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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: 'Electrically Induced Hallucinations'

From: "Steven J. Powell" <sjpowell@access.digex.net>
Date: Sat, 25 Jan 1997 14:06:17 -0500
Fwd Date: Sun, 26 Jan 1997 11:29:18 -0500
Subject: Re: 'Electrically Induced Hallucinations'

>From: Chris Rutkowski <rutkows@cc.UManitoba.CA>
>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: 'Electrically Induced Hallucinations'
>To: updates@globalserve.net (UFO UpDates - Toronto)
>Date: Wed, 22 Jan 1997 09:16:23 -0600 (CST)

>> I don't know why so many people make so much out of Persinger's work, its
>> very tentative and far from complete. There's positively a magnetic field
>> association with UFOs and there's positively a relationship between eologic
>> activity and subsequent UFO sightings. These are interesting but they
>> really don't prove anything yet.

>That's true, although if you saw the Discovery Channel's program which
>highlighted Persinger's work (and any other program which featured
>him), it was implied that this was the best theory since sliced bread
>(pardon the metaphor).

Well, technically, its not exactly a theory and as a hypothesis it hasn't
been tested... Its a neat idea, but the rest is still ahead.

>Further, Persinger isn't refining his theory at
>all; he's just going further and further afield and no longer even
>citing any criticisms of the TST. Finally, Persinger seems convinced
>that the EM fields *are* the explanation for UFOs.

I don't think its out of the question that geomagnetic effects could
possibly explain a number of brief and distant DDs and NLs. So what?
We've just recently successfully gotten past the 30% or 5% argument,
<grin>, and I think we all realize that such cases (single witness, brief,
distant, largely featureless DD or NL) aren't going to end up in our
"premiere" database anyway.

Geomagnetic effects (alone) don't come close to explaining the best data.

>So, the reason skeptics are excited about Persinger's work is that it's
>a way to explain the bizarre aspects of UFO reports (and all other
>Fortean) without invoking aliens or metaphysics. The reason ufologists
>are getting excited is because Persinger's work is getting so much
>attention despite its weaknesses.

I have a hard time believing that a critical thinking intelligent skeptic
would assign so much importance to an unproven theory that only explains
that which we consider less than compelling to explain...<grin>

Although folks who think everything odd in the sky is an alien spaceship
coming to probe their anus are probably quite upset at the attention TST
is getting.

>It's like the discovery that garlic has *something* to do with the
>reduction in the numbers of cancer cells in the body. Does that mean we

>should abandon all other leads or studies unrelated to garlic? No; we
>file it and devote some energy to investigating it, but remember the
>limitations of research.

Well, his 'theory' would benefit from some proof. Like, say, going out to the field and photographing and recording some geomagnetic anomalies and cross-referencing those with subsequent UFO sightings.

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