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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Handling the News Media: What MUFON Members

From: **Francisco Lopez** <d005734c@dcfreenet.seflin.lib.fl.us>
Date: Fri, 27 Dec 1996 23:22:14 -0500 (EST)
Fwd Date: Sat, 28 Dec 1996 03:30:07 -0500
Subject: Re: Handling the News Media: What MUFON Members

From: Rob McConnell <misterx@WarpLink.com>

I must reply to this "masterpiece of misinformation" that the writer is trying to pass the buck of the poor reporting of UFO by the media to the source where it actually belongs....people within so-called UFO organizations who have no idea of what they are looking for or looking at. They in return get so excited that they themselves contact the media and give these reports to news directors, who after logically investigating the sighting, with little more than a basic investigative reporting technique find that the information that has been brought to them is basically "junk."

A perfect example of this is when there were multiple sightings over the Gulf of Mexico from the beaches of Florida and Alabama. The sights were rather spectacular to those who made the initial reports, the home videographers as well as the "self acclaimed ufologists" who "documented" these mysterious lights in the sky. The problem is that they should have investigated the matter before releasing their "misinformation" to the media. They were not UFO's but NASA launches that are done from the back of a 747 at 40,000 feet. These 3 stage solid fuel rockets when they are "staging" flare - and then the object is not seen for a time and then it flares again, and again. Sorry folks, but the records at NASA and the CIA have collaborated these findings as well as the digitized video footage from television networks and independent sources.

Now, as a journalist, broadcaster and parapsychologist, I too am concerned with the misinformation that gets to the media and the manner in which members of "ufology reporting clubs" gather their information and distribute it with their own hidden agendas.

Over the years, I have had several members of UFO clubs, or as they are referred to in the Niagara Area "coffee club members" who have taken photographs of "strange lights" over Lake Ontario. These people, by their own admission and the presentation of "UFO Club" membership cards to the media, have dampened the credibility of UFO researchers who actually know what they are doing - and there are not many of them.

On one show, a Director of an International UFO Organization who was identified in a recent book as having video tape footage of the Brookhaven, Long Island incident, told me that in order to try and get to the bottom of the Area 51 mystery, he actually trespassed on private property and was proud of it. He was a person who was saying that the conspiracy of the Area 51 was against the law in the manner that the government was hiding the truth from their citizens. I asked him, "so, in order to prove that the government is breaking the law and that there is a conspiracy, it's alright for you to trespass on the private property of the US Government there by breaking the law?" There was a pause and no answer was brought forthwith.

There are also the hundreds of "ufologist" who have no idea what they are looking at and since they cannot identify it, it must be a ufo...please! The majority of the "members of Ufology clubs" have no idea about the proper procedures for taking photographs, the proper use of 35 mm cameras, nor the use of home video equipment.

It has nothing to do with hiding the truth, or the ratings, as pointed to by the writer of this rather one side article.

It has nothing to do with a government conspiracy. It is the very poor quality of reporting that is done of alleged ufo sightings that have made most UFO clubs and organizations into anything else but credilbe to the media.

Instead of hammering the media - print or electronic for the lack of reporting and time given to the hopes and desires of would be UFO researchers - get real! Get with it. In order to understand any part of the paranormal world or the science of parapsychology, one has to rea about the past. A knowledge in theology is a must, in order to understand the growth of the UFO mystery throughout time and throughout past civilizations around the world. Knowledge in other sciences, including geology, chemistry, biology and physics are also necessary. Courses in photography and videography would be a definite asset. A basic psychology course would be wise, however, not practical to the members of the UFO clubs, who already have made their minds up - that there is a conspiracy....that the governments of the world are in on this conspiracy.....and that the New World Order is just around the corner.

It is this very lack of experience and knowledge that have given birth to the lack of experience and knowledge that most "UFO memberships organizations" are associated with. On a national newscast, one scientist stated that if you want to see a UFO, it seems all you have to do is pay the annual fee to a UFO Organization and you can call yourself a UFO Researcher - balderdash. "These people have the same IQ as the people throughout the mid-western states who are parked in their pick-ups, drinking a 60 oz of their favourite mash and then claim to see a UFO. In fact," he continued, "I would believe the people in the pick-up before I would consider the report of a UFO organization member simply because, the people in the truck did not have to pay a fee to become a UFO 'researcher'...."

The author of this article used an example of how Walt Andrus of MUFON was approached by a reporter from a newspaper in Pensacola, Florida, who wanted to interview him on the Gulf Breeze sightings. The fact that he absolutely claimed to know nothing about the case is a way that reporters feel out the credibility of the source, which is done daily...not only to the poor people of MUFON, but to other people who have in the news, with newsworthy stories....stories that can be authenticated. We are no longer in the days of blind reporting. Sorry.

This article is the ufologists guide to self destruction and if a member of a UFO organization wants to have himself/herself taken seriously - then take the time and the patience to properly gather the evidence pertaining to the sighting. Don't forget the basic questions in journalism and broadcasting: WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY? HOW?

Ironically the majority of UFOLOGIST scream for Freedom of Information to expose the alleged government conspiracy.

Well "light watchers"....haven't you heard of FREEDOM OF THE PRESS? Besides, the media is responsible fo rwhat they print and air - unlike the reports that "the majority" of ufo researchers take.

The difference is - professionalism. Just because you pay a fee does not make you an expert. The knowledge that you seek can only be obtained through credible courses. Please, CONSUMERS BEWARE - people in authority will not take you seriously unless you can present your article, your report or your "evidence (?)" in a credible manner.

If you want members of the media to take you seriously -then be serious.

And one more bit of information, there is something called a "PSE" psychological strsss evaluator" that i sused to electronically tell based on simple question asked in the preamble of the interview or reporting of an event that various people use to authenticate the callers credibility before the matter is even considered as news worthy.

Rob McConnell,
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