparently pretty imminent - Second Coming, usually based on the progress of events in the Middle East, and liberal but excruciatingly detailed interpretations of the books of Daniel and Revelation. Books about the extraordinary business of the Toronto Blessing and its offshoots: fundamental Christianity's answer to channelling, complete with a lot of middle-class white

Anglo-Saxons writhing around on the floor making animal noises, imbued, we are told, with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has a better sense of humour than I'd ever imagined.

Then there's the really nasty stuff, which would probably get banned if we had laws to protect people from religions, rather than the other way round. There's homosexuality - curable by Jesus, of course, if the Gay Plague sent by God hasn't killed all the sinners off first. And then there's Possession, Exorcism and Deliverance. Because, of course, Jesus can save you from all the problems of being taken over by demons. And, if you buy the right books, you can be the very person He needs to do His work.

I'd hoped that we were past this sort of text. It's 23 years since the first appearance of the appalling 'Pigs in the Parlor - A Practical Guide to Deliverance', in which Frank and Ida Mae Hammond explained more or less everything they didn't like by finding a demon that caused it. Their list included the demons of Buddhism, retardation, ESP, insomnia, anti-submissiveness, schizophrenia, senility and headaches, among hundreds of others. Even when I bought my copy, many years ago, 100,000 other copies had been distributed. This mockery of caring and understanding, with full instructions on how to detect demons, and how to drive them out, is still widely available. [Put that on my Christmas list - Ed.]

Sadly, a respectable British Christian publisher has come up with a counterpart for 'Pigs' for the Nineties. Hodder Christian Paperbacks have published 'Deliverance from Evil Spirits - A Practical Manual' by Francis MacNutt, a book first published in the USA, which comes complete with praise from one of the leaders of the Toronto movement. MacNutt uses similar tactics to many UFO abduction proponents, starting not with a discussion of whether demons exist, or are able to possess people, but with a grand and enthralling set of personal claims under the heading, 'How I got involved in casting out demons'. See what I mean? There are demons, they possess people, they need to be cast out, and the author can do just that.

He goes on to tell you how to do it. And in case you need to find someone to practice on, he tells you how to find them. How demon-possessed people can be detected. And how to pick a team to support you in driving out the demons you detect.

MacNutt explains that he has the "gift of discerning spirits", and that you may have it, too, or that you can develop it. This "gift" is discussed with reference to relevant incidents in the Bible. This is a pattern you might find familiar in the way that idealised and

"typical" accounts of UFO abductions have been set out by Hopkins, Mack, Jacobs, Carpenter, Haley and others, and used to judge whether a reported abduction is "real" or not. MacNutt, like many others, refers to Biblical events as a model to establish whether a particular perception by a person now, two thousand years later, is accurate or valid. The point that the reported perception of two thousand years ago was also likely to rest on no more than personal whim or preference, and might in turn have been validated by a yet earlier, and quite possibly fictitious account is generally missed.

Personally, I doubt that the "gift of discerning spirits" exists. But then, I doubt that abductions have any greater objective reality than either the gift or the spirits. For MacNutt, the gift, and the evil spirits, are absolutely real, and he lives his life accordingly. He believes that curses can demonise people, that there are spirits of the occult, of trauma, of physical and mental sickness. He believes that he can drive out those spirits because of power he derives from his god or gods. To keep those spirits away, his strong recommendation is that those who were possessed should take his faith, become believers. Which people do, probably because that is what they wanted to do in the first place, when they presented themselves to the very man who is famous for driving out evil spirits, who will pay them deep and prolonged attention, and value and support them when their demons have been driven out.

So much for personal power, power exercised over others, power that is claimed and utilised by those who believe they have special communication with their deities. So long as both parties, deliverer and delivered, believe in that power, there is little that can be done about communicating to either that there is no objective reality to the existence of the demons, to those demons having the power to possess a human being, or to the supposed ability of another human being to drive them out. The fact that the delivered person is likely to join a group of others who have had, or would like to have similar experiences, and who will support them and confirm their beliefs, only serves to make them even less approachable, less likely to consider their situation objectively.

If the offer of deliverance and the safety of belief can be seen as one serious, disturbing form of infringement on individual freedom: of thought and behaviour - which is exactly how I see it - there is another form of demonstrating power over others that I find even more unpleasant. This is the spreading of fear, and worse, by claiming proof of the reality of demonic events, when there is no such proof to be had.

From the same bookshelf as 'Pigs in the Parlor' and 'Deliverance from Evil Spirits - A Practical Manual' comes 'Dangerous Obsessions - Teenagers and the Occult', by Andrew Boyd, with a Foreword by all-purpose Christian MP, David Alton. Boyd has previously written at length about Satanic Ritual Abuse. He has, it seems, long since chosen who to believe, and who not, and like so many others who believe in events for the reality of which there is no evidence, he presents only anecdote and assertion where he should be publishing the results of genuine and persistent research. His references are very telling. He prints as fact the unevicenced beliefs of several extreme Christian self-publicists, including several of those who were at the heart of the Satanic Ritual Abuse mess - Dianne Core, Tim Tate, Kevin Logan, Audrey Harper and Maureen Davics. Davics is described as "a counsellor", though even the extremists in the Reachout Trust found her too much for them. With views as set and extraordinary as hers, I doubt that she's in any position to counsel anybody.

Just as the SRA proponents have done - and caused havoc and misery in doing it - so does Boyd. There are no identifiable people or places in his melodramatic anecdotes, just single forenames like 'Jane', 'Amanda', 'Roger', 'Alex' and 'Gary'. Remarkable events happen to these untraceable figureheads. They become hooked on palmistry. They have tarot readings that forecast death and pregnancy. They read about ghosts and poltergeists while at primary school, and become brilliant (but demon-possessed) mediums. Their ouija boards move so fast they fly across the room on their own, and provide factual detail that mine clearly had no clue how to handle. One day, a scaffolding pole fell and killed a boy

called "Barry" who a board had threatened with death the previous week. I guess that God must have been too busy watching those falling sparrows to do anything about the scaffolding pole.

I don't know whether you've ever seen anyone levitating, but it's a common occurrence in Boyd's world. There's 'Caroline', and 'Amanda', and an unnamed girl whose teacher had watched a Uri Geller programme, and children at a "Devon comprehensive" who not only levitated but did "pendulum swinging", too. Odd how there were never any teachers who knew what was going on in any of the schools these children attended, that there are no objective, balanced reports of these amazing events.

Of course, in Boyd's world rock music - Heavy Metal in particular - is demon-inspired, and can lead to murder and death. The New Age - which I tend to see as daft and wet - has been set up in direct opposition to Christianity. Dungeons and Dragons and other role-playing games are clearly Satanic, and draw young people to their doom. And you won't be surprised to hear that the only answer to all this is an acceptance of a fundamentalist belief in Bible-based Christianity.

I'm currently working on a book about the growth of cult-like behaviour among those who publicise and believe in alien abductions. There are many similarities between the absolute beliefs of many of the abduction 'investigators', and those who are convinced of the existence of Satan and the demon possession of countless ordinary people. There are similarities in the way they seek and find publicity. In the way they draw experiencers into support groups which close themselves against the influence of the outside world. In the way that those who, on the one hand, exorcise, and on the other, hypnotise and regress, write books and give lectures about their supposedly amazing interventions, and the secrets they have revealed. Case histories are the lifeblood of their ability to make money, and to keep increasing their fame.

It isn't only demons, and it isn't only aliens. It's angels, too, and visions of the Virgin Mary. And crop circles. And near-death and out-of-body experiences. And remote viewing, and mystical archaeology, and whatever other new mystery some sly author comes up with next. What they have in common is the lack of objective evidence for the reality of any of them. And the passionate and sincerely-held belief of many of those involved in each that their experiences are deeply meaningful, and deeply real. And - the one to be careful of - the person who has found a way to achieve prestige, and power, and a greater or lesser additional income, by exploiting the fears and beliefs of others.

See the Reviews section for a review (what else would you find in a reviews section?) of Kevin McClure's latest book, "The Fortean Times Book of the Millennium", only £9.99 from all good new age bookshops.



The Black Lodge

by Dean James

By vocation an artist and sculptor, Budd Hopkins began writing on UFO-related themes in the late 1970s and rapidly became a major name in the field. He first made an impact in 1981 with *Missing Time*, a study of the phenomenon indicated by its title. This was followed some six years later by *Intruders*, which cemented his reputation and is now regarded as one of the cornerstone books of abduction research.

Hopkins' interest in other-worldly phenomena was actually stimulated by a daylight disc sighting in 1964. Thereafter he studied all aspects of nuts-and-bolts UFOlogy and became well versed in their lore. The pivotal point in his early research came circa mid-1966, when publication of *The Interrupted Journey* by John Fuller alerted him to Betty and Barney Hill's alleged ordeal at the hands of medical examiners from the wild blue yonder. Although initially sceptical of the Hill case he nevertheless kept it in mind and after much careful consideration found himself forced to concede that "abductions might literally be occurring as described".

The abduction syndrome is of course a complex subject touching upon many aspects of human behaviour. For Hopkins it rapidly became a kind of *idée fixe*. He began studying individual cases at every opportunity, using hypnotic regression to elicit accounts of strange medical procedures carried out on board craft from outer space. "Hypnosis cannot guarantee accuracy [of recall]," he admits in an appendix to *Intruders*: but it has nevertheless "proved useful in the majority of abduction cases to help the subjects overcome what appears to be an externally imposed amnesia."

Hopkins would further have his readers believe that the humanoid activity detailed in *Intruders* "has yielded more new information ... about the nature and purpose of UFOs than any case yet investigated." This extravagant claim is unsubstantiated by anything in the text. *Intruders* actually chronicles fairly routine psychic phenomena in a semi-rural area of Indiana dubbed Copley Woods, where lives divorcee Kathie Davis together with her parents and two children. Kathie's experiences figure prominently in *Intruders*. Hopkins seems to suggest at one point that she isn't terribly bright, but softens the blow somewhat by referring to her as "a true *Menschkenner*, a knower of men". He describes the Davis homestead and its environs in terms more appropriate to a Lovecraft pastiche than anything else. The house itself, while outwardly "neutral and prosaic", hides a terrible secret. The surrounding maple trees isolate it from the outside world and allow non-human forces to carry out their depredations unobserved. Even the very soil feels "unnaturally charged", though in what way isn't made clear. Hopkins' chief concern at this stage is to establish an appropriate setting for what is to follow. He has no time for trifling details.

It is against this backdrop that the *Intruders* of the title pursue their inscrutable ends, subjecting Kathie Davis to all manner of indignities in the process. Her reported experiences include abductions from an early age, impregnation by saucer-men, and various gynaecological disorders. She also dreams of being shown her own hybrid child (significantly described as looking "like an elf") by "a whole bunch of ... little grey guys" who seem "very pleased with [her]".

Hopkins has enormous sympathy for Kathie Davis and other like her, but evinces very little understanding of their plight. Time and again an ignorance of folklore vitiates his argument. At one juncture he hypnotises a dancer known only as Pam and draws from her a confused account of being taken to "an unfamiliar setting" by a grey humanoid, and there shown a baby resembling "a little new born lamb ... sort of half human, half whatever it was before." Pam first of all describes her alien captor in detail, stressing its "creepy head and shiny skin". Then, in what is presented in the text as a *borrbshell* revelation, she adds: "It wants me to nurse the baby. It seems to want to watch, to see what I do with it ... They [the *Intruders*] don't understand that you can't have milk if you don't let the baby grow inside you. They seem to think you have endless amounts of milk. That's sort of stupid." Hopkins describes Pam's recollections as "a shock, even in this bizarre context". He is seemingly unaware that similar motifs are commonplace in folklore. As Gillian Tindall has it in her *Handbook on Witches*: "Women were particularly liable to visits from fairies when they were in child bed, and were sometimes carried off to fairyland to suckle fairy children."

Hopkins speculates that the *Intruders*' ultimate purpose may be "to enrich their stock and ... then depart, having achieved their goal and revived their own species." This theme is later taken up by a Wisconsin mechanic who first of all describes being taken aboard a UFO and made to impregnate a female entity, then suggest that his captors were somehow "trying to upgrade their own species". In actual fact such beliefs have come down from remote times. Gillian Edwards explains in *Hobgoblin and Sweet Puck* that "fairies need now and then to enrich their own stock by grafting onto it the more robust blood of humankind." Katharine Briggs advances a similar view in her *Dictionary of Fairies*, remarking that in olden times human children were often spirited away "to reinforce the fairy stock". Significantly, Highland tradition ascribes such depredations to beings known as the *Grey Neighbours*.

(A folk-tale recorded by Jessie Saxby asks fatalistically: "What

can a body do when a bairn has had the grey man's web about it?")

Toward the end of *Intruders*, Hopkins remarks that several female abductees on his files "have dreamlike memories of being shown tinted infants which they were made to feel were their own." He goes on to cite a number of examples, notably that of psychotherapist Susan Williams, whose 'Wise Baby Dreams' are described at length in chapter nine. Susan is the ideal witness from Hopkins' point of view. Her professional status adds weight to what would otherwise be a fairly unremarkable range of experiences. She describes her 'wise baby' as "small and precious [with] the quality of a tiny bird," but ends by emphasising its "funny greyish pallor" and vacant expression -jarring elements in what would otherwise be a straightforward wish-fulfilment fantasy.

A dancer referred to only as Andrea reports much the same type of thing, adding an archetypal fairy midwife encounter for good measure, while Kathie Davis weighs in with recollections of a baby resembling "an old man ... more wise than anybody in the world."

Hopkins presents all this in sober fashion, evidently taking it at face value. "It is crucial to know if extraterrestrials exist, and are, as the reports indicate, experimenting with humankind," he writes, "or if the reports represent some profoundly radical new mental aberration." Here again the implications of his own material seemingly elude him. There is nothing in the least 'radical' or 'new' about Susan Williams' dreams. They are in fact identical with changeling accounts first set down as long ago as the early 13th century by Gervase of Tilbury and other chroniclers of the period. According to Spence, changelings can be recognised by their "wan and wrinkled appearance [and] slight, bony development". Wirt Sikes likewise refers to them as "shrivelled of face [and] ugly of form, ill-tempered, wailing and generally frightful". The parallel with Hopkins' material need hardly be stressed. Even Kathie Davis' remark that her wise baby "looked dead" is not without significance. Gillian Tindall explicitly identifies fairies with the realm of the dead in her *Handbook on Witches*.

Virtually all the indignities heaped upon Kathie Davis have to do with what she terms her "female stuff". Genital examination is a frequent feature of *Intruders*, albeit readers are assured that "in none of these cases, involving either men or women, do we have what can be called a basically erotic experience." Psychological profiling is also used to establish that despite their outward normality, Hopkins' subjects "[are not] fully at ease physically, at home in their bodies or comfortable with their sexuality." In other words, they are unable to enjoy sensuality for its own sake, and therefore represent easy prey for denizens of the Black Lodge known since time immemorial to delight in manipulating the human libido. As dean of para-UFOlogists John Keel puts it: "In Celtic countries the little people have been credited with bizarre sexual activities often accompanied by hallucinations just as intriguing as the modern stories of hanky-panky aboard flying saucers." And elsewhere, more simply: "The phenomenon has always had an almost pornographic preoccupation with our mating practices."

It is not the purpose of this article to disparage Kathie Davis, Susan Williams et al, or make light of their experiences. There can be no doubt that UFO abductions are in some sense 'real' and pose a tremendous challenge to the research community at large. By shoe-horning them unceremoniously into an a priori theoretical model Hopkins does a grave disservice to the very people whose interests he purports to represent. Far from throwing new light on the origin and purpose of UFOs, *Intruders* actually obfuscates matters still further with a lot of nonsense about nasal implants, laparoscopy and the like. Readers searching for a balance, coherent, well-reasoned treatment of the subject must look elsewhere.

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Human Spontaneous Involuntary Invisibility by Donna Higbee, CHT

In the summer of 1994, I became aware of a very strange phenomenon, human spontaneous involuntary invisibility, which was apparently happening to people in the U.S. When I checked with other researchers and discovered that a number of them had also heard of such cases, I decided to place an inquiry letter in several well-known journals, asking other researchers and the general public if they had any experiences of this nature that they would like to share with me. Besides the publication of my inquiry letter, my inquiry was placed on several Internet bulletin boards. The letters began pouring in, giving me a broader picture of this phenomenon. I want to share a few stories with you and pass on some of the information I have come across during this past year.

My inquiry letter told the story of Vera in Ventura, California, who tried to get assistance in a post office, only to be completely ignored by other customers and the postal clerk. I have kept in touch with Vera and she has had other apparent invisibility experiences in stores and other public places. Sheila in Roanoke, Texas, continues to have invisibility experiences, some of which have occurred in restaurants and at the airport. Glenda in Fort Worth, Texas, has had these experiences occur in a cafeteria and a movie theater. Most of the cases that I have researched have been in the U.S., although I do know of cases in England, Europe, Australia, Puerto Rico and Brazil.

In every case I have heard about or personally researched, the person is physically still present, although unable to be seen or heard. From the point of view of the invisible person, the world looks normal and they have no idea that they cannot be seen or heard by people around them. I will address how this might occur a little further along in this article, but first I want to give a few examples below. The quotes are directly from experiencers' letters to me.

Jean in Tucson, Arizona, wrote me of her experiences. She has had them occur in the library when she attempted to check out books and in clothing stores. The following is a quote from her letter, showing the humour with which she deals with these occurrences. "I've had this happen in stores, in restaurants, and many places. I remember joking to a friend of mine one time that I felt like I could walk into a bank, help myself to a pile of bills and no one would ever see me because I was invisible. There is no physical reason why I should be. I'm taller than average for my sex and age group (I'm fifty-five years old and 5'9"), referred to as good-looking, and I've always worn my hair red. You wouldn't think a tall woman with red hair, high heels in a purple dress and dangle earrings would be invisible, would you?"

Or the story from a thirty-seven year old man, Peter in Gloucestershire, England, who was at a private party in 1987. He walked upstairs to use the bathroom and was followed by a woman who also wanted to use the bathroom. The woman motioned for him to go first and she stood outside the door to wait her turn. Peter used the bathroom, opened the door and walked out into the hallway, closing the door behind him. He went on down the stairs and walked over to some friends and started talking to them. They all ignored him completely. He thought they were playing a joke on him, so he walked away and found his girlfriend and asked her for a cigarette. She, too, acted like she didn't see or hear him. Peter was getting angry by this time and thought the joke had gone too far. He decided to walk back upstairs and catch the woman coming out of the bathroom and ask her for a cigarette. "...I walked back up the stairs and, on reaching the bathroom landing, I came across the girl again who was standing outside the bathroom door, clearly still waiting for me to come out. When she saw me, her face dropped in

surprise for clearly she thought that I was still in the bathroom." Peter returned to the party downstairs, everything was normal again and he was able to be seen and heard. When he questioned his friends and girlfriend as to why they had ignored him, they all swore that they had never seen or heard him. Obviously the woman upstairs had not seen him come out of the bathroom and go downstairs.

Then there is the case of Melanie in Ventura, California, who became invisible while sitting on her own living room sofa and staring at the wall, lost in her own thoughts. Her husband was walking around the house looking for her but could not see her sitting there, only several feet away from where he was walking. This lasted for approximately ten minutes, then she was suddenly visible again. Her husband was quite upset with her and thought she had been hiding from him. She assured him that she had been sitting there all along but to this day, he does not believe her.

Or, how about Jannise in Minneapolis, Minnesota, who has had a number of invisibility experiences throughout her life. The one reported here lasted longer than usual. As a teenager, she fell in with a group of friends who decided to see if they could actually steal something from a department store and not get caught. As luck would have it, the entire group was caught and taken into custody, including Jannise. They were taken to the police station and one by one were questioned; all, that is, except Jannise. Although she was standing right there, no one paid the slightest attention to her; not the police, the guards, or the office personnel.

She finally just got up and walked out of the police station without ever being questioned or anyone attempting to stop her. When she later talked with her friends about what happened in the police station, "...they didn't even recall me being taken into custody at the department store. Yet I rode in the police car with everyone else, and they thought I was still at the store." No one had seen her from the moment the police had arrived on the scene in the store until some time after she had walked out of the police station unhindered.

What actually is happening? Why is this occurring? We don't have answers for these questions yet. But in trying to learn more about invisibility, I came across some information that I want to share with you.

Human invisibility has been written about for centuries. Indo-European and pre-Aryan shamanistic beliefs accompanied the peoples who eventually migrated into the Indus Valley (approx. 2,500-1,500 B.C.E.). Here, men and women of great spiritual attainment, superior knowledge, and extraordinary powers came to be called rishis. The Vedas, which form the basis of Hinduism, emanated from the teachings of the rishis, starting around 1,000 B.C.E. In these texts, we find descriptions of the rituals and techniques of the Hindu priests, sounding very much like the magical and shamanistic abilities of the old sorcerers, magicians and shamans. Later in Hinduism, around 700-300 B.C.E., we find the secret doctrines, called the Upanishads, which were written for students. Within the Upanishads, there is a section called the Yogatattva, which gives the rich mystical philosophy of the discipline and theory of practice for attaining knowledge of the essence of God. A serious student of raja yoga was taught that certain supernormal powers, called siddhas, were a natural outcome of gaining mastery over one's mind and environment, and were used as valuable indications of the student's spiritual progress. One of these yogic siddhas was human invisibility. Patanjali, author of the Yoga-sutra, which is one of the earliest treatises among the early Indian writings, attempts to describe the process whereby human invisibility occurred. He says that concentration and meditation can make the body imperceptible to other men, and "a direct contact with the light of the eyes no longer existing, the body disappears." The light engendered in the eye of the observer no longer comes into contact with the body that has become invisible, and the observer sees nothing at all. There is not a lot written about how this occurs; the explanation of the process whereby invisibility was brought into being was most likely left up to the teacher to impart to the student directly.

We move ahead in time and find that from the thirteenth century on, numerous texts in Europe refer to similar abilities, performed by sorcerers and magicians who had the power to make themselves invisible, like the shamans (both ancient and modern), and the yoga masters in India. Some other cultures in which shamanism (and the ability to vanish) has played a major role are the Aborigines of Australia, the archaic peoples of North and South America, and the peoples in the polar regions.

Next we look at Rosicrucianism, which started in Europe in the fifteenth century. Among the papers of that time, there are a number of them that talk about invisibility. A brother in the Rosicrucian fraternity wrote a paper on how to walk invisibly among men, and there is evidence that this was being taught in those early days. H. Spencer Lewis, the founder of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis in San Jose, California, stated that one can gain invisibility with the use of 'clouds'. He says that clouds or bodies of mist can be called out of the invisible to surround a person and thus shut him out of the sight of others. According to Lewis, this secret practice is still taught in the mystical schools of today. The written literature on this subject supports the statement that the cloud is the basis of the Rosicrucian invisibility secret.

Interestingly, a man named John Macky, who was an early Masonic leader (the early Masons were believed to be an offshoot of the Rosicrucians) taught a method whereby any man could render himself invisible. Another offshoot of the Rosicrucian fraternity, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, left manuscripts describing the 'Ritual of Invisibility'. These manuscripts talk about surrounding yourself with a shroud, which is described as looking like 'a cloud'. It is said that Madame Blavatsky, of the Theosophical Society, witnessed this invisibility for herself and was actually given the secret, thereafter accomplishing this for herself on several occasions in front of witnesses. The literature on the Spiritualists in the U.S. shows that there is no doubt they, too, knew about the cloud and its creation.

So, just what is this cloud? We are looking for something that is between empty space and actual physical matter, something unseen by the naked eye but very much in existence. The Rosicrucian Manual tells us that The first form into which spirit essence concentrates preparatory to material manifestation is electrons. When spiritual essence gathers into very minute focal points of electrical charge (due to certain conditions), we have the creation of electrons. Science reports that such a cloud of free electrons will absorb all light entering it; it will not reflect nor refract light waves, nor are light waves able to pass through a human being. Consequently the observer's eye sees nothing there and the person surrounded by such a cloud is invisible. Since light is necessary for human sight, when there are no reflected or refracted light waves bouncing off a person and hitting the observer's retina, the person is not able to be seen and is not visible under normal circumstances.

How is this cloud created intentionally? That is difficult to say. There are references to and descriptions of invisibility and its creation in the writings of secret societies, but most people don't have access to these writings. One could go to India and become an apprentice or student of an Indian guru or teacher to learn these techniques, but that probably is not practical in modern life. To the everyday person, the knowledge of how invisibility works is a mystery.

With this being the case, just how are people having experiences of spontaneous involuntary invisibility? I wish I had the answers, but we are still in the midst of our research. If indeed they are forming the light-absorbing, free-electron cloud around themselves, they are doing it unknowingly and without knowledge of the method. Since some kind of focused mental thought process must be employed to make the cloud form around oneself, then it might be that these people are doing this unconsciously.

At the start of my research, I was interested to see if there was a correlation between human invisibility and people who report having experiences with non-human entities. It is known that invisibility is one of the components making up the abduction phenomenon. The first several people who came to me with invisibility experiences were abductees, and I hoped to show a link

between abduction and human invisibility. But as I continued to get letters from people having experienced invisibility, I could see no direct link between the two. It seems that just as many non-abductees are having these experiences as are abductees. There is the possibility that those reporting to be non-abductees simply haven't remembered their experiences and are, indeed, actually abductees. If this is the case, it will be difficult to give accurate findings. At this point, I am simply calling for more data and hoping that some patterns become obvious.

I find it interesting that the people having these invisibility experiences seem to be people with higher than average psychic abilities. Possibly they are able to traverse other dimensions and command natural forces, knowingly or unknowingly. Researchers of the paranormal are having a field day as people are reporting experiences with what they term ghosts, angels, extraterrestrials, and interdimensional beings. Spontaneous involuntary invisibility is just another mystery to add to the lot.

In our culture, we have sayings such as "she looked right through me," "they acted like I wasn't even there," etc. There are several reasons why someone might use that kind of phraseology. There has been the supposition that minorities, and to some extent women, are somehow less in our society. Thankfully, this attitude has been undergoing a change in recent years. But a person who falls into a category that society has traditionally considered less in importance might take on the stereotyped role and believe it to be true to the extent he feels so unimportant that, to him, people don't even notice him. He feels invisible. Another reason could be the mental health of the person involved. Severely depressed people can experience what is termed nihilism or the feeling of such uselessness and worthlessness that they feel invisible to people around them. A person with extremely low self-esteem might feel he is unworthy of being noticed, therefore he feels invisible. In these cases, the feeling of invisibility is a subjective one on the part of the experiencer and is not necessarily based in fact. And I think we have all had the experience of a person simply not paying attention to us and not seeing us or what we were doing. But if we were to go up to them, stand directly in front of them and speak to them, their attention would be drawn to us and they would interact with us.

The phenomenon of human spontaneous involuntary invisibility is quite different. My research has shown the people to be well adjusted, well educated and taken totally by surprise at the occurrence of invisibility. Often it takes several such occurrences before they realize that they are truly invisible during certain times to other people. They attempt to interact with those around them and simply can't be seen or heard. This produces frustration and, in many cases, a sense of fear at something which they don't understand. There is a big difference between a person purposely not interacting with you because of some cultural or personal reason versus a person not interacting with you because he can neither see nor hear you. A case in point: I recently had a phone call from Joe L. in Fullerton, California who was very bewildered and needed to talk about what was happening to him. He had just returned from a restaurant where he was seated at a table by himself drinking his tea after having finished his dinner. Joe was sitting forward in his chair and intent upon something happening out the window and did not notice a man pass behind his table and take his jacket from the back of his chair. When he finished his tea, he stood up to get his jacket and found it missing. He reported this to the maitre d' and was told that the man who turned it in had said no one was sitting at the table and he assumed that the party had left, so he turned in the jacket. Joe had had several such invisibility occurrences within the past three months and was quite disturbed over them. As I continue to get letters and phone calls, I realize that there is much more to be learned about this fascinating phenomenon.

For those readers who find human invisibility interesting, I want to recommend a little paperback book entitled, *Invisibility* by Steve Richards (see references below). This book goes into much greater detail about how the electrons absorb light and how you can create this cloud around yourself. Since I've not attempted to do this, I

can't vouch for its accuracy, but it seems well researched and is most interesting.

I welcome any comments and personal experiences you may care to share with me regarding invisibility. Also, I am a certified clinical hypnoterapist, working with people who feel they have had non-human abduction experiences. I would be happy to receive any comments or answer any questions you may have regarding the abduction phenomenon. I can be reached at the following address: Donna Higbee, Post Office Box 6404, Santa Barbara, California 93160, USA. I can also be reached by email through America Online. My address is: Goodhigbee@aol.com

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BOOK REVIEWS.

Kevin McClure-

"The Fortean Times Book of the Millennium".

John Brown Publishing, paperback, £9.99. 152 pages, index, references and bibliography. ISBN: 1 870870 786.

The other books in the FT series ("...Strange Deaths" and "...Weird Sex") are entertaining, but are definitely "toilet books": Collections of allegedly true short stories that you can dip into at random and read for a couple of minutes. McClure's book though is a much more in-depth study, looking at the cults, predictions and movements that make up the current wave of Millenarianism as we approach the year 2000. While best read as a whole, each of the 16 chapters are sufficiently short and self contained for the reader to dip into this book at random, too. Chapter 14 - "Hybrids and High Strangeness - Abducting our future" will probably be of particular interest to readers of Strange Daze, where McClure draws parallels between the abduction movement and other cults of intervention and contact. If your interests are a little more varied that simply UFOs, this book is a quality item worth putting on your Christmas list.

Reviewed by the Editor.

Charles Berlitz - "The Mystery of Atlantis".

Souvenir Press, paperback, £6.99. 213 pages, bibliography, line drawings and b&w photographs. ISBN: 0 285 63351 1.

First published in Britain in 1976, this is Berlitz's unimpressive book on Atlantis. While I am impressed with some evidence for possible transatlantic travel and trade in prehistory, I become less convinced of the existence of Atlantis with each book I read. Berlitz places Atlantis around the Azores on the mid-Atlantic ridge and he asks: "Can Atlantis be found? - The near future will give us the answer. It can and will be". Well it hasn't, which probably means this book is a load of old bobbins. This is well written and the new edition is nicely presented. It makes a cheap addition to anyone's Atlantis collection, but is ultimately 20 years out of date and correspondingly unenlightening.

Reviewed by the Editor.

Title: Children Of The Light. Author: Cherie Sutherland.

Publisher: Souvenir Press Ltd. 43 Great Russell Street London, England, WC1B 3PA. Price: £9.99.

Most people the world over have heard or read about "Near Death Experiences" (NDE's), which occur when someone has either been involved in a tragic accident or illness, and for a few moments, find themselves 'separated' from their physical material body, and into what's termed their 'etheric body'. They then find themselves travelling down a long dark tunnel at the end of which can be seen a tremendous sphere of light. Upon reaching the light they then claim

to have met up with loved ones, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters who have passed on before them.

Many strange experiences have been told by people in these situations but this book is somewhat different, it covers the Near Death Experiences of children aged between one year (yes, one year!) and 17. To say that this is a most fascinating read would be doing it an injustice, it's simply incredible. The uncluttered minds of these children tell graphically and in great detail what they saw on the "other side".

This books should lift the veil of negative thinking on the part of the sceptic, and make him more understanding towards the phenomenon known as the Near Death Experience. For anyone interested in this subject, then this book is a must. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: One Step Beyond (a personal UFO Abduction

experience). Author: Elsie Oakensen. Publisher: Regency Press, 125 High Holburn, London, WCIU 6QA. Price £7:50.

I've had the pleasure to have met Elsie a few times at BUFORA UFO Conferences, and I've found her to be a warm intelligent person. At those meetings I knew that she had had a very vivid UFO experience, and this book, written by Elsie herself, is her own recollection of what happened to her on a lonely road back in November 1978.

Elsie's experience is quite common as UFO accounts go, but nonetheless, she felt that she had to get it out into print so that more and more people should become aware of the reality of this perplexing phenomenon. Elsie takes the reader through a step by step process as she tried to come-to terms with her experience and the problems she faced as the reality of it all sunk in. She dealt with many so called experts in an attempt to find a rational explanation to account for what she saw and underwent hypnosis as a means to bring any further hidden memories to light, This then is a courageous book by a courageous lady, and should be read by believers and sceptics alike.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: The Ghost Of Flight 401. Author: John G. Fuller.

Publisher: Souvenir Press Ltd, 43 Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3PA. Price (Pbk) £6:99.

Yet another reprint from Souvenir Press, this time it's the million copy (U.S.) best seller The Ghost Of Flight 401. I remember buying this book in my early twenties and was riveted by every page, no wonder it went on to become a best seller. It concerns the tragic flight of Lockheed Tristar Flight 401 which crashed with the loss of 101 lives. Parts of the wrecked plane were salvaged and refitted onto other aircraft, and that's when the problems arose. For on those aircraft which had introduced parts of the doomed 401's wreckage strange things started to happen.

The ghost of flight engineer Don Repo began to appear to stewardesses and scared the living daylights out of them, but apparently, he was trying to convey a message. Investigator and author John Fuller eventually found out about this and begun his Investigations. Don began to tell John Fuller about what actually happened before the crash, and the story continues with even more startling revelations.

This truly is a magnificent work which deals with this world and the next (!) and how the two combined to create a level in which solid communication took place. I'm quite sure that this time around (1996) The Ghost Of Flight 401 will prove to be another best seller, here's hoping anyway.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

As well as this book, the Ed also gave me "The Ghost of 29 Megacycles" and "The Interrupted Journey" as background reading. I managed the latter but not the former, but I think I have sussed out the sort of writer Mr Fuller is.

The problem I have with this book is that I think it is exceedingly plausible and well written. You may wonder (then again, you might not) why I think this is a problem; you see, I want to believe in all sorts of things - fairies at the bottom of the garden, UFOs, intelligent life living anywhere (never mind in outer space),

antediluvian technologies and all the rest of it, however when I read books on these subjects I find my mind narrowing rather than the reverse.

I repeat that I thought the book was well researched with facts that could possibly be verifiable and those that weren't were of the nature of frightened witnesses and Eastern Airlines logbooks removed to unknown locations.

I found myself believing that the ghost of Flight Engineer Don Repo stayed around helping Tristar crews after his untimely death along with 100 others in the Florida Everglades. The only problem I do have is that in the final chapter the author goes all Mystic Meg and contacts the missing airmen using a Ouija board, but this in itself is strangely convincing.

Am I going mad and about to write a book entitled "Hairpieces of the Gods: A history of Extraterrestrial Syrups"? You decide, I can't be arsed. Reviewed by Jon Lee.

Title: The Encyclopaedia of Signs, Omens and Superstitions.

Author: Zolar. Publisher: Souvenir Press; Paperback, £9.99.

In the last issue I gave "The Encyclopaedia of Ancient and Forbidden Knowledge" a good slagging off, which it thoroughly deserved. While that book was written in the hairy early 1970s, this one reveals an older and wiser Zolar, no longer titling himself "Master of the Occult". In the previous book Zolar included an uninformed attack on Science, but here in the introduction he explains superstitions in terms of ignorance, fear and custom.

The main thing I took away from this book was how glad I am that I live in an age of largely effective modern medicine and not the imaginary "new-age" past of wise women healers, whose "cures" seem from this book to be largely ineffective (sticking nails down your back on pieces of string, for example) or worse than the actual disease (like crawling through beds of nettles). Other traditional folk remedies outlined here which will definitely make me think twice before consulting a "traditional healer" are eating baby frogs before breakfast to heal TB and curing a child of rickets by passing it through a cleft in a holly bush.

One final thought to leave you with is a technique for sobering up drunks I found in this book: First of all, roll him in manure, then make him drink olive oil, and follow this up by having him smell his own urine and wrapping his genitals up in vinegar soaked linen.

Personally, I'd rather stay drunk.

Reviewed by Jon Lee.

Title: The Lost World of Agharti. Author: Alec Maclellan.

1983 Corgi edition cover price £1.75, bought second hand for much less...

I wasn't really supposed to review this book as the Editor reviewed the new Souvenir edition last issue, but after borrowing this copy off the Ed I couldn't help myself.

What can you say about a book which on the inside cover is promoted with quotations by, wait for it, Erich von Daniken, The Huddersfield Daily Examiner, Bolton Evening News and the Oldham Evening Chronicle. I rest my case.

But, just in case anybody thinks I am being unfair on this hugely amusing book which is, I am sure, a favourite of Robert Rankin (the Bard of Brentford) I shall quote from the *prologue* (say that like Frankie Howerd):

"Tibetan Lamas even assert that in America there live in vast caves people of an ancient world". I mean, really, what the □□□□ would those people know: They wear daft hats and live in a country where Yak herding is the greatest form of culture.

I will finish this hatchet job with another quotation and let you see what you think:

"Is the legendary subterranean kingdom of Agharti, with its network of tunnels linking the continents to its capital city myth or reality? Do its people really possess Vril Power, an amazing force which enables them to control man and nature?"

"The absorbing story of Agharti which has fascinated generations of explorers, occultists and mystics [draw your own conclusions!] based on evidence [ahem] collected from all over the world. It also embraces such controversial subjects as the origins of

the peoples of the Americas, the occult secrets of Asia and the legends of the lost continent of Atlantis. It pinpoints the possible site of Agharti's capital city [how can you pinpoint a possible site?] and makes the first positive assessment of what Vril Power really is. [A load of old b*ll*c*s.]

Comments in parentheses are the reviewers own, flippant and intentional. Reviewed by Jon Lee.

Title: The Encyclopaedia of the world's greatest unsolved mysteries. Authors: John and Anne Spencer. Publisher: Headline Publishing, Hodder Headline PLC 338 Euston Road, London, NW1 3BH. Price £6:99.

In a time when UFOs and the paranormal are becoming more and more popular, John and Anne Spencer's book has hit the market with apt timing. It's fair to say that the contents of the book have been covered many times before by other authors, but in this reviewer's opinion, not so well done as the Spencers.

The subjects are numerous, we have the Bermuda Triangle, Big Cats, Crop Circles, Ghosts, N.D.Experiences, Poltergeists, Psychic Detectives, UFOs, Yetis, to name but a few. Sadly some of the subjects covered only merit a few pages which is a shame, as these subjects have a wealth of information to be digested, that said, the book is a fine example to the younger generation of X Files fans who are seeking enlightenment on the many wonders that pervade our planet, this book will suit them just fine.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: Past Lives Future Lives. Author: Jenny Cockell.

Publisher: Piatkus Books, 5 Windmill Street, London, W1P 1HF. Price £9:99.

In the follow up to her highly successful first book, "Yesterday's Children", author and experiencer Jenny Cockell takes the reader on her continuing journey of past, present, and 'future' lives. She deals with her prophetic visions of the future, detailing living conditions, matters relating to the environment and her precognitive visions. About Past Lives Future Lives, Jenny says:

"In this book I hope to bring together a sense of the continuity of past present and future based on my experience of past life memories and visions of the future. Time is not just for the present, for the present is only a tiny fraction of our existence. We are more than reflections that we see in our mirrors, and far more than the separate isolated creatures that we may feel ourselves to be".

Again this is one of those books that makes you sit up and is a fascinating insight into the world of reincarnation and the possibility that the future is already mapped out before us. Now isn't that a thought!

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: The Book Of Miracles. Author: Stuart Gordon. Publisher: Headline Book Publishing, Hodder Headline PLC 338 Euston Road, London, NW1 3BH. Price: £19:99.

Christianity is awash with claims of miracles to miraculous healings, to visions and mystical apparitions. This book deals with these and others. We are taken through a conglomeration of N.D.Es (Near Death Experiences), including Transcendental N.D.Es. We move on to the infamous Sai Baba, who, it must be said, is becoming more and more suspicious, especially in the light of a T.V. crew who filmed him cheating.

There are a multitude of chapters dealing with so many things, that it would prove too long to go into them here. But briefly, the author writes about, psychic surgery (the pro's and con's), The vision at Fatima, the visions of the Virgin Mary at Garabandal and Medjugorje, bleeding and weeping statues, milk drinking idols, (sounds like my kids !!), stigmata, levitation, D.D. Home, and one page on UFOs !! Plus much much more and that's a fact.

Although some of the subjects are just touched upon briefly, the fact remains that this book is a real 'eye-opener' to religious phenomena from all ages, plus the many noted people who were associated with them. O.K. some scholars are well aware of these subjects, but we must consider those younger members of the ever

growing psychic studies who want to learn more, well, they can do no better than getting their hands on this book.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: The Druids Source Book: Author John Matthews.

Publisher: Blandford Press, Wellington House, 125 Strand, London, WC2R 0BB. Price: £19.99

Well I must say when this heavy book dropped through my letterbox and I saw the title, I thought this really isn't my forte. But nonetheless I travelled through it with much interest.

Essentially this is a study by John Matthews in Druid history and how diverse it has been throughout the ages. The Druids, he maintains, have long been misrepresented and misunderstood. We learn how the Druids originated and how they take part today in various practices. It is a book that one needs to spend a great deal of time on to digest what the author is saying. To separate the history and folklore of Druidism took a long time for the author, and the extensive research put into this book will undoubtedly make it a classic.

Not only do we learn about fairies and Druids from Ireland, but we also learn about Druidical chants in the choruses of popular songs from the U.K. This is an enormous work of study, and should be given your utmost of attention and thereby feature on any student's bookcase.

Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Title: Psychic Protection. Author: William Bloom. Publisher:

Piatkus Books, 5 Windmill Street, London, W1P 1HF. Price: £8.99.

Dr William Bloom is one of Britain's most prominent "New Age" teachers, and this book is a culmination of his life's work and teachings. To some I suppose, his teachings may seem controversial, and I guess having read them, I can see why! Still, to the students of the psychic sciences, his teachings are confirmation of what other similar teachers the world over have been saying for years.

We learn how to firstly perfect the proper breathing exercises, how to cleanse the body of imperfect thoughts. The first thing though is to be healthy, and that means eating the proper food, getting enough sleep, stop drinking alcohol smoking or using drugs. Commit to less work, (tell that to shift workers!) However there are I must admit, some silly suggestions in the book, no more so than asking the reader to play their stereo system on full blast for 5 minutes every few weeks to let the sound vibrate through your home (!) vibrations, the author tells us, is one of the keys to better living. (Try telling that to the neighbours!)

That's my only gripe about the book, as it is a book with many helpful tips to create a better living for you. The actual psychic protection bit was quite something, but to learn more about this you'd better buy the book. Reviewed by Malcolm Robinson.

Decoder
by Dean James

No discussion of Liber AL would be complete without some mention of the secret code or cipher it allegedly contains. Thelemites have laboured for decades to determine the "order and value of the English alphabet" referred to in chapter I verse 55. Crowley's magical son Charles Stansfeld Jones, aka Frater Achad, arrived at a partial solution as long ago as 1918, but abandoned his efforts at an early stage, unwilling or unable to carry them through. That task fell instead to Carol Smith of British order the O.A.A, who succeeded in deriving a viable English Qabala from the text in 1974, a full 70 years after it was first transcribed.

Although difficult to summarise, Smith's approach basically entailed treating the letters of the alphabet as if they were fixed points on the circumference of a circle and numbering them sequentially, starting at A and counting forward 11 places each time. Thus L became number two, W number three, H number four and so on. By continuing in the fashion until all 26 characters had been assigned a value she arrived at an elementary substitution code similar to those once common in juvenile spy fiction. Interested

readers can duplicate the entire process for themselves in minutes. It requires no particular effort once the basic principle has been grasped, and may indeed constitute the solution to 'this mystery of the letters,' albeit the biggest mystery of all is why Achad himself was seemingly unable to finish what he'd started.

Despite all that's happened since 1974, the ramifications of Smith's discovery still haven't been fully explored. Perhaps the most convincing evidence in support of her claims is to be found in American author Allen H. Greenfield's slim volume Secret Cipher of the UFO-nauts (ISBN 1-881532-04-6), which runs to only 110 pages but nevertheless merits every penny of publishing house Illuminet's \$9.95 cover price. Greenfield obviously sets great store by such virtues as brevity and encapsulation, writing with a notable economy of words yet still managing to cast fresh light on one of esoteric tradition's most closely guarded secrets. It is his contention that Ascended Masters throughout history have communicated with their human agents via elaborate codes based on numerology and the Qabala. He further alleges that by applying the key encrypted in Liber AL it is possible to crack the most recent of these codes and literally "trace the UFO-nauts to their very doorsteps."

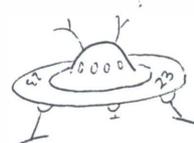
It should be obvious even from this brief summary that Secret Cipher... is the product of a deeply mystical sensibility. Indeed, its emphasis on ritual magic and the Qabala would probably incline most nuts-and-bolts UFOlogists to give up reading after only a few pages. A key passage stresses that the messages passed on to society at large by contactees and channellers "are meant to be understood only by deep initiates in possession of the code out of which the cipher was constructed." This code was purportedly introduced to UFOlogical circles at an early stage by such enigmatic figures as Meade Layne and especially George Hunt Williamson, "who may have helped [George] Adamski concoct his Orthon story."

(Greenfield also stresses that Williamson was "certainly an initiate much given to codes and ciphers." Perhaps significantly, Williamson devoted an entire chapter of his 1959 book Road in the Sky to the word 'El' and its derivations. A student of elder lore, he was no doubt aware that 'El' is the correct pronunciation of AL.)

Elsewhere Greenfield name-checks Richard Shaver, originator of the Mantong alphabet, for his part in promoting the contemporary UFO mythos; likewise Williamson's ill-fated confederates Wilbur Wilkinson and Karl Hunrath. He traces human interaction with UFO-nauts back to remote times and shows would-be adepts how they too can use the cipher to "resist Alien Abduction and Alien Conquest."

Some occultists and classical scholars will no doubt balk at what is effectively a simplified latter-day alternative to the traditional Hebrew Qabala; but such objections must ultimately be weighed against the cipher's undoubted value as a research tool. On the face of it there is something preposterous about the idea of using Liber AL to 'decode' UFO messages; yet anyone who follows Greenfield's suggestions will be forced to concede that there are indeed "virtually always case-specific correlations on the very first attempt."

The burden of proof for any claim inevitably rests with the claimant, and Greenfield certainly argues his case convincingly. An ordained Gnostic Bishop, he puts something of himself into every line he writes. This intense personal involvement elevates Secret Cipher... from pot-boiler level to the status of instant cult classic. It is to be regretted that the author of such an important book has produced so little else in the same vein.



OLD
THE PARANORMAL WORLD
OF
DR. BOB DODDMAN
UFOLOGIST

IT'S A CONSPIRACY

DR. BOB GIVES
ANOTHER
OUTSTANDING
LECTURE IN THE
UK.

AND THE ALIEN
VISITORS ARE
HERE TO CHECK
OUT MANKIND
AND HIS NATURAL
INSTINCT FOR
TRIBAL WARFARE

NEXT MORNING.

DR. BOB
TELL
EVERYONE
THE TRUTH!

PHEW...
MY RESEARCH AND
LECTURES ARE
BEGINNING TO
TAKE A STRAIN ON
ME... I MUST
TAKE A BREAK
FROM UFOLOGY.

DR BOB VISITS THE SEASIDE.

MY GOD! A MYSTERIOUS
DISK SHAPED CRAFT IN
THE DISTANCE...
I CAN ONLY
RELATE THIS TO
THE KALAHARI
DESERT UFO
INCIDENT. I
MUST
INVESTIGATE.

ICE CREAMS
MR. FLOSSY

FOR THE RECORD...
IT'S A NUTS + BOLT
CRAFT, INTELLIGENTLY
CONTROLLED BY A
HUMANOID ENTITY,
I SHALL NOW
APPROACH THE
VFO.

WHAT'LL IT
BE GUV.

Mr. FLOSSY

I COME IN PEACE... I AM
AN EARTH PERSON...
WISHING TO MAKE CONTACT
WITH YOUR SUPERIOR ALIEN
RACE... DO YOU ORIGINATE
FROM THE PLAIDIAN
GALAXY?

Mr. FLOSSY

DID YOU HELP THE
U.S. MILITARY WITH
ALIEN TECHNOLOGY
AT AREA 51 IN
EXCHANGE FOR
ALIEN ABDUCTIONS?

Mr. FLOSSY

LOOK GUV...
THIS IS JUST A
CONVERTED SHEPHERD
VAN... IT WAS
ONCE A BLACK
MARRIA
THOUGH...

I HAVE PROOF
YOU ARE IN
POSSESSION OF
LIVE ALIEN
BODIES.

THERE..LOOK!..
I SEE YOU HAVE COLD
STORAGE OF ALIEN
EMBRYOS FOR YOUR
HYBRID EXPERIMENTS.

BUT GUNNOR...
ITS ONLY A
FREEZER FOR
MY LOLLIES

I THINK YOU CAUGHT TOO
MUCH SUN... PLEASE... HAVE
A FUDGE 99 ON THE HOUSE.

ICE CREAMS
MR. FLOSSY

FUDGE 99? AH... HA... A
CODENAME... THE SAME
OBJECTIVE AS THE
MAESTIC 12 DOCUMENTS

TOTAL NUTTER

BEFORE YOU BEGIN
WITH YOUR IMPLANTS...
PLEASE INFORM ME
ABOUT YOUR CO-
OPERATION WITH
THE NORDICS AND
THE GRAYS

Mr. FLOSSY

LATER

LET ME SHOW
HIM BLOODY
"ANIMAL
MUTILATIONS"

Mr. FLOSSY

MOVE ALONG
PLEASE SIR..
YOU'RE CREATING
A DISTURBANCE

MEN IN BLACK
+ C.I.A ALL
OVER AGAIN.
ITS A
CONSPIRACY!

LETTERS

Please send letters to the NUFORI address on page two. Alternatively, bury your letter in the garden and one of our NUFORI burrowing agents will be along to pick it up in a day or two.

21st September 1996.

Sir/

I write in connection with David Sivier's article, "Fall Of The Idols" in the August issue of Strange Daze. In his well written article, David mentions Journalist Catherine Bennett and her BBC 2 documentary "Strange Days" of which she fronted. I would just like to set the record straight about a number of points as our society Strange Phenomena Investigations was featured on it.

(a) Initially we were unaware that this documentary was going to be a 'hacking job' on UFOlogy. This only became apparent as the interview progressed and Catherine's style and 'wicked' questions had me, Malcolm Robinson, a wee touch annoyed.

(b) Whilst I did say on camera that members of the public should accept that there are alternative explanations to the UFO enigma, I "did" specifically state on camera that I, on a personal basis, believed in the reality of the E.T. hypothesis (due to my work on the Scottish A70 Abduction case). Needless to say, this statement by me was cut from the finished programme.

(c) Indeed, I said quite a lot in favour of not only UFOlogy as a whole, but how serious this is all becoming with many qualified academic people now entering the UFO arena. I also mentioned the puzzling daylight and night time UFO sightings currently ongoing in Mexico as an indication of the reality of unusual aerial phenomenon (UFOs), again, all this was cut from the finished programme. David Sivier is correct when he said "Catherine didn't say a lot about UFCs in this brief interview". How true that statement was. SPI spent the best part of a day with the BBC 2 camera crew, all for less than 30 seconds air-time.

(d) The actual filming of the SPI skywatch was in fact Calton Hill in Edinburgh next to the Observatory and not Bonnybridge as stated in David's article.

(e) In summing up I would say that, one of these days, we UFOlogists will be allowed to tell the UFO story as it is, "nuts and bolts, the lot". Thankfully programmes like Catherine's 'Strange Days' are few and far between. At the end of the day, we UFOlogists must persevere and try to ensure that Joe Public gets to know that there is indeed something very tangible going on in regards to UFOs and we at SPI will work towards this goal, speaking to the press, T.V. and radio, thereby ensuring that the British public know that there is a case to be answered, all we ask is for 'fair play' from the media sources involved.

Let me remind the reader that the suppression of information is patently wrong, I can understand editing to a degree, but not to allow we UFOlogists to present our arguments openly and honestly is, to my mind, an affront to the supposed free speech in this country.

Yours,

Malcolm Robinson,

Strange Phenomena Investigations / BUFORA / MUFON.

Editor's comment: Free speech? Where?

For this following letter, readers may like to refer to Mick Burley's first letter, and my response to it, in the last issue of Strange Daze.

9th August 1996.

Sir/

What concerned me about your "review" of Pauline Delcour-Min's presentation at the BUFORA *Abductions* conference was not that you reject (many of) her metaphysical ideas and beliefs as "new age claptrap", but that you seem so ready to use ridicule as a means of "argument". If someone tells me - in a sincere manner - that they have managed to recall past life experiences on other planets through using a relaxation technique, and that they have had further experiences of other worlds and planes of existence through astral travel, my first reaction is not to suspect that she is trying to

sell me a bizarre belief system that I must either "swallow hook, line and sinker" or fully reject and deride. Rather, I consider it to be far more valuable for my own understanding of the universe to wonder exactly what it is that she's experienced and how it might relate to experiences of my own.

You say that the major question (with regard to the "abduction" phenomenon is "are people being physically abducted by an alien intelligence, or is this experience an internal, non-physical event?" Aah - if only it was that simple. The reason that investigations into altered states of consciousness, "dream states", astral travel, etc. are so important in this field is that they serve to blur the line between "physical" and "psychological", "objective" and "subjective", "real" and "imagined". Probably the most significant aspect of the whole "alien encounters" phenomenon - including sightings of UFOs - is, for me, its power to shatter our notions of human consciousness as a merely passive process of recording events in some "external reality".

My own (somewhat brief) encounter with the unfortunately named "greys" led me to conclude that, although I was in a waking state of consciousness, I had temporary access to another plane of existence. Let us not dismiss altered states of consciousness as hallucinatory experiences, in which we "project" unreal objects on to some kind of external screen, but rather consider the possibility that they provide occasions on which we may be able to experience a *different aspect of "reality"*.

I questioned your reasons for editing a UFO journal because I've always thought of such publications as providing a forum where wildly unorthodox views can be aired without fear of being ridiculed *simply on the grounds that they are wildly unorthodox*.

One other point: I described the objects in the first piece of film shown by Strieber as "moving in a chaotic yet intelligently controlled fashion". You implied that this was an oxymoron. Well, do you not think that the same description might apply equally well to, for example, a crowd of people in a London underground station? The objects in the Strieber footage moved with apparent intelligence - if taken individually - while at the same time appearing to be random and chaotic if taken as a whole. I agree with you that the objects moved like flying insects, but why did those further from the camera seem to travel more slowly than those closer to it?

Amongst a number of consciousness altering techniques which I have experimented with is "sleep avoidance" - i.e., forcing oneself to stay awake for period of 48 hours or more. This can have the effect of tiring out the logical-rational aspect of one's mental faculty whilst allowing the creative-intuitive aspect to come to the fore (obviously I'm simplifying for the sake of brevity). I was interested to note that, during a recent experiment of this kind, I was able to look into the sky in daylight and see flitting lights almost identical to those on the Strieber footage. I'm not looking for a simple explanation for such a phenomenon: I mention it here only to emphasise my point about the importance of the relationship between UFO investigations and altered states research.

Yours,

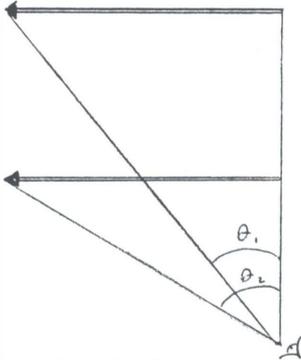
Mick Burley, Leicester.

Editor's response: I will quickly try to answer some of your points. UFO magazines are a place where unorthodox views can be aired, but those views must offer something new and insightful. To me, Ms Delcour-Min did not shed any new light whatsoever on the abduction phenomenon. All her relaxation therapy seems to do is bring out dreams and images from her clients' imaginations, which she wrapped up in vague new-age spiel in her presentation. I did not intend to ridicule her, and I don't think I did; However, it would have been easy to do, in fact I need have done nothing more than quote some of the many unkind comments that I heard in Sheffield.

With objects that are moving chaotically, it is impossible to predict their future motions, e.g. smoke particles moving with Brownian motion. Statistically it may be possible to make conclusions about the motions of a large number of randomly moving particles (e.g. a volume of gas), but not about single

particles. This is the exact opposite of how you described the objects in the film footage. People moving in an Underground station would either be (a) moving towards a train, (b) walking from a train to the exit or another platform, or (c) almost stationary, waiting for a train, all of which exhibit some form of intelligent behaviour both individually and as a group. This is completely different.

The objects further from the camera appear to move more slowly than those nearer (even if travelling at the same speed) because they move a smaller *angular distance* in a given time as seen from the camera's position.



Maths lesson over for today. Thank you.



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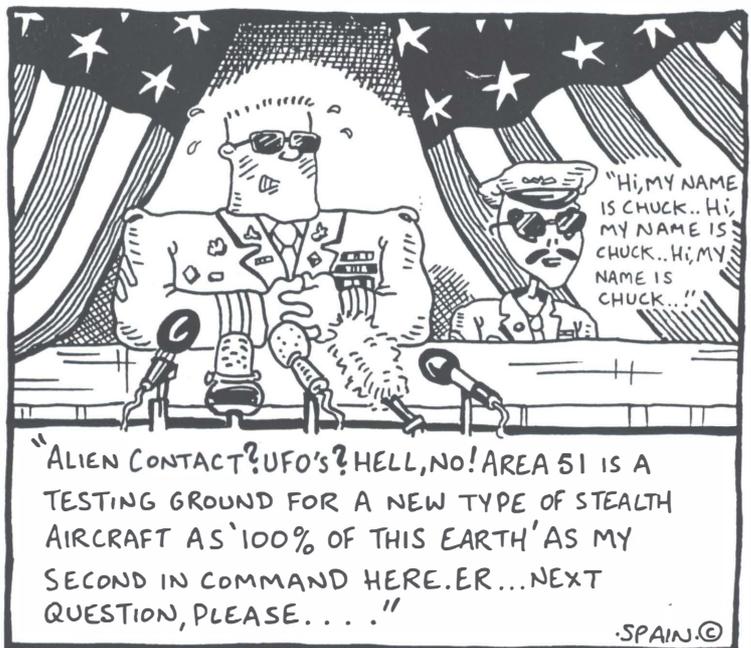
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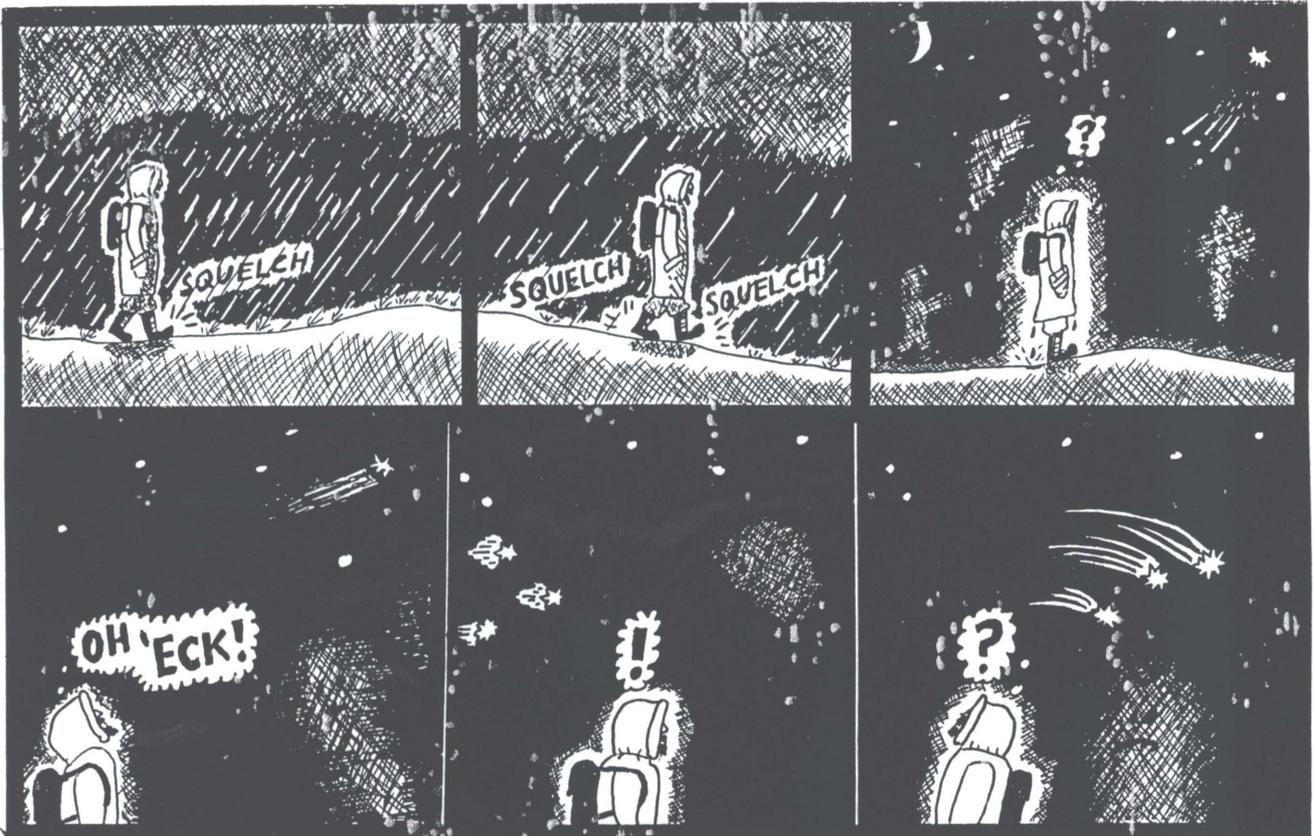
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I will leave you all with a profound quote from the great scientist, Sir Arthur Eddington:

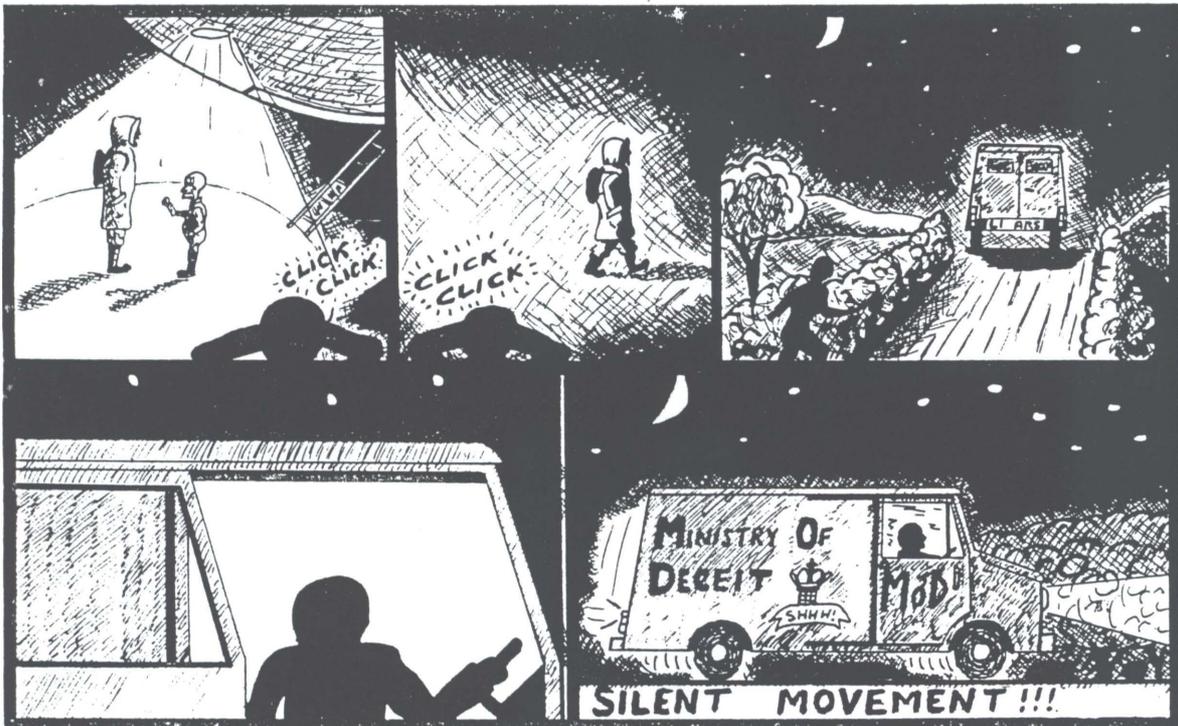
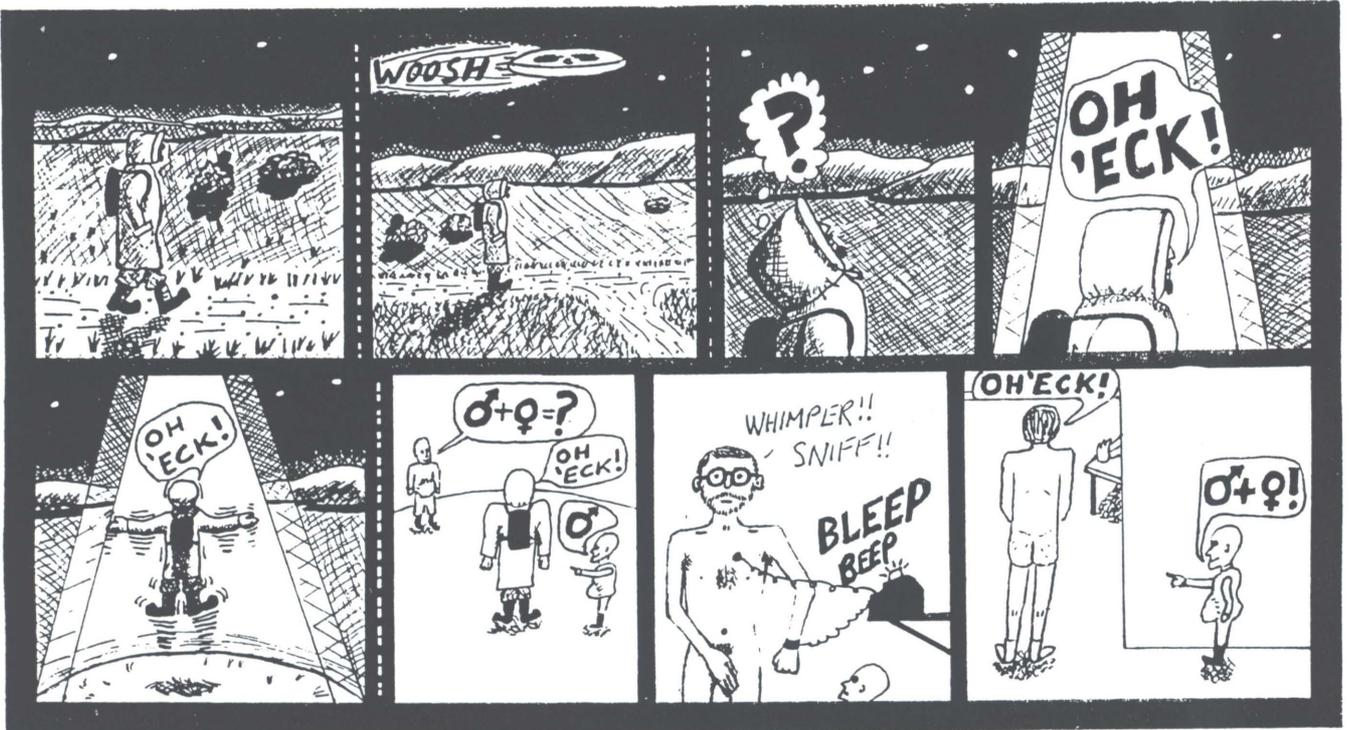
"Shut up. Don't talk nonsense."

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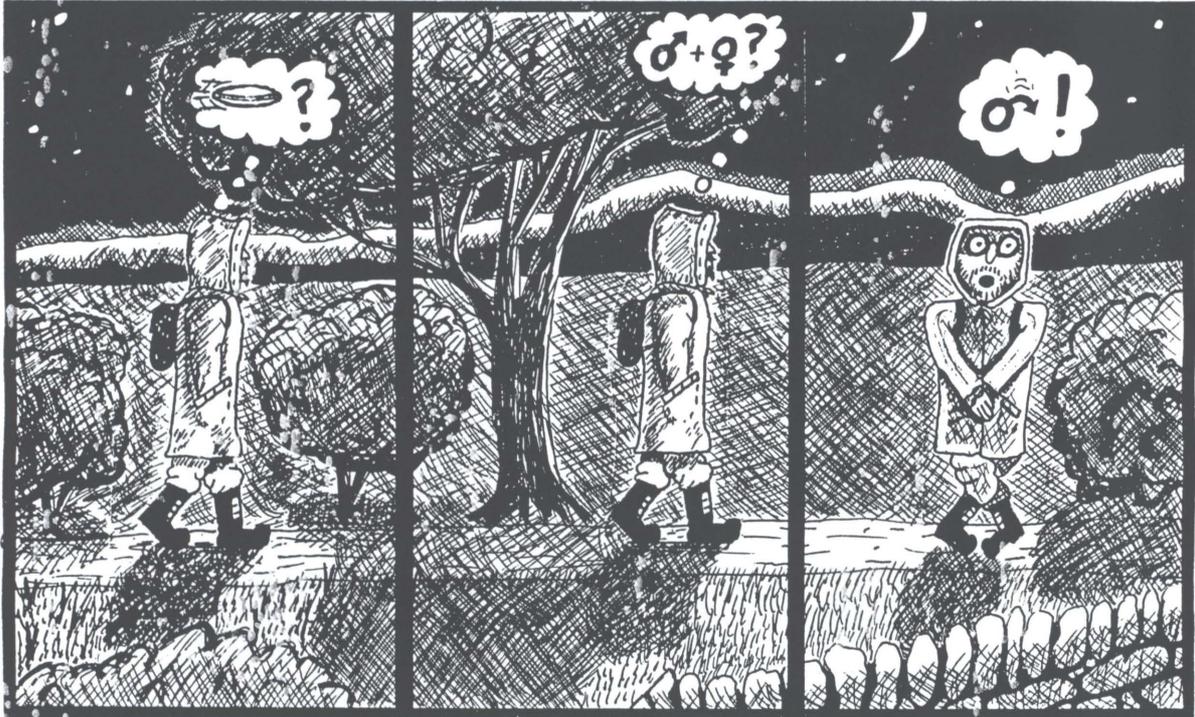


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