

# FSR BOOKSHELF — 8

New UFO books reviewed. . .

*Janet & Colin Bord*

**A**LTHOUGH a large number of abduction cases (nearly 250) are on record in the United States, cases of this kind are rare in Britain. In *The Janos People* (Neville Spearman hardback, £5.25, 198 pages) **Frank Johnson** describes in great detail a Gloucester family's encounter with people from "the distant planet Janos" on 19 June 1978 near Faringdon in Oxfordshire. Their experiences differed from those reported by most other abductees: the physical examinations were not too distasteful, the aliens were friendly and communicative, the visitors were given a conducted tour of the spaceship, and shown films of Janos and its destruction.

It is now accepted practice in ufology that the potentially important abduction cases should be investigated by a team with varied skills and outlooks, who will question the witness from different viewpoints, and will provide a cross-check for one another. It is also accepted that in multiple witness cases, such as this one, the witnesses are not questioned in one another's presence nor, when hypnotic regression has been used, are they made aware of their reported experience while the investigation is still in progress. And finally, although the investigators should provide reassurance and be sympathetic listeners, they should never become personally involved with the witness's story. None of these criteria appear to have been observed in this investigation, and therefore the results are, regretfully, of little value to UFO research.

In the "Author's Preface," Frank Johnson writes that he investigated the case "solo" (p.viii), hardly a wise procedure in view of its "sheer size and complexity" (p.ix). The outcome of his investigation, and the erratic reading list on pages 193-4, suggest that he carried out the work without the benefit of investigative experience or a comprehensive knowledge of the UFO phenomenon. And also it is very evident that he fell under the spell of the Janos people, to such an extent, that he eventually spent hours studying an atlas of the world to help him decide where some 10 million of the emigrating Janos people could come and live!

Whether anything of value can be salvaged from this contaminated case history is doubtful. There may well be a genuine abduction case (whatever they are) at the heart of this tale, but it is now probably too late to disentangle the real facts from the story as now published. *The Janos People* embodies the innocence of the contactee stories which were current in the 1950s. The difference is that then the benevolent space people were promising to lift off from our stricken planet those earthlings who were deemed worthy; now they want to move in with us! But it was instructive to read this naive piece of UFO reporting alongside the far more mature *Encyclopedia of UFOs* reviewed later in this column. The contrast between the two books brought home to us just how much ufology has changed in the past 25 years.

The abduction of Betty and Barney Hill on 19 September 1961 is probably the best-known abduction

case in ufology, but until now U.K. readers have not had an opportunity to read the full details because *The Interrupted Journey*, the book in which **John G. Fuller** tells the whole story, was published in the United States in 1966, but not in the U.K. Now, somewhat belatedly, a U.K. hardcover edition has been issued (Souvenir Press, £6.95, 340 pages, illustrations), presumably as a result of Fuller's success here with his later books.

Although this case has been well publicised during the years since Dr. Benjamin Simon put the Hills under hypnosis and retrieved the events of the missing hours, this account still makes gripping reading. The verbatim transcripts of the hypnosis sessions will be of value to some researchers, and this new edition also includes a transcript from a later session (1973) attended by Fuller and Dr. J. A. Hynek. Fuller has also added brief details of a few other abduction cases and some general UFO information. Unfortunately he seems to equate UFOs with extraterrestrial machines, judging by his stated conclusion concerning the Betty and Barney Hill affair: "this is either one of the most unusual cases in the history of psychiatry — or the possible historical event of the first extraterrestrial visit to be heavily documented in detail," (p.vii). And the book's closing sentences repeat the idea that the extraterrestrial theory is the most important in ufology. There are of course other possible explanations for the Hills' experience, some involving aliens, some not. And if aliens were involved, they were not necessarily extraterrestrial, even though they may have wanted Betty and Barney (and us) to believe that.

UFO abductions are also the subject of *Direct Encounters* by **Judith M. Gansberg and Alan L. Gansberg** (Walker and Company, New York, price \$11.95; 178-page hardback). The book is subtitled "Personal Histories of UFO Abductees," which is slightly misleading because not *every* witness discussed here has been abducted. The Gansbergs aim to tell the inside story of what it's like to be an abductee, especially *after* the event. This is an interesting idea, but the book fails in many respects. The authors are uncritical and take too much on trust. For example, they seem to accept the story of the 1897 Aurora crash and corpse, apparently unaware that it is now considered 99% certain to have been a hoax. Their attitude is one of newcomers to, not of involvement with, what they strangely call "UFO-ology," so they do not speak with authority, and also make some strange, basic errors (for example — p.90 — that FSR is published by "the British UFO Research Organization"!)

They do not have much to say about the phenomenon of abduction by UFO entities, seeming to accept an extraterrestrial origin for the latter. A little interesting insight is given into the personalities of the abductees and the harassment they invariably face if they "go public," but many opportunities to develop vital aspects of the abduction experience have been ignored, and instead the book contains repetition and padding (in the form of well-

known UFO history). The book has an uneven bibliography, but no index.

A far more knowledgeable approach to this new branch of ufology is seen in **UFO Abductions**, edited by **D. Scott Rogo** (New American Library, New York, price \$2.25; 242-page paperback). This is a collection of previously published case histories (some from FSR), plus commentaries, introduction and conclusion all by Scott Rogo who is an active and astute ufologist with a background in parapsychology. Ten cases (including Antônio Villas Boas, Travis Walton, Herbert Schirmer, and other lesser known subjects) are reported in detail by experienced ufologists such as Coral Lorenzen, Gordon Creighton, Ann Druffel and Jerome Clark; and Scott Rogo, who is not "jumping on the bandwagon" but in recent years has become deeply involved in abduction research, sums up what has been deduced so far about the UFO abduction experience. This is certainly the best of the four abduction books here reviewed, being heavy on facts and light on waffle. It has a short bibliography, but no index.

Attention has recently focused on Australasia, where two major UFO events have taken place — the mysterious disappearance of pilot Frederick Valentich and the filming of UFOs over New Zealand. Both events are described in a new Australian book, **Alien Honeycomb: the first solid evidence of UFOs**, by **John Pinkney and Leonard Ryzman** (Pan Books, Australia, price \$3.95; 168-page paperback), but the main theme of the book is the authors' investigation of a supposed UFO explosion over Queensland in the late 1960s and the subsequent discovery of pieces of wreckage. Despite the fact that no UFO was seen at the time the material was found, the authors seem convinced that it represents fragments of a non-terrestrial spacecraft. (The book includes a few colour photographs of the fragments.) But instead of arranging for detailed and objective analysis of the material in order to confirm their suspicions, they prefer to show it to unnamed scientists and with them enthuse over its beauty.

Their approach is naive. If there were no *terrestrial* flying machines, then it might be reasonable to suspect that the wreckage was not terrestrial; although even so, as it was found on the ground, there is not even any direct evidence that it was ever in the sky! Since we know that there is a wide variety of terrestrial aircraft and spacecraft in existence, then logically the fragments should be presumed to come from one of these until proved otherwise. Only if exhaustive analyses show the material to be "out of this world" can we begin to talk about UFOs and "aerial palaces".

Australian ufologist Bill Chalker, who is also an industrial chemist and has a special interest in physical evidence for UFOs, strongly suspects that the mysterious UFO wreckage is in fact of terrestrial origin, perhaps part of a Canberra bomber that crashed in the area in 1965. Bill Chalker has also found certain factual errors in *Alien Honeycomb* and these, together with his criticisms of the investigation, can be found in *UFO Research Australia Newsletter* vol. 1 nos. 2 & 3 (from 2A Castle Avenue, Prospect, South Australia 5082). So although this book is entertaining to read, its content should be viewed

critically. Its promise of "The first solid evidence of UFOs" is not fulfilled.

In June 1980 the Mutual UFO Network held their eleventh annual symposium, and this year the theme was UFO technology. The nine papers that were given have been published in a well produced, large size, 178-page paperback with the title **UFO Technology; a detailed examination** (available from MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Road, Seguin, Texas 78155, USA, price \$10 including postage by seamount). As the title suggests, the papers are directed towards the technical aspects of ufology, ranging from an analysis of the data in the UFOCAT sighting file (by Fred Merritt) to Thomas E. Bearden's "Hyperspace (Virtual State) Engineering." We found one of the most interesting papers to be "UFO Contactees: Captive Collaborators or Cosmic Citizens?" by Dr. R. Leo Sprinkle, who is one of the small group of U.S. researchers in the forefront of the search for the reality behind the abduction experience. Other contributors to the symposium included James E. Oberg, Stanton T. Friedman, and Ray Stanford.

In our first "Bookshelf" (FSR 25/5) we reviewed *The Philadelphia Experiment* by Berlitz & Moore, which tells of the authors' investigations into the U.S. Navy's alleged 1943 experiments in making a battleship invisible. Part of that story involved the notorious "Varo edition" of **M. K. Jessup's book The Case for the UFO**. A copy of Jessup's book had been received by the Office of Naval Research with numerous underscorings and added notes in different coloured inks, apparently made by three different individuals who were seemingly more knowledgeable about UFO phenomena than anyone else on earth, and who had passed the book among themselves and commented on Jessup's text. Someone at the Naval Office thought that the book with its annotations was of sufficient interest to merit having the complete book and notes retyped on to stencils and republished in a limited edition by the Varo Mfg. Co., these copies being circulated to various interested parties in the Naval Office.

This "Varo edition" has been republished in facsimile recently by Saucerian Press and is available as a large-size spiral-bound paperback (from Gray Barker, Box 2228, Clarksburg, West Virginia 26301, USA, price \$33.50 including postage by seamount). The mysterious annotations, which in this edition are typed in red, come from "Mr. A", "Mr. B" and "Jemi", and to us read more like an attempted hoax by confusion, rather than anything which would throw more light on the UFO enigma. The publisher explains that the higher than normal price is determined by the difficulties of production and the limited print run, but anyone making a special study of this area of ufology will undoubtedly want to obtain a copy.

Probably the biggest, thickest, heaviest and most expensive UFO book ever published in Britain, **The Encyclopedia of UFOs** edited by **Ronald D. Story** (New English Library, £12.95, 440-page hardback) is also the most comprehensive. It is virtually a complete overview of



ufology, presented in alphabetical order and with cross references which makes it easy to use. There are three categories of entries: 1. the most significant 100 cases in UFO history, which are described in brief, with new findings on old cases included; 2. *people* — biographies of notable personalities in the UFO field, plus a personal "position statement" from each one; 3. *features* — articles of varying length covering many subjects such as theories and government involvement.

There are also many illustrations: photographs of people, witness sketches, and UFO photographs (some in

colour); and it is useful to have details of analyses of the best-known UFO photographs, and to know which are thought to be genuine and which hoaxes. At the end are a 14-page "Chronology of Important Events in UFO History," a list of periodicals (compiled some time ago and now out of date), and a full, 15-page bibliography. Here is a book for reading straight through or for dipping into; but however it is tackled, you will probably find it to be compulsive reading. It is also informative, intelligent, usually accurate and objective. It is without doubt an essential reference book for every ufologist.

# REPEATER WITNESSES

## A Close Encounter Phenomenon.

*Jenny Randles*

READERS will be aware that I have written on the subject of Repeater Witnesses before, where I stated my belief that their study was of great importance to our understanding of the UFO phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> An attempt was then made to take the matter further and to do some specific research into the problem. I presented this work in a paper at the NUFON convention in February 1979, and have now decided to set these ideas down in a more coherent written form, since I feel that a wider appreciation of their implications might be an advantage.

The data that is presented in this paper will not prove anything. It is not intended to. Rather I hope that it will indicate that there are some significant answers to be found therein, and that this line of approach offers a prospect of new insights.

One of the dilemmas of modern ufology is that there are far too many data collectors compared with data manipulators. We lack the all-important theoriser/researchers; speculators who are content not simply to nurture an idea, but also to test it against the available data. Sadly this missing link is the key to scientific ufology, and the dearth is the major reason why ufology is not yet a science, as by every right it should be.

We already possess great volumes of data and yet we concentrate on adding more cases to the computer banks. I do not decry the validity of this, but it has to go hand-in-hand with a greater emphasis on research. We have the answers staring us in the face, but all we do is pretend that the page is not full yet and add more and more superfluous words to it.

### Repeater Witnesses — what are they?

Let me start by posing a question which can be asked of any gathering of people. How many have seen an object which they would not hesitate to call a UFO? The answer would be a fair percentage (possibly as high as 25%). If the question were then posed as to how many have seen more than one thing which fits the same description, the difference immediately becomes obvious. "Repeater" witnesses are uncommon.

We know from our statistical studies that 90% of

general UFO sightings can be explained. So let us play around with a few figures. The results will be far from precise because there are so many variables, but it will at least give us a reasonable order-of-magnitude estimate.

In Britain the UFO societies collect reports of about 1,000 sightings in an average year. By our statistics this means 100 of these are *True UFOs*. Yet we also know that this figure but skims the surface. Many reports are simply never heard about. Let us guess (and it is an estimate backed up by evidence from the *Daily Express* UFO Bureau experiment in 1978) that we only discover 1 in 10 sightings. This means that something like 1,000 *True UFO* experiences occur in Britain each year.

If we now assume the population of Britain to be 50 millions, and allow 2 witnesses per sighting as a reasonable average, this gives a chance of 25,000 to one against any person in Britain being involved in a *True UFO* experience each year. In a lifetime of say 50 years that means that only 1 in 500 would ever see a *True UFO* once in that lifetime. To see two *True UFOs* would involve odds of far higher proportions — about 250,000 to one — and so on to incredible odds for several *True UFOs*.

Because we know that there are a number of seemingly genuine, and yet statistically improbable (if not impossible) *Repeater Witnesses*, then we have to face the fact that some people see UFOs more often than others, and that perhaps some people just don't see UFOs at all.

Before continuing let us define *Repeater Witness*:

"A person who, involuntarily, has several genuine *True UFO* experiences within a contracted period of time."

I do not refer to witnesses who see what they believe to be a UFO, and then go out on all-night skywatching vigils, or follow some other ploy for conjuring up sightings. I am also aware of the tendency for a post-sighting lapse in perceptive abilities. A witness will unconsciously look out for "That UFO" again, and become prone to misinterpreting all manner of ordinary things.

### The research proposal

For the purpose of this preliminary research I decided