

## Nature of Science Discussions/Debates

### **(1) The Art of BS Detection**

**Tuesday, September 27**

Why is this an important skill to cultivate? Where can it be used in daily life? How would one go about proving or disproving a hypothesis? What should you be on the lookout for if you want to get good at “spotting” bad science? The class will make a list of “Beware if...” statements. Moderators will lead the class in trying to classify examples of good and bad science.

### **(2) Alien Visitation to Earth**

**Tuesday, October 11**

Class will look at the Betty and Barney Hill incident of 1961 from both sides and moderators will lead a discussion on the scientific and pseudoscientific aspects of the articles.

### **(3) The Drake Equation**

**Tuesday, November 8**

What are the odds that alien life exists elsewhere in the Universe? What factors should be considered when calculating the probability? What are the chances that we’ll find it? Moderators will lead the class in determining “pessimistic” and “optimistic” estimates for the number of intelligent civilizations in the Universe.

### **(4) The Case for Space**

**Tuesday, November 22**

What is the point of space science research? How much money should be invested and in what? Human space exploration? Robotic missions? Telescopes? Moderators will lead a debate on space science funding.

### **(5) Scientific Ethics**

**Tuesday, December 6**

Is science good, bad or neutral? In what ways is science similar to/compatible with democracy? Moderators will lead the class in drafting a scientific bill or rights.