

# ATOM BOMBS, SPACESHIPS and SALVATION: The Story Of The Contactees

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■ The first wave of "contactee" reports, people who claimed specially privileged contact and communication with extraterrestrials, occurred in the 1950s at the height of the Cold War confrontation between the United States and Soviet Russia. The claims followed on the heels of the first round of UFO books, in 1950, suggesting that UFOs were spaceships. These included *Flying Saucers Are Real*, by Donald E. Kayhoe and *Is Another World Watching?*, by Gerald Heard. Looking back, over 20 years later, it is now possible to see how the stories have stood the test of time. With some historical perspective, it is also possible to see how the stories "creatively" reflect the tensions and problems of the Cold War era.

The early contactees depicted spacemen concerned about atomic warfare and destructive science on earth; they had come here to offer guidance. The "Space Brothers" could not (or would not) intervene directly, but asked mankind to adopt their philosophy and politics with the promise that salvation would follow. Man would enter a "New Age," a utopian world free from war, poverty, pain and suffering. To promote these ends, the spacemen contacted certain earthmen to spread their message. The contactees cited the infinitely wise spacemen as their

authorities—curiously different spacemen in each case—and addressed themselves to war and peace, religion and philosophy.

It is important to point out that some later spacemen reports of the 1960s and 1970s do not fit these patterns and each ought to be evaluated on its own merits, as should the separate category of uncommunicative humanoid UFO occupants. However, if we believe the 1950s contactees, then we obtain this general picture of the type of earthman sought out for the urgent mission of setting the world straight: A technician-tinkerer, typically male, 40 to 60 years old, from a troubled or disrupted childhood, poorly educated and needing a ghost writer for his book. The typical early contactee claimed that he was chosen for contact because of some special quality he possessed.

## Messages Beamed From Space

One of the earliest contactees, George W. Van Tassel, was an airline mechanic and flight test engineer. At 42 he published *I Rode a Flying Saucer* (which doesn't mention anything about having ridden in a flying saucer!). In it he recounts messages "radioed to me by other-world intelligences in reaction to man's destructive action." The messages, received in a trance state via "light induction" and automatic writing, were scientific and political in content. The basic theme was the fear of human self-destruction due to the follies of human science and "continual destructive influences" epitomized by atomic explosions.

These "higher vibratory intelligences" always identified themselves by name: "Lutbunn," "Totalmon," "Oblow," "Qel" and "Locktopar," for example. Messages began with coordinates, such as Oblow broadcasting from "62nd projection, 7th wave, 3rd sector patrol, realm of Schare." A typical message (this one from "Kerrull") warned of prolonged illness for many humans resulting from "this folly in the use of atomic power for destruction. . . ." "Ashtar," the most prolific message-giver, engaged in tirades against earth scientists for exploding atomic bombs, and severely warned against exploding the hydrogen bomb.

In the ensuing years, warnings against misuses of atomic energy have been a standard theme of contactee messages world-wide. This fact has led some people to think that maybe the messages are genuine and the dubious character of the "medium" is unimportant. However, anyone who is familiar with the fashionability of themes among institutionalized mental patients will suspect that the messages are nothing but a reflection of socially transmitted fears and concerns. It should be no surprise that this "message" has been a common one during the unfolding of the atomic age.

Van Tassel observes that, "All the confusion, fear, inflation, war and hatred have been built through several generations to a point where it is concentrated in atomic bombs, to kill innocent millions." The saucer beings, he says, are here "to direct man back upon the path. . . ."

# ATOM BOMBS

...tive" statements. The spacemen told Van Tassel that explosion of the hydrogen bomb would "extinguish life on this planet," that they were going to eliminate such projects, and that we were about to see atomic weapons used in warfare again.

Angelucci was told that atomic warfare with Russia was imminent, that the spacemen were helping medical research and we would see "success in the fight against cancer," and that Christ would reappear "soon." Fry described heavy strain on his internal organs during weightlessness while landing, totally out of accord with the astronauts' experiences. Bethurum was told that Clarion was on the other side of the moon, invisible from earth (and, apparently, also invisible to visiting astronauts). He and Adamski were told that human forms were common to all the planets, and Adamski "saw" elaborate life on the moon.

The early contactees come across as

would-be social reformers, using spaceman parables to provide "solutions" for the earth's problems. They are reacting to real fears and concerns of the 1950s, including the potential for a devastating war inherent in the ideological Cold War. The threat of atomic destruction (thesis) and the penetration into our consciousness of the possibility of extraterrestrial visitors (antithesis) were two powerful ideas first unleashed in the 1950s. The solution (synthesis) offered by the contactees is that the Space Brothers with their superior wisdom will, by example and guidance, save us from ourselves.

Just as dramatist, painters and other creative artists interpret and symbolize life and death themes of human experience, the contactees could be understood as crude "artists" trying to be creative, but severely limited by their lack of education and sophistication. Whatever good intentions may have been present, the net effect of their "artistry" has been to mislead people and to confuse serious issues.

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# LETTERS

energy was stressed in that direction, and there emerged a useful part.

Man lived and had his being for a long, long time, connected with his host. Then there came a sluffing off of these parts. Then man began to experience death. After millions of years, the host became absorbed into the earth and man became more of a free agent, yet depending upon the Earth for his sustenance. Man is never separated wholly from the host. Even the astronauts had trouble when they went into space and suffered a loss of red blood cells.

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# ATOM BOMBS

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"Tell them about us."

Orfeo Angelucci, a California aircraft plant technician and amateur scientific tinkerer, presents a strongly messianic story. His book was "edited" (unquestionably ghost written) by Ray Palmer, well-known mystical and science fiction publisher in Amherst, Wisconsin. Sickly as a child and often suffering from malnutrition and weakness, Angelucci professes a great love of science and describes experiments he undertook as a self-taught amateur scientist. His poor health led to periods during which he had difficulty finding gainful employment. Innocently, his story reflects a strong desire for health and a world order in which every individual is valued as an important part of the universal order.

On May 23, 1952, Angelucci was chosen for the first earth contact because of his "higher vibrational perceptions." Throughout 1952 and 1953 the spacemen communicated with him periodically and lectured to him about religion. One of the fundamental contradictions in contactee philosophy emerges in Angelucci's story (as it does in Adamski's and others who portray "Space Brothers" coming to earth to aid us). Since life on earth is endangered, the spacemen are here to help. But, "Cosmic law actively prevents one planet from interfering with the evolution of any other planet. . . Earth must work out its own destiny. We will do everything in our power to aid the people of Earth, but we are definitely and greatly limited by cosmic law." Despite these prohibitions the spacemen are constantly trying to influence events—and constantly trying to justify the contradiction.

In July Angelucci was taken on board a flying saucer whose interior was "iridescent. . . shimmering. . . evanescent." The light dimmed and he was transported into space to the strains of his favorite song, "Fools Rush In." A voice coming from a "gigantic. . . crystalline dream-ship" high above proceeded to deliver a sermon on Interplanetary Religion. The voice also told him, "It is only because your physical body is weakened and your spiritual perceptions thereby keener that we have been able to contact you." (This trip is dated July

healthy-bodied Truman Bethurum was contacted by spacemen on the Nevada desert by spacemen who could land anywhere and contact anyone available.)

"Tonight," the voice continued, "you, an entity of Earth, have come close to the Infinite Entities. For the present you are our emissary, Orfeo, and you must act! Even though people of Earth laugh derisively and mock you as a lunatic, tell them about us! . . . We love the Children of Earth and it is our desire to help them as the hour of crisis approaches."

Later Angelucci meets the voice in the flesh and names him "Neptune." By now revealing himself to be a good 1950s anti-communist, Neptune predicts Armageddon very soon, "nearer than any man dreams," and makes it clear that he is referring to a showdown battle between the United States and Russia. This will be followed by a "New Age of Earth" built on the "Brotherhood of Man." Neptune admits that he is breaking cosmic law by this visit, but that "active cosmic law will see that necessary amends are made." Cosmic law, like cosmic logic, is wondrously flexible—except when it comes to allowing the spacemen to do something concrete to help us.

Neptune tells Angelucci that his efforts will have absolutely no effect, changing no conditions or events on earth in any way, but that the efforts will give "greater faith and inner conviction to the few." Practically in the next breath he adds, "We know you will not fail us, Orfeo. . . your failure will be my own. . . strength and encouragement will be given to the millions (emphasis added) who will rise courageously to meet the fiery trials ahead." But how can Orfeo "fail" when he is not expected to have any effect on events in any case?

In January 1953, Angelucci was taken to another world where he sported a "handsome new body," his true self or entity, and met the "dazzlingly beautiful" Lyra. The space people threw a big dinner for him consisting of amber triangles, green squares, lavender circles and sparkling liquid. After dinner, Orfeo began to have impure thoughts about Lyra and was embarrassed when a mottled red and black cloud appeared over his head and shoulders, revealing his crude animalism. It seems that there is no sex in the higher spiritual worlds. But despite the ethereal world of "high

space people apparently still are on the food cycle for energy.

The final contacts occurred the following winter when, in dizzying succession, Angelucci met Neptune again, heard voices elaborating on his mission to spread the gospel, and met Jesus Christ who told him, ". . . soon I shall again appear publicly upon Earth." Angelucci has now become a co-equal with Neptune. He has progressed from the poor, sickly, uneducated clod to conversing with advanced etheric entities, to being chosen their emissary on earth, to co-equal status with them, and finally to a conversation with Christ.

If any contactee story lends itself to psychological interpretation, Angelucci's story does.

## Scientific-Technological Spacemen

In contrast to the dire warnings of Van Tassel's galactic space fleet and to Angelucci's religious spacemen, Fry's visitors prove to be only low-key interventionists casually studying the earth and not yet able to land and freely make contact. Fry was about 46 when his first book was published. He was orphaned at 9, raised by his maternal grandmother and forced to fend for himself in California at 18. Self-taught in libraries, he has little formal education. In 1949 and 1950 he was employed by Aerojet General Corporation at White Sands, New Mexico as a rocket motor technician.

On July 4, 1950, Fry took a walk in the desert at night and encountered an "ovate spheroid" about 30 feet in diameter that glided in silently for a landing near him. The ship was silvery, like polished metal, with a slight violet iridescence. Curious, Fry walked around the craft and touched its surface, which was warm, smooth, and tingling. Suddenly a strong voice boomed out, startling Fry who stumbled backwards "Better not touch the hull, pal, it's still hot!" When Fry protested about being startled the voice answered "Sorry, buddy, but you were about to kill yourself and there wasn't time to diddle with controls." The spaceman, subsequently identified as "A-Lan," used the slangy Yank language popular in Gary Cooper and Victor MacLachlen movies of the 1930s.

Fry was invited on board and, during a fast trip to New York City and back, was told about the spacemen's science and purposes. "He is a good telepathic