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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Of Linda, Hopkins & The Post's loading dock

From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>  
Date: Wed, 26 Mar 1997 10:10:18 -0500  
Fwd Date: Thu, 27 Mar 1997 07:11:14 -0500  
Subject: Re: Of Linda, Hopkins & The Post's loading dock

Rebecca,

I'm late at getting to my mail...sorry...so I didn't see your question to me till now.

> > Date: Fri, 21 Mar 1997 07:28:04 -0500  
> > From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>  
> > To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>  
> > Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Of Linda, Hopkins & The Post's loading dock  
>  
> Greg, you mentioned this in your earlier post and I  
> would like to know if you interviewed Butler, Stefula  
> and/or Hansen.  
>  
> Can you cite how they were dishonest, please?

Well, first I should confess that I'm not dishonest, but I'm certainly idiotic sometimes. In my IUR piece, in the mail to subscribers as I write, I actually misstate the date of the abduction! The precise date has no bearing on anything I wrote, but it's ridiculous to have gotten it wrong. I didn't have it burned into my brain, and flipped through the book quickly to remind myself as I was writing the piece. Somehow I got it wrong. I can console myself by pointing to the corrections that appear in the New York Times every day (little things like giving the wrong name for the governors of major states). And when I worked for a magazine that employed a whole staff of fact checkers, I saw many instances of sound reporters falling down on details. But this mistake is a blot on my fledgling UFO career...maybe nobody should believe anything I say!

As for Hansen et al, maybe dishonest is too strong, Rebecca. But some of what they say is kinda far off, to put it mildly. There are two things I noticed. First, if you're familiar with their "white paper," you know that they give a long list of similarities between the Linda case and an awful UFO thriller called "Nighteyes." When I read the book, I discovered that the similarities are either nonexistent or wildly farfetched. To give you just one example, the first alleged similarity is that -- in both the case and the book -- a UFO hovered over a building in Manhattan and abducted someone. That simply doesn't happen in the novel. There's a delightful scene in which aliens come through the ceiling of a penthouse apartment on the upper west side, and engage in a pitched battle with a frightened but feisty family. Afterwards, the father discovers that his wife, an abductee, is missing. He rushes up to the roof, where he finds his faithful bodyguard dying of wounds inflicted by the aliens. (Any similarity to the Linda case yet?) Far up in the sky he sees a UFO disappearing into the night. So, fine, maybe the UFO was hovering over the building, but the novel doesn't say a word about that. For all we know, it could have landed on the roof. Most

crucially, nobody saw it do anything. The whole scene is told from the point of view of the family inside the apartment -- QUITE different from the Linda case, where the whole point is that the UFO was supposedly observed.

I spoke to Hansen about that, just last night. He said he'd have to read the book again, but that he and his colleagues hadn't meant to say the case and book were identical, only that the book (which Hansen said had been discussed in Budd's support groups) could have given ideas to the hoaxers -- including Linda -- whom he feel contrived the whole affair.

When you make the point that general, it's hard to disagree. Sure it could have given ideas. Hansen et al cite a scene where a federal agent kidnaps an abductee, using a van. Sure enough, that happens in the Linda case, too. In the book, there are a few extraneous details...the federal agent is on the run from his own agency, is accompanied by a newspaper reporter, and actually kidnaps a UFO researcher, whom he suspects of knowing more about UFOs than has been publicly revealed. The abductee (and her father!) happen to be with the UFO researcher, and get taken more or less by accident. If anyone thinks this is close enough to have suggested the entirely different episode in the case -- where two very determined federal agents in fine standing with their agency kidnapped a single abductee one time to interrogate her about whether she was working with the aliens or even might be an alien, and a second time to take her to the beach Pam Klemm has posted thoughts about, there to almost rape her -- well, God bless you. I don't see anything more than a coincidental resemblance, far outweighed by differences. You have to read Hansen et al, to see how much they make of all this. Although Hansen was reasonable to talk to, I think he and his colleagues misrepresent what's in the book.

Secondly, Rebecca, there's the matter of the weather. The three writers make much -- and again, you have to read the document to see how strongly they put this -- of Budd's failure to check the weather on the night of the supposed abduction. Would it even have been possible for someone on the Brooklyn Bridge to have seen Linda being abducted? Budd's response is that he didn't need to check, because he heard about the abduction the day after it happened, and thus knew what the weather was. That doesn't really satisfy me -- he should have checked anyway, assuming the weather mattered, because memory can play tricks.

However, I can't see why the weather matters at all. Linda was abducted from a 12th story window, for God's sake, which isn't all that high. The UFO was supposedly visible above the building, so add a few stories. Say the UFO was 15 stories high. I've lived in New York most of my life, and I've never seen clouds low enough to hide the top of a 15-story building. Yes, the Empire State, all 101 floors of it, will get lost in the clouds sometimes. But clouds low enough to hide Linda's abduction would be absolutely extraordinary -- truly shocking. And yes, I have heard of the phenomenon called "fog," and I've certainly driven through some very thick ones. But not here. I've never seen the tops of ordinary buildings (and in NY a 15-story building is quite ordinary) hidden by any kind of weather.

So let's put it this way. I think some of the objections raised by Hansen et al are extremely farfetched. People who would raise them think in a very different way from the way most people I know think. The stuff about "Nighteyes" is just wild. The list of supposed similarites is, in my judgement, so far off base that it does make me wonder what's going on.

> I can't be sure because I haven't seen it, but according  
> to people I know, the National Enquirer does indeed  
> publish UFO Stories. I've been told they published one  
> about 3 weeks ago. I think that the story even featured  
> one of our list members -- Pat Parrinello.

Interesting, Rebecca. I don't read the Enquirer currently, so I don't know about this.

I've spent time in their office, though -- probably two weeks, in all. (I've written a story about the Weekly World News, and at one time developed friendships there...a long story...and the News shares a building with the Enquirer.) It's possible that they run a UFO story now and then, but they don't have the strong interest they used to have, when they offered prizes for the best UFO sighting. It must be many years since they made anything about UFOs their cover story.

The history is actually pretty clear. Once the Enquirer covered anything outrageous and attention-getting. Then they got color presses, and made an upscale move. They decided they'd largely scrap anything paranormal

or grisly, and use their old black and white presses to publishes the Weekly World News, which would take over the outrageous side of their former territory. That the News decided it was more fun to make the stories up is something else again, which to me gives that paper all its charm. (And makes me giggle when I read someone painstakingly rebutting them in the Skeptical Inquirer!)

I never detected any interest in UFOs among any of thr Enquirer staff, and in the years that I was a pop music critic and would read the rag from time to time to check out the gossip, I never saw any UFO items at all.

Greg Sandow

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