

Interview with George Knapp ¹

(Host of Coast to Coast Radio)

By Reinerio (Rey) Hernandez
(Transcribed by Maria Coronado Chernikov)

Rey: George, how did you become involved with this field of the paranormal?

George: Sort of out of the blue. I was working at KLAS TV as an investigative reporter. A guy walked into our RV station in 1987. His name was John Leer. And he dropped a pile of UFO documents, FOIA documents, on the desk of my managing editor, a guy named Ned Day who had hired me there. He says “Ned you gotta take a look at this stuff. It’s the biggest story in the world! These documents will help you get through it and you can break this story. You’ll become world famous.” Ned looks at these documents and he says, “I don’t want anything to do with this. I’m not going to do this story. If this UFO stuff was true, if the cover-up was real, I’d already know about it. So, no thanks.”

And I was eavesdropping, which is something I do occasionally, and I said, “Hey! Let me take a look at that pile of stuff, and I started reading it. John Leer, at the time, had a certain amount of credibility with our TV station because he had helped us break a really big story about the existence of something called the Stealth Fighter. Leer is an aviation watcher. He’d go out to Area 51 and Area 52 with binoculars and night vision and look in the sky and would obtain evidence of classified projects. And along the way he developed an interest in UFOs and he thought that there was a UFO cover up. So, he helped us break the story of the F1-17 which became an international story. It was the first reporting that the program actually existed. So, he had some credibility with us. So, when he came in with the UFO documents, he expected to be taken seriously and was not.

I took a look at the documents and, at the time, I produced a little public affairs program that would air Sunday mornings at 6 o’clock in the morning. Normally it’d have a city councilman or a county commissioner. They’d talk about local politics and no one watched it and I thought, “Well, maybe this is a chance to put a different spin on that program. I’ll have John Leer come on the show.” He came on and laid out this UFO

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scenario - the cover up, Roswell, aliens, treaties with aliens - all this wild stuff I'd never heard of before. I'm wondering can this be serious? I get off the air, the show. The program airs and suddenly my phone starts ringing off the hook. I'm getting all these calls. "Who was that guy? Was that real? Can you tell us more?" So, I had Leer come back and do another show and the response from the public was even bigger.

Then he did a third one and he mentioned that he had met a guy who was working at area 51. That they had flying saucers out there and that maybe I'd get to meet him someday, that guy turned out to be Bob Lazar, and a few months later I did get to meet him. But I was hooked. I started reading the documents. I realized these are government documents. They were written before the Freedom of Information Act existed and that intrigued me because, as a journalist, I can't go out and find flying saucers in the sky but I can chase the paper trail. I can look for government documents and reports, indications that our military and other agencies have taken the subject seriously. And that's exactly what I found. Before FOIA existed. Before it was the law of the land, you sent a letter to the FBI or CIA and asked them, "Can I see your UFO files?", and they'd laugh at you. "We don't have any UFO files". After FOIA becomes the law of the land and you file those same requests, suddenly you get thousands of pages of material. They had in fact been studying it and had lied to the public. That intrigued me. That got me hooked.

Rey: So now years later you became involved with the paranormal. Was that through your involvement with Coast to Coast or was it independent of Coast to Coast?

George: Independent of Coast to Coast. It was because of a friendship that developed with Bob Bigelow, a billionaire businessman who has spent more of his own money researching what we call the paranormal and UFOs, than any person in the history of the world. Bob Bigelow lived here. He tried to hire me a couple of times. As soon as I started reporting on Area 51, he wanted to offer financial support, which I didn't take but which other researchers did - Linda Howe, Stanton Friedman.

Eventually Bob Bigelow created his own organization called NIDS, the National Institute for Discovery Science. So, for a reporter like me who's interested in UFOs and related subjects, it was mana from heaven. It was great to have this really topnotch world class group of scientists studying these mysteries and it's right here in my back yard. So, I spent a lot of time getting to know those guys. I was a fly on the wall for a lot of their meetings and it became obvious early on that the mystery that I was pursuing, the UFO coverup, the paper trail about flying saucers, was so much bigger. That that was one tiny aspect of a much bigger mystery.

I got to meet Jacques Vallee. In those days he was part of the NIDS board and the NIDS team and he explained it to me. "Look", he said. **"Look, if the ultimate end, the solution to the UFO mystery, is that people are coming here from other planets and visiting us, I'm going to be real disappointed"**. Because, to him, the evidence

indicated something much bigger than that. The cases that he had studied, the specific data of UFO craft and how they operated, indicated to him that whatever they are they can manipulate space-time. They can bend it to their will. And if they can bend space-time, that in fact they could be aliens from other planets, they could be time travelers, inter-dimensionals or all of the above. **So, he suspected that the ultimate answers are much bigger than just visitors from other planets and I tend to agree with him.**

When the NIDS board got up and running, these world class scientists from different disciplines, Dr. Edward Mitchell was one of them. He wasn't the only astronaut, by the way, on that board. They opened my eyes to a much bigger world and a much bigger world of possibilities - that aliens may not be from other planets. That flying saucers may not actually be craft from other worlds. That it might represent something else.

When NIDS bought the Skinwalker Ranch in 1996 to investigate the smorgasbord of what we call para and supernatural activity, everything you could name - flying saucers, orbs, Big Foot, poltergeist activity, disembodied beings, crop circles - all of it happening in one place. All of it happening for hundreds of years in front of thousands of witnesses, it was as if a living laboratory for the paranormal had dropped into their lap. **The lesson, and there aren't many that you can get from Skinwalker Ranch, the lesson is that somehow all of these phenomena are related. That they, it's as if it was trying to tell us something. It's a learning curve Rey! All of these are related, now it's up to you to figure out how.**

Rey: That's a perfect segway because that's exactly what I mentioned to you when you interviewed me a few minutes ago. We actually reached the same conclusion as Jacques Vallee and Edgar Mitchell and Rudy Shields and many members of our board, but we didn't have the data, we just had hypotheses. Now we have the data— we verified Jacques Vallee's hypothesis. Most of the researchers of the Dr. Edgar Mitchell FREE Foundation believed that all of the paranormal, all of the Contact Modalities, are all interrelated and all involve a manipulation of space-time. I briefly presented to you some of the data and research findings from the FREE UFO Experiencer Research Study. What is your opinion of this academic research?

George: Well, it's a massive piece of work and it needed to be done because you have a lot of debunkers and skeptics and I'm using air quotes around that word. They're actually disbelievers, non-believers. People like that have been able to dismiss all of this information as the rantings of toothless Hillbillies out in the country or something or people who are mentally deranged and they make fun of it. I resent what they've done to witnesses who've had these extraordinary experiences - intimidating them to the point where they don't come forward and don't talk about it with their own family. Furthermore, they have intimidated academics and scientists, investigators, journalists, who might otherwise be inclined to go ahead and take a look at this stuff. They don't because of the ridicule factor and I resent that. So, this book, this study that you guys

have done, has offered statistical evidence about the nature of the phenomenon, of the kinds of experiences that people all over the world are having and how broad it is. Not only how broad in terms of the different types of experiences, but the number of people who are having them.

Rey: What is your opinion of the research data?

George: I think it's very valuable. I mean I'm not a statistician. I can't say that I can't verify or validate the methods that you used, but it certainly looks good to me. The fact that you cast such a wide net and you got so much input from so many people asking them very detailed questions. This is not a casual sort of a survey that people could take in five minutes. They had to be committed to give you this kind of information. I think it's very valuable. It's the first of its kind.

Rey: Yes, it's the first of its kind. It's also the very beginning. We're just beginning to scratch the surface. What recommendations can you give us for future research in this area?

George: Well, it's a very exciting time for the specific UFO topic because since December of 2017, when the New York Times did this story about a secret study that had been based here in Las Vegas, conducted by an organization funded by the government, that study had started with UFOs as a starting point but it really realized quickly on, **that UFOs is a tiny part of a much broader mystery and that you're never going to understand UFOs without looking at related subjects.** So, they expanded the study at Skinwalker Ranch. They conducted interactions with governments around the world. They created a gigantic data base to suggest that flying saucers is not going to be the answer to these bigger questions. That you need to have a much broader understanding of the nature of reality itself. The universe is telling us something here. It's telling us that the reality isn't what it used to be. That reality is far more mysterious and complex and mind-boggling than maybe we can imagine. So, I am encouraged by the reaction from people in my line of work to that New York Times story. Because of that you have investigative reporters, news organizations, who are at least willing to look at the UFO aspect of this mystery and once they get there, it's going to lead to the bigger picture.

Rey: One last question. Dr. Raymond Moody, Dr. Jeffrey Long, Dr. Kenneth Ring, three major NDE researchers and the many PhD academics associated with the CCRI organization, all believe that "Consciousness is Primary" and not our physical reality. Do you also believe that Consciousness is Primary?

George: Let me put it this way. One of the reasons I became a journalist was so that I didn't have to deal with math. So, you know, there are challenges. I love science and I love scientific topics and kicking around and talking about them and reading about them. But there are limits to what I understand about consciousness and how it works, and it's

become sort of a buzz word now. You hear it at UFO conferences. People tossing it around. “Well, the secret to consciousness...” and they don’t have a clue of what they’re talking about and I’m not sure anybody does. I read a study the other day, an article that said objective reality doesn’t exist, which I’ve had that sort of feeling in my head for my whole life. Some days just feel more real than others and you know you wonder whether this is a simulation. Whether it’s a script. Am I starring in my own movie? What the heck is going on? **And you have those kinds of thoughts and then a paper comes out where it says we believe that we can demonstrate that objective reality does not exist, that it is observer generated. That consciousness exists before the physical universe. The tree does not fall in the forest if there’s nobody there to hear it. It’s tough to get your head around that stuff. It changes everything and when you start thinking of it in those terms, it makes UFOs and Roswell and crashes look very small.**

Rey: Exactly. A lot of individuals are also asking these questions. Do you believe that members in government are also asking these questions, especially questions as to whether UFOs might not be physical objects but might be consciousness-based objects?

George: Well look, I hear people pounding their fists on podiums and demanding disclosure. “We need disclosure! We need to know what the government knows!” I’m a first amendment guy. That’s my religion and yeah I believe that. I think that there should be transparency on this stuff. The public should know what the government knows. But if anyone thinks that our government has the answer to this I think they’re wrong. I don’t know that anybody understands it. We’re just trying to figure it out. We, meaning humanity, is just trying to figure it out. We might have a better understanding of some of the materials that have been stashed away in attics and hangars for a long time. There may even be bodies on ice somewhere. Somewhere there are people who have more information than we do. Radar data, things of that sort, evidence you would call it in the UFO world. But where that fits into understanding the bigger picture, it’s such a tiny infinitesimal little tidbit compared to the larger mysteries.

You know I’ve seen people demand disclosure. “We want to know what’s going on!” They think maybe they can get their head around the idea that UFOs are from somewhere else and they’re visiting here and the government has lied to us about it and I think the people could handle that information.

But what about the bigger picture? What are you disclosing? I’ve asked that question about Skin Walker Ranch. If you had to disclose, for example, that we live in someone else’s universe. That this is not our home. These are not aliens. They live here. That they can enter our world whenever they want. That they know what we’re thinking. That they know what we’re going to do before we do it. That we’re in the shower, we’re sleeping, they can see us. They’re watching us. I think that if you had a government disclosure of that, that people would freak out.

Rey: George. that's why I wanted to interview you because you understand that this phenomenon is so complex and that we really need to move forward with the complexities of this phenomenon instead of these materialist types of issues.

George: Well, we could do both, you know. You could do both. I think that the UFO research is worthwhile in that it is a road. It's a pathway to a bigger understanding. So, if that's what gets you into it, and gets you started down that road, fine. But it's a lot bigger than that little road

Rey: Thank you for your time George.

Bio: George Knapp is an American television investigative journalist, news anchor, and talk radio host. He has been a longtime news anchor at KLAS-TV in Las Vegas, Nevada. He is also a host on *Coast To Coast AM*, a syndicated radio show with millions of listeners worldwide. He is known for his work investigating UFO reports and also the paranormal which are a frequent topic of the *Coast to Coast* show. George has been recognized with Edward R. Murrow Awards, Peabody Awards, and dozens of Pacific Southwest Regional Emmy Awards. George was the co-author, with Dr. Colm Kellerher, of *Hunt for the Skinwalker: Science Confronts the Unexplained at a Remote Ranch in Utah*.

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