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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Jerry Black's Open Letter to Friedman

From: **Greg Sandow** <gsandow@prodigy.net>
Date: Sat, 1 May 1999 11:04:37 -0400
Fwd Date: Sat, 01 May 1999 23:48:17 -0400
Subject: Re: Jerry Black's Open Letter to Friedman

>Date: Thu, 22 Apr 1999 15:04:47 -0500
>To: updates@globalserve.net
>From: Glenn Joyner <infohead@airmail.net>
>Subject: Black's Open Letter to Friedman

>My name is Jerry Black, and I will now state, for the record, my
>position on the UFO topic.

[SNIP!!!!]

Am I the only one who never wants to read another word from Jerry Black?

Since I'm one of Budd Hopkins's many friends, I suppose Black might think I'm on his case because he got on Budd's, in his latest missive. But in fact I lost it with him when I read his latest Whitley Strieber attack, and I have no brief for Strieber at all. I decided to write this note after reading the first few paragraphs of his assault on Stan Friedman, long before I got to the part about Budd.

My thoughts about Black are very simple. He's hardly the first to raise questions about the Gulf Breeze case, or about Strieber. He does, though, set new records for stultifying self-righteousness, barely concealing a resentment that borders on rage.

And he doesn't seem to know the difference between a valid argument, an absurdity, and an ad hominem attack. It's absurd, for instance, for him to condemn MUFON, the entire organization, in part because he went to one function 20 years ago, and didn't like what he heard. And it's certainly an ad hominem attack when he talks about Stan Friedman's personality. Flamboyance, in Jerry Black's eyes, seems to be a kind of crime, prima facie evidence, all by itself, that the flamboyant person is only interested in money and fame.

Finally, Black isn't, to put it mildly, very well informed about some of the subjects he discusses. For one quick example, take this:

>Mr. William G. Hyzer informed me that the
>technology today is as such that anyone who has a computer and
>the money can make a UFO photograph that no one would ever be
>able to detect as being a hoax.

I might note, in passing, Black's exaggerated, almost obsequious respect for Hyzer, who may well be a worthy professional in his

field, but surely isn't the fount of unerring wisdom Black makes him out to be. Nobody, nobody at all, is that good.

But this statement about computer imagery is, first, not remarkable, because it's something you hear all the time, without having to consult Hyzer or anyone else. Second, it's wrong. Computer-faked images will show subtle signs of fakery, if you closely examine them (and, of course, if you have a deep knowledge of computer graphics). We've discussed that on this list many times. But Black propounds his notion (or Hyzer's) in the same tone of a self-righteous oracle that he uses throughout his broadsides. He makes no distinction between things he might know something about, and other areas, like this one, in which he hasn't a clue.

Enough. I don't care whether I agree with Black, or disagree with him, about the many points he raises in his open letters. But I'm offended enough by his tone to feel I should say something.

Greg Sandow

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