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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Ufology's 'Old Boys Club'

From: **Jenny Randles** <nufon@currantbun.com>
Date: Wed, 8 Sep 1999 12:02:07 +0100
Fwd Date: Wed, 08 Sep 1999 18:25:43 -0400
Subject: Re: Ufology's 'Old Boys Club'

>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: Jerome Clark <jkclark@frontiernet.net>
>Subject: Re: Ufology's 'Old Boys Club'
>Date: Tue, 07 Sep 99 12:55:01 PDT

>>From: Jerry Black <blackhole60@hotmail.com>
>>To: updates@globalserve.net
>>Subject: Ufology's 'Old Boys Club'
>>Date: Mon, 06 Sep 1999 16:30:22 PDT

>>I read your ridiculous comments about Bruce Macabee
>>[sic] in a recent
>>message that you had sent. I quote your comments where you
>>state:

>>"I have much respect for Bruce Macabee's intelligence,
>>knowledge and ability."

>>Obviously, you have not been in touch with current ufology for
>>the past 10-years. Maybe this is because you are so absorbed
>>with the history of ufology that you haven't had time to pay
>>attention to what is going on in ufology for the last 10 or
>>15-years. I find your statement to be ludicrous, that Bruce
>>Macabee [sic] has displayed intelligence, knowledge or ability
>>in the field of ufology in the last 10 or 15-years.

>I guess that's why CUFOS came down on the skeptical side of the
>Gulf Breeze controversy. We just didn't want to take "a critical
>look at the other person's work." Obviously, Jerry, you have not
>been in touch with current ufology for the past 10 years.

Hi,

Can I comment here about Bruce. Firstly, I do not agree with everything he has ever said by quite some margin (and I am sure the same is true with him of what I have said). I have my reservations about some of the photo cases he has dealt with, but of two things I am certain. He is the best and most valuable photo analyst we have and his good work is significant and visible. I always pay attention when he says something - not to believe all he says - but to heed his thoughts because they are born of first hand experience of photo analysis and ufology. To say otherwise suggests ignorance of the totality of Bruce's research. You cannot replace experience in ufology because first hand research is the only way to go. Also he is willing to expose misperception, fraud and deception where he finds it and has done several times. Recently - for example - his expose of cases like the Phoenix flares (still touted in the UK as real

UFOs by some) or the clever Mexico City hoax spring to mind. I should also add that Bruce's lecture at the MUFON conference in DC was for me one of the high spots. I am glad I stayed behind late to see it all (as many who missed out did not). He had a good blend of skepticism where required and open minded desire to learn more via a truly intriguing case he reported on from Arizona. There were few other lectures at DC to come close in terms of presenting real ufology.

>Strieber is not a ufologist and doesn't pretend to be one, >and ufology, however it may lament Strieber's excesses, is not >responsible for what he says. Strieber is.

>>What is has to do with ufology, Jerome Clark, is the following: >>you are the head of one of the two largest UFO organizations in >>the country.

>In any event, your assertions of my responsibilities are >preposterous. Strieber strikes me as a saucerian equivalent to >Carlos Castaneda. Through all the controversy that swirled >around Castaneda's books for two decades, I don't recall that a >single critic ever declared that it was the responsibility of >all leading anthropologists personally to debunk those claims. >Is anybody currently alleging that it is the responsibility of >all leading paleontologists or biologists to research and >denounce creationism. You're being silly, Jer.

Ufologists will know why I am not going to get involved in discussing Whitley Strieber and Mr Black might care to recall (or find out) what happened when I did. Then he might realise that it is nothing like as simple as he suggests for ufologists to march in and say what they think. I tried that with MJ 12 ten years ago - when I had good reason to believe it a hoax and wanted to caution the public of that fact - but I am still facing the consequences years later. You wont find me rushing to comment objectively on contentious issues any time soon because I have been there, done that and paid the far from inconsiderable price.

>>You also should have offered Strieber and his wife, as I >>recently did, to take a polygraph test. His lack of response or >>cooperation would be the basis of your report: you tried to >>investigate the case and dealt with his refusal to acknowledge >>you or cooperate with you. But at least your subscribers would >>recognize that the case would be without merit. But you didn't >>do that.

Regardless of my views on the Strieber affair, I should point out, Jerry, that in May 1987 when he visited the UK the BBC insisted that he took a lie detector test before he was given any national TV air time to tell his story. He took it and I understand that he passed. He was still treated scathingly by the UK media and no doubt he figured that taking future such tests would do nothing to stop people thinking what they wanted to think. What passing a polygraph for the BBC means of course is open to judgement, but if a polygraph determines a witnesses credibility in your eyes then Strieber proved himself long ago.

>>I also find your response about the Gulf Breeze case to be just >>as ludicrous. Again, I quote: "Like you, I have deep doubts >>about the core claims of the Gulf Breeze episode." That's an >>embarrassing statement for a man who has been around ufology for >>over 30-years.

>Yeah, I just love to embarrass myself. I guess I don't claim >your psychic powers to certainty. Let me repeat: "I have deep >doubts about the core claims of the Gulf Breeze episode." >>Actually, guy, if you subscribed to IUR and knew what you were >talking about, you would know that CUFOS was deeply involved in >the Gulf Breeze investigation, published at least one monograph >on the subject, and carried a number of articles in IUR on the >controversy. If you had followed ufology over the past 10 years, >you would be aware that CUFOS' repeatedly expressed skepticism >generated a period of tension with MUFON, which took a more >favorable view of the episode. Because of my skepticism, Ed >Walters long ago stopped communicating with me.

This is true in my estimation. The CUFOS v MUFON 'difference of opinion' over Gulf Breeze circa 1988/9 was evident to any outside viewer and pleased most Ufolk in the UK who have been singularly unimpressed with this vastly inflated case from day

one. CUFOS unquestionably took a properly cautious approach and were more skeptical than MUFON (although nothing like as sceptical as UK ufology who possibly had the advantage of distance). But to suggest otherwise about CUFOS implies you have not read the relevant literature.

Best wishes,
Jenny Randles

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Operated by Errol Bruce-Knapp - ++ 416-696-0304

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