

48th IAA SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) –
The Next Steps (A4)
SETI 2: SETI and Society (2)

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”WE (DO NOT) COME IN PEACE”: THE IMAGES OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE IN
CONTEMPORARY CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Abstract

Extraterrestrial contact has already become a staple of science fiction and popular culture. This, in turn, has helped to spark interest in scientific search for extraterrestrial life (such as, for example, that is carried out by SETI institute). However, the conspiracy theory narratives provide images of extraterrestrial life that, though obviously inspired, are still somewhat different from the ones found in science fiction books, movies or even mythologies of various new religious movements. Furthermore, these various conspiracy theories have become quite popular among the population. In these conspiracy theories, extraterrestrials are portrayed either as evil entities that have made pacts with various governments and now are secretly tormenting humanity, or as diabolical creatures that have infiltrated political positions of various world powers and are secretly ruling the planet. The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, it aims to analyze various UFO and extraterrestrial themed conspiracy theories and describe how extraterrestrial life is portrayed in those narratives. It also speculates possible sources of these images, such as science fiction cliches of always evil interstellar invaders. Second, it also tries to predict what possible responses and reactions the discovery of signs of extraterrestrial intelligence might provoke among the conspiracy theorists, and how conspiracy theorists may react to such discovery.