

framework of a project which bore the overall title Blue Book. It was confirmed in the summary and conclusions of the university commission in charge of evaluating the Blue Book [Project], the Condon Commission. The physicist Condon wrote in his conclusions that the study of UFOs had little chance of advancing science. All official studies thus came to a halt in the United States as of December 1969, and the Air Force referred those who were curious to private ufological associations.

Although it was endorsed by the Academy of Sciences, the Condon report was harshly criticized by numerous scientists, particularly at the powerful AIAA (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics). The latter justly pointed out that the summary and conclusions of the report, which were drafted by Professor Condon himself, conflicted with a number of analyses within its body. The AIAA recommended moderate, but continuous scientific work on UFOs.

An amendment to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) passed in 1974 permitted declassified official documents on UFOs to be obtained as of 1976. One of these, in particular, attracted attention. It was a letter from Air Force Brigadier General Bolender from October 1969 stating that the imminent conclusion of the Blue Book Project would not put an end to military reports concerning UFOs that constituted a threat to national security. These were not part of the Blue Book system and would continue, as in the past, to be handled in accordance with the directive JANAP 146 and Air Force Manual 55-11.

“As regards authenticity, only negative conclusions are definitive”

**By François Louange,
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Among the investigations conducted on the subject of UFOs, photograph analysis represents one of the more delicate areas. In fact, in the public's eyes, photographs constitute indisputable proof par excellence of the existence of the phenomenon, which gives them a very special emotional factor. But photography is in reality a field where one still finds many errors and hoaxes, because many natural or technical effects can give rise to surprising documents: it is becoming easier and easier for a specialist who has computer equipment to produce a doctored negative that stands up well to investigations. This can sometimes even prove lucrative.

Moreover, experience shows that most of the negatives that stand up to analysis contain only extremely poor and unusable information, often limited to a saturated bright spot on a black background or vice versa, which makes this area of investigation relatively disappointing.

For about forty years, alleged photographs of UFOs, which are sometimes renowned in ufological circles, have occasionally been the subject of expert appraisals on the part of specialists interested in this topic. The physical and technical fields that come into play are quite varied, ranging from atmospheric propagation to photography or video and including digital image processing.

The analysis of a photographic document or video is broken down into two steps:

1 - Establishing or disproving authenticity, uncovering hoaxes, fake maneuvers or parasitic phenomena that could have affected the photographing equipment or the original data storage medium (film, video cassette). This concept of authenticity is furthermore completely relative, because only negative conclusions are definitive and in the best of