

Steven R. Van Hook, PhD
Science Circle Seminar

**Transgalactic Relations:
Our Possibly Common Traits**
May 3, 2025 / 10:00 AM PT SLT

Transgalactic Relations

Abstract:

Ongoing military reports of unexplained objects flying in our skies have sparked renewed interest in alien visitors. Some scientists predict that we will have contacted advanced civilizations on other worlds within years, if not already. What might they be like, and — more importantly — how might they act? Steven Van Hook, a researcher in transcultural relations, will consider what universal social traits we could share in common with our galactic alien neighbors, with developmental theories of exobiology and exosociology.

Bio:

[Steven R. Van Hook](#) has taught courses in transcultural communications and global affairs for the University of California and other universities in the United States and abroad. He's been a newspaper columnist, radio talk show host, TV news anchor, and television bureau chief in Moscow covering the fall of the Soviet Union 1990-91. He has a PhD specializing in transcultural education, and is published in scholarly journals including SAGE, and UNESCO's *Prospects*. Research [website](#)



Research
Website

UFO/UAP Headlines

- New Pentagon Report on UFOs Includes Hundreds of New Incidents but No Evidence of Aliens

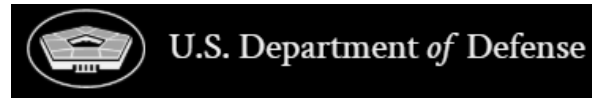
[Military.com](https://www.military.com)



May 2021

 YouTube

- DOD Examining Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena



- For some Navy pilots, UFO sightings were an ordinary event: ‘Every day for at least a couple years’

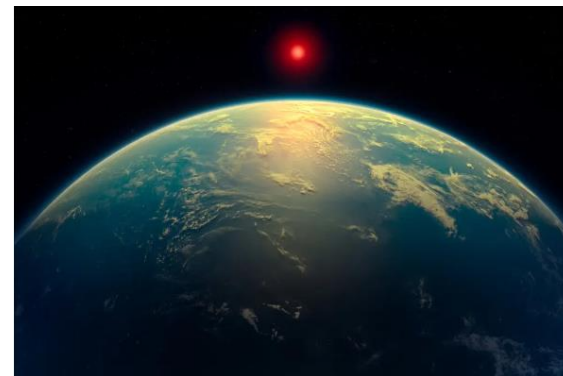
The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness



[Hyperlinked Slides](#)

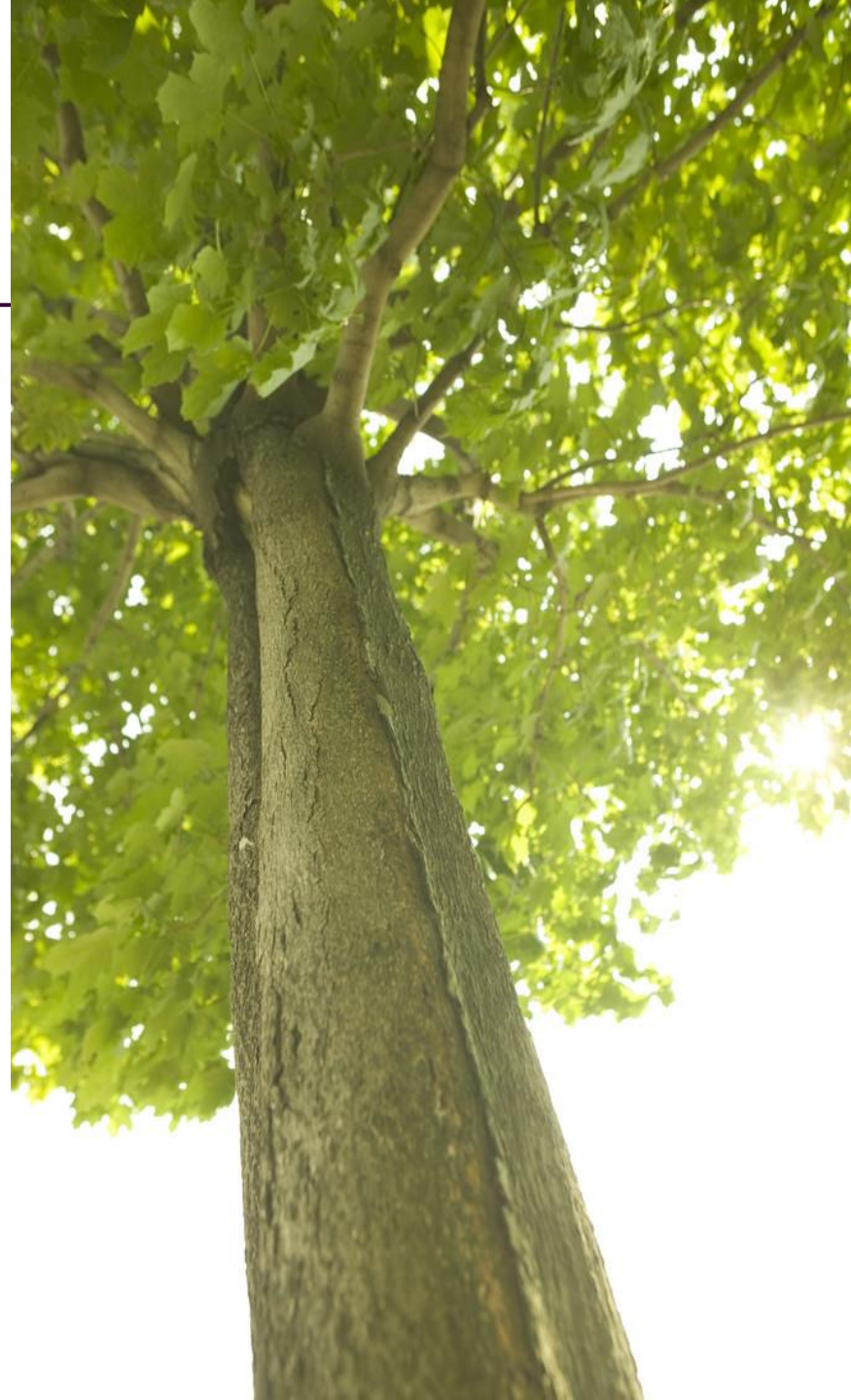
- Astronomers Detect a Possible Signature of Life on a Distant Planet

The New York Times



Doctoral Research

- Sociocultural Systems
- Socioeconomic Systems
- Transcendent Universal Commonalities



War of the Worlds



'In my heart, I don't believe
that aliens will be sinister'
– Steven Spielberg



- Interstellar (2011)
- Cowboys and Aliens (2011)
- When Worlds Collide (2010)
- Transformers (2007)
- War of the Worlds (2005)
- Men in Black (2000)
- Brief History of Time (1991)
- ET (1982)
- Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)

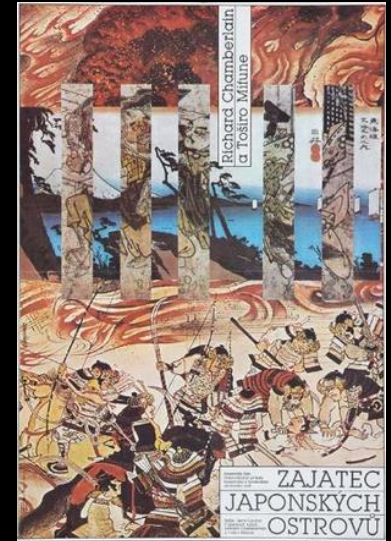


New Worlds Discovered



Shogun

*By James
Clavell*



16th Century meet of
Europe & Japan

Based on English sea
captain Will Adams



Universal Cosmography



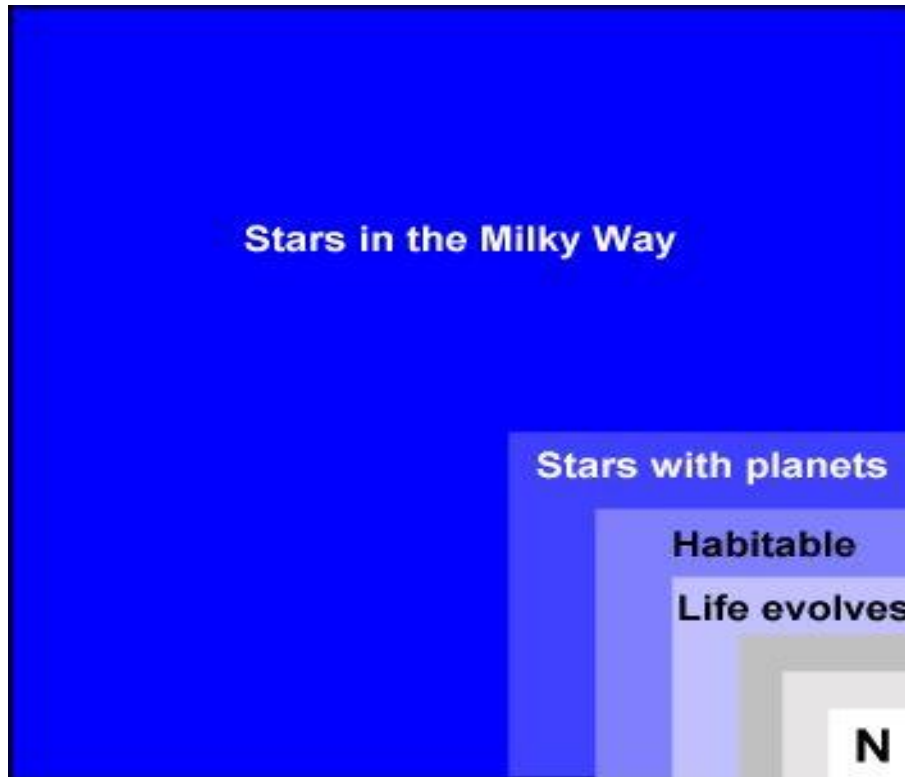
- Conservative estimate of 100 billion galaxies in the universe (Milky Way is one)
- Conservative estimate of 100 billion stars per galaxy. (~200 billion in Milky Way)
- $100 \text{ billion} \times 100 \text{ billion} = 10 \text{ sextillion stars in universe}$ (10-thousand billion billion)
(International Astronomical Union estimates 70 sextillion stars)
- Conservative estimate of 1-in-a-million stars with orbiting planets; 1 planet per star system = 10-million billion planets.
- Conservative estimate of 1-in-a-million planets support life = 10 billion life populated planets in the universe.

Drake Equation



$$N = R \times f_p \times n_e \times f_l \times f_i \times f_c \times L$$

N = number of Milky Way civilizations able to communicate by radio.
Dr. Frank Drake calculates N at 10,000.



Drake Update April 2024:

“Refine f-i factor with necessity of continents, oceans, and long-lasting plate tectonics”

scientific reports

Article

Astronomer Carl Sagan (1934 – 1996)



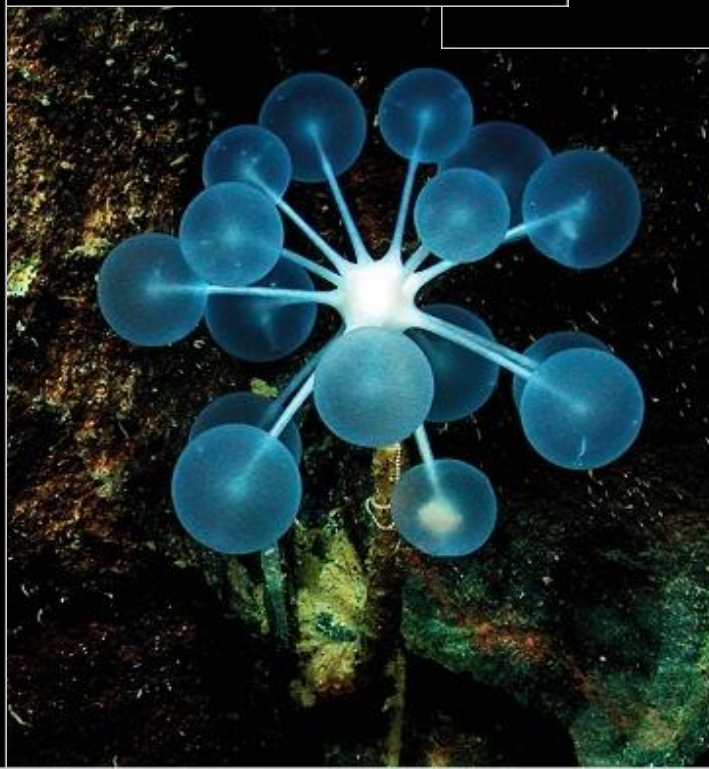
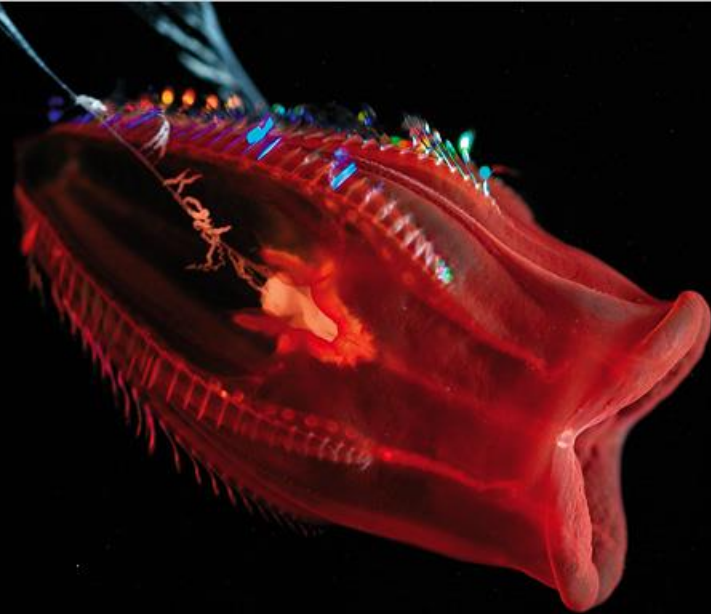
- **Dr. Sagan** revised the Drake Equation and raised the estimate to a million alien worlds in the Milky Way Galaxy. Since the cosmos holds hundreds of millions of galaxies, by that analysis the total number of alien societies could be astronomical, one estimate putting the number at roughly 10 trillion.

(New York Times)

Galactic Communication Problems

- **First radio broadcast** of human voice on earth Dec. 24, 1906.
- **SETI** (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) seeks space radio signals since 1960. (seti.org)
- **Milky Way Galaxy** 100,000 light years wide.
(Light velocity: 300,000 km per second / 9.5 trillion km per year)
- **100,000 years** for message traveling at speed of light to reach us from other side of galaxy.
- **Nearest neighboring galaxy** is Andromeda Spiral, 2-million light years away.





Mysteries in the Dark Down Deep
New York Times

The Tardigrade (Water Bear): Extreme Survivors

- Complex creatures with brain-cluster of neurons
- Live just about everywhere on Earth: tops of mountains to the bottoms of oceans to the polar regions to the hot climates.
- Survive exposure to outer space for 10 days.
- Survive extreme temperatures ... even degree above absolute zero for a few minutes.
- Survive dehydration for 10 years.
- Survive extreme pressures greater than the at the deepest depths of the ocean.
- Tardigrades can cease aging



- Survive radiation 1000 times greater than other animals.
- Each Tardigrade adult (0.5 mm) has the same number of cells
- “Tardigrades hug” - NdG Tyson

Animal Minds

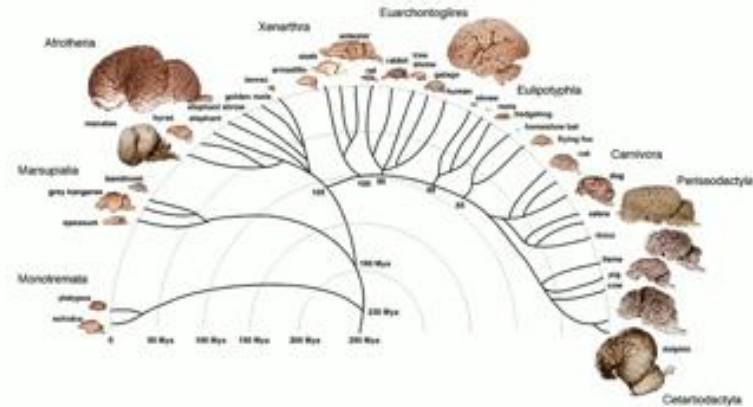
- Our neurons identical to those of crayfish
- Crayfish given micro-shocks develops anxiety and retreats to burrow
- Give them human anti-anxiety drugs, crayfish relaxes and comes back out



mouse



human

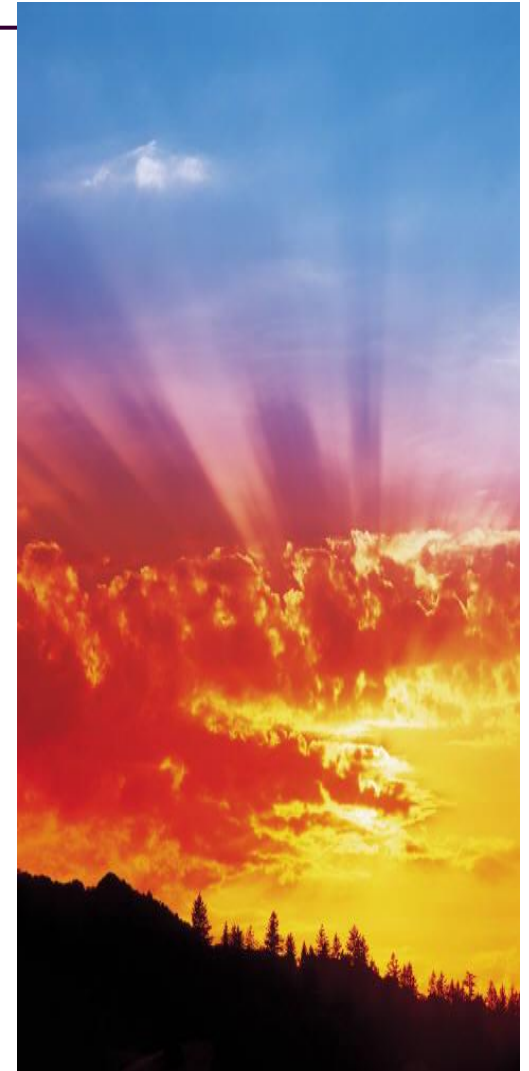


[Article: Animals are Conscious](#)

What Are Animals Thinking & Feeling?
Carl Safina / [TED](#)

Exobiological & Exosocial Evolution

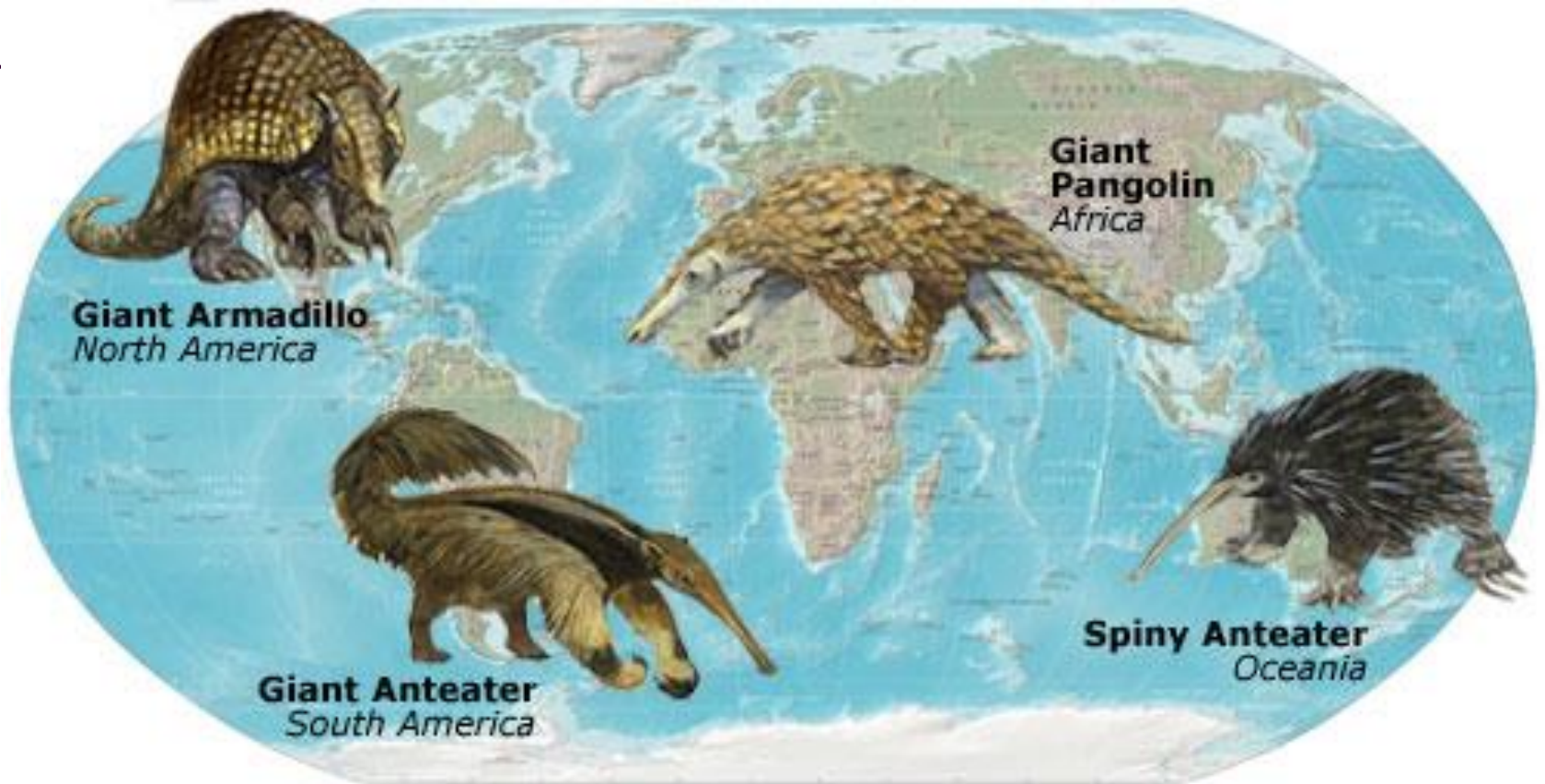
- **Wilson:** Physical and social traits develop according to their survival value.
- **Montagu:** The guiding mechanism of development is one of intelligence, or a matter of brain over biology.
- **Rogers:** Evident in all organic life is the urge to develop, to expand, to mature.
- **Maslow:** We strive for the self-actualized oceanic feeling beyond space and time, that transforms all aspects of life.



Alien Morphology



Convergent Evolution



They may look similar, but it's not because they're close relatives. Instead, they've evolved similar adaptations because they occupy similar niches -- dining on ants, hunting in the high grass, or swimming in the dark -- although their evolutionary origins are quite different. **(PBS)**

Convergent Evolution:



Dolphins and barracudas look similar in silhouette, even though they evolved from very different forebears. Their adapted hydrodynamic shapes are the result of convergent evolution.

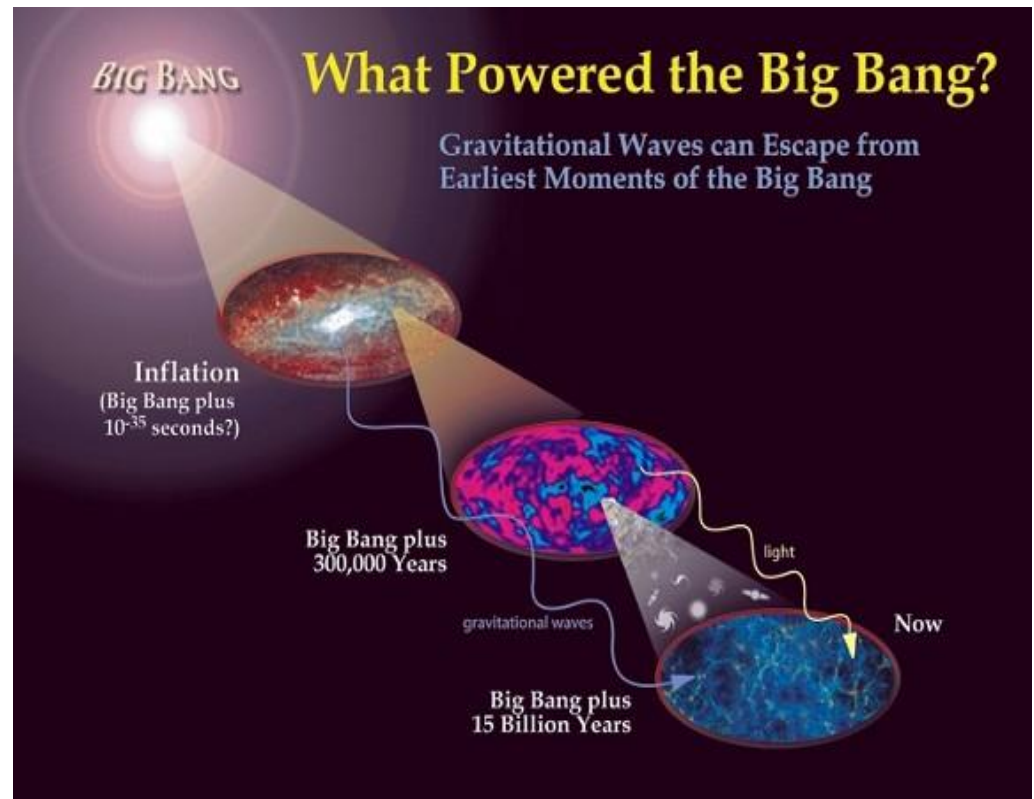
- The frequency with which convergent evolution has occurred on Earth supports the idea that certain basic anatomical structures and physiological mechanisms might be common among life-forms throughout the Universe.
 - *The Encyclopedia of Astrobiology, Astronomy, and Spaceflight*
- It's a bit extreme to maintain that we are the best design ... An extra set of arms might be useful, as would an eye in the back of our heads. A double spine might allow faster and easier walking, and a few extra digits on each hand could make for better piano playing.
 - *Dr. Seth Shostak, Senior Astronomer, SETI Institute*

It All Started with a Big Bang

- **Astrophysics:** The universe sprung in an instant in a massive explosion from a void the size of an atom

- “But what need have you to know this huge variety of forms. Know only that I exist, and that one atom of myself sustains the universe.”

**Krishna,
Bhagavad Gita**



Our Universe Begins ...

- **Genesis:** The world was without form, and the Lord said, “Let there be light.”
- **Baghavat Gita:** The universe is an eternal process alternating between phases of potentiality and expression (‘the day of Brahma’ and ‘the night of Brahma’)
(Bhagavad-Gita, p. 132)
- **Taoism:** Original undifferentiated reality from which the universe evolved (p. 37)



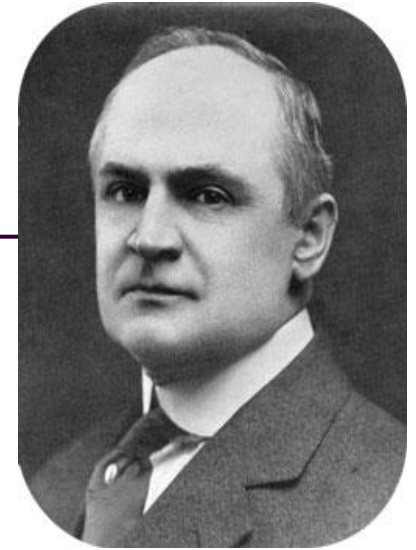
Multiversality

Bubbles of space-time that may account for accelerating cosmic inflation

[Space.com Article](#)

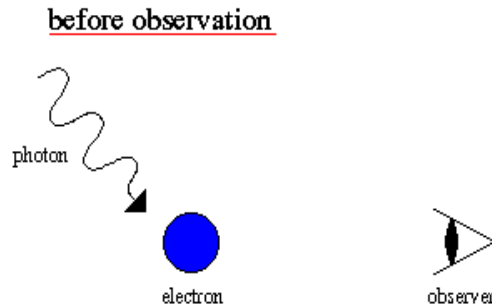


Consciousness & Physics

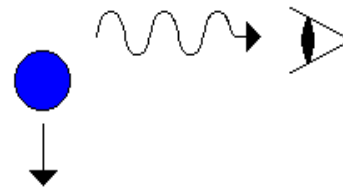


- Yogi Ramacharaka: Those who think matter created consciousness have it all upside down.
- Quantum physicists say it's consciousness that impacts matter – or a particle from a pulse of energy.

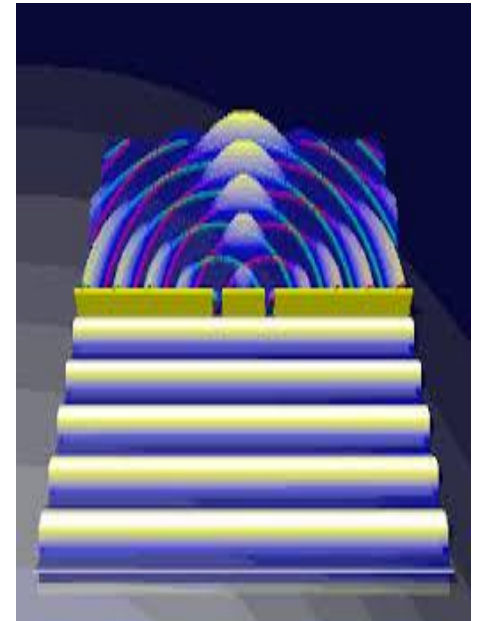
Measurement Problem in Quantum Mechanics



after observation



the act of observing effects the position and energy of electron



Communication Modes



- **Jung's Archetypes:** Myth of creation, rebirth, heroes in battle, transcendence.
- **Campbell's Themes:** Mystery of death, procuring food, transformation of children, relationship to the group.
- **Loizos:** Static pictures may fail to work transculturally.
- **Vakoch:** Use a vocabulary of gestures and pointing.
- **Deliver a package:** 10^{22} bits of data packed in a 1-kilogram cube of nanotechnology – the entire sum of all written and electronic knowledge on Earth at 100-million times less energy than radio transmission.

'Pan-Cultural' Facial Expressions

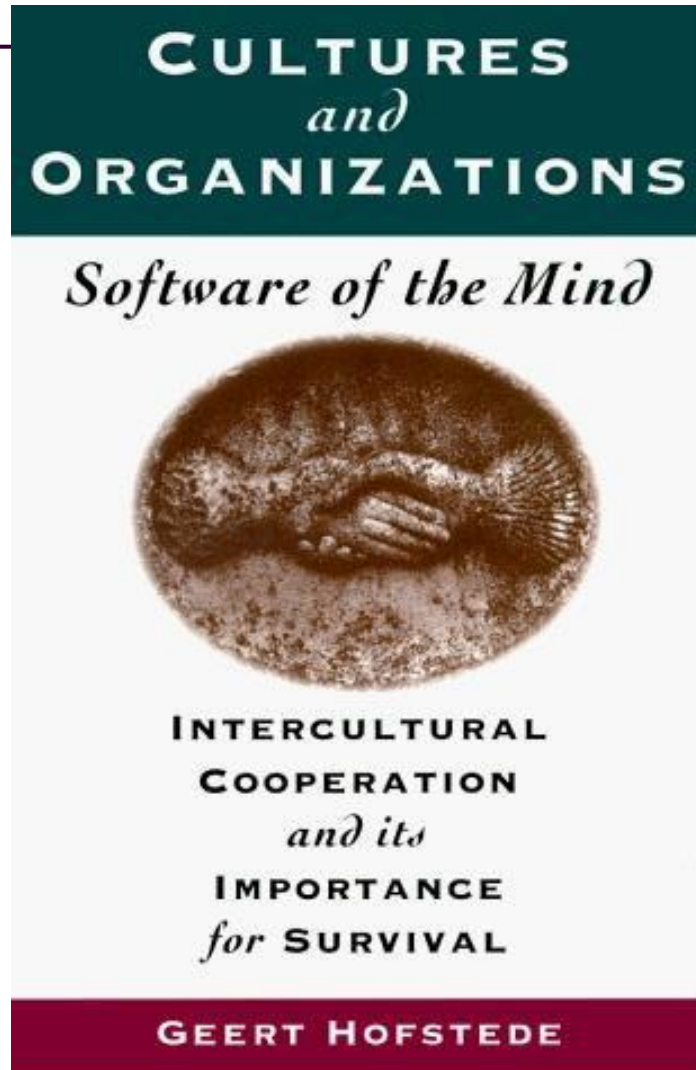


- Joy, Anger, Disgust, Sadness, Fear, Surprise

Ekman et al. (1969)

Watson (2004)

Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

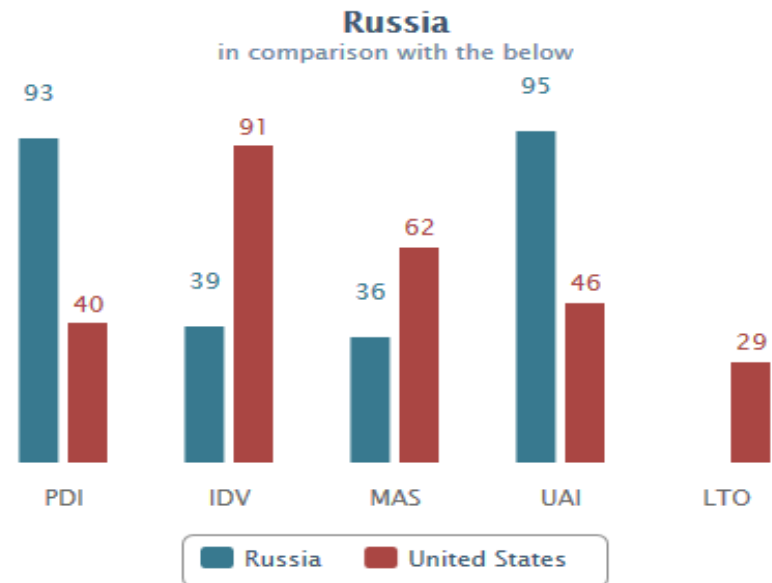


- **Power Distance**
(Breadth of social distances)
- **Individualism**
(Individual or collective focus)
- **Masculinity**
(Aggressive or nurturing)
- **Uncertainty Avoidance**
(Fear of the unknown)
- **Long-Term Orientation**
(Short or long-term perspective)
- **Other Models: Hall, Trompenaars, etc.**

Background in Eastern Europe



Moscow TV Bureau Chief

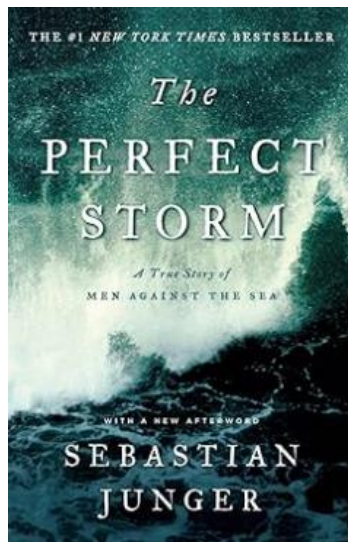


- Russians and Americans are cultural polar opposites

Origin of Cultural Differences?

Contributors to Cultural Divergence:

- ❖ Linguistic Divergence / Carrier of Culture
- ❖ Social Structures / Religion / Economics
- ❖ Historical Events / Conquests
- ❖ Environmental Adaptations
- ❖ Migration Patterns



Book

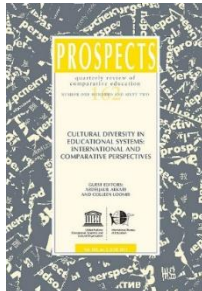
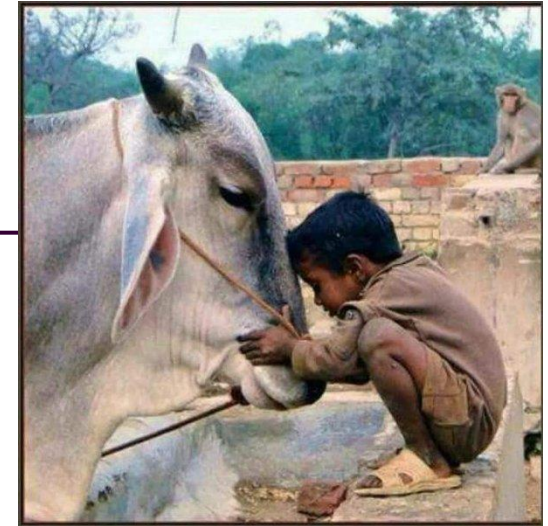
The Formation of Waves:

- ❖ Glassy Water
- ❖ Breeze Creates Ripple
- ❖ Haphazard Winds Nip and Empower Responsive Ripple
- ❖ Ripple Becomes Sustaining Wave of Pulsing Power Apart from Medium

Transcultural Themes & Images



- Babies & Children
- Pets & Animals
- Sports
- Love, Marriage, Relationship Conflicts
- Self-image
- The Birth-Life-Death Cycle
- Water



UNESCO Journal “Prospects”

Van Hook, S.R. (2012, June)

Hopes and hazards of transculturalism

[Article](#)

[Transcultural Research](#)

Transculturally Dissonant Messages:

What Doesn't Work Well

- Humor
- Sex
- Religion
- Politics



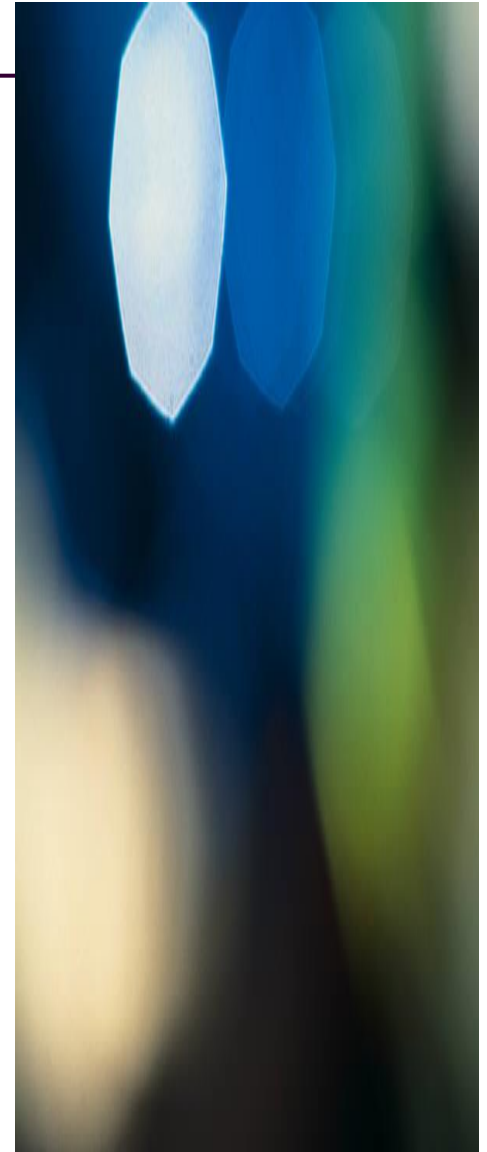
Transcultural Themes & Images

- Babies & Children
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Trans-Galactic Themes

- Reproducing & Preserving Life
- Family Bonds
- Models & Methods of Social Interaction
- Religion / Philosophy of Life
- Environmental Awareness
- Governance
- Economic Systems
- Self Defense
- Altruism



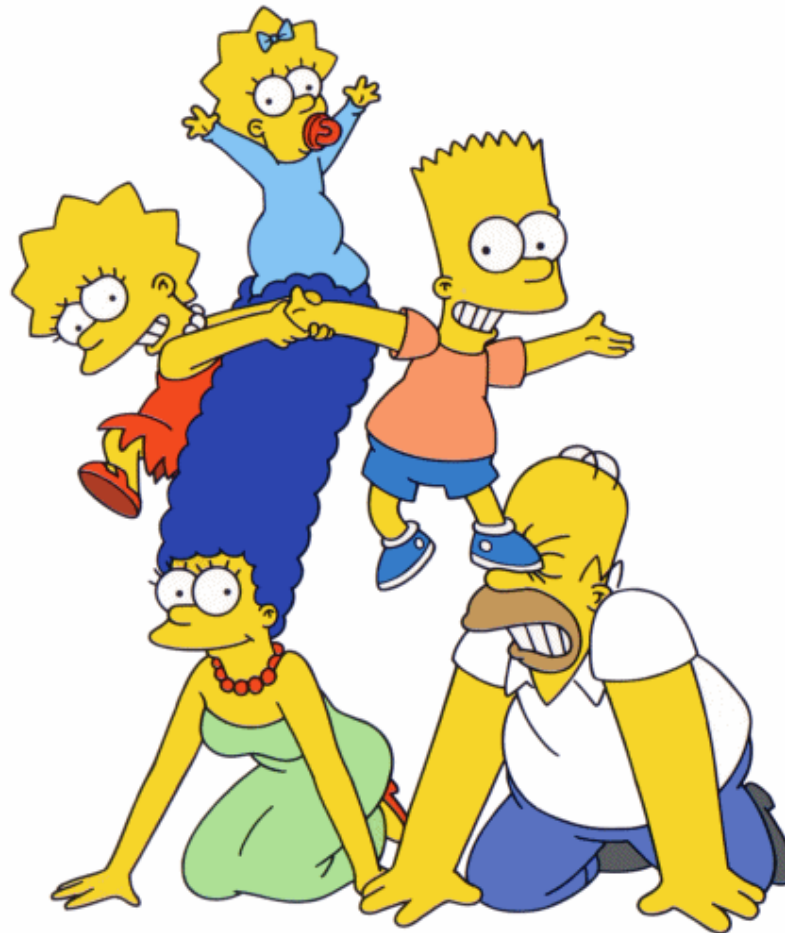
Trans-Galactic Themes

- Reproducing & Preserving Life



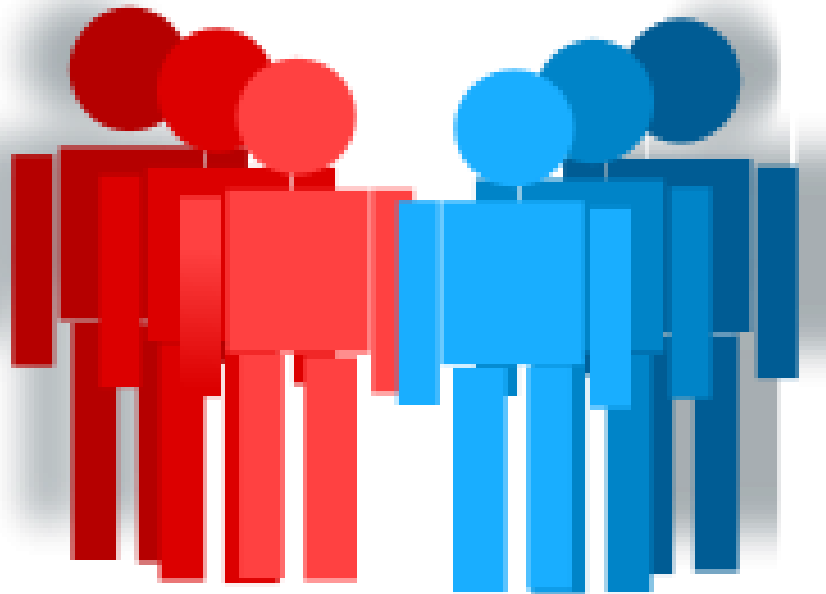
Trans-Galactic Themes

- Family Bonds



Trans-Galactic Themes

- Models & Methods of Social Interaction



Transitions & Upheavals as Change Evolutions



"Ahh, change is good."
- Rafiki



Agricultural Evolution:

<> Nomadic to communities
<> Learning to walk



Industrial Evolution:

<> From fields to cities
<> Puberty and finding new roles



Digital Evolution:

<> From defined roles to exploration and interconnection
<> Young independent adults



AI Evolution:

<> From work to reflection
<> Older and wiser holistic minds

Trans-Galactic Themes

- Religion / Philosophy of Life



“TO DO IS TO BE” -Nietzsche

“TO BE IS TO DO” -Kant

“DO BE DO BE DO” -Sinatra

Trans-Galactic Themes

- Environmental Awareness



Trans-Galactic Themes

■ Governance



Open Government Data



Open government diagram
by Arnel Le Coz and Cyril Lage
released under Creative Commons
Attribution terms

Educate Citizens (pedagogy)

Data visualisation -
Display governance process -
Infographics -



Monitor Policies

- Communication strategies
- Dashboard
- Timelines

Consult Citizens

Seek criticisms
suggestions
and ideas



Deliberate with
Citizens

Organise public debates



Co-Design Policies
with Citizens

Transparency

Open Government

Participation

Collaboration

Break down Silos
and Pyramidal
Structures

- Inside organisations
- Between organisations

Work Horizontally

- Between organisations
- Through territories
With:
- Service design tools
- Agile methodologies
By:
- Empowering citizens
- Favoring cooperation

NGOs
Public authorities
Companies

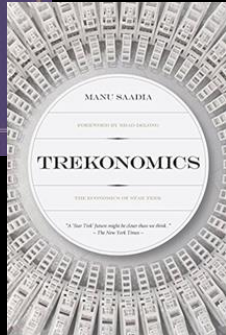
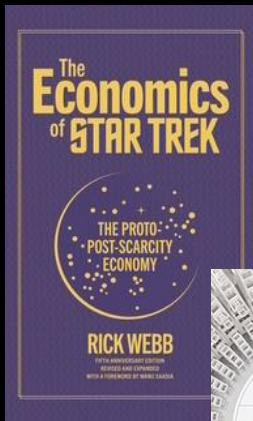
Organise Partnerships
(inside/between)

Trans-Galactic Themes

- Economic Systems



Post-Scarcity World



‘The right work can be satisfying for other reasons besides compensation ... this is still the part that newcomers always have the hardest time adapting to. It was thought if you don’t have a job, you starve ... it used to be that way on Earth until the invention of the matter synthesizer. It was the single most transformative moment in our history.

“When all your material needs are provided for at no cost, it changes the entire game. So why don’t people just lay around all day and do nothing? Well ... it’s sort of frowned upon socially. But more important than that, it’s no fun.

“On your planet, the currency is money. In the Union, it’s reputation. So if you do something, anything, that befits our society, and you work hard at it, you’re rich. And that could be anything from being a great scientist, or a great doctor, a great chef, or a great waiter. It’s all valued. Or maybe you want to study a field of research.

“Learn all you can about history, physics, literature, or art. Just for your own pleasure. That’s a respected life too. The only life considered poor is one that’s wasted on apathy.”

– Kelly, *The Orville*





Dr. Know – AI Artificial Intelligence

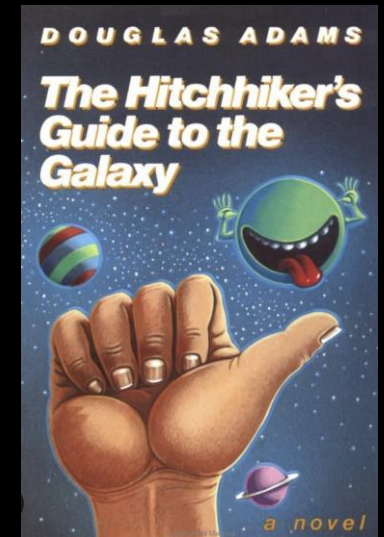
AI Portals



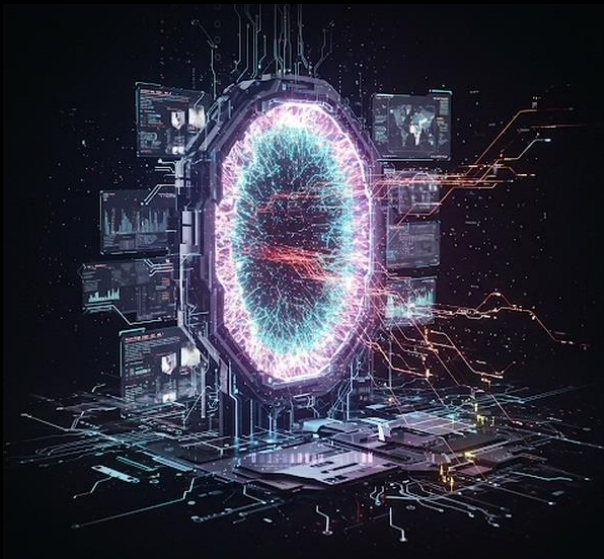
Fantastic Planet Headset



Gemini 2.5
Self-Portrait



Galactic Encyclopedia



Trans-Galactic Themes

- Self Defense



Trans-Galactic Themes

■ Altruism



*Reciprocal
altruism in
monkeys*

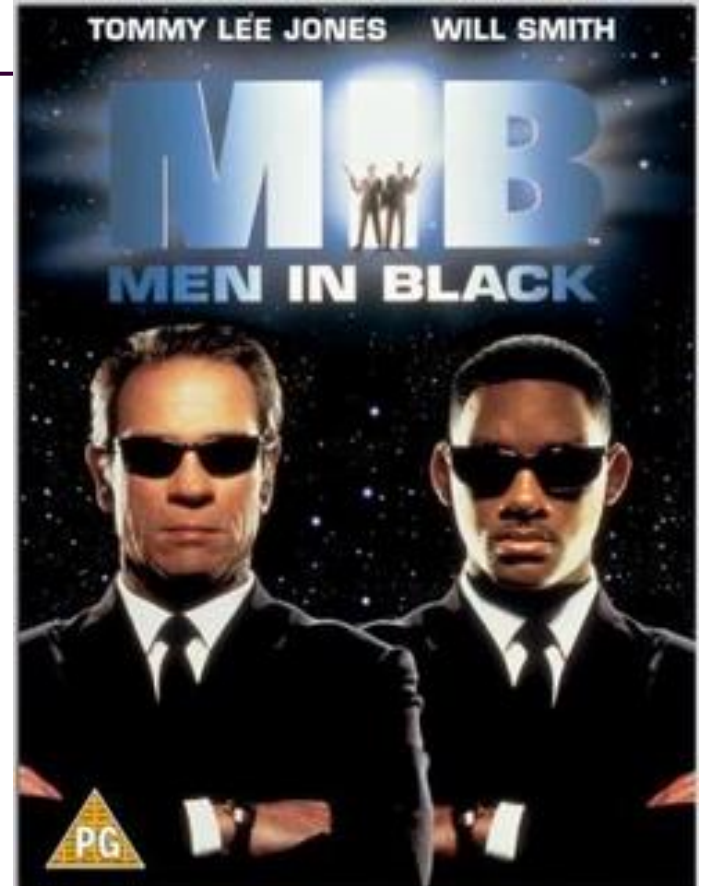
Trans-Galactic Themes

- Reproducing & Preserving Life
- Family Bonds
- Models & Methods of Social Interaction
- Religion / Philosophy of Life
- Environmental Awareness
- Governance
- Economic Systems
- Self Defense
- Altruism



Why the Secret?

- Edwards: *“Why the big secret? People are smart. They can handle it.”*
- K: *“A person is smart. People are dumb, panicky dangerous animals and you know it.”*



**DON'T
PANIC**





Questions? Comments?

Steven R. Van Hook / Kip Roffo

- **University of California**
*Language, Culture
& Business Programs*
- **Educare Research inc**
*Nonprofit International
Educational Resources*
- **Second Life: Educare**
Learning Centers
- <http://wwmr.us>
- steven@wwmr.us



[Educare Landmarks & Virtual World Primer](#)



