

5. Advanced technologies (test vehicles, satellites, reentry effects). Again, some reports can be attributed to this cause, but most cannot.

6. Poorly understood psychic phenomena (psychic projections, archetypal images, parapsychological phenomena, etc). It is difficult to comment on this possibility because of the current lack of knowledge of parapsychology. While a (small) number of UFO reports do exhibit aspects of parapsychological phenomenology⁽²⁵⁾, general relationships have yet to be convincingly demonstrated. Reference 6 deals with this explanation.

7. Extraterrestrial probes. A possibility commonly held by the public and commonly rejected by scientists. Prof. McDonald believes a number of sightings are best explained by this hypothesis.

8. Messengers of salvation and occult truth. This explanation is listed because of the nature of certain reports (particularly "contact" reports -- reports involving communication of UFO occupants and the witnesses) and because of the historical aspects of the phenomenology. See reference 5 for elaboration.

Perhaps, to play it safe, an additional category should be listed:

9. Other

Clearly, the explanation of UFOs will interest someone. Psychologists have an interest in 1, 2, 3 and 6; theologians in category 8, scientists in 4 and 7. Therefore, whatever the explanation, it is a problem of at least average interest. If, by chance, the explanation is 7, or even 8 (and possibly 6) the value to society would be profound and significant. In this sense, an identification of the phenomenon would be a task of highest potential urgency.

How might it be done?

Because of the transient nature of UFO's we cannot expect to have the interested scientist rush to the spot to make his own observations. Reports so far accumulated, however, show that UFO's sometimes appear frequently in certain areas for a short period of time (a so-called "flap"). One characteristic of the flap is a larger percentage of sightings of objects at low levels than one normally obtains. If the reporting and analysis system were responsive enough, men and instruments