

The SWAMP GAS JOURNAL

SPECIAL ISSUE!



So much has been happening in ufology this past year, it has been difficult to keep up with it all. The best that I can do in this issue is to highlight the more important developments - or at least the ones that seem to stick in my mind.

The UFO Cover-Up - Live! television program from October of 1988 is still a matter of hot debate. I have received some widely-differing reviews of the show, and it is certainly helpful to hear as many views as possible to form an opinion. Skeptics, of course, are having a field day with the contents of the show, especially the bird's remark about the aliens preferring strawberry ice cream. But they go much too far in assigning blame for the silliness to the bulk of the ufologists. Clearly, control of the program was in the hands of the producers and a few select people involved with ufology but not necessarily the ones whose opinions are endorsed by the ufology community.

Tracy Torme did talk to me at length about my involvement with ufology, prior to the show, but it was mostly about the TST, which never made it on air. I did discuss the Carman UFOs with him, but he never mentioned Robert Barry's input at all. This last point was quite frustrating. The Carman CKY-TV film was shown, with accompanying dialogue by Barry, and to the viewing audience, it was assumed that he was an expert on the matter.

Hence, it was no surprise that ufologists and skeptics alike have taken a new interest in the incident. But for some reason, the debunkers are attacking Barry's presentation of the case, without any consideration of the original investigations that took place since 1975. Indeed, the film itself has yet to be made widely available to researchers, although Grant Cameron and I have been trying to amend this recently. One "analysis" of the CKY film by a debunker used only a copy of a video version of the film, obtained via Robert Barry. To perform an analysis of a film based on a second generation video copy is not particularly scientific, to say the least. And to criticize Barry's comments on the case, since he was never involved in the investigation, is also strange.

Both Grant and I have written reports on the CKY film, and have interviewed many of the dozen or so witnesses, including the photographer. One amazing version of debunking the film notes that none of the witnesses were interviewed for the analysis!

Now, doesn't this seem a bit odd? My impression of skeptical UFO research has always been that of in-depth interviews and thorough research. I'm not of the opinion that the CKY case is as great as it's cracked up to be, but I'm definitely not going to make any false claims about it. The film shows a nocturnal light, without any reference points except in one frame which has yet to be satisfactorily explained. A suggestion by a debunker that it is the result of a diagonal splice is not tenable, as the second- and third-generation copies of the original film which Grant and I have in our possession do not suggest this explanation at all. In fact, it is much easier to suggest that the light is caused by an internal reflection. But I'm not convinced of that, either. Perhaps the safest thing to do is echo the words of Allen Hynek when he watched the film with me back in 1975: "It's the best film of a nocturnal light I've ever seen." (See the illustration in this ish.)

And then, there's Ufagate. From what I've gathered, Bill Moore has agreed that some ufologists were given false information, and that there is some hint of gov't involvement. If this is true, then the obvious question is why the gov't is so interested in ufologists.

I'm told that Michael Persinger's reputation is slightly tarnished due to his TST research, but that hasn't stopped him. The good news is that a 1989 paper by him finally specifies some of the temporal lobe effects that could cause people to see UFOs and imagine abductions. My comments on this are due to appear in an upcoming IUR.

A reported landing trace this spring near Brandon has been officially explained as "badger diggings". A UFOROM associate investigated, and though he was hesitant to accept the explanation, for lack of a better one, it's on the books. Residents, however, insisted that the markings were unfamiliar, and were unlikely to be caused by an animal. But a Provincial biologist opined for the badger theory. A report will appear later, either in SGJ or another zine.

Move over, Stonehenge

The New Age gravitates to Manigotagan, Manitoba

The landscape of the east side of Lake Winnipeg, north of the beach resorts, seems unremarkable, a monotony of evergreens broken only by the narrow slash of a two-lane highway. But for those who believe in the New Age, Lake Winnipeg's east shore holds more. New Agers are flocking to the area to absorb the emanations of an energy vortex they believe is centered near the logging community of Manigotagan, 100 miles northeast of Winnipeg.

These energy points are key to the mish-mash of beliefs of the movement, which mixes ecology, spiritualism, classical mysticism and astrology. At these points, lines of force linking power sites like Stonehenge and Peru's Machu Picchu converge. Explains a 1984 article in *Chautauqua Review*: "These sacred spots are seen as points on the landscape at which one can easily enter a larger than human, larger than personal, realm. Sacred refers to that which helps take us out of our little selves into the larger self of the universe."

But making the leap to "larger" universal self isn't for everyone. "If you're energy sensitive, you'll feel the energy," explains Edyth Fletcher, a Winnipeg New Ager who teaches breathing therapy to harried rat-race

dropouts. "It's a very personal thing in that way. Most of us walk around with a pile of anxieties just below the surface and this calms them." Miss Fletcher, who claims she can discern energy points, admits it's difficult to pinpoint the exact location of the Manigotagan vortex. "When I go up there, I just notice a shift, a stillness. It's very difficult to explain. It makes you feel really still inside."

New Agers can bolster their claims by pointing to the beliefs of the Ojibwa Indians of the Hollow Water Reserve, near Manigotagan. The area is the site of annual summer sweat lodges, where traditional spiritual teachings are passed on. Band chief Rod Bushie says Winnipeg spiritualists often come to talk to elders. "Elders will talk to people who want to know more about the history, but they don't go out and say 'This is it!'" Chief Bushie says local folklore holds that the many ants who live at the sacred site are guardians of the hallowed ground.

Christopher Rutkowski, a Winnipeg researcher who studies anomalies like UFOs and energy points, says claims of an energy point near Manigotagan have been around since the 1950s. "This isn't the first

time an energy vortex has been located in Manitoba. This is kind of the latest resurfacing of the idea." He says there have been rumours of energy points near Alonsa, 150 miles northwest of Winnipeg, and Falcon Lake, 120 miles to the east. He says the theory of mystic meridians, developed by American author James Brandon, argues that a line of force runs from the middle of the United States straight north through the middle of Manitoba.

Mr. Rutkowski says Vonetta Chouinard, a Manitoba psychic, walked through a field near Sundown, Man., after a series of UFO sightings there between 1977 and 1978. "She felt there was an energy vortex there as well." But he



Rutkowski: No scientific evidence.

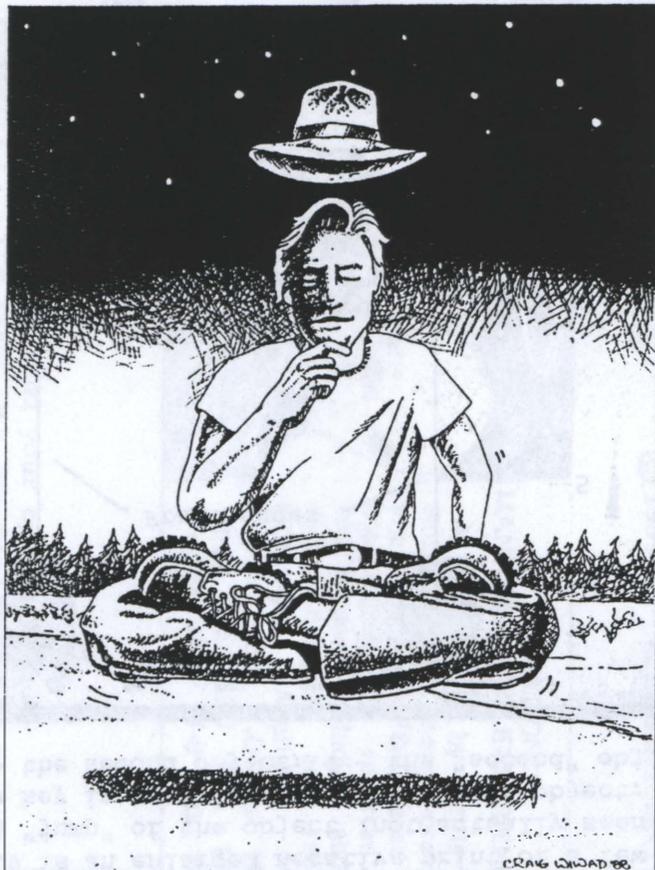
has some doubts about the new vortex trumpeted by New Agers. "As far as Manigotagan goes, I have known people who have claimed to have [psychic] powers, who have gone up to that area and felt nothing. There's no scientific evidence for any of this."

That doesn't bother New Agers, who eschew faith in rational explanations and empirical evidence. Dr. Raymond Currie, a University of Manitoba sociologist specializing in the relationships between religion and society, says dissatisfaction with science and established religion gave rise to the current crop of New Age cults. He draws parallels between the cornucopia of beliefs in the New Age movement and cults that flourished during the Industrial Revolution. Today, when there is a growing distrust of the powers of science and technology, he says, people lose faith in conventional scientific and religious values. "People become dissatisfied with science and they turn to belief systems outside science to answer the meaning of life to themselves," Prof. Currie explains.

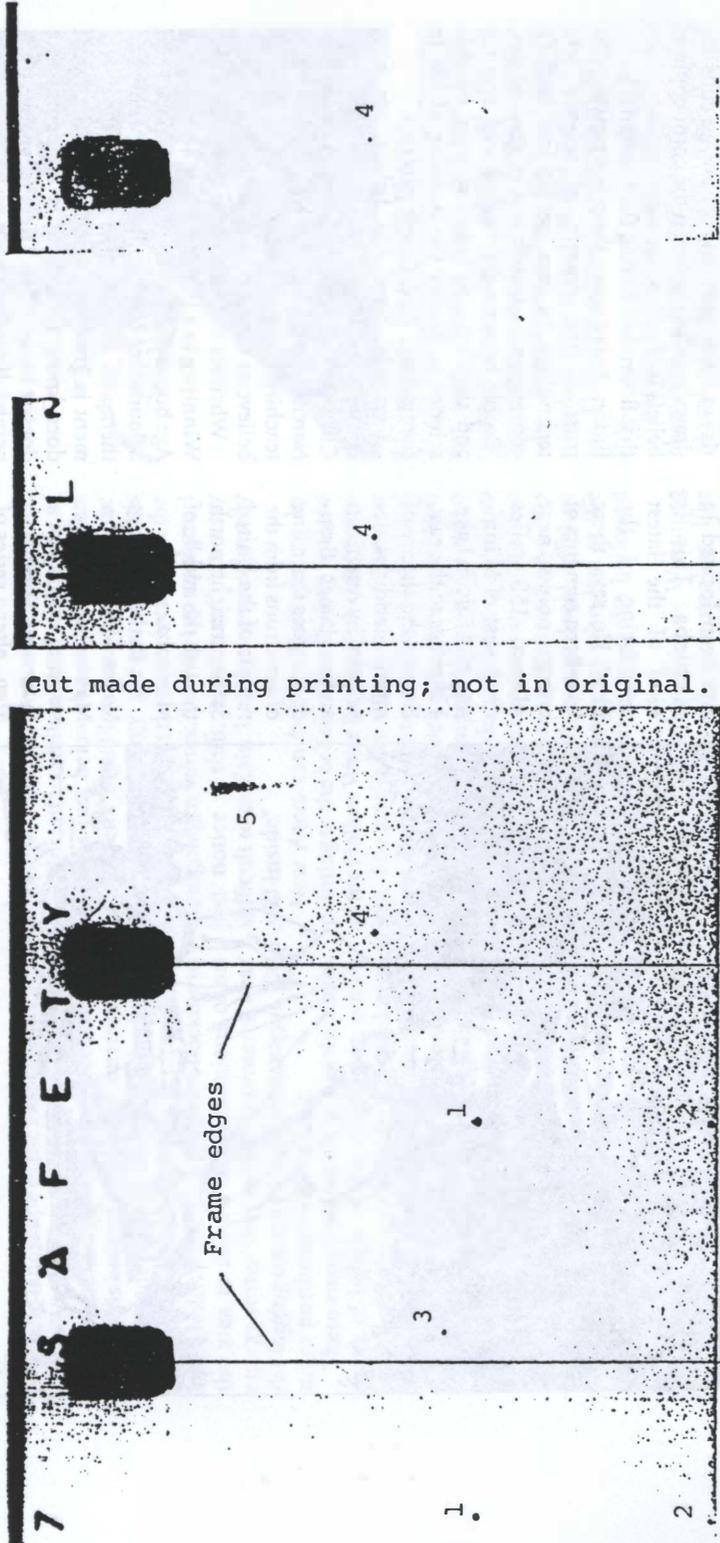
Certainly, New Age beliefs are easy enough to digest. American historian Christopher Lasch, author of *The Culture of Narcissism*, argues that New Age's central teaching "is that it doesn't matter what you believe as long as it works for you."

Whatever the reason, the New Age has hit Winnipeg in a big way. There are two New Age bookstores, a New Age newspaper and a flourishing community of counsellors and therapists. Miss Fletcher believes the movement is growing. "The man on the street does know something is happening; he doesn't know what. There's a change happening. If we don't keep up with it psychologically, it will do us in." If she's right, Manigotagan might end up as an international tourist attraction for New Agers. But they'll have to share the beach with all those guardian ants.

—Rene Mauthe



The Carman CKY-TV film taken in May of 1975 by Allan Kerr. This is an enlarged negative print of a few frames, showing the "jump" of the object (not actually seen by witnesses). The key is as follows: 1 - The main object; 2 - the "echo"; 3 - the second object; 4 - the "second" object?; 5 - the "flash".



cut made during printing; not in original.

A plethora of new books has made any comprehensive review and listing almost impossible. Whitley Streiber's MAJESTIC is out, as is the novel NIGHTEYES, by Canadian Garfield Reeves-Stevens.

Both the American and British editions of PHENOMENON are available, edited by Spencer and Evans, and include a chapter by yours truly on Geophysical Explanations of UFOs. Hilary Evans' FRONTIERS OF REALITY is also out, and contains chapters by Hilary, Mark Moravec, Kevin McClure, Eugene Taylor and myself. There are two new books by Kevin Randle, THE UFO CASEBOOK and THE OCTOBER SCENARIO, one of which is excellent and the other a real turkey. Grant and Scott Crain's book on MJ-12 and other aspects of the cover-up including the U of Penn angle is due out some time this year. And, the news of news, my own abridged comment on ufology, VISITATIONS?, is now available (as you will note from the ad). It is a revised version of one chapter of my book which I was trying to get commercially published for several years. It deals specifically with contact cases in Manitoba, but includes sections on recent sightings and a summary of Unknowns in UFOROM files.

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VISITATIONS? MANITOBA UFO EXPERIENCES

A new book by Chris A. Rutkowski. A thought-provoking look at UFO's based on the experiences reported by Manitobans, including abductions, contacts and recent sightings. Available from Winter Press, P.O. Box 1918, Wpg., Mb. R3C 3R2. \$9.95 (Please allow 6-8 wks. del.)

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