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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: D. Bunkerism

From: clark@canby.mn.frontiercomm.net [Jerome Clark]
Date: Fri, 25 Jul 1997 09:10:08 PDT
Fwd Date: Fri, 25 Jul 1997 14:01:06 -0400
Subject: Re: D. Bunkerism

Hi, everybody,

The individual who insists on signing his name "Karl deBunker" or "Karl D. Bunker" castigates ufologists for disdaining the term "debunker."

They're hardly alone. I've even heard my old friend Joe Nickell, CSICOP's principal investigator, distance himself from the d-word.

Marcello Truzzi has usefully defined the difference between the skeptic and the debunker. The skeptic is one who doubts, the debunker one who denies. It is infinitely easier to be the latter. The skeptic has to acknowledge the frequent presence of ambiguity, the impossibility of final answers to some of the most interesting questions, and the possibility that he or she may be wrong, too, even about treasured beliefs (such as that, say, the object at Roswell was a Mogul balloon). A debunker has the smug, but ultimately self-deluding, pleasure of declaring certainty even when none exists. Certainty is not the first noun that comes to my mind when I think of questions related to anomalies and the paranormal.

Debunking as applied to limited, specific issues where real answers are attainable is, of course, useful and necessary. As a defining philosophical principle, however, it is, in my opinion, intellectually and practically indefensible.

Jerry Clark

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