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Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1999](#) -> [Feb](#) -> **Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality**

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

From: **Ted Viens** <drtedv@freewweb.com>
Date: Tue, 9 Feb 1999 00:16:17 -0600
Fwd Date: Tue, 09 Feb 1999 10:42:20 -0500
Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

>Date: Sun, 7 Feb 1999 14:58:03 -0600 (CST)
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: Dennis Stacy <dstacy@texas.net>
>Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality

>>From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>
>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>>Subject: Re: Abduction - The Issue Of Reality
>>Date: Sat, 6 Feb 1999 22:02:15 -0500

><Giant snip>

>>The match that lit the tinder might have been the Elvis
>>sightings invented ten years or so ago by the Weekly World News,
>>whose editors really do believe that they started the whole
>>Elvis-is-alive phenomenon. Certainly they received thousands of
>>letters from people who said they, too, had seen Elvis (I saw a
>>mailbag full of those letters at the News' office in Lantana,
>>Florida, and I opened many of them). Here you have an almost
>>one-to-one correspondence between media story and real-life
>>counterpart. The Weekly World News prints the story, and people
>>immediately write in with stories of their own.

><snip>

><Greg Sandow

>Greg,

>I find it somewhat ironic that elsewhere on this list, if not in
>this particular thread, you've also referred to Hopkins's
>mailbag, which you've also been allowed to dip into and read at
>random.

>Let's call it the Case of the Two Mail Bags. Clearly, you
>believe that one mailbag (abductions) is worth pursuing in much
>greater depth than the other mail bag (Elvis sightings). You
>also seem to think that the Hopkins mailbag is relatively free
>of media (and perhaps cultural) influence, whereas the contents
>of the Elvis bag are attributable (seemingly) to nothing but
>media influence.

>So let's assume you get your wish and the entire social science
>department of a major university descends on these two sacks of
>mail. What would happen? I suspect both subjects would be
>approached from the same discipline, ie., some (perhaps
>particularized) form of phenomenology. Both reports (sightings
>of alien abductors and Elvis) would no doubt be treated as

>sociological facts, by definition. But I doubt that any
>sociologist worth his salt would even begin to approach the
>assumption that what was being seen, experienced and reported in
>one mailbag was indeed the original, real Elvis. Some could have
>been impersonators on their way to work, for example. For that
>matter, I have a cousin who is a pretty good ringer for Elvis,
>or at least the Thin Elvis.

<snip>

>One final thought that just came to me. Since I think you would
>agree that not every letter that Hopkins et al receives is the
>real thing, what percentage of the whole do you think such false
>starts represent? And to what do you attribute their cause(s)?
>Any good sociologist worth his or her salary would probably want
>to look into several of these cases as well, as a control
>population if nothing else. Actually, so would any really good
>ufologist.

>Dennis

Unknown even to himself, Dennis gives us veritas nativus; an innocent truth. Nothing would further our understanding of this abduction phenomenon more than having respected sociology departments devote student lab projects to the study of the mailbags of these researchers.

The Elvis mailbags could be used as a control.

Under the direction of respected leaders in the field and a secured system to insure anonymity, I would believe that Hopkins, Strieber, Jacobs, and Mack would make available the deeply private letters sent to them. With carefully chosen cataloging and analysis and a sample size of at least a few thousand, far more insight into these experiences would be generated than have been in years of bantering in our public forums.

Now for my sad suspicions. I really believe (brave of me to use such a volatile word in this forum, isn't it?) that some sociology departments, hearing the suggestion, would permit the study of Elvis letters as class projects. I doubt that any would risk letting themselves be associated with the significant study of abductee letters.

In fairness, in my personal understanding of the human experience, allowing that the individual episode is very important for each person, I find the abduction phenomenon very unimportant in exploring the ETH for the lack of a broad context in which to study it. By analogy, we are at the level of studying the atom with the tools of alchemy. Yes, I am tarnishing the glories of Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology and others.

Bye... Ted..

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