

## **Investigating the Mystery of the UFO Encounter** **(c)2000 by Craig R. Lang MS, CHt. MN MUFON Field Investigation Coordinator**

You are alone in your car, perhaps out on the highway in the wee hours of the morning. Only a few other cars are on the road. A mile or so ahead, above the road, you can see a light - not familiar looking. Perhaps it's an airplane. As you drive further, you note that this strange light has descended toward the road, settling slightly to one side. As your car gets closer, you realize that it is not an airplane, not a car, not anything you have ever seen before....

The phenomenon of UFO's and contact with the extraordinary from somewhere else is a reality in today's world.

To nearly 10 percent of us, sightings of the unexplained have occurred in some form. To about one person in a hundred, the reality has become both real and personal. To some the phenomenon is an interesting mystery, to others it is a deeply disturbing, or very wondrous piece of their lives.

Perhaps, you have seen something in the sky, or perhaps you are one of the one-percent who have had encounters with "whatever". What can you do? Who can you tell? Above all, who can you trust? There are several organizations that specialize in the investigations of sightings, and research into the close encounter phenomenon. Among these are the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), The Intruders Foundation, run by Budd Hopkins, and the Communion Foundation, run by Whitley Strieber. These groups are very open to sighting reports and experience accounts, and will treat your encounter with understanding and respect.

MUFON specializes in the collection and analysis of worldwide sighting and encounter reports. While UFO sighting reports are handled differently from reports of close encounters, all contribute in important ways to the overall understanding of the UFO/encounter mystery.

Sightings can be reported via the MN MUFON website ([www.mnmufon.org](http://www.mnmufon.org)), via the national UFO hotline 1-800-UFO-2166. Often, sighting information is simply passed along informally by word of mouth to an investigator.

Once a sighting is reported, the task of investigation is given to one of the field investigators in Minnesota MUFON. That investigator then contacts the witness and if the witness feels comfortable further describing the sighting or encounter, arranges an interview.

During a sighting witness interview, the investigator will ask the witness to describe the UFO event from beginning to end. The investigator may then ask a number of questions in order to bring out as much information as possible about the sighting. The investigator will fill out a sighting report, which will be sent to MUFON headquarters. Also, either before or after the interview, the investigator will gather as much additional corroborating information as possible. Whenever possible, this will include items such as weather data, a detailed survey of the sighting area, and any information from law enforcement regarding other possible reports of unexplained phenomena at the time of the event.

The field investigator's report, along with the sighting report from the witness, will be sent to MUFON headquarters, where it will be logged anonymously into the MUFON Worldwide UFO

Database. The information, with the witness's name and other identifying details removed, will be available to UFO researchers for future scientific study.

When an abduction or contact occurs, the situation is usually much more personal and experiential than it would be for a sighting. In cases of contact, it is often customary to conduct research confidentially - where the account is shared only between the experiencer and the researcher. This allows the experiencer to more closely control the degree of disclosure of their account, but helps the researcher to gain an overall picture of the phenomenon. The most important criterion is the witness's level of comfort in discussing the event

For many experiencers, however, merely reporting a UFO event is not enough. In many cases, contact has been traumatic, and its effects long-lasting. In such cases, it is important for the experiencer to seek some form of assistance with the post-contact effects. In such cases, the investigator may be able to suggest where the experiencer can find assistance. In the best of cases, the investigator, themselves may be trained and certified in such assistance.

If the experiencer needs assistance, there are several networks of therapists to help out. Some of these are as follows:

- The Intruders Foundation, run by Budd Hopkins,
- The Communion Foundation, run by Whitley Strieber,
- The Program for Extraordinary Experience Research (PEER), run by Dr. John Mack
- The Mutual UFO Network (MUFON)

In addition, many local groups offer support, on either a formal or informal basis. Among these are the local Minnesota MUFON chapter, and the local chapter of CSETI. Addresses for these organizations are available from the author.

If you have had a sighting or encounter, you may want to first decide your level of comfort at disclosing that fact. Who can you tell? Who can you trust? If you feel comfortable talking with a researcher, there are a number of options and the UFO research community will welcome your report.

**Bio:**

Craig R. Lang is a field investigator with Mutual UFO Network, and is a certified clinical hypnotherapist with the National Guild of Hypnotists. He conducts UFO and close encounter research in the Twin Cities metro area, and in surrounding areas within Minnesota and Wisconsin. He can be reached by e-mail at [crlang@mm.com](mailto:crlang@mm.com), or by phone at 763-560-1532. The Minnesota MUFON website can be reached at [www.visi.com/~jhenry](http://www.visi.com/~jhenry).