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Location: [Mothership](#) -> [UFO](#) -> [Updates](#) -> [1998](#) -> [Dec](#) -> Is 'E.T' A Retelling Of The Christ Story?

UFO UpDates Mailing List

Is 'E.T' A Retelling Of The Christ Story?

From: Stig Agermose <Stig.Agermose@online.pol.dk>
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Stig

Dr. David R. Allen, new head of the theater program at Midland College, has a rather interesting, but not unique, theory about the meaning of "E.T.," the 1983 film from Stephen Spielberg that has firmly entrenched itself in American culture.

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Is 'E.T.' a retelling of the Christ story?

By Jimmy Patterson
Staff writer

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Dr. David R. Allen, new head of the theater program at Midland College, has a rather interesting, but not unique, theory about the meaning of "E.T.," the 1983 film from Stephen Spielberg that has firmly entrenched itself in American culture.

Speculation has always held that the film is a retelling of the Christ story, and Allen buys into that notion.

"E.T. comes from above, is left behind, is given shelter by Elliott and, while he is with Elliott, brings plants back to life," Allen said. "He can communicate on a non-verbal level and he heals people. He is chased by the authorities, captured by the authorities and then dies. After his death, Elliott goes to him and he lives again and then Elliott takes him back to his space ship and he returns to heaven."

A simple translation with one further parallel: The last thing E.T. tells Elliott: "I'll be right here," the alien says, placing a finger on Elliott's heart.

There are overriding messages of faith and spirituality throughout many of the films of Spielberg, who is of the Jewish faith.

"Every single one of them," Allen said. "If you look at a lot of his films, you will see a recurring motif is light and moving

toward the light. That is his sense of the spiritual. During a scene in 'Amistad,' the camera pans up a slave's body and he is holding his hand up to the sky and to the light of the stars. Throughout the film, there's a sense of moving toward the light."

"Close Encounters of the Third Kind," one of Spielberg's early films, dealt with "moving toward a greater understanding and of our place in the world," Allen said.

"Star Wars" is another example of a film that offers a "clear sense of spirituality with 'The Force' and (producer) George Lucas' pop take on that."

More recently, this summer's "The Truman Show" had clear religious overtones.

"One might be able to say that 'The Truman Show' is a feminist retelling of the story of Eden. And I'm not talking in terms of feminist being women's power, but in the philosophical sense of a different point of view than the masculine telling of the story that came before it: that men were everything and that everything was done for the man. The feminist meaning is that neither man nor woman is the most important, but that we are of equal value.

"If I look at it that way, I see the retelling of the Eden story (in 'The Truman Show'). The character Christof is God, Truman is Adam. As Truman goes through his world he is happy but dissatisfied, and then along comes Eve. One of the actresses in the movie, Lauren, gives him the knowledge that his world is a setup for him. He then becomes extremely dissatisfied and leaves Eden of his own accord. Lauren gives him the knowledge by which he can have a better life, and then he takes it on despite all the problems that may come with it."

Other recent movies with clear religious themes include "The Shawshank Redemption," "Dead Man Walking" and "The Spitfire Grill."

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