

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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The alien abduction phenomenon has garnered considerable media attention in the last fifteen years, including many representations in books, film, and television. An overview of significant abduction literature is presented. Contrasts and comparisons are noted between popular written accounts and both the visual representations they engender and reports outside the mainstream, such as those compiled and statistically compared by folklorists. Also considered are comparisons between popular fictionalizations of victims of abduction and the relevant psychological literature on this population. Theories bordering on the psycho-spiritual and New Age are briefly introduced in regards to their connection to UFO phenomena and the popular belief in a changing collective consciousness. Throughout, it is argued that most forms of cultural production featuring themes of alien abduction, being subject to marketplace demand, alter or fictionalize their source content for dramatic purposes. This popularization and commodification of anomalous phenomena negatively impacts serious study by encouraging dismissive attitudes towards evidence, reports, and those individuals involved, informants, victims, and investigators. This commodification thus serves to protect the status quo, in the form of a consensus reality, from challenges by unknown or anomalous phenomena.

Aliens and Academics:
How Cultural Representations of Alien Abduction
Support an Entrenched Consensus Reality
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
ACADEMIC INTEREST	5
PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS	14
POP CULTURE STATUS	37
<u>Men in Black</u>	38
<u>X-Files</u>	40
PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL THEORIES	53
CONCLUSION	60
NOTES	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	76
FILMOGRAPHY	87

Aliens and Academics:
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The UFO phenomenon, in its totality, is surprisingly complex. Understandably this is not recognized by the general public The man on the street's simple opinion that either UFOs are all nonsense or that visitors from outer space do exist is brutally destroyed by close study.

J. Allen Hynek²

There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

William Shakespeare³

Introduction

The image of the "small gray" extraterrestrial is now a commonplace in the culture. This image derives from reports of supposed human contacts with aliens, frequently reported as abductions. A theme occasionally found in the pulp magazines of the thirties and forties and the B-grade sci-fi movies of the fifties, abduction by aliens was first presented to the public as a physical reality with the published accounts of the Barney and Betty Hill case, culminating in journalist John G. Fuller's book Interrupted Journey in the mid sixties.⁴ In the thirty-five year period since it was first mentioned in print, the phenomenon has undergone a transition from a gradual laboring into public awareness to a meteoric popularity.

The near simultaneous publication in 1987 of Whitley Strieber's best-selling autobiographical "non-fiction" book Communion and New York artist and UFO researcher Budd Hopkins' book Intruders: The Incredible Visitations at

Copley Woods brought alien abduction square in the face of the general public, and the last ten years have seen a veritable explosion of such literature.⁵ But the phenomenon has become hugely popularized recently by the fictionalized Fox television series X-Files, a massively popular program based on the premise that extraterrestrial presence on earth, and intentional government obfuscation of that fact, are not only a reality but a commonplace.⁶

In this paper I argue that the abduction phenomenon, regardless of its verisimilitude or psychological causes, has changed status, moving from a position as marginalized subject matter -- where it could be perceived as a threat to consensus reality -- to a popularized commodity. This commodification negatively impacts ufology's struggle for legitimacy by undermining the recognition and acknowledgment of any importance, psychological or otherwise, that alien abduction phenomena might hold. My argument is presented in three stages. The first section outlines the growing academic interest in abduction phenomena, its connection to legend and oral tradition, and the psychic and parapsychological components as originally introduced by Jung. This section closes with a recounting of Ron Westrum's model of the stages that anomalous phenomena commonly undergo toward either acceptance or rejection by the scientific community.⁷

The second section provides a roughly chronological review of the most popular and influential abduction literature in modern American culture, beginning with Fuller's Interrupted Journey, moving through Travis Walton's Fire in the Sky, and touching on Whitley Strieber's books published after his 1986 abduction experience, especially Communion and The Communion Letters.⁸ Movie and TV renditions of these accounts are briefly compared with their original written sources. In each case, statistical comparisons of reports compiled by abduction scholars, notably folklorist Thomas E. Bullard, serve as a

baseline or "norm" against which characteristic or uncharacteristic elements found in this body of popular literature stand in relief.⁹ While noting these differences helps establish the consistency of standard, less dramatically presented, abduction reports, it also highlights the considerable variations found in the popular visual media. Also considered in this section are popular books by three influential UFO abduction researchers: Budd Hopkins, David M. Jacobs, and John E. Mack.¹⁰

Following this review are close readings of several episodes from the X-Files which feature fictionalized renditions of alien abduction stories. Contrasting the details of these popular accounts with information from research about the abductee population provides further evidence of the ways in which fictionalized and sensationalized renditions of abduction reports, such as are found in programs like the X-Files, generate a "popular imaginary" concerning this phenomenon, engendering and fostering a set of attitudes and misconceptions which negatively impact the acceptance of "broader" perspectives, including ufology's struggle for legitimacy.

The third section briefly touches on some of the current theories about the possible relationship between alien abduction experiences and a globally collective "psycho-spiritual" developmental shift. Many of these ideas border on "New Age" thinking and are quite popular among UFO aficionados. Academic theorists Keith Thompson, Karl Brunstein, Michael Grosso, Michael Woodhouse, Carl Raschke, David Hufford, Kenneth Ring and others, argue that our social and scientific paradigms must shift as a result of the challenges these phenomena continue to present.¹¹ Some of these theorists, grounded in Jung's ideas of the collective unconscious, argue that abduction phenomena may serve as an unconscious expression of present day culture's over-reliance on abstraction and "objectivity." They suggest that individual confrontations with

the unknown and the bizarre are designed to encourage increasing recognition and practice, throughout the human collective, of other, equally useful, kinds of intelligence inherent in us. Their theories support the idea that media practices of fostering misconceptions and negative or dismissive attitudes about such phenomena may have deep implications in terms of delaying, derailing, or offsetting important, or possibly crucial, historical psychological developments. Jung himself and many after him argue that all "anomalous" phenomena, a category into which UFO experiences fall, serve as precursors to or manifestations of fundamental psychological changes in either the individual experiencer or the collective. The psycho-spiritual theorists firmly insist that a full understanding of these phenomena will require conceptual frameworks far different than those presently adopted.

Academic Interest

Abduction phenomena offer opportunities for investigation in a variety of research areas, particularly mythology, folklore, psychology, sociology, religious studies, epistemology, cultural studies, and popular culture, to name but a few. Beginning in the late 1970's, and partially as the result of increased media attention, there was a corresponding, though gradual, increase in academic interest in these phenomena, resulting in a small but growing body of quality literature. Thomas E. Bullard notes in the introductory section of his doctoral dissertation, "a surge of interest in psychological, social and cultural issues is evident in the more intelligent UFO periodicals and symposia, which are themselves increasing...".¹² Bullard asserts that though largely:

barred from academe, ufologists have set up a discipline-in-exile with its own apparatus of organizations, journals, newsletters and conventions of international scope and worthy to rival many established disciplines in membership. Much UFO research bears the stamp of slipshod amateur efforts and fan-club enthusiasm, but the field has always sustained a backbone of sound work and in recent years the standards approach those of university scholarship.¹³

As evidenced by the increasing psychological literature on the phenomenon, accounts from alleged abductees -- also called "experiencers" -- are difficult to classify.¹⁴ In addition, abduction reports vary in their quality at the same time that informants, though for the most part sincere, can vary in their integrity. In introducing his "UFO Abductions: The Measure of a Mystery: Comparative Study of Abduction Reports," Bullard notes that:

The reports may describe objective events, true enough: but research into dreams, altered states of consciousness, near-death experiences and comparative religion suggests that subjective reality is less individualistic than we usually think.¹⁵

Thus, even finding recognizable patterns of similarity in reports will not serve as reliable evidence of their veracity.

A clear and definable explanation is further complicated by the fact that any study of the phenomenon is, to a large percentage, only a study of the reports of experiencers. For this reason, modern abduction phenomena can be considered appropriate to the realm of folklore and legend. Indeed, there are significant similarities with earlier traditions of abduction accounts. In "The Belief Legend in Modern Society: Form, Function, and Relationship to Other Genres" folklorist Linda Dégh argues that:

UFO's are a particularly American phenomenon, and the press has produced thousands of reports on them. Interest in them is reflected by the multitude of paperback editions on the subject. These publications vary in their approach as well as in their quality. Scholarly, dilettante, pseudo-scientific, pseudo religious, and naïve writings are lined up on the drugstore racks, quite a few at the folklore level. Part of the material used in the literature originated in folklore and reinforces oral tradition."¹⁶

The folkloric elements of the phenomenon, particularly its analogs in earlier folkloric traditions such as abduction by fairies and other mythical beings, while suggested in Jung's writings on the subject, were first fully noted by Jacques Vallee in his book The Passport to Magonia.¹⁷ These and synonymous ideas were later more fully explored by folklore scholars, most notably Linda Dégh, Thomas E. Bullard, David Hufford, and Peter Rojcewicz.¹⁸ In "UFO Abduction Reports: The Supernatural Kidnap Narrative Returns in Technological Guise," Bullard notes:

A recent development in UFO lore and one of its fastest growing branches has been the abduction story, a first-person account of capture by alien beings. Abductees are people from all walks of life going about everyday activities when a sudden and unwanted

encounter with the unknown occurs. Not only do these reports surpass many folk narratives in circulation today for length and elaborateness, but the contents include a richness of fantastic elements seldom found outside the magical and religious lore of preindustrial times.¹⁹

As a result of the magical and mystical characteristics of abduction accounts, psycho-spiritual interpretations are quite popular in a subgroup of the academics writing on the subject. This group includes authors Keith Thompson, Mark B. Woodhouse, Michael Grosso, Carl Raschke and Kenneth Ring, to name a few.²⁰ These theorists argue that anomalous phenomena of various kinds are intended as instructional devices, emanating from some indefinable source in order to expand human awareness, understanding, and capacity. While varying in their thrust and content, all these interpretations are, to some degree, dependent on Jung's ideas of the collective unconscious.

When the modern saucer myth began gathering steam in the late forties, Jung began collecting data -- "newspaper clippings, reports issued by groups dedicated to [the] study [of UFOs], statements from the scientific, military, and governmental establishments, letters from people all over -- he read virtually every book on the subject."²¹ In 1958 he published Ein moderner Mythos von Dingen die am Himmel gesehen werden. The English translation, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies, appeared the following year. In it Jung suggests that the UFO phenomenon presents "a golden opportunity of seeing how a legend is formed."²²

Though by no means convinced that UFOs are extraterrestrial in nature, Jung nevertheless asserts that they are, in certain instances, a physical reality -- the psychical manifestations of archetypal elements rising from the needs of the human psyche. Jung coined the term "psychoid" for those phenomena, which though initially generated in the individual or collective psyche, nevertheless

leave physical trace evidence in the material world. Thus Jung cemented the association of UFO phenomena with parapsychology, a relationship many parapsychologists disdain. Jung also discussed the flying saucer as a kind of mandala appearing in the sky, its roundness indicating a psychic expression of the human longing for integration, wholeness, and connection.²³ Jung argues this projection is increasing in recent times as a result of modernization and a resulting fragmentation of the soul. In a supplement to his book, Jung expresses his belief:

that the whole collective psychological problem that has been opened up by the Saucer epidemic stands in compensatory antithesis to our scientific picture of the world... [which] consists...very largely of statistical or "average" truths. These exclude all rare borderline cases.... The consequence is a view of the world composed of normal cases.... Like the "normal" man, they are essentially *fictions*.... Since it can be said ... that reality consists mainly of exceptions to the rule, which the intellect then reduces to the norm, instead of a brightly coloured picture of the real world we have a bleak, shallow rationalism that offers stones instead of bread to the emotional and spiritual hungers of the world. The logical result is an insatiable hunger for anything extraordinary. If we add to this the great defeat of human reason, daily demonstrated in the newspapers and rendered even more menacing by the incalculable dangers of the hydrogen bomb, the picture that unfolds before us is one of universal spiritual distress.... It is therefore not surprising if... all sorts of signs and wonders appear in the sky, or if miraculous intervention, where humans have failed, is expected from heaven.²⁴

In essence, then, Jung argues that such a transitional and stress-inducing time as our own would naturally generate increased "psychoid" experiences and psychologically rich material from the collective unconscious. The spiritual void that results from an over-dependence on rationalism, the pure expression of which is the hard sciences, would also engender a longing for some intervention from beyond.

Many theorists and authors, including ufologists, have drawn from Jung in this regard, some expanding on his ideas, others blatantly misrepresenting

them. There is only a fraction more support in the academic mainstream for the idea of the collective unconscious summoning unidentified flying objects as messengers of our desire for wholeness than there is for the notion that small gray beings have been regularly visiting earth, altering and manipulating our genetic makeup -- and hence our destinies -- undetected. Though outside the mainstream of academia, these two theories represent a major distinction between the main camps within the UFO research community, the one group supporting abduction as a physical reality of ominous intent from an extra-terrestrial or extra-dimensional source, and the other supporting the psycho-spiritual thesis more or less attributable to Jung.

In his article "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events: Its Significance for Scientific Research and Social Policy," sociologist Ron Westrum attempts to define the processes by which such ideas and concepts about anomalous phenomena might or might not integrate into broader social paradigms.²⁵ Westrum argues that there are a recognizable set of stages or categories of recognition through which an event might pass, moving from an initial awareness of such phenomena to either its acceptance or rejection by the scientific community. This process, which often, though not always, involves a dynamic between the populace and the academy, determines the acceptability of a subject for scientific, or other intellectual, consideration. In presenting his argument, Westrum uses historical examples from a wide range of social concerns, including the reluctance of the Royal Society during the mid 18th century to consider the possibility of rocks falling from the sky -- a subject that remained in controversy for 44 years before meteorites were accepted as an objective reality. Westrum does not argue that all reports of anomalous phenomena are credible, but rather endeavors "to show...that the nature of the social dynamics involved is often not appreciated by persons who must make

decisions about the events in question."²⁶ By noting patterns of social obstacles to acceptance that other important discoveries endured, Westrum draws analogies to the present resistance by the scientific community to consider features of UFO and related anomalous phenomena.

First Westrum explains that "an event may be described as 'hidden' if its occurrence is so implausible that those who observe it hesitate to report it because they do not expect to be believed." This implausibility, he argues, is the "critical feature of the hidden event" and "may cause the observer to doubt his own perceptions, leading to the event's denial or misidentification."²⁷ He goes on to say that:

should the observer nonetheless make the report, he/she can expect to be treated with incredulity or even ridicule. Since the existence of a hidden event is contrary to what science, society, and perhaps even the observer believes, the event remains hidden because of strong social forces which interfere with reporting. The actual degree of underreporting is sometimes difficult to believe, a skepticism which itself acts as a deterrent to taking seriously those reports which do surface.²⁸

Because hidden events have few or no precedents, they are difficult to fathom, and in many cases are unbelievable. This means there will be numerous opportunities between the initial perception and an official investigation where potential reports can be quashed.²⁹ Few reports then are likely to find their way into a compilation of data. This is exacerbated by the fact that there is rarely any central compilation of data for events that are not yet recognized phenomena. In the case of UFOs, there is as yet no generally available "indisputable evidence." As a result, alternate explanations -- such as mistakes, confabulation, and hoaxes -- are offered readily and frequently. "Thus, the combination of alternate explanations for the observed events and

the lack of integration with current scientific theory" contribute "to a continued 'outlaw' status for each of these events."³⁰

In detailing how this process affects social policy, Westrum delineates the barriers to reporting and what he calls the "fallacy of centrality" in which "persons who see themselves as experts on the topic in question often overestimate how much they *would* know about the phenomenon *if* it were taking place." The resulting attitude not only discourages "curiosity on the part of the person...[but] also frequently creates in him/her an antagonistic stance toward the events in question."³¹ This is particularly evident in the case of alien abductions, in part because such reports are colored by recollections of the "contactee" phenomenon of the fifties and sixties. During this time, it was common for various groups and individuals to allege regular social intercourse with beings from a great variety of planets in and out of the solar system.³² By virtue of their high media profile and the outrageousness of their claims, contactees caused a vast majority of the thinking public to stigmatize any investigation of UFO phenomena that was not sanctioned by the government. Serious investigators had to work very hard to distance themselves from this circus atmosphere. But the tabloid nature of the UFO fringe remains indelibly etched in the thinking public's consciousness. This deeply entrenched attitude is easily reaffirmed by the variety of schlock media professing "facts" about UFO sightings, alien contacts or abductions, and government conspiracies to hide these events.³³ The absurd titles seen in the grocery line and the shoddy research presented on tabloid TV continue to taint perceptions of any and all UFO related investigations, regardless how objective or professional. It is popular among conspiracy theorists to imagine this inundation of tabloid nonsense is an intentional obfuscation perpetrated by the intelligence community.

In "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon: Forbidden Knowledge of Hidden Events," philosopher Michael Zimmerman extends Westrum's ideas, but focuses more emphatically on the abduction phenomenon per se.³⁴ Zimmerman is forthright in stating his belief that the abduction phenomenon is "worthy of investigation by people from many different fields," arguing that it is not socially healthy "that the . . . phenomenon is frequently discussed in popular culture but is largely ignored by establishment sources."³⁵ Zimmerman feels that because there are people honestly suffering as a result of this phenomenon, it is the job of our institutions to fund research to reveal the cause of this suffering. The refusal to do so, asserts Zimmerman, invites "the paranoid fringe to conclude that the 'government' is not only covering up an alien presence, but worse still is somehow in league with it."³⁶

This strategy of ignoring the problem breeds divisiveness and mistrust, as evidenced in the popularity of UFO lore and the productive harvesting of this distrust and paranoia by programs such as the X-Files. Zimmerman argues that "despite the fact that postwar popular culture has been saturated with images and accounts of UFOs and ETs, most people are understandably reluctant to conclude that accounts of alien abduction are veridical."³⁷ He agrees with researchers and theorists such as Ring, Vallee, Raschke, Thompson, and Hynek that "the phenomenon itself seems to defy most attempts to categorize it in terms either as a subjective event of 'inner space' or as an objective event of 'outer space'."³⁸

In further delineating Westrum's theory, Zimmerman recounts an historical pattern such anomalous or hidden events commonly undergo:

First, scattered but uncorrelated reports begin to emerge that people are experiencing an inexplicable anomalous phenomenon.
 Second, 'The experiences are brought to public attention, but their reality is questioned.' The phenomenon, whose boundaries remain

blurred, remains taboo for mainstream scientists. . . . In these first two stages, the academic 'experts' are usually 'a) ignorant [about the phenomenon], b) unaware of their ignorance, and c) contributing to the inhibition of reporting. . . .'

In the third and final stage . . . , scientists begin to study the phenomenon, which by now has been relatively narrowly defined and about which experts have significant information that can be collated and compared."³⁹

In outlining some of the reasons why alien abduction phenomena remain largely taboo to mainstream scientists, Zimmerman notes that: "For one thing, abductions are associated with UFOs, which themselves are 'off-limits' to mainstream researchers, in part because the US Air Force encouraged journalists to ridicule those who made UFO reports."⁴⁰ This ridicule is often still prevalent in reportage of UFO sightings or UFO related phenomena. Even those programs, such as the X-Files, which support the idea of abduction phenomena frequently evidence a heavy sarcasm, sometimes bordering on cynicism, towards the subject matter.⁴¹

In the case of the X-Files, this wit, informed by postmodern gen-X attitudes, may in part account for the show's popularity, but it is also generative of attitudes the viewing public assumes in imitation of their favorite characters. David Duchovny plays FBI agent Fox Mulder, the main character in the X-Files. His character is both passionate and cynical at the same time, a paradox which captures an ambivalence many feel. There are people who express a desperate desire to be fully involved in life, yet nevertheless find themselves too grounded in a learned objectivity to immerse themselves. Though they seem to long for some kind of truth, they apparently want to perceive it as outside of themselves, reclined on a slab for investigative probing, for dissection and experimentation. They want life at the same distance that they get their television accounts of life.

Published Accounts

Abduction by extraterrestrials was a popular fictional subject of the pulp magazines of the late thirties and forties as well as the science fiction stories and films of the fifties.⁴² John G. Fuller's The Interrupted Journey, published in the mid sixties, was the first presentation of abductions by aliens as a "physical reality."⁴³ Fuller's account of the Barney and Betty Hill abduction case is divided between details described by the Hills in waking-state interviews and transcriptions of hypnotic regressions of the Hills facilitated by Boston psychiatrist Benjamin Simon. Dr. Simon, who worked with Fuller on the text to ensure therapeutic propriety, notes in his introduction that the Hills had sought help from him for a "crippling anxiety, manifested by [Mr. Hill] in fairly open fashion and by Mrs. Hill more in the form of repetitive nightmarish dreams."⁴⁴ He had originally guessed their symptoms might somehow be resulting from social pressures related to their interracial marriage. Dr. Simon points out that while he cannot endorse the notion that aliens abducted the Hills, he nonetheless finds the accounts remarkable in their similarity and consistency, which he attributes to a shared fantasy. Because various elements of the account are common in later abduction recollections and, thus, indicative of patterns found in research with the abductee population, I include here a detailed summary of this classic story.

On the night of September 19, 1961, the Hills were traveling from Canada, where they'd been vacationing, to their home in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. During the journey they noticed a strange light in the sky which seemed to be moving erratically about, then standing still, all the while seeming to pace their car. Several times they stopped and got out of the car in attempts

to gauge what the light could be. Finally, in a state of increasing agitation, Barney again pulled to the side of the road, got out his binoculars, and walked over to a nearby field to get a closer look. At this point the light seemed much closer. Through the binoculars Barney was surprised to see a craft-like vehicle and "at least a dozen living beings" looking back at him from behind some kind of window.⁴⁵ Seized with the sudden conviction that they were going to be captured, Barney ran back to the car and drove off. Shortly afterward, the Hills remembered hearing a series of strange beeps coming from the back of the car. Like many abductees after them, the Hills arrived home some two hours later than expected but attached no particular importance to this. However, they clearly felt that things were not entirely as they should be. Betty insisted that they throw the leftover food away and not bring the things from the car into the house. Barney described feeling 'unclean' and 'clammy,' to the extent that he went to the bathroom, took a mirror and looked over his entire body, not knowing exactly why. As Barney reported in his sessions with Dr. Simon: "... it was a presence. Not that the presence was there with us, but something very puzzling had happened."⁴⁶ In the weeks following, Betty began to have vivid nightmares and partial recollections of certain "events" which she concluded must have occurred that night.

When the Hills eventually sought help from Dr. Simon, it was agreed that the treatment plan would include the use of regressive hypnosis. For therapeutic purposes, all such treatment would be tape-recorded. In separate hypnosis sessions, the Hills revealed similar stories about being stopped on the road by small beings who took them aboard a strange craft and subjected them to a variety of experiments, mostly of a medical nature. In addition, Betty recalled communicating comfortably with the "leader" who gave her a "star map" supposedly indicating the location of the aliens' home star.⁴⁷ The map was

taken from her, though, before they were returned to their car. She later reconstructed the map from memory.

Long before they sought Dr. Simon's help, they had already reported a good portion of their story to both the Air Force -- Fuller includes a copy of the resulting Project Blue Book file in The Interrupted Journey -- and to Walter Webb, a scientific advisor to the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena and a lecturer at Boston's Hayden Planetarium.⁴⁸ Brief accounts of the abduction then appeared in 1962 in the January-February issue of the UFO Investigator and again in the March, 1963 issue of APRO Bulletin. Between the time they were abducted and the release of Fuller's book, the Hills spoke with only a few people about their experience.

During the course of their work with Dr. Simon, the Hills were firmly opposed to any notoriety. But in the late summer of 1965, a Boston newspaper ran an article about both the abduction and the subsequent psychiatric treatment. Because the paper misrepresented the case, and had run the article despite the protests of both the Hills and Dr. Simon, the Hills decided to have the story told in as reputable and complete a manner as possible. To this end, they sought out Fuller's help. He was a respected journalist who had reluctantly agreed to write an account of a separate UFO incident that occurred in the Exeter, New Hampshire area around the time of the Hills' abduction.⁴⁹ While writing The Incident at Exeter, Fuller became increasingly intrigued with UFO phenomena. So when the Hills approached him, he readily agreed to investigate. Finding them sincere, and with the agreed participation of Dr. Simon in selecting transcripts for publication, Fuller went on to write an account of the Hills' story. As a promotional device, they agreed that the October, 1966 issue of Look magazine should run excerpts of the book, which came out in full later that same month.

The first alien abduction case reported in the U.S. media, the Barney and Betty Hill case continues to define, in many ways, distinct elements of the abduction phenomenon. One significant element is the use of hypnosis to recollect what came to be known as "lost time," time for which purported abductees are unable to account.⁵⁰ As in the Hills' case, it is common for an entire abduction scenario -- the period of lost time -- to take no more than a couple of hours in any one episode. The traumatic nature of the experiences often leads to repression. While some abductees are able to recall portions of their abductions without the aid of hypnosis, the majority report being given post-hypnotic suggestions to forget what happened to them during their experiences.

The Hills were intelligent, responsible, hard-working people. Barney Hill, despite an IQ of almost 140, worked as an assistant dispatcher at the Boston post office where, for some time, he'd been working the night shift. Betty Hill was "a child welfare worker for the state, handling a rather overwhelming caseload of social worker with a caseload of 120 assignments at one time."⁵¹ They were both deeply involved in civil rights activism and gave generously of their time and energy to this cause. They did not initially care to have their story told, nor, in fact, did they think they had much of one to tell. They were aware that they had seen a light in the sky which had acted strangely and that they had heard beeps which seemed to come from somewhere near the trunk of their car. Initially, they were also reluctant to share this information for fear they would be ridiculed. Their uncertainty about their own observations and their fear of ridicule are common elements in abductee reports. As Westrum and Zimmerman note, this is a significant barrier to reporting. In addition, the inexplicable loss of several hours and the generalized anxiety the Hills experienced -- having no obvious conscious source, yet beginning after

"sighting" an anomalous light while traveling in a remote area and relieved only through regressive hypnosis -- are also quite typical in reports of these kinds.

Shortly after the publication in the late sixties of Fuller's account of the Hill's experience, a psychologist at the University of Wyoming named Dr. Leo Sprinkle distinguished himself as one of the first professionals to begin working almost exclusively with abductees. Considered a groundbreaking step by many ufologists, Sprinkle's efforts soon caused his colleagues at the University to call for his early retirement. Sprinkle's case was the first in a series of cases which have raised important questions about academic freedom and the impact of investigating phenomena outside the bounds of consensual ideas about reality. This issue of the struggles involved in gaining and maintaining the freedom to investigate areas considered outside of the mainstream is a driving fictional element of the X-Files program as well as a matter of heated debate surrounding the UFO investigations of several prominent figures from various disciplines.⁵²

While reports of UFO sightings continued, including occasional sightings of beings -- termed "close encounters"⁵³ by USAF consultant Dr. J. Allen Hynek -- reports of actual abductions only began increasing in numbers after two significant media events of the mid seventies. The first was "The UFO Incident," a television adaptation of Fuller's book, shown on NBC-TV on October 20, 1975. It starred James Earl Jones as Barney Hill and Estelle Parsons as Betty. The second was Steven Spielberg's hit movie Close Encounters of the Third Kind, released in 1977.

In Watch the Skies!: A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth, aeronautics historian Curtis Peebles writes about these media events. He says of "The UFO Incident" that "the aliens in the film were depicted as short, with smooth grey skins, bald, with slightly pointed heads, and having large, slanted eyes."⁵⁴

Peebles attributes this early-televised presentation as being, in part, responsible for the popularity of the now hugely familiar "small gray." Close Encounters further popularized the image of the spindly, big headed, insect-eyed aliens, an image that is still the most commonly reported form of extraterrestrial.⁵⁵ Peebles asserts there was a rapid increase in abduction reports as a result of the televised "UFO Incident" and Spielberg's blockbuster, Close Encounters.⁵⁶

Also published during the seventies were three other books important to this study. The first was Temple University History Professor David M. Jacobs' book The UFO Controversy in America, the first scholarly historical account of the UFO phenomenon. In the next decade Jacobs, along with New York artist Budd Hopkins, would become one of the most outspoken supporters of the extra-terrestrial hypothesis. William Fowler published The Andreasson Affair in 1979, the first in a long list of abduction studies which established him as an important researcher in this area. The majority of his work focuses on one case: Betty Andreasson.⁵⁷

By far the most popular abduction book published in that decade was Travis Walton's The Walton Experience.⁵⁸ Walton's alleged abduction was another high media impact, highly controversial account. On November 5, 1975, a seven-man brush clearing crew under contract by the US Forest Service reportedly saw a UFO in the woods as they traveled from their work site to the town of Snowflake, Arizona. Walton bolted from the truck to get a closer look. The six others reported being terrified and calling to him to get back in the vehicle. When a blue-green flash of light struck Walton in the chest area, knocking him back some ten feet, Michael Rogers, the crew chief and driver of the truck, panicked and drove off. After some time driving in terror, some of the crew agreed to go back and look for Walton, but he was nowhere to be found.

Local authorities were notified and an intensive three-day search turned up no sign of either Walton, a UFO, nor any evidence of Walton's presence -- alive or dead -- in the woods. On November 10, five days after the disappearance, the remaining crewmembers took a lie-detector test to determine if any one of them had knowledge of or had been involved in Walton's murder. The test results, inconclusive in the case of one man, indicated that the other five not only had not been involved in any foul play, but truly believed they had seen a UFO the night of Walton's disappearance.⁵⁹ Walton, after an absence of five full days, returned the day following the tests.

Walton's brother Duane took charge of getting him competent medical help, keeping the barrage of news reporters and curious people at a distance, and initiating the steps towards official verification of Walton's claim. But Duane's efforts to contact a reputable UFO investigating agency resulted in the involvement of the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization of Tucson, a number of whose scientific consultants were on the National Enquirer's Blue Ribbon Panel for UFOs. Ultimately, Walton and his fellow crewmembers each received large checks from this tabloid along with certificates touting theirs as the most reputable UFO story of the year. This did not help the case for legitimacy. Though Hynek supported their account, debunkers and skeptics came down hard, latching onto numerous inconsistencies and raising questions of integrity.

For this and other reasons, Walton's case is still debated, but it is generally not considered representative of the majority of abductee experiences. The case is controversial for a number of reasons, and several of these illustrate common problems ufologists confront in determining and establishing the legitimacy of these claims. First off, few abductees are missing for such an extended period.⁶⁰ Second, most abductees are disinterested in the

amount of attention that Walton seemed to draw to himself, though this may have resulted from his extended disappearance and the fact that a UFO sighting was involved. Third, Walton recollects so little of his abduction, and the details that he does recall do not entirely correlate with the vast majority of reports. One example of this discrepancy of details is particularly illustrative of claims of media influences on abduction reports. Walton reports that on first waking in the ship, he could make out a rectangular light above him and a triangular shape to the ceiling. By contrast, the majority of abductees report an examination room that appears "circular and domed without sharp corners..., its lighting ... diffused and uniform without any particular source."⁶¹ However, the Hills had reported a wedge-shaped room. And this fact holds special significance for debunkers who note that the NBC-TV version of the Hill's case was televised one month prior to Walton's disappearance. Both Walton and his brother admitted to watching the program.

Additional discrepancies show up in Walton's description of his interactions with the beings. As he became conscious he was aware of someone working over him. He thought at first that he'd been in an accident and these were doctors. He describes them as "wearing unusual, orange-colored surgical gowns," and "white masks and caps," highly unusual details to find in an abduction report.⁶² While the beings Walton describes roughly match the profile of the "grays," it is quite unique to hear of them attired in such human garb. Once aware they were not human, Walton reports striking out at them, raising himself, despite his weakness, from the examination table, grabbing a loose instrument or tool with which to keep the beings at bay, and finally chasing them off. Here Walton's report is again highly uncharacteristic in that the beings seem to have had little or no control over him. Walton attributes his apparent ability to break their spell on him to his karate training, but abduction

accounts rarely include descriptions of such heroics. When they do, it is generally considered an indication of confabulation.

Walton then describes wandering about the ship until he encounters another kind of being. This one was approximately six foot two inches tall, very muscular, with blondish brown hair and beautiful features, and was wearing a velvety, close-fitting blue uniform and clear spherical helmet. The physical description matches reports of the second most commonly encountered alien, called the "Nordic type," frequently reported in Scandinavian and surrounding countries, including the British Islands, hence the name. The Nordic types also most closely resemble descriptions of those beings contactees of the 50's and 60's alleged meeting, though their alien friends readily spoke while more recent reports, such as Walton's, indicate a bemused silence on the part of this type.

Walton, thinking a human had rescued him, allowed the being to lead him from the ship. They went through a large enclosed area, where Walton saw two more crafts parked, and into a room where there were three more of the Nordic beings, including a female. These beings -- whom Walton describes as quite beautiful, with similar features as though from the same family -- smiled benignly but would not respond in any way to Walton's questions. The first being led Walton to a chair, then left the room. The three remaining beings then gently but firmly stretched him out on a table and anesthetized him. The next thing he recalls is waking on the road near Heber, Arizona, where he was found. A craft was floating off as he gained consciousness.

Fifteen years after the publication of his first book, Walton wrote a revised second edition, titled Fire in the Sky: The Walton Experience, in which he addresses at considerable length, and in great detail, the "attacks" from debunkers.⁶³ The revised edition also discusses the creation of a movie rendition, entitled Fire in the Sky, that was released in 1993. Filmed in Oregon,

scripted by Tracy Tormé -- who also wrote the NBC adaptation of the Hill incident -- the movie stars D.B. Sweeny as Walton and James Garner as the investigating sheriff.⁶⁴ While much of the movie version is at least congruent with Walton's written account, the abduction scenes themselves have almost nothing in common with what Walton presented in his book. The movie rendition does not include any of the aforementioned interactions with the aliens described in Walton's book. Rather, it is a terrifying scene of high strangeness and brutality, ultimately amounting to an optic and oral rape scene. While this representation may indeed capture something of the terror that abductees experience in recollecting their abductions, it does not proceed from Walton's own account nor does it match any category of abduction recollections with which I am familiar.

Other popular books on the subject that are adapted for film also suffer considerable alterations, ultimately presenting a skewed version of the account. Such portrayals exemplify how popular media accounts of abductions -- presumably based in fact -- are adjusted to meet some kind of popular demand, thus eroding the credibility not only of the specific report, but also of abduction claims generally, and ultimately, the study of the phenomenon itself.

Several years after the release of Walton's first book, New York artist Budd Hopkins firmly established himself as a major UFO abduction researcher with the publication of Missing Time.⁶⁵ The book was the first popular non-fiction text to suggest that earth and earthlings were the subjects of an ongoing research project by some non-terrestrial source. In the book, Hopkins suggests that a vast number of people may have been subjected to abductions unknowingly. The book focuses, in large part, on the experiences of five abductees, including transcriptions of portions of their hypnosis sessions with Dr. Aphrodite Clamar. But Hopkins also extrapolates from his research,

outlining a scenario of an unrecognized epidemic. The book is all the more frightening and intriguing because Hopkins offers his arguments in a manner both logical and clear. He takes great care to present his methodology, which seems well considered, and his astonishment, which seems genuine. Further, his evidence appears to lead inexorably in the direction that he concludes. A section of his introduction supports the ideas put forth by Westrum:

It is ironic but true that the very possibility of an extraterrestrial cause works against scientific interest in the UFO phenomenon. All of our thinking, all of our boundaries are anthropomorphically determined. Science is based upon human intelligence dealing with the empirical world. The nature of other possibly 'superior' but surely different intelligences studying *us* is literally ungraspable.⁶⁶

Hopkins followed his first book with Intruders: The Incredible Visitations at Copley Woods in 1987, which was later made into a television movie titled Intruders.⁶⁷ The movie version stars Richard Crenna as a psychiatrist who is confronted with two similarly bizarre accounts by patients in a short span of time. As he seeks to unravel these mysteries, he finds himself confronted with questions of a deeper personal ethic than that delineated in the professional codes of psychiatric hospital staff. This inner search leads him to risk his career status, and the support of his peers, in a search for answers. This portrayal is a loosely factual version of the inculcation of Harvard psychiatrist John E. Mack into the inner circle of abduction researchers. During the 90's, Mack became a major spokesperson for the phenomenon. Because of his prestigious medical and academic background, Mack's involvement has been quite significant in helping legitimize exploration of this phenomenon.

Both the movie and the book version of Intruders continue the ideas Hopkins first presented in Missing Time: humans are the subjects of an ongoing genetic experiment by extraterrestrials. But in Intruders, Hopkins introduces

evidence suggesting that abduction phenomena frequently occur across generations in families; that is, patterns of abduction occur multi-generationally. From this, he concludes that the extraterrestrial study of humans includes systematic investigations of bloodlines. In presenting the case of Kathie Davis and her family, Hopkins eventually describes a virtually industrial pattern of manipulation of human gene sequences as well as the use of unsuspecting human females to cross breed and occasionally nurture alien/human hybrids. The majority of abductees do report a notable focus, on the part of their respective abductors, on reproductive organs and the generative process. Classically, abductees have reported sperm or ova collection, but female abductees increasingly report artificial insemination or implantation of fetuses which are then removed in a later abduction -- usually near the end of the first trimester. Hopkins, Jacobs, Mack, and others report working with female subjects who have lost pregnancies with no evidence or memory of spontaneous abortion. This has been referred to as "Missing Embryo/Fetus Syndrome." Much like the alien implant issue, however, researchers who have conferred with medical doctors in hopes of finding in these reports the "smoking gun" have continued to be frustrated by the impossibility of isolating the possible causes.⁶⁸ Female abductees also report being shown rooms with fetus-like creatures floating free in fluid-filled glass containers. In addition, they report being asked to hold obviously hybrid infants, toddlers, or children, and being told these are their young. These are featured elements in the movie version of Intruders.

Though he includes highlights and supporting evidence from other cases, Hopkins' book focuses on the case of Kathie Davis and her family. Kathie's family is an example of the multi-generational nature of abductions, and Kathie's experiences specifically involve an unexpected pregnancy

followed by an inexplicable return to normal menstruation. Hopkins was also intrigued by the case because of physical traces left in the back yard at the presumed landing site, complaints by neighbors of extremely odd electrical disturbances at the time of an alleged abduction, inexplicable physical markings -- both internal and external -- on the abductees, as well as physical ill effects suffered by those family members who wandered outside shortly after the apparent departure of the craft.

In the beginning of the book, Hopkins relates his methods for eliminating the possibility of logical psychological explanations for abduction experiences. In association with Dr. Clamar and Ted Bloecher, and with financial support from the Fund for UFO Research, Hopkins "hired a highly recommended, highly qualified psychologist, Dr. Elizabeth Slater..., to administer a full battery of psychological tests to nine people whose abduction experiences" had been investigated previously. According to Hopkins, "Dr. Slater knew nothing about the UFO connection." The three of them told her only that they "had a research project that required the 'blind' testing of [the] nine subjects, [and] that [they] were interested in any psychological patterns that might emerge among them," including any indications of psychopathology.⁶⁹ The tests included the MMPI, the Rorschach, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, the Thematic Apperception Test, and a projective drawing test. According to Hopkins, Dr. Slater:

found no major mental disorders amongst the nine; none was paranoid, schizophrenic or otherwise emotionally crippled. There was, however, something of a pattern. Though all nine were above average intelligence, they all shared certain "deficits".... In general terms, though several ... were extremely successful in life ... all suffered a lack of self-esteem. None seemed at ease physically, "at home in their bodies, and comfortable with their sexuality," in Dr. Slater's words, and all suffered from a degree of distrust and

wariness, though none could be called paranoid. "They're just more vigilant, more hesitant to trust, than the average person," she said.⁷⁰

Dr. Slater reports that her results present a significant challenge to those who would argue that abductions are the result of confabulation or various forms of psychopathology, a common assumption.⁷¹ In addition, Slater's findings, according to Hopkins, support his belief that the disorienting, incredible, and shame-inducing nature of these experiences, combined with the apparent post-hypnotic suggestions the aliens allegedly plant to block abductee recall, and the social forces which dictate against the recognition or acceptance of such reports combine to make it virtually impossible for abductees to report such incidents, thus making it immensely difficult for the true proportions of the epidemic to be adequately assessed.

Hopkins' most recent book, Witnessed: The True Story of the Brooklyn Bridge UFO Abductions, details the multiple witness abduction of Linda Cortile from her twelfth floor New York apartment.⁷² Here Hopkins continues his customary methodology, presenting in tandem the "facts" of the case with a dramatic account of his discovery of the story elements. In Witnessed, Hopkins claims that, among others, a high level international diplomat and his two bodyguards witnessed Linda, in the company of three small gray entities and bathed in a beam of blue light, floating from her apartment into a strange craft hovering above the building. The witness reports, which are revealed gradually over a long period of complex interactions, correlate conveniently with his ongoing regression work with Linda. As Linda relives her experiences through hypnosis, they are corroborated through tape recordings sent to Hopkins by the concerned guards, one of whom becomes increasingly mentally unstable. They send tapes because they are extremely reluctant to reveal their identities, presumably because of regulations related to their work. One of the guards

comes to believe he has had an alien-fostered relationship with Linda since childhood. Both he and Linda separately recall having a long-running series of dreams of a sibling-like partner/friend that match the description of the other. Eventually, the guard comes to believe that Linda's son, presumably by her husband, might actually be his own. In this way, Hopkins introduces another element into the genetic manipulation mythology. Aliens are apparently not only interested in test-tube combinations of genetic material extracted from helpless victims in quasi-medical procedures, but are also curious how two people develop a consensual sexual relationship. And, according to Hopkins, they investigate this by engineering simultaneous abductions over time.

The book is an extremely complex unveiling which reads more like a detective novel than his previous work. The guards, identified only as "Richard" and "Dan," have interactions with Linda, even abducting her themselves several times, ostensibly in desperation to make sense of their own experiences. While this interpersonal drama unfolds, Hopkins gradually uncovers the identity of the guards and, thence, the diplomat, referred to as "the third man." Hopkins then arranges communication with the diplomat who indicates an intractable unwillingness to go public with his story. Hopkins agrees to maintain the anonymity of the "third man," though "several publications identified him as former United Nations secretary-general Javier Pérez de Cuellar."⁷³ Because Hopkins refused to reveal witness names, the case, which many initially hoped would serve as indisputable proof of the phenomenon, gradually assumed a quieter place among the growing catalog of abduction "legends."

The single most influential alien abduction book is Whitley Strieber's 1987 book Communion.⁷⁴ It was published at about the same time as Hopkins' Intruders. Both books made the New York Times best seller list, but Communion remained there "for thirty-two weeks, and [stayed] in the number-

one position for almost five months.⁷⁵ Its striking cover clinched in the mind of the reading public the image of the spindly-bodied, big-eyed, bug-like alien. When he first began recollecting his "visitor" experiences, Strieber sought help from Hopkins. Initially friendly, it wasn't long before the two fell out, Hopkins accusing Strieber of an aggressive maneuvering to eclipse him as spokesperson regarding the extraterrestrial invasion. Regardless of what caused friction between them, Hopkins was, in large part, responsible for the inculcation of Strieber -- as he was for John Mack as well -- into the ranks of supporters of the ET hypothesis and as a researcher of the alien abduction phenomenon.

Communion details Strieber's encounters with the unknown during the fall and winter of 1985. In addition, it chronicles Strieber's efforts to deal with this contact and interaction with the beings Strieber came to call the "visitors." Strieber, his wife, and their son went to their remote upstate New York cabin retreat for the Christmas holidays.⁷⁶ During the night of December 26-27, Strieber recalls being awakened by a noise and seeing strange creatures enter his bedroom. Though sitting up, he was unable to react to their advance, nor could he resist as they took him from his bed. Strieber recalls being taken to a spot in the woods and then floated up to a craft. Once in the craft, he recalls being left in a dirty anteroom to wait, interacting with a variety of beings in a more or less conscious, though terrified, state during this time, and, finally, being subjected to a moment of intense pain as the aliens apparently placed something in his brain.

The book also recounts another, more terrestrial, drama as Strieber struggles to make sense of what happened. He recounts seeing doctors and psychologists, contacting ufologists and UFO related organizations, and interrogating his friends about his behaviors. He undertakes all of these

measures in efforts to ascertain first his sanity, then the veracity of his experience, and gradually, its purpose in his life and any broader, global implications.

It is worth noting that, like Walton's account, several of the details of Strieber's story are notable departures from common abduction reports. Especially telling is his description of the dirty anteroom where the silver thread is injected into his brain. In The Threat, David Jacobs uses this example to argue against the media contamination explanation for abduction accounts so often offered by skeptics. Strieber, he says:

tells about being transported to a dirty anteroom where he sat on a bench amid the clutter.... If media contamination were a problem, I would expect some abductees ... who have read Communion to describe a similar situation. That has not occurred. Similarly, Strieber's movie, Communion, watched by millions of people, had a scene of dancing, fat, blue aliens. Neither I nor my colleagues have ever had a similar report.⁷⁷

Other departures from characteristic abduction reports found in Strieber's book include his description of sitting, as opposed to lying down, for the "operation" wherein the thin, needle-like item is presumably placed in his brain; his apparent consciousness and mobility during this interaction; the fact that there are four different alien types involved in his experience; and finally, the descriptions of several of these types -- notably the fat, blue dwarves.

Communion is intense and quite frightening. Strieber relates his terror and disorientation, the strangeness of the experience and how it challenged him. But the central issue for many UFO researchers is whether Strieber is telling the truth or simply capitalizing on a popular topic. In Alien Contact: The First Fifty Years, Jenny Randles points out that "because of his high profile and a brilliant publicity campaign, Strieber's book ... was a huge success all over the world..., raising the stakes in the abduction mystery overnight."⁷⁸ But that he

received a one million dollar advance for the book, that he was an experienced writer in the horror genre, that his abduction account varies from most in so many important details, and that he continues to maneuver for a central and defining role within the UFO community despite the fact his personal accounts offer nothing new or important to the body of data, all add up to big questions for those interested in legitimate UFO research.

Yet Strieber continues to assert the truth of his experiences and his sincerity in wishing to further the cause of legitimacy. Since Communion, Strieber has continued to write books dealing exclusively with UFO and abduction phenomena. In Transformation: The Breakthrough, which followed close on the heels of Communion, Strieber exemplifies how abductees often integrate the initially terrifying trauma of their experiences by reframing them as transformative, ultimately positive learning opportunities.⁷⁹ He also details the apparent abduction of his son from their upstate cabin. Majestic deals with the presumed formation during Truman's presidency of the MJ-12 group.⁸⁰ This group was allegedly created by executive order shortly after the Roswell incident. It was to remain top secret, and its mission was to make decisions and policies concerning the phenomenon of alien intrusion. Breakthrough is another book about the importance of the interventions of the aliens and the government cover-up.⁸¹ Strieber alleges our present time represents a crucially important developmental stage for the human race. This growth spurt, he says, is probably being initiated and engineered, and at the very least guided, by the nearly invisible visitors. In The Secret School, Strieber recalls his youth and the midnight "trainings" that he and other youths in the San Antonio area received from a hooded and wrinkled alien "matron" in the Olmos Basin.⁸² Strieber also claims recollection of his, and the matron's, past-life involvement in educating Octavius, intending thus to link aliens to ancient historical incidents of social

import. His most recent book, Confirmation: The Hard Evidence of Aliens Among Us, focuses on alleged physical proof of alien interactions in human affairs.⁸³ Included in this book are discussions of a number of video tapes made of an unknown object sighted repeatedly over Mexico City and the documented surgical removal and subsequent study of material "implants" found in five separate individuals.

Strieber's opus has gone far to promote the popular imaginary about the phenomenon. His recent book Confirmation may be important in terms of aiding the legitimacy of abduction studies. Also perhaps significant along these lines is the fairly recent Communion Letters, which he co-authored with his wife, Anne.⁸⁴ This book reveals excerpts from a sampling of the more than 200,000 letters Strieber claims to have received since publishing Communion. He credits his wife Anne with having individually read and catalogued each letter. The published excerpts deal with experiences which support the idea that visitation by extra-terrestrial or extra-dimensional beings is a regular occurrence. Some of the related stories are spoken of as no more than dreams, but each has elements familiar to the dedicated ufologist working with the abductee population. An unusual percentage of the letter excerpts refer to one or another of Strieber's books, and many express personal gratitude to him. This again makes these testimonies suspect because of Strieber's apparent conflation of his stated mission with his drive to self-aggrandizement.

Where Strieber has continually struggled to establish the legitimacy of his claims, Harvard psychiatrist and Pulitzer prize-winning author John E. Mack arrived in the fold of UFO abduction research with credentials firmly established. Mack's inculcation into abduction phenomena is depicted, no doubt in somewhat fictionalized manner, in a made for television movie entitled Intruders, based on Budd Hopkins' book by the same name.⁸⁵ Mack's 1994

book Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens caused a great deal of controversy in psychiatric circles and on the Harvard campus, resulting in a lot of unfriendly press and a review of his methodology by his peers, which he passed apparently unscathed.⁸⁶

In "Epistemological Totalitarianism: The Skeptical Case Against Abductions," folklorist Thomas E. Bullard gives an account of Mack's talk at the 1994 CSICOP (Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal) conference in Seattle. Mack, Bullard tells us, believes "that abductions represent a real and revolutionary encounter with intelligences beyond the scope of our present understanding," and that "the abduction experience mark[s] an opening of new knowledge, perhaps a new way of knowing . . ."⁸⁷ Mack, in line with other theorists mentioned later in this paper, argues that: "The rationalistic polarities of mental and physical, subjective and objective may have proved too rigid and narrow to encompass the reality of human experience. Abductees," Mack asserts, "often returned from their encounters with new understanding, more flexible and tolerant in their thinking."⁸⁸ Mack's philosophy about the phenomenon is more akin to the psycho-spiritual theories based in Jung's ideas than to the hard-core ET hypothesis camp of Hopkins and Jacobs.

Researchers working with the experiencer population often report that abductees, once having integrated their experience, feel their consciousness is greatly expanded by the event. Further, they often feel a sense of importance in their having been "chosen." The following is an excerpt from Mack's book wherein he discusses the case of "Jerry," a woman originally from Kansas City, Missouri who describes herself as an "ordinary housewife." Mack reports that:

Jerry's case demonstrates a broad range of abduction phenomena. She has experienced complex, intrusive reproductive procedures on

the alien craft, including insertion and removal of what appear to be fetuses of some sort[,] and [she] has had encounters with hybrid entities. At the same time she has undergone the intense personal growth and philosophical and spiritual opening that often seem to accompany abduction experiences.⁸⁹

Mack goes on to tell us that "a number of Jerry's writings are concerned with the relationship of the material world to the spirit world and the limitations of a purely technological way of knowing." As evidence that Jerry's transformational outlook results more from her experiences than from her work with him, Mack includes examples of her thoughts from two journal entries predating the psychiatric intervention. The first states that "Technical data does not lead to the discovery of other beings. Spiritual data does." Mack includes an entry written one month later:

Science: manifested travel into space and time
 Spirituality: unmanifested travel into space and time
 Science: limited travel
 Spirituality: unlimited travel
 Both valid
 Which ticket will you buy?⁹⁰

As a clinician, Mack is interested in helping abductees integrate their experiences into their daily lives. He finds that the sexually intrusive procedures that so many abductees report have a definite impact on their ability to interact intimately with their partners. In Jerry's case, "the uncovering of core memories of her abduction-related traumatic experiences" made it possible for her "to psychologically separate human from alien reproductive and sexual activity." With Mack's help, she was then able to "devise strategies for reinforcing the distinction between them. Jerry and [her husband] Bob were then able to enjoy a satisfying sexual relationship."⁹¹ His book, which discusses

thirteen such cases, also includes an overview of his methodologies and his theories about the phenomenon.

Mack's work and status have made him something of a target. Tina Landau's play, Space, which had its world premiere at the Steppenwolf Theatre in January 1998, has as its central role a character based on Mack.⁹² Landau's portrayal is less than flattering. In Allan Saunders, Landau conflates Mack's position and some minor, though distinguishing, details of his life with the frenzied dissociating personality traits commonly believed, by the uninformed, to be characteristic of abductees. While the identity of Mack as the model for the central character might be "poetically" legitimate, such a portrayal further entrenches negative stereotypes of abductees, researchers interested in the phenomenon, and the entire field of study, not to mention the potential damage to Mack's own career. This is another instance of how the media, in this case a nationally recognized theatre group usually known for its willingness to challenge accepted positions, re-interprets for entertainment purposes key elements of a story -- specifically here, the factual sources informing its storyline -- at an inestimable cost to broader issues.

Last to be considered in this list of essential published accounts is the work of Temple University history professor and UFO abduction researcher David M. Jacobs. Jacobs, like Hopkins, learned hypnosis so he could carry on his research without being a slave to the heavy schedules of available psychologists. In 1992 he published Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of UFO Abductions.⁹³ Comprised mostly of transcriptions of his sessions with abductees, the book also develops common themes, adds explanations, and provides context for the sessions. Jacobs released a second book on the subject just this year, The Threat, in which he discloses his belief that the aliens are generating a hybrid army to interface with the human race for the nefarious

purpose of gradually taking over the planet.⁹⁴ His books have been very popular, though by no means approaching the sales of Strieber's. However, by virtue of his historical expertise, Jacobs has the distinction of pioneering the only UFO course offered continuously at a major university in the United States.

Pop Culture Status

The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory -- PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA -- it is the map that engenders the territory.
Jean Baudrillard.⁹⁵

Modern media presentations featuring themes of abduction evidence distinct patterns of representation of both abduction details and abductee psychology which bear little resemblance to reports collecting in the files of ufologists. Yet these representations clearly support certain culturally embedded stereotypes about the phenomenon and those who allege involvement. Instances of this have been evidenced in this paper in the cases of the movie renditions of both Whitley Strieber's and Travis Walton's experiences, to a lesser extent in their books as well, and in the Tina Landau play Space. These and other popular representations have, in effect, appropriated and normalized the abduction phenomenon, thereby lessening the impact of these extraordinary reports and deflating their inherent challenge to conventional ideas.

A recent television commercial exemplifies how contemporary references to alien presence, even alien encounter phenomena, often present such phenomena as average, everyday, normal. While out walking his dog in a deserted field, that most average of men -- the Maytag® repair man -- meets with an alien craft apparently delivering a new washing machine to mankind. Magically, he is stripped of his outer garments by little elfin aliens intent on providing a wash demonstration. When clothed again in his now freshly laundered Maytag suit, and watching as the mother ship flashes off into the distance, he remarks as if to his dog, "They'll never believe this: a washer that

really cleans clothes!" The intended humor is also the subtextual message: UFOs and alien contact are nothing special, nothing out of the ordinary, nothing to be afraid of. The abnormal is, in fact, quite normal.

Men in Black

The recent popular movie Men in Black is a prime example of fictionalization for popularization. Though the movie has nothing to do with abduction per se, it is nonetheless a distortion of the MIB legend, a curious subset of UFO and abduction phenomena. In the movie, the MIB's are government agents working under the auspices of a highly secretive branch of some area of the intelligence community. Their function is to keep tabs on immigrating extraterrestrials, regulating their activity to ensure they abide by their agreements and don't make trouble with the native populace.

The actual MIB legend is quite different in its defining characteristics.⁹⁶ First, MIBs are said to exhibit oddities of behavior which cause those who encounter them to doubt not only their trustworthiness and intentions, but even their very reality. They typically arrive on the scene of a UFO sighting, or similarly anomalous event, shortly after the event itself or the report of the event. Frequently they arrive before the percipient has had an opportunity to make any report to any authorities or, as is frequently reported, they arrive immediately after the individual makes a report, as though they were already around the corner waiting. They frequently allege connection with government agencies, sometimes flashing obviously imitation cards or badges. Their intent is usually either to extract information from witnesses, and/or to warn them away from further involvement, inquiry, or official reporting of the event. Experiencer

descriptions tend to revolve around the combination of the almost laughable, fake, or surrealistic qualities about these beings and the real fear they induce.

Though sometimes fumbling as though unfamiliar with the ways of humans, MIBs are clearly not the good guys. They frighten and intimidate witnesses. Few people who have reported MIB experiences have not expressed significant doubt about their terrestrial origin. The movie Men in Black alters the content of the MIB myth in order to redefine it in terms of the tired standard Hollywood formula: American hero worship. A much closer approximation of the prototypical MIB experience is portrayed in the John Sayles film Brother from Another Planet. Here the MIBs, though still evidencing some fictional elements, are quite strange in their movements and behavior; and their motivations and intentions, while clearly malevolent at some level, are not in the least clear to the earthlings they encounter.

The film Men in Black also exemplifies the current trend in recent cultural production representations of extraterrestrials as bug-like and nasty. The ultra bad alien in the movie is, in fact, a monstrous cockroach. While this may be nothing more than a tongue-in-cheek reference to the bug-eyed aliens common in abduction reports, it is nonetheless curious how the greatest variety of recent movie extraterrestrial monsters bear this resemblance to the aliens of abduction reports. Other bug-like entities that attack Americans at the movies include the recent Starship Troopers enemy, the Independence Day aliens, the creatures from the various Alien movies, the changeable monsters in both Species and Mimic, and even the invading bugs in Lost in Space, to name but a few. Aliens are evil; by extension, otherness is bad.

While the scapegoating of otherness, of marginality, has been explored in feminist and ethnic studies literature in terms of how similar projections of otherness affect women or minorities in sociological and cultural frameworks, it

has, to my knowledge, never been addressed as an attack, intended or otherwise, on the projections of the collective unconscious sent as messengers to the self. If, as Jung proposed, the UFO is a symbol of the desire for wholeness, and, by extrapolation, encounters with "aliens" somehow indicative of our collective sense of "alienation," then the depiction of that otherness -- that part of the self inhabiting the UFO -- as an enemy only fosters the divisiveness that makes wholeness an impossibility. It would then work against the purpose that Jung and the humanistic psychologists have defined as the intrinsic nature of the self, the movement through acceptance toward integration and realization. In this regard, stereotypical depictions of aliens, abductees, UFO researchers, and/or those who experience or research other kinds of anomalous phenomena undercut the potency of the messages that the entities or experiences are presumed to carry by redefining them as mere surface gloss. The depth impact, though still very palpable for the experiencer, is thus made incommunicable to any general audience, including specific groups such as an experiencer's friends and family, by means of this standardized superficialization.

X-Files

The five-year-old and increasingly popular X-Files derives in large part from fictionalized distortions of abduction accounts. There are three reasons why the X-Files is central to this discussion. First, the program is built on the fictional premise that alien abduction is a reality, one which is current in everyday America but which remains hidden, even from those who are most affected by it, both by the omnipotence of the aliens depicted and, more insidiously yet, by forces within our own government which regulate and guide

our enculturation. This premise is reflective of certain pervasive trends in UFO lore. Second, the program exerts a tremendous influence on its public. In so doing, it is defining a criteria, a database of information, about this supposedly hidden reality of alien abduction. The viewing public is acquiring a particular understanding of the phenomenon from such presentations. But in being fictionalized, elements of the phenomenon are also necessarily mitigated, or filtered, by the constraints of entertainment marketplace value. Third, the program defines an acceptable range of attitudes toward the phenomenon among its viewers. In this way, the program can be said to be both capturing and shaping various UFO related subcultures.

The principal character is Fox Mulder, played by David Duchovny, an FBI special investigator driven to explore cases involving the paranormal. According to the plot, certain FBI cases are relegated to a special file because they either represent too much strangeness, are unanswerable by means available to logic, or because they border too closely on work by "black" sub organizations inside the intelligence community. Of specific interest to agent Mulder are cases involving evidence of extra-terrestrial lifeforms, abductions of humans by extraterrestrials, and/or genetic tampering, this last usually in association with abduction. The fictional premise for his near obsession with such phenomena is his guilt surrounding the disappearance, and apparent abduction by aliens, of his younger sister when they were children. Mulder recounts this story in the "Pilot" episode as something he allegedly witnessed, but which was discounted by the authority figures around him at the time of the incident, including his parents. He was only able to recapture his memory about the event through deep regressive hypnosis which, as noted earlier, is a common though controversial tool in abduction recollection. His search, then, is for any shred of hard physical evidence that can support his contentions of alien

intervention in human affairs or evidence pointing to government knowledge and/or cover-up of such interventions or interactions. Authority figures lied to him in his childhood, so naturally authorities have something to hide.

Conspiracy theories are a major driving force of the show.

Agent Mulder is accompanied in his investigations by agent Dana Scully, played by Gillian Anderson, a medical doctor specializing in forensics.

According to Chris Carter, the producer of the show and writer of many of its episodes, Scully offers a necessary skeptical balance to Mulder's infatuation with the bizarre. It is implied, from the earliest episodes, that FBI headquarters assigned Scully as Mulder's partner to check, in two senses of the word, his peculiar inclinations. As Mulder and Scully explore the unknown and deal with a variety of bizarre crimes, they are alternately aided and hindered by shadowy figures who seem to act on behalf of even more shadowy figures. A host of characters, named and unnamed, return to flesh out longer story lines which carry the show between its variegated panoply of weekly incidents featuring the bizarre.

In addition to the television program there are books, magazines, websites and additional paraphernalia which fans of the show, often referred to as 'X-Philes' or 'X-Filers', can purchase, subscribe to, or visit, depending. Critics of the show argue that it promotes belief in the paranormal at the expense of the scientific. Some have pointed to the design of the show, in which the skeptical mind, usually represented by Scully, is consistently proven wrong, as evidence of its detrimental nature. At the same time, many of these critics are concerned that the show presents as a given that extra-terrestrial visitors are regularly visiting earth and that the US government is either in secret collaboration with these beings or, at the very least, aggressively acts to keep their presence on earth a secret.

Like the discrepancies noted in both Walton's and Strieber's books, and especially their movie renditions, the details of the abduction scenarios in the X-Files vary considerably from the general patterns of accounts gathering in the files of researchers. There are two important points to note about this. First, while these fictionalized presentations have significantly increased awareness about abduction phenomena among the general public, they do not seem to influence trends in abduction reports per se. In other words, if, as many debunkers have suggested, media "contamination" is responsible for abduction reports, then the reports would have some variation based in some recognizable part on those programs which feature abduction accounts.⁹⁷ So far this does not seem to be the case. Second, these fictionalizations do misinform, on the one hand conflating the source material with stereotypical characterizations and, on the other hand, normalizing the extraordinary in ways that de-emphasize and obscure the importance and seriousness of the phenomenon.

The central premise and much of the fundamental mythos of the X-Files is introduced in the "Pilot" episode, which is dubiously preceded by a superimposed "title" claiming "The following story is inspired by actual documented accounts."⁹⁸ The episode begins with an abduction that is uncharacteristic in several ways. First, there is a human drone who is responsible for locating, and bringing to the apparently prearranged spot, those who are to be abducted. To my knowledge, there has never been a case reported that is even remotely similar. As the literature explored earlier in this paper should indicate, the offending aliens are able to come and go pretty much at will. They seem eminently able to intrude just about anywhere they choose.

Second, several abductees are returned dead. Though there have been some deaths attributed to UFO phenomena, they are very rare and those I have

read about do not appear connected to abductions per se.⁹⁹ Third, neither the kind nor the location of the telltale marks on the bodies of the returned abductees (or of the drone) coincide with the physical markings reported in the literature. The particular fictional abductees show marks not unlike large moles on their lower backs. Real life abductees do report a variety of marks presumably inflicted during examination by aliens. The most common of these resemble biopsy scoop marks, usually found on the legs or the back. Moles on the back are not referenced in any of the accounts I've seen.

Finally, the whirlwind which surrounds the drone as he stands at the pre-appointed woody location, holding the body of the next victim so they can be swept up into the craft, does not match accounts by abductees as the preferred method of transport. There are, however, important corollaries of whirlwind reports -- including helicopter-like crafts (some of which cannot be seen) -- associated with cattle mutilations (often conjoined with reports of UFO sightings).¹⁰⁰

Also in the "Pilot" episode, agents Mulder and Scully exhume the body of a previous victim in hopes of finding these same marks. But the remains have shriveled to an alien-like appearance, presumably the result of hybridization -- genetic tampering by the aliens. Scully, as the medically trained skeptical part of the duo, performs an autopsy which reveals, among other things, a nasal implant. Real-life abductees often recall suffering surgical insertion of implants either in the nasal cavity, behind the eyes, or in the ears. These implants are usually described as very small metallic balls. The implant that Scully recovers from the corpse of Ray Somes, however, is mammoth enough to have killed him instantly upon insertion. This is one more example of doing things big for dramatic purposes. The real-life recovery of such devices by researchers remains controversial, with some allegedly disappearing in the lab or in

transport. X-rays of such implants are indefinite. Quite recently, T-shaped metallic and diamond-like crystal implants, located in either the back of the neck, the hands, or the feet have allegedly been recovered from abductees.¹⁰¹

Another fictional extrapolation which premieres in the "Pilot," and which keeps resurfacing, is the X-Files rendition of the concept of "lost time." In abduction accounts, lost time is time for which the abductee is unable to account. Pondering this mystery often leads experiencers to spontaneously recall portions of their abduction, often leading them to seek the aid of professional care and guidance, sometimes including regressive hypnosis. The missing time is most often those hours during which an abduction is said to have occurred. Usually, this is no more than a few hours. Classically, recollection of abductions occurring during travel result with the recognition by the abductee that the trip took longer than expected. This is what happened in the Barney and Betty Hill case. There are quite a few others on record.

By contrast, the X-Files rendition of lost time involves a few moments during which time is suspended. Mulder is able to determine when he -- or others, if he is near -- has had an actual experience by simply checking his watch. If the time shown does not agree with time devices unimpacted by the alien intrusion, then he has proof enough for himself that he has been party to some kind of alien goings-on. This proves immensely helpful for Mulder when he must distinguish between 'real' abductions and those staged by the dark governmental forces which would use Mulder's passion to help them obfuscate the truth.

An example of this kind of missing time is found in the two part episodes "Max" and "Tempus Fugit." In "Max," an airline passenger plane crashes, killing everyone on board. The 'accident' is actually the result of a military attack on a UFO which happened to be in control of the airliner at the time it was targeted.

Before its hasty and deadly descent, those on board witnessed Max Fenig, unconscious and bathed in a globe of light, being floated out the open side exit. During their investigation, Mulder and Scully find that all watches have been removed from the victim's bodies. In the following episode, titled "Tempus Fugit," viewers are privy to another such abduction where everyone on board is eerily suspended in time, unable to move. Upon their return to the ground, they do not recall the incident itself, but all their watches are several minutes off from the rest of the world. This is enough to alert Mulder that something out of the ordinary has occurred.

The X-Files mythos, though fictionalized extrapolations, is nonetheless heavily dependent on and borrows generously from sources of UFO lore, sometimes almost verbatim. In the same way that stories become fact through legend transmission, so too does pop culture recreate history, essentially directing and designing human beliefs, ideas and ideals. It is characteristic of legend -- lore, urban myth or fairy tale -- that a story once told becomes the property of those who have heard it. And in their retelling of the story, they have full rights to embellish. X-Files producer and writer Chris Carter is certainly within the purview of his poetic license, then, when he alters the substance of those accounts which serve as material for his program. One could conceivably argue that, as is presumably the case in myth, no matter how the stories of the X-Files are altered from their source material, they nonetheless are rooted in some deeper or larger "truth." One could even say of the X-Files that it uses lies to tell the "truth." Such open doubt and fostered collective uncertainty makes the program all the more creepy, clearly establishing the value of uncertainty and mystery in the marketplace. Interestingly, it is this very doubt and uncertainty which our sciences seek to dispel.

However, in the process of adaptation, there are often gross misrepresentations. Most disturbing is the stereotyping of abductee psychology. Examples from the X-Files include the characters Duane Barry, in the episodes "Duane Barry" and "Ascension" and the character of Max Fenig, in "Fallen Angel," "Tempus Fugit," and "Max." Duane and Max are classic media-inspired stereotypes of alien abductees.¹⁰² They are certifiably pathological, mentally incompetent, and must be heavily medicated in order to function. The character of Max, nervous, somewhat paranoid and subject to violent seizures, is essentially harmless; Duane, on the other hand, is deadly. It is implied in the fiction that both came to their conditions as a result of their abduction experiences. Duane, it turns out, was a highly decorated FBI agent and happily married family man before his misfortune befell him. Max, on the other hand, was a child abductee and, thus, suffered throughout his short life.

In contrast to these dire presentations, most of the published psychological studies of abductees indicate no significant patterns of psychopathology compared to the general population. The report prepared by clinical psychologist Dr. Elizabeth Slater at the request of UFO researchers Ted Bloecher, Budd Hopkins and Dr. Aphrodite Clamar was mentioned earlier in the paper. In The Alien Files: The Secrets of Extraterrestrial Encounters and Abductions, Gregory van Dyk relates that the "five men and four women" who participated in the study were from a variety of backgrounds, including:

a college lecturer, an electronics expert, an actor/tennis instructor, a corporation lawyer, a commercial artist, a business executive, a research chemist, a salesman/audio technician, and a secretary....

[Dr. Slater] found them to be a diverse group, but with certain common characteristics. She described them as anxious, suffering from low self-esteem, wary, cautious, oversensitive and vulnerable to insults -- but not paranoid or psychotic in any way. She was very surprised when she was told that the subjects were abductees....¹⁰³

There have been a number of other psychological studies conducted in efforts to determine any illuminating patterns in the psychology of alleged abductees. Work by Susan Powers, Mark Rodeghier, and others has indicated no significant patterns of psychopathology in experiencers beyond some mild dissociation and post traumatic stress disorder, syndromes which make sense in light of the experiences recounted.¹⁰⁴ As Bill Ellis relates in "The Varieties of Alien Experience," "We need to admit that sane, intelligent people may sincerely perceive, or come to believe, that they have been attacked or abducted by paranormal agents."¹⁰⁵ According to John Mack and other clinical psychologists who work with this population, something is happening to cause people to have these experiences. The only treatment which seems to have any long-lasting, positive effect for experiencers appears to be hearing them out, taking their stories at face value, and helping them gradually make what sense they can of their experience while working to relieve their anxiety.¹⁰⁶

That the X-Files "Pilot" episode begins by proclaiming the elemental truth of the stories from which the show is based, along with the pseudo-documentary style of presentation, suggests that reality somehow underscores the fictional content of the program.¹⁰⁷ Viewers then consider each episode a puzzle that is part real and part fiction. Websites and chat rooms on the Internet are regularly dedicated to teasing out the "out there" truths hidden in each episode. An example of this mixing fiction and fact is found in the interview introduction to the video release of the episode "Duane Barry." Writer/producer Chris Carter refers to a story by "a friend about a friend of his" as a source for one specific detail about the character of Duane, a psychopathic abductee. Supposedly, this friend of a friend of Carter's believed he'd been abducted and that his abductors had drilled little holes in his teeth. Upon going to the dentist he was told that, indeed, he had holes in his teeth so tiny that they could not

have been drilled with current equipment. Carter, in relating this as a source, leaves open the doubt of its authenticity because, of course, it is a story about a story. This folk tradition of oral transmission feeds both the body of UFO lore and the X-Files mythos, in certain ways conflating the two. This offhandedness lends even greater ambiguity, greater doubt and uncertainty to the viewer, about how much in these fictions is based in fact. To complicate matters further, liberal sprinklings of science fact and technical terminology, along with the official status of the main characters as FBI, lend the show a degree of credibility and authority.

Doubt may well be one of the program's strengths, at least in terms of staying power. The technique parallels that of the inexplicably popular "Shaver mystery" of the forties, credited by some as the source of the whole UFO phenomenon. The Shaver mystery was a series of stories published in the pulp magazine Amazing Stories by editor Ray Palmer. They concerned a race of beings who lived in the earth and directed mind control rays at certain individuals on the surface, causing them to do what they were bidden. Charolette A. O'Connor states in "Abduction: An Alien Experience?" that: "The power of the Shaver stories to disturb the imagination rested on the claim that they were a fictionalized account of something factual."¹⁰⁸ Her contention is that Palmer "without quite knowing how he did it, but cognizant of the human race's capacity to objectify its psychological terrors . . . contrived to give the world nightmares. In essence, he provided a new technological skeleton on which could be hung all the prescientific folklore of the past."¹⁰⁹

Perhaps this suggested element of partial reality lends the X-Files its edge of fright. Indeed, Carter, in interviews that begin the video releases of each season's viewer favorites, has stated that his intention is to "scare the pants off of people." That Carter and the other writers on the show use any

interesting or strange information they can find as source material, occasionally pulling from historical or personal accounts, news reports, or other shows, etc., is openly discussed in the video interviews, books, and web sites dedicated to fans of the show.¹¹⁰ In addition, Carter has repeatedly stated that he never intended the program to present UFO lore, theories of extraterrestrial visitation, or government conspiracy as truth.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, many viewers, enthralled by the presentation of UFO lore and conspiracies, find it easy to believe that he must say such things publicly to maintain network support. There are clearly those who believe that many of the episodes are based on accounts of real-life events, and that the show is a thinly veiled information conduit.

It is interesting to note how closely the confusion in the X-Files mythos mirrors the confusion in UFO lore. In the introduction to Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception, Jacques Vallee bemoans the creation of hoaxes and disinformation by forces working to intentionally obfuscate the available data and confuse those who would investigate its true nature. He asserts that:

the proliferation of spurious material that confuses the real issues . . . should be analyzed and exposed for what it is: at best, a dangerous delusion, the germ of new cults that would extinguish the light of reason and free inquiry; at worst, an attempt to draw attention away from the real nature of the UFO phenomenon, a deliberate effort to drive serious research into the quicksands of speculation. ... [This activity] adds another factor of confusion to the bewilderment of sincere witnesses who wonder what they have seen and who are looking for a helping hand.¹¹²

It is exactly this state of affairs that the X-Files pretends to present. But in so doing, the program does less to clarify the situation than it does to further confuse matters. The general media influx surrounding the concept of alien abduction does little to help the case of those researchers who wish to seriously

investigate the phenomenon. It does even less to improve life for those who allege experience with alien visitors, for not only are they continually re-stimulated by images in the culture which re-voke for them the terror of their experiences, but they find themselves publicly represented in an unfavorable light. In presenting abduction accounts, the tabloids, the popular books, the fictionalized horror stories, the docu-dramas, and even those science programs which feign an objective consideration, this panoply of press jaded by either a rampant sensationalism or by the blinders of culturally defined social paradigm, serve only to add to the general confusion.

Meanwhile, the X-Files producers are firm in asserting that their product is fictional. Yet, a portion of their public still reads the program as a mixture of fact and fiction, a form of infotainment wherein the truth (which is "out there" somewhere) is suggested and hinted at in ways supposedly in sneaky defiance of a silence purportedly imposed on the standard American media. The paradox is that such programming is entertainment based, thus subject to the machinery of media culture and the laws of supply and demand. Paradoxically, in that the X-Files is probably the most guilty party, the character of Mulder sometimes speaks to this very issue. At the close of the sarcastically playful episode "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space'," Mulder appeals to the writer Jose Chung not to publish his book about an alien abduction. The monologue can serve as a general appeal to the producers of fictions, half-fictions, and distortions of fact which clutter and confuse an already complex and difficult phenomenon. During his visit to Chung, the Mulder character pleads:

Don't write this book. You'll perform a disservice to a field of inquiry that has always struggled for respectability. You're a gifted writer, but no amount of talent could describe the events that occurred in any realistic vein because they deal with alternative realities that we're yet to comprehend and when presented in the wrong way, or in the wrong context, the incidents and the people involved in them

can appear foolish if not downright psychotic. I also know that your publishing house is owned by Warden Wright Inc., a subsidiary of McDougal-Kessler, which makes me suspect a covert agenda for your book on the part of the military industrial entertainment complex.¹¹³

Psycho-spiritual Theories

While confusion continues to multiply in popular culture representations of the abduction phenomenon, researchers seek terrestrial explanations ranging from masked memories of birth trauma and childhood abuse to temporal lobe epilepsy magnetically induced by tension-releasing shifts in tectonic plates.¹¹⁴ Beyond these theories, and other efforts in both psychology and the hard sciences, are the psycho-spiritual interpretations of Thompson, Woodhouse, Ring, Raschke, and others. Their approaches to the abduction phenomenon lean heavily on Jung's ideas. While most consider the phenomenon indicative of changes in human consciousness occurring on a global scale, all agree we have yet to find a way to think about the phenomenon.

In "UFOs: Ultraterrestrial Agents of Cultural Deconstruction," religious studies scholar Carl Raschke suggests that the UFO abduction experience may be merely one portion of a vast strategic deconstruction of our consensus belief systems.¹¹⁵ Attacking the literalist thinking he finds prevalent on either side of the debate, Raschke insists that we "must remain curious... whether the *purpose* of UFO sightings and contacts is mainly to undercut the ingrained human longing for secure knowledge and faith, rather than to gratify it."¹¹⁶

Similarly, Keith Thompson, in Angels and Aliens, argues that historical "mythic" manifestations -- such as UFO sightings, alien abduction, visions of the virgin Mary -- are related in that they remind us of the possibility of other realms beyond our immediate awareness, realms we traditionally seem able to engage only through magic, sacred ritual, accident, or intentional faith.¹¹⁷ He posits that unbidden anomalous occurrences erupt into the consciousness of experiencers as a kind of counterbalance to our extreme reliance on rational thought. In

other words, these imaginal experiences, these entities peeking through the curtain of our understanding of reality, whether angels or aliens, come specifically as messengers of the non-rational.

Thompson insists that the question of the "reality" of these experiences cannot be satisfactorily answered in the terms that we customarily employ. He invokes Heisenberg's uncertainty principle in "that nature never reveals itself to us as it is but rather through the questions we put to it," a concept he feels is essential to keep in mind whenever approaching any aspect of UFO phenomena.¹¹⁸ "From this perspective each UFO hypothesis can -- in both Heisenberg's and Campbell's terms -- be taken as a reply to a particular question" According to Thompson, doing so "effectively shifts our observation from ontological to epistemological concerns, from 'What is the UFO's absolute nature?' to 'How do we know what we believe?' and even 'What is knowing?'"¹¹⁹ For Thompson, as for other psycho-spiritual theorists, UFO and related anomalous phenomena involve a challenge to accepted understanding through a reawakening of the mythic realm -- the nearly lost realm of the imaginal. Furthermore, they argue that this mythic eruption signals a need to re-integrate this fundamental part of ourselves -- i.e. the spiritual, for lack of another word -- with the materialistic dimension we have too much and too long over-emphasized.

Psychologist Kenneth Ring, highly regarded as the premiere pioneer researcher in Near Death Experiences, or NDEs, takes a slightly different tact.¹²⁰ In "Near-Death and UFO Encounters as Shamanic Initiations: Some Conceptual and Evolutionary Implications," and in his popular book The Omega Project, Ring points out patterns and similarities in the reports of those who experience UFO abductions and NDEs.¹²¹ Because these similarities, he argues, are analogous to steps in the training of shamanic initiates, he suggests

considering abduction and near-death experiences as intentional training and development in spiritual realms.¹²² Just as the classic shaman undergoes certain ordeals in his or her training in order to move between the material and the spirit worlds, so those who endure repeated encounters with the unknown begin to bridge, in themselves, these two worlds. The gradual integration of the two occurring in those individuals so touched will eventually generalize to the human race, encouraged by the quiet and invisible guidance of the initiating forces, whatever they may be.

While these theories contrast considerably with those of Hopkins and Jacobs, discussed earlier, other popular writers, such as Strieber and Mack, endorse the idea that humanity is collectively undergoing developmental shifts in understanding through a gradual awakening to additional dimensions of reality. The three dimensions -- or four, if time is included -- we now perceive as our concrete and inviolable reality may serve as a veil limiting our awareness of other "broader" and more encompassing realms. Physicists, confronted by frustrating inconsistencies in our present explanations of "reality," have long argued notions of extra-dimensionality.

In Beyond the Four Dimensions: Reconciling Physics, Parapsychology, and UFOs, physicist Karl Brunstein argues the possibility that a fifth dimensional realm is rippling into our flat four sided consciousness.¹²³ He points to Rhine's studies of psi phenomena in the thirties, forties and fifties as evidence that replicated laboratory experiments reveal phenomena that lie outside our present understanding of the laws of nature. As Brunstein says:

At first thought, psychokinesis, that is, the movement of physical objects through the direct action of the mind, appears to bear most directly on what we are trying to establish. Rhine conducted some carefully conceived experiments that prove, to my mind, incontestably the reality of this effect....

Subjects were instructed to will the dice to land with either a given face or a combination of faces uppermost. The dice were then rolled, either by hand or by a mechanical device, and the results recorded. There were no spectacular effects noted, that is, no impossibly long runs of sevens, etc. The experimenters instead concentrated on long, protracted sessions, their intent being to amass through a relentless effort a large enough quantity of data to establish the effect through statistics. They were successful. Statistical odds against chance occurrences of the results obtained were, in many cases, astronomical...

Telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition were also explored by Rhine and his associates. Of particular interest ... are Rhine's results with precognition.¹²⁴

That this is so, Brunstein argues, suggests that there are either forces or dimensions, acausal in nature, which we might expect to find occasionally breaching the parameters of our present understanding. "Therefore, if there exists a force that propagates faster than the speed of light, we residents of the electromagnetic world can expect to see it manifested occasionally by violations of causality."¹²⁵ Dreaming as a source of information and inspiration is one significant example of the perceived visitation -- or intrusion -- of an otherness guiding or informing our lives. Yet directive dreams are a common enough phenomenon, as are occasional experiences of precognition.

Brunstein makes the point that the scientific community is in no hurry to accept evidence that flies in the face of accepted understandings of universal physical laws:

In the UFO problem, the scientist is asked to choose, in a now historically familiar way, between established theory and observation to the contrary. In this case, either the scientist must label as crackpots by the thousands those otherwise reasonable men who report anomalous and scientifically embarrassing observations, or he must incorporate something into his view to make their observations acceptable. To do the latter, he must accept, essentially, that there are properties ultimately fundamental to space and time that have as yet somehow escaped his formal scientific notice. This is a hard pill to swallow. It is tantamount to confessing that modern science is still paddling about in the backwaters; this aspect of the UFO phenomenon sticks in the craw

and makes the alternative more attractive. This second alternative is a necessary corollary to the acceptance of the reality of UFOs, and it cannot be expected that there should be much scientific enthusiasm associated with it.¹²⁶

Folklorist David Hufford, in "Humanoids and Anomalous Lights: Taxonomic and Epistemological Problems," challenges all scholars to recognize and acknowledge their mindsets, their controlling "paradigms," in their investigations of what Linda Dégh has termed "belief materials," a category into which UFO experiences easily fit.¹²⁷ The reluctance to do so, Hufford argues, results in a major taxonomic inadequacy and effectively "imposes upon us a set of blinders which are derived from our assumptive set."¹²⁸ Hufford invokes Thomas Kuhn¹²⁹ in asserting that:

Paradigms are not simply theories or aggregates of theories. They are much more powerful than that. They specify not only suggested answers to questions already posed, but also indicate what kinds of questions may legitimately be asked and what kinds of answers may be considered acceptable. Their tyranny is the greater, then, in that they make certain lines of inquiry very difficult to think of in the first place, let alone to objectively consider.¹³⁰

In light of the theories of Jung, Raschke, Thompson, Ring and others, it seems reasonable to posit that the fictionalization of 'anomalous' phenomena, such as alien abductions and visitations, garners such popularity because the experiences themselves are, in effect, the material or dimensional response to profound and fundamental human psychic needs. Historical correlatives evidencing such needs exist worldwide. For instance, that most abductees report being "floated" up to a craft wherein they undergo their ordeal, suggests a longing for ascension. Mircea Eliade, in Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities, notes that:

the motifs of flight and ascension to Heaven are attested at every level of the archaic cultures, as much in the rituals and mythologies of the shamans and the ecstasies as in the myths and folk-lore of other members of society who make no pretense to be distinguished by the intensity of their religious experience. In short, the ascension and the "flight" belong to an experience common to all primitive humanity. That this experience constitutes a profound dimension of spirituality is shown by the subsequent history of the symbolism of ascension.¹³¹

Eliade continues, saying that "if we consider the "flight" and all the related symbolisms as a whole, their significance is at once apparent: they all express a break with the universe of everyday experience." The idea of escapism and masochism has been presented as a possible explanation for abductee reports. But Eliade's line of thinking takes us further:

A dual purposiveness is evident in this rupture: both *transcendence* and, at the same time, *freedom* are to be obtained through the "flight". . . . The creation, repeated to infinity, of these countless imaginary universes in which space is transcended and weight is abolished, speaks volumes upon the true nature of the human being. The longing to break the ties that hold him in bondage to the earth is not a result of cosmic pressures or of economic insecurity -- it is constitutive of man.¹³²

By Eliade's standard, then, we are wired for transcendence. Transcendence, it could be argued, is a higher order actualization of the same impulse which leads us to seek the harmless comfort we find in books, movies, or TV. Such popular media may actually serve to titillate, without fulfilling, our collective, but vaguely and often individually felt, longing to transcend.

There may be as many good reasons to consider UFO related phenomena a reminder of our desire to transcend ordinary existence as there are sightings and encounters. Even after 50 years, the chimerical nature of the UFO phenomenon continues, at every turn, to challenge our understanding and our accepted concepts of "reality." It has remained immune to definition.

Because the UFO is elusive and plastic, it accepts whatever meanings or interpretations people would impose upon it. Its challenges to our understanding collapse the spaces that are difference, those between that make distinction, and thus definition, possible. Baudrillard, commenting on the age and practice of simulation, tells us: "it is no longer a question of either maps or territory. Something has disappeared: the sovereign difference between them that was the abstraction's charm."¹³³ It is as though the UFO functions as a kind of floating signifier, a sign without a 'material' signified, acting out in dreamlike ways a continual deferral, an almost 'material' example of Derrida's assertion that all signifiers point away from the real, deferring meaning in an endless chain of signifiers, referring only to further signifiers, producing only greater differences and more interpretations.¹³⁴

And so the UFO presents itself as a jumping off place, not only for discussion of specific contemporary cultural problematics, but as the groundlessness from which the culture leaps into another level of the unknown. It acts, in effect, as a realized abstraction of that otherness which opposes materiality, which brings into being the possibility of signification, but which holds itself aloof, as if incorporeal, unable to fully materialize because it has not yet been fully invited, being thus staved off by our attachment to differences, our need for the distinctions which mediate abstraction. And because it refuses, with frustrating consistency, the limitations of any polarized categorization, UFO related activity, as a phenomenon for academic discussion, continues to be marginalized. At one and the same time, it is idealized by those social processes which would render it powerless, which would make it vanish without trace. This collective idealization is evident in the phenomenal growth of media attention which the UFO phenomenon -- almost magically -- has seemed continually to garner during the last fifty years.

Conclusion

The stereotypical representations of abductions and abductees, such as are shown on programs like the X-Files, while pretending to encourage awareness about such phenomena, in actuality aid and abet a derisive attitude toward this growing pandemic. This act of co-option or appropriation of this "fringe" -- or marginal -- activity works against the interests of those who would legitimize ufology. At the same time, it undercuts the importance and valuing of "non-ordinary" states in general, thus robbing the culture of the rich traditions and psychologically important functions of our "mythic" past. In presenting controversial and marginalized issues, the popular media mitigates the nature of the material so as to make it palatable for the masses. This effectively redefines the presented materials in such a way that they can no longer function as challenges to the hegemonic cultural structure. Instead, they become little more than hip clichés, trinkets of the culture.

Issues of misrepresentation are further exacerbated by examples of the extremist nature of reporting on UFO related phenomena still prevalent throughout the press and other presented media. As evidenced in this paper, high media impact reports are most often either sensationalized, ridiculed, or, in the cases of programs like Sightings, overdramatized. There is very little in the way of objective reporting, either in the popular media or, for that matter, in "research."

The obviousness of the problem, in this particular area of study, invites questions of tremendous implication for all areas of research and investigation. Any research is subject to biases based on the prevailing belief systems of the investigator(s), who cannot help but be deeply influenced by the prevailing order of belief in the culture(s) in which he, she, or they live and work. It is in

fact the case that any particular culture is defined, in part, by the collective beliefs of that group.¹³⁵ In "The Order of Discourse," Michel Foucault reminds us that "in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized, and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality."¹³⁶ Foucault is arguing here that ideological control requires the safety of abstraction, the avoidance of the messiness of corporeal materiality. It is interesting to note that the "weightless thoughts" of the UFO ruffle both extreme edges of the abstraction comfort zone, being at once an ultra-abstraction which nonetheless invades materiality to leave its mark, gliding effortlessly past all barriers designed to admit no intrusions.¹³⁷

In order for alien abduction and related anomalous phenomena to garner the careful, open-minded, yet scientifically sound research they deserve -- at the very least by virtue of their cultural prevalence -- fundamental attitudes will need to be examined and adjusted. The call for such changes extends throughout this paper, from Ron Westrum's outline of those social processes and paradigms which limit our perceptions to the psycho-spiritual theories of Jung, Ring, and Thompson. Considerable evidence suggests that alien abduction and related anomalous phenomena are marginalized, in large part, because the evidence for them does not fit any prescribed paradigm or consensual notion about reality. The media, consciously or not, supports this academic marginalization by popularizing the phenomenon, thereby stripping it of its mystery and power.

Psycho-spiritual theorists such as Thompson, Ring, Raschke, Grosso, Woodhouse, and others argue that anomalous experiences, including UFO abductions, may serve an intended purpose of presenting humans with

significant perceptual and epistemological challenges, forcing those who encounter such experiences to encompass broader perspectives than those defined by consensus reality.

The specific arguments and intentions of these theorists vary, but general themes include discussions of how these phenomena instigate, motivate, generate, or otherwise inspire the broadening of consciousness. These theorists feel that the issue of whether or not such occurrences are objectively perceivable as physical reality is moot. What is important to them are the ways in which these anomalous phenomena are connected to, informing, or informed by issues of expanded awareness and increased consciousness, including the re-integration into daily life of what they consider an inherent mythic/spiritual intelligence. Insistent that important connections between these phenomena and human consciousness do in fact exist, these theorists argue that it is at the least irresponsible, and could prove quite dangerous, for the culture at large to ignore or make light of these phenomena simply because they do not fit into accepted social and scientific paradigms.

Media exploitation of sensationalism surrounding abductions and similarly anomalous phenomena further crystalizes a collective belief among thinking people that there is little or nothing important about these events beyond their entertainment value. This attitude is in some ways analogous to Westrum's example of the Royal Society's reaction when French peasants brought them rocks, insisting they had seen them fall from the sky as balls of fire.¹³⁸ Acceptance of the meteorite by the academy as a physical reality occurred nearly one half century after popular reports began surfacing. The year 1997 was celebrated by Americans as the fiftieth anniversary of the first modern flying saucer sightings over U.S. territory.

It is understandable, given the psychological nature of the human organism, that people will collectively seek to diminish the importance of those experiences they do not understand. However, on occasion it happens that aggregates of information, evidence, or experience gradually accumulate around some controversial issue in such concentration as to warrant a more measured consideration. When such a critical mass presents itself, despite, as in the case of the meteorite or the UFO, fifty years of efforts to suppress recognition of such impulses, it could suggest that new approaches to the data are warranted. Conventional wisdom concerning alien abduction does not address nor even acknowledge any collective ignorance about the phenomenon, but insists rather that such experiences cannot occur in objective reality because the range of human understanding has no logical framework in which to couch them. Such a fundamental perceptual limitation, culturally defined and maintained by the media, needs to be reconsidered, altered, or completely cast aside before abduction and related anomolous phenomena can be fairly investigated. Until that time, UFO alien abduction and corollary paranormal and psycho-spiritual phenomena will remain as ethereal mysteries, considered only of interest to the "fringe" and those who are victims of these consciousness-changing encounters.

In addition, it seems inescapable that until such collective and cultural perceptual blinders are fully reevaluated, forms of cultural production featuring alien abduction, such as those noted in this paper, will continue to capitalize on the alternating popular fascination and repulsion for the unknown. In so doing, their representations will continue to entrench negative and dismissive attitudes about the phenomenon, diminishing in the public mind the importance of serious research in this area. This circular dynamic continues to reaffirm the present consensus belief that these phenomena present for humanity neither

danger nor opportunity, but serve only as entertainment. And while this maintains the status quo in terms of a collectively experienced reality, in the long run it can only further confuse and obfuscate any true understanding of the nature of this very bizarre, complex, and intriguing phenomenon.

Notes

¹ The term "consensus reality" is herein intended as a derivation of the manufactured consensus discussed in Stuart Hall, "Culture, the Media and the 'Ideological Effect,'" Mass Communication and Society, ed. J. Curran, M. Gurevitch, and J. Woollacott (London : Edward Arnold, 1977) pp. 315-48. Drawing from Marx, Gramsci, Althusser and others, Hall outlines processes which, overall, closely align with Gramsci's concept of hegemony. For my purposes, hegemony is slightly too strong an idea in that the issues addressed here are less obviously ideological. It is, of course, eminently possible to make an argument that the commodification of alien abduction themes is being engineered by a faction of ruling classes interested only in maintaining their control. But this is not my purpose and so, while I believe that the hegemonic processes are by and large the closest representational model defined for what I am arguing here, the term consensus reality seems just that much less politically informed or organized. Hall's article is more directly relevant to the concept of consensus reality as I mean it to be understood here than, say, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's, The Social Construction of Reality (New York : Doubleday, 1966). Academic consensus reality is also addressed, in terms of ideological scientism, in David J. Hufford, "Traditions of Disbelief," New York Folklore 8 (Winter 1982), pp. 47-55; "The Supernatural and the Sociology of Knowledge: Explaining Academic Belief," New York Folklore 9 (Summer, 1983), pp. 21-30; and "Reason, Rhetoric, and Religion: Academic Ideology Versus Folk Belief," New York Folklore 11 (1985), 177-194. Peter Berger also addresses issues of academic traditions of belief in "Relativizing the Relativizers," A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1970). pp. 28-48.

² J. Allen Hynek, From the preface to Raymond E Fowler, The Andreasson Affair. (Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979). A professional astrophysicist, Hynek served as the principal consultant to the United States Air Force's various UFO investigative arms -- Project Sign, Project Grudge, Project Blue Book -- between the years 1948 to 1969. Hynek's gradually accumulating frustration with the cavalier attitude of the USAF towards what he increasingly recognized as a serious problem requiring serious research eventually led him to retire his work with the government and form an independent agency, the Center for UFO Studies -- CUFOS -- headquartered in Evanston, Illinois. Because he was one of the first professional scientists to devote his life to UFO investigations, Hynek is considered one of the grandfathers of ufology.

³ Hamlet. V. iv. 166.

⁴ The January-February, 1962 issue of the UFO Investigator had a brief account. Also the March, 1963 issue of APRO Bulletin had an article. In the late summer of 1965, a Boston newspaper ran an article about both the abduction and the psychiatric treatment that Barney and Betty Hill had sought for symptoms presumably resulting from their experience. Because the paper misrepresented the case, and ran the article despite the protests of both Barney and Betty Hill and the attending psychiatrist, Benjamin Simon, the Hills agreed to have the story told in as reputable a manner as possible. To this end, they sought the help of John G. Fuller, a respected journalist then writing an account of a UFO incident that occurred in the Exeter, New Hampshire area. In early October of 1966, Look magazine ran excerpts of the resulting book, which came out in full later that month.

⁵ Whitley Strieber, Communion: A True Story (New York: Avon. 1987). Budd Hopkins, Intruders: The Incredible Visitations at Copley Woods (New York: Ballantine Books, 1987).

⁶ X-Files television series. FOX Broadcasting. Prod. Chris Carter.

⁷ Ron Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events: Its Significance for Scientific Research and Social Policy." Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilization 3:3. (March 1982): 381-400.

⁸ John G. Fuller, The Interrupted Journey: Two Lost Hours "Aboard a Flying Saucer, (New York: Dell. 1966). Travis Walton, Fire in the Sky: The Walton Experience (New York: Marlowe and Co. 1996). Originally The Walton Experience: 1979. Strieber, Communion. Whitley Strieber and Ann Strieber, The Communion Letters (New York: HarperPrism, 1997).

⁹ Thomas E. Bullard, UFO Abductions: The Measure of a Mystery. Vol. 1: Comparative Study of Abduction Reports (Bloomington, Indiana: Fund for UFO Research, 1987).

¹⁰ Budd Hopkins, Missing Time (New York: Ballantine Books, 1981). Hopkins Intruders. Budd Hopkins, Witnessed: The True Story of the Brooklyn Bridge UFO Abductions (New York: Pocket Books, 1996). David M. Jacobs, Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of UFO Abductions (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992). David M. Jacobs, The Threat (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998). David M. Jacobs, The UFO Controversy in America (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1975). John E. Mack, Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens (New York: Charles Scribner, 1994).

¹¹ Keith Thompson, Angels and Aliens (New York : Fawcett Columbine, 1991). Keith Thompson, "Angels, Aliens, and Archetypes--An Introduction," Ed. preface in ReVISION 11:3 (Winter 1989): 3-4. Keith Thompson, "Angels, Aliens, and Archetypes--Introduction to Part Two." ReVISION 11:4 (Spring 1989): 3-4. Keith Thompson, "Wrestling with Angels: The Mythic Dimensions of the UFO Phenomenon," ReVISION 11:3 (Winter, 1989): 31-47. Karl A. Brunstein, Beyond the Four Demensions: Reconciling Physics, Parapsychology, and UFOs (New York : Walker and Co., 1979). Michael Grosso, The Final Choice: Playing the Survival Game (Walpole, New Hampshire: Stillpoint Publishing, 1988). Grosso, "UFOs and the Myth of the New Age," Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience, Ed. Dennis Stillings (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989). Reprinted from ReVISION 11:3 (Winter 1989). 5-13. Mark B. Woodhouse, Paradigm Wars: Worldviews for a New Age (Berkeley, CA.: Frog, Ltd., 1996). Carl Raschke, "UFOs: Ultraterrestrial Agents of Cultural Deconstruction," Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience, Ed. Dennis Stillings (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989). David J. Hufford, "Reason, Rhetoric, and Religion: Academic Ideology Versus Folk Belief," New York Folklore 11 (1985): 177-194. David J. Hufford, "The Supernatural and the Sociology of Knowledge: Explaining Academic Belief," New York Folklore 9 (Summer, 1983): 21-30. David J. Hufford, "Traditions of Disbelief," New York Folklore 8 (Winter 1982): 47-56. Kenneth Ring, "Near-Death and UFO Encounters as Shamanic Initiations: Some Conceptual and Evolutionary Implications." ReVISION 11:3 (Winter, 1989). 14-22. Kenneth Ring, The Omega Project: Near Death Experiences, UFO Encounters, and Mind at Large (New York : William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1992). Kenneth Ring, "Toward an Imaginal Interpretation of 'UFO Abductions'." ReVISION 11:4 (Spring, 1989): 17-24.

¹² Thomas E. Bullard, "Mysteries in the Eyes of the Beholder," diss., Indiana U, 1982, 2.

¹³ Bullard, "Mysteries in the Eyes of the Beholder" 4.

¹⁴ James Chequers, Stephen Joseph, and Debbie Diduca, "Belief in Extraterrestrial Life, UFO-related Beliefs, and Schizotypal Personality," Personality and Individual Differences 23.3 : 519-21. Alvin H. Lawson, "A Testable Theory for UFO Abduction Reports: The Birth Memories Hypothesis," Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience, Ed. Dennis Stillings. (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989). "Perinatal Imagery in UFO Abduction Reports," The Journal of Psychohistory 12:2 (Fall 1984). Mack, Abduction. Caroline C. McLeod, Barbara Corbisier, John E. Mack. "A More Parsimonious Explanation for UFO Abduction." Psychological Inquiry 7:2 (1996) : 156-168. Leonard S. Newman, Roy F. Baumeister, "Toward an Explanation of the UFO Abduction Phenomenon: Hypnotic Elaboration, Extraterrestrial Sadoomasochism, and Spurious Memories." Psychological Inquiry 7:22 (1996) 99-126. O. Parnell, and R.L. Sprinkle, "Personality Characteristics of Persons Who Claim UFO Experiences," Journal of UFO Studies 2 (1990): 45-58. Michael A. Persinger, "The 'Visitor' Experience and the Personality: The Temporal Lobe Factor." Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience. Ed. Dennis Stillings (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989). Susan Marie Powers, "Dissociation in Alleged Extraterrestrial Abductees." Dissociation 7:1 (March 1994) : 44-50. Ring, "Near-Death and UFO Encounters," 14-22; Kenneth Ring, The Omega Project: Near Death Experiences, UFO Encounters, and Mind at Large (New York : William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1992) and "Toward an Imaginal Interpretation of 'UFO Abductions'."

Nicholas P. Spanos, Patricia A. Cross, Kirby Dickson and Susan C. DuBreuil. "Close Encounters: An Examination of UFO Experiences." Journal of Abnormal Psychology 102:4 (1993) : 624-632. Glenn G. Sparks, Sherri W. Sparks, and Kirsten Gray, "Media Impact on Fright Reactions and Belief in UFOs: The Potential Role of Mental Imagery." Communication Research 22.1 (1995) : 3-23. Glenn G. Sparks, C. Leigh Nelson, and Rose G. Campbell, "The Relationship Between Exposure to Televised Messages About Paranormal Phenomenon and Paranormal Beliefs" Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media 41.3 (Summer 1997) : 345-359.

¹⁵ Bullard, "UFO Abductions: The Measure of a Mystery," iii.

¹⁶ Linda Dégh, "The Belief Legend in Modern Society: Form, Function, and Relationship to Other Genres." In American Folk Legend: A Symposium. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1971. 58.

¹⁷ Carl G. Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies, trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton UP : 1978). Extracted from Volume 10 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Civilization in Transition, (Princeton UP : 1964, 1970). Jacques Vallee, Passport to Magonia: on UFOs, Folklore, and Parallel Worlds (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1993). Originally published by H. Regency Co., 1969.

¹⁸ See Bullard, "Mysteries in the Eyes of the Beholder," "UFO Abduction Reports: The Supernatural Kidnap Narrative Returns in Technological Guise." Journal of American Folklore 102.404 (April-June, 1989) : 147-170; "The Relationship of Abduction Reports to Folklore Narratives," Andrea Pritchard, David E. Pritchard, John E. Mack, Pam Kasey, Claudia Yapp, eds. Alien Discussions: Proceedings of the Abduction Study Conference, (Cambridge, MA: North Cambridge Press, 1994). See also Peter M. Rojcewicz, "Between One Eye Blink and the Next: Fairies, UFOs, and the Problems of Knowledge," The Good People: New Fairylore Essays, ed. Peter Narváez (New York: Garland Publishing. 1991); "The Boundaries of Orthodoxy: A Folkloric Look at the UFO Phenomenon," diss., U of Pennsylvania, 1984; "Folklore of the 'Men in Black': A Challenge to the Prevailing Paradigm." ReVISION 11:4 (Spring, 1989). 5-16; "Signals of Transcendence: The Human-UFO Equation." Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience, ed. Dennis Stillings. (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989). Though not dealing directly with abduction phenomena, the work of Linda Dégh was seminal in generating interest in UFO experiences as folklore. See Linda Dégh, "The 'Belief Legend' in Modern Society: Form, Function, and Relationship to other Genres," American Folk Legend: A Symposium, ed. W.D. Hand (Berkeley: University of California Press) 55-68; and "UFOs and How Folklorists Should Look at Them. Fabula 18:242-48. And see David J. Hufford, "Afterword to 'Traditions of Disbelief.'" Talking Folklore 1 (1988): 3; "Ambiguity and the Rhetoric of Belief." Keystone Folklore 21 (1977): 11-24; "Awaking Paralyzed in the Presence of a Strange 'Visitor.'" Pritchard, et al. eds, Alien Discussions 348-353; "Humanoids and Anomalous Lights: Taxonomic and Epistemological Problems," Fabula 18 (1977) 234-41; "Reason, Rhetoric, and Religion: Academic Ideology Versus Folk Belief," New York Folklore 11 (1985): 177-194; "The Supernatural and the Sociology of Knowledge: Explaining Academic Belief," New York Folklore 9 (Summer 1983): 21-30; "Traditions of Disbelief," New York Folklore 8 (Winter 1982): 47-56.

¹⁹ Bullard, "UFO Abduction Reports: The Supernatural Kidnap Narrative Returns in Technological Guise," 148.

²⁰ Thompson, Angels and Aliens; "Angels, Aliens, and Archetypes--An Introduction." Ed. preface in ReVISION 11:3 (Winter 1989). 3-4; "Angels, Aliens, and Archetypes--Introduction to Part Two." ReVISION 11:4 (Spring 1989). 3-4; "Wrestling with Angels: The Mythic Dimensions of the UFO Phenomenon." ReVISION 11:3 (Winter, 1989) 31-47. • Woodhouse, ParadigmWars; Michael Grosso, "Plato and Out-of-body Experiences," Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research 69:61-74. (1975); The Final Choice: Playing the Survival Game, (Walpole, New Hampshire: Stillpoint Publishing, 1988); "UFOs and the Myth of the New Age," Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience, ed. Dennis Stillings (St. Paul: Archaeus 5, 1989).

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²¹ Editorial note by W.M. in C. G. Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth, vii.

²² Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth, 16.

²³ Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth, 19-20; and 117.

²⁴ Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth, 135-36.

²⁵ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events.

²⁶ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 383.

²⁷ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 382.

²⁸ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 382.

²⁹ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 383.

³⁰ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 384.

³¹ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events, 392-93.

³² See George Adamski, with Desmond Leslie. The Flying Saucers Have Landed, (New York: British Book Center. 1953). See also Curtis Peebles, Watch the Skies: A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press. 1994) 93-108.

³³ Conspiracy theories about government and contactees have become conflated with discussion of abductions. There is a prevailing belief that Eisenhower, in conjunction with the mythical organization known as MJ-12, signed a secret treaty with aliens agreeing to turn a blind eye and ear to reports of human abductions and animal mutilations in exchange for advance technologies from the aliens. Examples of this are found in Jim Marrs, Alien Agenda: Investigating the Extraterrestrial Presence Among Us (New York: HarperCollins. 1997); Charles E. Sellers, UFO (Chicago; Contemporary Books, 1997); Philip J Corso, with William J. Birnes. The Day After Roswell (New York: Pocket Books, 1997); Stanton T. Friedman, Top Secret / Majic (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1996); Timothy Good, Above Top Secret: The World-Wide UFO Cover-up, (New York: Quill, 1988); and Alien Contact: Top-Secret UFO Files Revealed, (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1991). Revised ed. 1993. These are but a few of the many titles available.

³⁴ Michael Zimmerman. "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon: Forbidden Knowledge of Hidden Events." Philosophy Today 41:2 (Summer, 1997), 235.

³⁵ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 235.

³⁶ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 235.

³⁷ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 235.

³⁸ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 235.

³⁹ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 239. Those parts quoted are from Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events."

⁴⁰ Zimmerman, "The 'Alien Abduction' Phenomenon," 239.

⁴¹ The playful ruminations of writer Darin Morgan in the X-Files episode "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space'" are examples of what we might call "production sarcasm." A quote from this episode is included later in this paper. "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space,'" X-Files. Writer: Darin Morgan. Dir. Rob Bowman. FOX Broadcasting. Originally broadcast 4/12/96.

⁴² See Eric Nesheim and Leif Nesheim, Saucer Attack: Pop Culture in the Golden Age of Flying Saucers (Los Angeles: Kitchen Sink Press, 1997). See also John Keel, "The Man Who Invented Flying Saucers," The Fringes of Reason: A Whole Earth Catalog, ed. Ted Schultz (New York: Harmony Books, 1989) 138-45; Peebles, Watch the Skies!; and Robert Sheaffer, "A Skeptical Perspective on UFO Abductions," Alien Discussions: Proceedings of the Abduction Study Conference. Andrea Pritchard, et al., ed. (Cambridge, MA: North Cambridge Press, 1994) 382-386.

⁴³ Fuller, The Interrupted Journey. Excerpts from Fuller's book ran in Look magazine the same month the book was released.

⁴⁴ Fuller, The Interrupted Journey. From the introduction by Dr. Benjamin Simon, 5.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Peebles, Watch the Skies!, 160-61.

⁴⁶ Fuller, The Interrupted Journey, 35.

⁴⁷ This was the source of the Zeta Reticuli myth. For a discussion of the star map see Peebles, Watch the Skies! 225. See also Jerome Clark, "Hill Abduction Case," The UFO Book: Encyclopedia of the Extraterrestrial (Detroit: Visible Ink, 1998) 286-293.

⁴⁸ Fuller, The Interrupted Journey, 42-44. Project Blue Book, overseen by the Air Force and consultants led by astronomer J. Allen Hynek, quoted at the beginning of this paper, was little more than a clearing house for public relations.

⁴⁹ John G. Fuller, Incident at Exeter: The Story of Unidentified Flying Objects Over America Today (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1966).

⁵⁰ While the Hills reported losing several hours they could not account for, the concept of "missing time" was first fully introduced to mass public awareness through Budd Hopkins' book of the same name. See Hopkins, Missing Time.

⁵¹ Fuller, The Interrupted Journey, 21.

⁵² Temple University history professor David M. Jacobs has also been the subject of some concern among his fellows, especially after he began using hypnosis to further his investigations. His books Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of UFO Abductions (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992) and The Threat (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998) augment and support those of New York artist and UFO researcher Budd Hopkins. The essential similarities in their theories involve a concerted genetic manipulation of the human species by an alien race. In addition, Harvard psychiatrist John E. Mack has had his methodology reviewed by a board of his peers as a result of his outspoken involvement with the abduction population. Though he passed muster, his book Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens (New York: Charles Scribner, 1994) caused many to ask questions of appropriateness in the research "freedoms" defined by tenure. Courtney Brown, an associate professor of political science at Emory University, has created an uproar with his recent account of two distinct alien life forms, one living on the moon and one in the earth, involving themselves in human affairs. The book, Cosmic Voyage: A Scientific Discovery of Extra-Terrestrials Visiting Earth (New York: Dutton, 1996) asserts that his evidence is incontrovertible. His method of gathering data is the controversial "remote viewing," a process wherein trained individuals are presumably able to witness

events at great distance through a psychic scanning of earth coordinates. The defense department is reported to have spent considerable sums developing and testing this psychic spy method, and Brown alleges he was trained by a military trainer. For more on remote viewing see Howard Blum, Out There: The Government's Secret Quest for Extraterrestrials (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990). For more on academic freedom and questionable research see Jill Neimark, "The Harvard Professor and the UFOs," Psychology Today 27:2 (March/April 1994) : 46+; Harold Orlans, "Lost Faculties," Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning 27.5 (September/October 1995) : 8; Scott O. Lilienfeld, "The Courtney Brown Affair and Academic Freedom," Skeptical Inquirer 21:3 (May/June 1997) 51-54; Martin Gardner, "Courtney Brown's 'Cosmic Voyage' into Preposterism," Skeptical Inquirer 21:3 (May/June 1997) 14+.

⁵³ Originally from J. Allen Hynek, The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry (New York: Ballantine Books, 1974). The following descriptions are taken from C.B.G. Bryan, Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abductions, UFOs, and the Conference at M.I.T., (New York: Dutton, 1996) 7-8. Hynek categorized close range sightings into three types. Close encounters of the first kind involve sightings at close range with little or no "interaction with the environment (other than the impact on the observer);" close encounters of the second kind involve sightings at close range where "physical effects on both animate and inanimate material are noted. Tree branches are reported broken; animals are frightened, sometimes to the extent of injuring themselves in their fright. Inanimate objects, most often vehicles, are reported as becoming momentarily disabled, their engines killed, radios stopped, and headlights dimmed or extinguished. In such cases, the vehicles reportedly return to normal after the UFO has left the scene." Close encounters of the third kind involve cases wherein "the presence of 'occupants' in or about the UFO is reported. Here a sharp distinction must be made between cases involving reports of the presence of presumably intelligent beings in the 'spacecraft' and the so-called contactee cases." In the 1950's the contactees were a group of individuals who reported interactions -- including conversations, mystery initiation, trips to other planets and etc. -- with superior intelligences from outer space who had come specifically to aid the planet in avoiding self-destruction. The contactees were very energetic in their use of the media for the purposes of self-aggrandizement. Their high media profile and circus antics caused many to conflate all matters concerning UFOs with confabulating attention seekers. Hence their impact seriously damaged the credibility of later reports and UFO investigations generally. Some later conspiracy theorists have postulated that contactees may have been under the employ of those government agencies whose job it was to discredit groups investigating UFOs as well as individuals making UFO sighting reports. Research into government documents after the Freedom of Information Act has, at least, revealed a concerted effort -- in the form of injunctions to journalists by government agencies connected to national security -- to harass UFO investigative groups, individuals, and anyone who seeks to report UFO activity in the press.

⁵⁴ Peebles, Watch the Skies!, 226-27.

⁵⁵ For a full catalog of types of aliens reported see Patrick Huyghe, The Field Guide to Extraterrestrials (New York: Avon, 1996); or Kevin Randle and Russ Estes Faces of the Visitors: An Illustrated Reference to Alien Contact (New York: Fireside, 1997). Also, the following four articles are found in the section titled "Descriptions of Aliens" in Chapter II of Pritchard, et al., eds., Alien Discussions: David M. Jacobs, "Aliens and Hybrids," 86-89; Thomas E. Bullard, "The Variety of Abduction Beings," 90; John S. Carpenter, "Other Types of Aliens: Patterns Emerging," 91-94; and Martha Munroe, "Drawings of New Types of Aliens," 95-99.

⁵⁶ Peebles, Watch the Skies! 234-35.

⁵⁷ Raymond E. Fowler, The Andreasson Affair (Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979); The Allagash Abductions: Undeniable Evidence of Alien Intervention (Tigard, OR.: Wildflower Press, 1993); The Andreasson Affair: Phase Two (Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982); The Watchers: The Secret Design Behind UFO Abduction (New York: Bantam Books, 1990).

⁵⁸ Travis Walton, The Walton Experience (New York: Marlowe and Co. 1979). A second edition was published as Fire in the Sky: The Walton Experience, (New York: Marlowe and Co. 1996).

⁵⁹ Peebles, Watch the Skies!, 227-28. See also Walton, Fire in the Sky.

⁶⁰ There have been some such reports. Of particular note is the case of Dr. Gerardo Vidal and his wife as reported in Jenny Randles, Alien Contacts and Abductions: The Real Story from the Other Side (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc. 1993). In their account they "set off from the town of Chascomus, eighty miles south of Buenos Aires, Argentina, to drive 100 miles or so further to visit relatives in Maipu." (p. 108). They recalled their car being immersed in a dense fog "and their very next memory is of finding themselves still in the car but on an unknown side road and now in broad daylight." But it was two days later and they were in Mexico, 4,000 miles away. Their car was impounded for study and the Vidal's were flown home, where Mrs. Vidal was admitted to a local hospital because of her distress. No explanation was ever found.

⁶¹ Bullard, "UFO Abduction Reports: The Supernatural Kidnap Narrative Returns in Technological Guise," 154.

⁶² Walton, Fire in the Sky, 90.

⁶³ Walton, Fire in the Sky.

⁶⁴ Fire in the Sky. Adapted from Walton's accounts by Tracy Tormé. 1993.

⁶⁵ Hopkins, Missing Time.

⁶⁶ Hopkins, Missing Time, 5.

⁶⁷ Hopkins, Intruders.

⁶⁸ A careful explanation of the problems involved is presented in John G. Miller, M.D., "Lack of Proof for Missing Embryo/Fetus Syndrome," In Pritchard, et al. eds., Alien Discussions, 262-270. See also Intruders. CBS. Starring Richard Crenna. Air dates May 17 and 19, 1992.; and Hopkins, Intruders; and Jacobs, Secret Life and The Threat.

⁶⁹ Hopkins, Intruders, 31.

⁷⁰ Hopkins, Intruders, 31.

⁷¹ See Newman and Baumeister, "Toward an Explanation of the UFO Abduction Phenomenon: Hypnotic Elaboration, Extraterrestrial Sadomasochism, and Spurious Memories." Psychological Inquiry 7:22 (1996) 99-126.

⁷² Hopkins, Witnessed.

⁷³ Marrs, Alien Agenda, 243.

⁷⁴ Strieber, Communion.

⁷⁵ Jacobs, The Threat, 42.

⁷⁶ The Hudson Bay area is particularly active in terms of UFO sightings. For information see J. Allen Hynek, Philip J. Imbrogno, and Bob Pratt, Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO Sightings (New York: Ballantine, 1987).

⁷⁷ Jacobs, The Threat, 42.

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- ⁷⁸ Jenny Randles, Alien Contact: The First Fifty Years (New York: Sterling Publishing Co. 1997) 112.
- ⁷⁹ Whitley Strieber, Transformation: The Breakthrough (New York: Avon. 1988).
- ⁸⁰ Whitley Strieber, Majestic (New York: Berkley Books, 1989).
- ⁸¹ Whitley Strieber, Breakthrough: The Next Step (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).
- ⁸² Whitley Strieber, The Secret School (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).
- ⁸³ Whitley Strieber, Confirmation: The Hard Evidence of Aliens Among Us (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).
- ⁸⁴ Strieber and Strieber, The Communion Letters.
- ⁸⁵ Intruders. CBS. Starring Richard Crenna. Air dates May 17 and 19, 1992. See Tony Scott, "The Intruders," parts 1 and 2. Variety 347:5 (May 18, 1992) pg. 49.
- ⁸⁶ Mack, Abduction.
- ⁸⁷ Thomas E. Bullard, "Epistemological Totalitarianism: The Skeptical Case Against Abductions," International UFO Reporter 19:4 (Sept./Oct. 1994) 9-16.
- ⁸⁸ Bullard, "Epistemological Totalitarianism," 10.
- ⁸⁹ Mack, Abduction, 138.
- ⁹⁰ Mack, Abduction, 138.
- ⁹¹ Mack, Abduction, 139.
- ⁹² Space, Tina Landau, Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago, January 12-25, 1998.
- ⁹³ Jacobs, Secret Life.
- ⁹⁴ Jacobs, The Threat.
- ⁹⁵ Jean Baudrillard, "The Precession of Simulacra," Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader, ed. John Storey (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994) 361. Excerpted from "Simulations." Semiotext(e) (New York, 1983) 1-30.
- ⁹⁶ The information included here is derived from Hilary Evans, Visions. Apparitions. Alien Visitors, (Wellingborough, Northhamshire: Aquarian Press, 1984) 136-145. See also Peter M. Rojcewicz, "Folklore of the 'Men in Black': A Challenge to the Prevailing Paradigm." ReVISION 11:4 (Spring, 1989), 5-16; Dennis Stacy, "UFO Folklore: The Men in Black." The Fringes of Reason: A Whole Earth Catalog, ed. Ted Schultz (New York: Harmony Books, 1989) 154-55. See also Jenny Randles, The Truth Behind the Men in Black--Government Agents or Visitors from Beyond (St. Martin's Paperbacks, 1997); and Jim Keith, Casebook on the Men in Black (Lilburn, Georgia: IllumiNet Press, 1997).
- ⁹⁷ See Bullard, "Epistemological Totalitarianism," 13.
- ⁹⁸ "Pilot." X-Files. Writer/Producer: Chris Carter. Dir. Robert Mandel. Original Broadcast date 9/10/93.

⁹⁹ The case of Thomas Mantell is the only official report of loss of life by a US military service person related to UFOs. See also Jacques Vallee, Confrontations: A Scientist's Search for Alien Contact (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990).

¹⁰⁰ See Linda Moulton Howe, An Alien Harvest: Further Evidence Linking Animal Mutilations and Human Abductions to Alien Life Forms (Huntington Valley, PA : Linda Howe Productions, 1993). Many abductees also report inexplicable surveillance and/or harassment by unmarked black helicopters and/or the classic "men in black". See Dennis Stillings, "Helicopters, UFOs, and the Psyche," ReVISION 11:4 (Spring, 1989) 25-32; and T.R. Adams, The Choppers--and the Choppers (Paris, Texas: Project Stigma, 1980).

¹⁰¹ "The Alien Invasion." A five part report on FOX TV. Broadcast January 19-23, 1998. 9-11pm EST. See also Strieber, Confirmation.

¹⁰² X-Files. FOX Broadcasting. Prod. Chris Carter.

¹⁰³ Gregory van Dyk, The Alien Files: The Secrets of Extraterrestrial Encounters and Abductions (Shaftsbury, Dorset: Element Books. 1997).

¹⁰⁴ Susan Marie Powers, "Dissociation in Alleged Extraterrestrial Abductees," Dissociation 7:1 (March 1994) : 44-50. Mark Rodeghier, "Psychosocial Characteristics of Abductees." In Pritchard, et al. eds., Alien Discussions, 296-304. Also, in the same volume, "Evidence for Abuse Among Abductees," 338-341. Chequers, et al., "Belief in Extraterrestrial Life, UFO-related Beliefs, and Schizotypal Personality;" Parnell and Sprinkle, "Personality Characteristics of Persons Who Claim UFO Experiences;" T. Bloecher, A. Clamar, A. & B. Hopkins, Final Report on the Psychological Testing of UFO Abductees (Mount Rainier, MD: Fund for UFO Research, 1985); R.E. Bartholomew, K. Basterfield, & G.S. Howard, "UFO Abductees and Contactees: Psychopathology or Fantasy-Proneness?" Professional Psychology: Research and Practice 22 (1991) 215-222; Kenneth Ring and C.J. Rosing, "The Omega Project: A Psychological Survey of Persons Reporting Abductions and Other UFO Encounters," Journal of UFO Studies 3 (1990) 59-98. An entire issue of Psychological Inquiry (Vol. 7. No 2: 1996) is devoted to discussion of the theories put forth by Newman and Baumeister (see target article, that issue) as possible alternative causes to the alien abduction syndrome. Their review of the literature can be very helpful in gaining a perspective on this phenomenon.

¹⁰⁵ Bill Ellis, "The Varieties of Alien Experience." The Hundredth Monkey and Other Paradigms of the Paranormal: A Skeptical Inquirer Collection, ed. Kendrick Frazier (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991) 70-77.

¹⁰⁶ Mack, Abduction; McLeod, et al., "A More Parsimonious Explanation for UFO Abduction." Psychological Inquiry 7:2 (1996) : 156-168.

¹⁰⁷ "Pilot." X-Files. Writer: Chris Carter. Dir. Robert Mandel. Original Broadcast date 9/10/93.

¹⁰⁸ Charolette A. O'Conner, "Abduction: An Alien Experience?" UFOs" The Final Answer? Ufology for the 21st Century, ed. David Barclay and Therese Marie Barclay (London: Blanford. 1993) 167.

¹⁰⁹ O'Conner, "Abduction: An Alien Experience?" 167.

¹¹⁰ For an interesting exposé on source material for the show, see Jane Goldman, The X-Files Book of the Unexplained (New York: HarperPrism, 1995). Goldman introduces articles not unlike those collected by Charles Fort early in this century. Fort may have been an early progenitor of the UFO phenomenon, but he was indiscriminate in his passion for collecting reports of the strange and bizarre. The Fortean Times is still published.

¹¹¹ "The X-Files Meets the Skeptics," Skeptical Inquirer 21:1 (January/February 1997) 24-30. This is an edited transcript of Chris Carter's talk as "luncheon banquet speaker for the first day of World Sceptic's Conference and CSICOP Twentieth Anniversary Conference in Amherst, New York."

¹¹² Jacques Vallee, Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991) 4. Vallee is an astrophysicist and computer scientist who has worked as a consultant for NASA. He met J. Allen Hynek at Northern Illinois University while Hynek was head of the Astronomy Department and Vallee was completing his Doctoral work in computer science. They formed a close friendship there and continued to work together right through the last years of Hynek's life. Vallee has explored the UFO phenomenon since the great French UFO wave of 1954 when he witnessed the willful destruction of radar tapes containing the tracking of anomalous activity. He has written, alone or with others, more than seven books about UFO phenomena and is considered by many to be, after Hynek, the most informed ufologist of our time. Vallee served as the real-life model for the character of the French scientist in Steven Spielberg's Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

¹¹³ "Jose Chung's 'From Outer Space'," X-Files. Writer: Darin Morgan. Dir. Rob Bowman. FOX Broadcasting. Originally broadcast 4/12/96.

¹¹⁴ Lawson, "A Testable Theory for UFO Abduction Reports;" and "Perinatal Imagery in UFO Abduction Reports." The Journal of Psychohistory 12:2 (Fall 1984). Persinger, "The 'Visitor' Experience;" Michael A. Persinger, "Geophysical Variables and Behavior: LIII. Epidemiological Considerations for Incidence of Cancer and Depression in Areas of Frequent UFO Reports" Perceptual and Motor Skills 67. (1988) : 700-803; with J. S. Derr, "Geophysical Variables and Behavior: LXII. Temporal Coupling of UFO Reports and Seismic Energy Release within the Rio Grande Rift System: Discriminative Validity of the Tectonic Strain Theory," Perceptual and Motor Skills 71. (1990) : 567-72; Persinger with Brian Hart and Alex Thomas, "Geophysical Variables and Behavior: LXXX. Periodicities and Energetic Characteristics of a Strobe-light Luminosity During a Geomagnetic Storm," Perceptual and Motor Skills 82. (1996) : 683-688.

¹¹⁵ Raschke, "UFOs: Ultraterrestrial Agents."

¹¹⁶ Raschke, "UFOs: Ultraterrestrial Agents," 25.

¹¹⁷ Thompson, Angels and Aliens.

¹¹⁸ Thompson, Angels and Aliens, 15.

¹¹⁹ Thompson, "Wrestling with Angels," 32.

¹²⁰ Kenneth Ring, Life at Death (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1980); and Heading Toward Omega (New York: William Morrow, 1984). The information included here is a distillation of his later ideas as presented in "Near-Death and UFO Encounters as Shamanic Initiations," The Omega Project," and "Toward an Imaginal Interpretation of 'UFO Abductions'."

¹²¹ Ring, "Near-Death and UFO Encounters as Shamanic Initiations," 15. The four stages which are common to the UFO abduction are as follows: "(1) a sense of being taken away, usually against one's will, by one or more humanoid beings and (2) brought into a strange, alien environment where (3) one is subjected to an invasive physical examination that in some instances seems to have to do with one's reproductive organs, following which (4) one is returned to the physical world, though not necessarily to exactly the same location where the abduction apparently originated" (15). Interestingly, this pattern of abduction is similar to accounts throughout history. For an in depth exploration see Bullard, "UFO Abduction Reports: The Supernatural Kidnap Narrative Returns," or Vallee, Passport to Magonia.

¹²² Ring credits the following works as his sources for a definable pattern of stages of shamanic initiation: Mircea Eliade, Rites and Symbols of Initiation (New York: Harper and Row, 1958) and Shamanism

(Princeton: Bolligen, 1964); also S. Nicholson, Shamanism (Wheaton Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1987); and H. Kalweit, Dreamtime and Inner Space (Boston: Shambala, 1988).

¹²³ Karl A. Brunstein, Beyond the Four Dimensions: Reconciling Physics, Parapsychology, and UFOs (New York : Walker and Co., 1979).

¹²⁴ Brunstein, Beyond the Four Dimensions, 153.

¹²⁵ Brunstein, Beyond the Four Dimensions, 158.

¹²⁶ Brunstein, Beyond the Four Dimensions, 135.

¹²⁷ David J. Hufford, "Humanoids and Anomalous Lights: Taxonomic and Epistemological Problems." Fabula 18 (1977) 234.

¹²⁸ Hufford, "Humanoids and Anomalous Lights," 236.

¹²⁹ Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962. 2nd Ed. 1970. Kuhn defined the stages of crisis which the inculcation of new information bring about in philosophical systems, such as consensus scientific reality, and which result in necessary shifts in thinking, or changes in "paradigm."

¹³⁰ Hufford, "Humanoids and Anomalous Lights," 235.

¹³¹ Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries: The Encounter Between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities, trans. Philip Mairet (New York: Harper TorchBooks, 1967) 106. Originally published as Mythes, Rêves et Mystères in 1957 by Librairie Gallimard, Paris.

¹³² Eliade, Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries," 106.

¹³³ Baudrillard, "The Precession of Simulacra," 362.

¹³⁴ "... the meaning of meaning (in the general sense of meaning and not in the sense of signalization) is infinite implication, the indefinite referral of signifier to signifier?" Jacques Derrida, Writing and Difference, trans. Allan Bass (London: Routledge and Paul Kegan; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) 25.

¹³⁵ Definition 5b in Webster's Third International states: "the body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting a distinct complex of tradition of a racial, religious, or social group." Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1969) 552.

¹³⁶ Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present, ed. Patricia Bizell and Bruce Herzberg (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1990) 1154-64.

¹³⁷ In Flying Saucer: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies, Jung says of UFOs that they "behave rather like weightless thoughts." Jung, Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. Princeton UP : 1978.

¹³⁸ Westrum, "Social Intelligence About Hidden Events," 381-82.

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