


# SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

A dark, grainy night photograph of a house. A bright light source, possibly a UFO, is visible in the sky above the house. The house is mostly in shadow, with some light coming from a window or door on the right side. The overall tone is mysterious and dark.

*....others who desire to have a residue of unexplained cases in order to add mystery and importance to the UFO problem incline to set impossibly high standards of certainty in the evidence before they are willing to accept a simple explanation for a report.*

*Eduard Condon*



## DEBUNKER!

Cover: A UFO? Nope. It is just the full moon behind some clouds. Surprisingly, the moon can be mis-identified as a UFO under conditions like this.

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The term "debunker" has become a commonly used word by some UFO proponents to describe people, who hold an opposing opinion on the subject. The definition of the term means to remove the falseness of something. If that is what skeptics/debunkers are doing, then they are performing a service. However, UFO proponents have twisted the meaning into something of an insult. The tone implies something like, "How dare you question my findings/beliefs" or "Your explanation is not worthy of consideration". I look at debunkers, of which I consider myself one, as individuals seeking potential explanations to a UFO event instead of trying to create a mystery out of one. I have received/seen responses by some UFO proponents, who find my evaluation of their personal cases less than acceptable. The point of my criticism/evaluations are to demonstrate that their cases are not as good as some proponents want everyone to believe and that there ARE potential explanations that are either ignored or downplayed. This is why I selected the quote from Dr. Condon on the cover page of this issue.

The Scientific Coalition for UFOlogy (SCU), while not directly acknowledging SUNlite's article, seems intent on making corrections to their paper. Some of the SCU team have been commenting about the SUNlite article in various forums. This inspired me to respond here so readers can understand their complaints and I can answer them.

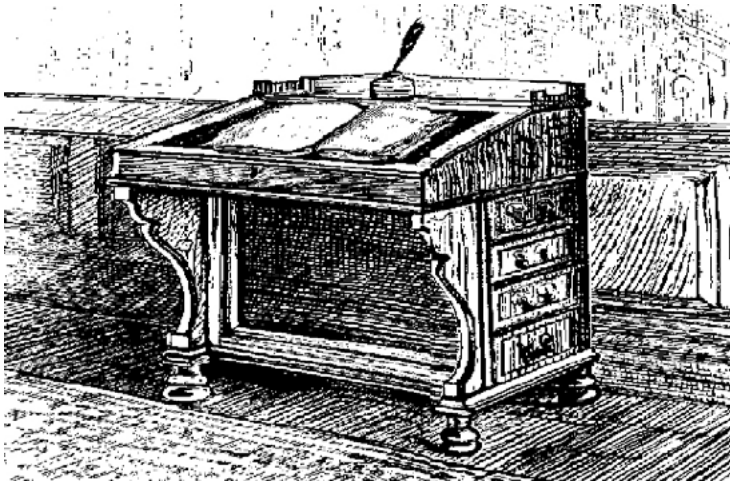
Mexico's #1 alien biologist, José de la Cruz Ríos López, e-mailed me with his analysis regarding the Roswell slides. He has apparently staked his reputation on the idea that the body is not a mummy of a two-year old child but a non-human entity of some kind. I found his arguments weak and spent an evening arguing back and forth about where I think he went wrong. Rios seems to think that I am not being objective but I find his defense of the slides based more on his personal beliefs and loyalties to Jaimie Maussan than actual science. In this issue, I describe why I think his analysis is flawed.

Other items that came up in UFOlogical circles is a rehash of the Chiles-Whitted incident. I have not bothered to closely examine the case in the past because I thought that case had a reasonable explanation. I now see that the die-hard defenders of this case are still hanging onto various tidbits hoping to falsify the fireball hypothesis. I try and address these issues in an article starting on page 9.

I would like to thank Luis Gonzales for an article he sent me addressing a rebuttal by Sean Meers to his article "Linda Cortile and Night Eyes", which appeared in SUNlite 6-3. As always, I entertain articles from outside writers and Mr. Gonzales should have the right to address Mr. Meers comments.

# Who's blogging UFOs?

## Hot topics and varied opinions



**Hillary Clinton, like so many politicians before her, is making promises on the campaign trail.** She is promising to investigate UFOs. While the UFO proponents cheer such promises, I have to wonder why Mrs. Clinton, and her husband, did not investigate the subject the eight years they were in the white house? Why didn't she investigate the UFOs when she was Secretary of State? Why didn't she investigate UFOs when she was a senator? It seems to me that her "promise" is just another one of those statements made to get votes and not something that will actually happen.

**Meanwhile, Robert Sheaffer continued to blog about Kathleen Marden's claims about the Dr. Simon Letter being hoaxed.** This prompted one of his commenters to weigh in as an expert and proclaim that Klass probably hoaxed the document. Somebody going by the name of Paul Westfall proclaimed that he, as a graduate student in neural network psychiatry, had a "team" of psychology experts analyze the let-

ter and state it was a fraud. Robert smelled a rat and discovered that Westfall was a fraud and that he was not a graduate student at all. Exposed, Westfall then stated it was he was nothing more than an undergraduate student hoping to major in psychiatry. Further probing revealed he lied about most of what he had posted and there was no "analysis" at all but it was a "thought experiment". What followed was him proclaiming all sorts of things laced with profanity, name-calling, and bad arguments. All the posters, including me, got tired of arguing with, what appears to be, an adolescent trying to sound more intelligent than he was.

**Leopoldo Zambrano Enriquez exposed Jaimie Maussan's video presentation at MUFON, showing video/photographic evidence of UFOs, of having at least one image that was taken from the 1997 movie, "Starship invasions".** I guess MUFON could care less that such hoaxes are being presented at their conferences. As long as they sell tickets, MUFON will allow just about anything.

**Chris Rutkowski and Michael Banias, who both author the blog, Terra obscura, made an on-line wager regarding what effect the new X-files television program would have on UFO reports.** Michael wagered there would be a significant increase in UFO reports the month after the show premiered. Chris felt there would be no change. I felt Mr. Rutkowski had it right because unless there was a significant series of celestial events in January-February (like a satellite re-entry and some bright fireballs over populated areas), there probably would be no significant change. Chris won the bet because rates actual fell in the MUFON database. I never was an X-files fans and I think the fan base of these programs tend to exaggerate their impact. Then again, I don't think "Hanger one" has much of an impact either.

**Robert Hastings presented parts of his upcoming film on Youtube.** This specific section described the testimony of Bob Jacobs and the Atlas ICBM test intercept story. Interestingly, Hastings does not include any mention of the classified reports I presented in SUNlite 6-4. As always, the contradictions and facts are ignored in favor of the witness story telling.

**Tim Hebert is re-familiarizing us with his previous work on the 1968 Minot UFO case.** It will be interesting to see where he goes with this. He is already receiving some criticism from the case's promoters/defenders. I guess any explanation, other than one, is unacceptable to those individuals.

**Last SUNlite, I mentioned some images being promoted by Richard O'Connor appeared to be water droplets.** Dr. O'Connor seemed to think this was not the case, at the time. However, after conducting some experiments, he now admits they probably were water droplets. I am impressed that he took the effort to test out the hypothesis. Usually, a UFO proponent will insist it can't be something and that would be the last you hear of it.

**Nova's February program about memory was very interesting and I can see who it applies to UFO testimony.** This is especially true in the case of decades old cases, where witnesses are grilled over and over again about their participation in those incidents. UFO investigators need to see the section on implanting false memories. The process for interviewing UFO witnesses has plenty of potential for creating them. The use of hypnosis probably makes matters worse when people, who are easily manipulated in that state, generate all sorts of details that may or may not be correct. Will UFOlogists pay attention to this?

**Michael Banias wrote an article about the Petit-Rechain photograph and how it affects debunkers and believers.** I agree to some extent with Mr. Banias arguments. However, it was the promoters of the slide that stated it was excellent evidence of a "Belgian triangle". Leslie Kean then further promoted the story in her book based on what the UFO promoters told her without question. My argument about UFO photographs and videos is that if they look too good to be true, they usually are hoaxes. In my opinion, any single UFO photograph taken from one vantage point is suspect. With modern cell phones having increasingly better resolution,



# Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

UFO imaging should become more prominent and likely. It would only be a matter of time before two or more individuals would photograph the same UFO from different locations. That would be an interesting case that deserved consideration. I had addressed these issues once before (See SUNlite 6-2). With thousands of sightings every year, the lack of good photographic/video evidence tells us something about UFOlogy.

**UFO film producer, Keith Arem, created a fictional movie about the Arizona UFO event of March 13, 1997.** The trailer appears to show some sort of battle going on between the US military and the UFOs. Lots of CGI and other nonsense can be seen in the preview of the film. If people want to believe that this is a true representation of what happened that night then they are mistaken. I am told it was to be screened at the UFO congress and showed aliens coming from an object following Comet Hale-Bopp! How the UFO congress could allow such a farce to be presented is beyond me. It is just another example of UFOlogists more interested in flash (i.e. Hanger one, the Roswell slides, etc) than substance.

**The same producer then tried to make a documentary of the Arizona UFO event by assembling some UFO talking heads at the International UFO congress and filming the discussion.** The dignitaries included Stanton Friedman, Alejandro Rojas, Nick Pope, and Lee Spiegel. Missing were any skeptics so it is obvious where the discussion probably went. Nick Pope is seen talking about the Cosford UFOs, which was seen all over the UK. The bulk of the sightings were of re-entering space debris, which Pope does not mention at all. He focuses on a meteorological officer's sighting but Dr. David Clarke paints a slightly different picture than the one Pope is seen describing in this short clip. If this is the kind of information that is being presented as an "investigation" or "scientific discussion" about the March 13, 1997 event, I doubt that they will mention any of the issues I had raised in SUNlite 2-3.

**Argentina's UFO agency, CEFAE, shut down.** Apparently, the new president recognized the agency was a waste of government funds. After all, it filed one report in five years based on investigations of ten sightings. Not surprising most were explained. At least they did not release a report that turned out to be videos of bugs!

**Military flares are causing UFO reports in Arizona again.** The Phoenix TV stations are promoting "mysterious lights" as some sort of strange event. Anybody familiar with military flares can identify this within seconds. One video clearly shows the lights trailing smoke! Maybe Lynne Kittei will buy this stuff but, for the rest of us, it is case closed.

**Robert Sheaffer gave us his annual accounting of what he observed at the 25th International UFO congress.** Unfortunately, my job keeps me from attending these sort of things. I appreciate Robert's summary of what he saw and heard. You can read his commentary at the following links:

<http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual.html>

[http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual\\_23.html](http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual_23.html)

[http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual\\_26.html](http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual_26.html)

[http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual\\_27.html](http://badufos.blogspot.com/2016/02/a-skeptical-look-at-25th-annual_27.html)

**Jack Brewer has allowed Carol Rainey to publish excerpts from her book, The abductionists' wife: A memoir, on his blog.** Carol was once the wife of Budd Hopkins and was deeply involved in his abduction research. Carol's story is about a singer, who had a child that had mental issues. Budd had convinced this woman that the aliens had done this to the child because they failed in their attempt at creating a "hybrid" child. Rainey, who had a front row seat on Hopkin's research, is hoping to set the record straight on the subject. Will UFOlogists/Abduction researchers listen?

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2016/02/the-singers-hybrid-daughter-part-i.html>

<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2016/02/the-singers-hybrid-daughter-part-ii.html>

**Jacques Vallée is looking for people to give him money.** Jason Colavito explains that Vallée is asking for people to help fund a revision to the book, Wonders of the sky, which was co-authored by Chris Aubeck. I went to the site and discovered that you may get a copy of the book, if you contribute \$220. Apparently, there are a lot of people out there supporting this as they have already collected half of the \$12,000 they need. I am not one because I see this as nothing more than throwing my hard earned cash away. Despite the promises of this helping discover the truth about UFOs, I seriously doubt that this one book will make a difference one way or the other.

# The Roswell Corner

**Jesse Marcel Sr.**

As usual, Kevin Randle's blog was full of Roswell commentary. Some of it is the same old stuff being recycled. Eventually, he brought up Jesse Marcel Sr. I think it was good that Kevin summarized a lot of the early interviews with Marcel. While I have presented many of these in the past, the quotes from the interviews conducted with Marcel in the movie "UFOs are real", which never appeared in the film, were very interesting. They paint a picture of Jesse Marcel, insisting that he had distributed some of the materials, from his recovery, onto the floor in Ramey's office. In the final production of the film, this was missing but, in one section, they have Marcel stating, "The newsman saw very little of the material, very small portion of it. And none of the important things, like these members that had these hieroglyphics or markings on them". Like many of the early quotes attributed to Marcel, it seems that he believed that the press saw some of the materials before the infamous "switch" supposedly occurred.

I suspect that proponents will say that Marcel confused the public relations officer as a member of the press. This sort of disagrees with the theory that Marcel was not a drooling idiot and could never mistake a radar reflector for a "crashed disc". In this case, Marcel did not know the difference between a military officer and members of the press! Of course, these same people, who proclaim that Marcel was not a drooling idiot, also suggest that Ramey must have been because he let the press photograph a TOP SECRET document.

I have gone over most of this too many times to count. Memory is a funny thing and it is apparent that Marcel said a lot of things that were inaccurate because he could not remember exactly what happened. The one point that keeps surfacing is that Marcel felt that some of the materials from the Foster ranch were seen by the press. The photographs taken by the press show that what he found was balloon and radar reflector debris. What you see is what you get.....

## **Maussan and MUFON**

In his talk at the last MUFON conference, Maussan presented us with his interpretation of the slides evidence. He implies that the slides taken by Mrs. Hadl in December of 1956 as well as the image of the Palmer mummy that appeared in the FOIA release papers from Montezuma's castle are NOT the same as the mummy that was discovered by Palmer in 1896. In his video, Maussan's narrator states:

*Now we know it is different than the BeWitness being. Two pictures came up recently. This black and white picture from 1986 from the national park service and another photograph by Frank Hadl in 1956. They are different from Palmer's original mummy. Watch the black and white picture from 1986. It's not the same corpse from Palmer's mummy.*

The black and white photo was actually taken in 1896 and not 1986. This was taken shortly after the body was removed from its discovery location. This error aside, I find it interesting that Maussan is stating that the body in these two photographs is the same as the BeWitness body. The implication is that there was a switch of the body at Mesa Verde with an alien body from the Roswell crash. One has to wonder how they got an alien body in 1896.

Of course, this argument contradicts the one made by Maussan's experts on October 26, 2015. In that presentation, the experts stated that the 1896 photograph was of the mummy and that it could not compare to the BeWitness body. The confusion between Maussan's presentation and the October 26 arguments makes it clear that Maussan is trying desperately to come up with some sort of scenario that explains his failure in regards to the Roswell slides.

## ***PUERTO RICO VIDEO UPDATE***

In SUNlite 7-6, I dedicated a significant amount of space reviewing the Scientific Coalition for UFOlogy's (SCU) Puerto Rico video report. Shortly after the release of their report, a group of skeptics/UFO proponents, which we called the Puerto Rico Research Review (PRRR), had examined the data and determined that there was good reason to suspect the source was possibly a balloon. I summarized those findings, as well as my own observations, in that issue of SUNlite. I expected a lot of criticism from the SCU but there was no immediate response. Recently, some members of the SCU have begun to respond to my, and the PRRR's, comments regarding the case.

### **SCU indirectly responds to SUNlite**

Billy Cox wrote an article in early January that described his problems with acquiring the video via FOIA. However, it was not this section that caught my eye. In the comments section, Rich Hoffman, one of the authors of the SCU report, decided to comment about the SUNlite article. His response was that it was "unscientific" and "biased". This mirrors some of the comments he made in another forum:

*We looked at it and plan to respond, but based on what we saw was a bias towards a balloon, a lack of an objectivity and an attempt to bash our group of researchers. Many of the points made were not supported by data or knowledge gained by talking with experts in the camera, the infrared technology and even witness testimony. It was a poor attempt to appear scientific and failing to refute our study. It was also apparent that parts of the study were missed (e.g., the appendix on parallax). We did however see some points that will be "beefed up" in the report to make it more clearer why it is NOT a balloon.<sup>1</sup>*

It seems that the SCU has taken the hard line they presented in their balloon explanation rebuttal. They aren't going to publicly respond to any criticisms/explanations that have not been subject to "peer review".

### **The pot and the kettle**

One of the first items that needs to be addressed in Hoffman's comments is that my article was biased towards the balloon explanation. This is true and I admit it. The reason that I spent my time on that explanation is because I felt the SCU did an awful job attempting to prove it was not a balloon. If their work was so poor, then I had to see if a balloon explanation was possible. Much to the SCU's dismay, they were wrong and it was possible for a balloon to produce the motion seen in the video. As a skeptic/debunker, I am always going to look at a case in terms of prosaic identification. The opposite seems to be the case in regards to the SCU. They went out of their way to eliminate the balloon explanation by making some incorrect assumptions and gross errors.

I found it fascinating that Hoffman, and others, have chosen not to demonstrate where I was wrong in my article. They used vague comments that did not specifically address the issues I raised or the errors I pointed out in their original paper. One could suggest that they were afraid to publicly admit that they made mistakes even after their paper was "peer reviewed".

Contrary to what Hoffman states, the SCU report never used the word "parallax". He is probably referring to appendix L, which is titled "Line of sight evaluation". I did NOT miss it and addressed this section in the SUNlite article (pages 7-8). Everything in appendix L hinges on the measurements between frames 711 and 712. The SCU had incorrectly assumed that the camera was stationary and that the motion of the object in the video was due to the object itself. Instead, it was due to the motion of the object, the camera rotation, and the movement of the plane. I also addressed the SCU's flawed rebuttal to the balloon explanation using line of sight (pages 8-13). Once again, the lack of any response that demonstrates where my observations were wrong indicates that my article was more accurate than they want to admit.

As best I can tell, the sections, and subsequent rebuttal report, regarding the balloon explanation were written by one or two individuals. The remaining members of the group, when conducting their "peer review", blindly accepted the work because they trusted the authors. The lack of proper review to eliminate such errors indicated the original report could not be classified as a "proper paper" or have been subject to "peer review" as implied by the SCU. So, the reader will have to forgive me when I laugh at members of the SCU, who state they will only respond to "proper papers" that have been subject to "peer review".

Unlike the SCU, I never considered SUNlite a "scientific paper" or something that would pass for "peer review". I like to think that SUNlite is more of a critique of claims made in UFOlogy as well as presenting alternate possibilities not considered. If those explanations/critiques are incorrect, then I am willing to admit those mistakes. In the past, I have published corrections or responses to those who found a certain explanation less than satisfactory. Can the SCU state the same?

As far as the criticism leveled towards SUNlite regarding the tone of the article, I fully accept responsibility for that. The SCU's report and rebuttal gave people the impression that they were scientific and examined every possibility. However, as the PRRR dug into

the report we discovered that the report was biased towards eliminating all explanations so that the remaining exotic explanation was the only one possible. Instead of scientific examination of the evidence, it appeared to be nothing more than the usual UFO-logical analysis disguised as science. I was disappointed and allowed that disappointment to leak into the article. On the other hand, the worst I referred to the SCU team was that they were hypocrites. This was in regard to their rebuttal paper, where they berated balloon proponents for not submitting proper scientific papers, which they continue to do. If this is what Hoffman refers to as “bashing” the SCU, he needs to look in the mirror.

Several members of the PRRR tried to discuss the case with the SCU on Facebook. From what I have read of the exchange, the SCU eventually resorted to referring to certain individuals as “liars”. This kind of accusation indicates the person believes that the other is intentionally deceiving everyone. Such a claim needs to be supported. When the PRRR members asked for where they had “lied”, the SCU refused to clarify or demonstrate where the deception occurred. They seem to ignore the possibility that people can be honestly mistaken, or misunderstood, instead of lying. It seems the SCU sees everything in either black or white. Either you are accepting their analysis as correct or you are an individual, whose opinion is unworthy of consideration.

### Expert opinions

Hoffman, and others, continue to state that they trust their experts when it comes to this video. I might too but these experts are “unnamed” technicians and engineers. One can not challenge their conclusions because their backgrounds and actual opinions are not a matter of public record. As far as I am concerned such “expert opinions” are the same thing as saying, “I know some guy and he says.....”

Lance Moody and I attempted to discuss the problem with some renowned experts in the thermal imaging field. They did not share the SCU’s experts enthusiasm for what was seen in the video. However, they were very busy and did not desire to spend a lot of time discussing the video. They indicated that they weren’t going to do an analysis of the video for us “pro bono”. Had I won the powerball, I would have employed them but my meager funds could not pay for such an analysis. As a result, I never quoted them and had to “go it alone” when I wrote my article for SUNlite.

The point of having an expert is that others can hear/read their opinion directly and can examine their qualifications. They will also be able to cross-examine that expert to see if there is something that they missed or counter that opinion with a different expert’s opinion. That is what having an “expert” is all about. Anything else is, as Mark Twain put it, “just some guy from out of town”.

### Witness testimony

Like the unnamed experts, the SCU relies heavily on testimony from anonymous individuals, who were supposedly in the plane. Eyewitness testimony is a subjective measure that can be influenced by the individuals own beliefs. One has to consider the possibility that the witness might interpret the events they experienced towards what they wanted to believe and not what was actually seen. Putting excessive weight towards eyewitness testimony can affect one’s conclusions.

This became evident when Billy Cox publicly asked Rich Hoffman about my analysis of the delay of the FedEx flight. Hoffman’s response was:

*Certainly, the delay could be due to many plausible explanations 1. The plane was just late for departure. 2. The CBP delayed the flight. 3 The object that was observed by the Control Tower and the CBP plane observed to be heading towards the airport delayed the flight. This is why we have pushed to get a response from the owners of the Control Tower staff (Robinson Aviation) to come forward. Without that piece we cannot say for certain, but it stands to reason that while the CBP plane was heading away from the airport at a sufficient altitude that would allow for a takeoff, it would not have been the cause of the delayed departure. The object which was an unknown was only hundreds of feet without a transponder and now heading towards the airport is logically the most likely hypothesis in my opinion.<sup>2</sup>*

Hoffman’s interpretation is based on the statement made by his sole witness and ignores the facts, as documented in the SCU report and in the video:

- The FedEx plane was scheduled to depart at 9:10PM
- The CBP plane took off at 9:16 PM, it circled the airport twice, and did not depart the area until 9:24 PM.
- According to the witness, the UAP was not seen until after the CBP plane became airborne
- The CBP began to depart the region of the airport at 9:24:00.
- The UAP was last recorded by the CBP around 9:25:02

- The FedEx plane was taxiing down the runway in preparation for takeoff at 9:25:21 PM
- The FedEx plane departed at 9:26 PM.

Since the FedEx plane was scheduled to depart at 9:10PM and the UAP had not been seen prior to 9:16PM, then it was already experiencing a delay waiting for the CBP plane to take off. Shortly after departing the region of the airport, one can see the FedEx plane taxiing down the runway. Had the UAP been the threat implied by the SCU, and their witness, then the CBP plane would probably never have departed the area at the request of the tower to monitor the intruder's position and intentions. Instead the CBP plane was allowed to depart and, shortly after, the FedEx flight left without knowing the intention or true location of this potential threat. This indicates that the air traffic controllers were not concerned about the UAP but, instead, were concerned about the CBP plane circling the airport as a reason to delay the FedEx plane. As I stated in SUNlite 7-6, it is very probable that, had the CBP ignored the UAP and departed the area promptly, the FedEx plane would have taken off as soon as it was ready. Any other conclusion is not "the most likely hypothesis".

### The Moody video

Lance Moody had been trying to work on his video for some time. Like many professionals, he wanted it to be correct and thought about performing some additional narration on how the video was created. Unfortunately, his work and personal life has been more important. He continues to work on the video and has shared it with some members of the SCU. In my opinion, Lance's video clearly demonstrates that a "lighter than air" target is the most likely source for what was recorded by the CBP plane. Without bogging the viewer down with speculation and mind-numbing calculations, they can look at the simulation and see if the balloon explanation is possible. Lance's latest versions of the video and how it was done can be found at the following links:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/resya2yseg64uub/REVISED%20SIMULATION.mp4?dl=0>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/qd3niwkwf6hqdr/How%20the%20Simulation%20was%20Made.mp4?dl=0>

### The object pair hypothesis

After Robert Powell's presentation at the International UFO congress, Robert Sheaffer approached him and was able to obtain a high quality copy of the video for examination. This was better than the one that was made available previously and got the PRRR talking about possible explanations for the object splitting up near the end of the video.

Roger Glassel was the first individual in our group, who proposed that the object might be two separate balloons that were tied together. I dismissed this because it did not seem that this was pair was not really visible prior to the actual separation late in the video. The new video seems to indicate Roger's initial observations may be correct. Two balloons tied together would oscillate about each other and appear as two objects close together or appear to split prior the later event. There are several examples in the new video that seem to support this hypothesis.



The possibility that this was a pair of lighter than air objects seems a distinct possibility based on these images. As time passed, the two objects became untied/untangled and then appeared as two distinct objects. With a possible explanation offered for the splitting of the object, one of the major criticisms of the lighter than air hypothesis may have been answered.

### SCU non-update

In late December, the SCU changed their web site and stated the following:

*Based on information gleaned from various inputs to SCU we are in the process of updating the report. A full update is planned to be available by Feb. 1, 2016 and will be posted on the SCU website. This update will address various issues raised as well as inputs from individuals who have contacted us since the report was released. Although this is always subject to change, we have not received any information that changes our conclusion that the object in the video cannot be explained as a balloon, bird, aircraft, drone, or other known object.<sup>3</sup>*



It is apparent that, despite their claims that they would not respond to SUNlite, they recognized that SUNlite, and others, had identified some serious errors in their original report and subsequent rebuttal. As a result, they would have to rewrite their original report with new measurements that would, in their opinion, falsify the balloon hypothesis.

February 1 came and went and no update occurred. It may have been a case of the SCU not desiring to release anything until Robert Powell spoke at the International UFO Congress in mid-February. The PRRR continued to wait but nothing has appeared at the time I published SUNlite 8-2 (March 1). Is this because they are too busy or is it because they can not find a way to prove it can not be a balloon? If, and when, the SCU does complete a report, I will provide the usual commentary/criticism in the following SUNlite.

### **Nothing new to see**

Based on their web site's statement, the SCU's new report appears to be an attempt to repackage their conclusions. This leaves us with two competing hypothesis. The first requires a vehicle that nobody can prove exists and the other involves a lighter than air device of some kind, which does exist. Unless the SCU can generate new improved evidence, the video is just like any UFO report. It is a mystery with a potential prosaic explanation. No matter how much the SCU preaches from the mountain top, this video can not be considered proof of anything.

### **Notes and references**

1. Hoffman, Rich. Alabama MUFON facebook page (closed group) January 13, 2016 12:21 PM
2. Hoffman, Rich. "Good thing it wasn't terrorism" Comments section. DeVoid blog. January 13, 2016. Available WWW: <http://devoid.blogs.heraldtribune.com/15447/good-thing-it-wasnt-terrorism/#comment-424757>
3. Scientific Coalition for UFOlogy. Available WWW: <http://www.explorescu.org/>

## JULY 24, 1948 - THE CHILES-WHITTED INCIDENT

Recently, Kevin Randle produced a blog entry discussing the infamous Chiles-Whitted sighting.<sup>1</sup> He argued that the case was probably a meteor fireball, where the pilots mistook the bits of debris breaking off as windows on a large craft. This has been the classification of the case by most skeptics and project Blue Book. I had thought that a majority of UFO proponents would have accepted this kind of explanation based on the evidence presented to date regarding space debris re-entries and fireballs. However, the response by several commenters, and on other blogs, indicated that they considered such an explanation absurd. As a result, I felt it would be a necessary to present the case and where I think most of the arguments against the fireball explanation are wrong.

### The case details

The case has undergone numerous interpretations over the years. The news media of the day gave several accounts of what transpired. This is a UP version of the story that appeared in the Lowell Sun (evening edition) on July 24th:

*...We were cruising about 20 miles southwest of Montgomery, Ala.." said Chiles, who was an ATC ferry pilot for four years during the war.*

*"We looked out the right side of the cockpit and saw a tremendous light. The first thing that came to my attention was the long stream of flame coming out the rear end of the plane, or whatever it was. "*

*Man-Made*

*"Then I noticed the two rows of square windows—it was a man-made thing, all right. ' We couldn't see any people aboard. It was traveling too fast for that.*

*"The aircraft seemed to be about four times the circumference of a B-29 fuselage but it was only a little longer," Chiles said. "There were no wings whatever."*

*"The plane passed us on our right, then, as if the pilot had it zoomed up into the same cloud it came out of. A 40-foot red flame shot out its rear end. A luminous glow, like a giant fluorescent light, ran along the belly of the thing."*

*Whitted, who said he had seen the air force's best jet planes not on the secret list, estimated its speed much faster than any craft he had seen before.*

*"I'd say that when it shot up into the clouds it was going between 500 and 700 miles an hour," Whitted said. "I've seen real shooting stars and meteors —they look pretty close when you're a pilot—but I've never seen anything like this."*

*Whitted was a B-29 pilot during the war.*

*As the aircraft passed them, their DC-3 fluttered in the "prop wash, jet-wash or rocket-wash," the pilots said. "It sent out tremendous shock waves." The brilliant light of the airship and the flame of its propellant brought "lightning blindness" to their cockpit, the pilots said, and they had to turn up their instruments lights to read them.*

*The eastern plane was en- route to Atlanta. The mystery ship appeared headed toward Mobile or New Orleans, the pilot said. They said they encountered the plane in a regular "airway," a 25-mile wide strip designated by the CAA...<sup>2</sup>*

Edward Ruppelt would write a similar entry in his book:

*On the evening of July 24, 1948, an Eastern Airlines DC-3 took off from Houston, Texas. It was on a scheduled trip to Atlanta, with intermediate stops in between. The pilots were Clarence S. Chiles and John B. Whitted. At about 2:45 A.M., when the flight was 20 miles southwest of Montgomery, the captain, Chiles, saw a light dead ahead and closing fast. His first reaction, he later reported to an ATIC investigation team, was that it was a jet, but in an instant he realized that even a jet couldn't close as fast as this light was closing. Chiles said he reached over, gave Whitted, the other pilot, a quick tap on the arm, and pointed. The UFO was now almost on top of them. Chiles racked the DC-3 into a tight left turn. Just as the UFO flashed by about 700 feet to the right, the DC-3 hit turbulent air. Whitted looked back just as the UFO pulled up in a steep climb.*

*Both the pilots had gotten a good look at the UFO and were able to give a good description to the Air Force intelligence people. It was a B-29 fuselage. The underside had a "deep blue glow." There were "two rows of windows from which bright lights glowed," and a "50-foot trail of orange red flame" shot out the back.*

*Only one passenger was looking out of the window at the time. The ATIC investigators talked to him. He said he saw a "strange, eerie streak of light, very intense," but that was all, no details. He said that it all happened before he could adjust his eyes to the darkness.<sup>3</sup>*

According to Ruppelt, it was this case that pushed ATIC into writing the infamous "Estimate of the situation", where they concluded UFOs were interplanetary spacecraft.

Ruppelt's version of events was considered gospel because it was supposedly based on what Blue Book had in its files. Unfortunately, Ruppelt's version appears to be more a replication of the media accounts than anything from the Blue Book record.

### Blue Book details

The Blue Book file is extensive and there are some interesting tidbits of information that can be found that presents some observational data not included in the media or Ruppelt accounts:

1. The plane was on a heading of about 50 degrees magnetic.<sup>4</sup>
2. The UFO went from northeast to southwest.<sup>5</sup>
3. Duration was described as short as 5 seconds<sup>6</sup> and as long as 15.<sup>7</sup> The consensus appears to be closer to 10 seconds.
4. Visibility was excellent with 25 mile visibility and broken clouds. The meteor disappeared to the southwest into a cloud or cloud bank.<sup>8</sup>
5. Plane was scheduled to land at Danley (Dannelley) field in Montgomery at 0253.<sup>9</sup>
6. A passenger stated what he saw was above the plane, *"About 1/2 as far above as the far as the plane was above the ground"*.<sup>10</sup>
7. The idea that the UFO created some sort of shock wave was dispelled by the statements made by the two pilots to ATIC:  
*We heard no noise nor did we feel turbulence from the object.*<sup>11</sup>  
*There was no prop wash or rough air felt as it passed.*<sup>12</sup>

The rest of the story is pretty much the same but this information can help in evaluating some of the observations.

### Possible meteor observations

There were several observations of meteor-like objects that night. One observation came from Robbins AFB south of Macon Georgia.<sup>13</sup> That witness reported his observations as being at 1:40 AM EST, which is an hour before the Chiles-Whitted observations.

Two other witness were pilots near the Virginia border. Both reported a sighting around 0230 AM EST. This is close enough to the Chiles-Whitted sighting to be considered related.

The first witness was an Eastern Airlines crew located between Blackstone, Virginia and Greensboro, North Carolina.<sup>14</sup> They saw what they thought was a the meteor to the southwest (approximately 210 degrees azimuth). It was seen traveling horizontal above the horizon and then faded out.

Near Blackstone, Virginia, a pilot enroute to Raleigh-Durham, also saw a trail being left by an object traveling towards the southwest (azimuth 230 degrees).<sup>15</sup> The witness stated the object was 20 degrees above the horizon.

### Weather

The sky conditions that night were listed by Blue Book as being 4/10ths clouds.<sup>16</sup> We don't know much more than that. Chiles and Whitted both stated the object went into a cloud bank, which tends to indicate that the some of these clouds were behind the aircraft. The passenger stated they could see the moon and only saw passing cumulus clouds.

The historical weather chart<sup>17</sup> for the date (see following page) shows that Montgomery was cloudy at 1:30 AM and Mobile was clear. This does not help very much since these values were more than an hour before the event. The precipitation chart for the 24 hour period prior to 1:30 AM EST indicated thunderstorms as far south as Montgomery and to the north. This all tends to indicate a majority of the clouds were in front of the aircraft and less to the rear. This appears to be supported by historical weather observations found at weather underground for various stations in the area.<sup>18</sup>

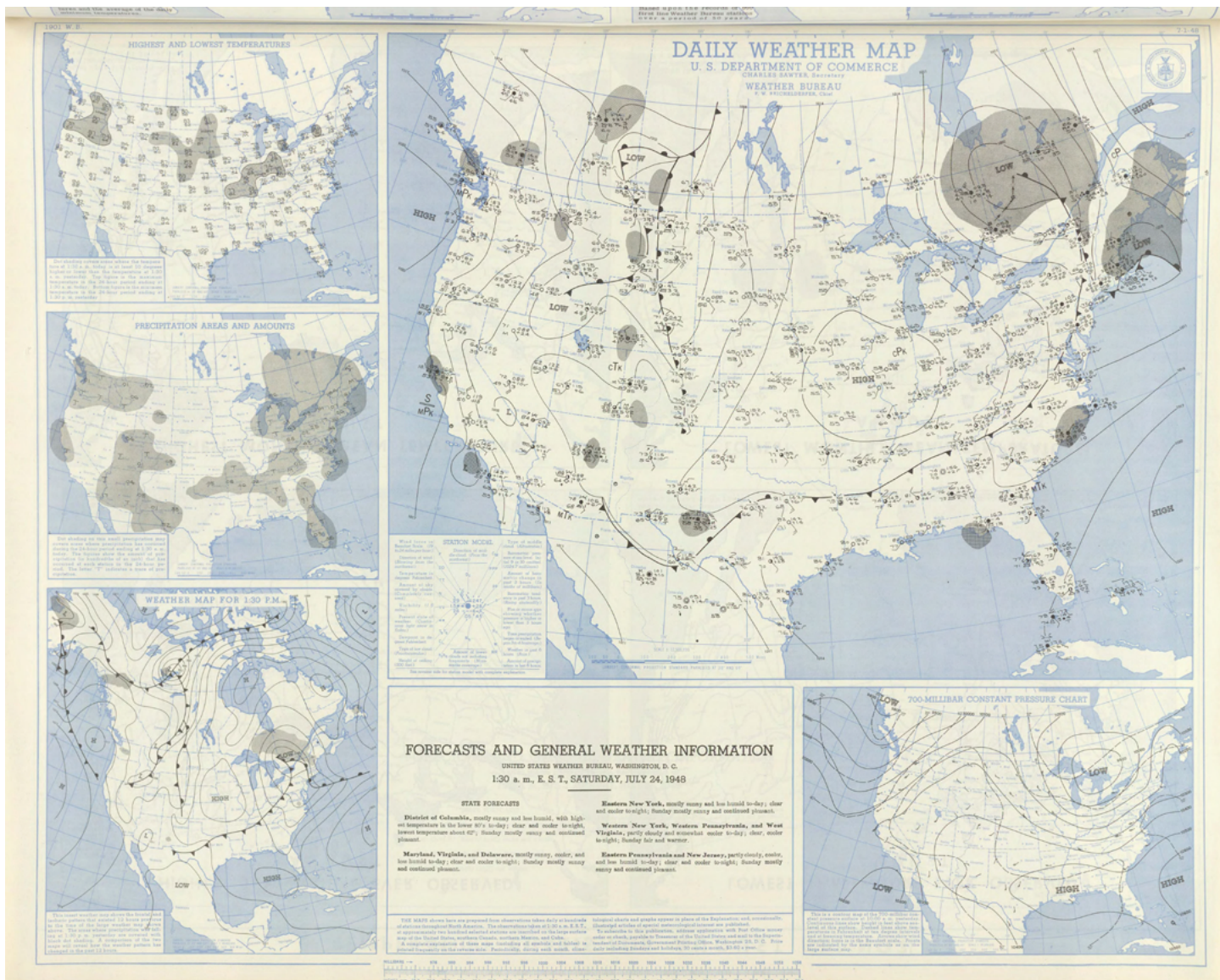
Location	Time	Observation
Mobile, Al	0000-0600	Clear
Montgomery, Al	0600	Rain and Thunderstorms
Selma, Al	0200-0300	Clear
Meridian, MS	0000-0600	Clear
Birmingham, Al	0000-0800	Clear

Selma (45 miles to the Northwest of the aircraft) had rain before 0200 and after 0300 but was clear during the critical time period. All of this information tends to indicate that the clouds were mostly to the east and north of the aircraft. There probably were scattered cumulus clouds in the area but one could conclude that the skies were probably "mostly clear".

### The fireball explanation

Blue Book eventually determined that this event was produced by a bright fireball. This was supported by the evidence obtained in the Zond IV incident, where some witnesses gave descriptions re-entering space debris that were very similar to the descriptions given by Chiles-Whitted.

Despite the evidence that such misinterpretations are possible, UFO proponents still want to rely on the old adage that pilots don't make such errors and that the Zond IV incident isn't appropriate. The military pilot sighting of November 5, 1990 mirrored the Zond IV incident.<sup>19</sup> In this case, Tornado pilots misinterpreted a space debris re-entry as some sort of large craft with lights. They were "experienced" pilots and had "good eyesight" but what they reported seeing was NOT what they actually saw. Mistakes by pilots



are a lot more common than UFO proponents want everyone to believe. In a recent incident, an Air Force aircrew landed their transport plane at the wrong airport!<sup>20</sup> These kinds of events can not be dismissed with a wave of the hand. The "pilot's are too reliable" argument ignores what is known about pilots, pilot error, and UFO reports.

Other arguments against the fireball explanation is that the meteoroid that produced the fireball had to be enormous in order to produce a bright fireball that lasted 10 seconds. This is not true. We have no magnitude estimates for the event other than it was bright enough to create a flash of light. This sounds like a brightness of about -8 to -12, which will cast shadows in illuminate the sky around them. Looking at the AMS database, one can see that such meteors are seen often enough to indicate that they are not a "rare" event.

Then there is the argument that meteors normally do not break up. Looking at the American Meteor Society (AMS) data<sup>21</sup>, such fireballs are frequent enough to be possible. For the United States, there were 3175 fireball reports from the year 2015. 1120 of them were of the fragmenting type and many of them were estimated to have magnitudes greater than -8.

There is also the argument that the duration of the event was too long to be a fireball and that such fireballs are very rare. Durations of the various fireball events described in the AMS database varied. Some reports contained durations as high as 20 seconds but these may have been erroneous. While the bulk of the sightings had time durations of five seconds or shorter, there were enough observation of fireballs with durations of about 10 seconds to indicate they were not that unusual.

These arguments against the fireball explanation are based more on belief than careful examination of what is known about fireball meteors. Contrary to what has been stated, a fireball meteor seems like a possible source for this UFO event.

A good reason to suspect that the sighting was of a fireball is based on the data found in the Blue Book file. When one plots the observations made between 2:30 and 3 AM that morning, there is indication that the observers were all seeing the same event.





These observations create an approximate path of the potential fireball (red track). While one might think it would be impossible for the two aircraft in Virginia to see the fireball in Georgia/Alabama, one should check out the meteor meniscus web site created by James Richardson.<sup>22</sup> The two aircraft were roughly 900-950 km northeast of Chiles-Whitted. For a meteor at standard altitudes, it would have been a few degrees above the horizon. While one of the pilots gave an altitude of 20 degrees, it is possible he over-estimated this. The magnitude of the meteor would have been 7-8 magnitudes dimmer than those directly beneath the fireball. This means that -8 to -12 magnitude fireball would have been about 0 to -5 from Virginia. This still would have been an impressive meteor.

The witness at Robbins saw his meteor an hour before but there is one document in the file that suggest his observations might have been an hour later!<sup>23</sup> He saw the object come from the north and go southwestward. He also mentioned it went overhead but an object at a significant angular elevation can often be misinterpreted as "passing overhead".

Of course, the big question is why Chiles and Whitted tended to indicate the fireball passed at a low elevation by their plane. Is it plausible that their interpretation of the object being close proximity gave them the impression that object was close to the horizon? In the Ruppelt account, the pilot made a tight bank to port. If they did bank their aircraft to port, it might have given the false impression the object was close to the horizon because of the raised starboard wing. The passenger implied the object was higher in the sky than the plane, which meant there may have been a higher elevation angle than low on the horizon. Since we never received any firm elevation angles for the object, it seems possible that it was much higher in the sky than near the wing of the aircraft.

One can not be sure of these observations or interpretations but there is a possibility that a bright fireball might have fit the observations that morning.

### Frequency of fireballs in late July

While it is hard to ascertain the amount of meteor activity on the date in question, one can look at meteor data to determine the amount of fireball activity for that time of the year. NASA has a meteor network that operates cameras in three regions of the US. One of these regions happens to include the area of Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. The entire network has its data readily available at the Spaceweather.com website.<sup>24</sup> I went back to the last two years on the days of July 22-26 to see what the general fireball numbers were.

Date	Total fireballs	Sporadic	Alpha Capricornid	South Delta Aquarids
7/22/14	9	9	0	0
7/23/14	16	16	0	0
7/24/14	18	18	0	0
7/25/14	22	22	0	0

7/26/14	19	19	0	0
7/22/15	14	12	2	0
7/23/15	12	10	2	0
7/24/15	14	7	6	1
7/25/15	19	16	2	1
7/26/15	26	18	8	0

These sightings were only from three areas but the American Meteor Society<sup>25</sup> has a database that encompasses the entire United States which might help narrow down some specifics regarding each fireball. I decided to examine the database for 2015 and look for fireballs that fragmented and see if they generate UFO reports of the type Chiles-Whitted reported.

### Do fireballs generate these kinds of reports?

I went through the “cigar” UFO sightings in the NUFORC data base<sup>26</sup> and compared it to the list of known fireball reports in the AMS database.<sup>27</sup> Going back from the present to June of 2015, I found 18 reports that were short enough duration that might be fireballs. While several of the events were possible matches, there was one incident that agreed in both data bases. On June 10, 2015, there were three UFO sightings near Texas at roughly 0450 AM describing cigar like objects. The American Meteor society has event 1319-2015<sup>28</sup>, which had 8 observers reporting a fragmenting meteor of about magnitude -8 at 4:47AM. It was seen as far north as St. Louis and as far south as Yantis, Texas (east of Dallas). Other observations were in Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

The UFO reports in the NUFORC database came from three locations

Location	Time	Description
Tuttle,OK <sup>29</sup>	04:55AM	<p>Me and a few friends were outside enjoying the nice weather. We were just about to head inside when the craft appeared. It was maybe half of an inch in the sky, it looks like it was at a relatively high elevation and ascending. The object itself looks like a pen or cigar we could not tell the exact color but it did seem as though it were changing colors.</p> <p>What really made it visible was it's trail! The trail to our eyesight looked like six inches long or so, no telling how long it was in reality, since it was so far away. It had two trails, one above, one below. The trail(s) looked whitish blue.</p> <p>Really weird, no noise, but a few minutes later there was a lot of wind (no wind before).</p> <p>We were looking east and it seemed like it was headed south and ascending. Finally disappeared into the cover of darkness after seven to twelve seconds, too fast to get it on camera...not enough time... unlike any unidentified object I have ever seen. We will not forget this one.</p>
Flower Mound, TX <sup>30</sup>	04:50AM	<p>Outside my apartment building, I saw a bright orange light coming from North East direction in the corner of my left vision and I quickly jumped out of my car and saw in front of me moving fast towards me at a 45 degree angle; a cigar shape cylinder looking flying object with orange lights in front and in back of it.</p> <p>Approximately 3 stories high in front of me, lower than any plane would fly. Was jet-like speed. Traveling at an angle to South West direction. Smaller than a jet plane and bigger than an suv truck. I heard no noise and saw no smoke. I quickly followed the UFO craft by moving my body in the direction that it was traveling for approximately 7 seconds total and then all the orange lights and flying craft suddenly disappeared from my vision. The back ground was trees and a dark sky and the UFO craft was clearly visable to me eye sight directly moving in front of me. The Moon was waning to the south-east of me with very sma! ll amount of light in the sky.</p>

Pollock, TX <sup>31</sup>	0445AM	<p>I'm going to describe it the way I described it to my friend in a text as soon as it happened: I just saw an ufo. (Let's make this clear...I don't mean an alien ship)...just something I was unsure what it was.</p> <p>At first I thought it was a falling star but ruled that out because they happen too fast. This was a slow but not too slow moving object. And unlike a falling star that appears to fall in a vertical line or appears to be falling in general, this object wasn't falling. It was moving horizontally or parallel to the earth.</p> <p>The reason for comparing it to a falling star was bc it had a tail behind it. But this tail wasn't bright like a star that's falling. It reminded me of a jet with the stream of smoke behind it. But this object appeared to be too close to be a jet and way too big. It was long and cylinder shaped or cigar shaped, and from where I was sitting it looked to be over a foot long or maybe more; longer than a ruler. I was driving at the time and I pulled over to continue watching it.</p> <p>Eventually it disappeared either by vanishing or what I think it was the angle of it may have caused me to not see it anymore. I can say this it reminded me of the rocket ship of nasa but longer.</p>
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These kinds of observations are very similar to Chilles-Whitted although they did not specifically describe seeing windows. Each fireball is unique and the perception issue which produces the "airship effect" will depend on the individual and the circumstances.

There are other examples in UFOlogical databases. This sketch was made on April 25, 1966 by a UFO witness in Pennsylvania.<sup>32</sup> On that evening, a bright fireball was seen over the north-east. There is no doubt that it was a bright fireball and it was widely photographed. Despite the public announcement that this was nothing more than a bright meteor, some witnesses thought it was something else. The witness' sketch shows the fireball as it appeared initially followed by the subsequent fading out as the remaining fragments of the fireball continued on its trajectory as it faded out. The created the "portholes" (aka windows) on the craft.



Fig. 3. Facsimile of Robert W. Martz's drawing of UFO. The first view (a) was "visible for a second—very awesome—a huge flaming body which lit up a large area (red flame, green and yellow tail.)" The second view (b) was a "dark object—huge flames went out like turning off a light bulb, a few seconds, then all darkness (dim light in ports)."

This all indicates that fireballs do generate UFO reports that are similar to the Chiles-Whitted sighting and that these fragmenting fireballs that generate such reports are not rare as some implied.

### Chiles -Whitted explained?

We can't say for sure that the Chiles-Whitted sighting was positively a fireball because we do not have a time machine. That being said, the history of how fireballs are misinterpreted as UFOs and that some can be described the same way Chiles-Whitted described their UFO indicates that it was probably a fireball meteor of some kind.

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# José de la Cruz Ríos López and the Roswell slide's last stand

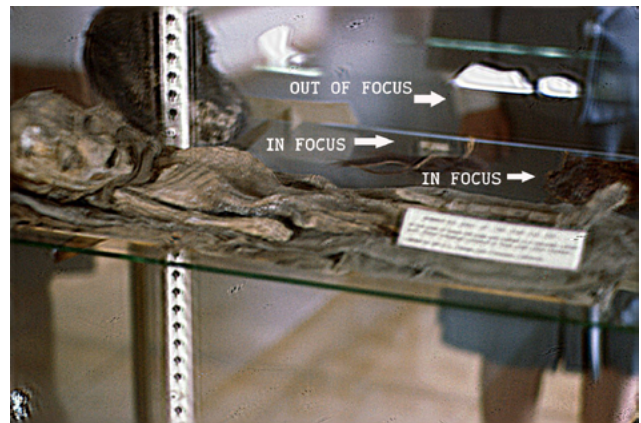
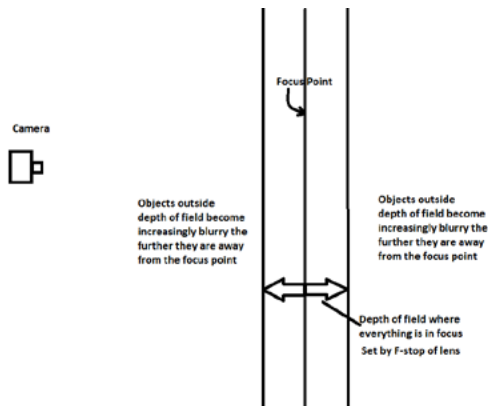
Last issue, I described how Maussan's Roswell alien scientists had written a report about the Roswell slides body. Their conclusion, as expected, was that the body was not a mummy. Their web site disappeared in just a few days. Now, one of the authors, Biologist José de la Cruz Rios Lopez, is promoting the story on another web site.<sup>1</sup> He sent me a link to the web page, which prompted me to e-mail him links to issues of SUNlite. What transpired over the next few hours was an exchange that indicated to me that Rios was "all in" and not really interested in either examining the case critically or discussing it with those outside his little circle. Jose Rios and I argued back and forth several times but his main arguments appeared to be that the body in the Ray photographs was not the same based on his own analysis of the images from 1896 and the slides. Rios used his own argument from authority as the final word. I would be willing to accept this if he actually attempted to discuss the issues. Instead, Mr. Rios simply gave blanket statements and appeared unwilling to examine the possibility that he made any mistakes.

## Peer review

Rios states that the study has been subjected to peer review by INACIFO. The problem with this is that INACIFO is not an independent agency. They had endorsed the slides as a non-human body before the placard was deblurred. Either they had to admit they had made some gross errors in their analysis or attempt to justify their initial flawed analysis. It appears they are doing the latter. Rios added that his article was to appear in..... a magazine! I supposed the MUFON journal or some tabloid will be glad to publish the story but they usually will publish anything that sells. There is little, or no, review involved with such analysis. What I was looking for was for him to actually submit his analysis of this "non-human" body to an actual journal, where actual experts, outside of the Maussan circle, can properly analyze his findings. If his findings are correct, then this discovery should be shared with the rest of the scientific community. If Rios can not, or will not, publish in such a journal, then one must draw the conclusion that there must be something wrong with his analysis.

## The length of the body

José de la Cruz Ríos López felt my analysis of the body's length was incorrect. According to him, the woman is so close to the body, that she can be used as a measuring tool to estimate the body's length. I tried to describe to him the reason the woman was out of focus was that she was outside the depth of field but he was insistent that the woman was only "a few CM" away from the body. This is not true and is clearly seen in the photograph. The woman is separated by the body by at least one glass shelf width. Glass shelves of this type are probably 8-inches (20 CM) in width. Because the body is on a second shelf, that means the distance between the body and the edge of the rear shelf was 12-inches (30 CM) or more. That is only the distance between the body and the rear shelf edge. The woman is obviously further away from the shelf. Putting her at the shelf's edge is more wishful thinking by Rios than actual objective research. It is hardly "a few CM" and demonstrates that Rios length of the body calculation is wrong.



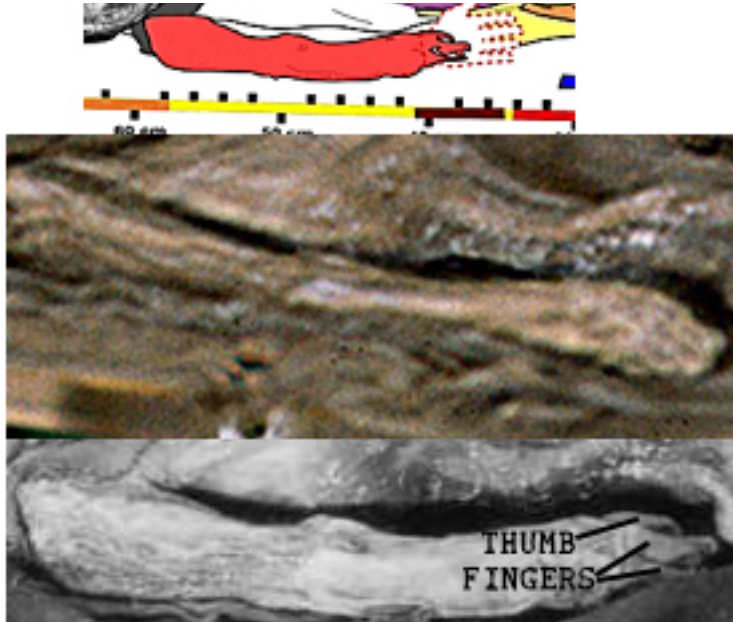
## The body is not a mummy

Mr. Rios was insistent that the body was "fresh" based on his observations of the slide. I countered with the comments from all the anthropologists Philip Mantle had contacted. They all agreed the body was a mummy of some kind. Rios seemed to be unaware that so many anthropologists had rejected his observations. He stated that he would try and contact these individuals but I have to wonder if he will. The only anthropology experts he seemed to be interested in listening to are Dobles and Carey, who are far from objective.

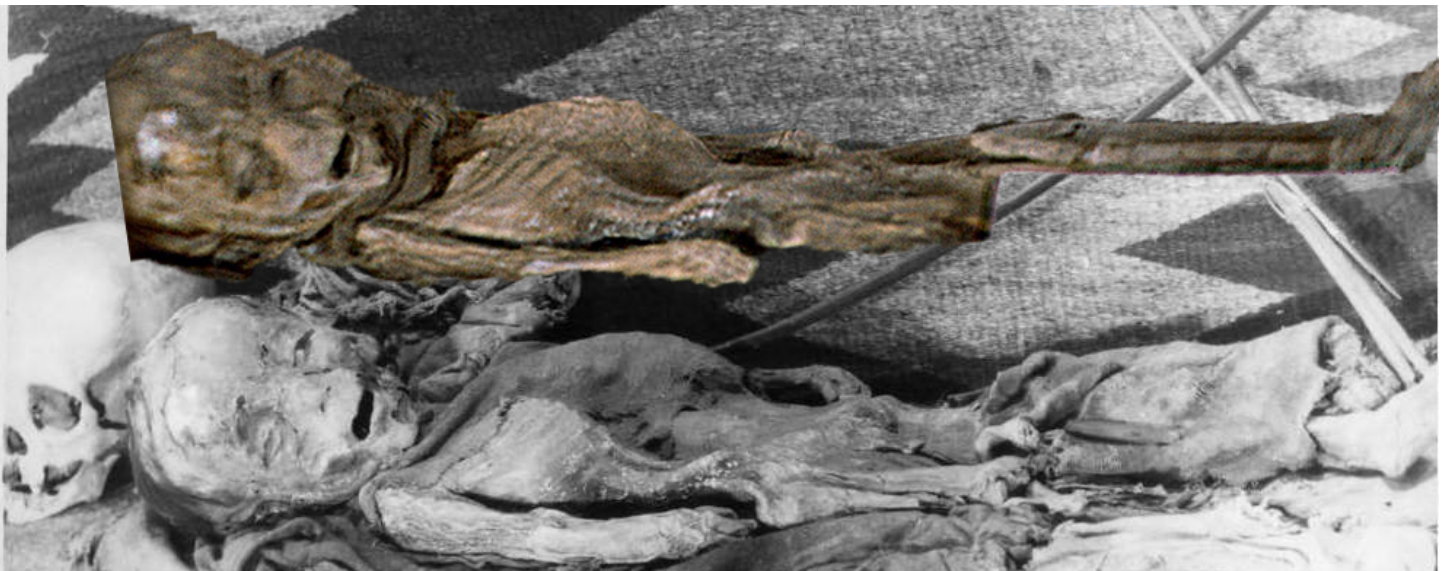
## The body is not the same as the Palmer mummy

Mr. Rios was proud of his analysis that states the bodies are completely different. However, any layman looking at the images would come to the conclusion that they look very much the same. The details he is seeing are not that obvious and ignore issues he is not willing to consider:

- The two images were taken about fifty years apart. A mummified body that has been moved several times is going to be exposed to some damage/changes in handling.
- The quality of the two images are not equal. One is a low resolution black and white photograph from a FOIA request, while the other is a Kodachrome slide. The resolution of the two images is not equal and certain details visible in one image are going to be more/less clear in the other.
- The body is photographed from two different perspectives and under different lighting conditions.
- Parts of the body are not positioned the same. The right arm of the body is not in the same position in both photographs. Rios thinks this means there is no right hand but he misses the obvious. The right arm appears to be rotated 90 degrees. There appears to be, the thumb and two of the fingers visible. The repositioning of the arm also makes the forearm appear different.



- The cloth found with the body was draped over the body differently. It hides certain parts of the body and gives the impression that certain areas are different. In Rios interpretation of the right "hand", parts of the hand are apparently hidden by the cloth, which makes that part of the body appear incomplete. In the Ray slide, the right arm is partially obscured by the cloth as well giving the false impression the arm is thin.



Ignored by Rios is the fact that the body is VERY similar to what we see in the Palmer mummy.

- The shape of the body is the same.
- They are both missing the right leg.

- They both have the cloth wrapped around them.
- The head and mouth are essentially the same.

While he can find apparent differences in the imagery, which leads him to believe they are two different bodies, Rios ignores the obvious. He is stating that this non-human body looks a lot like the mummified body of a two-year old boy!

### **The body has been identified by a former Roswell airman as being from the Roswell crash**

Jose Rios used this gem in our e-mail exchange and I chuckled at his acceptance of a story that can not be proven to be true. He is referring to Eleazar Benavides, who is has a personal interest in promoting the Roswell crash. His testimony is suspect. How can Rios tell if Benavides is telling the truth or being accurate? As a biologist, does he accept observations of Bigfoot, Chupacabras, or the Loch Ness monster as well? Roswell is full of "witnesses", who have made all sorts of claims and were later discovered to be not telling the truth. An actual scientist would understand the problems with such testimony and recognize it carries little or no weight. Rios seems to be one of those UFO scientists, who will discard skepticism in order to promote his own interpretation of the data.

### **The Rays had photographed the body in New Mexico after July of 1947.**

This was another of Rios' flawed arguments. There is absolutely no evidence the slides were taken in July of 1947. The best anybody could estimate was that they were taken in the mid to late 1940s. The Ray photograph collection contains few, if any photographs, from New Mexico. However, there are several of 1940s collection that show locations in Colorado. I pointed this out in SUNlite 7-3. Assuming the photographs of the body were taken in the same time period, then it is likely these photographs were taken at Mesa Verde, which is located in Colorado. Rios seemed completely ignorant of all of this and, instead, seemed insistent that the body had been moved to Montezuma's castle by the time these photographs were taken. The move did not occur until June of 1947. Since the slides can only be dated from the 1945-1950 time frame, then it is very possible the photographs were taken PRIOR to June of 1947.

### **Shots across the bow**

Rios has since tried to refute my comments from SUNlite 7-4 and proclaim them as false.<sup>2</sup> However, he does not address the important points and cherry picks data to attempt to show where I was wrong. Most of his arguments are based on what I have written here. He refuses to answer any questions about his measurement of the body length.

Meanwhile, Jaimie Maussan is promoting the idea that the only "scientific study" of the slides has proven they are images of a non-human body.<sup>3</sup> What Maussan fails to tell everyone is that this "study" has not been validated because it has not been presented to a journal of anthropology, where experts, outside of Maussan's inner circle, can evaluate their work. Anybody can post stuff on the Internet and proclaim it as scientific proof. Without independent verification of their work, by qualified experts, this report fails. I once again, challenge Maussan's "experts" to put their scientific reputations on the line and publish their work in an independent journal that can evaluate their work properly.

### **Notes and references**

1. José de la Cruz Rios Lopez. Comparative Study. Available WWW: <http://humanoide macrocefalo69.tumblr.com>
2. *ibid*
3. Maussan, Jaimie. "El caso de Bewitness fue demostrado con análisis científicos forenses.. Nadie demostró de la misma manera lo contrario". Twitter. 21 February 2016. Available WWW: <https://twitter.com/jaimemaussan1/status/701527797710213120>

# LINDA CORTILE & Nighteyes

## Considerations on a rebuttal

by Luis Gonzales

Sean F. Meers devoted a long reply (updated September 12, 2013) to try to disprove the alleged similarities between Linda Cortile's abduction and a science-fiction novel published some time before the alleged abduction by Garfield Reeves-Stevens, Nighteyes (1). I published a shorter article in May 2104 as my contribution to the debate (2). By chance, I have discovered that in July 2014 Mr. Meers penned a rebuttal (3) and, even if accused of whipping a dead horse, I cannot resist to reply.

Let's begin at the end. Meers concluded:

*"The primary tactic employed in Luis Gonzalez's article "LINDA CORTILE & Nighteyes" is substitution. He changes Hansen, Stefula and Butler's claims (the alleged similarities) into different ones of his own choosing. He then claims that because his substituted claim is correct, Hansen, Stefula and Butler's original claim is correct. In some instances he goes further and claims that his substituted claim was in fact the original claim. A clearly illogical and irrational approach to attempted refutation."*

Meers does not comment if my "substituted claims" are worth pondering, he simply protests they are not exact, WORD FOR WORD, identical to the original claims. Once again, his diversionary tactic is clear. In the text, he keeps repeating (for example, Fact #8) that "My argument is, and always has been, that (the alleged similarities) are reliant on the details about the kidnappings and meetings being removed in order for the similarity to appear accurate (...) Examination and comparison of the removed details reveal significant dissimilarities, not remarkable parallels". Unfortunately, he NEVER said so in his original, he limited himself to dismissing each alleged similarity but never really went into the real issue.

Nobody denies that many details of Linda's story are quite different from those in the novel, if only because Linda was a real person and the story developed in her surroundings, among her family and contacts, and within the constraints of her daily routines. What Hansen, Stefula, Butler and I claimed was that she could have got her inspiration (conscious or unconsciously) from the Nighteyes novel in regard to several big and small details of her story. Of course, the circumstances would be quite different and she would not copycat what she read, but the inevitable dissimilarities do not (cannot) cancel out the remarkable parallels.

Besides, you have to take into account that I was not writing my own argument as I wished but had to follow the template used by Meers to defend my own arguments. So I consider it completely defensible to slightly correct the similarities pointed out by Hansen et al in order to highlight their significance.

As an addendum, and accepting by the sake of the argument Meers' corrections, at the end of this article you can read my considerations on his rebuttal. But I would like, here and now, address the real question hovering in this exchange.

The most revealing aspect of Mr. Meers tactics is how he simply "forgets" to address my own criticisms. Let me repeat them again.

*The three main points in Linda Cortile's abduction (proclaimed as such by Budd Hopkins himself) were:*

- (a) *Abductee speaking in an alien tongue,*
- (b) *Abductee working with the aliens,*
- (c) *Sexual bonding since childhood between pairs of abductees.*

*All were written in a novel several months before the alleged abduction. This is, at least, clear evidence of a sociological influence or, in the worst scenario, proof of a hoax.*

*The most amazing point made in Hopkins' book, the cornerstone of Linda Cortile's case, was how the aliens had orchestrated the lives of two abductees in order to reunite them one night in lower Manhattan for an apocalyptic message. The main surprise of Nighteyes (besides the aliens being humans) is when two apparently independent abductees met again, in order to become the founders of a future race. How can anybody miss the parallelism?*

*My argument is not only about similarity of some details (the dissimilarities will always outnumber the similarities) but also about similarity of themes. Something like comparing Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" with "West Side Story." We, skeptics, are in a no-win position. If we point to similar details, believers argue that we should not pick details but see broader. When we see broader and discuss main themes, believers ask for a perfect reproduction of details.*

Let's consider an hypothetical situation. I am faking an abduction and I am inspired by a SF novel I have just read. Following Meers' logic, the only way I would be discovered would be if I were so stupid as to include in my story all and every detail appearing in the novel. All this, despite my starting point as a real person in a real world, would be radically different from the circumstances created in his plot by the writer, making it a complete impossibility to mimic his imagined characters, scenes, and relationships. Even if I tried to reproduce them to the best of my efforts, the differences would be so many that any follower of Meer's logic would easily discard the few similarities I could produce.

I like a debate as much as everybody but only if the participants are open to be convinced by serious arguments. As Sean Meers has



clearly showed he is not, this would be my last contribution to this exchange.

#### ADDENDA

**Alleged Similarity #01** – *Linda was abducted into a UFO hovering over her high-rise apartment building in New York City <-> Sarah was abducted (as it was later found out) into a UFO seen once slowly ascending in the vicinity of the high-rise apartment of her ex-husband in New York City.*

Meers writes: “The details of how Linda was abducted by aliens from her apartment into a UFO, and the details of how Sarah was abducted by aliens from her ex-husband’s apartment into a UFO can’t even be compared let alone called similar.”

It is not that Meers can’t see the forest for the trees, it is that he thinks that focusing in the differences between the trees, he will prevent the reader from noticing the forest. Of course the details are different but the point of the novel, that a person could be abducted from a high-rise building in the center of Manhattan, could have been a clear inspiration for Linda. Remember that at the time, abductions were usually considered lonely incidents in rural or suburban settings, not imaginable in “the city that never sleeps”.

**Alleged Similarity #02** – *Dan and Richard initially claimed just to have been parked in their patrol car (later they revealed it was an unmarked car) under the underpass of the elevated FDR Drive (without giving details or reasons)... and were involved in a UFO abduction during early morning hours <-> Early in “Nighteyes” two government agents were on a stakeout and became involved in a UFO abduction during early morning hours.*

Meers claims that the main point and radical dissimilarity was that Dan and Richard were NOT in a stakeout. Curiously, he does concede the relevant element: in the novel, two government officers on duty got involved in an abduction. It is a useful scene that somehow presented itself at the beginning of Linda’s story (the first letter by Richard could have been read just like that) even if further developments morphed it into Richard and Dan (and the third man) being also abducted at the time (in an incoherent procedure not even explained by Hopkins).

**Alleged Similarity #03** – *Linda was kidnapped and thrown into a car by Richard and Dan <-> Wendy was coerced (not thrown) into a van by the threat of a gun held by Merrill. Derek never left the driver’s seat.*

Meers goes into the minutiae, trying to cloud the issue. He concludes: Upon examination and comparison of the details of these two sets of events the numerous dissimilarities between them clearly outweigh any identifiable similarities between them.

Could we expect otherwise? Of course, the details are different. To me, the real point we were trying to raise was that Linda’s story about being kidnapped also by human agents could have been inspired by a similar event in the novel. Please remember that at the time (1989), MILABs were not heard of.

BTW, Meers is nitpicking over tiny details when he blames me for not mentioning the participation of the third man in Linda’s kidnapping.

**Alleged Similarity #04** – *Linda and his bodyguard both claimed to have seen unmarked gray surveillance vans and their occupants <-> Different kind of vehicles (marked and unmarked) were used in the novel for surveillance NOT of one female civilian but to monitor multiple FBI agents.*

Meers argues that Hansen et al removed the details to try make the surveillance features from Nighteyes conform with the surveillance features in Linda’s case but just afterwards admits that the detail was, by itself, unremarkable. The feature is common and has been depicted in films and TV series.

I agree. The inspiration could have come from elsewhere but, on the other hand, it is clearly also in the novel.

**Alleged Similarity #05** – *Richard is a security and intelligence agent <-> Derek was an FBI agent.*

In this case, Meers does not even deny the similarity with Richard: “Even for the sake of argument if one were to accept Gonzalez’s alterations, the feature of a protective, loving, heroic, government agent protagonist in Nighteyes, and in Linda’s case, is unremarkable because, like in an earlier example, it is not a feature exclusive to the book Nighteyes.”

So, the admission that Linda’s story could have been inspired by plenty of sources is irrelevant to Meers. Curious.

**Alleged Similarity #06** – *Dan is hospitalized for emotional trauma <-> One of the government agents in “Nighteyes” was hospitalized for emotional trauma.*

I wrote SIMILARITY DISMISSED, but thinking again I wonder... why Dan had to get hospitalized? To me, it looks like a useful trick to “delete” a problematic character who has fulfilled his role but it is no longer needed.

**Alleged Similarity #07** – *During the kidnapping Dan took Linda to a beach house (nowhere is that house either stated or implied to be a safe house) trying to prove she was a half breed human <-> During the kidnapping Derek (and Merrill) took Wendy (and two other men) to a safe house. Wendy was not their main objective, Derek just didn’t want to leave any witnesses.*

According to Meers, the beach house was NOT a ‘safe house’. His source: Linda said so.

The main point, that in both stories the witness is spirited away to a remote location is, again, overlooked. Besides, that Dan is

hardly likely to have taken Linda to an 'unsafe' house, is he?

**Alleged Similarity #08** – *The house Linda was carried unwittingly to was on the beach <-> In "Nighteyes", the safe house on the beach was subjected to alien abduction activity but it was NOT the one to were Wendy and others were taken*

The only nuance raised by Meers is using the adjective "safe" regarding Linda's.

**Alleged Similarity #09** – *Before her kidnapping, Linda contacted Budd Hopkins about her abduction <-> Before her kidnapping, Wendy reassured by her father, reluctantly went with him and both spoke to Starr in his apartment about how Wendy and her mother had been picked up by something and the mother disappeared.*

According to Meers, examination and comparison of the removed details reveal significant dissimilarities, not remarkable parallels. The FACT (in capital letters as he likes) that both witnesses contacted a ufologist and later were abducted by government agents is simply not relevant... to him

**Alleged Similarity #10** – *Budd Hopkins is a prominent UFO abduction researcher living in New York City and an author who has written books on the topic <-> Charles Edward Starr was a prominent UFO abduction researcher living in New York City and an author who had written books on the topic.*

In this case, Meers does not even deny the similarity. He just says it is not similar in any meaningful respect. Even when he admits that Hopkins himself could have been an abductee, he still considers the similarity without relevance. I cannot understand his peculiar blindness.

**Alleged Similarity #11** – *Linda and Dan were abducted once at the same time. Linda communicated with Dan (and the two others) during the abduction, even if cryptically and telepathically <-> Wendy and Derek were abducted many times at the same time and communicated with each other (not using telepathy) during their abductions.*

Originally, Meers (based just on one example by Strieber and his father) wrote: "The communication between abductees during abductions, though rare, was a reported and documented feature of alien abduction prior to the Linda Cortile abduction (...) and not a suspicious, exclusive occurrence found and documented only in Nighteyes." When I replied that the novelty was, in any case, that the abductees who communicate did not know each other before, he avoids the point and retreats to his mantra: "Examination and comparison of the details (of both stories) reveal two significantly dissimilar set of events, not ones that mirror one another, or even vaguely resemble one another." Why would you have hoaxed a perfect copy? That would only reveal your trick.

In his rebuttal, Meers delights in blaming me because my "altered" statements are correct, distorting his original criticisms. To me, the important thing is not how Hansen et al exactly worded the similarities, but the FACT that they surprisingly found so many.

**Alleged Similarity #12** – *Richard suspected he knew Linda previously; consciously, she only recalled a childhood imaginary friend named "Mickey" <-> Wendy "knew" Derek previously.*

According to Meers, Linda simply suspected she had met Richard before. On the other hand, Wendy instantaneously recognized Derek. But a few paragraphs later, he does admit that for Linda the connection that Richard was "Mickey" occurred when Hopkins read Richard's letter about the subject. No screenwriter could have imagined a better dramatic scene.

Regarding my "altered" statement, he declares: "Variations on the theme of shared childhood abductions occurred in both Nighteyes and in Linda's case. They do not, however, correspond in nature. The prepubescent ages at which (Richard and Linda) were taken, and that they were repeatedly allowed to play, talk and generally interact with one another for decent periods of time when they were taken, indicates that their repeated pairings were being performed for purposes other than procreation. Unlike in Nighteyes where procreation was the sole purpose of pairing people together."

I suspect Dr. Jacobs would disagree...

As usual, Meers dismisses the novel "plot-twist" presenting several other similar cases revealed after Linda's. In doing so, he even overlooks what Hopkins himself wrote at the time (p. 218-9 of my May 1997 POCKET BOOK edition of Witnessed): "Until this letter, I had neither heard of nor even imagined such profound alien meddling in individual human lives (...) The discovery of the aliens' interest in studying human relationships and eventual sexual 'bonding' from childhood through maturity is one of the most important contributions of the Linda Cortile case."

Is it not revealing that this "most important contribution" featured earlier in Nighteyes?

**Alleged Similarity #13** – *Richard expressed a romantic interest in Linda <-> Derek became romantically involved with Wendy.*

Meers refuses to acknowledge any similarity just because instead of Dan (as suggested by Hansen et al), I considered that Richard fitted better into the role. Yes, Hansen got the wrong man but the main point, the romantic relationship between agent and witness, is clearly there.

**Alleged Similarity #14** – *Dan and Richard felt considerable vibration during the close encounter <-> During the UFO landing in "Nighteyes" there was much vibration.*

Stefula and Butler wrote that Linda told them about the vibration. Linda denied doing so. There was no other independent source. Even if it was the word of two people against one, I graciously conceded this minor point and Meers quickly grabs the opportunity.

**Alleged Similarity #15** – *Photographs of Linda were taken on the beach and sent to Hopkins <-> In "Nighteyes", photographs taken on a beach played a central role.*

In order to deny the overall similarity, Meers insists once more: "They (the photos) do not correlate with respect to how the photographs were taken, who took them, why they were taken, what they depict or what they represent."

Yes, I admit the similarity was overstretched, but it served to highlight the absurdity of Dan's alleged acts (stopping to take photos of Linda as she was running away instead of chasing her quickly) but also Linda's. We were never shown the 5 color photos but the description given is curiously revealing: (p. 154) "The photos showed her running towards the water". What a strange direction to run away from her captor!

**Alleged Similarity #16** – *The letter from "the third man" warned of ecological problems and potential harm to world peace if there was interference <-> Wendy was racing world disaster in "Nighteyes".*

In this case Meers, instead of addressing the main point (the coincidence in the ecological warnings), insists the letter did not included such warnings and spends several paragraph blaming Hansen et al of crippling their investigation "because they proved themselves unable to confidentially examine private case evidence" and so they were denied the opportunity to read the mentioned letter and had to use secondhand information that proved wrong. A classic distraction tactic.

#### NOTES:

1. Sean F. Meers, "The Facts Regarding the Alleged Sixteen Similarities Between the Linda Cortile Case and the Science-Fiction Novel Nighteyes", [www.lindacortilecase.com](http://www.lindacortilecase.com).
2. Luis R. González, "Linda Cortile and Nighteyes", SUNLite 6:3 (May 2014), pp. 19-21, <http://www.astronomyufo.com/UFO/SUNlite.htm>
3. Sean F. Meers, "Rebuttal to Luis Gonzalez's Article", [www.lindacortilecase.com](http://www.lindacortilecase.com).

## March 29, 1957

The NICAP document produces the following description:

*March 29, 1957--Off East Coast, Florida. Pan American Airways pilot observed brilliant pulsating light, confirmed by radar. [V]*

Section V has a lengthy account of the event:

*March 29, 1957: About 7:30 p.m. local time, Pan American flight 206A was north-bound off the east coast of Florida, at 30 degrees N. Latitude. The plane was enroute to New York from Nassau at 16,000 feet, moving through the tops of cumulus clouds, on a heading of 25 degrees magnetic. At the controls was Capt. Kenneth G. Brosdal, The engineer, John Wilbur, was in the co-pilot's seat. The co-pilot, George Jacobson, was navigating.*

*"About 50 miles east of Papa-3, a checkpoint between Nassau and Tuna," Capt. Brosdal stated, "we (the co-pilot, engineer and myself) saw this very bright white light. It seemed to grow in intensity to the point where it would be about 3 or 4 strengths of a rising Venus, then would subside. This happened about 3 or 4 times, during which I came to enough to check on the radar screen. Sure enough, a target showed up at 3 o'clock between 45-50 miles away.*

*"Using the cursor on the face of the radar, I checked the angle of sighting and it checked with the visual angle. This light appeared to be stationary, or moving in a N.E. direction (same as us). I observed this on the scope long after the light went out. I checked with Miami ATC [Air Traffic Control] but no other traffic or firing was in the area, to their knowledge." [40]*

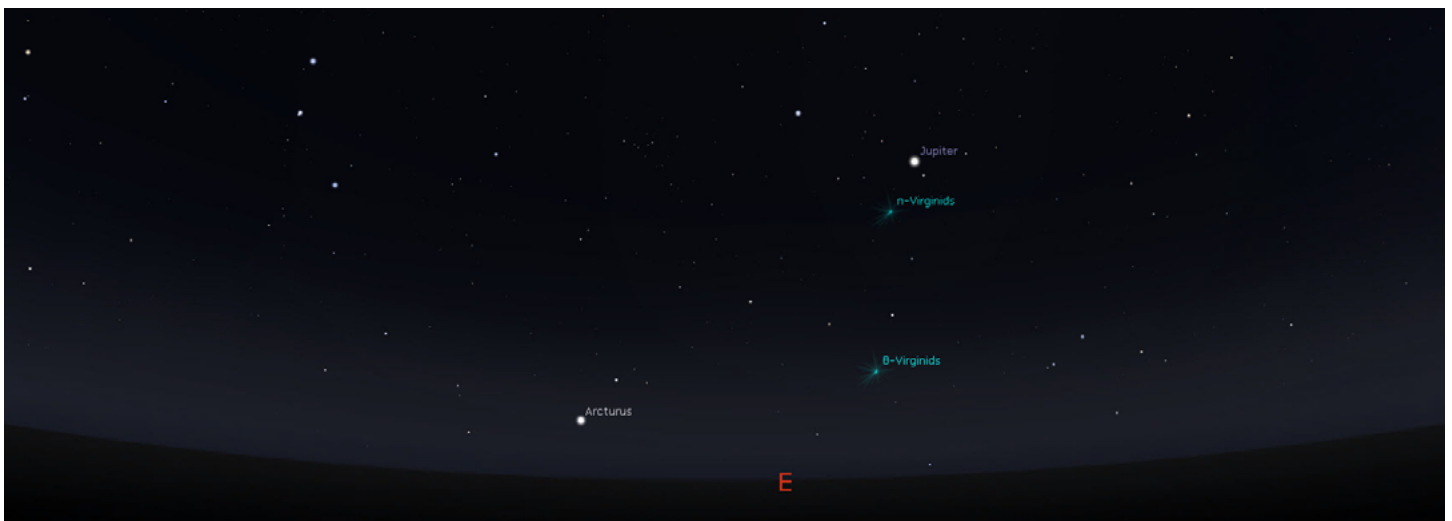
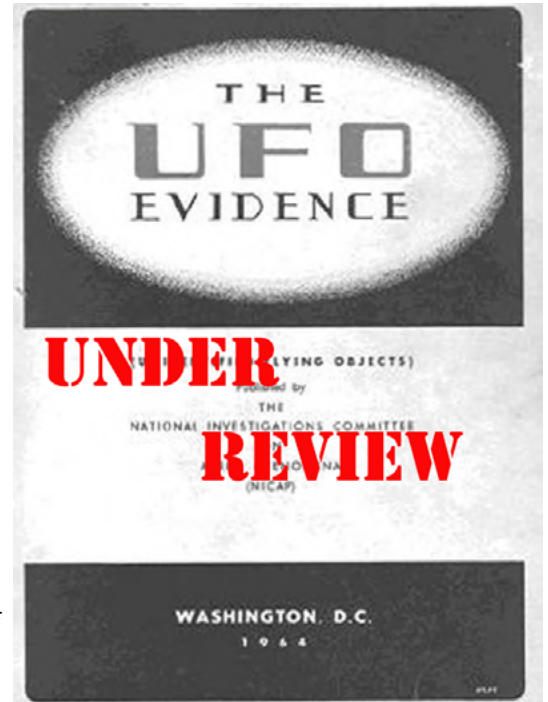
*The radar set, tuned to the 50 mile range, tracked the unidentified target for 20 minutes. The visual observation lasted 4-5 minutes. "The blip on the scope," Capt. Brosdal added, "indicated an apparent size in excess of the size of normal aircraft. The altitude of the light, on the basis of angle of sight and radar ranging, was estimated to be 20,000 to 25,000 feet."*

*Capt. Brosdal indicated that he was most impressed by the exceptional intensity of the light during the bright phase of pulsation.<sup>2</sup>*

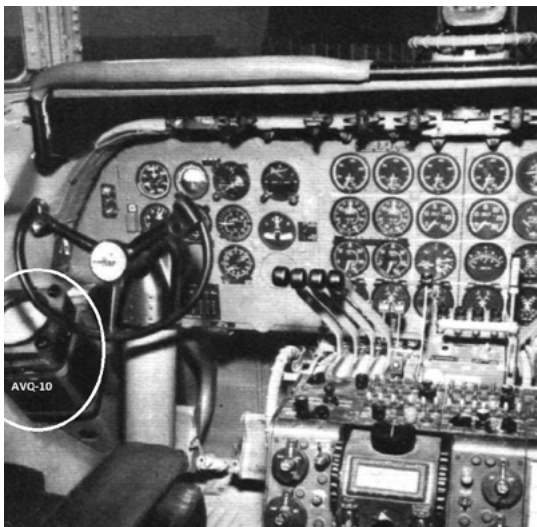
This sounds good but there seems to be some missing information in the UFO evidence document.

### Potential explanation

With a North-Northeast trajectory, a target at the 3 o'clock position would have been East-Southeast between 90-120 degrees. The fact that the object was reported to have been traveling along a parallel course gives one reason to suspect the visual sighting was a possible astronomical object.







The first potential suspect was the bright star Arcturus at an azimuth of 70 degrees and an elevation of 5 degrees. While this target is possible there is a more likely candidate. The bright planet Jupiter was at 105 degrees and an elevation of about 30 degrees. Since the pilots determined that the object was at a higher altitude than them, the object would have been at a significant angle of elevation. Jupiter seems to match this description. Any variations in brightness and subsequent disappearance may have been related to the cumulus clouds mentioned by the crew.

The radar question is the other issue here. What is forgotten is that just because a radar indicates there is a contact does not mean that it directly matches any visual observation. The radar appears to have been a weather radar (Probably the AVQ-10<sup>3</sup>), which was designed to monitor air turbulence and weather. The image to the left shows how the AVQ-10 was mounted on a DC-7C.<sup>4</sup> The display was small and anything that would register on the display must have been a large target to register clearly. It is possible that what was seen on radar was nothing more than some sort of weather phenomena not related to the visual sighting.

### Solved?

We can't say it is solved without a time machine. However, it is not unreasonable to suggest that this might have been the planet Jupiter and an unrelated radar echo that created this sighting. One thing is certain, this is not the kind of evidence that proves that UFOs are some form of intelligently controlled craft piloted by extraterrestrials. This evidence is not as good as claimed by the NICAP document.

#### 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. 136.
2. *ibid.* P. 42
3. RCA AVQ-10 Southwest Museum of Engineering, Communications and Computation (SMECC). Available WWW: [http://www.smecc.org/rca\\_avq-10.htm](http://www.smecc.org/rca_avq-10.htm)
4. "The Changing Navigation Picture". Flight Magazine. London, UK. 12 April 1957. P. 476

## 701 club: Case 1168 April 29, 1952

Don Berliner's list describes this as follows:

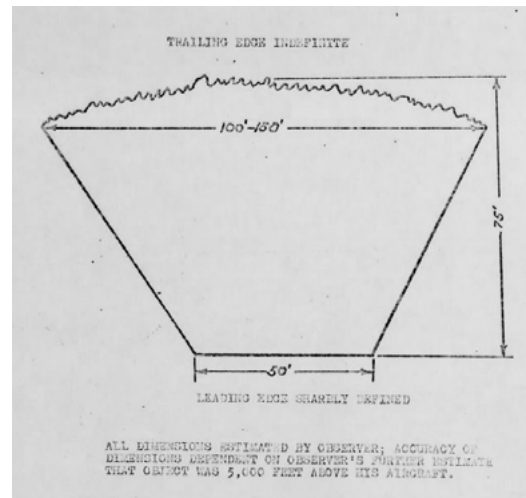
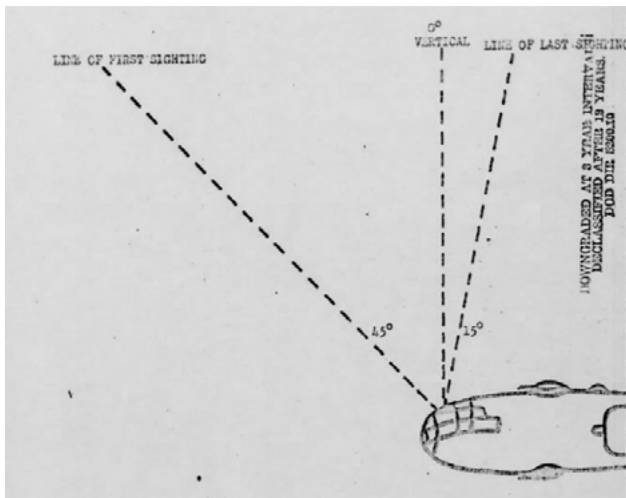
*April 29, 1952; Goodland, Kansas. 100 p.m. Witness: B-29 bombardier Lt. R.H. Bauer. One white fan-shaped light pulsed 3-4 times per second for 2 seconds.<sup>1</sup>*

The actual time was 2200 CST. Berliner apparently dropped a "0" from his time.

### Blue Book investigation

The Blue Book file only contains a three page report filed by the intelligence officer of the 90th Bombardment wing at Topeka, Ks.<sup>2</sup> It contained several attachments but nothing that helps much.

Investigation into the Blue Book file indicates the Bombardier was the only person who saw the object. It passed directly over the aircraft and never changed direction. Only the shape seemed odd but for a 2 second observation, one has to question how accurate this was especially when viewing through the Plexiglas dome of a bombardier's position on a B-29. It would not be surprising that the curvature of the glass could introduce distortion of shape.



Investigators considered a meteor explanation but dismissed it because the Astronomy department of Washburn University in near-by Topeka (300 miles from the sighting location) stated there was no meteoric activity that night<sup>3</sup>. While there were no significant meteor shower activity, sporadic fireballs are not uncommon.

Perhaps the Astronomy department meant that they had no reports of bright fireballs that night. There may be a good reason for this. The Blue Book file clearly states that the plane was at 30,000 feet and ABOVE a solid overcast up to 28,000 feet! Weather observations for Salinas, Kansas indicated there were light showers that night<sup>4</sup>. Other observations in the area indicated there were showers and clouds over the region. This indicates that it is unlikely that local ground observers could have seen a fireball that evening.

### Solved?

While the case can't be conclusively solved, the short duration of the sighting and flight path indicates a fireball meteor is plausible. This case should be reclassified as a probable fireball.

#### Notes and references

1. Berliner, Don. "The Bluebook unknowns". NICAP. Available WWW: <http://www.nicap.org/bluebook/unknowns.htm>
2. "Air Intelligence Report dtd 9 May 1952". [Fold 3 web site](http://www.fold3.com/image/6314023). Available WWW: <https://www.fold3.com/image/6314023>
3. Weather history Salina, Kansas April 29, 1952. [Weather Underground](http://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/KSLN/1952/4/29/DailyHistory.html?req_city=Salina&req_state=KS&req_statename=&reqdb.zip=67401&reqdb.magic=1&reqdb.wmo=99999). Available WWW: [https://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/KSLN/1952/4/29/DailyHistory.html?req\\_city=Salina&req\\_state=KS&req\\_statename=&reqdb.zip=67401&reqdb.magic=1&reqdb.wmo=99999](https://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/KSLN/1952/4/29/DailyHistory.html?req_city=Salina&req_state=KS&req_statename=&reqdb.zip=67401&reqdb.magic=1&reqdb.wmo=99999)
4. Weather history. [Weather Underground](http://www.wunderground.com/). Available WWW: <https://www.wunderground.com/>

# Buy it, borrow it, bin it

## Bad UFOs by Robert Sheaffer

Robert Sheaffer is one of the most notable skeptics in the “field” of UFOlogy. He consistently writes about UFOs in his blog and his column for *Skeptical Inquirer*. With the wealth of information he has presented in these forums, it is no surprise that he decided to compile it all in one book.

Robert spends an equal amount of space reviewing new and old cases. While some might question his rehashing the same old cases again, Mr. Sheaffer has to do so to remind readers about the problems with those cases. Time and time again, UFO proponents resurrect these old cases because there isn’t really much new in UFOlogy. It seems the more recent the case, the more likely it is going to be explained. This probably has a lot to do with the quick access to information and the ability of people to rapidly evaluate such cases. The CEFAA bug videos and the Roswell slides are just two recent examples of UFO claim debacles mentioned by Robert in his book. In both instances, proponents were insistent that these cases were definitive proof that UFOs were something exotic. As Sheaffer points out, the claims of the proponents did not live up to their expectations.

This book covers such a wide variety of topics that is hard to describe all of them. I enjoyed Robert’s observations of various UFO personalities because they are at the heart of the phenomenon. One quickly recognizes that many have strong beliefs that affects their interpretation of UFO sightings. They often are willing to ignore potential explanations in favor of reaching the one conclusion that a UFO was some form of alien spacecraft.

Mr. Sheaffer’s chronicling of the abduction phenomena is probably the best part of the book. He spends a lot of time on the Betty and Barney Hill story. Robert had been part of symposium in the White Mountains back in 2000. The resultant publication, *Encounters at Indian Head*, includes papers written by all the participants. The impact of the case on UFOlogy is not missed by Mr. Sheaffer. The idea that people are being abducted and examined by aliens evolved over several decades after this incident became public knowledge. In the 1980s, and beyond, more and more people came forward proclaiming that aliens had a special interest in them. Bob helps us understand the problems with these stories and those that are studying them. He equates abduction research to the scientific study of witches.

Robert Sheaffer then moves on to UFOlogy’s fall back position on why they can’t provide evidence. Every good UFOlogist knows that the US government knows the secret behind UFOs and is hiding it. The resultant evolution of the disclosure movement has culminated with people like Stephen Greer and Stephen Basset. Both have demonstrated that they are willing to peddle just about any story, no matter how bizarre, to promote themselves and their “movements”. I think Robert should have spent time on Basset’s 2013 mock hearings fiasco. Perhaps there was only so much space for craziness.

In closing, Mr. Sheaffer discusses the difference between skeptics and UFO proponents. While it is only seven pages long, it summarizes the differences of opinion on the reliability of witnesses and the lack of physical evidence. According to Robert, all UFOlogy has to offer are words, which are not enough.

Since I share Robert’s opinion, I am more than willing to accept his book into my library. My library includes UFO books by all the major UFO proponent authors and I want to think that any true UFO reader would want skeptical books in their library. I recommend that readers BUY this book.

