

## Lost Films Found! – Allen Hynek’s 3-D Photos

Barry Greenwood  
Stoneham, Massachusetts  
May 31, 2020

In 1972, Dr. J. Allen Hynek published his first book on UFOs, titled “The UFO Experience.” In it he presented what he felt was a scientific case for the importance of UFO research, himself having advised the Air Force’s Project Blue Book investigations for 21 years. One oddity in the book stood out in the section of photographic plates.

Hynek had reproduced two photographs of what appears to be a “UFO.” There is little said of the images except for the caption<sup>1</sup>:

*Finally, I include two photographs, Figures 9 and 10, taken from the window of an aircraft at 30,000 feet, of an object that I have been unable to identify. Perhaps some reader can identify it as a natural object. If so, I would appreciate knowing the solution. These are two photographs for which I can absolutely vouch.*

It was a strangely cryptic remark but was quickly interpreted to mean that Hynek himself took the photos. Why other details were left void is not clear, particularly coming from the former Air Force advisor to Project Blue Book.

Now fast-forward to March 2020. For the last three years, I have traveled to Chicago at the home of Mary Castner in an effort to scan the holdings of the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS). Mary had hosted the bulk of case work and other Center documents for about ten years after CUFOS found it necessary to close their office in Chicago, Il. Due to a forthcoming relocation, she had to have the files moved out to another location in Chicago.

As part of her housecleaning, she had periodically passed along to me parts of her own collection (which sometimes inadvertently contained CUFOS material) she no longer needed. One box, sent in March 2020, contained an assortment of slide boxes and cassette tapes. When the slide boxes were checked, it was quickly evident they weren’t normal slides. Each one was elongated with two images on each. These were slides made with a stereoscopic camera. There was vague identifying information on each slide (later identified as Hynek’s handwriting by Mark Rodeghier of CUFOS) that wasn’t always very helpful. They appeared to be

pictures of UFO sighting locations, group pictures taken at conferences, or individual people known in UFO circles.



Two of Three Slide Boxes



Typical slide box contents

It wasn't clear from the labeling who had been the owner of these slides, only that they were from CUFOS and hadn't been widely mentioned by anyone as existing for many years.

Back in June 2017, a new book on Hynek's life was released by Mark O'Connell<sup>2</sup>. This year my friend, Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos wrote an extensive review of O'Connell's tome based upon his many years of knowing and working with Hynek<sup>3</sup>. One thing that caught my eye was a discussion of Hynek's mysterious airliner photos from his 1972 book in Appendix 1 of the review. Ballester Olmos said he contacted John Timmerman of CUFOS some years back and asked about the details of these pictures. Timmerman said, "Allen never revealed the date or location of this photograph, taken with a binocular camera (underlining added)." Instantly, it was obvious that the boxes of stereoscopic slides Mary had sent were Hynek's own slides. The subject matter of the slides was rather too insider to have been taken by anyone, for example:



Left: Former Blue Book head, "Biker" Robert Friend, 1962.  
Right: Former Blue Book head, Hector Quintanilla and son Ross, 1964



Hynek with T.C. Drury and wife, Brisbane, 1973.



J. Vallee with Mexican pilot, 1977

Drury was a witness to a UFO incident in 1953 when he exposed movie footage of a streaking object that made headlines in Australia. The full footage has never been found but extracted frames remain.

While I could see the subject matter in the tiny frames of the stereo slides, I didn't have a viewer or projector to enlarge them. Some years back I had obtained a slide scanner for 8mm film, negatives and 35mm slides. It had no adapter for stereo images but in looking at it there was nothing to say I couldn't insert the stereo slides without an adapter. One just had to be careful inserting them so as not to damage the images. There were 73 slides, meaning I have to create a scan of 146 images, each of which had a slightly different image of the same scene. To my surprise, the images scanned quite well as you can see in the samples here.

Unfortunately, the famous airliner UFO slide was not included in these boxes. There is a good but peculiar reason for this.

When I checked Hynek's airliner images in his book, it seemed that at first glance, and with the hindsight of knowing the object was photographed with a stereo camera, the two photos were too different to be good stereo. A "shadow" in one

image was completely absent in the next. With a camera having lenses 2-3 inches apart, at least part of that shadow should have shown in both.

In his O'Connell book review, Ballester Olmos mentioned having consulted Jacques Vallee's first volume of diary entries for a mention of the photos.<sup>4</sup> Vallee did not have, nor knew the location of the photos. John Timmerman said he only had an 11X14 color print that was used for a later Hynek book.<sup>5</sup> It was time to contact Jacques Vallee. On May 23, 2020, I sent an inquiry asking how the airliner photos became known to him.

Vallee replied on May 24 in a rather unexpected manner:

*The two frame pairs you mention have to do with an incident that Allen quoted briefly in UFO Experience where he reproduced them on page 52. The actual story is that he took two stereo exposures of the object, entrusted the development to KODAK in Evanston, and only received one slide from each pair from the shop. They said they sent out such special items to KODAK itself, so they had no idea why one view from each pair was gone.*

*As a result, he could not determine distance or size for the target, hence the rather short description in the book of two photographs he could "absolutely vouch for."*

*We had many discussions among us (with Fred Beckman) about this even and what it meant, as you can imagine... The relationship between KODAK and Air Force Intelligence at the time was a little-known fact.*

I hadn't heard (nor had Mark Rodeghier of CUFOS) of the fact that the stereo images of Hynek's two photographs of the UFO had vanished after being sent to Kodak and returned as two single images. This explains the difference in the pair of images in *The UFO Experience*. It also injects a layer of strangeness into the story. There are 73 stereo slides in these three boxes taken between 1962 and 1982 which were processed as stereo. Then, for no apparent reason, two exposures of Hynek's UFO were the subject of tampering and nothing from Kodak as to why. It seemed pointless after the fact because even if the images came back as the proper stereo slides, the lack of other identifying data forgotten by Hynek severely limited their use as evidence. But it still would have been interesting to see them.

I contacted Hynek's son, Paul, to see if any of this could be explained. He in turn copied my inquiry to his brother, Joel.<sup>6</sup> They explained that their dad took "thousands" of stereoscopic slides since 1954, presumably the Hynek family's participation in the 3-D craze of the early 1950s. Joel said his dad loved doing this and was able to get good quality without using a light meter. But as is common, a good bit of archival news is sometimes paired with a bad bit of archival news.

Virtually all the slides were destroyed at Joel's house in the Los Angeles area due to the Woolsey wildfire of November 2018. Some single images and stereo pairs were digitized prior to their destruction and do survive.

At any rate, I have created an index of all the stereo images with markings on the slides, slide numbers and a best guess as to content since the descriptions on the slides are less than adequate. The slide numbers stamped on each slide tended to jump around and not be in the same sequence. With the loss of so many of Hynek's slides, it is unlikely this will be remedied. I'm sure some of these existing images will be identified through more scrutiny by those familiar with the subjects that were photographed.

A useful link to view stereo images without a viewer is here:

<https://www.magiceye.com/faq-items/help-how-do-i-see-in-3d/>

Thanks to Mark Rodeghier and the Center for UFO Studies, Jacques Vallee, Mary Castner, Paul and Joel Hynek and Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos for assistance in the production of this report.



V.J. Ballester Olmos, London, August 1979.



Hynek and Irene Granchi, Brazil, 1979

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Hynek, J. Allen, *The UFO Experience*, Henry Regnery, 1972, Figures 9 and 10 facing page 53.
- <sup>2</sup> O'Connell, Mark, *The Close Encounters Man*, Dey Street Books, 2017.
- <sup>3</sup> Ballester Olmos, V.J.,  
[https://www.academia.edu/42856955/Book\\_Review\\_of\\_The\\_Close\\_Encounters\\_Man](https://www.academia.edu/42856955/Book_Review_of_The_Close_Encounters_Man)
- <sup>4</sup> Vallee, Jacques, *Forbidden Science: Journals 1957-1969*, North Atlantic Books, 1992, page 410.
- <sup>5</sup> Hynek, J. Allen & Jacques Vallee, *The Edge of Reality: A Progress Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, Henry Regnery, 1976.
- <sup>6</sup> E-mails, Paul and Joel Hynek, May 29, 30, 2020.

## Appendix

### Index to J. Allen Hynek's collection of 3D slides.

Slides taken by J. Allen Hynek, or with Hynek camera. Slide numbers for each is on the slide frame and only sometimes sequential. Date imprinted on each slide is for when each was processed. Captions are in Hynek's writing.

- 1) Slide 3: UFO-Italy, Christians in Coliseum. Processed: 5-78
- 2) Slide 4: UFO-More Christians in the Coliseum. Processed: 5-78
- 3) Slide 8: UFO-Italy, Bruno +. Processed: 5-78
- 4) Slide 11: UFO-Boulder Colo. Site of UFO ptg. DD Sighting. Processed: 3-78
- 5) Slide 10: UFO-Boulder Colo. Site of UFO ptg. sighting Harvest House. Processed: 3-78
- 6) Slide 13: UFO-Proj. Starlight Austin Tx. Processed: 7-76
- 7) Slide 16: UFO-Proj. Starlight Ray & Kitty b. Processed: 7-76
- 8) Slide 17: UFO-Proj. Starlight 1976. Processed: 7-76
- 9) Slide 18: UFO-Teutch & Baldwin Proj. Starlight Austin Tx. Processed: 7-76
- 10) Slide 16: UFO-Jaragua Towers – Scene of UFO sighting. Processed: 3-79
- 11) Slide 17: UFO-Jaragua Radio Towers – Scene of UFO sighting. Processed: 3-79
- 12) Slide 18: UFO-On way to Jaragua, scene of UFO sighting. Processed: 3-79
- 13) Slide – UFO – Ballester-Olmos 1979. Processed: --
- 14) Slide 7: II-2 UFO-Mar Edwards place in Victoria. Processed: 9-68
- 15) Slide 28: II-2 MN UFO- UFO Talk, Duluth. Processed:

- 16) Slide 1: Australia UFO-Brisbane at home of the Mr. Drurys. Processed: 10-73
- 17) Slide 12: UFO-Swiss group. Processed: 6-80
- 18) Slide 1: UFO-Van Horne IA. Processed: 11-69
- 19) Slide 2: UFO-Van Horne IA. Processed: 11-69
- 20) Slide 5: UFO-Van Horne IA. Processed: 11-69
- 21) Slide 1: II-2 UFO-Crouch & Col. Friend-Silver City, Utah. Processed: 5-62
- 22) Slide 3: II-1 UFO-Sheriff Pete & Mrs. Pete, Eureka, Utah. Processed: 8-62
- 23) Slide 4: II-1 W UFO-Tote Gates in Utah. Processed: 5-62
- 24) Slide 6: II-1 W UFO-Tote Gates May 1962. Processed: 5-62
- 25) Slide 7: II-1 W UFO-Sheriff Pete Processed: 5-62
- 26) Slide 10: II-1 W UFO-Peterson on Tote Gate. Processed: 5-62
- 27) Slide 19: II-1 W UFO-Col. Friend on Tote Gate. Processed: 5-62
- 28) Slide 1: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 29) Slide 2: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 30) Slide 3: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 31) Slide 4: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 32) Slide 8: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 33) Slide 9: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 34) Slide 10: UFO-Thomas Case Processed: 6-78
- 35) Slide 14: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 36) Slide 15: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 37) Slide 16: UFO Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 38) Slide 18: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 39) Slide 19: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 40) Slide 22: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 41) Slide 23: UFO-Thomas Case. Processed: 6-78
- 42) Slide 2: UFO-Acapulco Conference. Processed: 7-77

- 43) Slide 5: UFO-Bravo, et. al. Mexico City UFO 1977. Processed: 2-77
- 44) Slide 6: UFO-1977 UFO Mexico City. Processed: 2-77
- 45) Slide 7: UFO-Bravo et. al. Outdoor UFO Classroom Mexico City. Processed: 2-77
- 46) Slide 15: UFO-Host in Mexico City, ?? 1977. Processed: 12-77
- 47) Slide 16: UFO-Jacques Vallee – John Simhou Mexico City. Processed: 12-78
- 48) Slide 26: UFO-Jacques Vallee & Mexican Pilot. Processed: 4-77
- 49) Slide 27: UFO-A rather familiar scene, the Center view. Processed: 12-78
- 50) Slide 3: UFO-Rubens Villela, Meteorologist from Sao Paulo. Processed: 2-80
- 51) Slide 12: UFO-Irene Granchi & me. UFO person. Processed: 3-79
- 52) Slide --: I-2 Br Angus Brooks & children in naborhood (sic)
- 53) Slide --: UFO-Moigne Downs, direction from which Angus Brooks saw object come, 1970.
- 54) Slide 20: UFO-Leo Sprinkle and Murray Fisher. Processed: 2-76
- 55) Slide 19: II-2 MW UFO-Maj. Quintanilla & Ross, Sgt. Processed: 3-64
- 56) Slide 2: S. Am. Theresa Fontes Blatter at yacht club, Rio. Processed: 9-75
- 57) Slide 26: UFO-UFO in Ren. Painting. Processed: 5-78
- 58) Slide 23: UFO-UFO in Ren. Painting. Processed: 5-78
- 59) Slide 11: UFO-Gribble map for 1964. Processed: 2-82
- 60) Slide 12: UFO-Gribble map for 1965. Processed: 2-82
- 61) Slide 15: UFO-Gribble map for 1966. Processed: 2-82
- 62) Slide 16: UFO-Gribble map for 1967. Processed: 2-82
- 63) Slide 18: UFO-View of Golden NM. Processed: 1-82
- 64) Slide 19: UFO-Gribble map for 1973 wave, use either side. Processed: 2-82
- 65) Slide 20: UFO-Gribble, probably the best. Processed: 2-82
- 66) Slide 21: UFO-Gribble. Processed: 2-82
- 67) Slide 22: UFO-Gribble. Processed: 1-82
- 68) Slide 21: UFO-Golden NM. Processed: 1-82
- 69) Slide 23: UFO-Golden NM. Processed: 1-82

70) Slide 24: UFO-James Scartaciano – Golden NM. Processed: 1-82

71) Slide 25: UFO-Landing site, Golden NM, Prob. best to use. Processed: 1-82

72) Slide 26: UFO-Landing site, Golden NM. Processed: 1-82

73) Slide 27: UFO-Pointing out landing site near Golden NM. Processed: 1-82