

“Have We Got a Message from ETI?”

Three Dress Rehearsals for Contact Online

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ABSTRACT

The Invitation to ETI project is based on the assumption that a smart probe from some advanced civilization may be on earth, observing us undetected. One of the things that this alien probe might be able to track and monitor is the World Wide Web. A particular website has been designed to draw attention of any alien “lurkers”. There have been 75 responses received by the project since its inception in 1996.

This paper reports three of the most important claims received at the Invitation to ETI project’s website, describes the actual communications taken place between the claimants and the project’s principal investigator Dr. Allen Tough, explains the steps taken to verify these claims, and it further explores the implications of the claims and reflects the process in which they were handled. Although none of the three claims turned out to be real ones, there were meaningful lessons learned, puzzles solved and principles revealed. Indeed, we gained profound sights in reaction to these claims, and they provided us valuable opportunities to think, act and react as if there was a real claim. We became better prepared as a result.