
MICHIGAN MUFON

Newsletter

Volume I Issue 1

June 15, 1995

STATE NEWS

To The Members of Michigan MUFON

It has been a hectic and busy but mostly positive month for us since we were asked by International Director Walt Andrus to take over the Co-Directorship of Michigan MUFON. Shirley Tafoya, who for years had served MUFON with her first husband George Coyne, was relinquishing her State duties to concentrate upon her national responsibilities with MUFON and to start a new life with her husband Joe. We wish the Tafoyas the best in the coming years, and almost immediately experienced how challenging directing a state the size of Michigan can be. We greatly appreciate the phone calls and other contacts from Members and

Section Directors, and the expressions of support we have gotten from national MUFON officers like Walt Andrus, Central Regional Director Jack Kasher, Chief Investigator T. David Spencer, and Staff photoanalyst Jeff Sainio.

Our immediate concerns were to communicate with our membership and State Section Directors. The postcards and phone contacts regarding the May 21st meeting cancellation, this Newsletter, two State Section Director Newsletters, and the June 4th State Section Director's meeting are results of that activity. Making plans for the September and November State Membership meetings, along with preparing proposals for State officer reorganization, took further time. In the middle distance are issues pertaining to Field Investigator Training and new State Section Director allocations,

as well as representing Michigan at the July Symposium in Seattle. Toward the end of the year we intend to turn over responsibilities to a new State Director and Board of Officers, and work with them until our departure for Oklahoma early next year. For details on many of these plans and what has been done to date, please see the accompanying articles. We ask for your patience and indulgence as we work on these issues. We strongly believe that what you and we are interested in is of the greatest importance. That realization, and the help and offers of help we are receiving from you, make the job easier. Thank you.

Bill and Linda Murphy

Upcoming Meetings

Please plan now to attend our last meetings of 1995, to be held in the Lansing area on September 10th and November 12th, from 12:30-5:00 p.m. A look at the State map

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shows that 90% of Michigan's MUFON membership is located within about an hour and a half of Lansing, while 70% is within the same radius of Flint. We intend to announce speakers and exact meeting sites, with appropriate directions, in the next Newsletter (late July-early August). These will be especially important meetings. In September we plan to conduct voting on nominees for the State Directorship, and will make important announcements regarding nominating for a limited number of State officers. At the November meeting the new State Director (or co-Directors) will take over the leadership, and the officer team will be presented. At both meetings, we will share current information about the status and plans for Michigan MUFON. Reservation arrangements for the meeting and brunch will be announced in the July/August Newsletter.

STATE DUES STRUCTURE ANNOUNCED --

Many of you have asked us by letter or telephone how to pay your 1995 Michigan State Dues. Dues for 1995 are \$10.00 per mailing address and not per person, as one Newsletter will be sent to each location. Please make checks payable to Michigan MUFON and send them to Bill and Linda Murphy, 3639

Stoneleigh Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910 (FORM ON P. 17). We will indicate in the next Michigan Newsletter whether our records show that you have already paid for 1995 or not. Those who have paid or who pay at that time will receive uninterrupted newsletters (at least three more after the next newsletter). This has seemed to us the fairest way to deal with the situation. We recognize that consistent communication is your right as members of Michigan MUFON, and pledge our best to justify your continued trust.

CALL FOR NOMINEES FOR STATE DIRECTOR --

With the concurrence of MUFON International Director Walt Andrus, Michigan is going to use a new method for selecting a State Director. This was proposed by a long time member, and has the advantage of allowing state members to express their preferences, while retaining the right of the International Office to make the final decision.

Candidates for the position of State Director (see job description below) must be

members not only of the MUFON parent organization, but also dues-paying Michigan MUFON members (\$10.00 per mailing address). Note that, like the present arrangement, two individuals can request to be selected as State Co-Directors (or Co-State Directors, whichever makes better sense to them; I'm still trying to figure that out). They must submit a written resume or biography to Bill Murphy by August 31, 1995, stating their background qualifications, interest in ufology, and why they would like to serve as State Director. Murphy will acknowledge each submission and print them up so that members may read them when they come to the September meeting. At the meeting members will vote on a ballot their first, second, and third preferences for State Director from the list. Only National MUFON members (who are on the National membership list, and not just those who paid their \$10.00 State dues) are eligible to vote for this position. Votes will be tallied by the following system: a first choice gets 3 points, a second gets 2 points, and a third choice receives 1 point. The names and resumes of the top three vote-getters will be sent to Mr. Andrus in Seguin, Texas, for his review and selection.

The State-Director-elect will be contacted by Mr. Murphy by October 15th and will play an important role in selecting the state officer team he/she/they will be working with. The new State Director(s) will then assume leadership of Michigan MUFON at the November meeting.

Work is still being done after State Section Director input at the June 4th meeting on determining the exact number and duties of the other State officers. We anticipate at minimum that Assistant State Director, Chief Investigator/ Head of Investigations, and Newsletter Editor/Media Chief functions will be allocated. Thus, the State Director will have many of the burdens taken over by other capable people, while still retaining the responsibilities of the State Director as described in the Field Investigators' Training Manual, 4th edition, Section III, by Walter H. Andrus, Jr., Dan Wright, and Jerold "Ron" Johnson:

3.2 State/Provincial Director

This person assumes overall responsibility for MUFON leadership in the state. The primary objective of his/her duties must be to establish and maintain an investigative network in all geographic areas of the state, with local

supervision by State Section Directors.

3.2.1 Objectives

To accomplish that objective and for related purposes, the State Director is expected to:

1. Recruit new persons as potential Field Investigators.
2. Conduct or oversee investigative training.
3. Recommend or approve appointments to investigative and supervisory positions and coordinate their activities.
3. Hold general membership meetings and otherwise communicate regularly with members in the state.
4. Solidify relationships with police, airports, and the news media for referral of UFO reports by the citizenry.
6. Assign cases, monitor their progress, and assess the resulting case reports prior to submittal.
7. Develop public awareness of the UFO subject.
8. Submit an annual report of activities.
9. Attend MUFON's annual International UFO Symposium (or appoint a designee) and participate in symposium activities designed for state directors.

See the remainder of Section III of the new manual for other useful information about MUFON offices and responsibilities.

We will provide a "how to" to the new State Director, giving up-to-date lists of media and police contacts, member and State Section Director phone numbers, and information on planning for the meetings. We'll also work with the new Director until our departure from the state. We intend that preparations for the 1997 MUFON International Symposium will be mainly in the hands of a Symposium Team, so that responsibility shall not claim as much of the State Director's resources as one might think. Being State Director affords one an almost unique opportunity to work with a variety of interesting people at the forefront of a fascinating subject, and to help make a difference in ufology, which may be one of the most important fields of endeavor imaginable.

STATE SECTION DIRECTORS' MEETING SETS NEW COURSE

Sunday, June 4th, saw Section Directors from all over Michigan converge upon Lansing for a reorganization meeting. There was excellent participation and discussion, and a great deal was accomplished. As one Section Director put it afterwards, "It was a good beginning." Section Directors

unable to attend the afternoon session have been fully apprised of the details by a Section Directors' Newsletter. A summary of the agenda, announcements, and decisions follows.

After introductions, the Section Directors were polled as to the challenges Michigan MUFON currently faces. While more details on this will be available in the next Newsletter, participants indicated that improved communications within the organization, Field Investigator training, and Public Relations were major interests.

An allocation of counties to State Section Directors was conducted. At the outset of this activity, Co-State Director Bill Murphy announced that he had been contacted that morning by Elmer Bean, who is resigning his post as State Section Director for Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Berrien and Cass counties. Mr. Bean is retiring from ufology after years of service to this organization, and he will be missed. Virginia Tilly, Section Director for Kent and Barry Counties, also is relinquishing her State position to devote more time to a variety of projects, including her duties as Director of Public Educa-

tion. The Co-State Directors have moved to fill these vacancies. Following is the current roster of State Section Directors, their phone numbers, and their respective counties:

Don Ashley, 616-846-2132:
Muskegon, Ottawa, Allegan.

Randy Baker, ---: St. Clair, Sanilac.

Tom Berlinger, 810-737-2738:
Oakland.

Bruce Domanowski, 517-467-
6218: Hillsdale, Lenawee, Monroe.

Wayne Erickson, 313-534-2293:
Wayne.

Sheldon Gunnerson, 517-386-3071:
Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Midland.

Linda Keck, 616-968-2519:
Calhoun, Branch.

Leonard Keeney, 313-769-7645:
Washtenaw.

Harold Marquardt, 810-463-5553:
Macomb.

Brenda and Richard McVannel,
616-582-7097: Charlevoix, Emmet,
Antrim, Grand Traverse.

Linda and Bill Murphy, 517-394-
2320: Ingham, Eaton, Clinton,
Jackson.

David Reinhart, 810-230-0536:
Saginaw, Shiawassee, Genesee,
Lapeer.

Bob Snow, Jr., 517-635-7158:
Huron, Tuscola.

Additionally, State Section Directors have been named for Mason and Oceana; Newaygo and Kent; and Barry and Ionia counties. Formal confirmation of these selections must come from Walter Andrus, International Director, before they can be announced. Additional appointments will be announced in upcoming newsletters. State Section Directors received telephone and address lists of all Michigan MUFON members. For

counties not currently covered by a named State Section Director, enquiries and reports should be sent to Bill and Linda Murphy, 3639 Stoneleigh Drive, Lansing, 48910, phone: 517-394-2320.

Other major business at the State Section Directors' meeting included the presentation of an innovative procedure for selecting the new State Director (see "Call For Nominees for State Director" article on page 2). This was followed by a financial report. There was \$812.66 in the Treasury as of our receiving it on May 20th. \$25.00 in member checks were deposited to bring the total to 837.66. \$41.36 was spent by the co-Directors on postage during May, but not yet reimbursed. A Michigan MUFON dues structure was considered, as were several ways of making money appropriate for a non-profit organization. Meeting plans for the rest of the year and beyond were discussed, and a Lansing site will be announced for the September 10th and November 12th Membership meetings. State Section Director meetings will occur one hour before the State meetings (see "Upcoming Meetings" article, page 1).

A working session was held on the matter of State Officer positions. Valuable input was given at this meeting, and the Co-State Directors are proceeding carefully on this matter. See "Call For Nominees" article for more details. The Co-State Directors will confer further with the State Section Directors before announcing the full slate of State Officer positions that will be open to nomination in the Fall.

Finally, the Co-State Directors and State Section Directors considered the course for Michigan MUFON for the remainder of the year. This newsletter will be followed by one in the late July/early August time frame. Those sending in their \$10.00/mailing address State Membership dues will continue to receive newsletters the remainder of the year. Mr. Murphy announced plans to develop a curriculum for Field Investigator Training, and to hold intensive sessions at three locations (Southwest, Southeast, and North-Central) in late Summer or early Fall. Several State Section Directors indicated their willingness to lend their expertise towards developing such a program. Intensive sessions already occurring, and videotaped segments from that training, will play a role in creating the standardized State training. Field Investigators-in-Training need to take such intensive training and to have read the Fourth Edition of MUFON's Field Investigator's Manual (a considerable improvement over the Third Edition) before taking the Field Investigator's examination. In addition, prospective Field Investigator candidates should participate in at least one investigation before being granted full Field Investigator status. We will do all we can to facilitate the development of competent Field Investigators in Michigan. Plans for the 1995 Symposium in Washington state and Michigan's 1997 Symposium were mentioned. More on these will follow in upcoming newsletters and meetings. Hosting the 1997 MUFON International Symposium is a signal honor bestowed upon Michigan and its current and previous State leadership. We intend to help set machinery in gear to make this Symposium, which marks the 50th

anniversary of the Kenneth Arnold sighting and the beginning of the so-called "modern era" of ufology, an event for which all of Michigan MUFON will be proud.

Lastly, issues pertaining to cooperation, communication, and responsibilities among the State officers were discussed. Informal discussions and a potluck dinner followed. We are personally thankful to all of those who in some instances drove many hours and miles to attend and contribute to this highly successful meeting. Their ideas, experience, and enthusiasm will contribute greatly to the future success of the Mutual UFO Network in Michigan.

STATE SIGHTINGS IN BRIEF

Courtesy of David Reinhart, State Section Director for Saginaw, Shiawasee, Genesee, and Lapeer Counties.

The following reports are taken from Peter B. Davenport's National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, Washington:

1994:

April 9, (reported January 13, 1995), Grosse Pointe: A woman reports seeing a brilliantly bright, "Kelly Green" light in the night sky near her home. The "orb" disappeared in the west.

August 18, Detroit (?): (reported December 22): a hospital employee and others see a triangular ship over the hospital.

August 28, Southern Michigan: approximately 40 to 50 strange lights were reported in clear sky. A landing was reported.

August 31 (reported October 5), Jackson: thirty public employees at a picnic witness sighted a bright object the size of the moon. Three photographs are taken.

September 1, Ann Arbor: a strange, triangular (?) blue object was sighted. The police recorded three calls.

September 5, Saginaw: a caller reports hearing voices. Aliens invaded his esophagus [?].

September 20, Caro: four members of a family witness four orange lights for a period of two to four seconds.

September 21, Charlotte: a retired police officer reports a bizarre, moving sound at 4 a.m.

September 24, Greenwood: an aircraft mechanic and two other adults witness a strange craft.

October 1, Riverside: a husband and wife witness a strange object in the night sky.

October 10, Battle Creek: a woman reports a very bright light southeast of Battle Creek. 12

October 16th, Southern Michigan: six adults watch 50 objects in the

night sky for two hours !!
[exclamation points Davenport's].

October 26th, Northville: a mother and daughter witness an immense bright green flash in the sky.

November 4, Fairgrove: three young women see two lighted objects over a field. Missing time is reported.

November 8, Haslett: a man sees a very bright object below the clouds. The object remains motionless.

November 10, 5 p.m., reported January 1, 1995, Potaski (Petoskey?): a prior caller recalled finding a cow's leg in his yard one week before a dramatic UFO sighting on November 16, 1994. Bizarrel [comments Davenport].

November 16th, Meceola: the police department calls to report multiple sightings.

-----, Rodney: a nurse, her husband, and their son witness a triangle and cluster of lights. A second witness reports that the object was larger than a Boeing 747. This sighting occurred in daylight.

-----Petoskey: a man, his wife, and their son witness a gigantic triangular ship for 30 minutes.

November 17, Detroit: a man sees multiple objects near Detroit (?). The Reporting Center notes that the report was unclear.

November 19th, South Haven: a man reports numerous sightings, including three triangles that "flip."

December 21, Traverse City: a State Trooper and witnesses see an object in the daylight sky. Video is taken [Note: this is the sighting that made "Sightings" in April, and is still under investigation by members of Michigan MUFON.]

December 23, Petoskey: a red, green, and white object was sighted in the southeastern sky -- a possible star.

December 29 (reported January 3, 1995), Lakeview: several adults were seen gawking at strange lights moving in the night sky. People stopped in the middle of the highway to watch for five minutes.

1995:

January 4, Rodney: approximately one dozen triangular ships were seen by multiple adults at 12:54 a.m. Columns of light were beamed to the ground. A mother and daughter called 911.

January 5, Big Rapids: local police station reports multiple UFO calls to its dispatch line.

-----, Lake Myers, near Ewart, 5:30 p.m.: a mother and her son in a car see two lights. They stop their car. The lights split into "headlights" and approach the car. A silver fuselage is seen. This sighting lasts for about ten minutes.

January 6, Grosse Pointe: the editor of the local newspaper calls about multiple local sightings.

January 7, Horton: a man and a friend witness a strange red light. The light disappears, but apparently is seen later.

January 8, Horton, 11 p.m.: a young boy and his friend see a red light in the sky near his home. While the boy went to get his parents, the light was extinguished.

January 28, Muskegon: a Michigan Trooper reports a red/blue/green light in the southeastern sky -- a possible star? [see the December 23rd sighting report from Petoskey].

January 31, Mason: an airport manager reports receiving multiple reports of UFO's sighted at about 8:07 p.m. One report, from a woman in a nearby town, is "bizarre". Duration of the sightings seems to be about three minutes.

-----Eaton Rapids, 8:10 p.m.: a mother, her children, neighbors, and an aunt see a huge "X-shaped object" fly from East to West overhead. A "dramatic sighting" which lasts for six minutes.

February 2, Eastport, 8 p.m.: a retired NASA engineer sees a large, white, bright object descending very fast to the south-southwest. The object is described as emitting "vapors". The engineer called Langley Air Force Base.

-----Traverse City, 8:10 p.m.: four children report seeing a disc above them, which bathed them in white light. "Missing time" was reported in this sighting, and there were other observers, as well. Duration of the sighting is listed at two minutes (?)

and the sighting is described as "dramatic".

February 3, 9:30 p.m., Romulus: two young males reported seeing a "World War II" style bomber fly overhead at treetop level; however, the National UFO Reporting Center notes that the facts were "muddled".

February 13, Cheboygan, 10:15 p.m.: a "bizarre aircraft" with 8-12 flashing lights flies silently over a man's vehicle, turns, then flies North. Many other sightings are reported.

February 16, 11:10 p.m., Kalamazoo: a former artillery officer witnesses 4-5 ships streaking East to West south of the city. This sighting lasted for five minutes; a flash with an atmospheric boom was noted five hours earlier.

-----11:15 p.m., Paw Paw: a man and his wife were awakened by an immensely loud roaring sound. They see five bizarre craft hovering nearby in formation.

-----11:45 p.m., Kalamazoo: a man reports seeing multiple objects moving East, and watches them for five minutes. [a possible connection between these three sightings was noted by Mr. Davenport.]

February 18, 9:00 p.m., Kalamazoo: a man called (February 22) to report that his mother had seen a strange light in the sky, but the details were "sketchy".

February 19th, 7:00 p.m., Fenton: a man reports a moving object with strange lights moving East to West.

The object seemed to hover below the overcast.

March 8th, 10:00 p.m., Byron Center: a couple witness a yellowish light descend into the woods near their home. Recurring sightings since 1979.

March 17, 7:40 p.m., Flint: Five FAA controllers see four pulsing "clouds" of red light. The objects dart, zig zag, and return a light signal [CE V?!!]
911 calls also reported this 15 minute sighting.

March 23, 10:25 p.m.: multiple FAA controllers experience a third sighting (the first was February 19th, and apparently had not been reported to Davenport until other sightings happened; the second sighting was the March 17th one immediately above.) The object again returned a light signal, but did not give a radar return.

March 30, Warren, 7:30 p.m.: a woman saw a bright light at an estimated 1-2 miles distance, which dimmed, then split into six objects. The duration of this sighting was estimated at ten minutes.

April 3, Haslett, 10:30 a.m.: a young boy saw two discs 50-60 feet from his home. He snapped a Polaroid photo of one of these, with a smoke trail. The photograph was said to be "good", and the sighting lasted two minutes.

These 47 or more sightings since late August make for fascinating reading, and well exemplify the need for establishing tight communications throughout the State for Michigan MUFON

members. It may not be too late to investigate some of the more recent "high strangeness" reports, and we do know that some of our top investigators have been working on several cases. We hope to have more details in several of these sightings for you in the next newsletter. We also will report to you about some recent Michigan sightings that did not make The National UFO Reporting Center's list, and give you some highlights of the fascinating reports that have come in from elsewhere in the United States recently. Stay tuned!

NATIONAL UFO AWARENESS WEEK

August 12-20, 1995, has been designated UFO AWARENESS WEEK (formerly UFO Information Week) by Michigan's own Ginny Tilly, MUFON International's Director of Public Education. That's a week which includes two weekends to give everyone plenty of opportunities to plan more activities!

Here in Michigan our third annual observance begins with a Kick-Off Rally at Noon on **Saturday, August 12 in Grand Rapids** on the front steps (the sheltered northside!) of the **Gerald R. Ford Federal Building, 110 Michigan St., N.W.** — that's just south of the downtown Ottawa Street exit off I-196. During the following

three + hours we'll listen to a wide variety of speakers; talk with MUFON Field Investigators; as well as enjoy music, poetry, and a skit with UFO themes. In addition, there will be appropriate petitions to be signed, and other ways to express support for continued UFO research. There will also be refreshments, crafts, and some surprises during the afternoon.

For the first time this year we're adding at least one speaker during the week and, hopefully, a screening of several UFO videos. Also, during the weekend we're hosting a picnic/program along the Grand River.

Our informational UFO displays in several local libraries have been well received in the past and you may want to do the same in your own community. Consider also the possibility of scheduling interviews with local news media, especially radio call in shows. We've found these to be extremely successful!

With dozens of press releases being sent out before UFO AWARENESS WEEK, we have always had a very positive response from the media which is eager for valid UFO information. Show your support by bringing some friends to enjoy and to learn more about this fascinating subject! If you'd like to give a 10-20 minute talk or have questions call Ginny at (616) 458-7288.

— contributed by Virginia Tilly

Can't Get There from Here? -- Wait a Hundred Years!

One of the most often noted arguments against the possibility of extraterrestrial visitation to the earth is the "fact" that aliens couldn't have crossed the "millions and millions" of miles of space that separate us from our nearest stellar neighbors. According to the Carl Sagens and other popular scientific writers, Einstein's equations forbid travel above the sacred speed-of-light barrier. Science-fictional and other "visionary" suggestions of "folding space", using cosmic "wormholes" as portals, and travel through other dimensions, including the mind, are just fantasy. Many historians, philosophers of science, and engineers know better than to make such a negative pronouncement, however. Historians might point to formerly "impenetrable" barriers as the speed of sound and the Atlantic Ocean as examples that the human species has in the past found ways to achieve the seemingly impossible. In the late forties, few things artificially made except electromagnetic waves and rumors traveled faster than sound; a man accelerating in an airplane would disintegrate when that threshold was reached.

This sounds like the claim that humans would achieve infinite mass and zero length when c , the speed of light, was attained. Philosophers who study how science and technology proceed would note that major progress is made by those who are able to free their minds from the constraints imposed by the generally-accepted notions of what is possible. These "paradigm-pioneers" who dare to come up with new ways of looking at or doing things usually are laughed at -- at least at first. For example, the man who invented the Xerox copy process met with initial rejection; that he persevered is proven in part by the fact that you're reading this duplicated page. Some people fail to change with the times and hold on to past ways of doing things for too long, with tragic results. Swiss watchmakers failed to adapt to the challenge posed by the quartz movement, with the result that their industry suffered decimation. An ancient example you're sure to want to remember was the failure of the 8th century BC Attic (Athenian) potters to move from their highly-successful Geometric form of pottery to the new "Orientalizing" form of pottery decoration featured attractive bands of decoration replete with more numerous, larger, and more rounded, colorful people and animals, many mythical. This more creative and imaginative style of ceramic decoration made the pottery of Corinth and other Greek centers more interesting to prospective customers and helped create an economic "boom" in the

7th century BC which the more conservative Athenians did not share. In fact, Athens sank into an economic depression for about a century. End of Ancient History 101: the point is, whole cultures can suffer from an inability to react to a challenge to their customary view of what is possible. The applications to the field of ufology and the probable impact of an alien civilization upon late 20th century AD human society are instructive.

And engineers know that c is no lasting barrier to space exploration, any more than the Atlantic Ocean proved to be to 15th century (and probably earlier) European adventurers. In a 1994 lecture published in the March 1995 IEEE Aerospace and Electronic Systems Magazine (pp.3-8) W.M. Brazelton, Jr., of the Harris Corporation, Government Aerospace Systems Division, proposes a "100 Year Vision" that will take us to the stars. Brazelton's article is called "Space Power for an Expanded Vision".

Brazelton proposes a three "Epoch" program which is founded upon an He-3 based nuclear reaction power system that is far cleaner-burning and, Brazelton says, more ecologically-friendly than any power technology today likely to supply future world needs. Brazelton says "the public would support an expanded space program if they understood the specific short term purpose that provides benefits coupled to a longer term vision" (page 3). "Epoch I" in this view, a "minimum near term space program", would build the Space Station and now-planned vehicles to get us back to the moon, where Helium-3 will be mined and

sent back to Earth. The Earth has almost no He-3 due to its magnetic field, but Brazelton figures there's a thousand-year supply on our nearest neighbor. "One space shuttle load of 25 metric tons will electrically power the US for one year", Brazelton claims (p.4). This could make the Earth energy self-sufficient by this "safe, low-radiation, nuclear alternative". The author sees this resource and the infrastructure created in space to acquire it as having "the same economic effects that the railroad to the West and modern highways have had on our current culture; wherever they touched, prosperity followed" (p.5).

"Epoch II is a manned tour and exploration of the solar system" by vehicles "propelled by [a] Helium-3 nuclear-fusion-powered electrical drive system" which "will probably have its origin in ion, particle beam, laser or matter/antimatter annihilation technologies of today" (p. 6). This deep solar system exploration would occur within the approximate 2020-2040 time frame, and would include observations of nearby star systems with optical telescopes and Radio Frequency sensors more powerful than our current best. In Epoch III a large interstellar vehicle will leave our solar system to explore a planet in a likely neighboring star system. Brazelton envisions "a fractional light speed spacecraft of perhaps a million pounds that is powered by a Helium-3 nuclear-fusion-powered matter/antimatter annihilation propulsion system" (p. 7). Accelerating (and for the second half of the journey decelerating) at only two feet per second per second, Brazelton computes that the spacecraft's mass would increase only 19% at

peak velocity. How about the powerplant? Brazelton believes "the power required would be about 60,000 pounds of thrust, or about the same as a single jet engine of today's large commercial aircraft" (p. 7), and the round-trip journey would take only about 37 years, including five years for exploring various planets. Brazelton thinks that "other scenarios could shorten this mission to about 20 years" (p. 7).

Now, some who read this article may be uncomfortable with Brazelton's rosy portrayal of Helium-3 nuclear fusion. I for one am unsettled by his vision of lunar "strip-mining" which exports our tendency to abuse the environment to new worlds. But the point is, that even allowing for the moment that the speed of light may be a practical constraint to our current technological "reach", it is not a barrier to human interstellar exploration. Utilizing technologies known or conceivable within today's scientific paradigms, engineers are seriously proposing, in mainstream organizational publications¹, that travel between the stars is feasible. If we can in fact "get there from here", it is incontestable that non-terrestrial races could do the reverse, and could have been doing it for centuries. And again, this

¹ IEEE Aerospace and Electronic Systems Magazine is published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Inc., a worldwide professional organization. Interestingly, Phil Klass is on its list of "Distinguished Lecturers" for this year, providing a lecture titled "Bringing UFO's Down to Earth" to IEEE member groups.

conclusion does not need the historically-certain development of future, faster, more efficient ways of doing things that will come from the next generations of "paradigm pioneers". The next time you hear some "scientist" mouthing the mantra that "ETs can't have come to Earth because they can't get here from there", tell that person to read Brazelton's article.

Who We Are

Linda and Bill Murphy have been in MUFON for approximately three years, and have been Co-Section Directors for Ingham, Eaton, and Clinton Counties for about the last year. Bill's a MUFON Research Specialist in History and a Senior Project Engineer at General Motors, working in Quality. He has been an Adjunct Faculty Member at Lansing Community College since 1976, teaching courses in Egyptology, Archaeology, Humanities, and Quality Control. He's currently Treasurer of the Central Michigan Society of the Archaeological Institute of America. Linda's a Senior at Michigan State University, majoring in Electrical Engineering with a strong interest in calculus-based Physics. Our own experiences have made us very conscious of the problems which abductees face. We attended last year's MUFON Symposium in Austin, Texas, and there met Walt Andrus, Richard Haines, and Jeff Sainio. We have had the good fortune to work with these gentlemen on a couple of Lansing-area cases. (Bill also met Phil Klass, with whom we have not worked since.) We had already planned to go to the Seattle Symposium before we accepted the responsibility of interim Co-State

Directors from Mr. Andrus. As Bill is currently scheduled to work on a project at the General Motors' Oklahoma City plant, we will be moving to Oklahoma for at least two years. Though we will turn over our responsibilities as Co-State Directors by January 1, 1996 or sooner, we have a strong interest in helping get Michigan MUFON reorganized and back on track. There are many good, talented people in our State organization, and the subject is extremely important to us all. We look forward to working with you these next eight months.

'Impossibility' thinkers

"Everything that can be invented, has been invented."

Charles Duell, head of U.S. Patent Office, 1899

"Who the h-- wants to hear actors talk?"

Harry Warner, president of Warner Bros. In 1927, at the time talking pictures were just coming on the screen.

"Algebra and Aliens" -- How Useful are Statistical Studies in Ufology?

PART ONE

About every November we get inundated by a flood of political polls. For most of the year, however, we endure a variety of polls and surveys, dutifully reported in the news media, and used by businesses, governmental agencies, and television stations to conduct their affairs. But these samplings of opinion don't always reflect reality. For instance, polls of Nicaraguan voters gave no hint of the feeling that would throw out the Sandinista government. In any American election, there are generally a few "surprises" caused by last-minute developments that week-old opinion samplings could not take into account. Whatever opinion-research for the Coca-Cola people did that resulted in the "New Coke" formula, must have been faulty. And no matter what other evidence is shown me to the contrary, I can't believe that the television-watching public really would rather watch "infomercials" all weekend!

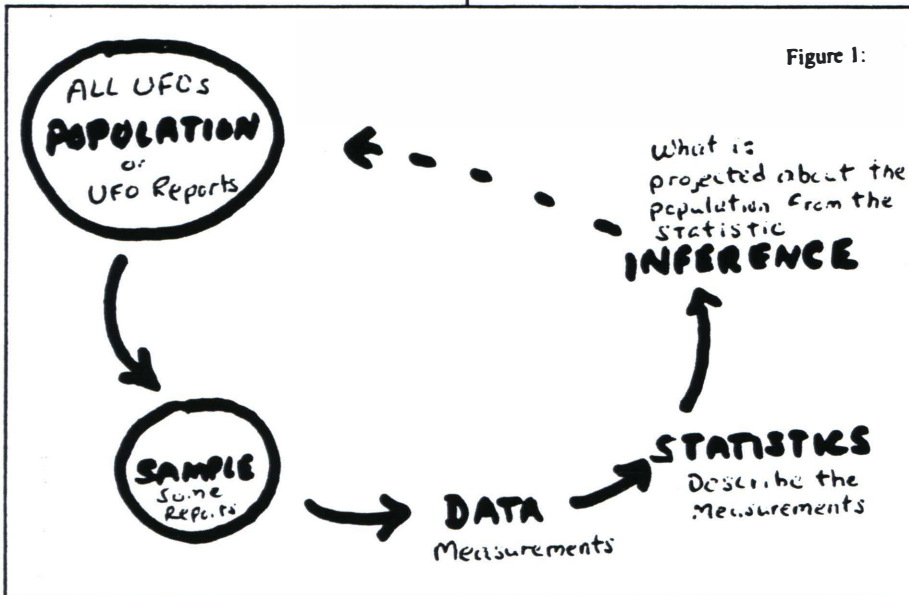
This fact that polls and statistical samplings don't always accurately reflect reality applies also to the field of ufology. According to Allan Hendry (The UFO Handbook), there are two directions that ufologists have followed in studying UFOs. One tack is to wait for the really "big" case, that will prove UFOs exist once and for all. This search for the "Case of the Century" characterizes some of the thought behind Budd Hopkins' and Walt Andrus' comments on the "Linda Cortile case". The other tack is to examine the mass of UFO data, much of it past information, for meaningful patterns. We're going to look at this second direction here, the statistical side of ufology. We're not going to

go heavily into the mathematics and the theory of probability, but we will try to suggest some of the problems involved in this sort of statistics. The purpose of this article is to explore what we can safely assume from such statistical efforts. Along the way, we will mention some of the statistical studies of UFOs that you might want to examine for yourself. This installment will talk generalities: next time we'll focus on those major UFO studies, their strengths, weaknesses, and uses.

Statistical inference, or the way we make educated guesses from less than total information, proceeds by several fairly simple steps. First of all, there is a "population" -- the totality of whatever it is we want to study (see illustration figure 1). It can

Now, usually we can't directly measure all of a population -- we can't ask all likely U.S. voters questions; it would take too much time, for instance. We don't even know all the sightings of UFOs, because a small percentage of those sightings actually get reported. So, for various reasons, usually including money and time, we have to content ourselves with measuring only a part of that total population. This is called a sample, the part of the population that we can deal with. Data is the measurements we get from our sample. For example, let's say we want to find out about the size of a UFO, from witness observations. We look at a sample of UFO reports, and write down when a witness comes up with a statement on size: "fifteen feet in diameter"; "forty feet in diameter"; "thirty feet"; and so forth. We next

averaged 30 feet". That is what a "statistic" does: it summarizes the data from a sample, and it is more useful than just repeating the data individually. Another example of the difference between data and statistics would be baseball items in the newspaper. Box scores telling us that Cecil Fielder went two-for-four in a particular game, which was won by the Tigers 6 to 5, are data; Cecil Fielder's batting average and the team's won-lost percentage are statistics, giving us more insight into what the player and the team are doing over the long haul. Now in the case of the UFO diameters, we have an average of 30 feet from our sample. But is the average UFO diameter really 30 feet? That's a leap of inference: it's what our sample said, but how well does it reflect the whole population of UFOs? We have to make some assumptions here, and statisticians employ some probability rules to help them make these educated guesses.



be the population of all Grand Am automobiles produced in a particular year, it can be the population of all likely American voters in a particular national election, it may be all sightings of unidentified flying objects in the U.S. over a ten year period.

need to summarize these pieces of information: it doesn't make sense to say, "Well, reports of UFO size include 15, 40, and 30 feet". So, we take an average of all our separate pieces of data, and come up with, say, "UFO diameters from this sample



The thing to remember here is that at every stage of this process honest, and sometimes not so honest, mistakes can happen.

-- For instance, did our sample fairly represent the population?

-- Was our sample large enough to give us a real sense of the population's characteristics? You obviously don't bowl one game and take that as your bowling average, nor is a batter's batting average computed from only one at-bat. But how many in a sample is enough?

-- Also, if a sample of UFO sizes isn't selected randomly, we might get a false notion of the "real" size of UFOs. Estimates of UFO size from Texans might be exaggerated, I suppose! It's also possible that some researchers might "throw out" reports of small UFOs, from the standpoint that they're too small to be inhabited and therefore can't be UFOs. On the other hand, we'll see next time that some groups of people actually seem to be more careful than others.

-- Did we get accurate measurements? For instance, if our size information includes statements such as "It was about 15 feet in diameter", "between 30 and 40 feet long", "It was 37 feet wide", and "it was bigger than a house", we're going to have a hard time averaging these estimates. For one thing, the precision expressed in these estimates varies widely, and I for one would wonder how precise "37 feet" is meant to be. For another matter, "diameter", "long", and "wide" do not necessarily mean the same thing, and when someone says "bigger than a house", probably more than just one dimension is being implied.

-- We also must guard against "straining" our data to "prove"

1. *National Sightings Yearbook 1992* by P. Ferrughelli, National Sighting Research Center. © 1993 by Paul Ferrughelli, 60 Allen Drive, Wayne, New Jersey 07470.
2. *The 1992 Canadian UFO Survey*, compiled by Chris A. Rutkowski, Ufology Research of Manitoba, Box 1918, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3C 3R2.

The *National Sightings Yearbook 1992* (NSY92) uses data from 1441 sightings from 1986 through 1992 (7 years), for a claimed total of 1,441 sightings. Sighting reports were obtained from a variety of sources, including MUFON State Directors and State Section Directors (616 reports), primarily from the UFO Filter Center, Francis Ridge), *MUFON UFO Journal* (20 reports), *UFO Newsmagazine* (359 reports), *Center for UFO Studies* (70 reports), and others (176 reports).

The *1992 Canadian UFO Survey* (92CUS) uses data from 723 sightings from 1989 through 1992. The data "was solicited from all known and active investigators and researchers in Canada." The reports came from "investigator's files, press clippings, and the files of the National Research Council of Canada."

Sighting Reports by Year

Year	MSY92	92CUS
1987	171	—
1988	293	—
1989	269	141
1990	205	194
1991	220	165
1992	187	223
TOTAL	1355	723

Figure 2: From Appendix C of the excellent Austin Field Investigator's Training Guide.

Figure 3: Table from Appendix C of Austin Field Investigator's Training Guide.

• "Cycle" time of peaks:	>40 months	N/A
• Last peak year of sightings:	1988	N/A
• "Best" time of day: For CE:	7:00pm-midnight 9:00pm-10:00pm	7:00pm-midnight N/A
• "Best" time of year: For CE:	Oct. Jan. Mar Jan-Mar, Sep-Oct	Apr. Aug N/A
• "Best" day of week: For CE:	Tue-Thu Wed	N/A N/A
• Most likely duration: For CE:	≤ 10 min. (65%) ≤ 10 min. (68%)	≤ 10 min. (>77%) N/A
• Reports describing objects: For CE:	55% 88%	32% N/A
• % "Close Encounters":	21%	9%
• Explained/not explained:	N/A	45%
• Conclusion = "Unknown":	N/A	22%

something it can't prove. For instance, can we really use any average we get of UFO size from witness reports to refer to the UFOs themselves? This may seem like a fine point, but the average size we get is only an average of estimates, and not an average of the actual diameters themselves, which may or may not be accurately reported by the witnesses, and whose very existence is not accepted by all. Another example of this: late last year I heard of a study which supposedly "proved" it was just as easy for a woman to get elected to public office as it was for a man. The inference was that women had "arrived" or become fully equal with men, at least in the political sphere. Now, I would be willing to bet that this study was based on the outcome of elections in which a man and a woman were pitted against each other. I would also be even more willing to bet that

the study did not and probably could not factor in whether it was relatively more difficult for a woman to get nominated in the first place for public office, whether or not the women so chosen had to be more qualified than their male counterparts to even get selected to run, something that has been accepted as fact by conservatives and liberals alike. The point is that this study did not "prove" that any woman has an equal chance with any man to get elected to public office. In the UFO sphere, we must beware of people using facts about "apples" to prove theories about "oranges".

Enough theory and made-up examples: let's look at one UFO study to conclude this first part of the article. The Austin, Texas, MUFON Field Investigator's Training Guide has an appendix given over to "UFO Report

Statistics". From the accompanying portion of that section, we see that two surveys were used, the National Sightings Yearbook 1992, and The 1992 Canadian UFO Survey (see illustration figure 2). The purpose was to evaluate the truth of some commonly-held beliefs about UFOs, including the percentage of misidentified reports, the best time of day, the best day of the week, and the best time of the year to see UFOs, the most likely duration of a sighting, the percentage of Close Encounters, the "wave cycle" between UFO "flaps", and the percentage of unreported cases (see Table, figure 3). Problems in this analysis of these two studies include the fact that not all the reports were of equal value in the two surveys; reports from the Center for UFO Studies, for example, could be expected to be more complete and accurate than those gleaned from newspaper clippings. Also, there were several places where information was not available in one or the other study to speak to a question such as the best time of the week for a Close Encounter, and one really wonders what to make of National Sightings Yearbook's finding that Wednesday was the best time of the week for a Close Encounter. How much "better" was it than, say, a Friday? And what would that mean? Generally, the Austin group recognizes the uncertainty that results from such information, and makes cautious conclusions. Next time we'll look at the Blue Book files, Blue Book Special Report #14, the April 1975 questionnaire sent to members of the American Astronomical Society, and other such studies.

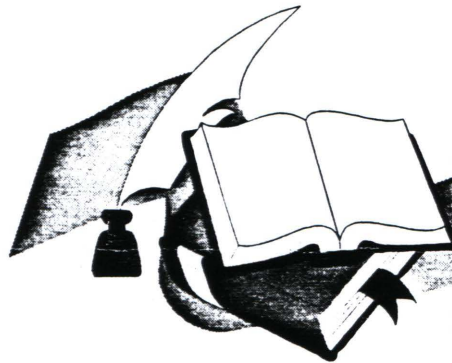
'Impossibility' Thinkers II

There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of the atom"

____ Robert Millikan, Nobel Prize Winner in physics, 1923

"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities -- brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."

____ John Gardner



BOOK REVIEWS

The following reviews are of both recently-published and older books. We think that some people might find analyses of some of the "classic" or important older works just as valuable as reviews of what's just come out. "Contact" seems to be an underlying theme of the following reviews; next time we'll review Kevin Randle's book on UFO Crashes, Mark Carlotto's book on the Martian anomalies, Gary Kinder's book on Billy Meier,

Ken Ring's The Omega Project, and Karl Jung's treatise on flying saucers.

Alien Contacts and Abductions: The Real Story From the Other Side. By Jenny Randles. New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc., 1994.

This is an interesting book on several counts. The history of alien-human contact is valuable, particularly because Randles focuses more on Europe and the world at large than just on the United States. Thus U.S. readers will get another perspective upon the subject. Randles' attempt to classify the different reported alien types is helpful, too, and her efforts to identify some kind of purpose to the alien abduction phenomenon make for thought-provoking reading. Most interesting to me was Randles' evolution of thought regarding this facet of ufology; gradually, reluctantly, but firmly, the British researcher has come to believe in the reality of UFO abductions.

Some of the more intriguing points I noted in the book follow:

On page 107 Randles lists five cases where the abductee was observed apparently during the abduction experience itself. These cases seem to point out to a "mental level" for at least some abductions, as the abductees were observed to be in a catatonic, trance-like, or apparently drunken state. Randles also speaks (pp. 108f) of a consistent set of cases in which abductees are seen to "teleport" away from right in front of astonished witnesses. Randles devotes some space to the history of "implants" and sees the evidence here as questionable (pp. 129f). Since 1987 there has been "a barrage of major cases, all involving alien contact", Randles notes, but also recounts earlier cases such as the 1969

Ashland, Nebraska, abduction of 22-year old police officer Herbert Schirmer, who was told by his aliens that they "intended that we believe in us [the aliens], but not too much" (pp. 143ff). Randles puzzles over statements like this and the vague or silly responses that other aliens give: one instance she mentions is a case where the "foreigners" told a woman that they came from "a small galaxy near Neptune", a statement she immediately recognized as absurd (p. 158). Benefits from the visits? Randles notes that two supposed cures for cancer transpired years ago, but "Neither have seemingly produced the sort of data that scientists could work with" (p. 147). However, the aliens have been giving ecological warnings since at least 1964, even before it was a fashionable cause; pages 150-153 should be consulted for these.

Some debunkers say stories of alien contact are merely fantasy, a kind of wish-fulfillment. Randles attacks this on several fronts: for one thing, some "macho-type" men tell stories which certainly do not seem to be intended to bolster their own egos (pp. 156f), and the contrasts are many between recent contacts and the "contactee" wave of the 1950s.

Are there any "threads" or patterns that run through the at-first bewildering melange of visitation-stories? Randles notes that there were at first some geographical differences in alien type reports; "Nordics" were appearing in Europe and "grays" in America; the U.S. seems to have exported their type to the Old World, and the "Nordics" have lost out — there even seem to be some intermediary types popping up in Europe now. Randles thinks that American abduction cases are more numerous because of the U.S. infatuation with regressive hypnosis to get at "blocked" memories; that she

does not approve of this is shown by her having successfully gotten a voluntary moratorium on hypnotic investigation of cases by many European ufologists. Jenny Randles deals with the problem that alien medical technology hasn't changed very much over the last few years (see pp. 168f); and she also shows that attempts to prove that the witnesses are "fantasy-prone" have failed "to the extent that at a seminar to discuss such results in June 1992 one of the pioneers of the idea, Australian case worker Keith Basterfield, publicly withdrew the theory from consideration" (p. 174). "Similarly, Dr. Eddie Bullard, an American folklorist, has tried very hard to show that abduction stories adapt with time as folklore does. But his work into hundreds of cases (easily the most in-depth ever carried out) has utterly failed to support this view. He has no answers" (pp. 174f).

In the end Randles has no answers, either. She is able to dispose of the notion that "aliens couldn't get here from there" in her concluding two pages (181f); see the article on page 1 of this newsletter for further on that. Randles is certain of one thing, however: there is a reality, some reality, to stories of alien contact. We aren't just making them up.

Intruders: The Incredible Visitations at Copley Woods. By Budd Hopkins. New York: Ballantine Books, 1987.

Kathie Davis (Debbie Jordan) shared a mysterious and frightening experience in July of 1983 with her mother and two friends. After reading his book Missing Time and noting Hopkins' request for those suspecting they had had similar experiences to contact him, Davis began working with the artist-ufologist. As time passed and their

contacts, aided by regressive hypnosis, continued, a series of abduction events emerged and Hopkins' investigation uncovered several more relatives and neighbors who seem to have been sucked into the abduction maelstrom. Particularly disturbing were the experiences of Kathie's two young sons, and the memory evidence, with some apparent physical corroboration, of aliens extracting ova or fetuses from Ms. Davis and her later seeing some of these children. Along the way we learn how Hopkins came to realize that abductions did not stop with the onset of hypnotherapy, as he had staunchly believed at first, the "wise baby" makes its first appearance in abductology, and Hopkins' thesis of a vast genetic experiment for mysterious alien purposes develops before our eyes.

Certainly Hopkins does make mistakes. Philip Klass has rightly pointed out elsewhere (see his UFO-Abductions -- A Dangerous Game) that Hopkins neglected to have a dramatic backyard area of denuded soil analyzed for microbiological cause, and the odd but somewhat similar "fairy rings" are results of fungal attacks on soil. Hopkins' employment of regressive hypnosis and the "buddy" system on the one hand to bring out the scary buried details of abductions, and on the other hand to comfort the abductee forced to relive these experiences, don't always work well. We have already implied Hopkins' mistake in assuring Kathie that abductions stop when the process of retrieving their details begins. However, Mr. Hopkins was a pioneer in this still-young field. I for one have every reason to believe that, along with Dr. Leo Sprinkle, Budd Hopkins may be perhaps the most empathetic to the people he tries to help. For after all, it is people who are subjected to this gross violation of their sense of reality. Whatever its purpose, or whatever human characterizations we make as to whether that purpose is benign, evil, or

more likely some combination of good and bad in human terms, the most certain common affect these experiences have on the witnesses is to shatter their paradigms, their accepted construction of how the cosmos operates. Read Hopkins' "Note to the Reader" at the beginning of the book for an enlightening illustration of this phenomenon: much of the world's population could not believe the Holocaust. Hopkins compares this inability to that of modern scientists unable to seriously consider the mass of evidence that something profoundly unsettling is happening. "I just cannot believe it" as Justice Felix Frankfurter said of the details he heard about the Nazi death camps — not that the gruesome tales could not be true, but simply that he could not comprehend them.

I understand the feeling. As I was reading this book I found myself uncomfortable and searching for explanations other than what Hopkins was developing. And this in spite of my own background. Some will find the chapters dealing with other abductees' stories more difficult to deal with than the now-familiar general lines of the Kathie Davis story. Some will note that Hopkins tends to collect abductees whose cases seem to fall into a similar category of negative experiences and frightening conclusions, while Leo Sprinkle's contactees usually have had a better time of it and Dr. John Mack's experiencers evolve from often painful and traumatic episodes to insights of spiritual transformation and an elevated purpose to the whole phenomenon.. What is going on here? Hopkins himself has given a sage estimation of the problem:

"rather than fitting into a predictably anthropomorphic schema of good and evil, gods and devils (which is, after all, the basic framework of both psychological fantasy and popular

fiction), the UFO occupants as described exist in a strangely mixed, nearly incomprehensible ethical world. Their puzzling but consistent morality nowhere intersects with the black-and-white certainties of popular fantasy and imagination. Their psychology, if one can use the term, does not make any more sense to us than human psychology apparently makes to them. The image that remains is one of two different intelligences that lack a common plane of understanding. But there is yet another unlikely factor here — the technologically superior group apparently views itself as more genuinely needy than the more "primitive" culture. One simply cannot reconcile the idea of kindly, helpful, all-powerful "Space Brothers" — a science fiction cliché now dear to spiritualist cults — with the ethically complicated reality of these unsettling UFO accounts. But it is equally impossible to reconcile the familiar image of "Space Invaders," swooping down upon us to conquer and colonize our planet, with the long-standing pattern of subtle and covert UFO interactions with our people. By any standard of comparison, the UFO phenomenon as it has been described seems less like a simplistic product of popular fantasy than it does a highly complex, morally ambiguous and self-contained external reality. A reality, I should add, that none of us understands" (pages 279f).

Kathie Davis has written a new book, which we hope to review in the near future. But Intruders deserves to be read by anyone who wishes to understand the history of abduction studies or indeed the wider world of ufology. Like it or not, the subject is likely to remain mysterious — unless and until the aliens change their tactics and end the uncertainty once and for all.

Abductions: A Dangerous Game. By Philip J. Klass. New York: Prometheus Press, 1988.

"This book is dedicated to those who will needlessly bear mental scars for the rest of their lives because of the foolish fantasies of a few."

Thus aviation and technology writer and arch-skeptic Philip Klass begins his examination of the abduction controversy. Budd Hopkins has characterized Klass as one who has "created an atmosphere of ridicule around anyone describing such a traumatic UFO encounter. According to these 'skeptics' complex beliefs, such an event is absolutely impossible; therefore anyone reporting such an event is by default either a liar or somehow mentally deranged. One recognizes this cruel tactic from the classic male defense in rape cases, in which the victim must of necessity be either a liar or seducer." Klass quotes this characterization on page 165 of his own book, most of the rest of which seems bent upon proving the truth of Hopkins' statements. If an abductee doesn't "go public", Klass pities him or her. Abductees who do have the courage to speak out are hoaxers, or bereft of their senses. Though Klass disparages the unscientific approach of others, this science writer's work seems a pure example of poor research.

Klass' book purports to give a review of the abduction phenomenon from the Hills through Kathie Davis and other events of 1987. Phil does not mention the Vilas Boas story until the end, and then only briefly, and inaccurately -- could this be because it does not square well with his preconceived notions about how the Hills started this up till 1987 almost completely U.S. phenomenon? Of course, that's possibly unfair to Phil and sounds like something he'd do. Klass' ad hominem attacks recall Stanton T.

Friedman's observation that the "noisy negativists" seek at all costs to damage reputations if they can't damage reports. Klass tarnishes peoples' reputations when it suits him, and occasionally rehabilitates them, again when it suits him to make a point. For example, see page 92 on the motivations of Kathie Davis:

"Hopkins' invitation to Kathie to visit New York, coming from a famous (and handsome) artist, UFO investigator, and author, must have been an exciting event in her then drab and not very happy life, especially when it would be her first trip to the Big Apple. Kathie is described by Hopkins as a large, broad-shouldered, big-boned woman who at the time was unemployed and recently divorced, with two small children, living with her parents and undergoing group therapy." Klass tosses in a bit of innuendo about Kathie's claims of medical illnesses right after this, and upon other occasions in his book. But on pages 184 he warms to this "remarkably candid young woman" who cannot bring herself to refer to her UFO experiences as anything other than dreams. Klass is hard on Hopkins, the "head guru" (p. 87) or "Typhoid Mary" (p. 191) of the field, prone to "fantasies of the mind" (p. 66). Klass "sets up" Dr. James E. McDonald as "one of the nation's most ardent and respected UFO-proponents" in one sentence, and the next tells us that he committed suicide (p. 88). Several times Klass mentions the vast amounts of money that can be made in this field; he easily confuses what may be conviction based upon experience with a very deep psychological need to believe in UFOs, and he doesn't spare all us MUFON investigators, either, from disparaging generalizations (pp. 126, 182, 157).

Generally Klass' chapters seem short on checkable facts, a problem he complains about because abductees often remain anonymous (I thought

they sought fame?). I also question whether his conclusions naturally flow from the facts that he does report. For instance, he seems to think that since the experts early on thought abductees' stories were "too weird", they were untrue. To me it may be more logical to believe that we have here a classic case of the human difficulty in dealing with information so at variance with the expected (see comments upon Budd Hopkins' "Note to the Reader" in the Intruders review, and elsewhere in this Newsletter). Klass (and his favored "experts") call this statement by the "experienced psychologist" Dr. Elizabeth Slater an "erroneous presumption":

"if one considers the skepticism and disrepute that is typically encountered with reports of UFO sightings, then not only are we characterizing UFO abduction as inherently traumatic, but we must add that it would likely carry social stigmatization as well. Moreover, assuming for the sake of argument that abduction has actually occurred and that presumably its occurrence would be very rare, it then becomes something that cannot be readily shared with others as a means of obtaining emotional support" (Slater, quoted on p. 115). Klass makes much of an important experiment conducted in 1977 by Dr. Alvin H. Lawson, John De Herrera, and Dr. William C. McCall which compared the stories presumed abductees told and those told under regressive hypnosis by people who were instructed to *imagine* they had been abducted. The experiment, according to Klass, cast doubt upon the physical reality of abduction experiences. Other researchers view the results differently from Klass, who accuses Lawson of rephrasing his original position under pressure from the ufology sector. Interestingly, Lawson made his first supposed "cave in to the nuts" at the American Psychological Association conference in Toronto on August 28, 1978 (see p. 56). This is hardly a pro-UFO group!

One would think that Lawson would have chosen a slightly different place for a pro-abduction shift.

Klass does score some points in his book, however. Regarding the Travis Walton case, if Klass' facts are correct, Walton's friend Mike Rogers had powerful incentives to concoct some kind of story to get himself and his woodcutting crew out of their financial and legal predicaments. Unfortunately, for the full story of Klass' finding in this and other major cases you've got to go elsewhere than to this specifically abduction-related book. Phil, however, thoughtfully mentions the appropriate book's title a couple of times, especially at the very end of UFO-Abductions, so you'll know where next to spend your money. Klass does catch ufologist Dr. Ron Westrum in an inaccurate conclusion on Dr. Elizabeth Slater's findings on the nine abductees she studied for Hopkins, Bruce Maccabee, and others in 1981 through 1983 (see p. 117). Klass well describes Whitley Streiber's early "flip-flops" on the truth of his stories (p. 128). This is enlightening because lately Streiber has seemed to "wobble" on the actuality of his own alien experiences, if media stories are accurate. What Klass repeats from others on Temporal Lobe Epilepsy (see p. 136) might be valuable. His comments on proceedings at the 1980 MUFON Symposium should be reviewed, but probably in conjunction with those of other reporters. Klass does make valid points about how people can become "contaminated" by contact with others in support groups, and suggests that the value of data gathered during interviews may be compromised by such participation. Investigators may have to make hard choices about whether the data or the support is to be preferred. Hopkins here and elsewhere has made mistakes, which Klass does not hesitate to point out, perhaps even magnify, for the reader's benefit. Mistakes do occur in

any new field, however: why should abductology be any different? Some readers will find amusing Klass' note (from another authority, p. 61) that psychologists and psychiatrists aren't particularly adept at recognizing deception.

In the end, this uncertainty may be just as true today as in 1988, when Klass' book appeared. We cannot "prove", and usually cannot "disprove" any one case by means acceptable to most scientists. I begin to suspect that non-abductees may never be able to understand the abduction experience, whatever that is or may ultimately prove to be. The best the research community at large may be able to do is more like statistics -- you look for patterns in the data to see where the general phenomenon, or population, is or is going. The weight of evidence, rather than any "case of the century", may be the source of science's finally taking a serious interest in abductions. It's instructive that the British ufologist Jenny Randles, whom Klass has treated with some respect in his book, has recently "gone over" to believe in the essential reality of abductions. May we wonder whether there's hope for Phil? In light of his rhetoric, it seems hard to believe this could happen. But as the previous book reviews have shown, this particular field is so complex and full of surprises, who knows?

New Members

Michigan MUFON would like to welcome the following new members into the National organization:

William M. Brown, Plymouth,
Wayne County, Field
Investigator-in-Training

Sarah Davis, Brown City, St.
Clair County, Associate Member

Dominic Sindy, Muskegon,
Muskegon County, Field
Investigator-in-Training

Next Time

In our next issue we'll have plenty on the Seattle Symposium, more information about meetings and meeting places, Section Director and officer positions, and updates on plans for Field Investigator Training. There will be many more brief sighting reports from around the country, and somewhat more in-depth information on several Michigan cases. Articles will include another installment of the look at statistics in ufology, plus the book reviews. Look for some cartoons, as well!

and send it to Bill and Linda Murphy, 3639 Stoneleigh Drive, Lansing, Michigan 48910, along with the form below, or a copy.

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