

tails. I suspect that this significant inference has totally escaped the attention of the author of this study.

If anything, this book has brought into focus the difficulties with abduction claims, and the absolute lack of supporting independent evidence. As such it is a valuable contribution.

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Response to Westrum and Smith

The problem with publishing a book about the abductions is that there are precious few people who understand the problems and difficulties of abduction research and can therefore make informed judgements on a book about the phenomenon. The two reviewers represent examples of the informed and the uninformed. Ron Westrum is a dedicated researcher with impeccable academic qualifications and a depth of knowledge about abductions that few scholars possess. Westrum has written important articles about UFO research and anomalies in general and has helped to define the parameters of abduction research. He has dedicated himself to the rigorous and systematic pursuit of knowledge. Smith is not an abduction researcher and has limited knowledge of the subject at best.

I toyed with the idea of addressing Westrum and ignoring Smith. But, I have decided to deal with Smith's somewhat confused critique because for the lay individual who has no knowledge of the abduction phenomenon, Smith's review might seem as if it had substance. I will not answer all of the criticisms, some are trivial, others are confused, bizarre, and nonsensical.

First, I would like to thank Ron Westrum for his kind and generous words. I would, however, like to make a brief comment about his statement that the abduction phenomenon is "messier" than I appear to believe. The abduction matrix upon which the book is based, constitutes a typical or common abduction scenario. This means that a myriad of atypical experiences have been left out. Westrum is correct in saying that the totality of the abduction phenomenon is messier. It is not a natural phenomenon. It involves intelligent choices with a variety of complications and permutations. We are still in the process of discerning its parameters. Researchers are bound to find many other events that happen to abductees. So far, I have found no reason to expand my matrix significantly. If, however, I were to expand the matrix, I might add some category about "extra-vehicular activity," but that is for the future.

And now for Smith. Smith first takes me to task because I accept the idea of a genetic breeding program even though "some scientists" (unnamed) have said it was an "impossibility." I am afraid that neither Smith nor "some scientists" know what is possible or impossible in the abduction phenomenon. It is

important to stay close to the testimony rather than try to force it into a preconceived structure. One does not adhere to Smith's type of speculation if the evidence mounts for a different position. Nor does one deny the evidence because some unnamed scientist says it can not be possible. If this were true, there would be no Society for Scientific Exploration.

Smith comments on the lack of hard evidence, ignoring the myriad of physical evidence including soil samples, physical sequelae, implants, stains, and so forth that have been recovered in relation to abduction activity. Presumably he wants some sort of artifact from on board a UFO. If he had looked at pp. 259-60 closely, in which I delineate the reasons why there are no artifacts, he would have found the reasons for the lack of hard evidence of this nature. For Smith, the inability to capture video images of an abduction suggests that the abductees are committing a hoax. There is absolutely no evidence for this and Smith's allegation is completely unfounded and based entirely on guesswork. He, of course, presents no evidence for a hoax.

Smith finds negative significance in the fact that abductees come to me and not vice-versa. I follow the ethics of mental health professionals and I do not believe in solicitation. When abductees do seek me out, I explain as much as I can about the possible consequences of revelation so that they can be forewarned and forearmed. I am not interested in soliciting abductees and possibly putting them on a life-changing pathway of discovery without their knowledge of the repercussions. *They* must want to find out what happened to them, my curiosity is not enough.

Smith says, with absolutely no evidence of justification, that I might have "influenced" the abductees to say what I want them to say because of lengthy contacts with them. For example, Smith points out that I had thirty sessions with Melissa yielding ninety hours of contact time plus a few hours of time to set up the TV camera in her apartment. I am puzzled by Smith's equation of time with influence. Spending time interviewing someone is something that is absolutely essential for both therapy and investigation. I suppose that Smith would prefer that I spend little or no time with each abductee so as not to "influence" them. However, following along with Smith's curious argument, Melissa would be the most influenced of all the abductees in my study, and I would have used her throughout the book. In fact Smith inexplicably calls her a "star" witness. Actually, Melissa figures very slightly in the book. I mentioned Melissa several times in the first chapter (as my first abductee investigation) and a few times in one of the later chapters, that is all.

One of Smith's few comments that has some validity is that we need to know more about the abductees' physical and mental health (Smith is obviously unaware of the blind psychological studies of some of Budd Hopkins' abductees, or the studies of fantasy prone personalities conducted by the Center for UFO Studies, or the studies conducted by June Parnell at the University of Wyoming, or those of Ken Ring at the University of Connecticut). For Smith this is "an essential ingredient if we are going to understand why those

particular individuals were selected for a breeding program." This may or may not be true. At present, except for the intergenerational link, the phenomenon seems random. But, what is needed is funding to conduct a complete physical and genetic investigation of each abductee. No one has attempted this yet, and it is certainly something that needs to be done in a very systematic way. Knowing what the abductees do with their time on a daily basis is not, as a confused Smith suspects, going to help in discerning their credibility. However, if Smith had bothered to look at a list of their occupations on pp. 326-327, he would have had a good idea of what they do.

For Smith, it is impossible to replicate my results with the abductees because my "secrecy" about them "goes beyond reasonable bounds." He complains that his attempt to evaluate their stories fails for lack of information about the abductees. Smith peculiarly equates confidentiality with secrecy. Anyone who has a thorough knowledge of abduction hypnosis and of the abduction phenomenon can replicate my results with most abductees. One does not need to have access to the abductees with whom I have worked. In fact, I have been getting reports from researchers around the country who have been finding the same procedures and overall structure of abductions. Replicating results using my abductees is pointless and ridiculous.

Smith seems intent upon interpreting the thoughts and actions of the abductees. For example, Patti returns to bed and her husband (called "a ghost character" by Smith, and who, incidentally, is a physician) exhibits no curiosity. For Smith, this is "a rather incredible situation." He is apparently unaware of the situation in which her husband might have thought that she returned from going to the bathroom. More to the point, if Smith has read p. 55, in which I discuss how those close to an abduction event are rendered unconscious and/or immobile while the abduction of another person takes place, he would have understood what happened.

Smith finds a shortcoming of my book "as in previous works on the subject" because of a lack of statistics. Smith is apparently unaware that my book and Hopkins' 1981 *Missing Time* are the only primary comparative studies ever done. Aside from that, Smith is unaware that one of the problems that abduction researchers have had in understanding the parameters of the abduction phenomenon is that it is extremely difficult to obtain valid numbers of frequency. For example, do all men have sperm taken from them each time they are abducted? The difficulties with solving this simple problem are that men will often skip over this part because of embarrassment or because they are "not supposed to remember." This is most common during the first one or two regressions. Furthermore, men often do not even know what is happening to them when this procedure is performed. Often the memories of the event are purposely clouded in their minds by the aliens. Therefore, discovering the actual frequency of each procedure is extraordinarily difficult and sometimes impossible. Much of the problem has to do with standardization of methodology. Once the methodology is standardized, then the frequency of specific

procedures might be more easily discerned, and statistics might be meaningful for all researchers.

For some reason Smith finds it important that abductees say little or nothing about the presence of actual craft. Obviously, *all* the abductees see a craft as they are about to enter it. They see the inside of the craft as well. This is made quite clear in the text. I did not dwell on the outside shape of UFOs. However, I do talk about the inside of them at length all through the book. After making this curious criticism, Smith displays a distinct lack of knowledge of the properties of the UFO phenomenon that researchers have compiled over the past forty-five years when he says that radar would detect them because some are very large. He is apparently unaware that the size of the object has nothing to do with whether radar will detect them. After this "insight", Smith veers wildly into speculations about a parallel universe that the beings come from. When abductees pass between the two universes, they would, according to Smith, report "confusion and disorientation." He boasts that his insight is "a significant inference," that "has totally escaped" my attention. I am, of course, aware of a lengthy list of speculations about the beings' origins. However, readers of the book will notice that at no time did I attempt to speculate about where the beings came from, be it Mars, a parallel universe, or Cleveland.

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