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CORRESPONDENCE

...For creative theorizing

To the editor:

Jay Gourley's article in the May 1979 issue was interesting but hardly yielded any surprises. The names Eunza (sic), and Atta from Uranus have already been published much earlier than the occurrence of the Naval Intelligence discovery (cf. George H. Williamson and Alfred C. Bailey, *The Saucers Speak*, New Age Publ. Co., Los Angeles, 1954). Both of these authors, as you will recall, witnessed Adamski's by now famous first encounter with a Venusian (cf. George Adamski, *Flying Saucers Have Landed*, The British Book Centre, New York, 1967, 14th printing.). This interesting detail might throw some light on Gourley's future researches. Similar interesting UFO related coincidences (if that is what indeed they are) have also been noted by John Keel in *The Mothman Prophecies*. Perhaps the hoaxes are more elaborate than we ever dared to suppose. On the other hand, some kind of manipulative conditioning might truly be indicated.

On another note ... in my estimation Jacques Vallée is the first author to deal with the UFO as an indicator of some kind of a dynamic mechanism, which, though little understood, may have a patterned behavior. Though he might be chastised for some of his personal interpretations, as a social scientist he is paradigmatically sound. In support of Vallée's work, I must state unequivocally that "nuts and bolts" (and all the stuff we erroneously think science is made of) are of scientific value only if placed into a meaningful context. This he has tried to do more than once; his efforts deserve great applause.

In conclusion, let me express my sincere hope that future issues will allow me to see a more serious, less speculative, rather than articles con-

cerned with devising methodologies for throwing babies out with the bath water.

Chris von Volborth
Cincinnati, Ohio

...The New Zealand sighting

To the editor:

In "The Psychology of the UFO Phenomenon" in your June issue, Stan Gooch used the New Zealand UFO sighting of December 31, 1978, as an example of a UFO case which is more important because of its psychological effect than for any information it may provide about UFOs. Gooch used this example because, in his opinion, "much of the initially impressive evidence here appears to collapse on examination."

Actually, Gooch should have made it clear that his opinion on this case was *not* based on close examination of the evidence. I can forgive him for not closely examining the evidence because, as with most media-reported UFO stories, the available evidence was minimal and somewhat self-contradictory. Nevertheless, what evidence was available should have cautioned him against uncritically accepting the explanation that the film showed a "magnified picture of the planet Venus (or even of Jupiter)" or that "smaller, rapidly zig-zagging lights" were "probably lights from the Japanese fishing fleet."

The airplane crew was quoted in the news media as saying that they had actually flown over the bright light which they saw near Christchurch, and that they had picked out the fishing boat

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Cover: A spider figure on the Nasca plain
Photograph by Gerald Hawkins.