

Why I Find Donna Tietze Hare's UFO Stories Unworthy of Belief
James Oberg // July 2004 // excerpt from Purdue debate with Greer

Now, why would I be unwilling to believe the stories that Dr. Greer has presented from one of his star witnesses, Donna Hare? Again, without any reason to impugn her intelligence, sincerity, or integrity, let me explain why I find it impossible to believe her claims about secret UFO information covered up at NASA.

Ms. Hare worked at the NASA center in Houston for a number of years between the Apollo and the beginning of the Shuttle program. She has testified that:

1. She saw a space photograph with a UFO on it, and a technician was airbrushing it out prior to public release.
2. She was told (and clearly believed) that all space flights were followed by UFOs but astronauts were sworn to secrecy and threatened with grave punishments if they revealed it.
3. She was told (and clearly believed) that there were space photos showing a cattle mutilation in progress by a UFO, with cattle in the field standing with their tails straight up in alarm.
4. She was told (and clearly believed) that UFOs had been responsible for crippling the Apollo-13 spacecraft, so as to prevent it from reaching its intended landing area on the back side of the Moon -- but then, the UFOs had further interfered by aiding the doomed spaceship and making it possible for it to return safely to Earth.

I cannot believe the first item, the only one of the four to which she was a direct witness, because she described the photograph as showing trees and their shadows, which allowed her to determine the low altitude of the white circle she saw (and which she described as "a metallic disk") from its shadow on the ground.

From what I know of NASA space photography, I believe it was impossible then or now for NASA to produce Earth surface images with sufficient detail to show a tree and its shadow. A vigorous search by several UFO buffs recently for such pictures in NASA's archives (the photo was described as being prepared for public sale) failed to locate any.

That challenge has remained open for many years: if commercially released NASA photographs in that time period were clear enough to show trees and their shadows, find one. Find any example in books, magazines, scientific papers, anywhere they might have been released. Nobody has yet succeeded – because, I suggest, such images never existed.

Veteran NASA earth photography specialist Paul Lowman confirmed this for me: “Your term ‘preposterous’ is right on. The original Landsats had a ground resolution of 79 meters; Landsats 4 and 5 did better than that, around 30 meters or so. The Skylab S190B camera (18" focal length) could resolve small boats in marinas on the Chicago lake front, and I think a 10 meter resolution would account for that. But no NASA satellite of that era, or for that matter of any era up to now, could resolve pine trees or their shadows.”

Ms. Hare then retorted that of course NASA had such pictures: "We not only had the technology to see a number on a golf ball back then, we used it in the Bay of Pigs -- remember? -- to see Cuban/Russian missiles aimed at our country." (email, March 25, 1999) Aside from a confusion of the Bay of Pigs with the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the use at that time of U-2 spy planes, not satellites, the additional confusion of what super-secret military spy satellites could see and what NASA was interested in and had in its possession, gives me additional confidence that my disbelief in this story is logical.

On March 23, 1999, Ms. Hare restated her experience: “I worked in the Nasa photo lab. I saw a satellite picture of the Earth, and flying over the top of a tree covered field was a round metal disk. Both the trees and the UFO cast shadows in the same directions giving me an understanding of the shape and size of the object. I was told by the photo lab tech the UFO would be airbrushed out before the public would see those pictures. I will swear to this in any court of law. I have absolutely no reason to lie or deceive anyone about my experience. I swore about my experience at NASA before Congress, and if I were lying I could be placed in jail.” Of course, there was no way to tell if a white dot was ‘metal’, and also there is no law that would put her in jail for ‘lying’ about it, and she did NOT swear about her experience before Congress - all of these are non-factual elaborations of her original story.

Nor can I believe the claim about all astronauts seeing UFOs and being ordered to cover it up. Aside from my personal research into these bogus and confused stories there is the testimony of Apollo-14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell, a former supporter of Dr. Greer's efforts to dig into this mystery.

Mitchell has said that these astronaut UFO stories are fiction, are untrue. Dr. Greer cannot expect us to believe both Ms. Hare's claims and Dr. Mitchell's utterly contrary assurances simultaneously. And by the way, Apollo-13 wasn't headed for the back side of the Moon after all -- somebody with a good grounding in the reality of space flight would have known that and might have been embarrassed to repeat it.

Other claims from Ms. Hare involve coverup activities such as threats to astronauts who have seen UFOs, and the total disappearance of one man who had disclosed space UFO material to her. Unfortunately Ms. Hare has not identified that 'disappeared' man so that researchers can verify he has really vanished, or ever even existed.

Assuming Ms. Hare's description of the comments to her are accurate, is there any possible prosaic explanation why men should tell her 'UFO stories'? One fact (found via Internet search engines) which may help in formulating a hypothesis is that she (under the name Donna Tietze) was on public record as a UFO contactee counselor during the same period she was allegedly being told these stories. She was a Texas 'Associate Director' of the 'UFO Contact Center International (UFOCCI)', a group that described itself in 1981 as "a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people who have had traumatic, bizarre experiences or sightings of UFOs. A secondary goal of UFOCCI is to promote public awareness of the UFO contactee phenomenon. UFOCCI works with each contactee to help them understand their experiences via hypnosis, group meetings and open seminars. Each year, over the Labor Day weekend, UFOCCI conducts a conference called "Jorpah" (which means 'Cosmic Gathering') in which the past year's activities are summed up and discussed. These gatherings are held at different places throughout the country. The date and time of these conferences are announced in The "Missing Link" newsletter."

Further, according to a published report of the STAR KNOWLEDGE CONFERENCE in Sedona, Arizona, in 1999, "Donna Tietze Hare, spoke about having an extraterrestrial encounter at age 25, which altered her consciousness about the cosmos. Perhaps as a consequence of that encounter, she then worked at Johnson Space Center for NASA."

One might hypothesize that her views, which she had no reason to hide while working at NASA, would be well known, and that people around her would realize she enjoyed UFO stories of any kind. Their motives could have been kindness, or teasing, or a desire to ingratiate themselves for personal reasons, or many alternate possibilities. The need for any such stories to be true was very low.

