“Contact”

Movie starring Jodie Foster and Matthew McConaughey

Released in 1997

Assignment:

1. Watch the movie
2. Your paper should be at least one page long, but you can write more. Really think about the movie and discuss your thoughts. The following questions might help you decide what to write.
3. Write a Summary (discuss the Science first; plot is not necessary for the assignment)
   1. Compare and contrast the science learned in class with what was discussed in the film
   2. What was the same?
   3. What was different?
   4. What did you learn about Radio waves in class? Was that reinforced by the movie?
   5. Was the science true? Was it good science?
   6. What were the problems with the science in the movie?
   7. Did the class help you to understand the science in the movie?
4. Write a Response
   1. Reflect on your thoughts about the science in the film
   2. Did the movie change your way of thinking?
   3. Did you like the way the information was presented?
   4. How was the class topics related to the film?
   5. Your understanding of space and the size of the universe has changed since you joined the class, how does this affect you beliefs about space aliens, abductions, and UFOs?
   6. Is it scientific to believe in aliens? Why or why not?
   7. Does the size of the universe in general, and the size of the Milky Way Galaxy as we now understand it affect your ideas of the possibility of alien visits to earth?
   8. What about the age of the universe? Humans have only been on earth a relatively short time. We have only been civilized for roughly 10,000 years, a mere blink when compared to the billions of years the universe has been around. Does that have a bearing on your ideas of contact from aliens? Why and how?
   9. Einstein’s Theory of Special Relativity is mentioned in the movie. Specifically, as a person approaches the speed of light (which is impossible to achieve as we understand physics and the laws of the universe) time will slow down for them (they will only age a few years), while people on earth will age normally, and time will progress as usual (they will age many more years).