

20 Years in the UFO Fog

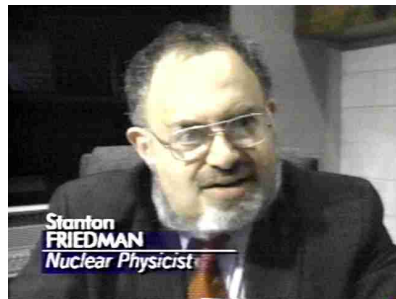
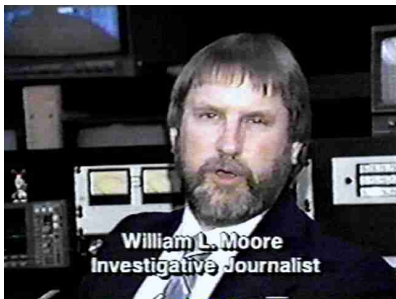
(Or my foray into the wonderful wacky world of UFOs!)

A Thumbnail Historical Sketch of the UFO Field -- circa 1987-2007

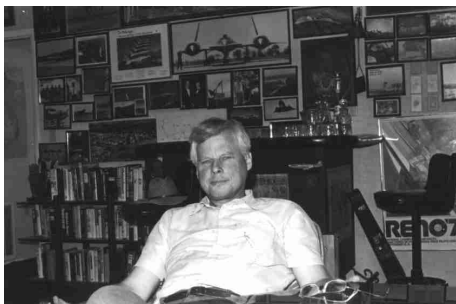
Well, it's been 20 years that I've been a part of the UFO research field. I got started in it in 1987 after getting my first computer and installing a modem. (Believe it or not ... a 300 baud modem from Radio Shack for **\$100.00!**) I had discovered Compuserve and stumbled over a brand new file on the ISSUES forum titled **MJ-12**. That launched me on a 20 year search for the TRUTH, which I was assured ... *WAS OUT THERE!* What truth? Why, is there anything to this UFO thing!

Back in the early 80's I was a police officer and in 1981-82 I was investigating an agricultural crime which I will admit really threw me ... two cattle mutilations. The case was never solved and I never made the possible UFO connection until years later after "discovering" UFO cases on Compuserve.

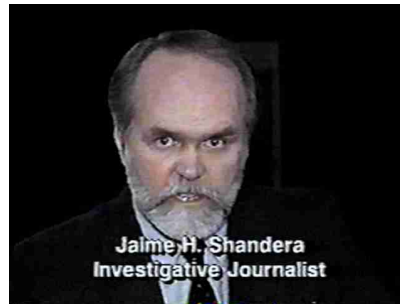
Before I involved myself into this admittedly confusing field I conducted a very intensive 6 month research effort into the subject. I haunted the library, used book stores and spoke to a number of people who were very prominent in the field at that time. People like Bill Moore, who along with Jaime Shandera "discovered" the MJ-12 papers. Also Stanton Friedman and John Lear and Dr. Bruce Macabee who were all very prominent in the field.



Macabee



John Lear





Me getting ready for a lecture

By this time I was very intrigued by what I had found, especially after finding and reading everything I could locate written by that “Godfather” of UFO research, Major Donald Keyhoe, USMC-retired. Keyhoe, as I discovered, had headed up the premier UFO research organization, NICAP during the 1950’s and 60’s. NICAP stood for the “National Investigations Committee On Aerial Phenomena.”



Major Donald Keyhoe

The more I read on and by Keyhoe, the higher my estimation of him became. I was then, and still am today, convinced that Donald Keyhoe was the greatest researcher with the highest integrity of any person in the field ... then or now! A number of years ago, my

wife Vicki and I were in Virginia visiting Keyhoes former home in Luray, Virginia and I



had a chance to visit his gravesite.

About the time I was becoming involved in UFO research, there were really two stories that were stirring the pot in the UFO field. The first story was the MJ-12 discovery by Moore and Shandera and it was considered very controversial. However, when it came to controversy, MJ-12 could not hold a candle to the other story ... The John Lear Hypothesis. Lear later told me and many others that his interest was piqued when he became aware of the Christmas – 1980 Bentwaters UFO case out of the United Kingdom. Bentwaters was a U.S. Air Force base housing tactical nuclear weapons that “suffered” an amazing encounter with an unknown that occurred over a 3 day period. At any rate Lear said his interest was at a very high pitch and he became obsessed with discovering if anything was real about this phenomenon. Now, you may ask just who was Lear? Well he was the son of aviation genius Wm. “Bill” Lear of Lear Jet fame, and Lear-Siegler Corp. John Lear is an accomplished pilot with over 19,000 hours in the air, and during the Viet Nam conflict was a contract CIA pilot. HOWEVER ... when one reads Lear’s “hypothesis” you have to wonder if he was smoking something other than his pipe tobacco because it reads like the wildest science fiction you’ve ever encountered. His paper has aliens abducting people and “implanting” chips into them, aliens abducting people and then “rendering them” into a food source and so much more. Of course if you want to read his paper you can locate it on the web, I don’t have the time to go into it here. Regardless, with MJ-12 and the Lear paper coming out almost at the same time, overall UFO research degenerated into “camps” and the acrimony ensued. The acrimony continues to this day by the way.

Now if you are not that familiar with the UFO field, you may think that it is only concerned with flying saucers and little green men. (Or possibly little Grey Men.) You could not be more wrong. There are almost as many facets to the study of UFOs as I have space on my hard drive. (Incidentally, I have a 300 Gig net drive) Just to give you a flavor of what I mean, consider this. In the 20 years of research that I’ve been involved in ... just some of the subjects connected to the study of UFOs have included but not limited to ... HIV-AIDS, the John F. Kennedy Assassination, alien abductions and the stealing of human fetuses, the Moon and Mars explorations, the Apollo Program, the manned Nasa Shuttle program, Remote Viewing, even the 9-11 event. (And believe you

me, I have not even touched the pile by adding these additional subjects.) Follow along with me now.

After I read the Lear paper I called him and spent several hours on the phone with John while he gave me his theory on what was happening with the wonderful world of UFOs. A week or so later John “Fed-Exed” me a huge package of papers and a VHS video tape with a number of UFO specials on it with some other video clips including a Japanese astronomer’s video of a strange disc shaped object flying above the Lunar surface. As he told me, this was all in support of his position paper. However one of the wildest things he later divulged concerned the Kennedy assassination with a very strange rendition of the Abraham Zapruder film that Lear claimed showed the Secret Service driver, one Wm. Greer, turn and fire “a .45 cal. pistol” into JFK’s head! To say I was taken back would be an understatement, so I did what any good cop, or in my case former cop, would do ... I jumped on a flight to visit Lear at his home in Las Vegas. I arrived in Vegas on November 18, 1988 and called John where I made arrangements to meet him the next day.

What I recall most vividly from that visit was attending a dinner by the “Former Intelligence Agents” organization that Lear was invited to speak at. He played the video (Zapruder film) of the Kennedy Assassination and claimed that it showed the Secret Service driver firing the killing head shot into JFK. (As an aside, Lear asked the audience a question. If they had been ordered by a superior to participate in the assassination, would they have obeyed orders? Out of the audience, 4 people raised their hands, including two women!) Lear had showed this to me in his den when I visited his home and I must admit that at first I was shocked and wondered if it could be true. Lear would not reveal where he got the video, but as I later discovered it came from a JFK researcher named Lars Hansson.

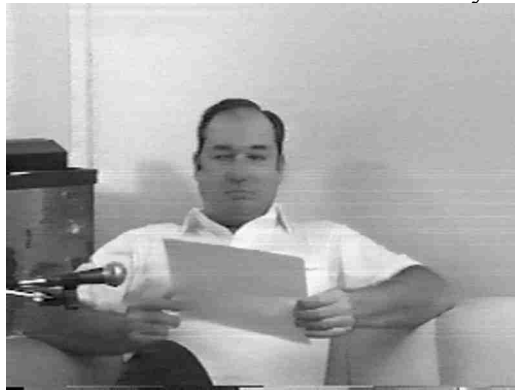


Lars Hansson

What Lear claimed was that in this “enhanced” copy of the film, you can see the driver, Wm. Greer, reaching over the seat with a .45 caliber pistol as Kennedy is struck in the head by the shot. I still have a copy of this video, but being very familiar with weapons, both from my military service as well as my Law Enforcement background, I noted at the time there was no muzzle flash. Believe me, a .45 ACP has significant muzzle flash.



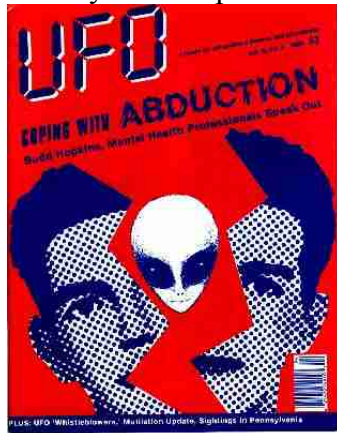
Here is the video frame in question. This piece of disinformation would take on a life of its own over the next several years when another “researcher”, and I mean that in the loosest sense, by the name of Milton Wm. Cooper, grabbed this video and tried to run to “financial security” by hawking it in every venue he



could slide into.

Milton Wm. “Bill” Cooper

Cooper was a story unto himself. With the exception of Well hell, there is no exception, Cooper did more damage to legitimate research than anyone else in the last 60 years. I conducted the very first “expose” on Cooper in the summer of 1990 in the pages



of UFO Magazine.

UFO Magazine Vol. 5 No. 6

(For a complete overview of this murky bit of history, see the end of this paper for the complete article I wrote “Dark Days Revisited-Chaos in the UFO Underground” UFO Magazine Vol. 17 No. 01 Feb./March 2002)

This was a two-part expose titled “The Whistleblowers” where UFO Magazine was the very first publication to expose the plagiarism and outright prevarications of Cooper, laid out so the UFO community and the public could judge him on his own merits or lack thereof. This launched Cooper into vicious attacks on the magazine and publisher and myself which lasted for years. Of course, most know it ended with Cooper shooting a police officer and then being killed in November of 2001. For more on that, read my Fortean Times article FT 155 http://www.forteanimes.com/articles/155_cooper.shtml “Bill Cooper-Dead Man Talking” But ... a lot was going on then.

However, not all of what I did involved exposing fraudulent information. In 1993 I received a telephone call from a well known name in the field, Richard Hoagland.



Richard Hoagland

Hoagland was working with Professor Stan McDaniel on a paper to put pressure on NASA to re-photograph the Cydonia region of Mars. (Remember THE FACE?) Hoagland told me that they were searching for a “government document” for McDaniel’s paper dealing with the early NASA’s search for ET intelligence. (SETI) Hoagland asked me if I would lend a hand since I had an investigation background. I agreed.



Cover of the McDaniel Report

I started making some calls and investigating this unknown report and finally discovered that the Brookings Institution prepared a report for the brand new NASA in early 1961 and the name of the report was “***Proposed Studies on the Implications of Peaceful Space Activities for Human Affairs.***” The part of this paper that was so telling involved the recommendation of what happens, not if but when, extraterrestrial artifacts or life is discovered *sometime in the next 20 years*. Remember that this was 1961 and NASA was trying to find their foothold. Brookings suggested that two groups of humans would be adversely affected ... scientists and engineers, and the second group were fundamentalists. (as in religious fundamentalists.) McDaniel found this document to be of great help in his paper. (To see more go to

<http://www.enterprisemission.com/brooking.html>)

PROPOSED STUDIES ON THE
IMPLICATIONS OF PEACEFUL SPACE ACTIVITIES
FOR HUMAN AFFAIRS

PREPARED FOR THE
NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
BY THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

"Proposed Studies o

I would be remiss to not mention one other case I broke on national media. Today, most everyone involved in the study of UFOs have heard of **STS-48** and the mysterious objects that were sighted and video tapped in Earth orbit.

In early 1992 I received a telephone call from a UFO researcher in Maryland named Don Ratsch. Don told me about a video tape he had that had been down linked to a small cable TV station in Dundalk, Maryland. Don told me he was totally “blown away” by what he witnessed on this video, and he said he would send me a copy of it right away.

STS-48 was launched September 12, 1991 from the Kennedy Space Center and landed on September 18, 1991 at Edwards Air Force base in California. (The reason given for the landing at Edwards instead of back to Florida was bad weather.)



STS-48 Launch

On September 15, 1991, while flying over Australia and New Zealand, an anomalous object was video-tapped rising above the lim of the Earth and suddenly off screen, there is an intense flash of light, then *something streaks toward the unknown*, the best I can state is it looked like weapons fire! The object then makes a drastic right angle turn and streaks out into space.



a frame from the sequence

About the time I received a copy of the STS-48 events from Don Ratsch, Vicki and I got a call from Dr. Bruce Maccabee. Maccabee was out in California at some type of scientific conference, (Bruce Maccabee is a Naval Optical Physicist) and said he would like to stop by and see us. We invited him to come over to our home in Sunland, California. I had not yet viewed the tape so before getting the call from Maccabee I had invited over a couple of friends to see this video. Maccabee arrived at our home and then I told everyone what I knew of the video to that point and we sat down to watch it.

Wow! That is the only superlative I could think of after watching a number of events on this tape. The most famous one, *Event 2* was not only intriguing, but I also found it a bit spooky. (the spooky part involves what appears to be a **firing** of some type of advanced weapons system at the unknown object.) Everyone at my house was astounded by this video, but Maccabee sat there not saying a single word. Later, I was astounded by Maccabee's non-reaction when I discovered the truth about his involvement. As I was to discover by later speaking to Don Ratsch and even Vince DiPietro (who was very deeply involved in this sighting) Maccabee was well aware of this incident.



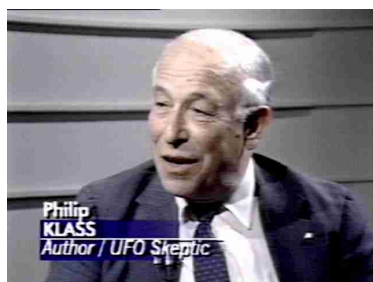
Vince DiPietro

As I discovered when the events surrounding STS 48 unraveled, DiPietro (who was a contract engineer for NASA at the Goddard Space Flight Center) became aware of the STS-48 anomalies, who along with Dr. Bruce Maccabee (a Naval Optical Physicist) decided that this was something truly *stupendous*, and they began to attempt to get U.S. Congressional interest involved in what appeared to be (at the very least) a hostile action taking place in “near Earth orbit.”

Maccabee never let on that he was aware of any information concerning the STS-48 mission or the encounter with anomalies in orbit. (Perhaps this is not surprising as I later found out and reported in UFO Magazine and confronted Maccabee on my show UFOs Tonite!, that Maccabee traveled over to the CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. to “brief” CIA officers on what was happening in the wonderful world of UFOs. At the time, Maccabee was the Chairman for the FUFOR or Fund for UFO Research, and he was removed as Chairman (because of his un-authorized briefings at CIA which FUFOR had no knowledge of) which created a bit of controversy at the time.) I don’t want to call Maccabee a spy reporting on people in the UFO field, but we saw the same type of thing with Bill Moore’s admission to the MUFON symposium in July of 1989. Does the “big G” have an interest in UFOs? You bet, but it might not be simply what it appears to be on the surface.

As my wife Vicki reported way back in the mid-1980s in UFO Magazine, the government intelligence agencies **always** regarded the UFO field a great training area for intelligence types and spooks in general.

However, back to the STS-48 caper. I called Dean Vallas, a producer at NBC’s **Hard Copy** show and told him about this amazing video I had. He asked me to drop over so he could review it and subsequently was the first program to air the footage to the American public. I then called another producer I knew at CNN, one of the guys who produced Larry King Live. At this time I had been on Kings show about 3 times, so these guys knew me. The producers name was Tom Farmer, and he asked me to run the video down to the Los Angeles CNN studio so they could “beam it” back to the Washington DC studios. Seeing the footage, Farmer was stunned and immediately wanted to do a program on STS-48. Oh yes, they also required a skeptic to “present the other side of the coin!” Well, my old nemesis Phil Klass immediately came to mind. I gave Tom Farmer Phil’s telephone number and Klass declined! This was unusual because Klass, as a rule, jumped at any chance to do his “debunking dance” on anything that smacked of UFOs. I then suggested they contact Dr. Jim Oberg, a NASA contract scientist.



Old Uncle Phil

Oberg accepted the invitation to appear on the show and things were set on June 26, 1992. I arrived at CNN studios in LA and this was the second segment of that evenings show. Oberg originally had some technical issues with his sound and King started off the show asking me why NASA would want to “hide” something like UFOs? (Yes, old Larry King, king of asking the truly *hardball* questions!)



Ecker & Oberg LKL at CNN

I started out by asking Jim Oberg if he were under any security restrictions by NASA or whomever, speaking about UFOs. Oberg answered me by accusing me of only coming on to sell magazines! Well Hell YES! If getting on Larry King meant selling some subscriptions YOU BET! This is still a capitalist country ... but that had nothing to do my original question ... can you speak about any knowledge you may have regarding UFOs? King then pushed him and he answered that he was free to talk about UFOs, but anything to do with Dept. of Defense missions was classified. From that point forward the show slid downhill.

Now, I was aware that Vince DiPietro, according to his buddy Don Ratsch, was at this point *terrified* by his actions in trying to bring STS-48 to the public’s attention. His greatest fear was that unknown intelligence agents might have targeted him for death, because of the highly volatile nature of STS-48 and the secrecy of this subject ... ***because IF the object WAS ET in nature, and IF a highly secret Space Born Weapons System was used in an attempt to shoot it down ... DiPietro was sure he stepped into IT from a secrecy standpoint and he feared someone would kill him for it.***

Anyone who has ever viewed Larry King Live knows that he takes telephone calls from all over the world. The King show is international in scope and his viewership is large. At the time I had no idea that **the FIX was in**, but I later figured it out. What do I mean by the fix was in? During this segment two telephone calls were taken, and they were both from NASA employees’ **AND ONE OF THEM TURNED OUT TO BE VINCE**

DiPietro! Figure the odds of that one! Hell, had that been Las Vegas I would have hit the Big Jackpot at least 3 times!

The first call was from guy that identified himself as O.H. Bond Jr. in Huntsville, Alabama ... and he had experiments on NASA shuttles. Of course he totally agreed with Oberg that what we were seeing was debris in orbit. King asked me to explain that and I pointed out that this *debris* didn't act like debris in a Zero-G environment and Oberg interrupted me and then accused me of not wanting the answer. Then the second call came in ... from Vince DiPietro, a contract engineer from the Goddard Flight Center. He claimed that what we were seeing was ICE. I got to question him then. The following is exact quotes from the show.

Ecker: Well Vince, let me ask you a question because I have the entire tape. And I have the section that you *digitally enhanced* that clearly shows a domed-disc object that was recorded on this mission. Do you deny that?

DiPietro: I see that on there, and I do not know what that is.

Ecker: Did you digitally enhance it?

DiPietro: Yes.

Ecker: Okay, Did it look to you like an anomalous object, or did it look like debris or ice?

DiPietro: It looks like an object but I can't explain what it is.

DiPietro went on to simply say that *the people he talked to EXPLAINED that what he was seeing was ICE and he seemed to now accept that.*

Now there is something else that came to light after this program aired. We, at UFO Magazine, expected to field a lot of calls from media about this case but we never even received one. However a week or so after this King show aired I did receive a telephone call from a source I knew back in DC. This was from a mainstream journalist that covered the national security beat. When I got on the phone this person told me I had managed to **totally piss off** some people at the Pentagon by bringing the events of STS-48 to the public ... AND ... I then was informed that as of the day after the Larry King Show aired NASA was now no longer allowing a *Live Feed* from outer space. Now, all feeds from the shuttles were either in time delay or were vetted first before allowing the public to see them. NASA gave out the explanation that this was to protect the Shuttle Astronauts privacy with their medical concerns. (Talk about total BS!) The story did not go away for a number of years. Richard Hoagland put his own spin on STS-48 by announcing that he believed the UFO was a DOD drone, and he was afraid that George Bush (Senior) would stage a fake alien threat to steal the 1992 election from Bill Clinton and Ross Perot. Dr. Jack Kasher provided a devastating critique of STS-48 and why it couldn't be ICE. Others took up the cause and as I had mentioned, the case stayed around

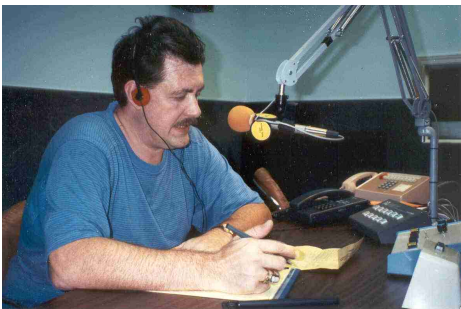
for several years but then faded. What could have been one of the most unusual and mysterious UFO events ... faded away. Why? Because we are talking about UFOs, that's why.



STS-48 Mission Patch

In 1991 I began broadcasting a UFO themed show titled "UFOs Tonite!" which lasted until 1996. The program became the "yardstick" for UFO broadcasting because we took a look at most everything within the UFO field. Just to give an idea of some of the folks I hosted ... John Keel, Linda M. Howe, Congressman Steve Schiff, Karl Pflock, Paul Davids, Jim Marrs, Zecharia Sitchin, actually hundreds of folks from UFOs to politics to the entertainment business ... you name it.

In 1994 after announcing that I was invited to give a lecture at the Santa Monica Museum of Flying, I had a surprise visitor ... Mr. Dwight Schultz. Dwight is an international television and film celebrity best known for starring in "The A Team" with Dirk Benedict, George Peppard and Mr. T. Later he had an on-going role in several Star Trek television series as Lt. Reg Barclay. Dwight and I became close friends because not only did we share an interest in the UFO subject but our politics are like minded.



As it turned out, Dwight did a show with me and it was so much fun I invited him to co-host when he was available, which he accepted. We



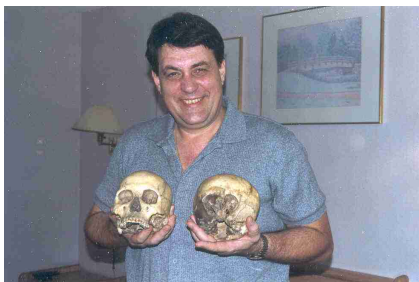
enjoyed some fireworks from time to time. This was great because Dwight invited myself and Vicki to visit him on the set when he was in town shooting Star Trek episodes ... on several occasions! Here is Vicki with Dwight



and “The Doctor” Robert Piccardo.
Star Trek Voyager set.

Vicki on

Over the years we have had occasion to visit and re-visit quite a few odd stories and cases. Since UFO Magazine is “THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD” on the UFO beat ... we often can get right next to the story ... like the weird and mysterious “Starchild” case as presented by Lloyd Pye. Here is a photo of me about to examine the “Starchild” skull.



Me and the Star Child

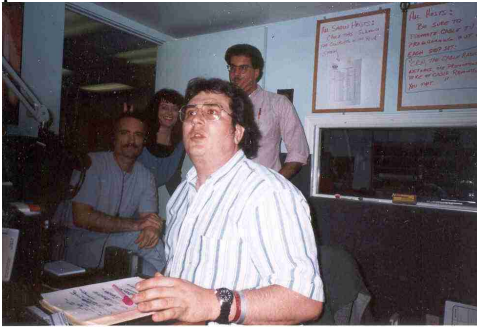
One thing that has been a definite plus being the Director of Research for UFO Magazine has been the opportunity to meet and form friendships with some amazing people. A case in point follows. For years I’ve had a deep interest in Lunar Phenomena and have investigated the subject in detail. (I started a book on the subject and may yet get it finished.) A very dear friend, who has since passed on, Bill Nielsen, put me in touch with a certain someone in NASA where I was able to get some lunar photos that still to this day have not seen the light in the public arena. I am saving them. Bill had a

fascination with cutting edge physics and he appeared on several UFO Tonite! shows.



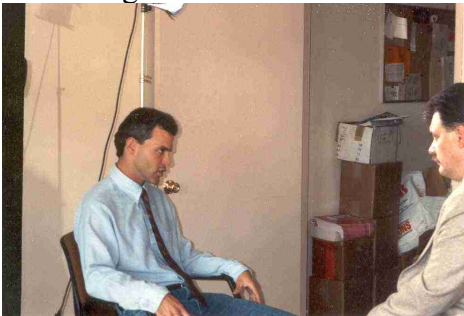
Bill Nielsen

I had met Bill via my fantastic and dedicated producer on UFOs Tonite!, Jeff Floro. Jeff was not only truly a dedicated guy but he is also a fantastic musician. Jeff not only worked as an unpaid (which we ALL WERE) producer but he brought a level of professionalism to the show that we would not have had otherwise.



Producer Jeff Floro

UFOs Tonite! ended up taking on a life of its own during our run. We appeared in the LA Times and on television a number of times because of the subjects we covered. Here I am being interviewed for a SCI-FI channel program.



Because of several stories I broke nationally back in the early 90's, UFO Magazine and UFOs Tonite! garnered quite a bit of national exposure. In late 1991 during an appearance on the Larry King Live program, I broke the amazing story of the (former) Soviet Phobos Mars probe encounter. Early that year I had

the chance to meet and interview former Red Air Force Colonel (retired) Dr. Marina



Popovich.

Dr. Marina Popovich

I interviewed her about the Mars Phobos probe encounter with a huge unknown in Mars orbit, and the Soviet probes destruction, apparently, by the unknown. (Here is the weird part, according to the Russians the unknown was 25 Kilometers in length- which translates to 15 ½ miles long! Okay, who knows?) The probe took a photograph of the unknown object which the Russian Agency “Glavkosmos” had in their files. I called a producer I knew at the TV show “Hard Copy”, told them about Popovich and they did a really big interview with her. This was Marina’s first exposure on U.S. television.



Producer Dean Vallas of Hard Copy

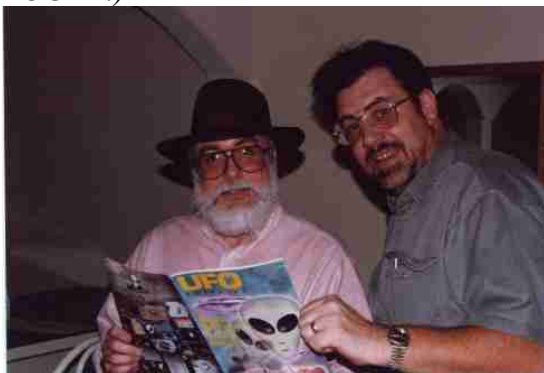
She was heading back to Russia but promised she would check with Glavkosmos. Later in the year she came back to the States AND HAD THE PHOTO. She gave me a copy and I called a producer I knew for the Larry King Show. I introduced the photo to America during a November 1991 show. Here I am on King, and here is the photo.



We did a big blurb in

the magazine on the encounter. Now there is a lot to the story, more than I have room for here, but the upshot was that Popovich told me that this incident caused President George Bush (the Senior Bush) and Mikhail Gorbachev to meet at Malta to discuss the implications of what (allegedly) happened. You may recall that Bush caught a lot of flack about this trip, during the trip there was a huge storm and Bush went to Gorby's yacht for a meeting (in a small boat) thru the storm. Popovich told me that the main topic was the destroyed space probe, and she being a retired Red Air Force Colonel and a former cosmonaut, well she should know. Regardless, I called the White House Press Office and spoke to Marlin Fitzwater and simply asked him about it. He laughed me off the phone, but to be honest I would not have expected otherwise.

I had author Jim Marrs on UFOs Tonite! a number of times. Author of such notable books as "Crossfire" (JFK Assassination) and "Alien Agenda" Marrs is well known for taking on the "odd subject." (*More recently, Marrs has become a Poster Child for some very twitchy conspiracies. One, which I have parted company, claims that the George Bush Administration knocked down the Twin Towers on 9/11/2001. I think that is HORSE PUCKY!*)



This picture of Jim and I was just prior to the two of us going on a "Tequila Tour" in Las Vegas.

Jim was very deeply involved in doing a book on remote viewing, which at that time was squashed. However he did do a couple of shows with me on the topic. One fellow he mentioned was a man by the name of "Ingo Swann", and the part that Swann played in

the then top secret world of US government “remote viewing.” Ingo, considered one of the world’s premier psychic’s was the guy that designed the protocols for the DIA’s remote viewing program.

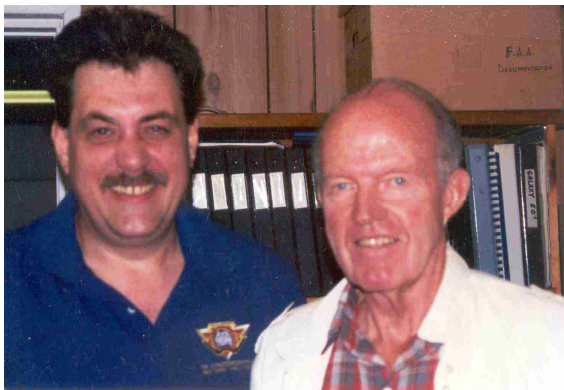
I also might mention that Ingo had written a book titled “**Penetration**” that I grabbed as soon as I heard about it. The book literally sent chills up my spine, especially when I read his account of being tasked to remotely view the Moon for what appeared to be a totally black government agency. (I don’t want to spoil the surprise, but what Swann “viewed” on the Moon *seemed* to support what I had in the NASA photos. The book is very hard to find, but if you can find it ... GET IT ...READ IT.) Well, somewhere he heard about the research I was conducting on Lunar phenomena and came to Bordentown NJ to hear a lecture I was giving on the subject for a UFO group located there. It was very much a true pleasure to meet Ingo and have the chance to speak candidly and off the record about not only the Moon but UFOs in general, and of course ... Remote Viewing.



Ingo Swann and me.

Speaking of UFOs, one complaint I’ve often heard from the skeptical side is this ... “if UFOs are real, then why don’t astronomers and astronauts see them?” Well, the fact of the matter is ... THEY HAVE! And one guy in particular who has told his story often was a genuine HERO of mine, Colonel Gordon Cooper.

Gordon Cooper, the last man to fly highest in outer space ... alone! Yeah, he saw UFOs!



Colonel Cooper and Don Ecker

Vicki and I met Colonel Cooper at offices he had in the Van Nuys Airport about 8 or 9 years ago. We spent about 3 or 4 hours interviewing him and listening to his recollections of his UFO encounters in Germany in the early 1950's and later the astounding incident that happened with him at Edwards Air Force Base in 1958. "Gordo" pulled no punches.

One thing I must say about Colonel Cooper, he was a brave man, one not afraid to tell the truth as he saw it and damn the consequences. He saw UFOs on several occasions and was not afraid to admit it. He suffered the slings and arrows directed at him from the skeptics and debunkers ... but so be it! Like I said, he was a brave man. Colonel, may your final rest be peaceful.

I mentioned that UFOs Tonite! went off the air in 1996, and at that time I was not sure if I would do anymore radio as a host. As it turned out in December of 1998 I was asked to host a 5 night a week show by the Liberty Works Radio Network. I agreed and called the new show *STRANGE DAZE*. I ended up putting a studio in my home and a great buddy and fan of UFOs Tonite! produced it. His name is Kelly Kleinman. Here is Kelly with his



lovely wife Shuzia. Kelly's former brother in law, a real electronic whiz, ended up running the boards and he made it hum. His name is Dave Johnson. *Here is Dave taking care of business.*



The program lasted 7 months because Liberty Works really didn't have an idea in hell of how to run a radio network. They were bleeding money and started to cancel the shows they had and finally went "tango uniform" and then bankrupt. Okay, I thought that *WAS IT!* However, just like that early 80's James Bond movie, "Never Say Never Again" there was at least one or maybe two shows more to come.

In late 2003 I received a call from a guy named Steve Melching who had started a small radio network called "The Reality Radio Network." Steve told me he had been a big fan of my old show UFOs Tonite!, and he asked me if I would be willing to do another show

which his network would really like to carry. I told him I would think about it and get back in touch when I made up my mind. I called Dwight and asked him if I did the new show, would he like to come on board and be a part of it? The upshot was Dwight thought it would be fun ... thus “**Dark Matters**” was born. We did the show for one year on Saturday nights for 3 hours. The show was a mix of the weird, UFOs and *politics*. We might have continued it for a lot longer but Dwight and I decided to pull the show after we caught some heat from Steve Melching because one of the last shows we did, we tore into a guy named Jeff Rense that has a virulently anti-Semitic and anti-American website that purports to be a UFO website. Melching was upset because he had been planning to place Rense on his network. Contrary to our original agreement Melching changed the status that Dark Matters was running under so we said fine and goodbye. Here was our



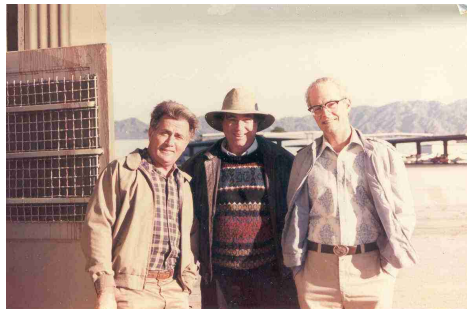
web ad in happier times.

Dark Matters Blurb

Now, what UFO publication or radio show would be complete without a mention of the most famous of all UFO cases, Roswell? Well, through UFO Magazine and all my different shows, we’ve covered Roswell from every angle. Back in the early 90’s a friend of UFO Magazine, Paul Davids, was in the middle of producing **Roswell** the movie. Folks like Martin Sheen and Kyle MacLachlin, Dwight Yoakam and Xander Berkeley starred in it. The movie was based on the books written by UFO researchers Kevin Randle and Don Schmitt and we covered this story extensively in UFO Magazine.



Me & Paul Davids



MacLachlin

Martin Sheen, Davids and Kyle



Randle, Davids, Schmitt before Randle split with Schmitt over Schmitt's embellishment over his (Schmitt) credentials.

Now, I guess I should tell you about a funny thing that happened to me on the way to Roswell. Back in the spring of 1994, I was asked by *Hard Copy*, a tabloid TV program, to examine something they were calling "flying Rods." I didn't have a clue as to what in the hell they were talking about so the producer sent me a VHS video tape with the *Rods* featured on it. Shot on a VHS camcorder by a man named Jose Escamilla, they appeared to show flying "something's" that were weird to say the least. I asked Dwight if he would like to travel down to Roswell with me and he jumped at the chance. This proved a very informative trip for two reasons. The first reason was neither I, nor Dwight, had ever been to Roswell, New Mexico so being the Director of Research for UFO Magazine and my wife a founder and publisher, I wanted to see this damn town. We got there and met Jose, his brother Manny and their sister. Jose had at that time about a hundred hours of video tape he shot. Now, as I recall this visit, the Air Force was in the process of conducting flight maneuvers and U.S. military aircraft of all types were flying all over the place. Jose took Dwight and I outside of town where he was video-taping his Rods.



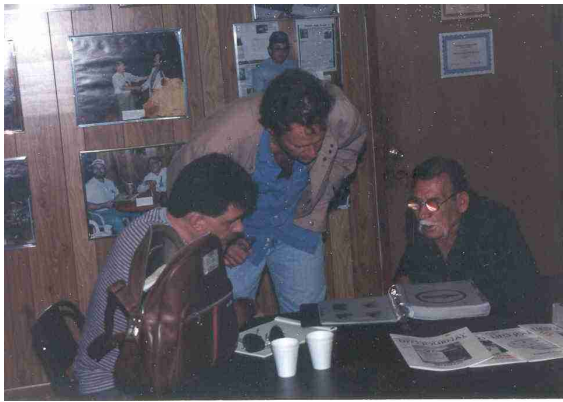
Here is a photo of Dwight and Jose.

Now, if you've ever been around a farm or ranch with livestock, then you will know that insects are in great abundance in such areas. The fly's and other insects were flying about in the *zillions* and both Dwight and I told Jose that we were of the opinion he was shooting *flying insects!* I suggested that he should have his tapes examined by a

photography expert before releasing anymore to the public. He apparently didn't agree because over the years he has released video tapes and now DVD's of his "Rods" and still claims there is something new about the phenomenon.

However the other fantastic thing that happened in Roswell was Dwight and I discovered an unknown witness to the 1947 UFO crash! We were getting ready to return to Los Angeles and we visited the John Price UFO Museum. (This museum is no longer operating.)

I introduced myself and Dwight to John and he told us that he just had an elderly gentleman inside who claimed to be an airman at Walker Field in 1947. He was a World War II Veteran and veteran of the 509th Bomb Group. (Remember, these were the guys that dropped the A-Bomb on Japan that ended the Second World War.) We went into the back room and met Mr. Tom Gonsalves, up from Tomball, Texas. He was looking through a copy of the 509th Group annual that John Price had.



Mr. Gonsalves looking for his unit photo



Gonsalves telling us his amazing Roswell story

Mr. Gonsalves found his photo (he was in T Squadron) and then told us his amazing story. He said that he was one of the airmen tasked to help "sanitize" the crash area. He was out there with other men picking up the debris from the crash site. **And** ... there were bodies and one live alien. He called them "Moon-men" and was very emotional about the event. This incident ended up affecting the rest of his life, just like others

involved with the mysterious event. However, Gonsalves told us one thing that ended up haunting me from that day to this one. He claimed to have kept a piece of wreckage.

Now you might ask why Dwight and I just didn't grab this fellow and zoom down to Texas ASAP! The fact of the matter was I wasn't sure just what to make of this whole thing and Schultz and I were due to leave that afternoon to fly back to LA. As it turned out, we didn't leave, our airplane broke. If you've never been there, Roswell and its airfield are both tiny. The airline, Mesa, buy rubber-bands by the gross to power their "puddle-jumping" airplanes but they ran out ... of rubber-bands ... and Dwight and I were stuck until the next shipment of rubber bands got in there. (they had to find a mechanic and the damned airplane didn't get fixed until the next afternoon.) Now, I'm not a shy guy, as a matter of fact I've been accused of calling a "Spade" a G-damned shovel, but I didn't have to do a thing. I got to see Dwight give an Oscar rated performance at the Mesa Airlines counter. When he was done we had a hotel room, dinner and later drinks, thanks to Mesa Airlines. In the meantime Mr. Tom Gonsalves ... *vanished!* Dwight and I went back to see John Price and Price told us the old fellow just got up and walked out. I asked John to *please* contact me if the guy came back, I wanted to speak to him again. The whole story is fascinating as I was to find out.

Several years prior to meeting Mr. Gonsalves, his wife of almost 50 years passed away. Except for his children he now was alone. He was of course retired and living on his Social Security. He ended up moving in with a single daughter, who had some children, and had been living with her. (Now this is what one of Gonsalves sons later told me) that the daughter in question "took over" his retirement money and also took his autonomy. The old fellow got angry, and happened to see a TV commercial about Paul Davids *Roswell* movie. He thought that the 509th was having a reunion, so without telling anybody, he hopped on a bus to New Mexico to go see his old buddies. In the meantime his kids called the police in Tomball who put an APB out on Mr. Gonsalves.

In the meantime Dwight and I got back to LA and I began to do some investigation on Mr. Gonsalves. I finally located one of his children, told them who I was and found out that the Roswell police had found Gonsalves and his kids drove up to Roswell from Texas and picked him up. About a week or so later Vicki and Dwight and I flew down to Houston, rented a car and drove to Tomball to see the family. Mr. Gonsalves was living with his son at that time and was not speaking to his daughter. The son took us to his dad's old house which had been condemned. Dwight, Vicki and I spent an entire day crawling through the house to see if we could locate his piece of a flying saucer that he called the "*Rock*". His kids told me that for years the old man had kept this on top of his TV set, but they thought that after their mom passed away and their dad moved in with his daughter, the *Rock* was with the rest of his stuff in storage. Now this is the heart-breaking part of the story.

His estranged daughter had the key to the storage locker where Mr. Gonsalves had all his household stuff stored. She was totally *pissed off* at her dad and refused to get the keys when Tom's son called her. He told her that we had traveled all the way from LA to see her dad but she didn't give a damn. Even though I did see a picture of this thing on an old

photo, I have no idea to this day what happened to it. Even though I never got to actually see and hold this piece of a “*flying saucer*”, Tom Gonsalves did carve me several figures of what he said were his little “Moon-Men” and what they looked like at the crash site. FWIW, here they are.



Tom Gonsalves Moon Men

Now over the years I’ve had some neat and some odd things happen in connection with UFO Magazine. Not quite a year later, before Christmas 1994, I got a telephone call from Producer Paul Davids. He was working on a new film titled *Starry Night*. The premise was pretty cute, Vincent Van Gogh never received a dime for his art during his lifetime. *What if ...* through some unknown process he came back to life a century later and demanded to be paid for his art? Paul wanted to know if I would like to be in the movie? Unpaid of course..... (Why change my *MO* now?) Well, I’ve never been in a movie so I said **SURE!** I thought “Hell, this might be a kick!

Well, have you ever heard of Guerrilla Moving Making? Well the scenes I was in were just that! Anybody that knows LA and the **Biz ...** (entertainment business) knows that any filming done around here **MUST** have a permit to do the filming. Paul’s budget was about \$.35cents which meant he didn’t have a permit ... and the shooting was at the New Years Day Parade in Pasadena ... circa January 1, 1995! I, along with Brandon Scott, were to portray two reporters covering the New Years Parade when Vincent Van Gogh suddenly appears and is hit by one of the floats! An ambulance is called and we were to ad-lib a news report on the accident ... all the while keeping at least two steps ahead of the real cops that were looking at us suspiciously!



Brandon Scott & Don Ecker

Yeah, well the film was finally released in 1999 and in all those years I never heard a word about it from Paul. Finally I bumped into Paul at a MUFON get-together in LA and when I asked him about it he told me that *Starry Night* was released ... and oh yeah, my scene was left on the cutting room floor. "By the way Don, here is a copy of the film." Paul handed me a DVD and later I had a chance to watch it. It was a cute film ... but I really think it could have been better with my reporting! Oh the pain ... the pain....

Vicki and I get asked to speak around the country, and sometimes out of the country.



Vicki speaking at MENSA



*Here I am, a speaker at
the Bay Area UFO Town Hall Meeting*

Late in 1994 I was called by the Orlando Disney people and they asked me if I would set up a two week UFO extravaganza for them to introduce their **brand spanking new attraction ... The Extra-TerrorEstrial** watch-a-ma-call-it! They wanted me to bring in the absolute top of the line UFO – ET – researchers-investigators for two whole weeks and I was to host it. Now one would think that Disney could afford to pay me a nice salary for putting my expertise to use to set up something like this. Nah, I was to do it for the *prestige* of the thing. My personal manager, Ms. Lynne Russo, advised me to do it because this could lead to other things down the road. Okay, with this in mind I agreed to do it for the cheap bastards. Brother, did I get a fantastic line-up of folks. Zecharia Sitchin, George Knapp, Russ Estes, Prof. Stan MacDaniel, Tor Dahlin, Barry Taff, Kevin Randle, Don Schmitt, Stanley McDaniel, Cliff Stone, Budd Hopkins, Bruce Cornet, Yvonne Smith and of course my lovely wife ... **founder of UFO Magazine** ... Vicki Ecker.



Some shots of the Disney

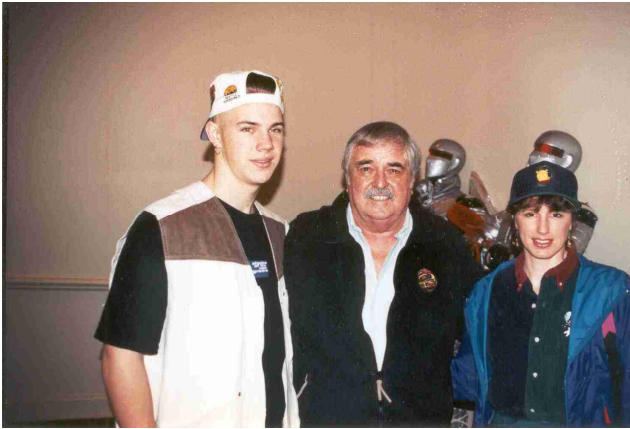
Extravaganza

Now, if any rag-tag current UFO conference could get even a third of this bunch of speakers ... well they would probably kill for the chance. Disney? Nope, no publication -- no publicity ... **AT ALL**. Here we had a bunch of speakers that most would kill to get and maybe we had a dozen people show up to see and hear them. Budd Hopkins got pissed in the middle of the week and just up and left ... not even saying good bye to me. Hell, I got him airfare, a room and board and not even a thanks. Well, that's UFO biz for you. Oh, I did get one thing from Disney for all my efforts. Of course when I got it I was called out into a *dark hallway*, and the guy running the event (I forget his name) said how pleased and happy they were with me for the job I did for them. (We were literally standing in a corner, in the dark, just me and the Disney honcho.) Then some Disney *drone* came running up carrying a cardboard box and reached in and pulled up their version of a *Oscar* called a **MOUSEKER** (get it?) and handed it to me with no fanfare. Okay, here is Mickey giving me the finger! Oy! Sure I'd love to do it again!! **NOT**.



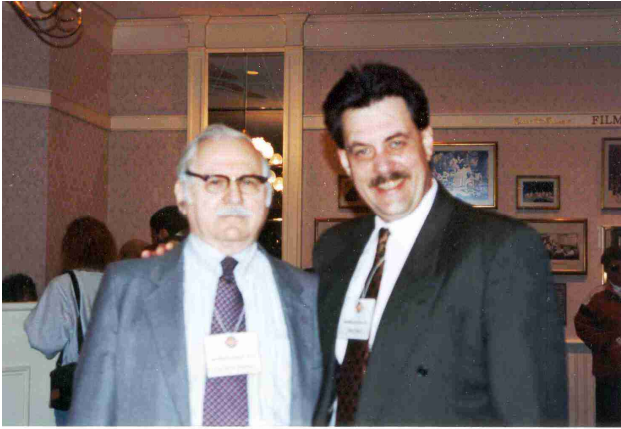
The Mouseker

Now, don't let me leave you with the impression that the whole trip was a drag because I "bumped" into **Scotty** of *Star Trek* fame at Disney. He was visiting with his family and I happened to see him and asked him if he minded if I took a "snap" of him. He graciously agreed. So here is Jimmy Doohan and his two kids.



Star Trek TOS Cmdr. Scotty

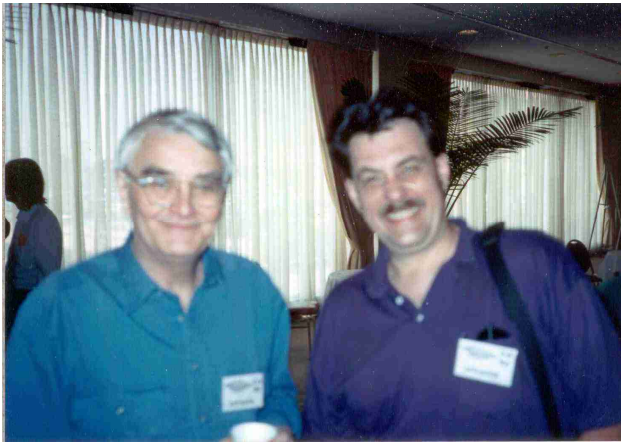
Over the years, I've met a lot of folks during my travels. One of the most enjoyable, bright and articulate has been Zecharia Sitchin. (*My respect and affection for Zecharia Sitchin knows no bounds. I do believe his Earth Chronicles Hypothesis fills in the missing gaps between human history and human mythology. He came up with the answers we've all been searching for. Simply put, I believe this man is GREAT!*) We've become close friends in that time.



World Renowned Scholar Zecharia

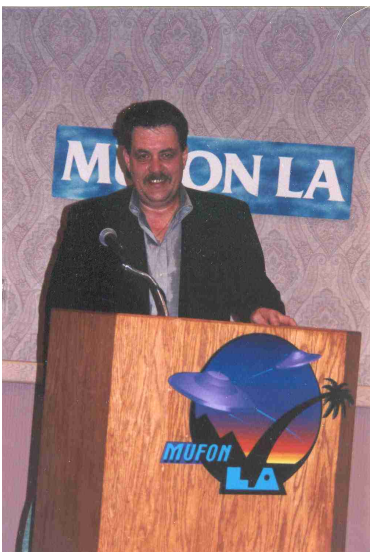
Sitchin

Budd Hopkins is a fixture on the abduction beat. Here is Budd and me.



Budd Hopkins and me

Once in awhile even the LA MUFON folks have asked me to speak. (Every 10 years or so!) Here I was speaking on Lunar phenomena in Hollywood.



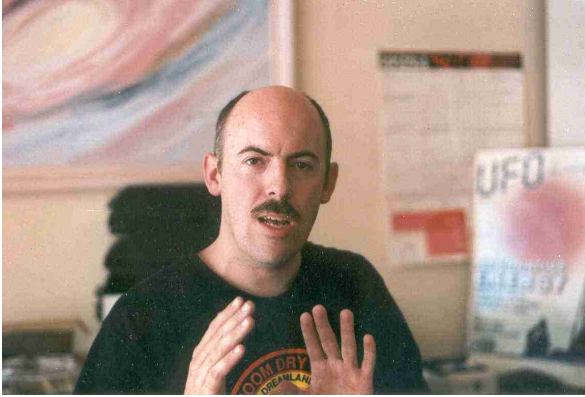
Over the years I've done some work for the film industry. (And they don't pay for SPIT!) However the exposure was great. Here are a couple of pictures from that work. The first one was for Paramount's "Fire in the Sky." Paramount was running a campaign to promo the movie and in the UK had a contest in connection with the movie. The winners got a trip to Snowflake, Az. to see the actual site where Travis Walton was said to have been abducted. Guess who took them? No, not George Clooney, but yours personally. One of the Brits was their version of a city councilman ... who happened to like Irish Whiskey. (A Brit?) Anyway the first night in Snowflake he and I and another guy managed to put a dent in his flask. All in all they were a great bunch of folks and I enjoyed it.



Brits

Me .. the Grand Prize .. and the

When the MEGA blockbuster movie "Independence Day" was coming out in 1996, we at UFO Magazine did a big job for them at the dedication of Hwy. 375 in Rachel, Nevada, renaming it the ET Highway. Now believe it or not, there were some "kill-joys" that tried to derail the festivities out the in the middle of no-where. (And I am not kidding. If you've never been to Rachel ... well all I can say is Man, it is a HOLE, and that HOLE is inside a PIT! The wind damn near blew us away.) Anyway, one of the kill-joys was Glenn Campbell of "Desert Rat" fame. (Glen's AKA is Psycho Spy. Catchy, huh?) One of the original Area 51 guys, researchers, etc. Glen was really pissed off at Fox 20th Century and a group of mal-contents tried to veer off some buses down a road and miss the location of where the activities were really taking off. Now, I know or should say, I knew Glenn, kind of a *different* kind of guy but I never did figure out what he was so upset about. Maybe because Fox didn't call him?



Glenn Campbell at offices of UFO

The entire caper ended up being a tempest in a teapot. Hwy 375 was renamed, ID4 was released and it made a **Zillion Dollars** for Fox. And ... Vicki and I got to go to Rachel, Nv. and have that hot wind blow on us.

Vicki and I spoke right after the Nevada Governor Bob Miller. George Knapp was there along with Walt Andrus of MUFON and some of the stars of the movie.



Nevada Governor Bob Miller

ID4 was produced by Dean Devlin and Roland Emerich. Here they are with some of the actors. (And in typical *Hollyweird*, none were too friendly with us peons!)



Yep, that is “Mr. Data”, Brent Spiner, in the shades without a hat.



Vicki and I at the ID4 dedication

Now, when you talk about UFOs, Area 51 and Nevada one name comes to mind almost immediately ... providing you've paid attention to the UFO beat. Who you may be asking? Why **Bob Lazar!** Going back to about 1989 Lazar caused most of the UFO field to simply ignite! Why? Well, as brought to us by Television Journalist George Knapp,



George Knapp

Lazar claimed to have been employed by the super-secret government installation known as Area 51, site S-4 or S/4 or some such. He claimed to have worked on recovered flying saucers!



Bob Lazar about 1992 or 93

Now I have to say I have great respect for George Knapp, and have known George since about 1989 or so. George and I have spoken very candidly about the Lazar story. There are some aspects of the Lazar story that are just too *weird* to be simply written off. One example was Lazar taking his then buddy Gene Huff, John Lear and his wife out to the desert to show them a secret test flight of *something* (a bright ball of light) darting around the mountains at fantastic speed performing seemingly impossible maneuvers. By the way, they were all caught by security right after that and Lazar lost his job? at S-4 or S/4 and according to Huff, Lazar was “pooping peach seeds” because he was afraid of what might happen to him. Real? or not? I don’t know but I did several face to face interviews with him, as well as have Lazar on my radio show a couple of times. His story *never* changed and unlike many in the field he never embellished anything. I believe he believed it, so take it for what its worth. Here I am with Lazar and Huff.



L-R Ecker, Lazar, Gene Huff

One weird aspect of this story was right after the story broke, Knapp’s Channel 8 TV station garnered HUGE ratings and the calls came in from people all around the globe wanting more information. Channel 8 decided to do another series on UFOs and Lazar in the next “sweeps” cycle and a competing TV station hired some private investigators to follow Knapp and Lazar around. (They play hard ball in Vegas.) Lazar was followed to a *bordello* in Vegas proper (even though prostitution is legal in Nevada, it is not in Clark County where Las Vegas is located.) Now, Lazar *KNEW* (in the Biblical sense) the Madame, and he had set up a computer and security system for her. When Knapp found out he and Lazar were being shadowed he convinced Lazar to go on camera and pre-empt the competing TV station. The Clark County DA filed charges on Lazar for *Pandering*.

Hell, that is like going to the Daytona 500 and handing out speeding tickets! They ended up taking Lazar to court, charging him with 6 felonies. (The Madame, who was a Vice Cop informant <AKA a *snitch*> ending up copping to a misdemeanor for running a disorderly house. And it was suggested she had *other dealings* with the Metro Cops. *More Biblical stuff*? The upshot was, the DA was out to fry Lazar ... it was an election year!) Finally Lazar agreed to cop a plea of Pandering and was sentenced to 3 years probation and community service. There have only been a couple of cases of pandering in the entire history of Nevada. Yeah, like I said ... weird.

(One more quick story involving Huff and Lazar ought to be told. Along about the Year 1999 or 2000 <after you reach 50, stuff starts becoming foggy> Huff called me up and said he knew I was very good friends with Zecharia Sitchin. He told me that he and Lazar would love to meet Sitchin and could I set it up? Well, Zecharia was giving a presentation in Las Vegas and I had planned to go see him. I called Zecharia at his home in New York and asked if he would like to have dinner when he got to Las Vegas? Zecharia was bringing his wife with him and he asked her and they agreed. It ended up that Lazar, Huff, myself and Vicki, Dwight Schultz and Lynne Russo and George Knapp had a fantastic dinner at a small Italian restaurant. Later we had coffee and Lazar and Huff got a chance to talk to Zecharia about his "Earth Chronicles" series and his research. It was a truly memorable evening.)

Back in November of 1993 we were invited to fly to Vienna, Austria to speak at the First World Congress in Vienna. Now they always want your bio and I provided them mine. While in the U.S. Army, I was a part of Military Intelligence, special operations in Viet Nam. Somehow that was translated in German to I used to be in the CIA. Not True! However, that's how they listed it in the newspapers. While in Vienna, I was approached by an Iraqi guy, a professional business type, and he wanted to have lunch with me. Now, remember that this was years before we toppled Saddam and things were very twitchy with Iraq. I looked this guy up and down and decided he was an Iraqi spook. But I thought what the hell, I'll let him buy me lunch and see what his pitch was. Of course he asked me about my "CIA" background and I truthfully told him that was bunk. Yeah, I know, even had I been former CIA I would deny it ... but hey ... had I been in the CIA I would probably never have left. I like James Bond as much as the next guy. Well anyway, this guy told me that he often visited LA and would I mind if he got in touch with me on his next trip into La La land. Had he called me I would have called the FBI but I never heard from him again.

However during that trip Vicki and I had the chance to renew friendships with several British researchers who were long time friends. John and Anne Spencer, Phil Mantle and his then brand new wife Sue, and Jenny Randles were all guests and speakers there. Here is a photo just before we all left for home.



Vienna UFO World Congress 1993

I should mention one other thing before moving on. Since the 1960's when I read his first book, (*Chariots of the Gods*) I was aware of Erich von Daniken and his thesis of ancient astronauts. As it turned out, he was aware of me and came to hear my lecture. Afterwards we had coffee and a nice chat. I don't know if I agree with everything he has to say, but I do think he is a pleasant enough man.



Erich von Daniken

One thing that is not as nice about this field are the bull shit artists that *infest* the field, and have since the beginning of modern UFO research. Over the years I have done a number of major exposes of those people in the field. I didn't do it because I didn't like them or anything like that *but because they ruined the field and the reputations of honest and legitimate researchers who do give a damn!* I've done exposes on the likes of Milton "Bill" Cooper, George Green, Harley Byrd, and of course Guy Kirkwood. There are many more clowns and BS artists, of course, but this will give you an idea.

Lets take a look at Kirkwood for a moment. (Let's not forget Guy also used alias's like Noel B. Cornwell and Mel Noel.)

I first saw Kirkwood's name in Tim Good's book "Above Top Secret" where I "discovered" that Kirkwood/Mel Noel (in the book) was a former U.S. Air Force Fighter Pilot, and back in about 1954 was part of a secret squadron tasked with chasing and photographing UFOs in flight. I first met Kirkwood about 1990 and I liked him. He was open, friendly and charming, and brother could he tell a story! I told him I would love to

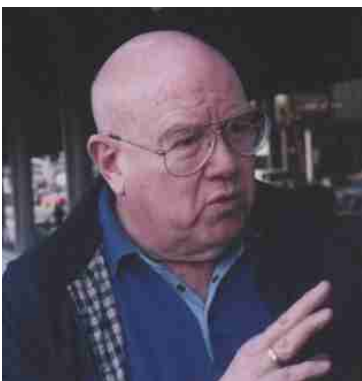
do an article in UFO Magazine and when could we get together? Guy assured me he would be in touch.



Mel Noel, Guy Kirkwood, Noall B. Cornwell

I never did hear from him then about 1991 or so he appeared on a tabloid TV program doing his *shtick* about being a former Air Force fighter jock and then a commercial airline pilot. Not a word of truth to any of it because I dug into the files, and others did also. Stanton Friedman and Fritz Kron all had done exposes on Kirkwood in the past, and back in 1969 Kirkwood admitted on a local Los Angeles television show, hosted by former Congressman Bob Dornan, (himself a former Air Force Officer and Fighter Pilot) that the story about himself was not true. I decided to cover it in UFO Magazine.

I contacted Don Dornan, brother to former Congressman Bob Dornan, and we agreed to meet for lunch.



Don Dornan

Back in the 1960's, Don Dornan was employed with *Life Magazine* as a photographer and he requested that *LIFE* allow him to do an article on Kirkwood because of all the noise Kirkwood was making in connection with UFOs. Now, just so you get the idea, here is an excerpt from my actual expose and interview with Don Dornan from UFO Magazine Volume 7 No. 3 May/June 1992.

"For his part, Don Dornan tells quite a different story about these events. "Noall Bryce Cornwell (Noel/Kirkwood's actual name) is a red-hot amateur scam artist," he says. "He has never pushed himself to the point where he will destroy himself on a national level. He loves doing his gag. That is now obvious.

"I was working for Life Magazine then, and they were just getting into the muckraking stuff, and they were getting impatient," Dornan continues. "I told them it would take a little longer for what I thought was Noel and Tomlinson's setting of the hook for their scam. Life wanted to know just where the beef was -- just when would the fraud be committed? Who was going to lose money? There is always someone who loses Money in a scam.

"I don't know where he (Kirkwood) was getting the money. He had to have been getting money, but I think he enjoyed the scam more than the money. It's funny. He thought I was some kind of spy, but I wasn't. The real spy there -- and he was sure it was a scam and Kirkwood was a fraud -- was Bob Kline. (Kline, an associate of J.A. Hynek, was a member of Kirkwood's group.)

"All this time" Dornan continued, "Mel (Kirkwood) was using his Air Force background to establish his credibility. My brother (now Rep. Bob Dornan) had been a pilot in the Air Force, and when he had met Mel he knew he had to have been a fraud. He (Bob Dornan) use to sneak in little things just to check out Mel, facts that if you were a pilot then, you would have known. Mel didn't pass the test. Also, some checks were then made to see if Mel held a pilot's license and not one thing was found! The Air Force was also aware that Mel had been passing himself off as an officer, and were considering filing criminal charges on him."

Dornan believes the "brains" behind the scam was Kirkwood's associate Kent Tomlinson. "He was using Kirkwood, and I finally brought it to a head in a meeting with Genovese," Dornan recalls. "In front of everyone, I asked Mel if he had ever been arrested. He said no, and I ticked off the first couple of instances. I then asked him if he were a Fuller brush salesman. He said, yeah.' I then asked him if he were a dance instructor and he answered, yeah.' "I was then hoping that everyone else was getting it as I ran down the list. You know what? Almost total denial. How do we know you're telling the truth?' or I don't believe it!' I said to myself, I gotta tell these folks to get off the denial kick here.' I told Mel that we didn't have anything to bring charges, but that (he) played with these people's emotions. The (the group)did not want to hear this, but as I kept going on,they finally got the point -- that they had been had.

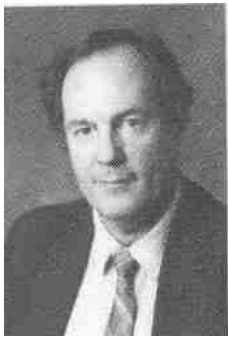
"I told them that I was working for Life Magazine. Several people were worried that the story would run in the magazine and I told them no, but that Mel had abused their friendship and he had abused their emotions. Mel crapped out' and did not deny anything. I asked him if he was ever an Air Force pilot and he said no, if he chased saucers, and he said no.

"That was the end of the story there."

That should have been the end of the story, but of course we are speaking about UFOs. After I completed this expose I caught a lot of heat from different corners of the UFO

“research community.” And ... don’t think a little thing like showing someone’s story is full of, as a guy I once knew said, “piss and wind” ... stop them from still speaking at UFO “dog and pony shows” at every turn. LA MUFON, through their former co-ordinator Don Waldrop, invited Kirkwood to speak several years after my expose, as well as in other MUFON venues.

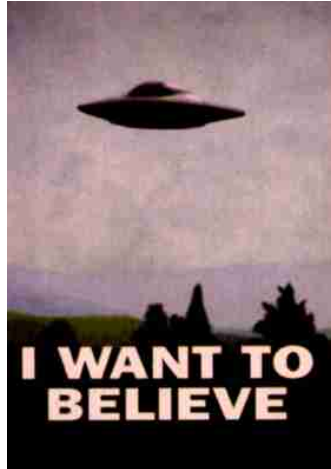
Then several years ago, another “researcher” by the name of Bill Hamilton



Bill Hamilton

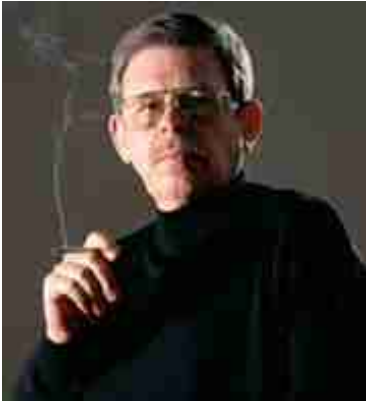
took a couple of shots at me on UFO Updates claiming my expose was full of inaccuracies. I confronted Hamilton several times to state clearly what my supposed inaccuracies were. FINALLY, he blurted out that *I got Cornwell, Kirkwood, Noel’s middle name wrong! (Hell, even had that been true, and it wasn’t, how in Hell could you tell with a guy that had that many names?)* And besides, Hamilton claimed that he *saw Kirkwood’s DD-214 military records that PROVED Guy was an Air Force Pilot!* Yeah, uh huh.

Like I told Kirkwood, Cornwell, Noel way back in 1992, show me your DD-214 and if I’m wrong I will do a complete retraction in the magazine and publicly apologize to you. Kirkwood, Cornwell, Noel promised to furnish me with the papers ... and I am still waiting. I asked Hamilton to get Guy to get me his military papers and Hamilton told me it wasn’t his job to do my job for me! So there! Yep, a fine example of doing research to its fullest! But then of course we are talking about UFOs ***and just like that poster that Agent Mulder had in his office in “The X Files”, it says it all “I WANT TO BELIEVE!”*** Hamilton *desperately* wants to believe.



In the last few years the one troubling thing with UFOs and UFO research has been the incredible lack of critical thinking exhibited by researchers that should know better and the public that doesn't know better. For many years I've heard people within the field grouse that the debunkers and skeptics are ruining research but who are they kidding? Some of the "cases" in recent years that people have touted make me cringe. Stories recently covered in UFO Magazine like *Project Serpo* that have not one iota or shred of proof and read like the worst case of *BAD* science fiction ... ***but people WANT to Believe.***

Another example of how the field had degenerated can be laid on the doorstep of radio hosts like Art Bell. Now, I will be the first to state that Bell has been enormously successful and popular ... but he is the "Professional Wrestling" of paranormal radio.



Art Bell enjoying a smoke

Bell's show, *Coast To Coast*, with Art at the helm was immensely popular during the mid to late 1990's. Running 5 nights a week during the "wee" hours, Art had a listener-ship numbering in the millions. He covered all sorts of odd subjects but really made his mark zeroing in on the UFO subject. Art was fond of telling a story about his own *weird* UFO sighting near his home in Pahrump, Nevada. Art described his (and wife's) sighting of a huge, black, triangle shaped thingy that scared hell out of them. So! Art was very hospitable to the idea of UFO visitation.

Now, regardless of what side of the issue you stand on, a radio program with the size of the audience Art had, has the responsibility to call questionable guests on the claims they make. The perfect example of what I'm talking about involves the "case" of the Hale-Bopp comet.

In latter 1996, during a Coast To Coast broadcast, Art received a call from a listener named Chuck Shramek. (As an aside, I "knew" Chuck because he was a longtime listener and caller to UFOs Tonite!) Shramek was also in the radio business and an amateur astronomer. Shramek had been imaging the Hale-Bopp comet with his telescope and taking pictures of it with his CCD camera. On one photo Shramek was mystified by what appeared to be an



Chuck Shramek Dec. 27, 1950 --- May 23, 2000 RIP

unknown object on it with what appeared to be a "Saturn like ring" around the object.



Chuck Shramek's photograph

Shramek relayed that he had checked his star charts and could find no explanation for the object and subsequently sent the photo to Bell. Art immediately posted it on his website and the dam broke! Almost at once Art began entertaining some very questionable folks on C2C like "Dr. Lee Shargel" who claimed the "object" was an alien spaceship filled with "Dolphonoid" aliens and a ***"blast of some type of energy was going to impact Earth thereby destroying the planet."***



Lee Shargel

Dr. Courtney Brown, who claimed he had a source, an “anonymous astrophysicist” who confirmed the “object” as a spaceship, and “within about 2 weeks” would announce his “discovery” of the alien ship. (Brown kept this up until sometime in January of 1997 until even Art had enough. Contrary to Browns promise that this anonymous astrophysicist would hold a press conference, Art’s listeners were ***demanding the guys name and when was this press conference happening?*** Art was catching a lot of flack from his listeners and finally lowered the hammer on Brown on C2C.)



Dr. Courtney Brown-the Farsight Institute

Former Army Major, Ed Dames, also known as

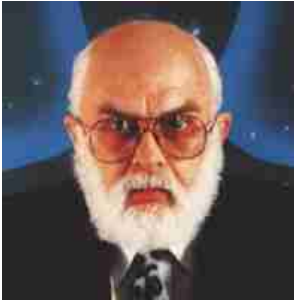


Ed Dames

“Dr. Doom” is best known as being a monitor and operations officer with the DIA’s former “remote viewing” program. Ed Dames has been a frequent guest on Bell’s C2C show and has often offered Bell and his audience some chilling predications of “doom and gloom” that’s on the way. (Predictions like “lots and lots of dead babies, 300 MPH Jet Streams impacting the earth, rouge nations detonating nuclear bombs, massive crop failures ... you name it! Geeze thank God we’re still here.) Dames is retired from the Army and contrary to what many believe, he was *never a remote viewer* while on active duty. His contribution to the Hale-Bopp story was employing a remote viewing team to view the comet. (All unnamed of course.)

“Such a team, involving about ten remote viewers over a nine-month period, viewed a cylindrical object - released by an alien intelligence - headed towards Earth; it carried a "plant pathogen" that would kill green plants on Earth. This prediction was made before the Hale-Bopp comet passed, in fact the cylinder was "remote viewed" being released from the comet.” All of this exploded in March of 1997 when an obscure UFO cult, called Heaven’s Gate, committed mass suicide in San Diego. Then the dam really did break. The following is part of an Op-Ed piece I wrote in 1997.

“Friday morning, March 29, I arose very early to keep a doctor's appointment in LA. Turning on the radio to a local Los Angeles A.M. station, I heard a short interview conducted with noted skeptic James "The Amazing" Randi. Randi, always a strident debunker concerning UFOs, was vociferously laying the blame for the tragedy on talk show host Art Bell. Bell, a popular late night talk show host, heads up the Monday through Friday program "Coast to Coast with Art Bell."



James “the amazing” Randi

I continued with, *“If you are not familiar with Bell or his talk program you may not make the connection on how he could bear any culpability with this bizarre mass suicide. What could be the connection?”*

What I was trying to show the public was that stories like these deluded and misguided victims of charismatic frauds like the Heavens Gate “leader” Marshall Applewhite



Marshall Applewhite

receive massive media coverage while truly worthwhile stories *never* get the coverage. Also, the media will zero in on the most visible target, in this case Bell, instead of really reporting and investigating the facts of the story. That's so much easier, don't ya know?

My op-ed continues,

"These stories and others separating the signal from the noise in UFO research have been given the space they get nowhere else. Over the years, we have broken some of the most amazing "true" UFO cases that received little or no exposure in the "straight" media; cases that should have made the front page of newspapers around the world: the amazing former Soviet Mars probes "Phobos I and II" apparently struck by a stupendous "15-mile object;" stories like STS-48, the Discovery space shuttle and the anomalies it encountered in orbit during the September, 1991 mission--later claimed by NASA spokesmen to be "frozen urine" from a waste-water dump--stories that have impacted national security like the Hudson Valley Sightings in New York state, where tens of thousands of witnesses observed (over about a three year period) one or more "huge" UFOs that witnesses claimed were at least as large as a football field! Yet reasonable media coverage of these obviously newsworthy UFO incidents never came."

"Up to this point, Bell had allowed these guests free rein in discussing this material. Bell has never been strong on challenging information put out by his guests.(Courtney) Brown, whose "Cosmic Voyage" is concerned with his alleged prowess at "remote viewing," claimed he and others from the "Farsight Institute" had remotely viewed this "companion" object, and said it was several times the size of Earth and filled with aliens. President Clinton, according to Brown, was reluctantly agreeing to make an official pronouncement (per Farsight's "remotely viewed" information)."

There was no doubt that in the alternative media, (like Coast To Coast) the asylum was being run by the inmates. And ... the "straight media", even national news programs, was

shining a spotlight on UFOs making the entire field out to be “the tin-foil hat” wearing fools and morons that need to get a life!

The C2C/HeavensGate story seemed to peak with an appearance of Whitley Strieber on the Larry King Live program.



Whitley Strieber

As I stated in my op-ed piece,

*“It appears that now, Bell and others associated with this story are trying very hard to distance themselves from it. In a recent CNN broadcast of "Larry King Live," horror novelist and abductee Whitley Strieber told King how he and Bell "exposed the hoax" of the Hale Bopp companion object. In retrospect, with debunkers like James "The Amusing" Randi looking to score points by pointing the finger at people like Bell, in an attempt to lay the blame for Heaven's Gate at his feet, Bell, Strieber and others have taken some heat for the Heaven's Gate mass suicide. Anyone familiar with Bell and this story knows that **Bell shoulders no blame for what these 39 addled believers did, but he should shoulder blame for being irresponsible with the information heard on his show--for not treating such sensational material with a more critical eye. If Art Bell's show is simply entertainment, like, say, the "X Files", then he should say so. If he promotes his show as "informational," then when frauds like Shargel and Dames appear, Bell he should pin them to the wall when they claim a planet killing spore is on the way in to destroy vegetation on earth, or that a lethal burst of energy is winding its way here.**”*

Back in 1986 when my wife and her business partner Sherie Stark began UFO Magazine, the idea was to report on a subject that the “straight media” never covered in a legitimate manner.



UFO Magazine Issue 01 No.01- 1986

The idea was to cover this subject just like any news organization would cover any story with a public interest. UFOs cover so many areas, it is inconceivable that the subject would not be of interest to Federal Government Agencies. Just from the standpoint of “national security” one has to know that “black agencies” would be all over the subject ... which UFO Magazine has pointed out time and again. For most of the 20 years we have tried to do the subject straight on!

About 1997, Vicki and I accepted business partners from the entertainment community because the magazine needed an infusion of funds to continue publishing. Having been at the head of the magazine for all the previous years, it was often hard for Vicki and I to accept the direction of the magazine because of these new partners. They bowed out in 2002 and Vicki and I went into a partnership with William Birnes and his wife Nancy.



Bill Birnes & wife Nancy on right

The good news was that Bill and Nancy were with our help, able to keep the magazine going. The not so good news was, the magazine was starting to veer off into areas that Vicki and I would never have permitted in the past.

As most reading this will know, Birne’s was co-author with Phil Corso of the blockbuster “The Day After Roswell.” However Birne’s is an academic and writer where I was a researcher and investigator. They began allowing previously *verboten* bullshit spewing airbags into the magazine that in my opinion *don’t have a clue nor could they buy a vowel*. So, what are they doing in UFO?

Birne's feels that regardless, all should have a say and then let the public decide. I most strongly disagree with that position. (For example, there is a vocal minority claiming that the NASA Moon landings were done on a studio stage, and the entire Moon Program was a government disinformation program. Should we give these morons a public position in the magazine?) If one strives to be the publication of record in this confusing field, one has to be willing to separate the wheat from the chaff. As I write this paper, the most recent egregious example of slip shod editorial decisions was allowing one wind-bag columnist to revisit one of the biggest hoaxes in recent memory by allowing the inclusion of the "Dulce alien base shoot out with U.S. Forces in 1979!" (With neither Birnes wife especially, or Birnes being aware of the last 20 odd years of UFO history, this type of egregious error is routinely made.) This came from the John Lear/Paul Bennowitz disinformation all the way back to 1987, and has been effectively shown to be ***total crap!***

One thing that I've discovered being in this field for 20 years is a very simple truth, but a truth that is most profound. Most "researchers" are ignorant of what has happened previously in the field of UFO research. They are ignorant of the claims made in the past, ignorant of past hoaxes perpetrated by "players" in the field and are intolerant of views that conflict with their deep seated *erroneous* beliefs. Quite frankly, I've grown ***tired*** of this field.

I'm ***tired*** of the media that is blinded by their prejudice about UFOs, their snide and condescending remarks about something that quite frankly they know *nothing* about. I'm ***tired*** of people claiming to be researchers that refuse to accept the *truth* about something regardless of how many times it jumps up and bites them in the ass. I'm ***tired*** of government agencies that continuously lie about a subject that has shown to be something real and even possibly affect our national security ... and getting away with it for over 60 years. I'm ***tired*** of *believers* that become upset when their fuzzy illogic is shown to be as full of holes as Swiss Cheese. I'm ***tired of frauds and clowns*** in this field that are *shown to be frauds and clowns* and yet still are treated like they are stars with something important to say. I suppose you could just say ***I'm tired of all of it.***

20 years ago I thought that genuine study, research and investigation might make a difference. Alas!! I was most profoundly wrong! Today (even though I most certainly believe this is a genuine and legitimate subject of study *and UFOs must come from somewhere*), I have had enough! So, this is my **goodbye** from the wonderful and wacky field of UFOs. For any of you that, through the years, have found any of my writing on the subject to be of interest ... thank you. It has been an up and down *thing*, this UFO enigma. However, if you are a believer in Bill Cooper, Mel Noel, Billy Meier, Project Serpo, or benevolent ET's from the Pleiades here to show us a *better way ... or possibly how to build a better mouse trap ... preferably a humane one*, I'm sure you will be glad to see my exit ... on stage right. So with that in mind I now make my exit. Thanks, because if nothing else ... ***this has been an interesting but frustrating 20 years.***

Don Ecker
Formerly the Director of Research for UFO Magazine

The following article will give some depth to the John Lear/Bill Cooper saga, especially Coopers death in a police shootout.

UFO Magazine, Volume 17, Number 01, February/March 2002

November 22, 2003 will mark the 40th anniversary of one of the darkest days in American History. Because of that, UFO Magazine wants to start reminding everyone of this important piece of history NOW....in 2002, so that we can avoid the media frenzy likely to take place next year. We also want to remind readers just how easily both facts and minds can get twisted when UFO and conspiracy thinking gets out of hand. We fervently hope that the real story about this American tragedy will finally be told. Until then, consider the following another step in clearing the record, which in the case of the JFK killing has been remorseless skewed by everyone from UFO charlatans to high level members of the Senate and judiciary.

Another version of the following article appeared in the April and May, 1999 issues of Fortean Times.

On Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, the will of the American people was thwarted by a murderer's bullet fired from ambush. That date re-enforced the idea that "it can happen here" and tore away the distinctly American illusion that we all wore "white hats." This was truly the end of the illusion of innocence for Americans for the rest of the century.

Vietnam, Watergate, the Senator Frank Hearings on the CIA, the October Surprise, Iran -Contra, wars and Sept. 11, 2001--the scandals and shock to sensibilities continued, but the assassination of President Kennedy is viewed as the "jump -gate" for the end of innocence. No other single act of criminality has produced as many theories of conspiracy as the assassination of JFK. For 35 years it has produced more books, talk shows and even Congressional hearings than almost any other conspiracy subject.

More secret files have been opened, but the public stance of the government is still holding to the single assassin theory. Not many believe this, of course, but just 13 years ago another theory was pitched as fact to the world and for several years it was to create a firestorm unlike what many would have believed. It tied in not only a government conspiracy to murder a President, but also tied in several other areas of esoteric research. It included UFOs, the Illuminati, the Masons, the President's limousine driver, the U.S. Navy and much-much more.

One major player in this drama, Milton William Cooper, was shot and killed on Nov. 5 of last year. Incredibly, many people still believe the disinformation that he purveyed --That the Secret Service driver who drove President John F. Kennedy that day in Dallas fired the fatal head shot into JFK. The first version had him using a nickel plated .45 caliber automatic pistol, later this was changed to an airgun firing a pellet filled with toxic shellfish poison. Confused yet?

The genesis of this story actually begins in the dawn of the personal computer revolution. In late 1985 a young man named Jim Speiser became interested in the new device that was to take over the world. At that time the internet was virtually reserved for the real "computer geeks." Everyone else used public bulletin board services. (BBS)

Almost without exception all BBS's in those early days catered to interest in and about computers. Speiser had a different idea, one that basically can be credited with helping put UFOs and other oddities on the internet. Speiser, living in Fountain Hills, Arizona, decided to operate a bulletin board, but his would be geared to the paranormal. Beginning on January 1, 1986, the Paranet Bulletin Board system would set the new computer operating public on its ear.

Speiser attended the MUFON (Mutual UFO Network) symposium in July, 1987, held in Washington D.C. At that time, the recently released MJ-12 papers were the current flavor of the month. Suddenly the UFO subject, after years of neglect, had become respectable. According to Speiser, one of the participants he met there was a very quiet John Lear. Lear was the son of Lear Jet founder, the "stormy genius" Wm. Bill Lear. What made John Lear an exciting addition to this gathering of the UFO faithful was his biography as a pilot and former contract employee of the Central Intelligence Agency. Holding every airman certificate issued by the FAA, winning numerous speed records in the Lear Jet, flying for a CIA contract airline during the Vietnam War, Lear, in a very low key way, brought a level of excitement and desperately needed respectability to the UFO field.

In December, 1987 Lear called up Jim Speiser and informed him of a paper he had just written. He sent a copy to Speiser and asked him if he would upload it to the Paranet BBS system. He also warned Speiser "If you don't get a call from the Air Force Office of Special Investigations upon transmitting the letter, I will buy you dinner at Caesar's Palace." Speiser did not get a call from the Air Force, but perhaps he should have. The Lear document was enough to scare hell out of anyone at first glance.

Dated December 29, 1987 the Lear Paper began this way. "Note to the Press: The Government of the United States continues to rely on your personal and professional gullibility to suppress the information contained herein. Your co-operation over the past 40 years has exceeded our wildest expectations and we salute you!" After this small tidbit Lear proceeded with "...we must face the shocking facts. The "horrible truth" the government has been hiding from us over 40 years. Unfortunately, the "horrible truth" is far more horrible than the government ever imagined."

What was this horrible truth that Lear alleged? He stated that the U.S. Government formed an unholy alliance with the alien presence, and in exchange for allowing the aliens to mutilate livestock and the occasional human, and to abduct unsuspecting humans, the aliens provided advanced alien technology to the U.S. There was quite a bit more to the document.

By this time the MJ-12 papers were general knowledge throughout the UFO community. Lear included the MJ-12 Group as the all-around governing body keeping its eye on the alien presence. According to Lear, MJ-12 at first thought they made a good deal but as several more crashed "saucers" were retrieved, MJ-12 "found out" that the aliens were implanting 3mm devices in the nasal cavity of abductees. The aliens were also "programming" abductees to carry out post-hypnotic instructions at some point in the future, that some abducted humans were being "used as biological material" and food sources. Some humans were murdered by the aliens because they presented a "threat" to alien activity, and last but not least, the aliens were conducting genetic experiments on humans and using human females to "cross-breed" alien-human hybrids.

Later Lear was to explain that he became interested in the UFO subject after speaking to several U.S. Air Force friends who had witnessed a UFO landing at the British/American base at Bentwaters-Woodbridge in 1980. He claimed that prior to this he never had an interest in the subject, although his father, William Lear, is on record as believing that UFOs were interplanetary. But with this released document now on the nation-wide BBS system, and soon to circle the globe, the circus was gearing up and the UFO research community was taking a nose dive into sensationalism-- and what is now called the darkside. This is the beginning of what promised to be years of disinformation and factionalism that still divides the UFO field and its researchers.

Soon on Paranet and then on the CompuServe Information Network Lear was being questioned by computer users all over the United States. When this writer was first exposed to the Lear paper after it appeared on Paranet, I telephoned Lear and spoke to him for several hours. Within a few days he sent me a large package of his material to support his hypothesis. Included in the package was a video tape with a number of programs which included Linda Howe's documentary on cattle mutilations and a Japanese astronomer's video of a "disc" overflying the lunar surface.

One point that Lear stated as truth was the "fact" that these aliens were residing in underground bases. Two areas pinpointed were near Dulce, New Mexico and Area 51 in Nevada. Later in 1988, Lear sent me newsclippings of a military project that was in the process of developing an earth penetrating nuclear missile which publicly was to "take out" Soviet underground command structures, but which Lear claimed was actually a defense measure to destroy the alien bases. The plot was thickening, but now he was coming under very intense questioning by not only computer users, but others in the research field.

As the year of 1988 moved along, Lear began to garner lots of publicity. George Knapp, an investigative journalist with KLAS-TV, Channel 8, in Las Vegas, had Lear guest on his weekly television program. Lear also was being interviewed by various newspapers in the western and south-western part of the U.S. in regards to his hypothesis. He had been garnering quite a bit of notoriety.

Now we must introduce two more individuals to this story.

In 1986, Lars C. Hansson, an investigative journalist with years of interest in the JFK assassination, met with two men named Perry Adams and David Evans. Adams and Evans had been working on a theory that the assassin who fired the fatal head shot into Kennedy had been Kennedy's own limousine driver, Secret Service Agent William Greer. At first incredulous, Hansson helped Adams and Evans attempt to enhance a copy of the Zapruder film. The film was already a fourth or fifth generation copy. They "washed the color" out of this copy in an attempt to enhance the contrasts. After proceeding to view the tape, they were amazed that just at the moment Kennedy was hit in the head, slamming his body back and to the side, what appeared to look like a pistol flashed by the Secret Service passenger, Roy Kellerman with the arm "holding the gun" by driver William Greer.

Looking for financing to extend their research, Hansson read about Lear and his UFO interest in a newspaper article. Thinking that Lear was heir to the Lear fortune, Hansson gave a copy of the videotape to him in the hope that he would assist in financing their research. Hansson and Adams and Evans had rented a production studio to clean up the tape, and placed titles and narration on it by Hansson. Now called "The Truth Betrayed, Dallas Revisited," the video was very compelling at first view.

The last character to enter this story in 1988 is Bill Cooper. All during 1988, Lear was coming under increasing questioning and even in some cases "attacked" on Paranet and CompuServe. Members of the UFO research community were also quite divided over his paper. There were a number of errors in Lear's paper that people picked up on, such as calling the crucifixion site where Christ died the "Mount of Olives" instead of Calvary. It was to later come out that much of Lear's information about the weirder aspects of his paper came from one "Paul Bennewitz," a name that would figure greatly into the overall "disinforming of ufology."

Cooper showed up on Paranet in the summer of 1988 with a story about a sighting he had while serving as a U.S. Navy sailor onboard a submarine, the USS Tiru, in 1966. The file, called Tiru -1.UFO created quite a stir. The Paranet administrator, Jim Speiser, was very complimentary of Cooper bringing this to the attention of the user base. Cooper allied himself with Lear stating that from his own "insider knowledge", he could VERIFY 50 percent of Lear's hypothesis. Later, Cooper claimed Lear was 150 percent correct.

Just several days after uploading the submarine story, Cooper re-surfaced on Paranet claiming that he had been "fired" from his \$75,000 a year job because of the release of his UFO information and having spoken with UFO researcher Stanton Friedman. Then, over the next two months he began uploading a number of

files dealing with the "top secret" UFO information he claimed to have been privy to while in the U.S. Navy service. Cooper also took a very intense and supportive role in regards to Lear and his information.

In Cooper's WARNING.PPB file, he claimed to have held a Top Secret SI Clearance, and said that after leaving the Navy he had remained involved in intelligence work until 1980. In these early files he used the same code words and project names that William Moore and Jaime Shandera did in their MJ -12 release. It was only in the very late part of 1988 that Cooper began to change and vary these names and claim that Moore and Shandera were "agents of disinformation."

In October of 1988, a much awaited television program aired in a two-hour special. It was called "UFO Cover-up Live" and was hosted by television star Mike Farrell. William Moore and Jaime Shandera appeared in this broadcast in reference to MJ -12, and included were interviews with two alleged government intelligence officers identified as FALCON and CONDOR. These two unnamed men were electronically altered to conceal their identities. However, what they had to say was quite inflammatory. They claimed that there WAS an extraterrestrial presence on earth, and some E.T. aliens were "guests" of the American government. After this broadcast, and over the next several days, Cooper uploaded (through this author) his new position paper, in which he totally reversed all his previous positions. Much later, Cooper claimed he was "testing" the UFO researchers knowledge by using the incorrect code names earlier.

In November of 1988, I was invited to Las Vegas by John Lear to see and hear him address the Association of Former Intelligence Officers chapter in Las Vegas about his UFO hypothesis. I had already visited his home to view much of his material. Prior to his speech, Lear took me into his den to view a film that would "shake you up" he said.. Once in his den (which seemed more of a shrine to aviation and the war --Vietnam and the Middle East) he offered me a drink and proceeded to play "The Truth Betrayed: Dallas Revisited". At first glance, I was simply amazed to see what appeared to be the driver suddenly with a gun in his hand as Kennedy is struck in the head by the fatal gun shot. Lear then went on to tell me that part of the reason Kennedy was murdered was because he had threatened to "tell the truth about UFOs, and MJ -12 decided to get rid of him!" Lear played this tape for the retired intelligence audience the next day, and then asked the audience, "who among you would have assisted with the assassination if you had been ordered to?" I was shocked when four members of the audience raised their hands. Women were among the "volunteers."

I asked Lear where he got the tape, but he remained very coy. He simply said it was through a contact. It was not until the end of 1989 that I discovered his contact was Lars Hansson, and by then the damage was done. In October of 1988, Lear had sent a copy of this tape to Cooper who was soon to appropriate it into his "dog and pony show" and wow audiences at \$15 and \$20 per head, while selling it at \$25 to \$30 per tape, all the while telling audiences that as a Navy enlisted man in 1972 he saw secret Navy documents that detailed how this Secret Service agent killed the President.

As 1988 drew to a close, American ufology was turning into a shambles. A firestorm had ignited concerning the claims and counterclaims surrounding the MJ -12 documents and the Lear paper. The debate over the legitimacy of both MJ-12 and the Lear document had often degenerated into little more than name calling and recriminations.

The "UFO Cover-up-Live" TV program heated up the debate up even more. Shadowy agents FALCON and CONDOR leaked the "news" that aliens were guests of the U.S. government. One of the most memorable moments of this broadcast were when "Falcon" claimed the "grey aliens" liked strawberry ice cream. For his part, Cooper was now claiming that the MJ -12 documents were a hoax designed to mislead UFO researchers off into disinformation as to conceal the real UFO information.

On October 26, 1988 in a public position statement on the ParaNet Alpha BBS, ParaNet founder Jim Speiser issued a public statement that ejected John Lear and William Cooper from the ParaNet system. The four-page document explained Speiser's reasons which listed in detail William Cooper's contradictions and obfuscation, such as: "The documents you are looking for are for the most part labelled TOP SECRET MAGIC-RESTRICTED DATA"-- Bill Cooper, August 22, 1988. "EVERY DOCUMENT YOU SEE

WHICH USES...'MAGIC' IS A FRAUD!!-- Bill Cooper, October 15, 1988. "The documents produced by Mr. Moore, et. al., are photographic copies of genuine documents which were procured at great risk." - Bill Cooper, August 22, 1988. "I CAN PROVE BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DOUBT TO ANYONE THAT MOST OF THE INFORMATION RELEASED BY WILLIAM MOORE, ET AL...ARE OBVIOUS AND DELIBERATE FORGERIES."-- Bill Cooper, October 15, 1988.

Speiser also mentioned a casual user of ParaNet named Jeff Felix who contacted him to request a meeting. A young man of about 24 years of age met Speiser in a Tempe, Az. restaurant and proceeded to relay a bizarre tale of being a NSA cryptology technician, and while "fooling around" on the NSA computer had stumbled across the Majestic and Aquarius files, "the whole ball of wax!" Several days later, Speiser had another chat with Felix and asked several questions he had been given by several people with an intelligence background. Felix failed this simple test but mentioned something called "Project X-calibur" (sic). Speiser spoke with Cooper, who told him he had heard of it, but that it was very top secret and he had no more information on it. Then later that day, Cooper called Speiser back and to Speiser's surprise told him that Project Excalibur was real, and it was a project by MJ-12 to extract technology from the aliens. As Speiser was to later say, "My thinking on Cooper and Felix at this time began to center on the thought that the two of them were scamming me behind my back. I had visions of having ParaNet become a home for unwed paranoids."

Not to come out until much later during an interview with John Lear was the fact that in October, Lear had sent Cooper a large package of information that included the information that Lear had collected in his research into UFOs. The information consisted of Lear's paper, writings from "Val Valerian" aka John Grace, a then U.S.A.F. active duty NCO with a UFO interest. Lear also sent Cooper a copy of a tape of the John F. Kennedy assassination that Lars Hansson had given him when Hansson thought that Lear might help finance his JFK research, with the proviso that Lear not give it out to anyone. This ultimately proved to be catastrophic.

In April of 1989, KLAS television journalist George Knapp presented a multi-part series on UFOs which shot the TV station's ratings through the roof. In one segment, Knapp interviewed a man in electronic blackout only identified as "Dennis" who claimed to have worked at the super-secret Nevada test site known as "Area 51, "but also in an even more secret site called S-4. What he claimed was so fantastic that the station was to get calls from all over the world. "Dennis" claimed he worked on "real flying saucers," alien or ET spaceships. Dennis would prove to be the enigmatic Bob Lazar, but at the time no one except Knapp and the security people working for Area 51 knew who he was.

Knapp also did a weekly local show called "On The Record" where he had already interviewed John Lear. Lear had shown Knapp the "JFK tape," and Knapp had Lear come back for another show. But this time Bill Cooper also appeared. While on the air, Knapp asked Lear about the tape and what it appeared to show, and then asked Cooper if he knew anything about it. Lear later remarked that up to that point (contrary to what Cooper later claimed) Cooper had never mentioned much of anything about the tape. However, on this day Cooper said that not only did he know of it, but had read about it in secret Naval files while he was attached to the U.S. Navy's Briefing Team in Hawaii!

In Las Vegas at this time a radio program hosted by Billy Goodman aired Monday through Friday on KVEG radio. Broadcast from a powerhouse 50,000-watt station, Goodman's show was heard all over the western United States. As more public interest was displayed on the subject of UFOs, Goodman's program began to take a decided interest in UFOs. Eventually, both Lear and Cooper appeared on Goodman's program. The sensational nature of their information further heated public interest.

In May of 1989, Lear and Cooper were asked to appear on a tabloid television program, "PM Magazine." The TV crew showed up at Lear's home to interview both Lear and Cooper. Later, Lear heard Cooper telling the interviewer that while he was on the Naval briefing team in Hawaii, he saw the "O.H. Krill" documents in secret files, documents I received from John Lear in his original package of material in early 1988. I knew that the documents were written by one John Grace, a then-active duty U.S. Air force NCO who had a UFO interest. The name Krill was an inside joke taken from a late 1950s case where the U.S.

Navy had interviewed a woman who claimed to channel an alien named Cyril. Lear and Grace made up the initials O.H. out of thin air. Grace did not want his name on these papers, because he was still in the Air Force and did not want adverse publicity. The actual O.H. Krill papers were only a little over a year old at the time of this television program, and would have been totally impossible for Cooper to have seen them in 1972 or 1973.

Lear said, "When I heard Bill tell the interviewer he saw the Krill papers while he was in the Navy, I motioned him over and asked him, 'what in the hell are you doing?' He said, 'what do you mean?' I said, 'Bill, John Grace and I did the Krill papers. We named them after a 1950s case, and we pulled the O.H. out of thin air.' Well, Cooper insisted he saw them in the Navy. That is when I really began to wonder about Cooper."

During 1989, John Lear was the state director for Nevada for the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON). He hosted MUFON's 1989 symposium in Las Vegas, which proved to be one of the most hotly debated proceedings in MUFON's existence. By June of 1989, Lear's paper on the "evil grey aliens," Bill Moore and the MJ-12 paper, and now Coopers twist and spin on both subjects caused rifts throughout all of American ufology. At the very last minute, Walt Andrus, then International Director of MUFON, dis-invited John Lear to speak at his own event. Lear as state director had invited Bill Cooper, Bill English and this writer to all speak about our own research. Because of the nature of Lear, Cooper and English's papers, MUFON and Andrus had decided to delete the Sunday event. By Saturday July 1, there was an open revolt within MUFON. Lear had threatened to take his speakers down the street to another location, and if he had, most of the conference would have followed him.

That Saturday an even more outrageous event was in the making. William Moore's speech ran over two hours in length and had the audience calling for his blood. Moore admitted that he had worked hand in fist with military intelligence during the 1980s, in an attempt to "get on the inside" of the military's knowledge on UFOs. During his speech he admitted participating in the disinforming of Paul Bennewitz, a civilian UFO investigator. Bennewitz later had to be hospitalised for severe mental problems. When Moore's talk was complete, he refused to take questions and rushed from the room, leaving the conference and the proceedings in turmoil.

During the conference, Lear seemed under severe stress and was mostly uncommunicative. Later he was to say, "Bill Cooper came to my house on Friday before the talk and was drinking heavily. He demanded to know who I was working for. He said he was afraid that either I or someone else was setting him up. The more he drank, the louder he became and started slamming his hand down on my desk. His girlfriend was there and I thought she might try to temper him but did nothing. He then told me that anyone that tried to cross him would regret it. I moved to the other side of my desk, not sure what he might do. Finally his girlfriend led him out, and that was the last time I spoke to him until after the talks on Sunday."

On Sunday July 2, 1989 the "alternative" MUFON event began. Lear spoke first and then Cooper. By this time, Cooper had refined his talk and for the most part left the audience in shock. He told them of a vast U.S. government conspiracy that dwarfed anything before or after. The government had recovered dozens of UFO crashes and alien pilots, the aliens were abducting people and killing them, etc.; the U.S. has a "secret" space program where the U.S. and Russians and the aliens have secret joint bases on Mars and the Moon. Cooper even claimed there were areas on the Moon with free-standing water and vegetation. "Man can walk on the Moon with just an airpack," Cooper confidently told the audience. Then Cooper told them that President Kennedy was murdered by his secret service driver as part of a huge conspiracy plot-- and he had read all about it in his secret Navy documents!

The next eruptions in 1989 happened close together. In November, Cooper conducted a lecture at Hollywood High School, where the "Dallas Revisited" tape was the main draw. About a thousand people attended the event. Cooper was now a regular on the "Billy Goodman Happening" broadcast out of Las Vegas. George Knapp had completed another series on UFOs for KLAS-TV and Bob Lazar, the physicist who had worked on UFOs at Area 51, came out of the closet! This created a firestorm that literally circled the globe within days.

Knapp interviewed not only Lazar but John Lear, Whitley Strieber and Stanton Friedman. Bill Cooper appeared briefly. Within days, Goodman's "Happening" had Lazar and his very good friend Gene Huff on several times. Suddenly the "Happening" became a well-known radio program within the U.S. With the appearance of Lazar and a number of call-ins by Bill Cooper, and Cooper's unqualified endorsement of Lazar, Cooper's message suddenly hit nation-wide.

This was Cooper's shot at a new occupation. Following the MUFON conference, he hired an agency that began booking speaking engagements for him. He also met two men with very strong Hollywood credentials who formed a partnership with him, movie actor Michael Callan and Callan's very close friend, Douglas Deane. Callan and Deane heard Cooper on the radio and wanted to meet him. They felt his message was important and wanted to "package" him the Hollywood way. Callan proceeded to set up a number of speaking engagements, and the three of them signed a contract forming Need To Know Productions.

By January 1990, Cooper was one of the hottest tickets on the UFO scene. After his numerous appearances on the "Billy Goodman Happening," an extravaganza was pushed with Cooper as the main attraction at the Showboat Hotel in Las Vegas. Cooper was billed as the "most knowledgeable UFO researcher in the world today!" A production put on by Michael Callan and Doug Deane, the Cooper presentation catered to the conspiracy and paranoia then rampant in the UFO field.

Near the end of the lecture the 'Dallas Revisited' tape was run. The sound track with Lars Hansson narrating was cut, and Cooper provided all the "details." He baldly claimed that John Lear had gotten the tape, but he had no idea where it originated from. He had searched for it for 17 years. Cooper also mentioned the "Project Excalibur" device that he claimed to have read about in secret briefing documents during 1972-73.

During my investigation on Cooper I tracked down this Project Excalibur document to John Lear, who received it from Bob Lazar in September, 1988. Lear sent a copy to Cooper in October, 1988. This seemed to be another point to suggest that Cooper was borrowing other's material and adding it to the overall conspiracy as time moved along.

During the early months of 1990, George Knapp and management at KLAS-TV decided to do another UFO special during the "sweeps wars" (where television stations and networks attempt to outdo one another to garner ratings.) By now, many researchers and media were asking some very hard questions of Bill Cooper, especially concerning the Kennedy tape. George Knapp had interviewed John Lear again, and Lear told the Cooper story involving "O.H.Krill" and how Lear was shocked and began to wonder if Cooper was for real. Knapp also planned to do another interview with Bob Lazar and his information. However, a rival TV station had hired private investigators to follow Knapp and Lazar around and report back anything questionable. One PI followed Lazar to an illegal brothel where he seemed to have a relationship with the "Madam." Knapp found out about the rival station, and convinced Lazar to go public first and report why he was involved with a brothel. According to Lazar's interview, he knew the Madam and she had hired him to set up a computer and software for her. Unfortunately for Lazar, Las Vegas was in the middle of a local political campaign year, and the District Attorney saw an opportunity to garner some notoriety.

In the interim, Cooper found out about Lear's admission on camera and knew that Lear and Lazar were friends. Cooper quickly embarked on a pre-emptory strike against Lear, Lazar, and George Knapp by claiming on his computer BBS that Lazar had been arrested on drug charges, and that Lear and Knapp were involved.

Lazar has a hobby of working with "jet cars," and would often mention his speed shop in connection with his own jet vehicle. Cooper, seeing a way to "get back" at everyone he thought had wronged him, said Lazar, Lear, et. al, were using the shop as a front to manufacture and deal illegal drugs. This was a complete fabrication, and at this point I began an investigation and expose on William Cooper.

Lars Hansson had made several phone calls to Cooper asking him to refrain from showing the "Dallas Revisted" tape, but Cooper refused. Cooper now began to call Hansson a disinformation agent and government asset. He also claimed John Lear was an agent, along with Bill Moore, Stanton Friedman, this writer or anyone else who happened to disagree with him. Hansson confronted Cooper on the "Billy Goodman Happening" radio show in July of 1990. By this time, I had published my first expose on Cooper's material when he began leaving late night calls on our answering machine. I was then contacted by Deane and Callan, who had another facet to add. Cooper, in an attempt to break his contract with Callan and Deane and keep all the profits himself, badgered them to release the master tapes to him.

At 4 a.m. on the morning of July 28, 1990, Deane began receiving a series of six telephone calls from a very drunken William Cooper. Using a series of fake voices, Cooper threatened Deane's life and personal property if he did not release the tapes to Cooper. That morning Michael Callan also received a series of calls from Cooper claiming he had bodyguards looking out for him (Cooper) and that Callan "better do the right thing and hand over the tapes." Cooper at the time was living with him a few miles from Deane in Arizona. Both Deane and Callan called and reported this to the police. Deane was concerned, and called a friend to spend the rest of the night with him. Then in his late '60s, Deane had no intention of being there if a drunk Cooper came to his house.

That morning, Cooper did arrive at Deane's home and Deane's gardener witnessed Cooper attempt to pry his back door open. Later that day, Deane arrived home and found all four tires slashed on his second car.

Shortly afterwards, Cooper distanced himself from the UFO field. He had burned all bridges in the field, and most of American researchers found his information unreliable at best or deliberately twisted to support his own paranoid conspiratorial claims at worst. Time and again, the "driver shooting JFK" tape was shown to be fraudulent. Cooper had sent one to Japan, where the color was re-added to it, and again attempted to sell it around the world. Lars Hansson, the man who originally produced the tape had by now (1990) spent over a year explaining that the whole thing was an invalid theory. Cooper had been calling for the driver, William Greer, to be brought before a court of law and charged with murder, not even knowing that Greer had died in the 1970s. Cooper slandered many very prominent JFK researchers while pushing this theory, but it was obvious he had very little investigative experience with the JFK case. In a typically sudden and arbitrary switch of loyalties, he began to ally himself with the ultra right -wing militia movement.

Shortly before his death, he was claiming that all UFO cases are actually part of a vast one -world conspiracy, secret government operations that will end up with everyone subjugated as slaves under a tyrannical New World Order.

Since the era of confusion and chaos detailed here, the UFO field has continued suffering from hoaxes, deception and disinformation, but never quite as overt. By a steady effort and stating truth, perhaps one day the field will be enriched and supported instead damned and demeaned.

Cooper Meets Violent End

On November 6, 2001 I turned on my computer to check my e-mail and was met with the headline, "Militia Leader Killed in Shootout." Milton William Cooper, 58, was killed in a shootout with Arizona police.

I was not surprised by the news. Cooper left UFO research in the very early '90s, and over the years I had observed his entry into the ultra right -wing "patriot" movement, his battles fought with other "patriots" within the movement, his extreme attacks upon the government and ultimately his feud with the IRS. The Feds filed tax evasion and bank fraud charges against Cooper, and it was only a matter of time before a confrontation was to take place.

Not long before Cooper was killed, he threatened a local Arizona man with a handgun for driving too close to his (Cooper's) property. The police were notified, and they filed a felony warrant. They knew of Cooper's volatile nature, and in the late hours of November 5 into early hours of November 6, attempted to lure Cooper out of his home in order to serve the warrant. Cooper responded with a gun, shooting a police officer in the head. That victim survived.

Cooper was not so lucky. The police returned fire, killing him instantly. Cooper's story is ended, but his type of thinking and those who buy into it go on.

D.E.