

# Abduction, Hypnosis, and Reality

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# Who Am I?

- Keith Rowell, Oregon MUFON Assistant State Director, Research Specialist for MUFON in Librarianship, Field Investigator, 15 years, 30 years study of UFOs.
- Investigated sightings, a few abductions, cattle mutilations, crop formations.
- Helped run PUFOG and NUFOG, public educational forums for UFOs in 1990s.
- B.A. Philosophy, 1969, UC Riverside; M.L.S., 1970, UC Berkeley; 2 years EE at PSU.

# A Roadmap

- Characteristics of UFO abductions.
- Some famous ones and some history.
- How hypnosis is used in abduction research.
- Some controversies around hypnosis and why.
- The reality problem.
- Some solutions to the reality problem.

# Alien Abduction

- What is it? Every American TV watching adult and most children know what it is.
- A person is taken into a UFO, medically examined, and returned to Earth.
- Books, magazine articles, news shows, entertainment shows, documentaries, movies, radio shows, podcasts have all treated this subject.
- Like UFOs, everyone knows what alien abduction is.

# Some Abduction Statistics I

- Up to 1985, some 300 cases appeared in the UFO literature.
- By 1995, a survey of 13 abduction researchers yielded 1700 cases, half of them explored in depth.
- Males and females: 50/50.
- All occupations and socio-economic classes from “ditch diggers” to CEOs.

# Some Abduction Statistics 2

- All countries including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Canada, France, Poland, Spain, and South Africa. Most reports from U.S., however.
- Education from less than high school to advanced degrees.
- No general characteristics apply to all abductees.
- Significant finding: The young (35 or less) are abducted far more often than older people.

# The Abductee Personality

- Few common psychological traits separate us from them.
- No more hypnotizable, no more mentally unstable, but slightly smarter, well-adjusted, slightly more “fantasy prone” and “imaginative,” more willing to believe in UFOs and paranormal.
- Do have enhanced dissociative skills.
- Seem to have more paranormal abilities (like NDEers).

# A Prototypical Abduction I

According to Eddie Bullard's analysis of 270 abduction stories:

- Capture (being taken aboard a UFO).
- Examination (of physical, mental, or spiritual traits).
- Conference (with ETs about significant things).
- Tour (of the UFO).
- Journey (to Earth or another world).

# A Prototypical Abduction 2

- Theophany (receipt of a religious or spiritual message).
- Return (egress from the UFO and return to same Earth environs).
- Aftermath (experience of various physical and emotional effects).
- First two found in all abduction reports; the rest are variously reported.

# Some Abduction Cases

- Kinross (Over KY, 1953); “Hairy dwarves” (Venezuela, 1954); Dúas Pontes (1962); Gerry Irwin (Utah, 1957); Betty and Barney Hill (1961); Herb Shirmer (1967); Betty Andreasson (MA, 1967); Parker and Hickson Pascagoula (1973).
- Patty Roach (1973); Travis Walton (1975); Charles Moody (1975); Sandra Larson & 2 friends (1975); David Stephens (MA, 1975) near Oxford, MA; Louise Smith & 2 friends, (KY, 1976); Helene Giulana (France, 1976).

# Hill Abduction Case

- The archetypal and prototypical case.
- The first U.S. case.
- First to use hypnosis.
- First to be a bestselling book (John Fuller's *Interrupted Journey*, 1966).
- First to be made into a movie (1975).
- First one “corroborated” by science.

# Barney and Betty Hill

- Social worker and postal worker.
- Members of Unitarian church.
- Local civil rights work in New Hampshire.
- Respected in Portsmouth, NH.



Source: *The Interrupted Journey*

# Hill Narrative I

On September 19, 1961, U.S. postal worker Barney Hill and his wife, social worker Betty, were driving at night from vacationing in Quebec through New Hampshire on their way home to Plymouth.

On Highway 3 near Groveton in north central NH, they spotted a strange light in the sky that seemed to be playing a “cat and mouse” game with them as they drove south.

They stopped a number of times in 30 miles to look at the obviously saucer-shaped, lighted object with binoculars. Barney armed himself with a .22 pistol from the trunk at one point.

The object finally settled down in a field about 100 feet from them just north of North Woodstock. Barney got out of the car and fearfully approached the object.

# Hill Narrative 2

Barney watch incredulously as up to 11 beings inside the lighted object seemed to be preparing to exit the saucer and come toward him. Barney panicked and fled to his car where Betty was still waiting inside.

They heard some odd beeping sounds from the back of the car as they accelerated down the road. Sometime later while traveling through Plymouth, NH, they again heard some odd beeping sounds and seemed to be awakening from a period of drowsiness. They turned onto Highway 93 and then onto Route 4 to Portsmouth.

They both felt upset and “clammy and unclean.” Barney felt odd sensations in his lower abdomen and groin area. Betty noticed an odd pink powder on her dress.

# Hill Narrative 3

The next day Betty and Barney reported their sighting to some officers at Pease AFB and they came out and took their report. They left out the sighting of beings inside the UFO that Barney saw with binoculars.

Friends and relatives were privy to some of their sighting details, too, over the ensuing days and weeks. But Barney continued to feel disturbed. About two weeks after the experience, Betty had five nights of “nightmares” about their experience. She wrote down the contents of these dreams.

After getting some UFO books from the library, Betty wrote to Donald Keyhoe of NICAP on September 26. On October 21, NICAP investigator Walter N. Webb interviewed the Hills for six hours.

# Hill Narrative 4

Webb reported that Barney believed he had a “mental block” to remembering more about the “leader.” Betty had more “nightmares” about Barney and her being captured by the men in the spaceship. The men were about five feet, “with oversized chests and noses, black hair, and dark eyes.”

Betty and Barney were led inside the disc-shaped structure and examined and conversed with the leader, who spoke imperfect English. Betty allowed the examination of her skin and even removed her dress for a “pregnancy” test with a painful needle inserted in her abdomen, which was rendered pain-free by the leader by passing his hand in front of her eyes.

While they waited for Barney’s exam to be done, Betty conversed with the leader. This was interrupted by workers’ discovery of Barney’s false teeth, which Betty explained.

# Hill Narrative 5

Betty then explained “old age” to them after mentioning it in connection with Barney’s dentures. Betty had a hard time explaining getting older.

Betty wanted tangible proof of her time with them and picked up a large book with strange symbols. The leader asked if she could read the book. “No, but I’d like to.” He produced a map from the wall. Betty believed it to be a star map because the leader asked her if she knew where the earth was. “No, but some earth people would know. Would you like to meet them?”

On leaving, the beings had an argument and the leader decided Betty could not have the book as proof. In fact, he said he would cause her to be amnesic for the entire episode along with Barney, and he would dispute her recollections. She and Barney were released near their car, and Barney “woke up.”

# Hill Narrative 6

Barney and Betty made regular trips to the abduction area in early 1962 trying to pin point the actual site, but would not succeed until 1965 by accident. Barney's anxiety continued to worsen and he turned to alcohol to console himself. Also, in this period, he had some warts in his groin removed.

They went to two doctors for help with their anxieties and concerns, but received no particular relief nor belief in their UFO encounter story. In 1963, they told their story publicly at their church. After this, a doctor in the audience suggested hypnosis might help and the Hills' psychiatrist at the time recommended they see Dr. Benjamin Simon in Boston. They started with Simon in December of 1963. A UFO skeptic, Simon, nonetheless, acknowledged that the UFO encounter was directly related to Barney's psychological symptoms.

# Dr. Benjamin Simon

- Prominent Boston psychiatrist; therapy not research was goal.
- Knew nothing about abductions; nobody did.
- Did careful, multiple hypnotic regressions on both.
- Tried hard to dissuade Hills under hypnosis that related events didn't happen.
- Was a UFO skeptic and remained unconvinced of reality of their story when he died.



Source: *The Interrupted Journey*

# Hill Narrative 7

In the first half of 1964, the Hills underwent many independent hypnosis sessions. Betty's story was essentially the same as her "nightmares." Barney's was less detailed, but corroborated hers at many points. He talked about a "mind voice" directing him where to drive off the road and park.

He was assisted out of his car by beings and into the craft. Barney opened his eyes only occasionally out of fear. He saw the "operating table." He was examined variously with a cup placed over his groin (to extract semen he felt), scraping of his arm skin, looking into his throat, a cylindrical device insert into his rectum, ears examined, etc.

He was brought back to his car and reunited with Betty. Delsey, their dog, was cowering in the car. Betty said they should watch the object leave, but Barney didn't understand.

# Hill Narrative 8

Simon tried hard to persuade the Hills that there was no reality to their story, which Betty did not buy at all. Barney couldn't go along completely with Betty or Simon. Regardless of the reality, they all agreed the therapy helped the Hills greatly.

Simon told the Hills' medical insurance company that he had successfully completed therapy for "emotional disturbance created by an experience with a UFO." The insurance company was highly skeptical but paid up.

In October 1965, the *Boston Traveler* newspaper covered the Hill's UFO encounter. The reporter got a tape of the Hill's talk at a Quincy, MA, UFO group, where Betty said she thought they'd been captured by a UFO. In 1966, *Saturday Review* columnist John G. Fuller contacted the Hills and Simon and published his bestselling book, *The Interrupted Journey*.

# Hill Narrative 8

*Look* magazine also excerpted their story in 1966. After this, the Hills were UFO celebrities and appeared here and there in the media. In 1968, Marjorie Fish, a school teacher and amateur astronomer, created a star map model from Betty's map. This fostered controversy in the 1970s. Barney died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in February 1969.

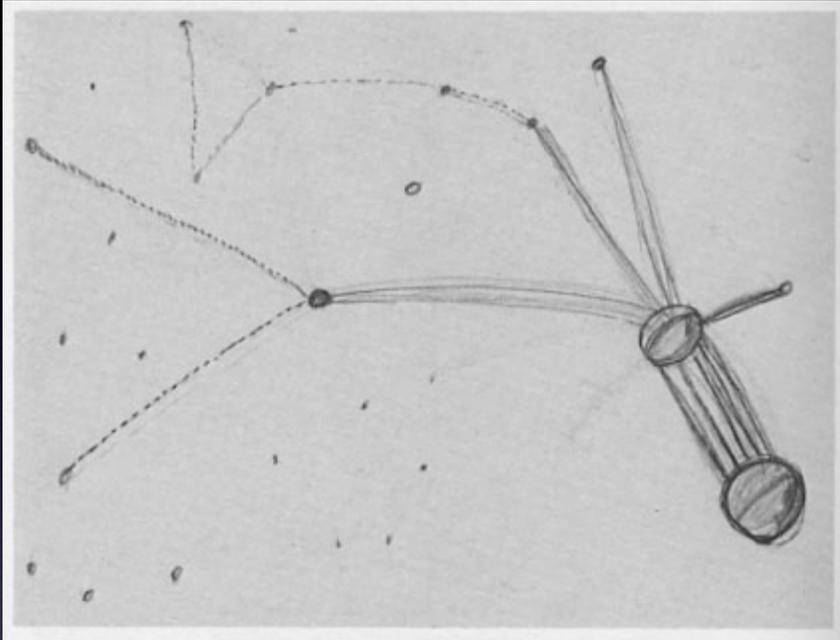
In October 1975, NBC aired the TV movie *The UFO Incident*, taken from Fuller's book, starring Estelle Parsons and James Earle Jones.

From 1972 on, Betty met with local UFO groups that discussed, searched for, and sought out contact with UFOs. Betty continued to cooperate fully with UFO researchers and published her own reflections on UFOs as *A Common Sense Approach to UFOs*. Betty died in 2004.

# Marjorie Fish Star Map I

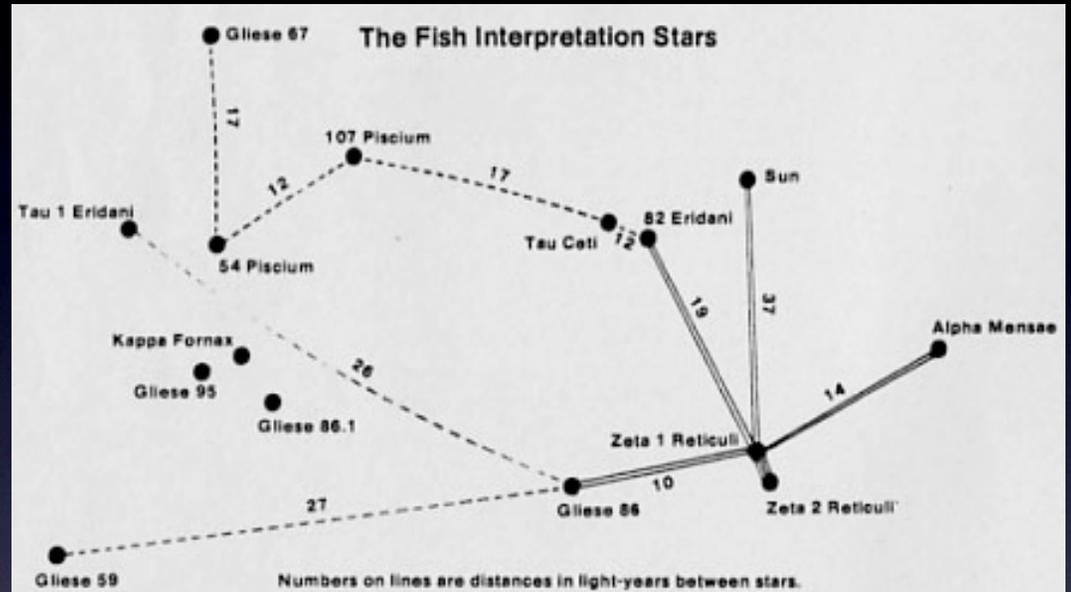
- Grade school science teacher with UFO interest.
- Made models using Gliese atlas and assumption of 50 light years from Earth.
- Zeta I and II Reticuli are sun-like stars within requisite distance.
- Found a “close enough” match.
- Big 1970s controversy.
- Later filled in stars from later Gliese edition.

# Marjorie Fish Star Map 2



Source: *The Interrupted Journey*

Betty Hill's "star map" as drawn under hypnosis in 1964.



Source: *The Zeta Reticuli Incident*

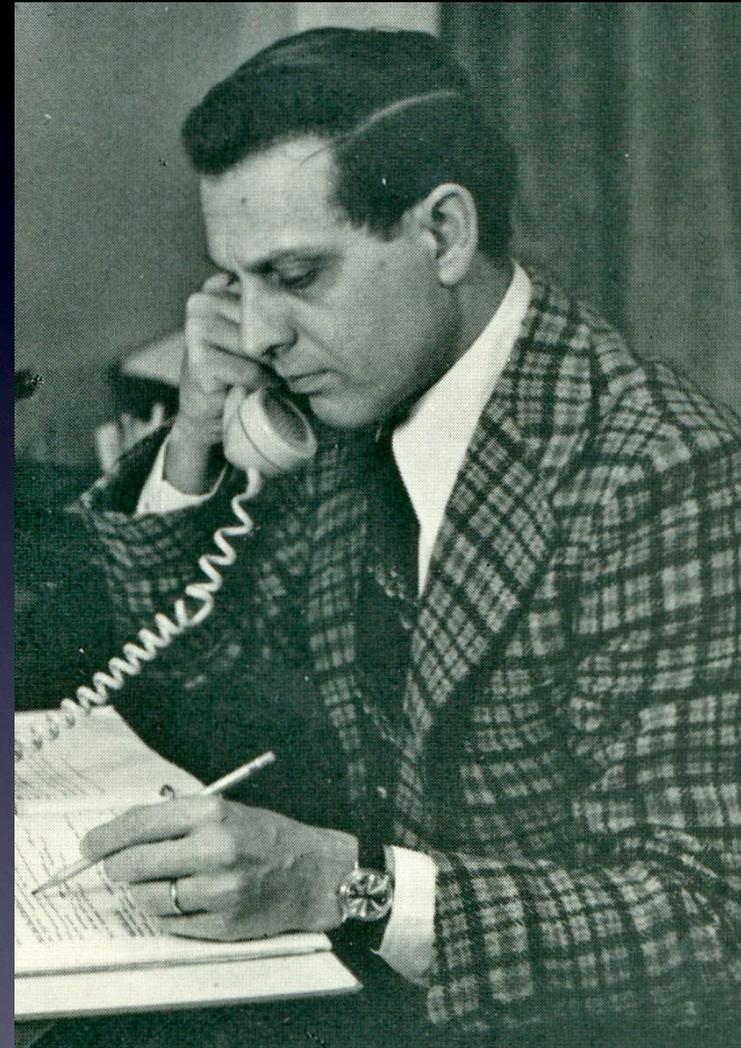
Marjorie Fish's star map as figured out and drawn by 1974.

# Abduction Researchers

- Worked with certified professionals early in their abduction research.
- Most prominent ones learned hypnosis and some therapy techniques, but not certified professionals.
- Well aware of short comings of hypnosis and, indeed, memory itself for research.
- Bottom line: memory (and hypnosis-aid memory) need independent corroboration if at all possible.

# Raymond Fowler

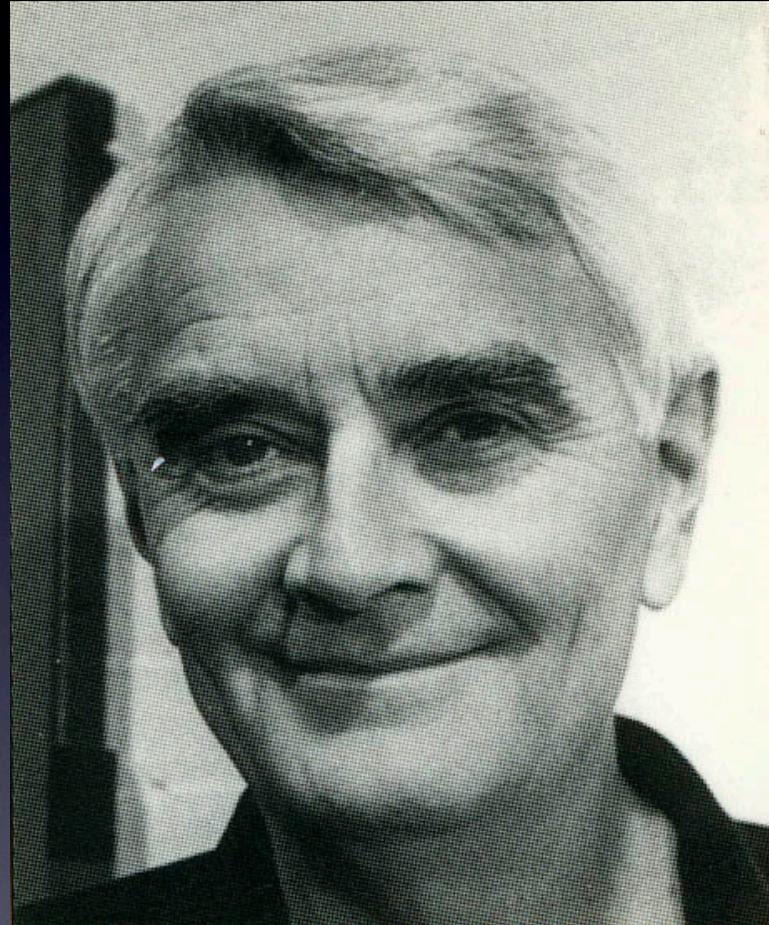
- Longtime UFO researcher.
- Amateur astronomer.
- Extensively documented Andreasson abductions.
- Discovered he's abductee; has had history of anomalous events in his life.



Source: *Casebook of a UFO Investigator*

# Budd Hopkins

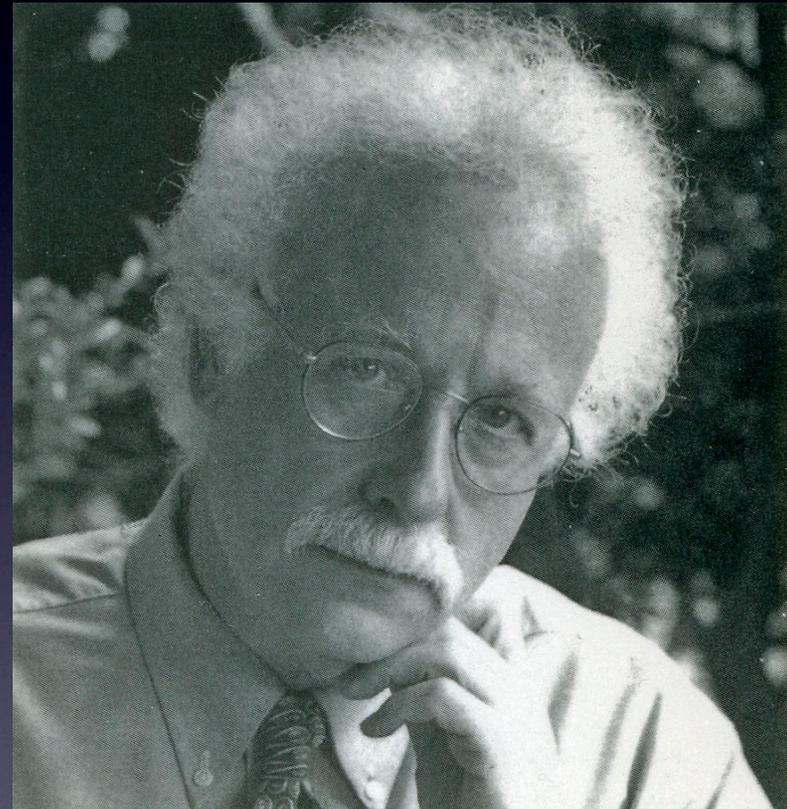
- Budd Hopkins:  
NYC artist.
- Saw a UFO.
- Debbie Jordan  
and Linda  
Cortile  
abductions.
- “Literalist”  
researcher.



Source: *Witnessed*

# David Jacobs

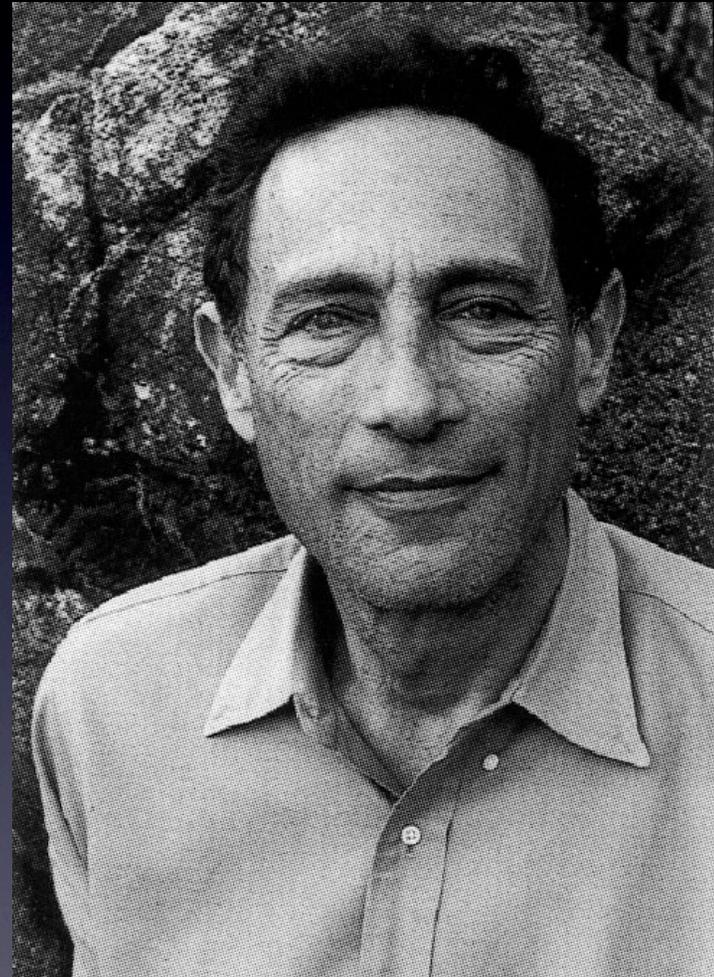
- Temple U. history prof.
- Wrote early history of UFOs.
- Got into abductions.
- Thinks aliens are interbreeding with us.
- “Literalist” researcher.



Source: *The Threat*

# John Mack

- Harvard U. psychiatry prof.
- Pulitzer Prize winning author.
- Explored transpersonal psychology.
- Then came to abductions.
- Survived a Harvard U. inquisition.
- Transpersonalist researcher.



Source: *Passport to the Cosmos*

# Other Researchers

- Yvonne Smith: LA area therapist/researcher.
- Leo Sprinkle: Emeritus prof U of Wyoming; ran Rocky Mountain experiencer conferences; deep psychological explanation of UFO encounters.
- John Carpenter: Social worker; active in 1980s, 1990s; contributed to research efforts.
- Oregon scene: hit and miss over the years; Alvin Ackerman (deceased).

# Abduction Theories I

- People who accept the evidence; people who don't.
- Do: ufologists, (secretly) a few academics, UFO enthusiasts, much of public.
- Ufologists are “literalists,” psycho-social theorists, or transpersonalists.
- Don't: dedicated debunkers, the vast majority of (ignorant) academics, establishment people, some of the public.
- Debunkers are reductionists.

# Abduction Theories 2

- Literalist ufologists: Explain by reducing subject to atoms, energy, and misapprehension.
- Psycho-social ufologists: Explain by psychology, social conditions, cultural ideas.
- Transpersonal ufologists: Explain by positing another realm.
- Debunkers (reductionists): Explain by reducing subject to atoms, energy, mistakes, and cultural beliefs.

# Abduction Conclusions

- No single theory fits the abduction syndrome perfectly.
- Best is, perhaps, Jacobs' genetic mixing and replacement of humans theory.
- Highly speculative: (1) Spiritual warfare for human souls à la Christian scenario; (2) Part of general New Age raising of consciousness; (3) Simply part of age old spirit world interaction with humans.

# Hypnosis in History I

- Trance states have always been with us.
- All tribal societies use trance states to gain further information: to cure disease, to protect from natural elements, to seek advice of the spirits, to understand life itself.
- Ancient world cults all used trance states.
- All major religious traditions have esoteric branches, movements, etc. All use trance states. Christian mystics, Muslim Sufis, Hindu yogis, etc.

# Hypnosis in History 2

- Anton Mesmer brought attention to trance states in 18th century Europe.
- 19th century physicians like Charcot, Braid, Liébeault, Bernheim, Janet, et al, helped “tame” hypnosis.
- Freud rejected hypnosis (on flimsy grounds) and it fell from favor as drugs advanced.
- Today, it is viable in the background, but little research into its psychic and paranormal aspects is done.

# Modern Hypnosis Research

- Lack of a single, consensus explanation of hypnotic trance; only competing theories.
- Hilgard's work with deep awareness: It never goes away.
- Charles Tart's experiments with telepathy between subject and hypnotist.
- Some clinical and therapeutic exploration of psychic and paranormal aspects.
- Need for more "farther reaches" exploration of hypnotic states from scientists.

# Hypnosis as Research Tool

- From Wikipedia on “Hypnosis”:

The American Medical Association and the American Psychological Association have both cautioned against the use of repressed memory therapy in dealing with cases of alleged childhood trauma, stating that "it is impossible, without other corroborative evidence, to distinguish a true memory from a false one", [15] and so the procedure is "fraught with problems of potential misapplication".[16]

# Hypnosis as Research Tool 2

- Hypnosis is a tool to reveal normally hidden information.
- Information from whatever source needs corroboration. If none, it stands alone and is worth much less.
- Sometimes UFO events have independent physical or eyewitness supportive evidence.
- Information gained solely through hypnosis is still susceptible of internal consistency and coherency checks.

# Hypnosis as Therapy Tool

- Abduction researchers either work with qualified hypnotherapists or have learned therapeutic techniques over the years.
- The *MUFON Field Investigator's Manual* requires working with qualified therapists.
- Most researchers set up and work with abductee support groups or refer abductees to qualified mental health professionals.
- However, research and not therapy is the main goal of abduction researchers.

# The Memory Problem

- No adequate psychological theory at this time because memory is varied and complex.
- Lots of experimental studies on memory seeming to demonstrate long- and short-term memory.
- Neurological/physiological correlates of memory studies abound.
- But memory is probably deeply involved with the reality problem.

# “False Memory Syndrome”

- FMS is not a recognized psychological concept or condition by the American Psychological or Psychiatric Associations.
- FMS was invented by (probable) sexual abusers who wanted to fight back against the growing recognition of the frequency of sexual abuse and against some irresponsible psychotherapists who induced “memories” of abuse in patients, often under hypnosis.
- Some UFO debunkers used FMS to disparage abduction research.

# Dreaded R Word: Reality

- Western psychologists have avoided philosophical implications of leading edges of science in neurology, subatomic particle physics, parapsychology, and paranormal phenomena studies.
- But this is changing. In 1950, 5 articles in biomedical lit mentioned “consciousness”; in 2000, 1400 articles.
- Still a long way to go. Reluctance to study “edges” of consciousness (reality) is great.

# Western Reality Dichotomy I

- Western psychology and philosophy is a world of black and white.
- Things are either real or not real. There is no “sort of” real.
- Real is defined by science: physics, chemistry, biology, etc. Reality discussions start with material world.
- Thus, consciousness is a problem.

# Western Reality Dichotomy 2

- “Odd” (paranormal) states of consciousness are even more of a problem.
- Consequence: If it is not real, no time, money, or expertise is devoted to it. Not to mention respect.
- Thus, consciousness itself is suspect and alternate states of consciousness are beyond the pale.
- Consequence: No accepted knowledge.

# Reality in Actuality

- Reality is a continuum of states of consciousness.
- “Hard end”: Based on atoms, molecules, energy; “outer” sensations through sight, hearing, feeling, tasting; “inner” sensations of pain, kinesthetic, etc.
- “Medium area”: ordinary awareness of thoughts, feelings, well-being, etc.
- “Soft end”: ghosts, bigfoot, UFOs, telepathy, NDEs, OOBES, cosmic consciousness, etc.

# UFOs Force Reality Question

- Telepathy.
- Beams of light ending in mid-air.
- UFOs disappearing into the ground(!) or “materializing” or “dematerializing” in mid-air.
- UFOs splitting into two or more in mid-air.
- Abductees traveling through walls and closed windows.
- UFOs affecting not only electronic/electrical but also mechanical systems.

# Transpersonal Psychology

- Richard Broughton in *Parapsychology: The Controversial Science*: “Around the world the historical record up to the nineteenth century shows paranormal phenomena to be inextricably bound up with religious beliefs.”
- Transpersonal psychology is attempt to bridge gap between traditional western psychology and alternate states of consciousness.

# Jill Bolte Taylor

- Neurophysicist who had a stroke; gained tremendous insights into reality by introspection as her stroke proceeded; book: *My Stroke of Insight*.
- Frames consciousness as two “minded”—identified with right and left brain hemispheres.
- Left brain is logical, rational, fact-oriented, time-oriented, sense-oriented, ego-oriented.
- Right brain is intuitive, imaginative, timeless, expansive, other-oriented, boundary-less.

# Stanislav Grof

- Czechoslovakian psychiatrist trained as a Freudian psychoanalyst.
- Used LSD in his psychotherapy.
- Discovered that Czechoslovakian “housewives” experienced Eastern mystic symbols under LSD influence.
- Evolved his ideas of “transpersonal” psychology.
- Gradually expanded range of experiences considered transpersonal and finally added UFOs.

# “Transpersonal” Ufologists

- Look to transpersonal ufologists to make most sense of confusing world of UFOs (and paranormal phenomena).
- John Mack; Richard L. Thompson (student of Hindu religion, UFOs as vimanas); George Hansen (UFOs related to trickster phenomenon); Patrick Harpur (UFO beings part of expansive other world of angels, fairies, sprites, demons, etc.); Jacques Vallee (ufologist with occult world connections; posits an other world force controlling/manipulating humankind).

# Conclusion

- UFO intelligence “dwells” in transpersonal realm; its natural home.
- UFO intelligence probably always been with humankind.
- We are probably its “project.”
- Humans, like most everything, are “at home” in the transpersonal world.
- Real reality is the transpersonal world; not scientific, rational reality of Western mind.

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