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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: 'Fake' and 'Self-Proclaimed'

From: Jorgen Westman <west@tripnet.se>  
Date: Sat, 14 Dec 1996 23:51:47 +0100  
Fwd Date: Sun, 15 Dec 1996 13:22:03 -0500  
Subject: Re: 'Fake' and 'Self-Proclaimed'

> Date: Thu, 12 Dec 1996 22:03:59 -0500  
> From: Greg Sandow <GSANDOW@prodigy.net>  
> To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>  
> Subject: "fake" and "self-claimed"  
> References: <2.2.32.19961211070158.00749fe4@globalserve.net>

> Going round the big red barn again, let's see if I can clarify two  
> issues.

> Or maybe three. A while ago I noticed that two abductees, John Velez and  
> Whitley Strieber, thought the alien picture Strieber posted here was  
> more like the aliens they feel they've seen than any other picture  
> known.

> That made me suggest a test. Show a group of abductees this picture and  
> several others, of the standard alien. Ask them which picture is closest  
> to the aliens they feel they've seen. If most of them pick the same  
> one...

> So now for the objections. Dennis Stacy wrote:

> > Now guarantee that when they say they haven't seen it, they  
> > haven't, indeed, seen it. Guarantee next that they haven't seen any similar  
> > images now almost ubiquitous in the modern media, beginning with, say, the  
> > cover of "Communion" itself.

> Well, of course they've seen these alien images, just as we all have. I  
> don't think that's relevant, though. We'd be asking people who all agree  
> on the general form of these aliens to pick a specific variant of it. If  
> they agree on the variant -- on very fine details, in other words --  
> then maybe they've actually seen the same thing.

> Hard to guarantee that they haven't seen it. That's a good point. I  
> think we could be reasonably sure, because the new image hasn't gotten  
> around much, and in any case, when I've seen abductees in group  
> discussions, they're not very ufologically savvy. So if this new image  
> only circulates in limited ufological circles (hmmmm...what a name for a  
> new airplane maneuver...don't think I'd want to be on a plane that was  
> doing one of those...), the odds are that most abductees wouldn't see  
> it. Though I know this doesn't validate the test scientifically!

> On to John Powell:

> > Show faked alien pictures to a  
> > > group of self-claimed abductees to see which fake picture they  
> > > like?

> I had trouble with two emotion-laden words in that question, "fake" and  
> "self-claimed." Re fake, I suggested a parallel to a police identikit.  
> But John says there's a difference:

> > The difference is that you'd be showing known fake pictures...<grin>

> The word "fake," I still think, is throwing a cloud of emotion over this  
> simple question. What we're talking about here are pictures that aren't  
> drawn from life. A police artist works with witnesses to create an  
> impression of a suspect. Likewise with pictures of aliens. All the alien  
> images we've seen -- the cover of Communion and the rest -- are artists'  
> impressions, based on descriptions from people who believe they've seen  
> the aliens.

> In that respect, an identikit picture and a drawing or  
> computer-generated image of an alien are similar. They certainly serve a  
> similar purpose -- to provide an image of something that wasn't there to  
> pose for the artist.

> In any case, I don't see how you can call the covers of Communion or  
> Intruders or any of countless other books "fake" pictures. Nobody ever  
> claimed those aliens were real.

> On to "self-claimed." That struck me as a mocking expression, especially  
> in context. To which John replied:

> > So far as alien abductions are concerned we have no evidence that such  
> > events have occurred therefore those who claim they have occurred (to  
> > them) are accurately 'self-claimed abductees.'...Why do you think referring  
> to abductees and their stories as  
> "self-claimed" somehow invalidates them?

> "Self-claimed" or words to that effect are routinely used in journalism  
> to underline what are perceived as shoddy pretensions or illegitimate  
> titles. For example, the President of Mexico would never be called the  
> "self-claimed President." But the "Supreme Commander" of a guerilla  
> force seeking to depose the president might well be called the  
> "self-proclaimed Supreme Commander."

> I don't think you'll find many usages of these terms -- or maybe even  
> any -- that aren't mocking or critical.

> I asked if anyone would speak about a "self-claimed rape victim," and  
> John replied:

> > or a rape victim I would use the term "self-claimed" during the  
> > initial reporting of the alleged event only because at that time it is a  
> > self-claimed (and alleged) event. (An exception of course would be such  
> > an event that was independently witnessed in which case it would be an  
> > "alleged" event and there would be no need to refer to it as  
> > self-claimed.)

> But this, I think, is exactly what is <not> done. Take the Mike Tyson  
> rape case. Imagine a newspaper story in which his accuser was referred  
> to as "the self-claimed rape victim." There's hardly a reader alive who  
> wouldn't catch the implication that the charges were false. So instead,  
> newspapers use neutral words like "accuser," which simply state the  
> facts.

> Another example. An Englishman named Declan McManus made quite a  
> reputation in the pop world for records he made under the name Elvis  
> Costello. In fact, to most of the world he simply <is> Elvis Costello.  
> So now let's say I come along and I start writing about "the  
> self-claimed Elvis Costello." There isn't a soul in the rock and roll  
> world who wouldn't know I despised him. (I don't, by the way...)

> Cut now to Michael Jackson. A few years ago, he signed a deal with MTV.  
> He'd do something for them (forgot what), and in return they'd refer to  
> him, even in their news broadcasts, as the "king of pop." Incredibly,  
> the phrase caught on, and Jackson was called that everywhere. That must  
> have been his greatest publicity coup ever. If I'd written about him  
> after that, I'd have been tempted to call him "the self-claimed king of  
> pop," meaning it as a dig, and feeling justified in sniping at him that  
> way, because the phrase was originally used deceptively.

> (If I kept it up long enough, I'd be cut off Sony Music's press list,  
> and my editor would get a nasty letter demanding an apology. You think  
> ufology is nasty?)

> Greg Sandow

Hi Greg.

There's one thing that struck me as I read your post:

Do you mean to use a "imitating-image" (I didn't say fake) of an alien and show it to abductees to see if they have seen the figure before? Alright if it was a single alien-person, but to me it sounds like showing a picture of a black man to a race of whites and they will go "Yeah! He's black alright!".

I don't mean to offend you, but you're not talking about a person - you're talking about a whole supposed alien race here, right?

Jorgen / WUFOC

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