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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Magonia Monthly Supplement 15, May 1999

From: Dennis Stacy <dstacy@texas.net>
Date: Tue, 1 Jun 1999 15:32:23 -0500
Fwd Date: Sat, 29 May 1999 19:40:13 -0400
Subject: Re: Magonia Monthly Supplement 15, May 1999

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>From: Greg Sandow <gsandow@prodigy.net>
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalseve.net>
>Subject: Re: Magonia Monthly Supplement 15, May 1999
>Date: Tue, 1 Jun 1999 11:48:56 -0400

<snip>

>If you want comparisons, Dennis, I'll offer two, which at least
>to me make more sense than a comparison to a NY Times editorial.

>Comparison 1: If I write one of my music reviews for the Wall
>Street Journal, I'll never let any major question sit
>unanswered. I can't just sit back and write, "Will someone tell
>me why Gerard Schwarz is still music director of the Mostly
>Mozart festival?" I have to call the festival (or other sources
>in the business) in an attempt to find out.

>Comparison 2: You'd left the MUFON Journal, Dennis, when I
>published my review there of David Jacobs's book "The Threat."
>But I had a question for Dave when I wrote the book -- "How many
>abductees reported the things the book talked about?" So I
>called him to ask, and spent much of the review discussing his
>answers.

>Greg Sandow

Greg,

As I said, I don't have a dog in this hunt. I accept that your comments and reasoning are imminently rational, just as I accept that Harney might have rational reasons for his comments, too, if he cares to make them public.

But since you brought up the book review example, let me comment. Surely it is not standard practice for a book reviewer to call up an author for further clarification of a particular point?

Admittedly, there's no law that says you can't or shouldn't, but neither is there any obligation to do so under the circumstances. The book review is your opinion and you stand or fall on it. If I wonder aloud, "What the hell was Tom Wolfe thinking when he ended his latest novel the way he did?" should I give him a quick call to find out?

Similarly, the organizers of a conference are perfectly free to invite

anyone they want, just as Friedman is perfectly free to show up and speak at same. That's not at dispute, either. No one is obligated to invite a skunk to their garden party if they aren't so inclined.

If I were going to hold a one-day seminar devoted to the abduction problem, however, I can think of a long list of names that would precede Friedman's. But that would depend on whether the organizers were interested in educating the public as to all the pros and cons of the subject under discussion, bolstering their own case, preaching to the choir, keeping expenses to a minimum...any number of factors.

It would behoove us all -- without increasing our cynicism or pessimism quotients -- to remember that life is a series of compromises. Sometimes you pick up the phone, and sometimes you don't. And just because you get a quote doesn't necessarily mean you got the answer.

"Slobodan, Dennis here. _Why_ are you terrorizing all those ethnic Albanians in Kosovar, anyway?"

I guess what I'm saying is this: news journalism requires that you pick up the phone. Editorial commentary, reviews, and opinion pieces don't, unless one is so inclined.

Dennis

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