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The theories expressed are not the only possible interpretation.

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The viewer is invited to make a judgment based on all available information.

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Tonight on Sightings, have our shuttle astronauts captured photographic proof of real star wars between extraterrestrials and our military?

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Welcome to Sightings. I'm Tim White.

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Tonight, startling new pictures of a UFO encounter that has top analysts locked in a heated debate.

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The authenticity of the pictures is above suspicion because they were taken by specialists aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery.

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For the past year, the United States government has avoided discussing what is potentially the most important 30 seconds of video footage to have emerged from the U.S. space program.

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The footage looks fairly innocuous, but some believe that something is going on here NASA doesn't want us to know about.

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On September the 12th, 1991, STS-48 lifted off into space for what NASA officials expected to be a routine shuttle mission.

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But what Discovery's cameras would capture high above the Earth during that mission would prove to be anything but routine?

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I heard one or two of the astronauts exclaim on shortwave radio, what is that? What is that?

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NASA says the objects could be space ice, satellites or debris.

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Ufologists interpret the footage as either alien spacecraft engaged in armed battle or an armed response to alien spacecraft by SDI, the so-called Star Wars Defense System.

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This particular day they were flying over the Philippines.

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You'll see what looks like stars in the sky and then you'll see these objects off to the right of the screen.

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Within a couple of minutes you will see an object come out of the clouds to the north part of your screen and it's heading to the north-northwest.

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In about four or five seconds you'll see a flash in the lower left hand corner of the screen and then you'll see a streak of light go by that object.

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Just missed it there in the one in the lower right hand corner of the screen.

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What's being enacted up there is basically a contact with an alien civilization and that those particular craft are not from here.

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The flash that we're seeing is probably a mechanism of Star Wars.

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Is this finally concrete proof that we're being visited by intelligent light from another planet? Space industry officials answer with an emphatic no.

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A lot of things we see on the pictures in space are things we're used to seeing here in the control center down here in Houston.

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They're ordinary events that surround the spaceship.

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Pieces coming off, water dumps, pieces of ice insulation.

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There's little pieces, 10 maybe 20 feet away from the camera.

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And as they're flowing across the field of view of the camera, there's a flash of light as one of the maneuvering jets on the shuttle fires under autopilot control.

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00:02:53,000 --> 00:02:58,000

Anything floating out there is like opening your door on a windy day and watching the dust in your house blow out.

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The burst of gas from the jet pushes these little pieces of debris and off they go.

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If that is true, why doesn't the horizon line and the curvature of the Earth's latitude change when that rocket fires in the upper left quadrant or to the west side?

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And NASA's explanation defies the laws of physics, according to University of Nebraska at Omaha physicist Dr. Jack Catcher.

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NASA's claim is that these are all pieces of ice and that this flash down here was an attitude rocket adjuster to adjust the position of the shuttle.

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So it's going to push it in a certain direction and the exhaust came up like this.

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Well, if that happened, then the particle should move up in this direction.

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Those two pretty well fit that scenario.

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But I have a real problem with the rest of them because first of all, this one just starts here and continues on down this way just straight the whole time.

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Now that's the wrong direction for an exhaust in this direction too.

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So I really have a lot of trouble seeing how you could make an explanation like that work.

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Analysis by aerospace propulsion expert David Fronin refutes NASA's belief that the objects are conventional spacecraft.

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Its behavior doesn't look like a normal orbital debris.

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To make a turn like that in a conventional vehicle would just be impossible.

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And to do that, you really have to actually warp and twist space.

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You certainly do appear to be objects that are intelligently controlled.

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NASA has issued several statements insisting the UFOs are chunks of space ice, but they refuse to comment on two additional sightings that occurred later in the mission.

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Here, one object is intercepted by a rocket like projectile.

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The object continues as more projectiles pass.

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Later on the dark side of the earth, another object comes into view.

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Soon, a second faster moving object nearly collides with the first, then continues out of frame.

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What if then they were extraterrestrial craft?

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Well then, there are some very scary things happening here.

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Was it some kind of a missile that we were firing at them with?

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And if that's the case, then why did we do that?

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It implies we're prepared to do that, that we're almost expecting to encounter these things, and then we're hostile to them.

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Is our military prepared to launch offensive strikes against incoming UFOs? Government officials won't respond.

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It's not a question of whether there is a government cover up about UFOs there is.

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It's the most highly classified topic in all the government and military.

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Has the military secretly developed SDI beyond public knowledge despite their denials?

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There have been developments for the Space Defense Initiative, a particle beam system that could have particle beams with the kinds of speeds that we saw going straight up into space.

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And if that is the case, why are we shooting at them?

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It implies that we expected to see them and that we were ready to shoot and then we did shoot, so we consider them hostile.

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You can look at these kind of lights, these kind of reports of the flying saucers coming around our spaceships.

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In terms of exploration, this is very traditional. These are our sea serpents, these are our mermaids.

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Five hundred years ago when Columbus' ships went out and the men peered off at the horizon, they could see little things on the horizon, they would misinterpret them,

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or interpret them in different ways or incorrect ways, then come back and tell stories.

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We're getting to the same sort of phenomena here.

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Well, first of all, a death ray or a laser beam that's in the Hollywood movie shows up as a flash of light and a crash and a thunder and so forth.

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That's Hollywood. In reality, these kinds of beams in space are invisible because they have nothing to show up on except a target.

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So you would not see a beam going across the picture.

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James Oberg has devoted the last 18 years to aerospace research.

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Although Oberg insists he is an independent analyst, some ufologists believe he's part of a secret government conspiracy to debunk all UFOs.

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It's a bit too trite and I've been insulting to the intelligence of the average American to say, you know, it's something to do with space folklore or space debris.

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Let's not forget that these people are not some kind of UFO organization speaking for 10,000 scientists out there.

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These are a couple of very far out people who are not even accepted in the UFO movement.

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Is this merely ice from the space shuttle? Secret weapons testing the military won't disclose.

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Or is this finally proof that we're not alone in the universe?

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It's only a matter of time, but I would wager by 1995. This will be common knowledge and the fact that extraterrestrials are here will be accepted by everybody.

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For a further perspective on the space shuttle footage, we've asked University of Nebraska at Omaha Physicist, Dr. Jack Kasher, to join us.

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Dr. Kasher, thanks for coming in. Appreciate your time.

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What evidence can you cite, sir, that those lights that we saw on the tape aren't conventional satellites?

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Well, I think the strongest evidence for me is I sat down and I put a transparency in front of the television set and I tracked eight of those objects both before and after the flash.

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And the main one did cut up sharply to the right, apparently in response, if you would believe the ice theory of an attitude adjuster rocket down here that would push it up with its exhaust.

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Two of the eight objects did that. Four just continued, didn't react. Two went up and to the left, which is the wrong direction.

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And I've looked at that 50, 100 times. I just can't reconcile that in my own mind.

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Have you been ostracized at all by the scientific community for holding these particular beliefs?

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Not really. You'd be surprised if the physicists that have come up after they've heard me speak about UFOs and say they're really surprised that there is evidence that is at least plausible that these things are real.

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You sort of went out on a limb, Dr. Kasher. You said that by 1995 these kinds of sightings would be commonplace. Why 1995? You know something the rest of us don't?

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Well, I do have some contacts that have given me some information and I think I based some of it on that. But I think that there is a groundswell of interest in UFOs.

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People are being more open about the sightings that they have had. And that just builds up. And eventually what are you going to do when your friends tell you they have actually seen flying saucers hovering above their houses?

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After that happens to you a number of times, you just have to start believing some of it.

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Dr. Kasher, have you seen a UFO yourself or anything that would lead you to personally believe that they're out there?

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Well, I haven't seen anything as spectacular as a flying saucer, but I have seen lights in the sky that behave in a strange way that you couldn't explain in terms of normal airplanes.

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And I do teach astronomy and know where the constellations are and what meteors are, so I can differentiate between those things. And the object that I saw were not airplanes and I'm not really sure what they were.

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Dr. Jack Kasher, thank you very much.