

PLAYBOY PANEL: UFOs

an earthly debate between believers and skeptics on flying saucers, extraterrestrial visitors and things that go flash in the night

Well before the current excitement in movies and elsewhere over UFOs—unidentified flying objects—we decided to publish a panel discussion on the subject. Over a year ago, Contributing Editor **Murray Fisher** assembled the distinguished participants while journalists **Barbara Cady** and **Donald Carroll** tackled the logistics of getting the scientists to reply to one another. It's taken us—and them—that long to put the panel together. On the following pages are a roundup of the most interesting and widely believed accounts of encounters with extraterrestrials ("All Aboard!") and a collection of photographs and sketches ("Is It a Bird? . . .") purporting to be documentary evidence. The background of each panelist follows.

JAMES A. HARDER is director of research for the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO). A professor of hydraulics at the University of California at Berkeley, he began to take UFOs seriously in 1960, when he investigated a sighting by several law-enforcement officers in California. A certified hypnotist, Harder has used hypnotism to investigate many so-called UFO abduction cases, including the highly publicized 1973 Pascagoula, Mississippi, incident, in which a pair of shipyard workers claimed one of them had been taken aboard a spacecraft by robotlike creatures (see *All Aboard!*, "Charles Hickson," page 72). Harder's investigations have led him to conclude that UFOs are extraterrestrial in nature.

J. ALLEN HYNEK is a professor and former chairman of the department of astronomy at Northwestern University. He is best known for his book *The UFO Experience, a Scientific Inquiry*, in which he coined the title of Stephen Spielberg's new UFO movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Hynek served as technical consultant on the film and also plays the role of a scientist who ultimately confronts extraterrestrial humanoids. A vocal proponent for the scientific study of UFOs, Hynek established and is the director of the Center for UFO Studies in Evanston, Illinois, which serves as a clearinghouse for UFO reports. He is now at work on an analysis of the recently declassified Air Force Project Blue Book files.

PHILIP J. KASS is the senior avionics editor of *Aviation Week & Space Technology* magazine. He has published two books, *UFO's Identified* and *UFO's Explained*,

which attempt to provide earthly explanations for UFOs. In 1966, Kass publicly offered \$10,000 to anyone who could prove the existence of a UFO; no one has yet collected on his offer. Kass holds a degree in electrical engineering and was named a fellow in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers in recognition of his technical writings.

FRANK B. SALISBURY is a professor of plant physiology at Utah State University. While a graduate student at the California Institute of Technology, he wrote a term paper on the possibilities of life on Mars. The correspondence generated by that paper, an expanded version of which was later published in *Science* magazine, sparked his interest in the UFO phenomenon. Salisbury has written a book, *The Utah UFO Display*, a bulky collection of interviews with witnesses of 80 thoroughly investigated cases in his home state.

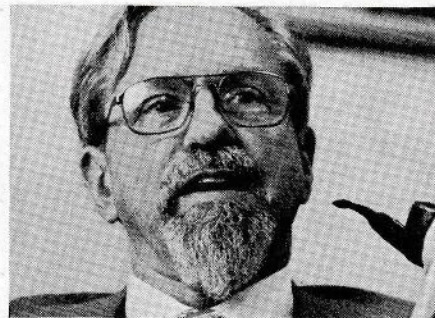
R. LEO SPRINKLE, a professor of counseling services and director of the Division of Counseling and Testing at the University of Wyoming, suggests that there may be a relationship between UFOs and psychological processes. His UFO research is directed toward an integration of the physical, biological, psychological and spiritual sciences. Noting that UFO witnesses are earnestly convinced of the reality of their experiences, Sprinkle has conducted extensive psychological tests on them with the hope that psychological patterns may be deciphered.

ERNEST H. TAVES, M.D., is co-author, with the late Donald Menzel, the distinguished Harvard astronomer, of *The UFO Enigma*. In addition to a doctorate in medicine from New York University, Taves holds a doctorate in experimental psychology from Columbia University. After practicing psychoanalysis in New York and Cambridge, Taves phased out his medical practice to concentrate on his writing, which includes a short story, *The Fire Fighters*, published in *PLAYBOY* (August 1969). As a psychoanalyst, he is interested in determining why "otherwise normal people" believe in UFOs.

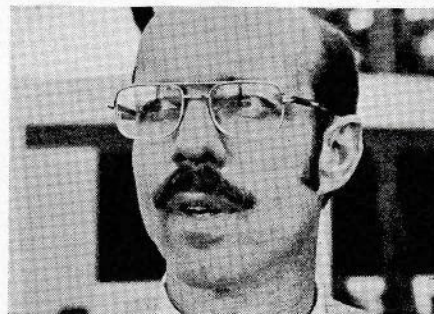
JACQUES VALLEE was first attracted to studying UFOs in 1961, when the scientific community as a whole was debunking reported sightings as natural phenomena or man-made objects. While working at a



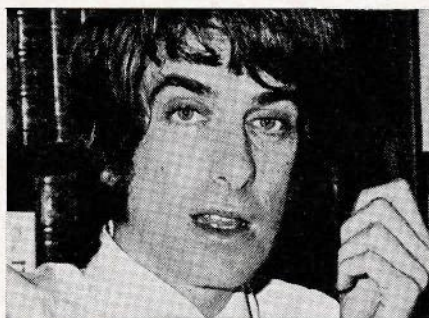
KASS: *If there are so many hundreds of cases of UFO landings—or several million, as some believers suggest—why haven't they left behind the tiniest trace of their presence, apart from "evidence" that could have been created by any sixth grader?*



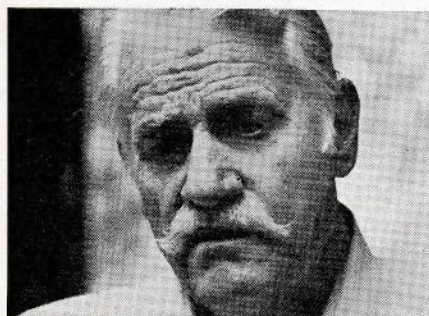
HYNEK: *For years, it was my job to help the Air Force identify reported UFO sightings, and I admit that at first I was a complete debunker. But no longer. After years of studying the phenomenon, I'm convinced it's real. I'm now sure there's honest, scientific pay dirt ahead.*



SPRINKLE: *I'm very sympathetic toward the idea that UFOs may be psychic projections, that they're either materialized images that spring from our collective unconscious or some type of phenomenon such as mass hallucination, autohypnosis, delusion or illusion.*



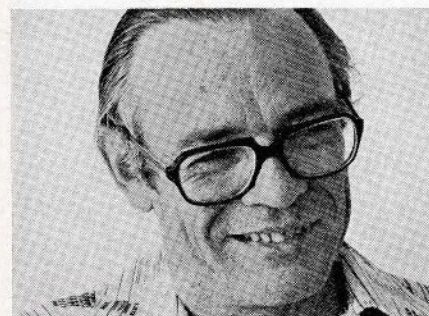
VALLEE: *We have a wonderful opportunity now to unite various fields of study. But we can never properly investigate UFOs so long as academia leaves the field to crackpots and religious fanatics.*



TAVES: *Dr. Vallee has put his finger on the crux of it. The UFO field has, indeed, become the property of crackpots and religious fanatics; this discussion has proved that point conclusively.*



SALISBURY: *UFOs have been seen by too many people—millions of ordinary, level-headed citizens, not crackpots or pranksters—to continue ridiculing either the phenomenon or those who witness it.*



HARDER: *Movies of a UFO were taken by astronaut James McDivitt. Yet his evidence, as far as we know, was never taken seriously by any Government agency and is dismissed by professional skeptics.*

French observatory, Vallee claims to have witnessed unexplained phenomena on several occasions, only to have tapes erased by the astronomer in charge of the project. An information scientist with a master's degree in astrophysics and a Ph.D. in computer sciences, Vallee has written five books on UFOs, the most recent of which, *The Invisible College*, argues that scientific data alone will not supply an answer to the UFO question. Vallee is now at work on a new book concerning the social impact that might be exerted by a belief in extraterrestrial life.

PLAYBOY: A 1974 Gallup poll revealed that 15,000,000 Americans claim to have seen UFOs and that 54 percent of the people surveyed believe UFOs are real. Do you?

KLASS: If you mean do I believe that there are extraterrestrial spaceships in our skies that sometimes abduct innocent citizens, my answer is that I find it easier to believe in the tooth fairy. If you mean do I believe that people sometimes see things that they find hard to explain, then I would answer yes.

SPRINKLE: Your question reminds me of the story of the Irishwoman who was asked if she believed in fairies. "No," she replied, "but they're there." It's the same with UFOs. Whatever they are, they're definitely there.

KLASS: And perhaps they're being piloted by leprechauns?

SALISBURY: Look, if we want to be scientific about this question, then we should divorce it from the question of belief or disbelief. It's a matter of seeking *information*, so we can more closely approach the truth. And, we simply don't have enough of it yet even to be sure if UFOs are some kind of aircraft, let alone who—if anyone—may be piloting them. But they have been seen by too many people now—millions of ordinary, level-headed citizens, not crackpots or pranksters—to continue ridiculing either the phenomenon or those who witness it.

HYNEK: At present, we're getting, on the average, reports of about 100 sightings a night. That's around 36,500 a year. And the number is increasing all over the world. Of course, it's important to point out that a great majority of these initial reports turn out to be of IFOs—*identified* flying objects—but not *all* of them, by any means. And that is the crux of the issue. Moreover, wherever the reports come from—Japan, Brazil, Fiji, France, Australia, China—they're basically similar. That's one of the most interesting and significant aspects of the whole UFO phenomenon. It's a point that most Americans seem to have missed—that UFO sightings in this country are only a fraction of the total.

VALLEE: And there may be many more UFOs in our skies than are ever seen.

Most UFOs are seen at night, when there are fewer potential observers. On the basis of my own analysis of computer files on thousands of UFO cases, I would estimate that as many as 3,000,000 UFO *landings* may have occurred in the past 25 years—if you assume, as I do, that the vast majority of sightings go unreported.

TAVES: Sightings, perhaps; landings, nonsense. Before we can talk about landings, we must first establish the presence of a vehicle, and I maintain that that has not been done. No evidence of the landing of such a vehicle has ever been left behind. If there have been 3,000,000 landings in the past 25 years, as Dr. Vallee suggests, how is it that there has been *no* instance of *one* disabled spacecraft that landed and was, for whatever reason, unable to lift off? If you were the project director charged with the responsibility to carry out a program including 3,000,000 undetected landings, you would insist that such an accomplishment would be impossible. And so do I.

HYNEK: Hold on! Who's talking about "spacecraft"? The predominant error of skeptics is that they equate UFOs with nuts-and-bolts technology. What we should be talking about is an *unknown* phenomenon.

HARDER: And Dr. Taves, you'd be speaking more accurately if you said that there is no evidence of UFO landings known to you. The Center for UFO Studies has published a catalog by Ted Phillips of over 900 landing-trace cases. As to "undetected," I believe Dr. Vallee said unreported; a recent national survey by Opinion Research Corporation indicated that only 13 percent of persons who sight UFOs actually report them. And no wonder, when you consider the reaction people get when they tell somebody that as they were driving home at two in the morning they spotted a large, glowing disk hovering over the road ahead and that the disk was spinning, had red and green blinking lights and after a few seconds took off at amazing speed and suddenly vanished into thin air. And that's a fairly common account of a typical sighting. Suppose people had also thought they observed creatures emerging from the strange craft or that they had even been taken aboard. How anxious do you think they would be to talk about their experience?

SPRINKLE: And even if they weren't frightened, to whom would they talk? Some government authority? Any agency that receives a report like that is going to be embarrassed by it, for the simple bureaucratic reason that it has no way of handling it. So, naturally, local authorities look for the easiest, most rational explanation—for instance, that people must have seen Venus or a meteor—that will save them the trouble of really investigating it.

KLASS: But after rigorous investigation,

that's invariably what UFO reports turn out to be: misidentification of natural or man-made phenomena, or outright tall tales.

HYNEK: "Invariably"? I think that's just another assumption you're making.

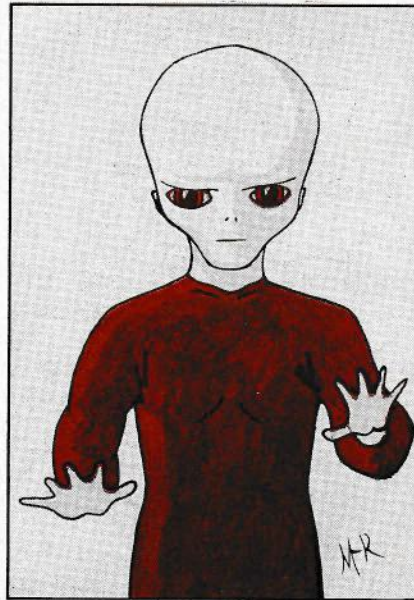
TAVES: I profoundly regret that my friend, colleague and co-author, the late Donald Menzel, cannot participate in this symposium. You are, of course, familiar with his views about UFOs, views that he and I shared. I shall do my best here to speak for him. He often said that UFOs are all around us, by day and by night—apparitions in the sky, just waiting to be seen. The observant person sees them and sometimes he identifies them for what they really are: planets, stars' reflections, mirages, meteorological optical effects, the aurora borealis, shooting stars, planes, balloons, wind-borne bits of shiny paper, flying tumbleweeds, ball lightning, St. Elmo's fire, clouds, the moon partially obscured by mist, burning oil wells, satellite re-entries, parachute spiders, rocket tests, searchlight reflections, birds, clouds of insects, kites, contrails, blimps, bubbles, airborne flares, fireflies, luminous birds, fireworks, eye defects, dandelion seeds, dust devils, and so on and so on. With so many possible stimuli, one isn't surprised at the large numbers of sightings; 100 a night on a world-wide basis is incredibly small.

SALISBURY: I'm in 98 percent agreement with you. Probably, 98 percent of UFOs do turn out to be IFOs and, indeed, many of these objects aren't even flying—like the planet Venus, which is probably the all-time-champion natural-type UFO. I myself was almost taken in by Venus once. Mr. Klass and Dr. Taves are probably dead right in saying that the overwhelming majority of UFOs can be explained in terms of natural phenomena. But the overwhelming majority isn't *all*. There's still a residue of at least two percent for which there is no apparent scientific explanation. Now, when you're talking about numbers of sightings that reach into the millions, that two percent represents a rather awesome collection of unexplainable events.

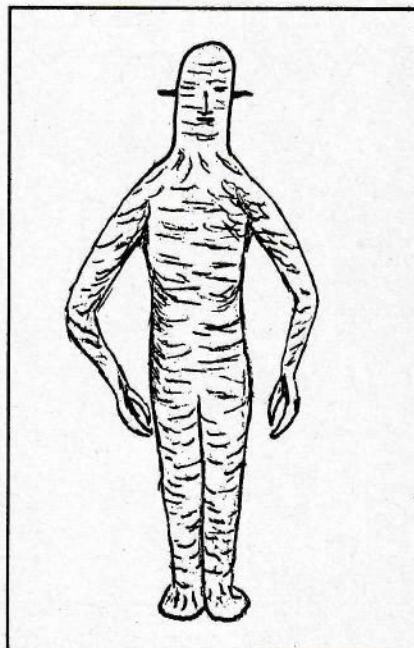
TAVES: Events unexplainable to whom? To the Air Force investigators, a group of young, inexperienced officers who were working for Project Blue Book—a definitive attempt to compile data on reported sightings—and who had no scientific background for evaluating such reports? It wasn't their fault; they were assigned to the project through the Bureau of Personnel, which had no idea what qualifications were necessary for conducting such investigations. Several of those young officers came to believe that some reports from pilots showed that UFOs, because of a reported ability to dodge and evade, exhibited evidence of intelligent control. In 1952, Dr. Menzel accepted

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE? IS IT A BUG-EYED MONSTER?

artists' renderings of aliens, plus a sampling of purported ufo photos. we know one's a fake; as for the others, the jury's still out



This drawing by Michael Rogers represents the kind of alien creature allegedly encountered by his co-worker Travis Walton (see his story in *All Aboard!*, page 249).



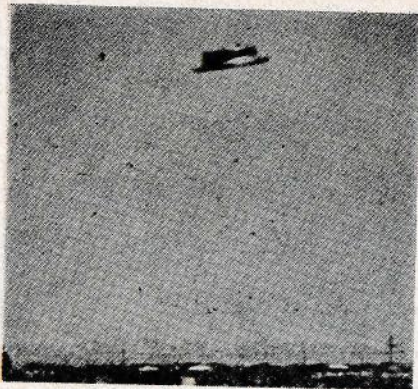
Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker (see *All Aboard!*, page 72) described the spacemen they met in 1973 to shipyard superintending Jim Flynt, who executed this drawing.



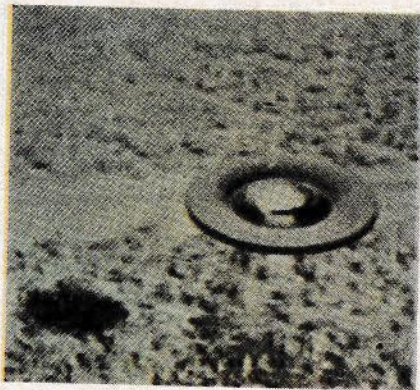
From Chicago Historical Society files, this April 12, 1897, newspaper engraving labeled AIR SHIP AS PHOTOGRAPHED OVER ROGERS PARK SUNDAY MORNING BY WALTER M'CANN.



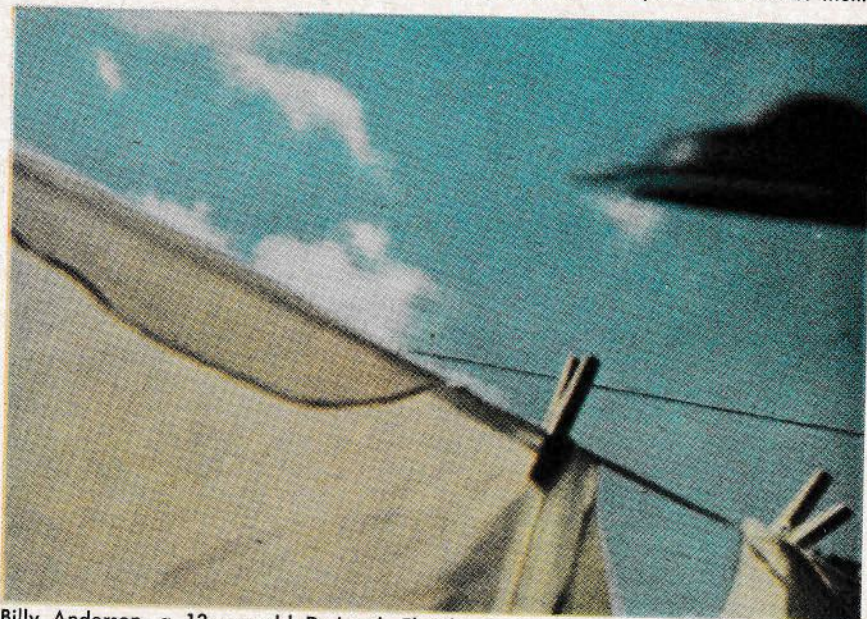
Falkville, Alabama, police chief Jeff Greenhaw shot this oddly similar photograph of an apparition he said was standing in the middle of a highway in 1973.



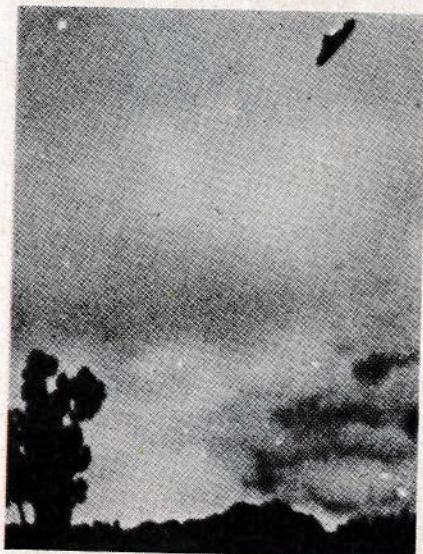
A Los Angeles County Highway Department employee, Rex Heflin, photographed this object with his Polaroid camera near Santa Ana, California, on August 3, 1965.



A Caracas engineer confessed to doctoring this purported 1965 saucer photo from Venezuela. He placed a picture of a button over one of an airplane and reshot them.



Billy Anderson, a 13-year-old De Land, Florida, junior high school student, fell down the back steps of his home in his eagerness to photograph this UFO, which he said made a buzzing sound while it circled his home at nine A.M. one day in August 1969.



Picture taken by Augusto Arranda in the Peruvian mountains in 1967; Aerial Phenomena Research Organization officials say it's unlikely it could have been faked.



Photograph of an unidentified flying object seen in Denmark. UFO expert Dr. J. Allen Hynek's office says the date, origin and reliability of this photo are unconfirmed.

the invitation of Major General J. A. Samford and Colonel John O'Mara to explain some of his views. Lieutenant, later Captain, E. J. Ruppelt, then in charge of the project, and his staff were not too happy with Dr. Menzel's demonstration that natural phenomena could explain a number of unknown sightings. **HARDER:** I have to butt in here and correct you. Project chiefs were not assigned by Air Force Personnel except *pro forma*; Ruppelt was assigned by Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Rosengarten, chief of the Aircraft and Missiles Branch. And Blue Book chief officers were not typically young or inexperienced; for example, Colonel Robert Friend, Blue Book chief from 1958 to 1963, studied physics and astronomy at the graduate level and Colonel Hector Quintanilla, chief from 1963 to 1969, had a bachelor's degree in physics.

TAVES: Well, Dr. Menzel was surprised at their ignorance of meteorological optics. He told me how, to make his point, he had to start with a familiar spectacle of nature, the rainbow. Rainbows are centered in the eye of the observer; as the observer moves, so does the rainbow. A person ignorant of the true nature of a rainbow, trying to capture it, will find that the rainbow moves away from him. The effect is even more startling if the observer is flying an airplane. The way the rainbow seems to elude his every maneuver might lead him to think that it is intelligently controlled.

Now, Dr. Menzel never suggested that UFOs are rainbows, but he did point out how ice crystals in the air—common constituents of ordinary cirrus clouds—can, like raindrops, produce a variety of apparitions, one of which is the sundog. These are bright spots of light, appearing on either side of the sun at an angle of about 22 degrees, best seen when the sun is low in the sky. Viewed from an airplane, a sundog can be spectacular. A pilot, attempting to intercept it, experiences the same effect as the pilot trying to intercept a rainbow. He simply cannot do it. The bright patch of light, taking apparent evasive action, cannot be intercepted, and if the plane suddenly runs out of the area of ice crystals, as sometimes happens, the mock sun shrinks and vanishes into the distance, as if it had put on a tremendous burst of speed.

In short, we believe that in every case where data are adequate, a normal, rational explanation is available and we examine these in our recently published book, *The UFO Enigma*.

HARDER: As for the notion that adequate data can provide "rational" explanations, Dr. Taves, the Battelle Memorial Institute exploded that myth long ago in a massive, scientifically oriented study it did under contract with the Air Force. Based on 2199 UFO reports, its analysis

showed that the more reliable the report and the better the sighting conditions, the more likely the evaluation was to be "unknown." In its "excellent" reliability category, 33 percent were unknowns.

HYNEK: I'd like to talk about my experience with the Air Force's investigation of UFOs. For years, it was my job to help the Air Force, as part of its Project Blue Book, identify reported UFO sightings, and I admit that at first my avowed purpose was to try to explain every sighting in terms of natural phenomena. Although, as a scientist, I was supposed to be neutral, I was, in fact, a complete debunker. To be perfectly frank, I was trying to pull Air Force chestnuts out of the fire. It wasn't that the Government denied UFOs exist. It couldn't do that—not with so many cases reported by reliable sources. The official attitude was that since UFOs didn't seem to represent any threat to national security, it didn't really matter *what* they were. They were simply not to be taken seriously. And I shared that attitude for a while—but no longer. After years of studying the phenomenon, I'm convinced that it's real. I don't pretend to know where the road leads, but I'm now sure that there's honest, scientific pay dirt at the end of it.

TAVES: But Dr. Menzel studied thousands of cases in the Air Force files and found no evidence whatever of "scientific pay dirt." As you recall, Dr. Hynek, you even sent him a number of cases you were unable to solve. He found satisfactory solutions to each and every one, and they were taken off the unknown list in the Air Force files. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, to distinguish the majority of these two percent unknowns from the 98 percent of the solved cases except a general lack of some major physical detail, such as the exact time of day.

HARDER: What crap! The Battelle study I talked about earlier showed statistically that the unknowns in its study *were* different from the identified in terms of color, shape, duration, number, brightness and speed. The chance that the difference was due to random variation was one in ten, followed by 29 zeros.

SALISBURY: And Dr. Menzel may have explained each and every sighting to *his* satisfaction—and perhaps even to the satisfaction of the Air Force—but to many others, he seemed to have arrived at those explanations by ignoring many key facts.

PLAYBOY: But you, Dr. Hynek, remain convinced there is pay dirt ahead. Is that because of the quality or the quantity of the evidence you've seen?

HYNEK: Both. Because of the attention devoted to UFOs in the media, people are becoming more aware that the phenomenon is world wide. And the quality of the reports has certainly increased since my Air Force days. Consequently, people

ALL ABOARD!

first-person accounts of three people who claim to have been kidnaped by extraterrestrials and taken aboard a spacecraft

CHARLES HICKSON

It was October 11, 1973. Calvin Parker and I had gotten off from work at 3:30, and by the time I had dinner and got my fishing tackle together, I guess we must have got on the Pascagoula River a little after five o'clock. It had become dusk by then and we were sitting on a small pier on the bank, fishing out into the river, when this noise—a hissing or zippinglike sound—attracted my attention. It was just like air or maybe steam escaping from a pipe. Anyway, I turned around, and as I turned, I saw these two blue lights. When I saw them, well, the sound seemed to go away. They were real close together and they were either flashing or pulsating not over 30 to 40 yards behind us. Almost as big as a car headlight and real bright.

You could make out real good it was some kind of a craft, you know, and at that point, well, it really startled me. I still can't be sure how big it was, because of the angle I was looking at it from; I couldn't see all the way around it. But it appeared to be 20 or 30 foot long, maybe eight or ten foot high.

Then in front of where the lights were, there was portholes or windows. Two was all I seen, but it could have been more. And after, when the noise stopped, these two lights went out. At that point, I suppose, it was a foot and a half or two off the ground. Anyway, when I was beginning to get a little scared, it seemed like an opening just appeared in the craft; it didn't open like a door. I could get the best view of the craft then, because the light—between a white and a yellow one—was glowing from the inside.

And I could really tell then that the craft wasn't on the ground. It was perfectly still, but then these three things appeared in that doorway. They were standing erect and just seemed to glide out the door right toward us. You could tell they had legs, you know, but their legs never moved apart and their arms were down at their sides. Some of these things I can't be positive about, because, to be frank, I was quite frightened at that time. And Calvin was almost scared to death. But when they came out, it just

seemed like all of a sudden they were on us. Two of them came for me, one for Calvin. One of them took hold of one of my arms and one took hold of the other, and at that point I felt pain instantly, a sharp sting, you might say.

I got a pretty good look at them. I would say they were about five or five-four, and they didn't have a head that resembled a human head. It seemed to come directly down to the shoulders, without a neck. And they were very wrinkled, with deep lines running horizontal across their arms, their face—all over. I'm not sure at all it was skin, but it reminded me of elephant skin, grayish and rough-like. I can't recall exactly what they looked like, because they were very wrinkled, but they did have something where a nose would be on a face and it came out to a point. One of these beings made some kind of a noise, like a little buzzing sound, but the other I didn't hear at all. Their hands were similar to claws or mittens.

I might add at this time that I thought about it a heck of a lot since then and—of course, I have no way of being sure—I believe now they were robots. I didn't see the legs or neck move, and when they turned, they seemed to move mechanically. I believe from the bottom of my heart that the one that was making the buzzing sound was being controlled from another ship. It appeared that they were more or less programmed to do something and they just simply done it.

Anyway, I just seemed to move up off the ground to about the height that they were and I noticed that Calvin, at that time, he just went limp. Then we seemed to glide back toward the ship, and when we started through the doorway, the light was almost blinding. We don't know for sure whether Calvin was taken in or not and I don't recall seeing him carried aboard. He'd passed out.

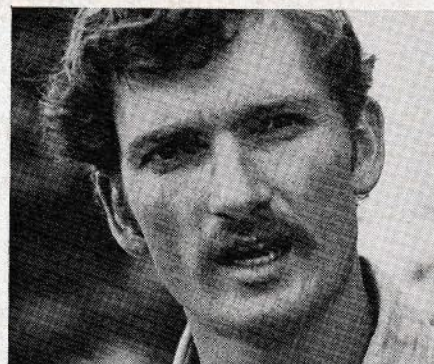
Inside the room, it seemed to be round. I didn't see any light fixtures—the light just seemed to glow from the walls. When they stopped—we seemed to be just suspended there, you know—this thing seemed to come out from the wall. It



CHARLES HICKSON



BETTY HILL



TRAVIS WALTON

wasn't perfectly round but was blunted in the front end and seemed to taper back maybe like a football. The end that was focused toward me was something similar to the lens of a camera and was either a different type of material or a different color than the rest of it. I have never seen anything like it before in my life; the color would be between a silver and white. Anyway, it moved up real close to my face and it remained there for a few seconds. Then it seemed to move down and go under me.

I didn't have any physical feelings at all. I guess by this time, I don't know, I could have been hysterical. I probably said, "What in the world are you going to do with me?" but—I know this is going to sound strange—I couldn't hear myself saying it. I might have just been screaming in my head, I don't know.

Finally, the thing came back up to about the same point where it originally came out from the wall and then seemed to go directly back in the wall and disappear in that glow of light. I could see then that these things had released me and I was suspended there. I couldn't move or do anything. And that is when I almost passed out.

Finally, they came back and we seemed to turn and glide back out the door. They carried me back almost to the spot they picked me up from, and that's the first time I saw Calvin. He was facing the river with his arms held out and he was like a statue. They seemed to ease me back to the ground and when my feet touched the ground, I felt it. That was the first feelings I had since I went in there. I don't know whether it was from fear or what, but my legs give way and I fell down to the ground. I started trying to crawl toward Calvin, but before I got to him, I heard the little zipping sound again. And when I turned around, the opening had closed and the blue lights was flashing again and just almost in an instant that thing was gone. It left so fast I don't know whether it just disappeared or what.

I had to slap Calvin two or three times and shake him. He was almost in shock.

It took a few minutes before it began to register on him that it was me. He was screaming and hollering and was still scared. He was just all to pieces, you know, but I finally got him to where I could talk to him, and I kept assuring him that I had seen the craft leave. But we didn't know what to do. I said, "Listen, Calvin, let's just keep it to ourselves. Let's don't tell anybody, because ain't nobody going to believe this."

BETTY HILL

In September 1961, my husband, Barney, and I decided very suddenly to go on a vacation. It was around the Lancaster, New Hampshire, area that I suddenly saw what I thought was a very large new star in the sky—beside the moon just about where Jupiter is. There was no traffic and the moon was so bright we could almost see with our headlights turned off.

Well, it kept getting bigger and bigger and, as it came in, we realized it was too big for a star. Then it changed course and started to go across the face of the moon; it was at this point Barney and I were sure it was a satellite. But when we got out of the car and looked at it with binoculars, I realized right at that moment that this was something I had never seen before. It had all kinds of flashing lights around it and was sort of oblong.

We started driving again and Barney kept telling me, "Look out the window and see what it's doing." So I'm watching this thing coming in toward us, jumping all over the sky and making right-angle turns in a step-by-step pattern. As it came closer, I could see that it had a blinking effect and it was rapidly spinning. Then it came out over the highway and stopped maybe ten stories high in mid-air. I could see the double row of windows and the red light on each side.

Barney stopped the car, got out, and as he stepped away from the car, this object shifted out over the field next to the driver's side. I stayed in the car and Barney started walking across the field

toward it, looking up at it through the binoculars. He told me the next day that he could see figures standing in the window, looking down at him, and that he was getting the message not to move, that no harm was going to come to him. Apparently, this is when they were beginning to get him under control somehow. And this is when he yelled to me, "We're going to be captured."

Barney ran back to the car and we went speeding off down the highway about 50 or 60 miles an hour. And he was yelling at me to look out the window. "It's right over us," he said. I put my head out, but I didn't see anything. Later, under hypnosis, I realized that I was actually looking up at the dark bottom of the craft, which was about 60 feet across. When I pulled my head in and put the window up, both of us heard a beeping sound, like something electrical, and the car vibrated.

All the way home, there was almost no conversation between us. We were in sort of a posthypnotic state, only we didn't know it at the time. But once I did say to Barney, "Do you believe in flying saucers?" And he said, "Don't be ridiculous." And then we heard the beeping sound again. "They're on their way," I said. "I don't know where they're going, but they're saying goodbye."

We weren't going to tell anyone, but I started having dreams about it and was convinced that what we saw was an alien spacecraft, that we might have been exposed to some physical danger. But every time I tried to talk about it, Barney would become angry and say, "Let's forget it. If people find out, they're going to think we're crazy."

Then two scientists came to visit us and, after going over our trip step by step, they began to realize that the trip had taken us much longer than it should have and suggested that we should go to a psychiatrist who used hypnosis. We eventually started hypnosis in January 1964, after Barney developed an ulcer.

The doctor hypnotized us individually and caused us both to have amnesia, so we couldn't (continued on page 249)

are becoming less reluctant to come forward and report their experiences.

SPRINKLE: And as more private investigative agencies have been formed that take these reports seriously, we're getting more precise data, because more and more of these stories are coming from expert witnesses—by which I mean policemen, airline pilots, radar operators, astronauts—people professionally trained to be reliable observers.

KLASS: Just because a person is an airline pilot doesn't mean that his powers of observation are infallible. My book *UFO's Explained* contains numerous cases in which experienced civil and military pilots reported seeing a UFO that later turned out to be a meteor or some other natural phenomenon.

PLAYBOY: Give us an example.

KLASS: OK, how about the Coyne helicopter case of October 18, 1973? That's the one that a blue-ribbon panel chose as the best UFO case of that year. Captain Lawrence Coyne and his four-man crew, flying an Army helicopter near Mansfield, Ohio, spotted a bright-red, glowing object moving toward them rapidly from the east. The pilot began to take evasive action to avoid a mid-air collision, but the fiery object kept coming at them. As the object passed overhead, the cockpit was brightly illuminated for perhaps a couple of seconds, prompting the crew to decide later that the object had hovered over them briefly before heading west and disappearing. There were other seemingly mysterious details, as well: The radio went dead for several minutes and after the incident, the pilot found the helicopter in a climb, whereas before he had been descending to avoid the bright object. After a rigorous investigation lasting many weeks, in which I talked to the flight crew, to other experienced pilots who had flown that same helicopter, to representatives of the company that made the helicopter, to the engineer who designed its radio and to others, the incident turned out to have a prosaic explanation. The object itself almost certainly was a meteor fireball from the Orionid meteor shower that occurs in mid to late October. It begins about 11 each night—the time at which the glowing object was seen.

HYNEK: There you have a perfect example of Mr. Klass's unwillingness to consider the evidence except insofar as it can be twisted to fit his preconception that the witnesses *must* have been mistaken. I admit his hypothesis sounds plausible at first; but when you think about it for a moment, meteors simply do not behave in the way reported by Captain Coyne and his crew. Further, the Orionids are very short-duration, rapid streaks of light, the typical "shooting star" such as can be seen any night. These are obviously not fireballs. Very bright meteors are much rarer, appear suddenly, follow a gently curving but basically horizontal

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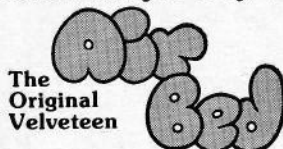


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trajectory, then disappear within seconds. They do *not* pace an aircraft and then turn toward it, as Captain Coyne reported. And they do not look like gray, metallic cylinders with a bright light coming from only one end, as he also reported. Nor do they remain visible for several minutes, as this object did. Finally, a fireball is seen across thousands of square miles and is widely reported by hundreds of people. Not one person reported seeing a fireball that night. So I'm afraid that Mr. Klass's theory that the helicopter crew saw an Orionid meteor is simply untenable. Further, the total duration of the Coyne sighting was nearly five minutes and more recent investigation has revealed a group of five witnesses on the ground to the Coyne encounter.

KLASS: Many meteors are as brief as you say, but some are long-lived, like one that flashed over the Rocky Mountains on August 10, 1972. One tourist managed to take 26 seconds of home movies, indicating that it lasted for at least half a minute. And as for the claim that the Coyne UFO could not have been a fireball because there were no other eyewitness reports, this is denied by an incident that occurred two nights later, several hundred miles to the east, near Pittsburgh. This fireball flashed through the sky at nine P.M., two hours earlier than the Coyne incident, when there should have been many more potential observers. Yet there was only a single reported sighting, from a United Air Lines flight crew.

VALLEE: In other cases, however, there is the testimony of astronauts Cooper, Cernan, Young, Carpenter, McDivitt—they've all reported seeing UFOs. In fact, I have a letter from John Glenn in which he says that, while he personally has not witnessed such a phenomenon, "I've heard too many reports from my colleagues and people I respect to say that there's nothing to it." That seems to me the sort of intelligent, open, objective attitude we should take toward eyewitness testimony.

KLASS: If you mean that our astronauts have briefly seen man-made earth satellites pass overhead without being able to identify which they were, or if you mean they have seen space debris that they could not positively identify, then you're correct. But if you are saying that any of our astronauts has seen the traditional saucer-shaped flying saucers, then you're dead wrong.

TAVES: None of these sightings has stood up to critical examination. The McDivitt sighting, for example, as persuasively demonstrated by computer analyst James Oberg, was his own Titan booster stage. It should be noted that, at the time, McDivitt was suffering from eye irritation because of an accidental urine spill into the cabin atmosphere. It should also be said that on another occasion during the same mission he had demonstrably failed to recognize his own booster at a distance of less than ten miles. The Gemini 7 photograph of

two strange hexagonal glowing objects is another photographic hoax—not, of course, perpetrated by the Gemini crew or by NASA but by a wily opportunist after the event. The UFO that Pete Conrad photographed was Proton 3, a Russian cosmic-ray laboratory. And so on.

HARDER: Dr. Taves has not mentioned that McDivitt took 72 frames of 16mm footage, at about eight frames per second, using a camera not usually subject to eye irritation. The UFO subtended an angle at the least dimension of three degrees, or six times the apparent angular size of the full moon—which eliminates the possibility of its being a spectacular reflection of the sun off some bolt. Furthermore, there is a long bluish flamelike flare coming from the UFO that is in good focus. The object itself shows on my copy of the film to be an orangish oval, about three by five degrees in apparent size; the Titan booster stage would have had to be within 100 yards of Gemini 4 to have appeared that big. McDivitt does not think the film footage is of what he saw, but that raises other issues as to whether the NASA photo lab was grossly incompetent, perpetrated its own hoax, or that the UFO influenced McDivitt's perceptions. But eye irritation? Nonsense.

And a careful analysis by Brad Sparks, of APRO's research division, showed conclusively that Proton 3 was 3000 to

4000 miles away in an opposite direction and below the earth's horizon from the position of Gemini 11.

HYNEK: Let's talk about *multiple*-eyewitness testimony. In a majority of cases, we have reports not from a lone observer but from two or more witnesses. So either people are seeing what they say they're seeing or there is an epidemic of hoaxes and mass hallucinations. The trouble with the latter explanation is that both hoaxers and hallucinators would have trouble filling in, under questioning, the remarkably similar details that multiple witnesses have supplied on so many occasions.

KLASS: But you yourself have often admitted that the majority of UFO reports—80 percent is the figure you usually cite, not the 98 percent Dr. Vallee talks about—are explainable as misidentifications or hoaxes. If so many honest, intelligent people, including multiple witnesses, can be fooled, then everyone is potentially vulnerable if he sees something unusual, or under unusual circumstances, especially at night.

VALLEE: I never talk about 98 percent, Mr. Klass. The percentage of true UFOs in the data I have examined—French cases as well as U. S. cases—has been closer to 75 percent.

PLAYBOY: But how *do* you account for "flaps"—occasions when many UFOs are spotted by many people over a given

area for a period of several days or weeks? **KLASS:** Easy. It's what I call the echo effect, and it's largely generated by the media. This is how it works. Let's say an interesting UFO sighting gets into the Cedar Rapids newspaper. The effect of that story spreads like that of a rock dropped into a pool. Pretty soon the city desk is deluged with UFO reports, and when those stories are picked up by papers in neighboring cities, Davenport and Des Moines residents start watching the night skies for *their* UFOs. And, of course, seeing them.

VALLEE: And in the majority of cases, they will be seeing Venus or a meteor or a sky-hook balloon. Of course, the media's sensationalizing of UFO reports increases the public's receptivity to sightings. In the great wave of 1954 in France, for example, all classes of people saw UFOs, local panics erupted and reporters roamed the land, hoping to get a photograph of much-touted extraterrestrials with bulbous eyes who wore diving suits. But media influence can explain only very localized flaps. It cannot account for world-wide flaps, like the ones in 1946, 1954 or 1956, to name just a few.

PLAYBOY: In any event, how could media influence explain one of the biggest UFO flaps in history, which occurred in 1897—not only before the invention of the airplane but also before there was any

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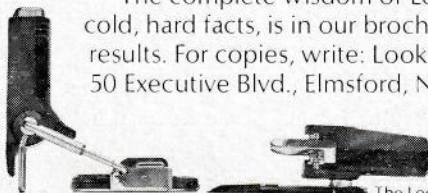
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rapid way to relay information over great distances, particularly into remote and rural areas? Thousands of witnesses reported seeing the same cigar-shaped airships flying all over the Midwestern U. S. and other locations, such as San Francisco. And a number of them were observed simultaneously by several thousand people.

KLASS: There were numerous reports, but the inspiration for them was a popular book by Jules Verne, *Master of the World*, which told of a mad inventor and his giant airship that could fly around the world. An English edition was published in 1887 and became very popular in the U. S. in the early 1890s.

SALISBURY: No one would argue that the media do not stimulate UFO reports from the public. And certainly there is always a high level of "noise"—reports of Venus and the like—compared with the possible "signal" in any UFO flap. But some of the 1897 accounts were backed by affidavits from the neighbors and associates of the witnesses.

PLAYBOY: Is there a consistent pattern in the descriptions of UFO sightings?

HYNEK: I know of one researcher, Dr. David Saunders of Princeton University, who has collected and computerized over 60,000 UFO reports from all over the world, and it's truly astonishing to see how closely they coincide with one another.

KLASS: In reality, there actually is a wide variation in reported UFO shapes and sites. Another researcher, Dr. Roger N. Shepard of Stanford University, published a paper showing more than 60 different UFO configurations. If UFOs were spaceships built by a very advanced extraterrestrial civilization, it is strange that they have not yet discovered the technical and economic benefits of standardized designs.

HYNEK: I'm not talking about spaceships, but even if I were, the fact is—as one who purports to be knowledgeable on the subject ought to know—that the overwhelming majority of cases, perhaps 90 percent, are remarkably alike in almost every regard.

TAVES: It is not surprising that many UFO sightings follow a consistent pattern if they are occasioned, as I believe they are, by a relatively small number of normal astronomical, physical and psychological phenomena.

VALLEE: I wouldn't say that on the basis of my computer file I can draw any definitive conclusions about *what* they are, but the data do reveal distinct patterns, remarkably consistent similarities in appearance and behavior.

TAVES: I don't think too much of these computer analyses. Those who employ computers for legitimate scientific studies have a descriptive phrase that would apply here: garbage in, garbage out.

PLAYBOY: Let's try to keep this discussion on a constructive basis. Does the term

flying saucer accurately describe the majority of UFOs?

HYNEK: It pretty well describes one of the categories of UFOs: the daylight disk. A typical report would describe two dinner plates, placed face to face on top of each other, forming a circular, or almost circular, disk usually about 25 to 40 feet in diameter. Generally, they are yellowish, white or silver and have the appearance of a solid metallic object.

SALISBURY: A 12-year-old boy who sighted a UFO gave me one of the best descriptions of its surface I've ever heard. He said it was the color of a car bumper.

HYNEK: One professional sculptor referred to his UFO as "a silvery hamburger sandwich." In these kinds of cases, a central rim of the craft protrudes beyond the juncture of the two inverted ovals.

VALLEE: Large and seemingly metallic cylinders have also been observed flying at high altitudes. This type of phenomenon is usually associated with a diffuse cloud or an atmospheric disturbance of some sort. People have speculated that they might conceivably be "mother ships"

"I've seen a UFO myself."

—JIMMY CARTER

containing a number of the smaller disk-shaped craft. Another speculation is that they are actually *stacks* of objects that, when viewed from the side at a great distance, give the illusion of a single cylinder. Aimé Michel, a respected French investigator, first recognized this class of UFOs while studying the famous wave of French sightings in 1954. But the most detailed description we have of this type of UFO in the U. S. comes from four members of a family who went on a picnic in New York State on April 11, 1964. They reported observing a dark, tubular object in the sky for about 45 minutes. Using binoculars, they said, they watched the object assume a vertical position, emit what appeared to be smoke and, giving off a flash of light, streak off sideways at a very high speed. After retracing its trajectory, the object then proceeded to split into many smaller objects. This obviously doesn't fit into the much more common disk category, but sightings of this type are too numerous, I think, to be totally discounted.

PLAYBOY: Does the disk type seem to be capable of the same kind of maneuvers as the cylinders?

HYNEK: Unlike the cigar shapes, the disks often seem to rotate in some manner. And from all over the world, disks are described as making the same sorts of movements: hovering motionless a few feet above the ground; rocking gently back and forth, usually in descent, in a falling-leaf motion; taking off with

tremendous acceleration, as though the inertial properties of matter had been abrogated; and maneuvering in sharp-angled zigzags of which our jets are totally incapable and that no human pilot could survive.

SPRINKLE: There are also common patterns of disappearance in disk sightings. If the object is on the ground, it first starts spinning, lifts off, comes to a height of about 60 feet, and then stops. One of two things happens next. Either the craft speeds up and eventually disappears into the distance or it seems simply to vanish on the spot.

HARDER: These UFO vanishing acts add an element of absurdity that makes the case for their existence seem more difficult to prove. But there's a plausible explanation, I think. Reliable witnesses who have observed UFOs from a distance of several miles, for example, have estimated their acceleration to be at 100 times that of gravity and their speeds to be on the order of 10,000 miles an hour—several times that of a high-powered-rifle bullet. Now, were a witness to observe that type of movement at close range, he could easily persuade himself that the object had literally disappeared, especially since these "dematerializations" are usually unaccompanied by any sound.

TAVES: Does anyone seriously believe that he can estimate whether something is moving at twice or several times the speed of a rifle bullet? Furthermore, you cannot estimate the size of an object if you don't know its distance and you can't estimate its distance if you don't know its size—all of which makes estimates of *speed* simply guesswork.

PLAYBOY: Are all UFOs soundless?

SALISBURY: Not always. We get reports of everything from high-pitched whistling sounds to deep, greatly amplified droning whines, but I'd still have to say that, statistically, the most common sound is no sound.

HYNEK: Lift-off and acceleration are probably more often accompanied by unusual light displays than by sounds. Occasionally, the light of the craft—or the lights on it—changes from red to blue or vice versa. Exhausts and acrid-smelling mists in the wake of a departing UFO aren't uncommon, either.

VALLEE: Witnesses are often more impressed by the light associated with a UFO than by the object itself, by the craft as a piece of technology. That has very interesting implications, because the brain's response to strong pulsating light is quite complex.

TAVES: Craft? The use of that word seems to me to show the bias of Drs. Hynek and Vallee. The existence of just one such craft is yet to be established.

VALLEE: Whatever they are—call them objects—witnesses describe them as emitting a bright light. They say things like, "It lit up the whole countryside." In one

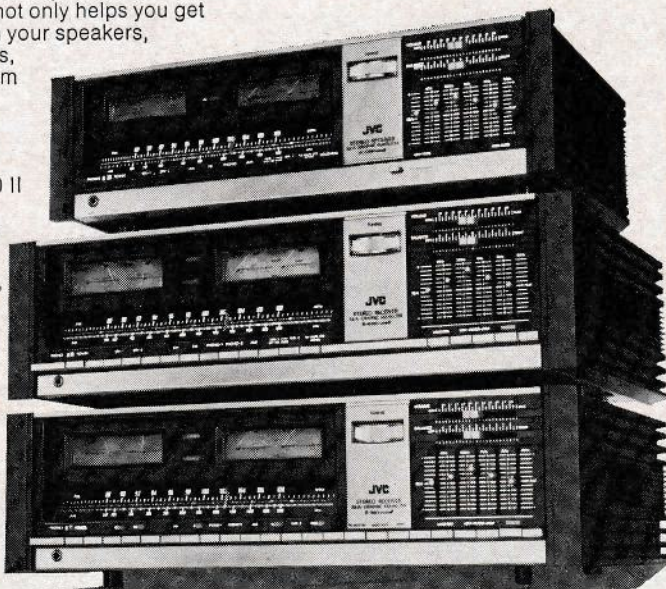
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report, a man said a UFO had illuminated the entire Red River Valley. In another case, a witness who reported seeing a UFO fly directly overhead told me the underside of the object shone with an absolutely blinding orange light, like a window opening in a star.

SALISBURY: In six out of the nearly 90 cases I investigated in the Uinta Basin of Utah for a book I wrote a few years ago, a strange light was reported beaming down from the UFO. In one instance, some children and adults said they saw a huge UFO—bigger than the house it was hovering over—with a bright-red beam pointed downward out of the bottom. Only occasionally, as it swept around, would it touch the ground, lighting it up brilliantly where it hit. In another case, witnesses reported that the beam appeared to be interrupted in the middle, as though it went out so far, stopped and then a little farther along picked up again. Now, our physics books just don't have an index listing for beams that are discontinuous or that go only so far from a light source.

PLAYBOY: There have also been many reports of objects that seemed to be entirely luminous, haven't there?

HYNEK: Yes. On July 19, 1952, for example, a spate of fiery balls over the nation's capital caused a spasm of extremely tense military activity. Just about midnight, a series of simultaneous visual and radar sightings of UFOs at Washington National Airport and Andrews Air Force Base caused the Air Force to scramble jet interceptors.

SALISBURY: But the F-94s ended up playing a sophisticated game of aerial tag. They'd chase the UFOs at incredible speeds, only to have them peel off and accelerate out of range. As soon as the jets would give up and land, the UFOs would zoom back into the area and the planes would have to go up again. This game went on until 5:30 in the morning. And the next weekend, the same type of sightings occurred around Washington and, indeed, all over the country.

KLASS: The Civil Aeronautics Administration, whose radar controllers were principally involved, conducted a rigorous scientific investigation and issued a report ten months later. The CAA study showed that spurious radar blips—called angels by radar engineers who are familiar with the problem—had been observed previously on the same Washington radar and on similar radar in other cities during warm, humid weather, especially during conditions of temperature inversion. Just such weather conditions existed in Washington on the night of this flap. The reason angels produced a UFO scare in July 1952 can be traced to the rash of feature stories in the news media, including *Look* and *Life* magazines, that spring and summer, hinting

that we might have extraterrestrial visitors. The CAA investigation showed that the UFO blips moved in the direction of the prevailing wind, at twice the wind speed, as would be expected if they were angels caused by temperature-inversion reflections.

HYNEK: The only trouble with your theory is that the temperature inversion for that night was 1.25 degrees, according to the Project Blue Book files. On other nights, the inversion was greater, but no flap resulted.

VALLEE: Another problem with your explanation, Mr. Klass, is that the UFOs over Washington were sighted visually both from the ground and from pursuing jets, as well as tracked on radar—simultaneously. And, at times, they were estimated to be traveling at about 7000 mph, which, if they were moving at twice the speed of wind, as you say, would make the prevailing winds approximately 3500 miles an hour.

KLASS: When you make wild claims like that, Dr. Vallee, it is clear that you have never taken the time to study the CAA report on this incident. I will be happy to lend you my copy, if you will agree to read it.

VALLEE: I think we would all agree that atmospheric conditions like temperature inversion probably account for most UFO sightings by radar, but we have to keep an open mind about radar sightings that cannot be explained in terms of natural or man-made causes. I can think of at least half a dozen unexplained radar cases in this country alone that are even stronger than the 1952 flap in Washington. Now, that may not seem like a lot, but just one unexplained case deserves serious, unbiased investigation. And how do you account for a case like the one at Torino, Italy, in 1973? A UFO was not only tracked by radar for about 40 miles but also seen by several airline crews and by the traffic controllers at Torino Airport, who directed an airplane not to land while this glowing, egg-shaped object was hovering near a runway.

TAVES: Simultaneous visual and radar sightings have no value, especially when temperature inversions are present, because it is impossible to establish the identity of the two images. An optical sighting establishes the direction and apparent elevation of an object above the horizon. It tells us nothing of its distance. A radar sighting tells how far the pulse has traveled and the direction of the last object that reflected it; but when a temperature inversion is present, as meteorological observers have reported it was, a pulse can suffer several reflections before returning to the observer. This famous case is wrapped up and completely explained. The fact that believers keep dragging it up shows how desperate they are for evidence and how ineffective-ly they evaluate the available data.

HYNEK: If this "famous case" you're talking about is Torino, it has certainly not been completely wrapped up. And neither has the Washington case!

HARDER: But there was the even more celebrated Lakenheath case in England in August 1956. On that occasion, a UFO was spotted and tracked *simultaneously* by two separate air-traffic-control radar installations about 40 miles apart. Not only that but after *visual sightings confirmed the radar observations*, an R.A.F. night fighter went up and intercepted the UFO. At a range of half a mile, the pilot radioed that he had his radar-controlled guns "locked" on the craft. In other words, *three* radar systems were tracking the UFO. Moreover, the pilot reported that for several seconds he had the object in view, as well as having a *radar gun-lock on it*—and then it suddenly began

"I've been flying now for 44 years and I'm the last guy that's going to say I don't believe they're up there. I've never seen one, but when Air Force pilots, Navy pilots, airline pilots tell me they saw something come up on their wing that wasn't an airplane, I have to believe them."

—U.S. SENATOR BARRY GOLDWATER

to take evasive action, circling around behind his plane and following it. The episode is too involved to go into at any length here, but suffice it to say that the U.S. Air Force officer who investigated the incident concluded that "the fact that three radar sets picked up the target simultaneously is certainly conclusive that a target or object was in the air."

KLASS: If the facts of this case were as Harder describes them, and as they are so often described in UFO books and articles, I, too, would find it mysterious. But after spending many months investigating this case to determine the facts, I've found that the mystery evaporates. My investigation included a detailed study of the original U.S.A.F. reports made shortly after the incident, a careful study of the instruction books for all of the radars involved, talks with engineers who designed and serviced the radars and with a British radar expert who knows the area where the incidents occurred and who told me that it is very prone to radar angels. The incidents did not occur simultaneously at two air bases, as Harder claims. One incident occurred before ten P.M. on August 13, 1956, while the other occurred more than two hours later, shortly after midnight, August 14.

HARDER: There are discrepancies in the various reports of the confusing events of that night. But the night-watch supervisor at Lakenheath, Forrest Perkins, said in a letter to Gordon Thayer in 1975 that there was a small delay before they saw any targets after they'd been asked to look out for them—but certainly not two hours!

KLASS: You fail to mention that two jet fighter pilots were sent to investigate the first radar-UFO incident, spent 45 minutes searching and found nothing—except a flashing lighthouse beacon and a bright planet Mars that explained some of the visual sightings. As for the report that an R.A.F. jet pilot achieved "radar gunlock" on the UFO, my investigation revealed that the airplane's AN/APS-57 radar was not designed to lock onto or track any target.

HYNEK: I must point out that, in contradiction to what you say, Mr. Klass, there were more than two sightings that night. Several incidents occurred during a four-and-a-half-hour period.

PLAYBOY: The most dramatic evidence for the existence of UFOs is in the form of photographs and motion-picture film. How many pictures are there of UFOs and how convincing are they?

HYNEK: There must be hundreds—but none of them is really convincing. The problem is that the people who take the photographs are caught unprepared and take pictures of objects in motion, at a distance. So they are naturally blurred.

VALLEE: In fact, the clearer the photograph, the greater the likelihood that it's a fake. I would even go so far as to say that among all the pictures I've seen, probably fewer than ten could be genuine.

SALISBURY: And they are considered possibly genuine because of the stories that go with them, rather than because of the photos themselves. Any photo can be faked.

KLASS: And most UFO photos are fakes or are accidental flukes that result from internal lens reflections or a flaw in the film. During the past 30 years, more than 50 billion still photos have been taken in the U.S., many focusing on events as rare and unexpected as a President's assassination, a meteor fireball or an aircraft accident. Yet we do not have, as far as I know, a single photograph that anyone on this panel is willing to say definitely represents an extraterrestrial craft. Nor do we have any movies, which I would consider much more convincing, because they're much harder to fake.

HYNEK: There goes Mr. Klass again with his extraterrestrial fixation. We are dealing here with a phenomenon whose origin we do not know. But movies of UFOs have been taken.

HARDER: Right. Motion pictures of a UFO were taken, for example, by McDivitt during the sighting we've already discussed. Yet his evidence, as far as we

know, was never taken seriously by any Government agency and today is dismissed by the professional skeptics.

PLAYBOY: Didn't NASA take McDivitt's report seriously?

HARDER: There's certainly no public evidence that it did. I believe that on a print NASA released of some of the motion-picture frames, the object was described as a sun flare. On another frame, it was called an unknown spacecraft.

KLASS: Well, McDivitt and Oberg, a computer analyst now working for NASA who investigated the so-called sighting, now agree that the glowing "UFO" was simply sunlight reflecting off a nearby spacecraft bolt onto the dirty window. Oberg's investigation has yielded prosaic explanations for other reports of astronaut sightings.

HARDER: All I can say is that it must have been a very special bolt to reflect a ten-times-enlarged image of the sun and to produce a blue flamelike flare to one side at the same time, as shown in the motion pictures. That sort of "explanation" really shows how bankrupt the critics' arguments can get.

HYNEK: Recently, I examined all the purported astronaut photos of UFOs at the Manned Spacecraft Center and, I must say, I wasn't impressed. Many could have been space junk; they didn't fit the classic flying-saucer patterns.

PLAYBOY: Has any physical evidence been found on Earth that might confirm the existence of UFOs?

VALLEE: Nothing to confirm it but much to suggest a high degree of probability. In case after case, when a UFO has been sighted, investigators will go to the spot and find that the grass has been flattened into a whorled ring or that branches, shrubs and bushes have been crushed, or that the ground has been scorched, or that tripod imprints have been left in the earth—or all of the above. So that in many of these cases, we know there was something physical, something material there.

KLASS: Human beings, for example. There is nothing—I repeat, nothing—that anyone has ever found in the way of physical evidence that couldn't have been either man-made or produced by natural causes. Show me one artifact, just one, that the National Academy of Sciences is willing to endorse as something that couldn't have been made on Earth and I'll happily refund the full purchase price of my last book to everyone who bought a copy. If there are so many hundreds of cases of UFO landings—or several million, as Dr. Vallee suggests—why haven't they left behind the tiniest trace of their presence, apart from "evidence" that could have been created by any sixth grader? Human beings in general and Americans in particular are great souvenir collectors. Yet

of all the dozens of people who claim to have been aboard a flying saucer, not one has bothered to pick up the equivalent of a paper clip or an ashtray or a book of matches.

TAVES: Yes, why has not one contactee been given some material object or artifact that could not be terrestrial? That would prove it once and for all.

HARDER: Ha! From your naïve expectation, you'd think that an abducted human was at a Sunday-school picnic. Several of the abductees *did* try to take evidence with them but were prevented.

PLAYBOY: Such things as scorched earth, broken branches, tripodlike indentations and whorled rings of grass *could* all be the result of either fakery or natural causes. In the absence of artifacts and convincing photographs or films, do

"I think we owe it to the people to establish credibility regarding UFOs and to produce the greatest possible enlightenment on this subject."

—GERALD FORD

UFOs leave behind any other tangible evidence of their existence?

SPRINKLE: Nothing conclusive, but there are numerous reports of car engines' dying, headlights' going out and radios' going dead during UFO sightings.

TAVES: A plane flying overhead often produces radio interference. So do power lines, transformers, metallic buildings and many other things.

KLASS: It's not really news that cars stall, or that radios stop working, or that lights go out. It would be significant only if all of those things happened *every time* a person reported seeing a UFO.

HYNEK: Do we have people killed every time there is lightning and thunder? Yet this is the same phenomenon. It certainly isn't news that cars stall, but what is the probability of a car's stalling *only* when a UFO approaches and then curing itself as soon as the UFO departs? Pretty small, I'd say. And what about instances in which separate witnesses report exactly the same effects from a single UFO? One case that comes to mind is the one in Levelland, Texas, in 1957, in which seven motorists, in different places at different times on the same night, reported that their cars died and their headlights went out when a UFO appeared. Moreover, all the descriptions of the craft were identical. That could hardly have been just a series of coincidences. Two cars, maybe, but not seven.

VALLEE: Speaking of unlikely coincidences, there have been a number of cases in

which both headlights of a car have burst out simultaneously in the presence of UFOs and both bulbs had to be replaced.

PLAYBOY: We've read that many witnesses to UFOs experience severe emotional disturbances. Is that common?

SPRINKLE: Yes. Extreme upset, bordering on hysteria, is not uncommon among people who have had encounters with UFOs. In fact, as a general rule, the closer the encounter, the greater the psychological impact on the observer.

HYNEK: The experience is often so traumatic that it's blocked from the conscious mind and can be retrieved only by regressive hypnosis.

SPRINKLE: Some even report the development of psychic powers after the experience—telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and so forth.

PLAYBOY: Are UFOs ever reported to have physiological as well as psychological effects on those who observe them?

SPRINKLE: Indeed they are. Typically, people who report having been close to UFOs tell of experiencing a burning sensation around the eyes, often accompanied by dizziness, nausea, skin irritation and sometimes temporary blindness. Carl Higdon, who had a UFO contact while hunting in the mountains south of Rawlins, Wyoming, on October 25, 1974, has since then had several clairvoyant experiences that he believes are associated with his UFO sighting. For example, he occasionally has a strange sensation in a shoulder that was injured during his UFO experience and whenever he does, either he or a member of his family will go outside and there will be a nocturnal light hovering in the sky nearby.

HYNEK: Sleeplessness is a symptom we encounter fairly often, and that's understandable enough. But in my experience, the opposite occurs more frequently—a tremendous sleepiness. I've had cases in which people who claim to have seen UFOs suddenly start sleeping 16 hours a day for weeks or months after the incident.

SPRINKLE: There are even cases of radiation poisoning from contact with UFOs, certified cases of radiation burns in which the cause could not be identified—but these are fairly rare.

HYNEK: There was the man from Winnipeg, for example, who said he saw a UFO land and went up and touched it. He had severe burns on his body, and his shirt was completely burned through. Now, the weird thing about this is that the burns would disappear and then reappear every two weeks or so. After seeking help from several doctors, he finally went to the Mayo Clinic. But they couldn't find any medical explanation for the burns. Weirder still, the Mayo Clinic now denies that the man was ever treated there, though he has all the signed receipts for the treatment he received. I

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TAVES: The case of the man from Winnipeg is a tired old hoax. When the incident was investigated by Roy Craig for the Colorado Project, the man's story was found to be riddled with inconsistencies and incongruities. The burns on the abdomen were not serious, according to the Condon report, but superficial and probably self-inflicted. The recurrences of the burns were most likely caused by insect bites. Seeking help after the sighting, the man from Winnipeg was judged by a Royal Mounted Police constable to be drunk. Later, he was entirely unable to lead Craig to the sight of the occurrence, though they spent hours searching for it. The Condon report lists the case as unexplained, but we see it as a hoax.

HYNEK: Well, I also investigated this case by going to Winnipeg myself, and I cannot agree that it was a hoax.

HARDER: We haven't yet discussed the case of Patrolman Herbert Schirmer, who claimed to have been aboard a spaceship—and paid the price for it with his health and his job.

PLAYBOY: What was Schirmer's story?

SPRINKLE: About 2:30 in the morning on December 3, 1967, Schirmer was patrolling the outskirts of Ashland, Nebraska, when, he says, he saw in front of him a large object with a row of flickering lights. When he switched on his high beam, the object took off and disappeared into the night sky. He reported the incident in his logbook but thought little more about it until one of the Government committees investigating UFOs noticed that there were 20 minutes missing from Schirmer's police report. He was subsequently put through time-regression hypnosis, which revealed that he had apparently repressed the memory of what seemed to be an encounter with the UFO and its occupants. This revelation was so upsetting and distracting to Schirmer that, despite the fact that he had been promoted from patrolman to police chief of Ashland, he resigned his job. Under further hypnosis, he said that the strange craft had actually landed and that the occupants had emerged, paralyzed him with a metallic device they applied to his neck and taken him aboard. He described them as less than five feet tall, wearing silver-gray uniforms and helmets with an antenna protruding from the left side. In broken English, they explained to him how the spacecraft worked—they said it operated on the principle of "reversible electromagnetism"—and they showed him all of its instrumentation, including a "vision screen" with apparently live images from outer space. Finally, before releasing him, they gave him a demonstration of the way they extracted electricity

from a nearby power line, which they said was the purpose of their landing.

HYNEK: The most celebrated contact case of them all, of course, is that of Barney and Betty Hill, whose experience was recorded in a book—*Incident at Exeter*—and later dramatized on television.

PLAYBOY: As a matter of fact, Mrs. Hill has told us her story; in abbreviated form, it appears on page 73.

HYNEK: I was privileged to be present at a hypnotic session with Dr. Benjamin Simon, a Boston psychiatrist, and the Hills, and was allowed to question them. I was overwhelmed both by their sincerity and by the obvious intensity of the emotions they felt in recalling the experience.

HARDER: Not surprisingly, abductees all tend to be profoundly affected emotionally by their experience.

PLAYBOY: Could it be that they were emotionally unstable to begin with?

HARDER: Of course it's possible, but I think it would be foolish—and unscientific—to dismiss every reported abduction as the ravings of a nut case. I have personally investigated a dozen abduction cases, involving 20 adults, and although most live in rural areas, five are college graduates—a somewhat higher percentage than you would expect in rural communities—and one is a Ph.D. Several of the others are very intelligent, while one is probably mentally retarded; most are happy and well-adjusted, while one is suicidal from time to time; and one worked in a massage parlor. None of which proves anything, except that you will have to find grounds other than the abductees' sanity if you're going to discredit their stories.

KLASS: Nobody said that they're *all* crazy, or even that mental disorders have played a particularly large part in stories of UFO abductions. But in the case of the Hills, Dr. Simon, who is very skilled at sorting fact from fantasy when treating his patients, does not believe the alleged abduction really occurred, and with good reason. He found that the few details Barney could give about the abduction were those he had acquired in hearing Betty repeatedly tell of her dreams in talking to friends and to UFO investigators.

HYNEK: In John Fuller's book *Interrupted Journey*, Dr. Simon provisionally allowed for the possibility that the Hills were telling a true story. His opinion, as you say, has since changed; he now believes Betty had a series of dreams that she impressed on her husband. Here we must separate the opinions of Dr. Simon from the evidence that he himself put together: Under hypnosis, Barney actually remembered many details that paralleled what Betty remembered. Furthermore, he remembered them *first*.

PLAYBOY: Are you suggesting, Mr. Klass,

that even if those who claim to have been abducted aren't mentally disturbed, they are at least honestly deluded?

KLASS: I think there are many motivations behind those who claim to have been abducted by UFOs, but it is clear to me that these stories are the result of widespread publicity accorded to other accounts of this type. For example, when I learned that NBC was going to do a two-hour TV special on the Hill case, I wrote an article, which nobody would publish, predicting that the program would spawn a number of new stories of abductions. Sure enough, three weeks after the telecast, a young man named Travis Walton, of Snowflake, Arizona, and six friends claimed that Walton had

"Flying saucers are real. Too many good men have seen them who don't have hallucinations."

—CAPTAIN EDDIE RICKENBACKER,
*World War One flying ace
and former chairman of the
board, Eastern Airlines*

been zapped by a UFO and had been carried off.

PLAYBOY: We've interviewed Walton, too. His story is on page 249.

KLASS: He may not have mentioned that, by a curious coincidence, he had always wanted to ride on a UFO. He and his older brother Duane had made a pact that if either ever saw a UFO, he would try to get aboard and would then try to convince the crew to go and pick up the other brother so he could share the experience.

HARDER: You fail to mention that you, as well as I, talked with the Arizona Public Safety polygraph operator, who very plainly said—and wrote in his report—that if there had been a hoax, five of the crew had no knowledge of it. The results for the sixth, by the way, were inconclusive. When asked if the story they had told about Travis Walton and the UFO were true, they said yes, and the polygraph operator concluded they were telling the truth.

What we see Mr. Klass doing is examining the motivations of the witnesses instead of examining the evidence. There may be a lot of loonies who think they have been on board a UFO—and I've met some—but Travis Walton is not one.

TAVES: I believe the real problem is that you, Dr. Harder, and the other believers on this panel have failed to examine the evidence critically. As far as I can make

out, your views are simply a belief in UFOs, which is a poor substitute for scientific study.

SALISBURY: So now you are assessing our motives, as well as those of UFO witnesses, Dr. Taves? The game is getting rough! *Your* definition of the scientific method, which allows one to ignore important points and make unfounded assumptions, doesn't coincide with mine! Our examination of the Travis Walton evidence has been as critical as yours. Could it be you have a blind disbelief?

SPRINKLE: Most people regard as a kook anyone who says he has seen UFOs more than once. Well, if they're right, I must be a kook, because I've had more than one UFO sighting myself. I distrust any approach that automatically assumes stupidity or culpability on the part of UFO observers.

HYNEK: When I first got involved in this field, I was particularly skeptical of people who said they had seen UFOs on several occasions and totally incredulous about those who claimed to have been taken aboard one. But I've had to change my mind. I no longer dismiss any case as too absurd to be investigated. One naturally does give more credence to stories where the witness' credibility is not in doubt.

PLAYBOY: Don't even trained observers have a tendency—conscious or unconscious—to embellish a story in the retelling?

HARDER: One safeguard against that is hypnosis. Under hypnosis, if a subject is cooperative, his original sense impressions can be brought to the surface out of his unconscious. Contrary to some notions, it is impossible to lie under hypnosis, and it may be very difficult sometimes to distinguish what a person remembers under hypnosis from a dream or a hallucination, for either can be recalled with the same vividness as a real experience. But a good investigator checks details against independent data and evidence gathered from other places.

PLAYBOY: Is there such a thing as a typical witness? That is to say, do UFO observers fall into the same categories that their stories do?

HYNEK: Not really. The typical UFO sighter is the typical citizen. The great majority of reports come from normal, respectable people who have been going about their daily affairs in the ordinary way when suddenly they're confronted with this extraordinary phenomenon.

VALLEE: I think it's fair to say that there are two broad types, or categories, of UFO observers. The first, which is by far the larger category, includes ordinary citizens who suddenly see something

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unusual. The second and much smaller group is made up of those who see UFOs all the time—the repeaters, the people who, if only in their own minds, seem to have made some kind of pact with UFOs. They are analogous to the witches of the Middle Ages.

SPRINKLE: A couple of sociologists have tried to show that UFO sightings tend to be reported mostly by those in the second group, people on the fringe of society; but my own studies don't support this. My feeling is that people who have the courage to report seeing phenomena that don't fit into our traditional way of explaining things are automatically classified as being on the fringe. But in my studies—and I've spent eight years studying these so-called fringe people, including the Hills and Herb Schirmer—they are almost all credible persons telling incredible stories.

KLASS: You are much too credulous. Give me a list of incredible stories—any five—on which the UFO movement is prepared to stand or fall. Then let's dissect them one at a time and settle this thing once and for all. I'll make it even easier. Show me just *one* case where there is undeniable evidence that this planet has been visited, however briefly, by creatures or things extraterrestrial in origin, and we can adjourn this panel.

SALISBURY: I don't think there *is* such a case. I have yet to see one I thought was absolutely convincing. But that's beside the point. The point is not to prove or disprove any single case—or five cases—but to find out what we can learn from the aggregate patterns revealed by the thousands of cases on record.

SPRINKLE: Exactly. Why can't we just proceed on the hypothesis that people are telling the truth as they perceive it? Is it really necessary, or productive, to spend so much time worrying about the credibility of individual witnesses among so many millions? Let's investigate their stories, not them.

PLAYBOY: Relying largely on eyewitness testimony, haven't several Government-sponsored scientific investigations investigated the phenomenon and concluded that there's nothing to it?

VALLEE: Unfortunately, until very recently, the scientific community's derisive attitude toward UFOs has made *any* kind of methodical investigation of the phenomenon almost impossible. Not only has the establishment treated the data with open scorn, it has in many instances actually destroyed it! As a matter of fact, it was this hostile attitude that initially got me interested in UFOs. I thought that if people were taking so much trouble to

avoid them or explain them away, then there must be something to them.

HYNEK: To me, it's astounding that so little real scientific work has been done on the UFO phenomenon. For instance, of the thousands of bright lights that have been reported, we don't have one single spectrogram of such lights to let us know whether the spectrum is thermal or nonthermal, whether it's an emission-line spectrum or what. One of the great mysteries, in addition to the UFOs themselves, is the tremendous Governmental indifference with which the subject has been treated. No real money or effort has been spent for an honest, official scientific investigation. Look at the Government's most celebrated effort: Project Blue Book, ballyhooed by the Air Force as a full-fledged, top-priority operation. It was no such thing. The staff, in a sense, was a joke. In terms of scientific training and numbers, I would have to agree this time with Dr. Taves, it was highly inadequate to the task. Usually, Blue Book had no more than a captain heading it and sometimes only a lieutenant. Now, you just don't get results in the military when you're that low on the totem pole of priorities. And the methods used by the project to collect and organize data were positively archaic. The files were kept only chronologically, with no cross-referencing whatever, and whenever I suggested that the data filing be computerized, I was told that it was too expensive. And that is the crack operation that the general public believes looked adequately into the UFO phenomenon.

PLAYBOY: Was Project Blue Book deliberately botched?

HYNEK: I don't think there was any conspiracy involved, but it's wrong to let the public believe there's been a serious, unbiased inquiry into the matter when there hasn't been. Now, we can make several hypotheses about our Government's nonaction. The first is that our officials know everything behind the UFO phenomenon and they aren't talking. The second is that they know there's something up there, but they don't know what it is; they're stumped. And the third is that they're telling the truth and there's nothing there.

PLAYBOY: What's your supposition?

HYNEK: It can't be the first or the third hypothesis, because I know for a fact they haven't even tried to find out, and the recently published files of the project will bear me out. That's why we have to get a national research institute going, something along the lines of the Mayo Clinic—a research institute funded by grants with no strings attached. When-

ever a sighting is reported, such an institute would have the authority and the personnel to go in and cordon off the area, take soil samples for chemical analysis, interview witnesses, coordinate the efforts of scientists from various disciplines, and so forth.

KLASS: The University of Colorado did exactly as you suggest: dispatched teams of scientists to the scenes of reported UFO sightings to make prompt investigations. And in every such case, there was no outstanding payoff, except to turn up more prosaic explanations. Not a single artifact of extraterrestrial origin was ever found.

HYNEK: Once again, that pet theory. It doesn't solve the UFO mystery to say that in the few cases the Condon committee looked into, no *extraterrestrial* evidence was found. An institute such as I suggest should also be concerned with the investigation of past cases, including those skimmed over in the Colorado investigation, so that we can better discern

"I, too, am interested in these aerial phenomena. Some people tend to discount UFOs, but I feel that any such unknown objects bear investigation."

—U. S. SENATOR BIRCH BAYH

and understand the patterns that emerge in UFO reports. At the Center for UFO Studies, we have a computerized data bank of some 75,000 cases, and there are hundreds of potential dissertation projects on the subject that are lying fallow. All of this wealth of material should be submitted to careful scientific study. But, again, it takes money.

HARDER: Not all that much money, though, when you consider the possible dividends. We're not proposing yet another study about the effects of marijuana on rats. We're talking about the possibility that our planet has been visited by intelligent beings from other parts of the universe, and if that's the case, it would be the greatest news in human history. Now, if there's even a two percent chance that it's true, then it seems worth it to spend a few million to find out *if it's true*.

KLASS: Again I must disagree. We have far more pressing problems on which we should be spending money—energy problems, environmental problems, social problems, and so on. Those are the things that deserve the money—and the publicity. Now, from a strictly selfish point of view, I'd be happy to see UFO research get a lot of funding and a lot of pub-

licity. It would be like getting a lifetime annuity, in terms of royalties on my books. But from the standpoint of real, national priorities, I think it would be ludicrous to spend public money on such a project.

VALLEE: Many people thought the same thing when Louis Pasteur said he thought that diseases were being transmitted by creatures too small to be seen. It sounded ludicrous at the time, and Pasteur himself admitted that it was just a hypothesis. He had never actually seen such creatures—and he died without ever seeing a virus. But there are a lot of people who owe their lives to the fact that he thought they existed and was willing to spend his life researching the possibility.

PLAYBOY: If you side with the argument that UFOs are physically real, what are they? Spaceships?

HYNEK: That's certainly the most popular explanation of the phenomenon—but this theory is rapidly losing ground among researchers, if only because of the tremendous number of sightings themselves. I'd be happier if there were only one sighting every 100 years instead of hundreds *every* year. The distances are far too astronomical for there to be that many extraterrestrial spacecraft visiting the Earth.

PLAYBOY: Doesn't the fact that UFOs reportedly perform technological feats beyond anything devised on Earth support the argument that they are extraterrestrial in origin?

SALISBURY: Definitely. And that argument is a strong one, once you're willing to admit the very strong probability that we're not alone in space and that the universe may well be teeming with life more advanced than any we know.

HYNEK: I personally believe it is and that we're like natives of a remote region of the Yukon who are totally unaware of the intricate civilization lying far to the south of us. Unfortunately, the possible existence of intelligent life elsewhere doesn't provide a convenient solution to the UFO problem.

KLASS: It certainly doesn't. On the assumption that there isn't intelligent life elsewhere in our own solar system, and I'm confident that there isn't, it would require nearly 100 years for inhabitants of the nearest star system to ours that *could* have life, Alpha Centauri, to make a round trip to Earth—if their spacecraft could fly at 70,000,000 mph. And this is based on the optimistic assumption that there *is* a planet in orbit around Alpha Centauri, that there *is* intelligent life on it and that it's so advanced technologically it can build spaceships capable of flying at that speed. So even if there is intelligent life relatively near to us, and if such creatures live to be 200 or even

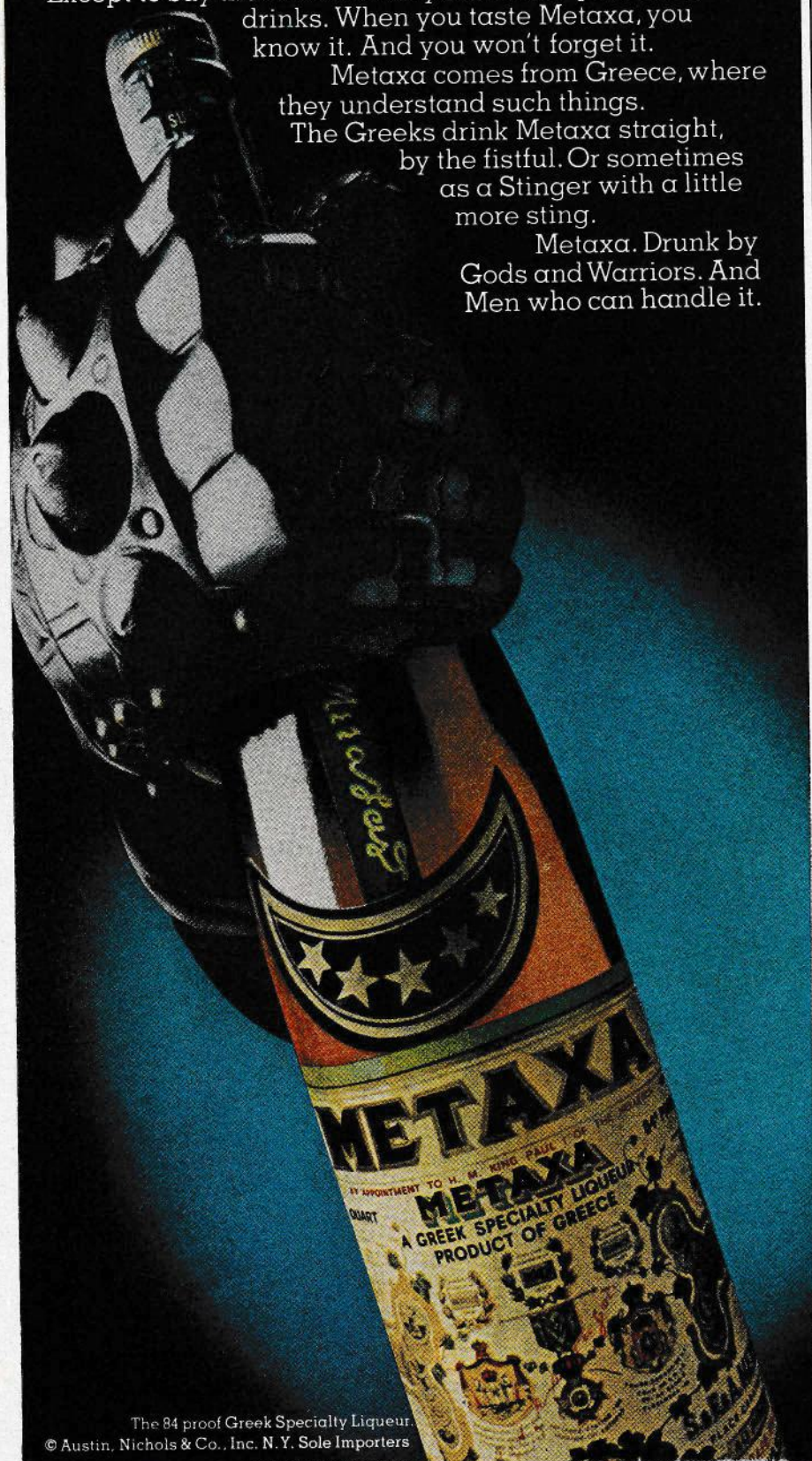
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400 years old, a 100-year trip is still not exactly inconsequential.

PLAYBOY: But suppose they were able to make the trip in less time.

KLASS: It would be really straining credibility to assume that they could. All of our physics—and this is not to say that we know everything—uses measurements based on the assumption that the speed of light is not only unsurpassable but unapproachable for objects having substantial mass.

HYNEK: Well, you said it yourself: We don't know everything. It's not unthinkable to ascribe to such civilizations knowledge of the physical as well as the psychic universe that we're completely unaware of. When you consider that the human race in the past century or so has gone from Conestoga wagons to the 747, and in just 70 years from Kitty Hawk to the moon, it's very possible that civilizations millions of years older than ours might just know a little more than we do. That's the frustrating thing about UFOs—facing the fact that the phenomenon may be completely beyond our ken at present.

SALISBURY: Still, the only evidence we have that would causally link UFOs with extraterrestrial intelligence is proof by default; no one seems to be able to think of any other way to account for the superior technology of UFOs.

VALLEE: The main reason for the popularity of the extraterrestrial hypothesis is that it responds to our deep longing as a species to meet more advanced beings, our hope that there are forms of life in the universe that have transcended the problems we currently have here on Earth—such as war, poverty and disease. Witness reports consistently bear out some kind of psychic connection between UFO sightings and certain strong unconscious needs and beliefs.

TAVES: It is certainly true that many people share a need to *believe*—in the existence of superior beings, in astrology, in ESP, in extraterrestrial spacecraft, whatever. The reasons for this need are too complex to go into here, but there's nothing new about it: Witness religion.

VALLEE: For me, one of the biggest problems with the extraterrestrial explanation is the fact that it fails to explain why there are often beings like us described as the occupants of UFOs. In several cases, witnesses reported small creatures wearing some sort of diving suit and *normal humans* working with them. In other cases, small creatures with human features have been described as breathing our air without special respiratory equipment. Witnesses even reported that they could see emotional reactions on their faces. Well, if we were visited by another race from a distant planet, it is unlikely that they would be humanoid in shape and even more unlikely that one could read their emotions. I'm not saying that UFOs are definitely not of extraterrestrial

origin, but the theory as formulated right now doesn't explain the sightings any better than a number of other theories.

PLAYBOY: Such as?

HARDER: The view, for example, that flying saucers are technological devices of earth-bound aliens who may live under the ocean floor, within mountain ranges or in the polar regions, etc. Absurd as it sounds, whatever evidence there is to support this theory ought to be investigated. Or that the UFOs are holographic in nature, projections of sounds and images across distances into an individual's awareness. If this is possible—and current technology suggests it might be—lack of physical evidence for UFOs would therefore be understandable. There's also the theory that time travelers from the past or future are visiting us in our present.

SPRINKLE: Personally, I'm very sympathetic toward the idea that UFOs may be psychic projections, that they're either materialized images that spring from our collective unconscious—something Carl Jung came very close to suggesting in his discussion of UFOs as psychological archetypes—or some type of phenomenon such as mass hallucination, autohypnosis, delusion or illusion. I've also considered, as have some of my colleagues here, that UFOs are advance technological displays by intelligent beings who are able to manipulate their space and time field in such a way that energy and matter can be interchanged.

KLASS: I find it difficult to understand how Betty Hill, Travis Walton and the other "UFO abductees" could be taken aboard a holographic image or a psychic projection for physical examinations, if their stories were true.

HYNEK: Just as it would have been difficult for Newton to understand a miniature hand-held computer!

HARDER: What I think we're observing is a very high degree of technology that is capable of systematically exploiting the basis of what we call telepathy and clairvoyance. We are just bumbling beginners at learning how to harness certain natural phenomena they may have been using for many thousands of years.

VALLEE: It just may be that we are being confronted with a technology capable of manipulating the reality of people who get close to it. If so, are we being manipulated simply because we're being visited by beings capable of it or because we are being *conditioned*? I tend to think it's the latter.

PLAYBOY: But what would be the point of that manipulation?

SPRINKLE: To condition us to a greater cosmic consciousness, to lift human understanding from a mechanistic and atomistic view of the world into a more holistic and universal awareness.

SALISBURY: We're not saying that's necessarily what is happening, but it's a possible explanation. Of course, there are other explanations as well. It could well

be that UFO occupants are simply tourists on holiday, or they may be scouts on a reconnaissance mission, or they may be scientists who are studying us.

KLASS: Perhaps I might suggest the possibility that UFOs are really the ghosts of dead military pilots. Pilots are famed for their love of playing practical jokes. And I suppose one ought also to consider pixies and leprechauns, at least for UFOs reported in the vicinity of Ireland.

SALISBURY: Those explanations may seem farfetched, but, in fact, they're a lot more logical than simply denying that these beings exist. We have a lot of evidence, witnesses' testimony at least, to indicate that UFO occupants are real in an objective sense. If so, they must be intelligent beings and they must have a reason for visiting us. My first reaction

"I saw one the other night, so help me. . . . It was a vertical beam of light, amber colored, and we watched it for about 35 minutes. It couldn't have been a reflection. It would fade out and get bright. . . . It was not a bird, it didn't wear a cape and I really don't know what it was."

—JOHN J. GILLIGAN, *former governor of Ohio*

is to assume that they are explorers of some kind, but that doesn't account for their curious behavior. So I've come gradually to the conclusion that they must be trying to manipulate or condition us. Look at it this way: If they are sophisticated enough to travel here from another solar system, or perhaps from future time, then they are certainly sophisticated enough to be aware of the impact they're having on our collective consciousness.

VALLEE: Not to mention our collective *unconscious*, rather in the same way that sylphs, elves, fairies, demons and other mythological figures have remained an integral part of human folklore despite the best efforts of science and religion to debunk them. What I'm suggesting is that maybe the "wee folk" of legend are themselves not entirely mythological; maybe they, too, have some basis in reality. Maybe we *should* believe in fairies, as Mr. Klass suggests.

SPRINKLE: That's an excellent point. I've often been struck by the similarities between the legends of fairies and angels and demons on the one hand and the descriptions of UFO phenomena on the other. Perhaps the wee folk are UFO occupants who have wittily used "magic

shows" to subtly alter our belief systems. Who knows?

VALLEE: If the purpose of UFO activity is to open us up collectively to a cosmic perspective, to encourage us to start considering ourselves as beings who exist in space, then they have succeeded admirably. If people weren't becoming more curious about the meaning of UFOs, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

KLASS: We can agree that if extraterrestrials exist and ever visit our Earth, certainly their civilization and technology will be considerably more advanced than our own. If and when they come, I am sure they will have a well-thought-out strategy. If that strategy is to observe us secretly, they can do so using photo-reconnaissance satellites, much as we and the Russians monitor each other's military facilities, without the man in the street's even being aware that these spy satellites are 100 miles overhead. If, on the other hand, their strategy, at some point, is to make their presence known to us, I am confident that they will do so with the grace and elegance born of a very advanced society. I am confident they will *not* hop around kidnapping innocent citizens for physical examinations, that they will not play tag with airplanes or frighten children and housewives—at least not over a period of more than 30 years. And no matter what their strategy, and no matter how good their technology, someday one of their spacecraft will crash, leaving behind extraterrestrial artifacts.

HYNEK: Let's not be anthropomorphic. What you're forgetting is that their motivations don't have to fit our ideas. As any contact with them will be solely at their discretion, all we can do is speculate. And conduct research. We have to take an interdisciplinary approach, because this phenomenon involves more than just astronomy or physics or chemistry; it involves psychology, anthropology, sociology and medicine as well.

VALLEE: We have a wonderful opportunity now, as perhaps we never had before, to unite various fields of study. But we will never be able to explain—or even properly investigate—UFOs so long as academia leaves the field to crackpots and religious fanatics. The longer the scientific community continues to react to the subject with puzzled embarrassment, the longer the bureaucracy continues to suppress reports and to deny that UFOs exist, the greater the likelihood that the phenomenon will lead to new kinds of religious mass movements, because it appeals to a deep need we have for mystery, for irrational belief. I would be saddened if that happened, but great religious movements have been spawned by much less impressive phenomena.

TAVES: Dr. Vallee has put his finger on the crux of the matter. The UFO field

has, indeed, become the property of crackpots and religious fanatics; this discussion has proved that point conclusively, but his statement that the Government is suppressing UFO reports is an outright lie. And if the scientific community fails to exhibit interest in UFOs, it is only because the scientists see nothing positive to study in the field.

SALISBURY: Well, I'm worried about the religious implications of UFOs not because I'm a scientist but because I'm *religious*. I've got to the stage where the implications of the phenomenon are more important to me than the scientific question as to what accounts for the phenomenon. When I'm doing experiments in my lab, it's possible, even necessary, for me to put my religious convictions and my scientific philosophy in different pockets, as it were. I can't do that where UFOs are concerned. I have to ask myself whether it's possible that spacecraft from other planets are operating in God's universe and doing the bizarre things that have been reported. The Scriptures, which I accept as the word of God, talk about a time when Christ will return in the clouds of heaven as a prelude to his reign of over 1000 years of earthly peace. Could the UFOs be forerunners of this new millennium? Or are they emissaries from other areas of God's kingdom? We Mormons have a strong theological foundation for believing that there are other worlds in the universe populated by God's children. I don't want to sound like an Old Testament prophet, but UFOs could also be manifestations of the forces of *evil*. The Scriptures are full of prophecies that evil would abound in the last days before Christ's return, and obviously any display that tended to lead the observer away from God, or toward a false god, would serve the ends of the forces of evil. I don't know the answer, but I would certainly like to understand UFOs theologically as well as scientifically.

TAVES: Dr. Salisbury, you have every right to your own religious beliefs, but your attempt to connect the Second Coming of Christ, God and the Devil with UFOs does not sound very convincing.

SALISBURY: That's understandable, because I'm not trying to convince anyone. I'm certainly not *convinced* myself. I'm only sharing some ideas that have been troubling me—and others—in recent years. It's too bad that we haven't time to examine them in more detail.

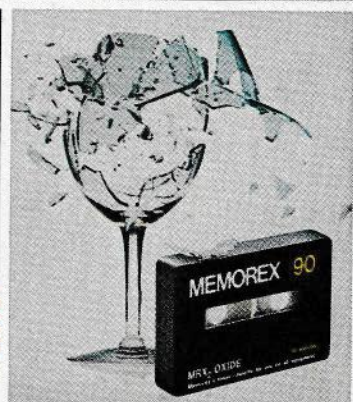
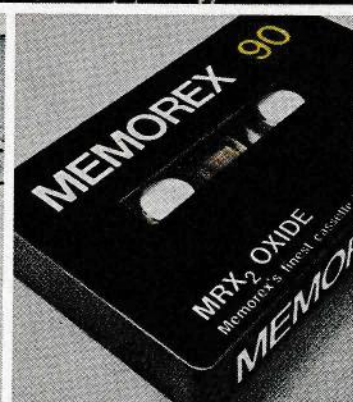
VALLEE: And there's nothing wrong with speculating on the meaning of UFOs in the context of one's personal beliefs. What is wrong is that our current scientific structures keep the best-educated and best-informed people from having access to information about UFOs. There's something wrong when people you meet on the street know far more about this fascinating scientific phenomenon than the Ph.D.s you meet on campus. And I

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dare say the reason for that is that the establishment listens to people like Mr. Klass, people who for one reason or another have a desperate need to debunk UFOs, to prove that they don't exist.

KLASS: Don't forget that I am a senior editor of a magazine that has carried more articles on legitimate space travel and space technology than perhaps any other in the world. It would be risky for me to debunk any UFO case that might later turn out to be the greatest space story of all time. I would like to find one credible case of all those you allude to, one that I could in good conscience submit for publication and for which I could honestly say, "I am unable to find any plausible earthly explanation." But after 11 years of investigation, I have yet to find one such case. And I think it's only fair that the burden of proof should be on those who claim that UFOs, in the sense of extraterrestrial—or interdimensional—spacecraft, are flying in our skies. I can't investigate every single case. All I can do is say, "Give me your most impressive cases and I'll investigate them." That seems fair. But once I've explained them, you come up with more and say, "But you haven't explained these."

VALLEE: In a way, I sympathize. Although we are on opposite sides of the issue, I'm equally frustrated by the closed-mindedness that surrounds UFOs. I would say, however, that the problem is with those who take a too-narrow, "rationalistic" approach. Science is only one way to acquire knowledge. It's a very efficient way and it's worked well for us during the past 200 years, but it's based on a fixed attitude toward reality. There are other ways of acquiring knowledge that worked for a long time before science came on the scene. In medicine, for example, we are just now learning a great deal from cultures who knew nothing about ultraviolet rays and gamma rays but knew a lot about the relationship of man to his environment and the relationship of man's consciousness to his body. Similarly, ways of acquiring knowledge will be discovered that are beyond the current structures of science, as Mr. Klass understands them.

Moreover, who are we to say that we can objectively and scientifically observe the UFO phenomenon and then pass judgment on it in the same way we study galaxies or chemical reactions? It's simply not possible. The observer and the analyst are *part* of the phenomenon. With UFOs, as with other new and controversial areas of science, such as quantum mechanics and parapsychology, we have to reconsider the whole concept of the observer as someone outside the situation looking at it from an external reference point. In the end, we may find ourselves living in a reality that we have not yet even imagined.

(concluded on page 128)

PLAYBOY PANEL: UFOs (continued from page 98)

HYNEK: I most emphatically agree. Niels Bohr, the father of atomic physics, once said, "There is no hope of advance in science without a paradox." It's the things that *don't* fit into our present picture of reality that point to new departures, to new knowledge of ourselves and of the fabulously exciting universe in which we live. To think that our present-day science provides the major answers to reality is the worst form of temporal provincialism. We must never forget that there will be a 21st Century and a 30th Century science. Perhaps the UFO phenomenon is the harbinger of changes in our scientific outlook.

HARDER: And perhaps not. We are not handling well the technical knowledge we already have. Providing us with more might be viewed by UFO intelligences with the same enthusiasm as providing chimpanzees with submachine guns.

KLASS: As you know, I contend UFOs *can* be explained by contemporary scientific methods. And I propose a fast, inexpensive approach to the issue. Let us ask the respected National Academy of Sciences to appoint a committee consisting of its most competent scientists to determine if there is a real scientific problem, or only a pseudo problem generated by credulous investigators with an unconscious desire to believe in UFOs.

During the past several years, some of you were asked to select the best, the most unexplainable UFO case from the hundreds of UFO reports during the year. You selected the Coyne helicopter incident, the Travis Walton "abduction" case and the Delphos, Kansas, "landing" case. Each has been awarded a sizable prize as the best case of the year. This committee from the National Academy would sit in judgment, using these three best cases you have already selected. You could present the facts as you saw them and I would present the results of my investigation. Each side would be free to challenge the other.

Then the committee would vote: Are these cases explainable in prosaic terms, using today's physics? Or can they be explained only in terms of extraterrestrial spaceships or other even more exotic phenomena? If the committee decided that even one of these three prize-winning cases could not be satisfactorily explained in prosaic terms, that would provide the ammunition you seek to justify a major Government-funded UFO investigation—and I would agree to withdraw from the field of UFOlogy and endorse a new major investigation.

If, however, the committee decided that all three of these prize-winning cases were explainable in prosaic terms, then

you would agree to withdraw your call for a new UFO investigation. That is my proposal.

SALISBURY: That's interesting! You propose to "settle" the UFO question by debate and appeal to authority, much as the medieval bishops and doctors settled theological questions. But that approach has gotten us nowhere during the past three decades. You and Dr. Menzel and others have been "explaining" UFO cases in the manner, I suppose, that you would expect the Academy of Sciences committee to follow: If you can concoct any

"It is well known that ever since the first flying saucer was reported in June 1947, the Air Force has officially said that there is no proof that such a thing as an interplanetary spaceship exists. But what is not well known is that this conclusion is far from being unanimous among the military and their scientific advisors because of one word, *proof*; so the UFO investigations continue. . . . What constitutes proof? Does a UFO have to land at the River Entrance to the Pentagon, near the Joint Chiefs of Staff's offices?"

—CAPTAIN EDWARD J. RUPPELT,
first director of Project Blue Book, the Air Force's 1951–1969 UFO-investigation program

scenario that seems to agree with some of the selected facts, you call the case "explained." Or, if you can unearth any motive for a hoax, you immediately seem to know that a hoax has been perpetrated. But where has this gotten us? We're *still* debating!

I have appreciated your careful investigations, and you've often illuminated some important evidence. But I have ignored your conclusions, because they are *not* directly implied by the evidence.

SPRINKLE: Mr. Klass's proposal, I think, seems to assume that the trial of protagonist versus antagonist is the best method for determining the truth about UFO reports. However, in my opinion, the history of UFO investigation indicates that the experience, rather than the evidence, is the significant effect of the

UFO phenomenon. I believe that UFO investigation should be conducted so that the *UFO experience*—the change in the world view of the UFO observer—becomes the focus. Investigation should be continued into the physical, biological, psychosocial and spiritual aspects of the UFO phenomenon.

HYNEK: And into its frequency, its worldwide occurrence and the quality of the witnesses. I would agree that a NAS committee to determine the validity of a phenomenon—*not* of a particular theory—would be fine. But a study of a few individual cases tells us very little about the scope of the entire phenomenon.

VALLEE: Personally, I would *not* be in favor of letting the subject be decided by the same people who have been responsible for discouraging scientific study in this area in the past. I'm also against pumping large sums of money for UFO research into a single organization, as Dr. Hynek and others have publicly proposed. I don't think we need another NASA or a central institution. Instead, I'd like to see the same research-funding process that's currently used in traditional disciplines—like computer science or astronomy—applied to UFO investigation. Any scientist in the country who thinks he has a good idea should be able to submit a research proposal on a competitive basis to organizations such as the National Science Foundation, NASA or one of the energy-research agencies without fear of bias—or ridicule. Skeptics like Dr. Taves or Mr. Klass should be able to receive funding from such organizations as well as anyone else. But to turn the UFO question over to the National Academy of Sciences—or any other single group of scientists—is folly. How can a few scientists—no matter how eminent—solve in a few days a problem that has puzzled hundreds of experts for 30 years?

When we were children and something frightened us in the darkness outside, we would rush back to our parents to seek reassurance. Many adults have never outgrown that childhood attitude and they keep looking for someone in authority to tell them what to do. They want to believe that the Government knows everything, that the National Academy of Sciences knows everything. The UFO question awakens this kind of fear in people—even scientists. Well, it's tempting to turn the whole problem over to some father figure; unfortunately, it won't work. Whether we like it or not, the only way to study this thing is to face it ourselves, even if by doing so we learn that the world outside has more darkness and mystery than we first imagined.

"But when I looked past the edge, I saw three aliens standing over me. They were about five feet tall."

discuss what we'd said. This is when we relived the whole experience. We were actually right on board the craft. Later, he played back the tapes of our sessions for us and we learned that we'd left the highway and gone up this small road where there were a group of men. They were short and grotesque and different, but I couldn't say how. I wasn't frightened, but when the car motor died and they came up to the car—three were at my door—I panicked. One of them put his hand in front of my eyes and I went completely under. I felt like I was asleep and I didn't want to be. Finally, I woke myself up and we were surrounded by these men. They were more or less guiding me—one at each arm—and sort of dragging Barney along. I yelled, "Barney, wake up!" And one of them next to me said—in a human voice, like somebody speaking English with difficulty—"Is his name Barney?" And I said, "It's none of your business."

And then I saw the craft. The moon was shining on it and I could tell it was silver metal, like aluminum or stainless steel. It seemed to be sitting on the ground, and after we walked up to it, we went up on this rim and walked through this open space—a door—in the side of the craft. I went into the first room and Barney went into the second. The room looked like a piece of pie with the point cut off and there was a blue-white light just shining through all the walls. At first, I didn't want to look at the creatures, but after a while, I noticed that their eyes were very dark black and extremely frightening to me. I got the same feeling as though I were looking at snake eyes. They didn't have any ears and their skin had a grayish tone to it. I had the impression they were human—or humanoid—and were what we would consider middle-aged.

They sat me on a stool and examined my eyes, ears, nose, throat and hair. The examiner looked at my skin through a big microscope and he got very excited. He was jumping up and down and he called the leader over. Then they put me on the table and checked my nervous system by touching these wires all over my body with something like a brain-wave machine. They told me that's what they were doing. Then he reached for this needlelike instrument that he inserted in my navel. I said, "No, no, it'll hurt." I was moaning and they both looked astonished. When he put his hand over my eyes and the pain went away, I began to realize that they didn't deliberately hurt me. He told me

it was a pregnancy test.

When the examiner went into Barney's room, I said to the leader, "When I get home, nobody is going to believe me, so I need something to prove this actually happened." "What do you want?" he said. I looked around and there was a book with columns of symbols that went up and down and said, "I'll take the book." And he said, "Fine, you may have it." Then the examiner came back in with Barney's dentures in his hands and started tapping my teeth. I explained to him that we lose our teeth from accidents, disease, wrong diet and old age. Then he said, "What's old age?" I couldn't get across to him we're supposed to live about 100 years, but most of us don't.

And then I said to him, "Where are you from?" That's when he opened up the wall and showed me the star map. The heavy lines, he explained, led to places they went all the time and the lighter solid lines were places they went to occasionally. The broken lines were expeditions.

As we were leaving, I was feeling very, very happy, but then I heard the crew members all mumbling and humming, like they were having an argument. The leader went back to the crew members and then came back to me and took the book. "It has been decided that you're going to forget the whole thing." I was so angry and I was crying and saying, "Well, I'll never forget!" And then I said, "I wasn't able to answer all your questions, so why don't you come back and I'll make arrangements for you to meet those who can?" "I don't know, it's not my decision to make," he said. So I asked, "Well, if you're going to come back, how will I know where to meet you?" And he said, "Don't worry, we always find those we want."

TRAVIS WALTON

We were working on a brush-thinning contract—me and six other guys—on the Mogollon Rim about ten miles south of Heber, Arizona. It was November 5, 1975. We'd finished a day's work and were getting ready to leave. It was starting to get dark, so we put the chain saws in the truck. We were going down this dirt road out of there and we saw this light coming through the thicket ahead of us. When I first saw it, I thought it was a sunset shining over the top of the hill, but when we got around the thicket to where we could see, we saw this object hovering. Everybody started yelling at the same time and we stopped the truck.

The object was 20 feet in diameter and shaped like two fry pans, lip to lip. It was about 30 yards away and about 15 feet off the ground and was kinda glowing—a soft golden glow that lit up the whole area. And it had darker bands on it. The glowing panellike areas weren't like windows, because you couldn't see into it. It was like glowing metal; you could feel the heat.

I jumped out of the truck and walked up for a closer look. Just as I got up to it, it started to make a sound like a motor starting up. Kind of a high-pitched sound with rumble to it, like a top when it slows down or starts up. I started to move when it made this sound. I was crouching when I heard it—and when I stood up, everything just went black, kind of like an electric shock.

[Walton's companions that day agree that a flash of light from the saucer hit Walton at mid-chest and that he was thrown into the air and landed ten feet away. The men became hysterical and began to flee. They saw the saucer lift off and disappear over the horizon. When they returned a short while later, Walton was nowhere to be found.]

When I regained consciousness, I was laying on my back on a metal table and I was in a lot of pain. I just lay there trying to let my thoughts clear. I looked down and felt something on my chest. It was about three or four inches thick, of a kind of grayish plastic-looking metal, and it kinda fit the shape of my chest. My shirt was pushed up and I had my coat on; I wondered why they didn't take my coat off, 'cause it was hot in there. I thought I was in a hospital.

But when I looked past the edge of this thing, I saw those three aliens standing over me. They weren't human. They were about five feet tall, had no hair on their heads, small features and great big brown oval eyes. Their skin color was chalky white and they had five fingers but no nails. And they had a real small mouth, but they never opened it or talked or anything to me. They were wearing some kinda real loose-fitting brownish-orange coverall thing—no collar, came up to the neck and gathered at the sleeve.

I jumped up and knocked the thing on my chest onto the floor. I just freaked out. I struck at the one that was on my right and jumped over into the corner. I started yellin' things at 'em, but they didn't try to attack me. I was really hysterical and they just left the room real quick. I was afraid they'd come back, so I left there. This room had one door in it to the outside and there was a dimly lit hallway; they'd gone down to the right, so I went to the left.

I went into this round room. In the middle, there was a metal chair that had about 25 colored buttons on the right arm and a molded-looking lever on the left side. It was on a pedestal, like the table. The room was kinda dimly lit, too,

and you could see, like, the stars on the walls, but the stars didn't seem to twinkle. It sounds ridiculous, but it seemed like you could see through the walls. They were flat, but they kinda curved up, and the room had a curved dome. You could see stars on the floor, too.

I sat down in the chair and when I moved the lever, the stars revolved. There was a little green screen there, too, and when I pressed a button, little segments of straight black lines appeared on it. I just did one or two buttons, 'cause I was kinda scared to be messin' with that.

I heard a sound then, I think, and when I turned around, a man—a human—came in the door. You see, there was two distinct types: the first type that was alien—five feet tall, brown uniforms—and the second type, normal humans that could pass in a crowd. The man was about my height—six feet—and was big, muscular and healthy-looking. He was kind of young but mature, with sort of brownish-blond hair. He had a tight-fitting bright-blue uniform and a helmet—just a clear bubble—and I got the impression he was wearing something black on his feet.

I went up to him and started yelling questions at him, like, "Are you from Earth?" That kind of stuff. He gestured for me to come toward him and I just ran up there, you know, thinking, Here's an Earthling. He just smiled, took me by the arm and we went out through the door to the right and into a small narrow room. It must have been air-locked, because we stayed in there for a minute and then went out.

This craft we came out of seemed to be parked inside a huge building, a hangar-like structure with a high, curved roof.

The structure was sectioned in panels and some of them were lighted. The two or three other craft that were parked in there were different from the one I came out of—still saucer-shaped but really smooth and brightly chromed lookin'. The one I came out of was sitting flat on the floor and those chrome things—I didn't see any legs on them—had a rounded bottom, so I don't see how they sat there.

Anyway, we walked out onto this ramp into a room that had doors like elevators, and when we went in there, there was three other people like him, a woman and two men. They all looked like they were members of the same family.

They set me down in the chair and the one with the helmet—the others didn't wear any—walked on out through the door on the other side. I started to talk to them, but they didn't answer me. They just seemed kind of tolerant and didn't have any bad intentions. A man and a woman came over and led me to the table and laid me down on it. I don't know why I cooperated, because they weren't answering any of my questions. Then they put this clear soft metallic plastic mask with a black ball about two inches in diameter on it over my face. And I just went out.

The next thing I knew, I was laying on the road out there outside of Heber. I looked up and I saw this light go out—I think it could probably have been a hatch closing or something. And then this craft just went straight up, really fast. I don't see how something could move through the air like that and not make a sound—like breaking the sound barrier or something. It just went straight up and right out of sight.



ALEX HALEY

(continued from page 134)

"I got everything a man could want—if it wasn't for this prejudice crap."

with a shotgun. Being sensitive and having race pride has been in my family since slave days. The slave Davies played classical string music on the plantations.

HALEY: You're said to be one of the financially best-off popular musicians. Is this correct?

DAVIS: Well, I don't have any access to other musicians' bankbooks. But I never have been what you would call poor.

Now I got a pretty good portfolio of stock investments, and I got this house—it's worth into six figures, including everything in it. My four kids are coming up fine. When the boys get in from school, I want you to see them working out on the bags in our gym downstairs. I keep myself in shape and teach the kids how to box. They can handle themselves. Ain't nothing better that a father can pass along.

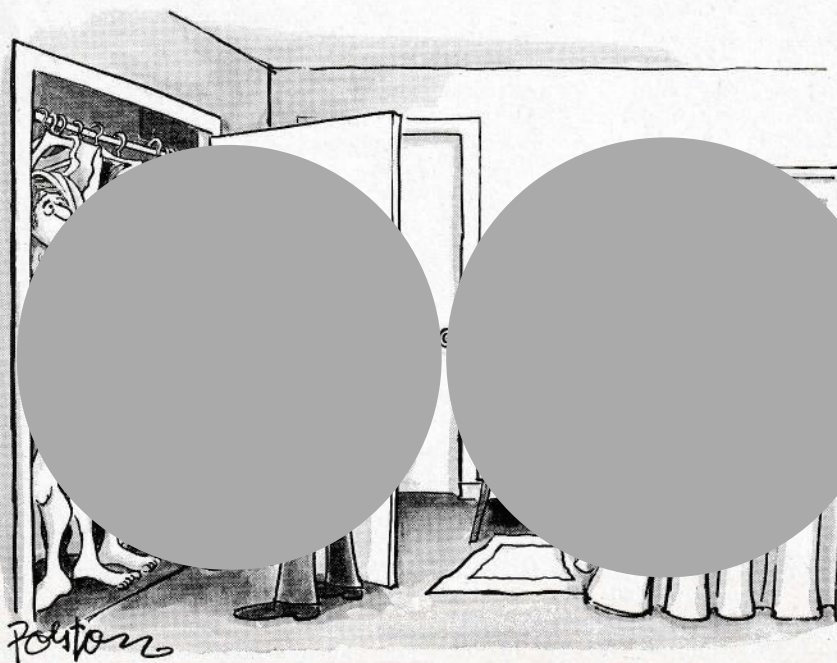
Then I got my music, I got Frances, and my Ferrari—and our friends. I got everything a man could want—if it just wasn't for this prejudice crap. It ain't that I'm mad at white people, I just see what I see and I know what's happening. I am going to speak my mind about anything that drags me about this Jim Crow scene. This whole prejudice mess is something you would feel so good if it could just be got rid of, like a big sore eating inside of your belly.

MALCOLM X

In May 1963, the publication in a mass-circulation magazine of an extended interview with a radical religious leader who professed to hate whites was considered extraordinary. Haley interviewed Malcolm X at a secluded table in a Harlem restaurant owned by the Muslims. He remembers that, except for moments of impassioned execration of all whites, Malcolm X spoke "in the impersonal tones of a self-assured corporation executive." The tapes of this interview formed the basis of the book Haley later wrote in collaboration with the Muslim leader: *"The Autobiography of Malcolm X."*

HALEY: What is the ambition of the Black Muslims?

MALCOLM X: Freedom, justice and equality are our principal ambitions. And to faithfully serve and follow the Honorable Elijah Muhammad is the guiding goal of every Muslim. Mr. Muhammad teaches us the knowledge of our own selves, and of our own people. He cleans us up—morally, mentally and spiritually—and

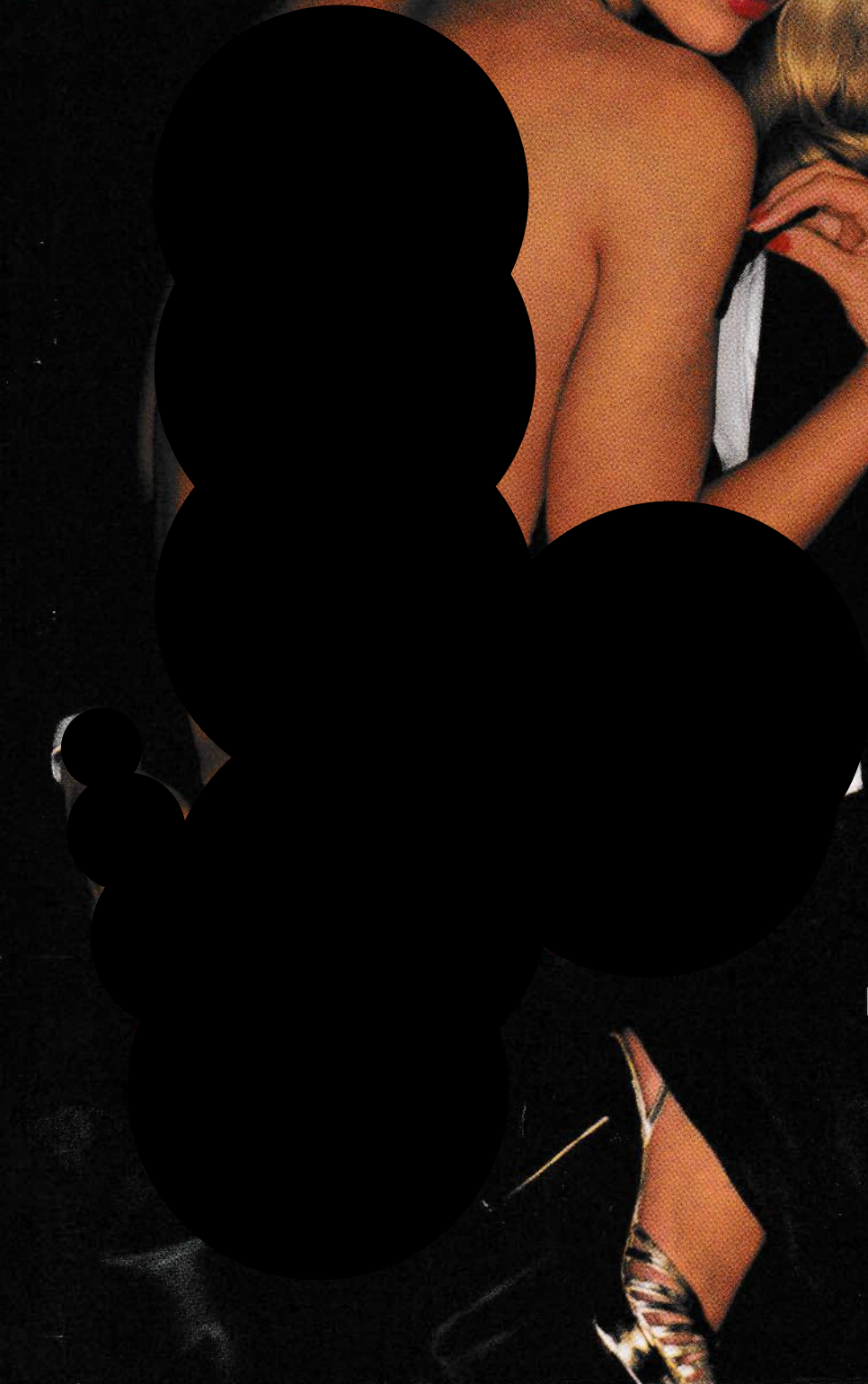


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