



Aliens On Earth.com

Resources for those who are stranded here



Our Bookstore is **OPEN**

Over 5000 new & used titles, competitively priced!

Topics: [UFOs](#) - [Paranormal](#) - [Area 51](#) - [Ghosts](#) - [Fortean](#) - [Conspiracy](#) - [History](#) - [Biography](#) - [Psychology](#) - [Religion](#) - [Crime](#) - [Health](#) - [Geography](#) - [Maps](#) - [Science](#) - [Money](#) - [Language](#) - [Recreation](#) - [Technology](#) - [Fiction](#) - [Other](#) - [New](#)

Search... for keyword(s)

in Page Titles

Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1999](#) -> [Jul](#) -> Re: IFOs

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: IFOs

From: John Rimmer <jrimmer@magonia.demon.co.uk>
Date: Thu, 29 Jul 1999 22:43:35 +0100
Fwd Date: Fri, 30 Jul 1999 22:06:32 -0400
Subject: Re: IFOs

>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: Jerome Clark <jkclark@frontiernet.net>
>Subject: Re: IFOs
>Date: Wed, 28 Jul 99 19:56:47 PDT

>If skepticism has anything to do with the questioning of
>received wisdom, American ufologists are by far more
>iconoclastic, and thus more skeptical. The European neoskeptics
>-- pelicanists, I call them in my uncharitable moments (though I
>could never be uncharitable to you, John) -- seem much more
>believing of conventional opinion, far more obsessed with
>holding safe and unheretical views which will keep the ridicule
>of the washed at bay.

So basically, to reject a workable scientific model of the universe on the basis of a series of contentious and questionable narratives, is iconoclastic and by inference a good thing; continuing to doubt the literal validity of these reports because there is no convincing evidence behind them, is being safe and unheretical and fearful of the ridicule of the establishment.

Yes, we British ufologist all meet from time to time at the Carlton Club to decide just how far we can deviate from conventional opinion before we are likely to meet ridicule from the Royal Society, the House of Lords, Tony Blair, the Church of England, the BBC, the MCC and the Royal Society of Miniaturists and Watercolourists. Naturally we would be terrified of ever upsetting such powerful establishment figures, who might laugh at us for our strange views, uncouth accents and inability to eat an artichoke properly.

>For someone who champions the psychosocial approach to ufology,
>I'm surprised that you would so easily dismiss cultural
>attitudes -- such as anti-Americanism, even if unconscious -- in
>the shaping of views regarding UFOs on your side of the pond.

Jerry, where the hell have I dismissed cultural attitudes as an explanation for different attitudes to ufology on either side of the Atlantic? Of course it's cultural attitudes, what else could it be unless the UFOs have decided to share the earth out amongst themselves, like that 15th century pope who drew a line across a map to separate Portuguese and Spanish areas of colonisation?

>Believe me, if you were on my side and reading much of the
>rhetoric from yours (which is uniquely obsessed with the

>particular national identity of the dissenters from European
>wisdom), you would be forced to agree that my characterization
>is hardly a casual one.
>I recall an especially amusing bit of
>goofiness from no less than the esteemed Magonia, where one
>authority on all things American (Peter Rogerson, if memory
>serves, as it may not; forgive me, Peter, if I'm suffering from
>what we Yanks call old-timer's disease) held that we're in the
>grips of abduction delusions owing to our fear of Hispanics.

Oh dear, not this again. Yes, of course it was Peter, as you know very well. I'm sure this isn't the only bit of goofiness you've found in Magonia. If anybody wants to read the discussion last time you'll find it archived away somewhere in the UpDates vaults. I did actually get a couple of comments from people on your side of the Atlantic saying they thought there might be something in Peter's suggestion, but they were all psychosocialists so they don't count.

>To turn very briefly serious: all of us, Brits, Americans, and
>other earthlings, are prisoners of culture, in ways that
>sometimes -- I didn't say always -- only those outside our
>specific cultures can see. On the other hand, don't get me
>started on the subject of American characters in British UFO
>or for that matter American ufologists in British UFO
>journals.... I'm just joking. Sort of.

And vice-versa of course.

>>Someone like Jenny Randles is hardly considered as a sceptic in
>>Britain, and I have criticised her as much as anyone when I
>>think she has made unjustified assumptions which I felt had been
>>based more on wishful thinking than hard evidence. However, in
>>the end she has always allowed the evidence to get the upper
>>hand. In American terms however, she seems to be rapidly gaining
>>the status of lovable old Phil Klass as a hard line sceptic.

>Not as far as I can see. Is there a little wishful thinking
>going on here, John -- just more proof of the foolishness of
>Americans?

That's how it sounds from the responses to her latest postings on UpDates, daring to say that there's no actual evidence for a extraterrestrial landing on Earth.

>Though I disagree with Jenny as often as I agree with
>her, I like and respect her for what she is: one of ufology's
>few truly nuanced thinkers. Sometimes she (or, more accurately,
>an opinion of hers) irritates the hell out of me, but she is
>_always_ interesting and thought-provoking, and ufology is lucky
>to have her. Few people have contributed as much to this field
>as she has.

"Always interesting and thought-provoking" is of course one of the great put-down lines. You've used it about Magonia often enough, as indeed I have about others.

>Amusingly, the first full-length book to champion an early
>version of ufology's psychosocial hypothesis was The
>Unidentified, published in 1975. Jerome Clark, lifelong resident
>of the United States, was coauthor and has been trying to live
>it down ever since.

Yes I know, and we'll never let you forget it, Jerry. Some barmy stuff in there, certainly, but definitely "interesting and thought-provoking".

>Witness perception and misperception, your (I'm sure
>unintentionally) self-congratulatory observations
>notwithstanding, has been discussed at length -- sometimes
>book's length (e.g., by Dick Haines and Allan Hendry) -- this
>side of the water.

I seem to remember in some previous discussion here that you were telling us just how unreliable Hendry's book was, something about his wife had been very critical of his statistics about UFOs and IFOs. Got the impression then that you weren't too impressed by it and thought we Magonians were taking it too seriously? Somewhere in the archives I'm sure.

The point is that a lot has changed in ufology on both sides of

the Atlantic since those heady days in the seventies. And the way American ufology has gone has been away from those landmark publications, whereas in Euroland many of us have tended to stick closer to the ideas of these great American pioneers.

>IUR, which I edit, has also published some illuminating pieces
>on that subject. What you object to, I gather, is that we have
>looked at the same data and found your conclusions concerning
>same largely unwarranted and uncomfortably like ... oh, jeez,
>you'll have to forgive me; I just can't help myself ... the
>ruminations of English majors and librarians.

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaarrrrgh!!!!!!

--

John Rimmer

Magonia editor and member of the International Librarian Conspiracy.

(When they send you a letter saying that you have an overdue library book, and you have already returned it, do you really think it is just an accident?)

www.magonia.demon.co.uk

[[Next Message](#) | [Previous Message](#) | [This Day's Messages](#)]
[[This Month's Index](#) | [UFO UpDates Main Index](#) | [MUFON Ontario](#)]

UFO UpDates - Toronto - updates@globalserve.net
Operated by Errol Bruce-Knapp - ++ 416-696-0304

A Hand-Operated E-Mail Subscription Service for the Study of UFO Related Phenomena.
To subscribe please send your first and last name to updates@globalserve.net
Message submissions should be sent to the same address.

[[UFO Topics](#) | [People](#) | [Ufomind What's New](#) | [Ufomind Top Level](#)]

To find this message again in the future...
Link it to the appropriate [Ufologist](#) or [UFO Topic](#) page.

Archived as a public service by [Area 51 Research Center](#) which is not responsible for content.
Software by Glenn Campbell. Technical contact: webmaster@ufomind.com

Financial support for this web server is provided by the [Research Center Catalog](#).