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THE RIO SCALE APPLIED TO FICTIONAL "SETI DETECTIONS"

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Almar and Tarter¹, and Almar² have proposed a scale for quantifying the credibility of claimed detections of extraterrestrial presence, either via signals or via direct physical evidence. The proposed Rio Scale was developed by borrowing from the more widely known Torino scale used by scientists studying the potential consequences of predicted impacts by near-Earth objects, and it is intended to provide the media and the public some indication from the science community of how seriously to regard such claims of detected ETI. In order to provide an illustrative set of examples, the authors have applied the criteria of the Rio Scale to a set of selected fictional extraterrestrial "encounters" from the cinema, as well as to some less dramatic "claims." It is the authors' hope that these examples will both clarify and enhance the usefulness of this important metric.

References:

- 1. Almar, I. and Tarter, J., "The Discovery of ETI as a High-Consequence, Low-Probability Event," Paper #IAA-00-IAA.9.2.01, presented at 51st IAF Congress, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Oct. 2-6, 2000). To be published in special issue of *Acta Astronautica*.
- 2. Almar, I., "How the Rio Scale Should be Improved," Paper #IAA-01-IAA.9.2.03, presented at the 52nd IAF Congress, Toulouse, France (Oct. 1-5, 2001). To be published in special issue of *Acta Astronautica*.