

Ufo essay sample

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Our scientific understanding of the vastness of the universe and the relative insignificance of Earth and human civilization on a galactic scale increases every day. The first planet outside our solar system was discovered in 1992, and since then, hundreds have been found. A study done at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2011, for example, estimated that the Milky Way Galaxy alone should contain about 2 billion Earth-like planets. If this estimate is accurate, then the statistical likelihood that at least one, if not more, has also evolved life, possibly even intelligent life, is higher than ever before. How does this new knowledge affect the long-held beliefs of many that Earth has already been, or is even currently being visited, by extraterrestrials? What should we think of UFO sightings today?

The “ modern” era of UFO sightings began in 1947, though sightings of odd phenomena were reported regularly during World War II by various airmen of various countries. On June 24, 1947, Kenneth Arnold, an experienced pilot, was flying solo from Chehalis, Washington to Yakima Washington. Upon landing, he reported having seen and tracked nine “ flying disks” around Mount Rainier and Mount Baker. He was seen as extremely credible, since he was a reputable businessman, an experienced pilot, and his story remained consistent even with several retellings. He also, at first, seemed to believe that these had been experimental craft of the United States military. It was not until the military remained silent on the subject for some time that he began to suggest that if they could not supply some sort of answer, then perhaps what he had witnessed came from another planet. This incident happened a few days after another famous UFO sighting in Washington, the Maury Island incident. Ultimately, Arnold ended up in contact with Science

Fiction writer and editor Raymond A. Palmer, who dispatched him to investigate and write on the Maury Island incident. He expressed the belief that the sightings were consistent with each other. Around this period, and even at the same time and location as where Arnold saw the objects on the 24th, there were many reported sightings in Washington State and the area.

Let it be noted, as well, that these incidents occurred very shortly before the now-famous crash at Roswell, New Mexico, on July 7th, 1947. The government is accused, in this incident, of covering up the crash of an alien spacecraft, including, in some accounts, alien bodies. The government, however, insists that the object that crashed was an experimental weather balloon, part of Project Mogul. They supplied debris from the crash, including wood, to the press at the time, and until the late 1970's, the weather balloon story was accepted. Only in 1978 did stories begin to circulate about a UFO crash, after Stanton T. Friedman, a "ufologist", began "researching" it. In an initial interview with Major Jesse Marcel, who had worked on the recovery of the debris, Marcel expressed the opinion that it was the recovery of an alien spacecraft. As others came forward, the stories got more and more elaborate, culminating in 1989 with an account by a former mortician at Roswell claiming that alien autopsies were carried out there.

Since the Washington state sightings and the Roswell crash, UFO sightings, particularly of the "flying saucer" type, have become more and more common. But even despite the odds that there is other life, potentially even intelligent life out there in the universe, what are the odds that these sightings can really be attributed to aliens? It seems unlikely, for example,

that if space travel across light years and light years is even possible (which we don't entirely yet know for certain), that such advanced technology would then fail in a crash at Roswell that appears to be not in any way uncommon or out of the ordinary for experimental US military equipment in the late 1940s. As for the sightings in Washington, they can easily be attributed to mirages, atmospheric phenomena, mass-hysteria (perhaps triggered by a small group of people conspiring to make up material for Palmer's science fiction publications), or even, possibly, the military conducting secret tests of some new form of equipment that was misinterpreted by the witnesses. As much as we are hard-wired as humans to "want to believe", the hard evidence, as of right now, is basically non-existent to support the idea that we are being visited by intelligent life forms that originated on other planets.

While UFO sightings in general are probably bogus, though, that doesn't mean that we should just stop there. We are now within reach of finding life on other planets and moons, and perhaps even in our own solar system. Johnson Space Center researcher David McKay, for example, noted in 2009 that "The evidence supporting the possibility of past life on Mars has been slowly building up during the past decade." (Jeffs 2009). Enceladus, Titan, and Europa, moons of Jupiter and Saturn, are also considered good candidates based on recent discoveries about their surface and subsurface conditions. So, while rejecting the notion of UFOs as unproven by science, we should embrace the search for life "out there" that we are currently conducting ourselves, rather than cling to notions that we are the intergalactic guinea pigs.

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