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Heretic among heretics: Jacques Vallee Interview

Conspire.com

Summary: In-depth interview with leading UFO researcher Jacques Vallee.

PART 1

Jacques Vallee hesitated before agreeing to be interviewed about the subject for which he's most famous: UFOs. It's not that he's reluctant to discuss the topic or tussle with the skeptics. After all, he's written close to a dozen books on UFOs -- several of them best-sellers -- analyzing a notoriously ethereal subject as a hard-headed physical scientist, folklorist, and sociologist. He believes there is more than enough solid evidence to make a compelling case for the existence of UFOs. And he doesn't shy away from an honest debate.

It's the hard-core believers who give Vallee pause. Anyone who has observed the semi-academic cockpit known as "UFOlogy" knows that close encounters of the UFO expert kind shed little light and much heat, dogma and territorial sniping. Vallee's views about UFOs are far more exotic and far stranger than what he calls the reigning "nuts and bolts" approach to the subject. Consequently, he's been attacked by believers so often that he jokingly refers to himself a "heretic among heretics". As Vallee puts it, "I will be disappointed if UFOs turn out to be nothing more than spaceships."

In his recent autobiographical book Forbidden Science, Vallee summed up his views about the provenance of UFOs -- a viewpoint that he's developed through decades of research. "The UFO phenomenon exists. It has been with us throughout History. It is physical in nature and it remains unexplained in terms of contemporary Science. **It represents a level of consciousness that we have not yet recognized, and which is able to manipulate dimensions beyond time and space as we understand them.**"

So much for anti-gravity-powered starships ferrying Big Brothers from outer space. Vallee thinks UFOs are likely "windows" to other dimensions manipulated by intelligent, often mischievous, always enigmatic beings we have yet to understand. ("60 Greatest Conspiracies of All Time" covers Vallee's theories in detail.)

No other UFO researcher has contributed more to an admittedly controversial field. But Vallee commands a measure of respect that must leave his colleagues feeling a bit envious. Even Philip Klass - the avionics expert and the media's favorite UFO-debunker -- calls Vallee "one of the more distinguished members of the pro-UFO community." Vallee, he adds, "is one of the brighter physical scientists who believes in UFOs."

Vallee moved to America from his native France in the early 1960s as a young astronomer-turned-computer scientist. Vallee pioneered the use of computers to analyze and categorize the UFO phenomenon. And his 1965 book Anatomy of a Phenomenon is still considered one of the most scholarly books on UFOs ever written. At Northwestern University, Vallee assisted Prof. J. Allen Hynek, the academic consultant on the Air Force's infamous Project 'Blue Book', now seen by most saucer students as either a half-hearted government effort to address the UFO craze of the 1950s and 1960s or a full-blown cover-up. While working with Hynek, Vallee and his wife Janine compiled the first-ever computer database of UFO sightings.

In 1969, Vallee published another groundbreaking book Passport to Magonia in which he collected a body of folkloric "myths" that read remarkably like modern UFO encounters, from Celtic tales of fairyland abductions to Biblical passages and medieval chronicles of "visitors" from beyond. Building on Carl Jung's thesis that UFOs are a sociological phenomenon -- a product of the collective unconscious -- Vallee forever left behind the space-bound ET theorists. But his folklorist's approach to the problem would influence a number of later researchers and writers who continue to echo his ideas about other-dimensional forms of consciousness. Best-selling author Whitley Strieber, Harvard "abductee psychologist" John Mack, and journalist Keith Thompson (author of Angels and Aliens all owe a debt to Vallee. Stephen Spielberg paid homage to Vallee in "Close Encounters of the Third Kind", basing his French scientist character (played by Francois Truffaut) on the real French UFO theorist.

We recently had lunch with Vallee in San Francisco at restaurant around the corner from the offices of his high-technology venture capital firm. 'Part 1' of that interview covers Vallee's theories about UFOs and his belief that Science can penetrate mystery of flying disks and *alien* beings. In 'Part 2' which we'll publish later this month, Vallee discusses the second sphere of his researches: The connection between the UFO phenomenon and the religious impulse. Vallee believes that the intelligence guiding UFOs is a kind of control mechanism, an invisible hand shaping the development of human consciousness over a period of eons. In the second installment, he also talks about the theory that from time-to-time governments have manipulated public opinion through UFO mythology -- in some instances constructing elaborate hoaxes for propagandistic purposes.

[60GCAT]: Why are Americans obsessed with the idea that outer-space *aliens* are the pilots of UFOs?

[Vallee]: I think Americans -- if they are interested in the subject -- are very literal. They want to "kick the tires", which is a good American thing to do. They want to do reverse-engineering on the propulsion system. And when I tell them, "Look, maybe those things don't have a propulsion system", you get a strange reaction. Just like, if you remember, in "Close Encounters", the Truffaut character keeps going around saying this is a sociological phenomenon -- not just physical. And he has a lot of trouble getting that idea across.

[60GCAT]: At one point, you subscribed to the theory that UFOs might be *extraterrestrial* in origin.

[Vallee]: When I met Stephen Spielberg, I argued with him that the subject was even more interesting if it wasn't *extraterrestrials*. If it was real, physical, but not ET. So he said, "You're probably right. But that's not what the public is expecting. This is Hollywood and I want to give people something that's close to what they expect." Which is fair.

[60GCAT]: So what do we know for sure about the nature of UFOs?

[Vallee]: There is a phenomenon. We don't know where it comes from. It's characterized by its physical [traces]. 80 percent of all the cases have trivial explanations. But I'm talking about

the core phenomena. It seems to involve a lot of energy in a small space. It seems to involve pulsed microwaves among other things. There isn't much that is known about the effect of pulsed microwaves on the brain, so it's quite possible that some of the stories that you get from people are essentially induced hallucinations in sincere witnesses (i.e., the witnesses are not lying). They really have been exposed to something genuine. But there is no way to go back to what that thing was based on their description, because their brain has been affected by proximity to that energy. **[StealthSkater note: The U.S. Government tends to ridicule UFO witnesses. I had read where the Soviet Government instead tells them, "We believe that you are reporting what you saw." A possible conclusion would be that the Soviets know what is caused the phenomenon and therefore believe the eyewitnesses' reports. That doesn't necessarily mean that what they saw really exists. This approach would fall in line with what Vallee is suggesting.]**

Having said that, I have plenty of colleagues in science and technology that I respect who tell me this could be a natural phenomenon -- this could be an undiscovered form of energy in the atmosphere. We don't know much about the effect of electromagnetic fields on the nervous system. We're going to be discovering that as we go. So, it's quite possible that there could be a phenomenon like that -- a very spontaneous thing. Or it could be artificial. If it's artificial it could come from another form of consciousness which may or may not be *extraterrestrial*. It's a big Universe out there. Who are we to say where it comes from? We can only speculate on that point. **[StealthSkater note: regarding unknown energies, read Wilhelm Reich's orgone energy at [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#) . Folklore maintains that it was Reich's DOR "cloudbuster" used in combination with from the Philadelphia Experiment that led to the Montauk Project (opening portals in time and possibly manipulating established timelines).]**

[60GCAT]: How can we use our own comparatively "backward" technology to investigate this mystery?

[Vallee]: Where I think that technology can be of help is in looking for patterns. And I did as much of that as anybody else. With my wife, I built the first computer database of UFO sightings. But where I think computers could be used much better is in applying artificial intelligence, reason, and inference to eliminating the reports that have natural causes. I developed a software prototype of that which was called OVNIBASE, which I turned over to the French CNES. Presumably they are developing a next version of it and running it on their database.

[60GCAT]: What about other technologies that can help us analyze evidence better than we could, say, 10 years ago?

[Vallee]: Digital enhancement of photographs is very useful. In my book Confrontations, I mention the photograph that I brought back from Costa Rica, which was unusual because the object was over a lake [Lago de Cote] so there was a uniform black background. Everything is known about the aircraft that took the photo. At the time the picture was taken [in 1971], nobody on the plane had seen the object. It was only after the film was developed that the object was discovered. The camera used was exceptional. It produced a very large negative (10 inches), very detailed. You can see cows in the field. The time is known. The latitude, longitude and attitude of the aircraft are known. So we spent a lot of time analyzing that photograph without being able to find any obvious natural answer to the object. It seems to be a very large, solid thing.

I obtained the negative from the government of Costa Rica. If you don't have the negative, analysis is a waste of time. I also obtained the negative of the picture taken before and the picture after, all uncut. I took negatives to a friend of mine in France who works for a firm that digitally analyzes satellite photographs. They digitized the entire thing and then analyzed it to the extent that they could. They could not find an explanation for the object.

[60GCAT]: It's hard for Americans to grasp the idea that UFOs might be a manifestation -- the other-dimensional.

[Vallee]: You have to keep an open mind. What I try to do is what any cop would do. I try to listen to the witnesses instead of printing my own theories. Theories are a dime-a-dozen. They don't do any good. It's much more useful, I think, just to listen to what people are telling you. I've been trying to do that not just in the U.S. but also in Europe and other places I've visited -- like Brazil and Argentina -- and try to look for patterns.

[60GCAT]: You're a bit of a controversial figure among UFO researchers, mainly because you entertain theories more exotic than the UFOs-are-from-outer-space paradigm.

[Vallee]: I've antagonized a number of the believers in UFOs. Number One, because I'm not ready to jump to any conclusion that it's necessarily *extraterrestrial*. We're not smart enough to know what *they* are at this point. And the research has not been done. I certainly remember enough of my training in astronomy to tell you that the Universe is big enough to have other forms of life than us. At least we hope that it does. But so far we cannot prove it. So we cannot see how *they* would come here. *They* probably would be much advanced with respect to our physics. And *they* would have found a way to do it. But that does not explain UFOs.

I've also antagonized a lot of people because I think that the way abductions are being handled is wrong. It's not only wrong scientifically, it's also wrong morally and ethically. I've been telling people, don't let anyone hypnotize you if you've seen a strange light in the sky. I think a lot of those people prominent in the Press, the *National Enquirer*, the talk shows and so on are creating abductees under hypnosis. They are hypnotizing everybody who's ever had a strange experience and telling them they are abductees by suggestion. And they are doing that in good faith. They don't realize what they are doing. But to my way of thinking, that's unethical.

[60GCAT]: What do you think of John Mack, the Harvard psychologist who believes that *alien* abductions are a real phenomenon? Of course, he uses hypnosis on his patients to liberate "repressed memories" of those abductions.

[Vallee]: I respect him for his courage in addressing the issue. But I don't agree with his methods.

I've taken some witnesses who wanted to be hypnotized to specialists in 2 out of maybe 70 cases of abductions that I've studied. And usually the specialists tell me that hypnosis is not necessarily the best way of helping these people. Nor is it the best way to recover memories. It may help in very specific cases. But I've never hypnotized anybody. I'm not qualified to do it.

[60GCAT]: How did you first become interested in UFOs and *paranormal* phenomena?

[Vallee]: I started out wanting to do astronomy. And I ruined essentially a perfectly good career in science by becoming interested in computers. This was in France in the early days of

computing and the earliest days of satellites and space exploration. So I took some of the earliest computer courses at French universities.

My first job was at Paris observatory, tracking satellites. And we started tracking objects that were not satellites and were fairly elusive. So we decided that we would pay attention to those objects even though they were not on the schedule of normal satellites. One night, we got 11 data points on one of these objects. It was very bright. It was also "retrograde." This was at a time when there was no rocket powerful enough to launch a retrograde satellite -- a satellite that goes around opposite to the rotation of the Earth, where you obviously need to overcome the Earth's gravity going the other direction. You have to reach escape velocity in the direction opposite the rotation of the Earth, which takes a lot more energy than the direct direction. And the man in charge of the project confiscated the tape and erased it the next morning.

So that's really what got me interested. Because up to then I thought, "*Scientists don't seem to be interested in UFOs. Astronomers don't report anything unusual in the sky. So there probably isn't anything to it.*" Effectively, I was in the same position that most scientists are in today. You trust your colleagues. And because you don't see any reports from credible, technical witnesses, you assume that there is nothing. And there I was with a technical report. I don't know what it was. It wasn't a flying saucer. It didn't land close to the observatory. But still, it was a mystery. And instead of looking at the data and preserving the data, we were destroying it.

[60GCAT]: Why did he destroy it?

[Vallee]: Just fear of ridicule. He thought that the Americans would laugh at us if we sent it. All of the data on satellites was being concentrated in the U.S. And we were exchanging our data with international bodies. He just didn't want Paris observatory to look silly by reporting some thing that he could not identify in the sky. [This was in] 1961.

Later, I found out that other observatories had made exactly the same observation. And that in fact American tracking stations had photographed the same thing and could not identify it either. It was a first-magnitude object -- it was as bright as [the star] Sirius. You couldn't miss it. It didn't reappear in successive weeks. It's just a little anecdote. But to me, the fact that we destroyed it was more important than what we saw.

And that reopened the whole question for me. Are there things that scientists are observing and not talking about? Then I started extending a small network of scientists (which is still active) and found that there was a lot of data that was never published. In fact, **the best data has never been published.** I think a great deal of the misunderstanding about UFOs among scientists is that the scientists have never had access to the best data.

[60GCAT]: Why has the best data never been published?

[Vallee]: I talk to a lot of technical companies where the executives are aware of my interests. I've had a lot of reports under seal of confidentiality from people in science and in business who had seen things. About a year ago, a vice-president at IBM took me aside after a conference and said, "*Are you the same Jacques Vallee who is interested in UFOs?*" He described a perfectly classic UFO close encounter story that he and his family had in upstate New York. This is not something that is going to be in the *National Enquirer*.

I met a man who is president of a technical company in Silicon Valley. He wanted to tell me about his experiences. He had been a very-high ranking naval officer in command of a large ship. And he 3 three experiences with UFOs -- two of them in the service in very sensitive positions and one time when he was a test pilot. He has never reported any of the encounters, even when he was a pilot. I said, "Weren't you under obligation to report it?" And he said, "Maybe I was. But if they have the slightest doubt about what you are seeing up there, you are [considered to be] crazy. They won't let you near the cockpit of an experimental plane." And he said, "If you're a pilot, you want to fly. You don't want to spend the next month filling out forms for a bunch of psychiatrics." Which is what will happen. I think any pilot will tell you the same thing, you know, over a beer.

So those are the cases that I'm interested in. The cases that have not been reported in the Press and haven't been distorted in the retelling. When I have time, I follow up on those cases with my own resources basically out of curiosity with no preconceived idea.

[60GCAT]: But skeptics always argue that even though there may be anecdotal evidence, there's no hard scientific data.

[Vallee]: There is plenty of data. And it should be analyzed further. But I do not think it's going to be a propeller from a flying saucer. I think it is going to be things that would be interesting if you could find a pattern to the material. I'm skeptical about stories of crashed saucers. I have an open mind about it. But I've heard those stories for so many years and they never really amount to anything tangible.

Also, I am skeptical for another reason. We build technologies now that are extremely reliable where there is the need. How often does your hard disk crash? I mean, if you keep your computer for 15 years, eventually the hard disk is going to crash. But you don't expect that to happen. If you were going to build a technology that takes you across interstellar space, it would have to be extremely reliable.

[60GCAT]: In your books, you detail the hard data turned up in European investigations.

Vallee: There is a small unit of the CNES (which is the French equivalent of NASA) that has permission to investigate any cases of UFOs. They were set up in the mid-70s and they've been going ever since. They found a number of cases that couldn't be explained. And some cases were never published with all the data. Cases where there were traces on the ground, where there was evidence of heat, evidence of radiation, including pulsed microwave radiation, and evidence of plants being affected. Again, that doesn't prove anything. It just proves that there was something there. It doesn't tell you what it was. But it certainly is a valid technical issue.

This data doesn't tell you if the phenomenon is natural-or-not because it doesn't tell you enough about the conditions where that happened. And that's where I think a lot more research should be done. People have come to me saying, "Look, I was a pilot or in a radar station in Alaska. And we were tracking UFOs. We recorded the data. I was a pilot and followed one of those things and got gun camera footage of it. When I landed, there was a guy waiting for me in blue jeans and a sweater who said, '*You didn't see anything up there.*'" Meanwhile, a guy with a screwdriver is unhooking the camera from the fuselage.

Usually witnesses have no idea where those guys come from. But somebody has a lot of data. And I think that this hard data should be turned over to Science. Certainly the stuff

from 20 years ago. I mean, how classified can it be? By now, we should have known if it was an enemy. So we should turn over the data to the scientific community. Let the skeptics analyze it from their point-of-view and let anyone else analyze it from their point -of-view. That's the way Science should be done.

PART 2

Editor's revelation: In 'Part 1' of our interview with UFO sleuth/computer conferencing pioneer Jacques Vallee, we looked at some of the scientific evidence bolstering the contention that UFOs are a real, measurable phenomenon. In 'Part 2' below, Vallee continues this theme as he talks about his samples of "liquid sky"--the metallic debris occasionally seen ejected from flying disks.

Then hold on to your propeller beanie as we depart 4-dimensional time space and look at some of Vallee's more exotic theories about the origin of UFOs. As Vallee puts it, "The UFO phenomenon exists. It has been with us throughout History. It is physical in nature and it remains unexplained in terms of contemporary sScience. It represents a level of consciousness that we have not yet recognized, and which is able to manipulate dimensions beyond time and space as we understand them. It affects our own consciousness in ways that we do not grasp fully. And it generally behaves as a control system."

Vallee refers to this complex system of control -- which is shaping human society over the course of thousands of years -- as an "interface of reality with consciousness." It sounds a lot like Arthur C. Clarke's science fictional theme in "2001: A Space Odyssey" -- an *alien* intelligence subtly directing the course of human development toward mysterious ends. Talk about your cosmic conspiracies!

But Vallee also has controversial ideas about human-made UFO conspiracies. "I was investigating some cases that were physically real," he says. "But they were hoaxes. Yet not hoaxes on the part of the witnesses."

The 2 most stunning cases of faked UFO events that Vallee has uncovered occurred rather recently in the history of saucer sightings. In 1980, a strange object purportedly "crashed" in England's Rendlesham Forest, a few miles away from an American Air Force Base. Dozens of military personnel were dispatched into the forest -- without weapons -- before the supposed crash of a luminous object. After the incident conflicting stories leaked to the Press and to civilian investigators, some of the leaks apparently originating from the front office of the military base. Vallee's conclusion -- controversial among UFO believers who insist that aliens touched down in Rendlesham Forest -- is that "the event had all the earmarks of being staged for the benefit of the witnesses, perhaps so that their psychological reactions could be studied." **[StealthSkater note: this incident has been archived at => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#)]**

Even more bizarre is the information turned up by French investigators in the wake of a bizarre 1979 abduction case. An unemployed young man named Franck Fontaine disappeared outside of his apartment one morning, reportedly after his friends saw him enveloped in a luminous fog. After a week of frenzied press coverage and a fruitless search by the authorities, Fontaine turned up in a field outside the apartment with no memory of his unusual experience. His friends insisted he had been abducted by a UFO. Police investigators -- though they doubted that claim -- found no other satisfactory explanation.

But as Vallee reports, investigators from GEPAN -- the French government's aerial phenomena study group -- were led to an official in the French Ministry of Defense who willingly described the

so-called UFO abduction as an "Exercise of General Synthesis." What happened to Fontaine? "We put him to sleep and he was put under an altered state of high suggestibility," replied the official. When asked if the "exercise" was intended to test the investigative abilities of local law enforcement agencies, the official said, "That would be a fair way to describe it." Then he added ominously, "If this operation had been completed, the next phase would have been far worse." As Vallee notes in his best-selling book Revelations, "It would be fair to assume that the [Fontaine] operation could have been a test -- perhaps a prelude to an experiment of wider scope."

Vallee says he knows the name of the French official (an Air Force officer) who spoke on condition of anonymity.

So what-on-Earth (to pick an appropriate planet) is going on? Vallee has several theories that might explain such UFO flim-flam. The military may be experimenting with psychological warfare techniques as the Germans did in World War I when they projected images of the Virgin Mary on banks of smoke in an effort to spook the French into saying their Rosaries instead of killing Germans. Vallee also thinks that sham UFO reports might be used as cover for tests of new military stealth technology. **[StealthSkater note: that is why I am personally more interested in cases in the 1945-1960 era.]**

But the most troubling "deception theory" Vallee poses is that from time-to-time, the target of UFO hoaxes might be the general public (or a segment thereof).

"In some cases," he says, "the community of ufologists may simply be used in a sociological experiment because they are a convenient group of people to test, to see how they react to different rumors."

Sounds a bit improbable. But Vallee's research into the growth of UFO "contactee" cults suggests that such manipulation occurs. In his book Messengers of Deception, Vallee explored the rise of a new kind of religious movement throughout the World -- the UFO Messiah cults, in which believers await the coming of bubble-headed saviors in saucers. You can find these groups in Europe and the Americas in increasing numbers. Want a glimpse of this otherworldly subculture? Just buzz into any of the alt.alien Usenet groups or enter the magic word "UFO" into any WorldWideWeb search engine and see how fast you're channeled into one of the most heavily trodden alternate dimensions of online obsession since Big Brother went digital.

Listen to "Seth", the channeled *alien* being from beyond. Hear the Venusian commander known as "Val Thor", who parks his spaceship on Lake Mead near Las Vegas as if it were an *extraterrestrial* houseboat (when he's not advising the Pentagon). Heed the warnings of the well-heeled "Rael", who speaks through a French contactee and runs a worldwide organization. **[StealthSkater note: one of the 1960's "Outer Limits" episodes was about a man who had been plastic surgically altered to resemble an alien. He was supposed to land at the United Nations and plead for nuclear disarmament. Instead he crash-landed in some farm field and was pursued and shot-to-death by farmers who thought he really was an alien. And this happened back in the 1960s! I remember that episode.]**

According to Vallee, the French press has recently reported that the notorious Order of the Solar Temple -- in the news last year after 53 members committed suicide in Switzerland and Canada -- told its followers that the highest levels of initiation involved meetings with *extraterrestrial* beings. The cult used **holographic projectors** purchased in the United States to fool its members. "As you may recall," says Vallee, "members of the cult were educated people and professionals -- not crazy kids on drugs." **[StealthSkater note: more on military holographic projection is at [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#) . And a reference**

should also be made to Dr. Richard Boylan's article on Los Alamos, Wen Ho Lee, and Holographic Dimensional Portals at [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL-doc](#) [URL-pdf](#)]

So without further ado, we present 'Part 2' of the Jacques Vallee interview ...

Liquid Sky

[60GCAT]: Let's talk about some of the other forms of hard evidence that scientists can look at when studying the UFO problem. For instance, chunks of molten metal -- the so-called "liquid sky" samples.

[Vallee]: On their own, these metal samples are not compelling evidence. But the existence of this material does show that there is data that scientists can look at. When we received the Bogota, Columbia sample [supposedly the remnants of a plume of liquid slag ejected from a flying disk over the University of Bogota in the mid-1970s], we sawed off one little corner for analysis. It turned out to be mostly Aluminum. Again, this doesn't prove anything. You could make a hunk of this stuff in your backyard by pouring molten metal into a pool of water. Metallurgically, the Bogota sample is not that unusual except that it has gone through a violent heating. Not just up to a boiling point, but beyond. My point has always been that it is interesting to see what patterns emerge from analysis of enough of these samples. If you kept picking up specimens like that, it might move your research into a particular direction.

[60GCAT]: One theory is that this liquid metal is part of the UFOs' propulsion system.

[Vallee]: There are [man-made] motors that use liquid metal (usually Mercury) for liquid contact. But the temperatures necessary for molten Aluminum and other metals would have to be quite extreme.

[60GCAT]: What about "liquid sky" samples that are of a slightly more exotic makeup than the Aluminum slag?

[Vallee]: The only one that's unusual is the one that Prof. Peter Sturrock (a plasma physicist at Stanford University) has. It comes from Ubatuba, Brazil. In the early 1930s, an object exploded over a beach in Ubatuba. [In 1957, an alleged fragment from the explosion turned up; its precise origin is uncertain.] Subsequent analysis at the University and Colorado and Stanford confirmed that the material was Magnesium and Magnesium Oxide with a very minute amount of impurities. If the metal really did originate in the 1930s, it would be very unusual because given the technology of the day. Someone would have had to go to a lot of trouble to get it that pure.

The Cosmic Database

[60GCAT]: Let's talk about some of the implications of your research. If the UFO phenomenon is real but is not *aliens* from outer space, we're talking about new ways of thinking about **reality** and cosmology, aren't we?

[Vallee]: Yes. In that sense, phenomenon is much more important than visitors from another planet would be. Because it fundamentally challenges the nature of reality. If UFOs are a physical reality, they certainly violate everything we think we know about reality. There are reliable reports of material UFOs that become immaterial and disappear on the spot.

[60GCAT]: Your theories about UFOs and other *paranormal* phenomena involve your metaphor of the "Informational Universe", where time and space and whatever other dimensions there might be act as a kind of cosmic computer database. What do you mean by that?

[Vallee]: You can get a consistent representation of reality if you look at the World as a collection of events or "instances" (as the philosophy of Occasionalism did in the eleventh century) rather than as a collection of material objects moving in 3-dimensional space as time flows. In virtual reality, of course, you can't tell the difference. In the real world, information and energy are actually the same physical quantity. In a universe viewed as "informational events", you should expect coincidences, telepathy, time-travel, multiple realities ... all those things that seem impossible in the 4-D energy universe.

To me, that's why puzzles like UFOs are interesting. I don't have a personal theory to "explain" them. But I see them as an opportunity to pose new questions. If it's true that information resides in the questions we ask, coming up with novel problems may be more important than having answers at this stage of our very limited understanding of the Universe.

[60GCAT]: So reality is like a computer database in that the right search word or "incantation" might cause a piece of information -- a UFO or ghost or other *anomaly* -- to materialize.

[Vallee]: If you think of [reality] as the software for the Universe, all it would take is for someone to change a comma in the program and the chair you are sitting in wouldn't be a chair at all. The major benefit from this model is that it handles *anomalies* very well. Coincidences would be a normal expectation.

If you address a database with a request for anything with the word "pool", you will get ads for sunscreen, lotions, billiard balls, and an investment prospectus or two. In *parapsychology*-gifted subjects may be forcing similar coincidences between separate locations or separate minds. One way of testing the theory, by the way, is to create massive informational *anomalies* and see what happens when they collapse. You could enhance remote viewing experiments, for instance, by loading the site with large quantities of data about highly unlikely events or situations and then quickly erase that data to collapse the singularity.

[60GCAT]: Of course, now we're talking about the intersection of Science and *mysticism*. Do you consider yourself a *mystical* person?

[Vallee]: I have never been comfortable with an arbitrary separation of the world into the physical Universe (which is presumably what Science studies) and the psychological, social, and psychic side of life. To me, that arbitrary separation is the major weakness of our intellectual system.

Most scientists who decide to study astronomy at an early age (as I did) are probably motivated by something akin to a mystical desire to understand the night sky and to embrace the larger issues. As time goes on, of course, that desire gets eroded and trivialized. In my case, I managed to keep that curiosity fresh because although I haven't had a "*mystical*" experience in a religious sense, I have always suspected that there was another level of consciousness and that it was accessible to the human mind. I have found similar feelings among many Net programmers who were drawn to networking by the impression of

operating outside the normal constraints of time and space, something akin to what mystics describe (although of course much more mundane).

The Controllers

[60GCAT]: You've said that UFOs represent a form of *alien* intelligence that is actively manipulating human society. How and toward what end?

[Vallee]: A new computer analysis of historical trends compiled in the 1970s led me to plot a striking graph of "waves" of UFO activity that was anything but periodic. Fred Beckman and Dr. Price Williams of UCLA pointed out that it resembled a schedule of reinforcement typical of a learning or training process: the phenomenon was more akin to a **control system** than to an exploratory task force of *alien* travelers. There are many control systems around us. Some are a part of Nature: ecology, climate, etc. Some are man-made: the process of education, the thermostat in your home. If the UFO phenomenon represents a control system, can we test it to determine if it is natural or artificial, open or closed? This is one of the interesting questions about the phenomenon that has never been answered.

Chariots of the Frauds

[60GCAT]: Speaking of control systems, some of your other avenues of UFO research have led you to suggest that from time-to-time human agencies -- governments, cults, and other groups interested in manipulating people's beliefs -- have engineered UFO deceptions and hoaxes. Now we're really getting conspiratorial.

[Vallee]: I think the place where ufology -- the way it has developed today -- meets with my interest in communications. And my interest in networks is in deception and manipulation. I think that is an area of which people should be aware. Because I think a lot of the things that are being discussed today among people who believe in UFOs are either mythical or a part of manipulation of some sort, which could include the stories of little *aliens* and the hybrids and abductions and so forth. A lot of that may be either material that cults have injected into the culture because it suits their own fantasy about the End-of-the-World or the Millennium and all that.

Or in a more sinister sense, in some of the cases I've investigated the deception hides a **mind-control** experiment. Anybody who is aware of technology today should know that we have much more than a stealth fighter flying around. We have capabilities -- theoretical or practical -- to make all types of things. There is a massive development of nonlethal platforms going on that those platforms have to be tested somewhere. They have to be disguised as something else from time-to-time. There has been massive development of RPVs (remotely piloted vehicles), some of which are disk-shaped. There is massive development of low observable technologies that are used for reconnaissance and can be used for all sorts of other things. And in many cases, the UFO stories are not simply fantasies in the minds of a few witnesses but may have been planted as part of a cover for some very terrestrial technologies that we are developing.

'Messengers of Deception?'

[60GCAT]: The UMMO cult -- which you discuss at length in your books Revelations and Messengers of Deception -- has an impressive history of elaborate deception. Tell us about it.

[Vallee]: I think that the UMMO myth was started by a small group of people -- essentially cultists. What was intriguing about UMMO was all its pseudo-scientific revelations [supposedly handed down to Earthling scientists like Vallee from UMMO-ites, *beings* who hail from a planet 14.6 light-years away from our Sun]. But these supposed revelations were not within the state-of-the-art. They didn't come up with proof of Fermat's theorem or something like that. It was just perfectly good science-fiction.

[60GCAT]: What about the French theory that UMMO was a psychological experiment?

[Vallee]: Yeah, they thought that the cult had been used or was manipulated by the KGB. Because for one thing, some of their ideas -- some of the data that was supposedly channeled from the UMMO organization in the sky -- was very advanced cosmology. Very advanced cosmology about twin universes involving some data that was not stupid. It came straight out of the notes of Andre Sakarav (including some of his unpublished notes). Some things that Sakarav was known to have worked on but had not published. And so some people -- and I don't know who's right -- felt that somebody had to have access to those notes to inspire those messages, perhaps the KGB. It wasn't just ordinary science-fiction. It was somebody who knew what some of the more advanced cosmologists were thinking.

[60GCAT]: Why would the KGB or any intelligence agency perpetrate such an arcane hoax?

[Vallee]: Well, let me tell you a little story. About 15 years ago, there was a group that suddenly appeared in San Francisco. They had a big party downtown. And they invited everybody who was anybody in *parapsychology*. And they made a little speech saying, "We have all this money from somebody who wants to do good and help research. We know that there isn't much money in parapsychology. We will entertain proposals for research. Give us your best ideas. We will send it to a panel who will review it and we will fund the best research." After the party, a lot of people rushed home to their computers and typed in all their best ideas and sent it on. But the organization never existed and was never heard from again. Somebody was "fishing".

So having a cover as a group sometimes -- a completely weird group -- can be a convenient way of getting technical intelligence. It's a good way of doing technological assessment. So some of those weird groups could be used for that. Now, that doesn't explain why they would do it for 10 years. In the case of UMMO, why would you go on? I think that UMMO became sort of a goal in itself. It became self-propagating because so many people got drawn to it, psychologically. They started writing things about each other, and it became a self-sustaining myth. They're still sending me stuff. There is an index, catalogs. For some people, it's become their entire life. Increasingly, we're seeing those kinds of cults appearing in net space, cyberspace.

[60GCAT]: Is there something about online communications that helps foster myths and deceptions?

[Vallee]: Because we live in a world where with communications media based on digital networks, a small group of people can have a tremendous impact on the belief of the masses. And we also live in a world where the belief of the masses is a strategic weapon. We have H-bombs, but we can't use them. We have neutron bombs, but we can't use them. But if we found a way of influencing the beliefs of masses of people, that would have great strategic impact.

The big problems in the World are the problems of fundamentalism and **religion**, whether it's Islamic or in other forms of religion. Those are the great destabilizing forces in the

World today. Well, belief in Extraterrestrials coming here to save us can be induced in large masses of people with the technical means that exist today.

The potential for contagion of absurd beliefs is a real one. In the hands of people who might deliberately use the Internet to create an epidemic of irrationalism, we might see the emergence of a whole new class of very dangerous, powerful cults with all the trappings of high technology.

And I think somebody has to pay attention to that angle. So I was led to that by finding ... I was investigating some cases that were physically real but were hoaxes, but not hoaxes on the part of the witnesses. And the story about the object had in fact been planted.

The Bentwaters case [in which American servicemen at an Air Force base in England observed a disk-shaped craft land in the forest] is a classic. At the landing site, they had a mix of ordinary guards, officers, sentries, and so on. They all had orders to go to the site under a scenario. And that's not what would of happened if the encounter were real. If a strange object landed on the base, you wouldn't be sending out a hundred people without weapons. The thing has all the earmarks of being staged for the benefit of the witnesses so that they could be studied and the reactions of the different psychological types and of different ranks could be studied. And when you think about it, it's not that weird. If you were in charge of a project like that, you'd have to test it in conditions where nobody is danger and you can get the data you need. In cases like this one (not many but a few of them) that I investigated, I had to conclude that these were tests of **virtual reality projectors**.

Psy-Ops from 'Beyond'

[60GCAT]: So there might be military applications for this technology of deception?

[Vallee]: Our gods have always come from the sky. And how would a god come from the sky today? He would come down in some kind of spaceship. He couldn't just appear out of the clouds. I mean, that won't work. Although in World War I, the Germans were using psychological warfare by projecting photographs, slides, along French lines. And I'm sure the French were doing the same thing to the Germans. And there are very sophisticated devices now being used in psychological warfare to create **holograms**, to create visions to influence people. It might not work with you and me today if we go out today and see something in the skies. It might not destabilize us. But if we were under a lot of stress ... if you've been fighting for a month on some little island, and all of the sudden something like that happens ...

I remember seeing a letter to the U.S. Air Force from a man who was finally reporting something he had seen during World War II in the Pacific. He said he was on top of a little island lookout point. They were expecting a Japanese attack. They had been fighting intensely on-and-off for several weeks. They were fairly isolated. They saw an object in the sky that was absolutely physical, that circled the island, was a disk, no means of propulsion, no noise. It circled the island and went off. And he said he had never reported it, not even to his wife. The reason he didn't report it at the time was that his men were under such stress that he wouldn't want them to think that their commander might be flipping. So the same kind of psychological means that won't work with ordinary people and ordinary things might work in exceptional cases.

[60GCAT]: And therefore cultists and UFO true believers -- who are under a kind of ideological stress -
- might be seen as ideal targets for such manipulation.

[Vallee]: In some cases, the UFO community may be simply used in a sociological experiment because they are a convenient group of people to see how they would react to different rumors. Suppose the government loses a nuclear weapon over a foreign country. You still have to go and recover that thing. And you can't tell people what you're doing, so you have to be able to very quickly plant a story. You might plant a story that this was a flying saucer from Venus. That would be so ridiculous that scientists wouldn't go check. You might have a few journalists there. But you can tell them whatever you want, and you can give them photographs of whatever. And so all you need is to distract everybody for 2-or-3 days: time to bring the equipment, get everything out, recover whatever was scattered and go away. I think there are cases where exactly that has happened. And those are sort of the great UFO stories that people still tell around campfire.

But I think there was no UFO there. I think the UFO story was invented. I was saying earlier it's healthy to be skeptical. I respect people who have a skeptical argument there. Jim Oberg (who is a specialist in the Russian space program) pointed out to me that some of the sightings that I published from the Soviet Union -- a strange yellowish crescent seen going through the sky by many people in the Soviet Union -- that those were rocket tests that were illegal under the Salt agreement. And obviously, they couldn't hide it in the sky. So the government planted the story that there was a flying saucer. And that got into the newspapers.

Again, the UFO research community is a useful laboratory in which to observe the effects of propaganda and disinformation, since it is driven in large part by an intent to expose "the cover-up". This creates an opportunity for people to masquerade as good guys and "reveal" all sorts of unverifiable rumors. They meet with a receptive audience because the context is one of "independent inquiry of original, bold, nonconformist ideas". Does that mean we should necessarily believe the man who claims he was in NATO intelligence and saw a classified document about the 4 humanoid races that live on the Moon? I don't think so.

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