

UFOs: History and Reality
MCLL S 115
Room 245

Mondays, January 7 2019 to March 11 2019

Don C. Donderi

The course will meet for ten weeks at 9:30 am to 11:30 pm in room 243. I plan to take a 10 – 15 min break at about 10:30.

Lio

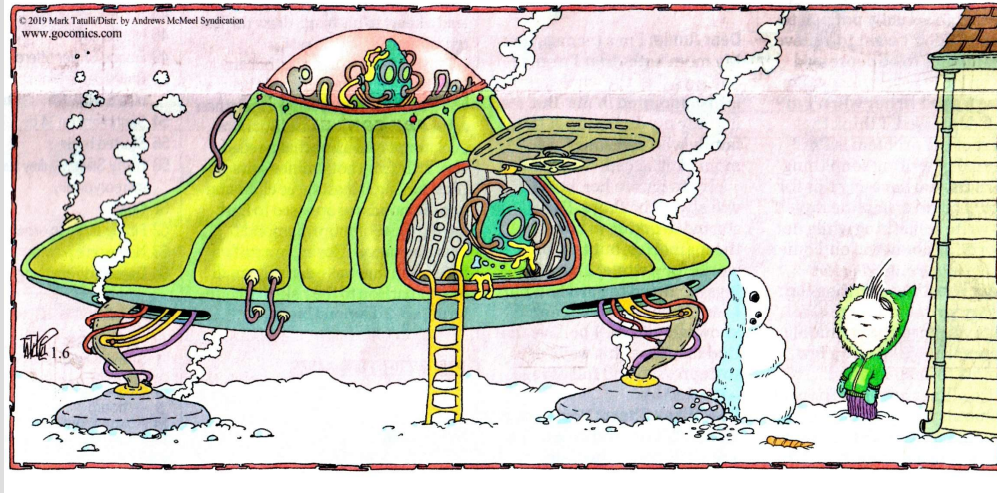
BY MARK TATULLI



A holiday-season start to the course. Of course cartoonists have been dealing with UFOs for decades, but this is the latest one I've seen: Saturday, December 29, 2018 in the Montreal Gazette. Thanks to Mark Tatulli and his friend Lio.

Liō

BY MARK TATULLI



...and if one wasn't enough --- next week, another one!

I had already prepared my slides when .. on Saturday last – Tatulli did it again; two in a row at the turn of the New Year. Is there something in the air?



**And here's an older one by my favorite cartoonist,
Aislin (Terry Mosher) of the Gazette**

Aislin has a retrospective book out – and this older cartoon (2012) is in it. Even Canada's leading visual satirist of politics and people is in on the act when it comes to promoting the now-pervasive cultural idea of ETs.



And – this season – two new dramas based on the UFO/ET theme. This one obviously uses the Roswell Incident – a 1947 UFO crash recovery incident (about which more later) – as a backdrop for suspense and romance

PROJECT BLUE BOOK



And here is a History Channel offering – a dramatization about one chapter in the US government’s involvement with the UFO/ET phenomenon – it was called Project Blue Book, and was a publicly acknowledged project, funded by the US Air Force, to collect and explain data collected about UFOs. It was (and is) highly controversial, but we will review it in detail during the course.

What is interesting, this year, is: why the interest in dramatizing UFO investigations.

Let’s look at what happened last year, at about this time.....

Glowing Auras and 'Black Money': The Pentagon's Mysterious U.F.O. Program

By HELENE COOPER, RALPH BLUMENTHAL and LESLIE KEAN DEC. 16, 2017

WASHINGTON - In the \$600 billion annual Defense Department budgets, the \$22 million spent on the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program was almost impossible to find.

Which was how the Pentagon wanted it.

For years, the program investigated reports of unidentified flying objects, according to Defense Department officials, interviews with program participants and records obtained by The New York Times. It was run by a military intelligence official, Luis Elizondo, on the fifth floor of the Pentagon's C Ring, deep within the building's maze.

The Defense Department has never before acknowledged the existence of the program, which it says it shut down in 2012. But its backers say that, while the Pentagon ended funding for the effort at that time, the program remains in existence. For the past five years, they say, officials with the program have continued to investigate episodes brought to them by service members, while also carrying out their other Defense Department duties.

Last holiday season -- the ET picture changed on December 16, 2017. That was the day the New York Times published a story about the current UFO investigation in the Pentagon and also released a gun camera video of a UFO being chased by an American jet fighter.

It is a bit too simple to say, apropos of this incident, that “the world will never be the same again” because this story has been growing in public consciousness over many years. But there was a big jump in awareness at the end of last year, and this is the story that brought it to our attention.

Christopher Mellon in the *Washington Post*, March 9, 2018

 The Washington Post

Outlook • Perspective

The military keeps encountering UFOs. Why doesn't the Pentagon care?

We have no idea what's behind these weird incidents because we're not investigating.



By Christopher Mellon March 9 at 2:23 PM

Christopher Mellon served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for intelligence in the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations. He is a private equity investor and an adviser to the To the Stars Academy for Arts and Science.

A couple of months later, another whistleblower – and the public awareness of the UFO phenomenon was changed once again.

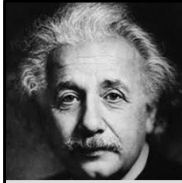
As a reminder in this era of “fake news”, the New York Times and the Washington Post are pillars of rectitude in the reporting of “True news.”



This segment contains an interview with one of the pilots, and an interview with one of the New York Times reporters whom I know well: Lealie Kean. She wrote a book that is on the reserve list for this course, and I wrote a blurb for the book's back cover – along with another journalist interested in the topic, PBS's Miles O'Brien. The Kean book is definitely recommended reading.



And here is a CNN interview that explains why there is a problem. Neil de Grasse Tyson is absolutely typical of the establishment reaction to any story that purports to suggest that some UFOs may be extraterrestrial vehicles. We will be discussing this point-of-view extensively during the course.



Scientific Attitudes

Albert Einstein

**These people have seen something.
*What it is I do not know and
am not curious to know.***

Letter to Louis A. Gardner, July 23, 1952 cited in Jacobs, D. M. *The UFO Controversy in America*, Indiana University Press, 1975 (Signet Edition, p. 71.)

Two historians of science, Michael Swords and Robert Powell, wrote about UFOs that “There is something about this subject, some barrier to its believability, some challenge of an emotional kind, which produces the most inexplicable responses by otherwise reasonable, highly functional people.” Here are two examples of that attitude expressed by scientists:

This sentiment of Albert Einstein was expressed in a letter to someone who had written to him about UFOs in 1952

- 1. Some UFOs are Extraterrestrial Vehicles (ETVs).**
- 2. Some ETVs have ET crews.**
- 3. Some ET crews catch and release humans in order to study us.**

These are the propositions that I believe are supported by the evidence to be reviewed in this course. The rest of the course will develop the arguments and analyze the counter-arguments for the three propositions stated above.

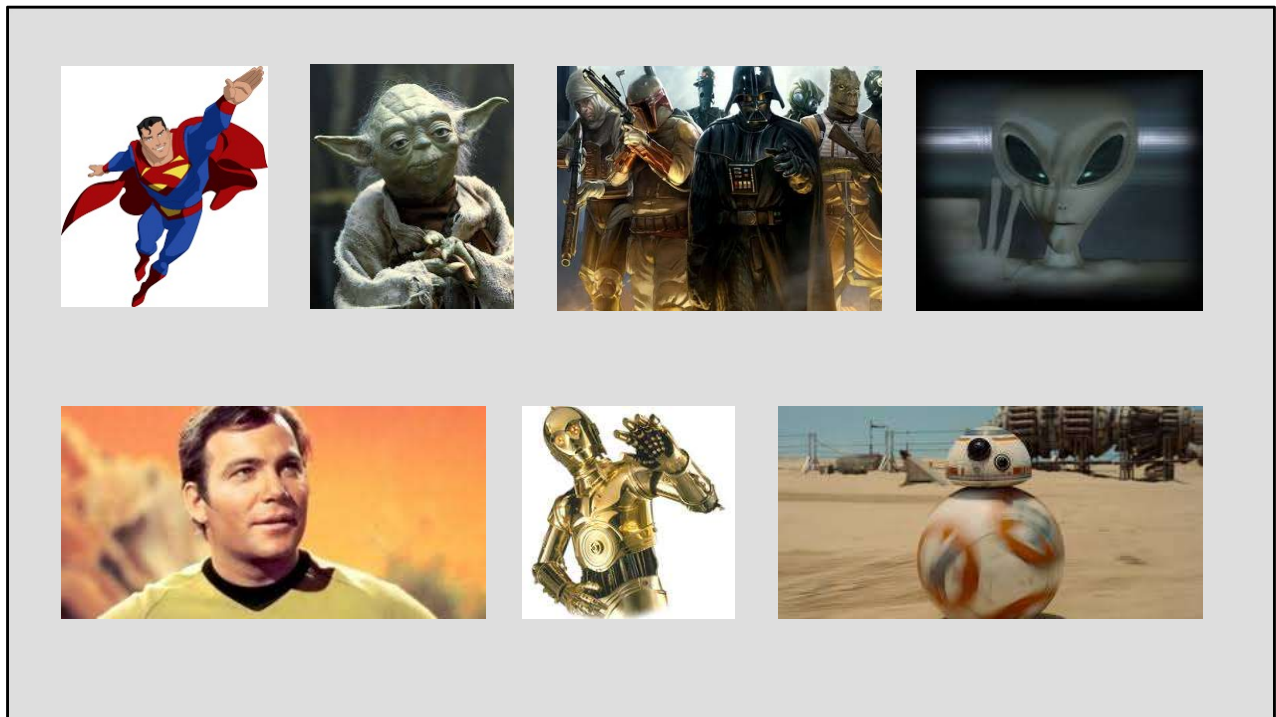
It is easy to state them: it is less easy to know what to do about them when the implications of each proposition begin to sink in.

Reserve and General Reading List for <i>UFOs: History and Reality: MCLLS 115</i>					
McGill Community for Lifelong Learning Winter Semester 2019 Monday 9:30 - 11:30 am, Jan 7- Mar 11					
Instructor: Don C. Donderi, Associate Professor (Retired), McGill University Department of Psychology					
email: dcdonderi@sympatico.ca; phone 514 486 3631					
Last Name	Reading List Name	First Name and Initial	Title	Call No.	Location
Donderi	Donderi	Don C.	<i>UFOs, ETs and Alien Abductions: A Scientist Looks at the Evidence</i>	e-book	McGill Library e-book
Swords, M. & Powell, R	Swords	Michael	<i>UFOs and Government: A Historical Inquiry</i>	TL780 U22 2012	Schulich Reserves
Jacobs	Jacobs 2	David M.	<i>UFOs and abductions: challenging the borders of knowledge</i>	BF2050 U36 2000	Schulich Reserves
Kean	Kean	Leslie	<i>UFOs: Generals, pilots and government officials go on the record</i>	TL789 K357 2010	Schulich Reserves
Sagan	Sagan	Carl	<i>UFO's -- a scientific debate</i>	TL769 A1 U23	Schulich Reserves
Berliner	Berliner	Don	Crash at Corona: the U. S. military retrieval and cover-up of a UFO	TL789.3 F75 1997	Schulich Stacks
Bryan	Bryan	C. D. B.	Close encounters of the fourth kind	TL789 B79 1995	Schulich Stacks
Bullard	Bullard	Thomas E.	The myth and mystery of UFOs	TL789 B75 2010	Schulich Stacks
Clancy	Clancy	Susan A.	Abducted: how people come to believe they were kidnapped by aliens	BF2050 C56 2005	Schulich Stacks
Clark	Clark	Jerome	The UFO Encyclopedia	TL789 C55 1990	Schulich Stacks
Fuller	Fuller	John G.	The Interrupted journey	TL789 F82 1974	Schulich Stacks
Hall	Hall	Richard	The UFO Evidence: Volume II	TL789 U137 2001	Schulich Stacks
Hynek	Hynek	J. Allen	The UFO experience: a scientific inquiry	not listed	Schulich Stacks
Jacobs	Jacobs 1	David M.	The UFO Controversy in America	TL789 J26 1975	Schulich Stacks
Keyhoe	Keyhoe	Donald J.	Flying saucers from outer space	TL789K42	Schulich Stacks
Lewis	Lewis	James R.	UFOs and popular culture: an encyclopedia of contemporary myth	TL789 L485 2000	Schulich Stacks
Menzel	Menzel	Donald	Flying Saucers	TL789 M45 1953	Schulich Stacks
Palmer	Palmer	Susan J.	Aliens adored: Rael's UFO religion	BP605 R338 P35 2004	Schulich Stacks
Pritchard	Pritchard	Andrea	Alien Discussions: proceedings of the abduction study conference	BF2050 A23 1992	Schulich Stacks
Ruppelt	Ruppelt	Edward J.	The report on unidentified flying objects	TL789 R8	Schulich Stacks
Rutkowski	Rutkowski	Chris	The Canadian UFO report: the best cases revealed	TL789.6 C3 R87 2006	Schulich Stacks
Sturrock	Sturrock	Peter A.	The UFO enigma: A new review of the physical evidence	TL789.3 S787 1999	Schulich Stacks
US House Committee	US House	US House Committee	Aliens in the skies	TL789 U56	Schulich Stacks
Vallee	Vallee	Jacques	The invisible college	TL789 V336 1975	Schulich Stacks
Warren	Warren	Larry	Left at East Gate: a first hand account of the Bentwaters UFO incident..	TL789.6 G7 W37 1997	Schulich Stacks

The Schulich Science library across the street has an excellent collection of UFO material. The four reserve books as well as the Donderi e-book are accessible through the Schulich library. I hope the bookstore has paperback copies of my book; I have asked them to stock copies.

MCLL s 115 UFOS: History and Reality				Suggested Reading Schedule			
Session	Speaker	Part	Topic	McGill e-Book	Books on 48-Hour Reserve		
				Donderi	Hynek	Kean	Jacobs
January 7	Donderi		1 Overview 2 Beginnings	ix-53	vii - 31		xi - 14
January 14	Donderi Palmer		1 Early Cases 2 The Raelians: a Quebec UFO religion		33 - 69		1-72 82-140
January 21	Donderi Vendittelli		1 Early UFO Groups / St-Adolphe d'Howard 2 Ruwa, Zimbabwe close encounter				73-98
January 28	Donderi		1 Government responses 2 Skeptics and debunkers	75-85	86 - 137		101-161
February 4	Donderi		1 Low, big and slow 2 Scope of the evidence	87-123			
February 11	Donderi		1 Occupants and abductions: early cases 2 Abduction skeptics and abduction researchers	125-144	138 - 163		142-191 192-302
February 18	Donderi		1 The psychology of the abduction experience 2 Media and government attitudes	147-171	165 - 191		162-261
February 25	Donderi		1 Philosophy of science and the UFO/abduction evidence 2 Media and government attitudes	173-200	192 - 213		262-291
March 4	Donderi		1 Internet noise, public opinion and UFOs 2 Religion, society and the UFO evidence				
March 11	Donderi		1 The implications 2 What might happen next		213 - 233		303 - 310

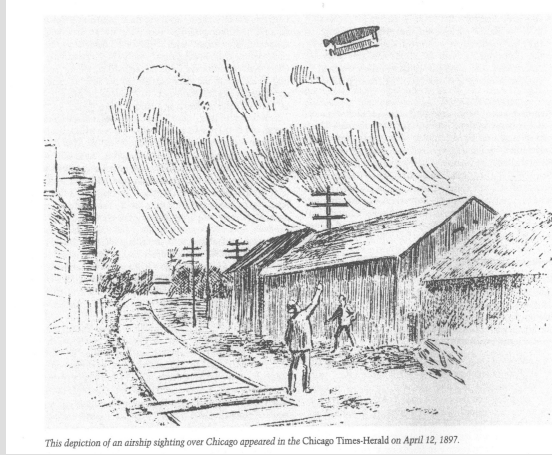
Here is the course outline as it is planned at this time. The schedule is subject to change, depending on the availability of the guest speakers who have agreed to participate.



The first thing we have to contend with is that the idea of extraterrestrial life, and extraterrestrial contact, is already embedded deeply in contemporary culture. If there is a real extraterrestrial phenomenon, we have to be able to separate it from the fictional (and very interesting) cultural phenomenon. The super-abundance of imaginative extraterrestrial fiction makes this difficult; the particular reasons will be discussed later on.



The San Francisco Call of November 19, 1896, ran this drawing of a mysterious airship seen over Sacramento two nights earlier.



This depiction of an airship sighting over Chicago appeared in the Chicago Times-Herald on April 12, 1897.

In the late nineteenth century, Americans began seeing “airships”, and newspapers began reporting them. At this time, lighter-than air flight was familiar; heavier-than-air flight was controversial, and more than one journalist was known to have invented an “airship” story because it was amusing copy.

H. G. Wells: The War of the Worlds (set in England, first published in 1898)



For example, even before heavier-than-air flight, human imagination had anticipated invasions from outer space: H.G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* was set in late-nineteenth-century London and its suburbs.

- .



...more of the apocalyptic vision of an alien invasion from Mars. Spoiler alert.... London is still there, and survived the Blitz as well! One of my colleagues was pulled from the rubble of the Blitz by Winston Churchill, but no one had to be pulled out of London after “War of the Worlds.”

Martians Invade America: *The War of the Worlds*, 1938



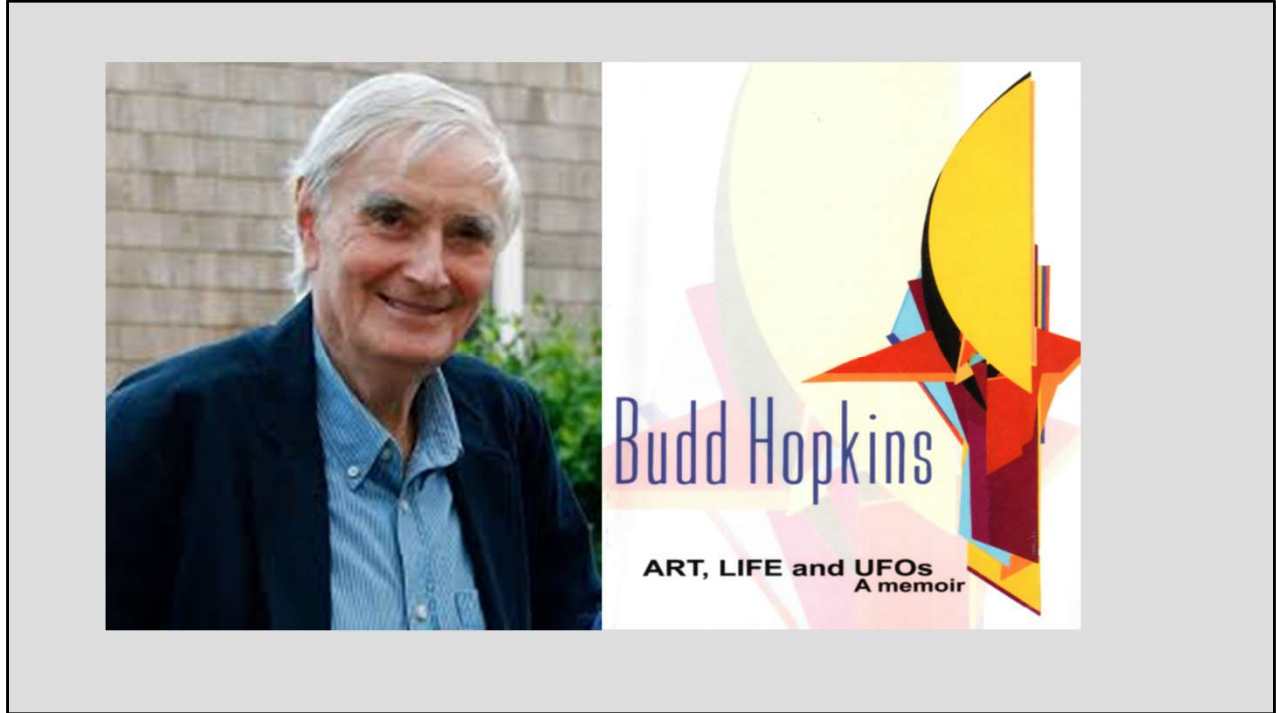
New York, Monday, October 31, 1938

Radio Listeners in Panic,
Taking War Drama as Fact



Orson Welles did the trick, with radio, in 1938.
Here's a sample:

I was too young to remember (I don't actually know if my parents listened) but one of my friends was not too young....



The late Budd Hopkins was born in 1931 (He was a well-known abduction researcher, and a friend). He remembers, and describes in his memoir, the reaction of his father (a calm man) and the reaction of one of his panicked employees (not a calm man) when the Orson Welles theater performance was aired. As a result, as Budd tells us, he was totally skeptical about UFOs until – as an adult – he saw one, along with other witnesses, on Cape Cod.

September 5, 2009



September 15, 2009

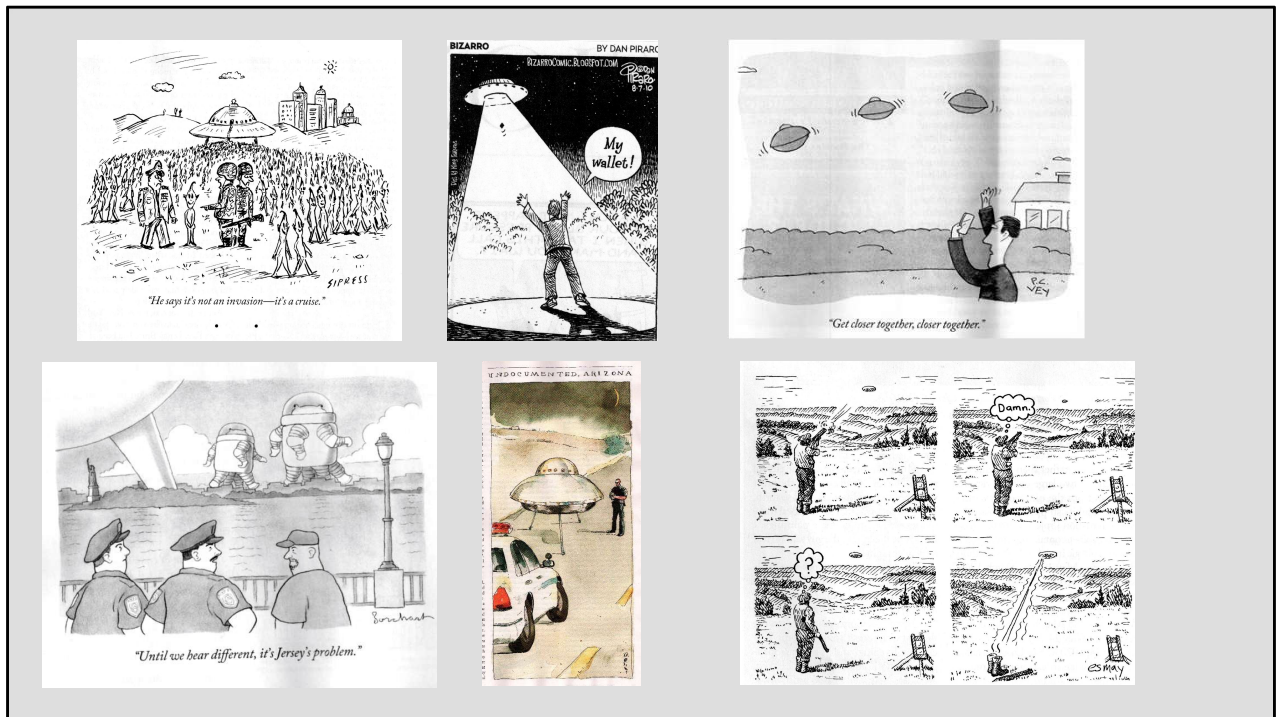


September 21, 2009

(H.G. Wells' birthday)



Google went through an enthusiastic period about UFOs, around the time of H.G. Well's birthday. I'm not sure whether they have repeated this virtuoso performance since: I don't think so.



And I have scores of UFO cartoons, from local newspapers up through the New Yorker – they are ubiquitous.



... another page of mostly New Yorker cartoons, with an ad thrown in.

The point to be made: the ET UFO theme is ubiquitous in our culture. The “theme” doesn’t have to be taught, what has to be taught is: why the theme represents reality.

Partial Chronology of the Modern UFO Phenomenon

1897	Airships	1956	Ruppelt <i>The report on unidentified flying objects</i>
1944	WWII Foo Fighters	1963	Menzel <i>The world of flying saucers</i>
1946	Swedish ghost rockets	1965	John Fuller <i>Incident at Exeter</i>
1947	Kenneth Arnold sighting: the "Index case"	1966	Fuller <i>The interrupted journey</i>
	USAF Project Sign	1968	RAND corporation: UFOs: What do to?
1948	USAF Project Grudge	1968	Congressional hearings
	J. Allen Hynek consults until 1969	1969	AIAA Symposium
1950	Grudge revitalized		Condon Commission Report
1952	Grudge renamed Blue Book	1972	Hynek <i>The UFO experience: a scientific inquiry</i>
	Washington, D. C. "Flap"	1975	Jacobs <i>The UFO Controversy in America</i>
	Robertson Panel Report	1977	Menzel <i>The UFO enigma: the definitive explanation</i>
1953	Donald Menzel <i>Flying Saucers</i>	1981	Budd Hopkins' <i>Missing Time</i>
1955	Fitts: "sightings the result of misperceptions..."	2017	<i>New York Times</i> revelations about Pentagon UFO program

Sooner or later, most of these events will be mentioned during our sessions. The modern chronology starts towards the end of WWII and continues to the present day.

A student of the phenomenon will eventually become familiar with most or all of these landmark events; they are well documented.



Take a Peek Into Our “X-Files”

The CIA declassified hundreds of documents in 1978 detailing the Agency’s investigations into Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs). The documents date primarily from the late 1940s and 1950s.

To help navigate the vast amount of data contained in our FOIA UFO collection, we’ve decided to highlight a few documents both skeptics and believers will find interesting. Below you will find five documents we think X-Files character Agent Fox Mulder would love to use to try and persuade others of the existence of extraterrestrial activity. We also pulled five documents we think his skeptical partner, Agent Dana Scully, could use to prove there is a scientific explanation for UFO sightings.

The truth is out there; click on the links to find it.

Posted: Jan 21, 2016 05:18 PM

Last Updated: Jan 21, 2016 05:49 PM

<https://www.cia.gov/news-information/blog/2016/take-a-peek-into-our-x-files.html#>

The CIA has released documents that they previously withheld and/or debunked as part of US government policy. As a result, this course may be almost past its “best before” date. That’s fine with me because the goal of people who are doing what I do is not to “solve the UFO mystery” – because we already are reasonably certain that my propositions 1, 2 and 3 are correct – but to make sure that the public can discuss the reality of ET surveillance without fear of ridicule. This will mean that the implications of ET surveillance for the future of human civilization on this planet can be discussed in order to find a course of collective (governmental and civil society) action that will be in our specie’s best interest.

Top 5 CIA Documents Mulder Would Love To Get His Hands On:

1. [Flying Saucers Reported Over East Germany, 1952](#) (PDF 325 KB)
2. [Minutes of Branch Chief's Meeting on UFOs, 11 August 1952](#) (PDF 162 KB)
3. [Flying Saucers Reported Over Spain and North Africa, 1952](#) (PDF 266 KB)
4. [Survey of Flying Saucer Reports, 1 August 1952](#) (PDF 175 KB)
5. [Flying Saucers Reported Over Belgian Congo Uranium Mines, 1952](#) (PDF 262 KB)

Top 5 CIA Documents Scully Would Love To Get Her Hands On:

1. [Scientific Advisory Panel on Unidentified Flying Objects, 14-17 January 1953](#) (PDF 907 KB)
2. [Office Memorandum on Flying Saucers, 15 March 1949](#) (PDF 110 KB)
3. [Memorandum to the CIA Director on Flying Saucers, 2 October 1952](#) (PDF 443 KB)
4. [Meeting of the OSI Advisory Group on UFOs, 21 January 1953](#) (PDF 194 KB)
5. [Memorandum for the Record on Flying Saucers, 3 December 1952](#) (PDF 179 KB)

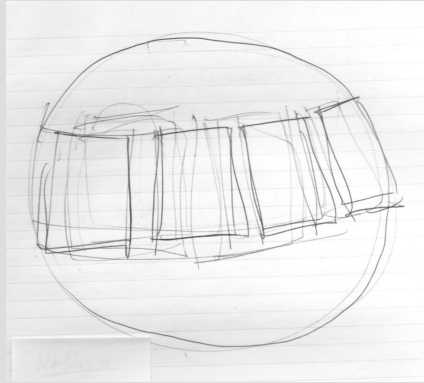
Do you want to believe? Then find out [how to investigate a flying saucer](#).

Posted: Jan 21, 2016 05:18 PM

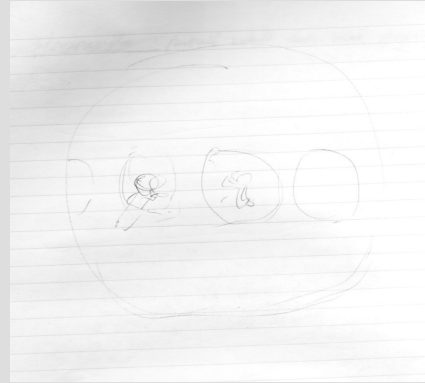
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The CIA went so far as to guide you towards documents on their website that played into the “X-files” theme; either skeptical or persuaded. No one forced them to do this; I think it was (circa 2016) part of an acclimatization process that is still continuing.

UFO Drawings by "Professor X" and his wife



Wife's drawing



Professor's drawing

Before introducing the field in general, let me review two cases I have personally investigated. They are at the beginning of the book.

Professor X: a reluctant professional witness, as are most professionals: unless you are a specialist in visual perception and human memory (which I am) you probably don't want to be tarred with the UFO brush because many of your colleagues will giggle and be embarrassed for your sake, not being sure whether you were mentally ok when

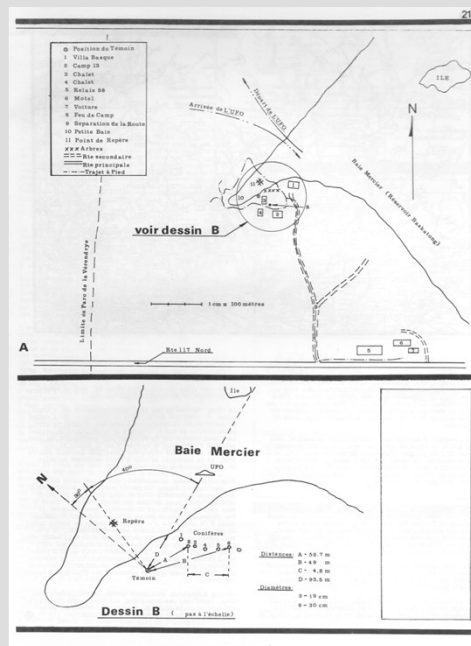
you saw what you saw.



Another case I investigated (with the help of another investigator and a McGill lab) – again reported in the introduction to the book. It was reported in the quarterly magazine of a local UFO group.

As in any investigation of this kind, you have to have the technical resources to rule out fakery. We did. The photo (s) are real.

UFO-Quebec No. 16,
Quatrième Trimestre,
Décembre 1978, p. 21



Here is the trajectory of the object, reconstructed through interviews with the witnesses.

“Some of the results here reached are of a character which I regret, since they cannot be agreeable to persons for whom I have a very cordial regard. The conclusions drawn from the facts may be matter of opinion; but it will be remembered that the facts themselves can be overthrown only by overthrowing the evidence on which they rest, or bringing forward counter-evidence of equal or greater strength; and neither task will be found an easy one.”

Francis Parkman, preface to *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV*

I do not take a confrontational approach to this subject. But as Francis Parkman (the great American historian of French Canada) wrote, “the facts themselves can be overthrown only by overthrowing the evidence on which they rest, or bringing forward counter-evidence of equal or greater strength, and neither task will be found an easy one.”