

41st SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) – The  
Next Steps (A4)  
SETI 2: SETI and Society (2)

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COMMUNICATING EXISTENTIAL ACCOUNTS OF BEING HUMAN IN INTERSTELLAR  
MESSAGES

**Abstract**

Many interstellar messages to date have focused on communicating mathematical and scientific concepts to extraterrestrial intelligence, with the rationale that any civilization capable of communication at interstellar distances would need to know these concepts to create the technology to transmit or receive messages. While such concepts are plausible prerequisites for interstellar contact, they do not capture the depth of the fundamental lived concerns of individual human beings. To complement messages based on mathematics and science, this paper examines means of conveying something about such core existential human concerns as death, responsibility, and freedom.