

PROOF IN THE STARS?

ASTRONOMY HOLDS THE KEY TO ALIEN ABDUCTION

By Stanton T. Friedman

It is not usually easy to validate claims made by UFO witnesses, and it is especially difficult in those cases in which an abduction seems to have taken place. The real complication occurs when hypnosis is used to investigate missing time in conjunction with the abduction.

In the case of the very well-known abduction of Betty and Barney Hill in 1961, many individual hypnosis sessions were conducted three years later by Dr. Benjamin Simon, a psychiatrist with a long history of using medical hypnosis to recover repressed memories of traumatic experiences, especially those that occurred on the battlefield during World War II. Simon knew nothing about UFOs, yet felt it was his duty to elicit details from Betty and Barney under very deep hypnosis to try to determine what happened during their encounter with a strange space vehicle and eleven alien beings.

Following the pent up emotion released by the Hills while in their separate hypnotic states, Simon induced amnesia in each of them in order to prevent them from discussing what they were beginning to recall. This allowed for careful cross comparison between their distinct accounts.

One key validating revelation was Betty's conversation with an alien about a three-dimensional model or map (probably a hologram) that was shown to her after she asked where they were from. There was a pattern of a dozen or so lights (stars) connected with three types of lines indicating heavy trade routes, light trade routes and occasional expeditions. Betty knew little of astronomy and was unable to explain where she was in the model. Simon instructed her to draw it after she indicated she could remember what it looked like. The drawing was subsequently included by John G. Fuller in his best-selling book, *The Interrupted Journey*.

At first there seemed to be no way to determine if the map had any meaning. After all, our galaxy, the Milky Way, has at least two hundred billion stars. Fortunately, a brilliant woman, Marjorie Fish, visited Betty to get more details about the map, in spite of fact that Fish was dubious about the Hills' assertion that the alien beings were humanoid. Nonetheless, over a period of a few years and more interviews with

Betty, Fish built about twenty-six different three-dimensional bead and fishing line models. Her goal was to find a 3-D pattern to match the two-dimensional pattern that Betty had drawn.

I had been favorably impressed by Betty and Barney when we met in Pittsburgh in 1968 and when I read *The Interrupted Journey* and Fuller's *Look Magazine* articles about the Hills. My colleague, Coral Lorenzen, International Director of the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization—one of the two major UFO groups at the time—asked me as a scientist to assist Fish in communicating the results of her research. I agreed, and visited her during one of my lecture tours. I also helped her explain her work at a meeting at Adler Planetarium in Chicago and during a presentation at a Mutual UFO Network Symposium in Akron.

Believing Fish to be objective and credible, I published the first article about her work in *Saga Magazine* and later arranged to interview her and Betty for my documentary film, "UFOs ARE Real." I also convinced the editor of *Astronomy Magazine*, Terence Dickinson, to speak with her and to publish an article, "The Zeta Reticuli Incident," about her work. It ultimately received more response than any article *Astronomy* had ever published, before or since.

Also appearing in my documentary was a professor of astronomy at Ohio State University, Dr. George Mitchell, who had been helpful to Fish in obtaining closely-held star catalogs. He used one of her large models as a teaching tool and testified as to her care and accuracy in constructing the models.

Through her detailed and careful research, she was eventually able to identify all the stars in the pattern, and found that all of the pattern stars were sun-like (notwithstanding that fewer than 5 percent of the stars within 55 light years of the Sun are sun-like). Some stars are too old, too new, too bright, too dim, or vary too much in the intensity of their energy production rate to be sun-like, or they have very close companion stars making it difficult to maintain stable planetary orbits in the vicinity. The pattern stars are also, amazingly enough, in a plane, like slices of pepperoni on a thin pizza rather than spread all about like raisins in a loaf of raisin bread. This makes travel between the stars much easier. The pattern is definitely not coincidental.

And most remarkably, Fish identified the base stars as Zeta 1 and Zeta 2 Reticuli in the southern sky constellation Reticulum, but only after much better data on the distances to nearby stars was obtained and used to rebuild the models. Nobody building a model before the Hill experience would have obtained the right identification. A unique twosome, Zeta 1 and 2 Reticuli are the closest pair of sun-like stars in our entire local neighborhood. They are only 1/8 of a light year apart from

each other, only 39.2 light years away from earth and a billion years older than the sun. These two stars had never been highlighted as special before Fish's discoveries. It makes sense that they would be the hub of the local neighborhood.

The cosmic perspective for intelligent inhabitants of a planet around Zeta 1 or 2 Reticuli would be very different than that for an Earthling, as the sun is thirty-five times farther away from the nearest star than the distance between Zeta 1 and Zeta 2. We Earthlings are out in the boondocks with no other star close by. However, from a planet orbiting around either of these stars, the other star is visible to the eye all day long, and planets around the other star would be directly observable. No inferences would be necessary. Even with our primitive equipment, at such a close distance we could determine, from the composition of the atmosphere around these planets, if biological activity were present.

Residents of Zeta 1 and 2 would have a much greater incentive to undertake interstellar travel than we have here on Earth. They would also have had much more time for the development of advanced travel technology with their billion year head start on us. Technological progress invariably comes from doing things differently in an unpredictable way and we primitives have already determined methods for star travel.

The star map work done by Marjorie Fish was a crucial factor, along with others, in the general acceptance of the Hill story of abduction. Her work was also the target of debunkers and skeptics, including Carl Sagan, who misrepresented Fish's methods and her results. These attacks along with many others on the Hill case, such as in the TV program, "Cosmos," are discussed in detail in my book, co-authored by Betty's niece, Kathleen Marden, *Captured!: The True Story of the World's First Documented Alien Abduction, The Betty and Barney Hill UFO Experience*.