

43rd SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) – The
Next Steps (A4)
SETI 2: SETI and Society (2)

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CRYPTOSOCIOLOGY AND EXTRATERRESTRIAL CIVILIZATIONS

Abstract

Sociological issues have a profound effect on the potential outcomes of SETI searches. They could influence the ability and the willingness of extraterrestrial civilizations to transmit signals to the universe or listen for others.

Theories on the sociology of extraterrestrial civilizations have mostly been constructed by analogy with observed examples from human sociology and speculative extrapolations.

This paper proposes the creation of the sub-discipline of “cryptosociology” as a field of research for exploring alternative systems for extraterrestrial sociology. The nature of such investigations is “cryptic” due to the lack of real data on extraterrestrial sociology and the potential for the development of social systems that are not observed in human civilizations.

Some sociological structures could be generally incomprehensible to human investigators, necessitating the development of alternative ontologies and strategies.

Cryptosociology also addresses the development of sociology and social sciences within extraterrestrial civilizations themselves. An alien civilization with a higher level of scientific development than Earth could develop more advanced and integrated paradigms and models of their own civilization and others. This could also influence the development of their societies.