Spectroscopic Investigation of a Repetitively-Pulsed Nanosecond Discharge

by

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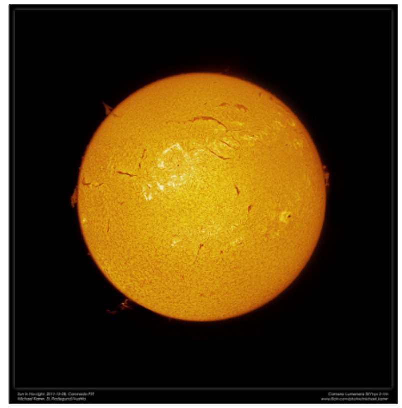
- Introduction
- Outstanding questions in RPNDs
- Metastable measurements
- Global model
- Emission measurements
- Conclusions

Outline

Introduction



Karrer, M. "Sun 2011-12-08." URL: http://www.flickr.com/photos/michael_karrer/6487199145/, Accessed: August 26, 2013.

What Is a Plasma? (Sun)

Hunt, P. "Lightning." URL: http://www.flickr.com/photos/michael_karrer/6487199145/, Accessed: Aug. 26, 2013.

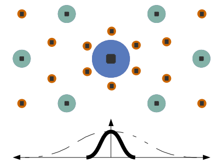
What Is a Plasma? (Lighting)

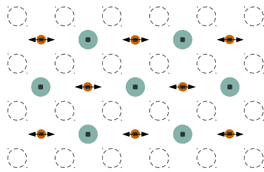
NASA, ESA, and the Hubble Heritage Team. "Star-Forming Region LH 95 in the Large Magellanic Cloud." URL: http://hubblesite.org/gallery/album/entire/pr2006055a/, Accessed: August 27, 2013.

What Is a Plasma? (Interstellar Gases)

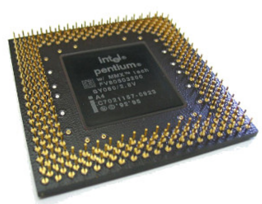
What Is a Plasma?

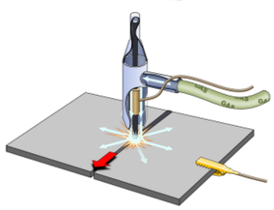
- Ionized gas
  - Neutral particles
  - Positive (and negative) ions
  - Electrons
- Exhibits large-scale electrostatic effects
  - Debye shielding
  - Electron oscillations





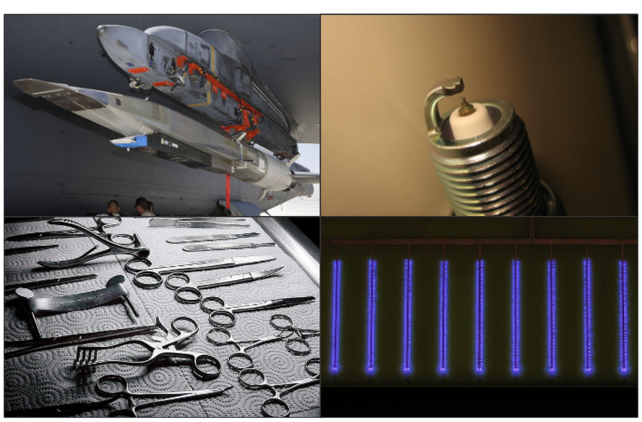
Applications





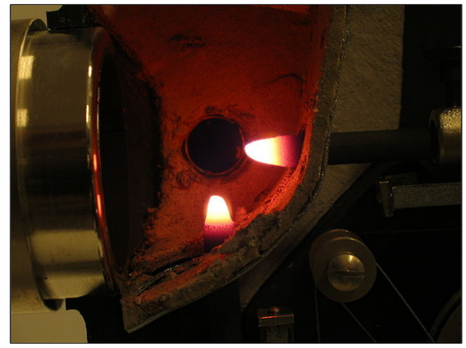
Bowden, M. “A fluorescent light bulb.” URL: http://www.sxc.hu/photo/203835, Accessed: August 26, 21013.
Shigeru23. “Gas arc welding (TIG & MIG).” URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gas_arc_welding_%28TIG_%26_MIG%29.PNG, Accessed: August 27, 2013.
Schmid, M. “Wasabi-Chips (Migros).” URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wasabi-Chips_%28Migros%29.JPG, Accessed: August 27, 2013.
Volant, L. “LG LV3550 15 R.” URL: http://www.flickr.com/photos/27048731@N03/5589223946/, Accessed: August 27, 2013.

Atmospheric-Pressure Plasma Applications



Bellay, C. “X-51A Waverider on B-52 2009.” URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:X-51A_Waverider_on_B-52_2009.jpg, Accessed: August 27, 2013.
Wong, N. “Tip of a spark plug.” URL: http://www.flickr.com/photos/14029705@N00/375024452/, Accessed: August 27, 2013.
parfe_alp, “Operation.” URL: http://www.flickr.com/photos/parfe/2239523465/, Accessed: August 27, 2013.
Xunger, “Plasma glow discharge.” URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Streamwise.JPG, Accessed: August 27, 2013.

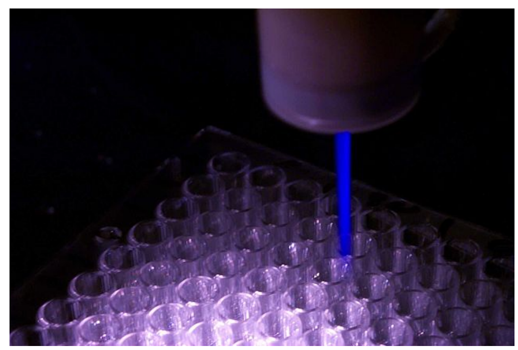
Equilibrium Plasmas



$$T_{\text{neutrals}} \sim T_{\text{ions}} \sim T_{\text{electrons}}$$

D-Kuru/Wikimedia Commons. "Afterglowing electrodes of an arc lamp." URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arc_lamp-afterglow_2_PNr%C2%B00038.jpg, Accessed: August 28, 2013.

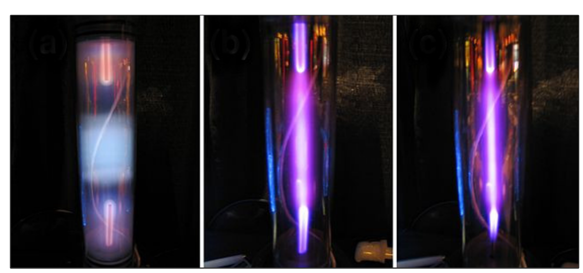
Non-Equilibrium Plasmas



$$T_{\text{neutrals}} < T_{\text{ions}} < T_{\text{electrons}}$$

Entropi5. "A low temperature plasma jet: Plasma Pencil." URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plasma_Pencil.jpg, Accessed: August 28, 2013.

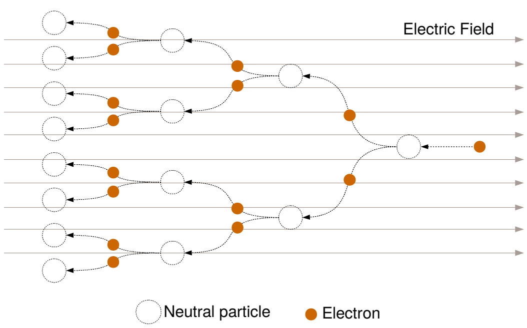
Glow-to-Arc Transition



- Increase in pressure → tendency to thermalize
- Caused by ionization instability
- Prevented by careful control of power input

Wikigan, "Transition from a glow discharge in Argon, to an arc." URL: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Glow2arc.jpg, Accessed: August 28, 2013.

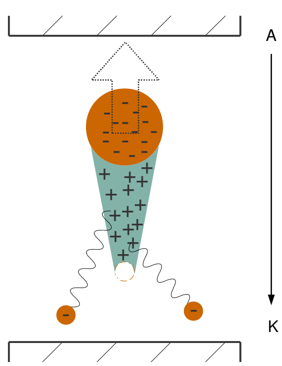
Pulsed Plasmas and Outstanding Questions



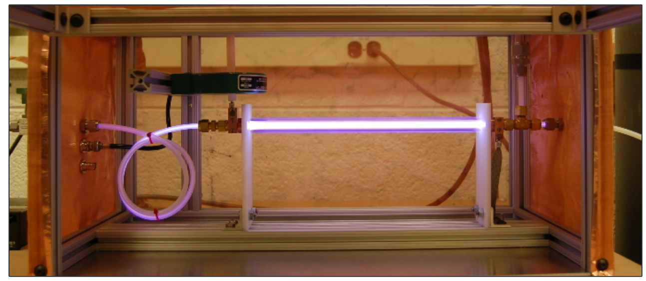
- Initial electron from cosmic rays, UV light, previous pulse, ...
- Sufficient electric field → exponential growth

Electron Avalanche

- Internal field of avalanche comparable to applied field
- Reduces energy transfer to streamer
- "Injected" electrons and photoionization become important

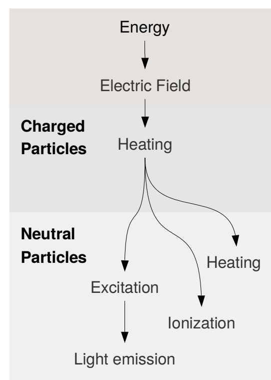


Streamer Discharge



- Similar processes to streamer discharge
- Short pulse-widths: 0 – 100 ns
- High voltages: 1 – 100+ kV
- Moderate repetition rates: 1 – 100 kHz

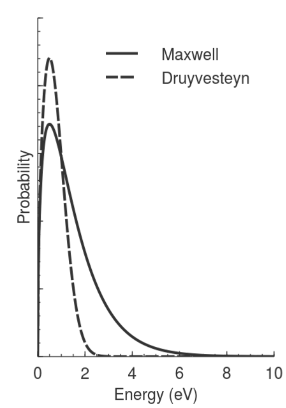
Repetitively-Pulsed Nanosecond Discharge



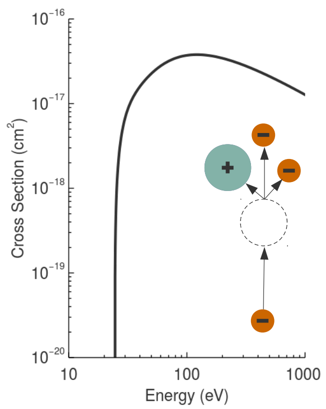
- Energy added to charged particles via electric field
- Fraction of energy heats electrons
- Remainder enters neutral particles through collisions
- How is energy divided?

Questions: Energy Coupling

- Continuous probability distribution for electron energies
- Analytic expressions and approximate calculations possible
- Assumptions may limit use for RPND
-



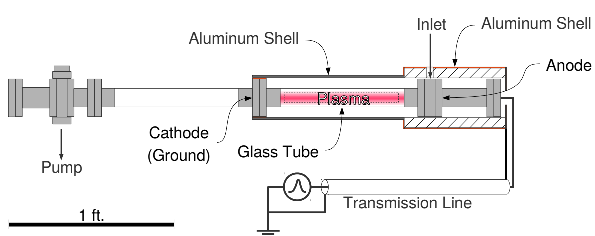
Questions: Electron Energy Distribution



- Plasma products determined by cross sections
- Probability to form a product for a given electron energy

Questions: Electron Energy Distribution

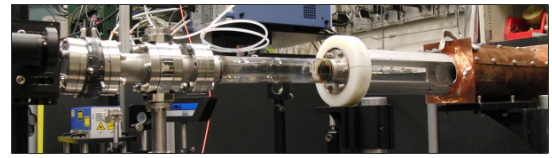
Experimental Setup



Coaxial-type geometry

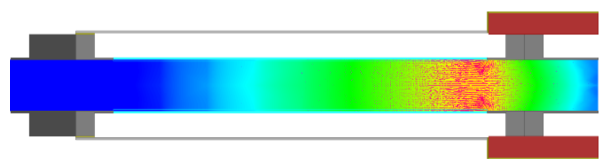
- Inner conductor: plasma
- Dielectric: borosilicate vacuum tube, air, and teflon
- Outer conductor: copper and aluminum shells

Discharge Geometry



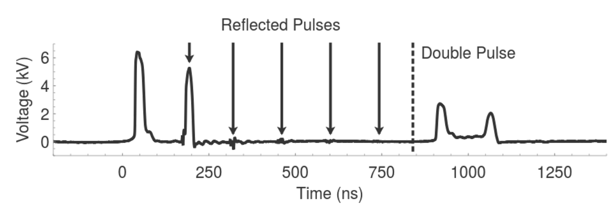
- Ultra-high purity helium: 0.3 – 16.0 Torr
- Rare gas discharges → interesting properties
  - Minimal gas heating
  - UV emissions
- Data available to create detailed population kinetics model
- Voltage pulses: 25 ns FWHM, +6.4 kV, 1.0 kHz

Experimental Setup



- Peak field: 3.8 kV / cm
- Non-uniform field, concentrated near anode-glass interface
- Notable radial component a result of outer conductor

Vacuum Electric Fields



- Impedance mismatch at anode should cause doubling of voltage
- Long (13 m) transmission line used to isolate incident and reflected pulse

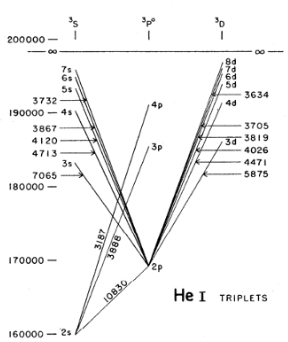
Input Waveform

Metastable Measurements

What Can Be Measured?

- ~~Physical probes~~
  - Perturb plasma
  - Not fast enough
  - Suggests an optical approach
- ~~Electrons~~
  - No detectable emissions
  - Insufficient density for laser scattering
- Atoms and atomic states

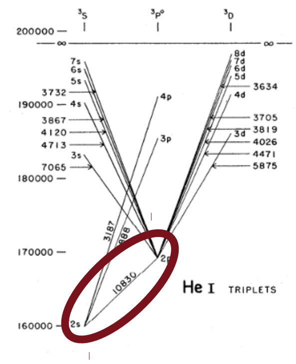
Excited States of Helium



- Absorption of light
  - Photon energy must match energy difference between states
- Time resolution determined by detector
- Fraction of light absorbed proportional to density of lower state

Moore, C. and Merrill, P. "Partial Grotrian Diagrams of Astrophysical Interest." National Bureau of Standards. Washington, D.C. (1968).

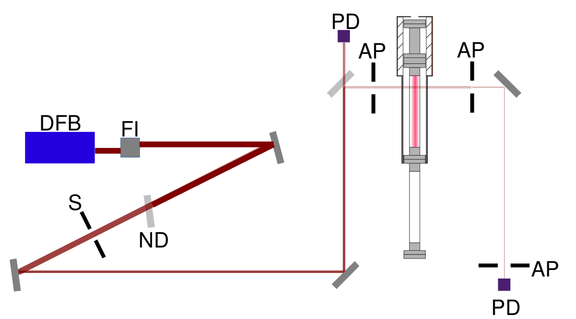
Triplet Metastables



- Lowest-energy excited state
- Cannot transition to unexcited state
- Reservoir for energy
- Can cause excitation and ionization long after pulse

Moore, C. and Merrill, P. "Partial Grotrian Diagrams of Astrophysical Interest." National Bureau of Standards. Washington, D.C. (1968).

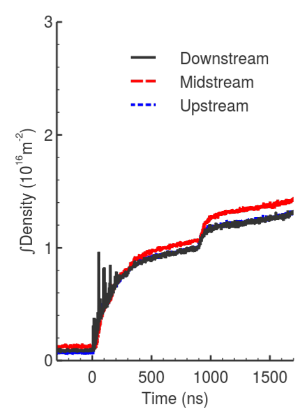
Laser-Absorption Spectroscopy Setup

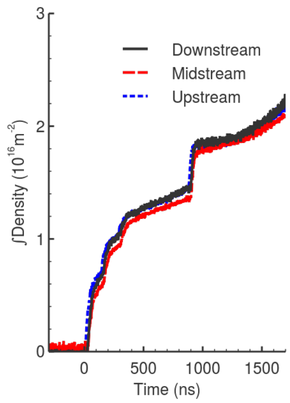


- 1083 nm laser diode, $2^3S \rightarrow 2^3P_0$ transition
- Pressures: 0.3, 0.5, 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 8.0, and 16.0 Torr
- Locations: 5.1 cm (Upstream), 12.7 cm (Midstream), and 20.3 cm (Downstream)
- Minimum detectable density: 9×10^{15} m^{-3}

Metastable Densities (Low Pressure)

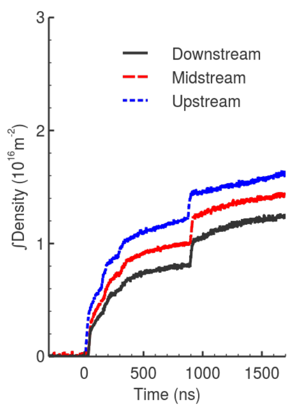
- Observable metastable density before pulse
- Noise present in downstream measurements from pulse
- No significant variation with location





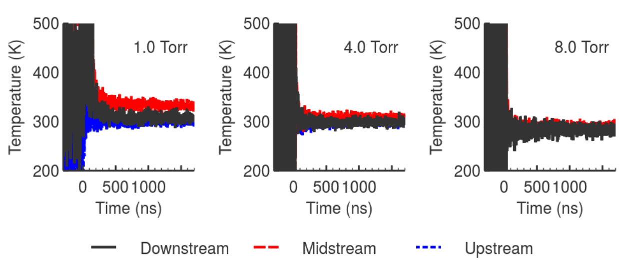
- Reduced pre-pulse density
- Increase in final density
- Reflections cause boost in metastable generation rate

Metastable Densities (Moderate Pressure)



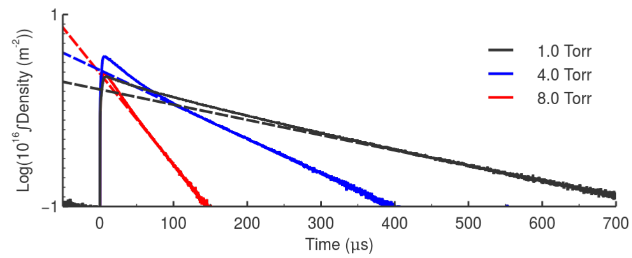
- No metastables before pulse
- Overall decline in metastable density
- Reflection effects still observable
- Plasma attenuation with distance from anode

Metastable Densities (High Pressure)



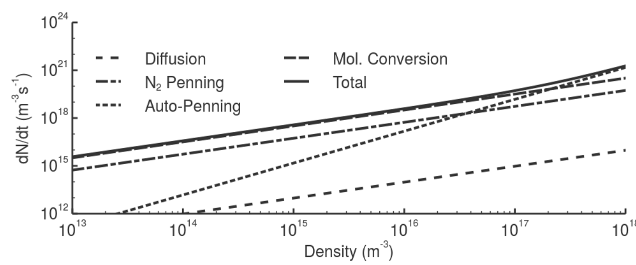
- Added benefit of laser-absorption spectroscopy
- Confirms minimal gas heating
- No significant difference from 300 K for all conditions

Temperatures



- Long-duration measurements reveal loss mechanisms
- Deviation from straight line → non-exponential process

Metastable Destruction



- Initially dominated by non-exponential processes
  - Superelastic electron collisions
  - Penning ionization between metastables
- Molecular conversion dominates at lower metastable densities
- Pre-pulse metastables only detectable for 4.0 Torr and below

Destruction Processes

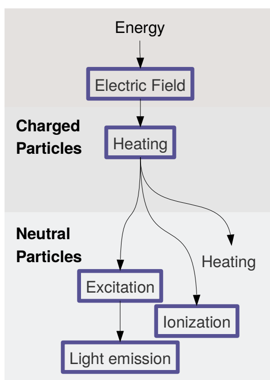
- Metastable states only persist between pulses at lower pressures
- There is an optimal pressure for metastable generation
- Significant attenuation of plasma occurs at higher pressures
- No detectable gas heating
- Losses initially dominated by superelastic electron collisions and Penning ionization between metastables

Metastable Summary

Global Model

Applying the Metastable Measurements

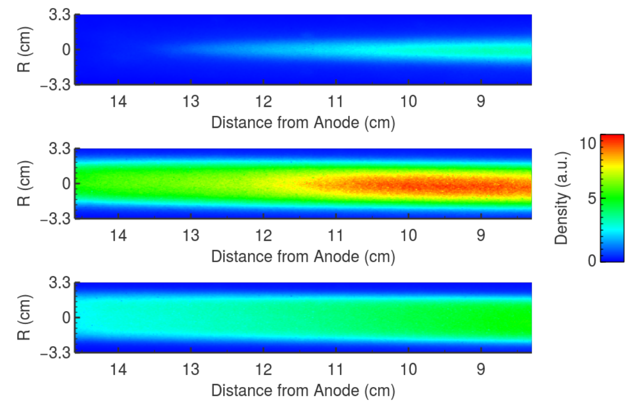
- Metastables only one of many excited states
- Use metastable measurements to infer other properties
  - Electric fields
  - Electron densities and temperatures
  - Excited states



Model Parameters

- Assumed spatial dependence (global model)
- Species:
  - Helium, all states n < 5
  - Helium ions
  - Electrons
- Reactions:
  - Elastic scattering (Pack)
  - Electron (de-)excitation (380 transitions, Ralchenko 2008)
  - Optical transitions (126 transitions, NIST ASD)
  - Excitation transfer (35 transitions, Dubreuil and Catherinot)

Spatial Dependence



Weatherford, B.R., Barnat, E.V., Xiong, Z., Kushner, M., 65th Gaseous Elec. Conf., October 22-26, 2012, Austin, TX.

Particle Density Equation

$$\frac{dN_i}{dt} = n_e \left[\sum_{j\neq i} N_j K^e_{j,i}(T_e) - N_i \sum_{j\neq i} K^e_{i,j}(T_e)\right]$$

Electron (de)excitation

$$+\left[\sum_{j>i} N_j K^o_{j,i} - N_i \sum_{j<i} K^o_{i,j}\right]$$

Radiative transitions

$$+N_g\left[\sum_{j\neq i} N_j K^a_{j,i} - N_i \sum_{j\neq i} K^a_{i,j}\right]$$

Atomic excitation transfer

Electron Energy Equation

$$\frac{d}{dt}\left(\frac{3}{2}n_e T_e\right) = \frac{e^2 n_e E(t)^2}{m_e k_m(T_e) N_g}$$

Electric field heating

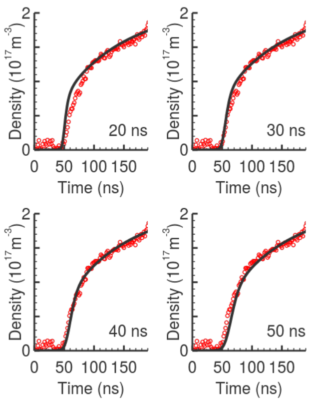
$$-n_e k_m(T_e) N_g \left(\frac{3m_e}{M}\right)\frac{3}{2}(T_e - T_g)$$

Elastic collision losses

$$-n_e \sum_i \sum_{j\neq i} K^e_{ij} N_i \Delta\epsilon_{ij}$$

Inelastic collisions losses

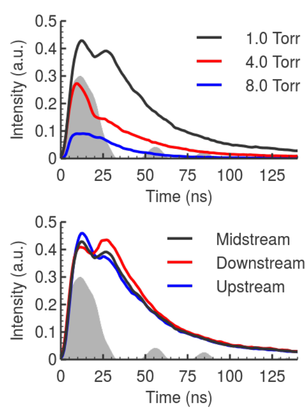
Pulse-width



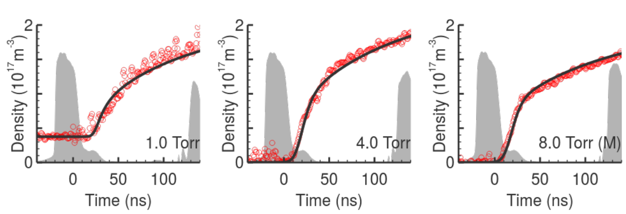
- Assumed electric field applied as a Gaussian pulse
- Free variables: electric field and pulse width
- Best fit obtained with 40 ns pulse-width, but this is longer than applied pulse?

Evidence for Return Stroke

- Optical emissions showed evidence of return stroke
- Double peak at several pressures
- Second peak most intense closest to ground electrode
- Excitation period effectively longer than 25 ns

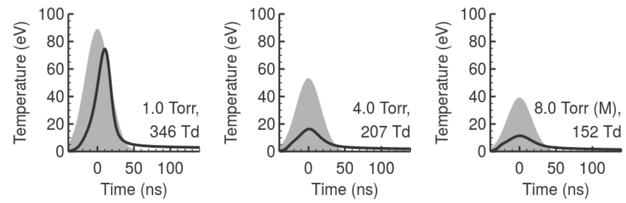


Metastable Matching



- Good agreement for most cases—trends and magnitudes were consistent
- Largest discrepancies at 1.0 Torr
  - Initial rise too fast
  - Radiative cascade too slow
  - Extended excitation?

Peak Fields and Electron Temperatures



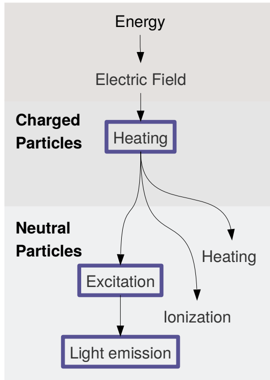
- Peak fields consistent with other studies
- 1.0 Torr fields well into range where two-term expansion solutions performed better
- 1.0 Torr temperatures are not reasonable

Summary of Simulation Results

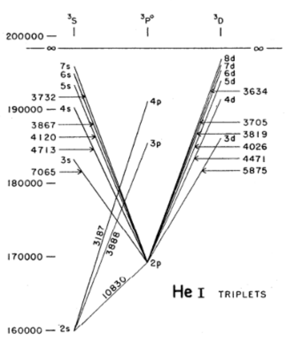
- Created and applied global model of RPND
- Observed evidence of extended excitation period
- Simulations able to reproduce metastable density dynamics
- Temperatures and fields at 1.0 Torr suggest potential violation of underlying assumptions

Emission Measurements

- Simulations based on metastable densities
- Optical emissions spectroscopy can check other excited states
- Can reveal other phenomena
- May be able to estimate electron temperature

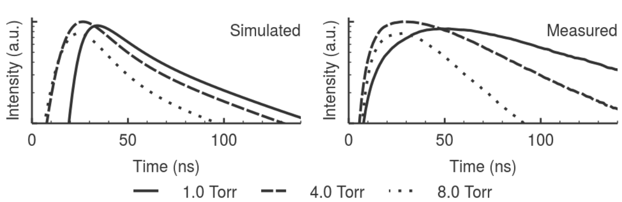


Corroborating Simulations



- Observed transitions in visible (triplet and singlet)
- Calibrated relative intensities with tungsten lamp
- Same conditions as absorption spectroscopy

Helium Emissions



- Relative peak heights and timing similar, distinctly different in shape
- Measurements suggest pressure-dependent de-excitation process (Penning ionization of impurities?)
- Long emission lifetime suggest an extended excitation process
  - Beam-like electrons
  - Persistent electric field

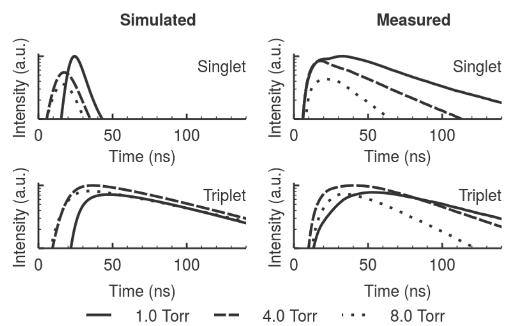
Extended Excitation ($3^1D \rightarrow 2^1P^o$, 668 nm)

- Resonance radiation can be “trapped” in plasmas
- Increases energy residence time
- Could contribute to extended excitation

Pressure (Torr)	Trapping Factor	Effective Lifetime (s)
1.0	8,773	1.549×10^{-5}
4.0	38,031	6.715×10^{-5}
8.0	78,837	1.392×10^{-4}

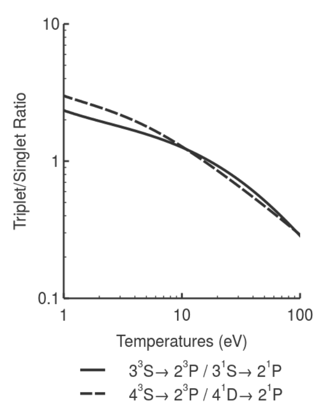
Lifetime increase for $3^1P \rightarrow 1^1S$ transition

Radiation Trapping



- Verify by comparison of 389 nm and 501 nm
- If radiation trapping affects system, measured lifetime of 501 line should be greater than simulation

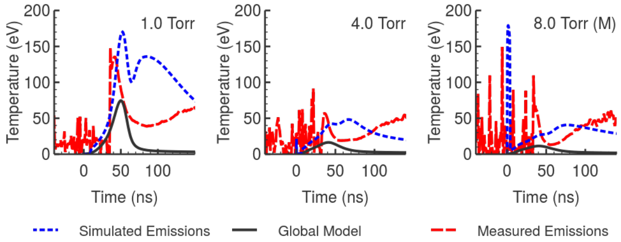
Radiation Trapping



- Can be used to estimate electron temperature
- Assumes
  - Electron-ground excitation only
  - Radiative losses
- Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution

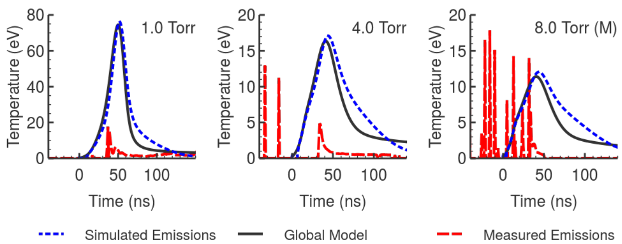
$$\frac{I_{i,j}}{I_{i',j'}} = \frac{\lambda_{i',j'} A_{i,j} \sum A_{i'} K_{0,i}(T_e)}{\lambda_{i,j} A_{i',j'} \sum A_i K_{0,i'}(T_e)}$$

Coronal Model



- Poor match with simulated and measured emissions
- Possible need to include n = 5 states
- Collisional redistribution of n = 4 states potentially a factor

Ratio 1: $4^3S \rightarrow 2^3P$ / $4^1D \rightarrow 2^1P$



- Coronal model and global model: consistent
- Application limited by signal-to-noise ratio
- Likely not a Maxwellian temperature
- May still be useful as a measure of mean electron energy

Ratio 2: $4^3S \rightarrow 2^3P$ / $3^1S \rightarrow 2^1P$

- Global model captures some features of RPND population kinetics
- Missing physics
  - Extended excitation (distribution or field related?)
  - Radiation trapping
- $4^3S \rightarrow 2^3P^o$ / $3^1S \rightarrow 2^1P^o$ ratio may be useful indicator of electron energy in helium RPDN

Summary of Emission Measurements

Conclusions

- Developed laser-absorption spectroscopy system and analysis software
- Obtained detailed measurements of metastable dynamics in a helium RPND
- Created a global model code for helium plasmas
- Used code to infer plasma parameters from metastable density information
- Measured optical emissions of the RPND
- Found several additional phenomena that are potentially important in the description of the RPND

Summary of Work

- Excited states only persist at lower pressures, what ensures consistent breakdown?
- Unexpectedly long excitation period, even accounting for return stroke
  - Slowing of beam-like electrons
  - Radiation trapping
  - Persistent electric fields
- May be possible to employ simple line ratio diagnostics for estimates of mean electron energy

Synthesis of Results

Future Work

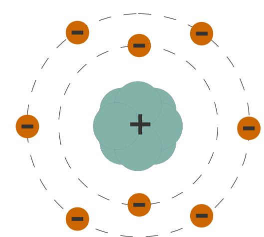
- Address temporal evolution of metastable density profile (Abel inversion) $\rightarrow$ wall effects
- Incorporate additional physics (Penning ionization of impurities, radiation trapping, etc.) in present global model.
- Employ different EEDF models to better match excited state dynamics
- Move to a 0D Monte-Carlo simulation of RPND to avoid EEDF issues
-

Acknowledgements

Questions

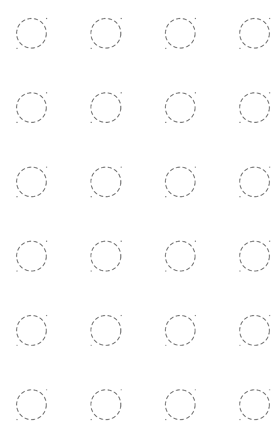
Backup Slides

Bohr Atom



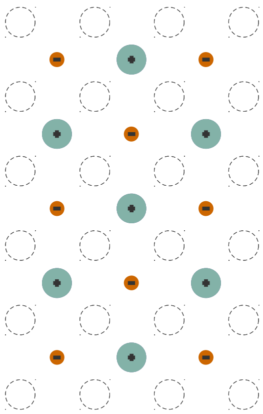
- Positively-charged nucleus
- Orbited by negatively-charged electrons
- Overall, electrically neutral

Gas



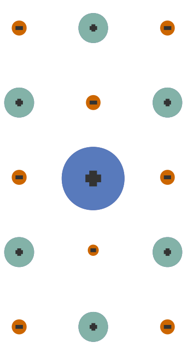
- Consider an atomic gas
- Many neutral atoms with random motion
- No electrical interaction

Ionized Gas



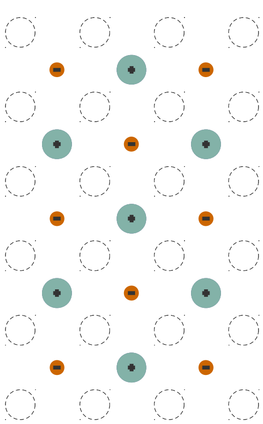
- Add energy to gas
  - Electricity
  - Shock
  - Light
- Electrons separate from atoms
- Collection of neutral atoms, (positive) ions, and (negative) electrons
- What makes a plasma?

Perturbation



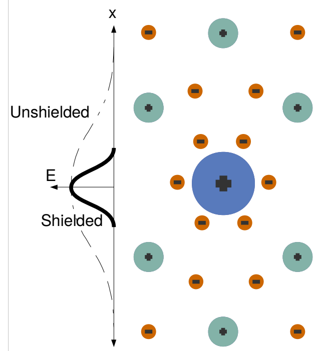
Consider what happens with an electrical perturbation.

Ionized Gas



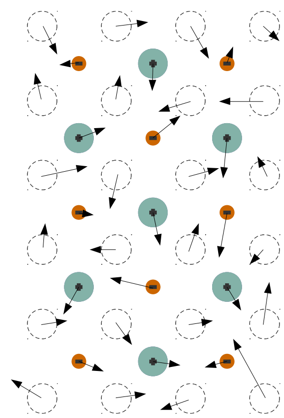
- Add energy to gas
  - Electricity
  - Shock
  - Light
- Electrons separate from atoms
- Collection of neutral atoms, (positive) ions, and (negative) electrons
- What makes a plasma?

Debye Length



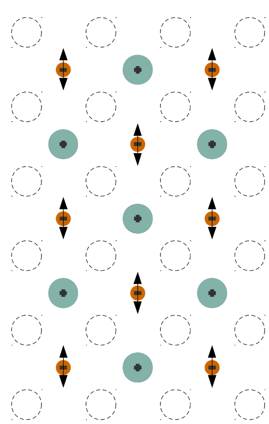
- Electrons move to shield charge
- Similar for positive and negative perturbation
- Electric field falls off quickly
- $\lambda < L$, $n\lambda^3 \gg 1$

Neutral Particle Interactions

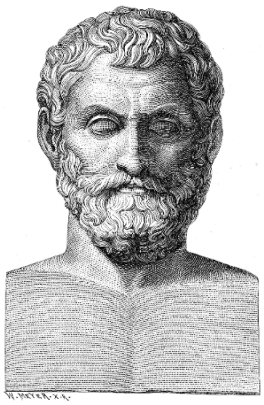


- Random collisions with neutral particles
- Neutral collisions can still determine properties of ionized gas
- Electric interactions should be dominant in plasma

Charged-Particle Oscillations

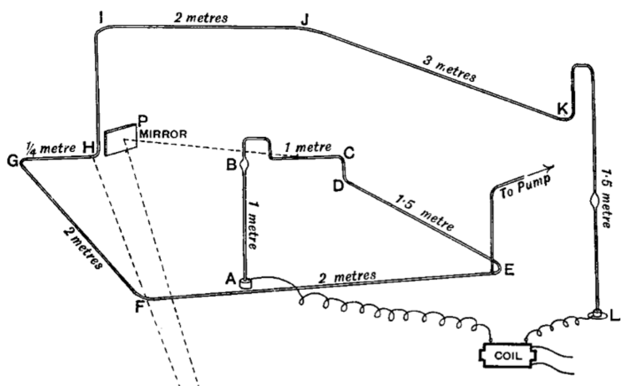


- Electrons possess natural oscillation frequency
- Characteristic of electrical interaction
- $\omega_p > \nu$



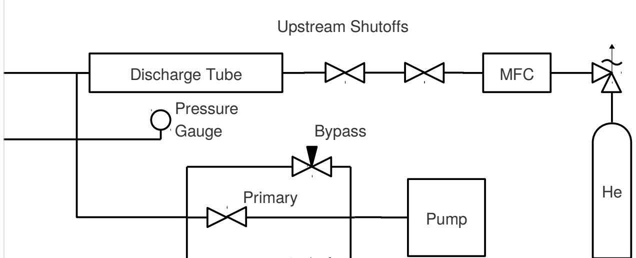
Wallis, E. et al. "Illustrerad verldshistoria utgifven av E. Wallis. Volume I." (1875).
Stotesbury, H. "J. J. Thomson." Popular Science, Vol. 56 (1899).

Early History

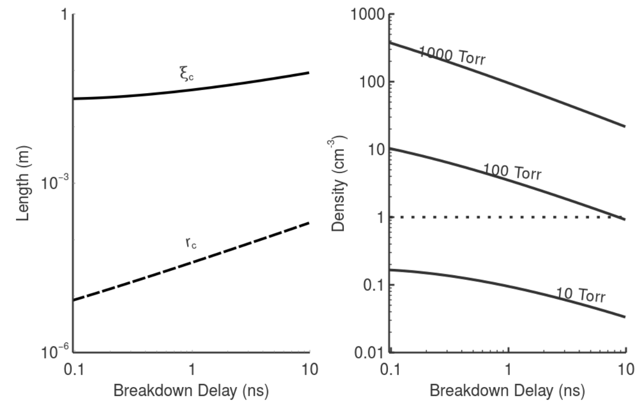


J. J. Thomson. "Notes on Recent Researches in Electricity and Magnetism." Clarendon Press, Oxford, UK, 1893.

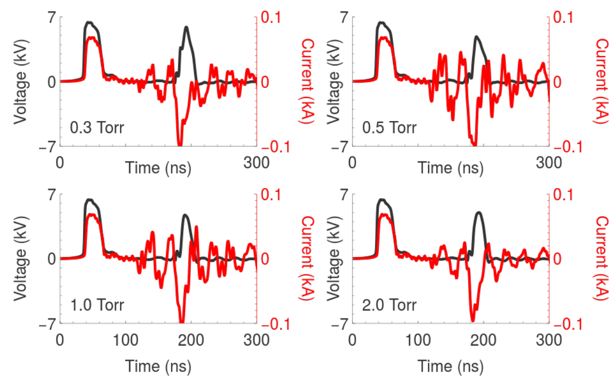
First Pulsed Plasma Measurements



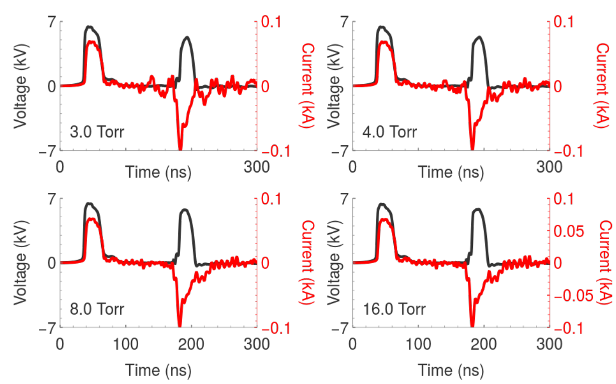
Pumping System



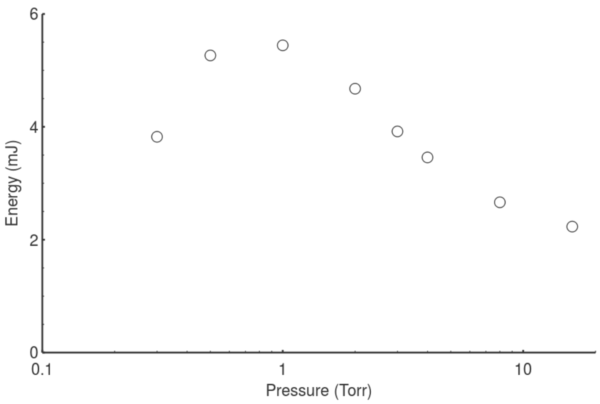
Homogeneous Streamers



Waveforms 1



Waveforms 2



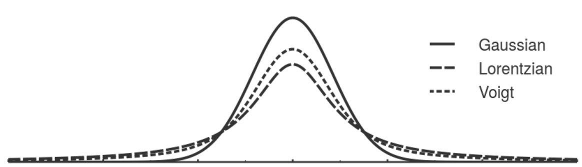
Energy Coupling

$$\Delta N = \Delta N_0 \frac{1}{1 + W\tau_{\text{eff}}} = \Delta N_0 \frac{1}{1 + I/I_{\text{sat}}}$$

$$W = \frac{\sigma I}{h\nu} \quad \rightarrow \quad I_{\text{sat}} = \frac{h\nu}{\sigma \tau_{\text{eff}}}$$

$$I_{\text{sat}} = \frac{2\sqrt{2}h_{21}}{\sigma\tau} = 0.45 \quad \text{mW} \cdot \text{cm}^{-2}$$

Two-Level Saturation



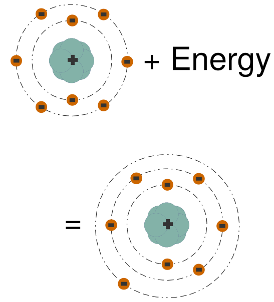
Lorentzian $$g(\omega) = -\frac{1}{4\pi^2}\frac{A\lambda^3}{\Delta\omega_a}\frac{1}{1 + [2(\omega - \omega_a)/\Delta\omega_a]^2}$$

Voigt $$g(\omega) = \sqrt{\frac{2\ln 2}{\pi^3}}\frac{\Delta\omega_d}{\Delta\omega_d}\int_{-\infty}^{\infty}\frac{1}{[(\omega - \omega_a) - \omega']^2 + 4^2} \times \exp\left[4\ln 2\left(\frac{\omega'}{\Delta\omega_d}\right)^2\right] d\omega'$$

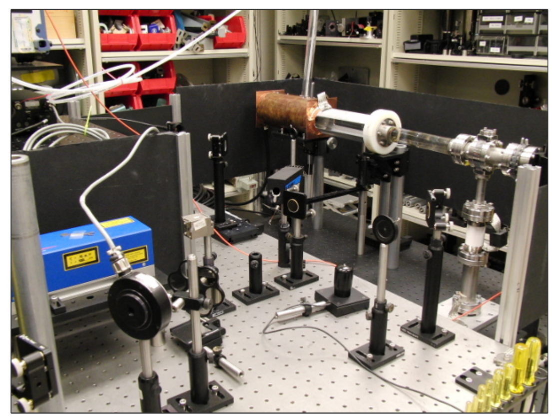
Gaussian $$g(\omega) = \sqrt{\frac{4\log 2}{\pi\Delta\omega_d^2}}\exp\left[-(4\log 2)\left(\frac{\omega - \omega_a}{\Delta\omega_d}\right)^2\right]$$

Lineshapes

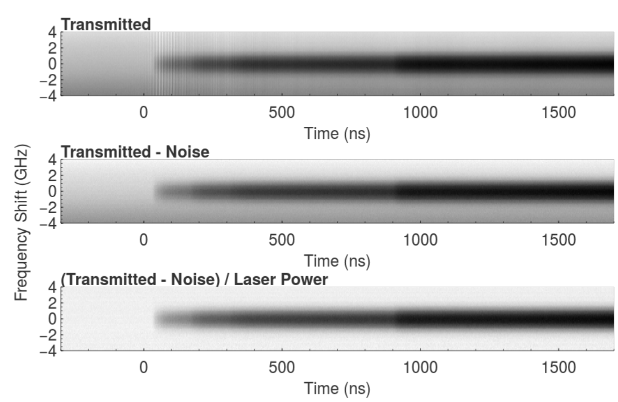
- Energy added to atom
  - Collisions
  - Absorption of light
- One or more electrons to higher orbit → excited atom
- Excited state can emit photon to reach lower energy state
  - Occurs with a specific rate



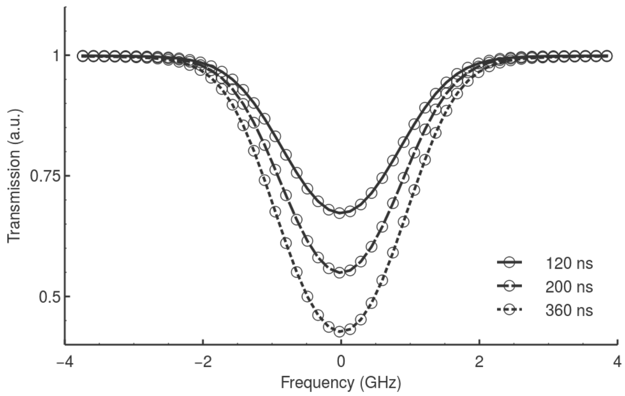
Excited States of Helium



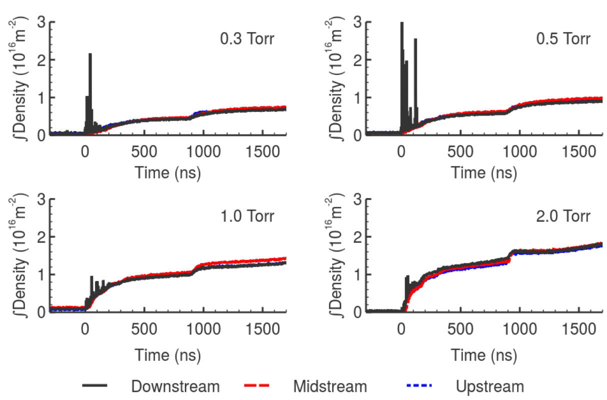
Laser-Absorption Spectroscopy Setup



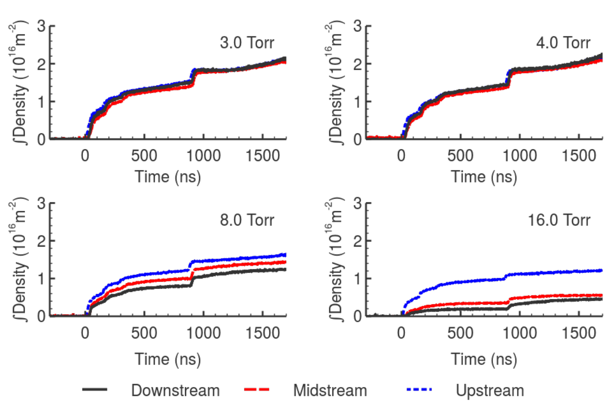
Spectral Post-Processing



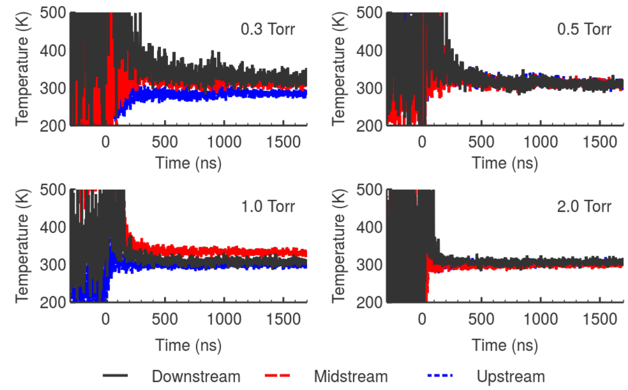
Absorption Spectra Matching



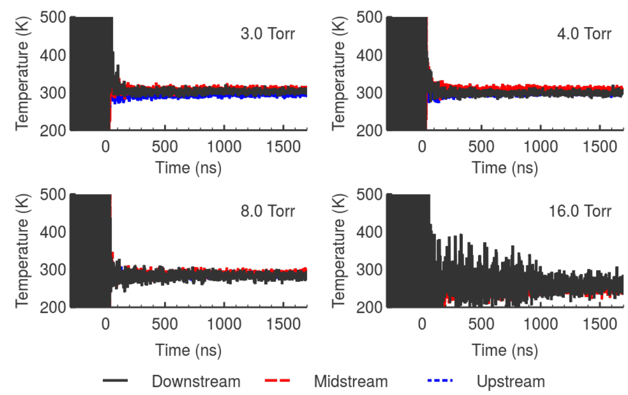
Metastables 1



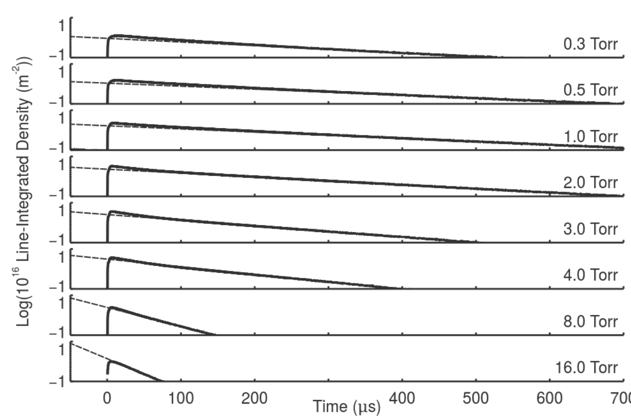
Metastables 2



Temperatures 1



Temperatures 2



Metastable Decay

$$\frac{\partial f_\alpha}{\partial t} + \vec{v} \cdot \nabla f_\alpha + \frac{q_\alpha}{m_\alpha}\left(\vec{E} + \vec{v} \times \vec{B}\right) \cdot \nabla_v f_\alpha = \left(\frac{\partial f_\alpha}{\partial t}\right)_{\text{coll}}$$

- Describes the evolution of the distribution function for a particle α
- 7 independent variables
- Simple equilibrium solutions possible
  - Maxwell-Boltzmann
  - Druyvesteyn
- Generally difficult to solve otherwise

Boltzmann Equation

$$\frac{\partial n_\alpha}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (n_\alpha \vec{u_\alpha}) = G_\alpha - L_\alpha.$$

- Boltzmann equation can be converted into moments by integrating over velocity space
- Introduces particle density *n* and mean fluid velocity, *u*
- *G* – source terms
- *L* – loss terms

First Moment: Continuity Equation

$$m_\alpha n_\alpha \left[\frac{\partial \vec{u_\alpha}}{\partial t} + (\vec{u_\alpha} \cdot \nabla)\vec{u_\alpha}\right] = q_\alpha n_\alpha (\vec{E} + \vec{u_\alpha} \times \vec{B}) - \nabla \cdot \vec{\Pi} + \vec{f}|_{\text{coll}}$$

- Second momentum obtained by multiplying by velocity and integrating over velocity space
- Describes changes in fluid velocity over space
- Introduces pressure tensor Π.
- $f|_{coll}$ expresses change in momentum due to collisions

Second Moment: Conservation of Momentum

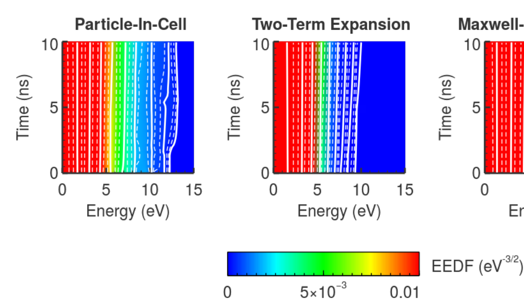
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t}\left(\frac{3}{2}p_\alpha\right) + \nabla \cdot \frac{3}{2}(p_\alpha \vec{u_\alpha}) + p_\alpha \nabla \cdot \vec{u_\alpha} + \nabla \cdot \vec{q_\alpha} = \frac{\partial}{\partial t}\left(\frac{3}{2}p_\alpha\right)\Big|_{\text{coll}}$$

- Third momentum obtained by multiplying by energy and integrating of velocity space
- Energy expressed in terms of pressure, *p*
- RHS includes energy losses and gains resulting from collisions

Third Moment: Conservation of Energy

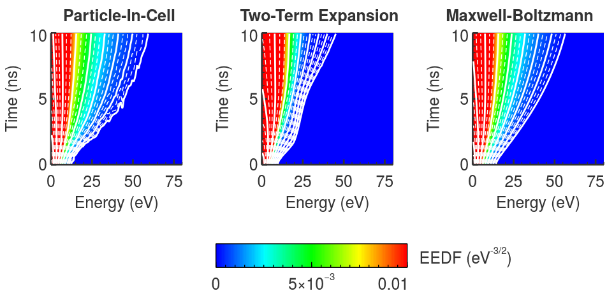
- Must assume an EEDF for reaction rates
- Baseline: 0D particle-in-cell (XPDP1)
- Two approaches considered:
  - Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution
  - Solutions of two-term expansion of Boltzmann equation (BOLSIG+)

EEDF Assumption



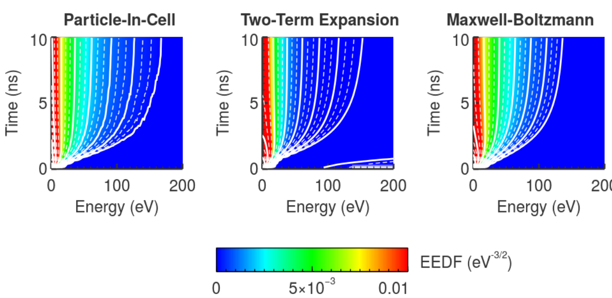
- Both approaches show reasonable agreement with particle-in-cell
- Two-term: less high-energy electrons
- Maxwell-Boltzmann: more high-energy electrons

EEDF Comparisons (10 Td)



- Unexpected contour variations in two-term expansion solutions
- Better agreement between Maxwell-Boltzmann and particle-in-cell

EEDF Comparisons (100 Td)

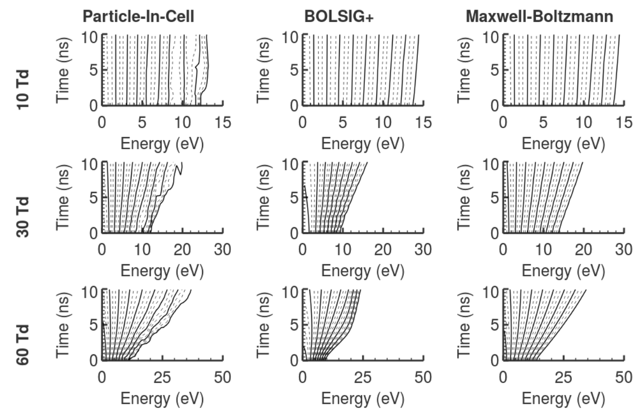


- Particle-in-cell: more 100 eV+ electrons than other results
- Two-term expansion solution best match this behavior
- Beginning of beam-like behavior?

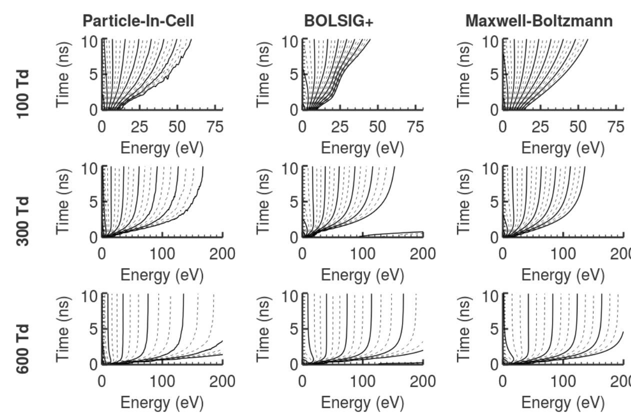
EEDF Comparisons (300 Td)

- < 100 Td: Maxwell-Boltzmann gives best agreement with particle-in-cell
- > 100 Td: BOLSIG+ gives best agreement with particle-in-cell
- Primary discrepancy in the number of high energy electrons: Particle-in-cell > BOLSIG+ > Maxwell-Boltzmann
- Better overall agreement led to use of Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution

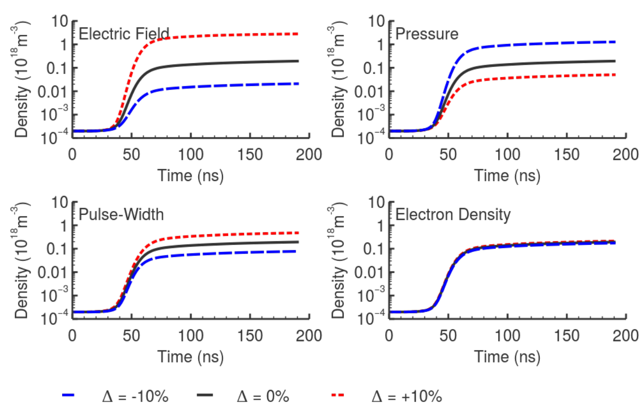
EEDF Comparison Summary



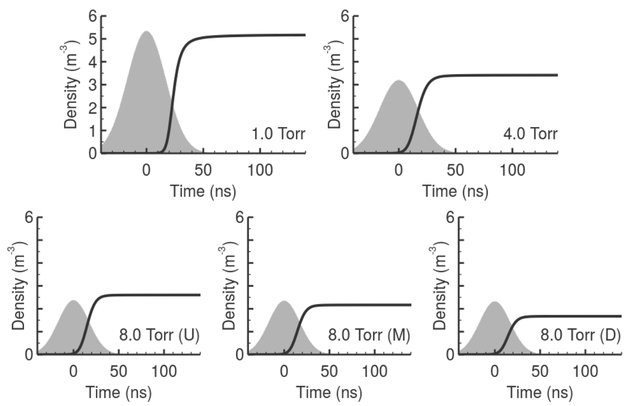
EEDF Contours 1



EEDF Contours 2



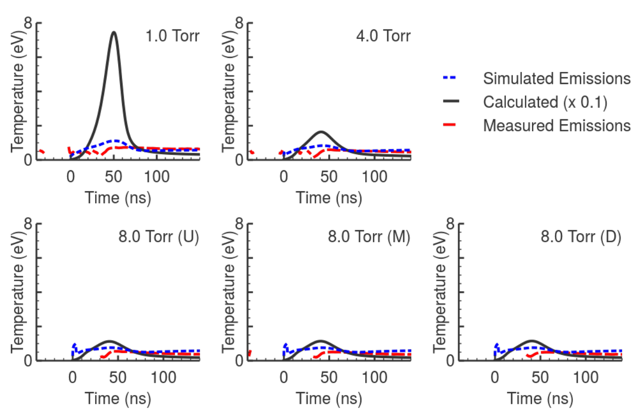
Perturbation Results



Electron Density Estimates

- Pressures: 0.3 – 16.0 Torr
- Spex HR460 monochromator, 0.88 nm bandpass
- 1,200 grooves/mm
- Photomultiplier tube, maximum 3.0 ns rise time
- Relative intensities calibrated with tungsten blackbody lamp

Emission Detection



Boltzmann Plots