

*Science Works...*

**Challenging Bashar, Sedona's UFO Cult Guru**

By Stephen P. Cook

It is hard to find a more anti-science statement, one more devoid of common sense, than what Bashar, a Sedona-based favorite of the UFO religious cult folks, has said, "Miracles are not the exception to the rule. They are the natural, true order of the things." He claims his teachings are "based on the laws of physics" and are "not just a nice New-Age philosophy." I am skeptical.

A Best Western "Travel Zone" website describes Sedona as "the New Age Capital where people come to explore, meditate... and receive professional psychic guidance." Occasionally, Sedona offers them Darryl Anka who channels Bashar—supposedly an enlightened extraterrestrial from the planet Essassani 500 light years away who lives in a flying saucer parked above Bell Rock. Does seeing it provide another reason—besides its supposed vortex—to visit this colorful landmark? No—you can't see it since it supposedly exists in an alternate dimension. But you can pay to experience Bashar and—if you're lucky—ask him a question. \$425 will get you into a September 2024 two-day channeling / moonlight meditation event, and enter you in an "Ask Bashar Raffle."

No doubt Darryl Anka is a great entertainer and does a good job impersonating an extraterrestrial interested in humanity's spiritual development. He has brought us Bashar since 1983. But should we value Bashar's wisdom, or that coming from other channeled entities such as Seth, channeled by Jane Roberts, or Ramtha channeled by J.Z. Knight? "No!" say scientists like Carl Sagan in "The Fine Art of Baloney Detection" chapter in his 1996 book *The Demon-Haunted World*.

Sagan says that propositions that cannot be tested and shown to be false are not worth much. He urges us to look for logical inconsistencies in arguments made by those pushing beliefs and to consider what really motivates them. For example, we should be skeptical, he says, of the tobacco industry's "Smoking does not cause cancer" argument given billions of dollars of profits at stake. The chapter ends with "Gullibility kills."

I'll add, "A fool and his money are soon parted." I recently was urged to engage in foolish behavior at a New Age Sunday service and, to be polite, I did put two dollars in the collection plate. But I rejected the message (summarized in song by the guest speaker couple) paraphrased as "Walk by faith, not by sight. Let the North Star be your guide." There's a logical fallacy here: without your eyesight you can't see the North Star. As I left, I avoided the table where the couple was selling CDs. Outside, faced with crossing the street, I recognized that literally taking their advice could kill me, so I kept my eyes open.

Contributing to such not being grounded in reality is the New Age belief "you create your own reality." Darryl Anka says that our "friend from the future" Bashar "clearly explains in detail how the universe works, and how each person creates the reality they experience." I say, "Nonsense. Bashar lives only in Darryl Anka's imagination."

Anka has family roots in Syria. The similarity between names Bashar of Essassani and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, raises two questions. First, if the consciousness Darryl channels is from the future, it should have known in 1983 that the name Bashar would—three decades later—become associated with a war criminal. So, if he wants the message to help humanity, why does the messenger's name closely resemble that of a monster? Second, did each of the millions of suffering people in war-torn Syria create that hell on Earth reality for themselves?

Thinking about Bashar's "helping us" capability raises additional questions. Other well known channeled

spirits—Seth, Ramtha, Abraham, Jesus—all lived in the past. From the future, Bashar has causality / “Grandfather Paradox” limitations. Suppose back in the 1980s he shares future-based knowledge with audiences. He describes a plane loaded with terrorists, ready to die for Allah, taking off from Logan Airport in Boston on the morning of September 11, 2001. 3,000 people will die at the World Trade Center unless they’re stopped. Suppose the warning is heeded, the attack never happens. This—like the guy who goes back in time and kills his grandfather — exposes a big logical contradiction making the whole scenario impossible. Namely, if it never happens, where did his original concern come from?

In November 2023, I got a report from someone who followed Anka from Sedona to a "Stairway to the Stars" Las Vegas event—which also offered a tour of (UFO infamous) Area 51 for \$200. This turned out to be a big rip-off since there was nothing to see. By then I was disgusted with New Age celebrities who seemingly value money more than practicing values associated with the fair and just world they supposedly long for. I decided to act. In a certified letter, along with previously posed questions, I asked Darryl Anka, "Why does Bashar hide behind a pay wall?" and "Is it true you're worth \$15 million?" The letter ended with a final question, "To address charges that Bashar is not who he claims to be, why doesn't he simply fly his triangular UFO from its long-time location above Bell Rock, a few miles from 'Sedona—The InterDimensional City' as he calls it—and land where people can see it?" He has not replied.



Prescott resident Stephen P. Cook was a university professor, campus astronomical observatory director, and physics teacher before founding the educational non-profit Project Worldview. That grew out of a “Science, Technology, and Human Values” class he taught.