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Interactive Presentations - 51st IAA SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) – The Next Steps (IP)

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OTHER MINDS IN THE UNIVERSE?

Abstract

The probability of the emergence of life is unknown. The probability of its way to more complex forms and into intelligence is even more unknown. Even the concept of intelligence is somewhat vague. We can see behavior in many animal species that can be described as intelligent. We can program computers to behave like intelligent agents. But none of these are capable for (or interested of) interstellar communication. Desire to communication outside our world is kind of extension to what started from need to communicate within small ancestor group. This need was a pressure what developed our abstract language, and what finally cumulated to telecommunication. We do not know what possible evolutionary paths are there to intelligent society and technological culture. Does technology always come along when certain point in social or cultural evolution has been passed? What environmental, physiological and anatomical features are required for technical culture to emerge? In a way, this is a similar question than the origin of life. We have only one example of life and technological culture, and it is hard to imagine alternatives. Fermi's paradox says that if there are other advanced civilizations in the Milky Way, then where are they? This is serious question to any claim about how life would eventually evolve to something that could make it more observable than just biochemically. Here I present new discipline called cognitive astrobiology that explores universal pathways to intelligent behavior and beyond.