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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Abduction of Blacks? [The Finalists]

From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>
Date: Tue, 1 Dec 1998 13:19:12 -0500
Fwd Date: Tue, 01 Dec 1998 23:18:43 -0500
Subject: Re: Abduction of Blacks? [The Finalists]

>Date: Mon, 30 Nov 1998 21:48:37 +0000
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: John Rimmer <magonia@magonia.demon.co.uk>
>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Abduction of Blacks? [The Finalists]

>I'm puzzled as to why the phrase "concern over alien
>immigration" is considered "degrading" to Americans, or why it
>should need an apology. This is typical of so much of the
>reaction to psychosocial arguments (and, in fairness, most other
>arguments) on the Internet.

I can't speak for others on the list, but I have a different problem with the phrase "concern over alien immigration." Obviously there's "concern over alien immigration" in the United States. There's also concern over crime, air pollution, natural foods, the price of auto insurance, the decline of news reporting into gossip mongering, the inability of TV networks to find viewers for new shows, and (in New York) the apparent inability of the Metropolitan Transit Authority to use its unexpected financial surplus to increase the quality and frequency of subway trains.

All these themes sail somewhat randomly through the media. Often they're contradictory. If you simply want to observe American life, the spectacle can be both provocative and entertaining.

But if you want to study some aspect of American life more seriously -- the abduction phenomenon, for instance -- you have to be much more precise about what you say. Do you want to link abductions to the evident "concern" over immigration? You then have to establish actual facts about that "concern," beyond the mere fact of its existence. How strong is the "concern"? How many people share it? Who are those people? Are they the same people who appear to be involved in the abduction phenomenon?

You have to establish that the "concern" about immigration somehow stands out from other "concerns," either in American life in general, or among people involved with abductions. Some people asserting the connection between abductions and immigration -- like the writer of the document Peter Brookesmith posted -- try to do this by saying that the reaction to immigration reaches the level of "panic." This, however, is open to serious question. Nor do those making this claim help their case by failing to provide any evidence beyond a few anecdotes.

What happens when the claim of immigration "panic" is challenged? One response seems to be a retreat from "panic" to "concern." If people like me object to the description of a

"panic," surely we'll admit that there's a "concern."

Well, of course there is, but what does that prove? As I said, there are "concerns" in America (and elsewhere) about endless numbers of things. If the mere existence of a "concern" about immigration is enough to connect fear of immigration to abductions, then the connection becomes untestable. It's going to be a long time before any of us will be able to look at American life, and not see some upset, somewhere, over immigration. Are the supporters of this immigration-abduction hypothesis going to say that as long as someone, somewhere is upset about immigration the hypothesis remains viable? If they do say this, then the hypothesis can never be falsified.

In order for me, at least, to take it seriously, I need it formulated in scientific terms. I need a way to measure how intense and how widespread the "concern" over immigration is. Once that's accomplished, I need to know how high the measured "concern" needs to be before it can be put forth as an explanation for other developments. I need testable hypotheses that flow from the theory. If abduction fear is really influenced by immigration fear, what other developments would we expect to see? What developments ought to be ruled out?

Without these scientific refinements, the theory remains just an idle assertion.

Greg Sandow

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