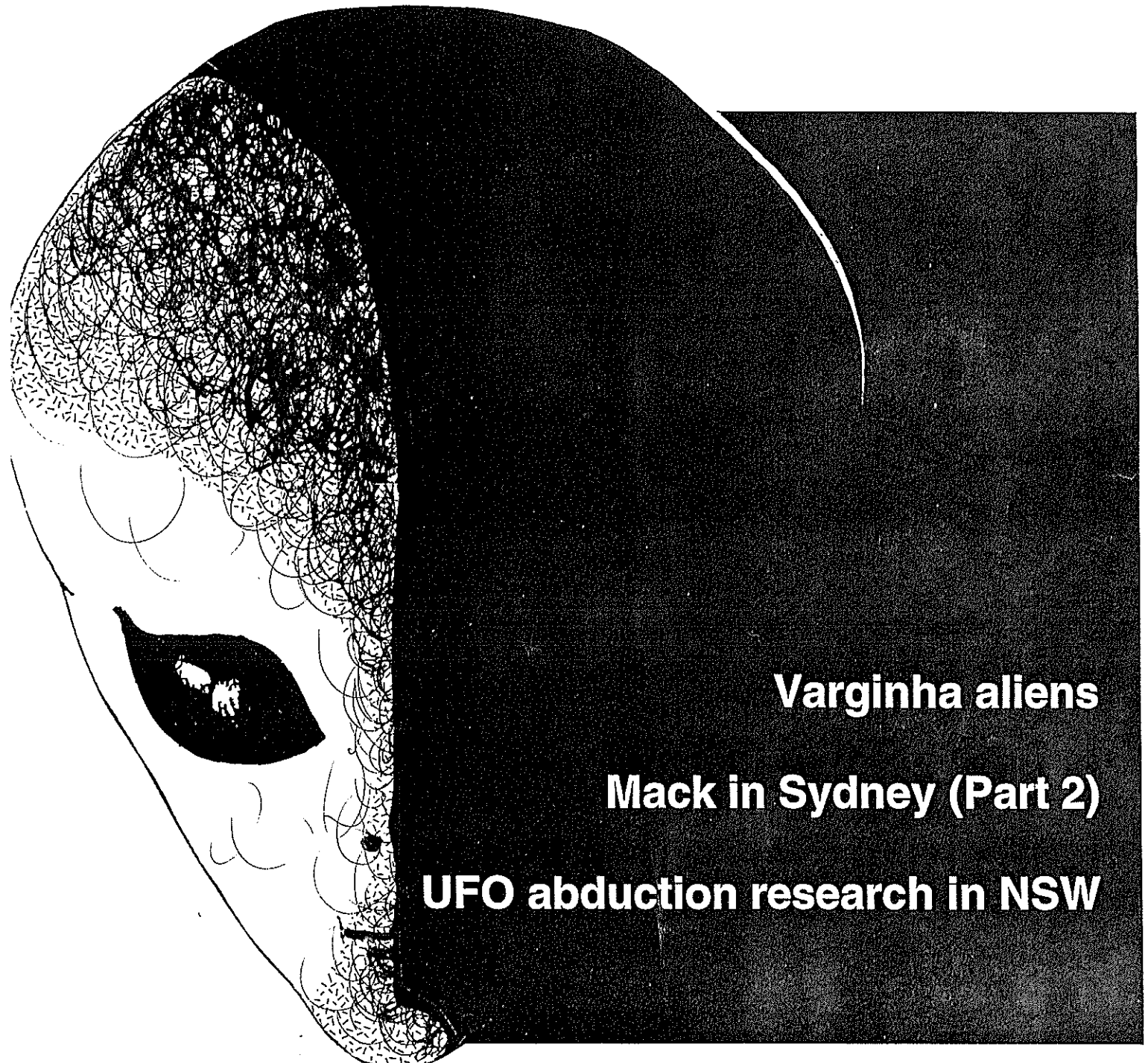


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Varginha aliens

Mack in Sydney (Part 2)

UFO abduction research in NSW

UFO Reporter

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International UFO Symposium, Brisbane

Following close after the UFOR(QLD) Australian Seminar in August 1996, MUFON (Queensland) featured a series of overseas and local speakers at its international Symposium in October. This has provided Australian UFO buffs with an unparalleled opportunity to hear some of the world's best speakers on UFOs and find out how well we are keeping up with overseas developments.

I was very pleased to find that, generally, groups here have excellent access to the best, most up-to-date material available. The steady stream of UFO publications, videos, Internet items and personal correspondence now available to us, ensures good, recent information is very accessible.

The Symposium was opened by MUFON Director, Walt Andrus who spoke on the 'Manhattan transfer' case recently featured by Budd Hopkins in his book *Witnessed*. This address was almost a carbon copy of the material Hopkins provided in Sydney and Brisbane during 1992 (see *UFO Reporter*, vol. 2, no.1, March 1993 for details)

Andrus was followed by other US luminaries such as Stanton Friedman, John Mack, Whitley Streiber, John Carpenter, and Peter Davenport. Some of these speakers were subsequently able to speak at engagements in Sydney and Melbourne. UFOR(NSW) was able to obtain Peter Davenport from the Seattle-based National UFO reporting hotline to address members the week following the Brisbane Symposium.

Excellent contributions were provided by less well-known speak-

ers from the UK, Australia, and Central and South America (Mexico, Brazil and Chile), providing an international perspective. While US influences continue to dominate UFO research, these 'other' speakers show that important work is taking place elsewhere:

□ Heimi Masson, a TV reporter from Mexico reviewed the Mexico City solar eclipse UFO sightings and subsequent events there. This material has often featured at our general meetings in Sydney, and he included recent video footage from Metepec of an insectoid alien. (Walt Andrus agreed to review this Mexican material, some of which MUFON investigators have previously attributed to Venus.)

□ Ademar Gevaerd of Brazil reported on investigations into the Varginha case (see box following)

Australian investigators I have spoken to were most enthusiastic about the Symposium, which seems to firmly slot Brisbane into the international UFO Symposium 'circuit'. This should greatly benefit the subject in this part of the world in future.

1996 has also been a busy and notable year for UFO research gen-

erally. For example, media reports of a meteorite, "ALH84001", found in Antarctica in 1984, indicated that it included fossils of primitive organisms from the planet Mars. During the media circus that followed, it was alleged that scientists had withheld publicising this information for eleven years and only revealed their find as a way of countering recent US Government attempts to curb the US space budget.

Most UFO researchers seemed delighted to consider this as just another indication of life elsewhere in the universe, and have quite overlooked the important issue of mainstream Science admitting to suppressing a major but 'inconvenient' discovery, even to other scientists. Are there similar cases of scientific suppression waiting for disclosure at the 'right' moment? For example, exobiologists engaged in the SETI project routinely declare that if they find radio signals from alien civilisations, Science, the United Nations and the World will know about it 'within hours'.

After ALH84001, this now seems less likely. While mainstream scientists have long assured us that important scientific discoveries are a part of everyman's intellectual property, and not subject to

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any one political agenda, this is now shown to be 'unrealistic'. Perhaps similar scientific information has been suppressed about the Face on Mars, for example. So, while the Mars meteor broadens our horizons, it also shows that some people find the new view it provides deeply disturbing.

And this does not mean that UFO researchers know better. For

example, in Australia, some ufologists avoid research into the alien abduction phenomenon. As it happens, this issue of the *UFO Reporter* is very much an 'abduction' issue, with articles about Mack, and the abduction phenomena in New South Wales.

Recently, four investigators from UFOR(NSW) underwent training in hypnotherapy to help

with their investigations in this area, so there will be future issues which develop this topic. While UFO abductions are just one aspect of a much greater phenomenon, the subject has been difficult to broach and requires specialised skills such as hypnotherapy. It's going to take UFOR(NSW) a while to get an accurate idea of just what is going on here. □

The Varginha Case (20 January 1996)

Professor Ademar Gevaerd, who spoke at the 1996 International UFO Symposium in Brisbane, gave up a Professorship in Chemistry to become Brazil's only full-time UFO investigator. He now edits two popular Portuguese-language UFO magazines, and has been the Brazilian Director for MUFON since 1995.

South America has a very long history of UFO phenomena and investigations, but the recent Varginha case is possibly the most important UFO event ever recorded there. US researchers such as Mack, Friedman and Carpenter had visited Brazil in recent months to confer with local witnesses and investigators.

Varginha is a city of 120,000 people some 250 km north north east of Sao Paulo in southern Brazil. The area around Sao Paulo is quite heavily populated and includes several of Brazil's best known UFO investigators. These researchers have collected and correlated information from many different sources to provide an extremely detailed account of the incident.

Shortly after midnight on Saturday 20 January 1996 the Brazilian Air Defense authorities were apparently contacted by NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) who had detected an infrared UFO trace in a downwards trajectory near Sao Paulo. This information was leaked to investigators by local radar station personnel.

Around 1.30 a.m. an elderly farming couple near Varginha were awoken when their cattle and sheep became agitated, noisy, and began acting strangely. Checking outside, the couple observed a rectangular craft with square windows hovering some five metres above the ground nearby. It was issuing 'smoke' and the walls of the craft appeared to

be shaking and flexing, as if it were in some difficulty.

Some hours later, at around 7 a.m., the local Fire Brigade began receiving telephone calls that an unusual animal seemed to have escaped from the nearby forest reserve and required their removal. (In Brazil, local Fire Department staff are responsible for capturing and returning the occasional alligator, monkey or snake which wanders away from local jungle).

The firemen arrived on the scene about two hours later, at around 10.30 a.m. (this kind of response to a call is apparently fairly typical of the service). They found military personnel from a local military police sergeants' college already present and surrounding an unusual entity in a local gully.

The entity was easily netted by the Fire Department and there had been some debate between the military and the firemen as to which agency had the authority over the captive. It was placed in a wooden box with a canvas cover, which was finally loaded onto a military truck and taken away, at around 11 a.m.

A building site worker nearby had watched the netting of the small entity. It appeared to be lethargic and hurt, and occasionally emitted a buzzing noise. Fire Department personnel later confirmed these details with investigators.

A few hours later, around mid afternoon on the 20th, three young women on their way home from work as domestics were startled to see an unusual, noiseless 'animal' crouching next to a wall to one side of their overgrown path. It appeared to be hurt, and the first woman to notice it screamed. They had all then run away, thinking the creature must be the devil. The entity was described as small, humanoid



and had a large hairless head. It had brown, oily skin, and three cranial ridges, one central and one ridge either side, running front to back. It had two large bright red eyes and its shoulders and neck seemed to be covered by a network of raised reddish veins. There had been a strong, ammonia-like smell in the air.

Within an hour, the mother of two of the women had returned to the site, but found nothing except an unusual smell – the same ammonia-like smell was reported by other townspeople who visited the area soon afterwards.

During that Saturday, many locals noticed an unusual increase in military activity in the township itself, with trucks patrolling the streets and entering or leaving the local hospital. Other sorties were apparently made by military trucks to the area of the first capture and more entities were caught (the exact number and their condition was uncertain).

It appears that the first entity caught had been taken to a health clinic nearby for treatment. The sole doctor and nurse on duty at the clinic had indicated they were ill-equipped to treat such a case and referred the military to a larger hospital in central Varginha. Sections of this larger hospital had been closed off, with normal employee access restricted. Police and army personnel had guarded the hospital constantly and medical staff had been strongly pressured by military and medical authorities not to mention what occurred. However, so many people

had been caught up in the incident that UFO researchers were still collecting eyewitness information.

Apparently US military doctors had been quickly flown in to 'join' the Brazilian medical team, but the first, injured alien captured had died. The dead body had then been taken to the regional university hospital in Campinas where an autopsy was performed by the world-famous Brazilian surgeon who autopsied the Nazi war criminal Josef Mengel some years previously. This autopsy had been videoed by the visiting Americans and afterwards the first captured alien and other alien bodies had been flown to the United States in a special plane sent for the purpose.

A number of unusual alien sightings had been made subsequently by local people and it seemed possible that some UFO crash survivors had eluded capture by the military.

Brazilian Government authorities had tried to cover up the incident by denying any aliens had been seen, and local UFO investigators had been harassed and threatened during their enquiries. The incident had received a great deal of media exposure in Brazil and South America, and most Brazilians were far from convinced by 'official' versions of the incident.

Brazilian investigators expected to eventually piece together the complete picture of what had happened, as eyewitnesses were still coming forward with their reports. □



Exploring cross-cultural UFO abduction experiences

John Mack in Sydney, Part 2

The second and concluding part of a public address given by Dr John Mack at the Zenith Centre, Chatswood, New South Wales on Sunday evening 4 February 1996 (organised by the Australian Transpersonal Association).

Mack began his career and established his reputation as a Freudian analyst. His own transpersonal journey had started much later in his career when his son became interested in topics such as transcendental meditation. While trying to keep up with his son, Mack met Stanislav Grof (in 1987) and studied holotropic breathwork techniques which opened up new horizons for him.

Like many people in the 1980s, John Mack had believed people involved with UFO abductions were insane. In 1989, Mack had read a paper by Keith Thompson which viewed UFO abductions as another form of spiritual emergency. Soon afterwards he met Budd Hopkins and UFO experiencers. He found, that as a psychiatrist, he had no clinical explanation for what people were telling him.

From a clinical perspective, Mack formed the view that “what was really happening was exactly what experiencers were telling him”. Except for one thing — what they reported, was impossible in our world view.

Mack had then faced a choice. Either to stay with the existing world view, or to expand this world view to incorporate these abduction experiences. When trying to interest other health professionals in abduction research, their most common reaction was that they already had enough reality to work with, and I could not take on more. Reflecting on this, Mack had concluded that people can only absorb so much new information at a time.

After publication of his book, Harvard University had reacted to Mack's nationwide television promotion tour and advised him by letter they were forming a commit-

tee to investigate his behaviour. The reason they gave was that by countenancing experiencers' views, he was affirming their false beliefs and causing harm. The committee finally backed off and Mack said he had been asked to form a working party to look at anomalous phenomena generally.

The first question that generally came up, often from the media, was whether the phenomenon was real. The question Mack asked was “who decides what is real, television, politicians, or the general population?”

Mack provided a overview of the current status of the alien abduction phenomena, based on his own experience in the field, and admitted that many of the basic elements in the abduction phenomenon material were now very familiar to most of us.

The focus on alien abductions was now rapidly shifting away from the novelty of the phenomenon to, “Well, aliens are here, so what? What does it all mean?”

Many mainstream scientists still demanded some kind of “proof”. However, the way to learn in this field was through a deeper exploration of experiences with other people.

This required an altogether different methodology to that of traditional, eighteenth-century science where you observe phenomena from a distance. The alien abduction phenomenon would not yield any basic information or secrets to that traditional kind of approach. It was a field that required our fullest energies to find what was happening.

Mack's background was as a clinician, a psychiatrist with a strong academic bent, and a rationalist orientation. He was con-

stantly asked how a self-respecting Harvard academic had got involved in such a disreputable field and did not know how to answer that. He had just slipped into it gradually.

Transpersonal psychology

His main interest had been in researching consciousness and the boundaries of human experience. Alien abductions were a quantum leap from his clinical psychiatry work and a disreputable “fringe” subject in the field of transpersonal psychology. (Transpersonal psychologists study the psychology that goes beyond our biographical lives to our birth experiences, and our consciousness as identified with beings, entities, mythical figures, gods, goddesses — the “cosmic” spirit of the world.)

Alien abductions were regarded as the “McDonalds of Transpersonal psychology”; an Everyman’s transpersonal psychology. Because UFOs kidnap people and produce scoop marks and lesions on abductees, this is not an esoteric phenomenon. It does not appear to be spiritually-oriented, like buddhist meditation, kundalini, or reiki — the kind of phenomena that psychologists can grab, and which are very powerful tools for human transformation.

There was a scary game in the mental health field where practitioners focussed on finding fault with the messenger. Mack had been subjected to this process, and even accused of a late mid-life crises (a situation he actually found very flattering!).

Mack nevertheless saw his abduction research as a progression of his earlier clinical work. People were sincerely reporting experiences where a light, or strange beings had entered their homes or surrounded their cars. They had been transported and terrified by their experience. The same people valued themselves and seemed to be people of altogether sound mind.

As a psychiatrist with an interest in consciousness and transpersonal psychology, the abduction phenomenon seemed a natural and important extension of the unusual experiences transpersonal psychologists were investigating — near-death experiences, kundalini awakenings, shamanism, and explorations of past lives. These were

opening up the realm of human experience of consciousness — an area which had a lot of power, interest and potential meaning for people.

Mack had worked intensively in the United States with between a hundred and a hundred and twenty abductees and had used a modified hypnosis approach with about seventy cases. The phenomenon was extremely robust and many cases exhibited remarkable consistency. There were the expected variations according to individual differences, but the basic range of phenomena remained consistent, which was one reason he took the subject so seriously.

On the whole, mental health professionals were not prepared to look at the phenomenon. He had increasingly found that investigations required intense work on powerful experiences, and you needed to fully engage the individuals you were working with to learn what they had been through. Mental health professionals were not generally prepared to do that and were basically conversationalists.

That was changing and more and more people were using hypnotherapy. However, many hypnotherapists were still not prepared for the intense energies of people with these kind of experiences bottled up inside. Perhaps health professionals were not the best people to deal with the phenomenon, but they could at least develop an approach for these experiencers which was clinically sound and responsible.

Cross-cultural approaches

The cross-cultural aspects of the phenomenon were extremely important. If it was simply an American, high-tech, media-driven, “Stephen Spielbergish” type of phenomenon, than it could be attributed to media hype or aerospace orientation. However, if the phenomenon was found in other countries around the world, particularly non-western countries with a strong

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indigenous population, and showed the same basic dimensions, the phenomenon was something more significant and real.

While it was still too early to report conclusively, work already done in Brazil, South Africa, Zimbabwe, in Europe, among indigenous Americans, and now in Australia found the same phenomenon over and over again. There was not enough information

During their conversation Mack had asked why they were coming forward now, after knowing all this time. His answer had been that we did not have a way to know this because we had only three dimensions of reality in our culture, while they had 220 dimensions

to know if the phenomenon was exactly the same everywhere, but the basic phenomenology appeared to be occurring consistently all over the world.

Mack had recently spoken with a Lakota indian in South Dakota. He

was the leader of a group of medicine men who had decided to come forward to share what they know of the "Star People" and their role in the history of the American indians.

During their conversation Mack had asked why they were coming forward now, after knowing all this time. Abduction researchers had been working hard, unaware that some native American tribes were aware of the phenomenon. His answer had been that we did not have a way to know this because we had only three dimensions of reality in our culture, while they had 220 dimensions. The aliens came from some other dimension of reality and manifested in our physical world. Many phenomena did that in their culture.

Mack had interviewed a Brazilian farmer and a Zulu medicine man from South Africa, each of whom had a "classical" abduction experience. Mack was also hearing from Australian aboriginals familiar with the phenomenon.

There were three fundamental dimensions of the abduction phenomenon being researched as follows:

- The basic, physical/biological relationship with the beings. This included the fundamental abduction story where someone at home, or in the car, or out of

doors sees a strong beam of light coming down with some sort of energy. They may see more and more alien beings around them; they are frightened and paralysed and transported against their will to some sort of enclosure. Within that enclosure they are subjected to a range of intrusive procedures such as being stared at, body probings, and sperm taken from men, or eggs from women. In subsequent abductions these people see hybrid children that look like a cross between us and them. A very strong relationship develops between humans and the beings. There was a lot of controversy about whether the beings had emotions or cared about us, or whether they were cold and indifferent. Much of this had to do with the experiencers perceptions of the relationship. There were physical dimensions to this aspect, such as cuts, scoop marks and lesions. Often people reported extensive bleeding noses from childhood abduction experiences and probings of the nose. If the person could not find a therapist to work with, this aspect could be very traumatic in many ways. First of all the experience itself could be personally traumatic if people felt isolated. Until recently, their view of reality was shattered, because such things are not supposed to happen and they had no control over it. The experience could recur at any time. Parents had trouble because they could not protect their children.

- The second dimension was informational. People are in some sort of communication with the beings who tell them there are problems in the way human beings are living. This process seems to be an invitation for growth and was not a problem-solving workshop. The information is conveyed in several ways through mind-to-mind communication from them to the experiencer, or on television-like monitors inside the enclosure where the person is taken, or through the eyes of the beings. This is a message of some desperate sort about what is happening to our planet, and people may be shown scenes of nuclear

destruction, or an outcome from the environmental devastation that is happening. This may have a powerful impact on the person in terms of changing their lives. Mack knew of a Victorian family of abductees who had moved to a forest logging area to stop further destruction of the environment. They had actively decided to take on a leadership role to try to block devastation by local logging companies. This mobilisation of abductees to take a stand on behalf of the Earth seemed to be a fundamental aspect of the phenomenon. Often abductees felt quite desperate, and were not optimistic, but became very committed to doing something anyway.

- The third area involves human growth, transformation, consciousness development, and spirituality. This has many elements to it that are difficult to describe, but seems to be at least as important as the first two dimensions. For example, during a hypnosis or relaxation session an abductee may open up to past life experiences and be struck by the fact that they are not finite beings in terms of this biography. Their consciousness exists over time. Or, they may have the experience that what we know as Space-Time does not apply, or collapses, and they are in tune with an infinity of consciousness where their consciousness can travel and exchange information from other dimensions or other parts of the universe. One woman Mack worked with described the phenomenon as cutting across socioeconomic lines and very "egalitarian". She said it was as if "all Time had collapsed and she was present through all aspects of Time at the same moment". Such experiences were counter-intuitive, but the phenomenon seemed to remove the barriers of our materialistic world view and our finite view of ourselves. Possibly another part of this spiritual category was the sense that we were at one with these alien beings and that we have all come from a common stock. We had split off from the same source at some point. Some people experienced themselves as both human, with a human

identity, and as alien seeing through alien eyes. Part of the purpose of the abduction phenomenon was to integrate this alien identity with our human identity. Often abductees discovered they have made some kind of an agreement with the Source, or God, or whatever, to come to Earth and be embodied to pursue life here. They felt separated from that original Source.

One of the most moving and powerful aspects of this occurs when someone in the course of a regression says they feel they are "home" again, back with the Divine Light or Source they came from. At that point they will often become very angry they have to be embodied on Earth; they feel they are not from here but from some other dimension.

She said it was as if "all Time had collapsed and she was present through all aspects of Time at the same moment".

Mack then showed a videotape which had two parts.

The first few minutes of footage showed an interview of a leading South African witchdoctor, Creto Motuha. He was well known to psychologists and anthropologists as a person of enormous lore about South Africa and Zulu mythology. Mack had first heard of him in 1994, while on a public television program. During an interview by satellite link to Johannesburg, it became clear there was some connection about what Mack was learning from abductees in the United States and Creto's experience of what he called the *Menindanee*. These were a type of alien being Creto had encountered through his life and which he sculpted with large round heads and large eyes, similar to the aliens Mack had found. Creto described a dramatic abduction experience from his late thirties, when working as a miner and training to become a shaman. The case was similar in some ways to the Travis Walton, *Fire in the Sky*, case where a timber worker went missing for several days in Arizona, but involved a sexual encounter with an alien female. Creto's view was that it was really important for us to take this phenomenon seriously in the West

and to recognise these beings were real, and both informative but dangerous to us.

Creto's abduction

The woman Creto encountered during his abduction experience was "utterly unnatural", not warm like a human being. She felt like a dead body, without beating arteries or veins. To Creto it had been a demeaning and frightening experience, and his skin still felt peculiar when recalling it. The female looked like a Zulu girl, but said nothing and had very European eyes. He noticed she seemed machine-like and had no bones. Although in pain, the "creature" had pushed him off the table and he had been shown "strange things" he did not understand, even now. Something he did remember was seeing a creature inside what seemed to be a bottle.

The next moment he was in the bush again. His body was covered with grey dust, his clothing was torn, and he smelt of the same "horrible, rotten-fish" odour he had

"I have had quite scary experiences in my life; I have faced a panther (it happens to everybody in Africa), but the experience with the Menindanee was twenty times worse than that."

smelt in the strange room. His brain felt very dull, and he gradually became aware of things that were wrong. His big mining boots (with heavy hobnails, good for kicking snakes and crocodiles!) which he always wore into

the bush, were missing. He had walked around the bush not knowing where he was, but began to look for a nearby village. He had found and walked along a track until he saw human footprints and followed these until he came to a small collection of houses. Every village dog had attacked him and pulled him down until the villagers came running and chased them away. He had then spoken to a man, an "ordinary African", who recognised him as someone the tribal police had been trying to find for three days.

Creto then found his left thigh, nose and groin were starting to hurt terribly. He had suddenly lost all strength and fallen down. Two men had found a wheelbarrow behind

some houses, had lifted Creto into it and taken him to a friend's house.

"I have had quite scary experiences in my life; I have faced a panther (it happens to everybody in Africa), but the experience with the *Menindanee* was twenty times worse than that."

Harare, Zimbabwe 1994

The rest of the video included interviews with three students from a suburban girls' school in Harare, Zimbabwe. There had been two days of dramatic UFO sightings on 14–15 September 1994. On 16 September, at around 10 a.m. some 60 pupils were in their morning break, outside. The older schoolchildren who supervise the younger children noticed the younger ones were wandering further out from the school yard than they were supposed to. They had followed them outside and the younger children had pointed out UFOs nearby. All the children had seen these UFOs and were both frightened and excited. Some had rushed back inside to tell their teachers who were at a meeting at the time. At first the teachers had been unconvinced, but when the children's reports were examined carefully, later they were consistent and sincere. There did not appear to be any pranks involved, so teaching staff concluded the children "saw something that was not of this world".

It did not seem that any children had been abducted, but the incident had made a very powerful impact on their lives.

The girls had seen one large hovering, hemispherical spaceship with a saucer-like base, and numerous small hemispherical "spaceships" clustering around the large one. All craft had a central girdle of small lights. The large craft was a greenish colour and had one dark, opaque "sunscreen-like" trapezoid window. The weather had been bright and fine, but not sunny.

Two "aliens" had also been seen, one directly under the big craft. This alien had a "longish, round face, dark eyes, and two holes for a nose. It did not appear to have a mouth, and had "normal" arms and legs.

The second alien was running around in the grass over to the right. It ran like a human, but with a bit more "bouncing", as if it

were lighter. It ran back and forth several times, before both aliens "flew" up into the spaceships, which moved slightly up into the air and then shot off into the distance, "like lightning".

Another witness described the objects and aliens similarly, but was trying to tell some children who were crying not to worry because she "felt" there was nothing really to worry about. She had been 3-4 metres from a being in the grass a little taller than herself, with large eyes which had no pupils and no colour. It had been quite scary and she had the feeling that the entity wanted people to know "we were doing harm, and not to get too technological".

Similar accounts of such aliens appear to be widespread. The faces of Aboriginal paintings of mythological entities bear a striking resemblance to these aliens, as do examples from ancient European cultures.

Mack saw the UFO abduction phenomenon as "...an outreach program for the

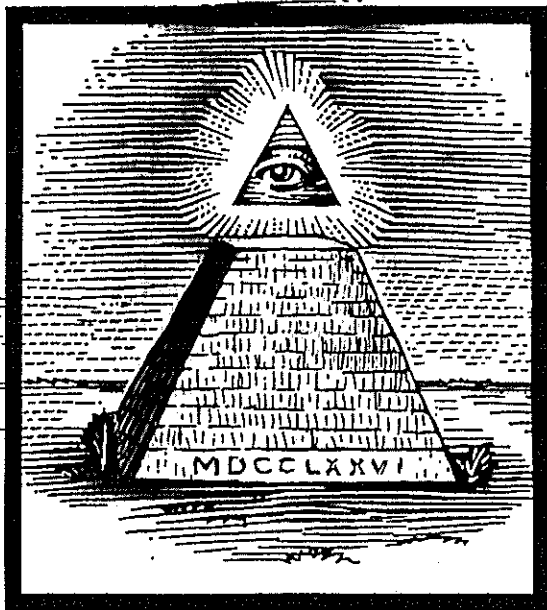
spiritually impaired", or as an "exchange program", where they give us expanding consciousness in return for our physicality, sensuality, closeness and intimacy.

We were destroying the Earth while the aliens were looking for a strong physical connection to replace their lost biological connection. The coming together of two very different species could solve two cosmic problems at once.

A conference in Washington in May 1995, had the theme of "When Cosmic Cultures meet" and looked at the consequences, implications and dimensional aspects of bringing two disparate cultures together. This very important aspect of human evolution had been neglected. □

Mack saw the UFO abduction phenomenon as "...an outreach program for the spiritually impaired", or as an "exchange program",

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UFO abduction research in New South Wales

Bryan Dickeson

This is the fourth and final paper UFOR presented at the UFOR(QLD) Seminar in August 1996.

Many of you will have read of one or two Australian UFO abduction cases. Most probably this will be recent material from the Kelly Cahill case (Dandenongs, Victoria, August 1993), or the Longley case (Casino, NSW, March 1996). The few publicised accounts you may have seen represent a very small part of the phenomenon within Australia. A wide range of abduction activity is now being reported, similar to that reported overseas. A few of the unpublicised cases are as good as the Kelly and Longley cases, but most are not as detailed.

When you investigate or collect this kind of information, you find many elements common to different cases. Like the keys on a piano, while the number of black and white notes is limited, the ways you can combine these notes is infinite. Overall, the phenomenon is very consistent; rarely do you find a new note. Rather than describe each note and some of the typical tunes in the short time available to me today, I would like to take a look 'beyond the keyboard.' From research being done in New South Wales, I would like to discuss how overseas findings translate locally, and suggest:

- Why UFO abductions are important and why Australian groups should research them.
- Why UFO abductions have only recently come to public attention
- Some important implications of the large numbers of UFO abductions being reported
- Some of the risks and benefits for UFO groups investigating UFO abductions

First of all, when you follow the UFO debate for any length of time, you begin to appreciate that a few individuals and or-

ganisations greatly affect how the subject is generally presented. Their history, idiosyncrasies, and politics often become an integral part of that presentation. Abduction research is no exception to this rule. A handful of people (mostly overseas and in the United States) dominate abduction research and will probably continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

To give you an idea of where UFOR (NSW) is coming from and where it may be heading, it helps to quickly look at where we have been these last few years:

The origins of UFOR's research program

The present incarnation of UFO Research (New South Wales) arose in November 1991. Some seven months later, in mid-1992, UFOR's Interim Committee formally agreed to research UFO abductions after approaches from members interested in the subject. Three committee members (DeLillo, Dickeson and Khoury) formed a special interest group (SIG) within UFOR to develop and coordinate a long-term support and research strategy.

In 1992 most 'serious' Australia researchers considered abduction research a complete waste of time; many still do. Ufologists here were sceptical, with most focussed on the idea that UFOs and related events (such as abductions), arose from unusual states of mind in the person reporting them.

UFOR's special interest group made slow progress at first, and may well have continued like that indefinitely. The abductee project had to compete with the many activities the Committee organised for its members. However, in mid-October 1992,

American abduction researcher Budd Hopkins visited Australia. Hopkins spoke at a UFO seminar in the Hyatt Kingsgate Hotel, Kings Cross about the work that he, Leo Sprinkle, and others had been doing in the United States.

Hopkins described methodologies being used in the United States. These combined confidentiality, hypnotherapy and mutual support to re-develop missing abduction memories and rehabilitate abductees. Mental health workers were actively recruited to provide professional support when dealing with abductee trauma, often with spectacular results. It appeared that people were being re-abducted throughout their lives. Furthermore, a poll just concluded by the Roper Organisation in the United States indicated that UFO abductions were much more common than had previously been imagined — a result which had both startled and alarmed UFO researchers.

During the Hopkins seminar, UFOR(NSW) was approached by a number of NSW abductees. These people were contacted for interviews by the SIG soon after the seminar, and an attempt was made to set up self-support groups based on American models. It quickly became evident that these models would have to be fine-tuned for Australian conditions. The SIG also started quietly canvassing support from local mental health professionals and hypnotherapists.

Unfortunately, early in 1993 a major schism developed within UFOR over its abduction research program. Differences arose as to how much UFOR should subsidise hypnotherapy sessions from group funds. UFOR researchers already providing ongoing, one-to-one support for abductees on a strictly personal basis, were asked to 'hand them over' to the SIG.

By mid-1993, Khoury and a small, recently-assembled group of health professionals had left UFOR to form their own abductee support group. After this, there didn't seem to be much of UFOR left, and its activities had to be severely pruned. Dickeson stayed with UFOR and began re-establishing a new, low-key abductee support network throughout 1994. This second

support structure was soon infiltrated by the breakaway group, and it had to be abandoned mid-1995 — we could no longer guarantee abductee confidentiality. UFOR's third abduction support structure (now in place), provides a high-confidentiality 'buddy' system whereby individual investigators share resources to provide a range of support options for abductees. Their research results are networked to other investigators.

Accounts of this period from 1992-95 differ, depending on which 'side' you listen to. Because of my closeness to these events, it is inappropriate to spend much time on details here. We now know that these kinds of organisational problems and schisms are routinely reported overseas, and some UFO groups such as BUFORA have been reluctant to get involved in formal abduction investigations because of them.

Abduction research appears to be a high-risk activity, so why bother with it at all? What new insight could NSW offer?

Let's go back to what happened in 1992 when Budd Hopkins was in Sydney:

The Roper poll

The Roper survey included five questions on UFO abduction-type experiences, as follows:

- 1 Have you ever awakened paralysed, sensing a strange figure or presence in the room?
- 2 Have you ever experienced an hour or more of 'missing time'?
- 3 Have you ever felt you are actually flying through the air without knowing why or how?
- 4 Have you ever seen unusual lights or balls of light in a room, without understanding what caused them?
- 5 Have you discovered puzzling scars on your body, without remembering how or why they got there?

The anticipated 'yes' result was about 1-2% for each question. The actual results were about 10,000 times higher than expected and have been subject to spirited debate ever since. While I share some of the basic concerns about the poll expressed since its publication, if the real figures are

The 1996 statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for December 1995, are:

State	Population	A B D U C T E E S		Abuse' Background
		(Hopkins)	(Mack)	
NSW	6,155,000	123,100	246,200	1,292,500
Victoria	4,521,800	90,400	180,900	949,600
Queensland	3,316,500	66,300	132,700	696,500
S.Australia	1,475,000	29,500	59,000	309,700
W.Australia	1,747,000	34,900	69,900	367,000
Tasmania	473,000	9500	18,900	99,300
N.Territory	176,700	3500	7000	37,100
ACT	304,000	6100	12,200	64,000
Australia	18,173,600	363,500	727,000	3,816,500
New Zealand	(3,750,000)	(75,000)	(150,000)	(787,500)

Notes: 1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 100 (this is why column totals do not always tally).
 2. The overall population figure for New Zealand is an estimate only, hence the brackets.

only one-tenth or one-hundredth of the Roper value, we still have something remarkable happening.

The high Roper values suggest that 2% of Americans, some 5 million people, have had abduction experiences. (US psychiatrist Doctor Mack was recently quoted as saying 4% is more accurate.) While the percentage appears to be small, the actual number of people involved is staggering.

For example, if we assume Australasian abduction experiences are similar to those in the United States, then over 350,000 Australians could be abductees (see table above). The information Hopkins provided Australian investigators in 1992 challenged local preconceptions and forced our investigators back to their notebooks.

In fact, most UFO field investigators I knew in NSW did have more 'possible' abduction cases than expected, but had chosen to downplay them — they were considered too unusual and too difficult to investigate properly. NSW investigators also appear to have reported abduction-type phenomena conservatively, according to what they believed was acceptable to their peers (other investigators).

One factor Australian investigators see which limits their ability to properly deal with abduction cases, is resources. Australia

is so vast, so sparsely populated, and the people here so urbanised, that if an abduction incident comes their way, it's entirely a matter of luck. The resources Australian investigators can muster are extremely limited and we probably miss out on most cases because we do not network effectively over the large distances involved. (This is the main reason why localised projects which attempt to take a snapshot of activity in a smaller area are so important. For example, Moira McGhee's NSW Central Coast Project will provide a sample of what levels and kinds of UFO activities actually go on here. McGhee's results can be applied throughout Australia—see box on page 19.)

Other abduction precedents?

As an investigator, when you look at the abduction figures in the table above, you have to start asking yourself questions such as: 'How did we get it so wrong? If this phenomenon really exists and in such numbers, how come we missed it? Is this 'epidemic' for real? (The results indicate there are five to ten thousand abductees per UFO investigator in Australia —we should find abductees queuing up outside our front doors.)

There are important sociological precedents which give this kind of result. These come from the similar area of sexual assault

and sexual abuse. (I use the word 'similar' because US studies show that abductees and people who have been sexually abused have similar personality profiles. For example, they tend to have low self-esteem, show a higher than usual degree of dissociation between corporeal and mental processes, they tend to have an artistic or fantasizing temperament, and so on).

On closer inspection, sexual abuse models appear well suited for this comparison, when you start to look at details of abduction accounts — most involve physical restraint and sexual interference. The sexual abuse model also offers additional insight into the alien abduction phenomena itself:

Sexual abuse models

From crime statistics published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia has one of the world's highest levels of reported sexual assault. Similarly, recent studies indicate one-third of Australian females and one-tenth of males have been subject to sexual abuse, most while under the age of 20. These occurrences are not uniformly spread; sociologists have found significant variations in some ethnic communities and institutions (penal, hospital, military, religious and educational).

For a population balance of 50:50 male:female, this translates into about 20% or one-fifth of the overall population. (I have listed these abuse numbers in the table above, in an "abuse background" column.) Essentially the sexual abuse rate is five to ten times the alien abduction rates suggested by Mack and Hopkins, respectively.

Fortunately, the general population seems to have a remarkable, innate ability which allows most people to recover from such traumas with few lasting effects. Otherwise, Australia's social services would be overrun by the sexually abused, and UFO investigators would be overrun by the alien-abducted. It also emphasises that our present understandings of both sexual abuse and alien abductions, come mostly by way of a trauma window — from glimpses provided by seriously-traumatised people. And of course, this view has disadvantages as well as advantages.

The sexual abuse model also suggests why alien abductions have been so well hidden, and for so long:

Historically, sexual abuse is something which western and other societies just do not like talking about — its a taboo subject. (However, the topic has become almost fashionable in NSW in recent years, during the ongoing public investigation into paedophilia rackets, and so on, conducted by the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption.) The same social sexual taboos certainly apply when considering alien abductions.

Interestingly, these social taboos have previously suppressed research into sexual abuse. For example:

In April 1896 Sigmund Freud presented a radically new theory of mental illness to the Viennese psychiatric Establishment. His research had led him to believe that human neuroses were caused by an individual's exposure to various forms of sexual abuse in early childhood.

Freud's revolutionary paper on the *Seduction Theory*, was met with complete silence by his peers and he was privately advised afterwards to modify his stance, to make himself and his ideas more socially acceptable. The Seduction Theory was suppressed so that Freud could get his work published. (The radical insights provided by Freud's revised material were still sufficient to change the way people thought about themselves and to become the basis of modern psychology.)

In 1896, Freud was unaware that prominent members of his audience (many of them personal friends), were themselves involved in sexual abuse. They had a vested interest in keeping the subject out of the public gaze. Some 80 years afterwards, during the late 1970s, Jeffrey Masson, a projects officer in the Freud Archives in Vienna rediscovered Freud's early material, his notes and comments, and wrote a paper as-

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serting that Freud had suppressed key finding in his early work. Masson parted company with the Freud Archives soon afterwards, in 1981.

Masson produced a book about his discovery, *The Assault on Truth*, in 1984. It was an academic sensation whose assertions have been substantiated many times

If it is possible to suppress high levels of sexual abuse in human society for 80 years through social coercion, then it also possible to suppress much subtler levels of 'alien abuse'.

since. Its publication coincided with recent political gains by the Women's Movement and greatly assisted that movement's drive for proper information about social issues affecting women.

(The Australian Government's sexual abuse statistics I have used here are another result of that world-wide re-awakening.)

High levels of ongoing sexual abuse in Freud's society and our own society are now widely acknowledge by social scientists, although that doesn't necessarily make this information any more socially acceptable than it was 100 years ago.

If it is possible to suppress high levels of sexual abuse in human society for 80 years through social coercion, then it also possible to suppress much subtler levels of 'alien abuse'.

It now seems the alien abduction phenomenon is well-entrenched in human society. It has probably been with us for centuries, and possibly millennia or tens of millennia.

As a follow on from this, UFO researchers might reasonably expect alien abductions could be more effectively concealed if the phenomenon had been deliberately encapsulated within the wider social phenomenon of sexual abuse by those perpetrating alien abuse. There are some indications emerging that this is the case.

For example; an account surfaced publicly last year which reinforces the idea that sexual abuse and alien abduction phenomena are very closely linked indeed:

On Saturday 26 April 1995, the *Sydney Morning Herald* printed an article on the

front page of its Spectrum section, (Full title: *This man stands accused of raping his daughters, committing forced abortions, and being party to systematic abuse. But he says his accusers are wrong.*) This somewhat sensational article reports how the NSW Department of Community Services (DOCS) had tried unsuccessfully to convict a husband and wife for sexually abusing their children over a period of 13 or more years. At one point the grandmother had also been charged with offences, but these charges were soon withdrawn.

The criteria DOCS follows in cases of possible child abuse, is to first find out if abuse is likely to be occurring, to remove those being abused to a safe place and provide them with support, and to prosecute those committing the abuse.

In practice, the Department is obliged to side with the children against the parents, to first assume the parents are guilty, and to justify its actions in court later, using any testimony from the children and 'expert' or medical evidence to corroborate events.

In this case, the newspaper indicates DOCS had clearly undertaken a long, exhaustive and expensive investigation. The Department's inability to establish who had been doing what to whom and why, had greatly affected its credibility publicly and legally.

The teenage children had been interviewed by DOCS officers, police and psychologists who were obviously convinced something was amiss from their stories. DOCS staff and police officers had provided the Court with a series of 'family' scenarios involving regular satanic or ritual abuse and suggested there was some sort of ritual abuse network in operation. The nature of the abuse could not be established conclusively for the Court, and no convictions could be made

The parents strongly maintained their innocence throughout the 16-month investigation. Apart from bizarre incidents reported by the children, extensive police investigations (including bugging the family home) had completely failed to find any evidence that the parents were involved in anything unusual. The entire family had been totally traumatised and fragmented by

the allegations (which is, of course, totally contrary to the original purpose of DOCS — DOCS is meant to support and maintain families in their community).

Early on in the investigation, the children had been removed from parental care and left with uncles and aunts. The children's cousins had subsequently 'remembered' other possible incidents of abuse. Abuse seemed to be a family-wide phenomenon. Psychologists had concluded that all of the children's stories had arisen due to 'suppressed memories'. However, suppressed memories of what?

I was particularly interested to read the few detailed fragments of the children's stories. These were strikingly similar to incidents of alien abductions in families reported in Australia and elsewhere. From the *Sydney Morning Herald* article:

"... she[one daughter] began talking about a 'big room' where she was abused by people in gowns and other family members; she also allegedly claimed she was photographed, given an orange-coloured drink, had blood taken from her arm, underwent a vaginal examination and saw children having 'things' done to them."

('Orange-coloured liquid' is referred to periodically in US abduction cases; this is the first time I have seen it mentioned in an Australian context.)

Is this sexual abuse case a misidentified alien abduction scenario? Given the large numbers of people who may be involved in the phenomenon in NSW, such a possibility becomes inevitable. I would like to have more detail on this particular account. However, this is extremely unlikely:

- It is highly unlikely because DOCS staff would not consider alien abduction experiences a plausible option in any child abuse cases. There is already a controversial subject in search of public acceptance (as I've indicated), and satanists and witches would be preferable to aliens, or at least more 'traditional'.
- It would be very difficult for DOCS to publicly account for any alien abduction scenario it did find, given ongoing public scepticism towards such material.

- It is unlikely that any members of the family would willingly consent to further psychological intrusion or hypnotherapy as part of an abduction investigation.

Still, the *Sydney Morning Herald* article offers an interesting glimpse into the shadowy world of sexual abuse — something else that abduction investigators should be aware of.

Similar kinds of stories emerge from time to time which suggest there may be a link between alien abuse and some institutional abuse cases.

For example, I have recently been told of a report from a nun who, while stationed in a fairly remote nunnery saw a series of small orange spheres overhead. Local nuns had often seen them before. (These orange objects are so frequently reported by other abductees, that some investigators here refer to them as 'harvest lights'.)

As already indicated, important comparisons between human sexual abuse and alien abduction phenomena are being ignored. This is presumably due to anticipated social, academic and bureaucratic embarrassment from addressing this taboo subject publicly. The potential for embarrassment may also be responsible for a massive 'cleansing' operation which appears to be under way, from some researchers, abductees and parts of the phenomenon itself.

Some abductees vehemently denounce any comparisons made between the phenomena. I am told that "Non-experiencers cannot begin to imagine the platonic love these beings feel towards us". These people create one of the most poignant paradoxes for the phenomenon:

(Very few people attempt to justify child sexual abuse ethically. Adult abductees usually have experiences going back to early childhood. As adults they claim their

I am told that "Non-experiencers cannot begin to imagine the platonic love these beings feel towards us". These people create one of the most poignant paradoxes for the phenomenon: Very few people attempt to justify child sexual abuse ethically. As adults they claim their abductions are benefitting Mankind. At what point/age do their abductions become ethically justified?

abductions are benefitting Mankind. At what point/age do their abductions become ethically justified?)

Some researchers who find it difficult to justify a high background level of extra-

There are definite indications that the phenomenon can re-engineer itself 'from within'. This internal variability is crudely termed 'brainwashing' in one or two recent overseas articles. It is cited by some UFO investigators as 'unreliability', and another reason not to trust the information provided by an abductee, or to get involved with abduction research.

terrestrial alien abductions, promote the idea that a transpersonal or 'Gaian' metamorphosis is taking place for Humanity. I do not see how this 'creative denial' differs from what happened with Freud's Seduction Theory proposal one hundred years ago.

□ Finally, (and I have checked

this result with other investigators in NSW and Victoria), there are definite indications that the phenomenon can re-engineer itself 'from within'.

This internal variability is crudely termed 'brainwashing' in one or two recent overseas articles. It is cited by some UFO investigators as 'unreliability', and another reason not to trust the information provided by an abductee, or to get involved with abduction research.

Basically, if you keep records of someone's abduction experiences, you find that important minutae evolve, or change over time. This applies whether hypnotherapy is being used or not, and depends on the frequency of re-abduction. Only part of this change is due to feedback, arising from an abductee re-interpreting or 'accepting' their experience during the investigation. You can get a situation where the agency behind a series of abductions 'competes' for the abductees attention with the abduction investigator, and tries to cover-up their activities.

In most cases, this re-engineering is sufficiently strong to reduce the effectiveness of your investigation after four to six interviews (or regressions). Your most valuable research information comes out 'raw' in the first few sessions, and your most

important function thereafter is for support and rehabilitation of the abductee.

Conclusions

- Abduction phenomena provide extremely valuable insights into the UFO phenomena itself.
- The higher than expected levels of abduction we are finding, may not be so unusual after all. These have important short and long-term implications which should be investigated further.
- Related phenomena such as sexual abuse, satanic abuse and ritual abuse offer important insights into UFO abductions and some may be misinterpreted cases. (These insights will not always make you popular.)
- The phenomenon is extremely complex; it operates on many levels and can modify its own activities. It appears to respond to investigation.
- Research in this area requires a lot of resources and commitment, and can create volatility and extra risk within an organisation. However, a number of effective structures can be used. I urge those UFO groups not yet involved to become involved in abduction research, and to network. □

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UFO abductions and extreme trauma?

Recently, some UFO researchers in Australia have become concerned by the possibility of a link between UFO abductions and cases of extreme personal trauma, such as youth suicide. Their view is that there could be a link between levels of child sexual abuse, alien abductions (now sometimes referred to as *alien abuse* because abductees experience intrusive, ongoing, sexual interference) – as described earlier in this paper.

During the Brisbane UFO Seminar in August, Moira McGhee mentioned that her research on the Central Coast of New South Wales following a recent UFO flap there had raised some disturbing information.

The area had experienced an extremely high number of youth suicides during the first six months of 1996 (a period of much higher than usual UFO activity). Over 28 cases, mostly males, had been reported in that time, and welfare agencies had suggested high local unemployment, a lack of facilities and so on, as possible causes of trauma.

At the time, McGhee had cautioned that a UFO-link might be purely coincidental, and investigators clearly needed much better information. Such information might show higher-than-normal levels of sexual abuse within the suicide group, for example. (Exactly how investigators would find

out such personal information from Government welfare agencies who maintain extremely high levels of confidentiality was seen as a major problem.)

In November 1996, concerns over the incidence of suicide on the Central Coast became more widespread. On 16 November, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that 41 local people had suicided in the previous 43 weeks, 37 men and 4 women, giving the area a 60% higher rate than the Australian national average. The *Herald* also reported that over half of these cases had experienced some form of child sexual abuse., that is, over two and a half times what would be “normally” expected. Sexual abuse was therefore seen as a significant, contributing factor in the suicides.

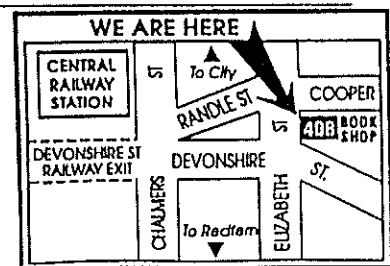
This still does not completely confirm some kind of link between sexual abuse and alien abuse. To further this line of inquiry, investigators would have to be familiar with case history details of individual suicides, which might show some of the elements indicated in the *Sydney Morning Herald* article mentioned earlier in this paper. □

Adapted from *The Gosford Files* (McGhee and Dickeson, 1996)

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Book reviews

Until recently there has been a dearth of good, current books on Australian UFO research. The only book I could refer new people to has been Keith Basterfield's somewhat dated *Close Encounters of an Australian Kind* (1981). 1996 has changed all that, with two excellent publications now readily available, and more are planned.

'Encounter'

Encounter, Kelly Cahill (Harper and Collins) 240 pages, illus., paperback ISBN 0 7322 5784 0

Encounter details Kelly's UFO close-encounter experience in the Victorian Dandenongs late one night in August 1993 (as described in *UFO Reporter* vol 4, no 2, June 1995). The book describes how this 'forgotten' incident began to unfold for Kelly, and how investigators discovered three separate sets of witnesses were involved.

The witnesses in the second car behind Kelly were finally tracked down and provided important corroborating evidence for the case, which makes this arguably Australia's most important UFO investigation.

Encounter includes a good account of the excellent physical trace material analysis provided by John Auchettl of the Phenomena Research Association in Victoria.

The book also describes Kelly's personal journey and development as the investigation progressed, and she began to make contact with other people who had similar experiences. A fascinating insight into the people, politics and methodologies of the incident, and a must for Australian UFO researchers.

'The Oz Files'

The Oz Files, Bill Chalker (Duffy and Snellgrove) 240 pages, index, illus., paperback ISBN 1 875989 04 08

This is an extensive representation of the UFO phenomenon in Australia, and very up to date, with references to the recent Cahill (1993) and Longley (1996) abduction cases, and the Gosford 1995-96 flap.

I quickly found myself skimming the pages and using the index to find what information there was on one or other case that I knew about. The 'classics' are certainly there; such as Nowra, Rosedale, Tully North-West Cape and Valentich, but not the 1992 Sydney Harbour or Figtree entity cases.

There are excellent accounts of very early incidents too. The 1868 Parramatta case reinvestigated by Chalker, and the first published account of 1909 'airships' from east-

ern Australia (that I know of). These airships are usually reported as a New Zealand-only phenomenon. *Oz Files* also includes some New Zealand material and a good account of the Father Gill (New Guinea) sighting for good measure.

As expected, Chalker devotes considerable space to his pioneering work with material from the Royal Australian Air Force files in Canberra and this section provides a valuable and welcome insight into the 'official' investigation of the phenomenon in Australia.

The book provides an excellent account of the range, variety and complexity of the phenomena reported here — the best and most readable I have come across yet, and is an excellent reference. For those reasons, I would put it at the very top of my list of compulsory reading for Australian investigators. The only (very minor) problem I found, was that at times I would have liked to know a bit more about some of the better cases. I expect that is inevitable with a book as comprehensive as this one is.

Apparently, Bill Chalker's main problem in producing *Oz Files* was having to cut down all the information sufficiently to have it fit into one book — seems like a good enough reason for a sequel to me. □

UFO *Reporter*

Quarterly Publication of UFO Research (New South Wales)