

**UFOs**  
THE GREAT  
DEBATE

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A native of Minnesota but a resident of Colorado since 1969, Jeffrey Allan Danelek's life has been a journey that has taken him down many different paths. Besides writing, his hobbies include art, political and military history, religion and spirituality, numismatics (coin collecting), paleontology, astronomy (and science in general), and Fortean subjects such as Bigfoot, UFOs, and things that go bump in the night. His personal philosophy is that life is about learning and growing, both intellectually and spiritually, and that is the perspective from which he approaches each project he undertakes. Jeff currently resides in Lakewood, Colorado, with his wife, Carol, and their two sons.

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# **UFOs** **THE GREAT DEBATE**

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An Objective Look at Extraterrestrials,  
Government Cover-Ups, and the  
Prospect of First Contact

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**J. Allan Danelek**

Llewellyn Publications  
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# INTRODUCTION

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On the afternoon of June 24, 1947, Seattle businessman Kenneth Arnold was flying his private plane in the area of Mount Rainier, Washington, when shortly after 3 p.m. he saw what he described as a formation of brightly colored, crescent-shaped craft flying at speeds in excess of 1,200 knots. An experienced pilot and solid citizen, Mr. Arnold later described the vehicles to reporters as flying like a “saucer would if you skipped it across the water,” thereby inadvertently coining the term *flying saucer*. Unbeknownst to Mr. Arnold, his curious sighting and casual description of what he encountered in the skies over Mount Rainier that afternoon sixty years ago started a worldwide fascination that not only launched the modern era of ufology, but has had profound and frequently divisive repercussions on the world of science that continue to echo to this day.

Not surprisingly, since then and right up to today, public reaction to the phenomena appears to be mixed. According to a recent

Roper poll,<sup>1</sup> about half the population believes extraterrestrials have or are currently visiting the planet, while millions claim to have experienced their own encounter with a “something” they can’t easily explain. To some people, it has even become a type of New Age religion, with many imagining our alien cousins to be intent on helping us usher in a new era of peace and prosperity or, at the very least, helping to save us from our own shortsightedness—making the quest to understand the phenomena not just a scientific one but, in many cases, personal as well. For them, UFOs aren’t simply interesting phenomena to be studied, but mankind’s best hope for the future. It makes one wonder whether Mr. Arnold would have been so quick to describe his experience had he been aware of how his words would eventually morph into the billion-dollar industry it has become today and impact so many people on a deep, emotional, and, some may even hazard, spiritual level as well.

An equally substantial minority, however, consider the whole thing just so much nonsense: the stuff of fairy tales acceptable as light entertainment perhaps, but nothing to be taken seriously. Of course, it’s not hard to understand such an attitude. How can we take anything like extraterrestrials seriously if we are constantly bombarded with every manner of crackpot and self-promoter—along with a host of New Age gurus and contactees of all ilks—intent on convincing us to not only believe their often fantastic stories but also hand over our wallets and common sense for the opportunity to do so? It’s no easy task sifting fact from fiction and science from speculation, and as a result many simply give up and choose not to try.

However, despite all the patent nonsense that surrounds the controversy, I believe it is a subject that is too important to be casually dismissed, especially considering the substantial and growing body of evidence to support the possibility of extraterrestrial visitation as well as the implications of what it all would mean were it to

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1. Roper poll prepared for the Sci Fi Channel, conducted in September 2002. See <http://www.scifi.com/ufo/roper/> (accessed 6 August 2008).

be proven true. To do so would be, in my opinion, not only intellectually dishonest, but foolish. We *must* examine the issue, if only for the sake of determining once and for all that there is nothing to it. We owe future generations at least that much and, who knows, perhaps at the end of the day, we'll have acquired a better understanding of our place in the universe in the process.

It has been my observation that far too many people who follow the UFO phenomenon do so without carefully considering many of the questions and the potential repercussions the issue entails—a problem this book hopes to rectify. But this is designed to be more than just another litany of UFO stories and page after page of grainy photographs showing “something” flying through the air; this work is designed to take a hard and, I hope, objective look at a phenomenon that has been such a major part of our culture for the past sixty years. It is written for those who, like myself, are curious about the possibility that our planet has been and may even now be the subject of study to any number of extraterrestrial civilizations, but who desire to get beyond the anecdotal stories, government conspiracy theories, and the general flotsam of faith such a phenomenon invariably produces. In contrast to most books on the subject, the reader will notice that this work, while sympathetic to the idea of extraterrestrials visiting our planet, holds the UFO community accountable for what it's putting out to the public as fact. To that end, in it I will ask the tough questions ufologists seldom consider, such as is a space-faring civilization even scientifically credible and, if so, why would it choose to traverse the vastness of space to study us? And if it did, how likely is it that alien visitors could actually operate in our skies largely unnoticed, much less possibly abduct people from their cars and beds to conduct all manner of bizarre procedures on them? In essence, then, this is not a book about what happened, when, and to whom, but about *why* such things might happen and what that could mean when they do.

This book also takes a careful look at the potential extent of our government's role in suppressing information about this phenomenon and even considers the possibility that the military may

have salvaged saucers, and even alien bodies, in its possession. (It's always amazed me how millions of Americans can accept the idea that a saucer crashed near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947, and that the government has been keeping the vehicle and its dead occupants on ice ever since, without once asking these most basic questions—an oversight this book hopes to rectify.) To this end, we'll briefly revisit the Roswell story, this most cherished legend of modern ufology, to see how it holds up in the face of scientific scrutiny, as well as explore some of the more technical concerns that recovering a crashed UFO would naturally incur. Most specifically, we'll look at the question of exactly how one goes about recovering a machine that could prove to be not only potentially toxic but also immensely destructive if mishandled. And, for that matter, we'll examine if it is even possible to "reverse engineer" an alien technology that might be centuries ahead of our own. And, finally, we will consider the question of why an extraterrestrial civilization would allow one of their disks and its dead crew to fall into our hands without making an attempt at recovering either—an extraordinary oversight, one would imagine, especially considering the repercussions such an inadvertent surrender of technology would mean to both sides.

In an effort to be as comprehensive as possible, this work will also attempt to make sense of all aspects of the phenomenon by examining some of the more modern mysteries frequently associated with UFOs, such as crop circles, cattle mutilations, and the mysterious MIBs (Men in Black). For instance, are the intricate patterns wrought in fields of corn and wheat around the world *all* the work of hoaxers, or are *some* of them messages from the stars? Are cattle mutilations merely misidentification of predatory marks on naturally deceased carcasses or is there something more sinister afoot? And what are we to make of the almost comical MIBs in their outdated Cadillacs, who seemingly appear from nowhere to question witnesses before disappearing again as suddenly as they appeared? Again, evidence of extraterrestrial visitation, a covert government agency at work, or simply constructs of vivid imagina-

tions? And of course, no book on the subject would be complete without exploring the controversial issue of alien abductions, not simply in an effort to determine their validity, but in an attempt to better appreciate the way the entire phenomenon has reshaped the way we look at ETs.

Finally, a few words about myself may be in order, particularly with regard to what qualifies me to write on such a broad and expansive subject as UFOs, especially considering the fact that I am not a ufologist by trade or temperament. In fact, while I write on a broad range of paranormal subjects, my personal life has remained largely devoid of such experiences, making me, one would think, the last person on earth qualified to say anything on the subject. However, perhaps it's precisely this very *lack* of personal experience that makes me the ideal candidate to write on a subject like UFOs. As an outsider who has no axe to grind, no credentials on the line, and no agenda in mind, it allows me the luxury of looking at the subject from the unique perspective of a person who is neither a passionate believer nor a hardened skeptic. This makes it possible for me to walk the narrow path between both camps, note the strengths and weaknesses of each position, and finally attempt to fuse the two perspectives into a reasonable and, I hope, objective whole. I realize this is easier said than done, but it is my opinion that such is the only way by which we might begin to touch upon the truth that lies buried beneath the hype and sensationalism that so permeates the subject. Of course, I freely admit to having my own opinions where this subject is concerned, so everything on these pages must be taken with the understanding that I am not impervious to personal bias myself; however, I will strive to do justice to all sides and hopefully prevent my own prejudices from contaminating too much of this material. I leave it to readers to judge for themselves whether I have been successful.

I see extraterrestrials as a metaphor for the human condition, a phenomena that not only questions our role in a very large universe, but works as an outlet for our modern technologically driven worries and fears inherent to our rapidly developing planet. Whether

we like to admit it or not, in many ways UFOs have helped define who we are as a species and have shaped our culture in ways we are just beginning to appreciate, and this book hopes to build a foundation upon which to explore the subject in a far more balanced and objective manner than is usually possible today. In the end, it is my hope the reader will find this a fresh approach to the subject that attempts to look at the issue from the position of reason rather than emotion. If I have accomplished even a small part of this goal, I will consider this work to have been a worthy endeavor.