

A Report on Ancient Aliens,
Psychic Phenomena and a
Suggested (Phenomenological) Approach to UFOlogy

Submitted to:
UNO UFO Study Group

By Steve Snodgrass, LCSW

January 1, 2010

A Report on Ancient Aliens, Psychic Phenomena and a Suggested Approach to UFOlogy

RATIONALE AND INTRODUCTION

Approximately fifteen years ago I submitted the one and only paper I ever wrote on the subject of UFOs to the MUFON Journal. I can no longer find the paper, nor can I remember the title, and it was never published to my knowledge. However, I do remember the subject very well. It was designed to be a persuasive and informative piece attempting to contribute to the field of UFOlogy in a different way – via a psychological model. I attempted to describe three different types of people who approach the subject of UFOs: true believers, skeptics and healthy skeptics. It was my intent to describe some of the motivations and inherent biases (self-fulfilling prophecies) that might surface which could tend to “color” an interpretation of the results one may find.

A true believer would tend to accept most if not all unexplained UFO-related events as clear evidence of the existence of extra-terrestrials. As such they might tend not to spot some clearly explainable aspect of an event because of a desire for there to be ETs. Conversely, a skeptic would tend to do the opposite - accept all unexplained reports or events as clear evidence that some type of explainable solution must be out there, it just needs to be found no matter how long it takes. As such, a skeptic might tend to relegate the unexplained as simply “awaiting explanation,” but will only consider a valid explanation as one that falls into the category and within the boundaries of currently accepted empirical science. Any explanation that falls outside the boundaries of empirical science is automatically rejected.

These dichotomous “types” would tend to lay on a continuum from one extreme to the other in much the same way one’s political views might tend to settle; left, right or moderate, or in the way religion and spirituality has been observed by psychologists. For example, a leftist or a person from the far right politically will have opposing answers to the same question, “What is the cause of human suffering?” A leftist essentially lays blame to society while a right-winger says it’s an individual’s fault. Similarly, when considering religious experiences, there are what might be termed “elevationists” and “reductionists.” An elevationist elevates or raises all irrational, pre-egoic, mystical experiences to that of enlightenment and trans-rational glory (Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell are oft cited examples.) A reductionist (Freud, Marx for example) reduces or relegates all mystical experiences describing oneness with the universe to either drug induced states or infantile magical thinking, or worse, the opiate of the people. Of course politics and religion have no business being discussed at the dinner table, let alone a paper on UFOs, but the point I want to make is that both extremes not only have something to offer, they are both often unable to spot evidence that conflicts with their worldview. Is it not fair to argue that sometimes society or “the system” causes human suffering and sometimes individuals are responsible for their own suffering? Is it not fair to argue that some religious experiences are profound realizations of unity and oneness, not infantile regression and some religious experiences can better be categorized as wishful magical thinking and hopeful intercession of a fatherly figure?

I raise this issue not to suggest it is entirely unhealthy. In fact, I think it is self-evident that our capacity to function in the world is based on our ability to organize and categorize events we perceive by way of holding hypotheses in the mind about what an event means. We arrive at conclusions and opinions based on our experience. In fact, without the ability to organize and categorize we could not function at all or ever arrive at any conclusion, nor could anything worthwhile ever be discovered. I suggest only that without an appreciation and awareness of our tendency to make sense of the world it becomes all too easy to paint oneself into a theoretical corner that can ignore events that do not fit into one's current world view.

I simply contend that extreme positions like "true believers" and "skeptics" on the topic of UFOs/ETs have something very much in common. They are founded on equally powerful preconceived notions and biases. The conclusion of the person (the subject) is pre-drawn first (ETs exist or they don't) which then colors every conclusion that can be made about an objective phenomenon. True believers and skeptics both maintain positions that have the potential to miss the truth of a phenomenon (the object of discussion) based on the attitude of the person making observations (the subject). Each consequently arrives at opposite conclusions based on the same observations.

The preferred stance I initially recommended was to hold the position of a "healthy skeptic." The "healthy skeptic" I described as not exactly at the midway point along a continuum of skeptic to true believer. Rather, I recommended one lean toward the side of skepticism for specific reasons. Healthy skepticism does not rule out the existence of UFOs/ETs, but takes great care before concluding an event is unexplainable. A healthy skeptic waits a long time for evidence or real-world explanations to arrive, but does not wait forever as would a skeptic. I believed this to be an appropriate stance to keep MUFON and the field of UFOlogy in the mainstream. As justification I cited the primary reason was to defray the inherent reputation UFOlogy received as that of pseudoscience at best and a group of psychotic crackpots at worst. Perhaps the field of UFOlogy, I thought, could improve its reputation by intentionally shifting toward skepticism and build up a more respected reputation by engaging and working with empirical scientists (physicists, aviation experts, and rocket scientists). If nothing else, this suggestion was designed to help improve the respect UFOlogists tend not to enjoy.

In many ways I have observed this happening over the last decade. We tend to listen to police officers, and educated scientists more than we do the commoner. The disclosure project is a great example of a tour de force of highly reputable witnesses designed to put political pressure on governments to come clean. While this effort in no way damaged the field of UFOlogy, I think it fair to say that to this day if a speaker at a UFO convention is described as "well-respected in the field of UFOlogy," such a compliment serves to help their reputation no better to a large segment of the population. This is especially true from the perspective of rationalists, empiricists and skeptics who tend to maintain a position no different than before except by implying the message "nice try."

A recent discussion occurred at the UNO UFO study group in regard to YouTube video comments, blogs and forums alleging that MUFON is actually screening out commentary. This discussion addressed the need for MUFON to maintain ownership and ensure authenticity of reports and in the manner in which MUFON investigations and witness claims are shared in the information age of the internet. It was clear that there is no effective means by which MUFON reports can remain intact and not be subject to having witness claims or investigator reports taken out of context or used for other defamatory or intentionally mocking and misleading purposes. The UNO/UFO study group seemed to agree that MUFON should remain an open, honest forum of inquiry into the nature of aliens, alien technology, sightings and encounters. It should strive to strike a balance to protect its interests as any organization should while at the same time provide the “biggest tent” in terms of acceptance of reports that even strike MUFON members as being without basis, unscientific, or just that they seem much, much too strange.

Is there good reason to include the witness reports detailing contacts, abductions, amnesia and mind control, smoky quantum singularities, and the description of a dozen or more alien races instead of just hearing reports of lights in the sky? In other words, can we bring back to MUFON and UFOlogy in general a reasonable discussion of close encounters of every kind?

PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

As I hope to demonstrate in this paper, I believe there is good reason to now “change my mind” in terms of what a healthy psychological motivation should be on the topic of UFOs. The examples I will use draw from divergent sources that appear out of the mainstream perhaps to many members of MUFON. The basis of this paper is an examination of the recent TV airing on the History Channel of “Ancient Aliens,” produced by Kevin Burns. As the title suggests, this program featured a few skeptics toward the idea, but was also an entertaining piece designed as a persuasive program for television that emphasized the idea of researchers arguing the following: there remains undeniable evidence that aliens have visited the earth long ago – evidence in the only form pre-industrial civilizations could manage: art, writing, graffiti, engineering prowess, astronomical accuracy, and architecture.

I hope to draw a comparison with what probably will seem to be way off topic: the nature of the proof of psychic phenomena (psi) or ESP. The comparison is this. Attitudes toward the existence of UFOs/ETs are not at all unlike common attitudes toward psychic phenomena, in a number of ways.

1. Both are frequent targets of rationalists, empiricist and skeptics.
2. Both offer relatively little proof on a case by case basis of incidents or events.
3. Both are considered bunk by mainstream science.
4. Both are the subject of ridicule to those who profess to “believe.”
5. Witnesses or experiencers tend to be convinced of the truth for something they cannot prove, but “know to be true”.

6. Both cannot be replicated or proven with an astonishing “smoking gun.”
7. Polls of those who believe vs. don’t believe in UFOs or psychic phenomena show that a majority (>50%) do believe. Skeptics are actually in the minority.

In similar fashion to my original written submission to MUFON, I hope to argue that there are three “types” of responses to the truth of ancient aliens that equate to essentially three possibilities:

1. Visitors, ETs, of one or more races have assisted or otherwise been involved in the maturation of humanity. There is sufficient proof of ancient aliens and the reason necessary proof is not available can best be surmised as the result of a non-interference tenet observed along the lines of the Star Trek prime directive.
2. It wasn’t ancient aliens, but rather any number of technologically advanced civilizations that influenced ancient civilizations (Mayan, Egyptian, Druid) and were somehow wiped out in a calamity that resulted in their being little archaeological evidence. Atlantis is the most widely cited.
3. Any evidence cited for ancient aliens is either the result of coincidence, or can be explained by the evolution of our species, trial and error, or anthropological causes. When any of these sources of evidence are not available, it’s unfortunate.

I first offer a brief summary of the main points put forth in “Ancient Aliens” for the reader to consider momentarily. Next, I offer a brief discussion of the motivation and (very human) strategy used to debunk these ideas. I then offer results of studies investigating psychic phenomena as a basis for the reader to consider the veracity of claims made by those apparently outside the mainstream of MUFON.

Finally, in what should probably be outlined in more detail in future writing, I will conclude with an argument that there should be MORE inclusion of ET writings and claims that appear to be out of the mainstream. I will use the work of John Foster as an example.

ANCIENT ALIENS – EVIDENCE IN QUESTION

Proof of ancient aliens in the History Channel program by the same name cited the following as evidence for consideration. I provide a brief summary of each topic along with some comments designed to give a balance of the perspectives presented.

1. Nasca lines in the desert of Peru. Enormously long lines drawn in the desert in the form of rocks or groove paths in the dirt take the form of diagrams, which can only be observed from the air. Extensive arguments from Erich Von Daniken and others describe “possible landing strips.” While this cannot be demonstrated, what remains is the fact that Peruvians would most certainly have created these diagrams in such a way to communicate something. This argument is countered by skeptics who suggest there could be any number of purposes for a society to create these diagrams – we just don’t know what they were thinking.

2. In Columbia are found drawings in artwork depicting what appear to be modern day aircraft with wings as well as tomb artifacts, objects that have tail fins, a fuselage using only the concepts found in modern aircraft design. How did the ancients get hold of modern aviation design?
3. In Guatemala is found a sculpture of a modern day “astronaut” because of the appearance of headgear or a helmet with breathing apparatus. Apparently we can be certain that alien races must have helmets and breathing apparatuses
4. In Istanbul, a carving of what appears to be a space vehicle in the form of a capsule with an occupant huddled inside with controls and a breathing apparatus. Apparently ancient aliens were limited to confined capsules just as the Mercury and Apollo programs were to NASA in the 1960s.
5. Great Pyramid of Polenka of Pacal the Great, a 7-8’ tall giant, the stone panel carving of which is described by some as King Pacal in a space capsule. Cited by VonDaniken as “absolute proof” of extra terrestrials.
6. Egyptologists all seem to agree that hieroglyphs and diagrams tell us that ancient Egyptians are expressing a message that the pyramids were built by humans, but with the assistance of “the Gods.” Who the Gods are is the issue subject to debate.
7. Great Pyramid at Giza is located at the exact intersection of the longest line of latitude and the longest line of longitude according to Joseph Seiss in 1877, and is located at the exact center of land masses in the world, dividing the land mass of the world into four equal quarters. Each side of the pyramid’s length measured in inches is divisible into a 365.5 day calendar year.
8. Teotihuacan, “Pyramid of the Sun” in Mesoamerica is 97% the base size of the Great Pyramid at Giza.
9. Pumapunku, a complex of temples in Bolivia consist in part of immense blocks with the appearance of machine tooling because of 6mm grooves. One block weighs 800 tons and other large blocks are interlocking H shapes. This complex is dated 17,000 years ago.
10. In Egypt, the secret knowledge room of Dendera with purported wall carvings depicting light bulbs with what appear to be tungsten filaments. Egyptologists suggest these drawings actually depict the aroma of a flower bulb wafting up. Apparently tungsten filaments, not LEDs, are the chosen technology of technologically advanced beings. However, Egyptologists also suggest ancient Egyptians used torches to light the otherwise pitch black interior of hallways and rooms. However, all experiments with technology of the time (copper mirrors) fail to illuminate the interior after four or so reflections of light. Also, there is not enough oxygen to fuel torches deep in some pyramids and no soot residue is apparent in some rooms.
11. “Baghdad battery,” copper wrapped iron rod which, when inserted into a clay pot filled with an acidic solution such as vinegar or orange juice, creates an electrical charge. Common suggestion of skeptics is that this was used as simple electroplating and, even if electricity is produced, “so what?” What remains is the idea that a civilization millenia ago could understand the concept of electricity, a technology which had lain dormant for 5,000 years.

12. A shipwreck off the coast of Greece, reveals the Antikythera device, a box of metal cogs and wheels which when x-rayed and reconstructed is a navigation device that clocks astronomical features and predicts the motion (including retrograde) of planets in astrology. The device's gears are more complex than a modern Swiss watch, and is dated 2,000 years ago.

The final segment of "Ancient Aliens" poses questions about striking coincidences related to astronomy. The Teotihuacan complex of pyramids is particularly interesting. The so-called Pyramid of the Sun is aptly named as it is the largest and is surrounded by smaller pyramids in a configuration of concentric circles that correspond almost exactly to the ratio of distances from the sun to the four rocky planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars). So not only was the relative distance of planets from the Sun apparently understood in ancient times, but also is the idea that the Sun is the center of the solar system, not the earth. A heliocentric solar system was somehow understood in antiquity long before the medieval debates of Galileo.

A similar ratio of planetary orbits in a heliocentric solar system is represented by the blocks at Stonehenge. A bird's eye view of Stonehenge reveals concentric circles representing orbits of the rocky planets. So, again, not only is Stonehenge remarkable in its ability to predict eclipses of the Sun and Moon, but the Sun is located at the center of the diagram of enormous blocks precisely placed and stacked atop each other. Astronomical facts were therefore understood in ancient times on separate continents.

The final thesis of the program provides the viewer with a bird's eye view of the pyramid complex at Tikal in Guatemala. The high points of the main stone towers, when diagramed using sight lines to each, are an almost identical match to the stellar configuration of the constellation Pleiades. Of course this complex of pyramids can be used to predict solar equinoxes too. Skeptics suggest ancients had no light source at night and so no city lights to obscure night sky viewing, and were obviously not pacified with such devices as GPS units. In other words, they had nothing better to do than carefully observe the stars and the heavens. The closing scene depicts a similar cluster of land formations of the constellation Pleiades, but on the planet Mars. Skeptics argue that either or both of these examples are most likely coincidental.

PSEUDOSCIENCE METHOD: THE QUESTION THAT REMAINS

Before proceeding to the next section, I might mention the Austin Society of Pseudoscience has a number of fact sheets written in polemic to debunk people like Erich VonDaniken and others making an argument for ancient aliens. For example, a fact sheet at the International Cultic Studies Association website describes Erich VonDaniken as a "Swiss high school dropout" who has "made millions on his theories." (<http://www.icsahome.com>). Coincidence may explain some of the locations described above, and some of VonDaniken's conclusions can easily be called into question with Abraham Maslow's dictum "if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." However, I believe equally suspect an argument that having a lack of formal and higher education combined with a profit motive is a reliable means of gauging solid evidence to

de-bunk something with a label of pseudoscience. It is no different than the political motive to attack an opponent's character when one cannot attack their ideas or their record.

With such an argument, any society incapable of separating science from religion would automatically be deemed simple-minded or "clouded by magic." It is clear from any historical record that religion and science were interwoven in antiquity, and remained that way until approximately 200 years ago. The separation of science from religion is a characteristic of the postmodern. But does that provide support to deny any and all evidence we have that might point to what was actually observed by ancient peoples? I refer to artifacts, artwork, graffiti, stories, texts and architecture – the only things archaeologists can use to interpret what is considered cultural "fact." Regardless, I believe at least three questions remain.

"Who were the Gods of ancient times?"

"What powers did they supposedly possess based on archeological discoveries?"

"Which of those powers can be ruled out in modern science and which cannot?"

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA – EVIDENCE IN QUESTION

Dean Radin, PhD, a paranormal researcher published a book entitled *The Conscious Universe* in 1997. This book describes the concept and use of meta-analysis in medicine as the basis for suggesting psychic phenomena could similarly be studied. Meta-analysis involves amassing research studies using similar if not identical methods of scientific inquiry and interpreting the likelihood that an hypothesis is true based on the combined or cumulative results of all studies on the same subject. Individual studies may point to strong results, weak results, or no effect. But together the odds against chance of a phenomena increases when results of multiple studies show weak, but consistent results. This is not the result of what is known as the "gambler's fallacy." The weak but consistent benefits of aspirin in reducing the impact and severity of a heart attack, for example, were "proven" in medicine by using meta-analysis. Following is a brief summary of Radin's study of psi phenomena.

Before proceeding, however, I call attention to the standards of experimental "proof." In the hard sciences (physics, chemistry) a high level of statistical significance demonstrating odds against chance is less than .01, or 1 out of a 100. In the social sciences (psychology, sociology) a high level of statistical significance is less than .05, or 1 out of 20.

1. Telepathy: Ganzfeld (whole field) telepathy experiments purport to demonstrate that a "receiver" can obtain information via telepathy from a "sender." A receiver is placed in sensory deprivation and begins to talk out loud describing the images and thoughts they are experiencing. At the same time a sender views one of four images or videos, randomly selected by the investigator. Later, the receiver is asked to rank each of the 4 images or videos to the order in which they believe information may have been sent to them. There is a 25% chance the receiver will rank the sender's "message" as #1. From 1974 to 1997, in 2,549 sessions and in

- over forty publications, the hit rate is 33.2%, which is not that impressive. However, for such similar studies to have been replicated in so many studies, the odds against chance using meta-analysis make the odds against chance that the receiver is obtaining information from a sender are one million-billion to one.
2. Perception at a distance: The sheep-goat effect describes a phenomena that those individuals who believe in ESP (sheep) tend to perform better on ESP card tests compared to those who deny any belief in ESP (goats). This effect is even more pronounced when a “sheep” is undergoes hypnotic induction to enhance and support their belief in their “ESP powers.” The idea in these experiments is not only to support the ESP ability of perception at a distance using ESP card tests, but to demonstrate that skeptics (goats) avoid ESP because they don’t believe in it subconsciously. Those who believe they have ESP powers perform better on ESP card tests (guessing the shape or design of a card: wavy lines, star, circle, etc). A meta-analysis of this effect assembling 73 studies by 37 investigators with 685,000 guesses by 4,500 participants from 1943-1993 results in odds against chance of one trillion to one.
 3. Perception through time: Paranormal researchers study unconscious precognition by hooking up participants to skin conductivity monitors, heart rate monitors, and blood volume monitors. Participants are asked to simply view 900 pictures. Approximately one-third of the pictures contain images designed to evoke a strong emotional and physiological response while two-thirds of the pictures are subdued or otherwise non-emotional. We expect and obtain an autonomic reaction from the body monitors seconds after a participant is exposed to an emotionally tinged image. However, we do not expect that participants will have a momentary spike in autonomic activity BEFORE being exposed to an emotional image. There is no classical conditioning involved because participant monitors spike 5-15 seconds consistently higher before emotionally charged images are shown to them. Body monitors do not spike at as high a rate before participants are shown subdued images. Participants sense or experience the intensity of an image before it is shown, indicating some ability to apprehend the future.
 4. Mind-matter interaction: Formerly known as “dice studies” where a subject is asked to influence via psychokinesis (PK) the outcome of a roll of dice. The modern equivalent of these studies use random number generators from a computer where a subject is asked to “control” whether the computer generates a one or a zero over time. Chance of influencing a random number generator is 50%. Studies for almost 3 decades demonstrate an average of 51%, again not very impressive. However, when accounting for 832 studies by 68 different investigators from 1959-1987 the results are persuasive, consistent and replicated with meta-analysis odds against chance of one trillion to one.
 5. Mental interaction with living organisms: The “feeling of being stared at” is one of the most studied phenomena that most anyone will indicate they are capable of experiencing. A meta-analysis of these studies produce odds against chance of 3.8 million to one.
 6. Field consciousness: Is there a combined “mental effect” when a large group of people focus on the same thought or experience? Random number generators (RNGs) operate more or less randomly over time. But when operated during the

1995 airing of the Academy Awards, and controlling for time zone differences, researchers learned that RNGs became less random at specific airing times of award announcements during the broadcast. Similar results with odds against chance ranging from 100:1 to 1,000:1 occurred when examining RNGs during Superbowl XXX and the Centennial Olympic Games in 1996. When millions of people view the same event, it shows up as peaks and valleys on RNG graphs. A unique opportunity produced very strong results in five RNGs located in the US and Europe during the airing of the O.J. Simpson verdict.

7. Psi in the Casino: Payout percentages of various casino games including table games and slot machines demonstrate that a losing percentage is reliably reduced on the day before, the day of, and the day after a full moon. These studies have been replicated for lottery payments in the US, France and former USSR. The Moon has more of an effect on the Earth than just ocean tides and climate – it has an effect on other physical matter and perhaps human behavior.

I also offer the work of Rupert Sheldrake who suggested *7 Experiments That Could Change the World*. These experiments include: the feeling of being stared at, phantom limbs, pets who find their owners, and how pigeons home. Many studies have obtained partial, not full, support for various explanations including pigeons' use of the sun, polarized light, infrasound, smell, magnetism, and sunspot activity. Pigeons have long been used in the military for communication. Sheldrake concludes his book with a lengthy discussion of morphogenetic fields, his offer to answer to the question “how do organisms seem to ‘know’ things?”

I believe it important to summarize. Telepathic communication, although developed in only a rudimentary fashion, is in some form not only possible, but real. Clairvoyance, the ability to perceive things outside the visual field is not well developed, but is also real. Perception outside of space-time, an ability to sense or somehow perceive the future is most decidedly a real phenomenon. Psychokinetic ability appears very weak, but is also a very real phenomenon. Sensing the perception and apprehension of another human being looking at you is not vague paranoia. It is real and not coincidence. There exists in some form a field of consciousness that is greater than the sum of individual thoughts and feelings, a vibrational frequency of sorts that ebbs and flows in direct correspondence with the additive effect of human thought. When large numbers of human beings focus their thoughts on the same thing, the cumulative effect of these thoughts influences physical matter, machines. And finally, although you will always lose at a casino over time, you will quite likely lose your money at a slower rate if you play games of chance on or about the day of a full moon.

But seriously, I want to point out here that the theoretical underpinning in research on telepathy using Ganzfeld experimental design was the concept of reducing “mental noise” of the receiver by way of sensory deprivation. Somehow quieting the mind to allow for subtle forms of communication to arrive seems to be an activity that heightens sensitivity. Somehow believing that one has ESP powers enhances those powers. In all but one of the following “out of the mainstream” examples all emphasize

the importance of quieting the mind by way of meditation in order to experience subtle phenomena and forms of communication.

OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM

1. Edgar Cayce, famous psychic and medical intuitive known as the sleeping prophet discussed at length the society of Atlantis, as well as paranormal phenomena.
2. Helene Blavatsky, Russian mystic and founder of the Theosophical Society, also provides an extensive discussion of the role of Atlanteans in the history and formation of civilizations past. Blavatsky helped host a gathering of all the world's religions and is known for "discovering" a child of 9 years as the new world teacher, Jiddu Krishnamurti, who became a well known spiritual teacher.
3. At Edward Leedskalnin's Coral Castle in Florida, large blocks of coral rock are carved, mounted and positioned using only hand tools and a large wooden tripod. Leedskalnin's only claim as to how he did it was to describe every object as essentially a "magnet." He also indicates he discovered the secrets to building the pyramids. There is no information left behind that Leedskalnin meditated.
4. Spirit channeling in the work of (A) *A Course In Miracles*, (B) its similar teaching by Esther Hicks of the entity called Abraham describing the "law of attraction" featured in the recent film "The Secret" as well as (C) Kevin Ryerson, the channeler made somewhat famous in Shirley MacClaine's book and made-for-TV-movie "Out on a Limb" wherein her experiences with extra-terrestrials while in Peru are described. I submit there is remarkable consistency in these "channeling sessions" in that they share a theme that disembodied entities have been involved in the formation of human societies for thousands of years, claim similar understanding that they are outside of time and space, and seek to preserve humanity and further our evolution. Meditation is a prerequisite.

A PROPOSED RELIABLE AND REPRODUCIBLE METHOD USING A PHENOMENONOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UFOLOGY

A book edited by Ken Wilber called *The Holographic Paradigm* explains that we are inhabiting a very strange universe. Light has been proven to consist of both particles or a wave depending on the type of experiment the investigator conducts. Gravity bends light. We live in space-time. Energy is mass times the speed of light squared. At the subatomic level particles don't behave as fixed Newtonian objects subject to gravitational forces. At the subatomic level reality consists of tendencies. Electrons at vast distances "communicate" simultaneously by spinning in different or opposite directions, apparently in tune with each other and surpassing the speed of light. The fact that "reality is non-local" at the subatomic level does mean the universe is indeed a strange place.

Interestingly, theoretical physicists describe a reality that is not unlike explanations of consciousness given by meditators and mystics. With a certain amount of meditative practice they say reality is discovered to be timeless and without an observer, formless, consciousness without an object (non-dual). It is essentially a scientific method that says "if you do this (mediate in this way), this will happen (you

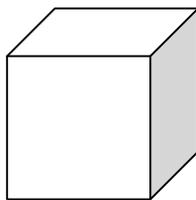
will observe the same thing). Meditation is a replicable method of inquiry. But most mystics and meditators do not suggest that this means “you create your own reality” in the sense that what you think or desire will come to pass. Most spiritual teachings of this kind, at their core, suggest that there are layers of observable objects that tend to disappear as one observes how the mind operates. As such, they describe reality in space-time as nothing more than a perspective or viewpoint. I argue it is this viewpoint of the subject that becomes critical if one is to make any comment about any objects in the “real world.”

A common catch phrase in the field of UFOlogy, made known by the TV series “The X-Files” is “the truth is out there.” Without appearing to be equally melodramatic, I propose “the truth is in here” as a new catch phrase that needs to be adopted, or at least appreciated as critical to the study of UFOs/ETs. Such a catch phrase requires all researchers and those interested in the subject of UFOlogy to examine their motivations by way of reducing mental noise. I am not suggesting we all enter sensory deprivation chambers and meditate as the only vantage point to determine what is real. I am suggesting that awareness of one’s own predilections must be taken seriously.

Central to the modern movement known as Integral Philosophy is the idea that spiritual experiences can be experienced at any level of cognitive development, but all such experiences will be interpreted according to the level of development of the subject. Vision logic, or mature reason, is a level of cognitive development capable of conceptualizing and comparing different perspectives or points of view. This implies an ability to be “objectively subjective” and “subjectively objective” or, in other words, maintain the capacity to hold multiple perspectives. Such an ability will more likely reveal truth simply because one’s biases and preconceived notions can be suspended. In order to hold multiple perspectives and/or switch from one perspective to another perspective smoothly one must have as a prerequisite the ability to intentionally reduce the mental noise of desire and attachment from one’s own personality and idiosyncracies.

One method or approach I am suggesting as a prerequisite for any UFO researcher, witness or investigator is to hold the notion “everyone is right.” The main idea to accept is that the human mind is incapable of 100% error. If you believe that to be true, then it follows that in some sense, to a greater or lesser degree, at least some part or aspect of what someone reports or believes must be partially true. The difficult part is the hard work of discovering what part is true and what part is colored by one’s own mental noise and the mental noise of a witness to an UFO/ET encounter. If sufficiently overcome or accounted for, however, the quieting of one’s own mental noise and the ability to cultivate and freely move from one perspective to another will at least put the UFOlogist in a position to examine what aspects of a witness report or story of ancient archaeology is likely to be true, and what part of that report may be cluttered by the mental noise of the reporter or themselves.

This capacity to smoothly transition from one perspective to another perspective represents a cognitive processing ability that is complex, but not difficult to understand. Imagine a line drawing of a cube.



One way of perceiving this diagram is to see the square panel positioned closest to you. From this perspective, this is a drawing of a solid cube. Another way is to see the square shape as farthest away from you. From this perspective, this is a drawing of 3 flat panels like the corner of an interior room. It's the same drawing (object), but one can observe it from two different perspectives (subjectively). The ability to switch back and forth between perspectives can be applied to how one observes and interprets physical UFO reports (photographs, video, etc.) and non-physical reports (witness testimony). An ability to assume different perspectives freely means to review the evidence from one perspective (skeptical for example), and then to review the same evidence again from a different perspective (a believer).

To conclude the main point of this paper on the subject of ancient aliens, I remind the reader of the three possible explanations I proposed: 1) we have been visited by ETs since antiquity, 2) technologically advanced civilizations left traces of their influence and 3) all can be explained by coincidence, evolution and learning, or other real-world explanations. It seems the most reasonable answer to the puzzle of ancient aliens would be to suggest some of each of these main arguments are true. How could all three of these perspectives be partially true? We have been visited and something along the lines of the Star Trek prime directive prevents at least some amount of interference with the course of human development. There was at least one advanced civilization that left impossible to trace mysteries. Most of the outlandish suppositions claiming unequivocal proof of ETs can be better explained by societal or cultural development and the tools available to ancients at hand. Or they can be explained by the fervor of an excited researcher who is seeing mirages. A thoughtful examination of these mysteries may never reveal a "smoking gun" of proof for any UFO phenomena, but the reduction in mental noise that can enable one to enjoy a cognitive capacity to assume increasingly more perspectives surely would allow for the truth to be better observed. It would also provide for more interesting and less hostile discussions on the subject.

APPLIED EXAMPLE: THE WORK OF JOHN FOSTER

To be respected in the UFO community, as I indicated early on, is not necessarily a guarantee of reliability or validity or respect. John Foster appears to be one who has extensively reported as reliably and objectively as possible his contacts and experiences with UFOs and ETs. Judging the veracity of his claims requires a unique capacity to take on multiple perspectives. In his two books, Foster describes an overwhelming flood of recollections of prior contacts with UFOs and ETs since early childhood and subsequent decades. Reports in his first book are carefully written as objective observations and witness reports. He is careful to describe and distinguish whenever possible what he

actually observed, what his impressions and thoughts were, and what are suppositions. Here is a brief list of some of the common themes. I strongly encourage readers to draw what they believe are the themes of Foster's body of work in the two short books he has written. I believe some of the consistent themes to be:

Native Americans, Buffalo, Horses
 Interdimensional travel and time travel
 Lizard looking beings (vs "the greys")
 Meditation, Rosicrucians and Free Masonry
 Dream amnesia, DNA
 Visitations throughout history

The author of *Eminent Discovery*, Foster, presents as honest and factual account as anything I've ever read about alien contact. He takes great pains to only tell what he saw, what he didn't see, what his thoughts and feelings were at the time, and his educated guesses about friends and relatives who occasionally witnessed and were with him at the time of many encounters. He completely separates any suppositions or theories about what it all means, saving those comments for a companion book he wrote. Or, he is at least clear to point out when he crosses from a factual line of recollection into a line of interpretation. Foster has made a concerted effort to be as accurate and truthful as possible in documenting his experiences, filtering out any wishes, desires or beliefs or interpretations. In other words, extracting the observation of events themselves without allowing interference of mental or emotional "noise." Foster's second book, *To Earth From Heaven* is a more free form examination wherein the author takes more liberty in offering connections, opinions and interpretations of what his experiences might mean.

Imagine what a world might look like where half the "real" waking world is present and the other half is dreamlike. This is how many of Foster's encounters seem to the reader. Also note that there is partial or complete amnesia in his recollections. Discounting Foster's experiences out of hand as simple visions, dreams or otherwise unreal not only ignores the documentation of witness statements Foster provides, but the amnesic effects of brain physiology that all people encounter every night. To have partially recovered memories and strong images reinforces, in part, the claims Foster makes that ETs had appeared to have some kind of ability to mentally interact with him, exert influence upon him, and omit his memories.

Foster knows his experiences sound bizarre. He thinks they are bizarre too. But he also says these things did not happen at night as a dream and the preface of his book includes comments from a psychologist as to his mental status and complete lack of psychotic symptoms.

Mathew McCounaghey said to Jodie Foster in the movie *Contact* in response to being questioned about the veracity of her claim to have been whisked away to the planet Vega and meeting her dear old dad in another dimension, "As a man of religion I'm not bound to the same rules as Dr. Arroway. But I, for one, believe her."

The reader is free, as I have suggested and recommended, to fully consider the mental noise, wishes or desires or motivations to which the author of this paper may be subject. I will take the same liberty as I continue to participate in group discussions with the UNO UFO Study Group and discussions with my local MUFON chapter. Regarding Foster, however, as a man with an appreciation of science and religion I have not experienced what he has experienced and cannot rule out the possibility. Nor can I say with certainty what kind of experience he had and in what state of consciousness he had it so I'm not bound to the universe he describes. But I, for one, believe him. Regarding my understanding of the reality of ancient aliens, technologically advanced civilizations, and commonly accepted and as yet understood unusual abilities the God's possessed, I find it most reasonable to recommend those in the field of UFOlogy continue their pursuit in search of the truth that may be "out there" in each of our respective specialties and fields of expertise, but I also suggest we be mindful of the risks and benefits of appreciating the truth that may be more readily uncovered by looking "in here." We can do both because we have a unique ability to hold different perspectives, sometimes in suspended disbelief, while we go about our lives gathering more evidence in this very strange world.

REFERENCES

- Ancient Aliens*. (2009) Produced and Directed by Kevin Burns. Video recording on DVD. The History Channel.
- Foster, J.R. (2009) *To Earth From Heaven*. Lincoln, NE: JR Foster
- Foster, J.R. (2009) *Eminent Discovery: A Lifetime of UFO Experiences*. Lincoln, NE: JR Foster.
- Radin, Dean (1997) *The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomena*. San Francisco: Harper.
- Sheldrake, Rupert (1995) *Seven Experiments that Could Change the World*. New York: Riverhead Books,
- Von Daniken, Erich (1989) *In Search of the Gods*. New York: Avenel Books.
- Wilber, Ken (1985) *The Holographic Paradigm and other Paradoxes: Exploring the Leading Edge of Science*. Boston and London: Shambhala/New Science Library.
- Wilber, Ken (2000) *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. Boston: Shambhala