

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT UFO'S

THE PHENOMENON

From time to time throughout history there have been reports of strange things seen in the sky. In 1946 a series of such sightings occurred in Sweden, and since 1947 reports of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) have become increasingly numerous in the U.S. and other parts of the world. These reports continue in much the same form today.

UFO sightings are reported to the Center for UFO Studies by a broad spectrum of the public, particularly through local law enforcement agencies. UFOs themselves are reported by many highly responsible people, e.g. military and civilian pilots, air traffic controllers, scientists, etc.

The majority of present-day sightings prove to be misinterpretations of natural phenomena—meteors, planets, and stars—or man-made objects such as airplanes, balloons, and satellites. These are referred to as identified flying objects (IFOs). A smaller number of reports cannot be investigated properly due either to lack of pertinent details or the inaccessibility of witnesses. In any given set of UFO reports, however, there remains a residuum of about 5-10% which are truly puzzling, not only to the witnesses, but to technically trained investigators who study the reports.

While UFO reports differ in many details, there are also a number of similarities recurring in such features as shape, maneuverability, appearance and disappearance, sound and color. There are several basic observational categories into which the unidentifieds may be classified.

THE CATEGORIES

A. RELATIVELY DISTANT SIGHTINGS

1. *Nocturnal Lights (NL)*: These are sightings of lights in the night sky whose appearance and/or motions are not explainable in terms of conventional light sources. The lights appear most often as red, orange, or white. They form the largest group of UFO reports.

2. *Daylight Discs (DD)*: Daytime sightings are generally of oval or disc-shaped metallic-appearing objects. They can appear high in the sky or close to the ground, and they are often reported to hover. They can seem to disappear in the distance with astounding speed.

3. *Radar-Visuals (RV)*: Of special significance are unidentified "blips" on radar screens which coincide with and confirm simultaneous visual sightings by the same or other witnesses.

B. RELATIVELY CLOSE SIGHTINGS (within 200 yards)

1. *Close Encounters of the First Kind (CE I)*: Though the witness observes a UFO nearby, it does not appear to interact with either the witness or the environment.

2. *Close Encounters of the Second Kind (CE II)*: In these encounters there is a reported interaction between the UFO and the environment which may vary from interference with car ignition systems and electronic gear to imprints or burns on the ground and physical effects on plants, animals, and humans.

3. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind (CE III)*: In this category entities generally of a more-or-less humanoid appearance (now referred to as "humanoids") are reported in or closely associated with the UFO. There is usually no direct contact or communication with the witness, but there have been some reports, increasing in recent years, of incidents involving very close contact, even temporary detainment, of the witness(es).

THE KINDS OF PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

After some UFO sightings indications of the presence of something most unusual have been found.

1. *Physical Traces*. Compressed and dehydrated vegetation, broken tree branches, and imprints in the ground have all been reported. Sometimes a soil sample taken from an area where a UFO had been seen close to the ground will be determined by laboratory analysis to have undergone heating or other changes not present in the control sample.

2. *Physiological Effects*. Medical verification of burns, eye inflammation or temporary blindness and other physiological effects attributed to encounters with UFOs—even healings of previous conditions—can also constitute evidence, especially when no other obvious cause for the effect can be found by the medical examiner.

3. *Radar Scope Photos*. A series of photographs of a radar screen on which a "blip" of a UFO appears is a powerful adjunct to a visual sighting because it provides quantitative evidence of the UFO's motions and velocity.

4. *Photographs*. While it might seem that photographs would constitute the best evidence for UFOs, this has not been the case. Hoaxes are common but can usually be exposed quite easily, but even those photos which pass the test of microscopic analysis and/or computer enhancement often show no more than an object of unknown nature and frequently out of focus. For proper analysis of a photo it is necessary that the original negative be available and the photographer, witnesses, and circumstances under which the photograph was taken be known.

THE RESEARCH

The persistence of the UFO phenomenon and its worldwide occurrence have led to a growing number of scientists to involve themselves in UFO research. The attitude of the scientific community is slowly changing. Cogent evidence of this is given in the Sturrock Report, a survey of the members of the American Astronomical Society, which showed that the majority felt that UFOs were worthy of scientific study.

An earlier attempt at a scientific study was made by the University of Colorado's "Condon Committee" in 1966-67. The conclusion of several involved scientists that the UFO phenomenon was worthy of further study was ignored by the project director, Dr. Condon.

Recently, a number of scientific journals are opening their pages to serious papers on UFOs. A conference featuring work of this quality was held in May, 1976 by the Center for UFO Studies and featured the work of the Scientific Board of the Center, an association of about twenty scientists from various universities and government laboratories who are dedicated to the serious scientific study of the UFO problem. The *Proceedings* of this conference and other documents are available through the CENTER.

HOW TO REPORT A UFO

If you yourself should see a UFO, first try to get as many other witnesses as possible and take a photograph of the object. Take careful note of its appearance, its motion, the time and duration of the sighting and the directions involved. To report your sighting, you can call the CENTER directly (312/491-6666) or mail a complete description of the experience plus sketches and names and addresses of other witnesses, to P.O. Box 1402, Evanston, IL 60204. Your report will be acknowledged and, if additional information is needed, you may be contacted by an investigator.