Name

Professor

Course

Date

Will Humans Ever Encounter Alien Life

Introduction

Since Neil Armstrong and his crew landed in the moon on July 20, 1969, there have been immense prospects of human beings finally encountering an alien life. The odds of these prospects have been intensified by the billions of dollars that are being invested in space exploration by governments and rich individuals. As a matter of fact, some NASA scientists believe that the people are going to encounter alien life within the next two decades. However, there are some people who believe that the alien life is simply a fallacy. These individuals believe that people are taking science fiction too far to realize it is not real. These individuals believe that the aspect of people merely wanting to believe they will discover alien life is not enough. Therefore, this paper is going to assess and evaluate the different approaches to this issue and come up with a conclusion of whether human beings will soon be discovering extraterrestrial life or not.

Body

The belief that human beings will soon encounter alien life

According to the findings of Frank Drake, the founder of the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligent (SETI), most of the signals that have been sent to space to date have just touched a fraction of the contents of the space. As a matter of fact, NASA scientists and astrologers are yet to discover most of the stars on the Milk Way. With continued scientific research, Drake believes human being will eventually make contact with other intelligent forms of life in the space. The prospects of human beings encountering alien life in the near future were strengthened by the discovery that Mars, one of the nine planets can actually support life (Davies 2011). This is an indication that there are other forms of intelligent life in the space which will soon be discovered.

50 years have passed since Drake founded SETI. Within this period, there has been no clear evidence of the existence of extraterrestrial life in the galaxy. However, Drake believes that the reason behind the lack of tangible evidence for the existence of alien life in the space is because the research studies carried out about the space have barely scratched the surface. For human beings to have a deeper understanding of the space than they currently do they will have to carry out more sophisticated scientific studies (Vakoch and Albert 2011). This implies more investments are needed in space research if human beings want to discover the alien life earlier than anticipated.

To mark the reopening of the largest Arecibo radio dish located in Puerto Rico in 1974, Drake transmitted the first humanity interstellar message. The message entailed a three-minute binary signal which had a graphic view of the solar system, a pictogram DNA and ten other items describing the extraterrestrial world. This description targeted the MI13 globular star cluster. This description showed the world that there was more to the solar system than what people currently knew.

Despite Drake devising the Drake Equation in 1961, it is still used today. There are some people who think this equation should be changed to integrate recent discoveries. However, Drake believes there is no need for altering the equation as it still works. The only thing that needs change is the numbers put into it. To validate his claims, Drake says that he was able to establish some of the factors they used to come up with the equation through observations. For instance, Drake knows that more than half of the stars in the galaxy have planets. Drake goes on to claim that the number of habitable places in the galaxy is more than what people used to know. The discovery of oceans in places such as Europa is a clear indication there is more to the galaxy that people are yet to know.

Drake believes that human will soon encounter alien life. He claims that his equation is still good and the accuracy of the numbers put into is increasing with time. However, there are still various aspects of the extraterrestrial life that are yet unknown. For instance, current scientists cannot tell the fraction of civilizations in the galaxy that develops technology. The longevity factor, also known as the l-factor is the aspect of the extraterrestrial civilization researchers and scientists cannot tell. Drake and his team can only know this factor upon discovering other forms of civilization in the space.

Drake says that scientists used to estimate various aspects of the solar system using indirect observations of theoretical models and planets’ rotations around the sun. Thanks to technological advances, NASA scientists have confirmed that the things approximated in the past were correct. Today, scientists are surprised by the number of exo-planets in the galaxy. Direct observations have supported Drake’s belief that the universe has a lot of life. What happened on Earth also happened in other places since what occurred in the solar system was not unusual. The fact that there are intelligent beings on earth implies there other beings resembling humans in other places in the universe. With time, people will finally encounter the alien life.

The belief that there is no alien life

As much as some people are convinced there is alien life, thereby committed to discovering it, there are those who disagree. Some people in the society believe that extraterrestrial life does not exist. According to Lain Murray, The American Enterprise’s former associate editor, the idea of the existence of alien life in space is simply science fiction. Logic and reason show clearly there are no intelligent beings in the galaxy as some people tend to believe.

Murray says that people’s observation methods have increased over time, thanks to technological advancements. Thanks to improved observation methods, people have been able to discover that between 20-50% of the stars in the galaxy have planets orbiting them. However, people have no idea whether the planets orbiting the stars in the galaxy are life-friendly as earth. At the same time, people cannot estimate the odds of life existing in these planets even if it is less intelligent than that on earth. Murray goes on to claim that people tend to come up with optimistic numbers upon discovering that there is actually nothing special about our solar system.

If intelligent beings existed in other parts of the universe, there are chances they would have sent probes into the galaxy just like human beings. By now, the number of civilizations would be in billions if there were other extraterrestrial beings in the space as some scientists claim. By now, researchers should have picked the traces of other intelligent beings in the space. The fact that people are yet to get any tangible evidence of the existence of intelligent beings in the space means there is none.

Over time, scientists have worked hard to search for intelligent life. Today, science is yet to detect any signal on the existence of extraterrestrial life. Scientists thought they had received one signal back in 1967. However, they were very disappointed upon learning that it was a pulsar’s natural signal. In 1977, the Ohio State University Big Ear observatory did detect a 37-second long burst of activities. The incident led to numerous attempts to discover the source of the signal. However, the attempts were never successful and led to a conclusion that the source of the signal was a man-made satellite in space. Such incidents have led to scientists believing there is something wrong in the conclusion that life exists in other places of the universe besides the universe. Perhaps, the solar system is not average as some scientists think, and what happened to earth was an abnormality. Based on these aspects, human beings will never encounter alien life since life-friendly planets in the solar system are rare.

My position on this topic

According to Carl Sagan and Frank Drake, there could be more than 10 million civilizations in the galaxy that are advanced as same as human beings on earth or even more. According to Murray, the notion of existence of civilizations in the galaxy is simply fallacious. This is because there is no tangible evidence showing the existence of these civilizations. Recently, scientists have made several discoveries suggesting the existence of life in the galaxy. As a matter of fact, there are suggestions of people moving to Mars in order to avoid exhaustion of resources on planet Earth. Based on the discoveries of Frank Drake and recent scientists, I am of the opinion that human beings will soon encounter alien life.

Today, most people are optimistic of scientists finally discovering extraterrestrial life in the galaxy. People’s enthusiasm is important as it enables scientists to stay in the course. In addition, it motivates the government and other funding sources to invest heavily in this course. The rising interest in science-fiction films is a clear indication that people are preparing to embrace alien life. This interest further shows that people have tremendous interest in life in the space. However, the public needs to realize that discovering the alien life will not be easy. People need to be patient to provide researchers with enough time gain a comprehensive insight into the galaxy. Despite the difficulties scientists are currently facing in their quest to discover extraterrestrial life, I believe they will be able to finally make a breakthrough. It might not be in the next one or two decades or even centuries, but human beings will eventually encounter human life (Joan 1999).

Conclusion

Conclusively, we can see that the debate on whether human beings will encounter alien beings in the future is intense. Without any tangible evidence suggesting there are other civilizations in the space, it is difficult to believe that people will eventually come across aliens. However, there have been several discoveries suggesting there might actually be life in the galaxy. For instance, the fact that planet Mars supports life is a clear indication that there are also other planets in the galaxy which do not only support life but also have intelligent beings. With more investments in space exploration, human beings are likely to eventually encountering alien life.

Work Cited

Davies, P C. W. *The Eerie Silence: Renewing Our Search for Alien Intelligence*. Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2011. Internet resource.

Joan ,Lisa Bromberg. NASA and the Space Industry. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Vakoch, Douglas A, and Albert A. Harrison. *Civilizations Beyond Earth: Extraterrestrial Life and Society*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011. Internet resource.