



**BOOK AND
MULTIMEDIA
REVIEW**

Forbidden Science 6: Scattered Castles, the Journals of Jacques Vallee, 2010–2019

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Jacques Vallee

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Those who have been following Jacques Vallée’s ongoing set of memoirs under the series title of “Forbidden Science” (Vallée, 1992, 2009, 2012, 2019, 2023) will welcome this sixth installment covering the years 2010 through 2019—representing the sixth decade of his research and reminiscences on UFOs, as well as his professional career as an astronomer, computer scientist, and venture capitalist.

As in the previous volumes, the book is presented as a narrative diary, essentially written at the time of the events described—although Vallée has hinted that the chronicle has been enhanced from “copybooks, loose pages, letters, and marginal notes” (Vallée, 1992: vii) and “notes and transcripts and bits of correspondence, or notices of events that brought back smiles or tears” (Vallée, 2023: 8).

The subtitle, *Scattered Castles*, is based on the name of a personnel security database used by the US intelligence community that logged Vallée’s personal info on his visit to the National Reconnaissance Office in Chantilly, Virginia, in 2010 (p. 19). Metaphorically, it could also represent his accomplishments as an architect of various enterprises, from artificial intelligence to healthcare startups or the interdimensional hypothesis for UFOs.

Forbidden Science 6 covers some major events in Vallée’s life (mourning the loss of his first wife Janine, his second marriage to Flamine, a research trip to Brazil, and conferences in Russia and Argentina) and the history of ufology (the end of the US Defense Intelligence Agency’s Advanced Aerospace Weapon System Applications Program (AAWSAP), later meetings with colleagues who had been associated with the group, and the resurgence of interest in UFOs after the *New York Times* revealed the existence of that program in 2017). As always, Vallée maintains an engaging narrative, spicing the story up with specifics of meals eaten, concerts heard, and conversations remembered, often embellished with a Gallic swathe of colorful weather reports worthy of Monet—“the weather a succulent blend of morning moisture and blue-sky spring” (p. 114). He also parenthetically mentions political and world events (the fire at Notre-Dame de Paris, p. 486) that are both useful for the timeline and allow him to wax philosophical with lofty observations on the state of humanity or “lamenting the shallowness of modern spiritual movements” (p. 482).

Like other journals and diaries, the details are in the moment, so you will have to look elsewhere in Vallée’s oeuvre for detailed documentation of UFO cases or a statistical analysis of sighting patterns. But his long history of involvement in the topic, combined with his many interactions with prominent ufologists and scientists interested in paranormal phenomena, make this and the other volumes in the series a treasure trove of enlightening trivia. No other UFO autobiography, few as they are, comes close in scope and vitality to *Forbidden Science*.



Although Vallée makes repeated references to his wanting to maintain some distance from the acrimonious debates ufologists often engage in (Vallée, 2019: 8) and the “heavy bias of politics, greed, and religion even in the great halls of science” (p. 8), this does not stop him from clearly stating his often harsh opinions. He offers these observations honestly and seemingly spontaneously, thus making them important benchmarks in the evolution of his outlook.

Readers have two choices in making use of *Forbidden Science 6*: They can read it in sequence from start to finish; or they can dip into it at various points, harvesting data of interest from specific dates, places, or personalities. Each method has its own rewards and challenges.

A straightforward chronological reading makes the most sense if you have done the same with Vallée’s previous volumes, because you will already be familiar with the names of his friends, family, and associates, many of whom he refers to in key areas only by first name. (Who is “Annick” on p. 30? Unless you know, you have to do some creative searching to discover her full name is Annick Jeane Thoby Saley, at least according to the index.) With the other books on hand, you will have access to the continuity of narrative and backstory required to make some sense of his journal entries. Even if you have not benefited from the earlier history, a front-to-back reading of volume 6 on its own will be rewarding, especially if you are willing to constantly check Wikipedia and Google to clarify the wall-to-wall name dropping that takes place—for example, the reference to “Kelsey Graves’ old study of the role of ‘Saviours’ in civilization” (p. 198).

Selective consultation is not as productive as it could be, for one primary reason: The two indexes (name and subject) both have serious flaws in both comprehensiveness and accuracy. I do not know if the other volumes have the same issues, but in volume six the printed name index has many false hits and omissions and the subject index has many gaps in coverage.

One major anomaly is that there is no index entry at all for Vallée’s partner and second wife, Flamine de Bonvoisin, who is mentioned on many pages, from his first meeting with her in 2010 (p. 13) through his marriage proposal (p. 90) and her father’s death (p. 305), to their separation (pp. 335, 397) and their unresolved relationship in 2018 (p. 463).

Similarly, there is no index entry for Michel “C” in the index, either under Michel or “C,” even though he appears in a photograph on p. 34; other entries accommodate anonymous individuals, such as “Ann” or “Identity Woman” or “Roro.” In another example, the first six pages in the

name index entry for Jean-François Boëdec are inaccurate, while his first real mention on page 33 is missing. There are enough of these gaps scattered around so that you will probably not be comprehensive in your search for pages mentioning, for example, Gerry Nolan, if you limit your search to the printed index.

The subject index appears to have been prepared either haphazardly or half-heartedly. So many major topics are missing that its utility is questionable. References to Vallée’s famous theory of a “control system,” for example, could have been included (pp. 94, 159, 499), as well as his financial investments, such as RosAtom or Novalem Analytics (although there are entries for “venture capital” and “venture fund”). His musings on the “extraterrestrial hypothesis” are either missing or buried in a generic entry for “extraterrestrial.” On October 27, 2018, Vallée describes (p. 471) a vivid psychic experience he had at his home in San Francisco; this appears to be referenced in an entry for “out-of-body experiences (OBE),” but the index misses his later reference to the “unique feeling of terror” that it inspired (pp. 483–484). His references to alleged physical evidence, including his first look into the 1945 Trinity case, are buried in the entries for “crashes (UFOs)” and “samples—material.” The prominent 2004 “Tic Tac” UFO case involving the USS *Nimitz* has no entry of its own.

Some organizations (CIA, CNES, DIA, FBI, MUFON, NASA) are included as acronyms, but others that are mentioned in the narrative are missing, such as NARCAP, To the Stars Academy, and the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS)—which is mentioned at least on pp. 150 and 166.

All of these problems with the printed index lead me to conclude that a wiser choice would be to select the Kindle edition of the book, which at least has full-text searching.

Vallée and the editors have made the decision to provide only limited context for much of the material in this possibly final volume, confining it to ten pages of explanatory references (pp. 520–529). But perhaps the final job of annotating all of *Forbidden Science* can best be completed by future Vallée scholars who will have access to the vast archive of his papers now residing at Rice University’s Fondren Library in Houston, Texas.

Other paranormal topics that have occupied Vallée’s interest are threaded throughout these books, pushing them far beyond the UFO category—alchemy, remote viewing, Rosicrucianism, even Rennes-le-Château. The breadth of the journey that Vallée has taken in life means that even a casual dip into these pages will result in multiple insights, many of them unexpected, from a talented scholar who is also a master memoirist.



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