

UFO INVESTIGATOR

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON
AERIAL PHENOMENA
NICAP



AAAS RAISES UFO QUESTION ANEW

New Theory on Sighters Evokes Quick Dissent

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), sponsor of a two-day symposium on UFOs in 1969 (*UFO Investigator*, May 1970), has stepped again into scientific debate on the UFO problem, this time with a sociological theory that attempts to link sightings to sighters.

Writing in the AAAS journal, *Science*, social researcher Donald Warren presents his "Status Inconsistency Theory," which purports to show that the people most likely to see UFOs are those who have experienced "frustration" and "status deprivations" in their efforts to climb the conventional ladders of social success. By seeing saucers, Warren contends, these people are able "to break out of a social order in which they are not accorded the place that their situation, in their eyes, deserves."

Warren concedes that this is only a theory, and does not necessarily invalidate other theories advanced to explain UFOs. In fact, he says, "nothing in the data rejects the possibility that some individuals have in fact seen objects propelled from another solar system or that all observations are of ill-understood or misperceived terrestrial phenomena."

He adds, however, that the theory does "account successfully for observed regularity in patterns of UFO sightings."

Warren, who is affiliated with the University of Michigan, bases his thesis on a study he made of the 1966 Gallup Poll that surveyed public attitudes on UFOs. The poll found that almost all U.S. adults had heard of flying saucers, and that an astonishing five percent (approximately 5 million people) claimed to have seen one.

Although the poll reported no significant differences between sighters and nonsighters with respect to sex, age, education, or geographical locality, Warren believes a closer examination of the data reveals otherwise. These differences—principally in education, income, and ethnicity—he cites as evidence that sighters "escape" a nonaccommodating social structure through their sightings.

"It is not," he states, "the uneducated, credulous, or the uninformed individual who reports saucers. Rather, it is the individual whose reward structure is out of line with his investment (in social achievement)."

Theory Scored for Unwarranted Assumptions

Not surprisingly, the theory has brought immediate reaction from *Science* readers familiar with the UFO field. Stuart Appelle, Teaching Fellow in psychology at George Washington University and a member of NICAP's Special Study Group on Data Processing Applications (SSGPA), submitted to *Science*

a short technical commentary that pointed out deficiencies in Warren's arguments and urged caution in trying to extend the theory to account for all UFO reports.

Appelle was particularly concerned over Warren's failure to distinguish between people who admit to sightings and people who make reports. "There is no reason," he said, "to assume on an a priori basis that the self-described 'sighters' among Gallup Poll respondents share characteristics with those persons actually making UFO reports."

Science editors declined to publish Appelle's paper on the ground that the subject of UFOs was no longer of sufficient general interest to justify continuing coverage in the pages of the journal. When queried by NICAP, however, the editors acknowledged that another, more detailed paper, which also dissents from Warren's theory, is under consideration for publication.

"BLOCKS OF LIFE" FOUND IN METEORITE

Interstellar Chemical Evolution Now Confirmed

Clear evidence that the chemical precursors of life can evolve in extraterrestrial space was announced early this month by NASA's Ames Research Center in California. Reporting on its analysis of a meteorite that fell in Australia on September 28, 1969, the Center said its scientists had made "positive identification" of amino acids inside the fallen fragments. Amino acids, the basic components of proteins, are essential constituents of all living organisms.

The announcement comes coincidentally at the time that NICAP is running its interview with Dr. Richard S. Young, Chief of Exobiology for NASA, on some of the very questions posed by evidence of extraterrestrial life. In last month's issue, Dr. Young discussed the work scientists are doing with meteorites, and commented that the presence of organic materials on meteorites raises two questions: "Are these organics evidence that there was life where these meteorites came from, or are they . . . evidence of chemical evolution preceding life wherever they came from?"

When the NASA announcement was made, Dr. Young was quoted in *Newsweek* as saying, "Since these complex molecules can evolve in interstellar space, it suggests that we may find organic materials on the moon, and...that the process occurs among the asteroids."

Amino acids have been detected on meteorites before, but they were suspected to be earthly contaminants rather than compounds indigenous to the meteorite. For the sample analyzed by NASA, this possibility appears minimal, since precautions were taken to prevent contamination and to remove the meteorite to the laboratory within hours of its impact.

Fifth of a Series

MAN AND NON-MAN

What Impact the Discovery of Extraterrestrial Intelligence?

The following is a continuation of the NICAP interview with Dr. Richard S. Young, Chief of Exobiology for NASA, on the search for extraterrestrial life. The interview began in the September issue.

NICAP: In this same general context, the question arises as to how man would react to evidence of extraterrestrial life that is of a substantially more dramatic nature than markings on a meteorite. In 1961, the Brookings Institution here in Washington submitted to NASA a report on the "Implications of Peaceful Space Activities for Human Affairs." The report considers various contingencies in this regard and, in a very interesting fashion, projects possible reactions on the part of society. In particular, it deals with what might happen if evidence of *intelligent* life were discovered beyond Earth. To quote from the report:

"Since intelligent life might be discovered at any time via . . . research presently underway, and since the consequences of such a discovery are presently unpredictable because of our limited knowledge of behavior under even an approximation of such dramatic circumstances, two research areas can be recommended:

"1) Continuing studies to determine emotional and intellectual understanding and attitudes -- and successive alterations of them, if any -- regarding the possibility and consequences of discovering intelligent extraterrestrial life.

"2) Historical and empirical studies of the behavior of peoples and their leaders when confronted with dramatic and unfamiliar events or social pressures. Such studies might help to provide programs for meeting and adjusting to the implications of such a discovery. Questions one might wish to answer by such studies would include: How might such information, under what circumstances, be presented to or withheld from the public for what ends? What might be the role of the discovering scientists and other decision makers regarding release of the fact of discovery?"

In this same connection, the report states:

"Such studies would include historical reactions to hoaxes, psychic manifestations, and unidentified flying objects."

To your knowledge, has NASA attempted to implement a recommendation such as this?

YOUNG: Which recommendation do you mean?

NICAP: To conduct studies of how people react to radical discoveries.

YOUNG: No, not to my knowledge. Your interest is primarily in the direction of intelligent extraterrestrial life. That has not been one of NASA's principal objectives over the years. We

have generally felt that for the time being at least, that's probably not a very fruitful area to research. It is probably more fruitful to look for evidence of life, period -- life of any kind. So, although we are certainly interested in the possibility of extraterrestrial life (some of the people we've supported, like Sagan, for example, have speculated on it), we've never really had an active program. We may or may not in future years get back into the Project OZMA kind of program, a monitoring program, and we have supported -- as a matter of fact, just this past summer -- a small group of people to start thinking about how we would go about monitoring the evidence of extraterrestrial life again. And if there's sufficient interest in the scientific community, and we've got enough money, it's conceivable in the next few years we might reactivate some kind of such program.

Now, as to whether NASA has spent any time following up the recommendations of this report -- I don't know; I've never seen the report before. It's almost ten years old and has probably been superseded by at least a dozen other similar reports. I really can't tell you what's been done. We have not done any studies on trying to determine what public reaction would be to encountering intelligent life form, although obviously people have considered it, thought about it, and theorized about it. We haven't, in any organized way, done anything about it.

NICAP: Could you see any value in conducting formal studies along those lines?

YOUNG: I don't know. It's a matter of priorities. You have to use your resources in whatever ways seem most important. I think if we felt more optimistic about encountering intelligent extraterrestrial life in the near future, then we would probably feel constrained to do something in the way of assessing public opinion. It's been suggested to us. We've considered it in this program, but have not been able to implement anything. I would say it that would probably be worth doing. I wouldn't put it too terribly high on a list of priorities, especially as tough as things are today. But I think it would be interesting and worthwhile to have a feel for what kind of impact this might have.

NICAP: If such a study were conducted, do you think that the field we are in might offer meaningful insights?

YOUNG: What field do you mean?

NICAP: Dealing with the UFO question.

YOUNG: Let me be candid about UFOs. I believe in UFOs by definition. There are unidentified flying objects. Whether these have anything to do with A) extraterrestrial life, and B) intelligent life -- and I think those are separate questions -- is very questionable. In my opinion, there is no evidence whatsoever that would lead me to believe that we should, for any reason, connect UFOs with intelligent extraterrestrial life. I just don't see the evidence. I've looked at it in some depth and read most of the reports, and followed it reasonably carefully. And I find the evidence not even slightly compelling. However, by that I don't mean to say that I rule it out as a possibility; I don't. There are unanswered questions about UFOs, and as long as there are unanswered questions about UFOs, one has to keep one's mind open to all the possible explanations. And one possible explanation is that of intelligent extraterrestrial life. I just don't happen to think so. But I wouldn't close my mind to it as a possibility.

NEXT: Were the Astronauts Expected to Find Anything Strange on the Moon?

News Commentary

AIR ACADEMY REPLACES UFO TEXT

Switch Comes After Fuss Over Old Version

The glare of national publicity has apparently prompted Air Force Academy officials to discontinue use of the science text that urges students "to keep an open and skeptical mind" on the subject of UFOs (*UFO Investigator*, October 1970).

Following widespread news stories that played up the text's liberal treatment of the UFO controversy, the Academy substituted a much abbreviated, "revised" version of the 14-page textbook chapter, contending that the old version was "out of date" and did not follow "the oral in-class presentation on this subject."

Although the Academy is claiming the substitution occurred last September at the start of the Fall semester, before any of the publicity began, no one is holding the Air Force strictly to that schedule, since word of the switch did not come until after the media had drawn attention to the old chapter.

Further evidence of the actual timing is the information given to NICAP when it contacted the Academy in early October and discussed the text at length with both the Office of Information and the Department of Physics (which uses the textbook, *Introductory Space Science*, in its elective course 370). During those conversations, no mention was made of any "revised" version of the chapter on UFOs, and in fact the instructor of Physics 370, Captain Edward Peterson, offered to send an "Errata and Addenda" sheet to NICAP to show how the UFO section had been updated, not replaced.

While it might be rash to conclude that notoriety in the press was the sole cause of the decision to drop the old chapter, there seems little doubt that the publicity served at least as a catalyst in the Academy's plan to eventually replace the textbook. Certainly, the publicity came as an unexpected and unwelcome development that put both faculty members and public information personnel in the position of trying to explain material that until then had occupied a relatively unimportant spot in the academic program and that was, in practical terms, used more to ensure attendance at the final meeting of the class than to indoctrinate air cadets on UFOs.

Indeed, it might even be said that the real villain in this melodrama is the writer or editor who decided to tell the world about the UFO chapter in the first place. Had the material remained in use, it probably would have been phased out at the end of the current semester, or even later, and the new text might have had more in common with its predecessor than the present revision does.

When the textbook was originally offered to Academy administrators for review in 1968, no interest was shown in the UFO chapter, and the book was incorporated into the curriculum minus any official imprimatur. Since updating of scholastic material is routine, there is no reason to believe that any special concern would have been expressed over the book at the next rewrite, had the newspapers not run their stories when they did.

The whole affair may now be little more than a rhetorical question anyway, because in a recent conversation with Peterson, NICAP learned that the Academy's supply of the textbook is almost exhausted, and there is some question as to what will take its place. As things stand, it would not be surprising if the Academy decides to forego consideration of the UFO subject altogether when the new material is put together,

although there appears to remain some interest in UFOs among the faculty, and no overt indication has been made that the subject is going to be eliminated from the course.

Also, in all fairness to Peterson, who wrote the new chapter, the revised text retains a large measure of the objectivity of the old chapter, and at the very least it offers appreciably more than just the Air Force's own view on UFOs.

One glaring weakness in the new chapter is the lack of any specific cases, even from the Air Force's own files. But this might be forgiven when balanced against the chapter's last paragraph, which ends, interestingly enough, with the recommendation that "all agencies of the federal government and private foundations should be willing to consider UFO research proposals on an open-minded, unprejudiced basis."

CASE INVESTIGATIONS AND EVALUATIONS

Follow-Up to Recent Reports

With the advent of winter in many parts of the world, the usual seasonal attenuation of reported sightings has been evident, although it is a rare week when NICAP receives no reports at all. Noteworthy among recent sightings is the apparent rise -- albeit slight -- in foreign reports, mostly in the form of press stories. Foreign clippings sent to NICAP thus far this month come from such widely separated locations as England, where an "object looking like a fried egg" was sighted over London; Australia, where mine workers at Meekatharra reported "an orange and white object that hovered and hissed;" and Ireland, where members of a band near Blessington "watched in amazement" an object that flashed colors in the night sky.

Being fragmentary in nature and referring generally to strange lights, these reports do not rate high on a phenomenological scale, but they do indicate that people worldwide continue to experience observations that, at the very least, are sufficiently puzzling to elicit coverage by the news media.

In the United States, NICAP made one field investigation at the beginning of this month, as follows:

Rhode Island

A spate of phone calls to police stations and newspaper offices in Providence on December 5, 1970, brought reports from various parts of the city that a brilliant light was hovering in the eastern sky. Police were able to observe the light themselves, but could not identify it. Local military installations were contacted but could offer no help either. A meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Warwick said the UFO was the planet Venus, and subsequent investigation by NICAP's Rhode Island Subcommittee confirmed that evaluation. Venus is particularly conspicuous in the early morning sky at this time of year.

SIGHTING
ADVISORY

Preliminary information on new reports. Details and evaluations will be published when available.

October 18, 1970 -- Two men parked on Mt. Greylock, Massachusetts, reported a "ball of light" that swept past their car, momentarily affecting the car's electrical system. Operating a two-way radio at the time, the men said the light flashed in their eyes and came directly at the car. The incident occurred at approximately the time of an unexplained power failure in the same area.



MEMOS
FOR
MEMBERS

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE, AND PRICES

Some members have asked which back issues of the *UFO Investigator* are available. The answer is: all issues from November-December 1965 to date (i.e. Vol. III, No. 5 through Vol. V, No. 1, and all issues published this year). A few earlier issues are also available, as follows:

Vol. I, No. 5 (August-September 1958)
Vol. I, No. 6 (December 1958)
Vol. I, No. 12 (April-May 1961)
Vol. II, No. 1 (July-August 1961)
Vol. II, No. 7 (January-February 1963)
Vol. II, No. 9 (June-September 1963)
Vol. III, No. 2 (April-May 1965)

Issues not in stock are available only in facsimile form by special order. These include Vol. I, No. 1 (July 1957) through Vol. III, No. 4 (August-September 1965). Exceptions to this are the seven issues listed above.

The price to members for issues in stock is \$.35 each, or three for \$1.00. For nonmembers, the price is \$.50 each. The price to members for issues not in stock is \$.80 each (except for Vol. I, Nos. 1-3, which are \$3.20 each). For nonmembers, the price is \$1.00 each (\$3.50 each for Vol. I, Nos. 1-3).

When ordering back issues, be sure to specify the ones you want and include full payment in U.S. currency. Allow two to three weeks for delivery, especially on large or special orders.

RETAIN MEMBERSHIP CARDS

When you use our new computerized form to renew, be sure to detach the renewal stub (left half of form) from the membership card (right half of form), and send only the stub with your dues payment. The card is for you to keep, because it is already imprinted with the new expiration date that will be entered in our files when we receive your renewal. If you decide not to renew, please destroy the card, because it is not valid unless it agrees with our records.

RENEWAL REMINDER

There are always going to be a few members who receive a renewal notice even though they have recently renewed. This is because their renewal is received too close to the time the notices are prepared to be excluded from the notice list. If this happens to you, you may ignore the notice; your address label on subsequent mailings will show your updated expiration date.

THANK YOU

We want to thank all the NICAP members who are using U.S. currency to remit dues and other payments. This helps us simplify our book-keeping and avoid special bank processing — both benefits that mean significant savings in time and money.

HELP KEEP THOSE CLIPPINGS COMING

R. S. Somerville, a NICAP member in Michigan, has suggested that each member cover one particular newspaper for articles to send to NICAP. If you want to volunteer to cover a paper in your area (or one you receive), send us a postcard with the name of the paper, how often the paper is published (daily, Sunday only, weekly, etc.), and your name and address. We will compile a list of the cards we receive, and advise each volunteer we accept. In case of duplicate offers to cover the same paper, the first card received will determine our choice. Please volunteer only if you can read a paper on a regular basis and send us all clippings on UFOs. Each clipping should include the name of the paper, the date of the issue, and the place of publication. Our thanks to Mr. Somerville for his excellent suggestion.

DONATIONS MUCH APPRECIATED

Since we cannot always acknowledge donations with a personal letter, we want to thank those members who have so kindly remembered us in recent months with a contribution. As the financial statement in the October issue shows, donations haven't added up to very much lately, but that doesn't mean we are not grateful for the few we have received. Each one is sincerely appreciated.

BOOK ORDERS TAKE TIME

If you recently ordered a NICAP publication but have not received it, please remember that we ship all books by Fourth Class mail to the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and by Book Rate (printed matter) to foreign countries (unless Air Mail postage is sent extra). Delivery can take from three to six weeks in North America, and even longer for foreign orders.

ON TAP FOR 1971 . . .

Where Have All the UFOs Gone?

Some Thoughts on a New Theory

What Did the Astronauts Really See on the Moon?

NICAP Tries to Trace a Rumor

Are UFOs Tampering with Earth Satellites?

A Critique by a Man Who Should Know

Are Computers the Answer to the UFO Problem?

A Status Report on Project ACCESS

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| Annual Membership Dues | |
| United States, Canada and Mexico | \$10.00 |
| Foreign | \$12.00 |
| Editor: Stuart Nixon | |

Q/A

Q. Do you know about a UFO that landed sometime in 1964 and scorched the ground?
G.D./Bowler, Wisc.

A. You are probably referring to the Socorro, New Mexico, case of April 24, 1964. A policeman observed a white, egg-shaped object sitting silently on desert terrain outside Socorro at approximately 5:45 p.m. MST. When other police officers arrived moments after the UFO had left, they found burned areas on the ground and other evidence the site had been disturbed. The Air Force lists this case as unidentified.

Q. What is NICAP's opinion of the Villas-Boas case, where allegedly a man was forcibly taken aboard a UFO for a breeding experiment?
J.V./Medinah, Ill.

A. Having made no investigation of this case, NICAP cannot offer a firm opinion. A priori, it is sensational in nature and essentially just another variation on the basic "contactee" claim. Without detailed study by a qualified psychiatrist, the case is probably best regarded with skepticism.

Q. How many false reports have been made to NICAP?
D.M./Winter, Calif.

A. No exact statistics are available on spurious sightings in NICAP files. A reasonable guess at the total number would be 500-1000, if photographic cases are included. Once NICAP's computer project, ACCESS, is implemented, questions of this kind will be answerable with great precision.

Q. Has any member of NICAP's staff ever seen a UFO?
D.M./Winter, Calif.

A. No.

Q. Does NICAP plan to make a breakdown of sightings per year for the past 23 years?
D.G./Parsons, Kan.

A. The principal purpose of Project ACCESS is to establish an advanced statistical capability for organizing and analyzing sighting reports. Once ACCESS is implemented, numerical listings such as you request will be readily available, plus a very large variety of more complex data presentations.

Q. Regarding your explanation of the Heyerdahl case (*UFO Investigator*, September 1970), the Poseidon launch accounts for only the third of the three sightings reported by Heyerdahl's crew. How do you explain the other two?
P.S./Fullerton, Calif.

A. The first two sightings were not investigated by NICAP due to their fragmentary nature. The initial report, an orange light seen for a few seconds, offers insufficient detail to properly evaluate, while the second report, an orange flame, is also somewhat impoverished, although it does suggest several possible explanations, such as re-entry phenomena.

Q. Is the NICAP Youth Council still active?
J.C./Woodbury, N.J.

A. No.