

could anyone recall such symptoms in the records of the 30,000 patients institutionalized or treated since 1900 at the Essex County Overbrook Hospital.

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## UFOs IN NEW JERSEY

by Berthold E. Schwarz, M.D.

Few subjects have aroused more controversy than unidentified flying objects. The atmospheric physicist, McDonald,<sup>1</sup> has called them "the greatest international scientific problem of our times." The recently released University of Colorado study (by the Condon Group) concluded that "...nothing has come from the study of UFOs in the past twenty-one years that has added to scientific knowledge...and that further extensive study of UFOs probably cannot be justified."<sup>2</sup>

Hynek,<sup>3</sup> professor of astronomy and chief scientific consultant to the Air Force on the subject, in a marked departure from his earlier skepticism, called for Congress to establish a board of inquiry for the specific purpose of an in-depth investigation of the UFO phenomenon.

The Aerial Phenomena Research Organization in its APRO Bulletin and the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena in its The U.F.O. Investigator, and other publications, have mentioned many possible UFO effects of interest to physicians, but there has been little in the medical literature. Meerloo,<sup>4,5</sup> a pioneering psychiatrist in so many fields, gave an analysis of possible errors of observation, and Walker<sup>6</sup> "presented various procedures for establishing the credibility level for observers." Walker used a hypothetical case to illustrate his methods of combining different branches of medical knowledge.

A Brazilian physician, Olavo Fontes,<sup>7</sup> studied an extraordinary alleged contactee case. In two recent reports<sup>8,9</sup> of close UFO encounters much of the relevant medical literature was mentioned. The first-hand studies showed how medicine could be useful (1) in evaluating possible UFO-induced biologic effects, and (2) in determining whether the alleged UFO episode was a reality, a delusion, an illusion, a hallucination, or a fabrication.

In thirteen years of private practice in which I have seen 3,391 patients in psychiatric examinations and have participated in thousands of hours of psychotherapy, I have never noted symptoms related to UFOs. A similar finding was confirmed on questioning Theodore A. Anderson, M.D., a senior psychiatrist, and Henry A. Davidson, M.D. (then Medical Director) of the Essex County Overbrook Hospital. Dr. Davidson recalled no patients with gross UFO symptoms out of three thousand in-patients, nor among all those presented to the staff while he was superintendent:

nor of thirty thousand patients who had been hospitalized since the turn of the century. My own check of standard textbooks and journals in psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and neurology also confirmed this absence of UFO-like experiences in various "nervous" and mental diseases.

The physician can often be the first to obtain reports of possible UFOs and to uncover hidden cases because a patient will often turn to a family doctor as a trusted friend. With the kind assistance of colleagues and friends, I have learned of, and studied, numerous well-documented UFO sightings involving people from all walks of life, including professionally trained observers, such as physicians, engineers, psychologists, airline pilots, special police, and state troopers.

Let me here present five close-range sightings which occurred under favorable conditions in northern New Jersey and which involved trustworthy witnesses. In each case, I undertook telephone, and later psychiatric, interviews in the homes or offices of the witnesses. In each case, I inspected the actual place where the UFO episode allegedly took place.

### Case 1

## CE1: big disk

"Mrs. Janet Ahlers, age 32, of Oakland, New Jersey, is an artist-housewife and proprietress of an antique store. In excellent health, Mrs. Ahlers has had no serious previous illness or emotional disturbance. Excerpts from an interview with her follow.

"It was late spring, about 2:30 a.m. in 1957. I was expecting a baby and was up during the night. Our bedroom window faced east. I was lying in bed and was disturbed by a pulsating sensation in my head, like a sound that was too high-pitched to be heard. As it came closer it became a whining, pulsating, high-pitched sound. I tried to wake my husband but he didn't stir quickly enough. I got to the window just as the thing went over the house. I could see it clearly. It was close to the tree tops and it seemed to stir them. It was saucer-shaped and seemed to have a hard edge around the circumference where the lights were - the (port) holes. It had one light in the center, on the bottom, and it was circled by six to eight other bright orange-red discs.

"It seemed to be a solid metallic object with holes on the bottom. The one in the center was larger and lighter in color. The UFO seemed to make everything reddish as it very slowly went over. I had to look up at it and could see under it (Figure 1). It just seemed to clear the knoll which was a few hundred feet from the house. It lasted less than a minute. This UFO was much larger than an automobile and wider than the house or a lot . . . more than seventy-five feet. I woke my husband. I trembled for about two hours. There were no physical effects."

Shortly after this episode Mrs. Ahlers told her mother about it and at a later time a circle of her friends, one of whom informed the author.

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