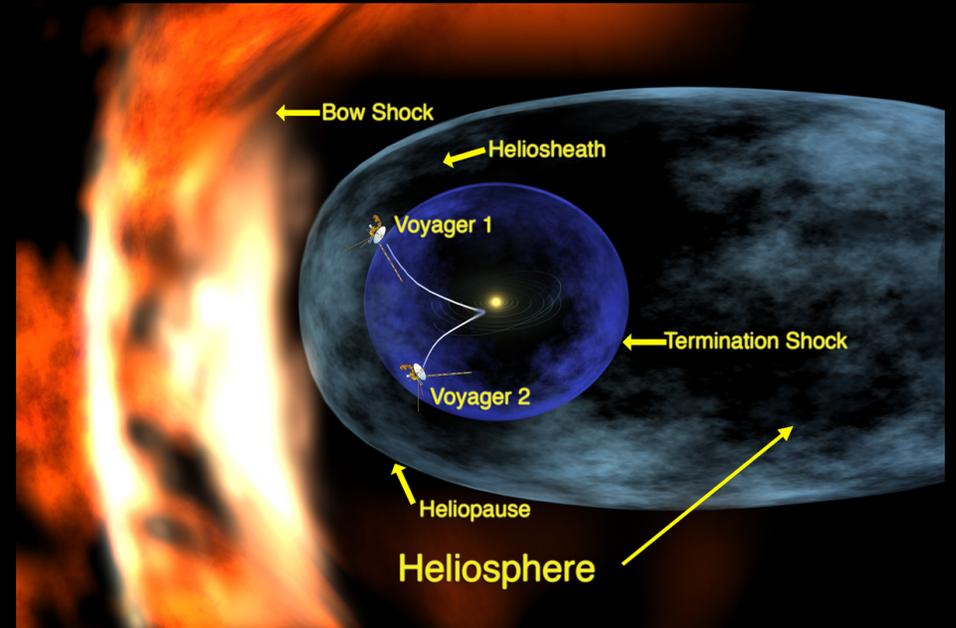
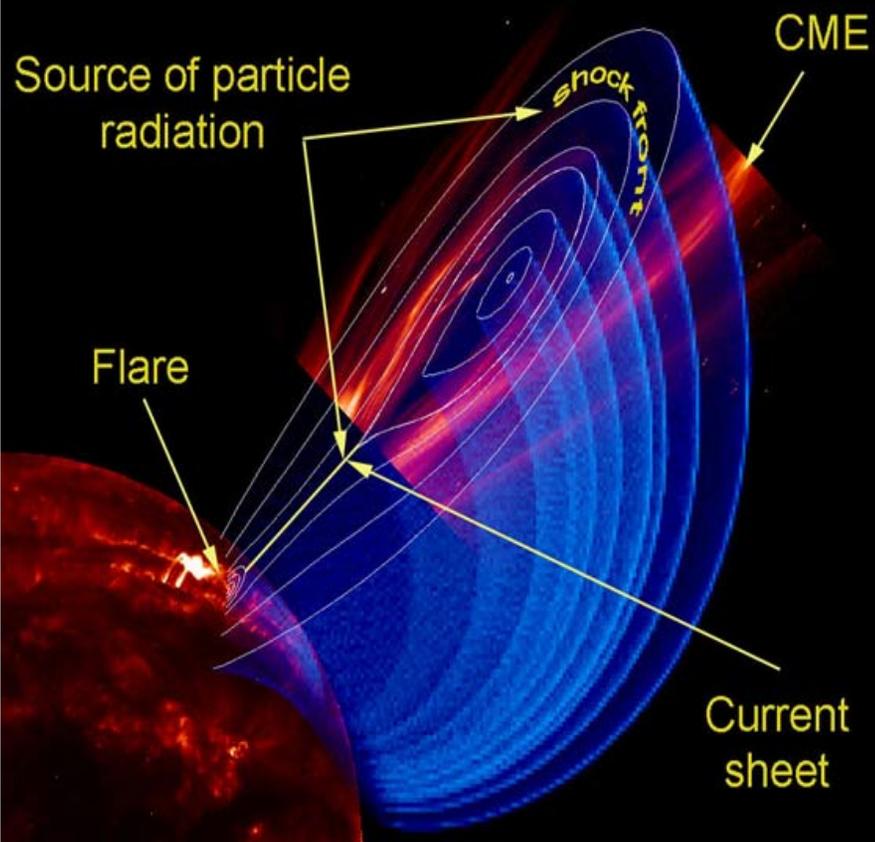


Heliophysics Shocks



Merav Opher,
George Mason University
mopher@gmu.edu

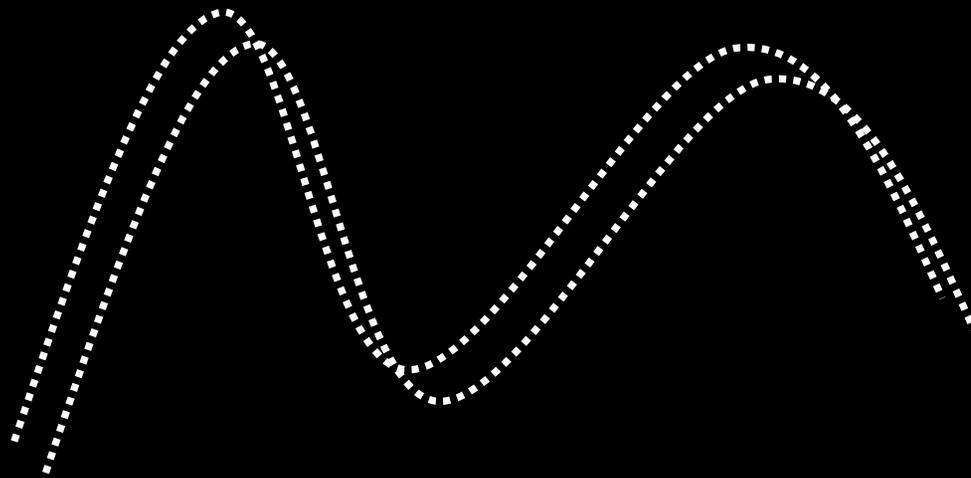
Heliophysics Summer
School, August 2, 2010

Outline

1. Why Shocks Happen: Non Linear Steepening
2. MHD jump conditions: Rankine-Hugoniot jump conditions
3. Definition and Classification of Shocks/ Discontinuities
4. Contact and Tangential Discontinuities/ Examples
5. Shocks
6. Observation of Shocks: Termination Shock, CME Shocks, Planetary Shocks
7. Open questions: research being done

1. Why Shocks Happen: Non Linear Steepening

- When gradients of pressure, density and temperature become large than dissipative processes (viscosity, thermal conduction) “steepening” or “wave-steepening” occur.
- The nonlinear convective terms balance the broadening effects of dissipation



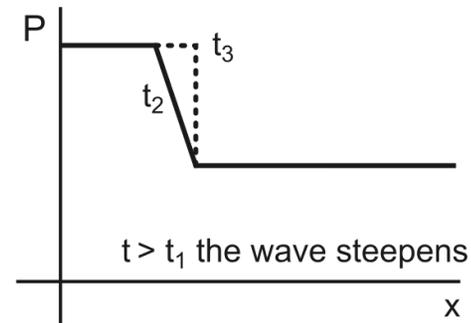
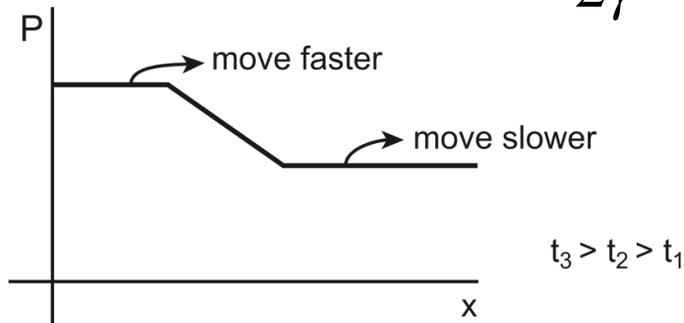
Example: propagation of sounds wave in an adiabatic medium

- Propagation of a sound wave is
- For an adiabatic equation of state:

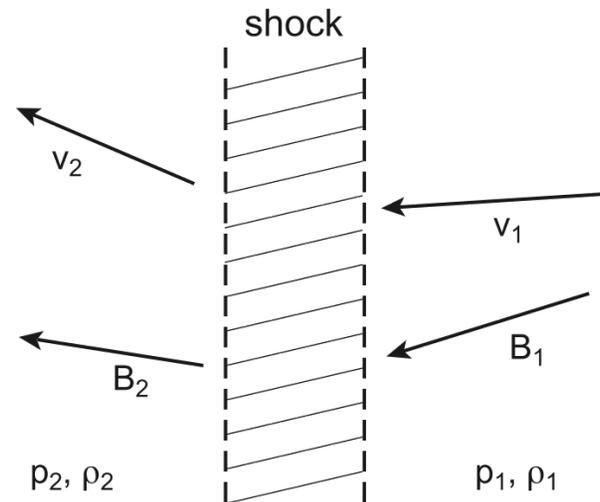
$$v_s^2 = \frac{dP}{d\rho}$$

$$P / \rho^\gamma = \text{constant}$$

So: $v_s \propto P^\alpha$ where $\alpha = \frac{\gamma + 1}{2\gamma}$



- A propagating wave solution of the ideal fluid equations leads to *infinite gradients* in a finite *time*. There is no solution for the ideal MHD equations
- The breakdown in ideal equations occurs in a very *thin* region and the fluid equations are valid everywhere else. On in this very thin region is difficult to describe the plasma in details.
- The simple picture: is a discontinuity dividing two roughly uniform fluids



Region 2 (downstream)

Region 1 (upstream)

The transition must be such as to conserve
 MASS, Magnetic Flux and Energy

2. Jump Conditions which are independent of the physics of the shock itself: Rankine-Hugoniot Relations

(a) Conservation of Mass: $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{u}) = 0$

through regions 1 and 2 gives: $\rho_1 \mathbf{u}_1 \cdot \mathbf{n} = \rho_2 \mathbf{u}_2 \cdot \mathbf{n}$

that can be written as $\{\rho \mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{n}\} = 0$ where the symbol $\{\}$

represent differences between the two sides of the discontinuity.

(b) Conservation of Momentum

$$\frac{\partial(\rho\mathbf{u})}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot \left[\rho\mathbf{u}\mathbf{u} + \left(p + \frac{B^2}{2\mu_0} \right) \mathbf{I} - \frac{\mathbf{B}\mathbf{B}}{\mu_0} \right] = 0$$

gives

$$\left\{ \rho\mathbf{u}(\mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{n}) + \left(p + \frac{B^2}{2\mu_0} \mathbf{n} - \frac{\mathbf{B}}{\mu_0} (\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{n}) \right) \right\} = 0 .$$

(c) Conservation of energy

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left(\frac{1}{2} \rho U^2 \frac{P}{\gamma - 1} + \frac{B^2}{2\mu_0} + \nabla \cdot \left(\frac{1}{2} \rho U^2 \mathbf{u} + \frac{\gamma P}{\gamma - 1} \mathbf{u} + \frac{1}{\mu_0} \mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B} \right) \right) = 0$$

gives

$$\left\{ \left(\frac{1}{2} \rho U^2 + \frac{\gamma P}{\gamma - 1} \right) (\mathbf{u} \cdot \mathbf{n}) + \frac{1}{\mu_0} (\mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B}) \cdot \mathbf{n} \right\} = 0$$

(d) The Magnetic flux conservation

$$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{B} = 0$$

gives $\{\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{n}\} = 0$ and $\nabla \times \mathbf{E} = -\frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t}$

gives $\{\mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{n}\} = 0$

Let us consider the normal n and tangential t component relative to the discontinuity surface so the JUMP conditions can be written as:

$$(a) \quad \left\{ \rho_m \mathbf{U} \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}} \right\} = 0 \Rightarrow \left\{ \rho_m U_n \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$(b) \quad \left\{ \rho_m \mathbf{U} (\mathbf{U} \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}}) + \left(p + \frac{B^2}{2\mu_0} \right) \hat{\mathbf{n}} - \frac{\vec{B}}{\mu_0} (\vec{B} \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}}) \right\} = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow \left\{ \rho_m U_n^2 + p + \frac{B_n^2}{2\mu_0} \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$\Rightarrow \left\{ \rho_m \vec{U}_t U_n - \frac{B_t}{\mu_0} B_n \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$(c) \quad \left\{ \left(\frac{1}{2} \rho_m v^2 + h \right) (\vec{U} \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}}) + \frac{1}{\mu_0} (\vec{E} \times \vec{B}) \cdot \hat{\mathbf{n}} \right\} = 0$$

$\vec{E} = -\vec{U} \times \vec{B}$

$$\left\{ \left(\frac{1}{2} \rho_m v^2 + h + \frac{B^2}{\mu_0} \right) U_n - (\vec{U} \cdot \vec{B}) \frac{B_n}{\mu_0} \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$(d) \quad \left\{ B_n \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$(e) \quad \left\{ \vec{U}_n \times \vec{B}_t + \vec{U}_t \times \vec{B}_n \right\} = 0 \quad *$$

$$h = \frac{\gamma p}{\gamma - 1}$$

The equations (*) are called the Rankine-Hugoniot jump conditions

3. Definition and Classification of Shocks/Discontinuities

	$U_n = 0$	$U_n \neq 0$
$\{\rho\} = 0$	trivial	rotational discontinuity
$\{\rho\} \neq 0$	contact discontin.	shock wave

4. Contact Discontinuity

- Happens where there is no flow across the discontinuity, i.e, $U_n=0$ and $\{\rho\}\neq 0$

E.g. classic contact discontinuity

Vinegar

Olive oil

- (a) If $B_n\neq 0$ contact discontinuity \rightarrow only the density changes across the discontinuity (rarely observed in plasmas)

Tangential Discontinuity

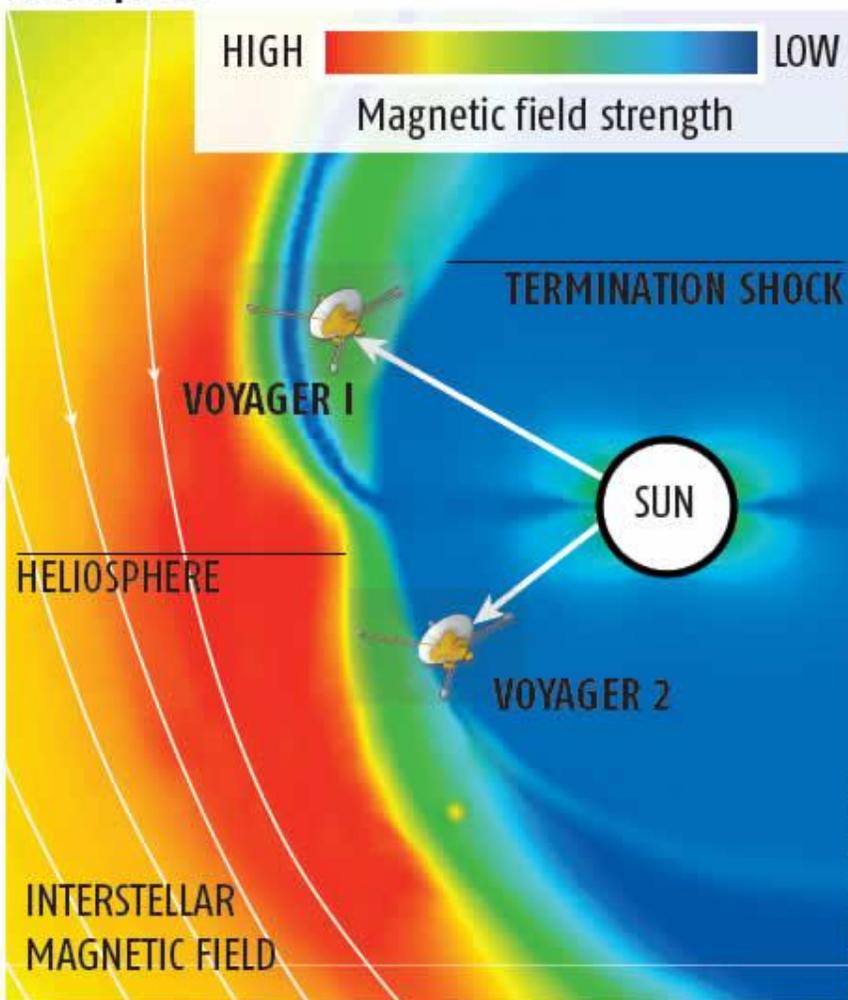
(b) When $B_n=0 \Rightarrow \{U_T\} \neq 0$
 $\{B_T\} \neq 0$
and $\{p+B^2/2\mu_0\}=0$

The fluid velocity and magnetic field are parallel to the surface of the discontinuity but change in magnitude and direction. The sum of thermal and magnetic pressure is constant also.

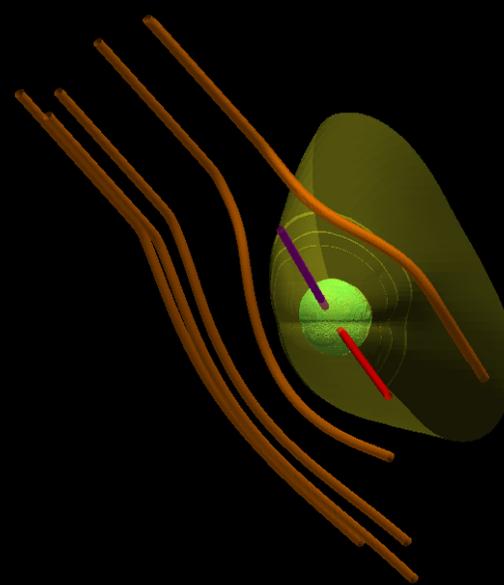
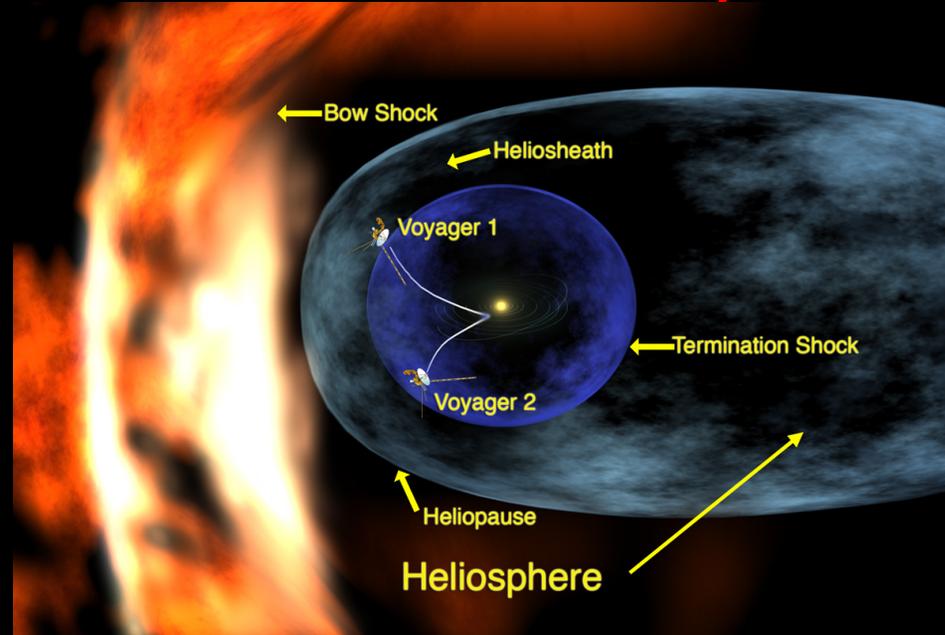
Heliopause: Tangential Discontinuity

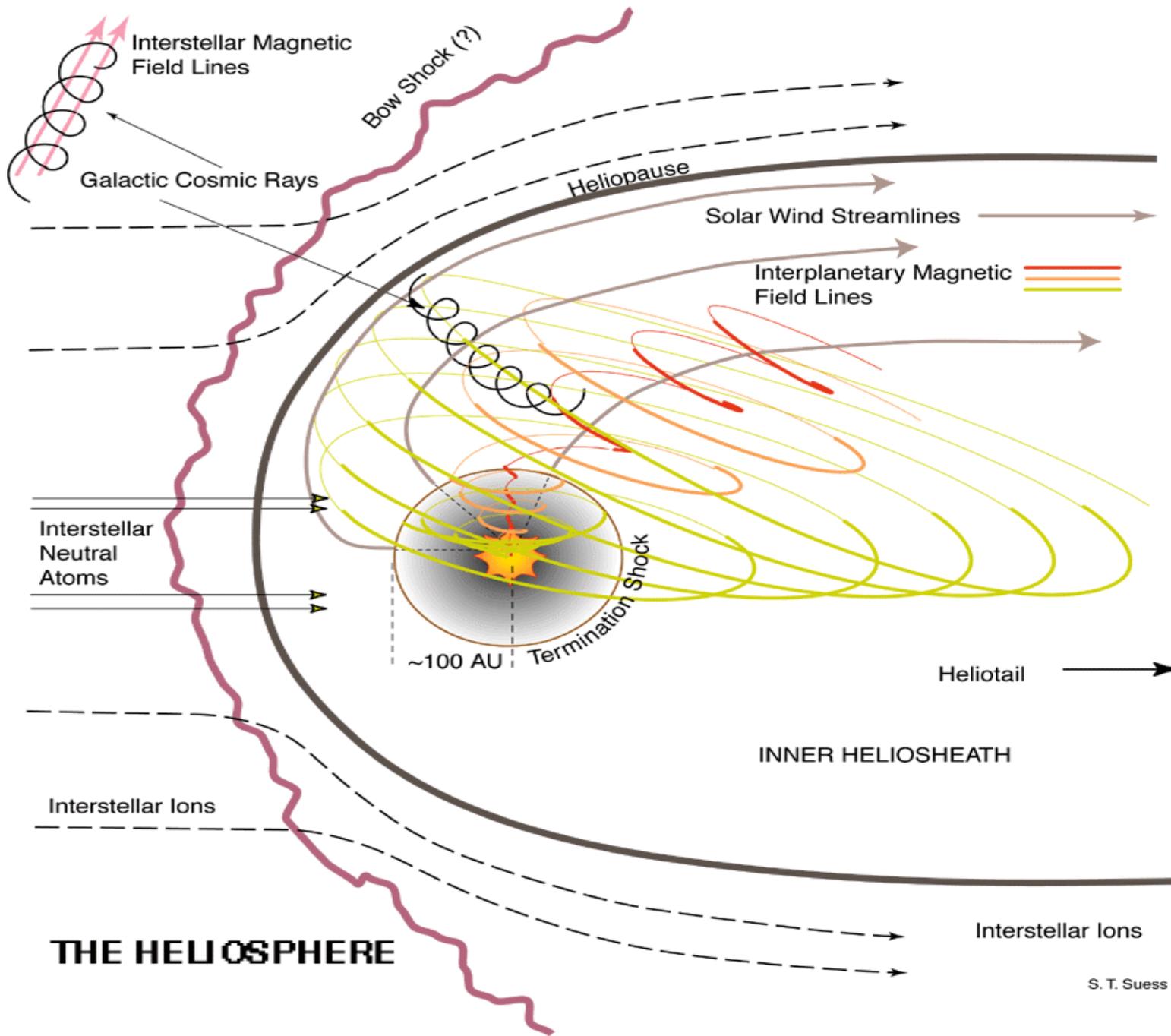
INTO THE UNKNOWN

The interstellar magnetic field is distorting the heliosphere



SOURCE: MERAR OPHER



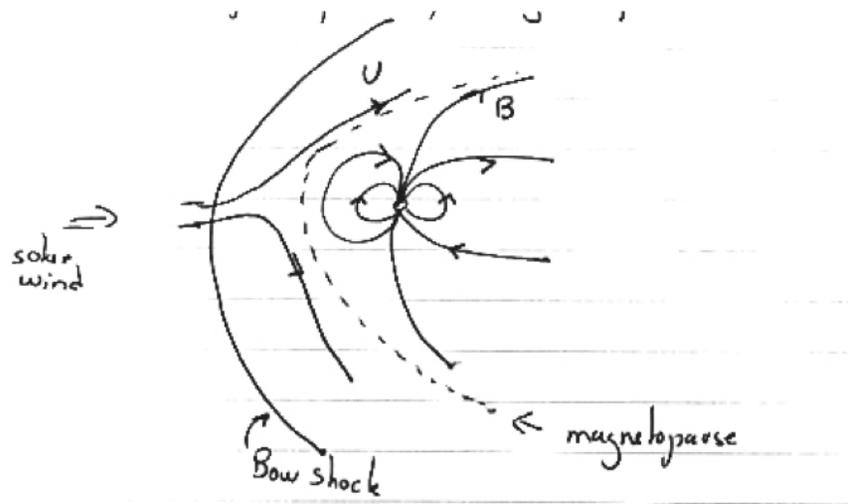


THE HELIOSPHERE

S. T. Suess

Credit: S. Suess

Planetary Magnetosphere: Tangential Discontinuity



If there is no much reconnection so $U_n \sim 0$; $B_n \sim 0$
so solar wind plasma and magnetic field do not
penetrate into the magnetosphere

Rotational Discontinuity: $U_n \neq 0$ and $\{\rho\} = 0$

From jump conditions

$$(a) \Rightarrow \begin{cases} \{U_n\} = 0 \\ v_1 \cdot \hat{n} = v_2 \cdot \hat{n} = v_n \\ \rho_1 = \rho_2 \end{cases} \quad \text{and} \quad \left\{ \rho + \frac{B_T^2}{2} \right\} = 0$$

..some math...we get that if $U_n^2 = \frac{B_n^2}{\mu_0 \rho_m}$

B_t remain *constant* in magnitude but rotates in the plane of the discontinuity.

Example: if the *reconnection rate* between the solar wind Magnetic field and the planetary magnetic field is substantial; then The plasma can penetrate significantly into the magnetosphere: The magnetopause becomes a rotational discontinuity

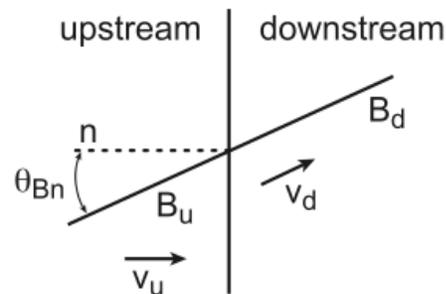
5. SHOCK WAVES

Shock waves are characterized by a fluid flows *across* the discontinuity $U_n \neq 0$ and a non zero jump discontinuity $\{\rho\} \neq 0$

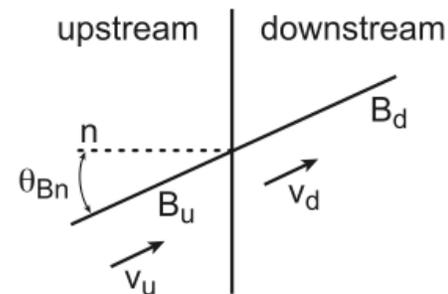
Frames of reference for MHD shocks:

(I) normal incident frame (coordinate system moving along the shock front with speed U_t)

(II) de Hoffman-Teller frame (the plasma is parallel to the magnetic field on both sides and the reference frames moves parallel to the shock front with the de Hoffman-Teller speed)



(I)



(II)

Strength of the Shock

- Jump equations: 12 unknowns (4 upstream parameters are specified: ρ , v_s , B_t , B_n) so we have 7 equations for 8 unknowns -> *we need to specify one more quantity*

$$\delta = \frac{\rho_2}{\rho_1}$$

Other quantities:

$$M_A = \frac{U_n}{V_{A_{\text{rms}}}} = \frac{U_n \sqrt{\mu_0 \rho_m}}{B_n} \quad \text{Alfvén Mach number}$$

$$M_s = \frac{U_n}{v_s} = \frac{U_n \sqrt{\rho_m}}{\sqrt{\gamma P}} \quad \text{Sonic Mach number}$$

$$\tan \theta = \frac{B_t}{B_n} \quad \text{angle } \theta \text{ between the } \vec{B} \text{ \& shock normal}$$

Shock Adiabatic Equation

- You can combine using the shock equations to a one single equation that gives the shock propagating speed U_{n1} as a function of shock strength δ and upstream parameters

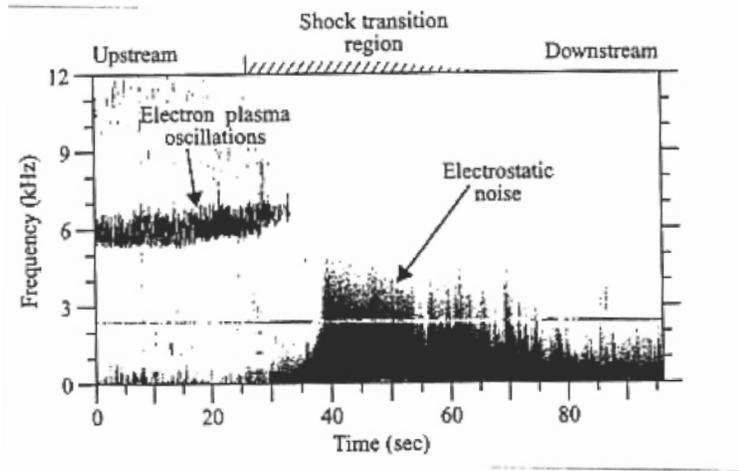
$$\left(U_{n1}^2 - \delta V_{A1}^2 \cos^2 \theta_1 \right)^2 \left[U_{n1}^2 - \frac{2\delta V_{s1}^2}{\delta + 1 - \gamma(\delta - 1)} \right] - \delta \sin^2 \theta_1 U_{n1}^2 V_{A1}^2 \left[\frac{2\delta - \gamma(\delta - 1)}{\delta + 1 - \gamma(\delta - 1)} U_{n1}^2 - \delta V_{A1}^2 \cos^2 \theta_1 \right] = 0$$

Type of Shocks

- Weak Shock Limit $\delta=1$ (solution of the shock equation are *slow, intermediate and fast shocks*) (*slow correspond to slow MHD wave; fast to fast MHD wave and intermediate to transverse Alfvén wave*)
- Strong Shock Limit: $\delta \rightarrow \delta_m$
- Parallel Shock: $\theta=0^\circ$
- Perpendicular Shocks: $\theta=90^\circ$
- Quasi-perpendicular shocks $\theta > 45^\circ$

Thickness of Shocks

- The thickness of the shocks and the detailed substructure within the shock depends on the angle θ_{BN} , M_{A1} , M_{A2}
- The transition region of a quasi-perpendicular shock is usually thin and well defined
- The transition region of a quasi-parallel shock is usually more complex and often appears thick

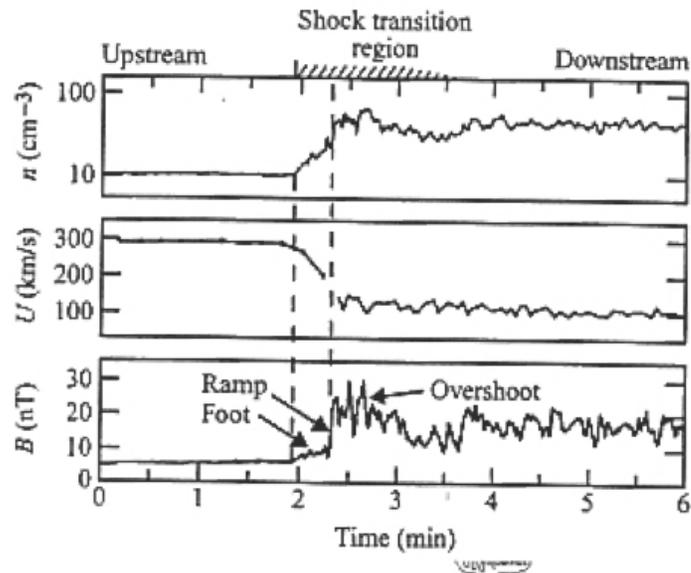


Broadband electric field noise:
Plasma wave turbulence excited
by unstable particle distribution in the shock

Jupiter's bow shock

*Narrow band at 6kHz:
Electron plasma oscillations
Excited by a beam
of electrons that escapes
into the region upstream
the shock*

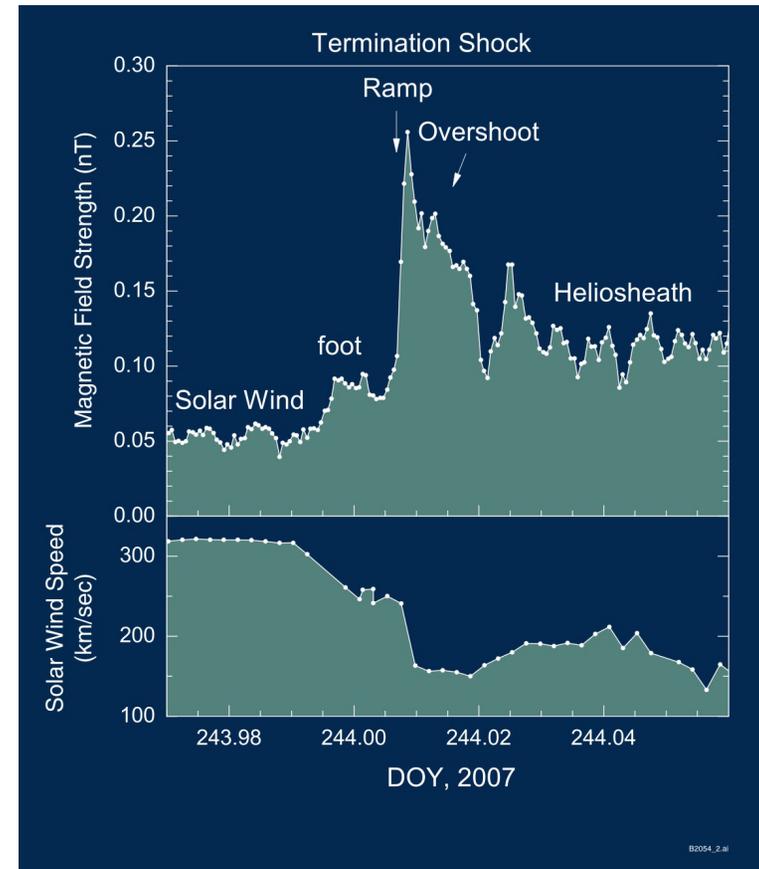
6. Observations of MHD Shocks



Earth Bow Shock (
at a distance $15.4R_E$ upstream
from Earth)

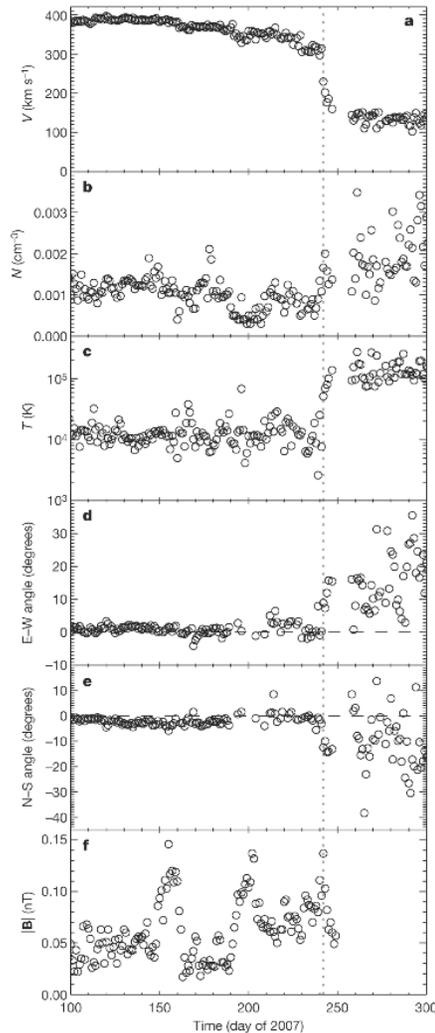
This example $\theta_1 = 76^\circ$
(between B and n)

$U_1 = 294 \text{ km/s} > v_A = 37.8 \text{ km/s}$



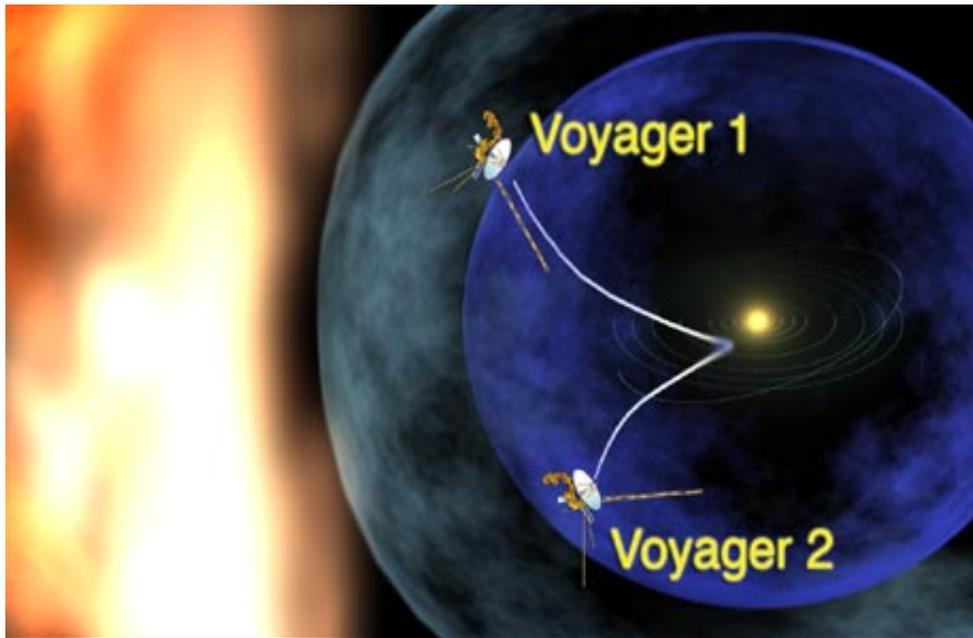
Voyager 2 crossing
the Termination Shock
in August 2007

Termination Shock: Perpendicular Shock

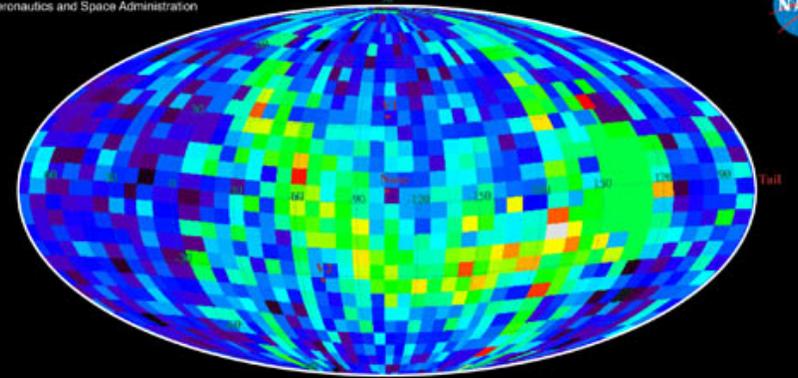


Voyager 2 crossed the Termination Shock in August 2007- (in-situ measurements of a shock)

J.Richardson et al.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

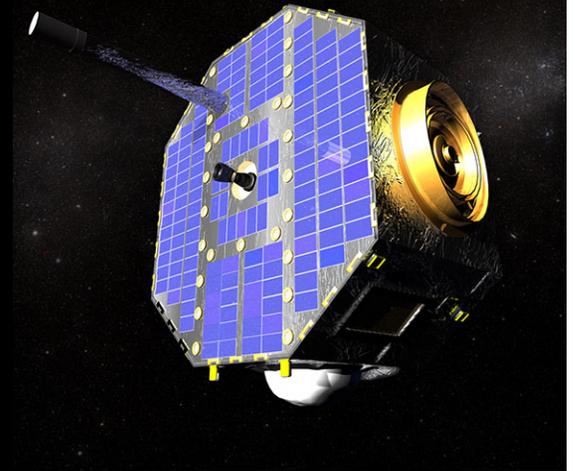


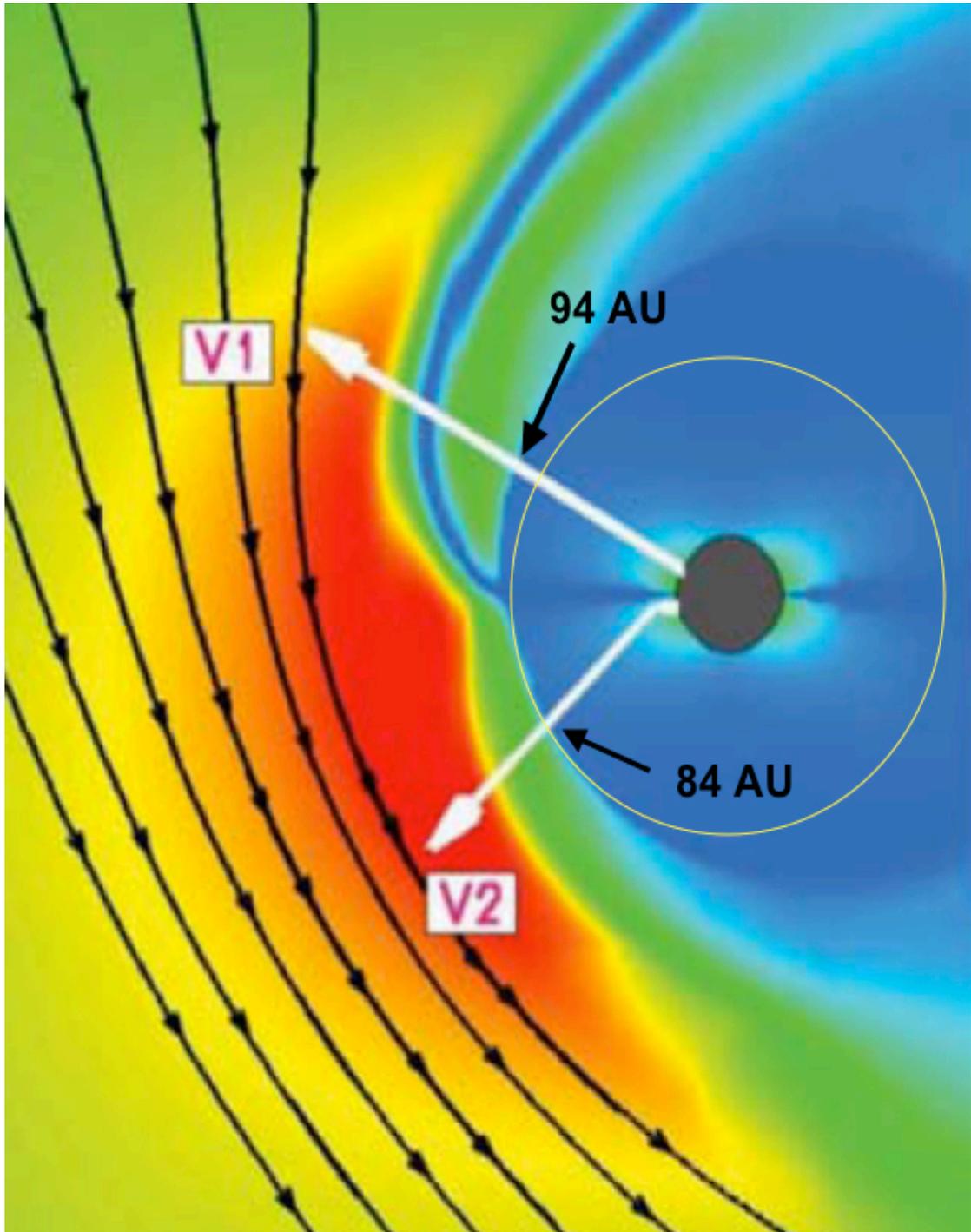
IBEX-Hi (0.6-1.0 keV) Flux



Flux [ENAs / (cm² s sr keV)]

Voyager 1 in the north
Voyager 2 in the south





Crossing of TS by V2: closer to the Sun than V1

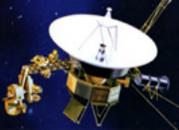


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Voyager

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- [Plasma Science](#)

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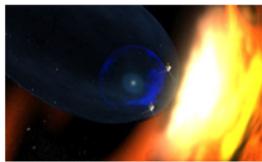
- [Cosmic Ray Subsystem](#)
- [Plasma Science](#)
- [Plasma Waves](#)
- [Low-energy Charged Particles](#)
- [Magnetometer Voyager](#)
- [Other Science Data](#)
- [Data Calibration & Validation](#)

Planetary Voyage: 1977 -1989

-  Jupiter
- 

Voyager 2 Proves Solar System Is Squashed

San Francisco, CA. - NASA's Voyager 2 spacecraft has followed its twin Voyager 1 into the solar system's final frontier, a vast region at the edge of our solar system where the solar wind runs up against the thin gas between the stars.



However, Voyager 2 took a different path, entering this region, called the heliosheath, on August 30, 2007. Because Voyager 2 crossed the heliosheath boundary, called the solar wind termination shock, about 10 billion miles away from Voyager 1 and almost a billion miles closer to the sun, it confirmed that our solar system is "squashed" or "dented"- that the bubble carved into interstellar space by the solar wind is not perfectly round. Where Voyager 2 made its crossing, the bubble is pushed in closer to the sun by the local interstellar magnetic field.

"Voyager 2 continues its journey of discovery, crossing the termination shock multiple times as it entered the outermost layer of the giant heliospheric bubble surrounding the Sun and joined Voyager 1. In the last leg of the race to interstellar space," said Voyager Project Scientist Dr. Edward Stone of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, Calif.

The solar wind is a thin gas of electrically charged particles

From the Archives

Miranda, moon of Uranus
[\(More archive images\)](#)

Flash Feature

Voyager
The Great Adventure Continues

Golden Record



Earth's Greeting to the universe

An Epic Journey

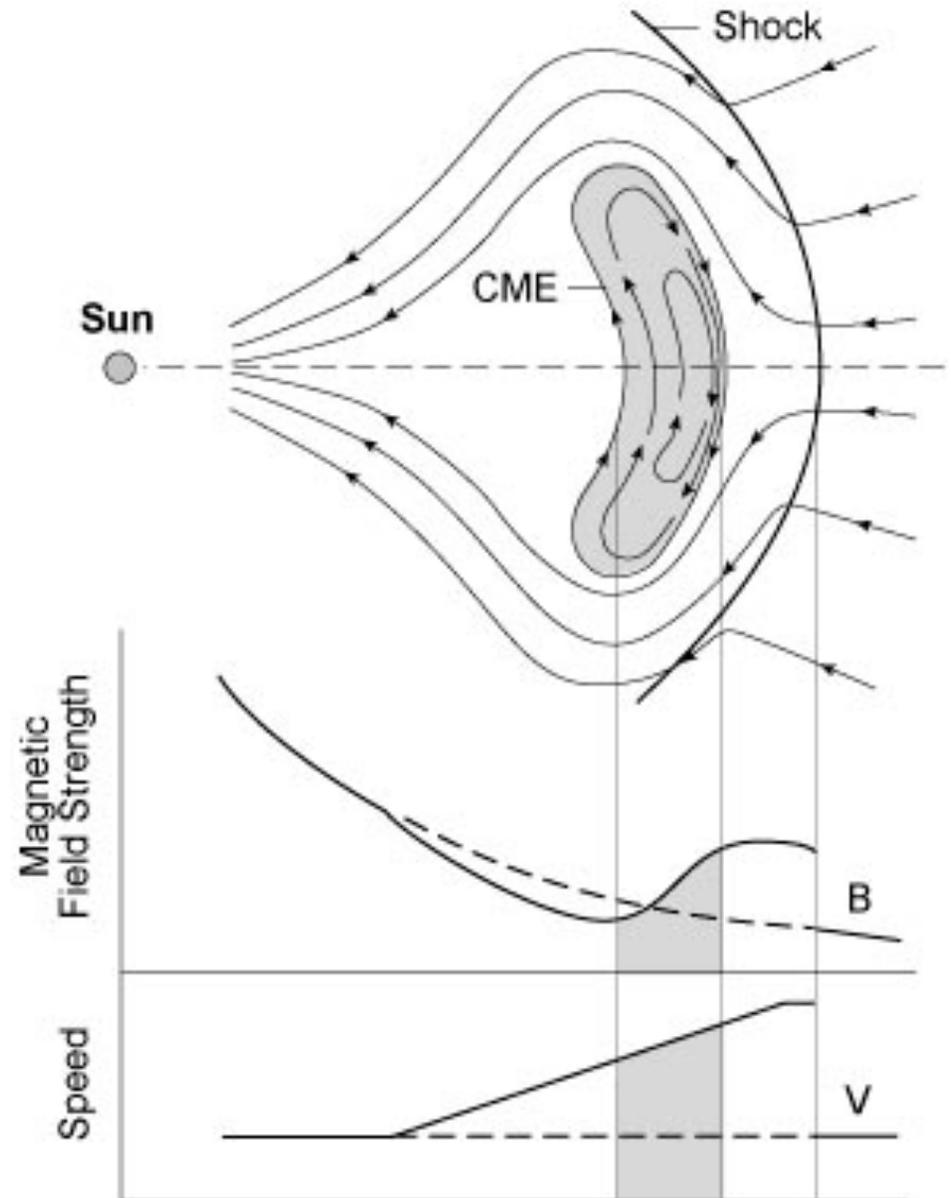
25 YEARS VOYAGER

Featured Video

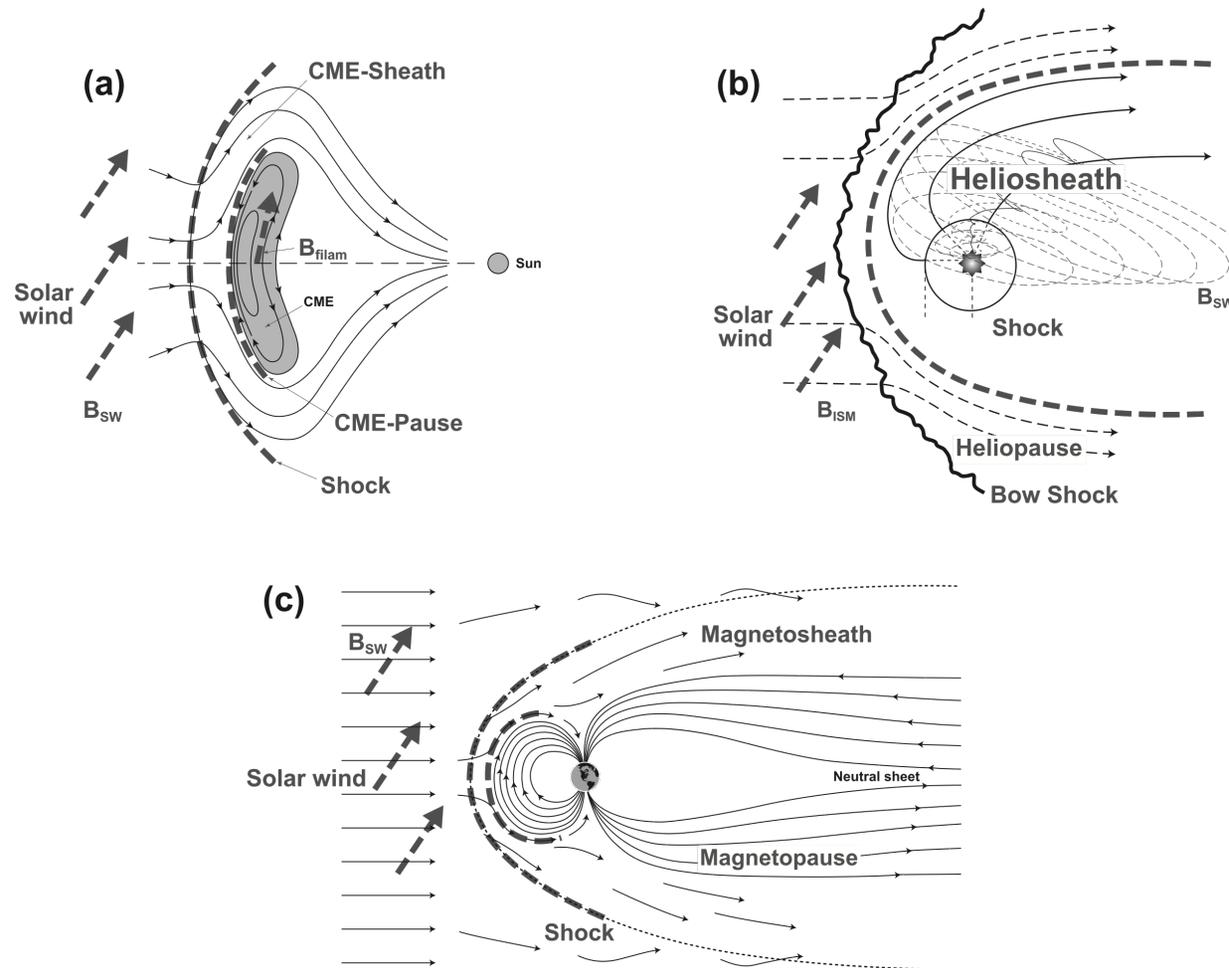


Propagating Shocks

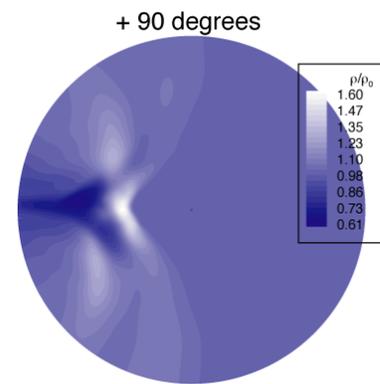
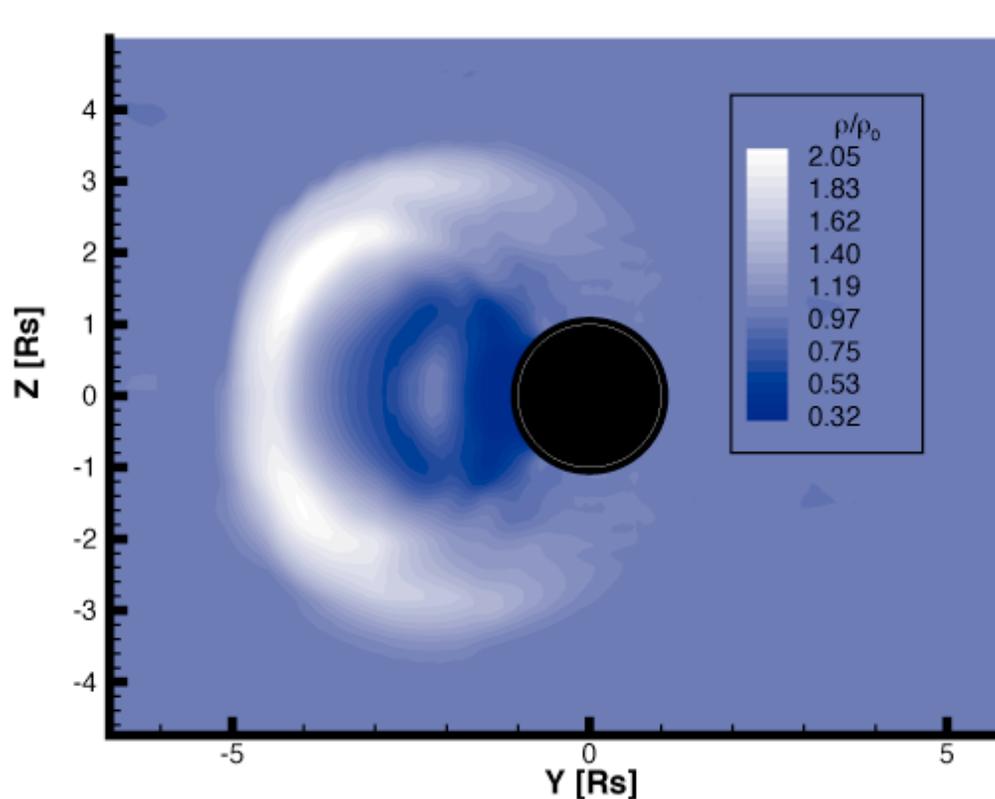
- Shock geometry can vary if near The nose or flanks



Universal Characteristics of Shocks



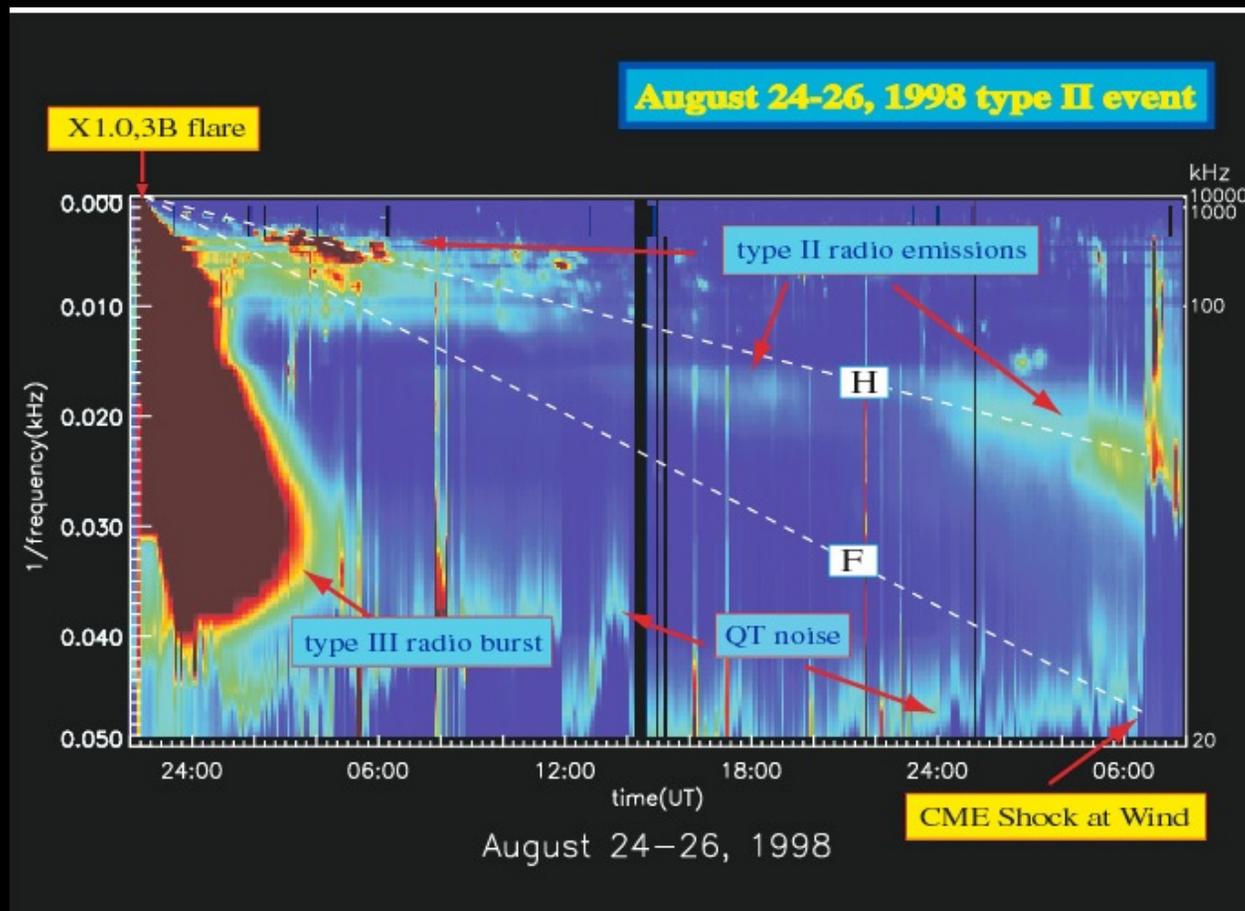
Synthetic Coronagraph Images of the CME: LASCO C2 and HI2



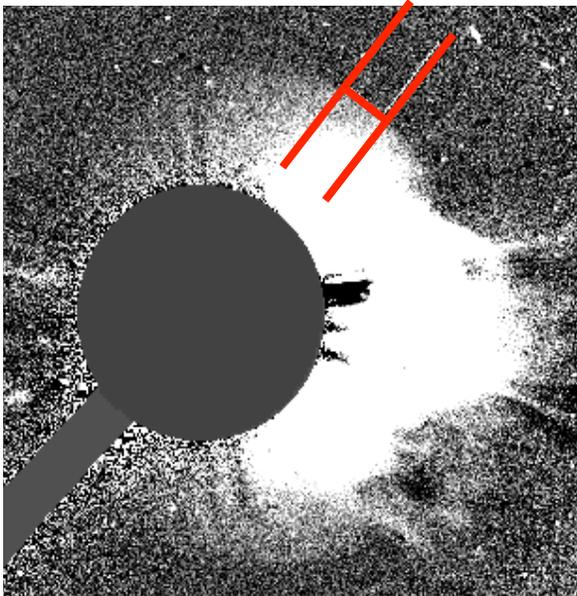
Reverse
Shock

Forward
Shock

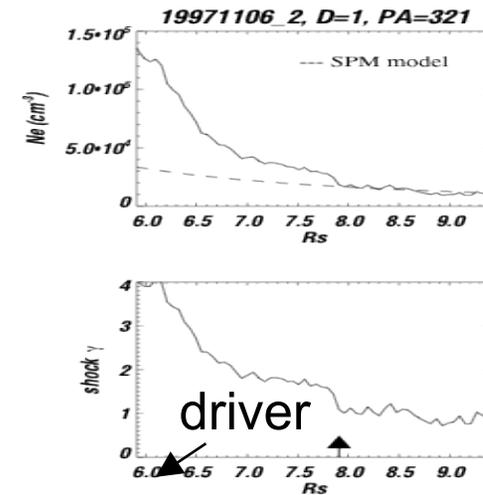
Radio Type II emission associated with CME shocks



Measuring Shocks



Shock brightness to density (ρ)
Shock strength, $\gamma = 1 + \rho/\rho_0$
SPM model for the density of
the back ground corona (ρ_0).



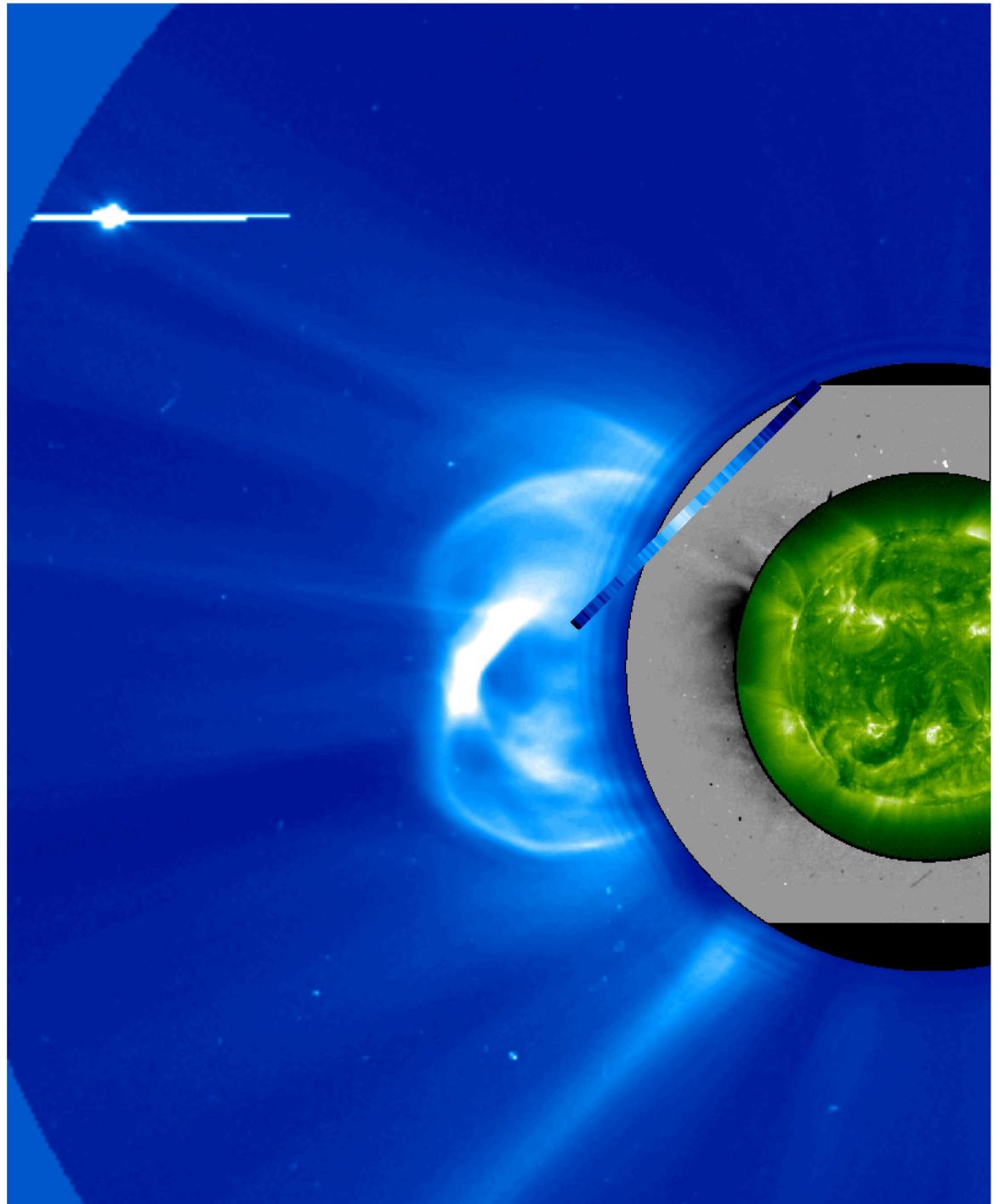
shock

Vourlidas & Ontiveros 2008

Development of Coronal Shocks Seen in the UV

John Raymond

Smooth, Faint arcs are often seen in White Light. convincing identification as shocks requires MHD Simulation matching profile (Manchester et al., Vourlidas et al.)



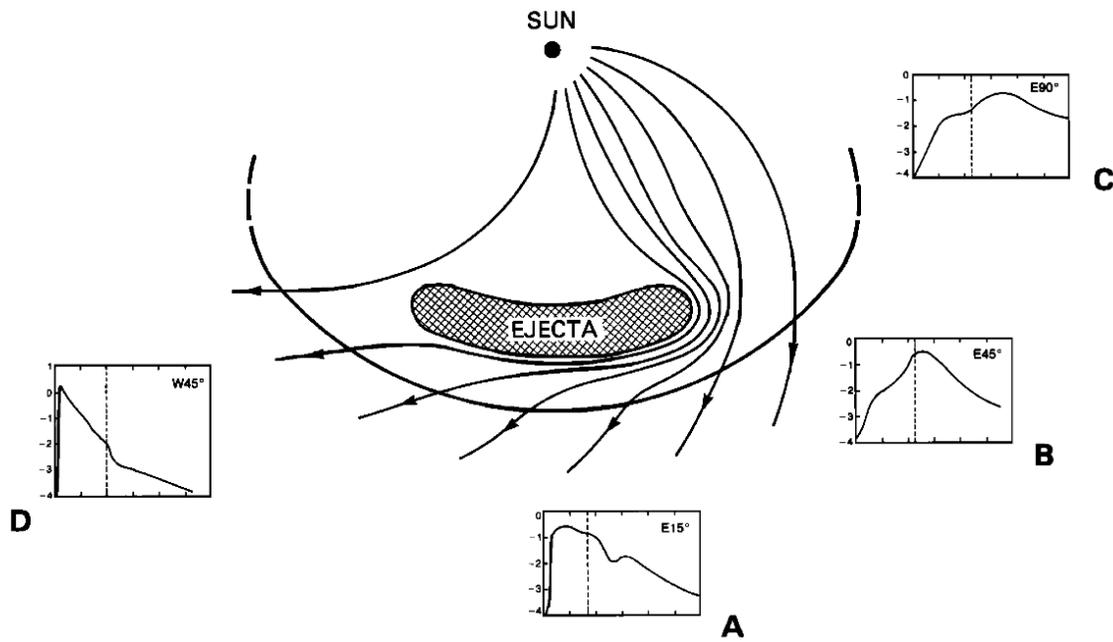
UVCS Shock Observations Analyzed so far

Date	Reference	H	V	n_0	Log T_0	X
06/11/98	Raymond et al.	1.75	1200	1×10^6	8.7	1.8
06/27/99	Raouafi et al.	2.55	1200		<8.2	
03/03/00	Mancuso et al.	1.70	1100	1×10^7	8.2	1.8
06/28/00	Ciaravella et al.	2.32	1400	2×10^6	8.1	
07/23/02	Mancuso&Avetta	1.63	1700	5×10^6	8.0	2.2

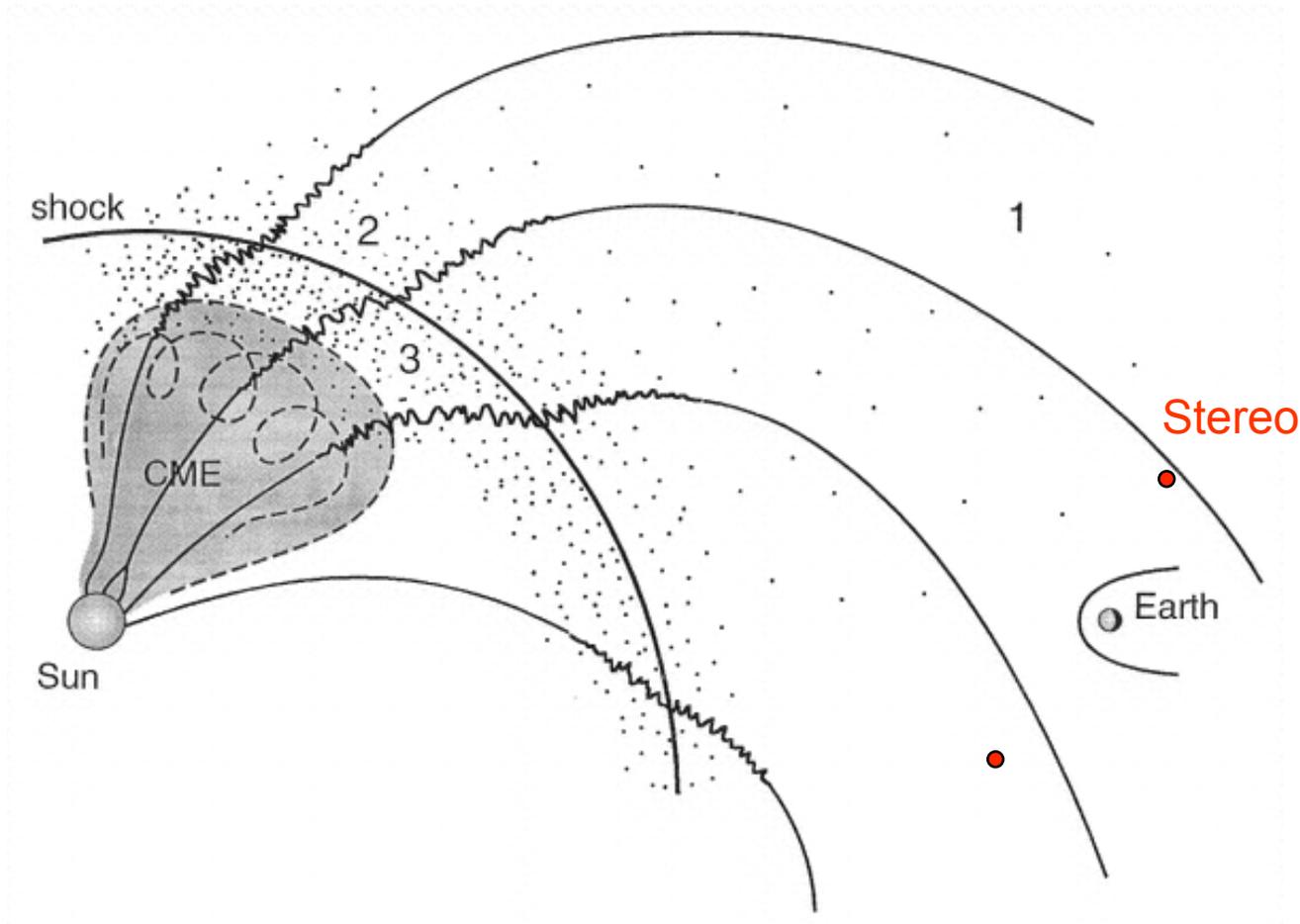
Modest heights, Modest compression, High T_0

5 other shocks not yet fully analyzed (Ciaravella et. al. 2006)

Shocks Geometry: Magnetic Connectivity



CMEs and Composition of SEPs

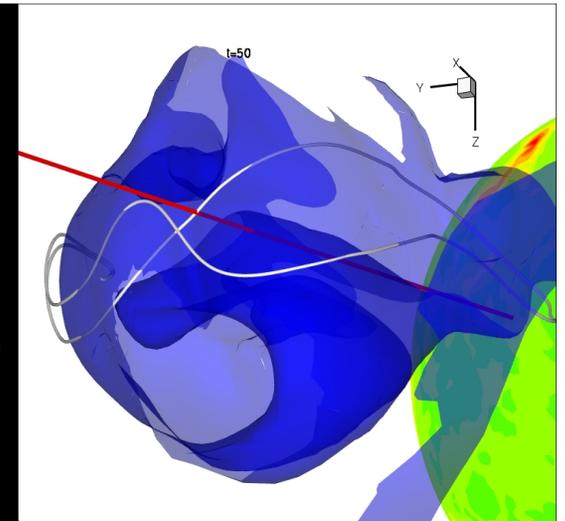


OPEN QUESTIONS/Research
being done

8. Open Questions

How do magnetic effects affect shock evolution?

(Loesch et al. 2010; Liu et al. 2009)



Which type of flows do we get in CME sheaths?

(Evans et al. 2010)

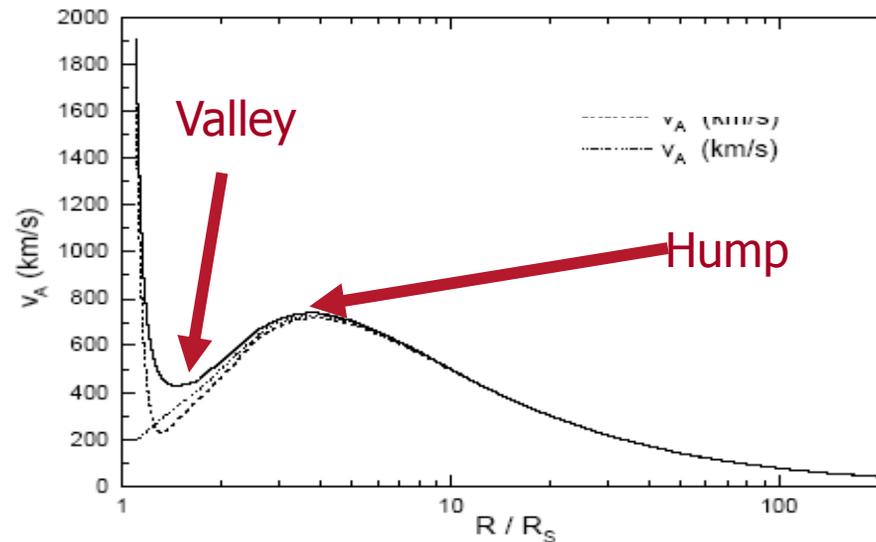
How does reconnection affect shock structures in the lower corona?

Formation of Shocks and Solar Energetic Particles

Background Solar Wind with Alfvén Waves

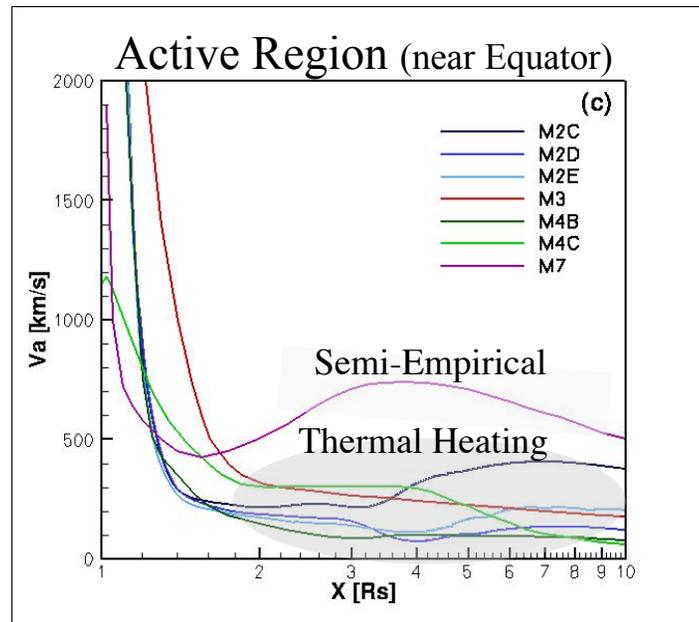
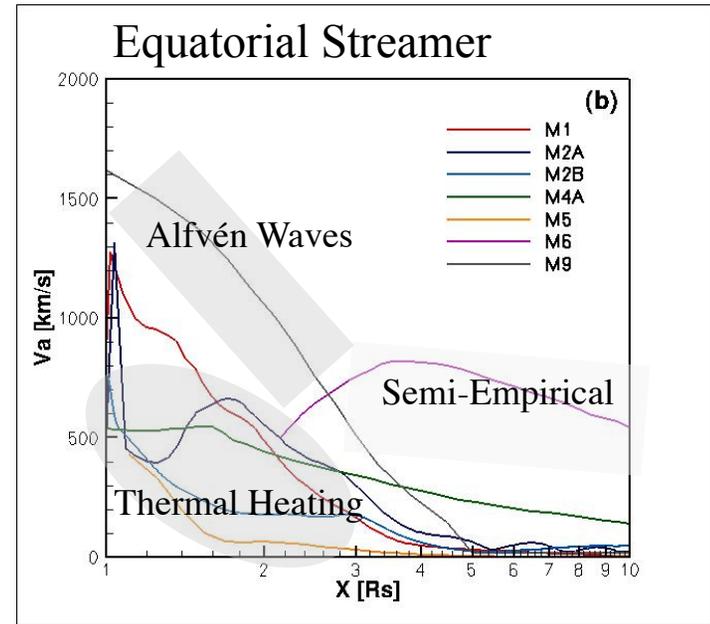
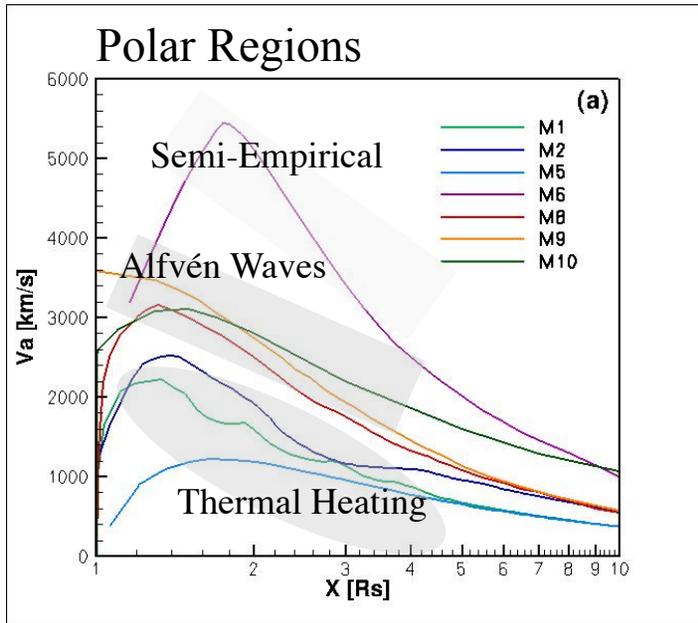
(Evans, Rona, Opher, Gombosi, 2010; Evans et al. 2008; 2009)

What is the Alfvén Speed Profile in the Lower Corona?



Evans et al. *ApJ* (2008)

- Ten Models (Solar Minimum)
 - **6 Global MHD**: Manchester et al. 2004; Cohen et al. 2007; Roussev et al. 2004; Riley 2006; Lionello et al. 2001; Usmanov & Goldstein 2006
 - **2 Local Studies**: Cranmer et al. 2007; Verdini & Velli 2007
 - **2 Semi-analytic**: Guhathakurta et al. 2006; Mann et al. 2003
- Different Strategies to Accelerate Solar Wind
 - Empirical Heating Functions
 - Non-uniform Polytropic Index
 - Inclusion of Alfvén Waves



Profiles vary drastically; Almost none with a clear hump
Need more physical based solar wind to study shocks in lower corona

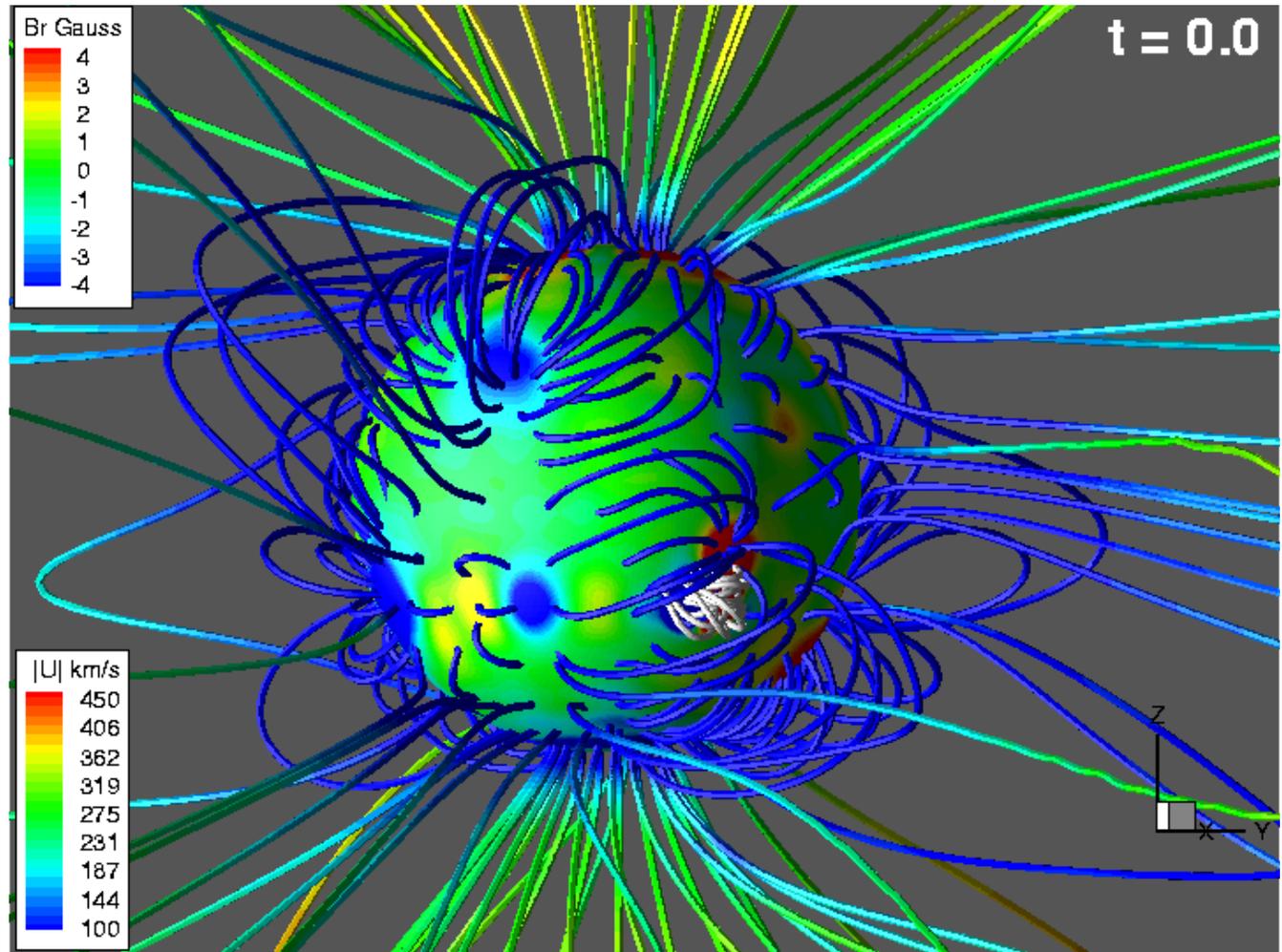
M1 Manchester et al. **M2** Cohen et al. **M3** Roussev et al. **M4** Riley **M5** Lionello et al.
M6 Guhathakurta et al. **M7** Mann et al. **M8** Cranmer et al. **M9** Usmanov & Goldstein **M10** Verdini & Velli

Initial Steady State in the Corona

- Solar surface is colored with the radial magnetic field.

- Field lines are colored with the velocity.

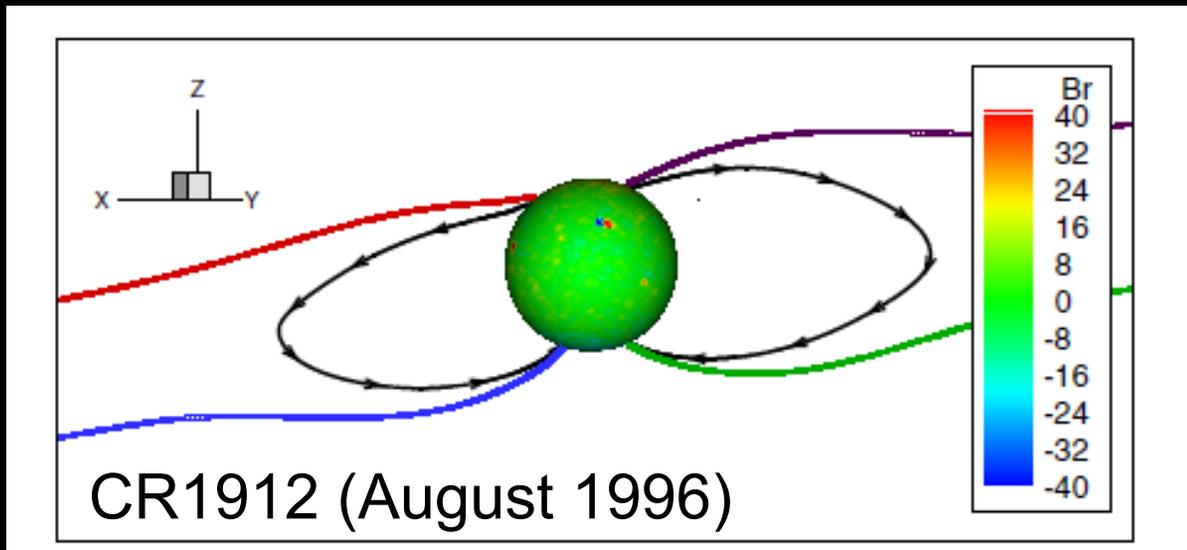
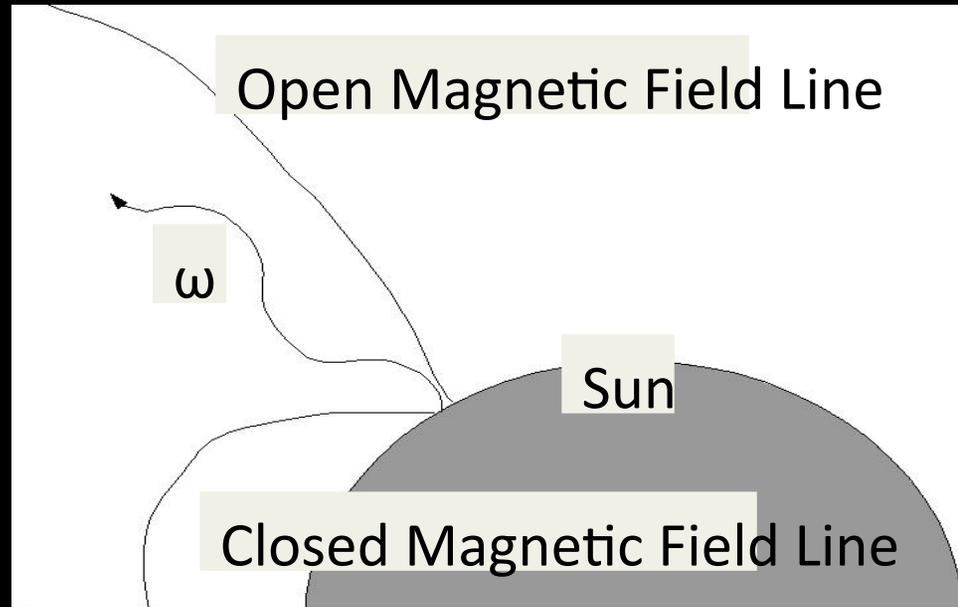
- Flux rope is shown with white field lines.



Surface Alfvén Waves

- Dissipate in regions with strong gradients in B , ρ (boundary of open/closed field lines)

$$L_{SW} = L_0 \left(\frac{r_0}{r} \right)^{5/2} \left(\frac{v_A}{v_{A0}} \right)^2 (1 + M_A)$$



- Calculated L_{SW} along field lines
- Damped wave flux is comparable to heating due to variable polytropic index

Evans et al. ApJ 2008, 2009

Surface Alfvén Wave-Driven Wind

$$\frac{\partial E_w^\pm}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (E_w^\pm (\vec{u} \pm \vec{v}_A)) + p_w^\pm \nabla \cdot \vec{u} = -\gamma^\pm E_w^\pm$$

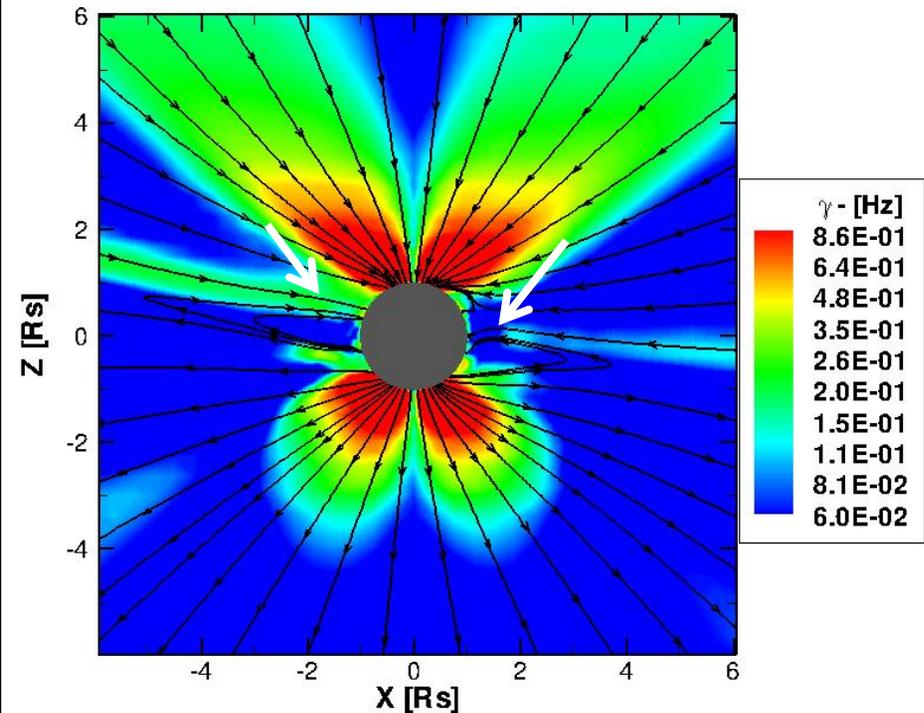
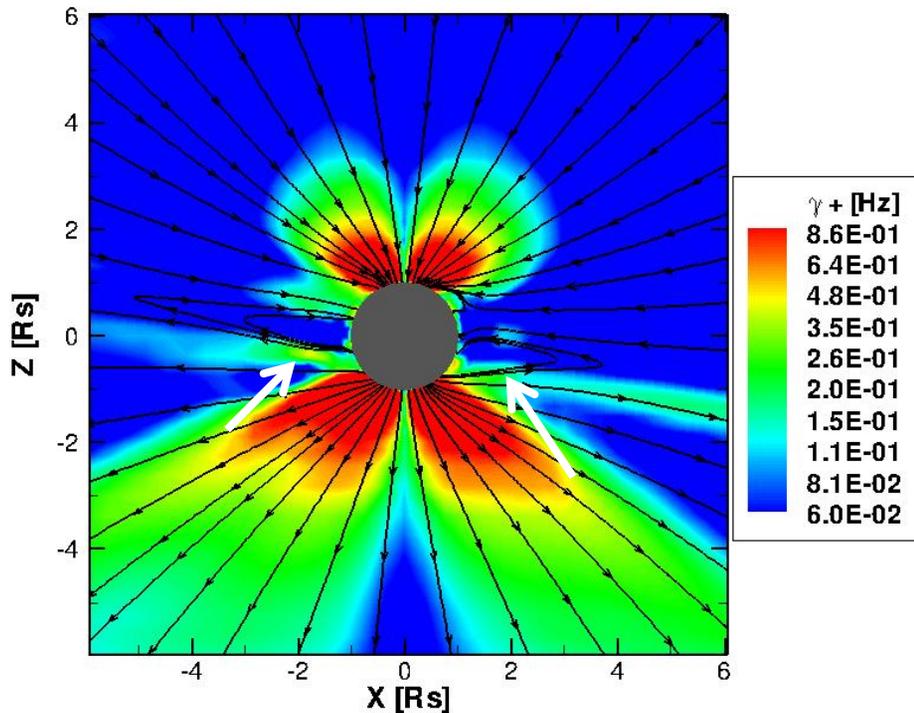
$$\frac{\partial E}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (E \vec{u}) + p \nabla \cdot \vec{u} = \gamma^+ E^+ + \gamma^- E^-$$

$\gamma = 5/3$ van der Holst et al. 2010

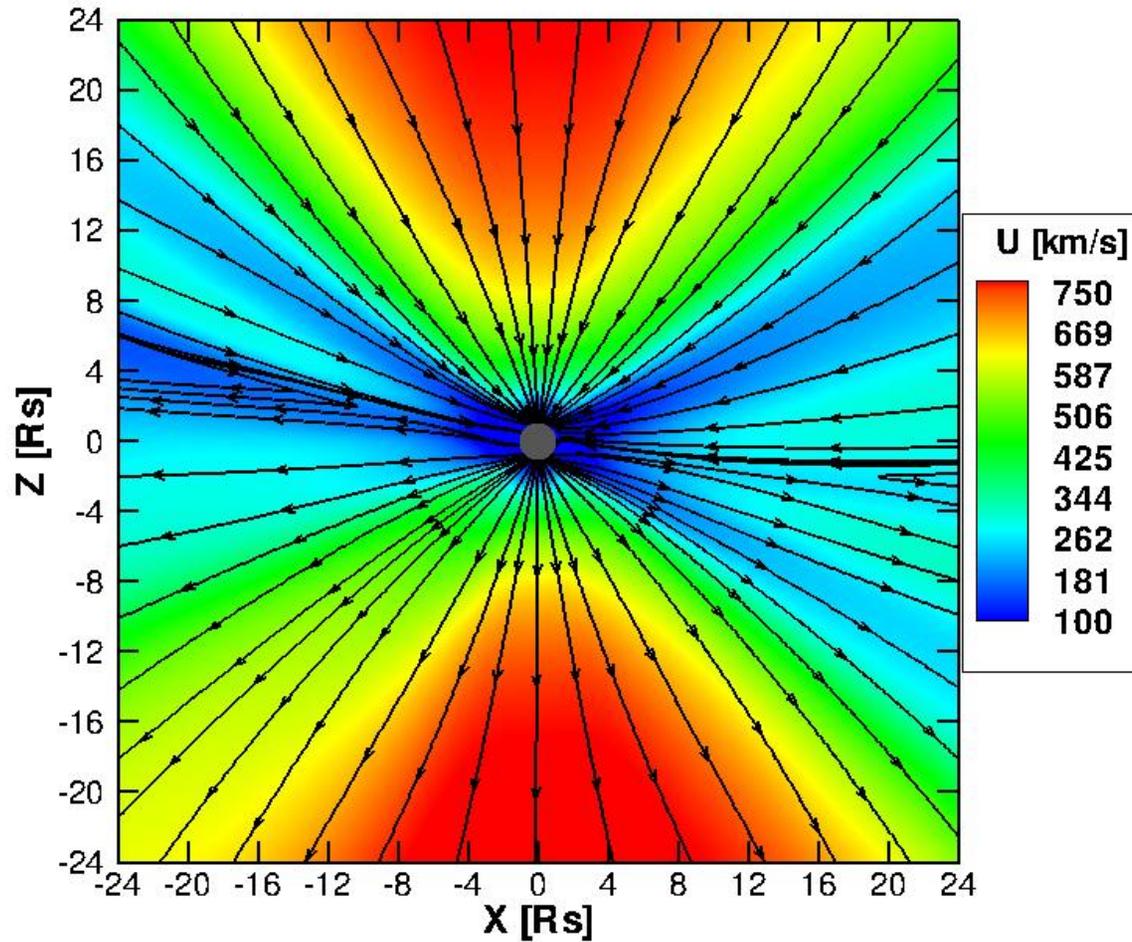
$$\gamma^\pm = \frac{(u \pm v_A)}{L}$$

$$L_i = C_{SW} \frac{\rho}{\sqrt{\left(\left(\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x_j}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial x_k}\right)^2\right)}}$$

Evans et al. 2010,



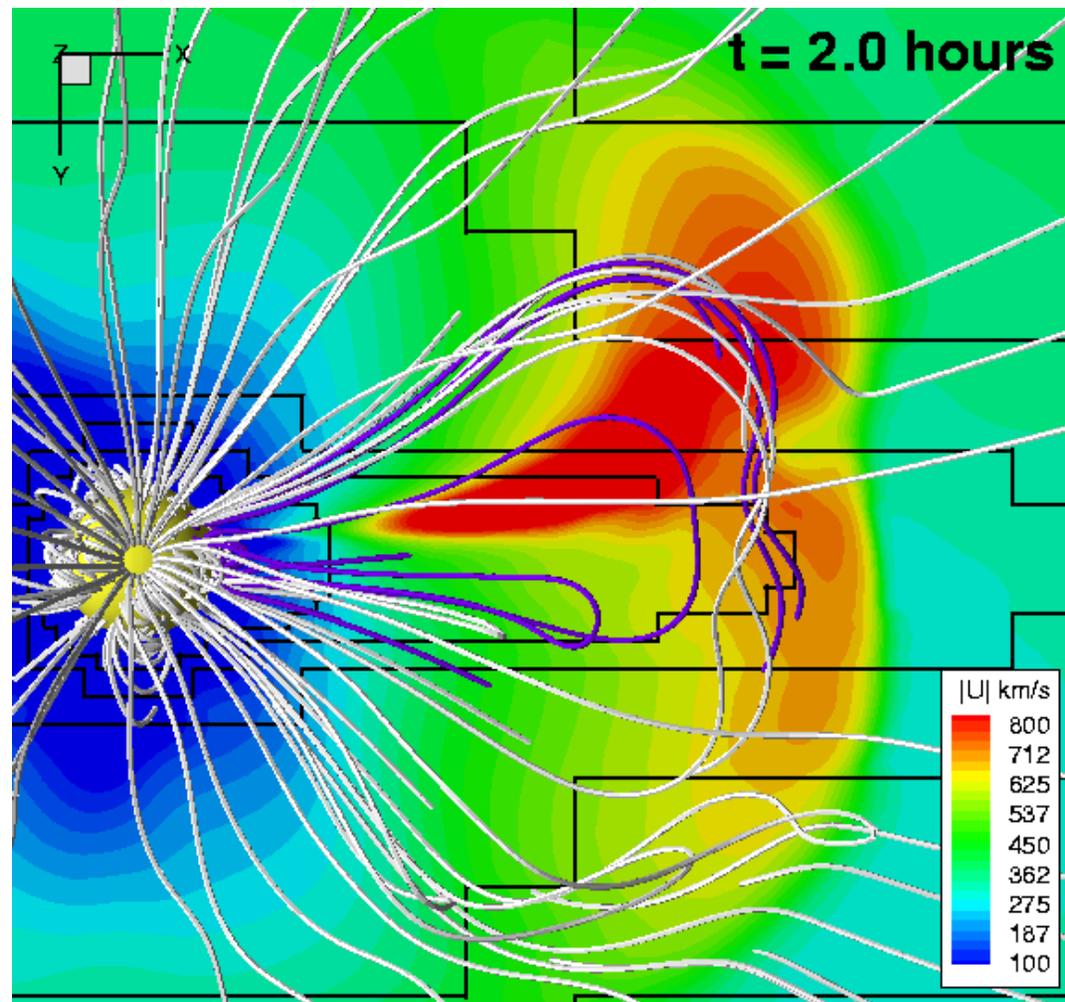
Surface Alfvén Wave-Driven Wind



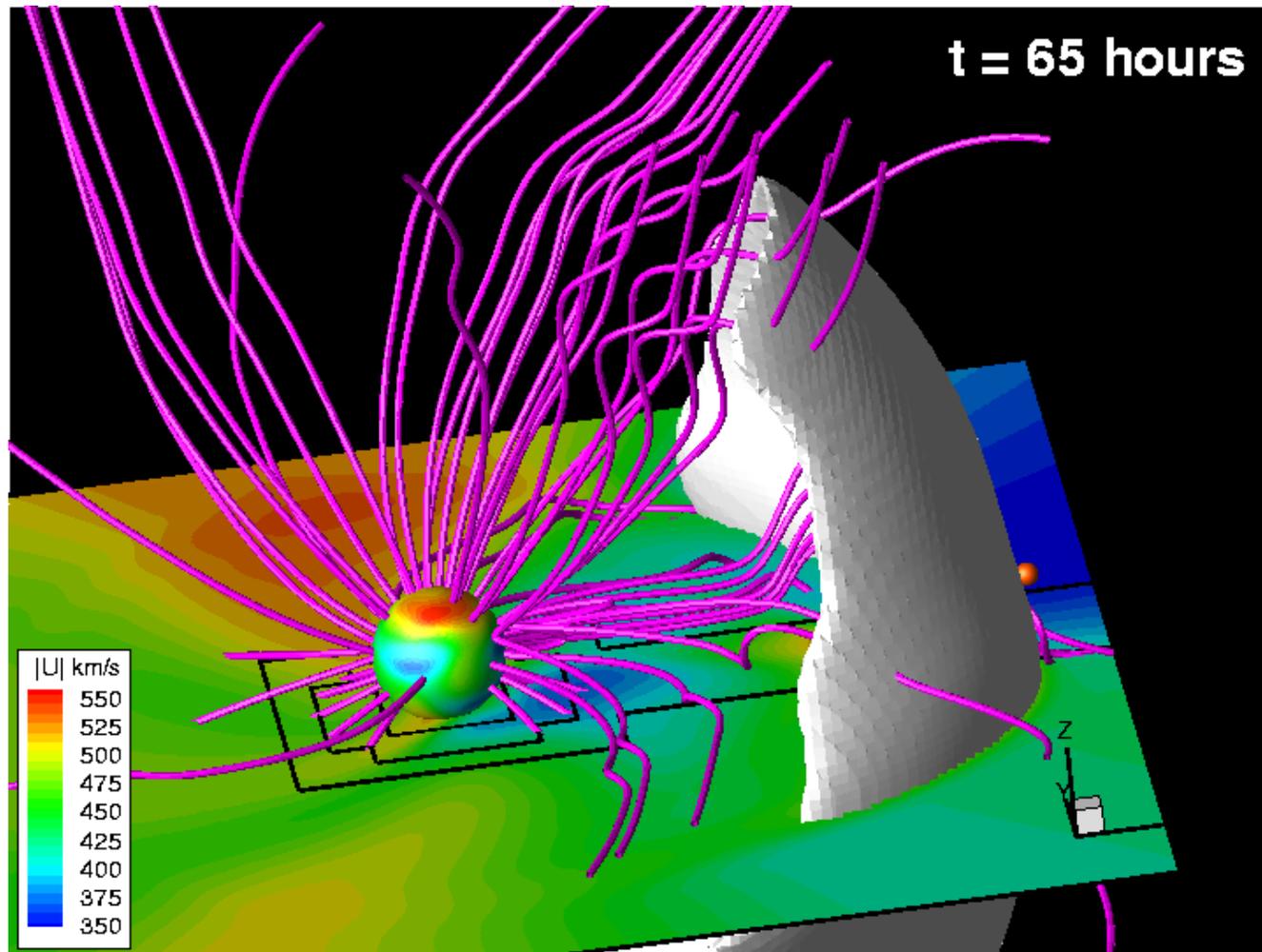
Evans et al. 2010

Future plans: Incorporate into a frequency-dependent model

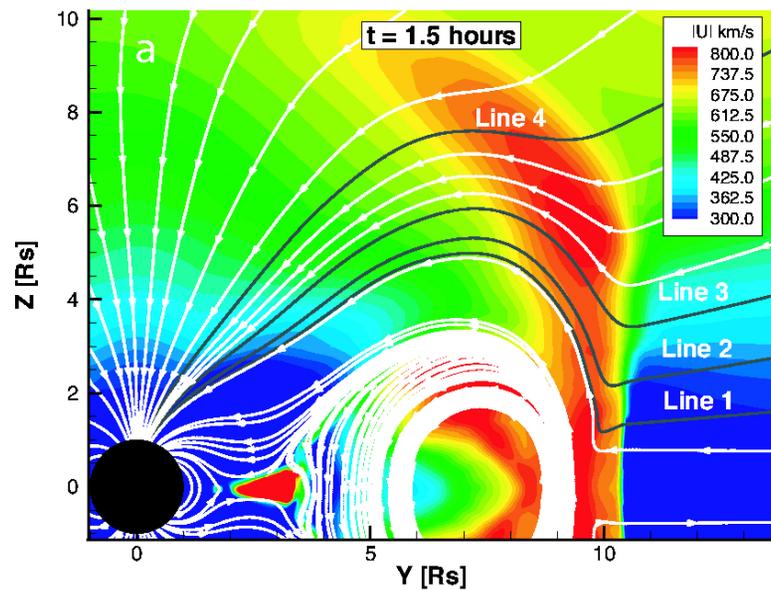
Two Hours After Eruption in the Solar Corona



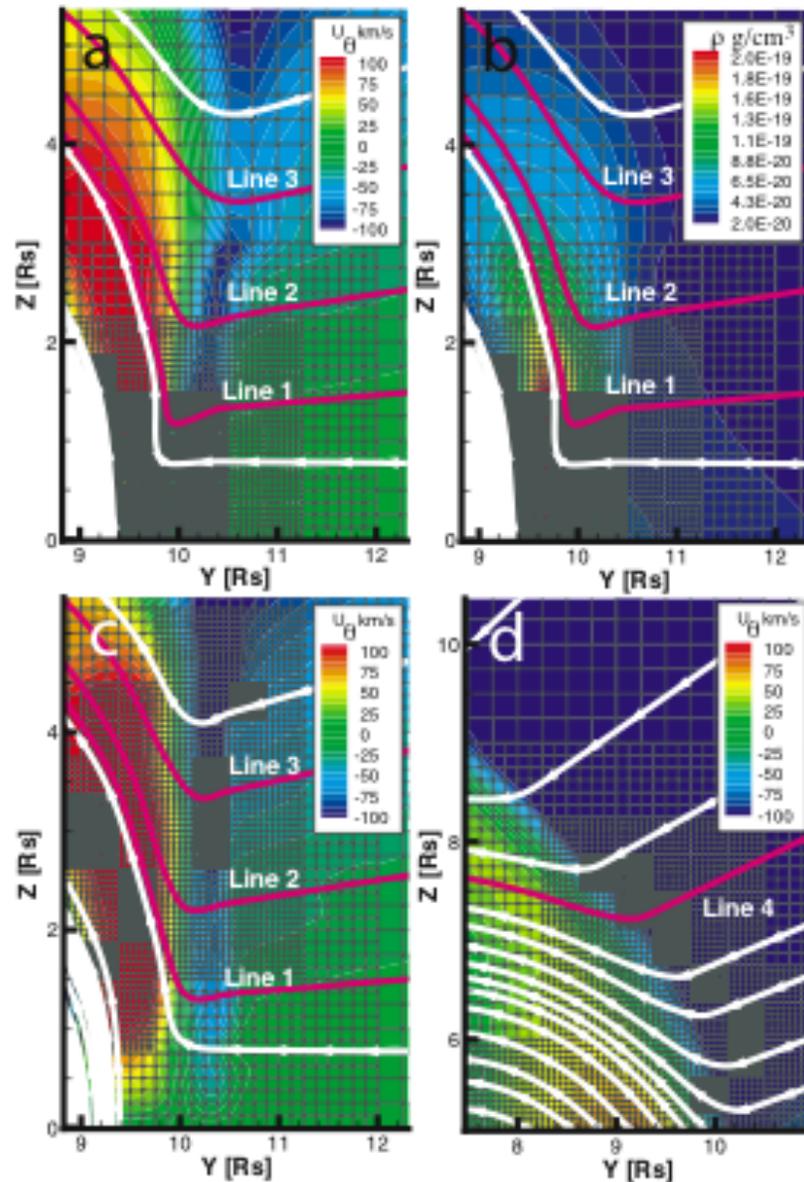
65 Hours After Eruption in the Inner Heliosphere



Fine Shock Structure

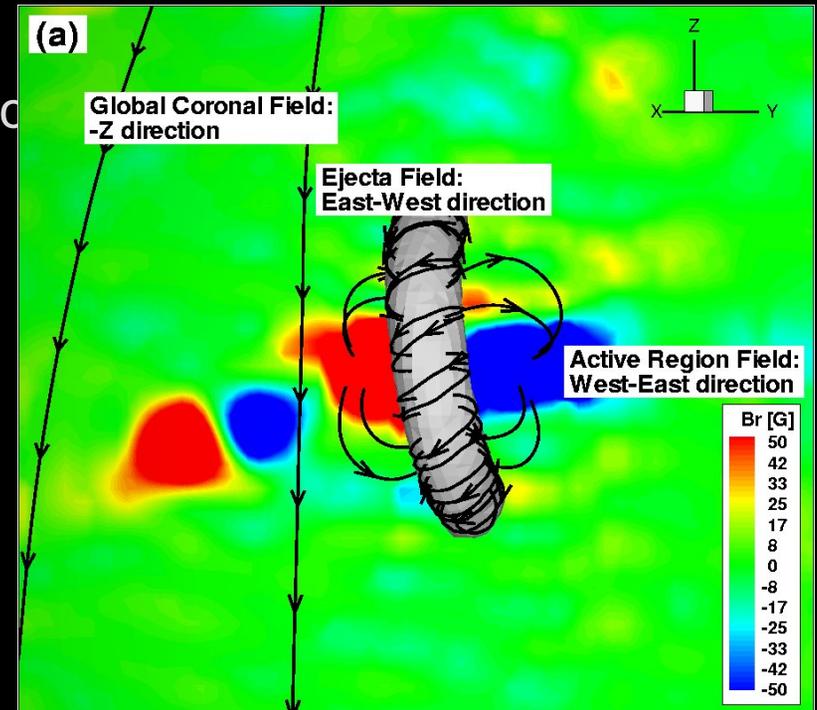


Manchester et al. 2004

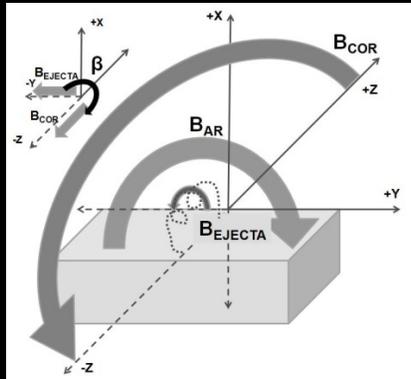


Flows In CME-Sheath

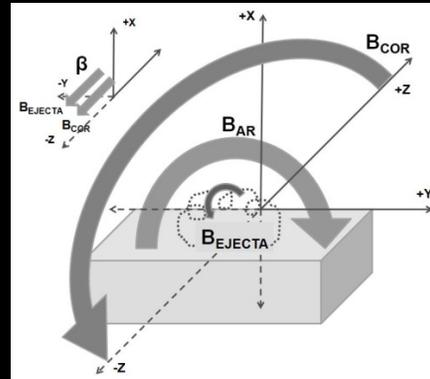
- Background solar wind:
 - 3D MHD Code BATS-R-US (U. of Michigan)
 - *Cohen et al. 2007* Polytropic Model
 - CR1922 (May 1997)
- CME Initiation
 - Modified Titov-Demoulin FR
 - Torus line current only
 - 3 Orientations of B_{ejecta}
 - 2 along neutral line; 1 across
 - Same initial free energy



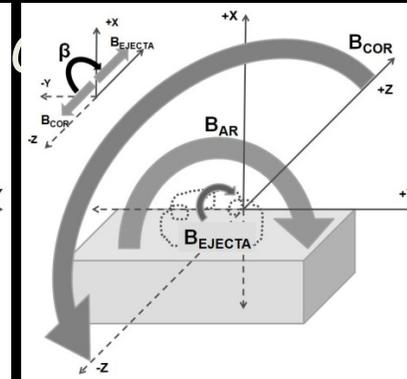
Case



Case

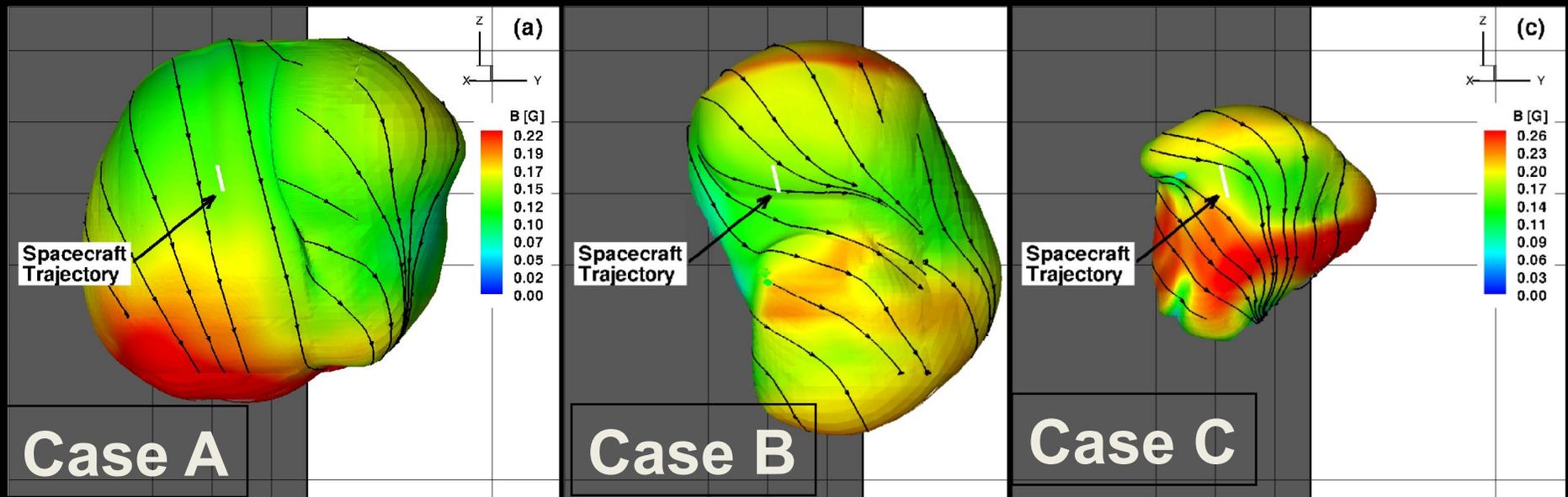


Case



CME-Pause

- Viewpoint: looking back towards Sun



*Evans, Opher & Gombosi ApJ
2010*

→ We expect the CME-sheath flows to deflect around the pause differently

1. Flow deflection angle along a velocity streamline

$$\theta_F = \tan^{-1}(V_N/V_T) \text{ (RTN coordinates)}$$

	θ_F at CME-shock	θ_F at CME-pause
Case A	-86°	-66°
Case B	-82°	-47°
Case C	-77°	35°

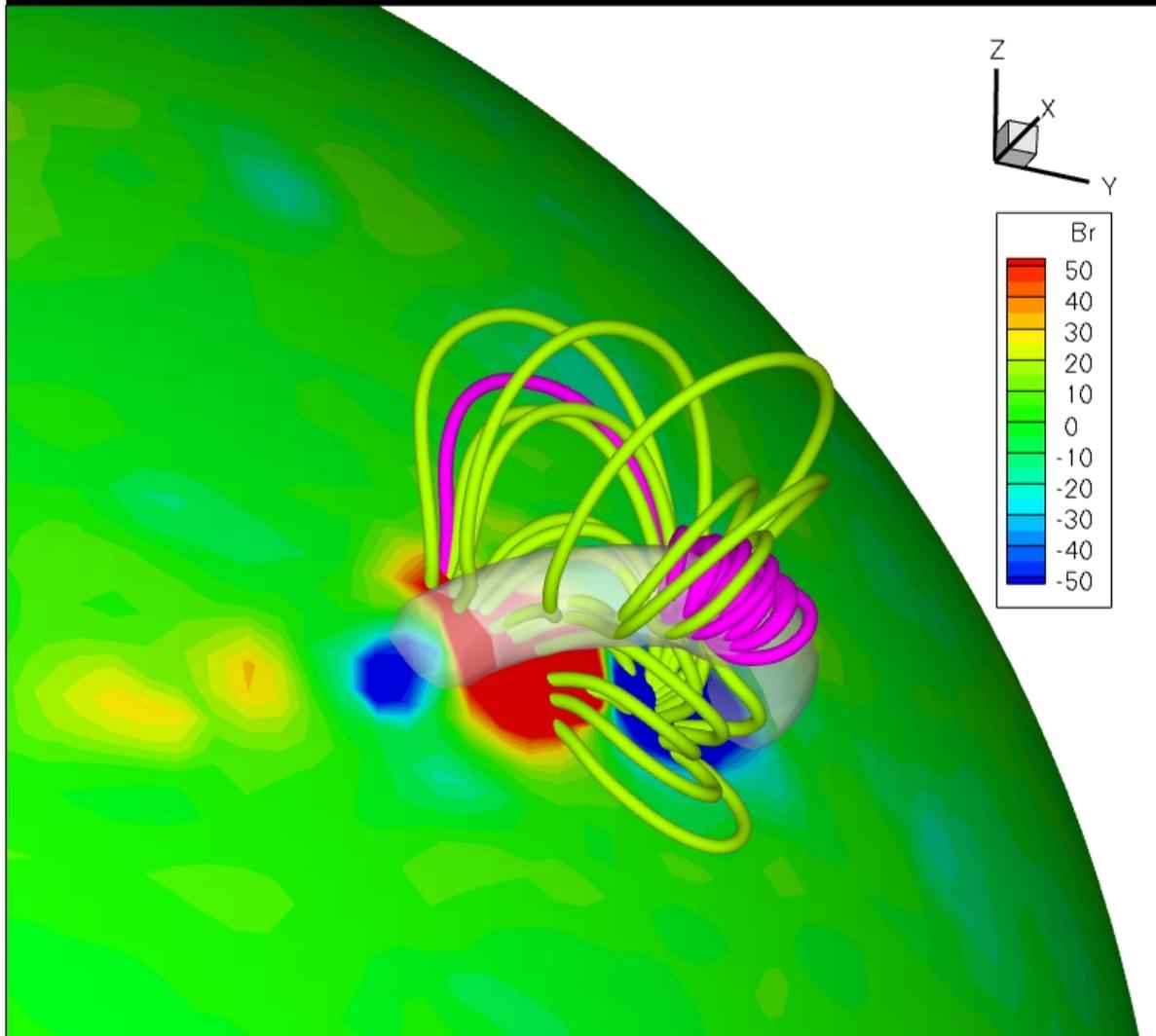
θ_F is different by 15-78° at the CME-pause

2. Flow deflection angle evolution

Rotation slows to $<2^\circ/R_\odot$ when $R_{\text{shock}}=6 R_\odot$
(for cases A & C)

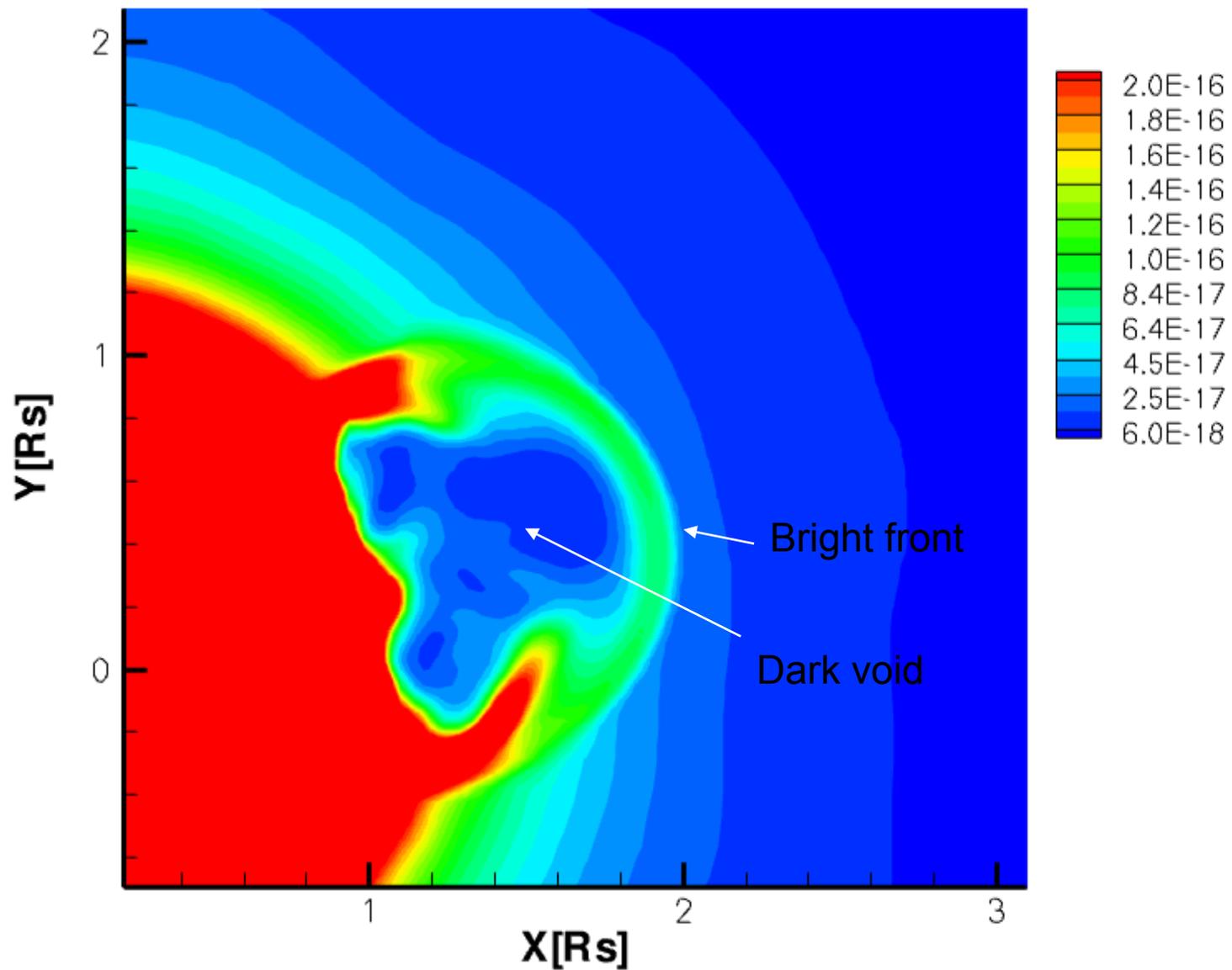
Flows in the CME sheath are sensitive to B_{ejecta} , and can be used as a diagnostic for its orientation

Evolution of a Flux Rope in the Lower Corona



Liu et al. ApJ
(2008)

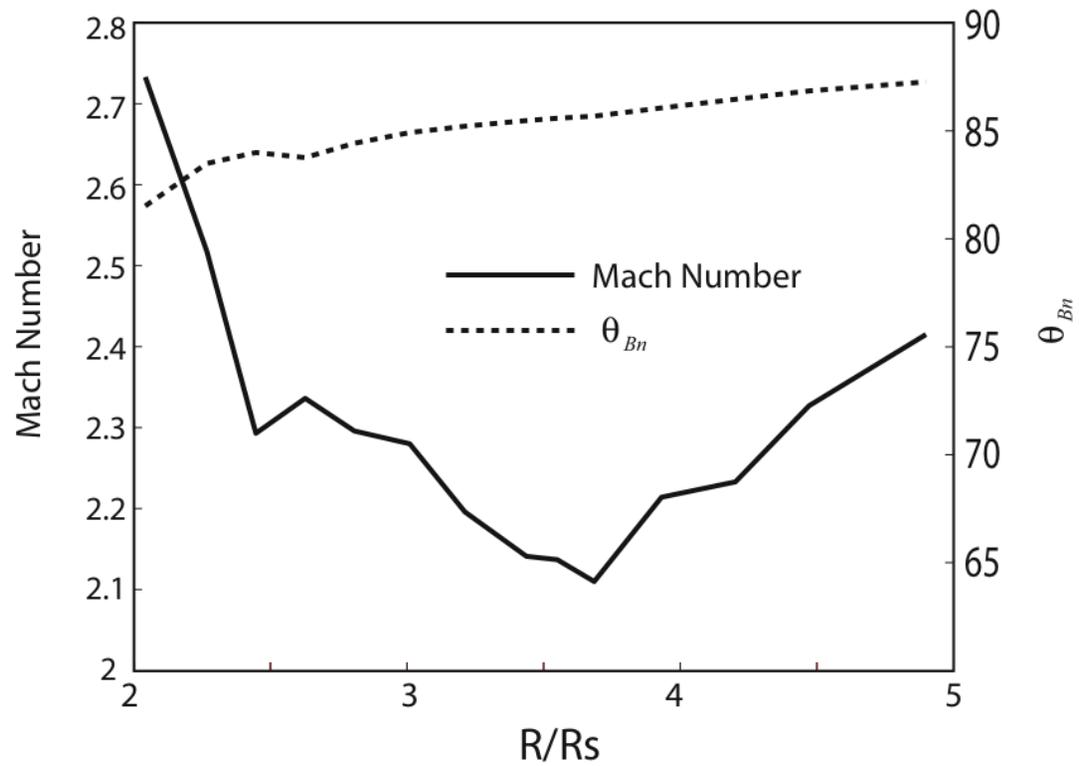
Bright Front and Dark Void



2D slice at $Z=0.11$

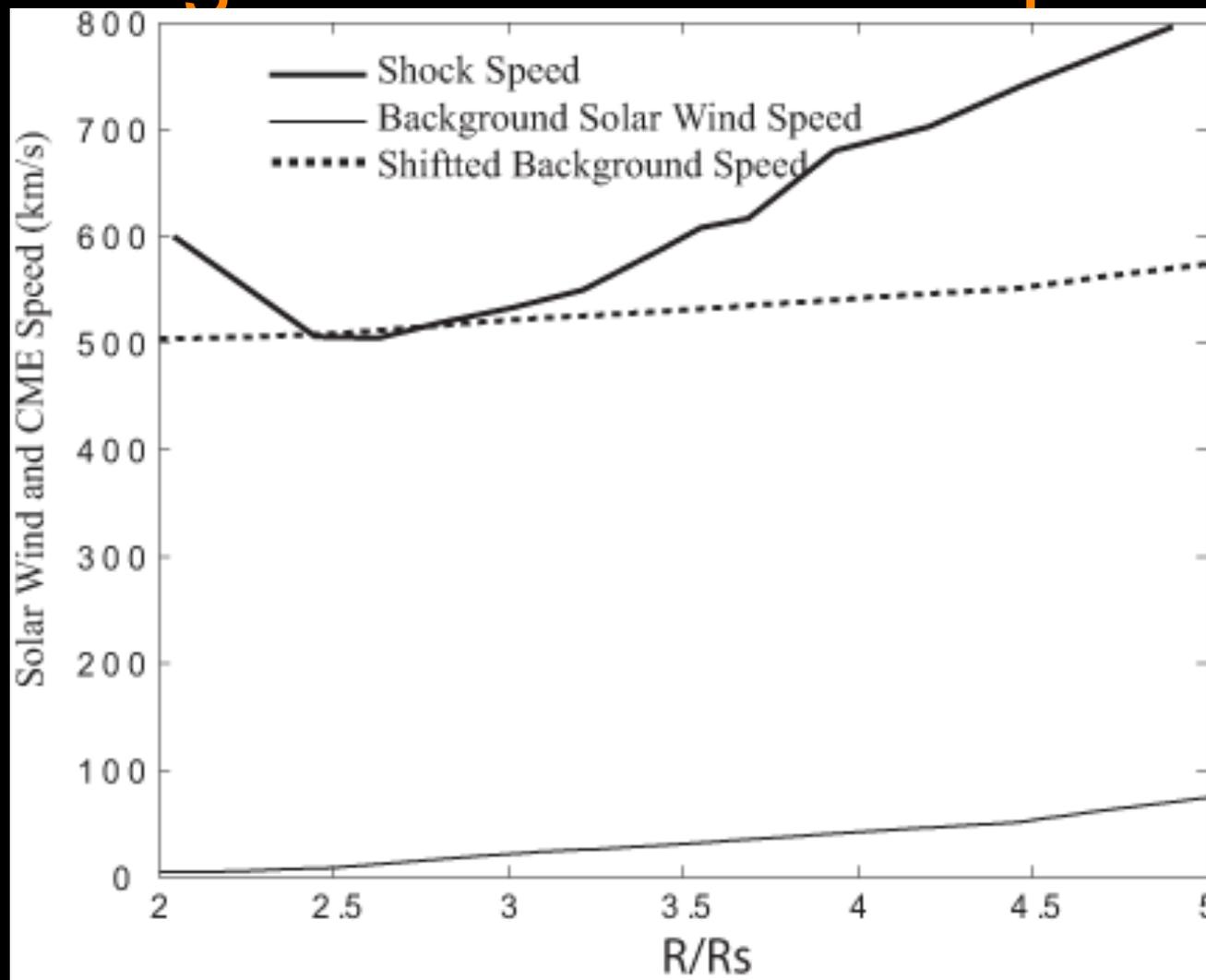
$t=10$ minutes

CME: near the nose: Quasi-Parallel Shocks

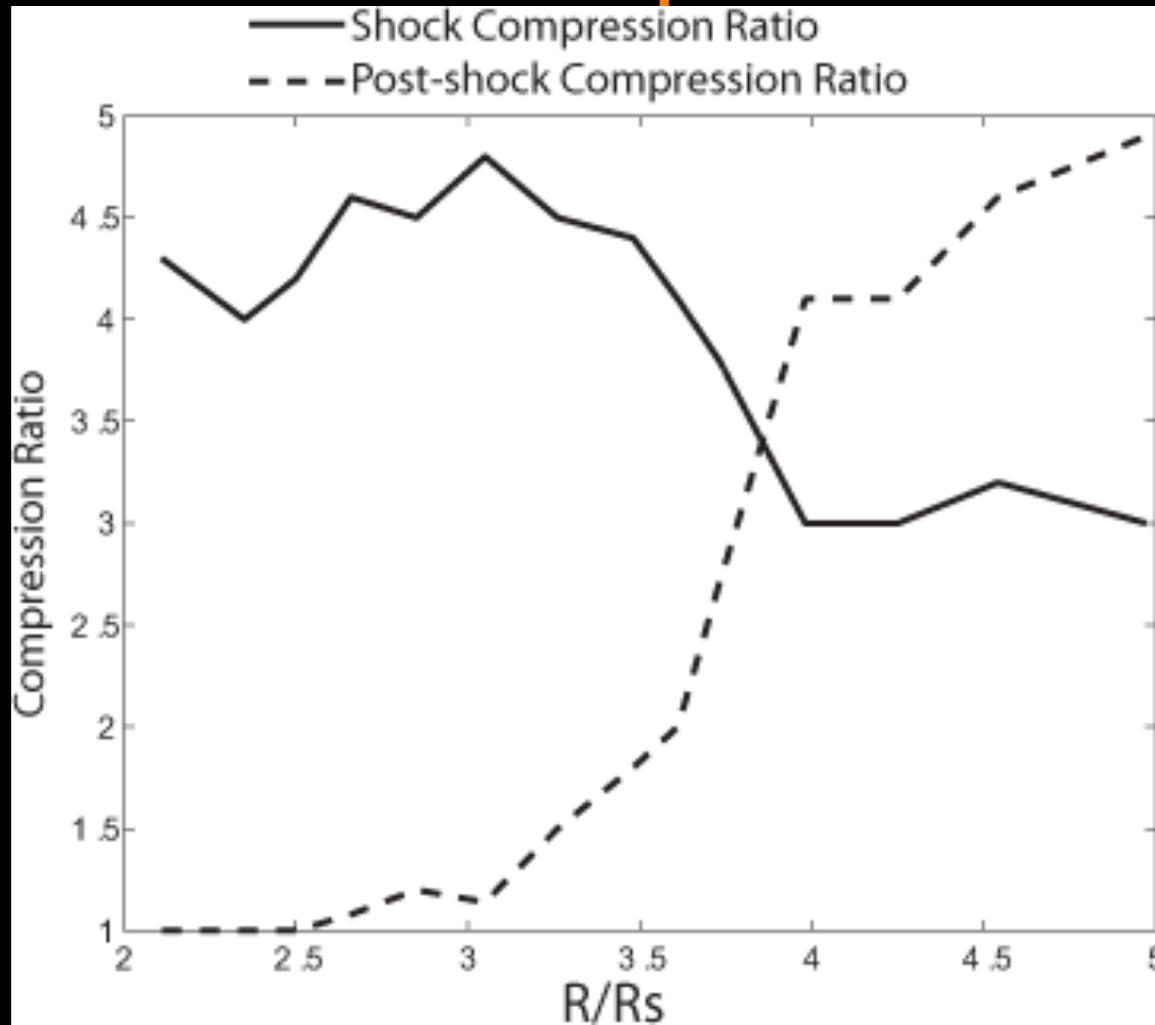


Liu et al. ApJ 2008

Shock Speed and the background solar wind speed

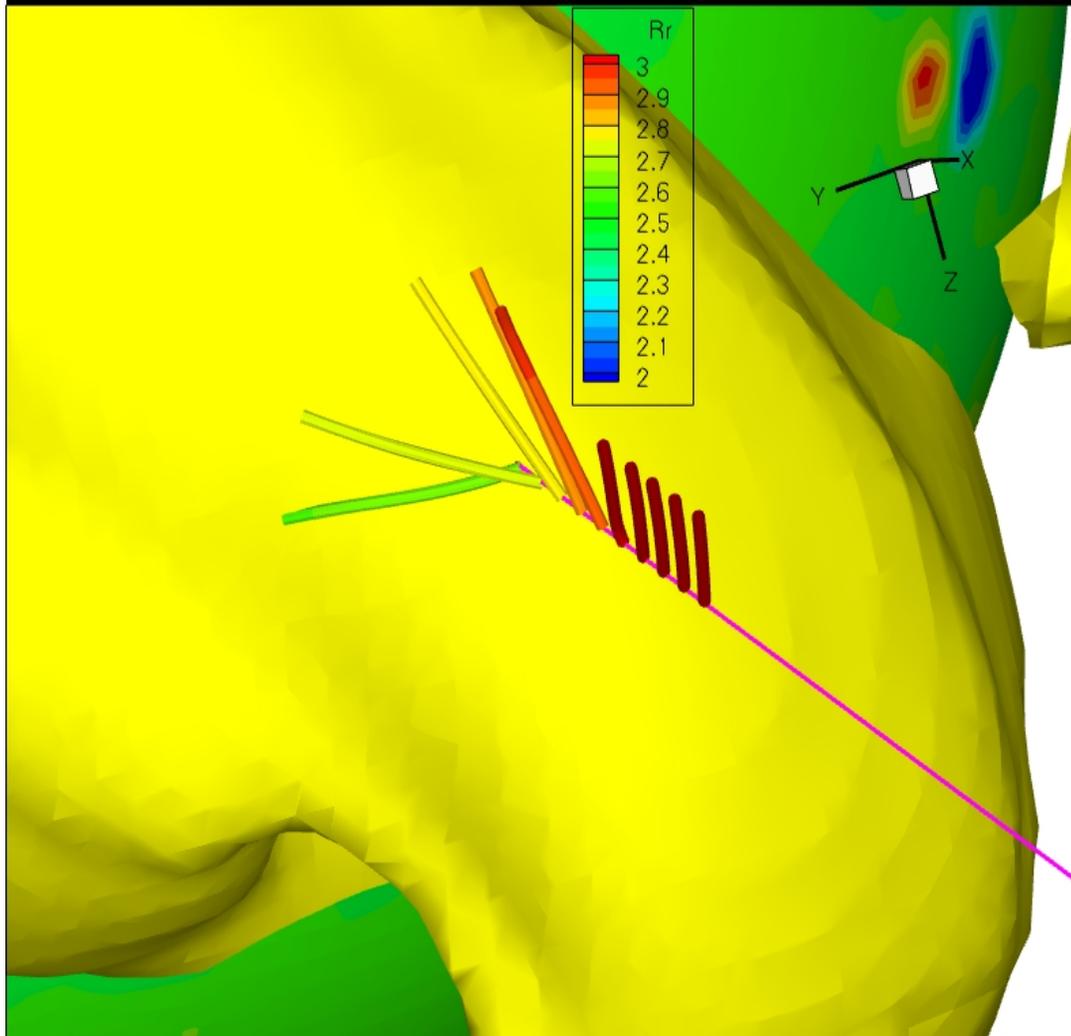


Shock and Post Shock Compression Ratio



The post shock
acceleration
exists in 3-5 R_s

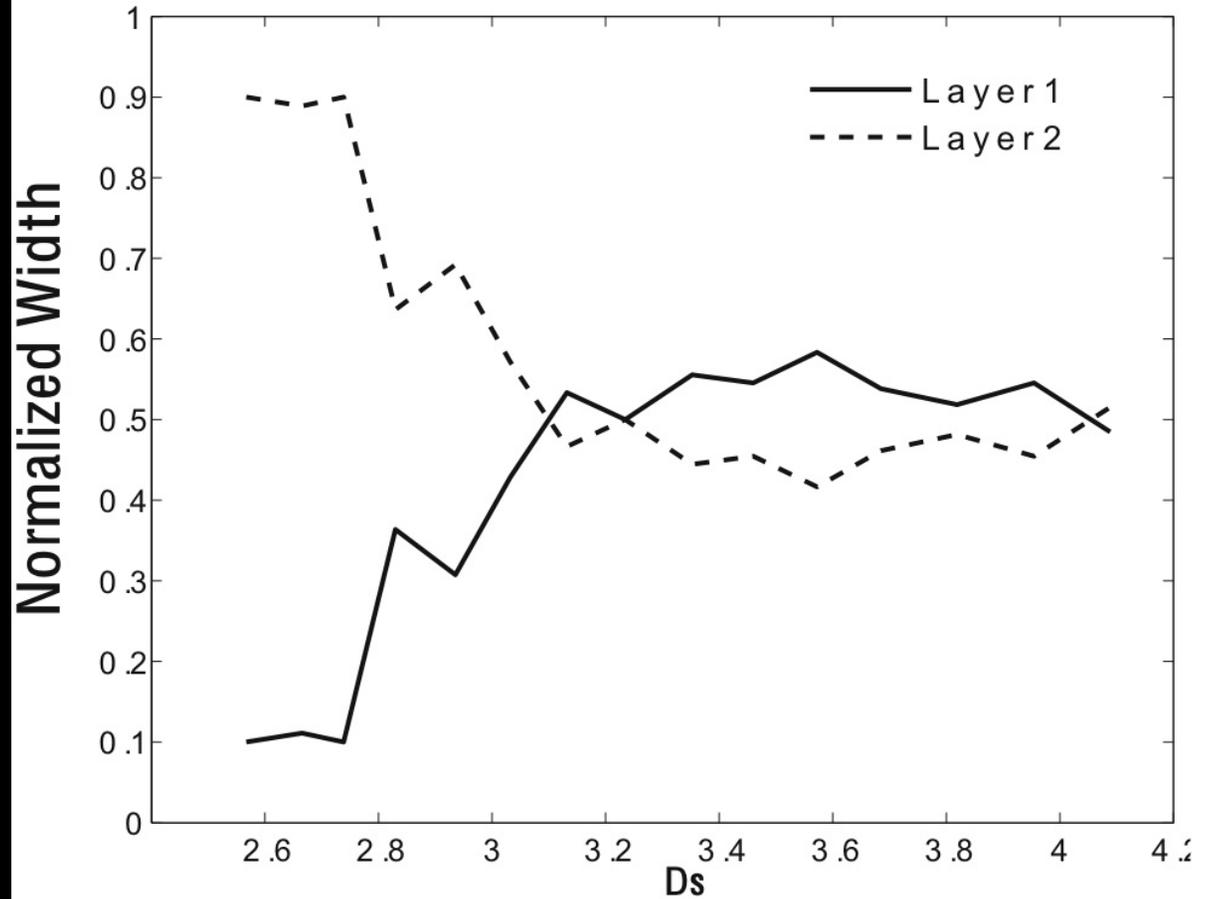
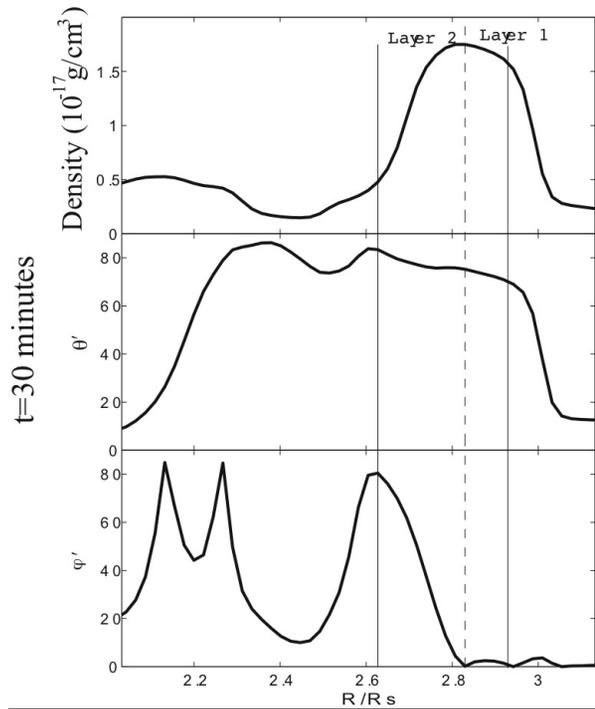
Evolution of Flows, Field Lines in CME sheath



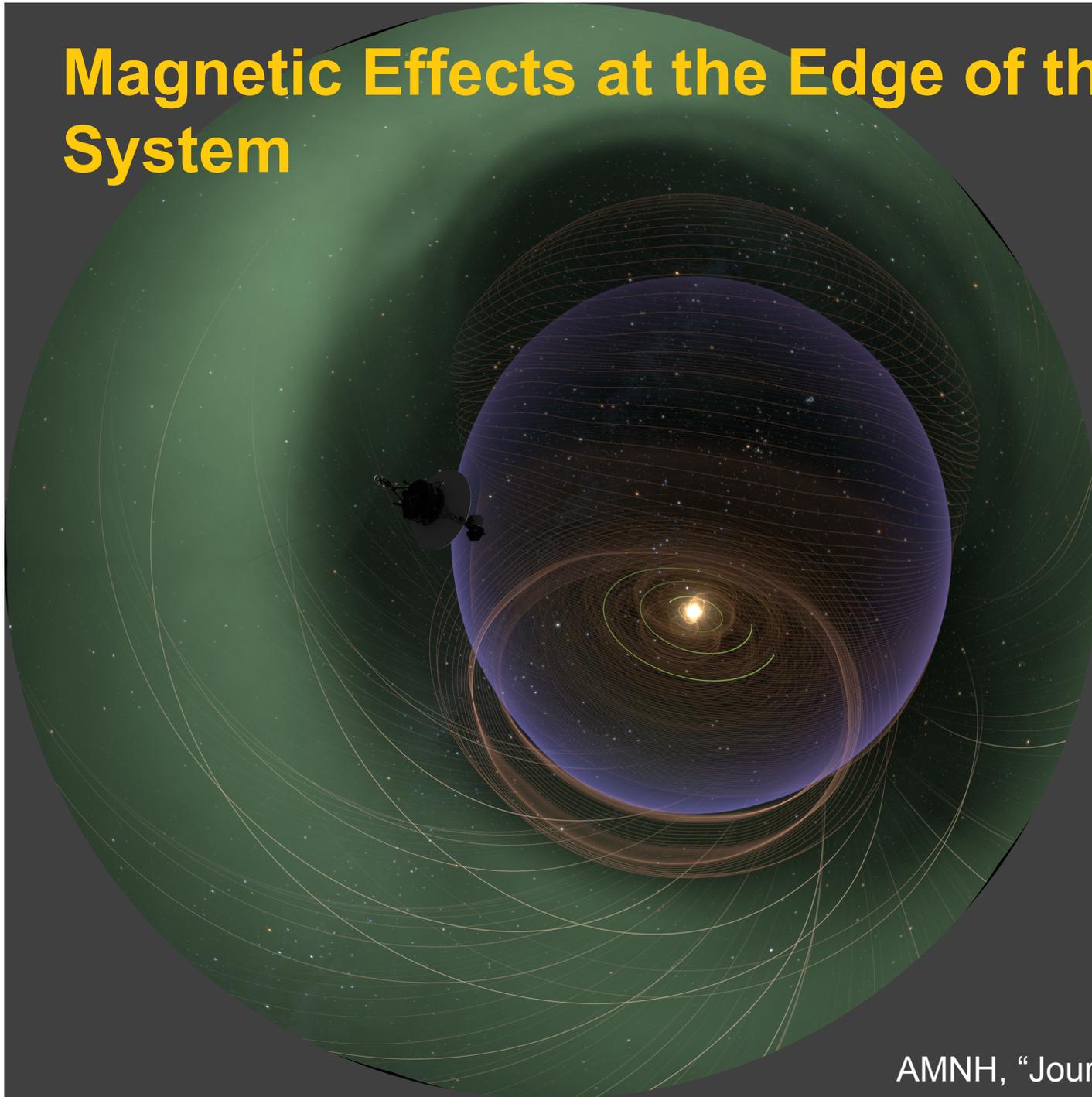
Magnetic Field Lines
Rotation

Liu et al. A&A 2010

Behavior of the Magnetic Field in the Sheath



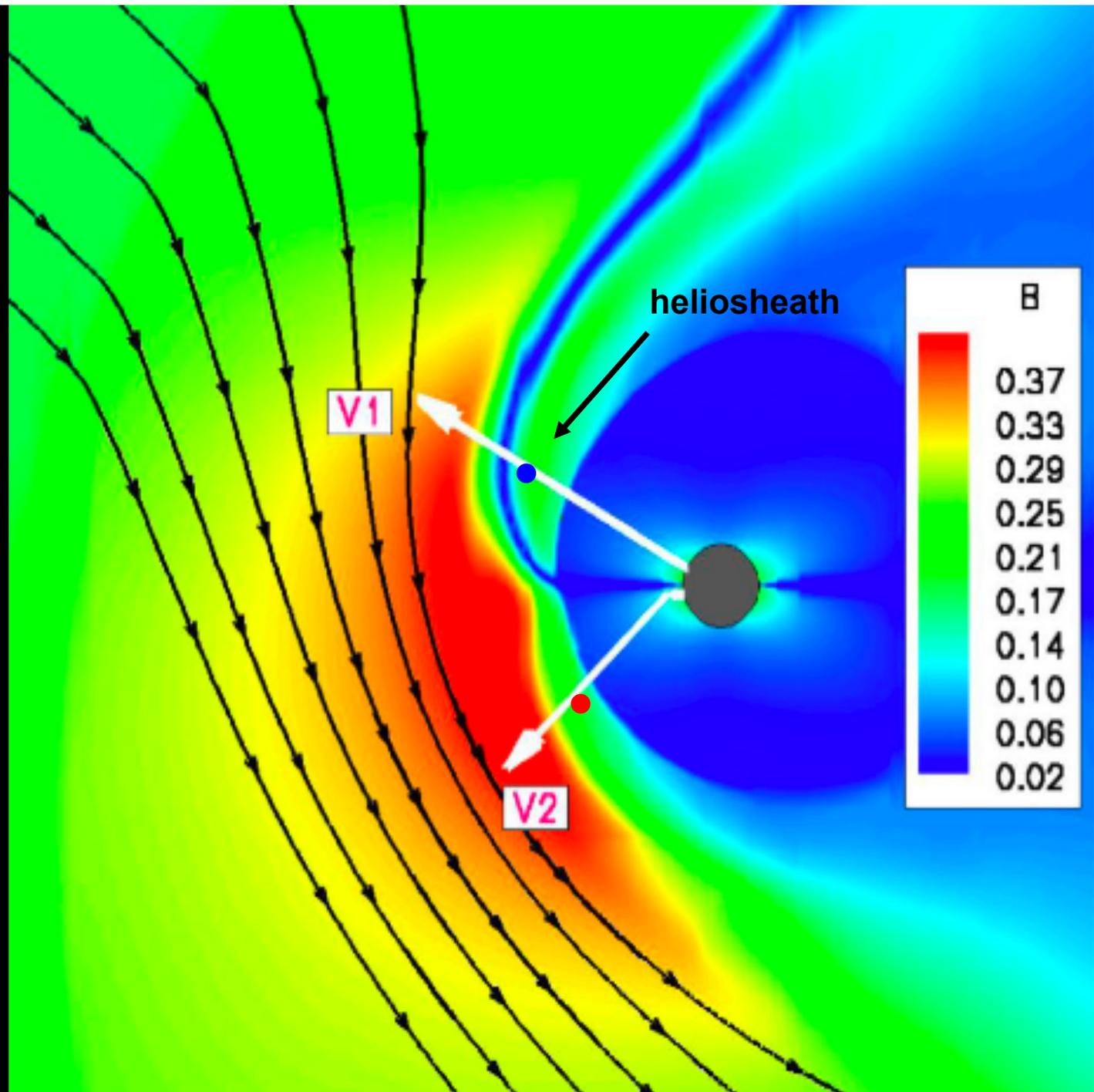
Magnetic Effects at the Edge of the Solar System



AMNH, "Journey to the Stars", 2009

V1 is beyond
100 AU at 34.1°
(latitude) and
 173° (longitude)
(HGI coord).

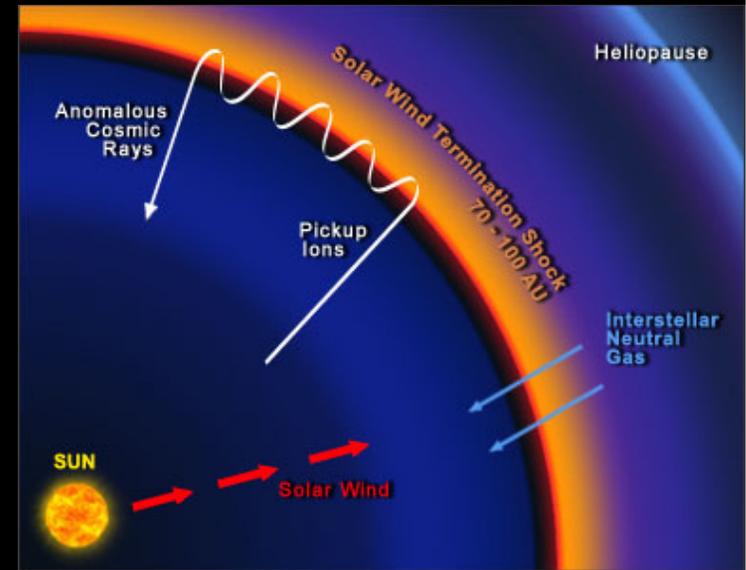
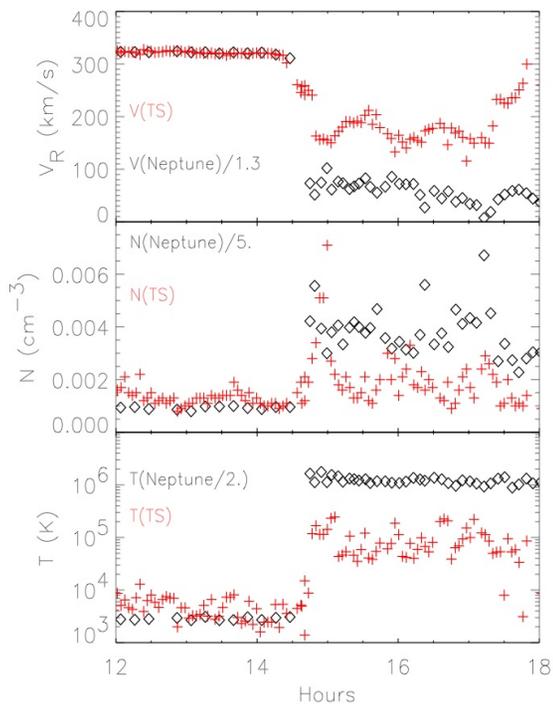
V2 is beyond 90
AU at -26.2°
(latitude) and
 216° (longitude)



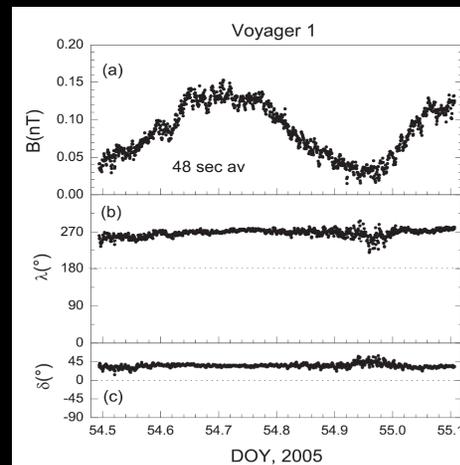
Paradigm Shift

Importance of tails

Particle acceleration



Shock is colder than expected



No evidence of the source of anomalous cosmic rays

Magnetic holes

Bulaga et al. 2007

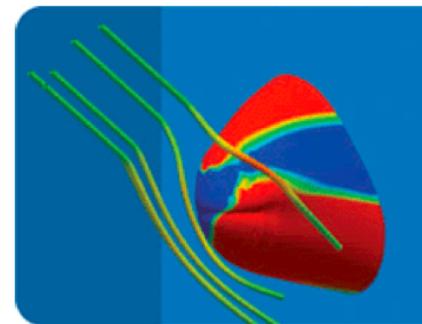
Heliospheric Asymmetries

- Position of the Termination Shock at V1 and V2
- Particle Data: Streaming Ions from the shock (TSPs)
- Radio Data: 2-3kHz
- Flows in the Heliosheath at V2

Opher, et al *ApJL* 2006
Opher et al. *Science* 2007
Opher et al *Nature* 2009
Prested et al.*JGR* 2010

Science 11 May 2007:
Vol. 316. no. 5826, p. 793
DOI: 10.1126/science.316.5826.793a

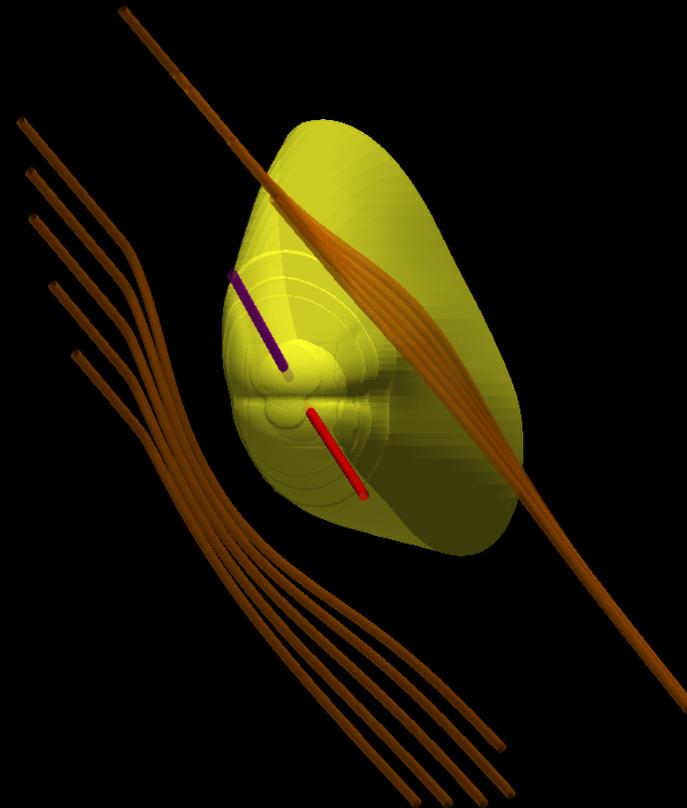
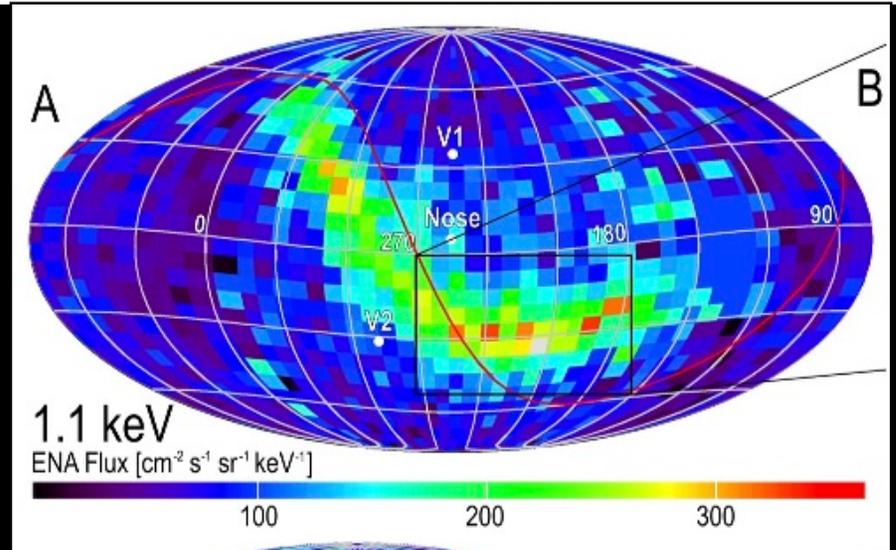
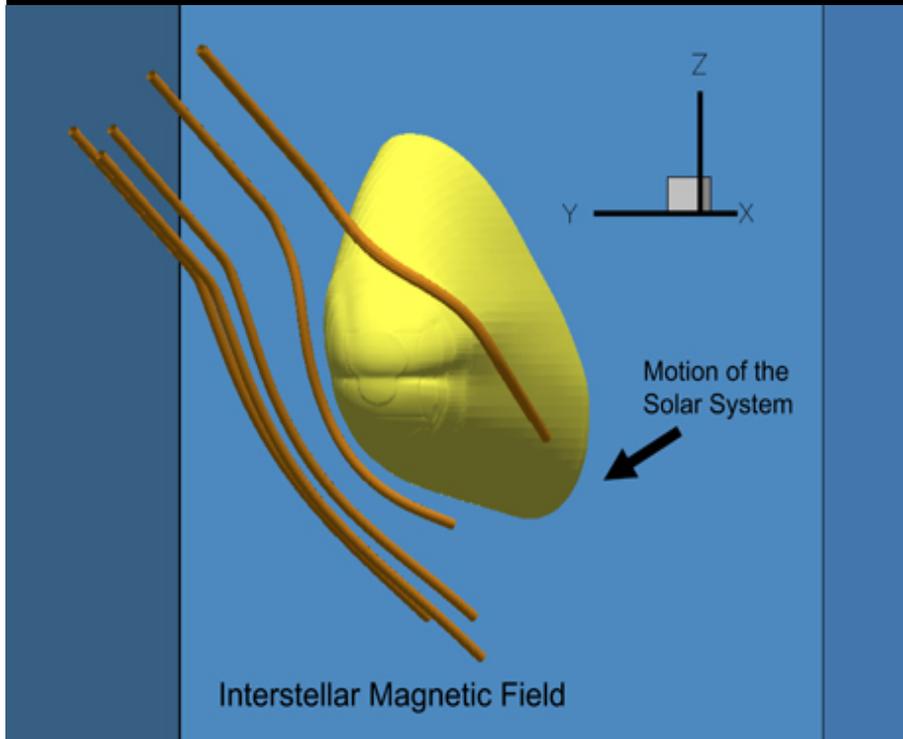
THIS WEEK IN *SCIENCE*



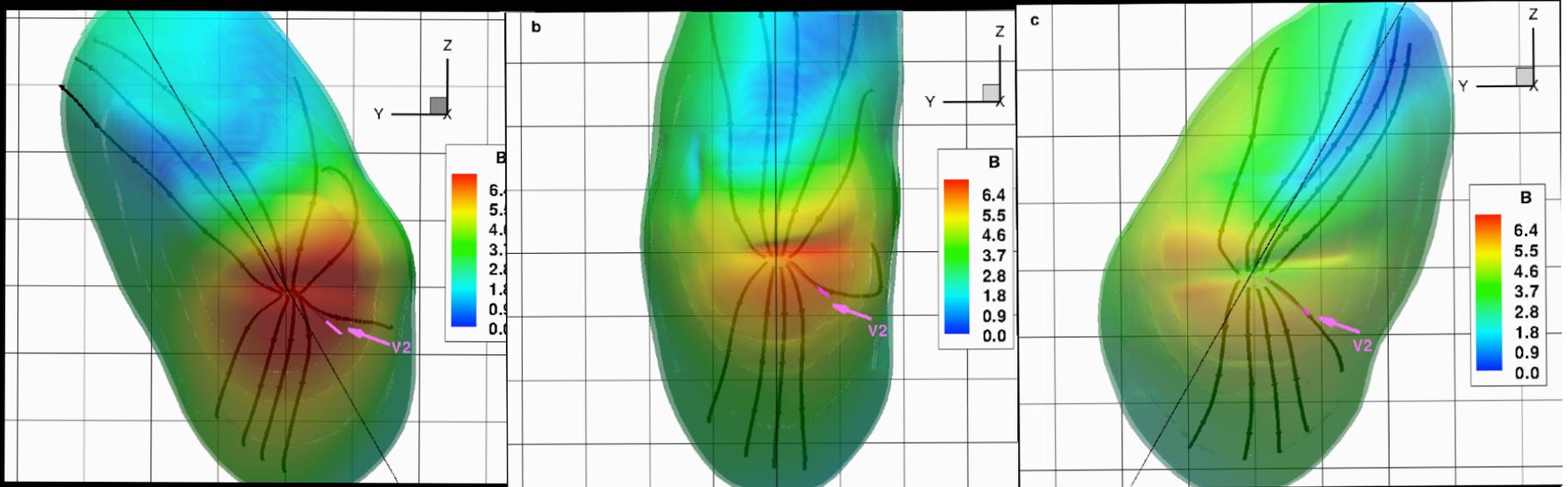
The two Voyag
a series of radi
beyond the hel
extent of the s
bubble that en
These radio so
from the inters
interplanetary
heliopause, bu
required assun
direction of the
field in this re

the local field introduces asymmetries that affect the lo
emission and the streaming direction of ions from the t
the solar wind. Others have assumed that the magnetic
the galactic plane, as it is on large scales in the Milky M

Importance of Magnetic Field



Heliosheath Flows

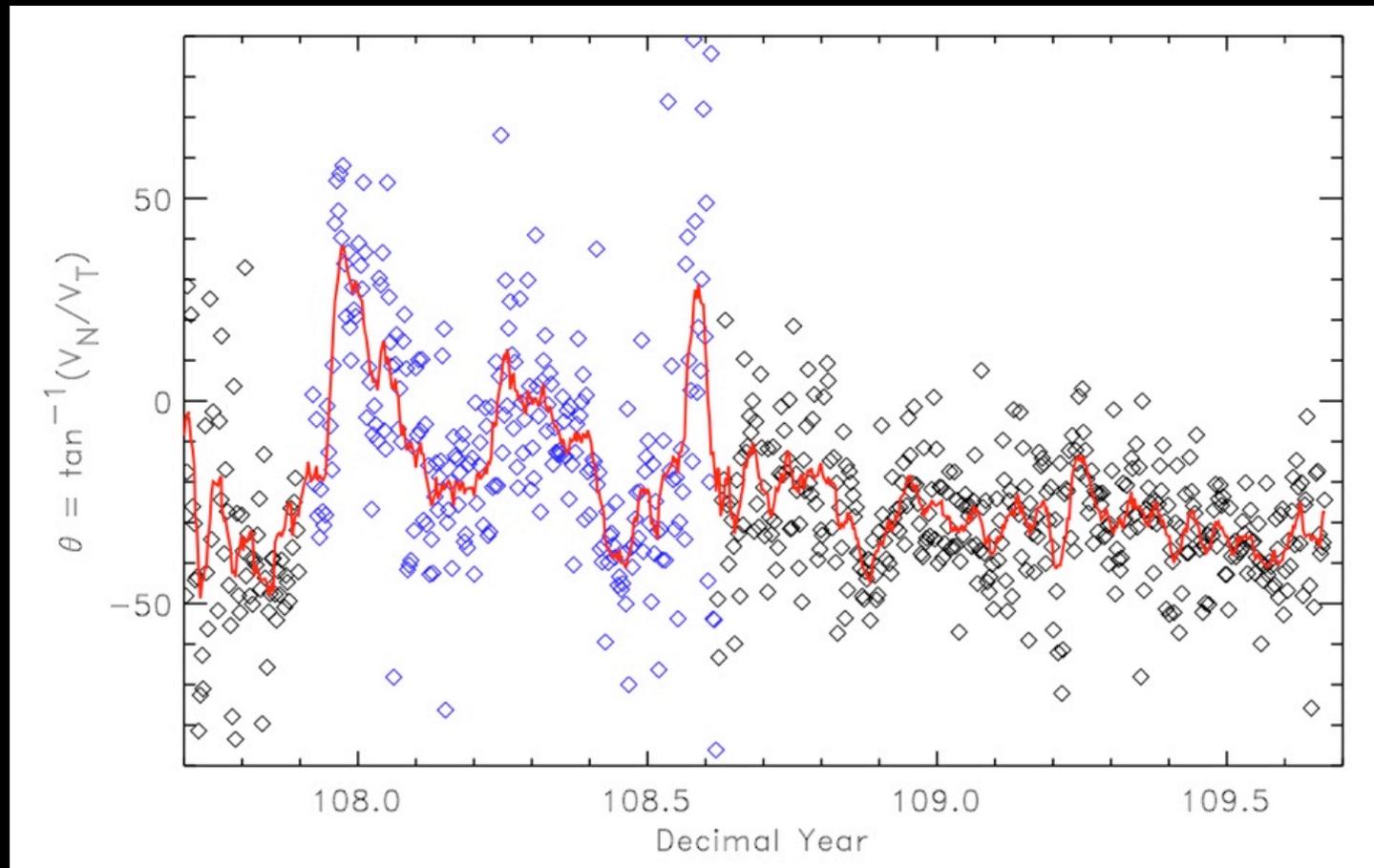


Subsonic flows sensitive to the boundary ahead

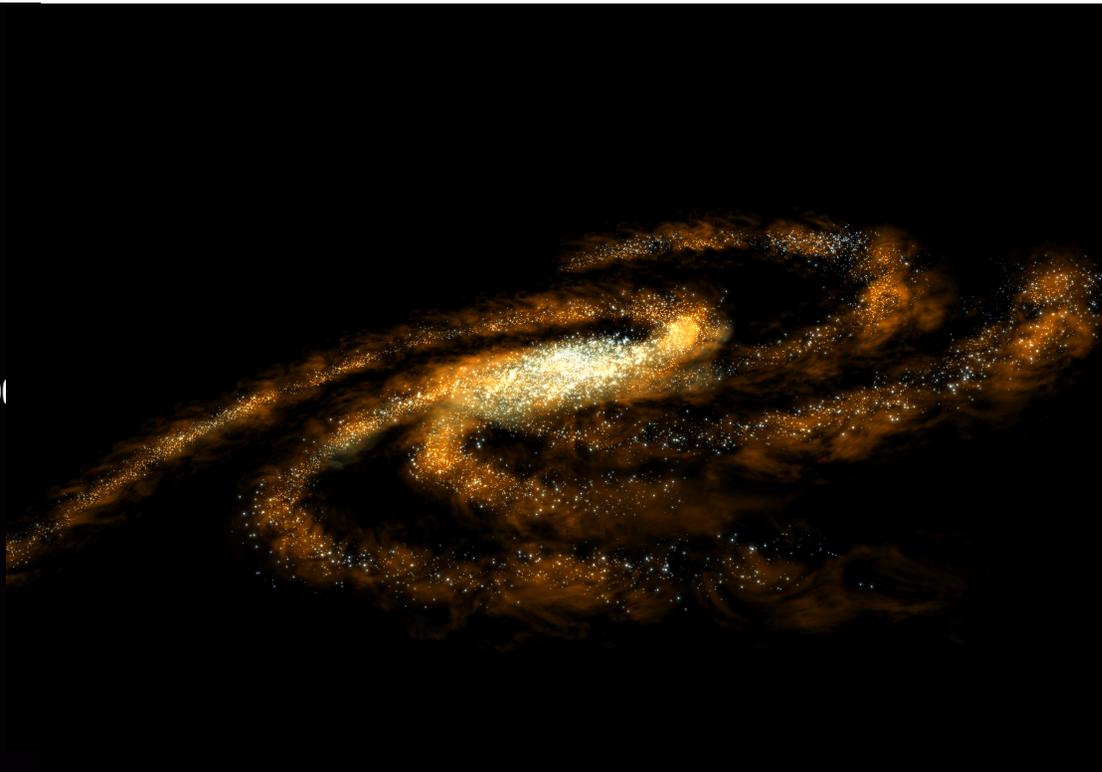
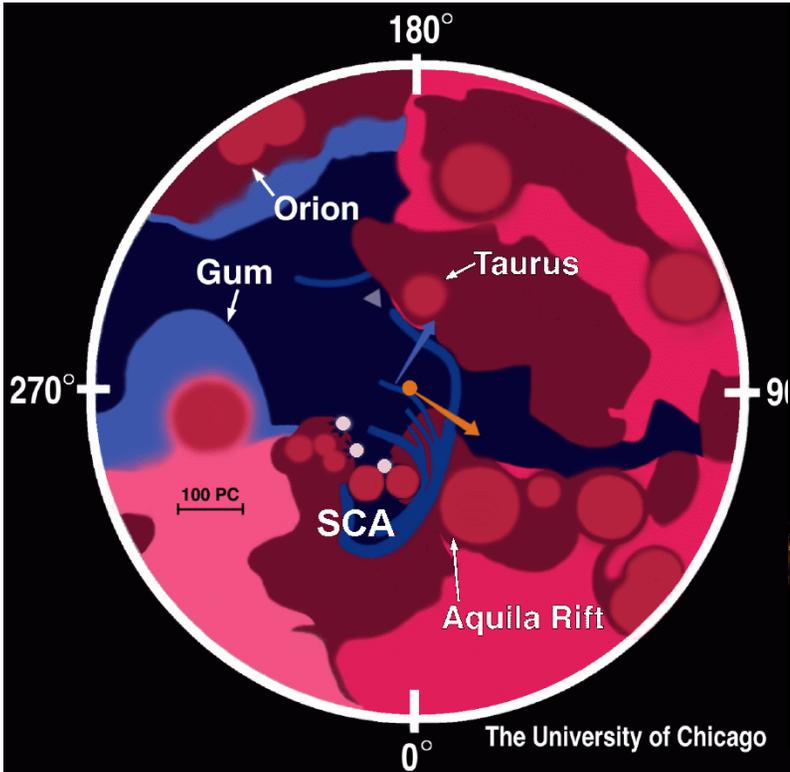
Opher et al. *Nature* (2009)

Model with ionized+neutral H (5 fluid model)

The flow angle $\theta = \tan^{-1}(V_N/V_T)$ in the Heliosheath from day 277 of 2007 to day 245 of 2009



The period between 2007.95 and 2008.62 (blue points) seems to be dominated by transients



Credit: D. Friesch

This suggests that the interstellar magnetic field in the Local Interstellar Cloud differs from a larger-scale Interstellar magnetic field

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VOYAGER MAKES AN INTERSTELLAR DISCOVERY

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December 23, 2009: The solar system is passing through an interstellar cloud that physics says should not exist. In the Dec. 24th issue of *Nature*, a team of scientists reveal how NASA's *Voyager* spacecraft have solved the mystery.

"Using data from *Voyager*, we have discovered a strong magnetic field just outside the solar system," explains lead author Merav Opher, a NASA Heliophysics Guest Investigator from George Mason University. "This magnetic field holds the interstellar cloud together and solves the long-standing puzzle of how it can exist at all."

Right: *Voyager* flies through the outer bounds of the heliosphere en route to interstellar space. A strong magnetic field reported by Opher et al in the Dec. 24, 2009, issue of *Nature* is delineated in yellow. Image copyright 2009, The American Museum of Natural History. [Larger image](#)

The discovery has implications for the future when the solar system will eventually bump into other, similar clouds in our arm of the Milky Way galaxy.

Astronomers call the cloud we're plowing into now the Local Interstellar Cloud or

More Open Questions

Tilted Heliospheric Current Sheet

Role of reconnection; turbulence, solar cycles

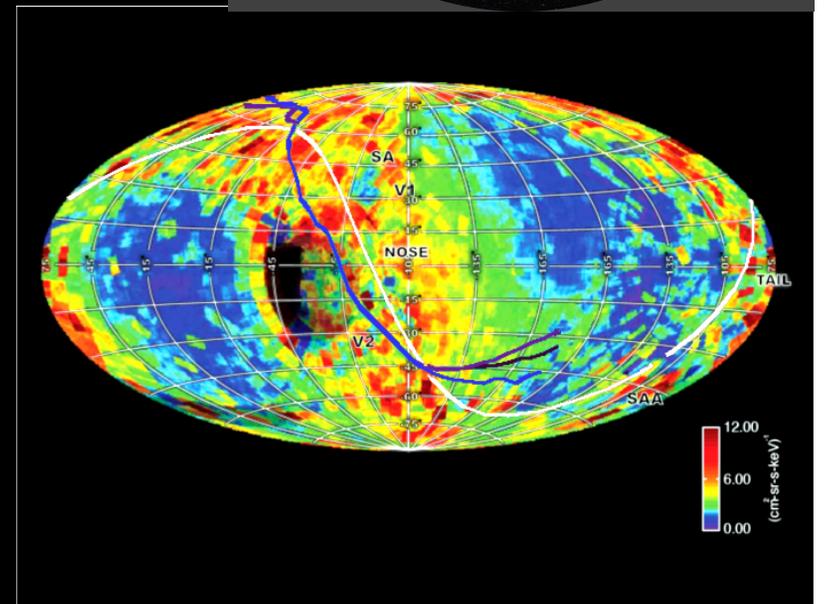
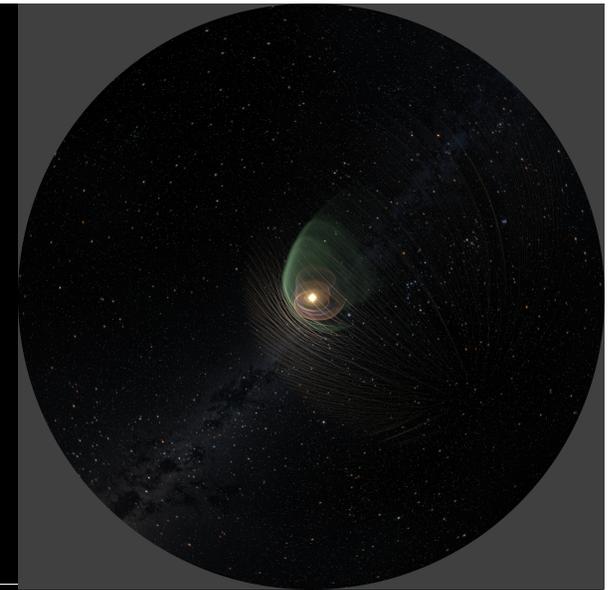
(Opher, Drake, Swisdak 2010)

Acceleration of particles

Role of tails (pickup ions)

Kinetic neutrals-MHD

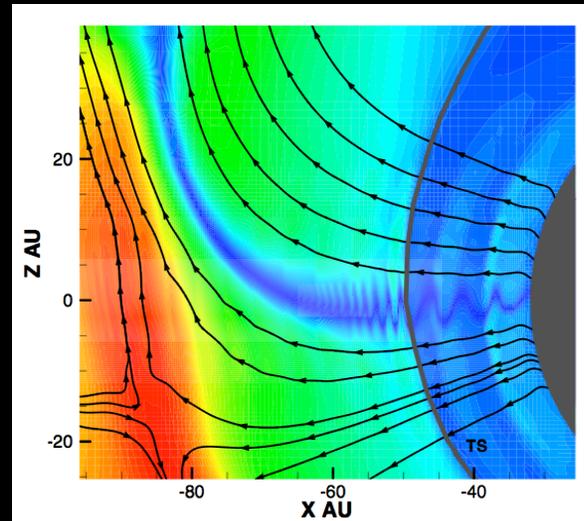
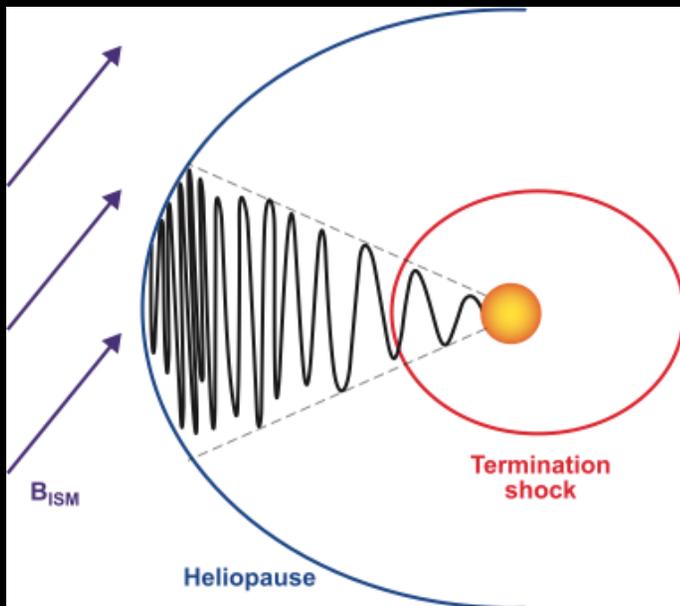
(Alouani, Opher, Izmodenov 2010)



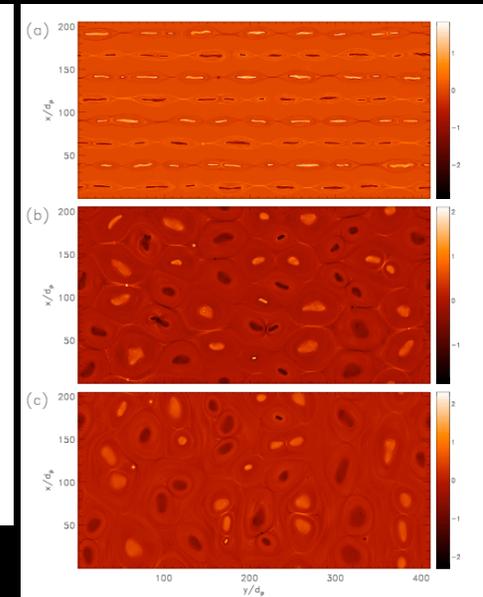
Krimigis et al.

Dissipation of the sectored heliospheric magnetic field: a mechanism for the generation of ACRS

Drake, Opher, Swisdak, *ApJ* 2009; Lazarian & Opher *ApJ* 2009



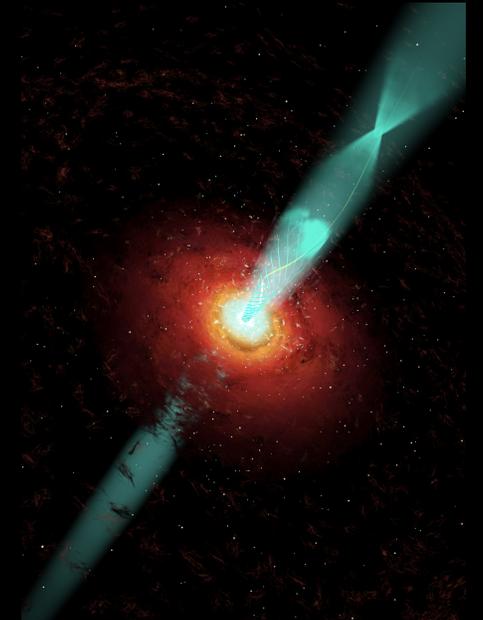
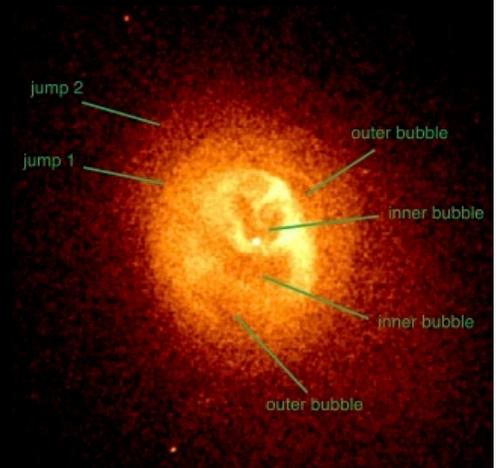
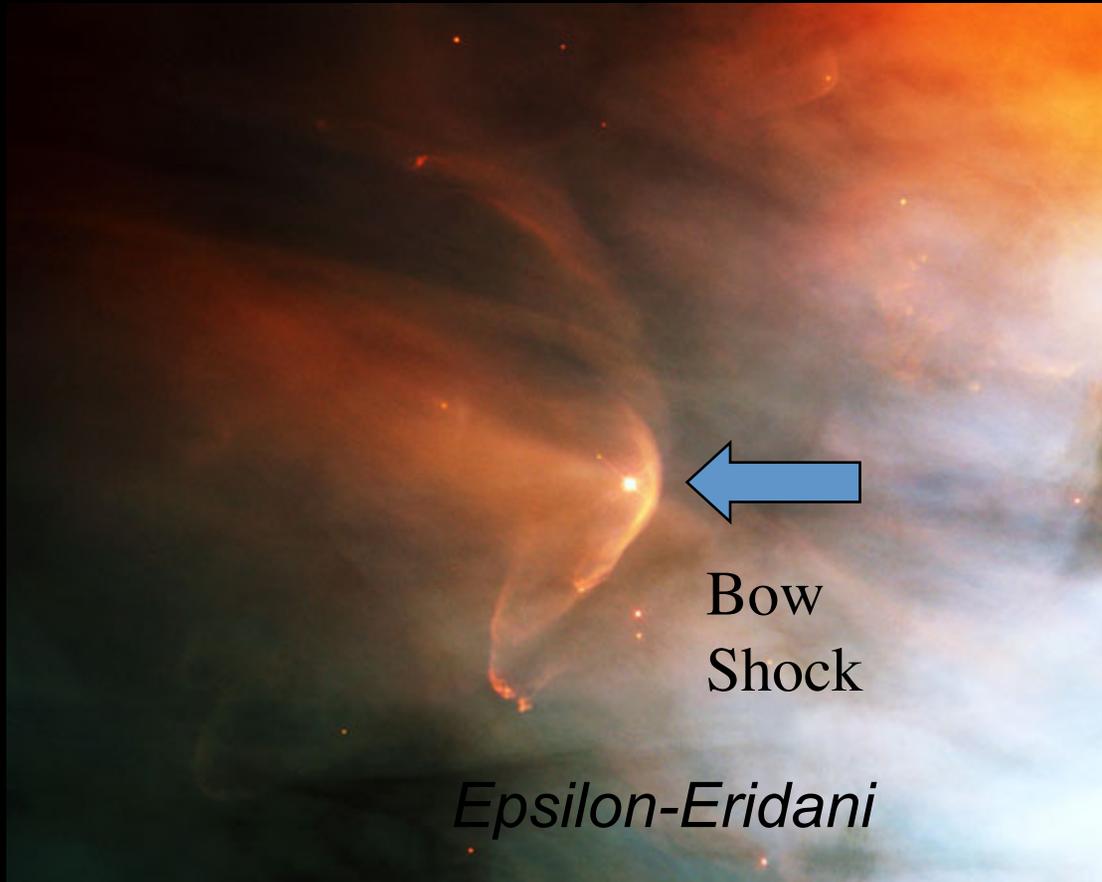
MHD



PIC

example of MHD-coupled with PIC code

Learning from the heliosphere about astrospheres and shocks



<http://physics.gmu.edu/~mopher>
mopher@gmu.edu

