

CONSPIRACIES ALIEN EVIDENCE

**Sky One – Wednesday 26th
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Oh, dearie, dearie me! A programme that started off with such promise ended up leaving such a sour taste in my mouth that I felt like drinking a cup of battery acid to ease the pain.

Sky One's Conspiracies series may not be the zenith of investigative journalism (it *is* Sky after all), but last night's programme about the alleged alien cover up since 1947 somehow managed to reach a staggering *nadir* in the aforementioned field.



It all started off so well, sort of, with a jokey segment in which presenter, Danny Wallace, stops passers-by in Camden to ask if they believe in aliens. Most of the people he questioned expressed an opinion that aliens do exist and that it is possible that they visit our planet from time to time.



Nick Pope, former MOD UFO officer and, as Wallace smirked, Britain's Fox Mulder, explained that if the public could see some of the UK's *real* X-Files, they would be astounded by the evidence for extra-terrestrial intrusions into our island's airspace.



It was time for a history lesson. Wallace jettied across the Atlantic and told us all about the famous 1947 sighting by pilot, Kenneth Arnold (cue the first of many excerpts from cheesy B-movies). Historian, Richard Dolan, recited Arnold's description of the 'flying saucers' as travelling at about 1700mph, an incredible rate of speed back then. The USA, he said, became gripped by the possibility that aliens were visiting the Land of

the Free (cue the showing of several newsreel clips of slightly odd people describing their ET encounters).

UFO researcher, Dave Clarke, told us that at that time, the world was on the brink of World War III as the superpowers of the USA and the USSR rattled their respective sabres from across the globe. It was thought that the western powers were being spied upon from the air by the Soviet Union and that the UFO sightings were some kind of advanced reconnaissance aircraft.

Then Roswell happened.



Roswell researcher, Dave Thomas, declared that Roswell became the new Mecca for UFO aficionados. Wallace picked up the story that we all know about Mac Brazel (which he constantly pronounced as 'Bray-zel') finding the famous debris and Roswell Army Air Field's (RAAF) intelligence officer, Major Jesse Marcel, ordering that the base press officer issue a press release stating that a flying saucer had been found (even though it was the base commander, Colonel Blanchard, that gave the order). The debris was removed to Wright Field and we were told that it was nothing more

than a weather balloon, much to Marcel's embarrassment. Roswell slipped off the radar for thirty years.



The next segment covered the infamous 'Men-In-Black' (MIBs). Nick Redfern explained that many UFO witnesses had received visits from these sinister agents and had been warned off, even given threats against their lives. It was noted, though, that many witnesses were credible, military people.

1952 saw Washington DC at the centre of a huge UFO flap. Radar picked up seemingly solid objects over the US capital and jets were scrambled, only to find nothing. Local residents saw lights in the sky and panic gripped the streets. A major press conference calmed public fears and the subject died down once more.

Project Blue Book was created to dispel the myths about UFOs, but in reality it was more of a public relations exercise than a serious investigative unit. It closed in 1969 and the powers-that-be hoped that that would be the end of the UFO 'problem'.



Jenny Randles, famous UFO researcher, told us about the Rendlesham Forest Incident of December 1980, when a group of US airmen from the twin bases of RAF Woodbridge/Bentwaters ventured into the trees and saw inexplicable lights. We were treated to the actual audio of the event recorded by the deputy base commander, Lt. Colonel Charles Halt. He wrote a memo of the event and it was filed away by the USAF and the MOD.



The Ministry of Defence ignored Jenny Randle's requests to see the memo for two years, until she decided to retrieve a copy via the USAF, using the American Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The memo created a media sensation, but the

MOD refused to comment and still do to this day.

Wallace made the cryptic remark that the intelligence agencies wanted to control the UFO movement from within – and then we went to a break...

In 1978, nuclear physicist and researcher, Stanton Friedman, resurrected the Roswell case by a chance meeting with Jesse Marcel Sr. The result was a best-selling book (note that Wallace mentions the 'best-selling' bit. It's important for later...) and Friedman's catapulting into the role of the 'high priest of ufology'. Wallace caught up with Friedman at a lecture and admitted that he was out of his depth with Stanton's talk.



Friedman explained that during his meeting with Major Marcel, he found out that the wreckage from the 'weather balloon' was not of this earth. The resulting 'best-selling' book put Roswell on the map and researchers descended upon the New Mexico town. Suddenly, tales of retrieved saucers, live and dead aliens and a huge government cover-up ensued.

The alien avalanche became big business for Roswell and Wallace demonstrated this by purchasing various ET-themed items from Roswell's many alien stores. He chatted with the town's mayor, who was not really impressed with the whole alien 'thing', and gave him a 'life-size, biologically accurate representation of a large, blue, inflatable alien'.



In 1994, the USAF released their 'final report' on Roswell in which they put it down to the infamous Mogul balloon project, experiments with test dummies dropped from planes and balloons, V2 rocket tests, hapless monkeys sacrificed in the name of science, the list goes on. They even used the Viking space probe test footage from the 1970s!

That's that, then. It was all nothing more than a combination of top secret projects that happened to all be found at the same time and mistaken for flying saucers and live and dead aliens! The UFO mystery was all a handy smokescreen for the intelligence agencies to get up to

their cloak and dagger escapades without fear of being discovered.

Wallace then made the remarkable statement that since the end of the Cold War, there has been a sharp dip in reported UFO sightings. "I guess that we're just not testing as much stuff as we used to," he mused. Of course, we know this is all nonsense and that UFO sightings actually *increased* during the nineties and continue to do so to this day!

It was up to Richard Dolan to defend ufology by explaining that not all UFO sightings can be of U2's etc., given the flight characteristics described by incredibly reliable witnesses.

The final segment was the real icing on the cake.



Wallace (aided by Dave Clarke) propounded the notion that being a UFO researcher is a nice money-spinner. Researchers make their fortunes through books, videos and those extremely lucrative lectures. They're all rolling in money, while sceptics such as Dave Thomas are so poor because nobody wants to

listen to them. Awwwww! Pass me a hankie!

Wallace made the astonishing claim that ufologists keep the 'conspiracy' going to keep the money rolling in. If it all came out in the open, he suggested, UFO researchers would be the biggest losers, as their 'careers' would go up in smoke and all that lovely lolly that they had been raking in would evaporate!

Perhaps somebody should explain to Messrs Wallace and Clarke that the vast majority of UFO researchers make *no* money out of their work and many end up out of pocket, *especially* on the lecture circuit.

Once again a UFO documentary has scored a massive own goal by dismissing the subject in spite of the vast amounts of evidence they broadcast (and ultimately ignore). Constantly, we are given the opportunity to see and hear first hand accounts from the people that were there, credible people like Charles Halt, but time and again, these programmes dismiss their testimony in favour of 'towing the line' and declaring that there is nothing to the subject.

When will they wake up and see that the UFO enigma is not going to go away? It is a real phenomenon and millions of eyewitnesses around the world are testament to that fact.

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