



Are we alone?

GENS4014

Oct 24, 2006.

A Field Guide to UFOs

Lecturer: Professor John Storey

Part I

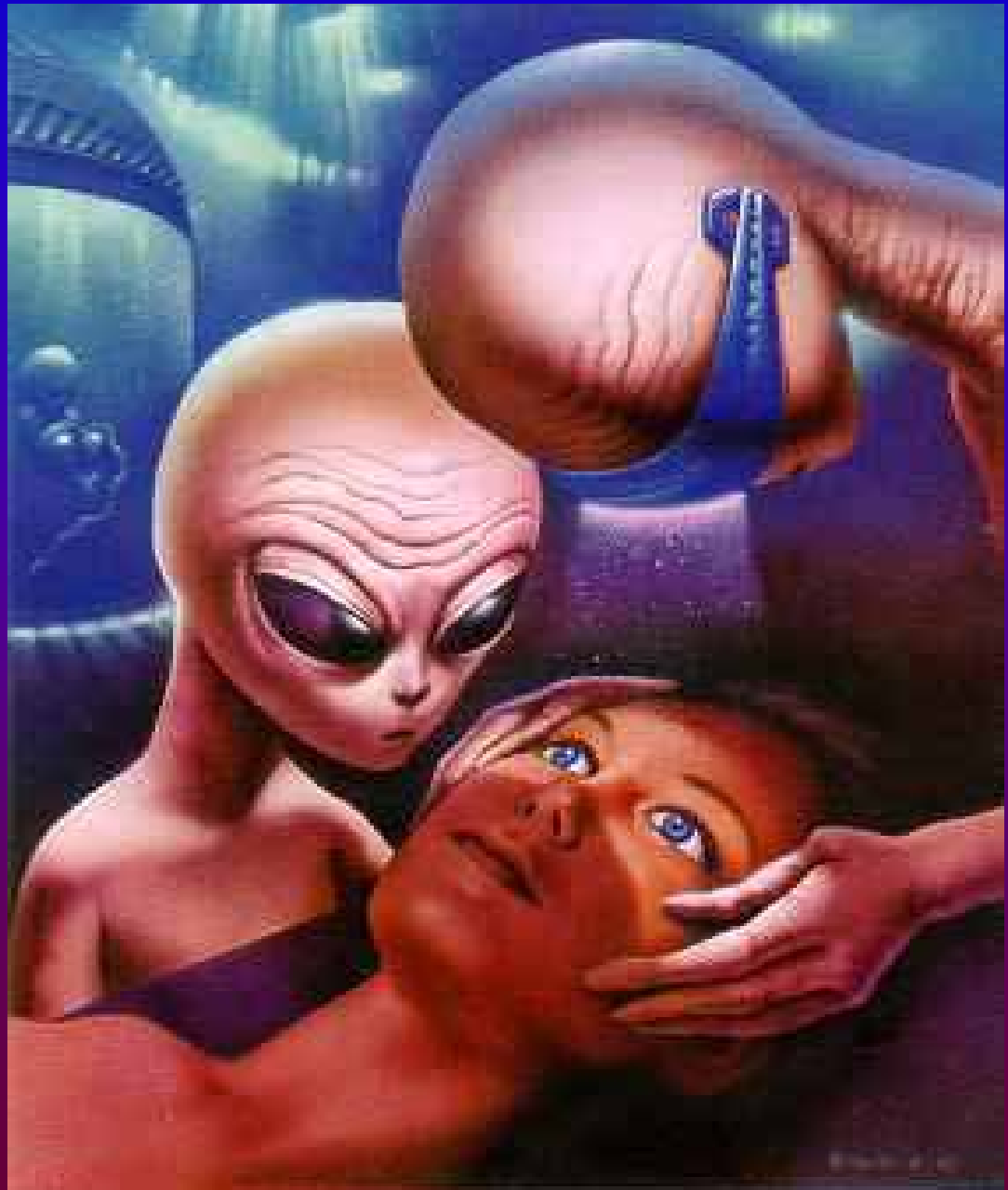
Alien Visitors: the Evidence.

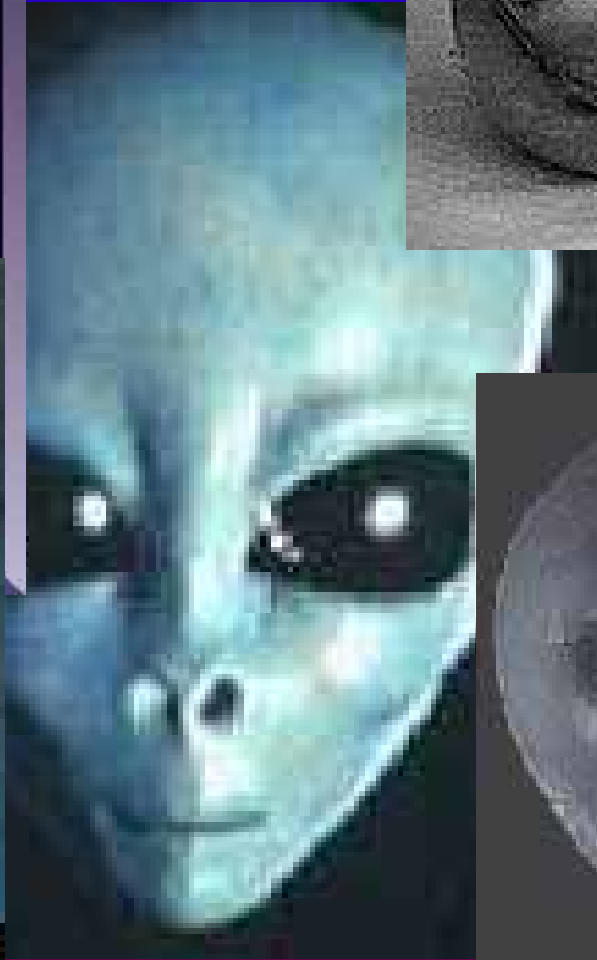


The Evidence

- Millions of sightings
- Eyewitness accounts
- Photographs, videos
- Radar images
- Alien abductions ■

Alien Abductions





Part II

Alien Visitors: what Evidence?



How far away is it?

- Focus position of eye (“accommodation”)
- Convergence of eyes
- In front of / behind other things
- Clarity
- Apparent size, based on prior knowledge



Distant object

Focus accommodation...

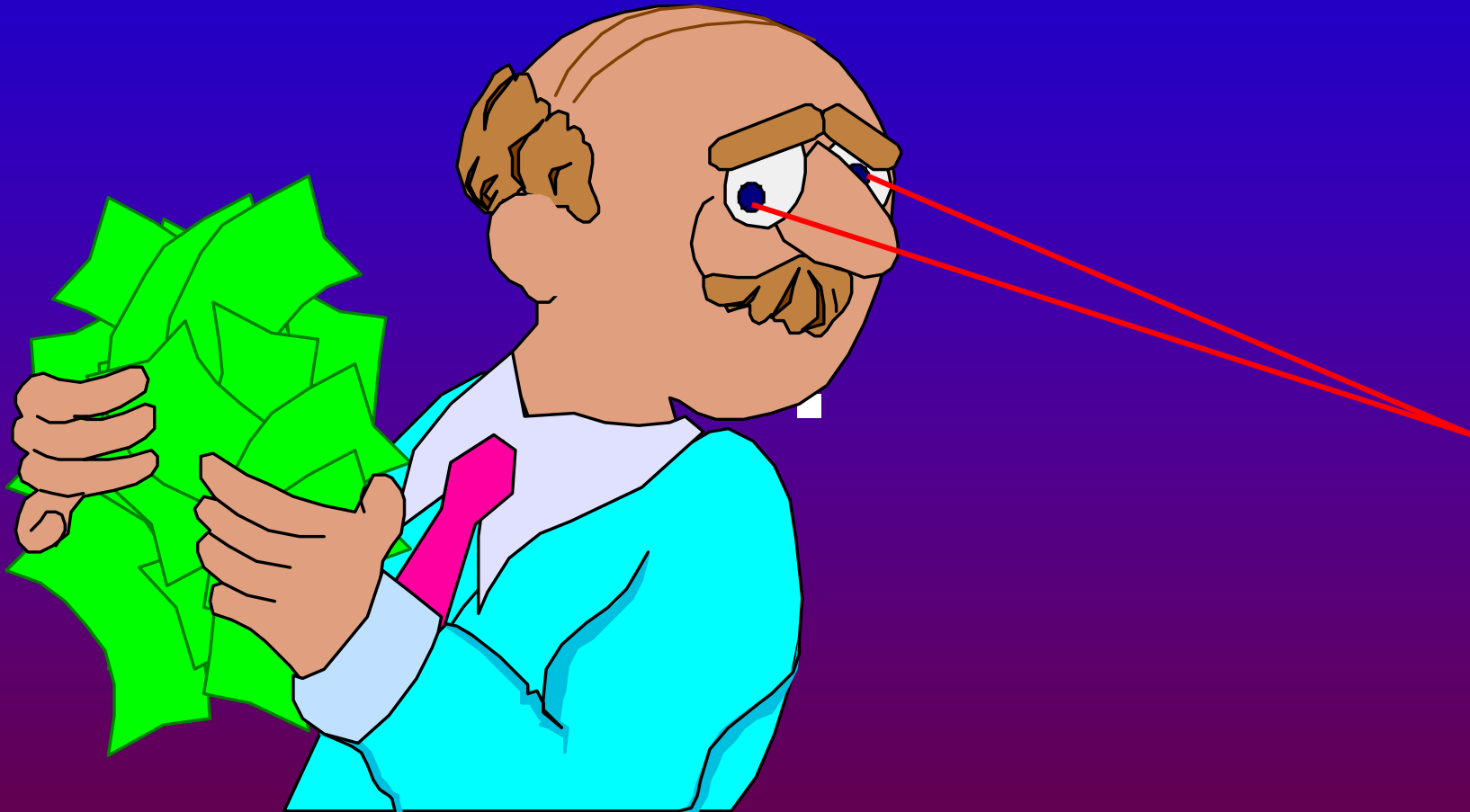


Nearby object

Object moves 125 mm to 1 m – focus moves 3.5 mm

Object moves 1 m to infinity – focus moves 0.06 mm

Nearby object

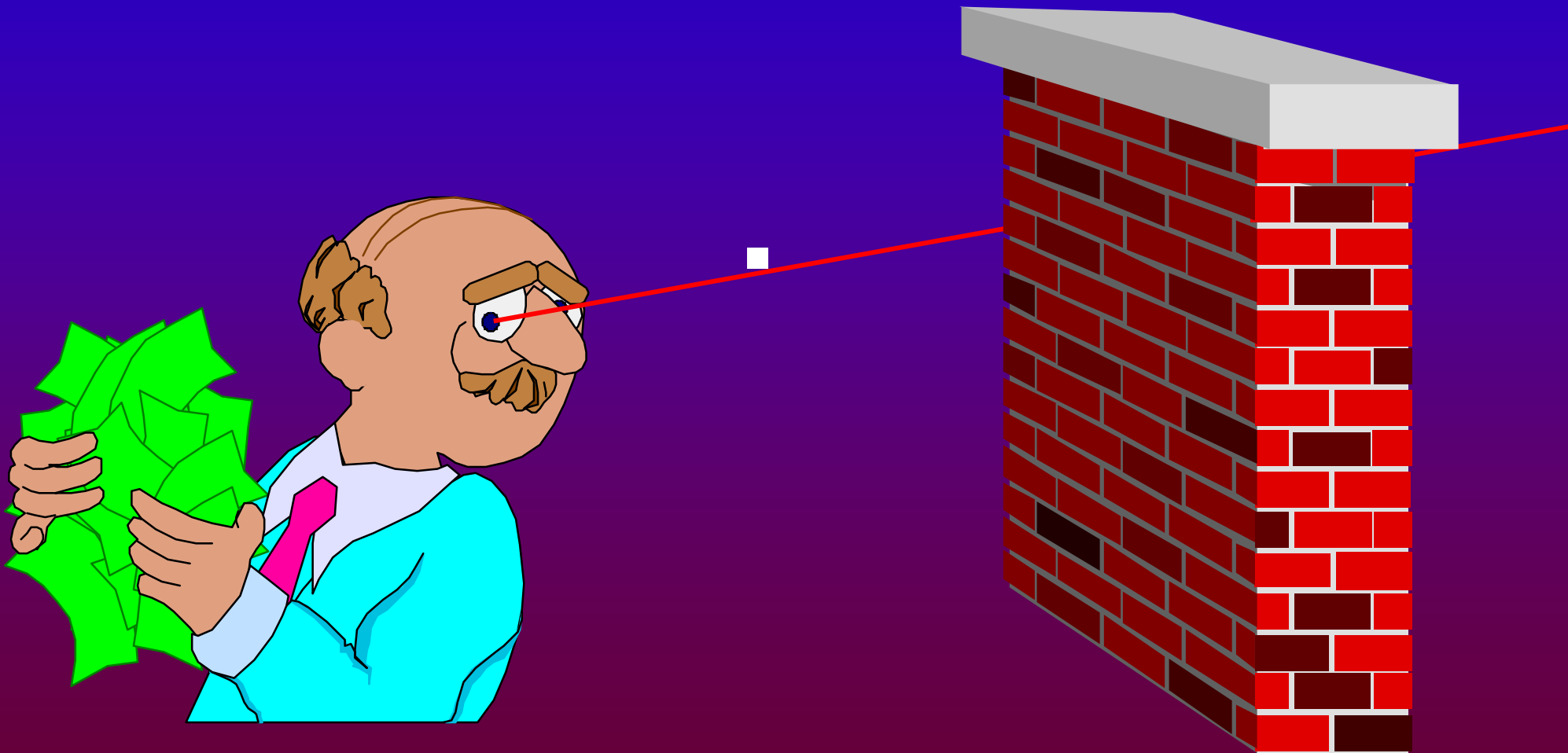


Stereoscopic vision...

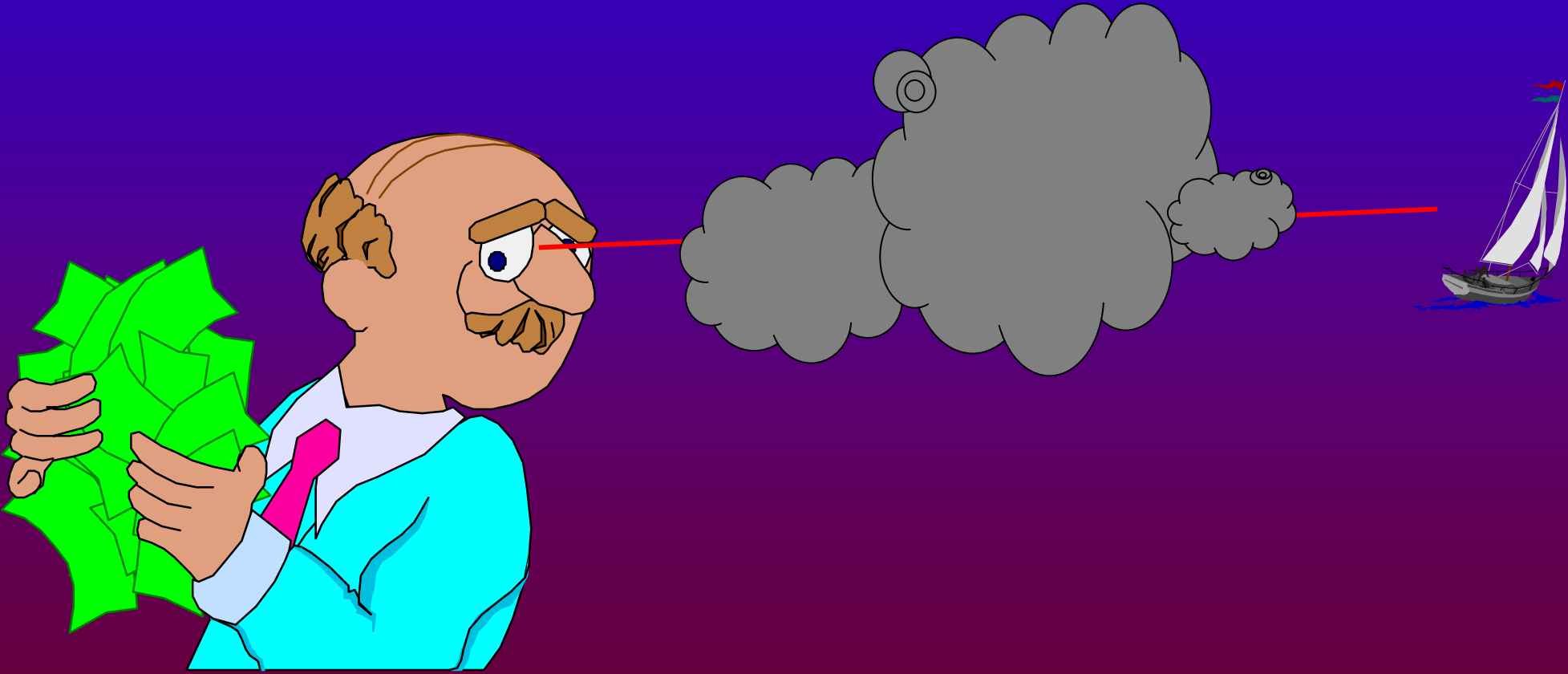
Distant object



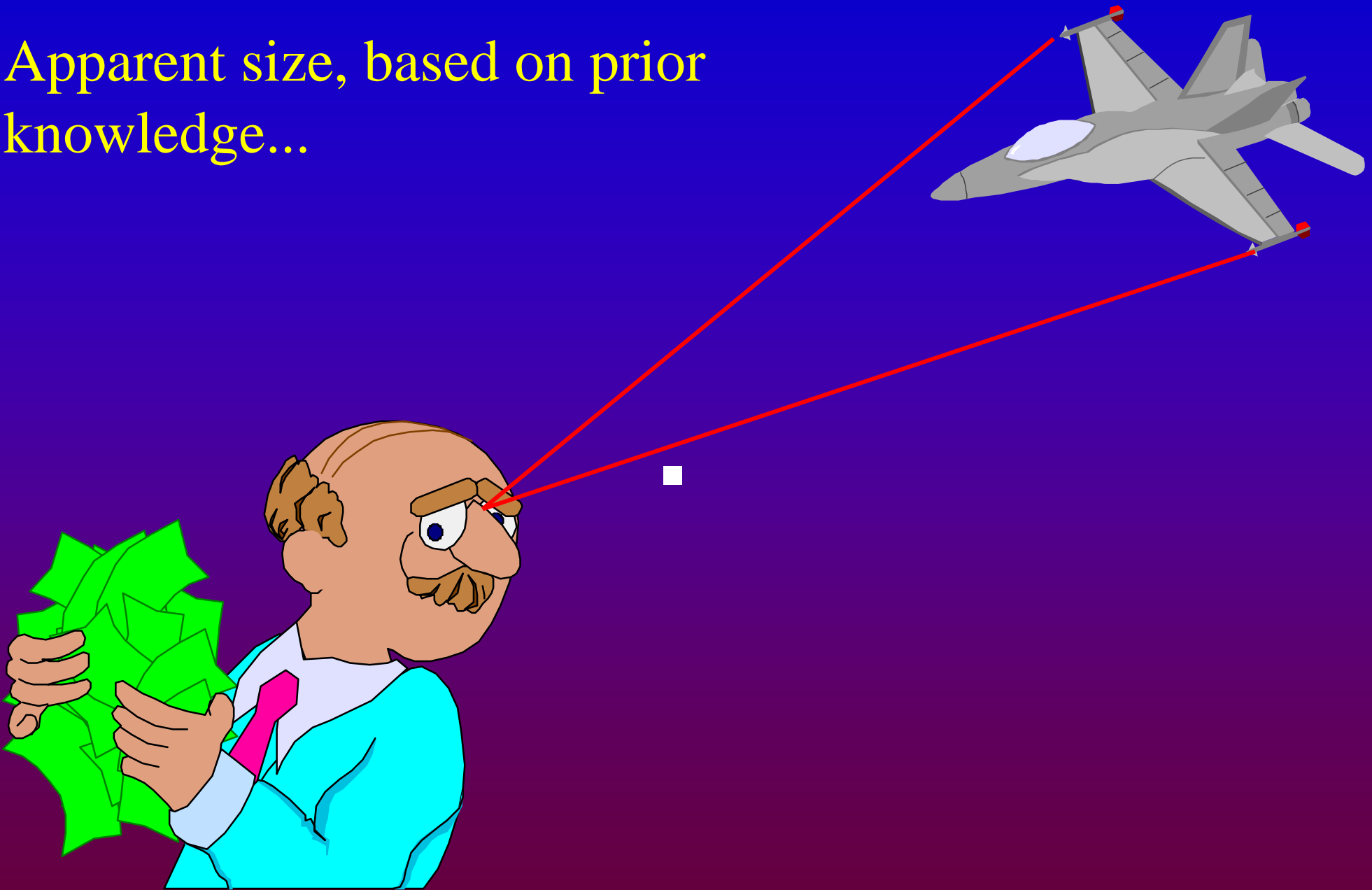
In front of / behind other things...



Clarity...



Apparent size, based on prior knowledge...



“If an unfamiliar object appears in the sky several metres away or more, it is impossible to tell how far away it is, or how big.”

Is it:



- A fire fly—5 metres away?
- A balloon —500 metres away?
- An aircraft —5 km away?
- Venus —50 million km away?

UFO sightings

- The vague
- The astronomical
- The atmospheric
- The mundane
- Weather balloons
- Space craft (terrestrial)
- The military
- Hallucinations
- Pranks
- Hoaxes
- The unexplained





From the film *Men in Black*

The End

A futuristic space scene featuring a teal, curved structure on the left and a large, glowing red nebula on the right. The background is a dark starfield. Two circular platforms with a central glowing object are positioned in the foreground.

Suggested further reading:

- *The Demon Haunted World*, Carl Sagan, Headline Books, 1997
- *Why People Believe Weird Things*, Michael Shermer, Freeman books, 1997