

BOOK REVIEW

by Paul Whitehead, FSR Consultant

THE WATCHERS: THE SECRET DESIGN BEHIND UFO ABDUCTION, by RAYMOND E. FOWLER, Foreword by WHITLEY STRIEBER. Published by BANTAM BOOKS, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York 10103. Hardback. Price US\$19.95 excluding postage. 1990. (NOTE: BANTAM BOOKS in London stated in November 1990 that they have no copies available here and they do not appear to be contemplating selling it here.)

THIS book bothers me. It brings us up to date with the story of Betty Andreasson; how she has apparently been visited by aliens on a regular basis since the age of seven; how they planted a series of messages in her mind, presumably for release at key times; and how they are allegedly involved in genetic experimentation in order to save mankind as a species.

Now, says the author, is the time for the final and earthshattering part of the aliens' message to be released to mankind. The message can only be produced under hypnosis — and if true is somewhat alarming.

This is the third book about Betty Andreasson, and Fowler hints that there could be a fourth. Her story goes beyond the usual thresholds of high strangeness that have been established in the typical "abductee" scenario. It introduces us to concepts of parapsysics with which few readers will be familiar — humans turned into balls of energy, existing as intelligent spheres of light inside a UFO, while Betty — herself turned to pure energy — looks on.

The descriptions, and what could be described as spiritual or religious knowledge imparted by the aliens in control of all this, makes interesting reading.

But then author Fowler himself claims to have been a human chosen for abduction, and speculates he may be on a co-mission with Andreasson to impart alien knowledge about the state of mankind to the world. The Andreasson story alone stretches one's credibility to the limits; to overlap that with another abduction story concerning the author seems both self-indulgent on Fowler's part and unnecessary.

Some British readers, fed on a diet of plasma vortices and weather-fronts as explanations for UFOs and encounters with their "ufonauts", might balk at this book. And that would be a shame, for it has much to commend it to the researcher and to all those interested in psychology or parapsychology.

Betty Andreasson is a committed Christian — and Fowler indicates he also might be. Christians would probably be shocked at what emerges from their story, but researchers into *Out-of-the-Body Experiences* and *Near-Death-Experiences (OBEs and NDEs)* would be fascinated.

For some of the descriptions of Betty's encounters, and the messages imparted, are strikingly similar to those experienced by people who have "died" and later been revived or have "woken up" in the mortuary! Fowler acknowledges this, and writes that Betty has had several *OBEs*.

What common factor could there be between what apparently happens to some "dead" people in an *NDE*, and to fully live people who are "abducted"?

Are the messages imparted similar to the "secret third part" of the message given to the children at Fátima in 1917 by a vision of the Virgin Mary, and since then allegedly hidden away in the vaults of the Vatican?

Is there also a similarity to the messages being given, or apparently given, to people involved in channelling and automatic writing sessions in various places around the world? Several people — some belonging to occult groups and believing themselves to be possessed of supernormal powers with access to confidential knowledge imparted by "the gods" or

"aliens" — have been attempting to contact "aliens" via these means. They will be disappointed if they discover that Betty Andreasson has been there before them!

But to return to the book. In a typical abduction, the abductee finds himself in a UFO, perhaps undergoes a "medical examination" and is then given knowledge about the state of mankind and the world. He also reports that his world-view has changed, and that he has psychic abilities.

Now, listen to what somebody on the verge of death may experience during an *NDE*. A typical *NDE* occurs during the later stages of an *OBE*. In her book, *Return From Death*, published by Arkana Books/Penguin, Margot Grey gives many examples. Here is a composite experience:-

"I was certified dead, my death-certificate had been signed, and I was taken to the mortuary. I was not conscious of any of this, though I do remember reviving in the mortuary and giving the attendant a terrible shock.

During all this I had an experience which has changed my life and given me a number of psychic abilities. I was conscious of floating above my body and of seeing the surgeons as they tried to revive my heart. Then I entered a long dark tunnel through which I moved at tremendous speed, eventually emerging into a beautiful landscape/beautiful building (some experiencers emerge into a landscape, others into a building). There was a great sense of light.

(At this point some experiencers meet people whom they recognise — people who have already died. But at some stage the typical *NDE* experiencer will meet some "beings" whom he/she may interpret as "God" or "Jesus", or as simple "beings of light". Knowledge is imparted, either through ESP or by the exchange of energy waves passed from "God" to the experiencer; these waves or vibrations can be seen, and give the receiver certain information.

This information is strikingly similar to the messages given to abductees. The experiencer is either given a choice to stay or return to Earth, or is ordered to return to complete some sort of mission. (The abductee, however, is merely returned — there is no choice.)

"It was so beautiful, I did not want to return," is a typical comment. It must be stressed that this is not a wish shared by abductees, however. While under hypnosis they can go through considerable stress, and suffer physical pain, as Betty does.

From the moment when, as she was a child of seven in 1944, she and her father saw small grey beings walk through their front door and take her away (the door was closed!) in a glowing UFO parked close to their house, until when she was a woman, Betty has been subjected to many "high strangeness" experiences.

In the Middle Ages she would have been burned at the stake as a witch or a religious heretic.

Her case, and those of other abductees, presents us with a challenge. *NDEs* are already the subject of considerable study. More study of some type is required. But if, as Fowler suspects, abductions and *NDEs* take

place *within another "plane of existence"*,* what scientific discipline could become involved?

There are changes of perception in the scientific community on some of these matters, but Fowler comments:-

"If the recalled memories of UFO abductees like Betty actually reflect genuine physical events, then our comprehension of reality is indeed limited. We could be compared with lower animals that experience life within the constraints of their particular physical and mental capabilities. Such animals are completely oblivious to the co-existing world of man and his technology... The forces that operate behind UFOs appear to be functioning on an infinitely higher plane of awareness that man is only just beginning to perceive through experiences like Betty's."

This is a book not only about abductions but also about silent, unmarked helicopters; men-in-black;

highly detailed accounts (and drawings — Betty has a photographic memory and has considerable artistic talent) of UFOs, both inside and out; of great personal tragedy for Betty; of investigative work which confirmed dates, times and locations of some weird experiences; and of intrigue on behalf of the reader.

I leave you, dear readers, to ponder.

*NOTE BY EDITOR, FSR

For years past, in my articles for FSR, I have been pointing out that there is not yet a shred of evidence that any human has ever been taken aboard a UFO *in the physical body*, and that the only possible explanation therefore is that they are literally "*lifted out*" of the physical, and taken, in their "*astral*", or "*etheric*", or "*spiritual*" or "*radiant*" body, or whatever you may choose to call it (*there are at least a dozen such terms that have been used at various times*) for their uncanny rendezvous with beings *who arrive from some totally different reality that is in all probability also HERE.* — G.C.

BOOK REVIEW

By George Wingfield, MA (Hons.), FSR Consultant

UFOs: THE GULF BREEZE SIGHTINGS. By ED WALTERS and FRANCES WALTERS, Pub. by WM. MORROW & CO., NEW YORK, 1990. Hardback. US\$21.95. (BANTAM BOOKS, LONDON, say (November 1990) they also have copies available for £14.99).

PROCLAIMED as the most astounding multiple sightings of UFOs in U.S. history, Ed Walters' UFO encounters of 1987 and 1988 undoubtedly rank as one of the most significant UFO cases of modern times. Certainly this book does appear to be one of very few books on the subject that actually "deliver the goods". But acceptance of whether or not this is, at last, the genuine article is already dividing ufologists everywhere.

The thirty-nine excellent colour photographs of UFOs taken by Ed Walters are of a quality seldom previously achieved with this elusive subject, and if we are to accept their authenticity, then we can only conclude that the non-human intelligence behind this quite extraordinary chain of encounters intended that these pictures should be seen. But are the photographs genuine?

The photographs were mainly taken with a Polaroid camera; this is a most difficult sort with which to fake photos. They have been examined in relentless detail by MUFON investigators, by technical experts from the Polaroid Corporation, and by Dr Bruce Maccabee, a government research scientist, who is a US Navy optical physicist and photo-analyst. He and the others conclude that there is no evidence of a hoax and that the photos are indeed authentic.

The story of Ed Walters' continuing series of UFO encounters is told plainly by him and his wife in diary form as events unfold. These include Ed's confrontation with small robot-like entities, apparently occupants of the UFO, which are vividly described. He tells of recurring contact with what seems to be a particular type of UFO (though other types did appear), usually accompanied by telepathic communication from the UFO intelligence. On some occasions when the UFO appeared near his house he was struck and immobilised by a blue beam which shone down from the craft. This beam seems also to be the means by which the small alien creatures leave and re-enter the UFO. Two of the encounters with UFO and these aliens resulted in "*missing time*" experiences, which regression hypnosis of the author at a later date showed to have concealed abduction events. These are not described in the book but may be the subject of a further volume.

What are we to make of these bizarre and unbelievable happenings, which to many readers will seem just too much to accept? The reaction of the skeptics is, of course, fairly predictable. Since it is too difficult to pin this particular series of UFO encounters on the planet Venus or the mythical "plasma vortex", they have no alternative but to accuse Ed and Frances Walters of having perpetrated massive fraud and faked all the photographs with the motive of financial gain. What these people are really saying is that since their view of the world is unable to encompass such events, the events *have* to have been fraudulently contrived. Some of the debunkers, who are clearly rattled, have gone so far as falsifying photographs of Gulf Breeze-type UFOs themselves in order to discredit Walters' photographs. Others have attempted to undermine the Walters' story by producing a 9-inch model UFO, said to have been found in an attic of a house where Walters lived at the time of the UFO encounters, but subsequently left vacant.

Neither of these attempts at character-assassination have been in the least bit convincing. Quite apart from anything else, the town of Gulf Breeze and its vicinity has been the centre of a major UFO flap for several years and well over a hundred witnesses have sighted UFOs there, some similar to those seen and photographed by Ed Walters. On some occasions people who were with Ed saw "his" UFO, or were with him when he shot photos of it with a sealed Polaroid camera. Bob Oechsler, a former NASA mission specialist who has investigated the case in detail, tells me that he saw the UFO when he was travelling with Ed in a truck.

Ed Walters has taken polygraph (lie-detector) tests which indicate that he, at least, believes what he has told us about his UFO encounters. Ed is a wealthy man whose house-building business brings in more than \$300,000 a year and the suggestion that he contrived the UFO story for financial gain simply does not hold water. And this case has been investigated in the greatest detail by the top people in the MUFON organisation, such as Walt Andrus, Don Ware, Bob Reid and Charles Flannigan. These men are no fools and there is every reason to respect their judgement. My own impression of Ed Walters, whom I've met, is