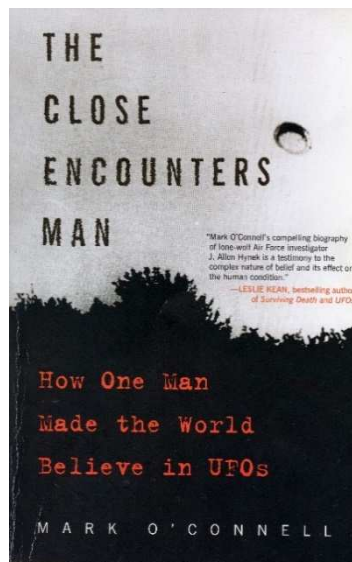


An Illustrated Review of “*The Close Encounters Man*”

By Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos

Symbols do matter. When you buy a book devoted to the UFO enigma (in my case, I kindly received it from the publisher for review) you expect the cover to have a meaning, a clue to its contents. Yes, I know that you should not judge a book by its cover, but the exterior should always somehow relate to the interior. Consequently, when I found the full front covered by a known-fake flying saucer photograph,¹ along with a highlighted book endorsement by a journalist embracing the alien cause, bad sensations were aroused. Publisher’s doing? Maybe. However, when Carl Sagan, one of the most extraordinary scientists and thinkers of our epoch, is referred to as a “UFO mocker” (p. xi), the author’s preconceptions emerge. But perhaps this also may be relatively unimportant. Let us read the book – *The Close Encounters Man* by Mark O’Connell, a biography of Josef Allen Hynek Ph.D. (1910-1986), scientific advisor to the U.S. Air Force for over 20 years.²



I should note at the outset that the author reveals himself not as a neutral historian researching and writing about the top figure of “ufology.” A screenwriter by trade, he is also a UFO blogger who, by age 13, had already read “a lot of UFO books.” By his own admission and emphasis, the 1973 Pascagoula UFO abduction is “pretty much my favorite UFO case of all time.” O’Connell is hardly an impartial chronicler of the career of someone like Hynek, for whom the study of UFOs was a part-time profession and a full-time hobby.

Let me digress a little from this review to establish my own perspective with regard to the man. Dr. Hynek’s involvement with the UFO mystery spanned from 1947 to 1986. Mine started in 1967, therefore, we shared 20 years of common interest, so it is predictable that both interacted during this long interval. My personal association with Hynek started in 1974. I had an uneven letter exchange with Hynek since that year. I held it, mainly, with his staff: Mimi Hynek, John Timmerman, Mark Rodeghier, or Jerry Clark. In 1976, the Center for UFO Studies released a compilation of UFO landing reports in the Iberian Peninsula,³ with a prologue by Jacques Vallée (since 1969, I had been closely working with Dr. Vallée in the development of a computerized census of this type of occurrences in Spain and Portugal). In addition to letter-exchanging, two

major spotlights in our relationship are worth alluding to. One was a couple of *vis a vis* meetings. On the occasion of BUFORA's first international UFO congress, held in London in August 1979, where we both were invited to deliver speeches, I had the opportunity to greet Hynek in the conference corridors and we agreed to meet far from the footlights. On the following day, we met close to the American Embassy. We held a fruitful conversation, one that would illuminate my research plans for the following decade, which would center on convincing the Spanish Air Force Staff to declassify and place in the public domain its UFO files. This goal was, as military pilots use to say, an accomplished mission.⁴⁻⁷ Hynek's advice and vision was superlative in planning the strategy.



Hynek and Ballester Olmos, London, 1979.
Photo by Perry Petrakis.



Dr. J. Allen Hynek. London, 1979.
Photo by V.J. Ballester Olmos.

Another highlight of my association with Hynek was his contributing the foreword for my book *Investigación OVNI* (UFO investigation), published 1984.^{8,9} I was specially moved because he wrote generously about me and my work. (See Hynek's original prologue text in the Appendix 2.)

Back to the book. This is "an attempt to find the heroism, humor, and humanity" in the man Hynek, the author explains. More than likely, those qualities will emerge, yet I would prefer finding an unbiased scientist always doing science with UFO sightings and arriving at sober, down to earth conclusions. We'll see.

Well-written, as is to be expected from a professional writer who contributed episodes to the *Star Trek* saga, and well-documented, both features specially appreciated by any demanding reader. We already knew the esoteric interests of Hynek from Jacques Vallée's memories¹⁰ and through a specific article by John Franch.¹¹ Here we see how from the age of 18 Hynek developed a sympathy with Freemason and Rosicrucian readings and "became enthralled with the concept of 'occult science' propagated by philosopher and spiritual teacher Rudolf Steiner" (p. 16). How much the belief of an invisible, arcane world would predispose the mind of a young astronomy student to the acceptance of other unearthly realities (not to be disclosed until 1947), we do not know, but certainly the seed was implanted. You never know how these beliefs may frame the ideas of a person, but if you are tackling an inscrutable phenomenon like UFOs, the risk of transforming something intricate into something impenetrable and unknowable is always there.



CUFOS's Mark Rodeghier (right) and V.J. Ballester Olmos, Washington, D.C., 1987.

The book is pleasant reading. Most of us are familiar with the Hynek-ufologist but less with the Hynek-astronomer or family man. Also, the author cleverly establishes a continuum from the late nineteenth century's Martian life expectations to pre-1947 public awareness and fears of interplanetary conquest. He shows how the culture was ready to echo misinterpretations that led to the huge (but short-lived) rash of flying saucer sightings of July 1947 in the United States. From the Prologue to Chapter 2, the history of astronomical discoveries—and the stream of erroneous speculations they prompted—from 1897 to 1938 represents an oven where the ideas being cooked would favor the subsequent apparition of flying saucers. Not to forget the influence of local science fiction literature, I hasten to add.

Not unexpectedly, the initiatory Kenneth Arnold sighting is presented without criticism, while the Mantell accident episode and other precedent episodes are shown in a more balanced light. Interestingly, UFO reports were in the beginning “vague and sketchy” for Hynek (p. 46). It was years before the waves of UFO landings and occupants. In other words, the “phenomenon” reinforced and reinvented itself and gained in complexity. In my view, it was the media pressure which convinced the “witnesses” to come along with more elaborate tales, peaking from the sixties to the eighties and diminishing to near zero in the current century. Reflecting on that, recently I wrote an entry in my blogsite entitled “Where have the UFO landings gone?”¹² In reality, they did not go, they simply never came in the first place.

In fact, Hynek himself found inconsistencies in size, speed, and performance estimates of the objects for the fundamental and founding Arnold sighting. On the other hand, one of the first photographic records reported (Phoenix, July 7, 1947) motivated Hynek to suggest it should be reopened for investigation, claiming that no competent investigation had been done and that “no astronomical explanation seems possible” (p. 48). Of course, because most probably it was a crude hoax. I am convinced of that, yet I still cannot prove it. But at that time the possibility someone would lie to the air force was not considered.

All in all, some 20% of the cases were unsolved within the first 273 studied by Hynek for the air force between December 1948 and April 1949 (Project Sign). By February 1949, Sign's final report even went so far as to discuss “the likelihood of a visit from other worlds” (p. 50). Some will say, coverup and debunking had not yet started. Blessed ignorance is what I believe.

Most of Chapter 4 covers the fiery, magnificent, July 24, 1948 Chiles-Whitted sighting of a huge, portholed, red-exhausted flying torpedo. The report produced a great shock in the Air Force top brass and Hynek could not explain it astronomically either, “if we accept [it] at face value” (p.

55). Key words. Unprecedented up to then, it was with all certitude the first “close” view of a bolide (large magnitude meteoroid) by airborne pilots. Over time, UFO and scientific literature discovered how the observation of a major fireball can be transformed into the appearance of a structured solid object with windows. This is termed W.K. Hartmann’s “airship effect.”¹³⁻¹⁶ Hynek finally attributed it to a slow-moving meteor and wondered if psychologists would link the brilliant trail of a meteor to the impression of a ship with lighted portholes.

After the cancellation of Sign, Project Grudge was enacted, to cope with continuing incoming reports to the Air Force. The ET-conscious stand changed to “debunking reports as quickly as it could” (p. 59). Depending of your viewpoint, it was due to either a dark hand or a flow of realism. The thing is that after eight months of operations (and 244 cases reviewed), the conclusion reached was that UFO incidents posed no threat to national security. In concordance, the same finding was reached decades later by various countries’ DoDs, when collections of military-based UFO reports were declassified and released. Nevertheless, today, some stubborn believers do not accept this incontrovertible fact, including, apparently, the book’s author.

The history continues by introducing the myth of the “Martians” salvaged after a flying saucer crash. O’Connell righteously tells that the tale was a contrived story. Yet this concept would surface in later years very vigorously, to survive in the form of the Roswell scenario. This time believers would not let the prey go as easily.

In 1951, the movie industry entered into the scene with the movie *The Thing*. O’Connell takes the last sentence of the film, expired by a wounded scientist: “watch the skies!” and interprets that the public more emphatically stared at the heavens and, consequently, observed more and more UFOs. However, with the passage of time, the interpretation of most scholars is that this is precisely one of the causes of the phenomenon of “waves”, a spate of uncalibrated, mistaken, delusional and mundane UFO observations, to be ascertained after a disciplined look at the sightings.¹⁷

The book vividly depicts how good Hynek was as a professor and fund-raiser to the Ohio State University. Popular and valued by university related media, he did not hate publicity, mainly because it was the medium to achieve his career objectives.

They say—and the book asserts it—that Grudge responded to debunking instructions . But it just took a General of the Air Force Intelligence to realize that the flying saucer project was inadequately staffed to reactivate it. It was then when salient Captain Ed Ruppelt was entrusted to “reinvigorate the program” (p. 69). The subject of study was now termed Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) and the program renamed to Blue Book (until its closure in 1969).

Ruppelt asked Hynek (again in his consulting role) to reevaluate the Mantell case, initially attributed to Venus. And he recanted. Why? The book says because “the UFO phenomenon persisted” (p. 70). The fact is that Ruppelt found evidence pointing to a secret Skyhook balloon as the possible culprit instead.

After the never properly-probed, massive radar tracking on July 19, 1952 over the airport of Washington, D.C. (a case of anomalous propagation?), the Battelle Memorial Institute was contracted to statistically analyze thousands of UFO reports (Project Stork). They wanted to discriminate between true and false UFOs. A naive attempt. They still did not know that there are no differences between “knowns” and “unknowns”.

A particular case receives special attention (9 pages beyond p. 96), the August 5, 1953 series of sightings that started with a GOC observer's sighting at Blackhawk, South Dakota and grew to span over three hours and 200 miles distance to North Dakota. It is virtually impossible to analyze an event from almost 50 years ago, but what can appear to be a homogeneous case, I see quite differently: something that occurred in far-flung locations, over the course of several hours, visually, by radar, from the ground, from the air, by untrained personnel or by pilots and air controllers, showing witness excitement, can perfectly well have diverse explanations and be the combination of different phenomena. I speak from memory, but I think Philip Klass already spoke about this artificial combining effect. The funny thing is that when the investigation concluded, Hynek's report made him allude to an "Alice in Wonderland flavor" (p. 111), i.e., a conundrum.

It reminds me of the case of the Spanish pilot of a *Supercaravelle* on November 11, 1979. For several hours after a central aerial incident, UFOs were seen from the ground and later on by a fighter pilot scrambled to investigate the strange lights. The only way to study time-extended sightings like this is to fracture them into separate temporal and geographic segments; otherwise, we are adding unnecessary complexity to what happened and making it inexplicable due to an incorrect methodology.^{18,19}

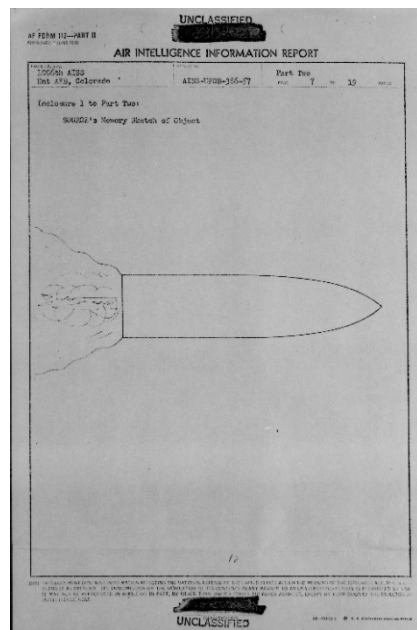
It was around this time that Hynek sparked the concept of the "residue". Those ungovernable cases are the root of a new phenomenon. But that is a fallacy. If you take a million measurements in a laboratory, a small percentage of random errors or discrepancies will always appear. It is a statistical fact that does not indicate at all that these extraneous measurements represent a new phenomenon or structure. In any field of investigation (police, medical, etc.) there are always "unsolved cases", but this speaks rather of the limitations of the investigator. In ufology, it just mirrors the failure of the narrator or/and the analyst. With more experience and skills this percentage decreases. Matter of fact, the figure 20% of unexplained cases by Hynek or the Blue Book has been reduced today to 2.0%, according to the latest figures of GEIPAN.²⁰

For social sciences academics who contend that media and cinema stimulated and maintained the high level of saucerism (both belief and reporting-wise) in America, the book quotes film historian Patrick Luciano's estimate of 500 movies of the SYFY genre (flying saucers included) produced in the US from 1948 to 1962. If you add to this book publishing, newspapers, magazines, and television promoting UFO stories during the space age and cold war term, the foundation for this appears more than proved.

The narration establishes a parallelism between Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and Hynek, a little bit far-fetched in my view. Primarily, based on unorthodox intellectual Arthur Koestler's (1905-1983) biography of Kepler, who defied XVII century scholars' rejection of Galileo's discoveries through the telescope he invented. In the same manner, the author suggests, Hynek opposed XX century scientists to look at UFO photographs (p. 118). But if there is one aspect of UFO phenomenology that has been well covered by scientists since 1947 (in and out of the military) it is photography and film footage evidence. As I said, an excessive comparison that I can understand as a nice literary conceit for a book.

In reviewing Hynek's labor life as an astronomer, this volume goes through interesting scientific achievements in the contemporary history of astronomy, e.g. the Baker-Nunn camera (p. 123). Also, the account of events surrounding the launch of the Soviet *Sputnik* in 1957, and the role played by Hynek, is quite illustrative and entertaining (p. 127).

It can be ascertained that the investigator's will to believe²¹ crucially limits one's capacity to analyze eyewitness depositions and UFO incidents. I can affirm that firsthand as I suffered this bug. It is like having a veil in your mind that inhibits detecting logical flaws, awkwardness, and absurdities within the reported event, or making a sensible and rational assessment of the whole situation, therefore accepting everything verbatim no matter how weird it is. Simply because you believe that such weird things happen in the first place. Let us revisit the Levelland, Texas story of multiple-landings on the night of November 2, 1957 (p. 133) from a different perspective. At 10:50 p.m., P. Saucedo and Joe Salaz, farm laborers driving a truck 4 miles west of town, have a brief encounter with a torpedo-shaped, high-speed colorful flame "about 200 feet long." Notably strained, Saucedo reports the fright to the night desk police officer of the Levelland Police Department, adding that the vehicle's engine and lights momentarily failed. Police officer A.J. Fowler dismisses the call.



Drawing of UFO sighting by P. Saucedo to Blue Book investigator, S/Sgt. Norman P. Barth, 1006th Air Intelligence Service Squadron, Ent Air Force Base, Colorado. (<https://www.fold3.com/image/7229817>)

As described, the economy of hypotheses rule suggests the observation of an unexpected bolide fireball, powerful enough to scare the two Hispanic occupants who, in their excitement, couldn't manage the vehicle. Nothing to be surprised about for UFO experiencers. There have been great confusions with fireballs, their grandiosity has even given rise to close encounter reports.²² Incidentally, for astrophysicist Menzel, it was a case of ball lightning.²³ This resolution was the one adopted by ATIC (Blue Book).

One full hour elapses. A still night is in progress. Suddenly, a Jim Wheeler [of Witharral] calls. He is driving 4 miles east Levelland and has seen a "brilliantly lit egg-shaped object, about 200 feet long, sitting in the middle of the road." As he approaches the neon glowing object, engine and headlights fail. He tries to leave the car when the landed object streaks upward and vanishes. Car power then recovers. A few minutes later, José Alvarez [also of Whitharral] calls the same Police Department, now from a road's telephone booth. He reports to have just observed a large glowing object sitting in the road 11 miles north Levelland. His car suffers from electrical failure as soon as the object soars away. At 12:15 a.m., [Whitharral] motorist Frank Williams phones to officer Fowler to claim having seen a glowing, pulsing object. With every light's pulse the car dies.

The object departs with a thunder. [He is 9 miles north of Levelland]. Now, Fowler realizes that his communications are being overheard by dispatchers that are having a good time with him and requests that air remains free for emergencies. Only then “the kidding ceased.” [Hynek wrote that all observers “were listening to a local radio that carried the news.”]²⁴ One more call is received from a pay phone at 1:15 a.m. from a terrified truck driver [James D. Long, according to New York’s *World Telegram and Sun*, November 4] who tells Fowler he saw “a [neon] glowing egglike object... 200 hundred feet long” that made his vehicle’s lights and engine fail until the object blasted off to the sky [at northeast Levelland].

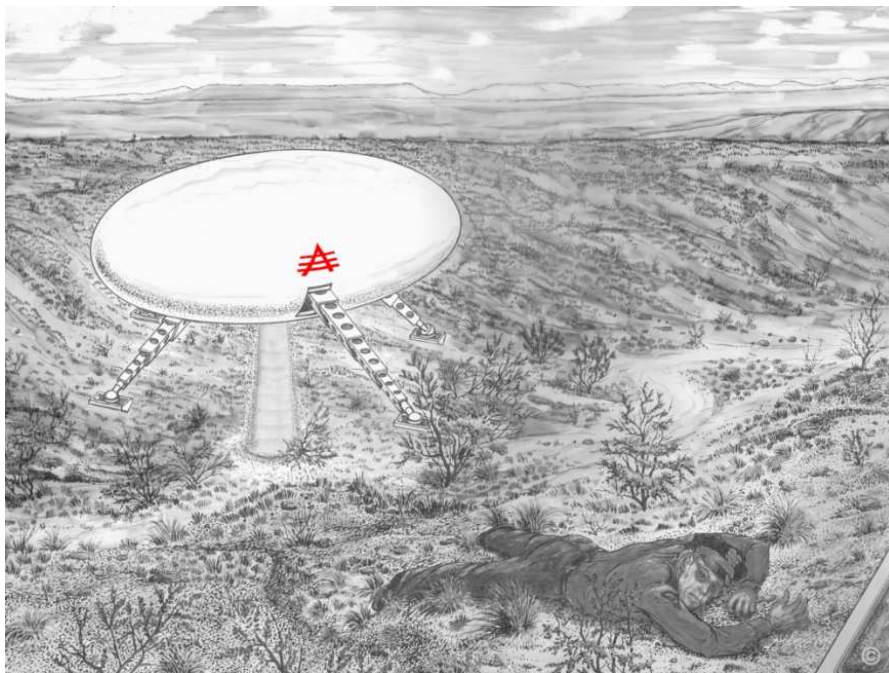
Witnesses usually have a problem estimating times and sizes. But here we have 4 reports made to the same bureau in the space of 85 minutes mimicking the crude dimension and shape and brightness and EM effects claimed for a meteor-like phenomenon made one hour before by two simple Mexican farm workers, in the same area, now portrayed as an egg-shaped object landing repeatedly.²⁵ Frankly, it looks like a coordinated joke. Or a copycat case, a miserable prank on the police. Haven’t the reader realized the kind of idiotic behavior/maneuvers of a potential spacecraft? Were the UFO operators drunk, jumping from a road to another, with full lights on, only to remain landed a short moment to impress poor car/truck drivers who—in an unprecedented exercise of collective responsibility and unanimity—decided to report the sighting almost live to a unique police station? The fact that the calls to the police had an ample audience supports this interpretation. On the following day, other calls informed about two other landings in the same area at the same time (12:05 and 12:45 a.m.). A restless flying saucer, indeed!

The November 2 incidents were not rated as important by Blue Book: its investigator did not bother to locate and interview the alleged witnesses of the touch downs. The BB official records are very poor.²⁶ Hynek was busy tracking the second Russian satellite and was not involved at all. One can reasonably ask: did the sources actually exist? How do we know for sure it was not one single guy spoofing, or a series of telephone mischiefs fueled by the initial, true occurrence? You can call it a revisionist approach. I call it an alternate, down to earth scenario. I may not be alone in this. Curiously, a case of “prevarication” is all Hynek had left, the book notes. “A most unlikely explanation for the night’s events,” O’Connell appends, showing his preferences. Unlikely?

Reading this book has proved to be a nostalgic stroll back to my youthful years when I waited every two months for the arrival of the latest issue of the *Flying Saucer Review*. Because this work unravels several of those “best cases,” already classics, incredible but disconcerting, that remain unexplained. And will be for forever, because of the absence of a scientific-skeptical field investigation. It is an axiom that UFO surveys conducted by the believer or credulous do not lead to anything positive, only to the mystery. One of those cases was Papua New Guinea, June 26, 1959, the longest ever UFO observation in the world, lasting three consecutive nights. And it was nothing less than the apparition of a floating platform with humanoids on top waving to the ground observers! Curious to recall those cases that were considered the best evidence for alien arrival. From the temporal distance, such tales appear ridiculous. Historians of the future will rate them as such. For example, the 1962 story of Barney and Betty Hill's pre-abduction: a landed long object similar to of an airplane, with rows of windows, behind which small humanoids are peeping. Would there be stewardesses too? Or the two-seater spacecraft seen by Lonnie Zamora in 1966, with unseen door heard to shut before lifting off by firing flames from the bottom, with an obsolete jet propulsion system. Doesn't anyone notice how different UFO close encounters are from each other? Every event has its personal stamp, as much as a unique and individual delivery and construction. We have been—and many still are—so innocent!

Was there any critical event Hynek went through since 1953 when he thought that an extraterrestrial visitation was “highly, highly improbable!” (p. 105)? That was Socorro, New Mexico, April 24, 1966 (a UFO landing with the presence of two small-sized beings wearing white coveralls) . A turning point in Hynek’s vision about UFOs. For that, I will pause a little on this. There is abundant literature on the occurrence.^{27,28} Hynek was truly impressed by the only witness, patrolman Lonnie Zamora, an “unimaginative cop...incapable of hoax.” (p. 164). After his on-site investigation, Hynek declared: “It is one of the soundest, best substantiated reports as far as it goes.” Additionally, the skeptic-minded engineer William “Bill” Powers (full-time staffer with Hynek)²⁹ thought to have found a geometrical pattern in distribution the supposed landing marks. The book does not say, however, that Powers had to admit years later that it was just a “little exercise in speculation.”³⁰ The point is that Socorro meant a before and after for Hynek. The landing marked him forever.

One of the many twists and turns of the Socorro case concerns the "insignia" seen by Zamora on the surface of the object. Veteran ufologist Ray Stanford, who probed the event on the spot at the same time Hynek did, knew first-hand how the real design looked. USAF Captain Richard T. Holder advised Zamora to describe a different one , apparently to enable recognition of ‘copycat’ hoaxes. See below a watercolor illustration prepared by Stanford.³¹



Major Hector Quintanilla was the last Blue Book Project officer (1963-1969), and during these last 6.5 years the relationship with Hynek was quite acid. Quintanilla devotes a chapter of his memoirs to him, showing no particularly good sentiments.³² When he starts by classifying Hynek not as a consultant to the US Air Force but just a Project Blue Book consultant, it sets the framework of a negative attitude towards him. “That feeling [awed] diminished proportionally with the number of contacts I had with the good doctor.” “Actually, Hynek added very little to the investigation... however, his typical press interviews added more flame to the fire,” Quintanilla wrote. One of the reasons for this criticism by Quintanilla was Hynek’s “flare for publicity”. It was exactly the Socorro case that polarized the two men, to the point that Quintanilla exclaims that “sending Hynek to investigate the Socorro incident was my mistake.”

A final comment on Socorro. Quintanilla was never satisfied with the “Unidentified” classification. “There are intangible elements—he wrote in his recollections—which are impossible to check, so the solution to this case could very well be lying dormant in Lonnie Zamora’s head.” He was inclined to think that way, among other things, because of the absence of physical proof in the touch down area. The Air Force Materials Laboratory analyzed soil samples of the landing spot and no foreign residue was found; even the analysis of the burned brush “revealed no chemicals that could have been propellant residue.” Zamora died in 2009.

O’Connell devotes no less than two chapters (pages 175 to 205) to a multiple-sighting episode, the Dexter-Hillsdale, Michigan, lights of March 20 and 21, 1966 and its important sequels. Since these are well known events, I will limit myself to extracting the personal reflections they suggest to me. It all begins with a series of observations of immaterial lights, devoid of physical evidence, in a swampy area of Michigan, by a variety of witnesses, including 80 young women from Hillsdale College. It was one of those recurrent cases with a low level of strangeness, ufologically almost irrelevant. In fact, for Hynek these were reports lacking coherence and articulation (p. 183).

Enter well-known columnist John G. Fuller, who had been writing for months—with great public acclaim—about UFO sightings and criticism of the USAF cover-up in the *Saturday Review*. He turned it into a book, condensed in *Look* magazine on February 22, 1966 and published as *Incident at Exeter* thereafter. Undoubtedly, this caused a popular predisposition that had to produce some effect, i.e., it pre-heated an ambience conducive to UFO sightings. When Hynek arrived in Michigan—Blue Book received explicit orders from the Pentagon—he found a “situation so charged with emotion” (p. 183) that investigation proved impossible. The environment was quasi-hysterical. Hynek even participated in a UFO chasing by several squad cars that ended in the realization that the excited law enforcement officers were seeing the star Arcturus! Another cop (Deputy Sheriff David Fitzpatrick) contributed to the mess with a UFO photograph that Hynek rapidly recognized as the conjunction of the Moon and Venus.

The affairs of Dexter-Hillsdale were a terrible combination of intense press fervor, the hysteria of unprepared witnesses and the ignorance of the police. Hynek was dissatisfied with the “inconsistency of the witnesses” (p. 187) in a number of sightings of ambiguous lights (“the lights in both cases were associated with swamp areas,” Hynek wrote in his report to BB.) But, specifically, he simply did not know what they were, when he was forced to hold a press conference (“a circus,” p. 191) in which he merely suggested the possibility of luminescence due to swamp gas. It was delirium, and the press ridiculed him for it. (In retrospect, that fiasco more than damaging his image made him a celebrity.)

As a result, national media furiously accused the USAF of hiding the truth and mocking the observers. The sequence (or, better, escalation) of events that followed proves how something objectively trivial can become crucial, depending on who is driving the pressure. If it is the press and, at the same time, the politicians, everything can occur. “U.S. congressman and House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford and Congressman Weston Vivian of Ann Arbor [Michigan] were urged by their angry constituents to call for a congressional hearing” (p. 195). The House Armed Services Committee scheduled the meeting in mid-April. The Secretary of the Air Force, Hynek and Major Quintanilla spoke. It was the occasion where Quintanilla would lose trust in Hynek because of his statement. Bottom line is that the congressional committee suggested the Pentagon “set up a civilian inquiry into flying saucer phenomena” (p. 197). Two months later the House committee recommended that a university took the job.

Another major consequence of this was an exorbitant number of UFO cases reported to Blue Book, “We had a total of 1,112 sightings in 1966, [it] has never been equated since,” Quintanilla wrote.³² Here we see the making of a UFO wave, an artificial surge of observations generated by the reach of an overheated press on a susceptible, persuaded population.

The Air Force Office of Scientific Research was faced with rejection by 25 US universities. Here we find another internal controversy. In his memoirs, Quintanilla is direct in accusing Hynek of maneuvering so that Northwestern University would be selected to conduct the scientific study on UFOs. However, O’Connell’s book is clear: “Hynek’s own university was not interested” (p. 198). Finally, in October 1966 the University of Colorado was awarded the contract . By then, Quintanilla did not trust Hynek at all: “I tried to keep Hynek away from the Colorado group.” By the middle of 1966 (the official closure of PBB was December 17, 1969), Quintanilla continues: “Hynek’s association with Project Blue Book was no longer an asset, it had... become a liability.” In June 30, 1969 Hynek’s annual contract expired and it was not renewed. “The termination of Hynek’s contract saved the Foreign Technology Division a few thousand dollars every year. Hynek had been well paid for his services as a UFO consultant,” Quintanilla finished crudely.³²

In 1963, young doctoral student Jacques Vallée entered into Hynek’s Dearborn Observatory. Vallée has exercised an outstanding influence on Hynek. Trained in astrophysics and computer science, Vallée is a charismatic, very intelligent, cultivated, has a captivating personality and, for an American, holds the added value of the French charm. If we add to this a dense and deep UFO knowledge, Jacques immediately became a—de facto—trio with Allen and Bill in UFO matters. Having said that, Hynek was always Hynek.



Barcelona (Spain), 1975. A. Ribera, V.J. Ballester Olmos and Jacques Vallée.



Jacques Vallée, in his first years in America, with son and Mike Jaffe.

O’Connell takes from Vallée a conversation between Hynek and him revealing that their mutual primal ideas would be somehow rooted in ancient “knowledge” of a hermetic character (p. 216). I wonder if Hynek was more inclined towards material UFOs, i.e., a more conventional, less daring scientist, afraid of escaping from certain limits vis a vis his peers. Hynek had his epiphany with the Socorro “landing,” but he was a pure astronomer and the tools to solve “encounters of the third kind” were not included in the education of a physical scientist, I feel. The truth is that Hynek and Vallée made a terrific tandem.

Chapter 14 refers to the most influential abduction case in the world, that of mixed-raced couple Barney and Betty Hill in September 1961 (sighting of a light in the sky)/February 1964 (an alien kidnapping adventure recovered by hypnosis). I did not remember having read before that psychiatrist Dr. Simon gave Hynek the possibility of questioning the hypnotized couple in the fall of 1966 (p. 212). In my view, abductions are plain fantasies.³³ I cannot admit, for example, physicians from a super-advanced civilization making an invasive pregnancy test introducing a long needle in a lady's navel.

When Hynek and Vallée first met with the team from the University of Colorado, Hynek was already convinced that there was something unmistakably genuine (new) behind the UFO phenomenon. Hoping to discriminate the signal from the noise in the huge mass of UFO reports and find differential patterns, Hynek designed his famous Σ/C system (p. 222).³⁴ Decades later, we know that UFOs and IFOs are the same and that there is no differentiation between noise and signal. As French scholar J. Scornaux put it: "there is a continuity between the ordinary and the extraordinary, and we appreciate an indistinguishability between identified and unidentified cases."³⁵ In any case, Hynek's conversion was quick, as by December 1967 he was publicly proposing that "the existing evidence may indicate a possible connection with extraterrestrial life,"³⁶ a qualitative leap without a safety-net for which he really had no proof, only intuition (or, worse, hope or desire).

As the book also explains, at that time, the more Hynek attained popularity the less support academia in general, and Northwestern University, his employer, in particular, rendered to him (p. 225). Finally, the Colorado UFO group (directed by eminent physicist Dr. Edward U. Condon) issued an overall negative verdict on the scientific value of UFO sightings, despite the fact that the final report contained several examples of unresolved cases.³⁷ Hynek himself was very critical and felt it had been a missed opportunity. Then, and years later, three members of the Condon study published books on their personal experience in the committee.³⁸⁻⁴⁰ The truth is that, while that voluminous report probably buried forever the corporate interest of established science in the UFO issue, it would not be so in the social space. In the ensuing years, with the contributions of film and television productions, mainly, popular curiosity for the subject has returned, now focused directly on our interaction with extraterrestrial visitors. Is that good? I do not think so. UFOs should continue be probed, but with a viewpoint not oriented to seek for ETI.

As far as Hynek was concerned, his flirting with crazy subjects like mental photography, psychic surgery or out-of-body experience was worrying to his colleagues Powers and Vallée, O'Connell remarks (p. 239). When a symposium on UFOs sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science⁴¹ was held in December 1969, Hynek prepared a speech partially based on his conversations with the philosopher of science, T. Goudge. He basically stated that the scientific establishment rejects new empirical observations that do not come from a previously accepted scheme (p. 245). Here, I must dissent frontally. Enough of making us the victims. Schrodinger's phrase that the scientist must be curious is fine. Who is not? Any researcher is. And daring to venture into new, uncharted territories. But before changing the *status quo*, a minimum is required: evidence. Material. Legitimate. Objective. In over 70 years there has been no lasting evidence, only visual observations we can describe as ambiguous, inarticulate, fuzzy, uncertain, imprecise, doubtful, evasive, etc. Nothing permanent, factually attested, measurable, well-recorded. All UFO investigators are aware we lack this. There are some solid-looking sightings reported by reputable people (always evanescent, short-lived phenomena). But where is the hard evidence for those landing reports with humanoid being around? Where?

I can, yes, understand the frustration with the BB line of investigating UFOs. I favor and sympathize with the efforts Hynek & associates made from the late 1960s to improve inquiry techniques, select, reevaluate, and study the best cases, search for patterns, create an invisible college, etc. But now it is 2020. What has been added to our knowledge of UFOs since then? On the contrary, everywhere in the world, classic cases have been revisited and solved, the foundations of the UFO building are rotten. Humanoid cases are now tales only valid for movies. In this sense (see Chapter 17), the publication of Hynek's *The UFO Experience* in 1972, his major work outside the scientific arena, produced an instant but momentary flare in the science environment.

Year 1973 saw Hynek meeting at Boianai, a South Pacific island, with the two Anglian missionaries who spotted the long-lasting 1959 UFO display (p. 142) depicting a crew of beings standing over a suspended flying object, gazing at each other. Eerie as it may be (and, like almost any extraordinary UFO incident, unique in the roster of cases), Hynek "sensed" the event was real to the natives and "seemed to him... intelligently controlled." (p. 263). The transfiguration of a new Hynek was in progress. At that time, Hynek was very dedicated to the well-paid conference circuit and consulting to TV producers. So, when the Pascagoula kidnapping took place, October 11, 1973, an event which would launch a national rash of humanoid cases in the US,⁴² Hynek had no trouble admitting that the abductees were telling the truth and that "they had a genuine UFO experience." (p. 278). This time he was sponsored by NBC News: affected by the scathing criticism after the swamp gas episode by the press, did he understand that media treated better a non-skeptic stand? Or did he become more fearless, to compensate? Even worse, I am afraid he was perfectly sincere.

An astronomer is fully capable of analyzing observational anomalies, of course. In my viewpoint, alleged experiences of contact or quasi-contact with spaceships and ET entities do not belong to the realm of Physics. It is a mental compartment belonging to everyone's inner world. This is why every "experience" is unique and exclusive to the one who originates it, a single person or (rarely) two, where one clearly is the influencer. A physicist cannot handle this kind of problem. Even less if he approaches it as a believer.

On October 18, 1973, another prominent UFO sighting took place. A four-crew Army helicopter piloted by Captain Lawrence Coyne emerged out of the blue to add complexity to an on-going UFO wave in the country (p. 281). To make a long story short, as usual, we have two views to judge and interpret the occurrence, critic Philip J. Klass ("fireball")⁴³ and Hynek's coworker Jennie Zeidman ("unidentified").⁴⁴ The reader interested in the UFO vs meteor debate (the settlement of which is quite clear to me), will find further literature on this by the two contenders.^{45,46}

In late 1973 Hynek founded the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS), lamenting that the gurus at Northwestern were unwilling to have the University associated with this initiative even remotely. It was a slap to him. CUFOS had an impressive back-up of scientists, with the mission to do research and educate the public at large. I have been a declared supporter of CUFOS from minute One. Correspondent, report's author, conference participant, journal subscriber, and friend of many in the Board. Over the years, its material output in terms of documentation has been more than robust: an academic journal, a periodical of high quality, and monographs.⁴⁷ For me, nevertheless, the most important single contribution is the influential book written by Allan Hendry, CUFOS chief investigator during the period 1977-1980.⁴⁸

The yearly journal and the magazine stopped being published (2006 and 2012, respectively) and the organization has languished to this day, becoming only the archives. We must face a reflection. Government projects, scientific-minded organizations, civilian groups and clubs, scientists, amateurs, specialized reviews have come and gone. They have operated several years without generating a real advance on our knowledge of the nature of UFOs, because there is not a single cause behind but a variety of phenomena, conventional in origin. Finally, military records from a large number of nations have been declassified,⁴⁹ oblivious to supposed extraordinary information. Tons of documents and studies have been produced but today we doubt if there is a radium in the mass of pitchblende collected. In fact, everything points in the negative.

Having reached this point in the history of the development of phenomenology (or UFO reporting), I think it is sterile to define this as a dilemma between skeptics and believers. Because there is no certainty of something unknown after 74 years. Just words of incredible events, lacking hard, empirically-demonstrated proof. And if there is anyone who has it (unambiguous, definite, physical), let them show it.

Because the bottom line of this question is clearly exposed in the assumptions Hynek listed in a conference on the future held at Chicago, November 1, 1975: [UFOs show] “unrealistic acceleration; simulation of zero mass; isolation in space and time; change in shape; the apparent manifestation of intelligence.” (p. 302). This is the problem: being unable to solve and clarify a number of sighting reports (of a variety as heterogeneous as witnesses), we wrongly take as certain the characteristics that everyone imagines or misinterprets. And we elevate these features to the category of standard properties of a supposed compact phenomenon. Hynek was just wrapping up in scientific terms the absurdities uttered by alleged witnesses.

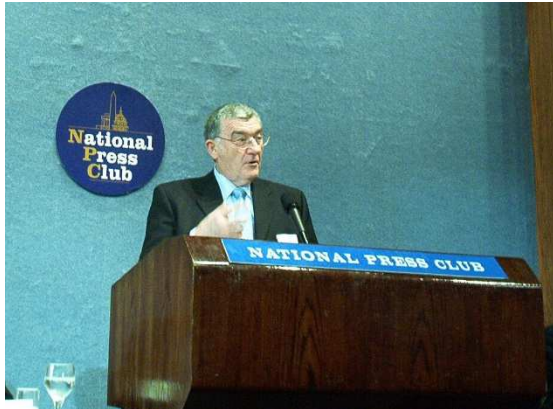
This is, basically, the objection Carl Sagan made to Hynek in that scientific forum 46 years ago. Those strange UFO reports would be explained away by “the full range of human misperception plus the full range of things in the sky of non-terribly exotic nature.” Statements treated not without a touch of ridicule by O’Connell in his book.

The fall of 1975 witnessed the premier on NBC of the recreation of the Hills’ abduction. A few weeks later the Walton abduction came out. For me, the detail that reveals the good practices of those denizens from another planet is that they keep their subject under observation unconscious for about five days. An unacceptably cruel “treatment,” if it was so. Another worse issue was Hynek’s opinion on the incident in a hypnotist’s conference: “the original abduction part and seeing the creature was a conscious memory.” (p. 310).

The book continues on Hynek’s second book, *The Edge of Reality* (coauthored with Jacques Vallée), where his posture was heeling towards the intangible: “The solution may lie in the parapsychological realm,” he self-answers his own question about how fast thought travels (p. 312).

Did I say anything about the relationship between stimuli granted to the public and the creation of a UFO flap? From one hundred UFO reports per year coming into CUFOS in 1977, hundreds of letters were received every day after the release of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the Steven Spielberg’s movie where Hynek had a 6-second cameo (p. 320). The title is obviously taken from Hynek’s first book.

Let me correct two oversights by O'Connell. After referring to the establishment by the CNES (the equivalent in France of NASA) of the official French UFO unit in May 1977, the Group d'Etudes des Phénomènes Aérospatiaux Non-Identifiés (GEPAN), by the impulse of Dr. Claude Poher, the book points out that it did not last two years (p. 324). That is not exact, GEPAN was transformed into SEPRA and years later into the current GEIPAN, whose activity continues unabated to this day.²⁰ Additionally, in the Spielberg film, the character of the French scientist "Lacombe" was portraying Jacques Vallée, not Claude Poher.⁵⁶



Dr. Claude Poher, Washington, D.C., 2011.



Dr. Jacques Vallée & Dr. J. Allen Hynek.

The story is coming to an end. By 1982, confronted with the possibility of visitors from outer space to explain UFOs, Hynek said that "the answer will be a very exotic and beyond our imagination; possibly something we could call paranormal." (p. 328). But anything paranormal cannot be placed into a laboratory, neither measured or weighted.

There is still an unclear chapter in Hynek's professional activity. I am referring to the new advisory contract signed with the USAF in 1970 (p. 254) and which periodically took him to visit Wright Patterson Air Base (p. 283). It appears that the type of work remains undocumented. I have checked and nobody in the environment of CUFOs is aware. Not even Jennie Zeidman, closest friend to Hynek.⁵⁰

Hynek's last few years were not very encouraging. Neither irrefutable evidence of the physicality of UFOs was found, nor did the offers of funding for higher-level UFO study come to fruition. I will not dwell on such sad, final stages of his life.

It may amaze that this book does not discuss UFO photos. UFO photography happens to be one of the most important kinds of tangible evidence. In fact, much of the reality of UFOs at the popular level comes from the photographic fetish. I myself have dedicated 20 years to compiling the largest database of UFOs of the imagery kind, FOTOCAT, a catalog that collects more than 12,600 cases (entry freezing point on December 31, 2005)⁵¹. The reason is found in Hynek's general dismissive opinion of this type of evidence: "As in the case with most UFO photographs, they remain unexplained and very puzzling, but prove nothing positive. The whole field of ufology has yet to produce one good photograph of a strange object at close range."⁵² In *The UFO Experience*, Hynek set down his criteria for judging purported UFO photographs. He also tackled this specific subject in Chapter 10 of his last book⁵³ (ghostwritten by Elaine Hendry, O'Connell affirms) and, as it could not be otherwise, in an article written for a journal of photography.⁵⁴

A biography is a book of history. And it is my impression that we do not learn in the course of time. How many more decades have to pass until we are convinced of the absence of an incontrovertible, reputed, trustworthy, and undebatable physical assurance for anomalous, unidentifiable UFOs?

I do sympathize a lot with the figure of Allen Hynek. A good scientist and a model UFO researcher. There was a time he was a hero to me. He was nothing less than a scientific consultant to the USAF's Air Force! He had, as any human being, his strengths, and weaknesses, owing to inner beliefs which could have molded his work, writings, and actions. It is very good to have a book written on him. He deserves it, as he was the foremost and most respected personage in UFO research in the world (second to him, unequivocally, is Jacques Vallée). This book is literature for ufologists, basically. To know more of each other in this microcosmos of the UFO movement. But, make no mistake, any of us, Hynek included, is an extremely minuscule figure in the world's history. Ours is a sort of sub-culture (with ample social impact, especially in the entertainment industry, yes) and names will be lost in the course of the years. But this book is a tribute to the first name in the roster and this is fine.

The book's subtitle reads "How one man made the world believe in UFOs." Fortunately, Hynek was not responsible for this fatal fault. It was the media and the movies. And a number of prolific, unscrupulous writers and their money-oriented publishers. Hynek was instead a center piece for a reduced bunch of individuals, we ufologists, who used his words as a mantra.

I read in the book I am reviewing this phrase: "Hynek was troubled that the phenomenon was seeming more and more to affect the entire human race" (p. 146). What if, in the end, the UFO concept is just an unsubstantiated, baseless belief? I mean, not an impenetrable, unfathomable mystery you are not allowed to decipher. Then, its expansion (globality) is not a trait of the phenomenon (as Hynek believed), but rather a lamentable concatenation of errors of observation and worse interpretation, that has grown exponentially until creating a social myth without material substance. Stories magnified by gullible writers and exploited by unscrupulous advertisers to create a state of opinion based on something fictional and unreal.

To those who did not know Hynek, except for the name behind the "close encounter" term, O'Connell's book sets out in fairness and detail the great scientist— in capital letters—who truly Hynek was, as well as his "management and problem-solving talents" (p. 149). I liked the book. Not only because I liked the person. It is the definitive reference on Allen Hynek, as man of science and ufologist. Through its pages, you make a chronological journey through the operation mounted by the USAF on UFOs and his own personal attack on the problem, with its ups and downs. It is a recommended work, with the caveat that it is written by someone that believes that something unknown lies in the core of UFO sighting reports.

The critique of a book implies an assessment of how worthy it is, yes. But it is also a vehicle for the critic to spell his own ideas. This clearly is the case here.



Top left: J. Allen Hynek in the popular TV show “To Tell the Truth, May 25, 1964.

(Borrowed from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMSw6Y-fhgA>)

Bottom left: J. Allen Hynek in a TV interview by Tom Snyder, early 1980s.

(Borrowed from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unAR5UE8sjc>)

Right: J. Allen Hynek, late 1970s. Lindheimer Observatory, Northwestern University, Evanston. Photo by CUFOS.

O’Connell’s work is an indispensable and reliable source of biographical material on the most heavyweight individual in the history of ufology, Dr. Josef Allen Hynek. A pleasure to read and to discover a great man of science who wished to handle UFO sighting reports within the academic milieu. He did not achieve that. But not because he failed. Because UFOs did not materialize. Let me close this review with words from Hynek himself. A few years before his death, he wrote: “We must face up to it: Ufology is today a grand assortment of superstitions, beliefs, wishful thinking, etc.”⁵⁵ Amen.

Notes

(1) Baci forest, near Cluj (Romania), August 18, 1968, photos by Emil Barnea. Pictures show an incident lighting incongruence and no atmospheric scattering, therefore a thrown model hoax.

(2) Published 2017 by New York’s HarperCollins as a trade paperback edition, selling by \$17,99:

<https://www.harpercollins.com/9780062484178/the-close-encounters-man/>

(3) V.J. Ballester Olmos, *A Catalogue of 200 Type-I UFO Events in Spain and Portugal*, Center for UFO Studies, Evanston, Illinois, April 1976,

http://www.cufos.org/books/Catalogue_of_200_Type_I_UFO_Events_in_Spain_and_Portugal.pdf

(4) V.J. Ballester Olmos, “Monitoring Air Force Intelligence (Spain’s 1992-1997 UFO Declassification Process),” in *MUFON 1997 International UFO Symposium Proceedings*, Walter H. Andrus & Irena Scott (eds.), Mutual UFO Network, Seguin, Texas, July 1997, pp. 139-178,

https://www.academia.edu/29413366/MONITORING_AIR_FORCE_INTELLIGENCE.pdf

(5) V.J. Ballester Olmos, “Spanish Air Force UFO Files: The Secret’s End,” in *MUFON 1993 International UFO Symposium Proceedings*, Walter H. Andrus & Irena Scott (eds.), Mutual UFO Network, Seguin, Texas, July

1993, pp. 127-168,

https://www.academia.edu/35786573/Spanish_Air_Force_UFO_Files_The_Secrets_End.pdf

(6) V.J. Ballester Olmos, "UFO Secrecy and Disclosure in Spain," in *UFOs and Government. A Historical Inquiry*, Michael Swords & Robert Powell, with Clas Svahn, Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, Bill Chalker, Barry Greenwood, Richard Thieme, Jan Aldrich, and Steve Purcell, Anomalist Books, San Antonio, Texas, July 2012, pp 423-438 and 513-529, <http://www.anomalistbooks.com/book.cfm?id=64>

(7) V.J. Ballester Olmos, "Desclasificación OVNI en España: El Mando Operativo Aéreo busca casos perdidos," June 2015,

https://www.academia.edu/12717306/El_Mando_Operativo_Aereo_busca_casos_perdidos

(8) <https://www.amazon.es/Investigaci%C3%B3n-ovni-Vicente-Juan-Ballester-Olmos/dp/B01LW7RF3G>

<https://tinyurl.com/woqlvx0>

<https://tinyurl.com/y3fcdl5c>

(9) To the best of my knowledge, J. Allen Hynek wrote the foreword to eight other books: *Challenge to Science* (1966), by Jacques & Janine Vallée, *The Utah UFO Display* (1974), by Frank B. Salisbury, *UFOs: Interplanetary Visitors* (1974), by Raymond E. Fowler, *The UFO Controversy in America* (1975), by David M. Jacobs, *Exobiology: A Research Guide* (1978), by Martin H. Sable, *The Andreasson Affair* (1979), by Raymond E. Fowler, *The UFO Handbook* (1979), by Allan Hendry, *Clear Intent* (1984), by Lawrence Fawcett & Barry J. Greenwood, and *UFOs and the Extraterrestrial Contact Movement: a bibliography* (1986), by George M. Eberhart.

(10) Jacques Vallée, *Forbidden Science. Volume One. Journals 1957-1969*, Documatica Research, San Francisco, California, 2007, see index page 479.

(11) John Franch, "The Secret Life Of J. Allen Hynek," *Skeptical Inquirer*, Volume 37, No. 1, January / February 2013, https://skepticalinquirer.org/2013/01/the_secret_life_of_j_allen_hynek/

(12) V.J. Ballester Olmos, "¿Dónde fueron los aterrizajes de ovnis?" December 2017,

http://fotocat.blogspot.com.es/2017_12_26_archive.html#es

(13) William K. Hartmann, "Process of Perception, Conception, and Reporting," in *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, Daniel S. Gillmor (editor), E.P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1969, pp. 567-590,

<http://files.ncas.org/condon/text/s6chap02.htm#S3> Related work: James Oberg,

http://satobs.org/seesat_ref/Oberg/680304-Eastern-US.pdf

(14) H.H. Nininger, "Air pilots and meteor hazards," *Popular Astronomy*, Vol. 44, 1934, pp.45-47,

<http://articles.adsabs.harvard.edu/full/seri/PA.../0044/0000046.000.html>

(15) James Oberg, "A 50-Year Old Soviet UFO Case is the Key to Unlocking the Mystery of the Giant Alien Motherships," http://www.jamesoberg.com/1963_kiev-fireball-swarm-rev-B.pdf

(16) Manuel Borraz, "Meteoros con ventanillas," <https://es.scribd.com/document/67067923/Meteoros-con-ventanillas>

(17) Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, "UFO Waves: An International Bibliography," November 2015 (GEIPAN website), http://www.cnes-geipan.fr/typo3conf/ext/dam_frontend/pushfile.php?docID=11383

(18) J.A. Fernández Peris, "The Manises UFO File,"

https://www.academia.edu/27920724/THE_MANISES_UFO_FILE

(19) J.A. Fernández Peris, "Caso Manises: ¡Aterrizo como puedas!", *Cuadernos de Ufología*, 25-26, 2000, pp. 4-12, <https://tinyurl.com/y8czyxzz>

(20)

[http://www.geipan.fr/index.php?id=181&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=211&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=205](http://www.geipan.fr/index.php?id=181&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[backPid]=211&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=205)

(21) Karl T. Pflock, *Roswell. Inconvenient Facts and the Will to Believe*, Prometheus Books, New York, 2001.

(22) Gilles Fernandez,

<http://skepticsversustheflyingsaucers.blogspot.com/2012/10/du-niveau-destrangete-des-recits-dovni.html>

(23) Donald H. Menzel & Lyle G. Boyd, *The World of Flying Saucers*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1963, pages 174-176.

(24) J. Allen Hynek, *The UFO Experience. A Scientific Inquiry*, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1972, pages 123-128.

(25) There is much more, of course, but it is purely circumstantial to me. For example, after the second block of three calls, the sheriff and officer's colleagues on duty were notified. Two of them saw "bright lights... for a few seconds... [with no] car-stopping." Levelland fire marshal Ray Jones, having heard Fowler's dispatches as well, went out to investigate and "encountered an object and experience brief light and engine difficulty." How much it was sort of a contagion due to nervousness, we will never know. But these types of loose ends always come up in long-duration, widely spread events. Officer Fowler said that up to 15 different calls were made in total. In the following days, there were also several reports with

common features with the telephone calls, however backdated reports, especially in press-agitated cases, have an additional probability of being false.

(26) From <https://www.fold3.com/image/7229541> to <https://www.fold3.com/image/7229904>

(27) Jerome Clark, *The UFO Encyclopedia. Volume 3: High Strangeness UFOs from 1960 through 1979*, Omnigraphics, Detroit, 1996, pages 452-465.

(28) Matt Graeber, "Twenty-First Century Ufology IV: Socorro Revisited," *SUNlite*, Vol. 2, No.2, March-April 2010, pages 15-21, http://www.astronomyufo.com/UFO/SUNlite2_2.pdf

(29) Along his consultant career with Blue Book, Hynek made use of his staff to assist him in UFO investigations: Walter Webb, Andrew Ledwith, Jennie Zeidman, William Powers, etc.

(30) William T. Powers, "The Landing at Socorro," in Charles Bowen (ed.), *The Humanoids*, Neville Spearman, London, 1969, pages 130-142.

(31) Ray Stanford, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, January 29, 2015.

(32) Lt. Col. Hector Quintanilla, *UFO's, An Air Force Dilemma* [1974], National Institute for Discovery Science, 2001.

(33) Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, "Alleged Experiences Inside UFOs: An Analysis of Abduction Reports," *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1994, pages 91-105, http://www.scientificexploration.org/docs/8/jse_o8_1_olmos.pdf

(34) Over time, other researchers have proposed alternative methods to assess the goodness of any UFO event reported. I myself contributed my two cents' worth of work in this regard: V.J. Ballester Olmos and Miguel Guasp, "Standards in the Evaluation of UFO Reports," in Mimi Hynek (ed.), *The Spectrum of UFO Research*, J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, Chicago, Illinois, 1988, pages 175-182, http://www.cufos.org/books/The_Spectrum_of_UFO_Research.pdf

(35) Jacques Scornaux, "L'hypothèse sociopsychologique : ce qu'elle est et ce qu'elle n'est pas," https://www.academia.edu/42663308/Lhypoth%C3%A8se_sociopsychologique_ce_quelle_est_et_ce_quelle_nest_pas

(36) J. Allen Hynek, "The UFO Gap," *Playboy*, December 1967, pages 143-146 & 267-271.

(37) Daniel S. Gillmor (ed.), *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Saucers*, E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, March 1969. See: <http://www.project1947.com/shg/condon/contents.html>

(38) David R. Saunders & R. Roger Harkins, *UFO? Yes! Where the Condon Committee Went Wrong*, The World Publishing Company, New York, February 1969.

(39) Roy Craig, *UFOs. An Insider's View of the Official Quest of Evidence*, University of North Texas Press, Denton, Texas, 1995.

(40) William R. Altschuler, *The Science of UFOs*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2001.

(41) Carl Sagan & Thornton Page (eds.), *UFO's- A Scientific Debate*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1972.

(42) Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos & Luis Ruiz Noguez, "Pictures of aliens in USA, October 1973," https://www.academia.edu/42066503/PICTURES_OF_ALIENS_IN_USA_OCTOBER_1973

(43) Philip J. Klass, "The Other Side of the Coyne Encounter," *FATE*, 345, December 1978, pages 72, 74, 76-82.

(44) Jennie Zeidman, "Zeidman on Klass on Coyne," *FATE*, 345, December 1978, pages 73, 75, 82-85.

(45) Jennie Zeidman, *A Helicopter-UFO Encounter Over Ohio*, Center for UFO Studies, Evanston, Illinois, March 1979.

(46) Philip J. Klass, *UFOs. The Public Deceived*, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, New York, 1983, pages 135-160.

(47) <http://www.cufos.org/>

(48) Allan Hendry, *The UFO Handbook*, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1979.

(49) Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, "State-of-the-Art in UFO Disclosure Worldwide," https://www.academia.edu/32053531/STATE-OF-THE-ART_IN_UFO_DISCLOSURE_WORLDWIDE

(50) Mark O'Connell, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, April 15, 2020: "Until she passed away last week I had been working with Dr. Hynek's colleague Jennie Zeidman, and she didn't know anything of any significance about Hynek's 1970 work at Wright Patterson. If Jennie didn't know what it was about, I can't think of anyone else who would know!"

(51) Started year 2000, FOTOCAT is both a physical archive and a computer-aided catalog of UFO reports where analog or digital photographs have been obtained: <http://fotocat.blogspot.com/>

(52) Gert Herb & J. Allen Hynek, "The Amateur Astronomer and UFO Phenomena," *International UFO Reporter*, Vol. 30, No. 3, May 2006, pages 14-16 and 24.

(53) J. Allen Hynek, "UFOtos: A picture is not necessarily worth a thousand words," *The Hynek UFO Report*, Dell, New York, 1977, pages 230-252.

(54) J. Allen Hynek, "How to Photograph a UFO," *Popular Photography*, March 1968, pages 69, 100, 110, 112 and 114.

(55) J. Allen Hynek, "Ufology as a Profession: A Manifesto," *CUFOS Associate Newsletter*, Volume 2, No. 9, September 1981, pages 3-5.

(56) The article "We Are Not Alone" by Marcia Seligson (*New West*, November 7, 1977) tells about a lunch she arranged in Hollywood with Steven Spielberg and Jacques Vallée. During this encounter, in reply to a direct question by her, the famed film director said he had patterned the "Lacombe" character on Vallée. Not only that, as Vallée has just explained to me, Spielberg had read his book *Anatomy of a Phenomenon* and he had been intrigued by the character of a Frenchman investigating UFOs in the US and was interested in parapsychology, which is a key factor in the fictional character.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Martin Shough for editing. And to Terry W. Colvin, Dr. Félix Ares de Blas, Dr. Gary Posner, Dr. Gilles Fernandez, Barry J. Greenwood, Igor Kalytyuk, Tim Printy, Mikhail Gershtein, Jacques Scornaux, Wim van Utrecht, Dr. Claude Poher, Dr. Mark Rodeghier, Clas Svahn, and Dr. Jacques Vallée for data, references, or illustrations.

Valencia (Spain), April 25, 2020.

Appendix 1 Hynek's Challenge?

A real mystery that Hynek took to the tomb is a pair of pictures he shot during a commercial flight. When, where, how, who else was witness, statement of facts? Nobody knows. Why did he not provide these data? Nobody knows. Therefore, its scientific value as evidence is zero. I mention it here as an anecdotal illustration. These first appeared in Hynek's seminal book *The UFO Experience*¹, "taken from the window of an aircraft at 30,000 feet." He tells us little more, but he wrote a curious phrase: "Perhaps some reader can identify it as a natural object. If so, I would appreciate knowing the solution." It is a strange manner to advocate analysis. It rather seems to be a challenge. Almost a contest.



1969 (first citation). Location unknown.
Photo by J.A. Hynek. Courtesy John Timmerman.



Analog close-up. Borrowed from Saturday Night UFORIA.



Computerized edge enhancement by GSW.

Fred Beckman, a distinguished University of Chicago photographic expert selected these two images for the photo section of a book coauthored by Hynek and Vallée. "They have not been identified," Beckman wrote in the closing line in his presentation.²

How can you identify something with all basic data missing? It does not even comply to the definition of UFO dictated by Hynek himself. Taken from the window of an airliner "at cruising altitude. The object was in sight long enough for the camera to be unpacked from a suitcase stored under the seat and for the two exposures to be taken. This time requirement at a speed in the vicinity of Mach .8 rules out many explanations," the photographs' caption reads.³

Jacques Vallée counts the first time these photos popped up in the 21 September 1969 entry of his journals.⁴ His associate Fred Beckman showed them to him, indignant that Hynek had not even recorded place, date or time: "Sometimes I have the feeling Allen just doesn't want to know," he retorted.

A few years ago, I attempted to research about these pictures, and I contacted CUFOS' John Timmerman. "Allen never revealed the date or location of this photograph, taken with a binocular camera, claiming a lack of memory, due to the years transpired."⁵ Further, he said he personally questioned Hynek after the photos first appeared: "He told me he was using a double-lens camera and was able to get a 3-dimensional record of the object."⁶ Timmerman was unable to find the negatives through the publisher (a publisher usually receives prints for publication, anyway, rarely negatives). During the 1980s, Timmerman discussed these photos with Jacques Vallée during a private dinner meeting: "he had attempted to locate the negatives, with no success."⁵ Timmerman only had a 11x14 color print showing pen cropping marks for use in *The Edge of Reality* (see uncropped image inserted above). Other CUFOS officials were unaware too. For Dr. Mark Rodeghier, chief scientist, "he took the stereoscopic photos with him to Arizona when he moved there. We did not find them when we went to Arizona and returned material to Chicago."⁷

In 2011, British lawyer and UFO researcher Isaac Koi referred me to an article by Richard Dolan who exhibited the story as insinuation of a cover-up by Hynek.⁸ Well, conspiracy-driven thoughts apart, there is nothing solid behind this presumption. At least, not with the military, as I will guess later.

Recently, Barry Greenwood, one of the top American UFO-archive-focused UFO scholars and co-author of *Clear Intent* (Prentice-Hall, 1984), received a box of assorted audio/visual CUFOS materials from Mary Castner. Inside, there were two little boxes of 3-D slides made by Hynek himself, with quite rare images, both case investigations and personal shots. Unfortunately, the airline UFO photograph he took was not there either.⁹

Without technical information, no scientific analysis is possible. Therefore, let us approach this intuitively. Anything inside the airplane reflected on the window? Could good old Hynek want to cast a joke on us all? He had a sense of humor, that we know. Or, cleverer yet, an invitation to bring forward hypotheses as a calibration instrument on us. It would also explain why he would not venture further clues. Not surprisingly, Belgian analyst Wim van Utrecht opines: "The luminous shapes in the pictures can be anything from brightly lit wrappings lying on a plate and reflecting in the glass of the porthole to the sun mirrored in a body of water."¹⁰ It is probably in this light that we can interpret the unusually secretive way Jenny Randles presented those two photographs in one of her books: "He said he could 'absolutely vouch' for their authenticity. Dr. Hynek later explained to me why this was so, and I agree. I can now vouch for them, too!"¹¹ I perceive fine English humor in this sentence. My long-time friend Jenny has not responded to two queries about it. Does silence mean approval?

Another major source who should have known better confirmed to me, however, that it was not a joke, the lack of information was simply an "occasional distraction," and connected the destiny of these photos to the implications of an indeterminate "interference," while at the same time not appointing these photos among those on which to "invest further research."¹² In view of these ambiguous circumstances, I am afraid I will leave the reader to judge the status of this UFO image.

Notes

(1) J. Allen Hynek, *The UFO Experience*, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1972, plates 9 & 10.

(2) J. Allen Hynek & Jacques Vallée, *The Edge of Reality*, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1975, page 120.

(3) *Ibid.*, plates 10 & 11.

- (4) Jacques Vallée, *Forbidden Science. Volume One*, Documatica Research, San Francisco, 2007, pages 436-437.
- (5) John Timmerman, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, December 29, 2002.
- (6) John Timmerman, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, April 19, 2006.
- (7) Dr. Mark Rodeghier, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, November 7, 2019.
- (8) Richard Dolan, <https://web.archive.org/web/20100728213404/http://keyholepublishing.com/hynek.html>
- (9) Barry J. Greenwood, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, April 25, 2020.
- (10) Wim van Utrecht, e-mail to Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, November 7, 2019.
- (11) Jenny Randles, *UFOs and How to See Them*, Barnes & Noble, London, 1997, page 135.
- (12) I will call my source "Father Jacobus," e-mails dated April 4, 2020.

Appendix 2

Original text of J. Allen Hynek's Foreword to *Investigación OVNI*
(UFO Investigation), by Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos, 1984

*Dear Juan - I hope this is acceptable!
Feel free to make minor changes.*

FOREWORD

- Allen

The UFO Phenomenon is perhaps the major outstanding mystery in the world today. There are, to be sure, many unanswered questions and mysteries in numerous areas of human inquiry..medicine, the physical sciences, psychology etc.....but these lie in specialized areas and are not generally known to the public at large.

Not so with UFOs! Here we have a subject known and recognized around the world. There is scarcely a language that does not contain the term "UFO" or "Flying Saucer" or some equivalent, and mere mention of the term brings instant recognition on the part of the listener.

There is, however, an even more radical difference. Whereas these other mysteries lie within our present scientific belief system, our scientific paradigm, the UFO mystery distinctly does not. The very existence of the UFO mystery is dismissed by much of the scientific community for that very reason; there seems to be no answer to it that is acceptable to science.

Indeed, so far beyond the pale of conventional science does the UFO phenomenon appear to be, so bizarre are its many aspects, that the doors of science have not been opened to it. It has not, so to speak, been allowed onto the "playing field" of science. The investigation of this mystery has thus been left very largely to the well-meaning , non-professional researcher, to the amateur (in the proper sense of the word) who has given freely of his time and resources in collecting data that otherwise would have been forever lost, and thus also their potential scientific value. These unsung heroes will someday be formally recognized for their pioneering work.

Juan Ballester-Olmos is one of Spain's foremost of these heroes, recognized in many countries for his dedication to the objective, critical approach to UFO investigation. He has been the uncompromising foe of sensationalism and the blind acceptance of evidence without as thorough an investigation as the circumstances would permit.

Spain has been favored with many UFO events during the past decades and it is likely that the majority of these would have gone unrecorded had it not been for investigators like Ballester-Olmos. In the present volume he presents us with an overview of the status of the UFO mystery not only as it exists in Spain but in the world in general.

FOREWORD....2

The UFO phenomenon is truly global; it transcends national boundaries.

The author vividly portrays the contrast between the true UFO phenomenon (by the presentation of Spanish UFO cases of "high strangeness" that completely defy prosaic explanation) and the negative aspects so often presented to the public (unbridled sensationalism, uncritical acceptance of unsupported theories, the great confusion caused by the misidentification by the gullible and ignorant of natural and man-made phenomena etc.). He calls for ufologists the world over to organize their knowledge by rigorous methodology, a very difficult challenge inasmuch as UFOs do not fit the modern scientific paradigm. He presents a very useful exposition of "false" UFOs (the IFOs, or Identifiable Flying Objects) from Russian rockets and astronomical and meteorological phenomena to illusion, hallucination, and hoax. While treating these for what they are, he emphasizes that one cannot dismiss the entire subject (as many would like to do!) solely because of the prevalence of illusory and explainable UFO reports.

A major step in answering his call for cooperation among ufologists of the world is the recent formation of two world-wide organizations: the International Committee for UFO Research (ICUR) and the World Ufological Association (WUA). The first is composed of representatives of UFO investigative organizations in various countries, while the second is composed of individuals, regardless of nationality or organizational affiliation, who have demonstrated their knowledge of, and competence in, the investigation of UFO phenomena.

The essence of the UFO phenomenon, and its greatest challenge to science, lies in those cases each element of which finds no rational explanation. The author presents many excellent examples, cases in which the witnesses have been utterly bewildered by close encounters with strange "craft" and creatures or entities often associated with them, by communications with these entities, and by intense radiation fields which sometimes cause temporary paralysis of the witnesses and strange effects on people, animals, vegetation, and on inanimate objects such as cars and electrical devices.

The popular interpretation of UFOs is, of course, that they are visitors from distant solar systems. It is this simplistic theory that

FOREWORD....3

has caused most scientists to dismiss the subject of UFOs out of hand. Although man has gone to the moon, the nearest star is more than one hundred million times farther, and there is no way even surmised by present day science by which such journeys could be accomplished.

If we are indeed being visited by such intelligences, then it follows that their technology must be so far advanced as to be unintelligible to us. Other questions arise: How can one possibly explain their behavior, so utterly unlike ours would be had we made such enormous journeys? We would make ourselves known to as many as possible, and we would bring such papers and artifacts along as to establish our credibility and legitimacy.

What do they do? They appear without notice in isolated, rural places, often on lonely roads, late at night, and appear only to a few witnesses! Often their actions seem absurd and make no sense to us. Furthermore, they do not stay long in the place of their appearance and when they disappear, they do so suddenly and no one knows where to. They are not, generally, seen elsewhere that night, or even for weeks or months thereafter. Where do they hide? Sophisticated surveillance techniques, so powerful that they can detect a body the size of a soccer ball at 20,000 miles, do not reveal UFOs approaching or refeding from the earth. Do they travel in other dimensions?

It is scarce wonder that formal science has deliberately avoided serious approach to this mystery; no one cares to undertake a task when one feels utterly helpless to do so. Someone, however, must enter where formal scientists fear to tread. In Spain, Ballester-Olmos and a few other dedicated investigators have accepted the challenge. Perhaps some readers of this book will be persuaded to join their ranks.

Despite the fact that virtually all of our evidence for the reality of UFO events rests on human testimony, the world-wide consistency of such testimony, its sheer volume, and the demonstrated integrity of many of the witnesses, simply does not allow any thinking person to dismiss the UFO phenomenon simply on the grounds of "high strangeness".

Ballester-Olmos, fully aware of the fallability of human testimony, tackles the problem of dealing with human testimony and has devised a technique for deducing the probability that the subjective elements in a reported UFO case are reduced to a minimum. Study and adoption of

FOREWORD....4

this or similar techniques is to be highly recommended.

It is fortunate that the Spanish-speaking world now has available so trustworthy a guide to the UFO mystery as this book. The reader, whether he is already well acquainted with the subject or is just being introduced to it, can fully expect a most rewarding journey into this challenging and mysterious domain of the UFO.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek
Center for UFO Studies
Evanston, IL. USA