

ABDUCTEES ARE "NORMAL" PEOPLE: THE PSYCHOLOGIST AND THE ABDUCTEE

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Ph.D.

As everyone knows, Dr. Hynek is an extremely careful and cautious man, and it is only right that he should be so. We therefore think that this article by him, which appeared in Vol. 9, No. 4 (July/August 1984) of his journal, THE INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER, is of the greatest importance and deserves to be considered carefully by all who study our maddening subject. — EDITOR.

*A*n *experimentum crucis*, which may be truly crucial in the field of ufology and with far reaching consequences, has recently been completed. It was funded by a grant from the Fund for UFO Research, to Ted Bloecher, Dr. Aphrodite Clamar, and Budd Hopkins. Its implications are so great that its results are now being studied independently by other psychologists.

In short, the experiment was this: to have a fully accredited, professional psychologist administer standard tests (Rorschach, TAT, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, and the long recognized Minnesota Multiphasic Tests, as well as projective drawings) *without* the knowledge that the persons she was testing were in any way involved with UFOs. She was told nothing of their backgrounds but one may assume that she thought that perhaps the persons were being tested for emotional and psychic stability before being considered for some sensitive positions.

All nine persons passed the tests as normal, non-psychotic people; imagine the psychologist's surprise when she was told, after the tests were completed and the analysis done and the final reports submitted, that the persons she had tested were abductees on board a UFO!

This result is obviously an important one, but in science it is necessary to have an experiment repeated independently, and results corroborated, before they can be accepted. In this case this can be accomplished by having the completed tests examined by other psychologists, also on a blind basis. This is now being done. The tests themselves do not have to be readministered because in themselves they are routine. It is the interpretation of the tests that requires the expertise, and this should be done by several qualified people. The Fund for UFO Research is to be commended for sponsoring this important research and we hope that it will see the job through to the finish.

Scores of Cases

There are today on record scores of accounts by credible persons who attest that they have been taken aboard a UFO, and not only taken aboard but treated

in a seemingly programmed way. They report being placed upon a table and administered some type of medical examination, sometimes having been partially or totally undressed by or at the command of the Ufonauts, and then released, generally with the admonition that they would not remember what had happened to them.

This similarity of the accounts coming from many different countries and, as in many cases, from people whose credibility would not be questioned in other circumstances, leads one to take these stories seriously even though they fly in the face of common sense. Not only have the professional UFO debunkers decried abductee accounts, but some serious ufologists have likewise balked at accepting these accounts as evidence of real physical happenings. The latter do not question the reality of the event to the abductee (a very real event often with traumatic effects) but they question whether the event was "real-real". UFO skeptics hold, especially in the cases where the witness has successfully passed a lie-detector or similar test, that somehow the witness was so deluded that he believed the event; thus he was not lying and, therefore, was able to pass the polygraph test.

Regressive Hypnosis

Skepticism tends to ride especially high because often the major portion of the abduction account is obtained through regressive hypnosis. Amnesia and "missing time" is a frequent adjunct in abduction cases, ascribed to the fact that, while on board, the witnesses were psychologically manipulated and hypnotized or otherwise prevented from remembering. Arguments upon arguments have occurred as to what extent hypnosis itself is a reliable tool in UFO (and other) investigations. This, coupled with the extremely bizarre nature of the abduction accounts, has led to considerable question as to the mental state of the witnesses. Were they hallucinating? Are they schizophrenic or at least mildly psychotic? . . . anything to find a reason to dismiss abduction cases as unreal.

And many ufologists have confessed privately that, somehow, they wished abduction cases would go away! Daylight disks and physical trace cases seem so much more wholesome! In science, however, one does not dismiss data simply because one entertains some prejudices about them. And abduction cases do continue to be reported!

Need for Tests

This issue was regarded by Dr. Aphrodite Clamar, psychologist, and Ted Bloecher and Budd Hopkins (*Missing Time*), UFO investigators, as of prime importance; the issue of the mental stability of abductees had to be addressed. To that end they approached the Fund for UFO Research for aid. These three investigators had already looked closely into 22 abduction cases, 17 with the aid of hypnosis and five without, and found from their studies that all these witnesses were "playing with a full deck of cards" and most held responsible positions in society. It was decided to select (as a test sample for an in-depth study of abductees) five men and four women. These nine, of course, knew what the reason for the testing was but "played it straight"; the newly engaged psychologist, Dr. Slater, knew these nine simply as people she had been asked to test.

The nine abductees tested, all of whom requested anonymity, had professions that brought them into contact with the public: college instructor, actor and tennis instructor, electronics expert, corporation lawyer, business executive, commercial artist, secretary, salesman and audio technician, and finally, a director of a chemistry laboratory. All had college degrees, and three had attended graduate school. Four were single, four were divorced, and one married. Each of the nine had reported an abduction aboard a UFO, missing time, contact with and examination by "aliens".

The recommendation of the examining psychologist was left to a third party not known by any of the three investigators except by reputation. From the standpoint of the three investigators (but not that of the psychologist), the primary goal was to determine whether there was in any or all of the nine the presence (or absence) of mental problems which could account for the invention of very similar stories of being taken forcibly aboard a strange craft and manipulated and examined in much the same way a pathologist might examine a white mouse for experimental purposes.

In short, was there any common psychological quirk that might predispose one to the telling of such stories and in such similar patterns?

As each of the nine subjects was given the battery of tests, Dr. Slater wrote an extensive individual report and sent it to Dr. Clamar. In a 15-page report, "Conclusions of Nine Psychologicals", her findings are summarised, and this, plus evaluation of these tests by

other psychologists, will in time be published under the auspices of the Fund for UFO Research. The individual tests, of course, are privileged medical information and will remain in the possession of Dr. Clamar.

It is of considerable interest to extract from the report some sections which illustrate the nature of the results. As one of the recipients of the research grant, and representing the other grantees, Mr. Hopkins has given permission to have them included here. Despite the inclusion of some technical terminology, it appears best not to deviate from the actual report lest this writer's interpretation might intrude:

"... While the subjects are quite heterogeneous in their personality styles, there is a modicum of homogeneity in several respects: 1) relatively high intelligence with concomitant richness of inner life; 2) relative weakness in the sense of identity, especially sexual identity; 3) concomitant vulnerability in the interpersonal realm; 4) a certain orientation towards alertness which is manifest alternately in a certain perceptual sophistication and awareness or in interpersonal hypervigilance and caution. Perhaps the most obvious and prominent impression left by the nine subjects is the range of personality styles they present... there is little to unite them as a group from the standpoint of the overt manifestations of their personalities... they [are] very distinctive, unusual and interesting subjects.

Abductees tested anonymously prove above-average in intelligence, interesting, with a rich inner life, though somewhat distrustful.

"Above Average Intelligence"

"One of the positive aspects of this group is their above-average intelligence. As measured by the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, one subject has an overall IQ score in the Very Superior range and five had overall IQs in the Bright Average range. Only three of the nine fall within the Average range, and they fall in the very upper end of that range. Breaking down intellectual skills further, there is no pattern among the nine in terms of strongest abilities.

"Along with above average intelligence, richness in mental life, and indications of narcissistic identity disturbance, the nine subjects also share some degree of impairment in interpersonal relationships... The last salient dimension of impairment in the interpersonal realm relates to a certain mildly paranoid and distrusting streak in many of the subjects, which renders them very wary and cautious about involving themselves with others. *[If they had been abducted by aliens, one would think they might very well be distrustful of*

others! J.A.H.] One of the women, for instance, gave frequent Rorschach responses of people who are back to back, looking at one another over their shoulders, or otherwise facing one another only indirectly. One of the men, on the other hand, in the Rorschach test interpreted the ink blots as one anticipating being used and abused by others. For him, relationships are characterized by discord, rudeness, disappointment and distrust.

"To summarize, while this is a heterogeneous group in terms of overt personality style, it can be said that most of its members share being rather unusual and very interesting. They also share brighter than average intelligence and a certain richness of inner life that can operate favorably in terms of creativity and disadvantageously to the extent that it can be overwhelming."

Psychologist Amazed

Dr. Slater, the psychologist, did not learn until several days after she had submitted her final report to Dr. Clamar and the others what the true nature of the project had been . . . the UFO connection! She was astounded and downright flabbergasted. First off, she knew little about the subject of UFOs and almost nothing about the abduction issue. She was told that several people she had tested had been subjects in Hopkins' book, *Missing Time*, a copy of which she was then given. All this resulted in an eight-page addendum to her report in which she addressed questions asked her by the investigators after the disclosure. In summary, she stated, ". . .The first and most critical question is whether our subjects' reported experiences could be accounted for strictly on the basis of psychopathology, i.e., mental disorder. The answer is a firm No. In broad terms, if the reported abductions were confabulated fantasy productions, based on what we know about psychological disorders, they could only have come from pathological liars, paranoid schizophrenics, and severely disturbed and extraordinarily rare hysteroid characters subject to fugue states and/or multiple personality shifts . . . It is important to note that not one of the subjects, based on test data, falls into any one of these categories. Therefore, while the testing can do nothing to prove the veracity of the UFO abduction report, one can conclude that the test findings are not inconsistent with the possibility that reported abductions have, in fact, occurred. In other words, there is no apparent psychological explanation for their reports."

Test Results as to be Expected

Dr. Slater now goes on to point out what to ufologists would be obvious: had the persons tested had such abduction experiences some of the test results would have been expected.

"Psychological traits which arose consistently in the subjects included a surprising degree of inner turmoil as well as a great degree of wariness and distrust. Logically, such emotional upheaval and accompanying caution about the world might certainly follow in the wake of an experience as described above.

"Furthermore, if one considers the skepticism and disrepute that are typically encountered with reports of UFO sightings, then not only are we characterizing UFO abduction as inherently traumatic, but we must add that it would likely carry social stigmatization as well . . . Assuming for the sake of argument that abduction has actually occurred and that presumably its occurrence would be very rare, it then becomes something that cannot be readily shared with others as a means of obtaining emotional support. Consequently, one would likely find a deep sense of shame, secretiveness and social alienation among the victims, who would have undergone a profound experience that could not be comprehended or accepted by others. The closest analogy might be the interpersonal alienation of the rape victim, who has been violated most brutally but somehow becomes tainted by virtue of the crime against her.

"It will be recalled that the nine subjects showed considerable interpersonal difficulty that is in keeping with the above description . . . They all showed anxiety and discomfort in interpersonal contexts and frequently were at a loss about how to handle themselves or others. This anxiety was accompanied by a general wariness, instinctive self-protectiveness, and sensitivity to criticism or other interpersonal injury or insult. Such problems make a great deal of sense if these individuals have an awful secret to guard."

Conclusions

So, then, where are we? The implications of this pioneer investigation are obviously far reaching. Do we now have to take abduction stories very seriously? Considering that these tests (and assuming the follow-up evaluations by other highly qualified professional psychologists are in agreement) demonstrate that people who report that they have been abducted by a UFO are, as a rule, otherwise quite normal people, and that their abduction accounts cannot be ascribed to psychological disturbances, there remains no doubt that abduction accounts must be taken as a legitimate aspect of the total UFO phenomenon. In short, abduction accounts can no longer be put into a handy pigeonhole off to the side and then forgotten. So, yes, we must take the abduction stories seriously. Was it a "real" abduction? The tests do not prove this. All that can be inferred is that a set of normal people underwent what to them was a vivid, traumatic real experience, an experience that profoundly affected their lives. But if we do not accept the abduction accounts as real, what sort of "cop-out" can we adopt?

Can we say that there is some sort of a "standard dream" that occasionally hits mentally stable people of good reputation and standing in various parts of the world? If so, what prompts the "dream"? And why is the dream so standard, involving medical examinations etc. and oft-times, scars as evidence that something physical did go on?

Abduction Phenomenon Pivotal?

This is why the abduction phenomenon is perhaps pivotal in the whole UFO scheme: it may represent a "bridge," an interface, between the real physical world we are so familiar with (or are we?) and a "counter,

psychological" world and its interaction with the "real" world which we are only now beginning to explore.

Certainly, the test results here described do not support a trite "psychological, or psycho-pathological" explanation. Perhaps we may again quote William James, who may have been onto something when he wrote, many years ago, "*Whatever else be certain, this at least is certain: that the world of our present natural knowledge is enveloped in a larger world of some sort of whose residual properties we at present can frame no positive idea.*" Just what is the nature of the world of the abductee?

A FLAGRANT BRITISH COVER-UP IN 1979

Gordon Creighton

DURING the closing days of November and the first week of December of 1979, a flurry of sighting-reports came in from various districts of the south-western corner of the County of Hertfordshire, which lies about twenty miles to the north from London. The areas concerned comprised Watford, Oxhey, Bedmond, Rickmansworth, and Chorleywood.

These sightings must have engendered some alarm in official quarters in Britain, who accordingly found it necessary to mount an astonishing cover-up operation.

Watford Sighting

The initial report came from a lady, Mrs Elspeth C — (name on file), a trained commercial artist, of Dellfield Close, Watford. Her statement to the local newspaper (*Watford Observer*) for December 7, 1979, was as follows:-

"It was quite dark — about 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, November 29, and as I went to shut the window of my dining-room, I noticed this very bright light above the house opposite. (I didn't switch on the lights in the dining-room.) Then I perceived that it was not one light, but three lights, all part of the same object.

"It was above the roof-level, but very low down, and it then came down right over my neighbour's roof — about level with the eaves — and hovered for a couple of seconds before making a vertical take-off. There was no sound from it except a soft humming noise as it went up.

"Although there were these three circles of brilliant white light, no beams of light shot out of it. The tubular part of the craft was a metallic purple.

"It was shorter than a bus, and larger than a small plane.

"What I want to know is whether there is any military explanation for what I saw.

"This was altogether too close for comfort. It was not a plane or a helicopter, because there was no noise. I am not claiming it was from Outer Space, and I think there may be some military explanation, but if there is one, I think we are entitled to know."

A hard-headed and practical Scot, this lady immediately sat down and drew what she had seen.

Police Sighting at Rickmansworth

The next event reported was during that same night, at 3.25 a.m., on Friday, November 30, 1979, and the observers were two Hertfordshire Police officers, Police-Constable Philip Moorcroft and Woman Police-Constable Anne-Louise Browne, who were sitting in their *Panda* patrol-car at Long Lane Roundabout, on the southern outskirts of Rickmansworth. The engine was switched off and the car windows were down. Suddenly they both saw a large bright circular light which seemed to be moving along at what they thought might be a height of 40 ft. or so. It hovered for about two minutes, and then moved off slowly and silently south-eastwards towards Harefield (a nearby village in Middlesex, famous for its hospital that does heart-transplants.)

Describing their sighting later to local journalists, the two witnesses said they had "open minds about UFOs". The affair had left them "very excited and curious", and Police-Woman Browne admitted: "I was absolutely terrified. It was so weird."