

archived as [http://www.stealthskater.com/Documents/Vallee\\_05.pdf](http://www.stealthskater.com/Documents/Vallee_05.pdf)

similar articles at <http://www.stealthskater.com/UFO.htm#Vallee>

*note: because important websites are frequently "here today but gone tomorrow", the following was archived from [http://tmv.us/site/Editorials/Vallee Interview.html](http://tmv.us/site/Editorials/Vallee_Interview.html) on April 25, 2006. This is NOT an attempt to divert readers from the aforementioned website. Indeed, the reader should only read this back-up copy if it cannot be found at the original author's site*

## Jacques Vallee Interview

### The Mysterious Valley - Guest Editorials



UFOs remain the chief enigma of our time. No matter what we read, no matter what our own experiences with the phenomena, the strangeness and absurdity of the reports keep us wondering just what is really going on. For some, the question is of the utmost importance. For others, it is treated as an entertaining oddity. For those of us who have had some kind of encounter with UFOs, the experience will continue to be a critical question mark behind our taken-for-granted assumptions about the World. We may never find out what they are, but we certainly appreciate any reasonable suggestions as to their ultimate nature.

Many writers and researchers have devoted themselves to the task with varying degrees of success and sincerity. But none of them has come close to a comprehensive framework to accommodate the range of problems posed by this ancient dilemma. Some believe this incomprehensibility is a fundamental and essential aspect of the UFO phenomena and suggest we learn to live gracefully in the face of an unsolvable mystery. Others would hurry us into accepting their partial and biased theories that inevitably force us to disregard certain evidence in light of their own evidence and extrapolation.

While others have been satisfied with establishing mystery cults or even cults of personality, Jacques Vallee has focused on historical and generally scientific analysis in the hope that persistence will shed some light on this elusive field. His books are widely discussed and have opened up new areas for consideration by the inquisitive.

Broadly speaking, Vallee vacillates from book to book between 2 seemingly inconsistent positions. On the one hand, in works like Passport to Magonia and Dimensions, he suggests the experience is both ancient and mythic, comparing alien encounters with the Fairies of pre-Christian paganism. Frequently warm and generous, the creatures in these stories are seen as wonderful and magical beings continually involved with perplexing humans with the bizarre and non-sensical. In other works such as Messengers of Deception and his latest book Confrontations, Vallee would have us believe the UFOs represent something hostile and damaging: People get zapped with harmful beams and sometimes die. In Messengers, we must consider the possibility that the whole thing is a human contrivance designed to confuse and misdirect serious inquiries.

To his credit, Vallee makes no secret of his own ambiguities. If the entire field of research amounts to one big question mark, Vallee appreciates the logic of devoting as much attention to the question as he does to the answer realizing that even though we may never fully understand the reality of the UFO phenomenon, we can at least begin to understand more about ourselves by the way we react to it.

Jacques Vallee's resume is an impressive one. Born in France, he was trained in astrophysics and is a former principal investigator on computer networking projects for the Department-of-Defense. He first became interested in the UFO problem in 1961 while working on the staff of the French Space Committee where he witnessed the destruction of tracking tapes of unknown objects. The following year, Vallee came to the United States and began working closely with Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the Air Force scientific consultant on the UFO problem.

Dr. Vallee is widely recognized as the premier investigative scientist in the realm of UFO research today. In addition to authoring numerous articles and books, Vallee served as Steven Spielberg's advisor during the making of "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and was the real-life model for the character portrayed by Francois Truffaut.

Dr. Vallee's research into the phenomenon has taken him to many countries around the World including France, Scotland, Australia, and Brazil. He currently resides in San Francisco with his wife and 2 children.

**[TMV]:** Your latest book Confrontations just came out this spring. Prior to that, you hadn't been in the limelight much. What was your focus during that time?

**[Vallee]:** People assumed I had gone off to a mountaintop to philosophize. The reason that I dropped out of the UFO scene is that I wanted to do UFO investigations and I was tired of going to meetings where the same things were continually rehashed. What it came down to was just a lot of talk.

I think we're a long way from understanding this phenomenon. And the only way we're going to understand it is to stop talking to each other and go back and talk to the witnesses. That's what I wanted to do. And I wanted to do it first-hand. I wanted to be able to go to the site, meet the witnesses, and monitor what was happening over a certain period of time.

So, I put the highest priority on first-hand cases that had not been reported to the Press or to the UFO community because the moment the cases become part of ongoing discussion, they get polarized. The witnesses are bombarded with all kinds of questions; there are biases; and the ego gets into it. I wanted to do a quiet kind of long-term research. In 10 years, I accumulated over 200 such cases. The book is really a summary of the more interesting of these cases.

**[TMV]:** And how were you contacted about these cases?

**[Vallee]:** Usually through people who have attended my lectures or have read my books. I get several letters everyday now prompted by Dimensions, even though it's a year old. I pick the most interesting letters which -- to me -- are often from people who have a very visible position in life such as one from a vice-president of IBM. The last thing he wanted to do was to go to a UFO organization. He didn't want any publicity; he didn't want to see his name in any book. But he had a sighting which was very valid.

**[TMV]:** What conclusions have your research led you to?

**[Vallee]:** I feel that I could go before a committee of scientists and convince them that there is overwhelming evidence that the UFO phenomena exists. And that it is an unrecognized, unexplained phenomenon for Science, but something that I think I could prove. My personal contention is that the phenomenon is the result of an intelligence that it is a technology

directed by an intelligence. And that this intelligence is capable of **manipulating space and time in ways that we don't understand.**

I could convince a committee of my peers that the phenomenon is real, that it is physical, and that we don't understand it. I could not convince them that my speculation is correct -- there may be alternative speculations. The essential conclusion I'm tending to is that the origin of the phenomenon of the intelligence is not necessarily *extraterrestrial*.

[TMV]: Would you say you tend toward a multi-dimensional interpretation that doesn't specify that these have to be some kind of humanoid-type creatures from another planet coming to Earth physically? It seems that sometimes you talk about this phenomenon as being a kind of religious sentiment that wells up from the human spirit. At other times, you speak as though there's a potentially harmful force that is being imposed from without as a control system.

[Vallee]: Certainly. I think it's an opportunity to learn something very fundamental about the Universe because not only is the phenomenon or technology capable of manipulating space and time in ways that we don't understand, it's manipulating the *psychic* environment of the witness. I tried to introduce that idea when I wrote Invisible College. At that time, the UFO community was not ready for it. The New Age and the parapsychology communities interpreted my conclusion to mean that UFOs are devas from the dream world that they are not physical or that the physical aspect is unimportant. In truth, I think we are dealing with something that is **both technological and psychic and seems to be able to manipulate other dimensions.**

This is neither wishful thinking nor personal speculation on my part. It's a conclusion that comes from interviewing critical witnesses and then listening to what they have to say. And what they have to say is not that they've seen spacecraft coming down from the sky and then returning to the sky. More often, what they have reported is that they have seen something appear on the spot ... take on a physical shape (sometimes even changing shape) ... and then disappear (sometimes faster than the eye can trace). On occasion, it will disappear in a closed space by either becoming transparent and then vanishing or by concentrating into a single point. An example that's often given is like turning off a television set -- the image goes "zoom!" to a single point.

I don't have a good explanation for the question of why the technology seems to appear in a form that uses images from our own unconscious. I'd be kidding if I said that I understand that. There are cases of repeated observations where the phenomenon begins by being amorphous and then starts matching the expectations of the witnesses. There are 2 ways to deal intellectually with that.

One is to say it's a phenomenon of the brain which is very good at reading recognizable images in amorphous things like clouds and ink blots. So, perhaps the witnesses are getting used to this phenomenon and are starting to read things into it. But that's not the only explanation. It may be that the phenomenon itself is using our reactions to it in order to turn into something that we expect or understand. We may be carrying a matrix of imagery that it somehow picks up. A good example of that is Fatima. The apparitions witnessed at Fatima did not start in 1917. They started 2 years before. Some of the same kids were involved, and there were also other witnesses. What they saw was a globe of light. Then they saw a globe of light with some type of being inside. Then they started calling the *being* an "angel". And then the angel stated communicating with them and gave them a prayer. It developed in stages and culminated in 1917. But even then, the virgin Mary wasn't seen by everyone who was present.

In contemporary UFO cases, you also have **objects that are seen by part of the crowd but not by others**. I was doing a radio program about a year ago and somebody called from Sacramento and gave me exactly that type of report. He had been near a lake with his family. He witnessed an object come over the lake. There were people around him that saw it and there were people that just couldn't see it. What we're dealing with is a very interesting phenomenon that has both *psychic* aspects and physical aspects.

[TMV]: What's interesting is that the people that did see it would see the same thing, would they not? Or does that vary?

[Vallee]: Usually there is a consensus on the major aspects of the physical parameters of it. But people can disagree on, for example, when there is interaction with *entities*. Different people may be perceiving different things.

[TMV]: Plus after you see something like that, you build consensus by an interactive process. You start matching things together.

[Vallee]: But there is a social, mythological aspect to it also. And that can be very tricky. I think it's important to bring this out so that people can be alerted to it, especially since the publication of Communion. There was a major marketing effort behind Communion which proved to be very successful. True, it's a powerful book. But Communion has also touched people who have never even read it because it also has a powerful cover. That face on the cover has become our society's standard for what *aliens* are supposed to look like.

This standard has reached the point where any witness that doesn't report something that looks like the cover of Communion is dismissed as a hoaxer. People who see things that don't look like the cover tend not to be believed by UFOlogists. Those sightings are not followed up, and they don't go into the database. So, scientific analysis tends to retrieve more-and-more patterns that correspond to those patterns that we expect in the first place. There's a self-fulfilling prophesy involved which is very tricky.

[TMV]: Are you finding in the cases that you've studied since Communion came out that a greater preponderance of people are seeing that type of *being*?

[Vallee]: Yes. But I've recently been looking at other cases in which the beings were radically different. Again, I use the word "*beings*" in quotes because we don't really know what *they* are.

[TMV]: As we approach the millennium, I would expect that we'll see phenomena reported that far exceed anything that we've seen yet if for no other reason because people expect things to change. And that expectation itself is fertile ground for these changes to occur.

[Vallee]: I think the way that we get into trouble studying UFOs is that we mix up the different levels involved. We mix up the physical level, the *psychological* level, and the mythological or social level. I want to clearly identify these 3 levels because we need a different type of mythology to deal with each level and each set of events.

At the physical level, all we know now is that there are material, physical objects -- at least part of the time. They leave traces; they interact with the environment; they throw off heat and light and probably pulse microwaves in very interesting ways. They contain a great deal of energy. I've included some energy calculations in Confrontations.

I think we've made a lot of progress in the last few years in understanding the *psychological* and physiological level. There are some very clear patterns that range from sunburns to conjunctivitis. Sometimes temporary blindness occurs. Sometimes witnesses report a form of paralysis in which they have no control of their muscles during the time when the object is there. I think this has obvious medical implications that are very interesting. The witnesses are often disoriented.

In Confrontations, I cite a case I investigated in which the people thought they were driving North when they were driving South. Such confusion in space and time too often contributes to scientists concluding that the witnesses aren't reliable. We don't know a lot about the effect of pulsed microwaves on the human brain. One effect might be hallucinations. You may end up having witnesses telling you incredible stories because they were subjected to very strange psychological side-effects of something that was really there. I don't think that most of the UFO community is ready to deal with that. And I don't think the scientific community is ready to deal with that.

Then there is a third level -- the mythological or sociological level. At that level, the physical reality of the actual UFO is totally irrelevant. Proving that Jesus Christ never existed would have little effect on our society in terms of belief systems. At this point, the influence of Jesus would remain even without a historical Jesus.

**[TMV]:** Why did you decide to concentrate on so many case studies? We have thousands of case studies. What good is a hundred more going to do?

**[Vallee]:** I think that's a fair question. Number One, I didn't publish all the case studies. I just published selected ones that illustrate certain points. What I wanted to do was to start gradually from the physical side by focusing on cases that involved physical traces. What I wanted to do was to go back to basics, proceed step-by-step, and find out what we know about the phenomenon. To do this, I concentrated on cases that no scientist can refute.

The first case in the body of the book is a case in which there were 2 French submarines anchored in the harbor at Martinique. The submarine tender and all the sailors and officers saw an object that came over the harbor and made 3 large loops before vanishing from the spot only to reappear 5-minutes later. It then did the whole thing in reverse and went away. There were something like 250 witnesses. I've had several personal conversations with one of the witnesses who was the first helmsman of the French fleet of the Mediterranean. He was somebody who had very good eyesight and was a darn good observer. Not only did he see this, but he also had time to go up to the tower and come back with 6 pairs of binoculars that he gave to his fellow officers. All of them watched the thing through binoculars. There is also a weather observatory on the hill overlooking the harbor, and all the people in the weather observatory saw it. You can't say that this didn't happen. You can't say that it was a meteor or a comet or any of that. I'm trying to use cases like that to establish the physical reality of a phenomenon and then continue from there.

I also selected cases where I went to the site expecting to find something that would be easy to dismiss only to find a complex set of circumstances that ultimately led me to the conclusion that it was a real UFO case after all. I also included cases where I expected to find evidence pointing to a real UFO and found, instead, a trivial explanation. And finally, there are cases where, frankly, I don't know what happened.

[TMV]: It would seem in a sense that you are creating your own filtering mechanism. Selecting those case studies that do seem to establish patterns while discarding others irrelevant to your analysis.

[Vallee]: Let me clarify what I did. The cases I selected were chosen not because they said something about UFOs, but because they said something specifically about methodology. The question I was trying to answer was how do we go about investigating those things, given the unique characteristics of the phenomenon? I purposefully selected cases of one type or another to illustrate the complexity of this kind of research. I think the main message that I wanted to get across is that even after you've spent 5,000-or-10,000 dollars investigating a case, you may not know anymore than you did at the beginning. I think that's something important for people to realize.

[TMV]: Have you ever seen any flying disks?

[Vallee]: I've seen things that shouldn't have been there when I was tracking satellites at the Paris observatory. I saw them visually as part of a team. That's really what started my research. Obviously, I had heard of UFOs before then. I always thought that if there were UFOs, astronomers would see them and would tell us.

But my first job as an astronomer left me disillusioned. I was part of a team that was tracking satellites for the French Space Committee. We found ourselves tracking objects that were not satellites and were not anything else recognizable either. One night we got 11 data points on one of these objects on a magnetic tape and wanted to run the tape through a computer and compute an orbit and see the thing again. To this day, I can't tell you that it wasn't some piece of technology that somebody had. It could have been some very bizarre piece of human technology. But what intrigued me was that the man in charge of the project **confiscated the tape and erased it**. That's really what got me started because I suddenly realized that astronomers saw things that they did not report.

The important part of Confrontations is really in the last few chapters that deal with field investigations that Jeanine and I did in Brazil. We went to Brazil specifically to check stories of people being hurt by exposure to the light from UFOs. We spent about 2 weeks in the interior of the country going from village-to-village and talking to people. We just barely scratched the surface but in 10 days we spoke with 50 people who had been hurt by those beams -- some of whom had seen these objects just a week before we arrived.

[TMV]: Were they seeing the same kind of technological craft?

[Vallee]: Pretty much. There was a whole variety of objects. But the ones that emitted these beams were classic in terms of shape. They were boxy, rectangular objects that either didn't make a noise or made nothing more than a *hum* (like the noise a refrigerator makes). They came over at night. And the beam was a light that not only burned them but pinned them down.

When we asked people in Brazil about the phenomenon, we discovered that they didn't see it as something that comes from another planet but something that comes from another spiritual plane. That's the way they put it. But they offered no further explanation than that. They seemed to be just as puzzled by it as a scientist would be.

There was this one fellow who was blind and had developed *psychic* powers. I tried to push him. I asked him what kind of spirits he thought he was encountering. But he was very

straightforward and humble. He said he could invoke the gods of his tradition, but these things were something else. It was like, "*Yes, these things exist, but they are beyond my reach.*"

[TMV]: In our culture, that explanation would be regarded as even more absurd than the activities of *extraterrestrials*.

[Vallee]: It is absurd, just like the explanations by our culture are absurd. But absurdity doesn't mean meaningless. The absurd is a signal that has a property of taking you out of your normal thinking process and making you aware of other forms of thinking that you didn't know existed. It's forcing you to perceive reality at a different level. Zen koans, for example, are absurd. But they are intended to be absurd in a way that stops your normal thinking process. They make you aware of your mental process by stopping it.

[TMV]: And what type of mental state is that creating in these villagers?

[Vallee]: Terror. The day after an encounter, witnesses were very often extremely weak and could hardly walk. They would be taken to a doctor if there was a doctor close-by. I spoke with some of the doctors, one of whom had treated 35 such cases in the mouth of the Amazon.

[TMV]: What do you think of that? That's such a concentrated activity in one area.

[Vallee]: You find the same thing right now in the Soviet Union. But nobody will talk about it.

[TMV]: Were people getting hit by beams of light in the Soviet Union?

[Vallee]: Yes. But I have not heard of cases with actual injuries in the Soviet Union although I have heard of reports of beams melting the asphalt. I spent a week with a French journalist in the Soviet Union just 6 weeks ago. We heard about a case in January where an object hovered close to the ground and a beam came out and melted the asphalt in front of a nuclear power plant in Viljandi? Vlorë? Varanage is not a little city lost in the snow somewhere. It is a city twice the size of San Francisco. It's a major industrial center.

The Western newspapers gave the impression that the witnesses were kids. Well, there were some sightings by kids. But there was a total of over a thousand witnesses in Varanage. In one of these sightings, an object hovered at rooftop level close to some apartment buildings for a long period of time and was seen by 500 people, most of them adults. There is a very intense concentration of cases around that area and, of course, this has been sensationalized by the Soviets themselves. It's hard to tell now which reports are real and which are not.

There were many cases with *entities* described that were not like the cover of Communion. Some *entities* were described as very small and some were described as very tall.

**if on the Internet, Press <BACK> on your browser to return to the previous page (or go to [www.stealthskater.com](http://www.stealthskater.com))**

**else if accessing these files from the CD in a MS-Word session, simply <CLOSE> this file's window-session; the previous window-session should still remain 'active'**