

Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO)

Charles Alcock, Director

The Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO) was established in 1890 as a research unit of the Smithsonian Institution concentrating on studies of solar radiance. Sixty-five years later, SAO assumed responsibility for establishing an optical network for tracking the first artificial satellites. From this pioneering effort, the size and scope of SAO grew with the international space program to include major research in virtually all branches of astrophysics, as well as in areas of earth and planetary sciences.

Since 1955, when its headquarters moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, SAO has pursued such research in close collaboration with the Harvard College Observatory (HCO) and the Harvard University Department of Astronomy. On July 1, 1973, the Smithsonian Institution and Harvard University formalized their collaboration now known as the Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian (CfA) to coordinate the related research activities of the two observatories under a single director. Today the observatories retain their separate identities, each responsible to its parent organization; however, the joint venture draws on the coordinated strengths of the two organizations and the combined staffs in six research divisions: Atomic and Molecular Physics; High Energy Astrophysics; Optical and Infrared Astronomy; Radio and Geoastronomy; Solar, Stellar, and Planetary Sciences; and Theoretical Astrophysics. In addition, the CfA has a Science Education Department.

Facilities

Observational facilities include the multipurpose Fred Lawrence Whipple Observatory (FLWO) on Mt. Hopkins in Arizona and the Submillimeter Array Telescope (SMA) on Mauna Kea, Hawaii, the latter a collaboration with the Academia Sinica's Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics of Taiwan. The major instrument on Mt. Hopkins is the 6.5-m-diameter optical telescope of the MMT Observatory, a facility operated jointly with the University of Arizona. SAO scientists have developed and deployed a suite of advanced wide-field imagers and spectrographs for the MMT including the Hectospec/Hectochelle fiber-fed optical spectrographs, the Megacam imager, and MMIRS, an infrared spectrograph and imager. VERITAS, the Very Energetic Radiation Imaging Telescope Array System, is a major ground-based gamma-ray observatory at FLWO with an array of four 12-m optical reflectors for gamma-ray astronomy in the GeV – TeV energy range. Also located at the FLWO are: the MINIature Exoplanet Radial Velocity Array (MINERVA), the MEarth planet hunter, a 1.2-m imaging optical/infrared telescope, and the 1.5-m Tillinghast spectroscopic telescope. FLWO is also home to HAT, the Hungarian Automated Telescope, a completely automated set of small aperture telescopes that search for transiting extra-solar planets; four HAT-Net telescopes are at FLWO, and two are at the SMA site in Hawaii.

In addition to these SAO-operated facilities, the Center for Astrophysics has a 20% share of the twin 6.5-m Magellan telescopes in Chile, operated by a five-institution consortium headed by the Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. A set of f/5 wide-field optics, identical to those at the MMT, have been installed at the Magellan Clay Telescope. These new Magellan optics allow the operation of Megacam and MMIRS in the Southern Hemisphere. Not least, SAO/CfA is involved in the development of both the 25-m Giant Magellan Telescope, with its partners in the Magellan consortium and others, and the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope. Special laboratories are maintained for the development of telescope instrumentation and for the spectroscopy of atoms and molecules. A 1.2-m radio telescope on the roof of the Observatory in Cambridge is used for the study of molecular clouds and the structure of the Milky Way through the spectral lines of CO and other molecules.

SAO instrumentation is also operating in space. The Chandra X-ray Observatory, the third of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Great Observatories, carries the High Resolution Mirror Assembly X-ray telescope whose development SAO oversaw. Chandra's High Resolution Camera (HRC), which SAO designed and built and operates for NASA, is used to study X rays from high-energy regions of the Universe. SAO proposed

and manages the Spitzer Space Telescope's Infrared Array Camera (IRAC), a 3-to-10 micron camera for the study of both the very deep, early universe and the formation of stars and planets locally. Ongoing Solar and Stellar X-ray Group space-based mission participation includes Hinode, Solar Dynamics Observer, IRIS and DSCOVR. Division scientists are principals in the Solar Wind Electrons Alphas and Protons (SWEAP) investigation for NASA's Solar Probe Plus mission to the Sun. During the 2017 solar eclipse, the Solar and Stellar X-ray Group will use an NSF funded airborne spectrograph that they are building to open the mid-IR window to coronal studies.

Numerous facilities serving the general scientific community are located at the CfA in Cambridge. The Institute for Theoretical Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics, established in 1988 to attract and encourage talented graduate students to enter this field, emphasizes theoretical study of fundamental questions in atomic and molecular physics, hosts many visitors, both long- and short-term, and conducts conferences and workshops. The Center for X-ray Technology, established in 2003 as a collaborative effort with other institutions, promotes the development of detectors and optics leading to space telescope applications, including X-ray interferometers. The Institute for Theory and Computation (ITC), also hosted by the CfA, is dedicated to research in high-end astrophysical computing. The ITC consists of members of the Harvard Department of Astronomy, Smithsonian astrophysicists, postdoctoral researchers, graduate students, and associates at other institutions.

Other services at SAO include the Minor Planet Center, which disseminates information on asteroid and comet discoveries worldwide. The United States' gateway for SIMBAD, an international astronomical computer database, is also located at the Cambridge site, as is Harvard's extensive collection of astronomical photographic plates, the largest in the world. In addition, SAO conceived, developed, and now operates the Astrophysics Data System (ADS), funded by NASA. This service includes on-line access to more than 12 million abstracts of articles in the fields of astronomy, astrophysics, space instrumentation, and space physics. Full-text on-line journals are also available. The HITRAN database of molecular parameters for transmission through and emission from planetary atmospheres is maintained at SAO for more than 5000 users worldwide. SAO participates in the National Virtual Observatory (NVO) and the International Virtual Observatory (IVOA) collaborations, whose aims are to implement improved connectivity between the various astronomical data archives in the world.

SAO, on behalf of NASA, serves as the site of both the Chandra X-ray Observatory Science Center (CXC) and the Chandra Operations and Control Center, the latter of which conducts Chandra flight operations on an around-the-clock basis. The CXC develops and oversees the General Observer program for this mission, as well as calibrates, manages, and distributes data received from Chandra.

The CfA's library, which includes the SAO collection as well as that of HCO, is available to the staff and to visitors. Located near the center of a community of universities, government agencies, and corporate scientific enterprises, SAO investigators enjoy access to a variety of facilities and counsel, and they may avail themselves of opportunities to pursue academic interests within the community. Smithsonian staff, research fellows, and their Harvard colleagues at the CfA publish more than 800 refereed papers each year in internationally known journals.

Office of the Director

RESEARCH STAFF

ALCOCK, Charles Roger, Director, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics; Professor of Astronomy, Harvard University. B.Sc. (1972) Auckland University, New Zealand; Ph.D. (1977) California Institute of Technology. Research specialties: Large astronomical surveys; outer solar system; cosmic dark matter; astronomical data mining; virtual observatory technologies. Contact: CALcock@cfa.harvard.edu

BRICKHOUSE, Nancy Susan, Astrophysicist; Senior Science Advisor, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. B.S. (1977) University of North Carolina; Ph.D. (1984) University of Wisconsin. Research specialties: Plasma physics; solar and stellar coronae; plasma emission line spectroscopy; ultraviolet and X-ray spectroscopy of astrophysical sources; laboratory astrophysics. Contact: NBrickhouse@cfa.harvard.edu

Research Programs

The scientific objectives of the CfA are intentionally flexible so that response to new research opportunities can be prompt and effective. By design, the research programs reflect the strongest areas of the two observatories and concentrate in fields where the contribution to national goals and scientific excellence can best be realized.

Atomic and Molecular Physics

Quantitative information about atomic and molecular processes required for interpreting astronomical observations is obtained from combinations of laboratory and theoretical studies. Laboratory research includes centimeter-wave through ultraviolet spectroscopy of non-terrestrial molecules, and stored light experiments in quantum optics. Fundamental precision measurements to test time-reversal symmetry-violating phenomena and applications of new magnetic resonance imaging techniques using spin-polarized noble gases are pursued. Tests of general relativity and the underlying equivalence principle use laboratory experimental techniques as well as radio observations of solar-system objects, spacecraft, and quasars and measurements of the round-trip timing of laser pulses sent to the moon. The application of the laser frequency comb to astrophysical measurements has been developed and is being refined. The development of precise laser-based distance measurement techniques supports both the equivalence principle work and future space missions. Measurements of trace gases (primarily atmospheric pollutants and greenhouse gases) and other atmospheric constituents are made from satellite-based spectrometers operating in the ultraviolet, visible, and infrared.

Theoretical research with applications to astrophysics includes calculations of atomic and molecular structure, cross-sections for recombination and molecular collisional processes, photoionization, photodissociation, charge transfer, and the interactions between matter and anti-matter. These studies are used in the Division to explain the characteristics of X rays stemming from interactions of comets with the flux of ions and electrons streaming from the Sun (the solar wind), to examine the distributions of energetic atoms in atmospheres of the terrestrial planets, to develop new radiative transfer tools for the modeling of planetary atmospheres, and to measure and model photochemistry and pollution in the Earth's atmosphere. AMP is a worldwide center for the development and archiving of fundamental spectroscopic parameters of molecular gases. These data are employed for calculations of transmittance and radiance for the Earth's atmosphere and for astrophysics. The Institute for Theoretical Atomic, Molecular and Optical Physics, funded primarily by the National Science Foundation and situated in the AMP division, has now been in existence for more than 25 years. The main goals of the Institute are to educate both students and postdoctoral fellows in theoretical AMO Physics, to maintain a world-class visitor program, and to organize and support workshops in forefront areas of AMO Physics research.

RESEARCH STAFF

BABB, James F., Physicist. A.B. (1982) Oberlin College; M.S. (1986), Ph.D. (1988) New York University. Research specialties: Applications of atomic and molecular physics to astrophysics and atmospheric physics; molecular structure; long-range forces. Contact: JBabb@cfa.harvard.edu

CHANCE, Kelly V., Senior Physicist; B.S. (1970) University of Hawaii; A.M. (1972), Ph.D. (1977) Harvard University. Research specialties: Molecular spectroscopy, structure, and dynamics and their application to atmospheric studies; laboratory spectroscopy and satellite-based measurements of the Earth's atmosphere, particularly of atmospheric pollutants and greenhouse gases; atmospheric composition and radiative transfer. Contact: KChance@cfa.harvard.edu

GONZALEZ ABAD, Gonzalo, Physicist, B.S. (2008) University of Valencia, Ph.D. (2011) University of York. Research specialties: Space-based measurements of Earth's atmosphere trace gases, air quality, radiative transfer and instrument calibration. Contact: ggonzalezabad@cfa.harvard.edu

GORDON Iouli E. Physicist. Diploma. (1999) Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology; MSc (2001) University of Toronto, Ph.D. (2006) University of Waterloo. Research specialties: Spectroscopy of molecules of atmospheric and astrophysical interest, Development and management of spectroscopic databases (HITRAN and HITEMP). Contact: igordon@cfa.harvard.edu

KHARCHENKO, Vasili A., Physicist. M.Sc. (1974) Politechnic Institute (Leningrad); Ph.D. (1978), D.Sc. (1988) Ioffe Physico-Technical Institute (St. Petersburg). Research specialties: Atmospheric physics; atomic collision theory. Contact: vkharchenko@cfa.harvard.edu

LIU, Xiong, Research Scientist, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. B.S. (1995) Nankai University; M.A. (1998) Research Center for Eco-environmental Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences; M.S. (2002) University of Alabama in Huntsville; Ph.D. (2002) University of Alabama in Huntsville. Research specialties: Remote sensing of atmospheric trace gases, aerosols, and clouds; Atmospheric radiative transfer modeling and instrument calibration; Tropospheric chemistry studies integrating satellite measurements, chemical transport models, and in situ observations. Contact: XLiu@cfa.harvard.edu

McCARTHY, Michael C., Senior Physicist; Associate Director, Atomic and Molecular Physics Division. B.Sc. (1986) University of Alaska; Ph.D. (1992) Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Research specialties: Astrochemistry; laboratory astrophysics of reactive molecules; microwave and laser spectroscopy. Contact: MMcCarthy@cfa.harvard.edu

NOWLAN, Caroline R., Physicist. B.Sc. (1999) Mount Allison University; M.Sc. (2000), Ph.D. (2006) University of Toronto. Research specialties: Atmospheric remote sensing; space and airborne instrumentation for atmospheric measurements; radiative transfer; retrieval theory; air quality; atmospheric chemistry and composition. Contact: cnowlan@cfa.harvard.edu

PHILLIPS, David Forrest, Physicist. B.S. (1988) California Institute of Technology; Ph.D. (1996) Harvard University. Research specialties: Development and applications of atomic clocks; precise tests of fundamental physical laws; quantum optics. Contact: DPhillips@cfa.harvard.edu

SADEGHPOUR, Hossein R., ITAMP Director. B.S. (1981), M.S. (1983), Ph.D. (1990) Louisiana State University. Research specialties: Atomic and molecular collisions and spectroscopy; formation and collision of cold antihydrogen and protonic atoms, quantum mechanical interference effects; rydberg collisions; absorption and scattering of light for astrophysical applications, recombination and reionization, and two-photon processes, coherent control and manipulation on the nanoscale, coherent light interaction with nanotubes, ultracold collision of dipolar systems. Contact: HSadeghpour@cfa.harvard.edu

WALSWORTH, Ronald L., Senior Physicist. B.S. (1984) Duke University; Ph.D. (1991) Harvard University. Research specialties: Development of atomic clocks and precision measurement tools; precise tests of fundamental physical laws; bioimaging and brain science; searches for extrasolar planets. Contact: RWalsworth@cfa.harvard.edu

WANG, Huiqun (Helen), Physicist. B.S. (1997) University of Science and Technology of China; Ph.D. (2004) California Institute of Technology. Research specialties: Martian atmosphere data analysis and numerical modeling; Martian dust storms and clouds; Atmospheric trace gasses. Contact: Hwang@cfa.harvard.edu

AFFILIATED RESEARCH STAFF

MARTIN, Randall V., Research Associate, Dalhousie University. B.A. (1996) Cornell University; M.Sc. (1998) Oxford University; M.S. (2001), Ph.D. (2002) Harvard University. Research specialties: atmospheric chemistry; satellite remote sensing; global modelling of atmospheric composition.

ROTHMAN, Laurence S., Senior Physicist. B.S. (1961) Massachusetts Institute of Technology; A.M. (1964), Ph.D. (1971) Boston University. Research specialties: Molecular spectroscopy; HITRAN (high-resolution transmission) spectroscopic database compilation. Contact: LRothman@cfa.harvard.edu

High Energy Astrophysics

Research in the High Energy Astrophysics Division focuses on astronomical objects and processes that emit and absorb energy as X-rays, which include planets, all types of stars including the Sun, neutron stars, supernova remnants, supermassive and stellar-mass black holes, galaxies, and galaxy clusters. Observations are made from

spacecraft, notably the Earth-orbiting Chandra X-ray Observatory, one of NASA's Great Observatories, as well as other space-based X-ray telescopes. The division's scientific studies are directed at a broad range of topics, including a) cosmology, b) the structure, interactions, and evolution of astronomical objects, and c) processes that generate X-ray radiation. In support of their scientific studies, members of the division use telescopes at all major observatories covering all available wavelengths. Division scientists also play a role in advancing instrumentation and are working to develop novel X-ray optics and detectors. In addition, the Division operates the NASA Astrophysics Data System, the premier digital library of astrophysics publications. Staff members participate in planning and developing major new X-ray missions, and operate the Chandra X-ray Center, which conducts flight operations and science activities for the Chandra X-ray Observatory. The Division has a strong and active Solar and Stellar X-ray Group (SSXG), which participates in the development of new experiments and in the operation of ongoing missions. Ongoing SSXG space-based mission participation includes Hinode, Solar Dynamics Observer, IRIS and DISCOVER. Division scientists are principals in the Solar Wind Electrons Alphas and Protons (SWEAP) investigation for NASA's Solar Probe Plus mission to the Sun. During the 2017 solar eclipse, the Solar and Stellar X-ray Group will use an NSF funded airborne spectrograph that they are building to open the mid-IR window to coronal studies. In support of its research and educational goals, the Division funds approximately 20 postdoctoral fellows, hosts visiting scientists, runs two NSF summer intern programs – one with a broad focus on astrophysics and a second targeted at solar physics – and conducts extensive education and public outreach activities.

RESEARCH STAFF

ACCOMAZZI, Alberto, Program Manager, Astrophysics Data System Project. Ph.D. (1988) University of Milan. Research specialties: Digital Libraries; Scientific Information Systems; Semantic Web Technologies; Natural Language Processing; Image Analysis and Classification. Contact: AAccomazzi@cfa.harvard.edu

ALDCROFT, Thomas L., Astrophysicist. B.S. (1987) California Institute of Technology; Ph.D. (1993) Stanford University. Research specialties: X-ray constraints on the intergalactic medium; quasar absorption line systems; quasar multiwavelength spectral energy distribution. Contact: TAldcroft@cfa.harvard.edu

BRENNEMAN, Laura W., Astrophysicist. B.A. (1999) Williams College; Ph.D. (2007) University of Maryland. Research specialties: X-ray spectroscopy of accretion and outflows in AGN and black hole binaries; studies of black hole spin, coronal physics and absorption signatures in the innermost accretion disk. Contact: LBrenneman@cfa.harvard.edu

BURKE, Douglas, Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1992), M.Sc. (1993) Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine (London); Ph.D. (1997) University of Durham. Research specialties: Galaxy clusters; observational cosmology; extragalactic astronomy; Astroinformatics; Semantic Web. Contact: DBurke@cfa.harvard.edu

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D'ABRUSCO, Raffaele, Astrophysicist. Master Degree (2004): University of Napoli "Federico II"; Ph.D. (2007): University of Napoli "Federico II". Research specialties: multi-wavelength observations of blazars; properties of globular clusters population in external galaxies, galaxy evolution; machine learning applied to complex/massive astronomical datasets. Contact: rdabrusc@cfa.harvard.edu

DAVID, Laurence P., Astrophysicist. B.A. (1980) Drexel University; M.A. (1983), Ph.D. (1985) Indiana University. Research specialties: Early-Type Galaxies; Groups of Galaxies; Clusters of Galaxies; Cosmology. Contact: LDavid@cfa.harvard.edu

DELUCA, Edward E., Senior Astrophysicist. B.A. (1979), M.A. (1980) Wesleyan University; Ph.D. (1986) University of Colorado. Research specialties: Solar coronal physics; Solar Active Region Modeling; Solar Instrumentation; Magnetohydrodynamics. Contact: EDeLuca@cfa.harvard.edu

DRAKE, Jeremy J., Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1985) University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne; D.Phil. (1989) Brasenose College, Oxford University. Research specialties: Star and planet formation; protoplanetary disks, stellar atmospheres; stellar magnetic activity; element abundances and stellar evolution; novae; extreme ultraviolet and X-ray astronomy. Contact: JDrake@cfa.harvard.edu

EDGAR, Richard J., Research Astrophysicist. B.A. (1976) University of Colorado; M.S. (1983), Ph.D. (1985) University of Wisconsin. Research specialties: X-ray astronomy; spectroscopy; diffuse soft X-ray background; hot interstellar medium supernova remnants; nonequilibrium ionization solar wind, x-ray instrument calibration. Contact: REdgar@cfa.harvard.edu

EDMONDS, Peter D., Astrophysicist. B.S. (1988), Ph.D. (1994) University of Sydney. Research specialties: Globular clusters; compact binaries, especially accreting systems; HST studies of globulars; optical identifications of X-ray sources; X-ray studies of compact binaries; millisecond pulsars; stellar pulsations. Contact: PEdmonds@cfa.harvard.edu

ELVIS, Martin S., Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1973) University of Bristol; M.Sc. (1974) University of Sussex; Ph.D. (1978) University of Leicester. Research specialties: Extragalactic X-ray astronomy, quasars, and active galactic nuclei; large scale multi-waveband surveys (X-ray, uv, ir, mm, and radio) esp. of continuum and lines in quasars; models for quasars, winds from quasars. Asteroids studies to enable human exploration. Contact: MElvis@cfa.harvard.edu

EVANS, Ian N., Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1982) University of Western Australia; Ph.D. (1987) Australian National University. Research specialties: Physics of active galactic nuclei, including the impact of nuclear activity on the host galaxy; HII region abundances and physics of the interstellar medium; image-processing algorithms. Contact: IEvans@cfa.harvard.edu

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FORMAN, Christine Jones, Astrophysicist. A.B. (1971) Radcliffe College; A.M. (1972), Ph.D. (1974) Harvard University. Research specialties: X-ray observations of hot gas in galaxies and clusters of galaxies to determine their mass, structure, and cosmological evolution. Contact: CJones@cfa.harvard.edu

FORMAN, William R., Astrophysicist. B.A. (1969) Haverford College; M.A. (1970), Ph.D. (1973) Harvard University. Research specialties: X-ray astronomy; high-energy astrophysics; hot gas in galaxies, galaxy groups, and clusters of galaxies; feedback from supermassive black holes in galaxies. Contact: WForman@cfa.harvard.edu

FRUSCIONE, Antonella, Astrophysicist. Laurea Doctoral Degree (1986) University of Milan; Degree of Advanced Studies (1987) University of Paris. Research specialties: Multiwavelength studies of active galactic nuclei; EUVE and X-ray astronomy; astronomical data analysis. Contact: AFruscione@cfa.harvard.edu

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KRAFT, Ralph P., Physicist. B.S. (1988) University of Pittsburgh; Ph.D. (1995) Pennsylvania State University. Research specialties: Instrumentation for X-ray astronomy, astrophysical jets, hydrodynamics, galaxy mergers, formation of structure. Contact: RKraft@cfa.harvard.edu

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MONTEZ, Rodolfo, Astrophysicist. Ph.D. (2010) Rochester Institute of Technology. Research specialties: Nebulae; late-type evolved stars; interacting binaries; X-ray astronomy; multiwavelength imaging; imaging science. Contact: rmontez@cfa.harvard.edu

MOORE, Christopher, Samuel, Astrophysicist. B.S. (2010) University of Iowa; M.S. (2014) University of Colorado Boulder, Ph.D. (2017) University of Colorado Boulder, Research specialties: Solar and stellar coronal physics; magnetic field morphology of the solar photosphere, elemental abundance determinations in solar and stellar atmospheres, X-ray and UV instrumentation development, UV-Vis optical coating development, Instrument characterization. Contact: Christopher.s.moore@cfa.harvard.edu

NICHOLS, Joy S., Astrophysicist. B.A. (1968), M.S. (1970) Northwestern University; Ph.D. (1992) University of Amsterdam. Research interests: Winds of massive stars; high-energy plasma physics; high resolution X-ray spectroscopy; variable stars jnichols@cfa.harvard.edu

NULSEN, Paul E.J., Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1975) University of Western Australia; Ph.D. (1980) Cambridge University. Research specialties: X-ray astronomy; dynamics and gas dynamics; hot gas in galaxies and clusters; active galactic nuclei. Contact: PNulsen@cfa.harvard.edu

PATNAUDE, Daniel, Astrophysicist. B.S. (1995) University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Ph.D. (2005) Dartmouth College. Research specialties: Supernova Remnants; ISM Studies; Cosmic Rays; X-ray Astronomy; Computational Physics; Accretion; Supernovae. Contact: DPatnaude@cfa.harvard.edu

PLUCINSKY, Paul P., Astrophysicist. S.B. (1987) Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Ph.D. (1993) University of Wisconsin, Madison. Research specialties: Local X-ray background; supernova remnants; Interstellar Medium; Nearby Galaxies; X-ray detectors. Contact: PPlucinsky@cfa.harvard.edu

PRESTWICH, Andrea H., Astrophysicist. B.Sc. (1984) Queen Mary College, London; M.Sc. (1985) University of Manchester; Ph.D. (1989) Imperial College, London. Research specialties: Multiwavelength studies of clusters of galaxies; extragalactic star formation. Contact: APrestwich@cfa.harvard.edu

PRIMINI, F. Research Interests: Observational X-ray astronomy, including number counts and distributions of X-ray source populations in the Milky Way and other similar galaxies; surveys of extragalactic X-ray sources; X-ray binaries; searches for compact objects in gravitational microlensing surveys; time-series analysis of X-ray sources; X-ray data analysis. Contact: fprimini@cfa.harvard.edu

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Optical and Infrared Astronomy

Research in this division spans extragalactic and galactic astronomy, with special emphases on cosmology, the large-scale structure of the universe, cosmic gamma-ray sources, clusters of galaxies, clusters of stars, the halo of our galaxy, and the formation and evolution of stars and galaxies. Observations are made from orbiting observatories including the Hubble Space Telescope and the Spitzer Space Telescope, as well as from ground-based observatories such as the MMT, Magellan, and FLWO. SAO/CfA astronomers were the first to uncover the large-scale structure of the distribution of galaxies in space and the acceleration of the Universe. Division scientists have also led the exploration of the very high energy (TeV) gamma-ray universe using atmospheric Cherenkov telescopes. OIR scientists are heavily involved in the analysis of Spitzer data and led the development of the Infrared Array Camera (IRAC) for Spitzer. They are active in the development of both advanced optical and infrared instruments for existing ground-based facilities, and instruments for the next generation of large optical/infrared telescopes, including the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT). GMT is a 25-m telescope with seven 8.4-m primary segments, four of which have already been cast. Division scientists are developing concepts for next generation space satellite missions.

RESEARCH STAFF

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Radio and Geoastronomy

Research in the SAO Radio and Geoastronomy Division includes investigations of a wide range of astrophysical phenomena and the development of new technologies. Division staff operate the Submillimeter Array (SMA), an eight-element interferometer sited on Mauna Kea, Hawaii for high-resolution observations of celestial objects at submillimeter wavelengths. Other facilities include a small millimeter wavelength telescope dedicated to mapping emission from molecular clouds in the Milky Way. Astronomical observations are also carried out with major national and international radio telescopes, including the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array, the NRAO Very Large Array and Very Long Baseline Array, the IRAM 30-m Telescope and NOEMA interferometer, and the South Pole Telescope. Astronomical research programs involve the cosmic microwave background, the epoch of reionization, the evolution of galaxies over cosmic time, the structure of the Milky Way, the formation of stars, the formation of planets in circumstellar disks, the physics and chemistry of the interstellar medium, interstellar masers, and the planets and comets in our Solar System. In addition, Division astronomers are leading the development of the Event Horizon Telescope, to directly image the immediate environment of a black hole, taking advantage of technological advances in very long baseline interferometry at millimeter and submillimeter wavelengths and digital signal processing.

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Solar, Stellar, and Planetary Sciences

Research in the SSP Division is directed toward understanding star and planet formation and the physical processes in the Sun, stars, and stellar systems. Division research on the Sun addresses its basic stellar properties, its atmosphere and corona, and its effects on the Earth. Studies of other stars seek to measure the age and chemical composition and to understand the structure of surrounding disks, magnetic fields, and winds. Searches for objects in our own solar system and for extra-solar planets inform theoretical investigations of star and planet formation and evolution. Observational data are obtained from ground-based observatories (such as the MMT Observatory, Magellan, and the Whipple Observatory) and from satellites including the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory, the Transition Region and Coronal Explorer, the Far Ultraviolet Spectrographic Explorer, the Hubble Space Telescope, the Chandra X-ray Observatory, and the Spitzer Space Telescope.

RESEARCH STAFF

AVRETT, Eugene H., Senior Physicist. B.S. (1957) Georgia Institute of Technology; Ph.D. (1962) Harvard University. Research specialties: Theory of stellar atmospheres and spectra; models of solar and stellar atmospheres; computer simulation of solar, stellar, and nebular spectra. Contact: EAvrett@cfa.harvard.edu

CRANMER, Steven R., Astrophysicist. B.S. (1990) Drexel University; M.S. (1991) Ohio State University; Ph.D. (1996) University of Delaware. Research specialties: Heating of the solar corona and acceleration of the solar wind; Plasma physics and kinetic theory of waves and turbulence; Rotating hot stars (O, B, Wolf-Rayet) and circumstellar fluid dynamics; Radiative transfer and spectroscopy.

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KENYON, Scott J., Senior Astrophysicist. B.S. (1978) Arizona State University; M.S. (1979), Ph.D. (1983) University of Illinois. Research specialties: Numerical calculations of planet formation; structure of debris disks; the formation and evolution of single and multiple stars; accretion disks. Contact: SKenyon@cfa.harvard.edu

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AFFILIATED RESEARCH STAFF

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Science Education Department

The SAO/CfA Science Education Department (SED) conducts fundamental research and creates products and programs designed to improve the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), in precollege classroom environments as well as museum and out-of-school learning settings. SED staff includes scientists and science educators, educational researchers, research methodologists, and education technology developers. Ongoing and recent major projects include: the research, development, and validation of misconception-based assessment instruments; research into identifying measurable factors that predict levels of achievement by students in both K-12 science and introductory college STEM courses, including massive open online courses (MOOCs); examination of professional development programs and their impact on teacher participants; research into identifying variables that predict persistence of students within the STEM pipeline, particularly for females and underrepresented minorities, and the development of science identity. SAO's science education innovations have included: programs that integrate the CfA's robotic telescopes and authentic inquiry into classroom, museum, and out-of-school learning environments; the development and evaluation of museum exhibitions and programs; and the creation of innovative curriculum and technology-based tools for STEM learning.

RESEARCH STAFF

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