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in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1999](#) -> [Apr](#) -> **Re: Friedman vs. Krauss Debate**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Friedman vs. Krauss Debate

From: Brad Sparks <RB47Expert@aol.com>
Date: Sat, 10 Apr 1999 13:46:00 EDT
Fwd Date: Sat, 10 Apr 1999 17:55:23 -0400
Subject: Re: Friedman vs. Krauss Debate

>From: Mendoza <DarkSecretPB@compuserve.com>
>Date: Fri, 9 Apr 1999 18:44:20 -0400
>Fwd Date: Sat, 10 Apr 1999 03:38:38 -0400
>Subject: Re: Friedman vs. Krauss Debate

>With the compliments of the Duke of Mendoza:

>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalseve.net>
>>From: Jerome Clark <jkclark@frontiernet.net>
>>Subject: Re: Friedman vs. Krauss Debate
>>Date: Wed, 07 Apr 99 09:35:11 PDT

>>a fine spray of irrelevant blather all over the hated Jerome
>>Clark when I am not remotely the issue Brad is discussing here.

>Mmmm. Why do I have this persistent memory that Jerome's name
>did creep into the post to which Brad was responding? And why
>does the paragraph Jerome quotes happen to be one in which I was
>clarifying what my post was up to?

>"Hated". This is so inappropriate it isn't even an exaggeration.
>Ah! Of course, it is a joak.

>>There is a lot of naive and just
>>plain dumb writing about the ETH, but in science (and, ideally,
>>even in list exchanges) it is always the best arguments and
>>evidence that are at issue, not the worst.

>Such as our old friend Trans-en-Provence, and the Roswell
>imbroglio - to take a couple of Jerome's favorites. I should
>like to see the careful analyses of the psychosocial factors in
>those cases, by those who believe they have some ET connexion,
>or even some substance as anomalies.

Comments: Sorry I can't help you because I believe the
first-hand witnesses who said what was found was foil-like foil,
balsa-like balsa wood, plastic-tape-like plastic tape, and
rubber-like rubber balloon sheeting.

>>given a position sufficiently at risk that it is reduced to
>>grasping at those human straws Klass and Menzel, Peter would
>>prefer for us to concentrate on the former.

>On Menzel (and Taves), I wrote: "Now, anyone may disagree with
>their interpretations and their use of the data, in some
>instances; but surely no one of good faith can disagree with
>their comments on numerous cases that are simply too vaguely
>reported to be meaningful of anything at all."

>
>So much for Jerome's good faith.

Comments: The context of these remarks was that I presented two surveys of American and worldwide UFOlogists in 1966 and 1981 which listed the best-evidence UFO cases. Since most of these ufologists believed in ETH as the best explanation of the UFO phenomenon, these lists were therefore de facto best-evidence ETH lists.

Only the very myopic could fail to grasp that reality, unless Brookesmith wishes to contend that most ufologists in 1965 and 1979 (the dates of the actual polling) were actually PSH advocates or some such.

Mark Cashman has already astutely argued that the best UFO evidence is functionally the equivalent of the best ETH evidence, if one examines the cases.

Skeptics have evaded these lists for decades, despite their repeated demands for "ten best UFO cases" (etc.) and despite knowing of the existence of at least one of the lists if not both (in 1974 Philip Klass cited the Vallee list of 1966 for its finding that the Socorro case was ranked number one but has apparently avoided mentioning the Vallee poll ever since).

I also pointed out that the "anti-UFO" side represented by the Condon Committee had failed to explain many of its UFO cases, conveniently listed in the Condon Report Index under "Sightings, unexplained." Altogether I estimated that skeptics had failed to explain and/or even discuss approximately 1/3 of all the cases on these three best-evidence lists, Vallee, Condon, and Story-Greenwell.

Brookesmith came back with the mention of the Menzel-Taves book which in 1977 purported to explain all of the unexplained Condon Committee cases.

Aside from the fact that their "interpretations and their use of the data" were questionable (to which even Brookesmith seems to allude), Menzel and Taves completely ignored about one-fourth of the unexplained UFO cases listed in the CR Index under "Sightings, unexplained."

They simply addressed the 23 cases with Case Numbers and ignored most of the other 9 cases cited in the Condon Report under "Sightings, unexplained," that did not happen to have project case numbers (I think they addressed only one of these unnumbered cases, one of the two Gemini 4 incidents, but it's made up for by another one they overlooked, see next).

Apparently Menzel and Taves didn't want to go to all the effort of actually reading the entire Condon Report.

If they had they might have noticed an important Astronomical Instrument UFO Case that remained unexplained (CR pp. 777-781) which was inadvertently omitted from the Index, and which involved a UFO detected by an airglow scanning photometer at Haleakala Observatory in Hawaii on Feb 11-12, 1966. That would seem to have objective scientific content and should have been of especial interest to an astronomer such as Menzel.

In short, Menzel and Taves completely ignored about 9 of the approximately 32 unexplained UFO cases published in the Condon Report (there are a few additional unexplained cases couched in ambiguous language which evidently for that reason weren't indexed as "unexplained").

I am not aware of any other skeptics who have addressed these cases, let alone attempted to explain them.

It's hard to avoid agreeing with Jerry Clark's comment that the cited skeptics are merely human strawmen, since the past 30-year history of UFO skeptics seems to show that skeptics have no real intention of ever proposing Scientific (as opposed to Literary Analytical) explanations for this short list of best UFO cases that a huge Air Force-contract university investigation could not explain.

Why not forego the pointless, factless jawboning on this list and get down to the nitty-gritty of the actual cases, with

names, dates, times, places, angular elevations and directions, and measurements?

>As for Uncle Phil, I merely remarked that he acknowledged that
>reconstructing the then 17-year-old RB-47 case, even with the
>help of the pilot, was problematic because of the passage of
>time. This is a matter of fact. Where is the straw?

Comments: The implication of Brookesmith's remark is that the RB-47 case is impossible to reconstruct.

Yet Uncle Phil found it was quite adequately documented for his skeptical explanations, especially once McDonald located the contemporaneous military records on the case from 1957.

Indeed Phil's in-depth investigations of the case certainly constitute the greatest skeptical demolition of a UFO case in history no doubt his crowning achievement, seemingly very thorough and very convincing.

Unfortunately, his explanations are just flat wrong, conclusively disproven.

Now that the flight track of the RB-47 has been accurately reconstructed it has been proven to be accurate by the on-board ELINT direction-finding which accurately painted the known location of the Duncanville/Dallas air defense radar -- at exactly the same time as it accurately painted the maneuvering UFO's airborne radar signal, which thus provides the world's first real-time calibrated measurement of a microwave signal from a UFO, proven to be accurate by the simultaneous calibration against the known radar signal (Duncanville's).

This is exhaustively documented in my 30-page paper in The UFO Encyclopedia, 2nd Edition, along with other massive evidence conclusively refuting Uncle Phil's explanations (save that of the brief meteor sighting during the incident).

I should think that if skeptics are truly seeking the scientific truth they would be drawn to such powerful scientific evidence for a highly maneuverable radar-emitting UFO whose movements and microwave emissions were recorded by electronic instruments and found to neatly correlate with visual observations and ground radar tracking.

But it seems that the greater the scientific substance to a UFO case, the less the interest in it by present-day skeptics, especially of the PSH variety.

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