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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>
Date: Mon, 8 Feb 1999 19:19:26 -0500
Fwd Date: Tue, 09 Feb 1999 09:48:42 -0500
Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

>From: Leanne Martin <leanne_martin@hotmail.com>
>To: updates@globalserve.net
>Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality
>Date: Sun, 07 Feb 1999 20:21:01 PST

>>An important piece missing from all these arguments for media
>>influence would be other examples of this purported phenomenon
>>at work. That is, can anyone think of something else in real
>>life with the emotional force of the abduction phenomenon that
>>clearly, indisputably was created by pop culture? (Where are the
>>social scientists? Why is a complex question like this one,
>>which ought to be informed by specialized professional
>>knowledge, left to amateurs like Kevin, me, Mark Cashman, Martin
>>Kottmeyer, and Jerry Clark?)

>Of course!!!! You may have amnesia about the true effects of
>the Orson Welles "War Of The Worlds" broadcast on American
>society?? What better proof do you need? A radio drama clearly
>labeled a work of fiction having massive psychological impact on
>a few individuals. They in turn passed on the panic and so it
>spread.

Ah. Well, first the drama wasn't so clearly labelled fiction. It
was presented as if it was news. It began as if it was a
broadcast of dance music. The music was interrupted by a news
bulletin -- a meteor has fallen. Successive news bulletins told
us about the Martians emerging from the meteor, shooting people
with their heat rays, and so on. Only at the end was the frame
of a news broadcast breached, and the show revealed as radio
drama.

Second, recent research (documented on the Project 1947 list)
seems to show that the broadcast didn't cause nearly the panic
most people believe.

Third, even if a certain amount of panic did arise, it ended the
day after the broadcast. That makes the whole affair not really
comparable to the abduction phenomenon, which has persisted for
more than 20
years.

>>I can think of two such examples, and -- though I'm no social
>>scientist and have no real standing to argue this point (an
>>admission I wish others in this debate would just as cheerfully
>>make) -- my examples seem to show that the abduction phenomenon
>>can't have been generated the same way.

>>One example would be the belief that Elvis is alive, fervently
>>maintained by people who think they've seen him. And there's a
>>parallel belief (set forth in a fascinating book by Raymond
>>Moody, called 'Elvis After Life', I think) that Elvis has

>>appeared to people after his death, functioning in effect as an
>>angel. Where did this come from? Well, most likely from the
>>intense fascination, verging on worship, that Elvis had for many
>>people when he was alive.

>Do they see the fat, ill, old Elvis that actually died or the
>younger, virile Elvis that set rock'n'roll aflame?

They see a version of the old Elvis, though normally healthy and
slimmed down, since the mythology normally says that he faked
his death to escape from his unpleasant life. Sometimes he's
bearded as well.

Too bad nobody sees the young one. (Preferably in the black
leather suit he wore in his 1968 TV comeback, or driving the
pink Cadillac he bought when he was young and his first record
hit!)

><snip>

>>My second example would be vampire cults, though I'm not sure
>>"cult" is the proper word for them. They've been documented in
>>at least two books. People drink each others' blood; many of
>>them wear clothes and create environments based on vampire books
>>and movies, especially Anne Rice's novels. Again, there's a
>>one-to-one correspondence between pop culture and the phenomenon
>>at hand. The vampire books and movies exist; people in the
>>vampire groups consciously imitate them. They don't invent some
>>other kind of vampire, a vampire that, for instance, might drink
>>only animals' blood, or might love sunlight.

>
>A very good example to chew over. Like 'abductions' these
>'Goths', as they like to be called (at least here in Oz) have
>taken something in from popular culture and adapted it for their
>lives, or adapted their lives to it. They will still draw their
>dole money (unemployment benefits) and use the 'free' medical
>system here (lucky us, eh?), they still buy food and other
>services, etc. Obviously real vampires have no need for that but
>the Goths still have deal with reality.

>How does this parallel 'abductions'? People who have claims of
>being abducted must still relate to the real world, at least
>those who haven't totally lost it. For the most part something
>has happened in their lives that they need to deal with and
>convert into one or more experiences within their makeup so that
>they can live an otherwise normal life. Some people who undergo
>severe and occasionally repeated trauma develop split
>personalities. These other personalities can cope with their
>stressors so that their main personality can remain 'normal' in
>the mind of the individual.

Well, I don't know about your down-under bloodsuckers, but the
overwhelming majority of the ones here don't really claim to be
vampires. They just enjoy acting the role. That makes them very
different from abductees, who claim experiences with something
outside ordinary reality.

Greg Sandow

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