

SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

Are UFOs real? Does it matter?... I truly believe in the reality of the UFO phenomenon. I just don't know what it is or what it means, and I'm okay with that. I'm okay with not knowing because, despite the fact that I am not certain of its objective reality, I am certain that the phenomenon has meaning and significance (even if it originates in my psyche). As I state in my book, some mysteries were meant to be savored, and not necessarily solved.

Mark O'Connell - The satisfaction of not knowing



Front: The planet Venus and the moon on the morning of June 19, 2020. Venus had just reappeared from behind the moon as part of a rare lunar occultation. Venus, as usual, plays a role in several UFO cases in this issue.

Left: A close-up of the Venus moon occultation.

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Better to remain silent.....

I keep remembering back to my Navy days when we used to say, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't". It had a lot to do with rumors people would circulate indicating something good was going to happen. More often than not, it never happened or, when it did happen, it was not as good as advertised. One can apply the same phrase to UFOlogy. Unfortunately, there is a certain number of individuals that do not exhibit enough skepticism and often fall for the latest shiny object that appears to them, as irrefutable proof that UFOs are alien spaceships.

Last summer, [a document surfaced on the Internet](#), that presented a transcript of a meeting between Dr. Eric Davis and Admiral Thomas Wilson in 2002. Richard Dolan, who seems to have never met a conspiracy theory or hoax he did not like, declared it the "UFO leak of the century". The apparent author of this document is Dr. Eric Davis, who was one of Robert Bigelow's team of scientists involved with the AATIP. Written in 2002, the notes never surfaced for the public to see until last year. Like so many documents that surfaced before, I simply ignored them because they just did not sound credible to me and I would wait until something came up that clarified the situation. [That clarification surfaced in June when Billy Cox interviewed Retired Admiral Wilson.](#)

In the Davis notes, Wilson supposedly confirmed that there was a super-secret organization that handled at least one crashed alien spaceship and they were attempting to reverse engineer the technology. Cox asked Wilson about the documents. He replied that he had never seen them before until somebody had directed him towards them in the past month. Wilson told Cox that this was all fiction and he would not even recognize Davis if he was standing in front of him. Of course, UFOlogists are going to say Wilson would say such things in order to cover the whole story up. However, Wilson wasn't the only person Cox talked to about the document. Several other individuals were mentioned in the transcript, whom Cox interviewed. All denied any knowledge about this. Luckily, not all UFOlogists are quite as gullible as Dolan. [John Greenwald suggested that the document was nothing more than a test script for some television program that never was realized.](#) I think it is important to note that Dr. Eric Davis could have resolved all of this but, as best I can tell, he has said little about this document since its release.

I suspect that Dr. Davis wants this all to be an open issue with no conclusion one way or the other. If he denies he wrote it, one has to wonder what took him so long to say so. If he admits it was just a bunch of rambling ideas he created out of thin air (in the form of a script or fictitious article), then people like Dolan, as well as Davis, appear foolish since Davis could have ended this when the document first appeared a year ago. If Davis says that Wilson is lying, then he sounds like a conspiracy theorist. Dr. Davis loses either way so he has probably figured the best thing to say is not say anything at all. Better to remain silent and thought a fool than speak and remove all doubt.

The quote on the front page of this issue was from Mark O'Connell's recent piece, "[The satisfaction of not knowing](#)". It was a very good read and should be read by skeptics/debunkers and proponents/believers alike. I want to think I am good with "not knowing" about a case but the debunker in me wants to try and present possible solutions. That being said, I have been more than willing to move cases from the Blue Book files to the UNIDENTIFIED category or acknowledge I have no explanation for a case. To me, a case being called UNIDENTIFIED means other than it is nothing more than a mystery. There are plenty of mysteries in this world that will probably never be truly solved to everyone's satisfaction. UFOs is one of them.

WEEDING OUT THE WEINSTEIN CATALOGUE

August 27, 1957 Dry Tortugas, Florida¹

57.08.27	20:45 ZT	USA	Dry Tortugas, Florida	M	a military plane	one object with a bright red to reddish-yellow pulsating light	GR		427 20
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Case file

The source document is the Project Blue Book files and Loren Gross' UFO history. Gross' entry does not add anything since it is just the Blue Book record card. Therefore, the sole source of information comes from the Project Blue Book file. Blue Book listed this as the planet Venus with "spurious radar blips".

The file has quite a bit of information inside of it.² This included:

- A speedletter from the Atlantic Fleet weather training unit in Key West to ATIC dated 17 Sept 1957. This speedletter has hand-written comments by Captain Gregory where he mentioned that the star Arcturus, the planet Venus, and the lighthouse in the Dry Tortugas were all in the direction the plane was looking. Most noteworthy was the comment by training unit:
"...TWO SUBSEQUENT INSTANCES INDICATE POSSIBILITY OF RANDOM SIGNALS BEING RECIEVED BY APG-51A RADAR WHEN POINTED TOWARDS VENUS"
- Aeronautical charts for the region with notes for the position of the aircraft, direction of travel, and directions for Arcturus and Venus.
- A message from FAWTULANT to ATIC, DTG 280545Z, with the details of the sighting. In that message, the pilots stated the UFO could not have been the lighthouse.
- Hand-written comments about the sighting by the Captain Gregory, where he mentioned Arcturus and the lighthouse.
- A joint message form, dated 4 September, 1957, requesting any additional information from Chief of Naval operations that might help explain the sighting
- A message from CINCLANTFLT, DTG 141945Z, mentioning that a coast guard vessel and two Navy escort ships were located 11.2 miles at azimuth 322 from Rebecca Shoal lighthouse. They also reported that there were three F3D and 1 F3H aircraft in the region between 2100 and 2305.
- A speed letter dated 10 September 1957, that references a CNO message. There is a note written on the letter referencing the CINCLANTFLT message of 14 September (DTG 141945Z).
- A joint message form, dated 4 September, 1957, requesting information from the Civil Aviation Administration that might help explain the sighting.
- A joint message form, dated 4 September, 1957, requesting information from Eglin AFB that might help explain the sighting.
- A message from Eglin AFB, DTG 051900Z, stating they had no operations in the region.
- A message from Patrick AFB, DTG 101515Z, stating they had no operations in the region.

Based on the information in the case file, two F3D aircraft were airborne west of Key West and saw the UFO at time 2045R (not Zulu). The UFO was described as being bright red to reddish-yellow and pulsating. At least one of the aircraft's radar (AN/APG-51A) picked up a contact at 20 miles distance, which jumped to 30 miles distance after one minute. The duration of the sighting was approximately two minutes when the object faded from sight.





Analysis

The aircraft's flight path during the chase was towards a true azimuth of about 278 degrees (Gregory lists it as 290 in his notes). The message also stated the object was towards the west when first seen. It is also important to note the message used the time of 2045 Romeo, which is Eastern Standard Time and not Zulu. For Zulu time, it would have been 0145Z on the 28th of August. The set time for Venus at sea level was around 0139 Z on 28 August at azimuth 266 degrees. The star Arcturus set at 0400z at azimuth 292 degree. The crescent moon had set at 0128Z on the 28th at an azimuth of 262 degrees. However, the aircraft was not at sea level. It would have set approximately one minute later for every 5000 feet of altitude. Because the aircraft were at 24,000 feet, the set time for all of these objects were about five minutes later.

Conclusion

There seems to be no good reason to dismiss the possibility that this was a sighting of Venus. The direction of flight was only about 12 degrees to the right of Venus and Venus was setting during the incident. With Venus at such a low angle of elevation, it would appear reddish. The only concern is the radar contact but it seems that the message from Atlantic fleet indicated it was possible this was just an anomalous return. Considering the fact that it apparently jumped 10 miles in single sweep of the antenna, it is likely this was the case. In my opinion, there is no reason for this to be in the Weinstein catalogue and it should be removed.

Notes and references

1. Weinstein, Dominique F. Unidentified Aerial Phenomena: Eighty years of pilot sightings. NARCAP. February 2001. P. 34
2. "27 August 1957 Dry Tortugas case file" Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <https://www.fold3.com/image/6969355>

July 19, 1956: Hutchinson, Kansas

July 19, 1956-*Hutchinson, Kansas. Naval Air Station reported tracking "a moving unidentified object" on radar, observed visually by state police as "teardrop shaped" light source. [VIII] Noticeable maneuvers of UFO "vertically and horizontally over a wide area of the sky" mapped by Wichita Eagle.¹*

Section VIII has the case listed in a table with the same description². Its footnote states the source of information was a United Press story from the same date.

The Blue Book file

Blue Book has a case file for this event under Arkansas City, Kansas.³ There seems to be little information in the way of what the Air Force discovered. Instead, the file contains mostly news reports and excerpts from Ruppelt's book and other sources. There is a record card from the 4602nd AISS and a message that is so faded that it is hard to read. They report the object was in the direction of 80 degrees azimuth, was visible for 40 minutes (and still was in sight at the time of the report) and was traveling towards the southeast. The time listed was 0610Z on the 19th on the 4602nd record card. An addition then appeared on the card indicating the time was 0010Z. This is the time that appears on the official Blue Book record card.

Media accounts

The Hutchinson News-Herald of July 19, 1956 recounted the events that transpired.⁴ They stated the following details:

- First observed between 12 and 1 AM. Highway trooper Dick Hadsall stated the object did not move quickly but seemed to move horizontally and vertically over "a wide area of the sky".
- Policemen Otis Kirkbride and Chief Harold Alt, of the shore patrol, were in Hutchinson and they saw the object at tree top level to the northeast at 3:30 AM. They initially thought it was the moon
- Patrolman Bob Robinson was to the south of town and did not initially see it. Only when he drove north did he see the object.
- Kirkbride and Alt stated the object moved from side to side and eventually went north, ascended, and disappeared.
- The story that it was tracked by the Naval radar was checked out but Hutchinson NAS stated they did not track anything to the news media.
- Newspaper editor Brian Coyne described it as a "brilliantly lighted, tear shaped object with prongs or streams of light spraying downward. The prongs or streams of bright light were observed first as directed towards the earth and then extending from the sides of the object." The head was described as being green or bluish green.
- Near Emporia, a rail road worker reported seeing a light at 3AM for twenty minutes. It appeared to come and go.
- It was reported that a B-47 was dispatched and that they only reported seeing torches from the oil fields.
- The object(s) near Arkansas City was visible after sunrise when it disappeared about 5:15 AM. It also mentioned that a second object (not previously mentioned) disappeared a few minutes later.
- There was mention of a ball of fire traveling eastward extremely fast. No time was mentioned.

The Blue Book file contained a media teletype that stated a B-29 and two other jets were sent to investigate. Another media account that states a B-47 was sent. One can only assume that nothing was seen, except oil well fires, since there appears to be no indication that Blue Book, or the 4602nd AISS, had received a report from the aircrew.

Further examination of other media accounts, revealed this quote:

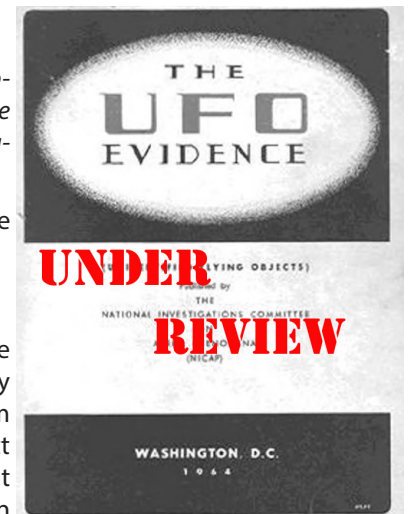
Earlier, the Kansas Highway Patrol reported radar at the Hutchinson, Naval Air Station had picked up "a ball of fire traveling east at a high rate of speed."⁵

The Blue Book file had a news teletype print out that stated that the "ball of fire" had been seen by a patrolman.

Analysis/summary

In Sunlite 11-2, I determined the sighting to be attributed to Mars and not a balloon as Blue Book determined. This had to do with the times of the event listed on the Blue Book record card. The 4602nd felt that the southeast motion was due to the wind, which was coming from the northwest. However, an astronomical object would shift azimuth from East to Southeast as it rises. Mars, at magnitude -1.6 (brighter than any star visible in the sky at the time), was at azimuth 116 degrees at 0610Z on the 19th. It had risen around 0440Z at azimuth 100 degrees. This is why I listed Mars as the source.

Examining the rest of the story, we have a bunch of sightings at various times. One series of sightings seem to have happened around 3:30 AM (0930 Z). At 0930Z, the planet Venus was at azimuth 69 degrees and at an elevation of 3 degrees. It was near



maximum brilliancy at magnitude -4.4.

Other sightings appeared to have been between midnight and 1AM. As previously noted, Mars had risen in the east and was quite the prominent object in the southeast. Additionally, rising in the northeast around 12:20AM, was the bright star, Capella. Coyne's description sounds a lot like Capella although it is not clear when he observed the object. The lack of specific details regarding azimuth, elevation, and more precise times, makes it difficult to draw a definitive conclusion.

The object that was a "ball of fire" that traveled eastward very fast was probably a meteor, which apparently had been visually observed by a patrolman. What probably transpired was that this patrolman, or the dispatcher, probably called the radar site asking if they had seen anything and got some sort of response that he/they had interpreted to mean that the Air Station had tracked this object. It was then reported it had been tracked by radar to other patrolman on the radio.

What this means is the radar contact was little more than rumor. There is no official mention of it in the Blue Book file, other than the news media accounts. The fact that the Naval Air Station denied there was a radar contact when asked indicates that whatever was reported to the patrolman was ambiguous at best. There may have been a contact but it probably was just spurious in nature. Without further evidence, the radar contact report has to be considered lacking in substance.

Conclusion

It seems that astronomical objects may have been the major source of these UFO reports. The media accounts appear confusing and it is too bad the Blue Book file does not have detailed accounts from the primary witnesses with specific information. However, based on what is in these accounts, I suspect that Capella was one of the primary UFOs reported between 12 and 1 AM. I also think that Venus was another source of the UFOs that faded out after sunrise. Mars also probably played a role based on the accounts in the Blue Book files. If a "true UFO" was present, it was lost in all of the confused reports that were published. Based on the information that we do have, these sightings can be listed as possible astronomical objects and should be removed from the "best evidence" category.

Notes and references

1. Hall, Richard M. (Ed.) The UFO evidence. The National Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). New York: Barnes and Noble. 1997. P. 135
2. *ibid*. P. 79
3. "Case file 18 July 1956 Arkansas City, KS" Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <https://www.fold3.com/image/6787190>
4. Skinner, Jim. "Balls of fire are spotted over city". The Hutchinson-News Herald. July 19, 1956. Hutchinson, Kansas. P.1
5. "Strange object in sky over central Kansas last night". The Ottawa Herald. July 19, 1956. Ottawa, Kansas P.1.

THE 701 CLUB: CASE 943 JULY 24, 1951 PORTSMOUTH, NH.

Don Berliner lists the case as follows:

*July 24, 1951; Portsmouth, New Hampshire. 7:10 Witnesses: Hanscom AFB Operations Officer Capt. Cobb, Cpl. Fein. One 100-200' tubular object, 5 times long as it was wide, with fins at one end, and colored greyish with many black spots. Flew 800-1,000 m.p.h. at 1-2,000' altitude, leaving a faint swath. 20 seconds.*¹

The description by Sparks is essentially the same.²

The Blue Book file

The file consists of a report made by the Office of Special Investigations (OSI). Most of the information in the report is as described by Berliner/Sparks. However, there are a few items that need to be highlighted that are not mentioned by Berliner/Sparks. For instance, the closing description of how the object disappeared seemed to be omitted:

*The sighted object was in view for approximately 20 seconds, at which point it disappeared very quickly, as though it had gone into a cloud bank.*³

Additionally, the file has the statement made by Cpl. Fein. He estimated the duration to be 5-10 seconds and not the estimated 20 seconds described by Captain Cobb.⁴ The record card reflects this since it lists two times for duration.

Analysis

The time of the sighting, was at 7:10 PM EST. The sun set at 7:12 PM EST on July 24th. Therefore, the sighting happened around sunset in a twilight/dusk sky. This leads to the possibility that what was seen was a fireball meteor. Is it possible that this was the source of the sighting?

To me, the description of the object as disappearing instantaneously is consistent with a fireball fading out. Such a meteor would have been bright but it may have only been about magnitude -4 to -6. Seeing Venus just before sunset, during greatest brilliancy (-4.4), is difficult but not too hard once you know where to look. The motion would have attracted the attention of two men. Dusk conditions could have made it appear ghostly in shape and the witness perception could have created the impression of dark spots on the "hull" of the meteor.

Conclusion

In my opinion, this case can be reclassified as a "possible meteor" and should be removed from the list of Blue Book unknowns.

Notes and references

1. Berliner, Don. "The Bluebook unknowns". NICAP. Available WWW: <http://www.nicap.org/bluebook/unknowns.htm>
2. Sparks, Brad. Comprehensive Catalog of 1,700 Project Blue Book UFO Unknowns: Database Catalog Not a Best Evidence List-NEW: List of Projects & Blue Book Chiefs Work in Progress Version 1.30. Jan. 26, 2020. P. 107.
3. "OSI File 24-119 dtd 21 August 1951 P. 2." Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <https://www.fold3.com/image/7008053>
4. "Statement of observer of unconventional aircraft". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <https://www.fold3.com/image/7008073>

Another NARCAP Challenge?

On June 1, Ted Roe released his NARCAP report #20¹, which describes an incident involving an aircraft flying from Queretaro International Airport, Mexico to Memphis, Tennessee on March 19th.

The incident

According to Roe, the flight left at 8:05 PM and was 50 minutes behind schedule. While the plane was at 37,000 feet and traveling North (actually North-Northeast) at 490 knots. About 150 miles south of Monterrey, Mexico, the first officer looked over towards the left side of the cockpit and saw a yellow light descend into view from above. At first he thought it was a meteor but it stopped and then projected a bright beam towards the aircraft. It was feared the object was going to collide with the aircraft. However, the object stopped projecting a beam and then simply paced the aircraft.

The object was described as “tear-dropped shaped” and there were no navigation lights. Videos were taken and there was no indication that the object appeared on the aircraft’s radar. As the aircraft approached the US border, the light changed color from yellowish-white to Pinkish-purple. It also began to flicker. It then took a path directly away from the aircraft towards the west and disappeared.

Ted Roe added that the incident lasted 32 minutes.

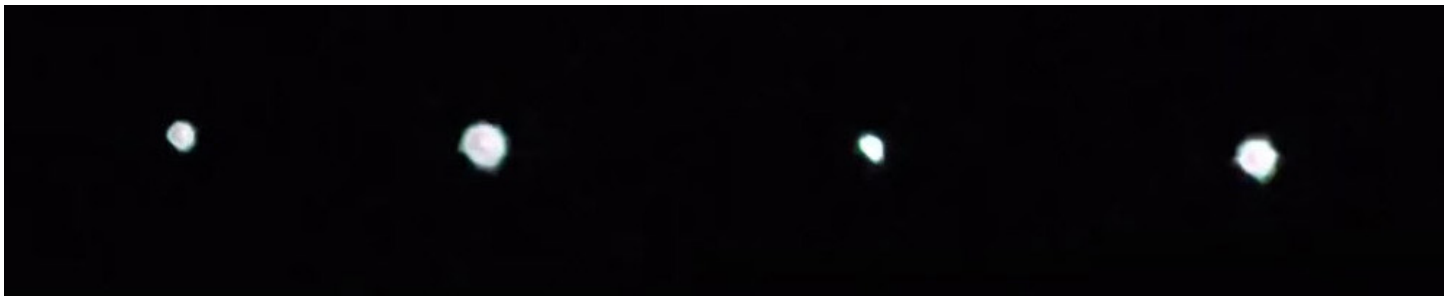
Evaluation

M. Roe evaluated the incident by giving a long winded discussion about how this UAP is like all the other cases that have been documented over the years. The implication is that, because the UAP is similar to all other reports classified as unknown, this UAP cannot be explained as something conventional.

Not once in the report do we have any particulars associated with the event. We don’t have the exact time the incident started and ended. We don’t have any azimuth values/relative bearing/elevation values either. Another thing that should have been asked is if the plane was in level flight during the initial part of the sighting or was it coming out of a bank? What about the recording equipment? What kind of “camera” was used to record the event? Were any telephoto lenses used? One would think that expert witnesses would have been able to provide this and Roe would have demanded such information for a “technical report”. I e-mailed Ted Roe asking for specific information but he did not respond. Either Roe does not regularly answer the e-mail for NARCAP or he ignored my e-mail.

The Video evidence

The video presented by Roe really does not help. We see, what appears to be, a digital camera/phone trying to focus on a bright point source. It keeps coming in and out of focus, which the first officer interpreted as a “pulsating UFO”. More important is the commentary while the UFO is being recorded. The first officer stated, “...they (UFOS) tend to congregate around Monterrey..”. He also seemed pleased that others saw the UFO with him (“I can finally say I saw one”). This all indicates he felt he was familiar about UFO folklore and was willing to believe what he was seeing was something exotic.



Analysis

Since Roe seemed uninterested in providing this data, we will have to see if we can figure things out based on the data we do have. As best we can tell from the graphic on the report, the heading of the aircraft was approximately 25 degrees true azimuth at the time of the incident. Since the first officer, was looking towards the left when he first saw the object, we can make an assumption that this was 270 degrees relative bearing (90 degrees CCW from the aircraft’s front). This would mean the UAP was observed at an azimuth of about 295 degrees. Other than the initial observations, the UAP remained at this azimuth for the entire 32 minutes of the sighting.

This brings us to when was the sighting. Luckily, the initial report was filed with MUFON and the individual listed the time as 1100 PM CDT.² This equates to 0400 UTC and indicates the event ended sometime around 0432 UTC. We don’t know how accurate these times are since the MUFON report was filed nine days after the event. We have to assume they are approximate values that have a range of +/-15 minutes.

Is there a possible source for this UFO report? Remember, the pilot and first officer claim that the UAP was the dominant object outside their cockpit and they made no comparison with any nearby astronomical objects. This is important to note since there is one object they should have noticed but did not mention. Can you guess what it was?



At 0400 UTC, the azimuth of the bright planet Venus was 290 degrees (Using Monterrey as the location). Venus would set at approximately 0420 UTC at an azimuth of 292 degrees. Since the plane was at 37,000 feet, the set time would have been later by about seven minutes (one minute for every 5000 feet). Remember, we assumed the times are approximate. I would consider 0427 UTC close enough to 0432 UTC (estimated) to be a reasonable match.

Was it Venus?

It seems odd that they would confuse Venus as UFO but the historical data has shown that pilots do this frequently enough that it is possible. Still we need to address the arguments against it being Venus.

One of the first things that concerned me with the explanation was that nobody noticed it during the first part of the flight. It is possible that only the pilot would have been able to see it since the fuselage could obscure it from the first officer's view. The pilot may have noted it but really did not concern himself with it until the first officer reported it had moved downward. It is also possible that the plane was still climbing in altitude and the weather may have obscured the planet from view.

That brings us to the observation of the object "descending" to the plane's altitude. This is why I had to wonder what the plane's attitude was at the beginning of the sighting. If the plane had banked to port and then leveled out, Venus would appear to descend to an observer inside the aircraft, who was using the windows as a frame of reference. We don't know exactly what transpired leading up to the "descent" but it seems to me that it possible that "descent" was a case of it appearing to descend and not actually descending.

The "shining a beam" effect is easier to explain. Venus was a little over a month from greatest brilliancy (magnitude -4.5) and was around magnitude -4.3. Venus is bright enough to cast faint shadows under the right conditions and Allan Hendry notes that witnesses have described that Venus was "too bright to look at" as if the light was blinding. The perception that a spotlight was directed at the aircraft may have just been the pilot/first officer being alarmed at a object much brighter than the dark sky suddenly appearing to port. It seems plausible that once they began to look at it, it did not seem as bright as initially determined and gave the false impression that the spotlight had turned off.

Finally, the "tear drop shape" is apparently based on the videos/still images taken of the object by the crew. A hand-held video/still shot of a point source can produce such shapes. Additionally, they were photographing through an airplane window, which is a curved surface, which would distort the image. Lastly, Venus was about 54% illuminated during this time period. It is possible that this shape could have also played a role in the appearance of the object in the video/still as well.

While the Venus explanation has some problems, I have to wonder why the pilot/first officer never mentioned seeing or comparing the object to Venus. Assuming my computations of azimuth are correct, both were in the same direction and should have appeared in the video before they zoomed in to see the UFO. The aircrew could have stated, "It was as bright/brighter than the planet Venus, which was also visible". The lack of mentioning Venus nearby is an indicator that Venus was possibly, if not probably, the UFO.

My conclusion for this case, based on the information presented, is that it should be classified as possibly Venus.

Notes and references

1. Roe, Ted. "NARCAP Technical Report 20: An Independent Analysis of a March 19, 2020 Aviation Safety-Related Incident involving UAP, Unidentified Aerial Phenomena, Over Mexico. National Aviation Reporting Center On Anomalous Phenomena (NARCAP). Available WWW: <https://www.narcap.org/blog/narcaptr20>
2. Case management system. Mutual UFO Network (MUFON).. Available WWW: https://mufoncms.com/cgi-bin/report_handler.pl?req=view_long_desc&id=107281&rnd=

Project Blue Book case review: January-June 1960

This is the latest edition of the Project Blue Book case review covering July through December of 1959. Like the previous evaluations, I tried to examine each case to see if the conclusion had merit. I added comments to help clarify the explanation or if I felt it was not correct or adequate.

January 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
Jan	SE of Philadelphia, PA	Insufficient data	Agreed. Witness could not remember date/year.
1	Tillamook, OR	Insufficient data	This was seen around midnight on New Year's. Possible firework display/fire balloon.
3	Mormon Mesa, NV	Meteor	Agreed
3	Seattle, WA	Reflection	Possible flare drop by aircraft.
3	Kingman, AZ, Lake Meade, NV	Meteor	Agreed
4	Bloomfield, CT	Aircraft	Agreed
6	Winter Haven, FL	Missile	Agreed (Atlas missile launch)
8	Long Island, NY	Hallucination	Agreed. Individual claimed missile crashed and they had part of the nose cone.
9	West Alexandria, OH	Insufficient data	Venus
9	2 mi N. of Scottsburg, IN	Cloud	Agreed. Cigar shaped cloud/contrail seen around sunset.
10-11	Pacific	Meteor	Agreed
15	Baudette, MN	Meteor	Agreed
15	ND, MN, WY	Meteor	Agreed
18	Gulf of Mexico	Anomalous Prop	Not seen visually. Agreed.
18	Denver, CO	Meteor	Agreed
18	Lakota, ND	Meteor	Agreed
20	Pacific	Flare	Probable russian missile activity (R-7 launched 25 minutes prior to sighting. Target area used by Soviets in Pacific west of Hawaii and visible from Johnston Island region)
21	Pacific	Missile	No photos. Agreed that this was probably the same Russian missile as in previous case with an error in date because plane was on other side of international date line.
22	Sea of Japan	Balloon	No case file
24	Bryan, OH	Meteor	Agreed
24	Erie, PA/Jackson, MI	Meteor	Agreed. Same meteor as Bryan, OH.
27	Sylvannia, OH	Hallucination	Witness states they perceived the object before seeing it. However, observations indicate it was possibly a meteor.
28	Poiteres, France	Aircraft	Insufficient data. No duration. Could have been meteor based on description.

February 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
Feb	British Columbia, Canada	Hoax	Agreed
1	N. Atlantic	Meteor	Agreed
3	22 mi. NW of Carbondale, IL	Insufficient data	Meteor
6	Fletcher, OH	Ceiliometer	Agreed
7	McHenry, ND	Aircraft	Agreed
10	Sebring, FL	Insufficient data	Polaris missile test from Cape Canaveral

14	Sparrevohn, AK	Meteor	Agreed
14	Nome, Unalakleet, AK	Meteor	Agreed
15	San Jose, CA	Aircraft	Agreed
18	Rockledge, FL	Birds	Agreed
18	Marlboro, NJ	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
20	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
20	Grand Blanc, MI	Emulsion Flaw	Agreed
21	Munich, Germany	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
22	Alexandria, LA	Meteor	Agreed
22	Alexandria, LA	Spica	Arcturus
24	Japan	Meteor	Agreed
24	Tuscon, AZ	Reflection	Agreed. Object seen in west near setting sun. Reflection of possible aircraft.
26	Downing, MO	Balloon	Agreed
26	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Night Illumination exercise	Meteor
27	Las Vegas, NV	Meteor	Agreed
27	Cornwall, VT	Aircraft	Echo test launch from Wallops Island (See SUNlite 6-1)
27	Rome, NY	UNIDENTIFIED	Echo test launch from Wallops Island (See SUNlite 6-1)

March 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
Spring	Maddock, ND	Chaff	Agreed
2	Lebnitz, Austria	Insufficient data	Agreed. No negative presented to ATIC. The photograph in the files is from news media accounts. What it shows appears out of focus and is not clear.
4	Dubuque, IA	UNIDENTIFIED	Aircraft (See SUNlite 5-3)
5	Perryville, MO	Reflection	Agreed. Contrails reflecting rising sun.
6	Evansville, IN	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
6	Nome, AK	Meteor	Agreed
7	Eastern US	Satellite Decay	Agreed. Discoverer 8
9	Gulf of Mexico	Meteor	Agreed
14	Waterbury, CT	Insufficient data	Agreed. No positional data. Possible aircraft reflecting setting sun.
14	Mather AFB, CA	Insufficient data	Agreed. No duration listed.
17	Hawaiian Islands	Meteor	Agreed
19	North Platte, NE	Mirage	Possible aircraft. Three lights apparently moving towards the east from the direction of Denver.
19	Codroy, Newfoundland	Insufficient data	Agreed. Positional data lacking. No elevations and no specific azimuths. Only direction given was to the East.
19-21	Ousi Suomi, Finland	Meteor	Insufficient information. Original message missing from case file. No details on record card.
20	Monroe, WI	Balloon	Agreed
22	Hawaiian Islands	Meteor	Agreed
23	Indianapolis, IN	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED

24	St. Louis, MO	Insufficient data	Possible meteor seen through broken clouds. Witnesses state weather was overcast but weather conditions listed as 10,000 feet base with 0.9 cloudy conditions. Conditions on weather underground listed as "mostly cloudy". Potential for a bright meteor being seen through the broken clouds. Same time as Terre Haute, IN UFO (about 160 miles apart).
24	Terre Haute, IN	Flare	Possible meteor
25	Dalton, MA	Ice	Agreed
25	Viola, DE	Meteor	Agreed
25	Biggs AFB, TX	Meteor	Agreed
29	Hawaiian Islands	Meteor	Agreed
31	Reims, France	Sub Sun	Agreed
31	ENE of Hawaiian Islands	Meteor	Agreed

April 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
Apr	Chicago, IL	Insufficient data	Agreed. Witness claimed to have observed re-entry of Sputnik IV and Discoverer 11. BB sent standard questionnaire, which was never returned.
Apr	Richfield, OH	Insufficient data	Agreed. Report indicates no specific date/time/direction
2	Escanaba, MI	Meteor	Witness reported seeing something fall into swamp, which then hissed. Meteorites do not do this. Not a meteor. Nothing was found. Insufficient data without the object that fell into swamp.
3	Salem, AR	Chaff	Agreed
4	Cloverdale, IN	Meteor	Agreed
4	San Diego, CA	Satellite Decay	Meteor
4	Hawaiian Islands Vicinity	Meteor	Agreed
4	N. of Worden, OR	Goose	Agreed. Witness saw object moving for about 30 seconds and then disappear in puff of smoke. A dead goose that had been shot was found in the vicinity suggesting this might have been the source of the sighting.
5	Saipan Island	Meteor	Agreed
5	Loogootee, IN	Insufficient data	Meteor
5	Argentina	Sputnik	Meteor. Discussion with Ted Molczan confirmed this was not an observation of the Sputnik 3 decay.
5	Roswell, NM	Meteor	Agreed
7	Ocoll, TN	Aircraft	Agreed.
7	Lebanon, OH	Conflicting Data	Insufficient data. Report listed as conflicting because the letter required more information, which is stating there wasn't enough information. Very little positional data. No duration.
7	W. of Hawaiian islands	Meteor	Agreed
9	Arcata, CA	Emulsion Flaw	Agreed. The "object" against the sun is barely visible in the images in the case file. BB analyzed negative and determined it was a flaw in the emulsion.
9	SE of Newfoundland	Meteor	Agreed
9	Hudson straight, Canada	Meteor	Agreed (possibly the same meteor as above)
9	Dover, DE	Meteor	Agreed
11	Hazel Green, WI	Aircraft	Agreed. Film not submitted to USAF.
12	La Camp, LA	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED

12	Saratoga Springs, NY	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
13	Rhein Main AB, Germany	Aircraft	Agreed
14	Jefferson, IN	Meteor	Agreed
14	Bitburg AB, Germany	Meteor	Agreed
15	Between Waren and Toledo, OH	Reflection	Agreed. Driver saw lights in moving car. Observer drove route again and saw the same lights.
16	NM - TX area	Meteor	Agreed
16	Olean, NY	Birds	Agreed
17	Bitburg AB, Germany	Meteor	Agreed
17	Richards, Gebaur AB, MO	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
18	Dayton, OH	Meteor	Agreed
19	NW of Azore Islands	Meteor	Agreed
21	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	Reflection	Agreed
22	Orleans, France	Meteor	Agreed
25	Mandiaga, Panama	Meteor	Agreed
25	Shelby, MT	UNIDENTIFIED	UNIDENTIFIED
27	Duluth, MN	Balloon	Agreed
28	Cincinnati, OH	Reflection	Sightings made by several 11-12 year-olds. Possible aircraft.
28	Smithville, TN	Aircraft	Agreed

May 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
May	Decatur, IL	Imagination	Agreed
1	Glendale, AZ	Insufficient data	Possible debris picked up by "dust devil" being observed
1	E. Of Hawaiian Islands	Flare	Possible meteor
2	Trout Run, PA	Insufficient data	Possible stars Capella and Arcturus
2	Bayonne, NJ	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
3 and 6	West Hartford, CT	Aircraft	Agreed
6	Seattle, WA	Reflection/hoax	Agreed
7	Regina, Canada, MT	Balloon	Agreed
8	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
8	Southern Norway	Clouds	Agreed
9	Ottawa, Canada	Insufficient data	Possibly Jupiter. Witness described object approaching from SE in zig-zag path. Went into cloud and disappeared. Jupiter to SSE.
9	Vicinity Waco, TX	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
10	WSW Hawaiian Islands	Meteor	Agreed
12	San Gabriel, CA	Insufficient data	Based on numerous wild statements in the report (i.e. "If you all want me to place an atomic bomb by dropping me and it on some future or distant battlefield or enemy installation do not hesitate to call me"), witness appeared to have been unstable/unreliable. Report cannot be taken seriously. Unreliable report
16	Loftabad, Iran	Insufficient data	Agreed. Limited information. No duration or specific positional data.
16	Dallas, TX	Meteor	Agreed
17	SW of Albans, WV	Insufficient data	Agreed. Listed as moving east to west but visible for 45 minutes at and after sunset. Lack of specific positional data.
18	Dayton, OH	Aircraft	Agreed

19	Tallahassee, AL	Insufficient data	Agreed. No positional data.
19	Dillingham, AK	Balloon	Agreed
20	Rhodesia, Africa	Meteor	Agreed
20	Jaffrey Center, NH	Insufficient data	Possibly Jupiter
21	Malden, MA	Reflection	Possible meteor
22	Mangham, LA	Balloon	Agreed. Possibly the Grab Bag balloon launched from Goodfellow AFB on 21 May.
24	Murfreesboro, TN	Balloon	Agreed
24	Bear Lake, FL	Satellite	Possible aircraft
24	Southwestern, Canada	Meteor	Agreed
25	North Miami, FL	Jupiter	Agreed
26	Naples, NY	Insufficient data	Possible balloon
27	Vicinity of Midway Island	Insufficient data	Possible meteors
27	E. Of Japan	Meteor	Agreed
28	Bentley, MI	Iron	Agreed
28	Penns park, PA	Reflection	Possible moon. Moon set in WNW about 20-30 minutes after sighting. Object described as "oval orange light" in west.
28	El Paso, TX	Meteor	Agreed
29	Chapelston, ME	Mars	Possible meteors
29	Champagne, Yukon, Canada	Insufficient data	Agreed. Missing specific details (positional data/duration)
30	Las Vegas, NV	Insufficient data	Possible balloon
30	St. Louis, MO	Insufficient data	Possible fire balloon
31	Manus island, Admiralties	Meteor	Agreed
31	23 mi S. of Joliet, IL	Jupiter	Agreed

June 1960

Date	Location	BB explanation	My evaluation
1	Pence, Puerto Rico	Venus	Agreed
2	Salt Lake City, UT	Reflection	Agreed. Aircraft reflecting setting sun.
4	Leadville, CO	Lens aberration	Hoax/reflection. Witness states it was not taken through a window. It appears to be a reflection. BB chose to accept the witness' statement and called it a lens aberration instead.
4	NW of Azore Islands	Meteor	Agreed
4	Springfield, OH	Balloon	Agreed
4	Pacific	Weather	Agreed
6	Dayton, OH	Meteor	Agreed
6	Beckley, WV	Meteor	Agreed
7	Union City, IN	1. Insufficient data 2. No image	Agreed. There appears to be no UFO on the film or that it is so small, it cannot readily be identified.
7	Champaign, IL	Meteor	Agreed.
7	Speicher, Germany	Meteor	Agreed
7	Buffalo, NY	Insufficient data	Agreed. No positional data but possibly observation of Jupiter
7	Eastlake, OH	Aircraft	Agreed
7	Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada	Lens aberration	Agreed
12	Bad Godesburg, Germany	Insufficient data	Possible birds
14	Concord, MA	Aircraft	Agreed

16	England AFB, LA	Meteor	Agreed (Date listed as 16 on message but appears to have been 17th based on memo)
17	Greenville AFB, MS	Meteor	Agreed (Probably same meteor as England AFB if date was incorrect)
17	Littleton, CO	Meteor	Agreed
18	N. of Biga, Turkey	Meteor	Agreed
19	Coudersport, CO	Aircraft	Insufficient data. Reports filed in February 1963.
20	Oregon area	Meteor	Agreed
20	N. of Corvallis, OR	Meteor	Agreed (Probably same meteor as Oregon area)
22	North Vancouver Island, Canada	Insufficient data	Possible observation of Transit2 Rocket body launched 3 hours prior. TLEs put it as being illuminated and visible in the area of sky described.
23	Corsett, AR	Meteor	Agreed
23	Louisiana area	Meteor	Agreed
24	15 mi. SW of Lead, SD	Insufficient data	Agreed. No positional data. Probably Jupiter or Arcturus.
24	Vicinity of Ascension Island	Flare	Light seen in water for 10 seconds near data cassette recovery for Titan missile launch. No flare dropped. Assumed this had something to do with the test vehicle that had impacted in the vicinity.
24	Brookley AFB, AL	Meteor	Agreed
24	West Indies Vicinity	Missile	Agreed. Titan missile launch on 25 June 0005Z. Time on record card is wrong. Actual times in messages are 0012-0017Z.
25	Hopetown, South Africa	Meteor	Agreed
25	Syracuse, NY	Furnace slag	Agreed
25	Long Island sound, NY	Aircraft	Agreed
25	Caribbean sea, British West Indies	Meteor	Agreed
25	Vicinity Midway Island	Meteor	Agreed
26	Palm Springs, CA	Balloon	Agreed
26	20 mi. S of Battlecreek, MI	Aircraft	Agreed
27	Danvers, MA	After image	Agreed. Witness staring at sun watching aircraft and saw UFO for 40 seconds after.
27	Palm Beach, FL	Missile	Agreed. Atlas missile launch at time of sighting.
27	Claremont, NH	Insufficient data	Aircraft
27	Springfield, OH	Aircraft	Possible meteor
29	Denver, CO	Meteor	Agreed
29	Altus, OK	Aircraft	Agreed
29	Wilmington, MA	Balloon	Agreed
29	Newton, OH	Jupiter	Agreed

Reclassification

I evaluated 194 cases in the Blue Book files from January to June 1960. In my opinion, 51 were improperly classified (26%). Twenty-five (about 13% of the total number of cases/49% of the reclassifications) of these were listed as "insufficient information". This table describes these cases and how I felt they should have been reclassified.

Date	Location	Reclassification	Reason
1/1	Tillamook, OR	Insufficient data	This was seen around midnight on New Year's. Possible fire-work display/fire balloon.
1/3	Seattle, WA	Reflection	Possible flare drop by aircraft.

1/9	West Alexandria, OH	Insufficient data	Venus
1/20	Pacific	Flare	Probable Russian missile activity (R-7 launched 25 minutes prior to sighting. Target area used by Soviets in Pacific west of Hawaii and visible from Johnston Island region)
1/27	Sylvannia, OH	Hallucination	Witness states they perceived the object before seeing it. However, observations indicate it was possibly a meteor.
1/28	Poiteres, France	Aircraft	Insufficient data. No duration. Could have been meteor based on description.
2/10	Sebring, FL	Insufficient data	Polaris missile test from Cape Canaveral
2/18	Marlboro, NJ	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
2/20	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
2/21	Munich, Germany	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
2/22	Alexandria, LA	Spica	Arcturus
2/26	San Juan, Puerto Rico	Night Illumination exercise	Meteor
2/27	Cornwall, VT	Aircraft	Echo test launch from Wallops Island (See SUNlite 6-1)
2/27	Rome, NY	UNIDENTIFIED	Echo test launch from Wallops Island (See SUNlite 6-1)
3/4	Dubuque, IA	UNIDENTIFIED	Aircraft (See SUNlite 5-3)
3/6	Evansville, IN	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
3/19	North Platte, NE	Mirage	Possible aircraft. Three lights apparently moving towards the east from the direction of Denver.
3/19-21	Ousi Suomi, Finland	Meteor	Insufficient information. Original message missing from case file. No details on record card.
3/24	St. Louis, MO	Insufficient data	Possible meteor seen through broken clouds. Witnesses state weather was overcast but weather conditions listed as 10,000 feet base with 0.9 cloudy conditions. Conditions on weather underground listed as "mostly cloudy". Potential for a bright meteor being seen through the broken clouds. Same time as Terre Haute, IN UFO (about 160 miles apart).
3/24	Terre Haute, IN	Flare	Possible meteor
4/2	Escanaba, MI	Meteor	Witness reported seeing something fall into swamp, which then hissed. Meteorites do not do this. Not a meteor. Nothing was found. Insufficient data without the object that fell into swamp.
4/4	San Diego, CA	Satellite Decay	Meteor
4/5	Loogootee, IN	Insufficient data	Meteor
4/5	Argentina	Sputnik	Meteor. Discussion with Ted Molczan confirmed this was not an observation of the Sputnik 3 decay.
4/7	Lebanon, OH	Conflicting Data	Insufficient data. Report listed as conflicting because the letter required more information, which is stating there wasn't enough information. Very little positional data. No duration.
4/12	Saratoga Springs, NY	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
4/28	Cincinnati, OH	Reflection	Sightings made by several 11-12 year-olds. Possible aircraft.
5/1	Glendale, AZ	Insufficient data	Possible debris picked up by "dust devil" being observed
5/1	E. Of Hawaiian Islands	Flare	Possible meteor
5/2	Trout Run, PA	Insufficient data	Possible stars Capella and Arcturus
5/2	Bayonne, NJ	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
5/8	Dayton, OH	Insufficient data	Possible aircraft
5/9	Ottawa, Canada	Insufficient data	Possibly Jupiter. Witness described object approaching from SE in zig-zag path. Went into cloud and disappeared. Jupiter to SSE.

5/9	Vicinity Waco, TX	Insufficient data	Possible meteor
5/12	San Gabriel, CA	Insufficient data	Based on numerous wild statements in the report (i.e. "If you all want me to place an atomic bomb by dropping me and it on some future or distant battlefield or enemy installation do not hesitate to call me"), witness appeared to have been unstable/unreliable. Report cannot be taken seriously. Unreliable report
5/20	Jaffrey Center, NH	Insufficient data	Possibly Jupiter
5/21	Malden, MA	Reflection	Possible meteor
5/24	Bear Lake, FL	Satellite	Possible aircraft
5/26	Naples, NY	Insufficient data	Possible balloon
5/27	Vicinity of Midway Island	Insufficient data	Possible meteors
5/28	Penns Park, PA	Reflection	Possible moon. Moon set in WNW about 20-30 minutes after sighting. Object described as "oval orange light" in west.
5/29	Chapelston, ME	Mars	Possible meteors
5/30	Las Vegas, NV	Insufficient data	Possible balloon
5/30	St. Louis, MO	Insufficient data	Possible fire balloon
6/4	Leadville, CO	Lens aberration	Hoax/reflection. Witness states it was not taken through a window. It appears to be a reflection. BB chose to accept the witness' statement and called it a lens aberration instead.
6/12	Bad Godesburg, Germany	Insufficient data	Possible birds
6/19	Coudersport, CO	Aircraft	Insufficient data. Reports filed in February 1963.
6/22	North Vancouver Island, Canada	Insufficient data	Possible observation of Transit2 Rocket body launched 3 hours prior. TLEs put it as being illuminated and visible in the area of sky described.
6/24	Vicinity of Ascension Island	Flare	Light seen in water for 10 seconds near data cassette recovery for Titan missile launch. No flare dropped. Assumed this had something to do with the test vehicle that had impacted in the vicinity.
6/27	Claremont, NH	Insufficient data	Aircraft
6/27	Springfield, OH	Aircraft	Possible meteor

Summary

The cases during this time period, while minimal in number, still contained some interesting events. Space activity appears to have been the source of quite a few sightings. A Russian missile launch into the Pacific near Hawaii produced a pair of sightings. Many of the sightings in the Caribbean were sightings of missile tests from Cape Canaveral.

[I think the film shot at Champaign, Illinois was the most interesting report.](#) It was a film shot of a statue with the sun behind it. Suddenly an object transits the frame for about a second. It is quick and disappears rapidly. I consider it interesting because it has all the characteristics of a fireball seen in daylight. This is not unheard of but is rare and to capture one on film is quite the prize. I saw no reason to draw a conclusion other than a daylight meteor unless others have better information or a higher quality video that says otherwise.

Another interesting case was in St. Louis, Missouri on March 24, 1960. It had all of the characteristics of a bright meteor except the conditions were listed as overcast. About the same time of this sighting, aircraft over Terre Haute reported a meteor like object "falling" out of the sky. They are probably the same meteor and the St. Louis observers probably saw the object through broken/thin clouds. I have seen fireballs illuminate the clouds like this before so it is possible.

Lastly, there was another one of those possible moon sightings on May 28 from Penns Park, Pennsylvania. Blue book listed it as a reflection but the moon appears to be a better fit considering the light was in the west and the moon was setting in that direction a short time after the sighting.

One thing that has been consistent in my examination of all of these files, is that Blue Book continued to have problems gathering all of the pertinent data for each sighting. It is no wonder that so many were listed as "insufficient data". If one couples this with the fact that people misperceived objects, like the moon, as UFOs, we have to wonder about those cases that were given the lofty

classification of "UNIDENTIFIED".

References

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2. Project Blue Book archive. Available WWW:<http://bluebookarchive.org/> (This site is no longer active but some of the files I downloaded from that location)
3. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA/ESRL Radiosonde Database. Available WWW: <https://ruc.noaa.gov/raobs/>
4. "Stratospheric balloons: Chronological lists of launches worldwide since 1947" StratoCat. Available WWW: <http://stratocat.com.ar/globos/indexe.html>
5. "Space History Chronology". Astronautix. Available WWW: <http://www.astronautix.com/s/spacehistorychronology.html>
6. Condon, E. U., et al., eds. Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects. New York: Bantam 1968.

