

Phenomena Without Borders: Consciousness, the Paranormal and the Contact Modalities ¹

John B. Alexander, Ph.D.

*Because the phenomenon fits none of the usual categories... UFOs cannot be analyzed through the standard research techniques... All we can do is trace their effects on humans.... We are dealing with a yet unrecognized level of consciousness, independent of man but closely linked to the earth.... **I do not believe anymore that UFOs are simply the spacecraft of some race of extraterrestrial visitors.** This notion is too simplistic to explain their appearance, the frequency of their manifestations through recorded history, and the structure of the information exchanged with them during contact.*

Dr. Jacques Vallee, Ufology research pioneer and consciousness scholar.

One of the most fundamental errors in the study of various phenomena is to preordain boundaries while the data are still incomplete, and always will remain so. In retrospect, the problems become obvious. For instance, “*flying saucers*” became attached to UFOs, because of the simple report of a pilot attempting to describe what he had seen near the mountains in Washington. *Near-death experiences* (NDEs) were categorized because of the initially perceived relationship between the observer and their apparent physical state at the time of the incident. The term “*remote viewing*” was established based on the concept that the person “saw” the target at a distance, yet it was quickly determined that other senses could be involved in the process (sounds, smells, touch, etc.) In almost all cases, the descriptors initially applied to a topic area were either incomplete, or wrong. Worse, the terminology served to inhibit comprehensive research into these phenomena.

Additionally, those parameters often reflect the biases of the researchers and usually come from the established scientific or philosophical disciplines as represented by the investigator’s background. As it is said, “If the only tool you have is a hammer, then all problems look like a nail.” The same situation is prevalent in these investigations

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of phenomena. If the investigator is a physicist; the reports will be couched in terms of physics. Psychologists and psychiatrists are most likely to confer a mental diagnosis. Even when multidisciplinary teams are formed, while the response may be broader, it will still be constrained by the limits of their expertise. Relying on traditional educational experience, in most Western developed nations, parameters are normally established based on a materialist worldview, thus excluding other nonconventional options. Perturbation of time with issues such as precognition and retrocognition represent serious obstacles to a strict materialist worldview, and are thus generally ignored by conventional science. Of course, recent research into retrocausation represents even greater problems for theoretical explanations.

In all presentations I openly acknowledge that I have a personal agenda. That is to assist in making it possible for our young best and brightest scientists to engage in studies of phenomena without risking their reputation or livelihood. Currently, there is a significant stigma that attaches to anyone who enters these fields of research. That was demonstrated by the ad hominin attacks in *Scientific American* against me. The issue of concern to them does not even have to be psi-related phenomena. In my case, it was work on non-lethal weapons that they didn't approve of. Still the author, John Horgan, used my interest in various phenomena to question my credibility across the board.

Many readers will remember the plight of Dr. John Mack, the acclaimed Harvard Medical School psychiatrist, who also happened to be a Pulitzer Prize winner. As I noted in *Reality Denied: Firsthand Experiences with Things that Can't Happen-But Did*, "Based on his controversial publications, Harvard initiated a panel to determine, 'whether Dr. Mack was conducting his research in accordance with Harvard's standards of scholarly investigation and whether he was exploiting his subjects or exposing them to harm.' This was the first time such a procedure was initiated against a tenured professor. John, a personal friend of mine, was not suspected of ethics violations or professional misconduct. His sin was to research people who claimed to have had alien encounters and publish the results." That possibly is the most egregious formal attack made on one with such impeccable credentials. The list of competent scientists and investigators who have been impugned with guilt by association is lengthy and illuminating. Not known are the names of those scientists who either watch from the wings or never enter into public discourse for fear of damage to their reputations. It is imperative that an environment be created in which their contributions can be made.

However, it must also be remembered that there does exist a number of researchers who have pontificated on more than they know, or can claim. These topics, like many others, also have their fair share of outright charlatans. Problematic, they damage the credibility of the competent investigators and deserve to be called out. As a friend, and former senior official of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department told me, "If you don't take out the garbage, someone else will do it for you." While Sid was addressing law enforcement, the same is true for the fields of studies of phenomena.

From the perspective of the Dr. Edgar Mitchell FREE Foundation UFO Experiencer Research Study, published in the book "*Beyond UFOs*", there is something you, the individual who have had unusual events, can do to help. Namely, tell people about your experiences. There is a need for both the public and scientific professionals to understand these are normal events, and occurring on a far wider scale than we ever imagined. They may be infrequent when compared with everyday situations. Still, they are happening at a rate that deserves to be understood and respected. The language applied to such fields of study even needs to be changed to reflect the authenticity of these events. More specifically, there is a need to drop "para" from the vocabulary, except maybe for "parachute." These events are rare but normal not, "paranormal" or "parapsychological." Even medics are not really "paramedics" but professionals with a substantial amount of training. Words matter. They influence how the general public thinks about these topics. Further, by speaking out, you are helping in normalizing these events, and encouraging others to do the same. We can turn the tide of disparaging thought.

Complicating research of phenomena are events that are ineffable. As an example, in some NDEs, individuals are exposed to lights, colors, sounds, and even spiritual entities that defy description in consensus reality. For clarity, I will refer to consensus reality, as the physical circumstances in which there is common agreement between individuals (i.e. the sky is blue, the floor is solid, etc.) However, in some situations, observations of phenomena may be of qualities that do not even exist in the world as we know it. Personally, I was struck by the comments of one famous New-Age musician who was a roommate of mine at a rustic conference several decades ago. He told some of us that he had to wait for instruments to be invented so that he could play the music that he already had heard in his head. So too do some of those using the psychedelic, Ayahuasca who say they experienced colors that we have yet to discover. The paintings of Pablo Amaringo, Eduardo Luna, and others, display an attempt to replicate the visions they encountered from the soul of the vine. They admit whatever is produced falls short of their transpersonal journeys.

Any attempt at research projects usually begins by defining the problem. That approach actually makes sense in most cases, especially when dealing with physical events. When the observations are indescribable, however, and often seem illogical, setting limits of acceptable solutions is problematic and premature. Historically, research into phenomena begins by personal encounters with unique situations. The individual's assumptions frequently are that the event or observation is totally unique. There is a high probability that they misunderstood the situation or were being misled. They also believe there is no other, or very little, research on such events. Well-meaning, they attempt to understand the situation they have encountered. If they have a professional background, and willing to risk ridicule, they may publish an article in a journal in their respective field.

Importantly, the choice of the journal selected may have significant influence over the direction future investigations take. The author will consciously, or unconsciously, tailor the article to fit the accepted format of that publication. While they may push the envelope, they cannot exceed the subject boundaries for that journal. Once parameters are formed, they can be very hard to break. Luck may also play a significant role in determining whether or not the event plays to a wider audience. For example, the personal proclivities of reporters, editors, or producers will play a role in determining if the media picks up on any given event or report. My personal example came when I wrote an article titled *The New Mental Battlefield* and submitted it to a staid official U.S. Army magazine, *Military Review*. It was the first time that either remote viewing or psychokinesis was addressed in a formal military publication. My thought was it had little chance of getting into print. The luck issue was that the editor had previously had his own near-death experience. Not only was it published, he made it the cover article.

So too does timing matter in the publishing world. If critical events are happening, the probability of exposure decreases. On a “slow news day” the probabilities increase. Unfortunately, the tantalizing nature, or even salaciousness of the story, will make a difference. Applicable here, as the media knows, “If it bleeds, it leads,” and there is constant competition for story recognition. Unfortunately, perceived interest, not importance of the material, is often the determining factor.

Consider unidentified flying objects (UFOs), for example. The topic did not become popular until the media picked up on the claims of Kenneth Arnold in 1947. As previously indicated, based on his description, the term “flying saucer” was coined and for a long time was considered by the public to be synonymous with UFOs. As we know, UFOs portrayed a wider range of objects, and in reality, the accepted terms continue to morph. Consider the use of the term “*Unexplained Aerial Phenomena*” (UAP) or making an assumption of origin with *alien spacecraft*, and similar terms to both describe the observation and establish distance or uniqueness from the more traditional UFO moniker.

As such, I argue that even the definitions relate to the general topics of this paper are illogical and inaccurate. Yet, because of tradition, and the extensive use of erroneous nomenclature, it becomes almost impossible to reset the mindset, especially of the general public. Consider this; what is a UFO? On one end of the spectrum we have little balls of light, sometimes referred to as orbs. But then, there are a variety of orbs, many of which do not fit well with the UFO phenomenon. On the other end of the equation there are hard physical craft that are determined to be more than a mile across. Worse, there are thousands of variations in shapes and sizes reported. Sometimes they are visible, and others not. At times that applies to the same object. There appear to be those objects that are seen by some people yet not visible to others standing nearby. There are reports of craft that appear to change size based on the visual perspective of the observer. That is, from the exterior they seem to be one size, but once entered, convey the image of

something much, much larger. While physically impossible in conventional reality, that description has been reported by astute observers. Similarly, there are conflicting reports from a variety of sensor systems. Some UFOs are tracked on non-cooperative (military-type) radars while others are not recorded at all. Response to acoustic and magnetic sensors vary as do thermal imaging.

Equally troubling to me are the diverse reports of interactions between humans and sentient non-human intelligent (NHI) entities. Indeed, there are some similarities in some reports, such as Energy Beings, a vast array of Human Looking Beings, Ghosts/Spirits, Greys, and thousands of different types of physical beings that seem to be right out of central casting for the infamous *Star War's* bar scene. Also confusing are reports of geographic specialization, meaning certain types of entities are reported in clusters in specific areas of the world. That infers that there exists a galactically-endorsed plan that has subdivided Earth for visitation privileges.

When examining such interactions in a broader sense, we find that there are reports of contacts between humans and NHIs throughout the entirety of recorded human history and possibly longer. In addition, they appear in all cultures around the world. Here too there are a wide variety of entities in all shapes and sizes. What is relatively new are the reports that such beings arrive from transportation in metal flying craft.

Sex with beings always attracts attention and a popular theme is that alien cultures need our eggs and sperm to revitalize their depleted civilization. The first known reports deal with incubi (a demon that has intercourse with women) and succubus (a female demon that seduces men). They first were indicated in Mesopotamia dating to circa 2400 BCE. In Christianity's Bible in the Old Testament there are such stories. Genesis, 6:2 states, "when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and bare children to them." Greek mythology has sexual contact between Zeus, and other gods, and human women. Roman mythology has Titan, son of Neptune, capturing a human woman. In Norse mythology Odin, father of Thor, also embraced human women.

All of the preceding in my view is problematic. If some of the crafts are real (and they are), and interactions with unknown entities occur (and they do), then an immediate assumption is that if they do not come from any known human source, they must come from someplace else. That leads observers to what is known as the *extraterrestrial hypothesis* or ETH. Of course, if constricted to the physical aspects, how such objects could transit the vast distances of interstellar space raises its own set of issues. More importantly, the potential for established points of origin defy logic.

The question becomes, if the ETH is not viable or supported, then what is the nature of origin of the NHI that have established contact with humans? That, in my view is far from certain. A reasonable extrapolation is the *extra* or *interdimensional theory* (EDH). The EDH allows for numerous types of interactions and could explain the vast

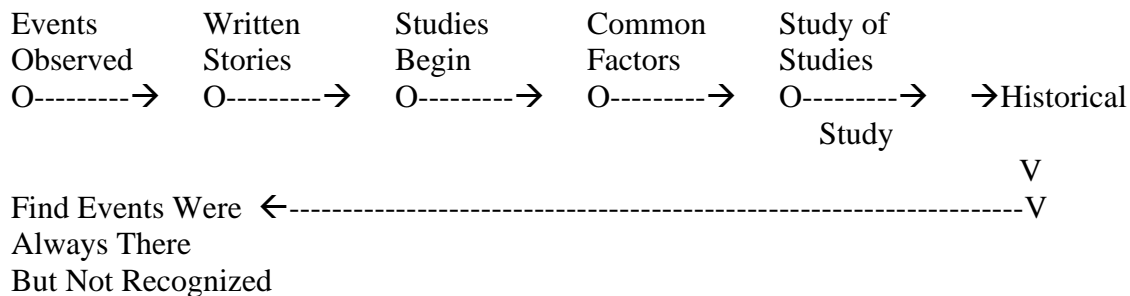
variances that are reported. It is my opinion, that a multidimensional approach is a better fit of the facts than does a unidimensional space travel theory (or the traditional ETH)

It is worth noting how studies of various phenomena begin. Figure 1, for example, represents a diagram similar to one I created several decades ago when writing the historical etiology of aerial phenomena and similar events. Appearing first in the *International UFO Reporter*, it is interpreted as follows:

1. A triggering event is observed that cannot be explained
2. A story (or stories) is/are written about the event that attracts attention
3. As more reports emerge, the first studies are conducted and reports created
4. "Experts" determine the common factors and establish the parameters that are considered acceptable
5. As more reports are published, a study of studies is conducted and the body of evidence grow
6. Next historical studies are undertaken, examining as many previous events as can be located
7. The determination is that these events were observed long before the triggering events, possibly centuries to millennia

FIGURE 1

MODEL OF RESEARCH PHENOMENA



The last issue is possibly the most important as it speaks to our ability to observe. There are conflicting tales of indigenous people not seeing real objects, even though they encountered them. One rumor was that indigenous people of the Indies could not see Christopher Columbus's ship when they arrived and assumed it was a lack of historical context. The problem of scotomas is well established, and probably experienced by most readers. Think of the picture that can be viewed either as two candlesticks or two people kissing. The change occurs only in the mind of the observer. That also applies to the well-known old hag-young girl shadow. As with many optical illusions, once the objective is pointed out, it is easy to reacquire. It is the initial identification that is critical. Thus, many of these "new phenomena" have, in fact, always existed and just not recognized; at least not in Western countries.



Currently, the inability, or unwillingness, to acknowledge the existence of some phenomena, such as UAPs, NDEs, OBEs and ESP, among others, is based on limitations of the observer's belief system. Willful ignorance is endemic and infects several sectors of our society. Having entered the post-truth era is further complicating our understanding of these phenomena. It was bad enough when there were trustworthy sources of information, especially at the highest levels of government. That is no longer true. Then too there are websites that imitate real sources and spread misinformation.

When making presentations I usually say you need three things if you want to become involved in studying various fields of phenomena: 1) understand conspiracy theory as you automatically become part of it, 2) be independently wealthy or have a day job, as nobody is making big bucks in these fields except scam artists, and 3) have thick skin, as you will be attacked no matter what your position is. While this has been true for a long time, the controversy has gotten far worse in recent years. The level of vitriol in ad hominin attacks often borders on, if not crossing into, libelous accusations. As an example, we even see honorable people being labeled as pedophiles with zero evidence to support the statement. Anonymity on the internet brings out the worst in people.

This subject for discussion is inserted as it directly relates to these topics. In this chapter I have advocated for people coming forward and relating their experiences as a crucial means for development and acceptance of many phenomena. The message to them from the internet trolls is exactly the opposite. If you discuss an event, or publish a recounting of it, you are almost certainly going to experience personal degradation. Obviously, that is something nobody wants and has a deleterious effect on both the individuals and their respective fields. The community needs to become far more civil which may be counterintuitive when society in general appears to be slipping with the current president leading the way.

My advice to the skeptics has remained constant. Do nothing. Led by the UFO community, self-immolation has become a norm. Skeptics are not required to make cogent counter-arguments when presented with factual accounts. It is more than apparent that the true believers will decimate anyone who does not totally agree with their predisposed position. If anything has been learned from the FREE Experiencer Research Study, it is that these experiences are more common than previously thought and that they can vary widely. Therefore, taking potshots at those who report to have had so-called anomalous experiences that do not meet one's expectations is both disheartening and detrimental.

Traditional science relies on repetition and consistency. That has served us well as we have experienced significant technological advances that have extended life expectancy dramatically. From that perspective, science works. But, there are other examples of events which defy traditional scientific principles that are more common than many people think. Therefore, it is the science of outliers that is essential. Rather than studying things that work, we should also study when things go wrong and why. We understand that if 99,999 people are held under water for fifteen minutes, they will all drown. But, what about the one that doesn't, despite all statistics against them? That is what happened with Dr. Mary Neal when kayaking in northern Chile. What about the man that doesn't burn when exposed to flame? I personally witnessed and video recorded this unexplainable event in a voodoo ceremony in Togo. What about miraculous healings? There are numerous confirmed cases in which patients appear to spontaneously recover even when contraindicated by established medical norms. In fact, 50% of 1,465 subjects in the FREE study responded "yes" to the question: "Do you believe that any of these NHI's have performed a medical-healing on either you or another member of your family?" This medical outcome was consistent with the findings by Dennett (1996) who reported more than 100 accounts of healings of injuries, illnesses and diseases performed by NHI associated with or without a UAP craft.

Rather than disregarding these events, we need to create an atmosphere in which capable scientists openly embrace and conduct serious research of the diverse range of commonly reported anomalous experiences shared by millions over the centuries. Whatever we are dealing with is more complex than cancer, yet the resources allocated to their research are miniscule. Based on the Western belief in a materialist-only paradigm, for example, we have invested over \$18 billion into the Large Hadron Collider search for the God Particle. Imagine what might have been accomplished if such adequate resources had been applied to the study of consciousness, let alone the possibilities of alternate co-existing or spiritual dimensions.

In closing, since the sentiments have applicability across the entire range of phenomena, I'll restate and expand upon my final paragraph from *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities*. In the end, it is clear that the universe is far more complex than we ever imagined (and possibly more complex than we can imagine). We are not close to solving the enigmas posed by UFOs, pre/post mortem consciousness and communication, inexplicable data transference (remote viewing, pre-retro cognition), spontaneous materializations (apports), trustworthy reports of contacts and interactions between humans and sentient non-human entities, or other perturbations of the *laws of science* (including conservation of energy) observed by credible sources in many related phenomena. Rather, we are still at the front end of defining the fundamental issues and boundaries. They are all related and the key component, consciousness, is integral to the exploration. **Collectively, this chapter supports the FREE UFO Experienter Research Study which suggests that an aspect of consciousness may actually represent the key unifying characteristic that explains the unexplained.**

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Bio: Dr. John Alexander was a former U.S. Army colonel and served in key positions in US military intelligence and conducted research on non-lethal weapons. Upon his retirement, he introduced his work on Non-Lethal Defense to the Los Alamos National Laboratory for which he is an internationally recognized expert. Dr. Alexander developed a deep interest in Near Death Experiences and then completed his Ph.D. dissertation under the supervision of one of the pioneers of NDEs, Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. He went on to become the president of the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS) and helped to create the Children's Hospice International. John had engaged in research on all aspects relating to Consciousness, the paranormal, and the psychic phenomena. He and his wife have travelled the world and have spent weeks with local shamans learning about the consciousness and paranormal aspects of their work. Dr. Alexander has held leadership positions with the International Remote Viewers Association and the Society for Scientific Exploration. He has also worked part-time for the National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS), a private research organization dedicated to exploring the UFO, Consciousness, and Paranormal topic. His books include the following: *UFOs: Myths, Conspiracies, and Realities* (2011) and *Reality Denied: Firsthand Experiences with Things that Can't Happen – But Did* (2017).

Website: <http://johnbalexander.com/>