

# Alien Minds and the Problems of a Political Epistemology of the UAP-Phenomenon

**Grounding the SETI and UAP debate: Law, evidence,  
and anticipated futures**

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Two Disciplinary Angles:

## 1. Political Theory

- What makes something “political”?
- How societies create or impose order
- Central tensions:
  - Freedom vs. Security
  - Individual Rights vs. Collective Will etc.

## 2. (Political) Epistemology

- How we *know* what we claim to know in (political) life
- Typical key questions:
  - Who is allowed to speak?
  - How is truth constructed, ignored, or manipulated?

## Deepening the Epistemological Question

What if an intelligence itself is non-human?

- Not just: “What do we know?”
- But: “What if the subject of knowledge doesn’t share our biology, culture, or cognition?”
- Raises new problems:
  - Can we understand alien minds?
  - Can we even recognize them as minds?

## Anthropocentrism, the Knowledge Trap?

- No shared frameworks → Alien minds may not communicate through language, symbols, or norms we recognize
- Social science tools break down → No interviews, surveys, or interpretable archives
- Risk of projection → We assume human motives: territory, energy, scientific interest etc.
- Danger of misreading, especially in a political context → Neutral acts may seem hostile → Cosmic security dilemma
- Institutional “un-seeing” → Anomalies or out-of-context-phenomena are reframed, or, in a national security context equally problematic, simply ignored.

## The Challenge

Can “Politics” Survive the Encounter with the Non-Human?

- Our political theories are:
  - Built on human needs and symbols
  - Based in embodied life, language, mortality
- Is it even meaningful to speak of “politics” if these are absent?
- Or must we radically rethink what counts as “political” in an NHI-context?



**What follows is NO First Contact protocol, but a conceptual framework to imagine alien solutions on what we consider political = establishing systems of social order.**

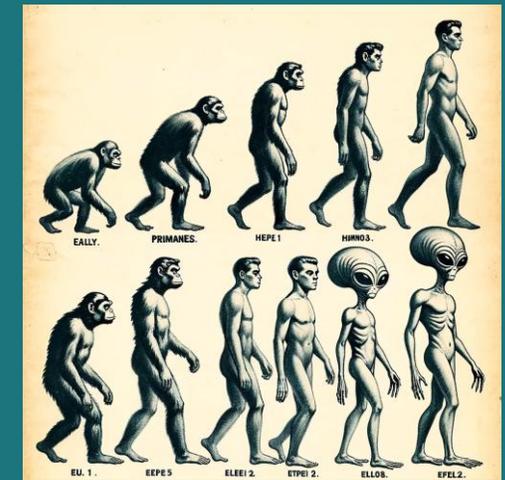
# A Tentative Bridge, or: Can Evolutionary Social Psychology Help?

## Premises:

- Intelligence emerges from evolutionary pressures
- Cognitive evolution driven by natural selection and environmental pressures.
- Strategies for coping with similar challenges across species in cosmos.

## We might observe universally:

- Altruism within groups
- Communication systems
- Social hierarchy and bonding mechanisms
- Empathy and social skills crucial for forming alliances and cooperation.
- ‚Self‘ (and sense of it) as an essential feature enabling culture, technology and societal complexity



# Minimal Assumptions, Not Projections

## Why it (might) help:

- Traits emerge from (potentially) universal adaptive survival challenges
- They don't rely on culture, but on function
- Allows for cautious speculation, e.g.:
  - Any intelligent species needs coordination
  - Some norms of fairness might emerge
  - Group survival depends on some form of trust or restraint

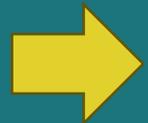
## But the Limits Are Real...

We must acknowledge:

- Conditions could be radically different
- No predators
- No scarcity
- Post-biological existence

Alien life may involve:

- Non-DNA information transmission
- Symbiosis with parasites
- Total darkness, silence, or no sensory overlap with humans



**Even so, evolutionary logic offers a minimal foothold**

## The “State of Nature”: Political Theory’s Test-Bench

- Classical thought-experiments (Hobbes, Rousseau, Machiavelli, Kant) model how order emerges from imagined pre-political conditions
- Each thinker tweaks starting pressures—fear, property, ambition, “unsocial sociability”—and watches a distinct political mechanism lock into place



**Change the ecological or psychological baseline and you change the kind of power, obligation, and conflict-management that follow**

# Updating the Test-Bench: Evolutionary Psychology & Three Thought Experiments

- Variables such as parental care, group size, and predation leave measurable marks on cognition and temperament
- Therefore: natural state ↔ baseline political motives

## Three illustrative evolutionary lineages

- **Eusocial Hive** – ingrained internal harmony, lethal external rivalry; authority and leadership is biologically coded, not debated
- **Co-operative Breeders** – trust & reputation as hard currency; leadership always provisional
- **Solitary Apex Predators** – default suspicion, peace sustained only by an external “Leviathan”

# How the State of Nature May Shape Interspecies Behaviour

Politics at home → default psychology abroad?

- Hive minds may probe, test, and delay dialogue until strength is clear
- Co-operative breeders may expect information-sharing and punish freeloading; they may misread strategic ambiguity as deceit
- Solitary predators may negotiate warily, reading weakness and relying on deterrence



**When directly facing NHI, our frameworks for power, conflict, and institutions must be able to stretch to accommodate such unfamiliar logics**

## Potential Lessons

- Apex predators forged in competition with a rival intelligence illustrate how deep suspicion can become adaptive (cf. Homo sapiens vs. Neanderthals)
- Humanity's own in-group / out-group reflex may echo that ancient contest—an atavism worth guarding against
- Practical counsel: reverse-engineer the visitors' likely natural state, then infer motives before reacting
- Political theory's old aim—understand order to improve it—now expands to the cosmos: meet non-human minds with neither naïveté nor panic but with testable hypotheses flexible enough to survive whatever finally lands.....

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