

Spring 2016

First Year Seminar

## Homework Assignment 3

### Alien Abduction Experiences

**Reading Assignment:** By Thursday, February 8:

“Reflections in a Curved Mirror,” from *Searching for Memory* by Daniel L. Schacter.

“Into the Air, Junior Birdmen!”, from *Flim-Flam*, by James Randi, chapter 4 (pp. 55-92)

It is said that the best way to learn material is to have to teach it. With this in mind, I am having each of the four groups play the role of teacher and summarize a group of material for the class as a whole. All of these materials have relevance to the subject of Alien Abduction Experiences.

**Description:** This is a group activity. Your goal is to prepare a report (lecture) on one of four topics. Every member of the group must take a part in presenting the report, but you should cooperate. You will be preparing short presentations, as a group, on one of the four topics listed below. You will be graded on both the quality of the materials you bring to assist you, and on the presentation that you make.

**First Reading and Organization:** Due Tuesday February 13

You should have read the materials (or watched the videotape) once by next Tuesday. I recommend that you take notes, even on this first pass. Then you need to meet with your group and subdivide the topic into more detail. Next Tuesday you need to present me with a single group summary of who is doing what. This is very informal; a one sentence summary for each person is fine.

**Notes and Presentation:** Due Thursday February 15

Next Thursday, you will lecture on the material (about 15 minutes per group) you were given in class. Your presentation should be clear and well organized; your fellow students can be tested on it later. Any materials you use (such as lecture notes) should be turned in with your name. I will use this in helping me grade.

Lecture notes need not be as formally presented as a paper; sentence fragments and incomplete ideas are fine, as long as you present them clearly during lecture. If you choose to do anything creative (I’ve had a power point lectures), you can turn that in as well.

The materials you will be basing your presentations on will be one of the following:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Team: “The Demon-Haunted World,” from “The Demon-Haunted World” by Carl Sagan. A comparison of demonic possession in the middle ages with modern Alien Abduction experiences.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Team: [“The Doctor’s Plot,” by James Gleick](#) (from the New Republic) and “The Man from Outer Space,” by James Willwerth, (from Time magazine, April 25, 1994). Two critiques of John Mack’s work with those who have had abduction experiences.

**<http://www.around.com/abduct.html>**

3. \_\_\_\_\_ Team: [“Abduction by Aliens or Sleep Paralysis?” by Susan Blackmore](#) and ["Sleep Paralysis" by Al Cheyne](#).

**[https://www.csicop.org/si/show/abduction\\_by\\_alien\\_or\\_sleep\\_paralysis](https://www.csicop.org/si/show/abduction_by_alien_or_sleep_paralysis)**

**[http://sourceress.tripod.com/storage/asklepiasleepparalysis/S\\_P2.html](http://sourceress.tripod.com/storage/asklepiasleepparalysis/S_P2.html)**

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Team: “Kidnapped by UFO’s?” a PBS Nova special on abduction experiences. This is a videotape.

You should feel free to expand the material that you discuss to go beyond the materials I am providing, if you wish.