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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Failure Of The 'Science' Of Obergian Debunking

From: Ed Stewart <ufoindex@jps.net>
Date: Wed, 14 Oct 1998 23:01:55 -0700
Fwd Date: Thu, 15 Oct 1998 09:08:22 -0400
Subject: Re: Failure Of The 'Science' Of Obergian Debunking

>From: Greg St. Pierre <StrmNut@aol.com>
>Date: Tue, 13 Oct 1998 22:40:59 EDT
>To: updates@globalserve.net
>Subject: Re: Failure Of The 'Science' Of Obergian Debunking

>>Date: Sat, 10 Oct 1998 16:45:17 -0700
>>From: Ed Stewart <ufoindex@jps.net>
>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>>Subject: Re: Failure Of The 'Science' Of Obergian Debunking

>Uh, does that mean that you do support or don't support your own
>statement that debunkers aren't part of the problem?

Ufology's problem is internal to itself. Debunking only works on
bunk.

>>I don't really know where the basis of your critique is coming
>>from. On one hand Klass has been criticized for not even
>>speaking to witnesses and Sagan for not investigating UFO cases.
>>In Klass's Skeptics UFO Newsletter he seldom address witnesses
>>unless they have already reached public status usually by having
>>written a book or having appeared and made statements in a mass
>>media like a TV show. Critiquers like to have it both ways at
>>their convenience, but it makes for faulty logic.

>The basis of my critique comes from the dislike I suddenly
>developed for Carl's attitude toward honest people seeking an
>explanation for something unusual they've seen. Would you like
>to be told that an amazing experience you've had was
>"worthless"?

If you have nothing to independently verify your experience, I
am afraid it is worthless as proof of anything. That is the
real world. Accept it and learn to live with it.

>Like you, he lumped every person on the planet with
>an interest in UFOs into a single category, at least toward the
>end of his life.

I have an interest in UFOs. I don't feel like he ever lumped me
into any category. I know for a fact he also had an interest.
And what is your basis for saying that? If you want to be like
Jerome Clark and construct personnas and build motivations for
these assumed personnas around what you believe to be the case,
you are at the same level he is. He won't like that. There is
not enough room for someone else at his level.

>Frankly, I found his assumptions disgusting and
>most unbecoming of a scientist.

Most of the world feels differently about Carl Sagan. I for one admire the man for what he did bringing a compelling appreciation of science into my home. And his popularization of extraterrestrial intelligence made me think twice about the real possibility that other life forms exist outside our planet. I don't share your view of Carl Sagan as an enemy of ufology. I think in the long term run, he will turn out to be more of a friend to ufology than folks that you may now idolize.

>The above-mentioned complaints against
>Phil and Carl are (and were) legitimate ones.

The point is that legitimacy in this case is totally irrelevant. Ufology is not advanced one yota by pointing fingers, justified or not, outside of the field. It has become a cop-out in ufology to attack skeptics, debunkers, the scientific community, government and anyone that raises a dissenting opinion against the temple. It hasn't advanced ufology in fifty years and it won't advance it in the future. Most of the finger pointing against skeptics and debunkers (debunking only works on bunk) is to elicit support from the gallery, i.e. an illogical fallacy. Ufology needs to clean itself up. Nobody will do it for ufology. If you wish to vent out against Carl Sagan or Phil Klass, go right ahead. But, you are not advancing ufology one yota.

>Are
>radar-visual or ground-trace cases "absolutely worthless" too?

Most are worthless. If they weren't, we would not have this discussion. What is missing in all these cases, every last one of them is complete linkage of the data from the initial premise to the conclusion. If there is no linkage, the case is worthless as proof of any given hypothesis. Ufology has no case in its vast files that links the premise to its final conclusion.

>Those aren't just anecdotal stories. So, why didn't he want to
>look? Science demands an answer, and even if (by scientific
>analysis) the circular, charred area of grass turns out to have
>been produced by rabbits mating at high speed, at least the
>effort was made, and I and most here would be satisfied by the
>results. Science still wins. But when scientists refuse even to
>examine, because they have preconceived notions of what they may
>find, then are they still scientists? That's when science loses.

First of all, nobody has any obligation to invest their time and their resources on your ideas. Period! It is up to you to prove your contentions and provide compelling evidence for your claims. If you believe you have something extraordinary, it is up to you to provide the extraordinary evidence. It is not up to science to come running just because you called. That is the real world. Accept it and learn to live with it. Nobody is stopping you from producing compelling evidence of an alien cruiser or ET, but don't expect somebody else to go get one and if they don't you demonize them.

>BTW, the sarcastic burnt-circle cause given above was intended
>as humor. Guess I shouldn't give debunkers ideas though.

>Listen. I must have watched "Cosmos" billions and billions of
>times. I loved Carl Sagan and respected his work.

Your love for him is simply overwhelming your commentary.

>That is until
>he became bitter and began lashing out at the UFO community at
>large, without ever referring to the relevant evidence
>(Stanton's phrase).

Carl Sagan was not bitter towards ufology. As far as Stanton's 'relevant evidence', read the Sturrock panel's report. There is no relevant evidence according to them. As a matter of fact, they suggested that the evidence presented should be packed up and not reviewed again, because ufologists would never get anywhere with the unscientific data they presented. As far as Stanton, he is an excellent speaker and it is his job to excite the crowd. He is good at it. He is a card-carrying member of the guild.

>I wouldn't have minded if he could explain
>the sightings as easily as he dismissed them. It's much easier
>to say "You saw Venus" than it is to say "I don't know what that
>disc-shaped object with blue lights around the perimeter
>was...let's find out!".

There is nothing stopping you from doing that. Go for it!

>I really don't care what his earlier work toward UFOs was. He
>did a lot of damage in his latter years. Didn't you see the guy
>on TV? Perhaps you weren't privy to to interviews he gave. If
>you weren't, then you may be forgiven for not being aware of his
>arrogance. If you were, then you turned a blind eye to it.

Carl Sagan is irrelevant to ufology's woes. If you are unable to see that, then continue lashing out and blaming the world for ufology's lack of credibility. When you finish, you can start over again from the beginning because nothing you would have said would have helped ufology get up from its pit.

>Sorry, but people don't see UFOs because they need to believe in
>something. They see them because they are BBQing, driving home
>from work, or piloting an airplane. Carl had his cause and
>effect mixed up.

Why don't you lambast ufologists for not doing there job right and getting the compelling evidence? They seem to spend most of their time attacking people like Phil Klass and Carl Sagan instead of doing something that may produce paydirt.

>You remind me of my boss. You see, we have squirrels that build
>nests along the eaves of our building. They frequently find ways
>into the building, much to my and my co-worker's amusement.
>They're just curious, or perhaps searching for food. Well, one
>day I decided to oblige one of them, and tossed him a few pieces
>of my doughnut. Unfortunately, the boss walked in, and became
>furious.

Do you have a job as a donut taster?

>I thought I'd catch heat for wasting company time (I
>could have been doing more productive things with my time in the
>four seconds it takes to toss a few doughnut pieces, you know!).
>Instead, he said "THAT'S why we get squirrels in here! Do you
>>want to explain to our insurance company that the squirrels chew
>up the insulation and ceiling panels because my employees are
>feeding them doughnuts?"

>Now for some reality. The squirrels build nests there because
>that's what they've always done...many generations of them.

They learned to like donuts or is it a hereditary acquired taste?

>And, they will continue to do so until they are exterminated
>(killed, for you non-pc folks)or the building is torn down. My
>boss habitually grabs the first available explanation for
>unwanted events, and applies it to all the examples of the
>events that have ever occurred. This is as logical as the
>arguments made by debunkers, and as logical as the way you
>interpreted my statement about their effect on ufology.

Your boss is the boss. I recommend you follow his lead and stop wasting your valuable time with the squirrels. With the money you save from the extra donuts not wasted on the squirrels, you can buy your boss one of Jerome Clark's books on ufological wisdom and everybody comes out winners. The boss sees your real interest in life is not squirly. You gain a companion in your boss where you can share your thoughts on ufological wisdom with him. Clark gets to sell one of his books and make enough money to buy the squirrels a donut. The squirrels get to move over to Clark's house and keep the heavyweight squirrel some much needed company - a win-win situation for all!

>Mr Stuart, I apologize for picking on a deceased person.

You don't owe me any apology.

>However, death does not free us from the legacy we leave behind,
>good or bad. I will remember Carl Sagan in many good ways, but I

>was severely disappointed in him in his final years. When the
>debunkers stop altering details of sightings, humiliating and
>insulting witnesses, attacking ufologists ad nauseam, and are
>willing to sit down with them, examine the data they have
>collected and just generally behave like big people, then I will
>be first in line to shake their hands. What have they got to
>lose? Science should prove that there's nothing to the stories,
>right?

Wrong! It is not up to science or anybody else to prove that
there's nothing to the stories. It is up to whoever makes the
claim, not science, not Carl Sagan, not Phil Klass, not Laura
Schellinger.

>They can prove ufologists wrong once and for all.
>Or can they?

Have you ever entertained the concept that they don't care one
way or the other? No one is ever going to lift a hand to help
out ufology. Ufology will have to clean up its own act.

Ed Stewart

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Ed Stewart ufoindex@jps.net | So Man, who here seems principal alone,  
There Is Something          | Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown.  
Going On!                   | ,>'?'<, Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal,  
Salvador Freixedo ( O O ) | 'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.  
-----oo00-(_)-00oo----- Alexander Pope, Essay on Man -----
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