

THE NEW POLITICS OF UFO RESEARCH

A Handy Guide to Current Opinion in the UFO Field

FAR LEFT

Basic position: UFOs are strange phenomena, likely relating to psychic or mystical experience. Research is needed, but not necessarily scientific research.

Once the unchallenged domain of the contactees, the ultraliberal fringe is now dominated by theorists who would link UFOs with ESP, poltergists, and the Fourth Dimension. For many UFO believers tired of ETH, this is an intriguing idea that seems to offer new hope for a solution to the UFO mystery.

MODERATE LEFT

Basic position: UFOs are real phenomena, most probably extraterrestrial vehicles. Research is needed, but only to confirm what is already obvious.

When publicity was widespread, this was the camp of greatest activity. *Belief in ETH* produced a heavy grass-roots movement and practically eclipsed all other moderate views. Today, the ranks have thinned considerably, and many erstwhile liberals have shifted to the right where they form a "silent majority" of discouraged believers.

MODERATE RIGHT

Basic position: UFOs are unexplained phenomena, possibly extraterrestrial in nature. Rigorous scientific research is needed to establish best explanation.

Scientists interested in the UFO problem have generally assumed positions near the center, usually on the right. Much of the bona fide research currently being done falls within this area. NICAP, APRO, and a few other groups have gravitated to the right in recent years as they have become more scientific.

FAR RIGHT

Basic position: UFOs are hoaxes and misidentifications. Further research is pointless, except possibly as psychological study.

The bastion of skeptics and scoffers continues to sit like Gibraltar, content with the view that sooner or later the Condon Report will have its intended effect and advocates of further research will get tired of talking to each other. Only a few ultraconservatives still carry on the fight with their former zeal.

