

The SETI Transmission Debate

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Rigorous SETI research seeks credible scientific evidence of other technological civilizations in space. Throughout its rich history, not one single radio emission of clear and irrefutable intelligent extraterrestrial origin has yet been detected. After nearly fifty years of solitude, SETI proponents ask, might it not be time to break our radio silence, and make some noise from planet Earth? What are the risks, and the benefits, of transmitting into interstellar space? What does international law say about the subject? Just how detectable is Earth's radio footprint, anyway? This paper addresses these questions, by quantifying the detectability and information content of several historical transmissions from Earth.