

## [Transcript] The Ezra Klein Show / What the Heck Is Going on With These U.F.O. Stories?

So I'm going to take a moment setting this one up because if you've not been following along until now, then where we are now is going to seem really strange.

So on June 5th, an outlet called The Debrief published a story that more or less broke the internet.

In it, a decorated former combat officer and an intelligence officer named David Grush, who had worked on the government's unidentified aerial phenomena task force, said he had turned whistleblower and he had testified under oath that he has been told reliably and given evidence of secret government programs that have over a long period of time recovered and definitively analyzed crash materials that we have this stuff and it is being kept from Congress, it is being hidden.

And if it were just him, maybe you would dismiss it.

But there were others in the intelligence community who had served around him, who were themselves very highly credentialed, who backed him up on this.

And so immediately you these two narratives emerge and take over a lot of social media.

One was this is the biggest news break of all time and it's being published in The Debrief because the mainstream media just doesn't want you to know about it.

Tucker Carlson in his Twitter show said UFOs are actually real and apparently so is extraterrestrial life.

Now we know in a normal country, this news would qualify as a bombshell, the story of the millennium.

And in our country, it doesn't or keeping it from you.

And then there's the other side of this, which thinks it is ridiculous to even be talking about just media organizations taken crank seriously for the clicks.

And every time I step anywhere near UFO stories, and I do because I think there's something interesting here, I get a ton of emails saying this like how dare you waste our time.

And so to make a meta point about why I want to do this conversation right now, I don't think it's good for these two interpretations to be so distant from each other.

It feeds conspiracy theories.

It makes it hard for people to know why something that looks very legitimate to them isn't being taken as legitimate elsewhere.

But also, I don't think on the other side, it's good for stories that even if they have problems and holes that do have something interesting happening in them, something intriguing, something that is a little bit hard to explain that does deserve scrutiny to be ignored.

So I wanted to dig into this story, both for what's solid in it and what makes me at least skeptical of it.

And I also want to dig into some of the stories about governmental investigations into UFOs that preceded it because there have been a bunch of these over the past couple of years.

The biggest ones, including this one, were co-authored by Leslie Kane, a long time journalist on this beat, who's published a number of them in the New York Times, my publication.

Though as I mentioned, this particular story was in the debrief.

And so I asked her to join me on the show so I could get my questions and hopefully some of yours answered.

And my hope is by the end of this, you have more of a sense of why I think it's reasonable to be very curious at this point about what is going on here, to have some real unanswered

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questions, but also to be pretty skeptical of some of Grush's claims, or at least get a sense of why I am.

As always, my email is [reclineshow@nytimes.com](mailto:reclineshow@nytimes.com).

Leslie Kane, welcome to the show.

Thanks for having me.

So let's go back to the first piece that you co-authored in The Times back in 2017.

Give me a bit of texture on how that story came about, but fundamentally what it was reporting.

Sure.

Well, the story came about because of a meeting I was invited to with some associates of a man named Luis Elizondo, who was the person who headed up a secret program at the Pentagon, which is what the story was about.

And I had an introduction to him a couple of months earlier because he was resigning from his position as head of this program.

So he wanted to try to carry on the work he had been doing outside.

He was concerned that there were not enough resources being devoted to what he thought was a very important issue after all the years he had spent studying it.

So that's why he left.

And this meeting was really a turning point for me, Ezra, and my career as a journalist. I mean, I was just stunned by the fact that that program existed, by the fact that I was meeting the former head of the program and all the things that they showed me at that meeting, which basically showed the reality of the program and it showed Harry Reid's involvement with it.

And we can talk more about that because that all led to the story, but I just wanted to share that it was a major moment for me to be invited into a meeting like that.

So what was the program?

It was a very small, basically unfunded program called the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program.

We call it ATIP.

There was another program that was set up before this in the DIA, and this was kind of an offshoot of another program that closed down.

And basically it was just a small group of people within the Pentagon, and it was led by this man named Luis Elizondo, a former counterintelligence operative and a very highly cleared person who worked with a lot of, I mean, he did a lot of other jobs while he was at the Pentagon.

This was just something he kept going, even without a lot of funding, with a small group of people.

And they were basically studying cases that were presented to them by, a lot of them were from the Navy, cases that came through intelligence agencies, Air Force, anybody that was connected

to the defense establishment.

They were not taking cases from commercial pilots or police officers or anybody else.

And nobody even knew about this program.

Their focus was to try to understand the technology, basically.

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How do these things do, what are they doing, and how are they doing it?  
And observe as much as they can and collect as much data as they could.  
And so that was the nature of that program.

I mean, it was very small.

Some people argue maybe it shouldn't even be called a program, but for lack of a better word, that's how we've always referred to it.

It's one of the interesting questions about all of this that I think, and to the extent that there's a public mind about this, you might think that if the government is doing something on UFOs, or now they're called UAPs, or whatever the acronym of the moment is, and is seeing things on videos and multi-sensor data, which is something that the government later says is not just videos, but it's being picked up by multiple sensors, then it might be a very big deal, big conspiracy.

But actually, what gets reported then, and what I think subsequent reporting also bears out, this program is very small.

It's funded by about \$22 million from Harry Reid.

It's a little bit of a backwater.

I think sometimes people have in their heads, and maybe this will come back in later, the idea of a big men in black conspiracy.

But if anything, it seems like it was very hard for people to get the Pentagon actually interested in this.

Yeah, you're right.

I mean, it was small, and that \$22 million was actually, it wasn't just for this program.

It's a complicated situation because it was actually provided to this DIA program that preceded it, but they were very closely linked.

So we didn't go into a lot of detail on that because it's just confusing.

But yes, it was a small program, and the reason Elizondo resigned was because of what you just said that not enough resources were being devoted to it, and he felt that it was a national security problem, and that it was extremely important.

And he was in a position to know that because he was paying attention to it, which most of the Defense Department was not paying attention to it.

So this program, as I understand it, is investigating these reports, which have always trickled in but are now getting a little bit more collected of unidentified flying objects.

What is the program finding what discoveries are made or conclusions are drawn?

I mean, when you speak to Elizondo and he's leaving, what does he say has been the result of this work?

First of all, some of the material, a lot of it was classified, so he couldn't tell me a lot of the details of what I really wanted to know.

So even the fact that those videos came out was kind of a miracle because even though it was an unclassified program, actually the fact that the program existed was not classified, but a lot of the information they collected was.

They would get case reports, they would get data from these sightings, and they would have their best analysts look at that data, and they would try to find correlations between sightings and try to understand what the various characteristics were of these objects and how they behaved.

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But the specifics of that were not revealed at the time.

I'm always very careful with the word classified because I think when people hear it, they think secret and true.

But whatever this program is finding at that point, even though its findings are classified, it's not enough to get blown up into a huge program.

Elizondo is not getting promoted up through the ranks, but what it seems to do and tell me if I am getting this wrong, as I understand it, and through partially through your story too, is get Congress interested.

So there's this interesting tension again where whatever it's finding isn't doing that much inside the bureaucracy, but then the revelation of the program begins to get real congressional sponsors and interests, and things begin to turn from there.

Is that how you understand what happens?

Absolutely.

That's exactly right.

And that's why Elizondo left because he wanted what you just said to happen.

And it did.

And it was because of the story.

I mean, the story started the ball rolling in that direction.

And within a year or so later, members of Congress were asking to be briefed on this.

So then they started to learn what the program knew and whatever this information was that was more specific, that could not be revealed to the public, was revealed to Congress.

And other members of the intelligence world, people started to learn about it.

And that was good.

That's exactly what he was hoping would happen.

And so what happens next in Congress?

Mainly the House and Senate Intelligence Committees were very interested in this.

And the interest grew and more and more of them were briefed over a period of years by different people.

And eventually they actually authorized the, or set up this UAP task force, which was sort of an offshoot of this original ATIP program that we were talking about earlier, but became a solidly established and funded entity.

This entity was instructed by Congress to study these cases and come up with reports, including reports for the public, and to just investigate this.

And also members of Congress were more public about speaking out about this, which none of this had happened before as there, it was like a sea change from, there's a line that you can draw in the year 2017.

And I studied this, I was doing this for 20, you know, 17 years before that.

So it just was radically different that any member of Congress would even speak about this issue.

And they were doing that in various interviews.

So it was just kind of bubbling up and becoming much more of a public issue.

And they're continuing to be more and more engaged with it as time goes on, even today.

You know, it just, things are escalating for them.

What does UAP stand for and why does that become the preferred acronym here?

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When the acronym UAP was first established, it stood for Unidentified Aerial Phenomena. And that was used because of the term UFO had a lot of baggage attached to it.

I mean, people think of UFOs as being flying saucers from another planet or, you know, something, a vehicle driven by aliens and something from a science fiction movie.

It's just a loaded term.

And scientists in particular wanted to avoid any association with something called UFO.

So they renamed it, but it's been changed even beyond Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

It has now been changed to Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

What's interesting about that is the word anomalous covers a much broader range of phenomena, of issues, of possibilities than the word aerial does, because some of these objects come out of the water and are seen under water and even outer space.

So it gives a broader definition for it.

So one of the things that happens next is in the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, which actually passes strangely in 2018, there is some language inserted into the classified annex of that bill, pushing the Pentagon to continue these investigations.

And over this period of time, a couple things get inserted into bills, as I understand it, somewhat shift the funding, the structure of the investigations, whistleblower protections, etc. So can you tell me a bit about how the governmental context changes here?

Yeah, I mean, if we go through starting from what you just mentioned and go through to the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2023, we've come a long way because that is the act in which whistleblower protections were offered, specifically for individuals whose security owes prevented them from talking about the knowledge they had of these programs, some of which may contain physical materials. And the legislation also asked for reports on the acquisition of any physical materials or crash retrievals. They actually mentioned that, and they write that in there. Also, medical effects on people from close encounters, psychological effects. The fact that Congress is legislating and looking for information, and I was willing to state something that seems as far out as retrieved materials, and then the acknowledgement that whistleblowers may have something to say, which they're prevented,

to say, yet we want to hear about it, Congress is saying. So this was a huge step forward, the legislation. And it's been, every year, something new gets added to the NDAA that takes it further.

That brings us, in a way, to your next set of pieces published in 2019 and 2020 again with co-authors that focuses on reported encounters between Navy pilots and flying objects that they couldn't explain or identify. So can you tell me a bit about those pieces?

Yeah, so you're talking about the one in 2019, when that was the second one we did after the original one, which was with Ralph Blumenthal and Helene Cooper. And it focused on pilots, Navy pilots, off the east coast of the United States who have been encountering these objects for starting in around 2014, 2015, these very small objects that sort of seemed like drones, but they didn't behave like drones. There were lots of them. Sometimes they would see them every day. Two of the pilots went on the record. One of them was Ryan Graves, who has since become very well known, and talked to some others off the record. But the numbers of incidents that they had were just extraordinary. And they could not explain the behavior of these objects, but the fact that some of them would hang around for 22 hours or something like that,

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which is longer than they believed any drones could remain aloft without going back down. So there were other occasions of near misses where the objects would go zooming between two aircraft. And one was described as a sphere with a cube inside it. So these were different kinds of things than we had been hearing about for decades when people talk about UFOs. This was a different kind of an object than we have heard much about before.

And this is a bit of your bread and butter as a reporter on the subject. You wrote a book on this that came out in 2010 called *UFOs: Generals, Pilots and Government Officials Go on the Record*. John Podesta, the former White House Chief of Staff, writes a forward to that book.

And a lot of that book is reports of pilots of things they've seen and can't explain. There's a long history and documentary record here. So tell me a bit about whether or not these reports end up in the 2019 and 2020 stories. Are they different? Are they something new? Are they just a continuation of what you've seen and reported on before? How do you place that in context? What's interesting about the difference between the book and what the kinds of cases that I wrote about in the book and that others wrote about because I had contributors to that book who wrote their own chapters, were that they were the more kinds of classic sightings that we've been hearing about for a long time, like gigantic triangular objects or disc-shaped objects or sort of the typical ones, silent, you know, huge things that would drift over Arizona for an hour and a half. And I think what's different about, particularly about the 2019 sightings, are just that they're small. Nobody was reporting anything like that in the earlier cases that I had in my book. And I also think what's changed, of course, is that we have better equipment now and much more sophisticated

sensors to capture data on these objects and also we're paying more attention and trying to capture data on them, which we weren't doing then. I mean, we had one case of an object that was hovering over O'Hare Airport for about five minutes, a disc-shaped object in 2006, seen by all kinds of pilots and aviation people. And there's no data on that. It wasn't in a position where the radar could pick it up. I imagine if something like that happened today, it would be very different. So I think part of it is we have different kinds of reports, but we also have much better ability to actually capture data on these objects. So therefore, we know more about them.

This was one of the things that, as somebody who's interested and skeptical in this space, I found interesting, because there's a lot of debunking. You can go to it on YouTube and find it of different ways. People could very reasonably see something that isn't there or mistake something

they do see when they're flying a plane. There's a lot on your mind at that moment.

But there have been government reports and hearings where there is discussion of these phenomena being picked up in multiple sensors at once, which is more interesting to me because it would seem to knock out at least some of the chance for error. So can you talk a bit about beyond some of the visual reports, what else is seeing or sensing these events?

Yeah. I mean, they do. The multiple sensors is very important. And we don't, I mean, I don't know much. And I think a lot of people don't know much about what those actual sensors are. That is information that we don't want to release to our adversaries. So even the kinds of sensors that we use are protected. For instance, the videos that were released, the whole video wasn't released. It was just a portion of the incident, particularly the one called the gimbal video, because apparently the rest of the video revealed information about our sensors that we didn't want our adversaries to have access to. So I can't really speak to the types of sensors and the

types of technology that's used. I just know that the idea of having a multiple sensor, you know, an object that is captured through multiple sensors is really important, as you point out. And the visual component is important too, but probably not as important as the others. And when you have the combination of multiple witnesses seeing it with their eyes and multiple sensors also picking it up, you've got a pretty strong case and you have a lot of data to work with. And you cannot analyze a case and come to any conclusion about it unless you have an adequate amount of data. That's always a big problem. You're never going to be able to resolve it without enough data to be able to rule out what other conventional explanations might be possible for it. So you have to have a lot of data. And that's again, something that we have a lot more of now than we did 10, 15 years ago. So to add a little bit of data to this. So in June 2021, through a congressional mandate, there's a report released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena. I read this at the time and a lot of it is just saying, we don't know, much of this probably has totally normal explanations, maybe all of it does, but they do give a little bit of detail in the sensors. And it was a part that I found most interesting. So I'm going to read a bit of it here. So it says, UAP were registered across multiple sensors to include radar, infrared, electro-optical, weapon seekers, and visual observation. And then it says of the 144 reports that get investigated here, 80 involved observation with multiple sensors. So not all of them. And they don't say of those 80 what had which sensors on it. And that doesn't, I really want to note that there could be a lot of explanations here, including experimental craft from other countries and so on. But these are not all tricks of the light. This is not all just eyewitness accounts. So 80 having multi-sensor observation struck me as pretty notable. I would agree. Yeah. And I also think in that report, what was notable was they did say that they did not have any evidence that these were Russian or Chinese objects. And also that they did not have any evidence that they were American technology, which you know, wasn't definitive, but it was certainly suggestive of the possibility that they are unexplainable. But you're absolutely right too. Just having something that's not explained doesn't mean that it's from another world. Of course, we don't know what it is. Is it basically what it means? But that was a really notable part of that report. I don't know if you felt that way, that they did reference the China and Russia and American technology, American sophisticated secret corporate technology or something like that was mentioned as well as not being very likely explanation. So later in 2020, you reported on the fact that the ATIP program that forms the basis of the 2017 story has been renamed. It now has a new name. It has a little bit of a new, I think positioning within the bureaucracy or at least centrality. Tell me about what happens to it. It was renamed the UAP task force. I think that's what you're referring to. And that was kind of, you know, as a formally established, I think it was under the department of the Navy particularly, and it was going to, it was just tasked to investigate these objects, to investigate the sightings that were coming in. And basically to do the work that the report you just referred to had laid out. And so this was the first time that any official body was established and that was known publicly anyway by the Congress within the Defense Department since the 50s and 60s. So it was a forward movement that was very important. But its job was to be the focal point for these reports and to do the work that was required to investigate them and see if they could be explained. So in that piece, you describe, quote, a small group of former government officials

and scientists with security clearances who, without presenting physical proof, say they are convinced that objects of undetermined origin of crashed on earth with the materials retrieved for study. So who are you describing? What kind of evidence did you see there that made you think those statements were credible? So a lot of conversations were off the record. One of the individuals in that story, Eric Davis, actually made the statement that he had briefed members of Congress on, he briefed some aerospace companies as well on objects that were otherworldly. And who is Eric Davis? He's a physicist who had been an associate with the ATIP program for a long time. He has clearances. He's been involved with this issue for many, many years. And he was one of the people who had worked with the ATIP program was very close to Luis Elizondo.

And he was one of the people that was conducting briefings. A lot of the people who we talked to, of course, could not go on the record and they could not provide anything specific. They could not provide proof or data on these crashes if in fact they existed, which we did state clearly in the story. But having been involved with this for so long when I have talked to so many people off the record who I believe are in a position to know about what's going on behind the scenes and who have had connections to some of these programs, who have told me that these materials do exist,

I take it very seriously. And in fact, Luis Elizondo did say publicly on an interview he did with Tucker Carlson. I think it was in 2019. I actually made a note of this. It was in May of 2019. He did say at that point, and he didn't say that it was a fact, but the question was, do you believe, do you think that our government is in possession of these materials? And he answered,

yes. So there have been suggestions of this made publicly, but it's a very hard thing for anybody to go on the record about because it's such a protected area. You can't talk about it.

And so this is where I think you can also get into questions about the people who do go on the record. So I remember that the Times actually got criticism for quoting Eric Davis. He said in other places that psychic teleportation is quite real and that it can be controlled.

And there's a generalized concern that any kind of task force tasked with studying a topic that is often been understood and has attracted people on the fringe is going to get fringe people. And they might be people who have a basket of unusual beliefs. And as much as they're

part of this, you could have sort of correlated problems in who's involved in the sense that the people who are attracted to it may not be the most sober in their analysis. So how do you think about that? How do you think about some of that blowback? How do you think about who is credible here and who has things that they come to this with a belief that is already set and they're trying to prove it? It's a very, very tricky thing, especially as a reporter who wants to bring forward credible people. And yes, some of them may have long histories with various CIA programs that study things like remote viewing. And they might seem very, you might use the word fringy, but really these were programs run by the CIA. So people have a lot of ideas about the ideas that other people have. And I can't control that. When I bring someone out, I have a reason to believe that specifically with relationship to this, they know what they're talking about. And who's going to decide what's fringe and what isn't really? I think that there are people who have beliefs like that, many more of them than you would ever imagine. And most of people just don't talk about it and you don't know about it. So it's really a struggle, Ezra, because this



subject is sort of tainted with all that kind of stuff. You come to the table with people having preconceived ideas about how strange it is and how they, you know, how fringy it is. So I do the best I can with the sources that I can bring forward. And I understand people's concerns. I want to pause on this because I think it's actually an important space. So on the one hand, something that preparing for this conversation and paying attention to this for a while that I often see is people attempting to destroy the credibility of somebody talking on it by noting unusual ideas they have. And on the one hand, I think it is both very possible that something like UFOs, I mean, it's clear that something like you UFOs or UAPs is going to attract conspiratorial minds. Like anytime you marginalize a belief, you're going to get marginalized people who are the ones who are speaking up on that belief. And you've, you know, often in life and human history have people who have some collection of ideas that are weird and some of those weird ideas can be true. So another way of thinking about this, I've been doing a lot of reporting on AI over the past year. And on the one hand, a lot of very senior people in AI believe AI is going to become super intelligent, very plausibly sentient or something close to it and destroy humanity. And that is either a very important view that we need to be very concerned about because a lot of people, you know, involved in this believe it, or you could just say that people get involved in AI or people with a predilection to believe AI is super important and to believe various kind of sci-fi speculation. And it's very hard to know which one you're dealing with at which point. The popularity of beliefs in a subculture where the subculture is expert on whatever they're talking about can either be a reason to take the belief very seriously or a reason to just worry you're getting involved or getting taken in by just what has become culturally normal to believe among this community. Yeah. I mean, I think it's a really good point. And I, if you think about religious beliefs, those religious beliefs are not really considered fringe or they're not looked down upon. But if you look at them with the same lens, you could think that some of those were beliefs maybe were a little bit strange. And people even use their religious beliefs to make a determination about whether they should study this national security problem or not. I find that to be pretty strange, even though that's taking place within the establishment and not outside the establishment. So I don't know, I just think it's problematic. I wish everybody was 100% free of any kinds of a strangeness that people are going to judge them for. But it just doesn't always work that way. Everybody's got their quirks. And so I just do the best I can with handling that. But I think you're making a really good point. When you are moving through this world, because you're deep in it, have been for a long time, and I'm sure you're constantly confronted with the question of how to decide if somebody is credible or if somebody is a crank. And I'm sure you meet a certain number of people you think are cranks or have some crankish beliefs. How do you make those judgments? Yeah, it's a good question. I mean, you really spend a lot of time talking to them. There's usually red flags that come up. I can just tell by the way they're talking to me, if what they're saying makes sense. I mean, I know enough to know sort of a framework for what's true and what isn't. If the person seems to be mentally unstable, and then there's also documentation, a person has to verify who they are and show me their credentials and show me whatever they can to justify what they're saying. I mean, if there's documents that back up the points they're making to me, all of those things come into play. And you just have a sense after a while, and you talk to other people also who know that person, other people you trust who may have talked to that person as

well.

I might get a colleague to speak to them as well, if I'm not sure. But it takes a lot of time to vet somebody. And for some people, it's shorter. Some people, it's obvious. Others, it's questionable. And if anybody's questionable, I tend to just keep spending time with that person, but I will not write a story with them unless I get to a point where it's completely clear. And I think if someone's questionable at the beginning, chances are it isn't going to happen for them later on.

But you just don't know. And especially in the secretive world full of stigma that we're living in here, it can take a lot of time to get to know people and figure out who they are.

So that, I think, brings us to the latest story you've published. So who's David Grush and what is he claiming? David Grush is a former Senior Intelligence Officer who was with both the National Reconnaissance Office and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. He just left the NGA in April of 2023. He had a top secret compartment information clearance and was involved in a lot of different aspects of these two agencies. And one of them was he was their kind of UAP investigative person, and he was involved with the UAP task force on behalf of both these agencies starting in 2019 through 2022. And he, during that time, I mean, there's more that I can tell you about him, but I think we're more interested to know that when he was working at the task force,

he started to look into this question of crash retrievals. And what it involved was him speaking to many people because he was very well connected and very well trusted within the intelligence community. He was able to speak to many people who have direct knowledge of these programs, people who are actually involved with the programs. And many of them came forward to him and told him

about illegal activities that were going on because there was no oversight. There were questions about the federal acquisition regulations that should have been governing these, some of the contracted programs. And he just was able to gather a lot of data from them over a period of years, which he eventually brought to Congress and also communicated to the Intelligence Community Inspector General in a complaint that involved reprisals that had been taken against him earlier. I mean, it's a long and complicated story. But I think the key thing is that he is making the statement that there are craft in the possession of these programs, these government programs, and have been for decades that have been shown to be of non-human origin definitively. And he doesn't have direct access to the programs. He hasn't seen the stuff himself. He hasn't touched it or had any exposure to it. He has seen documentation about it, photographs, as I understand it, and has spoken to many people directly involved. So that's where his information comes from. So has he named any of these people to you? Not to me. These specific individuals, the locations of the programs, the names of the programs, all of those things are classified. So he's not in a position to present any of that information to me, but he has presented that information to Congress. He presented about 11 hours of oral testimony to congressional staffers, which was then transcribed into hundreds of pages. So all that kind of information has been provided, but not to me. So there's something weird here. So we go back to what we were talking

about at the beginning with the program under Elizondo. And this is this small rump program.

It's having trouble getting funding, having trouble getting any notice. And now there's this allegation that, I guess, somewhere else in the government, they have crash remains. Grush has said either to you or in subsequent interviews that he believes they have bodies. There's a

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multi-decade race between nations to retrieve and hold these things. And so there's been this unbelievable level of, I guess, success, right? Findings, retrievals. So on the one hand, you have this program that is supposedly the Pentagon's investigation into UAPs, which is having trouble getting off the ground or getting any notice. And then on the other hand, this allegation that somewhere in the government, somewhere else, according to someone else, there is an incredibly powerful set of programs that are doing this. Is that the sort of shape of the story? Yeah, I would say that. I mean, these programs are completely separate from the program that Elizondo was involved with. I mean, nothing to do with it. They're deep black. They call them legacy programs. They've been around for decades. And they're much more tightly controlled in terms of security than the program he was involved with. So yeah, they are completely separate. So but how do you understand what is being alleged about, I guess, the Pentagon's organizational structure here, right? Somebody in theory at the top of the government knows about the programs, right? And knows what the Pentagon is doing. And the Secretary of Defense is having one sort of UAP program that has no attention. And then other black programs that do or is the allegation here that the Secretary of Defense wouldn't know about this or the CIA. I mean, what is organizationally as you understand it being alleged? Like how do you merge in your mind the different programs you are reporting on here? Yeah, it's a really fascinating question, Ezra, because these programs that or let's say one central program that Grush is talking about, and others have talked to me about, I don't have that kind of specific information. I mean, I don't really know who knows about these programs and who doesn't. It appears that many high level officials don't know about them. That's why he has to be a whistleblower and go to Congress about them. I mean, the members of Congress didn't know about them, or they might have heard about them, but they haven't had the data that he was able to provide. And the other whistleblowers that are also coming forward to them, and I know there have been others, they just haven't come out with their names yet. So it's a fascinating question because they're so hidden and there's so much information that is not being brought forward publicly about them that I cannot say this is how they're structured. This is who runs them. This is who knows and doesn't know. Maybe this president is briefed and this one hasn't. That information is not really clear or known. I think that what is known is that it seems very likely, and even Harry Reid mentioned this or alluded to this, that aerospace companies have been subcontracted by government agencies to handle, to house these objects. And the work is done outside of government in that sense, which makes them even harder to find. It's going to make it harder for Congress to find them because corporations can claim they have jurisdiction over their own possession. So I do know that, but to answer the rest of your question, I just don't know. And I don't think anyone knows except what might be in information that's classified and has been provided to Congress. So until now, we've been talking about stories that had some kind of direct evidence at their core, right? There was this Pentagon program under Elizondo. There are these videos that can be released. What makes you confident that Grush's internal investigation here is turning up something real rather than that he has ended up believing things from people who maybe themselves believe the wrong thing or maybe they're lying or whatever people believe, including governmental kinds of weird things. So what makes you confident in this given that it is secondhand testimony and it is quite explosive in its claims?

Yeah. I mean, what gives me confidence is knowing him and knowing the reputation that he has and having talked to other people who know him and have worked with him and a vouch for him. I don't have any reason to believe that he himself would be making anything up. And then you ask about

the people who have spoken to him. I don't know a lot of those people. So I can't say that I've interviewed them or anything. But I think after spending years involved with the investigation that he conducted with the people that he claims he'd spoke to, I would believe that those are the people that would know. I mean, I don't think that the numbers of people that he spoke to, it's hard to imagine that all of them are coming forward and either lying or in some conspiracy to deceive him. I trust his judgment on the people he spoke to and the people that he knows within these programs. And the other element for me is that I have talked to other people besides Grush who have told me the same thing. And this has been going on for years. Even before Grush came forward, I'd been able to gain access to people who have clearances and who are deep insiders like this and who have told me the same thing basically, not the details, but just the very simple fact that these objects are in the possession of our government and they are not of human origin. That's the simple truth that we're trying to get out here. If indeed it's true, I believe it is. I haven't just heard that from Grush. I've heard it from other people that I respect and trust as well for quite a while. So for me personally, it's kind of an accumulation of conversations I've had with very highly respected people, people that I suspect and trust that have given me this kind of information for a long time. And it's my faith in Grush and who he is. And I've spent hours talking to him. He's provided me with documentation and performance reviews of his work. He's highly regarded. So I'm willing to put it out as a story. I mean, I think the point of it is that Congress needs to investigate and find out if what he is saying is true or not. And I think it's up to Congress to take the next step.

One thing that is striking about the piece you published in the debrief is that it doesn't just have Grush quoted. There are a series of people who fairly directly say that what he is saying is in their view true. So notably Christopher Mellon, Carl Nell. It looked to me like later on on Twitter. Elizondo was backing him up. But tell me a little bit about what Nell and Mellon say about Grush and about his claims and who they are.

Well, Carl Nell is a recently retired Army Colonel who actually still does. He knows Grush very well. And he worked with him on the UAP task force. And he has said a lot of things. I've had hours of conversations with Carl Nell. He wasn't willing to go on the record with a lot. But he did make a statement that he said that Grush was beyond reproach. And then later on said that he basically what Grush is saying is true. I mean, he said that in his own words. So he's one person. And then we have, I mean, again, there have been many others off the record. But you mentioned Christopher Mellon. And Christopher Mellon began, you know, he was involved with briefings on this years ago. He's been involved with briefings where these topics were covered anyway. And he knows Grush very well too. And another person is Gary Nolan, a scientist from Stanford University who is highly regarded. He's a geneticist and has been studying actually, he's been studying physical materials himself for many years in his own lab. Also knows David Grush very well and vouches for him. So and then we have someone else on the record named Jonathan Gray, who is with NACIC, the National Air and Space Intelligence Center. And he has basically, he's not so much talking about Grush, but he is basically telling us the same things that Grush is telling us. And he has, he knows these from his own work and his own

briefings at NACIC. So there is support for this astonishing possibility that we do possess these crashed objects comes from many people, not just from Grush. Gray is a slightly strange figure in the piece as best I could read the piece, which is he's saying he has more firsthand direct evidence of this and he's being directly briefed on it, not just sort of finding it out through people coming to him on the side. But if I understand the way the piece is written correctly, Gray is speaking under a pseudonym? Yeah, it's sort of like a legend name. It's a name he uses within his work. What does that mean that he uses a name in his work? Well, I mean, he has never, it's just like you might think of a CIA agent. I mean, lots of times people don't even tell you they're using a different name. Like if you're talking, you know, he's not an agent who's in the field conducting clandestine operations or anything like that. But he is working at such a sensitive level and the knowledge that he has is it's not just about UAP, but about other national security issues is so sensitive that he does not use his real name in his work. And he would never go on the record with his real name. So the only option we had was to use this other name for him. When you say in his work, do you mean in his work in the government? He's not telling the people he works with his name? His work at Nasik. He's not telling the people at Nasik his name? Yeah, I mean, I'm sure his immediate superior who knows him very well knows his birth name, but he never uses that name. No, he does not use that name within his work at Nasik.

What makes you confident he is who he says he is or that he does have the information he says he has? Because he in some ways, I think, has more far-ranging statements in the piece than Grush. What he's really saying is that he is in the briefings where the government is saying to itself directly that these are extraterrestrial origins, et cetera, et cetera. But his situation seems weirder to me. Yeah, I mean, I know exactly what you mean. Because he hasn't, again, he hasn't been

exposed directly to the actual physical objects, but he has been briefed on them by, as you're saying, by people within his agency. So that's why it was a very difficult choice for him to make, to even come forward. And the reason I know who he is is because I know him very well. I've spent hours and hours and hours of time with him, both in person and on the phone. And I've been shown his credentials. So I am completely confident to bring him forward. He's just very hesitant to reveal a lot about who he is. And I understand why that is. And I respect that. And that's just how it is. So it's either he doesn't come forward or he comes forward in the way that he has. And I thought he added a lot to the story. And since I know who he is, it's, I'm comfortable bringing him out like this. The other stories we've talked about were published in The Times. I know this story was looked at at least by Politico and The Post. Why did it end up in the debrief, which is a less well-known and established publication, which is to take nothing away from them?

The reason it came out in the debrief, Ezra, was kind of an odd situation that doesn't usually come up. But we were working, Ralph Lumenthal and I were working with a reporter, a well-known reporter at The Washington Post. And we'd been with him for, you know, about a month and a half. And The Post was very interested in the story. And they were spending a lot of time doing background

and doing due diligence, as The Post should and does. And also our reporter had other work he had to do at the same time. So it was taking quite a while. And what happened was that Grush's name leaked out. First of all, it leaked that The Washington Post was involved with the story. Then it leaked, his name leaked. And he was starting to get threatening phone calls. And he became, we were worried about his safety. And I think he was too. Because there's a vicious world out there.

And he's already had faced retaliations and all kinds of things as a result of coming forward. So it just seemed that we couldn't wait any longer. We'd waited quite a long time already for The Post to do its job. And we totally respect their need to do that. But it just became this moment of intensity where we were concerned about protecting our source, basically. And so we felt, and he wanted it to come out as well. And we felt we had to just get it out quickly. And we did go to Politico. Politico was interested in it, but they couldn't get it out as quickly as we felt it had to come out. And so that's why we went to this publication called The Debrief, because they were able to turn the story around quickly. Threatening phone calls from whom, of what sort? He didn't even know who they were from. He doesn't answer them. There were also hostile actors out in the UFO community who were calling him. And there's a nasty Twittersverse out there. I don't know if, and if you don't know about it, Ezra, you're lucky. Because there's just a, it's a very contentious arena out there of people who are involved with this topic. And they will sometimes try to cause harm to people, like Grush. And so I think it was a legitimate concern when things start to leak. You don't even know how this information is getting out. Somebody's leaking it. And so we didn't know where it might go next. We also thought our story could be undermined by somebody else writing something else that, you know, that maybe didn't have the legs we had. So we just felt a lot of pressure to do it quickly at that moment. So what can be verified firsthand in this story? So that, that Grush is making these claims, as I understand it, that he's applied for whistleblower status, that he's made testimony under oath. But as best I know, and tell me if this is wrong, that he and nobody else in the story says they have seen any of this firsthand, nor has named to you or any of the other reporters who the people are who have given them this information or where in the government this is all supposed to sit. Is that sort of right? That's right, except he has given that information to Congress and to the ICIG. So it's not like he hasn't given it. He just hasn't made it public because it's protected by national security laws, by classifications. So I just want to make that distinction. It's not public, but the Congress has the very information that you're talking about. So you noted in the story that the Pentagon cleared Grush to make these statements. Tell me what that means. Yeah, I mean, that just means that they go, basically, it doesn't mean that they're endorsing what he's saying. But every employee has to go through a pre-publication review and to make sure that they're not revealing anything that is classified, basically, or that might threaten the national security of the United States. So it just, they just have to, that's what they're going on when they review it. They're not saying, oh, we endorse this. Yes, say it. They're just saying, there's nothing in here that's illegal for you to say. And so it was cleared in that way. So in a way, this is the thing that I got hung up on. So I have a little bit of experience. I've worked alongside a lot of national security reporters not doing that work myself, but I've been close to them doing that work. And the Pentagon is very expansive in its definition of what revelation could harm national security. I mean, we just saw Donald Trump arraigned for not protecting classified information. And what's being claimed here is that Grush came to them and said, he's going to reveal one of, I guess, the most closely guarded secrets in American defense history, right? That America has under its possession foreign craft and other interviews he

said, foreign bodies that it has found that has come to this conclusion. And the Pentagon is just going to say, great, yeah, that doesn't harm national security in some weird way that I feel like if they thought this was true, they would not let him say it. I mean, that's a very good point. And you could argue that maybe the reason they let him say it was because it would help dispel it. I mean, I think what the key thing is though, if he's not giving anything away about it specifically, I don't think they under the law can prevent him from saying it. If he's just making the general statement and whether it's true or not, you know what I'm saying? I don't think that they can prevent it. And I've heard other people like Lou Elizondo, as I said, on Tucker Carlson, said that he believed that these these crash retrievals existed. He didn't say he knew it as a fact. That's the difference. But I was actually quite stunned that they did approve it. And I have the documentation that states that they approve these all the statements that he wanted to make.

So I don't know what that means exactly. But I know that there was nothing specific that he was stating that that was revealed. I mean, I don't think it's true in my knowledge of classification procedure that because he's not revealing something more specific than that we have it, that it can't be classified. If you reveal that America has a weapon that we have not revealed to the world we have, which is functionally what is being said here in a way, the fact that you're not saying it's in this space here doesn't mean they can't classify it. So I feel like this was my interpretation. You're left with one of two interpretations. Either the Pentagon doesn't believe the story to be true, because you can say a lot of things that aren't true. If you say I'm going to reveal the Pentagon thinks, you know, that flowers grow on Mars, I mean, I guess fine. It's not an actual secret they're trying to keep because they don't believe it's true. Or they think that to let him say it in some ways protects that they're actually doing it because it seems right. Like you can imagine interpretation that this is a kind of reverse psychology PSYOP. That seems a little fanciful to me, but this is a part that I was the most stuck on. On the one hand, there are credible people in this story backing up another credible person, all of whom served around this task force. So if somebody's going to find this out, it seems like it would be this set of people. And on the other hand, for the Pentagon to just say, yeah, go ahead, tell the world that we have crash remains and use the fact that you worked here and have our imprimatur on you to give that credibility. That's just not in my experience how the Pentagon works with anything. They're very secretive. And I don't imagine this is how they would roll this information out. So that's to me the part where I can't seem to make my way forward in this. Yeah, I mean, it would be, it's a really interesting point. I mean, I think it's conceivable that maybe the people that made the decision about this don't know about whether it's true or not. I don't know what the actual process of the pre-publication review involves. And to what level does it go within the Department of Defense? Is it just a sort of a lower level person that's looking for certain signs of classified information? I don't know what that process is about. And I think it'd be a really interesting thing to try to find out more about it. But it is conceivable that they didn't know if it was true or not. And maybe they just think, well, this is kind of ridiculous. Yeah, he can say it. What do we care? I really don't know, Ezra. I have to say, though, that the second review, which was made, which was the one that included the really important statements that he made in the story, happened literally overnight. And that was, I mean, I don't know if I've ever said that before publicly, but it did. He submitted it and he got his response the next day saying yes. So I can imagine that it went through too much overnight.

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We were just stunned. Was it just a clerk who just sort of signed off on it that fast? Or did they just not bother to read it? Or I don't know how it worked. I don't know how the whole thing worked. The other place that I wonder about is, as we were talking about a minute ago, just what's being alleged about the structure of the government here? So Grush is saying this has been going on for a long time. He talks about recoveries in a subsequent interview, recoveries under Mussolini that the Vatican knew about. And there have been a lot of high-up government officials interested in this. I mean, John Podesta, as I mentioned before, wrote the forward to your book. He was a very high-up government official. He was very interested in this as chief of staff to Bill Clinton. He worked under Obama. He's worked with Biden. We've heard people talk about it to our CIA directors who seem very confused about what's going on. And I take them with their word that a lot of people have wanted to know what is happening here and seem interested, but also seem confused. And the idea that you have this very long-running situation where there are crashes and there are events, and there's some kind of US government team that gets deployed to them, that is then hiding what they find from everybody else in the US government or from large portions of the US government, such as maybe you'd even have the Pentagon clearing Grush, but not knowing that it actually has somewhere in its own governmental structure, the very things he's talking about. I guess it's not impossible, but the US government, in my experience, is very just bad at keeping things secret for very long periods of time. This would have to be happening in a lot of geographical locations. It would take a lot of mobilization to do. That's, again, a place where my skepticism comes in a bit, that the level of conspiracy, it's not even the conspiracy being alleged, but the competence seems beyond what I tend to find government capable of even within itself. Yeah, I mean, I kind of agree with you on that, Ezra. When you just really think about it and the way you just said it, it's hard to imagine, as you said, that people going out in the field and hiding this for decades. I mean, there have been people that have come out over the years and talked about being witnesses to such events, and nobody really takes them seriously. There have been people who have made deathbed confessions about these very programs. So it's not like nobody's ever talked about it. Nobody at the level of a David Grush who has been to Congress has ever talked about it. That's what's different here. And I know I do believe that secrets can be kept. I mean, I've been told by people close to the program, by one person in particular, that the cost of maintaining the security for this program was more than the money they spent on actually doing the work to study the material. They went to great lengths to keep this under wraps as best they could. And they very, very small number of people know about it or had access to these programs. So that's all I can say. I mean, maybe after this is investigated, it will come to light that none of it is true. I mean, we don't have the proof, the investigation that needs to be done, at least a public investigation has not happened yet. And it is hard to come to terms with this. I hear what you're saying. So I'm, you know, I just want to see more investigation happen. And I wanted to bring help Grush come forward because I think he opens a door to possibly others coming forward. And for us to learn more about what this is all about. I mean, that's the goal. So I know this goes a bit beyond the story. But, you know, as I mentioned, I have some real points of pretty deep skepticism here. And on the other hand, it is strange to me and curious and intriguing that you have a series of people serving on this task force who are coming to this task



force as I understand it from different directions. I mean, my understanding is that Nell and Grush and Elizondo and so on don't all know each other from 30 years back that they kind of end up here together. And they're all hearing something from someone who they find credible, such that they believe this is happening. I mean, maybe you know more than you can say or something, but and I think you believe this is at least plausible enough that you're reporting it.

So given the points of skepticism that you take as serious, what do you think is going on here? Like what's your mental model of what you're hearing and who is coming to them that isn't just coming forward or why are they working through Dave Grush? Like, how do you understand what you're reporting here? Well, I would say first of all, it's not just that they're hearing something from someone, but they're hearing the same thing from multiple people, multiple people with high clearances who have shown them and convinced them through whatever means they can. And sometimes

this is through documentation that they have this knowledge and that they have direct knowledge that they've been involved with these programs. And you have to trust the ability of these task force members and others who know of this and haven't talked about it publicly to make that discernment to say, well, enough people are telling me this. And I have enough documentation that I've

seen that I take it seriously. And all we really have to rely on here is the credibility of the people who are giving us the information. That's all we have right now. So yes, I mean, I can understand skepticism. It's different when you're in a position like I am of having talked to them myself for so long and for having talked to so many other people with the same kind of information that Grush has. So that's partly what convinces me. I can't bring a lot of it forward. But I think in terms of how to think about it is spending a few years talking to very high level people because he is so trusted by them. And some of them come forward to him and talk about illegal activities that they're concerned about. And enough of them do that, that he builds up hundreds of pages of testimony about what he's learned from them and takes it to Congress. So you're either going to accept that, well, maybe there's some truth to that or you're not. And as I said, I think it's just the beginning. But that's how I frame it. I think there's enough people that he has spoken to that it gives it a lot of weight. I want to add one thing, Ezra, and that is anything that came out in that interview that happened after our story came out, which dealt with bodies and a lot of strange questions that were asked about the Vatican, none of that was part of the reporting that I or Ralph Blumenthal did. And none of that had we discussed with Grush before that interview was done. So I just want to make that clear that that wasn't part of our reporting.

But I do think it bears. I want to be careful there because, and we were talking about this dynamic earlier, I don't want to rule things out that Grush is saying because he's saying some things I find even weirder than some of the other things. But I mean, it is all the same guy. So I recognize it's not part of your reporting. But the fact that he's now going out and saying, well, his theories, these are being sort of working on quantum dimensions, not sort of operating with space time, not, you know, and it's a Vatican. And so there are things he believes that I think are obviously does not have a lot of evidentiary backing for. And then there are things that he's hearing from someone. And it doesn't seem crazy to me that once you, if you are in the position he is in, and I take him as sincere, and you are now serving on this task force, and you are seeing things that you cannot explain under your old models of the world, then probably a lot of things that you discounted before and sources you discounted before

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become more credible to you all at once. And how do you sort between them becomes very difficult. But, you know, the fact that he's saying this in subsequent interviews, I mean, he's still the source at the center of the story. So I feel like it's all relevant.

Right. I understand your point.

So there's another oddity to this to me, because as you say, there's been for a long time stories that this has all been recovered and that the government has it in possession.

And sort of Grosh and some of the other people named here are basically saying, listen, people who are involved in this are coming to us to tell us about it. So on the one hand, this thing is really not that secret, right? People seem to want to talk about it who have first hand knowledge of it. But why don't any of the people first hand knowledge of it then come out if they're very concerned, right? And they'd be very credible because they could say, look, I was in the room and I saw the thing. And there are these whistleblower protections. What's your theory of why they're working through somebody like Rush? Well, I think that they're not, they don't feel safe coming out at this point. Now, that could change. And I think that's what we're all hoping will change once Congress, because Congress can talk to these people. And maybe they will be safe, feel safe coming out. But as it stands so far, as I understand it, they don't want their names out in the public domain. They may be working in jobs, which I know of one person who has actually spoken to Congress. Yeah, who was in one of these programs for a short time. And his current employer has made it clear that they don't want him talking about this. There are various risks that people take for coming forward, especially if they're still in government. And so for whatever reasons, each one of them has their own reasons for being willing to talk to Congress, but they are not willing to go public. Now, I think that's going to change, Ezra, as time goes on. And I also think if Congress holds a hearing, they may call some of these people. And they may not have a choice. But if they can talk under oath in a protected environment in which they are free to say what they want without facing reprisals, that could change everything. Also, because of the reprisals and harassment that Rush faced over the years, I think a lot of these people are afraid of that happening to them. So it's complicated why they don't come forward, but they all have their own reasons for it. The other thing that I've wondered about is we just live in this age when just documents leak left and right because it's so easy to send them through much more anonymous means. You can work them through the dark web, they end up on Discord servers. We've been through WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden and a lot of versions of these. And one thing that's always interesting to me about the stories here is they're very, as I hear them told, they're very human to human, right? Somebody told me instead of us getting, or I think much more to the point, instead of you getting an anonymous zip file that has a bunch of documents, a bunch of photographs, whatever it might be. And I don't know if you know if Rush has supporting documentation, that he was able to turn over but can't show you or did show you and you can't, you know, it's not been reported. But what about documentation, which in many ways is easier to leak than people

having to come forward themselves? Well, apparently, I mean, what I understand and what Gresh has said

is that he has provided some of that documentation. In some extent to Congress, I don't know exactly how much of it. I have not seen any of it because it's all classified. I don't think he is willing to, and you know, you talk about things being leaked. I mean, I would love nothing more than to get such

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a file. But I would not also want anyone to risk going to jail in order to leak. And I think nowadays, it's much harder for people to leak things than it was. And the people that I have talked to who might be in a position to do that are just not willing to take the chance. They don't want to spend the rest of their lives in jail. That's what they're afraid would happen. So you never know, maybe it will happen, but it hasn't happened yet. And, you know, maybe also even better that there will be a way that some of the documentation eventually can be declassified and can be released. And maybe the Congress will be able to facilitate that happening. I think we all have to be patient. I mean, this is a slow process. And this got, you know, Gresh only came out, you know, within the last two weeks. So we have to let it all unfold and hopefully be all going to learn more and get more specific information through whatever means that happens. So what does happen now? So my understanding is that the Pentagon has denied the claims. They've said they don't have evidence of what Gresh is saying. But he did make this testimony to Congress. Like, who in Congress does have this now? And what do they do with it? Well, the Congress, they haven't been that forthcoming about, you know, which members have seen it and what they think about it. I mean, they're not willing to go on the record about any of that. We do know that he provided this information to the general counsel for both the House Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee. And those staffers transcribed it. And it has circulated around among these committee members. There are some names that have been provided of people that should have seen it or have seen it. If you call up the congressional offices, they're not going to go on the record. And what I've been told, and we put the statement in our story, is that it's a matter of policy that they cannot discuss ongoing investigations or reveal the names of people involved in these investigations. So Congress is not that forthcoming yet about individuals coming forward specifically on this investigation. Some of the members have come forward and said they want to hold a hearing on it.

And these are members from other committees. So there's stuff going on in Congress, but I can't like say, well, this member's read it and this one hasn't. I don't have that kind of information. So in theory, what could happen now? So this has been circulated among, I would assume, senior members of the Intelligence Committees. And they would have more of the names and specific information

Grecia said he's provided. And they could, if they chose and found a credible follow up on it, and go from there. And a number of them are interested in this. I mean, Rubio and Gillibrand and others, I mean, there's clearly members of Congress who are very interested in this area. And Congress is leaky in my experience. And I know people in the Intelligence Committee. So is that, as you see what happens next, that they get what was not turned over to you? And the hope is that they take it from there. And if there's something to this, we're going to find out about it through them. Yeah. I mean, the hope is that perhaps there will be another hearing in which they will call Grush and maybe others to talk about specifically about this question of crash retrievals, that they will conduct an investigation, first of all, and try to track some of these things down and make this information public. I mean, that's always a question, will they make it public? To what extent will they make it public? We don't know the answer to that. But it's really in their hands to follow up on this information that's been provided to them. And see where it goes. I mean, the hearings would be another great thing, whether they might declassify some documentation. But I think there is going to be a demand on Congress now to respond to these allegations and come up with something and address them in some way. And there's a lot of different

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ways they can do that. And hopefully they'll do it in all those different ways. As you say, there are members very interested in this. So I suspect that will happen. I just think we're waiting really to hear about some specific steps that might be taken at this point.

I think that's a good place to end. So then I appreciate you coming on and walking us through this. And always our final question, what are three books you'd recommend to the audience?

Yeah, that was a really hard one for me, Ezra, because there are so many good ones. But I kind of chose three books that represent different things. And one of them is a book, if you're interested in the history of how this whole thing has evolved way back starting in the 50s, is a book called *The UFO Experience, A Scientific Inquiry* by J. L. and Heineck. And Heineck was the Project Blue Book scientist, the Air Force scientist who spent two decades basically debunking UFOs. And then once he left the program, was able to come out and acknowledge the reality and put out a whole different kind of perspective and show the transformation that he went through.

So it's a really, really, it's one of the most important historical books that we have on the topic. Another book I'd recommend is called *The UFO Evidence*, a 30-year report by Richard H. Hall, H-A-L-L, published in 2001. And it's just a thick volume of this, a lot of case evidence, which is fascinating. And he was a very astute investigator. And a third one is a more recent book called *American Cosmic* by Diana Posolka, who's a professor of religion at the University of North Carolina. It's a very unique book, deals with a technology and religion and mythology and all the different ways that she has explored this topic from a unique perspective.

So it's got nothing to do with the kind of work I do, but it's a very eye-opening book.

So I would recommend that one as well.

Leslie Cain, thank you very much.

Thank you, Ezra.

This episode is produced by Roche Karma,

fact-checking by Michelle Harris and Mary March Locker. Mixing by Jeff Geld and Isaac Jones, the show's production team also includes Emma Fogau, Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Kristen Lin.

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