

Science and the UFO phenomenon:

Dr. James E. McDonald:

(1920-1971)

- B.A., Chemistry, University of Omaha, 1942
- M.A., Meteorology, M.I.T., 1945
- Ph.D., Physics, Iowa State University, 1951
- U.S. Navy, Intelligence and Aerology, 1942-1945
- Instructor, Physics, Iowa State University, 1946-1949
- Assistant Professor, Physics, Iowa State University, 1950-1953
- Research, Cloud Physics, University of Chicago, 1953-1954
- Associate Professor, Physics, University of Arizona, 1954-1956
- Full Professor, Physics, University of Arizona, 1956-1957
- Senior Physicist, Instructor of Atmospheric Studies, 1958-1971
- Member, Weather Modification Panel, NAS, 1965-1971
- Member, Navy Storm fury Advisory Panel, 1966-1971
- Member, National Science Foundation (NSF) Weather Modification Panel, 1967-1971
- Member, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)
- Member, American Meteorological Society
- Member, Sigma Xi
- Member, American Geophysical Society
- Member, American Society of University Professors

An excellent biography of Dr. James E. McDonald was written by ufologist Ann Druffel: "Firestorm - Dr. James E. McDonald's fight of UFO science", Wild Flower Press, 2003.

James E. McDonald received his Ph.D. in physics from Iowa State University in 1951, then worked there as an assistant professor in meteorology. He then worked as a research physicist in the University of Chicago's department of meteorology from 1953 to 1954, when he 1954 he joined the University of Arizona faculty, first as an associate professor from 1954-1956, then as a full professor in the department of meteorology from 1956 to 1971. McDonald was also a senior physicist in the University's Institute of Atmospheric Physics, and served as both associate director (1954-56) and scientific director (1956-57). He also advised numerous federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, The Office of Naval Research, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Environmental Science Service Administration.



During the mid-late 1960s, McDonald became intensively involved in UFO research, interviewing hundreds of UFO witnesses and lecturing widely on the subject to professional societies. His talks emphasized the need for a serious scientific study, adding that he considered the best reports to be evidence of extraterrestrial visitations. He also played an important role in Congressional UFO hearings in 1968.

Privately, McDonald analyzed a huge number of the [Project Blue Book case files](#), convincing him that the Air Force had performed an entirely inadequate to have been more concerned with internal politics rather than real science. He also reviewed the cases dealt with by the Colorado Project which resulted in the [Condon report](#) and concluded that several of their explanations were incorrect or ill-conceived. McDonald left no book but privately published many monographs based on his lecture presentations, some of which are available on my website in the [science](#) section or from the listing underneath.

Here is a non-exhaustive listing of writings and talks by Dr. James E. McDonald about the UFO issue.

- Lecture at the colloquium, Department of Physics, University of Arizona, October 5, 1966.
- Lecture at the colloquium, Department of Meteorology, University of Arizona, October 6, 1966.
- Lecture at the Aerospace-Mechanical Engineering Seminar, University of Arizona, October 10, 1966.
- Lecture at the Washington, D.C., Chapter, American Meteorological Society, October 19, 1966.
- "*The Problem of the Unidentified Flying Objects*", summary of the talk given at the American Meteorological Association, Washington, D.C., October 19, 1966.
- Lecture at the colloquium, Department of Psychology, University of Arizona, October 26, 1966.
- Lecture to the staff, Steward Observatory, University of Arizona, November 1, 1966.
- Lecture at the Tucson Amateur Astronomers Association, Steward Observatory, November 2, 1966.
- Lecture at the Planetary Atmospheres Seminar, Kitt Peak National Observatory, Tucson, November 9, 1966.
- Lecture at the Seattle Chapter, American Meteorological Society, Department of Meteorology, University of Washington, November 15, 1966.
- Lecture at the conference, Department of Psychology, University of Washington, Seattle, November 16, 1966.

- Lecture to the staff, Department of Geophysics and Astronomy, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, California, November 17, 1966.
- Lecture at the Tucson Chapter, National Pilots Association, December 6, 1966.
- Lecture at the seminar, Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Arizona, December 8, 1966.
- Lecture at the joint colloquium, Arizona State University Psychology and Sociology Honoraries, Tempe, Arizona, December 14, 1966.
- *"Unidentified Flying Objects: Greatest Scientific Problem of our Times"*, published by UFO Research Institute, Suite 311, 508 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15219, 1967.
- Lecture at the The University Club, Pioneer Hotel, Tucson, March 8, 1967.
- Lecture at the Convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE), (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), March 27, 1967.
- *"The UFO phenomenon - A New Frontier Awaiting Serious scientific Exploration"*, interview, in the *Arizona Daily Wildcat*, Arizona, Vol. 58, No. 110, pp 4-8, April 6, 1967.
- Lecture to the Scientific Staff, at the National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., April 17, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the U.S. Air Force Office of Information, SAFOI, Pentagon, Washington, D.C., April 17, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Office of Naval Research, Navy Department, Washington, D.C., April 18, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Naval Research Laboratory, Anacostia, Maryland, April 19, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C., April 20, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Advanced Research Projects Agency, Department of Defense, Pentagon, April 20, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Naval Ordnance Station, Indian Head, Maryland, April 20, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Office of Naval Research, Navy Department, Washington, D.C. (continuation of April 18 talk), April 21, 1967.
- Lecture at the American Society of Newspaper Editors, Washington, D.C., annual meeting, April 22, 1967.
- Lecture at the Physics Division, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, April 24, 1967.
- Lecture at the Arizona Academy of Sciences, Tucson, UFO Symposium, April 29, 1967.
- Lecture at the Arizona State University, Interdisciplinary Seminar, May 8, 1967.
- Lecture at the International Students Club, University of Arizona, May 16, 1967.
- Lecture at the American Society of Civil Engineers, banquet meeting, Tucson, May 19, 1967.
- Lecture at the Staff, Goddard Institute for Space Sciences, New York, New York, June 7, 1967.
- *"Statement on International Scientific Aspects of the Problem of Unidentified Flying Objects"*, statement to the Secretary General of the United Nations, June 7, 1967.
- Lecture at the Outer Space Affairs Group, U.N. Building, New York, New York, June 7, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Federal Aviation Agency, Washington, D.C., June 9, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, California, June 21, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Radiophysics Division, CSIRO, Sydney, Australia, June 27, 1967.
- Lecture at the Institute of Physics and Department of Meteorology, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia, June 29, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Division of Meteorological Physics, CSIRO, Aspendale, Victoria, Australia, June 29, 1967.
- *"UFOs: Extraterrestrial Probes?"*, Aeronautics and Astronautics, the AIAA, vol. 5, pp 19-20, August 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the Sandia Corporation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 2, 1967.
- Paper of the talk at the Annual Meetings of the Newspaper Editors, American Society of Newspaper Editors, Washington D.C., August 22, 1967.
- Lecture at the American Institute of Astronautics and Aeronautics (AIAA) Luncheon at the Olympic, WA Boeing facilities (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), August 28, 1967.
- Lecture at the Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, public lecture, September 24, 1967.
- Lecture at the Interdepartmental Physics Colloquium, Westinghouse Research Laboratories, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 25, 1967.
- Lecture at the Boston Chapter, American Meteorological Society, Boston, Massachusetts, September 26, 1967.
- Lecture at the Staff, at the Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratories, Bedford, Massachusetts, September 27, 1967.
- Public lecture at the Sunday Evening Forum, University of Arizona, October 8, 1967.
- Lecture at the Tucson Chapter, Reserve Officers Association, Davis-Monthan Officers Club, October 12, 1967.
- Lecture at the Colorado Springs Chapter, American Meteorological Society, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, October 23, 1967.
- Lecture at the Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 24, 1967.
- Public lecture at the Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, October 26, 1967.
- Lecture to the Staff and Students, at the University of Omaha, October 27, 1967.
- Lecture at the Omaha-Offutt Chapter, American Meteorological Society, Omaha, Nebraska, October 28, 1967.
- Lecture at the Arizona Science Teachers Association, U.A. campus meeting, November 3, 1967.
- Public lecture at the Newman Forum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, November 28, 1967.
- Interview by David Schaumbreau on *Science Panel*, (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), 1968.
- Lecture to the Staff, at the United Aircraft Research Laboratories, E. Hartford, January 26, 1968.
- Lecture at the Naval Ordnance Laboratory, Silver Spring, Maryland, Applied Physics Department, January 29, 1968.
- Lecture at the Baltimore Chapter, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Towson, Maryland, January 30, 1968.
- Lecture at the Sigma Delta Chi Journalism Fraternity, Tucson, February 8, 1968.
- Lecture at the Canadian Aerospace Institute, UFO Symposium, Montreal, March 12, 1968.
- *"UFOs - An International Scientific Problem"*, paper of the talk presented to the Canadian Aeronautics and Space Institute, March 12, 1968.
- Lecture at the Institute for Aerospace Studies, University of Toronto, staff conference, March 13, 1968.

- Lecture at the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics, Flight Test, Simulation and Support Conference, Los Angeles, March 26, 1968.
- Lecture at the Santa Ana, California Chapter, American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics, March 26, 1968.
- Lecture at the 9428th Air Reserve Squadron, Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, April 6, 1968.
- Lecture at the Interdisciplinary Seminar, Arizona State University of Tempe, April 22, 1968.
- Lecture at the Alabama Section of AIAA, Huntsville, Alabama, May 29, 1968.
- Lecture at the Chicago Chapter of American Meteorological Society, Chicago, Illinois, May 31, 1968.
- Lecture at the Burro Club, Washington, D.C., June 3, 1968.
- Lecture at the National Science Foundation Secondary Science Training Institute, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, July 24, 1968.
- [Oral statement to the House Committee on Science and Astronautics](#) at the Symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects, Rayburn Bldg., Washington, D.C. July 29, 1968.
- ["Statement on Unidentified Flying Objects"](#), prepared statement submitted to the House Committee on Science and Astronautics at July 29, 1968, Symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects, Rayburn Bldg., Washington, D.C., submitted to the House Committee on Science and Astronautics at July 29, 1968, Symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects, Rayburn Bldg., Washington, D.C., July 29, 1968.
- Lecture at the Boeing Management Association, Boeing Aircraft Company, Seattle, Washington, August 7, 1968.
- Lecture at the Aerospace Education Workshop, Seattle, Washington, August 8, 1968.
- Lecture at the Pacific Science Center, Seattle, Washington, August 8, 1968.
- *"UFOs: A Case Study in Public Mis-information"*, lecture at the Kent State University, Ohio (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), September 24, 1968.
- Lecture at the Chicago Chapter of AIAA, Chicago, Illinois, September 26, 1968.
- Lecture at the Arnold Air Society, University of Arizona, October 10, 1968.
- Lecture at the Arizona Section of AIAA, Phoenix, Arizona, October 19, 1968.
- Lecture at the Pima County Sheriffs Aero Squadron, Tucson, November 3, 1968.
- Lecture at the Central Oklahoma Section of AIAA, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, November 14, 1968.
- Lecture at the Omaha Section of AIAA, Omaha, Nebraska, November 15, 1968.
- Lecture at the Aviation Aerospace Writers Association, Dallas, Texas, December 13, 1968.
- Lecture at the Cape Kennedy Section of AIAA, Cape Kennedy, Florida, December 18, 1968.
- Lecture at the Miami Chapter of AMS, Miami, Florida, December 19, 1968.
- Lecture at the Institute of Atmospheric Physics, University of Arizona, January 14, 1969.
- Lecture at the Medical Students Colloquium, College of Medicine, University of Arizona, January 30, 1969.
- Lecture at the DuPont Chapter, Scientific Research Society of America (RESA), Wilmington, Delaware, February 12, 1969.
- ["A Dissenting View of the Condon Report"](#), paper of the talk presented to DuPont Chapter, Scientific Research Society of America (RESA), Wilmington, Delaware, February 12, 1969.
- Lecture at the Symposium on Meteorological Observations and Instrumentation, AMS, Washington, D.C., February 13, 1969.
- *"UFOs - A Challenge to Observation"*, paper of the talk presented at the Symposium on Meteorological Observations and Instrumentation, AMS, Washington, D.C., February 13, 1969.
- Lecture at the Point Mugu Naval Air Station for the Pacific Missile Range Chapter of the American Institute of Astronautics and Aeronautics (AIAA), Point Mugu, California, (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), 1969.
- *"UFOs and the Condon Report: A Dissenting View"*, paper of the talk presented to the Pacific Missile Range Section, American Institute of Astronautics and Astronautics, Point Mugu, California, February 18, 1969.
- Lecture at the Antelope Valley Chapter of the American Institute of Astronautics and Aeronautics (AIAA), Lancaster, California, February 18, 1969.
- Lecture at the Utah Chapter of AIAA and Salt Lake City Chapter of AMS, Salt Lake City, Utah, March 19, 1969.
- Lecture at the San Diego Chapter of AIAA, San Diego, California, March 26, 1969.
- Lecture at the Southwest Texas Chapter of AIAA, San Antonio, Texas, March 28, 1969.
- *"The Dissenting View"*, in *Engineering Opportunities*, page 33, April 1969.
- Lecture at the Vandenberg Chapter of AIAA, Vandenberg AFB, California, April 11, 1969.
- Lecture at the Department of Physics, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, April 21, 1969.
- Lecture at the Arizona Branch, Reading Reform Foundation, Phoenix, Arizona, May 6, 1969.
- *"What You Won't Read in the Condon Report: An Inside Look at the UFO Problem"*, paper of the talk presented to the Arizona Branch, Reading Reform Foundation, Scottsdale, Arizona, May 6, 1969.
- *"Some Pennsylvania UFO Cases and their Bearing on the Condon Report"*, paper of the talk presented at the Mansfield State College, Mansfield, Pennsylvania, May 15, 1969.
- *"A Very Creditable Effort?"*, paper of the talk presented to the Sacramento Section, American Institute of Astronautics and Astronautics, May 28, 1969.
- Lecture at the N.I.C.A.P. lecture, Washington, D.C., May 7, 1969.
- Lecture at the Mansfield State College, Mansfield, Pennsylvania, May 8, 1969.
- Lecture at the Tulsa Chapter of AIAA, Tulsa, Oklahoma, May 22, 1969.
- Lecture at the Kansas City Chapter of AIAA, Kansas City, Missouri, May 23, 1969.
- Lecture at the Edison Foundation, Counselors Conference, Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, May 26, 1969.
- Lecture at the Sacramento Chapter of AIAA, Sacramento, California, May 28, 1969.
- *"The Condon report: Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects"*, in *Icarus*, Vol. 11, #3, pp. 443-447, November 1969.

- "*Science in Default: 22 Years of Inadequate UFO Investigations*", lectures at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) 134th Meeting (recording can be ordered at www.fadeddiscs.com), December 27, 1969.
- "*Science in default: 22 Years of inadequate UFO investigations*", paper of the lectures at the AAAS, 134th Meeting, December 27, 1969.
- "*Meteorological Factors in Unidentified Radar Returns*", 14th Radar Meteorology Conference, American Meteorological Society, November 17-20, 1970, in the *Journal of the American Meteorological Society*, pp 456-463, 1970.
- "*UFO Encounter I - Air Force Observations of an Unidentified Flying Object in the South-Central U.S., July 17, 1957*", Sample Case Selected by the UFO Subcommittee of the AIAA, paper in *Aeronautics and Astronautics*", pp 66-70, July 1971.

Note: James McDonald obviously also wrote books and papers that are references in the field of atmospheric physics, but here I only intended to provide a bibliography of his ufological writings.