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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: [Extra Terrestrial Hypothesis] &c

From: **Jim Deardorff** <deardorj@ucs.orst.edu>
Date: Sat, 22 Nov 1997 10:02:06 -0800 (PST)
Fwd Date: Sat, 22 Nov 1997 20:21:43 -0500
Subject: Re: [Extra Terrestrial Hypothesis] &c

> Date: Fri, 21 Nov 1997 08:55:11 -0500
> To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
> From: Bob Shell <76750.2717@compuserve.com>
> Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: ETH [Extra Terrestrial Hypothesis] &c

> >Date: Thu, 20 Nov 1997 10:59:52 -0800 (PST)
> >From: Jim Deardorff <deardorj@ucs.orst.edu>
> >To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
> >Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: ETH [Extra Terrestrial Hypothesis] &c

> >Your opinions pretty much bracket the possibilities. But here's
> >one question I have that should have an answer, though I couldn't
> >locate it within the Roper Report on Unusual Personal
> >Experiences_. Though the report repeatedly states that they
> >received 5,947 responses, how many questionnaires did they send
> >out in the first place? Perhaps it was two or three times as
> >many? My thought is that those who felt the subject was too
> >silly or foolish to bother wasting time on and respond to were
> >likely mostly the ones who, had they responded, would have
> >responded negatively to most or all the questions. So their 2%
> >estimate, granted that it was conservatively based on requiring
> >positive responses to 4 out of 5 key indicator questions, might
> >have been up to a factor of two too large.

> My magazine does a reader survey every two years or so. Typically
> send out around 20,000 surveys and get something like 2,000 back.
> I'm told by the company that does our statistical analysis that
> this is a much higher than average percentage of returns. We
> tried to get more returns a couple of times by giving a gift to
> everyone who sent back the form, but it made only a tiny difference
> in the numbers we got back, so we stopped. I don't know details
> of how the Roper Poll was done, but if they got back close to
> 6,000 responses, they must have sent out 60,000 or more
> surveys.

Thanks for the info, Bob. I think that surveyors always ought to state the number of persons contacted who declined to respond, assuming they had some general idea of what it was they were declining. If the response rate in the Roper case was anywhere near as poor as you've found, the bias could be all the worse.

Jim Deardorff

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