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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Ufology - A Personal Viewpoint

From: dledger@ns.sympatico.ca (Donald Ledger)
Date: Tue, 01 Sep 1998 00:20:32 +0100
Fwd Date: Tue, 01 Sep 1998 08:05:30 -0400
Subject: Re: Ufology - A Personal Viewpoint

>Date: Mon, 31 Aug 1998 17:09:35 -0400
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: Steven Kaeser <steve@konsulting.com>
>Subject: Re: Ufology - A Personal Viewpoint

>>Date: Mon, 31 Aug 1998 12:42:16 +0100
>>From: dledger@ns.sympatico.ca (Donald Ledger)
>>To: updates@globalserve.net
>>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Ufology - A Personal Viewpoint

><snip>

>>I had a little trouble with this reasoning myself when I read it
>>and this is not the first time this subject has cropped up. Your
>>analogy of the policeman is a good one. If push came to shove on
>>crime in progress, particularly a violent one, I'd much rather
>>have the testimony of the policeman than an inexperienced
>>civilian. You want the criminal put away.

>While I would tend to agree, your unstated assumption is that
>the policeman has greater training and ability in the art of
>observation, and/or that his opinion would carry greater weight
>in the legal system because of his chosen profession. This is
>probably not always the case, but usually true.

The police themselves will tell you that for the most part the typical witness is usually unreliable, particularly in a situation where there is a great deal of stress and excitement. This of course would hold true with UFO sightings. The police are put into situations during training where they are expected to notice certain things during the test in order to sharpen their observation skills. As a pilot you are continuously bombarded with information during your training while flying and you have to get it right, particularly during the takeoff and land phase or in the circuit [pattern in the US]. These tests sharpen your observations skills both for inside and outside of the aircraft.

As a UFO researcher we are constantly reading forms, or documents, or testimony about sightings which I am sure has to lead to greater observation skills than the average citizen and perhaps even a police officer. That's not to say all researchers.

>>Why not the same with an experienced UFO researcher, who in many
>>cases might know exactly what to look for through experience and
>>probably because s/he had often wished the witness of some UFO
>>sighting in the past had done certain things.

>>What if Hynek, James MacDonald, Wilbert Smith or Jacques Vallee,
>>for example, had had a good sighting? Would we trash it simply
>>because they were and are experienced UFO investigators.

>>I had a good sighting last November in BC and I had two areas of
>>experience to bring to the sighting. Experience as a UFO
>>investigator and many more years as a pilot. I hate to think I
>>was disregarded as a witness because of the former experience.

>>Don Ledger

>I think that your sighting would be of interest to most of us
>here, but there are some who would probably take your apparent
>beliefs into account as they review any evidence you submit.
>This would be a shame since you would indeed bring a perspective
>to that observation that would be invaluable.

Yes but would we not argue that point with those who would
consider these "beliefs" of ours [to be honest with you, I hold
no firm beliefs in this area] as biased and therefore
unreliable. I think I would use the arguments we've been
discussing in my defence. Having said that, I've seen RCMP UFO
documents, for instance, that have stated that the observer in
question is very interested in UFOs or a UFO nut and therefore
infers that the witness is unreliable.

>On the other hand, I can think of a few researchers that I >
>wouldn't feel the same way about, so I don't think the issue is
>all that simple.

Sure, we all know some and I don't disagree with you, but again
as in everything else in this field, it's an uphill struggle for
some degree of legitimacy.

>If a researcher wishes to pursue this as a full
>time profession, then their ability to view the genre from an
>independent position becomes more questionable. Their research
>could be solid, but the appearance of a possible bias might
>impact how others view it.

>Steve

It might also be dependent upon how many letters the person has
after their name or community standing etc. For the time being,
and this is what I was referring to originally, I'd like to
think that our peers in this field would be less inclined to
blow off a researcher's sighting as a beginning to some
legitimacy in the general population. For the most part we know
how much we can trust the observations of those in the UFO
research community and the "newbies" will have to earn their
spurs so to speak.

Don

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