

While jogging the other night I was listening to a podcast interview of atheist Victor Stenger by Skeptiko radio host **Alex Tsakiris**. It turned out to be very enlightening.

<http://www.skeptiko.com/victor-stenger-slams-parapsychology-calls-stanley-krippner-c-harlatan/>

Stenger is adjunct Professor of Philosophy at the University of Colorado and Professor Emeritus in Physics and Astronomy for the University of Hawaii. He's also a very successful author, having published 11 books including the 2007 *New York Times* Bestseller, *God: The Failed Hypothesis. How Science Shows That God Does Not Exist*, and his latest book, *God and the Folly of Faith*.

The main part of the interview dealt with Near Death Experiences (NDEs) and a debate over whether consciousness is part of the brain or something separate from the brain and waiting to be defined.

Stenger defines himself as a skeptic who maintains that there is just a mechanical materialistic universe absent of any God. The appearance of the material universe we know is nothing more than a random series of accidents.

Therefore his position with Tsakiris was that the idea of NDEs being anything outside the material world is ridiculous and unproven. Most importantly to this paper, Stenger stated that the idea of NDE being anything other than being caused by the chemistry of the brain is "Not part of the mainstream." By this statement he implied that he is the mainstream and Tsakiris is on the fringe. (Fringe is a word that the UFO community has heard many times)

Everyone in the UFO community is probably familiar with skeptics like Stenger. That is because all skeptics basically sing from the same songbook. They come from a basic atheistic material world belief system. Everything is explained working back from that strongly held basic belief. They believe themselves to be omniscient and most can suck the energy out of a room just by

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Written by Grant Cameron

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being there and showing off their arrogant intelligence.

Most ufologists, who have been in the field for any length of time will have run up against a skeptic, and I really don't know a researcher who has anything positive to say about the prominent UFO skeptics. They are usually defined as having not read the material being discussed, and they say often say the stupidest things.

This description was clearly made known whenever Larry King did a UFO show as he would always include a skeptic for balance. The next morning on the chat boards the anger of researchers would come out that Larry King had ruined another show by putting on a skeptic who would say the stupidest things. Then people would list all the really stupid things the skeptic had brought up to challenge the UFO topic being discussed. Many times people would tell me that they actually felt sorry for the guy as he was coming across as dumb as a bag of hammers.

When it comes to the UFO skeptics it is almost like the worst scientists in the country apply for the job. It has led many in the field to conclude that these people must work for the government trying to continue the cover-up, because no scientist could be that stupid.

Now the point of the Tsakiris / Stenger interview that I would like to deal with, and which is important for the UFO community to take note of, is when Stenger went on a rant about evolution. He was angered that the scientific community and the National Academy of Sciences have made statements that "there is no reason to fear evolution and that evolution does not challenge religious beliefs and that's wrong." He was planning a book to hopefully correct the misstatement being promoted by some scientists that God and evolution could co-exist.

It was at this point when Stenger made a dramatic admission that "there was a Gallup poll that showed that "only 16% of American's believe in Darwinian evolution, or random mutation evolution. The rest either believe in creationism as described in the Bible...or those who are willing to accept evolution that took millions of years but it is guided by God- that's theistic evolution." He was very distressed that in a poll of 34 countries only Turkey had a lower belief in evolution.

To put this number in perspective and illustrate just how little support there is for the random

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theory of evolution think of Congress. The congressional approval rating for Congress is two points higher. Therefore the American public has more faith in Congress than random evolution. That's pretty bad.

At this point it is important to make a comparison to Ufology and the desire by most researchers to get some sort of disclosure or recognition of the importance of the study of the UFO phenomena. Ufologists often play the role of Rodney Dangerfield believing that they "It's not easy being me. I don't get no respect."

Stenger's anger over the level of belief in the Power Ball version of evolution, which is the cornerstone of his atheistic belief, shows that Ufology is doing pretty well in moving towards disclosure or at least getting the general public to accept our conclusions related to the UFO phenomena.

Humanist scientists have been busy promoting random evolution and making it important that it is taught in school. Yet they have only a 16% rate of belief among Americans.

Whereas only 16% of the population is agreeing with Stenger over random evolution which, according to a 2003 Roper Poll 48% said "they believe that UFOs have visited the earth in some form over the years." This it should be noted is without any efforts to brainwash children in school with our ideas. (Similar numbers exist for what was being debated in the interview -the belief in NDE as a non brain event was over 47%, and consciousness separate from brain was supported by 60% of people who believed they had an ESP experience)

Stenger's skeptical argument that UFOs would be nonsense because in a material world "you can't get here from there" is not accepted by the public. A Larry King Poll showed only 14% who did not believe there was intelligent life in outer space.

The numbers clearly show that the UFO research community (and those advancing NDE research) have convinced three times as many people than Stenger and his supporters. That is 300% more. If the debate were a baseball game the mercy rule would have to be used.

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Stenger also contended in the interview that random evolution shows that the “human entity is a pure accident. If you started over humans wouldn’t evolve. The world could still be filled with dinosaurs if there hadn’t been asteroid accidental 65 million years ago.”

Compare that belief which got 16% support to the idea which has been promoted by the UFO community for 65 years that there is not only life here but also intelligent life in outer space. That idea got the support of 66% of the American public. That is four times the support for Stenger’s beliefs.

Clearly the facts show that Stenger and his supporters are the ones on the fringe. They have lots of beliefs to sell but no one is buying.

The UFO battle is being won. Those like Stenger will in time go the way of the dinosaurs.

Stenger in reply to these overwhelming stats would say that these numbers don’t count because the population is not educated on the facts. Therefore, Stenger expects researchers in the NDE, psi, and UFO communities to prove it to him because he is so smart.

This is not a good idea for two reasons;

1. We have the ideas that have been accepted by the public. Stenger is the one with the fringe beliefs that no one is buying. He should stop evangelizing, go away, and have a good life.

2. The “prove it to me” game is a sucker game that we can’t win. We are the ones with the numbers so the onus is on skeptics like Stenger to convince the public that he is right and we are wrong. For some reason, we in ufology, always play the game because we want to convince the last man standing.

I learned the importance of the “prove it to me game” in a University astronomy class where the professor challenged the students to prove to him that the world was round. Seemed like a simple task for bright young minds but after the class was over he had won.

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Let me explain this in terms of the counter punches that skeptics use when we try to and prove UFOs to them. It is impossible to prove anything to someone if he chooses not to believe.

It is a stupid challenge. Everyone knows the world is round.

Counter – 600 years ago everyone thought the world was flat. What everyone believes is not proof.

Astronauts have reported the world is round and have taken pictures.

Counter- Astronauts have taken pictures of UFOs, and James Irwin from Apollo 15 told a close friend of mine that a UFO landed when they were on the moon and was there when they left. Astronauts say a lot of things and skeptics do not accept that as proof. Pictures can be easily faked.

People have flown around the world in airplanes.

Counter- No people “say” they have flown around the world in airplanes. People also say they have had NDEs, see flying saucers, been abducted by aliens, been reincarnated. People say a lot of things so that’s not proof.

The world is round. You can see the horizon.

That is an optical illusion. This happens with UFO sighting reports all the time.

Conclusion

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The UFO community is getting the message out and more and more people are accepting the fact that we are the ones who are right. The numbers will grow with time.

We must quit fighting with the skeptics who hold the fringe ideas on the subject. It is not necessary to win over 100% of the people. We have to stop trying to win them over. Their faith is strong and the consequences of them admitting defeat are great. They will defend the faith till death, so don't waste your time.

When you are feeling down that no one is listening just imagine yourself in Stenger's shoes where only 16% of people believe what you are saying.

If the "prove it to me game" must be played skeptics should be reminded of the poll numbers and that they are the ones who are "not in the mainstream." It is up to them to prove to us their woo woo ideas of reality.

Skeptics actually help the cause as they make the ufologist look intelligent with the stupid things they come up with to explain the UFO evidence.

New ideas are not born. Old ideas just die away. In the final chapter of the book UFOs, NDEs, psi phenomena will be acknowledged, and a consciousness that is not bounded by material laws will be the order of the day.