

**SAS Honors Seminar 256:
Extraterrestrial Life**

11/29/2011

Reading for Thursday

Review Bennett & Shostak 11.3.

Bostrom (2002) *Anthropic Bias*

An introduction to the “anthropic principle(s)”; read **only
pp 1-7, 11-18, 43-51, 57-58 (17-23, 27-34, 59-67, 73-73 in PDF).**

Gonzalez & Richards (2003)

Vakoch (2004)

Brumfiel (2007)

Various perspectives on the **very controversial “privileged planet” hypothesis of Gonzalez & Richards, and its impacts.**

Due Thursday

LAST response paper:

The late sociologist Marcello Truzzi deserves credit for the axiom (often attributed to Carl Sagan) that “Extraordinary claims require extraordinary proof.” Discuss whether and how this axiom applies to one or more subjects we have discussed in this class.



1935 – 2003

Student choice topics

Topics suggested so far...

- (a) multiverse theory †
- (b) black holes/wormholes †
- (c) sociological implications of first contact
- (d) astrobiology in science fiction/pop culture
- (e) YOUR CHOICE HERE

† not clearly within scope...

Term paper topics (one week to finalize!)

Approved:

The Future of Space Exploration

Martian Meteorites

Proposed:

Searching for Life on Mars

Practical Implications of the Fermi Paradox

Congressional Funding for Astrobiological Research

The Ethics of Terraforming

The History of SETI

**The Media's Portrayal of Extraterrestrial Life and
its Influence on Public Opinion**