I Want To Believe Essay, Research Paper

I Want To Believe

Introduction I want to believe Ever since US Air Force Pilot Kenneth Arnold coined the term Flying Saucer, on 24th June 1947, after allegedly encountering nine disk shaped objects while out flying over the Cascade Mountains, the world wide sightings of such objects, has increased logarithmically. By 1957 the furor over UFO sightings showed no sign of abating and the sightings had now been awarded levels of classification by US Astronomer, Allen. J. Hynek. Hynek created three categories for UFO encounters: Close encounters of the first kind: nocturnal lights, daylight disks, the second kind: Physical affects left by UFOs, marks on the ground, car engines stalling and finally close encounters of the third kind: the actual witnessing of beings emerging from their craft. But on September 20th 1961, the categorization of this phenomena took on a fourth dimension when Betty and Barney Hill claimed while driving home one night, they were allegedly abducted by alien beings. The Hills were the first individuals in modern history to state publicly that they had been abducted by extraterrestrial beings, leading to a new era, with reports of alien abductions occurring world wide. But to be abducted whilst outdoors like the Hills is considered to be extremely rare, with almost all cases being reported at night, while the abductee was in bed and without any independent witness corroboration. The description of the alleged alien abductors varied widely throughout the world but in the last ten years or so the descriptions of the abductors have become almost indistinguishable. Therefore, the object of this project is to try and establish the possibility that a minority of the human race, could conceivably be being abducted from their beds at night, by a super intelligent race of extraterrestrial beings or do these people just perceive that they have been abducted and there is a more down to earth answer for the abduction phenomena. The first part of this project contends that alien beings do not come from out a-space but a lot more closer to home or more specifically inside the human brain. The project’s debate, is that the reason behind the vast majority of abduction cases might be temporal lobe epilepsy, epilepsy which triggers a condition known as hypnogogic sleep disorder. When a person is in the midst of hypnogogic sleep they are almost always completely paralyzed and suffer hypnopompic hallucinations, hallucinations which give the sufferer the impression of a presence around their beds with the secondary effect of floating. When a person reaches this stage of the hallucination they then interpret it as being an alien abduction experience. The project will then look at outside influences that might trigger temporal lobe epilepsy, influences like electrical trauma and or electromagnetic fields, fields that are higher in density in more areas than others, areas that are located close to radio masts and electricity pylons. The essay will then look at Dr. Michael Persinger’s experiments with electromagnetic fields experiments were Persinger was able to recreate hypnogogic type hallucinations. The next part of the project will then debate, that a section of the human race is being systematically taken from the planet, for reasons that are not clear. It will tell of the advantages of night time abductions and tell of an exceptionally rare case of an abduction with multiple and credible witness. The project will then reveal the striking similarities of alleged alien beings and the mythical beings portrayed throughout different cultures, similarities that are particularly evident within the prophetic messages given to these said cultures by their gods from the stars. The second part of the debate will close by putting forward a theory for the attention we seem to be receiving from our extraterrestrial inquisitors, suggesting that the emergence of the human race into the nuclear age, might in part be responsible. The aim of chapter three, is to analyze and evaluate it’s primary sources of research (Questionnaire and Little Gray Man Experiment) looking at the statistics and their relationship to the alien abduction phenomena. The project will then give an interpretation of the findings, starting with the questionnaire, revealing that there is a pattern throughout the questionnaire, a pattern showing that the vast majority of people are willing to believe in un-provable beliefs. The interpretation of the little gray man experiment, helps to demonstrate the power of the media and the influence it has in giving people preconceived ideas of what an alien life form might look like, which might explain why people nearly always see the same being. Chapter three will then examine the relationship between the mass media and its effects on peoples opinions and how people appear to be led by the media, contending that the emergence of alien abductions has become more prolific since the advent of television and extraterrestrial beings are the result of a war of the ratings as opposed to a the war of the worlds. The final part of this project will sum up the subject matter that has been debated (are people being abducted from their beds at night by extraterrestrial beings or are these people suffering from a neurological disorder that might be being agitated by the media) and then draw a conclusion from the debate. Chapter 1 NEUROLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS Alien abductions are not as straight forward as they seem, do the answers lie in outer space or is it all in the mind? The vast majority of all alleged alien abductions, occur at night in bed, just as the potential victim is about to enter into a deep sleep. Could there be a connection, some theorist believe there is and one hypothesis suggests, that alien abductions are strongly connected to sleep paralysis syndrome. Sleep paralysis syndrome, is believed to be a form of epilepsy or to be more specific, temporal lobe epilepsy “temporal lobe epilepsy is important to emotions and other sensations, it is possible that disturbance in this part of the brain is responsible for the sleep disorder narcolepsy” (Chadwick., 1988, P.14). Narcolepsy manifests its self in several different ways, depending on the individual sufferer but the most common outcome is a seizure taking place, whilst the sufferer is still sleeping, to a rare condition known as hypnogogic sleep. Hypnogogic sleep is the medical term for sleep paralysis syndrome and this condition is thought to be closely associated to Rapid Eye Movement sleep (REM), which is a phase of sleep closely related to dreaming. When in REM sleep, the body is believed to be paralyzed, this is thought to be an in-built safety mechanism to stop people physically carrying out there dreams, like being violent or trying to run. When people suffering from this condition awaken, they are fully aware of their surroundings but the paralyzing symptoms of REM sleep are thought to persist “people suffering from the hypnogogic sleep disorder, awaken from REM sleep but their body remains in a state of paralysis with the exception of the sufferer being only able to move their eyes” (Hufford, 1982, P. 107). When a person suffering from hypnagogic sleep disorder awakens into an altered state, as well as the paralysis, the sufferer will often encounter vivid and frightening dreamlike experiences. These hallucinations are a major component of the hypnagogic sleep disorder and are so real to the sufferer, that they are unable to distinguish them from reality. In almost all cases, the same scenario is played out, beginning with the afflicted person realizing that they are unable to move any part of their body, this instinctively sends them into a blind panic. Typically, they then enter into the final stage of hypnogogic sleep and experience hypnopomic hallucinations. It is at this hypnopomic stage, that the stupefied victim senses a presence in the room with them, this is usually coupled with the sensation of floating, making the circumstances ideal for the terrified recipient of the paralysis, to interpret the situation as an alien abduction “I was quite conscious of the fact I could not move, conscious of were I was going and the creature in front of me. I was floating and felt like a bear on the end of an invisible rope” (Hough.P, 1997, P.50). This is a fairly typical account of a nocturnal alien abduction experience and contains all the components to classify it as such. Some people have been so affected by what they perceive to be an alien abduction, they have then felt compelled to write about their experience. A good example of this is by the famous horror writer Whitley Strieber. Strieber was alleged to have undergone a classic alien abduction scenario “Is someone there? I wondered aloud. the door opened a few inches and I had a glimpse of a big and glistening black eye, belonging to a distinctly non human face. Then there is something like a burst of lightning from above and the house was bathed in light” (Strieber.W, 1987) Strieber was so overwhelmed by his alien abduction incident, that he was inspired to write the best selling book Communion, Which allegedly portrayed his abduction ordeal. Strieber continued to experience what he perceived to be alien abductions after writing communion, therefore he decided to seek a medical explanation for his strange encounters. “After undergoing a batch of psychological and IQ tests he was given a clean bill of health, he was then given a brain scan (M.I.R) and this also turned out to be negative. finally Strieber was subjected to a temporal lobe scan (E.E.G) but this time the test was positive and inconsistencies were found in this area of his brain” (Schnabel.J, 1994). Strieber past the rigorous psychological examinations set before him but the discovery of anomalies within the temporal lobe region of his brain, is symptomatic of narcalepsey. Therefore, what Strieber and thousands like him perceived to be alien abduction, could instead be TLE. It seems more likely then, that the answer to the alleged alien abductions does not lie in out-a space but more likely in inner space, within the human brain. One possible source for the alien abduction phenomenon could be attributed to electrical activity, particularly electrical trauma to the brain. The human brain is a highly sensitive bioelectrical organ that continuously conducts millions of electrical impulses through it’s billions of neurons and in essence it could be described as a super computer “At any one time , the brain is a junction box alive with incoming and out going messages. These are carried by thousands of millions of cells, these cells form such a complex arrangement that we have little chance of understanding what individual cells do” (Barnhard. C, 1984, P.78). This statement illustrates that the human brain is a delicate electromagnetic organ and if it is exposed to electrical trauma, this then might lead to a malfunction. Parapsychologist Albert Budden conducted a study of fifty alleged nocturnal alien abductees, to his amazement, he found that all fifty had one thing in common, they had all been exposed to a major electric shock “Almost invariably I have found that these abductees have had a major electrical event, they have been struck by lightning or been near lightning or have suffered major electrocution and this has changed their bodies permanently” (Budden A, 1998) This remarkable discovery by Budden, helps to show the ramifications of electricity on the human physiology. Therefore, did all fifty people in Budden’s study suffer major electrical trauma and were then abducted by aliens or more realistically, did the electrical event somehow change the functioning of their brain, altering their perception of reality and if so could these changes be reproduced in the laboratory? Research carried out by neuropsychologist, Professor Michael Persenger suggests that the human brain is susceptible to certain kinds of natural occurring electrical energy. Persenger theorized that weak electrical impulses sent to the temporal lobes of the brain would induce hypnopomic like hallucinations. To test his theory Persenger built a sound and light proof chamber, a subject was then placed in the booth and a purpose built helmet that was able to generate a weak electro magnetic field, was placed on the subjects head. Varying electrical impulses were then sent to the helmet, enabling Persenger to control the electromagnetic waves sent to the recipients brain. He found that this generated differing kinds of mystical experiences amongst his volunteers “The kinds of things that people reported in the chamber when their experiences were amplified by applying these complex weak electro magnetic fields, would be feelings of floating through a tube, feelings of being detached, sensations of someone being in the chamber with them. One subject said he could feel someone tugging at his legs and genitals so he labeled it as an experience contributed it to the electro magnetic field. But if you took the same experience when you are alone at night in bed, the cultural label is, alien abduction” (Persenger, 1998). This experiment by Persenger, helps to prove that under certain circumstances, electromagnetic fields can trigger hypnopomic Imagery, but this is in the laboratory, how could these events take place while we are in bed? The fact is, we are all bathed in strong electromagnetic radiation but some people are more susceptible to electro magnetic fields than others. “This is an environmental health issue and in fact alien abductions are just a very small part of a much broader issue which is electro magnetic pollution” (Budden, 1998). If people with discrepancies within the temporal lobule area of the brain, live in the vicinity of electricity pillions, electrical sub stations, radio masts or any other generator of strong electromagnetic fields, they then might be living near the very catalyst, that triggers an alien abduction event. Chapter 2 Extraterrestrial Explanation for alien Abductions The notion that people can be taken from their beds at night against their wills by little gray alien beings and taken aboard a space craft, appears to be an outrageous claim, but unfortunately for some people it seems to be a fact of life. If the aim is to abduct a person in the most covert manner possible, then during the night would logically be the best time to achieve this goal. It is at this time that the potential abductee is at their most vulnerable, they are usually sleeping and do not see their abductors until they awaken. On awakening, the victim is almost always paralyzed and unable to speak, making the conditions ideal for the abductors to stealthy extract their quarry “Secrecy appears to be critically important to the aliens in determining the opportunities for abductions” (Jacobs D.M, 1993, P.12). Nocturnal abductions are also advantageous in that the absence of the person who is being abducted is likely to go unnoticed and any memories that they might retain of their abduction experience, could be attributed to a vivid dream. Therefore, if the abductors wish to maintain the subterfuge when carrying out their clandestine activities, it seems more feasible to surreptitiously sequester people from their beds whilst they are in a transient state, rather than to snatch them from the street during the day. . One of the most reliable cases of alien abductions with multiple independent witnesses ever to be documented, was the Brooklyn Bridge Incident of 1989. The credibility of the witnesses was so convincing that, Bud Hopkins a UFO investigator involved with the case, felt compelled to write a book about the whole incident “I have come to the firm conclusion: This abduction event so drastically alters of the alien incursion in our world that it is easily the most important in recorded history” (Hopkins, 1994, Introduction). Hopkins is a leading authority on the alien abduction phenomena and is renowned for his fastidious approach to his research, therefore it would be fair to say that his assessment of the validity of this incident would be held in high esteem. Hopkins noted, in downtown Manhattan, New York City early on the morning of November 30, 1989 at approximately 3 am, Linda Cottile, a married mother of two, was seen emerging from an apartment building window twelve stories above ground accompanied by three small alien figures. Linda and her captors appeared to be suspended within a blue beam of light which was causing them to ascend into a large reddish-orange glowing UFO, which then moved off in the direction of the Brooklyn Bridge. Numerous witnesses, including a high placed united nations diplomat (who remained unnamed), saw and later independently substantiated this unbelievable event. It is the presence of the numerous and influential eyewitnesses to this abduction that makes this event one of the most reliable known to date. But when Linda Cortile first reported her abduction to Bud Hopkins, he only conducted an initial investigation and concluded that there was nothing that unique about the incident, deeming it to be an archetypal abduction event containing the usual components which included the common message of imminent destruction for planet Earth. That assessment changed dramatically when Hopkins later received a letter in which two men, identified as New York City police officers, described sitting helplessly in their car and watching three creatures escort a woman (Linda Cottile) into a reddish-orange glowing oval hovering in the sky “She was floating in mid air in a beam of whitish blue light. She was then brought up to that oval, she was being escorted into that thing by three small ugly humanoid creatures” (Hopkins, 1997, P.4). The occurrence of this event would have gone without further investigation because of its similarity to the many thousands of unsubstantiated cases like it but the corroboration of independent and authoritative witnesses, gave the whole case an new and extremely powerful dimension. Cases like this one, now seem to be prevalent throughout the world but if we go back in time and look at different cultures, it appears that alien abduction occurrences or nocturnal visitations are an age old phenomena. Throughout recorded history, many cultures have been infused with myths and legends of night time visitations by strange entities, from the Roman nocturnal demon, the Incubus: (Night mare) to the malevolent Japanese demon, Kanashibara: (To tie with iron rope). The ubiquitous presence of these nocturnal creatures across time and cultures appears to follow a set pattern with the main diversity of the narratives being in the description of the said entities “The Old Hag has been regularly reported for more than two thousand years, it has been attached to a variety of narrative frameworks . . . , But regardless of the framework, the experiential features have remained the same” (Hufford. D, P.39, 1982). Huffords statement suggests, that visitations by insidious creatures during the night, may have played a part in differing societies throughout history, however today, there seems to be a general concessus amongst the alleged nocturnal visitations, a unanimity that comes in the guise of alien beings. Consequently, alien beings may be the successors to our ancient myths but there is also the possibility that they originally inspired them. To our ancient ancestors, beings who came from the sky in fiery craft would in all likelihood be seen as gods, giving rise to many of the legends associated with the magical beings that have appeared throughout the history of the mankind. Therefore the alien abduction phenomena of today might be an amplified resurgence of a phenomena that is as old as the human race. Throughout the individual epochs of history, differing cultures have prophesied the end of the world, the apocalypse’ and one particular civilization, the ancient Maya, made that very prediction over 5000 years ago. The Maya claimed they were endowed with prophetic knowledge from their Gods “The religious legends of the ancient Mayan peoples say the stars were inhabited and that the gods’ came down from them. A god who became known as Quetzelcoatl taught the Mayas science, arts and customs and left very wise laws. When Quetzelcoatl left he boarded a ship which took him to the morning star” (Vondaniken. E, 1993, P.73) After the Maya had received their visitation from the star gods’ their technological understanding of the world around them increased dramatically, this was particularly evident through their grasp of mathematics, when developing an extremely accurate calendar. Their calendar, accurately established the duration of the terrestrial year, 365. 24.20 days and the length of the Venus ion year of 584 days. In 3114 B.C the Mayas prophesied that on July 11, 1991, there would be a solar eclipse over southern central America, stunningly on that date, some 5105 later, Guatemala City was whiteness to a full solar eclipse. However, this astonishingly accurately prognostic calendar that was allegedly given to the Mayas by their gods from the stars, has yet another prediction, a prediction that chillingly claims, the world as we know it will come to an end on 22 December 2012 . This type of prediction is abundant throughout most religions and is one of the most powerful mythologies throughout the human race but when examining the alien abduction phenomena, one of the most common traits to emerge, is the conveying of a similar apocalyptic type message by the alien beings “Scenes of the earth devastated by a nuclear holocaust, vast panoramas of lifeless polluted landscapes and waters and images of giant earthquakes, firestorms and floods even fractures of the planet are shown by the aliens” (Mack. Dr. J.E, 1994, P.40). This unnerving message of mass destruction is a dominating factor conveyed by the alleged alien beings and echoes the prophesy set out by the Mayan civilization over 5000 years ago. Therefore, the primal belief of the day of judgment’ now seems to be reemerging, in an age were some poles show that more people are prepared to believe in aliens, than believe in God. Consequently, it seems that aliens are now perceived by many, as the modern day equivalent of the horsemen of the apocalypse and it is they who are the armagedonists of the twentieth century, reanimating the prophecies of cultures like the Mayan, seemingly preparing us for annihilation. But why for the past fifty years, have the so called gods from the stars, ever increasingly made their presence known to mankind an increase that is seemingly reaching its zenith. The human race appears to have been intensively scrutinized by extraterrestrial beings for the past fifty years. The advent of this curiosity could be attributed to the first detonation of an atomic bomb in 1945. Once man had solved the enigma of splitting the atom, he may then have sent out a calling card to the rest of the universe, announcing that planet earth can no longer be considered a primitive civilization. Some theorists believe that in all likelihood this is the case and many governments throughout the world know this and are collaborating in a “cosmic” cover up “There has been a tremendous amount of security put around the subject. I could go and meet with the deputy director of NASA and they know the subject is real but they would never go in front of a camera and talk about it, because it would be the end of their careers professionally” (Greer, 3/2/99) This theory could help to answer the question of why the alien abduction phenomena is a relatively new occurrence with almost all cases being reported in the last fifty years. With the development of nuclear weaponry and the exploration of space, it therefore seems fair to assume that beings from around the universe would be casting a worried eye on the advancement of mankind. At the end of the second world war, man kind was technologically evolving at a staggering rate, with the invention of the atom bomb, rockets and powerful radar. On a cosmic time scale, this technological evolution could lead to man visiting the stars, in the not so distant future. The ability to achieve interstellar travel might therefore be viewed as a potential threat by any extraterrestrial race that might be living in the locale “If we make an assumption of the aliens that they are concerned with their own survival and security, we would expect them to check out all primitive societies in the local neighborhood and from their view point, we are a primitive society whose major activity is tribal warfare” (Friedman, 1988, P.67). Ergo, it would seem plausible that mankind is being scrutinized by extraterrestrial beings for the purpose of their own preservation and to make sure that we do not bring our brand of friendship which they might call hostility. Chapter 3 Questionnaire (Results and interpretation) There is no tangible evidence to conclusively prove that people are being surreptitiously removed from their beds at night by a race of super intelligent extraterrestrial beings but despite this fact, there are some people who implicitly maintain that these events are undoubtedly authentic. Even with the most precarious evidence, many individuals are willing to except that UFOs and alien abductions are the results of visitations from beings from outer space, rather than being of an earthly origin, in essence they “want to believe” which is a doctrine that is as old as mankind. Throughout the ages man has instinctively pursued the belief that a higher being or beings exist and their existence has an overall influence on their lives, a concept collectively known as religion. Therefore the aim of this study is to establish a sample group of peoples personal views of the paranormal and to then interpret the findings. This survey was conducted using opportunity samples with 32 people taking part, eighteen women (56%) and 14 (44%). Their ages ranged from 20 to 70 of age with 21 (65%) coming from the 30 to 40 age group. Fifty percent of the people surveyed, said they did not have any religious beliefs with only one person (3%) declaring they had no beliefs what so ever (religious and paranormal). Of the fifty percent of people who had religious beliefs only two people (6%) subscribed to the alien abduction theory, which might suggest that from a religious point of view, God created man in his own image and therefore man can be the only intelligent life form in the universe “And God proceeded to create man in his image, in Gods image he created him, male female he created them” (Holy Scriptures 1984). Seven (21%) of the religious people polled acknowledged the possibility of life on other planets, this could be attributed to the media once again, with the recent and highly publici sed “ALH840071, Rock from Mars” which purports to contain fossilised life forms (Bacteria). Only two (6%), were open to the possibility that we had actually been visited by extraterrestrial beings. But the majority of religious people tended to be superstitious, ten (31%) and believe in ghosts five (15%) the superstition could emanate from biblical events such as good Friday and its connection with Friday the thirteenth and the number disciples at the last supper could be equated to the number thirteen. Their belief in ghosts could possibly have its origins with the holy ghost but in all likelihood, religious peoples beliefs could be affected by the society in which we live, like everyone else they are not exempt from the exposure of such mediums as the mass media. All but one of the non religious people had a combination of beliefs but predominantly they tended to be superstitious, 12 (37%) and believe intelligent life on other planets 11 (34%). The roots of superstition are as old as mankind and they have been passed down through generations over the centuries. Consequently, longevity of superstitious beliefs could account for the high proportionate number of believers, an overall of 22 (69%). Of the 32 people poled, 18 (56%) held the view that there might be life on other planets this also could be attributed to the media. Coverage of the alleged Roswell incident and the countless UFO based documentaries that are shown to the nation on a regular basis help to shape peoples perceptions of reality leading people to believe what the media wants them to believe. People who subscribe to the extraterrestrial theory for an answer to the alien abduction phenomenon, state that one of the strongest pieces of evidence to substantiate their claims, is no matter where the abduction takes place, the same scenario is nearly always played out. They particularly contend that regardless of were you are in the world, the being who is kidnapping you, will almost always be small, gray with a large head and large almond shaped eyes. They claim, it is no coincidence that these encounters are virtually identical, theorizing that we are being observed by a race of gray alien beings and therefore the vast majority of reported abductions are being carried out by that said race. This theory appears to be plausible and would answer the question of how different people from a variety of locations around the world, seem to be experiencing the same occurrences but there could be another more down to earth reason for people witnessing these same events, namely the media. The mass media reaches out to the far corners of the earth and it is the media which helps us build our perceptions of the world around us “The mass media tells people that most things are okay and that radical change would be bad. This view suggests that the media do not merely report what is happening, but actively try to influence people’s opinions and behavior” (Davernport. G.C, 1996, P.288). It would therefore seem more tenable that it is the influence of the media that predominates our perceptions of extraterestrials and not actual eye witness accounts as some people believe. The Little Gray Man Experiment The little gray man experiment, was an investigation to try and establish if there could be a connection between the description of the alleged alien abductors that people claim to have encountered and the media. For the past ten years or so, the media has predominantly portrayed alien life forms as being little gray men with large heads and this portrayal has perhaps influenced the description of alleged sightings of such beings. Therefore, this experiment theorized that the media’s portrayal of these creatures, could conceivably have an affect on the collective psyche of a group of eight to ten year old children “Other children and the media provide powerful models from which children draw their ideas about what to do and think” (Davernport, 1996, P.174) Because this age group of children has grown up through the media’s fashionable (and profitable) “Gray period” for alien beings, it hypothesized, that when asked to draw a picture of an alien being, the majority of the children would draw a little gray man. This survey was conducted using the opportunity sampling method with 18 children taking part, 12 (66%) girls and six (33%) boys. Of the 18 children surveyed nine (50%) drew a little gray type man and nine (50%) drew a multitude of creatures with no two alike, the only similarities among these creatures was the multiple appendages emanating from the creatures bodies. The lack of consensus among this group of drawings, might suggest that these particular children had no pre conceived ideas of alien beings, implying that they were not influenced by the media. Of these nine drawings, seven (77%) were drawn by girls and girls seem not find science fiction as interesting as the boys, resulting in fewer preconceived ideas about alien life forms. In contrast, the other nine drawings were all similar and showed consistencies with each other. They were all humanoid in design with large heads and large dark eyes, helping to prove the hypothesis of this experiment. If this experiment had been conducted more than ten years ago, the chances are, that virtually no one would have drawn a gray alien. Therefore, the origins of these composite drawings may have been acquired through the fairly recent and on going feeding frenzy over the alien abduction phenomena, which might account for the similarities in the description of the beings throughout the world. Since the 1950s, the media has systematically bombarded a large portion of the worlds population with stories of beings from outer space, which now seems to be reaching a crescendo with the arrival of television programs like the X Files. This onslaught by the media, appears to be helping to fuel peoples insatiable appetite for the UFO phenomena, which is good news for the television produces as their ratings skyrocket “Our love of novelty is proving to be a menace and our aesthetic sense-the basis of all our culture-is likewise being exploited in order to force our desires along channels which serve a commercial interest of some kind” (Hass. H, 1970, P.183) This observation by Hass suggests, the media has an influential effect on our insight into the world around us, shepherding us into what they would like us to perceive as reality. If you asked people to describe what an alien being from another world might have looked like before the advent of such shows as the X Files, you would have got a mixed bag of answers, with the predominant description being that of a little green man with an antenna on his head. But if you ask the same question today, you will almost always get the same answer, a little gray man with a large pear shaped head. The media has helped to shaped peoples perceptions of what an alien life form might look like, these resulting preconceptions might help to answer the question of why people all over the world predominantly see the same image of an alien being. Therefore, the promoting of the little gray alien by the media, seems to have led to the staid image of the pre-90s little green man giving way to the more fashionable little gray man of the 90s. Summary and Conclusion This project has looked at the much publicized alien abduction phenomena or more specifically, it has looked at the nocturnal aspect of these alleged occurrences. The project described how these nocturnal incidents are reported world wide and how most of them appear to follow a set pattern. The project showed that it was the repetition of this widespread pattern that helped to substantiate the theories of both alien abduction advocates and skeptics alike with both camps maintaining that it is the parallels between each abduction scenario that helps to prove their hypothesis. Chapter one of the project stated that the alien abduction phenomena could, in part be as a result of temporal lobe epilepsy. It contended that this condition is fairly prevalent throughout the human race and has varying effects on each sufferer. It told how people who are afflicted with this condition experience effects from seizures to hypnogogic sleep disorder and it is this disorder which could be the causes of people believing that they have undergone an alien abduction experience. Chapter one also examined experiments conducted by Parapsychologist Albert Budden and Dr. Michael Persinger, Budden and Persinger both theorized, that external electrical activity such as electricity pylons could trigger an hypnogogic episode, this led Persinger to build an apparatus to test his theory. With his machine, Persinger was able to show how weak electromagnetic fields sent to the temporal lobe area of the brain could trigger hypnogogic hallucinations, consequently, Persinger hypothesized that naturally occurring electromagnetic fields and the widespread coverage by the media of the alien abduction phenomena could be the root cause for people believing that they have been involved in an alien abduction experience. Chapter two of this project, examined the nocturnal alien abduction phenomena from the point of view of the alien abduction advocates. It told of the similarities in alien abductions all over the world and theorized why the vast majority of abductions take place at night while the victim is in bed at night. It stated that, a minimum amount of fuss would be created at this time of day, as the potential abductee and potential witnesses were likely to be sleeping. It then looked at a seemingly watertight case of an abduction which had a multitude of credible and influential witnesses, witnesses who were deemed so credible, that one researcher, Bud Hopkins wrote a book about the whole event, a book which claimed that the alleged abduction, was the best case ever documented. The next part of chapter two looked at the alien abduction phenomena of today and the night creatures that seemingly traversed the worlds of mankind throughout history, revealing the striking similarities of alleged alien beings and the mythical beings portrayed throughout different cultures, similarities that are particularly evident within the prophetic messages given to these said cultures by their gods from the stars. Chapter two then speculated that one reason for our visitations could be as a result of mans technological evolution and emergence into the nuclear age. It theorized, that any intelligent life living in the cosmic neighborhood, might be apprehensive about mans technological ascendance and therefore they might be monitoring us as a precautionary measure. Chapter three, examined the primary research, it assessed the findings of the questionnaire and the little gray man experiment. The primary aim of the questionnaire was to establish peoples beliefs religious, paranormal and the existence of non terrestrial intelligence. The main aim for trying to amass this information was to show that even though nothing on the questionnaire could be conclusively proved, people would still want to believe. The hypothesis of the questionnaire was, if the results of the questionnaire tended to show that people believed in non tangible entities such as ghosts, then it might be possible that they would believe in alien abductions suggesting that abductions are the modern day equivalent of the incubus. The questionnaire revealed, 97% held unprovable beliefs but only 6% subscribed to the alien abduction theory, helping to disprove the questionnaires hypothesis. The questionnaires hypothesis made some crude assumptions and thought it would get a definitive answer, consequently, the survey demonstrated the diverse complexity of human beings. The little gray man experiment, was an attempt to show how the media’s recent portrayal of alien beings as being gray as opposed to their more conventional colour of green, could be the reason why alleged alien abductees report the same beings throughout the world. When this media induced image of an alien life form is coupled with hypnogogic sleep disorder, the sufferer might then have the ideal circumstances to interpret the event as an alien abduction. The little gray man experiment theorized, when asked to draw an alien life form, a group of eight to ten year old children (who had only been exposed to the media’s recent depiction of alien beings) would predominantly draw a little gray man. Fifty percent of the children drew a little gray man with the others drawing a mixture of creatures, the gray creatures all resembled each other suggesting that the children who drew them had preconceived ideas for alien beings, ideas possibly generated by the media. Chapter three further explored the psychological link between nocturnal alien abductions and media, looking at the mass media as a source for peoples perceptions of the world around them. chapter one explained how it was physically possible for people to believe that they had been abducted from their beds at night, through hypnogogic sleep disorder and chapter three suggested that the media dictated the imagery that they experienced while suffering an hypnogogic episode. Chapter three gave an account of our developing obsession with non terrestrial intelligence an obsession which culminated in the production of such shows as the X Files. Therefore chapter three hypothesized that, the homogeneous accounts of nocturnal alien abductions might be the result of the ever growing media attention given to this controversial subject. This project has looked at both sides of the argument of nocturnal alien abductions and after much deliberation, it concludes that they are not extraterrestrial in origin but terrestrial. The reason the essay has come to this conclusion, is that the only evidence that these events have taken place is anecdotal evidence, there is no tangible evidence that can conclusively prove that these events are taking place. However, there is evidence that suggests that these alleged events are neurological in nature, with a high proportion of abductees showing anomalies within the temporal lobe region of their brains. When coupled with the media attention that this subject has received over the past twenty years, these neurological abnormalities offer an answer that is not speculation but actual evidence that can be studied, unlike the extraterrestrial theory which appears to have a more prosaic explanation. Bibliography Budden A, UFO Down To Earth, Discovery Channel, 30/12/98. Barnhard Dr Christian, 1981, The Body Machine, Willimstad, Multimedia Publications. Chadwick Dr David & Urskin Sue, 1987, Living With Epilepsy, United Kingdom, Macdonald & Co. Greer. Dr. Stephen, Creatures Fantastic, 3/2/99, Discovery Channel. Davernport. G. C, 1996, Introducing Psychology, Hammersmith London, Harper Collins. Hass. H, 1970, The Human Animal, London, Hodder & Stoughter. Hopkins. B, 1997, Witnessed, Soho Square London, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. Hough Peter & Moyshe Kalman, 1997, The Truth About Alien Abductions, London, A Cassell Imprint. Hufford David J, 1982, The Terror That Comes In The Night, Philadelphia USA, Pen Press. Jacobs. David. M, 1993, Secret Life, Westborn Grove London, Simon & Schuster. Mack. Dr. John. E, 1994, Abduction, Kendal Street London, Simon & Schuster Ltd. New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1984, USA, International Bible Students Association. Persenger M, Great Balls of Fire, Discovery Channel, 1998 Shnable, Jim, 1994, Dark White, London, Penguin Group. Strieber, Whitley, 1987, Communion, New York, Morrow. Von Daniken. E, 1993, Chariots of the Gods Gurnsey, Channel Islands, The Gurnsey Press Co. Ltd.