"Then the Saucers Do Exist?": UFOs, the Practice of Conspiracy, and the Case of Wilbert Smith

MATTHEW HAYES

Abstract: This article is about the *practice* of conspiracy theory. It provides a case study of Wilbert Smith, a Canadian government engineer, and the way in which a single document he produced—handwritten notes recollecting an interview with an American scientist—contributed to the perpetuation and expansion of the UFO conspiracy theory in North America. A literary-biographical approach is used to trace the genealogy of Smith's notes, first written in 1950 but not discovered until the late 1970s. This recounting of Smith's story demonstrates how the ufology community reproduced his notes and eventually used them to expand the UFO conspiracy theory into ever more fantastic realms. Conspiracy theory is understood here as a creative activity in which people across the political spectrum engage in order to make sense of a world in which it seems everything is connected. Conspiracy theory studies is still very nascent, especially so in Canada, and this article is a contribution to the study of the morphology of conspiracy theory. It provides a detailed Canadian case study that demonstrates the complicated transition from evidence to conclusion, showing how a single aspect of a larger conspiracy theory is constructed and maintained.

Keywords: conspiracy theory, UFO, Wilbert Smith, paranoid style, Department of Transport

Résumé : Cet article porte sur la pratique de théories de complot. Il présente l'étude de cas de Wilbert Smith, ingénieur travaillant pour le gouvernement canadien, et la manière dont sa rédaction d'un simple document – des notes manuscrites sur les souvenirs d'une entrevue avec un scientifique américain – contribua à perpétuer et à agrandir la théorie des ovnis en Amérique du Nord. Une approche littéraire-biographique est utilisée pour tracer la généalogie des notes de Smith, d'abord écrites en 1950, puis découvertes à la fin des années 1970. Cette narration de l'histoire de Smith démontre comment la communauté ufologique a reproduit ses notes et les a utilisées pour pousser la théorie des ovnis de manière encore plus fantasque. Les théories de complot sont définies ici comme étant une activité créative dans laquelle des gens de toutes opinions politiques participent pour donner un sens à un monde dans lequel tout semble lié. L'étude de théories de complot est encore une nouvelle discipline, surtout au Canada, et cet article contribue à l'étude de la morphologie des théories de complot. Il offre une étude de cas canadienne détaillée qui montre la transition compliquée de preuves à conclusion, démontrant ainsi comment un seul aspect d'une théorie de complot plus grande est construit et maintenu.

Mots clés : théorie de complot, ovni, Wilbert Smith, style paranoïaque, ministère des Transports

The year 1947 was a watershed for the UFO phenomenon. Two particular events helped usher in "the modern era of UFOs" (Evans and Stacy 1997, 5). One was the businessman and pilot Kenneth Arnold's sighting of nine shiny, unidentified objects flying past Mount Ranier in Washington State at high speed, the event that led an Associated Press journalist to coin the term "flying saucer" (Denzler 2001, 4; Donderi 2013, 3–5). The second event was the infamous Roswell, New Mexico, UFO crash, long rumoured to form the basis of an extensive government cover-up (Berlitz and Moore 1980; Berliner and Friedman [1992] 2004). Countless sightings across the world followed these events (see Clarke 2009), and the phenomenon has grown so large in importance that even US presidential hopefuls speak of full disclosure as part of their campaign promises (Speigel 2016).

Thousands of books have been published on the topic since the early 1950s. The ufological literature is vast.[1] While there are a number of academic works that have been produced on UFOs, and the paranormal more generally,[2] the literature has been written mostly by dedicated amateurs and published by popular presses. As this literature has become unmanageably large, this article focuses on one story within the phenomenon: the Canadian radio engineer Wilbert Brockhouse Smith and his government-sponsored work on the connection between UFOs and geomagnetic forces. Smith has become a shining beacon for ufologists, both for his legitimate scientific training and for the material he uncovered during the course of his research. His story has been told and retold numerous times since he began his work in 1950, and especially since his death in 1962, which, according to British broadcaster and writer Timothy Good, "robbed not only Canada but the world of one of the most intelligent and original minds in the field of UFO research" (1988, 203).

In fact, Smith's story is often reduced to a single document that was found within his papers after his death: handwritten notes on an interview Smith allegedly had in Washington, DC, in 1950 with Dr. Robert Sarbacher, a physicist and defence consultant long rumoured to have been involved in the American UFO cover-up (Clark 1998, 813). The ufology community[3] has claimed that Smith's interview notes (reprinted in full below) unequivocally prove that the US government knew UFOs were real, that they were the most highly classified subject in the US at the time, and that they were indeed of extraterrestrial origin. This article demonstrates how Smith's interview notes became part of the UFO cover-up conspiracy theory, linking an otherwise obscure Canadian government employee and project to the vast, predominantly American, conspiracy theory.

There are several reasons for this focus on Smith's story. Unlike the American situation, Canada's share of the UFO literature is still relatively small. There is an identifiable core of books about Canada's UFOs around which others have been written (all of which inevitably mention Smith). This is in large part due to the fact that Canada's own official investigation into UFOs was on a much smaller scale than the US projects, and so produced far fewer documents: whereas the US projects produced over 100,000 pages of material, the Canadian project amounts to approximately 15,000 pages. With so much less to write about, fewer books have been written. But even a number of books about the American investigation mention Smith, and it thus provides a more accessible route into this voluminous literature. It also provides the opportunity to trace the specific story back through the literature to its original source, analyzing how it transformed and contributed to the phenomenon along the way.

This article uses what David Lafferty calls a "literary-biographical approach," which understands conspiracy theory as "not only a social phenomenon but a creative endeavor in which fact and fiction are blurred within narrative structures that are developed and redeveloped many times" (2014, 805). It demonstrates how ufologists used a single document to bolster their claims of a UFO cover-up. There is a growing body of literature on conspiracy theory as a mode of political activism and a deeply embedded cultural motif, but there has been less written on the way in which conspiracy theory operates on the ground. Alasdair Spark (2001, 58) defines this distinction as one between conspiracy *theory* and *practice*, which structures the aim of my argument. This article engages the practice of conspiracy theory, by which is meant participation in thinking (and writing) about alleged conspirators and conspiracies. I show how Smith's notes on his interview with Sarbacher were absorbed into the body of the UFO cover-up conspiracy theory, and later used as a linchpin on which to expand the theory into ever more fantastic realms.

Ufologists have redeveloped the same stories in their books over the years, citing one another in an endless feedback loop or "echo chamber" (Uscinski and Parent 2014, 120). The stories are now easily accessible, despite the inaccessibility of, for instance, most Canadian UFO documents, and this could be considered an achievement.[4] But, as this article shows through a case study of one of these stories, they have been circulated within very small circles with a specific aim: that of contributing to the project of UFO disclosure, the attempt to force those governments allegedly involved with the cover-up to reveal the truth. I outline the specific workings of this process by recounting the history of Wilbert Smith and the Canadian UFO investigation, and by tracing the references of a selection of UFO books back to the original source from which they all sprout.

While many UFO books correctly lay out the facts of the stories they tell, it is often the case that the evidence presented does not support the conclusions. Some of these conclusions are modest enough that they seem plausible. Others are downright outlandish, many verging on or actively engaging in conspiracy theorizing. It is often the moment of making the leap of faith from evidence to conclusion that proves critical for a story's inclusion in the wider body of conspiracy theory. The story of Wilbert Smith provides an excellent case study of this complicated transition, and demonstrates the agency that ufologists exercise when contributing to and perpetuating UFO conspiracy theories.

Conspiracy Theory and Practice

To date, far too little has been written on conspiracy theory. As Sanders and West write, the subject has traditionally been approached in ethnographic studies of magic and witchcraft. There is a long history of anthropological studies of what could be termed conspiracy in tribal social relations, but those who have attempted to research conspiracy theories at home, in North America, have often faced ridicule (Sanders and West 2003). Nevertheless, there is a growing literature on the topic, which typically takes as its seminal idea Richard Hofstadter's essay "The Paranoid Style of American Politics." Writing in the early 1960s, Hofstadter diagnosed a particular style of political theory especially prominent among the contemporary right wing in the United States, which evoked "qualities of heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy" (1967, 3). He argued that "the paranoid" feels dispossessed, as if his very way of life is under attack by "the existence of a vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetuate acts of the most fiendish character" (14). The enemy is all around us, actively driving history along a highway of its own making.

Hofstadter has since been criticized for emphasizing in his work a "partisan asymmetry." Uscinski and Parent (2014), for example, note an imbalance in conspiracy theory studies, which has historically attributed the paranoid nature more to the political right than the left. This is largely because those studying the subject themselves have mostly identified with the left and so tend to overlook conspiracy theories that might be present within their own intellectual communities. Uscinski and Parent argue that, at least in the United States, conspiracy theory is a way of thinking that is actually relatively constant and evenly distributed throughout time and space, regardless of factors like political affiliation (92–93). They charge that

Hofstadter's "Paranoid Style" essay is "dubious and vague," because the assertion that those on the right are pathological is unfounded. They also argue that Hofstadter does not satisfactorily address the reasons why people might turn to conspiracy theory to make sense of the world (2014, 154).

Peter Knight (2000, ix) describes conspiracy theorizing as "a wilderness of mirrors." Writing at the turn of the millennium, he noted that conspiracy theory had by then come to be taken for granted "as both a mode of explanation and a mode of political operation" (3; see also Goldberg 2001, xi). Whereas once conspiracy theories were comfortably tied to discrete people or events, and were used to form a part of one's identity, increasingly they are used "to express a not entirely unfounded suspicion that the normal order of things itself amounts to a conspiracy" (Knight 2000, 3). This tendency became especially pronounced in the United States after the JFK assassination and the Watergate scandal. Conspiracy theories still target individuals, but they also now reflect a generalized sense of anxiety about the everyday order of things "in a world in which everything is connected" (3; see also Melley 2000).

Jodi Dean (1998, 63) notes that this feeling of interconnectedness became significantly emphasized with the introduction of the World Wide Web, through which all opinions can gain equal footing and the user experiences a flattening out of the distinctions between authorized and unauthorized versions of history. The ability to put one's ideas, conspiracy theory–minded or otherwise, online for all to read has the likeness of the kind of equality Mark Fenster (1999) writes about when he says that conspiracy theory is not really about uncovering a sinister plot, but is about prefiguring a new vision of democracy. Conspiracy theory represents a "struggle for equality, solidarity, and a transparent, participatory democracy" (viii). Conspiracy theory becomes a mode of political action for those living in insignificance, baffled and frustrated by events beyond their control. Frederic Jameson (1991) described this process as the "poor man's cognitive mapping."

What these scholars suggest is that conspiracy theory is, in a sense, a natural outcome of modernity. It represents the anxiety of the modern age, and, especially in America, the willing suspicion of authority and government that is said to underpin the country's cultural and political ethos (Parish and Parker 2001). Uscinski and Parent (2014) put it bluntly: Conspiracy theories are for "losers." What they mean by this is that such theories are "weapons of the weak and on balance an adaptive behavior" (17). To say that conspiracy theories are for losers is to speak only descriptively, not pejoratively, in order to highlight that, more often than not, those practicing conspiracy theory are "out of power." Conspiracy theory as a mode of political explanation resonates deeply with the type of theorizing that ufologists do, as they are usually themselves "out of power"—that is, not occupying great positions of authority—and focused on a government that they believe actively harbours secrets and cannot be trusted to serve and protect its own citizens.

In the case of Wilbert Smith and his interview notes, what is even more revealing is the distinction that Alasdair Spark (2001) makes between conspiracy *theory* and *practice*. By this he means not "participation in a conspiracy, but rather participation in thinking *conspiratorially*, in a conspiracy mind-set or a conspiracy expectation" (58). This distinction also resonates with Lepselter's own distinction between *performance* and *theory* (2016, 4). Thus, the following sections aim to address the *practice* of conspiracy theorizing more than the actual theory itself, through a case study of Smith's interview notes and their travels through the years since the document's discovery. The aim is to reveal how conspiracy theory is actively practiced, giving insight into the agency that "paranoids" have, much in the same way that they attribute agency to those leaders of the alleged conspiracy itself.

The Canadian UFO Files

Beginning in the 1990s the Canadian government began declassifying and releasing its UFO files. This paralleled similar moves by other governments during the same time, including Britain and France (Clarke 2009, viii). The Canadian release culminated in 2005 with the establishment of an online exhibit entitled *Canada's UFOs: The Search for the Unknown*, which contained a digitized selection of these files. In all, about 15,000 pages of material located at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) in Ottawa are available to the public. The documents are scattered throughout several record groups, but concentrated primarily in Department of National Defence, RCMP, and National Research Council files. The documents cover the period from the late 1940s until the mid-1990s. Included are thousands of UFO sightings throughout the country, interdepartmental memos regarding the responsibility for the investigation (there was consistent confusion about this), newspaper clippings about relevant sightings and events, and minutes from a very small number of meetings held by a committee comprising Canada's official UFO investigation: Project Second Storey (PSS).

In 1952, the United States launched Project Blue Book, the culmination of its own UFO investigation. Blue Book received over 12,000 sighting reports and was terminated in 1969 after the release of the Condon report (Denzler 2001, 16). Edward Condon was a physicist at Colorado University who headed up a US Air Force committee tasked with deciding once and for all the reality of the UFO phenomenon. To the dismay and outrage of ufologists, the Condon committee concluded that there was no scientific basis to UFOs, and discouraged any further investigation of them (Condon 1969). UFO researchers cried foul and accused the US Air Force of a cover-up, Condon simply being a foil for what was a predetermined conclusion. The American government had in fact conducted two previous investigations: Project Grudge, 1949, and the earlier Project Sign, 1947–1949. Among the conclusions the members of Project Sign put forth was that UFOs were likely of an interplanetary nature, favouring the extraterrestrial hypothesis. The legend goes that the US Air Force was furious with this result, and immediately ordered the establishment of Grudge to debunk this conclusion and assure the public these results were misguided (Ziegler 1999, 6; Haines 1999, 27). This effort culminated in the termination of Blue Book, what the government surely considered the final nail in the coffin of American UFO investigations.

Canada's PSS was established in 1952 to similarly investigate whether or not UFOs posed a threat to national security and presented a legitimate site of scientific inquiry. The committee was headed by Peter Millman, an astronomer with the Dominion Observatory, and included several military officials as well as Wilbert Smith (Oatway 1952). PSS's existence was far briefer than Blue Book's. What survives in the archives are the minutes from a total of six meetings of the PSS committee. Leaving aside any speculation that there may in fact be more, still classified and hidden away, this number makes for quick reading. The main task PSS set itself was creating a standardized form for reporting UFO sightings. Beyond this, the committee emphasized the need to withhold comment on the topic from the press. They also reviewed several recently published books on UFOs, including Donald Keyhoe's seminal *Flying Saucers Are Real*, and reviewed Wilbert Smith's work on detecting UFOs, which actually predated PSS.

The minutes from one of the last PSS meetings indicate that the committee felt UFOs did not in fact pose a threat or present a viable opportunity for scientific research. Thus, UFOs being fully investigated, in 1954 the committee recommended an indefinite hiatus. There ended Canada's official investigation. The RCMP continued to collect sighting reports for the next several decades, and in 1968 all responsibility for housing reports was transferred to the National Research Council (Millman 1968). The majority of these files are now open at LAC, in either physical format or on microfilm. A small selection is still under security restrictions, and so require a formal access to information request.

Project Magnet

One of the more "curious and sincere" individuals involved with Canada's UFOs was Wilbert Smith, a radio engineer with the Department of Transport (DoT) (Bray 1979, 75). Born in 1910 in Lethbridge, Alberta, Smith received his BSc and MSc in electrical engineering from the University of British Columbia. After working for a time for the Vancouver radio station CJOR, Smith found employment with the DoT in Ottawa in 1939. He was put "in charge of establishing a network of ionospheric measurement stations throughout Canada" and in 1947 "represented Canada at the Canada-US FM Broadcasting Agreement" conference (Bray 1979, 57). Smith was a senior engineer with the DoT by the time he became involved with the UFO phenomenon. It is a fascinating and strange tale, and has taken on nearly mythic proportions in the ufology community, both within Canada and in the United States.

Even before the PSS investigation began, Smith had begun his own inquiry into the existence of UFOs. As an engineer, Smith was interested in geomagnetism, and the ability to shape the earth's geomagnetic fields to provide a means of propulsion for aircraft. Smith claimed to have invented an anti-gravity device based on his research, which sat on his desk and appeared to levitate objects an inch in the air. Smith thought UFOs might be a form of advanced technology—not necessarily extraterrestrial—that made use of geomagnetic principles. In late 1950, Smith received clearance from DoT to begin Project Magnet, an investigation into UFOs to determine whether or not their technology could be reverse-engineered. The project continually received press coverage, announcing to the world that the Canadian government was officially investigating UFOs (e.g., MacDonald 1953). The press coverage did not sit well with DoT officials, and likely contributed to their eventual decision to distance themselves from Smith's work.

What prompted the establishment of Project Magnet was a visit Smith took to the United States, which resulted in the creation of a memo and a handwritten account of an interview. These two documents have excited ufologists to a fever pitch. The website Roswell Proof describes the Wilbert Smith documents as "among the most important ever found, since they state unambiguously that flying saucers were quite real and they were being secretly studied by both the U.S. and Canadian governments" (Rudiak 2001). In 1950, Smith travelled to Washington, DC, for an engineering conference. While there he allegedly met with Dr. Robert Sarbacher, who told Smith that UFOs are in fact real, that the issue was classified in the US higher than the hydrogen bomb project, and that they are in all likelihood of extraterrestrial origin. On the basis of this interview, Smith wrote a memo to his DoT superiors requesting permission to start research on the connection between UFOs and geomagnetic forces, a project he dubbed Magnet. Within Smith's papers is also the infamous handwritten recollection of the interview, reprinted in full below:

> WBS: I am doing some work on the collapse of the earth's magnetic field as a source of energy, and I think our work may have a bearing on the flying saucers.
>
> RIS: What do you want to know[?]

> WBS: I have read [Frank] Scully's book [*Behind the Flying Saucers*] on the saucers and would like to know how much of it is true.
>
> RIS: The facts reported in the book are substantially correct.
>
> WBS: Then the saucers do exist?
>
> RIS: Yes, they exist.
>
> WBS: Do they operate as Scully suggests, on magnetic principles?
>
> RIS: We have not been able to duplicate their performance.
>
> WBS: Do they come from some other planet?
>
> RIS: All we know is, we didn't make them, and it's pretty certain they didn't originate on the earth.
>
> WBS: I understand the whole subject of saucers is classified.
>
> RIS: Yes, it is classified two points higher even than the H-bomb. In fact it is the most highly classified subject in the U.S. government at the present time.
>
> WBS: May I ask the reason for the classification?
>
> RIS: You may ask, but I can't tell you.
>
> WBS: Is there any way in which I can get more information, particularly as it might fit in with our own work?
>
> RIS: I suppose you could be cleared through your own Defense Department and I am pretty sure arrangements could be made to exchange information. If you have anything to contribute we should be glad to talk it over, but I can't give you any more at the present time.
>
> Note: The above is written from memory following the interview. I have tried to keep it as nearly verbatim as possible. (Smith 1950b)

The official memo Smith sent to his supervisor at the DoT summarizes much the same:

> I made discreet enquires through the Canadian embassy staff in Washington who were able to obtain for me the following information:[5]

a. The matter is the most highly classified subject in the United States Government, rating higher even than the H-bomb.
b. Flying saucers exist.
c. Their modus operandi is unknown but concentrated effort is being made by a small group headed by Doctor Vannevar Bush.[6]
d. The entire matter is considered by the United States authorities to be of tremendous significance. (Smith 1950a)

Project Magnet was officially discontinued in 1954, although Smith was allowed to carry on the work in an unofficial capacity "in his own free time" (albeit using DoT equipment and space) (Browne 1954). He became one of the PSS committee members based on his expertise in the area and, judging from his involvement in each meeting, was clearly the most active and enthusiastic. His correspondence with private citizens over the years after the termination of the two projects reveal that he became disenchanted and frustrated with the Canadian government's lack of interest in UFOs. Smith felt the truth was obvious, but that government officials simply refused to believe it, because they were scared (Smith n.d.). Smith eventually began researching regression hypnosis and became involved with several mediums who claimed to channel alien presences. He also claimed to be in contact—through his radio set—with an alien named AFFA, which warned of impending destruction to the earth, a common motif among the tales of contactees.[7] After the termination of Magnet, Smith doggedly continued his work on UFOs until his death in 1962, from bowel cancer.

Within the ufological literature, Wilbert Smith is easily the most famous (and probably the most technically qualified) Canadian UFO investigator. However, while others knew about his work in the 1950s, his death shortly after the termination of Project Magnet meant that his work slipped into obscurity for a time. It was not until the late 1970s that the interview notes and memo regarding the meeting with Robert Sarbacher were discovered, and Smith's story once again entered UFO lore. Beyond the unrelenting determination that Arthur Bray displayed in obtaining UFO documents, I attribute the re-emergence of interest in Smith's story to two factors: changes in the way the Canadian government handled its UFO documents, and changes in US political culture.

In the late 1960s, the Canadian Department of National Defence (DND) decided it had had enough of the UFO phenomenon. Officials made arrangements to transfer all responsibility for collecting and analyzing reports to the National Research Council (NRC). DND felt the latter already had in place the resources necessary to handle the reports, as an Associate Committee on Meteorites regularly met and collected similar reports from civilians. The NRC only accepted the responsibility under the condition that the security clearance of all documents transferred to them would be downgraded to "unclassified." This change in policy made it more accessible in subsequent years for investigators to access the UFO documents, and also alleviated the government's concern over adverse publicity.

Events in the United States also surely aided in Smith's re-emergence. Although the Roswell UFO crash occurred in 1947, it was not until the publication of Charles Berlitz and William Moore's 1980 book *The Roswell Incident* that the event really began to take hold in the public's imagination (Partridge 2003, 6). A political shift began occurring in the 1970s, which reignited many of the fears that conspiracy theorists imagined. The right-wing journalist Jonathan Kay describes it this way: "[During this period] the politics of conspiracism began to become an equal opportunity affair, as fringes on both sides of the ideological spectrum increasingly began promoting the same basic type of New World Order conspiracy theories" (2011, 60; see also Dummitt 2017, xv). With the rise of neo-liberal governments in the United States and the UK, conspiracy theorizing experienced a modest resurgence, especially in the early 1980s (see Uscinski and Parent 2014, 110). Conspiracy theorists attributed the evils of the world to a new international network of corporations working to bring about a "New World Order," a one-world, totalitarian government ruled by the elite.

It is into this new mix of ideas that Wilbert Smith's storey was reinjected, and it fit perfectly within the narrative of a globalist conspiracy involving actors within multiple governments attempting to cover up the truth. Better yet, Smith's story and the documents he authored provided "proof" that the conspiracy was not new at all, but rather had a long history to it and enabled the kind of "historical hopscotch" favoured within conspiracy theorist circles (Kay 2011, 106). In short, the resurgence of UFO conspiracy theories, the publication of hundreds of books on the subject in the 1980s and 1990s, and the timing of the discovery of the interview notes, helped bring Wilbert Smith's story once again to the forefront of the phenomenon.

Those Who Have Written about Wilbert Smith

To diehard UFO enthusiasts, the stories of Project Second Storey, Project Magnet, and Wilbert Smith are well worn. They form the core of Canada's UFO story, and have been recounted a number of times since the late 1960s, but especially in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century.[8] This section outlines those UFO books that recount the story of Wilbert Smith, showing how they build upon and repeat one another.

Perhaps the earliest, in-depth account of Smith's activities—other than scattered newspaper clippings from the early 1950s—is found in Donald Keyhoe's 1953 book *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*. Keyhoe was a Navy pilot who retired after injuring himself in a plane crash (Donderi 2013, 31). He then turned his talents to writing pulp fiction for several years and eventually published a number of bestsellers on UFOs. Keyhoe's writing style was journalistic, framing himself as a muckraker who had the advantage of calling on old military contacts to obtain otherwise classified information (Keyhoe [1950] 2011). Keyhoe became convinced that UFOs were real and that the US government was indeed covering them up.

Keyhoe wrote in *Flying Saucers from Outer Space* that he had learned of the Canadian interest in UFOs in 1948, and began corresponding with Smith in the fall of 1950, once Smith began making regular business trips to Washington (Keyhoe 1953, 128). Having found out about the Canadian project through Keyhoe's book, dozens of people—especially Americans—began writing to Smith asking for more information (e.g., Lamoureux 1955). The DoT continued to receive letters from concerned and interested citizens well into the 1960s, even after Smith's death. But after his death the volume of letters addressed directly to Smith began to decline, as word of his project slipped into obscurity. Keyhoe had moved on to publish more books about UFOs, but none mentioned Smith. It was not till the late 1970s that Smith's name began cropping up again in any meaningful way.

Working backward from here serves to show the progression of Smith's story after the initial fame Keyhoe's book brought him. One of the most successful contemporary Canadian UFO writers is Winnipeg-based Chris Rutkowski, who maintains and distributes the Canadian UFO Survey.[9] He has published a number of books on UFOs, three of which specifically mention Wilbert Smith: *The Canadian UFO Report* (Rutkowski and Dittman 2006), *A World of UFOs* (Rutkowski 2008), and *The Big Book of UFOs* (2010). Rutkowski's books fit the survey genre of UFO writing: those books that present an encyclopedic overview of the phenomenon, often written chronologically beginning with ancient sightings and leading to the present day. *The Big Book of UFOs*, for instance, includes a section that begins with the chapter "UFOs before 1900" and proceeds by decade until it ends with the chapter "The 2000s." The book also includes a general introduction to the phenomenon, a section on alien abductions, and a section on government involvement with UFOs, which surveys a number of official projects from around the world. In this latter section, Wilbert Smith's story is confined to a single page. It mentions his employment with the DoT and his interest in magnetic propulsion. It then goes on, in the space of two paragraphs, to tell the story of Smith's meeting with Robert Sarbacher, mentioning the memo Smith submitted to his DoT supervisor (Rutkowski 2010, 336–37). The book contains no references whatsoever, a common omission in UFO books.[10] It is unclear from where Rutkowski pulled the information about Smith, although the bibliography at the end of the book contains several earlier titles that also present his story.

Rutkowski's earlier book *A World of UFOs* also fits within the survey genre, and also mentions Smith. But a reader of both books will notice that the text concerning Smith is almost identical. Except for several minor changes of word order, the text describing Smith's story in *The Big Book of UFOs* is exactly the same as in *A World* *of UFOs*; Rutkowski simply transferred the story from his earlier to his later book (2008, 176–77). *A World of UFOs* contains no explicit references, but does contain a bibliography.

The Canadian UFO Report, on the other hand, contains a more detailed treatment of Smith. The book itself still has the appearance of a survey, but each individual chapter is able to delve into the topic more deeply, as the book is constrained to Canadian UFOs. The chapter that mentions Smith, "Government UFO Investigation," was actually written by Geoff Dittman, a fellow UFO researcher, who shares the book's authorship. Smith's story runs to several pages in this book, and is actually referenced with endnotes. It tells of Smith's early days as a radio engineer, his growing interest in UFOs, and the establishment of Project Magnet. It also reprints a portion of Smith's handwritten notes recalling his conversation with Sarbacher. The chapter then quotes from the memo Smith sent to his superior at the DoT.

What is useful about this account is that it cites the specific sources used to research this story. In several cases, actual documents available at LAC are cited, specifically several DoT documents and an interim report Wilbert Smith submitted on Project Magnet's progress. What is disappointing about some of these references is that they have been retrieved, not from LAC itself, but from various UFO websites operated by independent researchers, notably Joseph Daniels's ufo-joe.tripod.com and Grant Cameron's presidentialufo.com, the latter a common figure at UFO conventions. Like many websites from the 1990s, they are now found in an archival state, containing garish interfaces and totally unreferenced material displayed in a haphazard fashion. It is clearly these types of UFO researchers and their early Internet DIY websites that Jodi Dean has in mind when she says that "thanks to widespread developments in communication networks," "the 'irrational' can get their message out" and "connect with those myriad others also dismissed by science" (Dean 1998, 9; 2000). Historian Jason Ridler describes presidentialufo.com as "hyperbolic and bizarre" (2015, 311n88). Although websites like these may contain legitimate documents, they have to be taken with a grain of salt, and so do not provide an entirely reliable source of information.[11]

Beyond citing these websites, *The Canadian UFO Report* also cites the earlier 1992 book *Crash at Corona*, which is billed on its front cover as "the definitive study of the Roswell incident," containing "exclusive testimony on a second New Mexico crash site and new evidence of the government's secret MJ-12 team."[12] The book was written by Don Berliner and Stanton Friedman, the latter one of the most infamous ufologists in the world. Friedman, an American who now lives in Fredericton, New Brunswick, with his third wife, is also a regular on the UFO speaker circuit. He has repeatedly emphasized his credentials as a retired nuclear physicist (he has a BSc and MSc) to establish his expertise within the ufology community (much the same way that Smith's credentials are lauded). His books (all published with popular presses) have been widely read, and as his website declares he has given over 700 lectures worldwide.

Berliner and Friedman dedicate a short chapter to Wilbert Smith's story in *Crash at Corona*, printing the entirety of Smith's notes on his meeting with Sarbacher, and linking this admission to the US government's alleged UFO cover-up. As he says of the notes, "If genuine, this would constitute the most impressive and convincing evidence of UFO reality and of U.S. government complicity yet revealed" (Berliner and Friedman [1992] 2004, 49–50). To establish the document's veracity, Berliner and Friedman do not appear to look for any other corroborating documents. In fact, like Rutkowski's book, there is not a single citation of any kind in the chapter. Instead, they write that they tracked down and telephoned Robert Sarbacher in 1983, at that time still alive, and received verbal confirmation that what Smith noted was accurate. Berliner and Friedman also relied on the accounts of other UFO researchers to fill in the gaps, perhaps the most common method ufologists use in their investigations (the aforementioned "feedback loop").

In this respect, Berliner and Friedman specifically mention the help of Arthur Bray, a retired Royal Canadian Navy pilot who began investigating UFOs in the 1950s. Timothy Good's popular 1988 book, *Above Top Secret*, does the same in its discussion of Projects Magnet and Second Storey, and is actually referenced with endnotes. Good's book was an instant bestseller. It helped to establish "a new generation of ufologists"—one inspired by Keyhoe's seminal works—and "impressed many newcomers to the field" (Clarke 2015, 138). However, despite Good's attempt at journalistic rigour, at any mention of Smith he inevitably refers the reader to personal correspondence with Arthur Bray, or one of the latter's books on the topic. John Robert Colombo, a writer who describes himself as "Canada's Master Gatherer," also directly references Bray in *UFOs over Canada* (1991), as do Chris Styles and Graham Simms in *Impact to Contact* (2013), their self-published book on the Shag Harbour UFO crash. It seems that anything published on Wilbert Smith—and specifically his interview notes—from the 1980s onward inevitably leads back to the earliest ufologist to recount the story of Wilbert Smith's handwritten interview notes.[13]

Arthur Bray self-published two books over the span of his ufology career: *Science, the Public and the UFO* (1967) and *The UFO Connection* (1979). In his earlier book, Bray devotes less than a page to Smith's story, noting that "it is public knowledge that the Canadian Government (Department of Transport) conducted

UFO research under the direction of the late Mr. Wilbert B. Smith, at an ionospheric research station at Shirley Bay, near Ottawa, a number of years ago but abandoned this investigation (Project Magnet) not long after for reasons unknown to this writer" (1967, 45). Bray then goes on to describe a specific piece of equipment Smith developed for the detection of magnetic "binding forces." Bray cites a single source for his information about Smith: the House of Commons debates from 9 May 1966. Mr. Howe, the MP for Hamilton South, asks question no. 1344: "Has the Department of Transport ever undertaken an investigation of reported unidentified flying objects and, if so, during what period? Have results of such investigations been made public? Are such investigations being carried out at this time and, if not, is consideration being given to the institution of such investigations?" Mr. J.A. Byrne, the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Transport, provides the following answer: "A small group within the Department of Transport conducted spare time investigations between December 1950 and August 1954" (House of Commons 1966, 4863).

Bray's account of Smith in his later book, *The UFO Connection*, is markedly different. In an entire chapter devoted to the Canadian UFO projects, Bray writes that "much has been written and spoken about Project Magnet over the years but a large proportion of this has been misleading, incomplete or inaccurate. In this chapter I will attempt to set the record straight, using official government documents as sources of my information. The information in some of these documents has never before been made public" (1979, 57). Bray does indeed make use of official documents, including various reports Smith submitted to his superiors on the progress of Project Magnet, and the minutes from Second Storey meetings.[14] Bray obtained these documents in the 1970s through inquiries with the Departments of Transport, National Defence, and the National Research Council (1979, 46–50). He also obtained a collection of Wilbert Smith's papers from Smith's widow, which included the interview notes themselves (interestingly, they are not found within the official LAC documents). What becomes immediately obvious though, is that Bray never explicitly referred to Smith's handwritten notes. This is quite a shock, considering how so many since have taken up the story of these mysterious notes.

The closest Bray comes to discussing the notes are in three separate paragraphs:

> [Project Magnet] was an outgrowth of work already being done by Smith and a small group of engineers on the collapse of the Earth's magnetic field as a source of energy. It was believed that "Flying Saucers" were operating on magnetic principles and it seemed that this work might explain the saucers' operation. *Smith had been informed by highly-placed sources that flying*

> *saucers are indeed real, that they are almost certainly of extraterrestrial origin and that they operate on a magnetic principle.* Just how this principle actually operated was unknown.
>
> Early in 1950, a book by Frank Scully (Behind the Flying Saucers) claimed that flying saucers had crashed in the USA and that the US Air Force had retrieved them along with the dead bodies of their occupants. Although some people have claimed that Scully's book was a hoax, *Smith was informed by a certain top American Scientist who was deeply involved in UFO research for the US Government, that "the facts reported in the book are substantially correct."*
>
> The study of UFOs, or flying saucers as they were called in those days, was of tremendous interest at top levels of the US Government, and *Smith was informed that the matter was the most highly classified subject in that government, rating higher even than the H-bomb. Top officials were aware of their reality, he was also told.* (1979, 59; emphasis added)

The notes themselves are not reproduced in Bray's book. It was not until the publication of Timothy Good's *Above Top Secret* (1988, 519–21) that the public would be able to see the actual document, as a photocopy of it is included in the appendix (others have also reprinted it since). After the publication of *The UFO Connection*, Bray must have given copies of the notes to several other researchers, Good, Berliner, and Friedman among them. In this regard, Jerome Clark reports that Bray revealed the identity of the "top American Scientist" during a talk he gave at the 1982 MUFON conference (Clark 1998, 813). The text from the interview notes has been reproduced a number of times since, and has come to form one of the key documents used to "prove" a government cover-up—both Canadian and American.

The Interview Notes

What must be emphasized is the fact that this part of the UFO-cover-up conspiracy theory is based on three pages of handwritten notes. It is not hyperbole to say that many ufologists regard Smith's notes as a smoking gun. Despite its questionable veracity, it is taken as literal truth. I argue that this is the case because it so easily fits into the existing conspiracy theory. Everything contained in the notes confirmed what ufologists already suspected, and so the notes were easily digestible (see Kay 2011, 18). Lafferty comments on the importance to the creation of conspiracy theory of finding "obscure links." This is often done through the use of "an investigative mode of historico-political analysis" that creatively fuses "nonfictional and fictional narratives, constructed through a repetitive but teleological process of investigative research and imaginative speculation" (Lafferty 2014, 807). Smith's interview notes helped ufologists play "historical hopscotch," to connect the dots across time and space, linking the present of the 1970s and 1980s with the alleged Roswell crash in 1947. The conclusions drawn from the document are contained within the document itself: that UFOs are real and of extraterrestrial origin, and that the US government knew about them as early as the late 1940s. No further theorizing was done, and so the conclusion, in this sense, was modest. It matched the "truth" the ufology community had already "established." It was sufficient to simply reproduce the notes in subsequent versions of Smith's story and point at them with an accusing finger. No further explanation or context was needed. In fact, the notes did not come to serve as just another piece of the puzzle. Rather, for many conspiracy theorists the notes assumed the role of starting point in their accounts, especially those about the Canadian investigation. The fact that the notes were handwritten, and the document is not in any way officially endorsed, was ignored.

Ufologists often invoke official endorsement as proof in these matters, and they have done so with regard to the memo that Smith wrote to his superior at the DoT. The memo is usually also included with the interview notes as part of the proof, but there is no doubt that ufologists consider the latter to be more truthful. There is a qualitative difference between the DoT memo and the handwritten notes. However, I argue that it is only of degree, and not kind. The DoT memo was written after the notes, and contains a conspicuous absence. Nowhere in the memo is it mentioned that the US government thought UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin. The first two points are mentioned: that UFOs are real and that the government knows about them. But the extraterrestrial hypothesis was absent. It is unclear exactly why Smith chose to omit this information. However, based on the actions the DoT took several years later—that is, terminating the project—I suggest that Smith probably knew how controversial this conclusion was at the time, and assumed that his proposal to set up Project Magnet would have been dismissed outright if the DoT thought he wanted to make contact with little green men. Despite Smith's open-mindedness—especially evident just before his death—he likely exercised some restraint and diplomacy with his first official foray into UFO research.

Beyond this, there is also a difference between a memo written on government letterhead, and official endorsement of such. Simply because Smith wrote a memo to his superior does not mean that the Canadian government officially endorsed everything in the memo. Smith in fact wrote many memos and several reports on the progress of Magnet, and there is little evidence that his superiors took any of it seriously. It seems clear that the DoT in fact endorsed only a portion of Smith's 1950 memo: namely, the part about setting up a project to study the potential for geomagnetic principles of propulsion. The DoT thought that this was indeed a worthy subject of study, as it could actually have been of scientific and security interest. Judging from the DoT's later frustration and impatience with the whole UFO matter (and especially the publicity the department was receiving because of Smith's public statements), it seems safe to say that the government did not in fact entertain the extraterrestrial hypothesis.

There is also the matter of the veracity of Smith's interview notes. They are, first and foremost, a handwritten recollection of an interview. They are not a verbatim transcript written by a third party (and Smith himself acknowledged this on the notes themselves). The document is not official, and is not found within the LAC collection. Rather, it is found within the Arthur Bray collection at the University of Ottawa archives. Bray found the document among the papers that Smith's wife gave him when conducting his research in the 1970s. Bray then donated the entire collection to the University of Ottawa.

Beyond this, there is another curious discrepancy between the notes and the memo. The notes indicate that it was Smith himself who spoke with Sarbacher, as his initials—WBS—preface each question. However, in his memo, Smith writes that he "made discreet enquiries through the Canadian embassy staff in Washington who were able to obtain for me the following information" before listing the points noted above. What is more, the interview notes themselves begin not with Smith's first question, as shown above, but with the line: "Notes on interview through Lt/C. Bremner with Dr. Robert Sarbacher." As Berliner and Friedman write in *Crash at Corona*, "It wasn't hard to check out 'Lt/C. Bremner,' who turned out to have been the defence attache at the Canadian embassy in Washington" ([1992] 2004, 50). Nearly every single account of Smith's notes I have located concludes that Bremner was the one who contacted Sarbacher and set up the interview, which Smith then attended, and so it was indeed Smith who spoke to Sarbacher face-to-face.

However, Clark (1998) disputes this in his entry entitled "Sarbacher Episode" in *The UFO Encyclopedia*. He writes that the interview notes imply that Smith forwarded his questions to Bremner, who then posed them to Sarbacher (813). Further research done after the interview notes surfaced allegedly revealed that Sarbacher was not in fact involved in any way with the US UFO investigation and had gained all of his knowledge through other scientists. Shortly before his death, Sarbacher also indicated in correspondence with another ufologist that he remembered speaking with Bremner, rather than Smith, but that the information contained in the interview notes seemed to accurately reflect the discussion (Clark 1998, 815).

As is typical of any investigation into UFOs, we are left at this point within the wilderness of mirrors. It is unclear how much, if any, of this information is accurate.

There is little documentation of any kind to support these claims. As most of the ufologists involved admit, the majority of this information is second-hand and obtained verbally. But for the purposes of this article, it does not matter exactly which parts are true. What is more important is the context within which the interview notes emerged, the fact that they are so heavily contested, and the fact that, despite this, they are still taken as proving the "truth" of the alleged cover-up. Very little investigation of the notes themselves was ever done. For the majority of ufologists, the notes were enough. They cohered fantastically well with the cover-up paradigm the ufology community had developed, and so there was no perceived need to explore them any further. The veracity of the interview notes are clearly in question, but this is of no consequence to those writing about them and actively reproducing the theory. It seems that, when it comes to the practice of conspiracy theory, refusing to proceed with a line of inquiry and settling on the "truth" of a claim—in effect, *doing nothing* and letting a claim take on a life of its own—can be as effective as making the disparate connections in the first place.

It Does Not Seem Far-Fetched

Beyond the various sources already mentioned, one must be singled out: Palmiro Campagna's *The UFO Files: The Canadian Connection Exposed* (1997). Since its publication, it has been cited by every author writing on Wilbert Smith and the Canadian investigation. Campagna's claim to expertise in the matter is that he was an employee of the Canadian Department of National Defence, and alleges to have single-handedly made the government declassify its UFO files.[15] This is clearly an exaggeration, as Bray claimed the same back in the 1970s. But there is some truth to Campagna's assertion: he does cite a number of official documents, now available at LAC, which seem unique to his book.

This section, however, focuses on the conclusion that Campagna draws regarding Wilbert Smith. Ironically, Campagna's book is one of the most well-referenced books of those discussed here, but it also draws the most outrageous and unsupported conclusion of them all. I argue that Campagna's book, and his narrative of Smith, is a culmination of the decades' worth of retellings of Smith's story. Each of the books previously published contributed another piece of the puzzle, slowly but surely linking Smith to the wider cover-up theory and repeating the story until it took on the appearance of well-documented fact. In Campagna's book is found the epitome of all the conspiracy theorizing about Smith yet published.

The basic details of Smith's story have been recounted above. It starts with his employment with the DoT, leading to a trip he takes to Washington for an engineering conference. During this conference he makes contact with and (maybe) has a meeting with Robert Sarbacher, who tells Smith that UFOs are indeed real, and that the American government is actively covering it up. Smith returns to Canada a believer, and requests permission from his employer to set up Project Magnet. Smith's investigation runs for several years, mingling with the work of the Second Storey committee, and eventually is shut down. Smith's superior at the DoT lays out the reasons for this: while the initial goals of the project may well have fallen within the scope of the work DoT does (reverse-engineering UFO gravitational technology), Smith's investigation took a turn that, by 1954, DoT officials felt was outside the scope of the department's mandate. The DoT could no longer justify spending resources on the investigation, considering the Canadian Defence Research Board (DRB) was also running a parallel investigation (and was considered a more appropriate and qualified choice to do so). The DoT also felt it was receiving too much publicity about the matter, to the point of harassment. In other words, too many "cranks" had come calling, and DoT wanted to wash its hands of the matter.[16]

This is the official line, which Smith's superior delivered to him in a memo. Many ufologists looking into the Smith case do not believe a word of it. To believers, the termination memo is part of the alleged cover-up. It is clear to people like Stanton Friedman and Palmiro Campagna that Smith was onto something big, something earth shattering,[17] and the Canadian and American governments colluded to hush it up. They tried to silence him by terminating his project and removing his resources and all official endorsement.

A situation like this is ready-made for conspiracy theorists. Campagna makes connections in exactly this way when he attempts to account for the government's termination of Magnet. Around the same time that new life was injected into the Roswell story and Smith's handwritten notes came to light, evidence came out that the US government had covertly experimented on Canadian citizens. The CIA was conducting research into behavioural control by, among other things, dosing unwitting patients with LSD at the Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry in Montreal. The project was known as MKULTRA, but had gone under at least two names previous to this, stretching back to the late 1940s (Scott-Smith 2011, 361; McCarthy 2013, 612). The release of this information in the late 1970s caused a scandal, and resulted in a massive civil lawsuit (Cawley 1986). Canadians were outraged when they realized some of the experiments had taken place on their own soil, and that US agencies were using Canada as a testing ground. The outrage became particularly acute when it was realized that the wife of a Winnipeg MP was one of the patients on whom the experiments had taken place (Collins 1988; Vienneau 1986).

The MKULTRA case and the Wilbert Smith case are both documented historical events. But there is nothing explicit linking the two together. They did both occur during the same time frame, and were close geographically. But beyond this, there has never been any connection made between them. Campagna, however, believes that it "does not seem far-fetched that Wilbert Smith, the willing believer, was part of a larger experiment" (1997, 144). According to Campagna, it is possible that the DoT became so embarrassed by Smith's work, or felt that he had gotten too close to the truth and was in danger of exposing it, that they decided it was necessary to bring in the CIA and feed Smith disinformation to lead him off the trail. They did this by involving him in the covert drug-induced mind-control experiments. Campagna suggests that "Smith may have run afoul of the confidence he had established when he violated Solandt's request not to speak to the media but to keep matters confidential" (1997, 141). It seems reasonable to Campagna that the Canadian government made the decision to dose its own employee with LSD in order to discredit him and throw him off the track of the truth he had uncovered.

For Campagna, Dr. Omond Solandt is the key to the conspiracy theory. Solandt was a scientist turned administrator, who chaired the DRB from 1947 to 1956 (Turner 2012). He was the figure who ultimately gave Smith permission to set up Project Magnet, and has since been implicated in the UFO conspiracy theory. Campagna traces an entirely undocumented history of Solandt's career during this time, making links that lead him to conclude it was actually Solandt who conspired against Smith. Campagna claims that Solandt was involved in bringing MKULTRA to Canada, having attended "a secret meeting at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal," and considered the work of MKULTRA to be an extension of previous DRB-funded research into the effects of isolation (1997, 144). This is despite the fact that Solandt publicly distanced himself and the DRB from the CIA experiments, and even "worked with the lawyer in charge of the case for the survivors" (Ridler 2015, 171). Solandt was also connected to Wilbert Smith, having initiated the Second Storey committee and consulted in the initial stages of Magnet. Campagna concludes that Smith became a liability to the Canadian government once he started going public with his information about UFOs and extraterrestrials. Smith disobeyed Solandt's and Second Storey's directive to keep all information confidential, especially from the media, and so had to be shut down and misdirected, lest he give away legitimate evidence of a cover-up.

It is upon the Solandt connection that Campagna builds his addition to the conspiracy theory, and offers no proof of his idea other than to say that "one cannot and must not tread naively into this quagmire of fact and fiction. One must remain objective and open-minded on all fronts, no matter how bizarre or fantastic the hypothesis, until hard corroborating evidence can be obtained. Above all, one must not become paranoid but be willing to accept the truth, no matter how extraordinary it might be. It is out there, and someday it will be revealed" (1997, 160). This is a case of connecting disparate dots in order to make sense of what might otherwise appear to be a bewildering array of people, events, and information, even if no connection is actually there or documented in any way. The fact that it is *not* documented simply further confirms the alleged cover-up. After all, why would the government document something as sensitive as this? It would surely stay behind closed doors. As Lepselter writes, Campagna clearly found that all of this information resonated in an uncanny way. To him, "it all makes sense" (Lepselter 2016, 4).[18]

Jason Ridler, in his biography of Omond Solandt, writes that UFOs must have been little more than a curiosity, or a growing annoyance, to the head of the DRB, who was busy "with the serious matters of modern warfare" (2015, 197). Ridler notes that "Solandt's reputation has been somewhat warped within the community of those who believe in UFOs" (311 n88). He outright dismisses those who believe that Solandt was involved with UFOs in any way beyond forming the Second Storey committee, in any way other than perhaps an enjoyable "diversion" (197).

Peter Knight describes conspiracy theory as a way of making sense of a world "in which everything is connected" (2000, 3). This certainly resonates with the analysis of Campagna's own theory, which connects disparate events into what he suggests is a coherent whole, using a specific target (Solandt) as the lynchpin. The evidence of the CIA's experiments on unwitting patients in Montreal certainly provides grist for this mill. And given the decades of speculation and suspicion underpinning the UFO phenomenon, it perhaps did not seem that far of a leap for Campagna to connect the dots in this way. This example shows the way in which, once a certain "fact" is established, its authors begin to unite it with other established facts. Conspiracy theory, in this way, has a rhizomatic quality (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). Once a piece of the puzzle is placed, it seems to organically reach out and connect to other pieces, however far removed. The pieces resonate with one another across boundaries of time and space in a way that cannot necessarily be demonstrated with material sources (indeed, many conspiracy theorists fundamentally believe they cannot). As Lepselter (2016, 4) says, this type of resonance is only *felt*.

The fact that Omond Solandt was a concrete, historical figure—a political and intellectual leader—only made it easier to construct the theory (see Nattrass 2013, 114). Many conspiracy theories are built on shadowy figures ("cabals" being a favourite term[19]) that turn out to be non-existent.[20] Solandt was indeed real, his activities amply documented. And even more enticing, he was an important figure in the

Canadian defence establishment, with connections throughout the country and continent. In many ways, he was the perfect figure to appropriate for this purpose. For Campagna, Solandt represents the Canadian counterpart to the American scientist Vannevar Bush, allegedly one of the architects of the US UFO cover-up, who provided Campagna with a model target who had the means and the will to perpetrate similar atrocities across the border.

The above analysis has demonstrated *how* this part of the larger UFO conspiracy was constructed, but it is necessary here to explain exactly *why* I argue that Campagna's ideas are in fact of a conspiracist bent at all. There is a sense in which the very label "conspiracy theorist" is meant to strip the person identified of authority. This is similar to Michael Gordin's argument that applying the label "pseudoscience" is meant primarily as an epithet, to discredit ideas and people (2012, 1). I intend that this article does not simply throw the term "conspiracy theory" around in an abusive way, however, by showing that the kind of narrative to which Campagna contributed is fundamentally flawed.

Uscinski and Parent devise six tests to apply to ideas one might suspect of being conspiracy theories, in order to assess their validity. These tests are meant to assess the theory on the basis of its soundness, its simplicity, its intentions, and its beneficiaries. I argue that by applying Uscinski and Parent's criteria, Campagna's theory fails to achieve any kind of validity. The theory becomes unwieldy and overly complicated, failing to satisfy the "parsimony principle." Parts of the theory, as is true with the broader UFO conspiracy theory, are unfalsifiable, meaning they cannot be disproven by any known methods. Uscinski and Parent also recommend "the worst intentions" test, advising the rejection of a conspiracy theory "if it attributes a depravity [to the alleged conspirators] that is unlikely given one's track record and institutional incentives." The "cui bono" test—that is, asking who benefits—is also useful in determining "the amount of intentionality and rationality assumed in the conspirators' motives" as compared to the risks involved in carrying out the task. And finally, it is useful to consider whether something of the sort proposed has happened in the past (if there is some kind of precedent) and if an impartial spectator looking at the theory would find it plausible (Uscinski and Parent 2014, 37–47).

It seems clear that Campagna's ideas do not satisfy these criteria. His theory is based on questionable documentation and evidence, it is unclear exactly who benefits at certain points, the risks involved in carrying out such actions seem to outweigh the benefits, and the conclusion drawn does not satisfactorily follow from the evidence presented.

Conclusion

While ufologists continue to (self) publish books, the real practice of conspiracy theory has arguably moved online. Kay laments that rather than the introduction of the World Wide Web ushering in "an Enlightenment dreamworld of mutual understanding and rationalism" it has done the opposite: the technology has instead "propelled radicals into their own paranoid echo chambers" (2011, xvii). The Internet provides a space free of traditional barriers for ufologists to develop and redevelop their ideas. There are no checks or balances on the way in which information is shared or distorted. YouTube, especially, has become a haven for conspiracy theories and theorists. Wilbert Smith is the subject of multiple pages' worth of videos, all of which re-present the very ideas discussed in this paper, all of which flow from the original texts identified here.

The story of Wilbert Smith, and the way in which his story was used and distorted in the years after his death, provides an excellent example of the malleability of history and of how easy it can be to make "the characteristic paranoid leap into fantasy" (Hofstadter 1967, 11). In Lafferty's words, Smith's story "offers privileged insight into the morphology of conspiracy theory narratives" (2014, 823).

This article has attempted to reveal the morphology of a piece of the UFO cover-up conspiracy. All counted, this small part of the conspiracy is based on three pages of documentation, sprouting from the efforts of a single UFO researcher in the late 1970s. After Arthur Bray first alluded to the interview notes, and Timothy Good and Don Berliner and Stanton Friedman printed them for the first time, they were quickly subsumed into the larger conspiracy theory. The notes became part of the bulwark the ufology community has tried to establish to push back against the authority of what they see as unbelieving scientific experts and governments that actively deceive their citizens for their own nefarious purposes.

What the above recounting has shown is how a single document can be uncritically reproduced through the years, and how it can be appropriated as the causal link between otherwise unconnected people and events. This article has attended to the *practice* of conspiracy theory, through an analysis of the travels of one document and how it has contributed to a conspiracy theory and provided fertile ground for the very active imaginations of ufologists. It can be difficult to tease out any meaningful truth from the complex webs of causality and connection that ufologists construct. Up until the publication of Palmiro Campagna's addition to the conspiracy theory surrounding the final days of Project Magnet, the conclusion regarding Smith's work was relatively modest. His interview notes supported the alleged cover-up ufologists had already suspected. It just made sense to them. And what was even better was that Smith had official sanction in the form of his employment with the Canadian government. Smith's interview notes provided the ufology community with a smoking gun in the form of a specific time, location, and name with which to associate the origins of the UFO cover-up.

Clearly believing this "leap into fantasy" was not enough, Campagna played his own part in maintaining and expanding the conspiracy theory by identifying the next target. For Campagna, it was not enough to assume that the government silenced Project Magnet through bureaucratic means. As Hofstadter says, the "paranoid" has at his disposal "a vast theater for his imagination, full of rich and proliferating detail, replete with realistic clues and undeniable proofs of the validity of his views" (Hofstadter 1967, 24). Campagna's imagination included other sinister government plots—namely, MKULTRA—and he used the case of Wilbert Smith to connect this unrelated project to the wider UFO conspiracy theory. Of the stories of Smith yet told, this is the culmination in fantastic leaps of logic. But conspiracy theories, as Campagna has shown, continually evolve. Especially given the power the Internet provides in disseminating information and allowing for its redevelopment, Smith's story will likely undergo even more changes. Ufologists love the story of Wilbert Smith, the humble government engineer who sincerely wanted to believe. They probably aren't done with him yet.

Matthew Hayes is a PhD candidate in Canadian Studies at Trent University.

NOTES

Thank you to Adam Montgomery, Lisa Pasolli, Laura Thursby, and the anonymous reviewers for their time and invaluable feedback. This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

1. So large in fact that even as far back as 1977, Westrum lamented: "In recent years the expansion of the literature has been so great that the author has had to abandon his policy of systematically buying all the books published in this area" (300n86).
2. I do not want to give the impression that the study of UFOs has been the exclusive domain of amateurs, as there has been regular, if relatively modest, academic interest that has spanned disciplinary boundaries. Carl Sagan famously debated their existence in a number of high-profile books and public talks (e.g., Sagan and Page 1972). UFOs have also been taken up in a serious way in studies of religion, such as by Jeffrey Kripal (2010; Strieber and Kripal 2016). More recent work can also be found by historians (e.g., Eghigian 2017; Geppert 2012), political scientists (e.g., Wendt and Duvall 2008), scholars of communication (e.g., Sparks and Pellechia 1997; Brewer 2013), sociologists (e.g., Cross 2004), and folklorists (e.g., Dewan 2006; Dégh 1977), to name a few.

3. The term UFO or ufology "community" is admittedly vague and contested. For a discussion of this, see Dean, who writes that it can be difficult to tell who is and is not included, but people within the community "have a general sense of what the term means" (1998, 18). Often it means simply those who believe in the UFO phenomenon, or have had experiences themselves. It also often means that scientists and debunkers are excluded.
4. As John Milloy notes, Canada's national archives are "increasingly a local institution," due to budget cuts resulting in the cancellation of the interlibrary / archive loan program (2013, 14 n10).
5. It is generally assumed that Smith was the one who actually met with Sarbacher; however, this fact is contested. Smith's memo to his supervisor indicates the information may have come to him second-hand, which casts the document in an even more questionable light. I will explore this point further in this article.
6. Vannevar Bush was an American scientist who served as chairman of the US National Defense Research Committee created during World War II (Avery 1998, 39). For many years, Bush has been connected to the UFO phenomenon as one of the alleged architects of the US UFO cover-up. Smith's memo was instrumental in making this connection.
7. A well-known example is George Adamski, who claimed in his book *Flying Saucers Have Landed* (Leslie and Adamski 1953) to have met the Venusian "Orthon," who warned of the potential of nuclear destruction. Christopher Partridge provides an excellent analysis of how post-1947 UFO religions "emerged within the tradition of theosophical esotericism," affirming the main tenets of the earlier belief system, but with a unique twist: the introduction of advanced technology and a highly evolved "master" who descends to earth (in a flying saucer) rather than ascends up into heaven (2003, 36).
8. One of the more recent mentions I have come across was at the inaugural Alien Cosmic Expo, held at the Brantford, Ontario, Holiday Inn in June 2016. Stanton Friedman briefly spoke about Wilbert Smith, describing him as a "genius."
9. As its website states, the Canadian UFO Survey is a compilation of data collected from "active Canadian researchers" and "made publicly available in an attempt to promote the dissemination of information across the field of ufology."
10. The same omission is found in Story and Greenwell (1980) and Sachs (1980), both of which contain entries on Smith. Ironically, one of the only books from an academic press to mention Smith—Denzler's *The Lure of the Edge* (2001)—does indeed contain citations, but cites a book that itself does not! Denzler confines her mention of Smith to a single paragraph, and cites Craig (1995). Craig's book, although also published by an academic press, contains no references whatsoever, and is apparently written entirely from memory, being a chronicle of his personal experience with the phenomenon in the 1960s.
11. When I was myself in the process of collecting all of Canada's UFO documents from LAC, I came across a similar website that contained several hundred pages of microfilm scans of what appeared to be some of the actual LAC material. While it may have saved me a trip to Ottawa, I decided not to trust the website, just in case omissions had been accidentally made.

12. MJ-12 stands for "Majestic 12," an alleged top secret committee struck by Harry Truman in September 1947 tasked with monitoring and analyzing UFO information. The documents that allege the existence of this group have been denounced as forgeries, yet the ufology community maintains their authenticity (see Denzler 2001, 28; Friedman 1996).
13. The 1969 Condon report actually briefly mentions Smith in a single paragraph, in the context of his work being the precursor to Project Second Storey. It contains no mention of the handwritten notes, but mentions that Smith's work "did not represent the official opinion of the Department of Transport or the Second Storey Committee, and in this respect is not a part of the official study of UFOs in Canada" (Condon 1968, 554).
14. The Arthur Bray collection at the University of Ottawa contain all of these documents. The collection is, ironically, more complete and organized than that found at LAC.
15. This claim is common among ufologists, clearly a strategy they use when trying to establish expertise through exclusive access. Chris Styles claims the same in his self-published book *Impact to Contact* (Styles and Simms 2013), albeit with regard to those files about the Shag Harbour UFO crash.
16. Smith himself admitted to the influx of letters from "cranks" in a memo he sent to his supervisor after the termination of Magnet. Smith asks permission to continue his correspondence with those he considers having legitimate inquiries, assuring the DoT that he will ignore the cranks (Smith 1954).
17. Indeed, for many years Stanton Friedman has popularized his notion of a "Cosmic Watergate."
18. It is traditionally argued that one of the hallmarks of science is its falsifiability—that is, because one can never prove a theory is undeniably true, science instead works to prove theories *wrong*. On the flip side, one of the hallmarks of conspiracy theory is its *un*falsifiability. It is impossible to prove a conspiracy theory is false, because any argument of this type simply becomes further proof of the alleged cover-up (see Gordin 2012, 7–8).
19. Paul Hellyer, Canada's Minister of National Defence from 1963–67, uses this term often (e.g., see Coyle 2015).
20. Nevertheless, there are times when such a group does in fact exist, and the conspiracy theorists in those cases are vindicated. See DeCanio (2011) for an example. It must also be acknowledged that some conspiracy theories might not seem so paranoid when examined alongside some of the experiments and secret projects the US government undertook, such as the story Ronson (2004) tells about "the men who stare at goats."

REFERENCES

Avery, Donald H. 1998. *The Science of War: Canadian Scientists and Allied Military Technology during the Second World War*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442682313.

Berliner, Don, and Stanton Friedman. (1992) 2004. *Crash at Corona: The US Military Retrieval and Cover-Up of a UFO*. New York: Paraview Special Editions.

Berlitz, Charles, and William L. Moore. 1980. *The Roswell Incident*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap.

Bray, Arthur. 1967. *Science, the Public and the UFO*. Ottawa: Bray Book Service.

———. 1979. *The UFO Connection*. Ottawa: Jupiter Publishing.

Brewer, Paul R. 2013. “The Trappings of Science: Media Messages, Scientific Authority, and Beliefs about Paranormal Investigators.” *Science Communication* 35 (3): 311–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547012454599.

Browne, G.C.W. 1954. Memorandum to superintendent of radio regulations at the Department of Transport. 25 June. RG 97, vol. 182, file 5010–4, part 1. Unidentified Flying Objects File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

Campagna, Palmiro. 1997. *The UFO Files: The Canadian Connection Exposed*. Toronto: Stoddart.

Cawley, Janet. 1986. “Brainwash Tests in ’57 Haunt CIA.” *Chicago Tribune*, 1 June, 10.

Clark, Jerome. 1998. *The UFO Encyclopedia: The Phenomenon from the Beginning*. 2nd ed. Detroit: Omnigraphics.

Clarke, David. 2009. *The UFO Files: The Inside Story of Real-Life Sightings*. Kew, UK: National Archives.

———. 2015. *How UFOs Conquered the World: The History of a Modern Myth*. London: Aurum Press.

Collins, Anne. 1988. *In the Sleep Room: The Story of the CIA Brainwashing Experiments in Canada*. Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys.

Colombo, John Robert. 1991. *UFOs over Canada: Personal Accounts of Sightings and Close Encounters*. Toronto: Hounslow Press.

Condon, Edward. 1968. *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*. New York: E.P. Dutton.

———. 1969. “UFO’s I Have Loved and Lost.” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 113 (6): 425–27.

Coyle, Jim. 2015. “Cabal Keeping UFO Secrets to Blame for World’s Woes, Says Former Cabinet Minister Paul Hellyer.” *Toronto Star*, 11 April.

Craig, Roy. 1995. *UFOs: An Insider’s View of the Official Quest for Evidence*. Denton: University of North Texas Press.

Cross, Anne. 2004. “The Flexibility of Scientific Rhetoric: A Case Study of UFO Researchers.” *Qualitative Sociology* 27 (1): 3–34. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:QUAS.0000015542.28438.41.

Dean, Jodi. 1998. *Aliens in America: Conspiracy Cultures from Outerspace to Cyberspace*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

———. 2000. “Webs of Conspiracy.” In *The World Wide Web and Contemporary Cultural Theory*, edited by Andrew Herman and Thomas Swiss, 61–76. New York: Routledge.

DeCanio, Samuel. 2011. “Populism, Paranoia, and the Politics of Free Silver.” *Studies in American Political Development* 25 (1): 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0898588X11000010.

Dégh, Linda. 1977. “UFO’s and How Folklorists Should Look at Them.” *Fabula* 18 (1): 242–48. https://doi.org/10.1515/fabl.1977.18.1.242.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Denzler, Brenda. 2001. *The Lure of the Edge: Scientific Passions, Religious Beliefs, and the Pursuit of UFOs*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Dewan, William J. 2006. "'A Saucerful of Secrets': An Interdisciplinary Analysis of UFO Experiences." *Journal of American Folklore* 119 (472): 184–202. https://doi.org/10.1353/jaf.2006.0020.

Donderi, Don. 2013. *UFOs, ETs, and Alien Abductions: A Scientist Looks at the Evidence*. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads.

Dummitt, Christopher. 2017. *Unbuttoned: A History of Mackenzie King's Secret Life*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1w6tfon.

Eghigian, Greg. 2017. "Making UFOs Make Sense: Ufology, Science, and the History of Their Mutual Mistrust." *Public Understanding of Science* 26 (5): 612–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662515617706.

Evans, Hilary, and Dennis Stacy, eds. 1997. *UFOs 1947–1997: From Arnold to the Abductees*. London: John Brown.

Fenster, Mark. 1999. *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Friedman, Stanton T. 1996. *Top Secret/Majic: Operation Majestic-12 and the United States Government's UFO Cover-Up*. New York: Marlowe.

Geppert, Alexander C.T. 2012. "Extraterrestrial Encounters: UFOs, Science and the Quest for Transcendence, 1947–1972." *History and Technology* 28 (3): 335–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/07341512.2012.723340.

Goldberg, Robert Alan. 2001. *Enemies Within: The Culture of Conspiracy in Modern America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. https://doi.org/10.12987/yale/9780300090000.001.0001.

Good, Timothy. 1988. *Above Top Secret: The Worldwide UFO Cover-Up*. Toronto: Macmillan.

Gordin, Michael D. 2012. *The Pseudoscience Wars: Immanuel Velikovsky and the Birth of the Modern Fringe*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226304434.001.0001.

Haines, Gerald K. 1999. "CIA's Role in the Study of UFOs, 1947–90: A Die-Hard Issue." *Intelligence and National Security* 14 (2): 26–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529908432538.

Hofstadter, Richard. 1967. *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays*. New York: Vintage Books.

House of Commons. 1966. *Debates*. 27th Parliament, 1st Session. Vol. 5. Ottawa: Queen's Printer.

Jameson, Fredric. 1991. *Postmodernism; or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Kay, Jonathan. 2011. *Among the Truthers*. Toronto: HarperCollins.

Keyhoe, Donald. (1950) 2011. *The Flying Saucers Are Real*. New York: Gutter Books.

———. 1953. *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*. New York: Henry Holt.

Knight, Peter. 2000. *Conspiracy Culture: American Paranoia from Kennedy to the X-Files*. London: Routledge.

Kripal, Jeffrey J. 2010. *Authors of the Impossible: The Paranormal and the Sacred*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226453897.001.0001.

Lafferty, David. 2014. "A Literary-Biographical Approach to the Study of Conspiracy Theory: the Development of the 'Grand Design' in the Works of Douglas Reed." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 83 (4): 803–25. https://doi.org/10.3138/utq.83.4.803.

Lamoureux, Maurice. 1955. Letter to Wilbert Smith. 23 March. RG 97, vol. 182, file 5010–4, part 1. Unidentified Flying Objects File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

Lepselter, Susan. 2016. *The Resonance of Unseen Things: Poetics, Power, Captivity, and UFOs in the American Uncanny*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Leslie, Desmond, and George Adamski. 1953. *Flying Saucers Have Landed*. London: Werner Laurie.

MacDonald, Bruce. 1953. "Maze of Instruments in Tiny Shack Hunts for Saucers—Ottawa." *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 November, 21.

McCarthy, David S. 2013. "'The Sun Never Sets on the Activities of the CIA': Project Resistance at William and Mary." *Intelligence and National Security* 28 (5): 611–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2012.699291.

Melley, Timothy. 2000. *Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Millman, Peter. 1968. Letter to the commissioner of the RCMP. 22 March. RG 18, vol. 3779, HQ-400-Q-5, part 7. National Research Council—Unidentified Flying Objects File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

Milloy, John. 2013. "Doing Public History in Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission." *Public Historian* 35 (4): 10–19. https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2013.35.4.10.

Nattrass, Nicoli. 2013. "Understanding the Origins and Prevalence of AIDS Conspiracy Beliefs in the United States and South Africa." *Sociology of Health and Illness* 35 (1): 113–29. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9566.2012.01480.x.

Oatway, H.C. 1952. "Project Second Storey: Minutes of the 2/52 Meeting". 19 May. RG 24, acc. 83–84/167, box 7523, file 3800–10–1, part 1. Flying Saucers File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

Parish, Jane, and Martin Parker, eds. 2001. *The Age of Anxiety: Conspiracy Theory and the Human Sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Partridge, Christopher. 2003. "Understanding UFO Religions and Abduction Spiritualities." In *UFO Religions*, edited by Christopher Partridge, 3–42. London: Routledge.

Ridler, Jason Sean. 2015. *Maestro of Science: Omond McKillop Solandt and Government Science in War and Hostile Peace, 1939–1956*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ronson, Jon. 2004. *The Men Who Stare at Goats*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rudiak, David. 2001. "The Wilbert Smith Papers." *Roswell Proof*. Accessed 23 March 2017. http://roswellproof.homestead.com/smith_papers.html.

Rutkowski, Chris. 2008. *A World of UFOs*. Toronto: Dundurn.

——. 2010. *The Big Book of UFOs*. Toronto: Dundurn.

Rutkowski, Chris, and Geoff Dittman. 2006. *The Canadian UFO Report: The Best Cases Revealed*. Toronto: Dundurn.

Sachs, Margaret. 1980. *UFO Encyclopedia*. New York: Putnam.

Sagan, Carl, and Thornton Page. 1972. *UFO's: A Scientific Debate*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Sanders, Todd, and Harry G. West. 2003. "Power Revealed and Concealed in the New World Order." In *Transparency and Conspiracy: Ethnographies of Suspicion in the New World Order*, edited by Harry G. West and Todd Sanders, 1–37. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Scott-Smith, Giles. 2011. "Interdoc and West European Psychological Warfare: The American Connection." *Intelligence and National Security* 26 (2–3): 355–76. https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2011.559324.

Smith, Wilbert. 1950a. Memorandum to the controller of telecommunications at the Department of Transport. RG 97, vol. 182, file 5010–4, part 1. Unidentified Flying Objects File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

——. 1950b. "Notes on Interview." X30–3, box 1126.2. Wilbert Smith—Project Magnet File. University of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa, ON.

——. 1954. Memorandum to Mr. Van Allen. 8 September. RG 97, vol. 182, file 5010- 4, part 1. Unidentified Flying Objects File. Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, ON.

——. n.d. "Official Reticence." X30–3, box 1126.12. Wilbert Smith—Biographical Material File. University of Ottawa Archives, Ottawa, ON.

Spark, Alasdair. 2001. "Conjuring Order: The New World Order and Conspiracy Theories of Globalization." In *The Age of Anxiety: Conspiracy Theory and the Human Sciences*, edited by Jane Parish and Martin Parker, 46–62. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Sparks, Glenn G., and Marianne Pellechia. 1997. "The Effect of News Stories about UFOs on Readers' UFO Beliefs: The Role of Confirming or Disconfirming Testimony from a Scientist." *Communication Reports* 10 (2): 165–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/08934219709367672.

Speigel, Lee. 2016. "Hilary Clinton is Making Big Promises to UFO Believers." *Huffington Post*, 20 April. Accessed 23 March 2017. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-ufofiles_us_5716a9f8e4b0018f9cbb83a1.

Story, Ronald D., and J. Richard Greenwell. 1980. *Encyclopedia of UFOs*. New York: Dolphin Books.

Strieber, Whitley, and Jeffrey J. Kripal. 2016. *The Super Natural: Why the Unexplained is Real*. New York: Tarcher Perigee.

Styles, Chris, and Graham Simms. 2013. *Impact to Contact: The Shag Harbour Incident*. Halifax, NS: Arcadia House.

Turner, Jonathan. 2012. "Politics and Defence Research in the Cold War." *Scientia Canadensis* 35 (1–2): 39–63. https://doi.org/10.7202/1013980ar.

Uscinski, Joseph E., and Joseph M. Parent. 2014. *American Conspiracy Theories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199351800.001.0001.

Vienneau, David. 1986. "Ottawa Unaware CIA Funded Tests New Report Says." *Toronto Star*, 8 May.

Wendt, Alexander, and Raymond Duvall. 2008. "Sovereignty and the UFO." *Political Theory* 36 (4): 607–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591708317902.

Westrum, Ron. 1977. "Social Intelligence about Anomalies: The Case of UFOs." *Social Studies of Science* 7 (3): 271–302. https://doi.org/10.1177/030631277700700302.

Ziegler, Charles A. 1999. "UFOs and the US Intelligence Community." *Intelligence and National Security* 14 (2): 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/02684529908432537.