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*How do you prove that UFOs come from other planets? Even more important, how do you prove they don't? It takes only a single unexplained case to keep open the possibility that UFOs are real—and so skeptics will go to any length to "solve" a report, even if the solution doesn't explain anything. But then maybe the solutions of those who believe UFOs hail from other solar systems don't explain anything either. Dr. Salisbury wrestles with these issues and considers some possibilities.*

## **Are UFOs from Outer Space?** by **Frank B. Salisbury**

Often the most rewarding thing science can do in relation to any hypothesis is to try to disprove it. If this succeeds, the hypothesis then probably can be restated in a form that comes closer to the truth. Our specific problem is—how does one go about disproving that UFOs come from outer space?

Perhaps the most logical thing would be to take every single UFO case and prove that *whatever* was sighted did not come from outer space. Clearly, the exercise would have to include *every one*, because if even one UFO came from outer space the hypothesis is not disproved.

Many of the UFOs I've studied have turned out to be the planet Venus; other stars and planets have sometimes accounted for other UFOs. This comes about because the star or planet appears to move and thus the witness believes he is seeing a UFO. Some people are fifty or sixty years old before they first notice Venus blazing up there in the sky; they have no concept of Venus as the morning and the evening star. If you ask people why the sun moves in the heavens they would surely answer that it is because

the earth turns but it never occurs to them, apparently, that the stars and planets appear to move for the same reason.

Nevertheless, I'm intrigued with the Venus cases because they give us a small test of how good people are at observing. Actually people come through very well.

I was in Snowflake, Arizona, in May 1977 and heard of a UFO sighting that supposedly took place at the same time Travis Walton had his experience. I visited one of the two witnesses. It turned out the sighting actually took place ten days after Travis's experience but began very close to where the Walton sighting occurred. The two men had been hunting but decided to come home in the early morning—at 3:00 A.M. They saw a brilliant light through the trees and above the horizon which stayed about half a mile ahead of them as they drove east along the road. When they turned south or north it remained in the east but moved along with them. If they stopped the car and got out to listen, the object also stopped. It was about a three-hour drive home, and the light stayed with them all the way. I immediately suspected they had been watching Venus, so I listened carefully to everything the witness said. He didn't say a single thing that conflicted with the idea that they had been watching Venus. Although they were convinced they had watched a UFO from outer space, the witness was accurately describing Venus.

This gives me some confidence in the belief that the witnesses at least report their experiences accurately, although probably there is always a little distortion.

Other cases can be solved with only *some* certainty. The Mantell skyhook balloon is a good illustration of this. Reading that Captain Mantell probably was chasing a skyhook balloon I'm pretty impressed. Almost certainly that's what happened. On the other hand, the records are incomplete, so that we don't have absolute proof that there was a skyhook balloon at that place at that time.

In many of the cases it requires a great deal of faith to accept a prosaic explanation. Close encounters of the second or third kind are especially persuasive.

Actually, the temptation and emotional need to explain UFO cases in terms of misinterpreted natural phenomena, etc., can be a dangerous and powerful trap for UFO in-

vestigators. We can name some of those who have fallen into this trap: Philip Klass, Donald Menzel, Ernest Taves, and others. They have a rather distorted view of science; they seem to believe that if you can formulate a hypothesis that matches a few of the facts in a given case and if the rest of the facts can be either wished away, ignored, or distorted, then you've solved the case! To me this is fantasy.

If, in doing research in plant physiology, I believed my hypotheses were conclusive when they seemed to match a few of the facts, it would change my whole approach to science. But this is not the way it works. You may begin with some agreement between your hypothesis and the data. Then you look for the things that don't match and when you find them you modify the hypothesis. Klass and Menzel and Taves seem never to understand this.

In one of the early chapters in the Menzel-Taves book *The UFO Enigma* the authors try to shoot down some of the biblical miracles. Using the exact data available to us all, they approach the "legend" of Christ walking on the water by quoting an article entitled "Theological Optics": "The legend of Jesus walking on the water can be similarly explained, as Alistair B. Fraser has suggested. Where a mirage exists, an individual can appear to walk on water when his feet are actually on dry land—as shown in one of Fraser's photographs. Note that the figures appearing to walk on water seem larger than those in the boat. In fact, they were standing on a sand spit about as far beyond the boat as the boat was from the camera. This magnifying effect is generally found in such mirages.

"The same phenomenon may be seen on a highway on a hot day; a mirage of the sky causes the pavement ahead to appear wet. A car driving ahead of you may appear to be floating or moving on the water."

But let me quote the biblical account: "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightaway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come

down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased." (Matthew 14:25-32.)

I'm not arguing for or against the truth of the miracle in the Bible; I'm just illustrating a point. Menzel and Taves take the account, ignore its many details—distance from the boat, Peter walking on the water as well as Christ, the event taking place at night rather than during the day, when one sees these nice little mirages—and then, because they have a photograph that seems to show someone walking on the water, they exclaim, Eureka! The case is solved!

This is typical of the gentlemen's whole approach. They devote several pages to Ezekiel's vision, talking about sun dogs and such things. They state that ". . . the agreement between Ezekiel's vision and a modern description of a deluxe-model display of mock suns with attendant glories is completely convincing." But when I read the account I don't see this agreement at all. The Son of Man was on a throne in Ezekiel's wheel within a wheel, and he called Ezekiel to be a prophet to the nations by giving him a little wafer with the call written on it, which he was to read and then ingest into his body. Such details, plus many others, seem like pretty fantastic sun dogs to me.

Philip Klass explained the Captain Lawrence Coyne helicopter case by saying it was an orionid meteor and then pronounced the case solved! He ascertained that such meteors were *likely* on that night, and basically this is all it took for him to call the case "solved." I find such "reasoning" absolutely fantastic. What were the facts? And how do they match? are the questions which remain unanswered.

Klass also has "solved" the Travis Walton case. This one is worth mentioning because it illustrates an alternate approach—when it is difficult to come up with explanations for the facts there is still a way out—namely, to declare the case a hoax. And if you declare it a hoax, the next logical thing is to show that there were motives, reasons why someone might want to perpetrate a hoax.

Klass also has bragged about how he "solved" the Lonnie Zamora-Socorro, New Mexico, case. This was an important case, so I got out his book and read the chapter. I kept waiting for the solution but it never came clear, so I read it again. Finally, I discovered his solution: The mayor had said they needed more tourists in Socorro! As far as I could see, that was the only bit of data Klass had. His reasoning? It must have been a hoax because a UFO case would bring in more tourists!

Klass took the same approach with Travis Walton. He set up a number of possible motives. I don't doubt in the least that motives can be set up in such a situation. You can always suggest that an individual wants to make money from the hoax that he perpetrates, or that the hoaxer wants the ego boost he gets from knowing he has fooled a lot of people. Although we don't have any difficulty dreaming up such motives, by the same token they don't prove anything.

I talked with some of the principals in the Travis Walton case. They listed for me the motives that Klass had suggested and pointed out how utterly foolish they were. For example, Klass made a big thing out of their thinking this was a way to get out of the Forest Service contract. In actual fact people forfeit those contracts all the time—apparently this is standard operating procedure. You don't have to dream up a UFO to forfeit a contract; you just forfeit it!

I was impressed with this case because of the polygraph tests. Chances are so small that several polygraph tests of that type could be simultaneously faked and, of the tests of the six witnesses, only one set of results was "inconclusive." The witness was asked whether he liked Travis Walton and he answered that he did, whereas he later admitted he didn't. To me this is impressive; it indicates that the tests were valid; an actual lie did appear in the tests. But at least five of the witnesses showed no stress in upholding the UFO sighting. It is possible that five people could fool a polygraph, but it is extremely unlikely. They were not a close group; they were not the kind of group that would be likely to perpetrate such a hoax.

I recorded some of my conversation with Mike Rogers, who was driving the truck. Of course it is unscientific to consider gut feelings, although science often gets its initial stimulus toward the solution of a given problem through intuition. At any rate, my gut feelings about these words of Mike Rogers's are very positive:

"If it was a hoax, it was not only brilliant but nearly impossible from what I saw. Somebody would have had to really have done a masterpiece to have created what we saw. It would have taken a lot of time and money. The light wasn't extremely bright but it was very penetrating and very strange. Another thing that was really weird is that the light seemed to light up the whole entire area without really being bright. I have a feeling about it too—you know the feeling is one thing that I can't think . . . who would put that kind of a feeling into a hoax?

"The very instant that we saw it, it took me about three seconds to become just absolutely terrified. Just totally freaked out! In fact, it was such a thing that to even talk about it right now it gets me kinda feeling funny, you know.

"Several of us guys kinda had the same opinion of it; Tim Peterson was one that got one of the best views of it and he's a level-headed enough person. Alan was in the backseat next to the door, but he's kind of a devout coward; it took him about ten seconds to put his head between his legs. Ken is a more calm person; he just sat there and looked at it, just took it all in, you might say. Alan's description wasn't too good because he just went to pieces so quickly and so totally that . . . I don't know just how much he saw of it. He saw enough of it to get freaked out like that, but he didn't sit and actually take it all in like Ken did. I didn't see it as soon as they did; I was on the outer side of the truck and I was driving and I had to watch where I was going until I could get the truck stopped. After I got the truck stopped and turned off the engine, when I could lean over and look out, then I could see it real good but until then I couldn't see it. But Ken, he sat there, his description was kinda the same as mine. I think we were what you might say the two most level-headed of the

group. Steve was kinda young—he got real upset by it too. Travis really took it in—it took him in! He just went running right over there. The only reason I could think that he'd run over there was just the fact that that's his nature. All his life he's been that kind of person. One time (about two years before that, maybe three years before that), we saw a bear run across the road on the way to work one day and he did exactly the same thing. He got out of the truck and ran right after that bear. It's a perfect example of why he did that."

Stories like this don't prove anything. Mike Rogers has practiced this little speech and no doubt can give it in this convincing way. Nevertheless, my gut feeling is positive.

But what do we do when we can't solve every single case? We do what science does much of the time—we indulge in inductive reasoning. We say: "We have solved such and such a percentage of cases and if we just had sufficient facts we would solve the rest." That is, we say that the solved cases are representative of all cases.

This is a valid approach. If we are analyzing a swimming pool for the amount of chlorine, we don't have to analyze every drop of water in the pool. We take a sample and analyze the sample. Can't we do the same thing with UFOs? Can't we take a sample of UFO cases, analyze them, find that they are the planet Venus, weather balloons, mirages, and so on, and conclude that all cases would be the same if we just had a few more data?

No, we cannot. Because the UFO cases that are solved are not representative of the ones that are not solved. This seems clear enough to me. But it doesn't seem at all clear to Menzel, Taves, and Klass. They seem to think that the cases that have been solved are perfectly typical of the ones that have not. To me this is incomprehensible. Perhaps they arrive at this because they *think* they have solved the Travis Walton, Lonnie Zamora, and Captain Coyne cases. By using a distorted form of science they think they have solved cases when they really haven't. On this basis perhaps all cases are alike.

But I think there are profound differences between the

UFO cases that I have identified as the planet Venus and those that I have not been able to identify as any conventional phenomenon. Close encounters of the first, second, or third kinds are very different from nocturnal lights. Nocturnal lights are no longer impressive; although some of them may be "spaceships" too, there is no way to be sure they are not something conventional. However, the close encounters are in a different category.

To summarize, you can't solve the whole UFO enigma by solving a representative sample because the sample that you are able to solve is not representative!

### Proving the Impossible and the Possible

William Markowitz published a paper in *Science* magazine in 1967 in which he suggested that UFOs are not extraterrestrial machines because it is impossible to get here from anywhere else in the universe. The counterargument, of course, is that William Markowitz doesn't know that much about moving around in the universe. We have only been in the powered flight business since 1903 and the Wright brothers. In less than one century we have gone from no flight at all to flights to the moon and Mars. Thus I remain unconvinced when someone like Markowitz tries to tell me that it's impossible to travel among the stars. True, we don't know for sure how to do it, although there have been a number of fairly reasonable proposals. But to suggest that it can't be done is to suggest that you know more than can be known at this time.

Can we show that UFOs do impossible things? If we could prove that UFOs do impossible things then we might prove that somebody is lying. But who knows what's possible and what's not possible at this stage of the game? Reportedly the UFOs hover silently, move rapidly without sonic booms or frictional heat, accelerate rapidly, and make right-angle turns at high speeds. By our present knowledge such things are impossible. But our knowledge isn't far enough advanced to say that such things are impossible. Garrett Hardin refers to statements of impossibility as

*statements of impotence.* However, we can make a few such statements. I'm told that we can say mathematically that it is impossible to trisect an angle with a straight edge and a compass. The second law of thermodynamics is another impotence principle, so there are a few things that we can say are impossible, but there aren't many.

Gravity control could make a tremendous difference. We have no concept of how or whether gravity can be controlled, but if it can be, then conceivably these rapid accelerations and sharp turns will fall into a very different category.

Or maybe the UFOs are not tangible objects; they are three-dimensional projected holographs. This has been suggested often in recent years. How can we tell the difference? Certainly not by looking. I know of one case in the Uintah Basin where an Indian shot at a UFO with his deer rifle and heard the bullet ricochet off. That sounds pretty tangible, but I thought, what if those who project the holograph up there are so clever that they are prepared for people to shoot at them and have a recording of a ricochet to play at that exact moment?

The whole UFO business is terribly frustrating. We can't really get our teeth into it; whatever we come up with, there is some kind of an alternative that somebody can suggest.

Another explanation is that the objects are projected into the minds of the witnesses. For example, in the Pascagoula case (the two fishermen who were "abducted") there was, according to John Keel, a drawbridge nearby with a man sitting in a booth facing the area where the UFO appeared and there were cars driving along a nearby road. So we have to ask why no one else saw that brilliant object. Yet it is difficult to listen to the recorded sessions with these two witnesses and think that they were lying. Could the sighting have been an hallucination in which the image was telepathically projected into the minds of the two witnesses?

My conclusion is that we cannot prove UFOs are not extraterrestrial machines. Here again, the only logical approach would be to prove that every single UFO is not a

extraterrestrial machine, and this can't be done. It is a practical impossibility. All other approaches have logical as well as practical limitations.

Can science prove that UFOs are extraterrestrial machines? Can investigators apply a scientific approach to prove this?

It is possible to imagine the kind of objective, verifiable data that would convince Philip Klass or even Carl Sagan: The UFOs land and reveal themselves; they provide cures for mankind's ills plus items of a supertechnology; and they take Sagan and Klass and me for a ride!

We can imagine the kind of data that would be convincing. But such data depend on the UFO drivers; they depend on the intelligence, presuming there is one, behind the UFO phenomenon. If the drivers are superadvanced and intelligent compared with us, then they may control what we know about them. We may be at their mercy.

I've tried to think of ways that science might prove the nature of UFOs if they are produced by some nonhuman intelligence. I'm on the *National Enquirer* panel that looks at the cases submitted every year; for a "proven" case the *Enquirer* will pay a million dollars. An applicant has to convince those of us on the panel and also a panel of judges, because in a way it's a legalistic question. I go to that meeting every year and we try to arrive at decisions on the cases of the last year. I think: What evidence would be totally convincing to Carl Sagan?

Fraud has occurred at all levels of science, so virtually all evidence should be questioned. Perhaps we are looking for convincing photographs taken under suitable circumstances (i.e., in the presence of several reliable witnesses), light spectra from a UFO that have characteristics unknown on earth, and extraterrestrial artifacts. Absolute proof is really difficult to imagine.

My conclusion is that it may be impossible for science to prove the extraterrestrial nature of UFOs. We can learn a great deal about UFOs by applying scientific methods and considering UFO phenomena in the light of our scientific knowledge, but it is possible, perhaps even likely, that our science cannot provide a final solution to the riddle.

## UFOs as Extraterrestrial Machines

Sometimes intuition is the only scientific tool for advancing frontiers. One must always be ready to change one's mind at the appearance of new data. At the moment I stand on the fence. Let me explain this.

On one hand, I'm totally unconvinced by the Menzel-Taves-Klass approach, although I'm glad some persons take their attitude because they provide data and make us consider seriously our interpretations of reality and related matters. But I don't think we are going to solve the UFO enigma by taking this approach.

On the other hand, there are many reasons to suspect that UFOs represent extraterrestrial machines and for many years this was, for me, the exciting and intriguing possibility. But I was careful to avoid committing myself on it! People invariably ask me, "Do you believe in UFOs?" I say that is not the game I'm playing. I might believe in God or in other things, but that is a different kind of game.

With UFOs, I'm playing the scientific game, and in science you are not supposed to believe in something; you are supposed to seek objective, verifiable data that lead to tentative conclusions, which may be modified as more and more data come along. So I have feelings about UFOs, but I don't have beliefs or convictions at this time. Nonetheless, there is evidence that they may be extraterrestrial machines.

The cases that I investigated in the Uintah Basin all could be interpreted that way. A man by the name of Joseph Junior Hicks became known locally as the world authority on UFOs and received reports from people over an area of almost one hundred miles in diameter (mostly three small towns with several even smaller towns scattered around). He interviewed these people and made up a form for them to fill out, had them draw pictures, and so forth. I interviewed many of the same people with a tape recorder and they had some marvelous close-encounter stories to tell. We had eighty cases when I finally completed the book *The Utah UFO Display*, and there have been a few more since. Most of the activity was between 1966 and 1968. For example:

Joe Ann Harris, with four other Indian girls in the backseat and a large Indian woman in the front seat, was driving home to Randlett, south of Fort Duchesne, one of those little towns. She came around a corner and one of the girls said, "What's that flashing star over there, that funny star?" It was funny because it was flashing on and off and it was below the horizon. They slowed down and it began to approach them, ending up right in front of the car "as big as the church at Randlett." It was about fifty feet in diameter, flat on the bottom, with a dome on the top. Through the windshield it appeared huge with the dome lit up and flashing. The four Indian girls got down onto the floor of the backseat, screaming their heads off, and the large Indian woman got down under the glove compartment. Joe Ann put the car into reverse, backing down the road to get away from this thing. She looked behind her for a moment, saw headlights coming around the bend and looked back—and the object was gone.

About that same time her friend Estel Manwaring was driving home with another Indian girl, on a different route. Estel looked out the window and said, "Isn't that a funny star?" Apparently it was the same object, flat on the bottom with a dome on the top. But they were not frightened; it was not attacking them. They watched it as they drove on for about half a mile. They turned the car toward it to get a better look, pulled up and flipped off the lights, and the object shot up in the air like a meteor. Although it may have been a quarter of a mile away, Estel tipped her head back so rapidly that she hurt her neck.

The point I'm making is that this object doesn't sound like the planet Venus, like a weather balloon or any such thing. It sounds like a spaceship from another world, if that's the context in which you think of such matters. Actually, it has been difficult to think of UFOs as being anything else. For the past twenty years that is what we've talked about. Betty Hill asked, "Where do you come from?" and they showed her the star map. Herb Schirmer talked about going off into the stars. The obvious evidence in relatively reliable close-encounter and contact cases implies that they are extraterrestrial machines. (I don't like to call them spaceships because perhaps the only spaceship is the mother

ship and the others are little scouts that don't go between the stars but just go around frightening people.)

### Doubting the Spaceship Hypothesis

Notwithstanding all this "obvious" evidence, I have become increasingly convinced that the UFOs are not extraterrestrial machines. This seems to be the modern trend in ufology. People are becoming dubious. It is not that the arguments of Klass and Markowitz prove that extraterrestrial machines are impossible. Rather, it is because the UFOs seem so irrational, so perverse. Years ago I used to answer this argument by saying that one can't discern the motives of another intelligence. One can't know what's rational and what isn't if the object is controlled by an extraterrestrial, otherworldly intelligence. This is true, of course, but nevertheless much of what we observe makes almost no sense unless it is truly diabolical.

I gave up thinking that "they" are exploring our planet partly because "they" go so far back in history and partly because things seem so staged. I have listened to one Uintah Basin encounter after another in which the witness comes barreling around a corner and there sits the UFO, waiting. In one case a man and his son were coming back from a fishing trip and they saw a "burning haystack" out in the middle of the desert where there weren't any haystacks. Just as they parked the car and got out to look it took off. It flew up and made a perfect circle around the moon before leaving. Well now, if a UFO is to fly a perfect circle around the moon the witness must be in a certain position in relation to the UFO's flight. If the witness is just a short distance away from that position, the moon will not be at the center of the apparent circle. So if the encounter really happened as they described, the object was flying a perfect circle around the moon and in relation to the two witnesses down there watching. It was responding to their being there. Many other times the witness says, "Oh, look at that!" and the light goes out. Or perhaps he only *thinks* something and the light goes out. This could be

coincidence, of course, but the witnesses feel that the object seemingly responded.

I've decided that it's a display of some kind; that whatever it is, it's for the benefit of the witness. A Frenchman comes peddling his bike over the hill at 4:00 A.M. on his way to the bakery (in Aimé Michel's book *Flying Saucers and the Straight-Line Mystery*) and there "it" sits out in the field. Little "men" are pulling up plants. When I first read this in 1962 I thought, as a botanist, "Aha, I'm proud of them; they are collecting samples just as I would if I went to another planet!" But I'm not comfortable with that thought anymore. I think they were *appearing to collect samples*, perhaps because this is what the baker (and those to whom he would speak of the encounter) would expect. If they want to sample the earth's biota they've had plenty of time to do so, and there are certainly better ways to do it than by pulling plants up by the roots at four o'clock in the morning.

The next question, of course, is why the display? The answer must be that they want to manipulate us in some way, for good or for evil. Do they want to condition us to join the galactic society at some future time? Or are their motives less pleasant?

In many cases the contactees really do seem to be manipulated. Adamski told us that he visited the moon and that its other side has forests and rolling hills, with little towns and lakes; in short, a topography that looks much like northern New Hampshire. I have wondered if the space people want to manipulate some of us—the gullible among us—to turn off those of us who are not gullible, those of us who knew in 1952 that the far side of the moon couldn't be that way. Many of us knew beyond any question that the far side of the moon could not be as Adamski described it because of what was known about this side. If "they" wanted to turn off scientists, engineers, and the nongullible in general and at the same time manipulate the gullible who were willing to believe, perhaps a good plan would have been to pick up Adamski out at Giant Rock or somewhere and take him for a little spin. When "they" got over northern New Hampshire they might say, "Look out there, George; we are on the other

side of the moon now. Go back and tell everybody how it looks!"

Please understand, I'm not saying that I accept Adamski's story. The most logical explanation of his story is that it's a lie, a fraud, a hoax. But when you consider these things seriously you end up with these paradoxes.

One of the most troubling things is that the UFOs seem to meet the expectations of the witnesses. The 1897 airship is surely one of the most perplexing aspects of the whole problem. No one thought of extraterrestrial machines, yet people were seeing UFOs, calling them airships, and describing them in the context of the science-fiction airships of that time. Does this mean their minds generated them? Maybe, but I'm not at all comfortable with the idea that it was just a response to suggestion among the witnesses. There were too many witnesses; there was too much evidence for a real object. Yet why should it be so exactly suited to their times, beliefs, and sociology? Thought about in this way, practically all cases fit into this category.

#### Lunatic-Fringe Ideas

There also are elements of the bizarre, the fantastic, the diabolical. You've probably all been titillated by the Antonio Villas-Boas space goddess. This Brazilian peasant claimed he was taken aboard a UFO where he had a (very) close sexual encounter with a diminutive space woman. This has some rather fantastic implications if it is taken at face value. If you think the blonde lady with red hair in her armpits came here from another world to seduce Antonio and become pregnant by him, then you raise the specter of fantastic biological questions. If the inhabitants of other worlds are capable of reproducing with us then their chromosomes would match up when the sperm and the egg unite and *we are one species*. This is totally unacceptable to modern biologists, if we evolved independently on our own worlds. The only alternative is to assume that we are related, that the people from the other world



put us here—or we both were placed on our worlds by someone else.

How does all this relate to religion? The miracle of the Fatima sun in Portugal in 1917 is totally set in 1917 Portuguese Catholicism. To try to take it out of that context is to miss an extremely important point.

The healings we hear about also are fantastic. John Keel's books have kept me awake nights thinking about these matters. His "mothman" is fantastic in terms of any extraterrestrial-machine ideas. The prophecies of the contactees are of interest because they are only partially, not wholly fulfilled. For instance, the contactees tell John Keel there will be a disaster on the Ohio River, probably an explosion in a chemical plant. The explosion doesn't happen, but a bridge collapses instead. Was the prophecy fulfilled or not? Or is something diabolical going on?

Must they be spaceships or extraterrestrial machines? They could be, and still account for these strange things, I suppose.

Are they perverse visitors who want to observe or control us and have been doing so for thousands to millions of years—and maybe put us here in the first place?

Are we a huge sociological, ecological, psychological experiment of some kind?

Is our evolution being controlled by the visitors?

Personally, I'm not comfortable with any of these ideas.

We've mentioned three-dimensional color holographs and projections into the mind. To that list we can add time travelers from the future and parallel universes. But these are only concepts without foundation in fact, although conceivably they could turn out to be true.

There are realities that can't be comprehended. The human mind cannot grasp the concept of eternity or infinity—a universe without beginning or end. Nor can we imagine space that goes on forever and ever, while at the same time we cannot imagine space that doesn't! It's conceivable that UFOs will end up in that horrible philosophical position—something we simply can't grasp with our minds.

I continue to have fun playing science with the UFOs. I have learned a great deal about how science works by

worrying about UFOs. But I am no longer really comfortable with this approach. I am more interested in the philosophical and religious implications of the whole business, although I think this is extremely dangerous because everyone who takes a philosophical approach comes up with a different idea—which makes reaching the truth extremely difficult. Yet, within the context of my own religion (I'm a Utah Mormon), I can accommodate some of this. It would be difficult to explain why to anyone who is not a Utah Mormon; we wouldn't be talking the same language! I can only say that I don't know many answers but I do get some solace from some of the religious ideas, specifically the ones within my own faith.

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