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### **Response to J. Stan Rowe 2001. "In search of intelligent life ..."**

## **Overlooked "Keystone" Ideas**

[Wayne Tyson](#)

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Rowe's piece (2001) is so simply stated and familiar that it is in real danger of being ignored. "I knew that" is the whistling-past-the-graveyard response reserved for elegant statements that, ironically, have not sufficiently been drummed into our dear little ears. Despite volumes of protestations to the contrary, even some of those who claim to "get it" don't evince it nearly as well as Rowe in their actions or their convoluted, "learned" papers that rely on obfuscation to ensure grant propagation and other ill-gotten gains.

It is time, Stan Rowe has said (as I hear him), to speak not of many things, and certainly not of mere places and of things, but to get to, and stick to, crucial principles that can and should drive all research and action. The only thing Rowe himself overlooked is the old-fashioned idea of a firm challenge to DEBATE his point. His profession owes him that note of respect for his lifetime of struggle to winnow the winds for the gems and germs of life's simplest (and most complex) riddles that he sees clearly. Let us not let him cry in the wilderness. Ecologists should either stand up for his point or refute it. Anything else, while perhaps politically correct, is cowardly.

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### **RESPONSES TO THIS ARTICLE**

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### **LITERATURE CITED**

**Rowe, J. S.** 2001. In search of intelligent life. *Conservation Ecology* 5(2): r3. [online] URL: <http://www.consecol.org/Journal/vol5/iss2/resp3>

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