

Pompous rhetoric is a poor attempt to trivialize an important subject

Your June 3 editorial "Flying saucers at Harvard!" was arrogant and condescending. Healthy skepticism about UFOs all too often becomes haughty disdain, and this was clearly evident in the tone of your editorial.

Some people who claim to have had an alien encounter are undoubtedly mistaken or even lying, and some believers cross the line into fanaticism. But the basic idea of extraterrestrial visitors and all those who accept it should not be hastily denounced as an element of the lunatic fringe. Instead, the matter should be seriously examined — by scientists, theologians and the general public — as an issue that pertains to all aspects of our worldview and culture.

Although I have never seen an otherworldly craft or being, many normal members of society believe they have.

Considering the immense and

mysterious universe we live in, the only sensible attitude toward the UFO question is curiosity and an open mind. After all, people throughout history have believed in higher beings from the heavens, calling them gods, angels, demons, etc.

Your editorial derisively mocks the many UFO enthusiasts of today who claim "the chariots have swung low and taken them for a ride"; but perhaps a more astute perspective is in order, for the Bible describes numerous aerial craft as fiery chariots, shining clouds and strange pillars of light in which God and His angels descend to earth. Might there be more to the subject than most people, including the majority of UFO believers, would care to realize?

Mr. Mack and all others struggling against the establishment should not only have the right to study and speak their views, they

should be encouraged to do so — as should all those on the skeptical side — in the hope that Hollywood stereotypes and hot air will yield to thoughtful inquiry and eventually some real answers. "While everybody else was worrying about balanced budgets and mad bombers," you sarcastically inform your readers, attendees of the recent Washington-area UFO convention "had their eyes on the important stuff."

Such pompous rhetoric is a poor attempt to trivialize the subject. It is time for all of us to come down from our pedestal of human arrogance and open our minds to the larger world, to a universe that cannot be neatly placed in a test tube for analysis and must not be comfortably defined by prevailing cultural bias.

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