Book Reviews

Review Symposium

The UFO Handbook. By Allan Hendry. Doubleday/Dolphin Books, Garden City, N.Y., 1979. 297 pp. Paperback, $8.95.

Reviewed by Philip J. Klass

The UFO Handbook is one of the most significant and useful books on the subject ever published. It is the result of Allan Hendry's relatively brief experience as the chief investigator for J. Allen Hynek's Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS), where Hendry personally investigated 1,307 UFO incidents during a 15-month period from mid-1976 to late 1977. The book is subtitled "A Guide to Investigating, Evaluating and Reporting UFO Sightings," and it fully lives up to this claim. But it also could be subtitled "The Disillusionment of a Would-Be UFO-Believer."

In the book's Foreword, Hynek says that Hendry "has arrived at some very striking and unexpected results, and has exploded or thrown into serious question some of the 'instinctive' conclusions of even very experienced UFO investigators, myself included." This is a remarkable admission from a man who has himself spent more than 30 years in investigating UFO cases, including more than two decades as a consultant to the U.S. Air Force.

Hynek admits that his long experience in the field had prompted him to "recognize the importance of finding out just to what extent misidentification, wishful thinking, emotions, and hallucination enter into the UFO problem, [but] I regretfully failed to make such a study. Allan Hendry is the first to attempt such an important evaluation." It would have been more accurate if Hynek had qualified his statement to read: "Allan Hendry is the first *UFO-proponent* to attempt such an important evaluation."

Hendry writes that he first became interested in UFOs in 1972, after meeting

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Hynek, and that he subsequently wrote "materials on UFOs for Dr. Hynek," later submitting a prototype of a UFO newsletter that he suggested CUFOS publish. In 1976, Hynek hired Hendry to publish such a newsletter and to serve as CUFOS chief investigator. The first issue of the newsletter, *International UFO Reporter*, was published in November 1976, and it soon established itself as the most respected UFO periodical in the United States, if not in the entire world of UFOlogy. Hendry abandoned his career as a commercial artist to accept the assignment. He had had some scientific training, having minored in astronomy at the University of Michigan.

Prior to joining CUFOS, Hendry admits, his knowledge of the UFO mystery was based entirely on secondhand and thirdhand accounts in books and periodicals, which, as I too learned from experience, sound much more credible in print than when the cases are rigorously investigated. Hendry acknowledges that he was intrigued at the prospect of being able to learn more about the UFO mystery through firsthand investigations. And learn he did, as so many other UFOlogists do not.

Of the 1,307 UFO cases that Hendry investigated, he concludes that only 8.6 percent of the incidents defied his efforts to find prosaic explanations and therefore qualify as "genuine" or "true UFOs." Those for which prosaic/earthly explanations were found are referred to as Identified Flying Objects, or IFOs. Even dedicated UFO proponents acknowledge that 80 to 90 percent of all UFO reports turn out to be IFOs, and probably would be willing to settle for Hendry's 8.6 percent figure. After all, even if only 0.01 percent of the 100,000 UFO reports *really* defy prosaic explanation after the most rigorous skeptical investigation, this would confirm the long-standing claims of UFO proponents.

But what will shake the UFO movement is Hendry's candid admission that he is "discouraged about the ability of any investigator to draw the line between all IFO and UFO sightings." Specific cases cited by Hendry demonstrate that gross errors of description are found in eyewitness reports, because the public has been so brainwashed on the subject—he uses the term "emotional climate." And he admits that a number of seemingly mysterious UFO reports were found to be IFOs through "sheer luck" rather than rigorous effort. (Having spent more than 13 years in investigating challenging UFO cases, I fully agree.) This prompts Hendry to pose the crucial question that will bring down the wrath of UFOlogists: "How can I be sure, if my remaining 'UFOs' aren't simply IFOs misperceived (sincerely) to the point of fantasy?"

This has been the basic premise—stated more positively—of those who have been critics of most UFO reports. If Hendry had entered the field as a skeptic, or if he now admitted that he had become a skeptic as a result of his CUFOS experience, his conclusions and book could more easily be dismissed by the UFO proponents. But on the last page of the book, Hendry admits: "Personally, I *want* there to be anomalistic UFOs that defy the laws of physics for the simple reason that it would usher in a new scientific revolution."

That Hendry was able to find prosaic explanations for all but 8.6 percent of the 1,307 cases he investigated, despite this personal bias, is a tribute to his hard work and good sense. But a key question is whether he was able to devote sufficient effort to the seemingly inexplicable UFO reports, considering the large number of reports received—these were encouraged by Hynek's frequent public appeals. Ignoring the time that Hendry spent each month in writing and publishing *International UFO Reporter (IUR)* and assuming he spent *seven days a week*, eight hours a day, in his

investigations, without a single day off in 15 months, Hendry could afford to spend *an average of less than three hours on each case.* My own experience shows that some of the more difficult cases require hundreds of hours of investigatory effort to turn up and demonstrate a prosaic explanation. True, Hendry was able to enlist the aid of other UFOlogists, principally members of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON). But my experience with MUFON suggests that many of its investigators have an overwhelming desire to find unexplainable cases, a desire that dulls investigative rigor.

Nor is there any indication that Hendry's busy schedule allowed him to go back to re-investigate older incidents in the light of new insights, which might have resulted in converting older UFOs into IFOs. Recognizing that Hendry had no prior UFO investigating experience before joining CUFOS, it is hardly surprising that with increased experience his percentage of "genuine UFOs" declined. For example, the average for 1977 was 9 percent. But for the first eight months of 1978 (the only figures for 1978 published so far), the UFO percentage dropped to only 5 percent. The USAF's experience paralleled that of Hendry as it gained investigative insights.

UFO-movement critics, I predict, will charge that Hendry's book is mistitled and ought to be called "The IFO Handbook," because it is devoted largely to discussing UFO cases that proved to be IFOs. But this is what makes it so valuable a handbook for would-be UFO investigators, especially with its excellent photos, which demonstrate how a high-altitude weather balloon, a meteor fireball, or a hot-air balloon, seen in darkness, can generate mysterious-sounding UFO reports. Hendry recognizes that his findings may prompt criticism that he has become a skeptic, or originally was a skeptic posing as a would-be believer. So the author explains that the UFO movement's traditional modus operandi of trying to amass large, impressive numbers of UFO cases, most of which are really IFOs, does not really serve the cause. The large IFO content in the already unmanageable inventory of many tens of thousands of *UFO reports* simply diverts attention from the genuine UFO cases—if any such exist.

Hendry's findings, after his brief tenure as a UFO investigator, seem to have had an impact on Hynek's long-held views. A decade ago, after 20 years of experience in support of the Air Force, Hynek testified during a Congressional hearing: "I did not—and still do not—concern myself with reports which arise from obvious misidentifications by witnesses who are not aware of the many things in the sky today which have a simple, natural explanation. These have little scientific value, except perhaps to a sociologist or an ophthalmologist."

Now, in the Foreword to Hendry's book, Hynek admits that it is "abundantly clear to one seriously engaged in UFO studies that IFOs are a major stumbling block to progress ... unless we alter our methodology and use to the full extent what we learn from close attention to the manner in which IFOs are allowed to masquerade as UFOs because of the desire of the untutored and the wishful thinkers to transform IFOs into UFOs, we shall make little progress. There is little point of continuing the uncritical reporting and recording of IFOs and UFOs." (Only two years earlier, in an Epilogue written for a book based on the script for the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* Hynek had written of "a catalog of some 1,100 cases in which a UFO occupant has been reported," without attempting to assess whether any of these were genuine.

In Chapter 9 of Hendry's book, he discusses the 113 UFO reports that defied prosaic explanation and categorizes them according to their "unexplainability"

(my terminology). One of these categories is called "Near IFOs" and involves cases "that just miss being ascribable to an IFO cause by virtue of one or two anomalistic features." A second category Hendry calls "Problematic UFOs," involving reports "with fundamental difficulties not serious enough to demote them to the exception class (i.e., unreliable), but enough to raise questions about their strength as 'data.'" A third category is "Good UFOs," involving reports that are "still hampered by the possibility of an IFO explanation." Finally, there is the "Best UFOs" category, involving "strong reports with only a minimal chance of a prosaic explanation."

Out of the 113 "UFO" cases, only 20 qualify as "Best" cases, with "only a minimal chance of prosaic explanation," corresponding to only 1.5 percent of the total 1,307 incidents investigated. And 14 of the 20 are "nocturnal lights"—lights in the night sky. Hendry's investigations indicated that at least 93 percent of all nocturnal-light reports submitted to CUFOS had prosaic explanations, and the bulk (70 percent) of the "Best" of the unexplainable cases were of this type. Another 20 percent of the "Best" cases were of the "daylight disc" type, but at least 80 percent of all daylight disc reports submitted to CUFOS during this period turned out to have prosaic explanations.

The remainder of the "Best" cases—two incidents—were "close encounters of the first kind," where the witness estimates the UFO is no more than 500 feet away. But nearly 80 percent of all such CE-I encounters, as they are called, submitted to CUFOS turned out to have prosaic explanations in Hendry's judgment. During the period covered in Hendry's book, CUFOS received only five "close encounters of the *third* kind," in which the principal reports seeing strange-looking creatures associated with a UFO. But Hendry's investigation into these five CE-III reports prompts him to rate them as "problematic"—i.e., of questionable reliability and not deserving of the "Good" or "Best" categorization.

Since Hendry's book suggests that he is a no-nonsense investigator, should the two seemingly unexplainable CE-I "Best" reports be taken at face value as reasonable proof that there is at the root of the UFO mystery an exotic phenomenon that truly defies prosaic explanation? Hendry is not without his blind spots, probably because, as he admits, "I *want* there to be anomalistic UFOs [his italics]." On page 13, Hendry writes: "As UFOs get *close*, however, the chances for simple misidentifications become reduced [his italics]." Yet on page 85, he described a "CE-III incident" in which a mature woman reported seeing a UFO at a sufficiently close distance that she said she could see the silver-colored faces and round heads of the UFO occupants on several successive nights. The woman's husband described the UFO quite differently, as resembling a star. After Hendry's investigation he concluded that the woman had been watching the planet Venus—an explanation she refused to accept.

Hendry's book devotes two chapters to the potential use, and misuse, of radar to try to confirm reports of visual UFO sightings. He cites a case where six witnesses observed a bright light in the night sky through a telescope and called a nearby Naval Air Station to ask if it had an unidentified object on its radar. The radar operator looked and found an unidentified, but weak, "blip." Hendry's investigation prompted him to conclude that the weak blip was due to anomalous radar propagation conditions and that the bright light in the sky was a star. Based on this and similar cases, Hendry cautions readers against jumping to the conclusion that an unidentified radar blip automatically confirms a visual sighting. (In my book *UFOs Explained*, published in 1974, this was stated as "UFOlogical Principle #9: Whenever a light is sighted in the night skies that is believed to be a UFO and

this is reported to a radar operator, who is asked to search his scope for an unknown target, almost invariably an 'unknown' target will be found.")

Yet in the spring of 1978, Hendry investigated a "radar-visual" UFO incident that had occurred at a navy facility near Ocala, Florida, and was later featured as a "UFO of High Merit" in the June issue of *IUR*. Hendry acknowledged that the bright planets Venus and Jupiter might have played a role in the incident and that the case had "the same major drawbacks" that weakened other "radar-visual" cases.

Subsequently, Robert Sheaffer (vice-chairman of CSICOP's UFO Subcommittee) investigated the same case and asked for my assistance on the radar aspects, as I have often asked him for aid on astronomical matters. On February 4, 1979, I talked with the navy radar operator, Timothy Collins, tape-recorded our interview for accuracy, and gave Sheaffer a verbatim transcript of key portions. Sheaffer wrote an article, published in the April 1979 issue of *Second Look*, which indicated that the starlike object seen over a tower being used to calibrate a Navy radar was the planet Jupiter and that Hendry's account of the incident contained some errors in terms of what had, or had not, been reported by radar operator Collins.

Hendry responded with an article published in the May *Second Look* in which he sharply criticized both Sheaffer and me, implying that I had not accurately reported to Sheaffer what I had been told by radar operator Collins. Hendry wrote: "If Collins had told me the same story that Klass indicates he told *him*, I would never have run this case as a true anomaly." I promptly wrote to Hendry, on May 12, proposing that this important issue could be easily resolved if he and I were to exchange copies of our tape-recorded interviews with radar operator Collins. I offered to supply him "with a complete, unexpurgated copy of my tape-recorded interview on February 4, 1979, with Collins, providing you agree to supply me with copies of your tape-recorded interviews with Collins." Hendry declined to accept my proposal.

Hendry did send a copy of his tape-recorded interview to *Second Look*, with a letter saying that he would not send me a copy because I would "resort now to the same propagandist twists which he [Klass] applied to his own conversation with Collins." I replied on May 19, asking: "How can you honestly charge me with 'propaganda twists' of my conversation with Collins when you yourself have not even heard what Collins told me, and you reject the opportunity to hear for yourself." Hendry has never replied.

At the end of *The UFO Handbook*, Hendry lists a bibliography of UFO books and published papers, presumably a list of recommended reading. The list includes *Beyond Earth: Man's Contact with UFOs*, by Ralph and Judy Blum. The book, published in the spring of 1974, includes a prediction by the authors that "by 1975 the government will release definite proof that extraterrestrials are watching us." The list includes the book *The Humanoids*, by Charles Bowen, devoted entirely to reports of encounters with strange-looking creatures that allegedly fly in UFOs. But Hendry's bibliography has no mention of any of the three books written by the late Donald H. Menzel, world-famous astronomer and UFO skeptic. Nor did Hendry list either of my two UFO books, also expressing a skeptical viewpoint. One possible explanation for this "oversight" is that Hendry would rather that his readers not know how many of his own findings had earlier been published by these "Ogres of UFOlogy."

Hendry may believe that his UFOlogical education is complete, but I predict that the most illuminating phase will occur when he reads the reactions of UFO-

movement leaders to *The UFO Handbook*. Hendry concludes his book with a warning: "Unless we develop *drastically* [his italics] new ideas and methodologies for the study of baffling UFO cases and the human context in which they occur, we will watch the next thirty years of UFO report-gathering simply mirror the futility and frustration of the last thirty years."

Will the leaders of the UFO movement, Hynek included, accept Hendry's sage advice? Will they adopt more rigorous investigative techniques and a far less credulous attitude toward tall tales? Will the leopard change its spots?

Reviewed by Ronald Story

If I were to choose a fitting quotation to appear at the front of Hendry's book, I would quote the famous dictum attributed to the Greek philosopher Protagoras (c. 480-410 B.C.): "Man is the measure of all things," the UFO phenomenon probably being the best case in point.

The UFO Handbook should, I think, be considered a publishing milestone in the annals of UFOlogy and should certainly be regarded by most reasonable persons as the most worthwhile book to read on the subject since the famous (or infamous) "Condon Report" (published as the *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, edited by Daniel S. Gillmor and Edward U. Condon, E. P. Dutton, New York, 1969).

Although written in a pleasant style—free from ridicule and blatant sarcasm—the book will not be bought by readers primarily for its entertainment value but rather as a rational guide (probably *too* rational for most UFOlogists) to a subject that has suffered at the hands of irrational (or intentionally dishonest) writers for far too long.

Allan Hendry is the chief investigator for the Center for UFO Studies—founded by astronomer and former Project Blue Book consultant J. Allen Hynek—and managing editor of the *International UFO Reporter*, both based in Evanston, Illinois. Hendry received his B.A. degree in astronomy and illustration from the University of Michigan in 1972.

The book is based on a study of some 1,300 UFO reports received by the center during a period of a little over one year (from August 15, 1976, through November 31, 1977). Primarily through inquiries by a telephone WATS line, Hendry was able to identify 90 percent of the reported "objects," leaving a "residue" of 113 "genuine UFO reports, meaning the well-examined 'unknowns.'" But, during the investigative process, some rather startling findings emerged.

I say "startling" because, even though many investigators have long realized the many pitfalls of eyewitness testimony, this sorry state of affairs has never been documented so clearly and concisely—relative to UFO matters—as in Hendry's study. The CUFOS investigator did not *himself* expect that the vast majority of UFO "witnesses" would be *so subjective* and *so unreliable*.

The book is divided into two major sections: UFOs versus IFOs (identified flying objects); and "tools" of the investigator, such as hypnosis, lie detection, optical aids, photography, radar, and so forth. Hynek's classification system is

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used throughout to group the 1,300 reports into manageable categories. Within all of these categories, Hendry found an inordinate number of mundane objects being reported on the Center's UFO "hot line." Witnesses could not tell the difference, for example, between advertising planes and "flying saucers" (20 out of 33 so-called "close encounters of the first kind" IFOs) or, as in one case, between Venus and a disclike craft containing occupants with "silvery-colored faces"—i.e., a "close encounter of the third kind."

Since the entire UFO phenomenon ultimately rests on human testimony alone, the implications for the future of UFOlogy as a truth-seeking concern seem dark indeed. Hendry also uncovered a striking trend in the data (always suspected by some, but never substantiated by detailed statistics) that indicated "a powerful UFO mythology" (i.e., an apparently unconscious desire on the part of many "average, ordinary, everyday" people to see particular kinds of objects with certain performance characteristics *among what turned out to be IFOs*), seemingly absorbed from the culture at large, "affecting the objectivity of UFO witnesses, even in groups."

The reader should be cautioned, however, not to regard Allan Hendry as a total, all-out UFO "debunker." Although he maintains a questioning attitude and is far more discriminating than most other UFOlogists, Hendry's real message in this book is a call to UFOlogists everywhere to vastly improve their methodology in the hope that real progress can someday be made. At the conclusion of his book, he states: "I can only assert that it is my *feeling* that some UFO reports represent truly remarkable events." And in his "Position Statement" for the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of UFOs* (to be published by Doubleday in May 1980) Hendry wrote:

> I have seen a full social spectrum of witnesses treat partially-resolved advertising planes, stars and meteors as UFO "Rohrschach blots," reading into them a pre-anticipated UFO "model" that is frighteningly consistent from report to report. Experience with the "domed disc" descriptions and unearthly speeds and powers over the environment that so many people afford to common sources is quite sobering, as are the strong emotional reactions elicited by these IFOs.
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> As the last thirty years of UFO research have been a scientific frustration, my ongoing hope has been to exploit any effective systems or techniques which would bolster the value of human testimony in this regard. Current tools like radar, photographic analysis, hypnotic regression, polygraph tests, statistical experiments, physical trace analysis and such, however, have led at best to ambiguity. If UFO researchers are ever to plumb the scientific potential posed by such UFOs as the radar-visuals and the physical trace cases, or the physical basis (if any) of humanoid claims, it will be necessary to devise new procedures to support the tales of UFO claimants. Otherwise, we will be faced with another thirty years of promise and frustration drawing the distinction between alleged UFO stimuli and the pervasive UFO mythology. •

Betty Through the Looking-Glass

The Andreasson Affair. By Raymond E. Fowler. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1979, $8.95.

Reviewed by Ernest H. Taves

> *Why, it's turning into a sort of mist now, I declare! And certainly the glass was beginning to melt away... In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room.*
>
> Through the Looking-Glass, 1872

> *And we are coming to some kind of a glass—mirror, or glass. And they are going through it! We are going through it—through that mirror!*
>
> The Andreasson Affair, 1979

Walking through glass was far from the strangest thing that happened to Betty Andreasson the night of January 25, 1967. This episode was but a minor fragment of a rich and varied narrative we shall return to shortly. First, however, a brief account of our protagonist.

Mrs. Andreasson was a housewife and homemaker living in South Ashburnham, Massachusetts. Ordinarily she lived there with her husband and their seven children. However, events had altered that arrangement. Betty's husband, James, had been seriously injured in an auto accident the preceding December 23 and was still hospitalized. To help run the household in James's absence, Betty's parents were living in the house.

Betty was a deeply religious fundamentalist Christian. She spent much time with the Bible, and there had been a history of "odd events" occurring in the family prior to 1967. What had allegedly happened on that January evening in 1967 was the abduction of Betty aboard an alien spacecraft, whereupon began a nightmarish odyssey. This abduction was (years after the event) subjected to a year-long scrutiny by a team of investigators. Raymond Fowler describes the abduction as "probably the best-documented case of its kind to date." Accordingly it behooves us to examine his account of this incident.

At about 6:30 P.M. on January 25 there was a power failure at the Andreasson house. Betty, her parents, and the seven children were there. Some of the children had been watching television. Betty had been finishing up in the kitchen. Shortly after the lights went out, a pulsating pink light appeared outside the kitchen window. A number of alien creatures entered the house. And there the matter rested until 1974, when Betty submitted an account of the experience to the *National Enquirer* in response to that publication's solicitation of firsthand UFO accounts. (That tabloid awards an annual prize of up to $20,000 for the best UFO-incident report, and a prize of $1 million for "positive proof" that earth has

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been visited by extraterrestrial spacecraft.) The *Enquirer* expressed no interest. In 1975 Betty learned of J. Allen Hynek's Center for UFO Studies, and she wrote to him of her experience. Hynek shelved the letter for a time before sending it on to the Humanoid Study Group of MUFON—the Mutual UFO Network. MUFON mounted an investigation, into which Fowler was later drawn.

The principal activity of the investigation consisted of 14 sessions during which Betty was hypnotized. On these occasions Betty was taken, in hypnotic state, back to the events of the night of January 25. Each hypnotic session was followed by a debriefing period, during which the investigators discussed the elicited material with Betty.

It will be remembered that at the beginning of the investigation, ten years after the event, Betty's memory of the occasion consisted of a power failure, a pulsating pink light, and the entry into her house of a number of alien creatures. The elaborate narrative that follows was elicited during hypnotic sessions conducted April through July, 1977.

Four large-headed humanoid entities entered the house, by walking or gliding through the unopened kitchen door, which was made of wood. Their heads were shaped like inverted pears. They wore shiny, dark-blue uniforms, with bird emblems on their left sleeves. Their hands, which bore three digits, were gloved. One of the entities, apparently their leader, was somewhat taller than the others. He identified himself as Quazgaa. It occurred to Betty that the uninvited visitors might be angels, and she offered them food. After some confusion she gave Quazgaa a Bible. He gave her a small, thin blue book in exchange. Quazgaa waved his hand over the Bible, causing other copies to appear, which he gave to his companions. Betty looked briefly into the thin blue book; the first three pages were white and luminous. Further on in the book she saw strange designs she couldn't understand. Quazgaa then asked if Betty would follow them. After some turmoil she did.

(It should be interpolated at this point that, when the investigation began, none of the six younger children had any memory of the alien intrusion and that Betty's mother would have nothing to do with the inquiry. Betty's father said he had seen strange characters outside the kitchen window. Betty's oldest daughter, Becky, who also underwent hypnosis, to a degree confirmed parts of Betty's memory of the early part of the evening. From this point on no family member shared in Betty's adventures.)

They leave the house, passing through the closed kitchen door. Betty is astonished to see a strange oval-shaped object settled in her backyard. Quazgaa makes it partly transparent, and Betty sees things in the craft that she had seen pictured in the blue book. They float or glide a few inches above the ground toward the strange vessel.

Now they board the craft, and Betty is taken through different parts of it, including a cleansing station, where she is engulfed in brilliant light, and a changing room, where she removes her clothes and dons a white examination garment. This leads, naturally, to being taken to an examining room. Here a needlelike probe is thrust up her nose. "I heard something break like a membrane or a veil or something—like a piece of tissue or something they broke through." When the probe is withdrawn Betty notes that it now contains upon its end a small round BB-like object with tiny points on it.

A similar probe is thrust through her umbilicus. She must be measured, she is told, for "procreation." The nasal and navel probes are both decidedly unpleasant.

Betty Andreasson.

Humanoid entities entering the Andreasson house through the unopened kitchen door.

"I don't want any more tests! Get this thing out of me!" Finally it is done, and Betty returns to the changing room to dress in her familiar clothes.

But the odyssey has just begun. Now Betty, accompanied by two gnomelike creatures, leaves the spacecraft by floating along and through a long black tunnel. They emerge into a curious compartment containing eight glasslike chairs. She sits on one of these, is covered over with glass or plastic, and is immersed in a fluid. There are tubes, two nasal and one oral, for life support. There are soothing vibrations. Betty is told she is going to be given something to drink. She feels a thick syrup seeping into her mouth through the connecting tube.

"It is a—about a spoonful or so they are giving me through the tube, and it tastes sweet. Tastes good. Oh! This feels good! Oh, so relaxing. (Sigh) And it tastes good . . . it feels good on me."

Later the fluid drains from the chair. The two gnomes reappear, now hooded in black, and the three of them proceed into another long tunnel. They come to a glassy wall, or mirror. They pass through it and emerge into a region where almost everything is red. They see many lemurlike beings, scary creatures, crawling upon the surfaces of buildings. They continue and pass through a membrane into a region where everything is green. This is a welcome realm of beauty. Here Betty and her companions soar over a pyramid, which is crowned by a "feminine-male" head. They see, in the distance, a city of stark beauty, where bright light reflects from crystalline structures like giant prisms. Clearly, Betty has traveled a far piece from the backyard in South Ashburnham, Massachusetts.

Comes now an encounter that confounded the investigators when they heard of it, and in respect of which Fowler confesses persisting bafflement. Betty is taken through these crystal structures to confront an enormous bird. There is much light and heat, and Betty cries out for help and writhes in agony. In due course the temperature drops. Betty squints her eyes open. The bird is gone. A small remaining fire dwindles into embers and ashes, from which emerges a "big fat worm." She has witnessed an enactment, or a vision, or whatever, of one version of the phoenix legend.

A voice then speaks to Betty, and here she has a profound religious experience, for the voice is the voice of God. She did not see God, she said later, but she heard his voice. The consternation of the investigators was considerable as they faced what seemed to them an unlikely admixture of fundamentalist Christianity, on the one hand, and UFOs and the concept of extraterrestrial life, on the other.

Betty and the two creatures then retrace their earlier path, returning to the room with the glasslike chairs. The earlier experience is repeated. "Oh, that feels good . . . Oh, this is so good!"

Back to the ship, then, in the yard in South Ashburnham. In the spacecraft she says farewell to Quazgaa. He tells her that secrets have been locked into her mind, and that her race will not believe her for a long time. The beings have come to help man. They love the human race.

Quazgaa remains on the ship while two of the aliens escort Betty back to her house. It is now 10:40 P.M. She has been away 3 hours and 40 minutes. Betty asks about the blue book. She is told she may keep it for a time, that it contains formulas, riddles, poems, and writings, "for man to understand nature." Betty's parents and the children, who have been in a state resembling suspended animation, are restored to normal consciousness and everyone goes to bed.

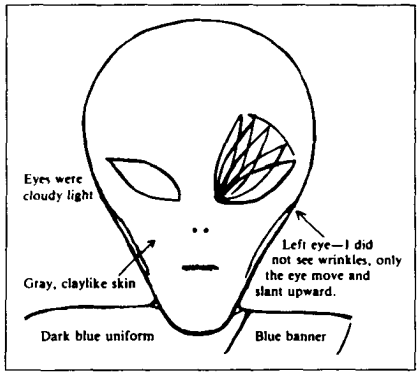
The basic narrative, as outlined above, was obtained during the first eleven hypnotic sessions. Three additional sessions followed. During the first of these Betty spoke for a time in an unintelligible tongue, interspersed with phrases like "Signal Base 32," and "Star Seeso." The entities communicated indirectly with the investigators through Betty and also directly with Betty: They are from a planet far, far away, not in our galaxy. They have been visiting Earth since the beginning of time. They can see the future. Many other humans have been taken aboard their craft, but only a few have "gone to the fullness." In the trip outside of the spacecraft Betty had not been taken to their home planet but to "the high place"—coordinates unspecified.

In another session the investigators tried to find out more about the thin blue book. Betty described what she saw in it: "One comma-dash like a curleque of some kind. A sweeping under in a circle, and then two lines close to each other . . . a zero with a dot and some kind of a line on an angle going through that with a little flag-type thing on the line."

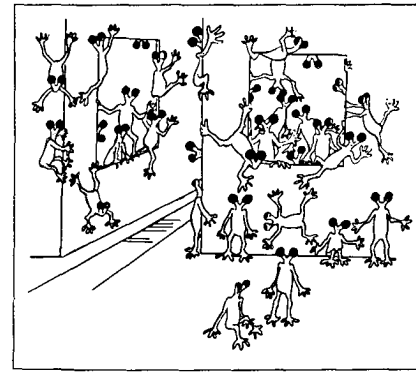
The sessions ended when Betty moved to Florida. Before then she and James had been divorced.

A further incident should be related: When Betty moved to Florida she met one Bob Luca, who had also had a UFO experience. (She and Bob were later married.) Bob was subsequently interviewed by MUFON investigators. On the evening of the day of the interview Bob telephoned Betty to tell her about it. Their conversation was interrupted by an angry male voice, speaking unintelligibly, with clickings and tones. Betty thought that the voice was that of a fallen or evil angel and that she was caught in a supernatural battle between the forces of good and evil. The next day two of Betty's sons were killed in an auto accident.

So much for the basic narrative. It provides a wealth of material for our consideration. What are we to make of it? We might begin with this: The aliens are capable of extragalactic flight. Exceeding the speed of light poses them no problem. They have crossed extragalactic space to observe us since the beginning of time. Our time, that is. They love the human race. They are here to help us. Granting this, we must be incredulous at their manifest inability to communicate meaningful



Quazgaa, leader of the aliens.



Alien creatures seen by Betty Andreasson after passing through the mirror.

intelligence. Never, surely, in the history of space travel have aliens come so far for so long to communicate so little.

Let us invoke Occam's Razor.[1] This powerful directive suggests that we consider which is the simpler, more reasonable, more rational explanation of this exotic adventure: (1) Betty was taken aboard an extragalactic spacecraft by aliens who have been visiting Earth since the beginning of time but haven't been able to effect meaningful communication with man. (2) Betty recalled, or relived, in hypnosis, a dream or fantasy (or a number of them) that had meaning and utility in terms of her life history and her emotional needs.

With respect to hypnotic regression it must be emphasized that reports obtained from hypnotized subjects do not necessarily correspond to external, objective, verifiable reality. The hypnotist who worked with the Andreasson team, Dr. Harold Edelstein, is an experienced professional; both he and the investigators were convinced that Betty believed that what she brought forth in the hypnotic sessions was true. And there is no reason to challenge that. But whether the events reported correspond to any reality outside of Betty Andreasson is a different question altogether. Indeed, Dr. Edelstein said he could not say how much of Betty's story was "real" and how much was "imaginary." Similarly, Dr. Benjamin Simon, who conducted hypnotic sessions with Betty Hill, did not believe that that other Betty had been taken aboard an alien craft. "Absolutely not," he said. Hypnotic regression is a useful psychotherapeutic tool and the legitimate uses of hypnosis are many, but it is necessary to emphasize that the subjective realities thus elicited may or may not have any correspondence with objective reality.

A minor point, before proceeding to considerations of more importance: It will be recalled that within 24 hours of the interrupted telephone call between Betty and Bob Luca two of Betty's sons were killed in an automobile accident. Before this, shortly before Betty moved to Florida, her father died of cancer and complications. Before that one of the investigators died of a heart attack. There is no suggestion in Fowler's text that the deaths of either Betty's father or the investigator were in any way associated with the investigation. Regarding the death of the two sons in the accident, Fowler states that, though the investigation of that event is "confidential," a "logical reason" for the accident was found. Fowler notes ominously, however, that the auto accident "brought to four the death toll of people who had been associated with our investigation." Then, having just stated that they had found a logical reason for the auto accident, Fowler cannot resist temptation:

"The question still remained, though—was the accident a coincidence?"

How did the question remain? This is a cheap shot, yellow journalism, a tired attempt to inject mystery into a situation where there is none. The Curse of Tutankhamen lives on. Betty's narrative is rich enough without the addition of such tarnished trappings.

J. Allen Hynek, in an introduction, writes that even if the entire series of adventures was "the result of some complex psychological drama played in concert" this account would still be "a fine case study in abnormal psychology." Astronomer and UFOlogist Hynek errs in this psychological appraisal. I shall show how the investigation failed and shall suggest how such investigations in the future might be improved.

How, then, does *The Andreasson Affair* fail? Sex is as good a point as any at which to begin. It will be obvious to most readers that the narrative provides a wealth of sexual symbolism and imagery. Phallic symbols appear in Betty's drawings, and the aliens penetrate her orifices. There is displacement here, as might be expected, the umbilicus being implicated rather than the more convenient (medically speaking) and nearby vagina—and not for the first time in abductee literature. And there is much more, including, for example, and in more than one instance, the theme of return to innocence—to, if you will, the womb, as in the immersion in the fluid-filled chair. The feeding in this chair, which felt so good to Betty, is susceptible of multiple interpretation, including breast feeding and adult oral sex, but in the absence of a proper history we don't know what to make of it. Fowler's text is as free from references to sex as the most repressed Victorian novel. A psychosexual history is essential, however, to the scholar attempting to understand the significance of Betty's experience.[2]

Of many reasonable alternative hypotheses to that of the extragalactic spaceship let us set forth one: On the night of the power failure the weather was foggy and misty. With the house lights suddenly out, the headlights of a passing car illuminate the fog, producing the appearance of a light outside the kitchen window. The car bounces, and the light is seen to pulsate. Later the power comes back on and conditions in the house revert to normal. Betty goes to sleep and converts the stimulus of these events into a richly structured dream. For the most part the dream is forgotten, though there remains a vague memory of alien visitation. Later, in hypnosis, the dream is brought back. But the data that would help us understand the dream are not provided.

We must surmise, for example, that the Andreassons had an active sex life—seven children born between 1937 and 1963. We know that on the evening in question Betty had been deprived of her husband for more than a month because of his hospitalization. What was the effect of this upon Betty? What was her state of mind in late January? What was their relationship like? There is a fleeting reference to marital problems, and we know they were divorced between the night of the dream and the time of its recall; but we are told almost nothing else of their relationship. The investigation is seriously flawed, in Fowler's account, by the absence of any attempt to ask the obviously indicated questions.

We have also the business of the nasal probe entering an orifice and penetrating a membrane, a veil. Granted that long-distance psychoanalysis is hazardous, some things are relatively obvious; and the chances are that we should wonder here about loss of innocence or initiation into adulthood. Indeed, *veil* is a common enough lay term for hymen. But we can't say more about the meaning of this part of the tale because the indicated inquiry was not made—or at least not reported. The point of

this kind of inquiry is that the greater the extent to which the elicited material can be shown to make sense in terms of the history and psychodynamics of Betty Andreasson, the lesser the need to seek exotic explanations.

The same lack of inquiry arises in other areas as well. Consider theology. We have seen that religion was an important part of Betty's life. Three aspects of her narrative are of particular interest from a theological point of view: (1) During her trip she was from time to time comforted by the laying on of an alien hand. (2) In the later sessions she began to speak in an unintelligible tongue. (3) She received, from an entity she at first thought might be an angel, a book containing important messages for man but written in unintelligible symbols. Here are three striking parallels with the Mormon religion: The founding of that church was based upon the alleged finding, by Joseph Smith, of the "Golden Bible," a book of metallic plates, given by an angel; the plates were covered with incomprehensible writing that Joseph "translated" by means we needn't go into here. And the concepts of speaking in tongues and the laying on of hands have been important parts of Mormon doctrine from that church's beginning. Was Betty familiar with this history? We need to know the answer to this and other questions, but no information is provided.

Turning from theology to literature we find the same problem. Walking through a glass or mirror into a strange place is a concept Betty shares with Lewis Carroll. Had Betty read *Alice in Wonderland* or *Through the Looking-Glass?* These books have had an influence upon and have been well-remembered friends of generations of girls and women (and boys and men) of all ages. Was Betty familiar with them? Fowler's account leaves the question unanswered.

There is a similar paucity of information even in respect of the episode of the phoenix, which so unsettled the investigators. We gather from Fowler's account that Betty's sister consulted a reference work to look up the phoenix after the session in which Betty spoke of it, but the serious student wants to know if Betty was familiar with the phoenix legend before that session. What was the extent and nature of Betty's awareness and knowledge of the phoenix legend prior to confronting the big bird in the hypnotic session? The answers are not available.

And how about science fiction, and science-fiction movies? It can be deduced from internal evidence that Betty was familiar both with science fiction and with that genre of illustration. But apparently the investigative team did not consider this a matter worthy of inquiry. There is, in fact, in Fowler's account no evidence whatever that it ever occurred to the researchers at any point to look into Betty's life history for possible sources of the imagery they obtained under hypnosis, though they had a veritable gold mine of material to work with. It is as if they were all hypnotized in their own turn by the concept of the extragalactic spacecraft sitting in the backyard.

Thus the investigation is flawed throughout by a failure to ask obvious questions, answers to which would illumine the meaning of the body of data they collected. Clearly they had no interest in seeking or considering alternative hypotheses. As a serious investigation into an unusual happening *The Andreasson Affair* is a failure.

How to avoid such failure in future investigations? The most obvious suggestion is to use more knowledgeable investigators. To the extent that an investigative staff is comprised solely of participants in NICAP, CUFOS, MUFON, and the like, they might consider whether their collective expertise is equal to the job at hand, whether it might not be a good idea to bring in help from the outside, whether

more broadly based backgrounds might not be useful to them. Specifically, in any case similar to the present one the help of an experienced and impartial psychoanalyst is mandatory. Where literary allusions and parallels present themselves, they should be pursued not ignored. Alternative hypotheses, though perhaps eventually repudiated, should be considered.

Back to Occam's Razor. Are we to believe on the basis of Betty's vivid narrative that an alien spacecraft was present in her backyard that night? I suggest that it is more likely that *The Andreasson Affair* relates the history of a missed opportunity to conduct a moderately interesting study in not-so-abnormal psychology.

Notes

1. Essentia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem. The number of entities should not be increased unnecessarily.

2. In the course of the investigation Betty was given a psychiatric examination by a psychiatrist who chose to remain anonymous. The doctor said that Betty displayed no symptoms of active thought disorders or obvious psychiatric problems. This *pro forma* examination does not approach the kind of psychoanalytic inquiry the case required.

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Articles of Note

Following is a sampling of recent articles that critique paranormal or fringe-science claims or report on them in a responsible way.

Bartusiak, Marcia F. "Will the Real Nessie Please Stand up?" *Science News*, 116 (Aug. 18, 1979): 122-123. Discussion of both the Power and Johnson paper (see below) and the proposal by engineer Waldemir H. Lehn (also see below), in *Science*, July 13, 1979, that some of the reported sightings of Loch Ness and other lake "monsters" may be due to peculiar optical effects.

Coleman, Kate. "Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in the Afterworld of Entities." *New West*, July 30, 1979, pp. 43-50. Lengthy report on Kübler-Ross and her association with mail-order minister Jay Barham and his Facet of Divinity Church. Chronicles the Barham church's sex-therapy sessions, which sometimes include sex with supposed "materialized" personal spirits known as "entities" (actually real persons, including Barham). Author says Kübler-Ross "is causing concern within the [death-and-dying] movement and is dismaying many of her former associates with behavior that smacks of the occult, or simply the bizarre."

Cowen, Robert C. "Evolution: Equal Time for God." *Technology Review*, June-July 1979, p. 10. This discussion of the creationist movement concludes with a call for biologists to give more attention to explaining their science to the public—not only the facts but the Darwinian "sense of grandeur" about life and evolution.

Hawkes, Nigel. "Tracing Burt's Descent to Scientific Fraud." *Science*, 205 (Aug. 17, 1979). Report on new book by L. S. Hearnshaw confirming how British

psychologist Cyril Burt fabricated research data, invented nonexistent colleagues, and otherwise engaged in deliberate deception to support his theories about intelligence.

Kelly, I. W. "Astrology and Science: A Critical Examination." *Psychological Reports*, 44 (1979): 1231-1240. Review of the empirical literature that has attempted to test the claims of popular astrology. "The majority of studies conducted do not confirm astrological claims, and the few studies that are positive need additional clarification."

Kernan, Michael. "The Calamityville Horror." *Washington Post*, Sept. 16, 1979, pp. D1-D2. Report on all the suits and countersuits in the Amityville case and a review of some of the evidence casting doubt on the story.

Lehn, W. H. "Atmospheric Refraction and Lake Monsters." *Science*, 205 (July 13, 1979): 183-185. Surveys reported sightings of lake monster phenomena and suggests that many of them may be attributable to atmospheric image distortion. Surface temperature inversions can cause strong atmospheric refraction that can cause familiar objects easily to take on unrecognizable form. Author says his goal is not to discredit the possibility of yet undiscovered animals but "to sharpen optical observation techniques and to provide one more stage of evaluation before accepting such observations as unequivocal evidence."

Meeus, Jean. "Planets, Sunspots, and Earthquakes." *Mercury* (Astronomical Society of the Pacific), July-Aug. 1979, pp. 72-74. Belgian astronomer, updating his devastating critque in *Icarus* in 1975, explains the fallacies of the claimed "Jupiter effect" and emphasizes that the year 1982 should cause no more concern about earthquakes than any other year. Not only are the planets not "aligned" in 1982, but a review of the observational data shows no relation between planetary positions and sunspot activity, nor between sunspot activity and number of earthquakes.

Oberg, James. "The Failure of the 'Science' of Ufology." *New Scientist* Oct. 11, 1979, pp. 102-105. Appraisal of the status of UFOlogy after 30 years. Finds the suspicion with which modern science views the UFO movement to be well based, a result of serious shortcomings in the approaches and arguments of UFOlogists. An award-winning essay (see News and Comment, p. 15).

Power, Dennis, and Donald Johnson. "A Fresh Look at Nessie." *New Scientist*, Aug. 2, 1979, pp. 358-359. Remarks upon the close similarity between the famous 1934 photo of "Nessie" and a photo of a swimming elephant.

"Reveille's Phantom Spaceship." *New Scientist*, Aug. 2, 1979, p. 380. (See J. Oberg article in News and Comment, p. 8.)

Rockwell, Ted. "Parapsychology and the Integrity of Science." *Washington Post*, Aug. 26, 1979, p. D8. Makes some serious and misleading charges about critics of parapsychology and has other faults as well, but is included here because it raises an issue that engineer/parapsychology-advocate Rockwell has long wanted discussed: Do responsible scientific journals err toward conservatism in rejecting academic parapsychology research for publication?

"Science, Nonsense and Responsibility." *Nature*, 280 (Aug. 23, 1979). Editorial pointing to responsibility of scientists to help guide laymen in distinguishing between real science and pseudoscience.

Thomsen, Dietrick E. "Mystic Physics." *Science News*, 116 (Aug. 4, 1979): 95. Thoughtful and well-informed essay about recent efforts by a few West Coast physicists to relate modern physics to mysticism or religion. Sympathetic but urges restraint. "If the particular insights of physical (and biological) science

about the nature of reality can deepen or extend our spiritual life, that is all to the good. If they lead to occultism or cultism, better they were left alone."

Wheeler, John Archibald. "Parapsychology—A Correction" (letter to editor). *Science*, 205 (July 13, 1979):144. Retraction of an off-hand comment Wheeler made orally at AAAS session about experiments of Rhine and McDougall. Followed by a letter of response from J. B. Rhine.

—*K.F.*

Scientists and Unsound Belief

A scientist who wishes to keep his friends must not be forever scoffing and so earn a reputation for habitual disbelief; but he owes it to his profession not to acquiesce in or appear to condone folly, superstition, or demonstrably unsound belief. The recognition and castigation of folly will not win him friends, but it may gain him some respect....

[One] way in which a scientist loses friends is to call attention to the tricks that selective memory can play upon judgment. "Three times, no less, I dreamed of Cousin Winifred and on the very next day she rang me up. If that doesn't prove that dreams can foretell the future, then I'm sure I don't know what does." But, the young scientist expostulates, on how many occasions did you dream of Cousin Winifred without a subsequent telephone call?—and is it not a fact that she rings up almost every day?

Superstitions are not so easy to cope with. Probably it is better not to try to reason with astrological predictions, but it may be worthwhile just once to call attention to the extreme a priori *unlikelihood of their being true and to point to the lack of any convincing evidence that they are so. But perhaps after all it is best to let sleeping unicorns lie—I myself have for some time past abstained from discussing spoon bending or other manifestations of "psychokinesis."*

—P. B. Medawar, in *Advice to a Young Scientist*, Harper & Row, 1979.