

# Radial velocity and line broadening in spectra

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The College of Idaho

SMSW2, 22 February 2019

# Background

Physics

Carleton College (Northfield MN)

Astronomy

University of Wisconsin (Madison)

Early conditions of massive star  
forming environments

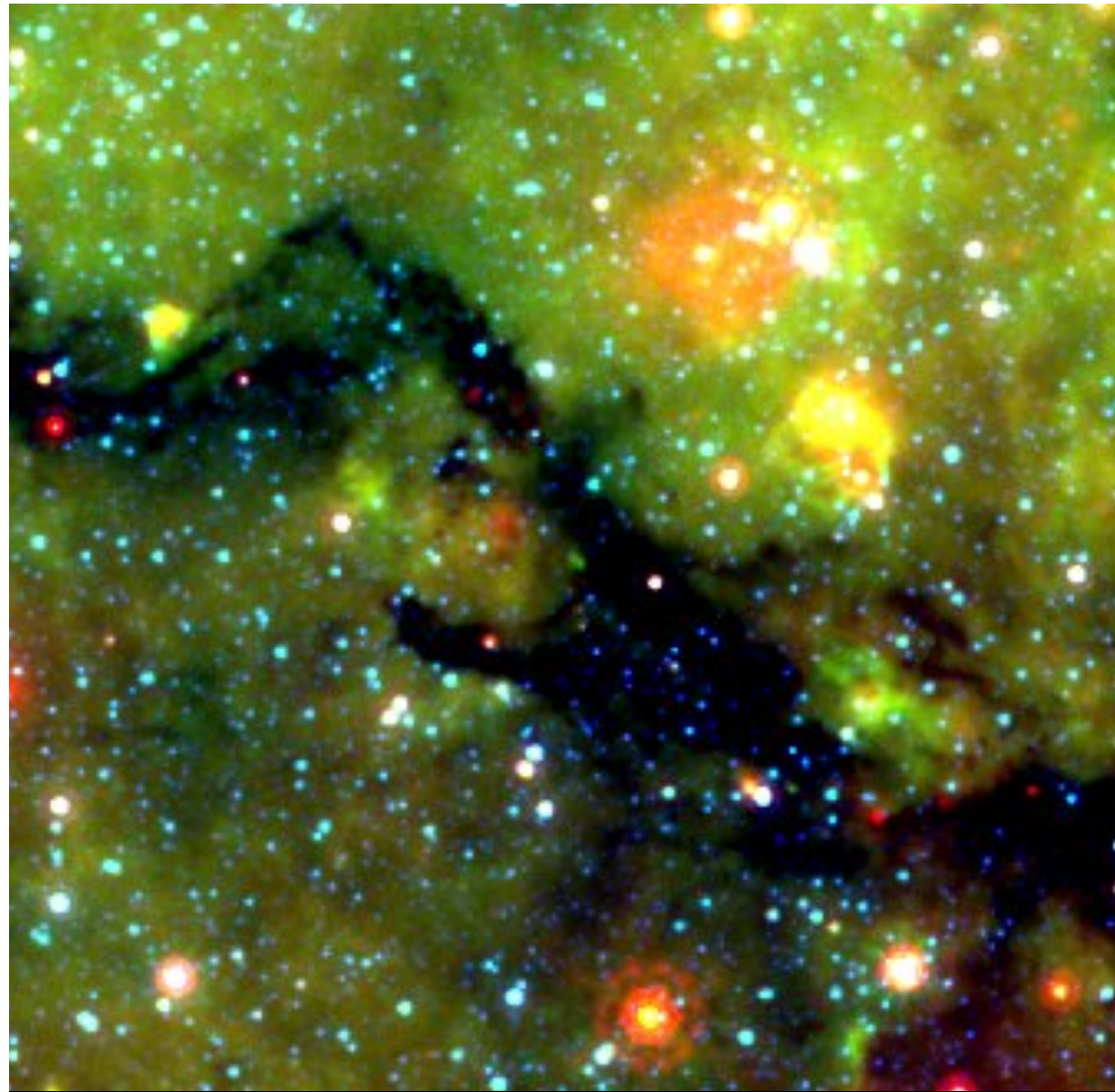
Internal properties of infrared  
dark clouds

College of Idaho

Physics professor since 2009

Intro and upper division physics

Intro astronomy



*Image credit: Milky Way Project ([milkywayproject.org](http://milkywayproject.org))*

Infrared dark clouds are seen in silhouette against background glowing dust emission.

# Research

Massive Star Formation

Radio: VLA, Green Bank Telescope

Infrared: Spitzer, Herschel

Hierarchical star formation

Bubbles

Yellowballs

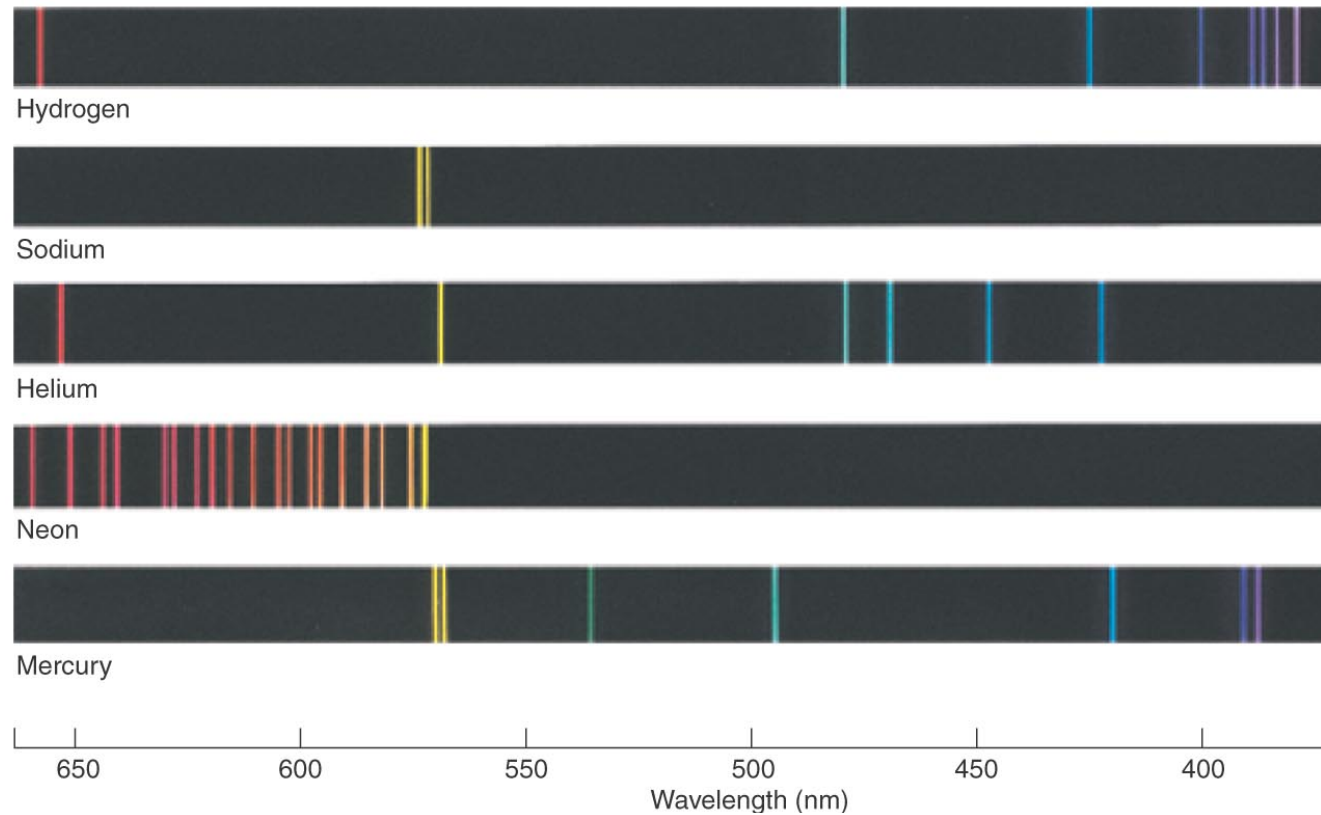
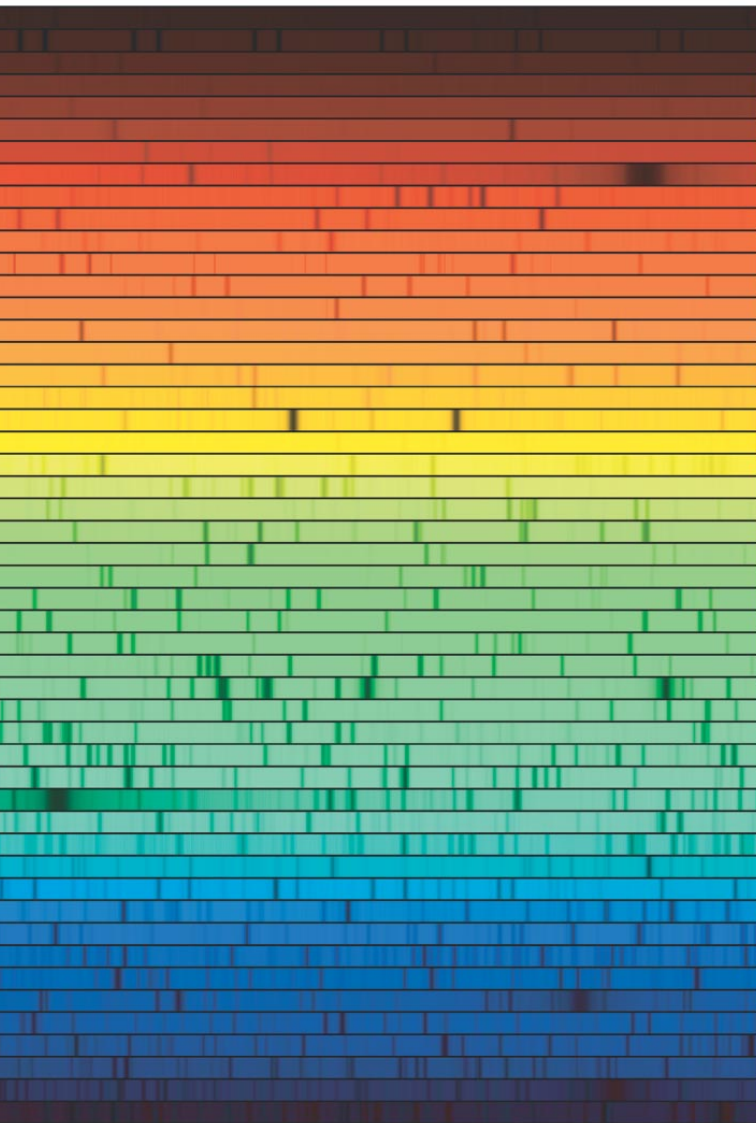
connection to this

reference: **I use radio spectral  
lines to determine conditions of  
molecular gas in star forming  
regions.**





# Emission and Absorption Lines (Spectral Lines)



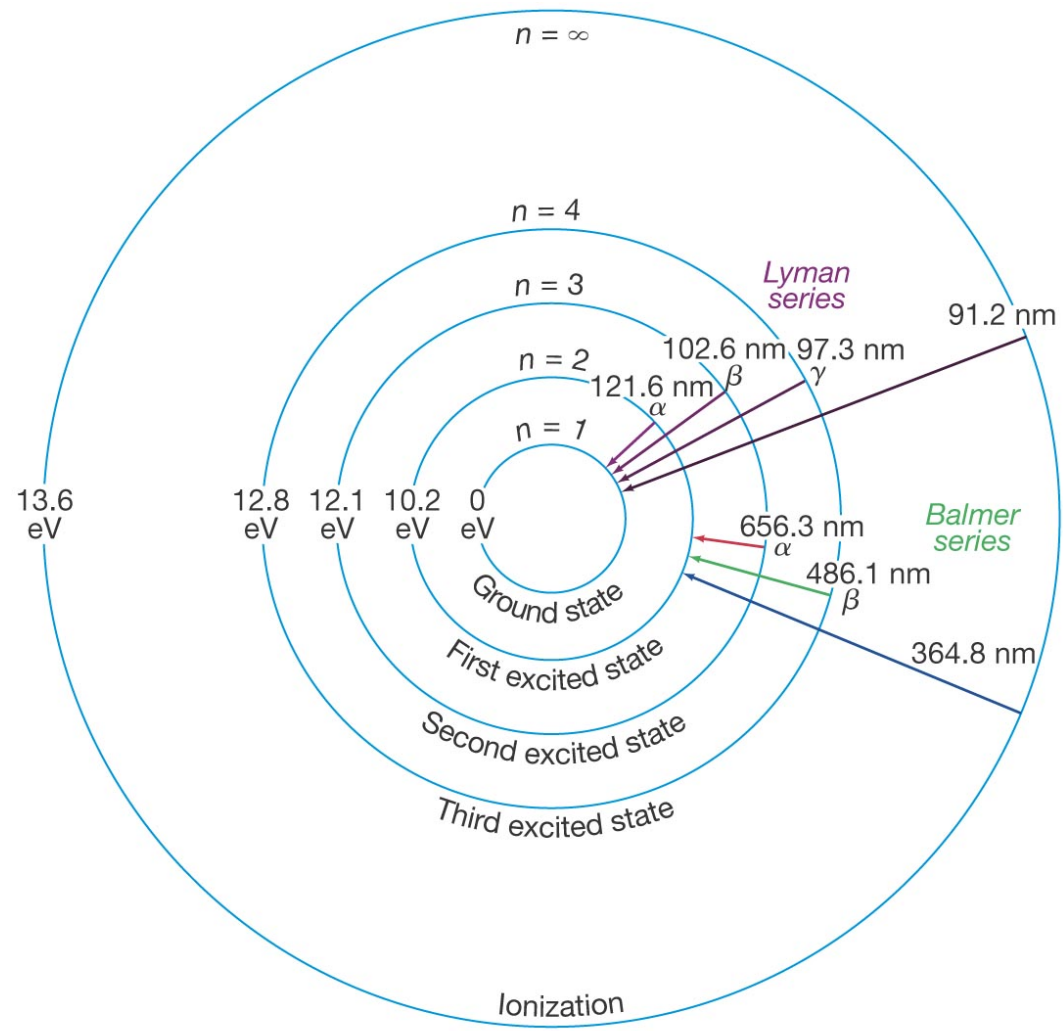
“Fingerprints” of atoms and molecules

# Atoms and Absorption Lines: The usual model

Absorption can boost an electron to the second (or higher) excited state

Ways to decay:

1. To ground state
2. Cascade one orbital at a time

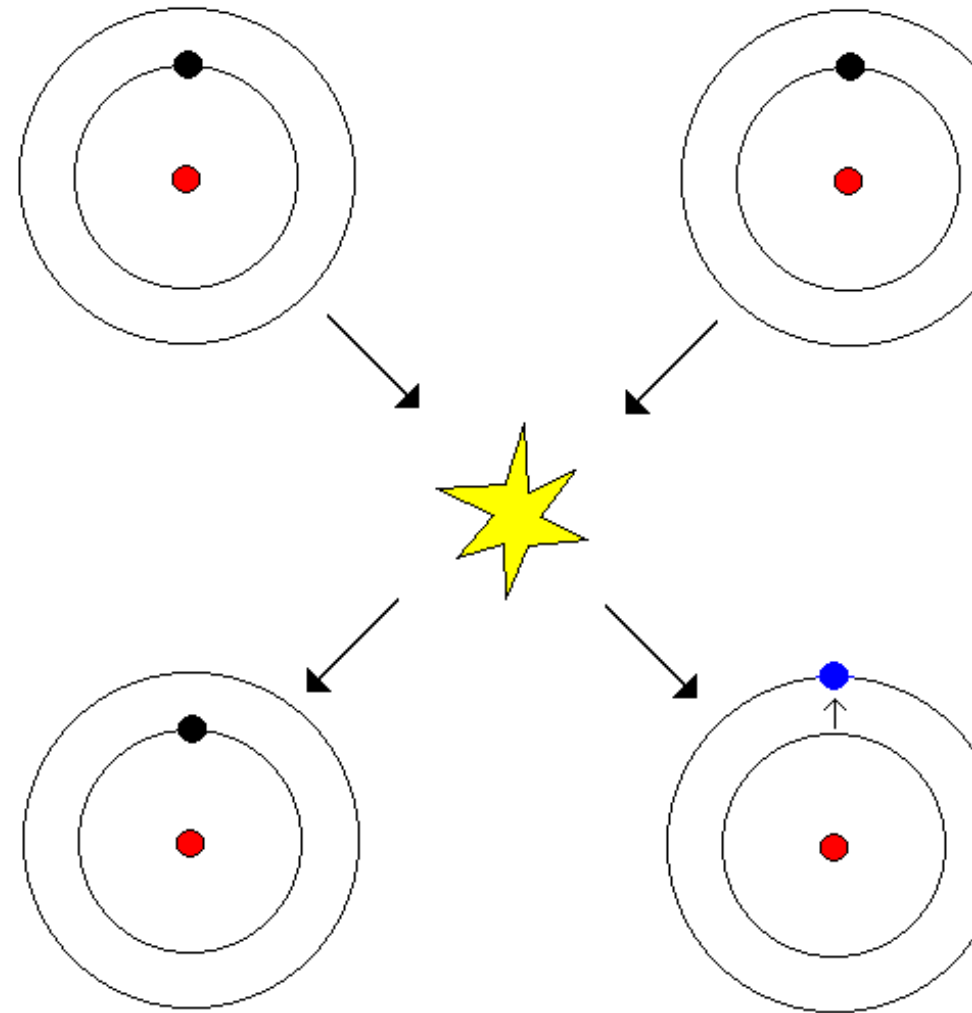


There are other ways  
to generate emission  
lines besides “eating  
photons”

Collisional excitation: can be used to  
measure the density,  
temperature of gas

### Collisional Excitation

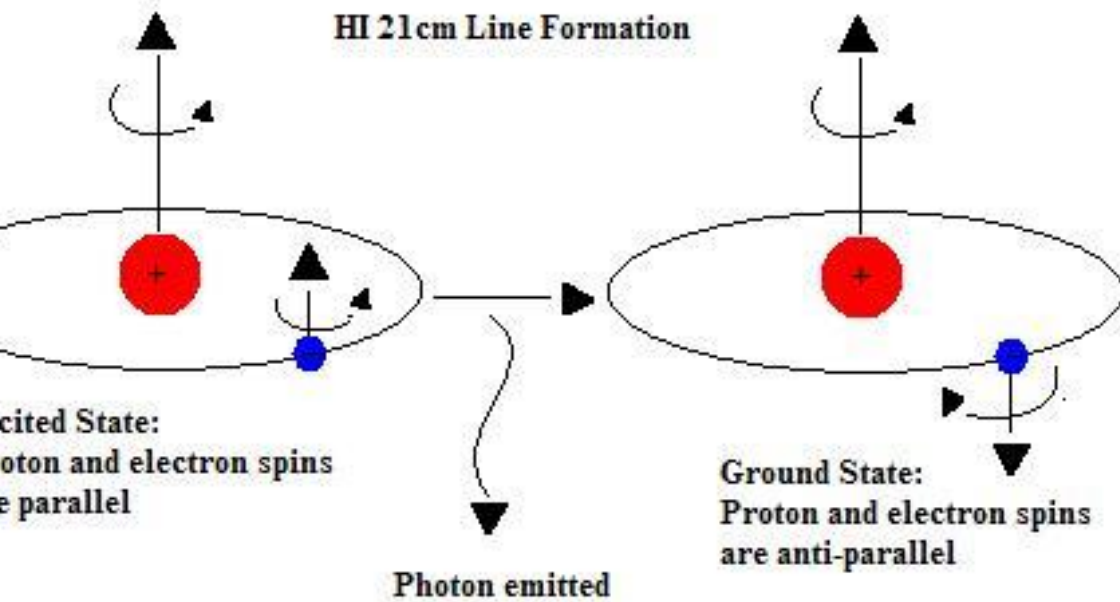
Excitation of an atom can occur when two atoms collide



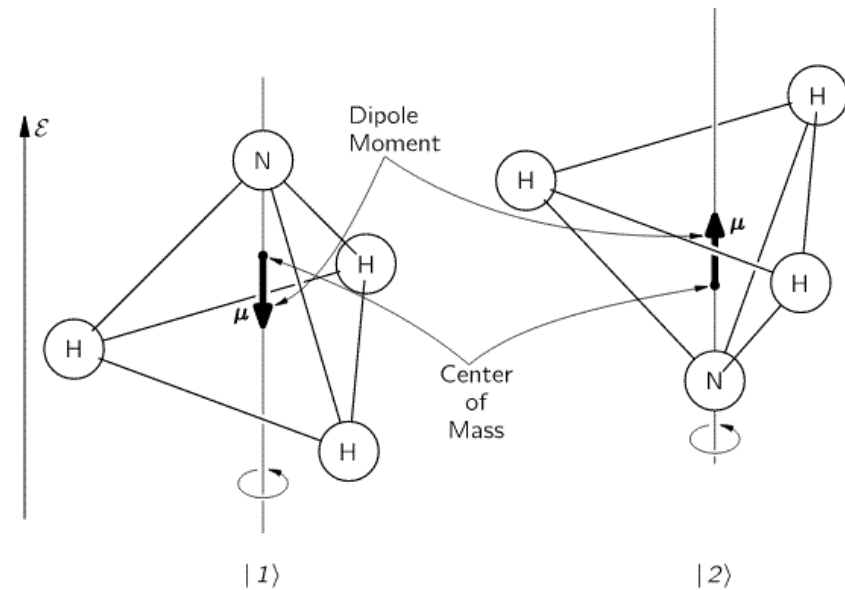
some of the energy of the collision is transferred to the electron,  
bumping it to a higher orbit.

Image: <http://abyss.uoregon.edu/~js/glossary/excitat>

# Additional types of energy levels of atoms and molecules

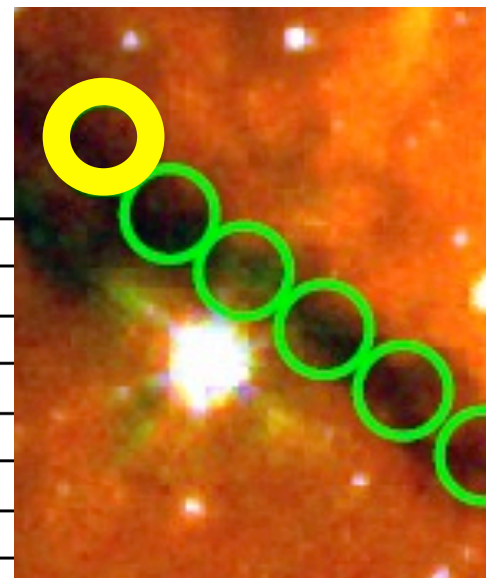
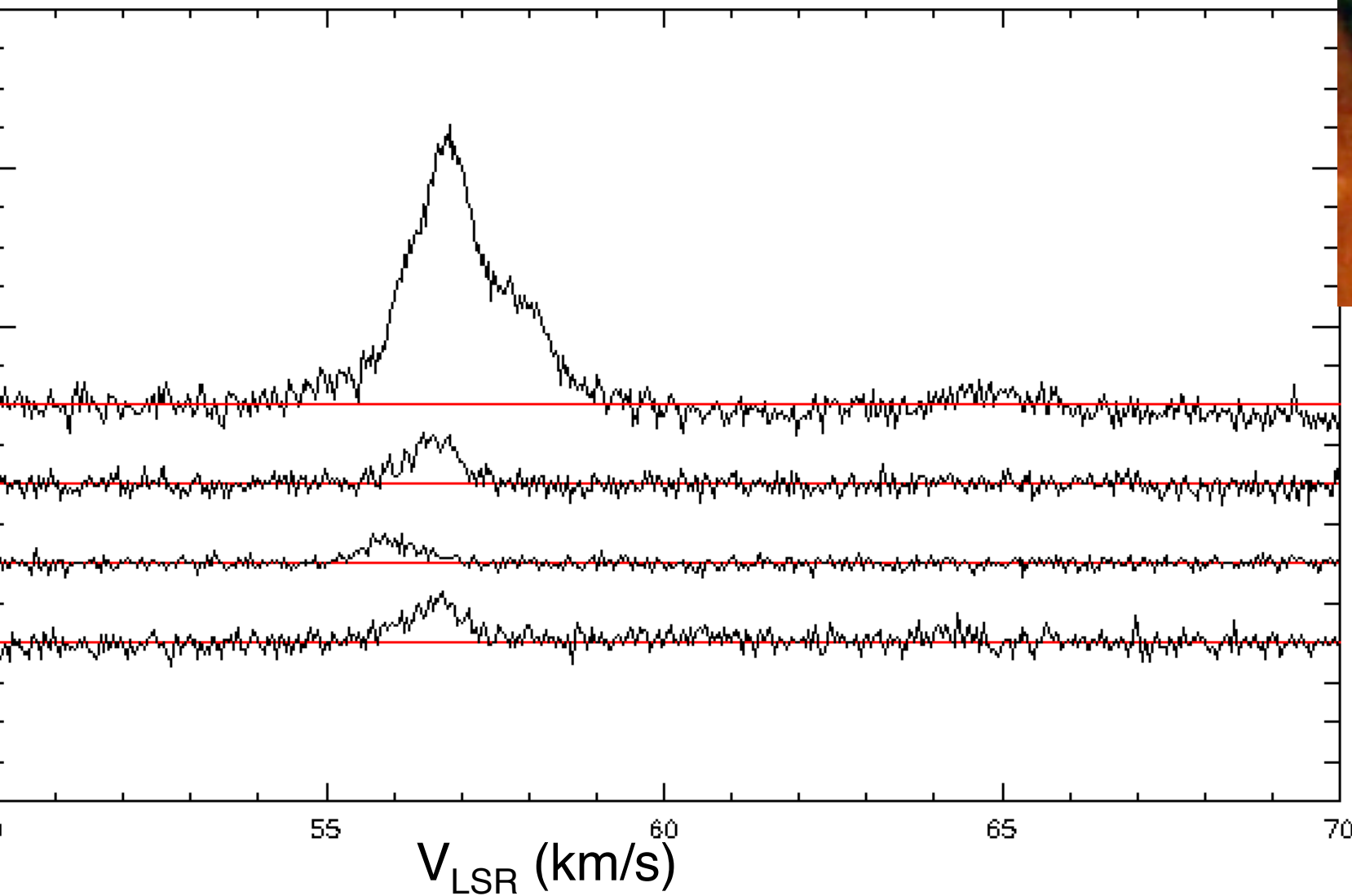


Electron/proton spin alignments have different energies. Example: 21 cm line in hydrogen.



Molecule's direction of rotation around its axis of symmetry. Example: position of N at ammonia ( $\text{NH}_3$ ).

# radio example: emission line



CS

C<sup>34</sup>S

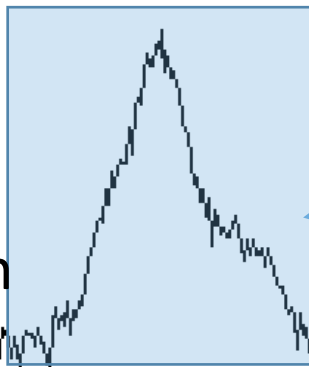
HC<sub>3</sub>N

CH<sub>3</sub>OH

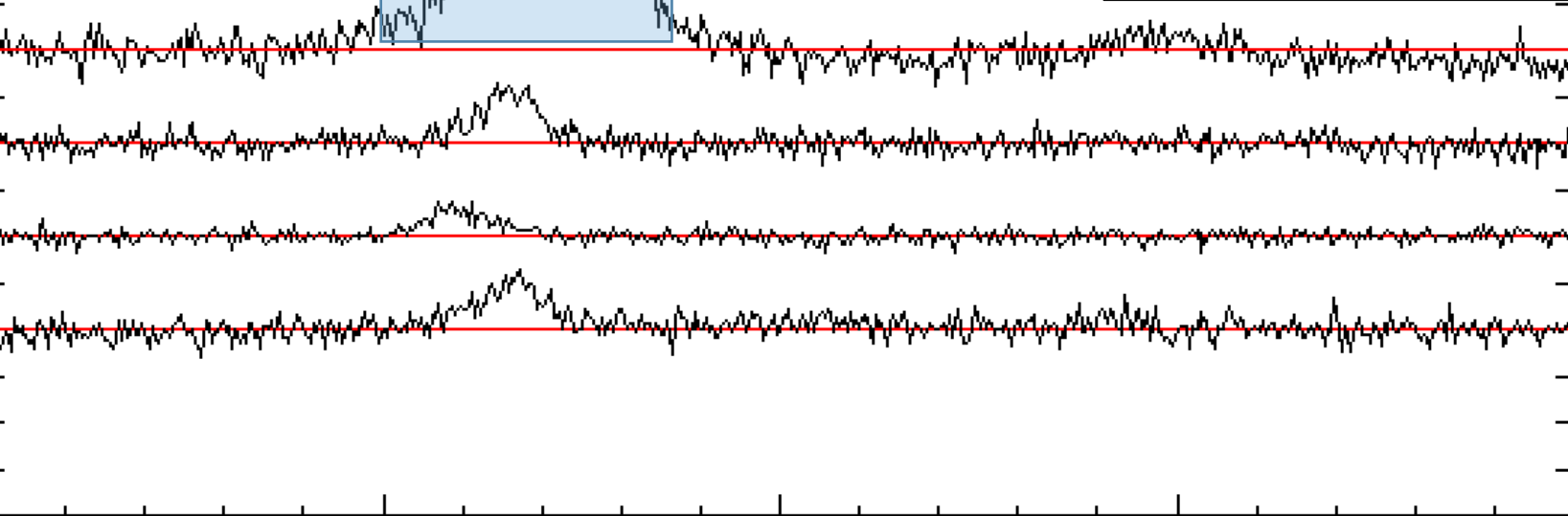
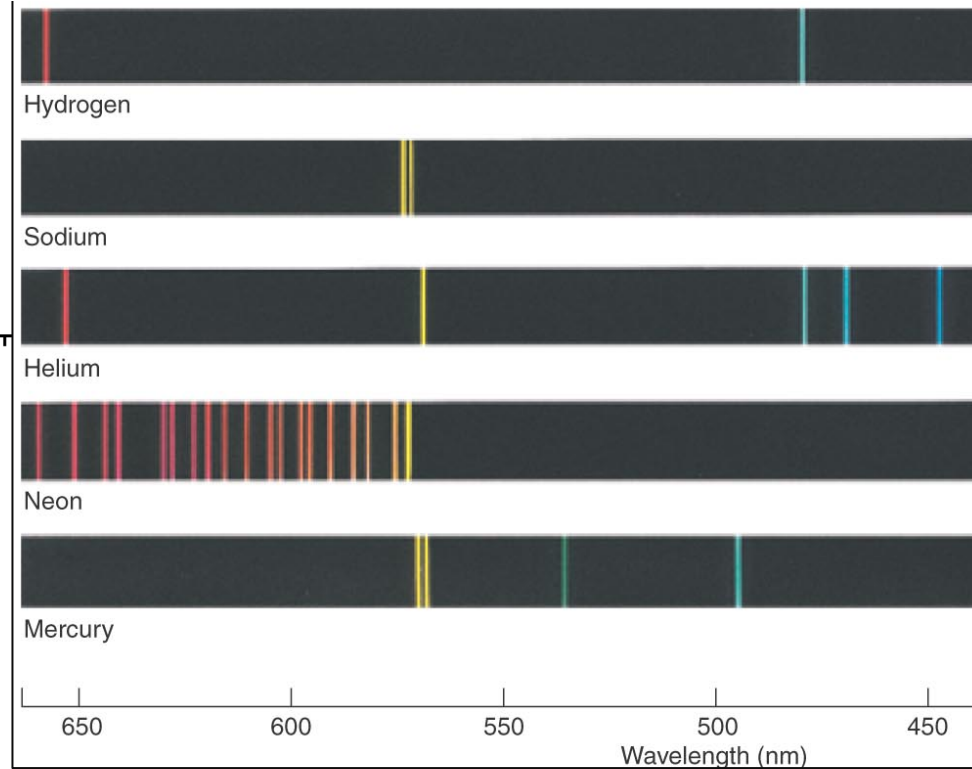


# Important Features

Intensity—  
amount of  
energy  
collected per  
wavelength bin



Not a “line” –  
has structure



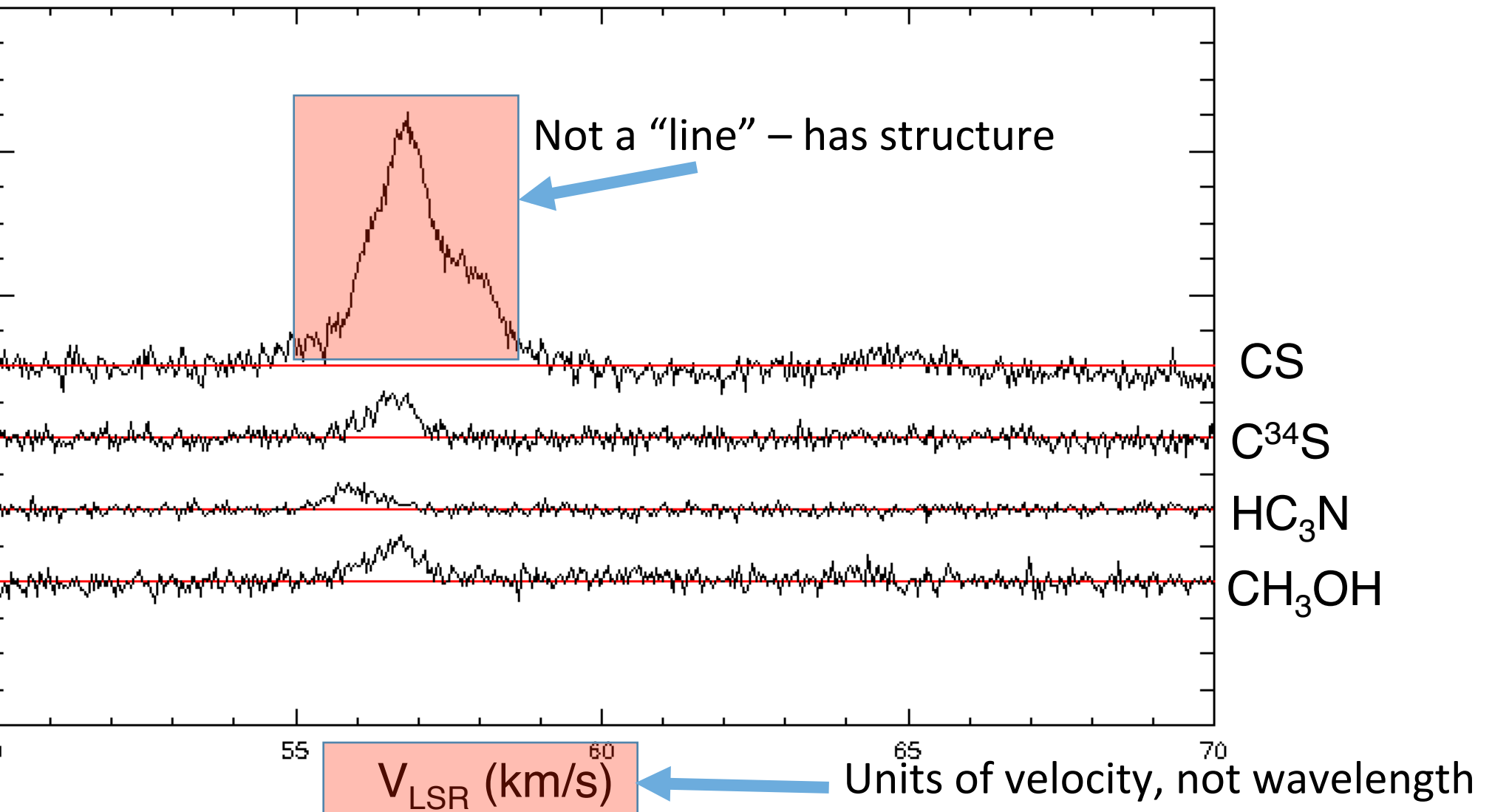
CS  
C<sup>34</sup>S  
HC<sub>3</sub>N  
CH<sub>3</sub>OH

Molecular emiss

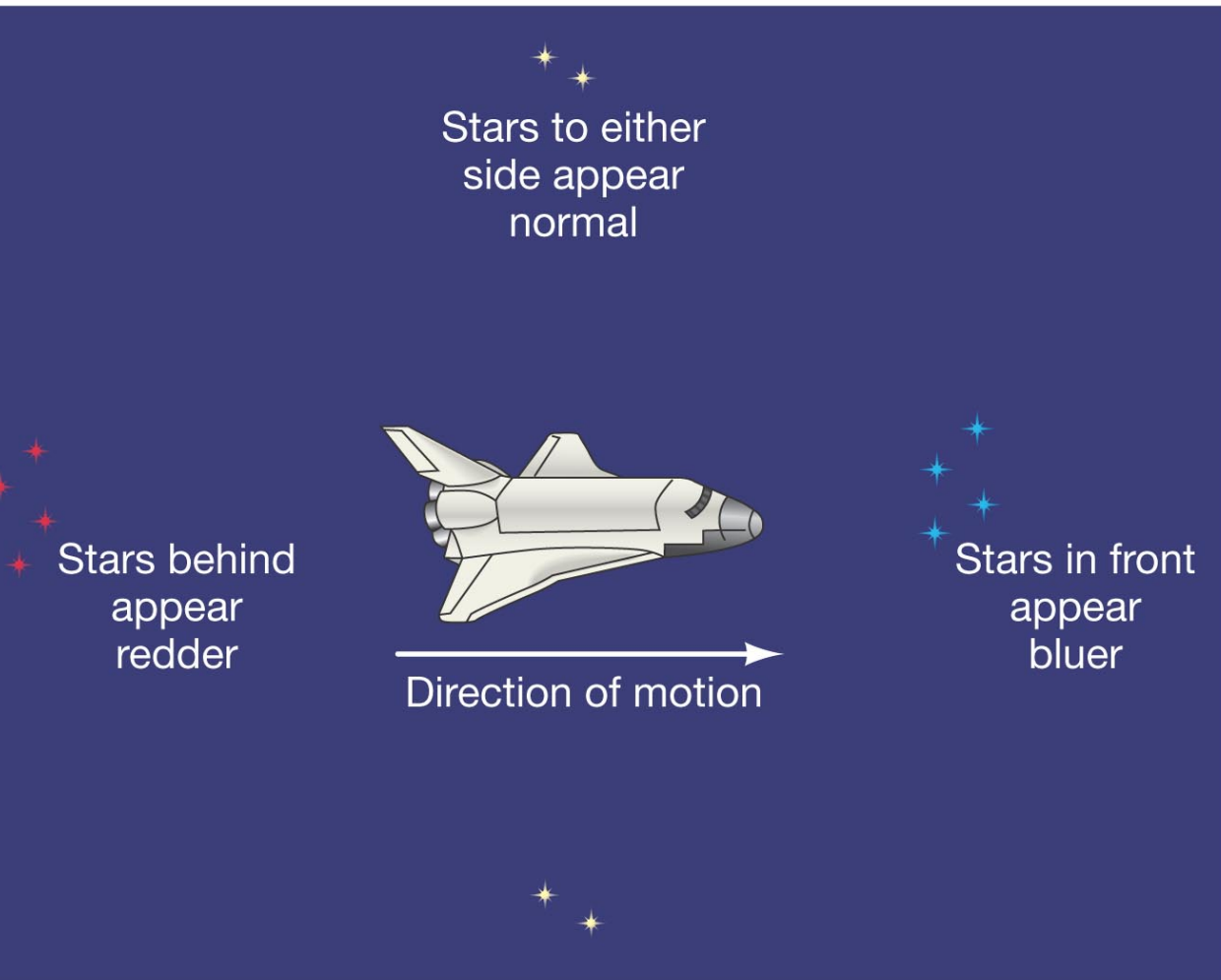
$V_{\text{LSR}}$  (km/s)

Units of velocity, not wavelength

# Radial Velocity and Line Broadening



# The Doppler Effect



Light can't travel faster (or slower) than the speed of light, even if it is emitted from a moving source.

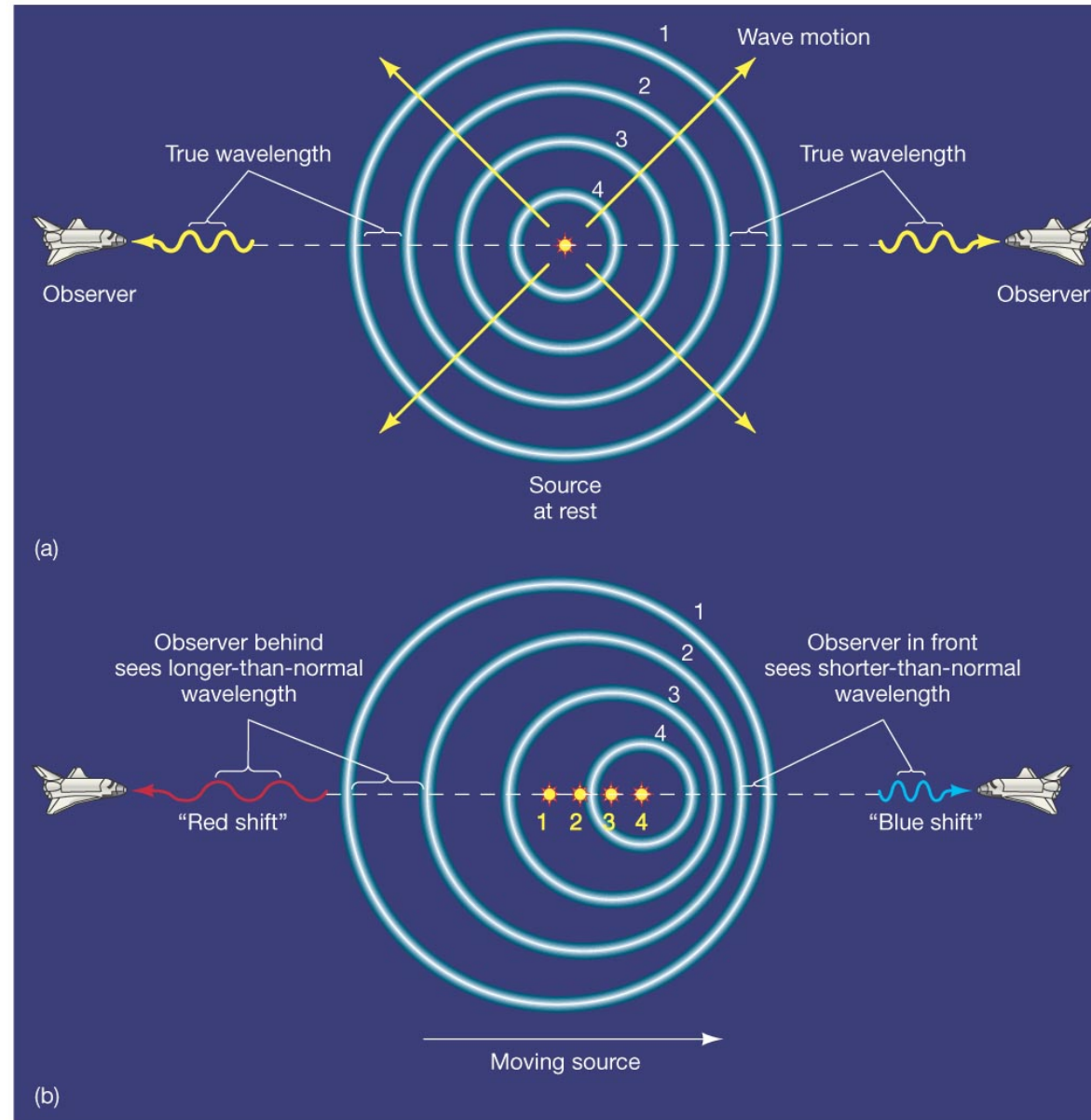
If one is moving toward a source of radiation, the wavelengths seem shorter (higher energy photons); if moving away, they seem longer (lower energy photons).

# The Doppler Effect

depends only on the relative  
motion of source and  
observer... motion must be  
"radial" (towards or away  
from line of sight) to cause  
Doppler Effect

$$= v/c$$

Red shift = higher radial  
velocity

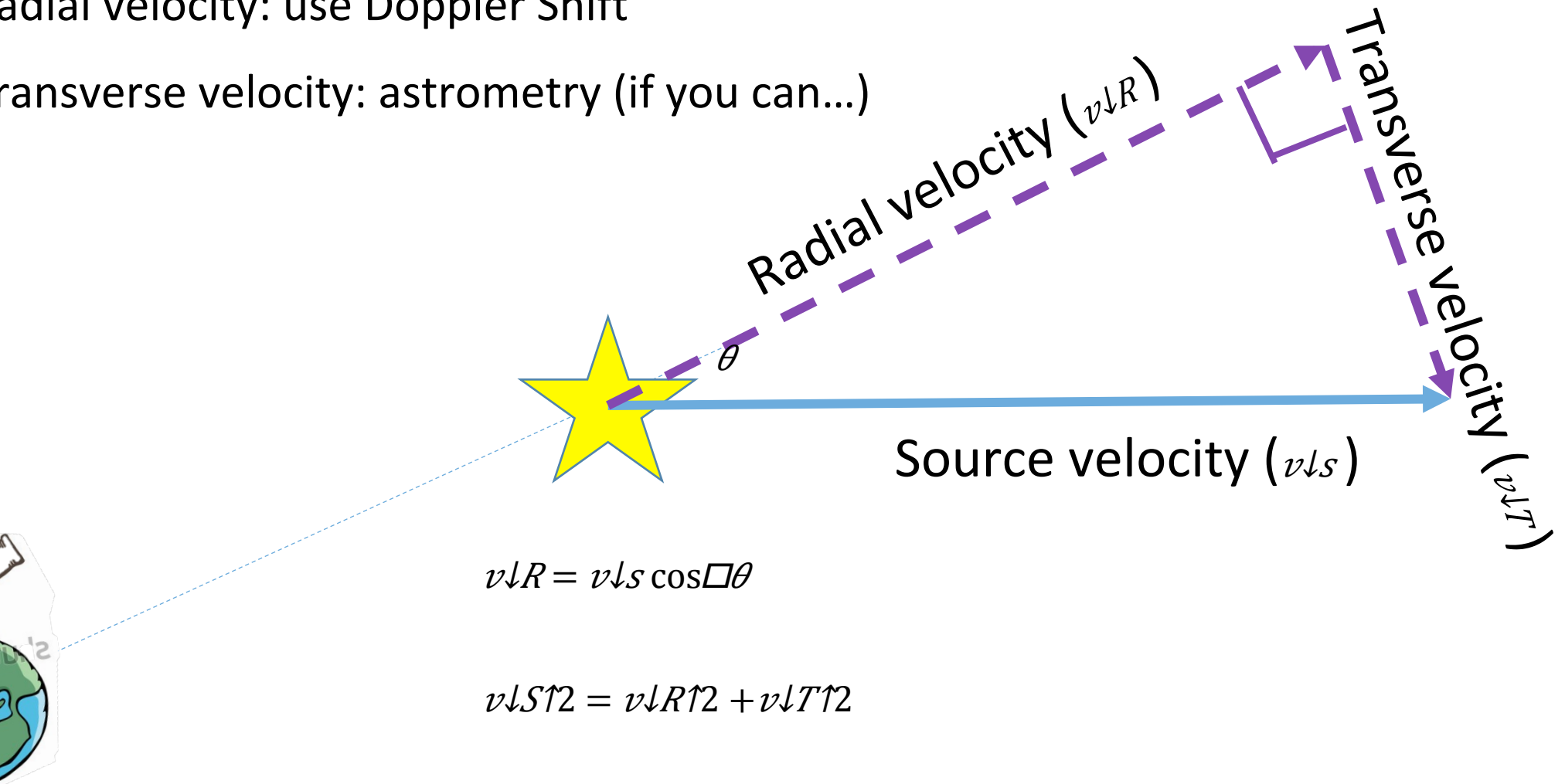




# Radial velocity vs. source velocity

Radial velocity: use Doppler Shift

Transverse velocity: astrometry (if you can...)





# Velocity in Our Galaxy: Galactic Rotation

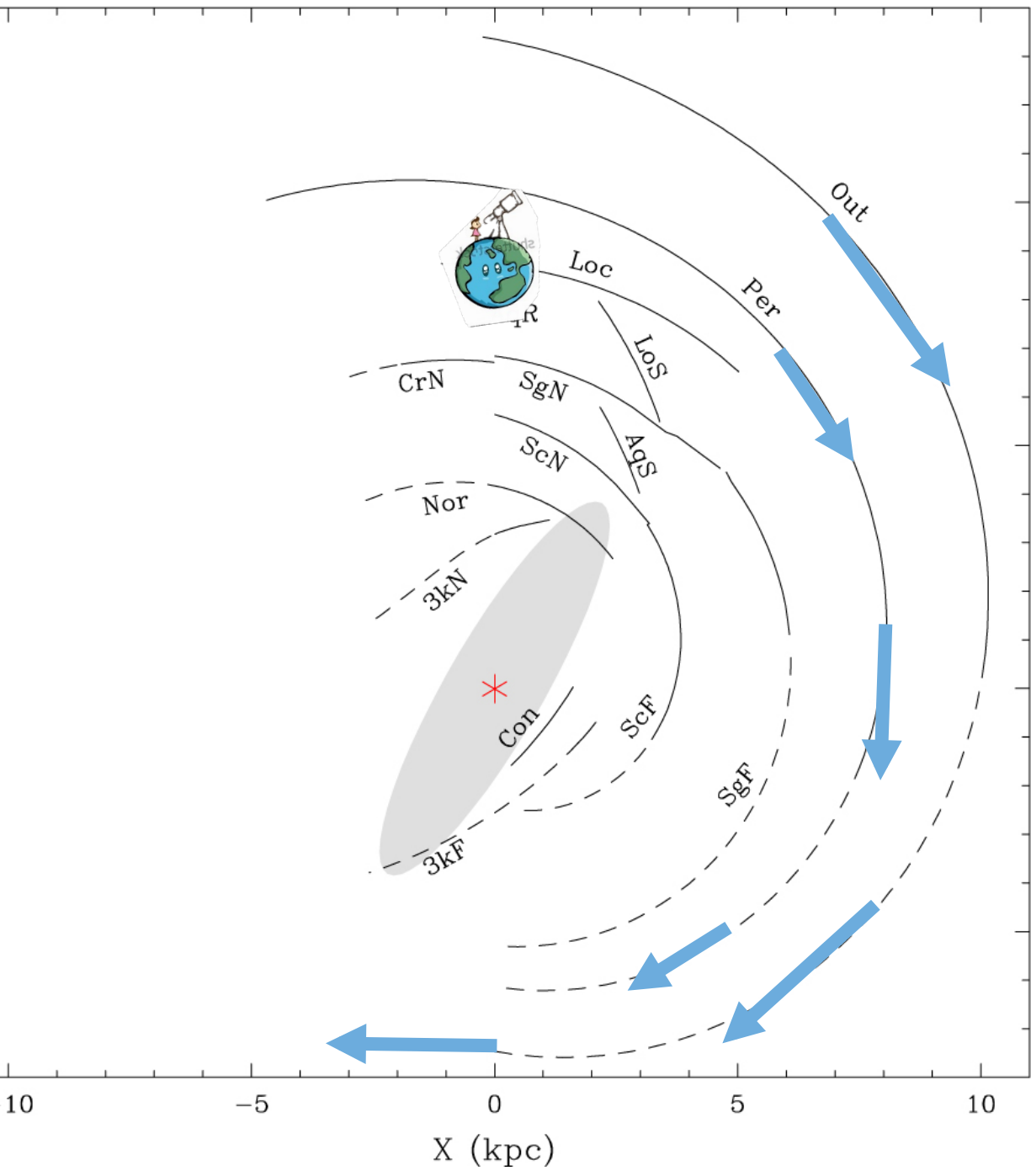
Radial velocity (relative to Sun) of gas in Milky Way spiral arms

Image: NASA (APOD 25 A 2005)

# Velocity in Our Galaxy: Galactic Rotation

Radial velocity as tool to getting distances to objects in spiral arms (*"We obtained source distance using a kinematic model."*)

Reid et al., ApJ, 2016





# Gas in other galaxies

Hydrogen in M33 (Triangulum or Pinwheel Galaxy) imaged by VLA and Westerbork telescopes.

Image: NRAO, <https://www.nrao.edu/pr/2001/m33gas/>

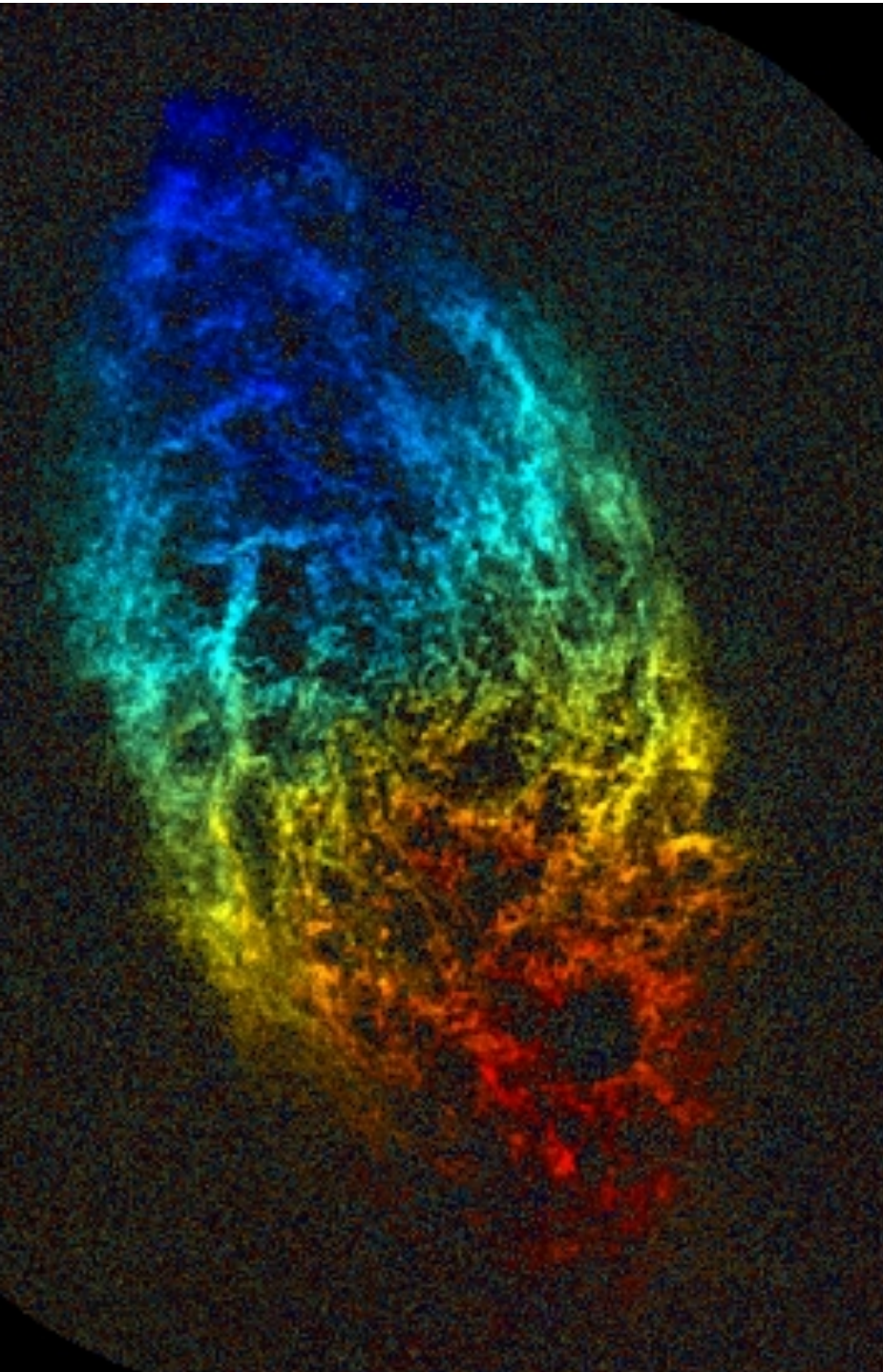
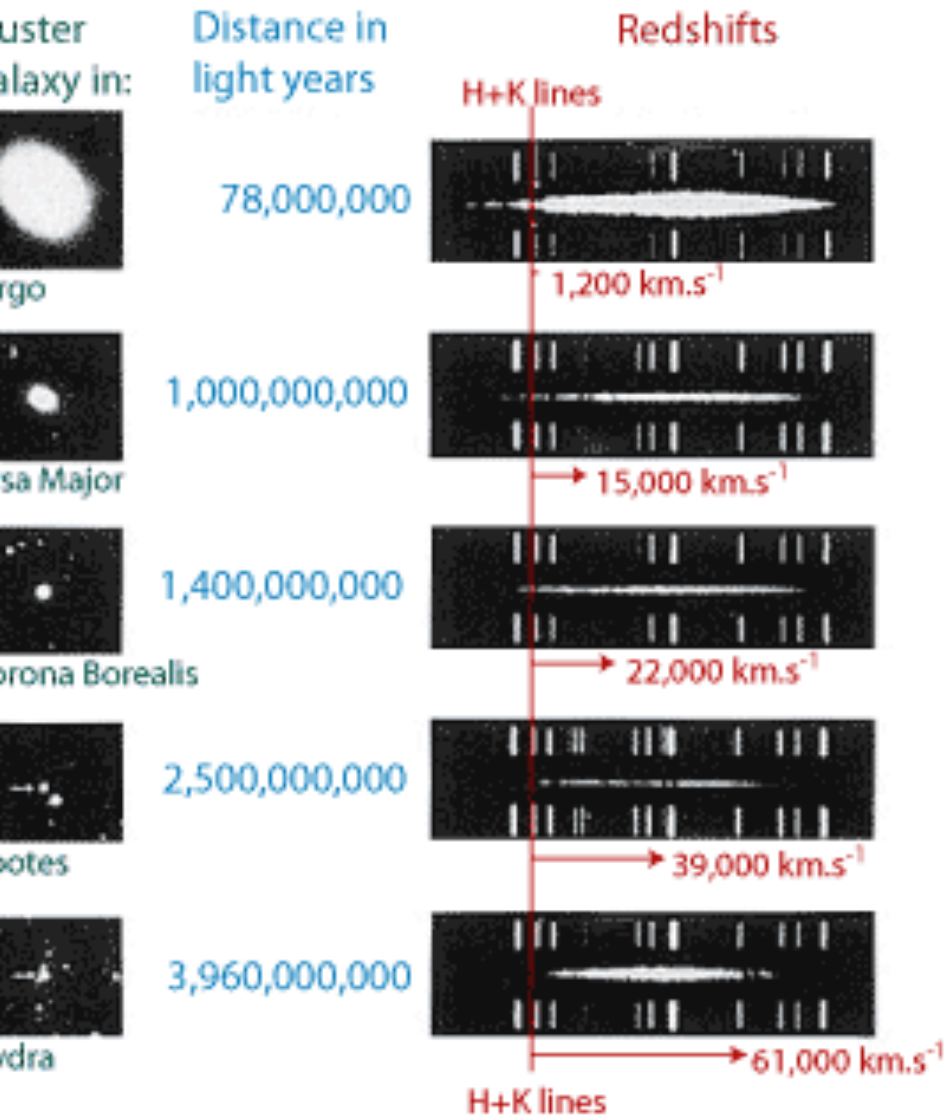


Image Credit & Copyright: Giovanni Benelli  
(NASA APOD 2016 September 17)



## Relation Between Redshift and Distance for Distant Galaxies

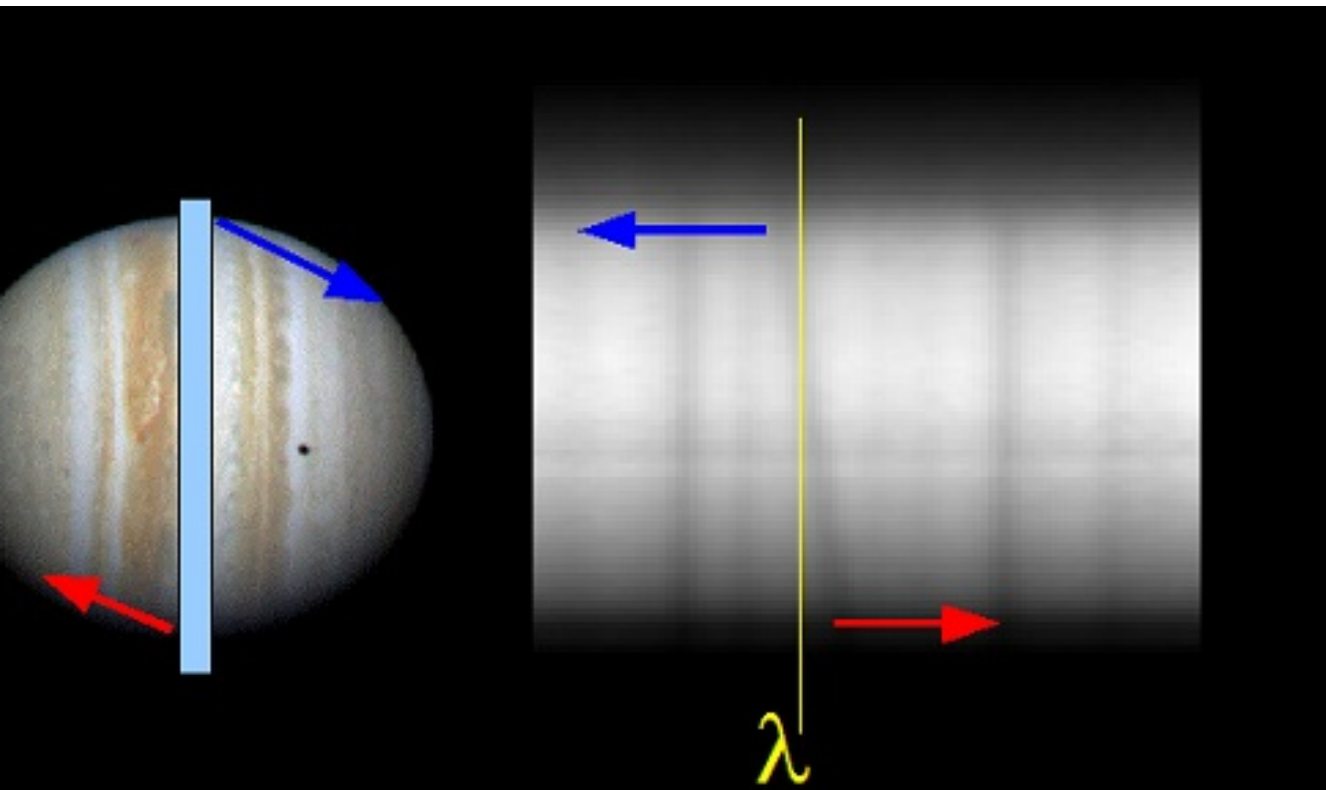


# Velocities of other galaxies

Edwin Hubble's observations of galaxies with the redshift in their spectral lines (1943).

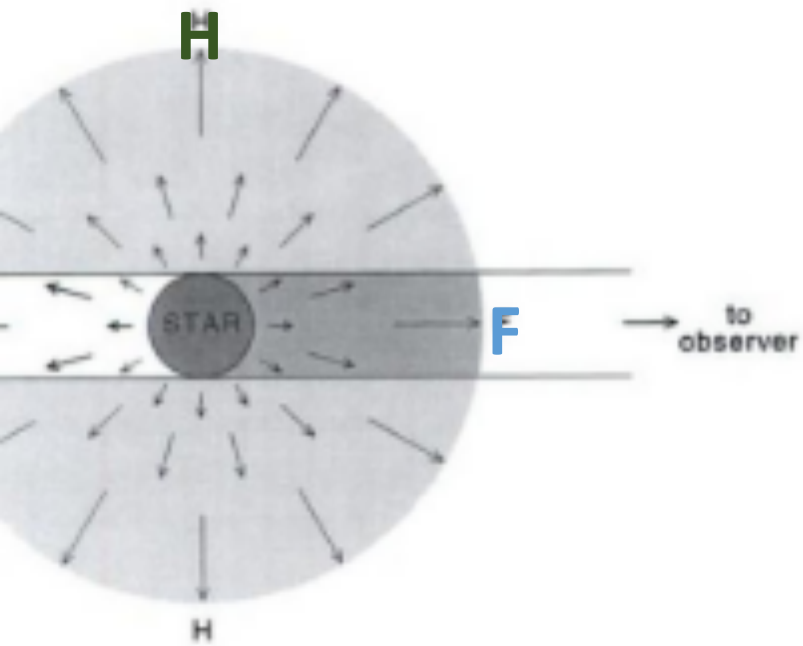
Expansion, motion within Galaxy clusters, rotation of galaxies

# Planetary Rotation



Example: Rotation of Jupiter

Image: Shelyak.com



# P-Cygni Profiles

Bottom shows the continuum from star with absorption in front (F) and emission from halo (H)

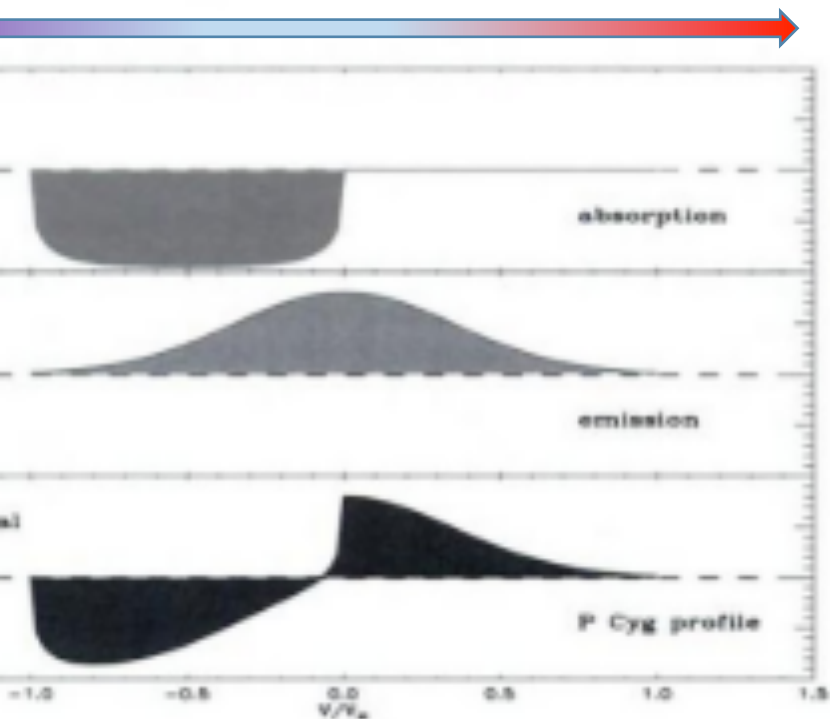
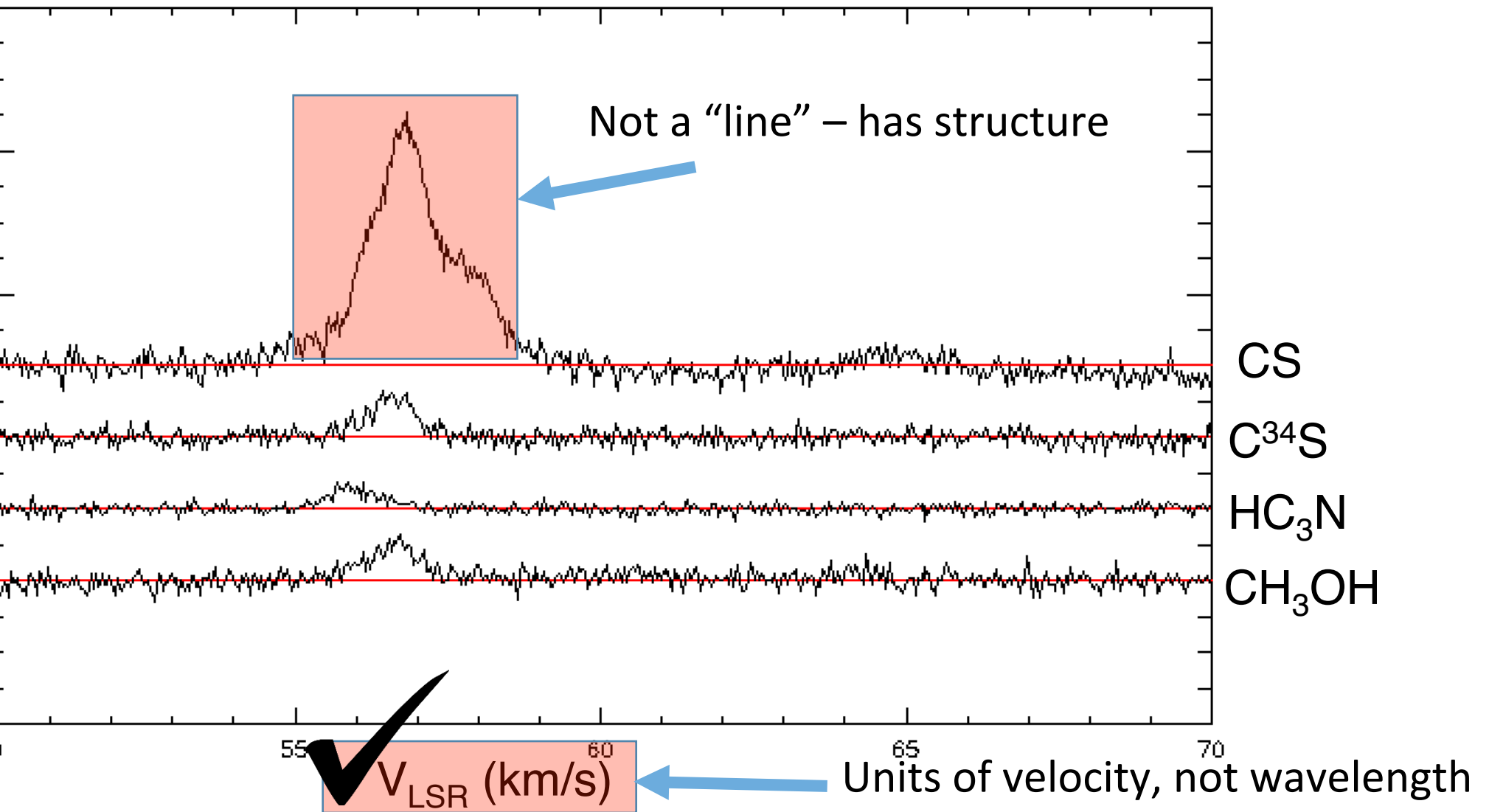


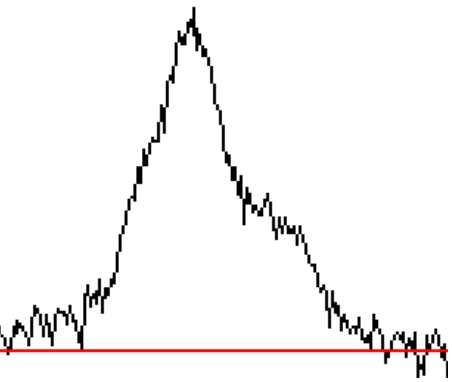
Image: Figure 2.4 from Lamers & Cassinelli, *Introduction to Stellar Winds*, 1999, Cambridge University Press

# Radial Velocity and Line Broadening





# Line Broadening



Dispersion:

Natural broadening

Pressure broadening

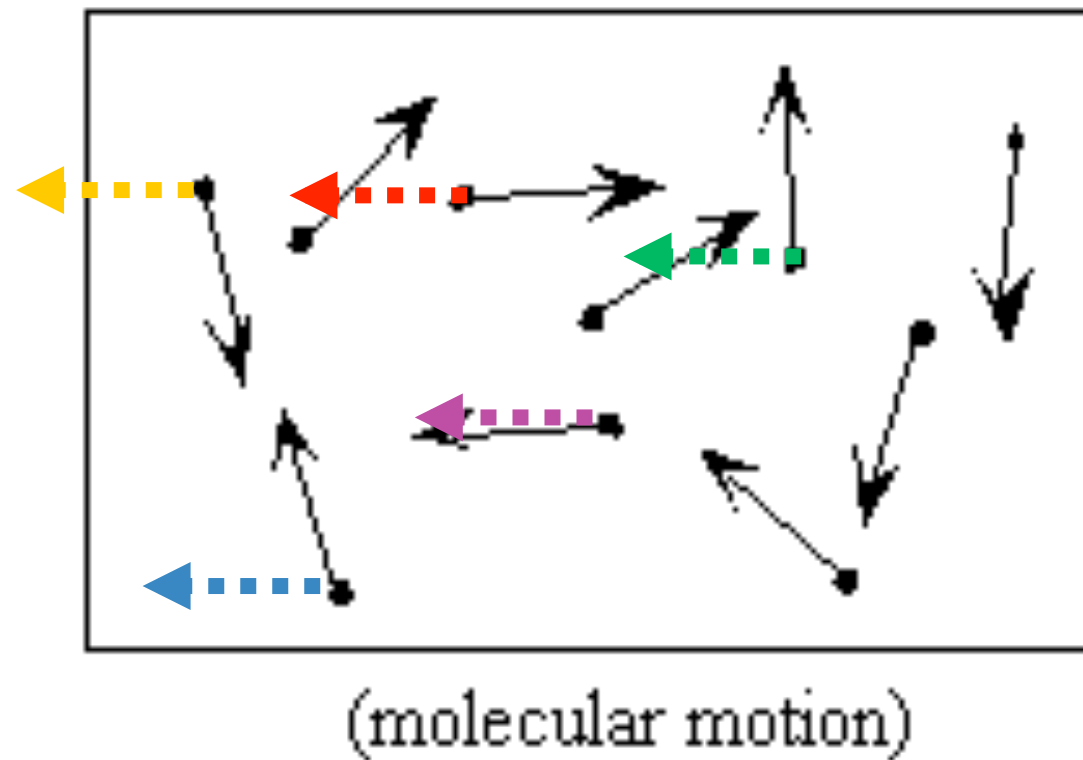
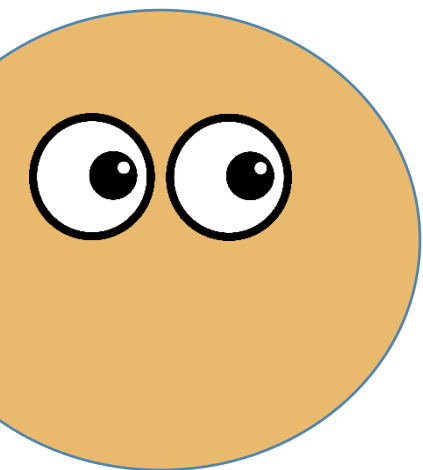
Gaussian:

Thermal

Turbulence

See David Whelan's talk for more!

# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Physics



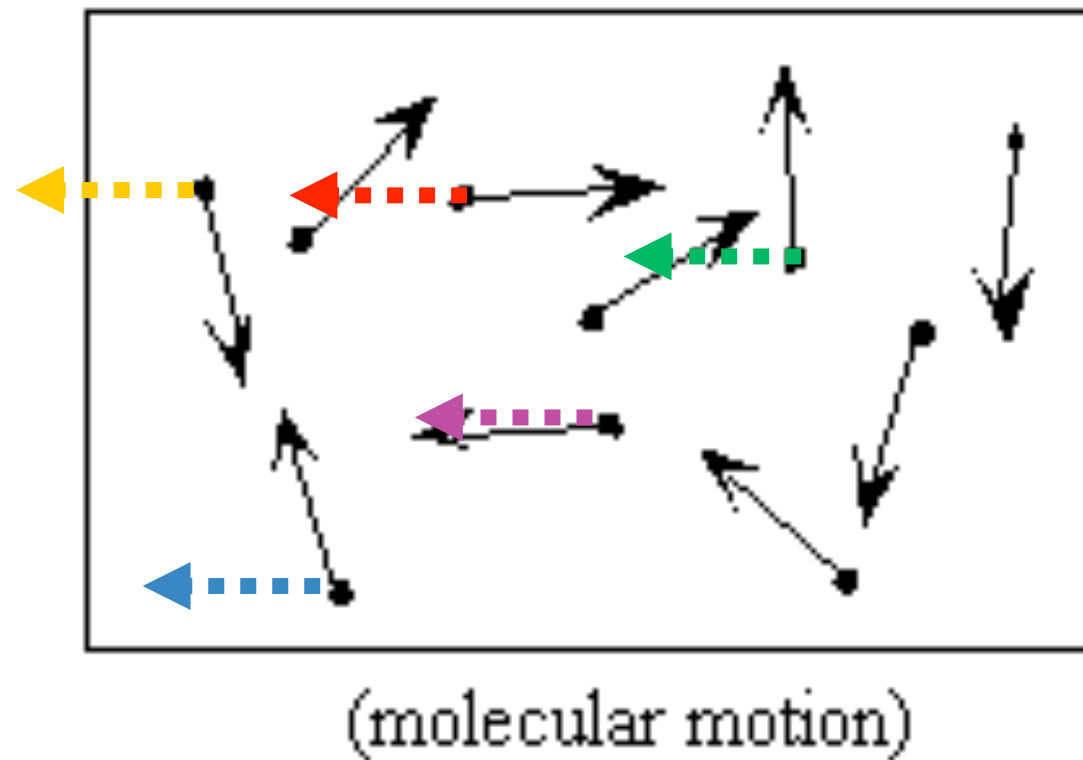
$f(v)$  is fraction of atoms with velocity between  $v$  and  $v+dv$

# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Physics

$f(v)dv$  is fraction of atoms with velocity between  $v$  and  $v+dv$

$f(v)dv$  is “probability distribution” depends on gas properties

Probability distribution determines the shape

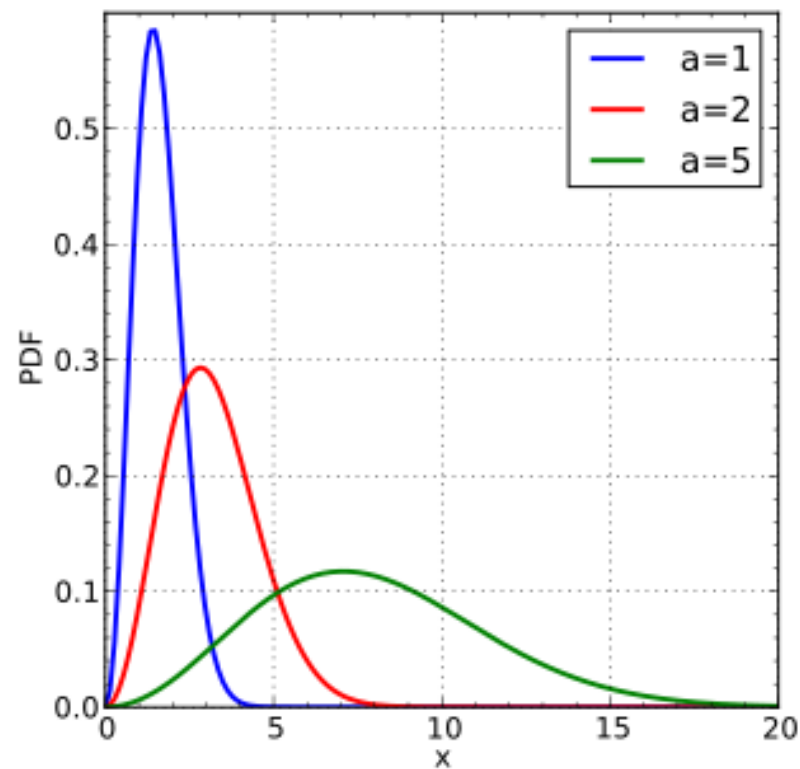


# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Physics

$f(v)dv$  is fraction of atoms with velocity between  $v$  and  $v+dv$

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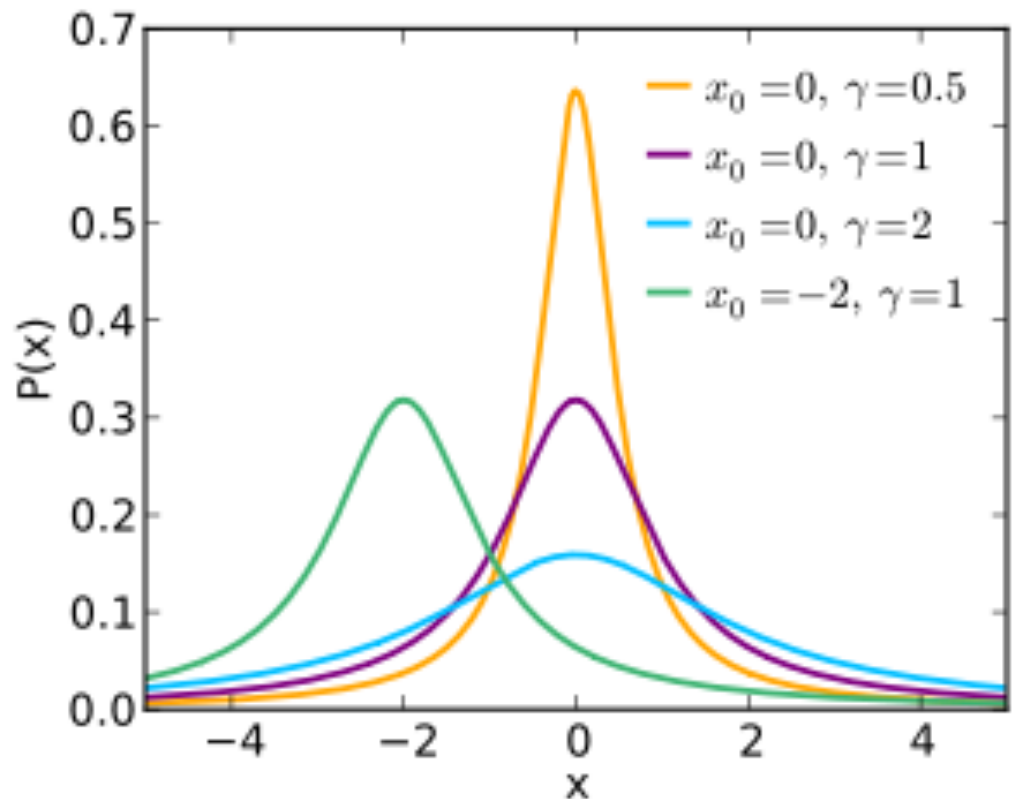
Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution— ideal gas with random motions

# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Physics

$P(v)dv$  is fraction of atoms with velocity between  $v$  and  $v+dv$

$P(v)dv$  is “probability distribution” depends on gas properties

Probability distribution determines line shape

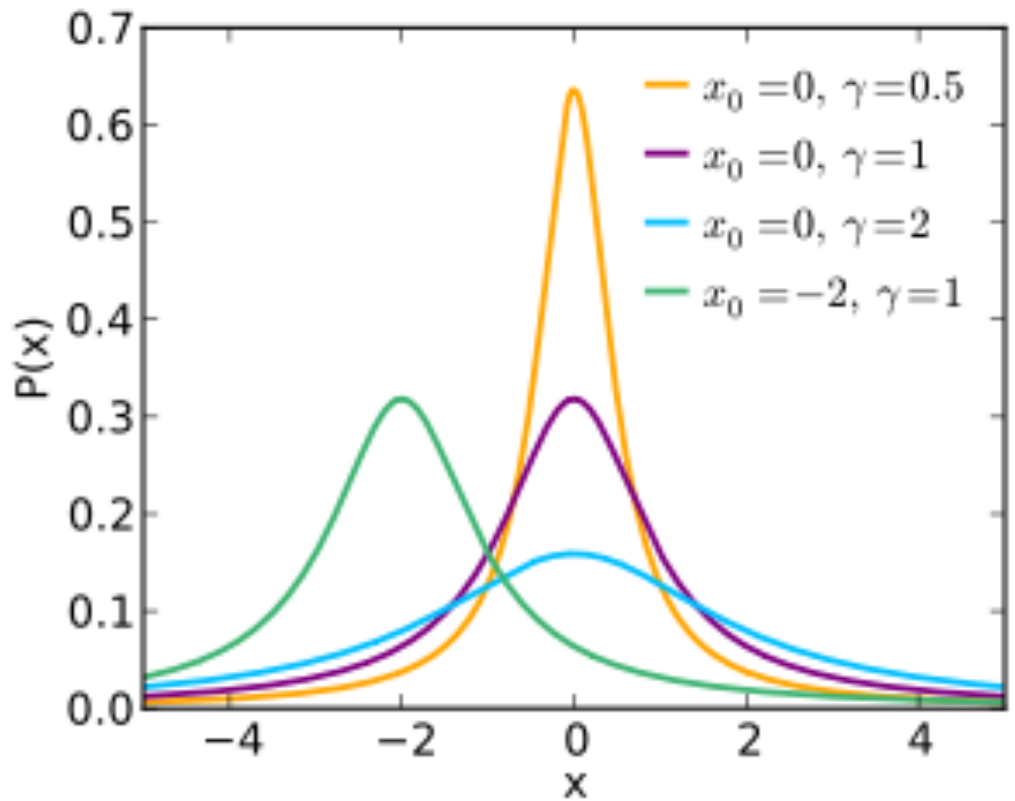
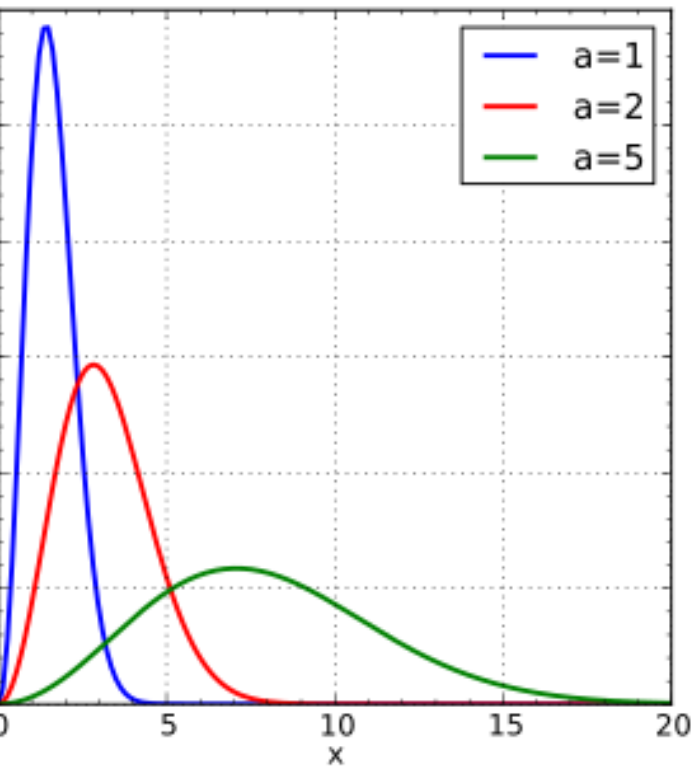


Cauchy–Lorentz (Lorentzian) distribution  
homogeneous broadening

Image credit: <http://cronodon.com/SpaceTech/CVAccretion>



# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Physics



Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution:  
Thermal (Doppler) broadening

Lorentz distribution:  
Natural (uncertainty principle) broadening  
Collisional broadening

# Velocity of Individual Atoms: Statistical Profiles

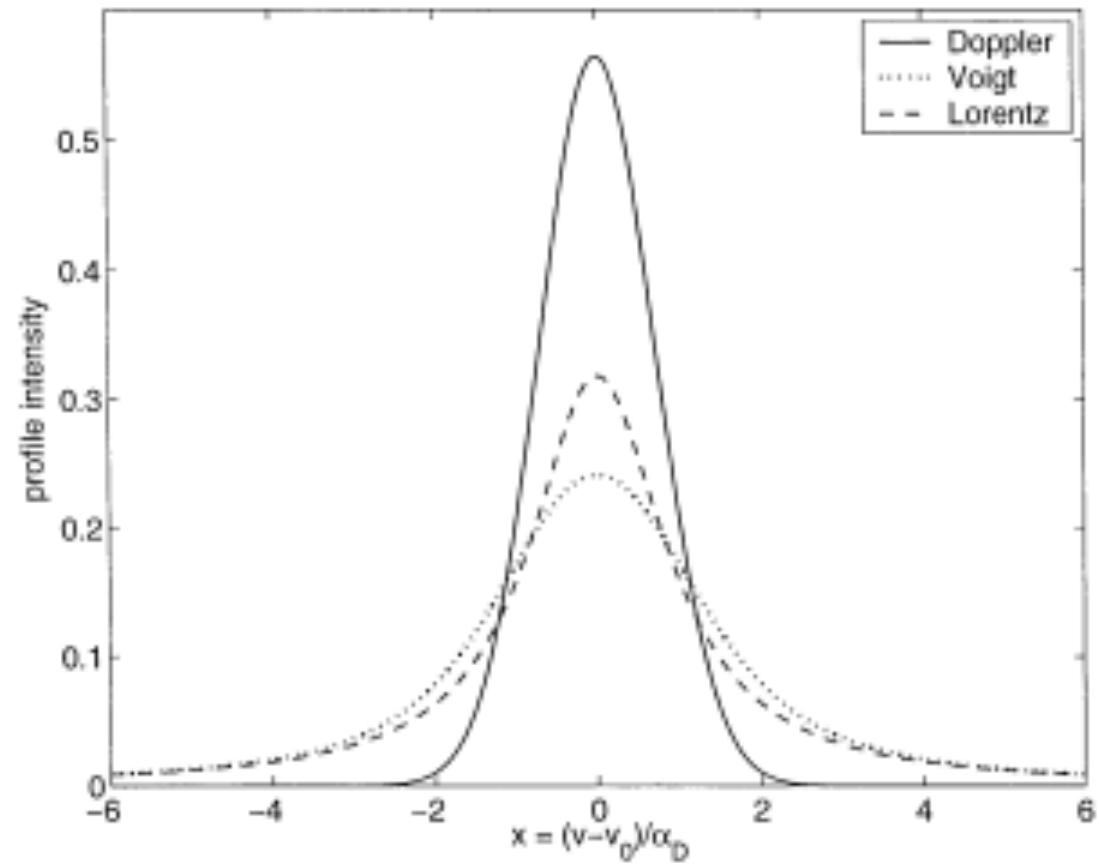


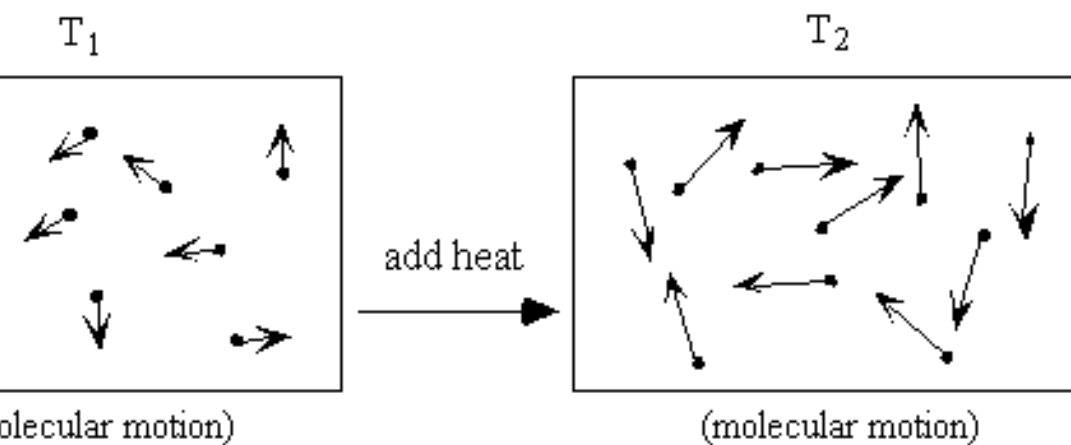
FIG. 2. The Lorentz profile (dashed line) and the Doppler profile (solid line) with the same half-widths ( $\alpha_L = \alpha_D = 1$ ). The dotted line is the corresponding Voigt profile. Here,  $x$  is defined as  $x = (v - v_0) / \alpha_D$ .

Voigt profile: convolution of Gaussian and Lorentzian profiles

Figure: Huang & Yung, "A Common Misunderstanding about the Voigt Line Profile" 2003 Journal of The Atmospheric Sciences

# Example: Thermal Motion

## Temperature is Energy, Energy is Motion



$$T = \frac{2}{3} \frac{KE_{avg}}{k_b}$$

$k_b$  is Boltzmann's constant,  $1.38 \times 10^{-23}$

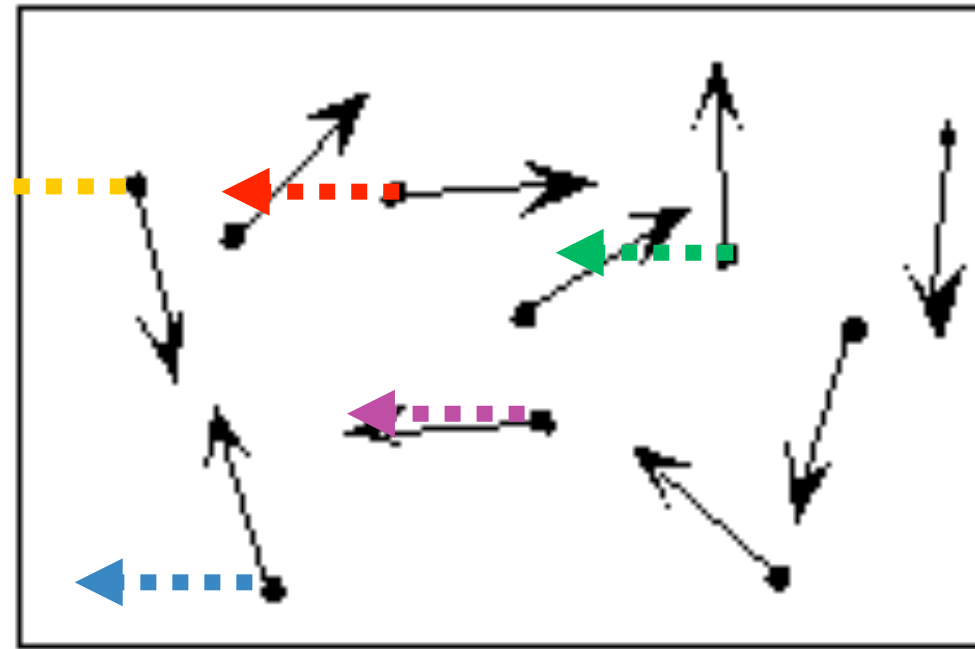
Rearrange to get average kinetic energy of a gas:

$$KE_{avg} = \frac{3}{2} k_b T = \frac{1}{2} m v_{average}^2$$

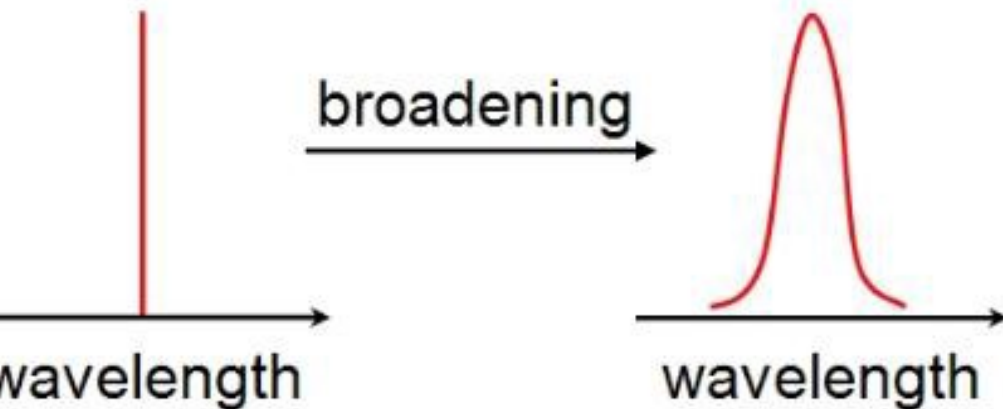
# Thermal Linewidths

Thermal gas random motions follow Maxwell-Boltzmann distribution:

$$f(v) = \sqrt{\left(\frac{m}{2\pi kT}\right)^3} 4\pi v^2 \exp\left[-\frac{mv^2}{2kT}\right]$$



(molecular motion)



$$FWHM = \frac{1}{\lambda} \sqrt{\frac{8kT}{m} \ln 2}$$

Image credit: spectral line broadening via BotReje  
at <http://cronodon.com/SpaceTech/CVAccretion/>

# Velocity in Gas: Turbulent motion



Stars, Gas, and Dust Battle  
the Carina Nebula

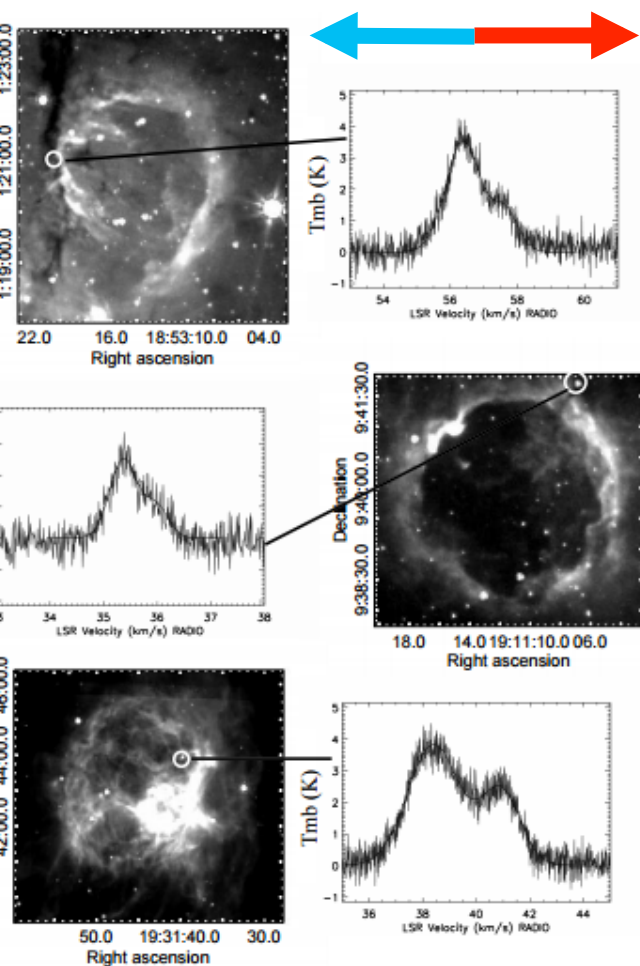
Image Credit & Copyright: Bastien Foucher

NASA APOD 2017 August 15

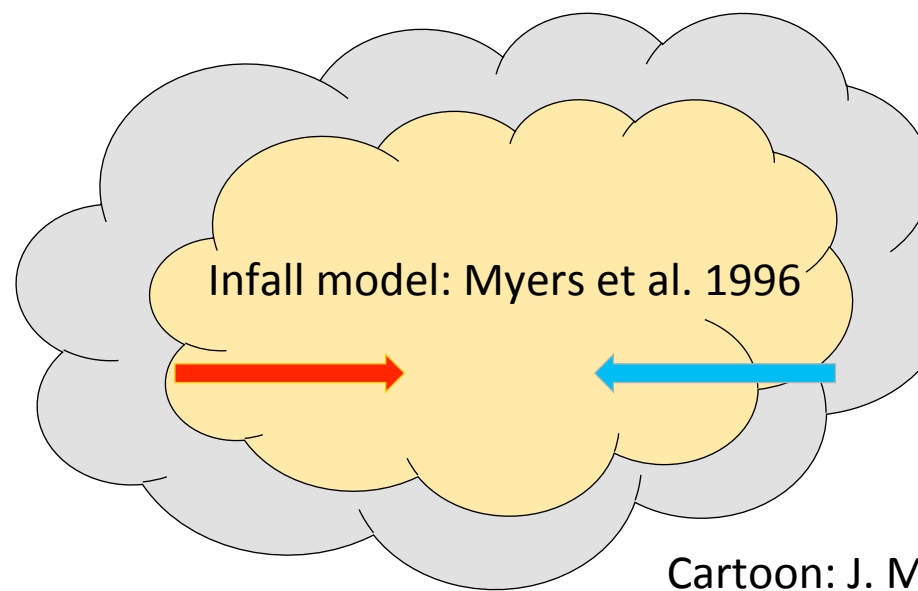
Measure the temperature of a  
gas, and find that lines are  
broader than thermal  
linewidths → there is probably  
turbulent motion



# Fun science example: using spectra to look for evidence of in-falling clouds



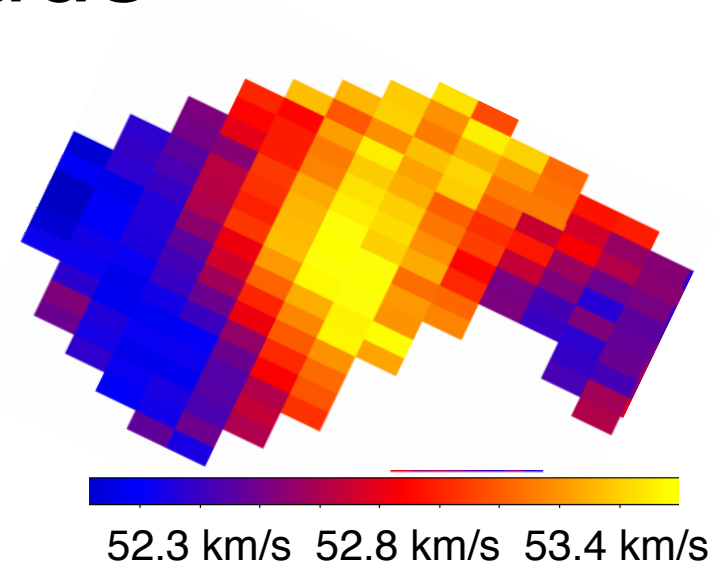
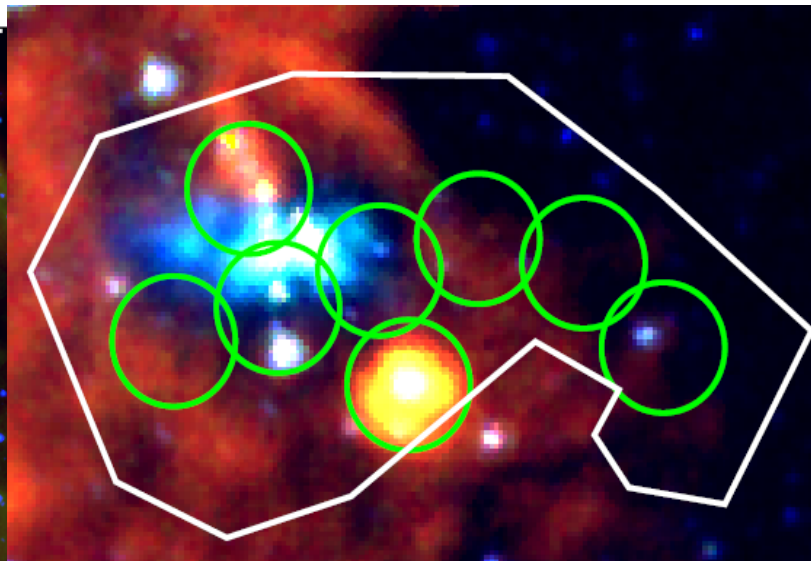
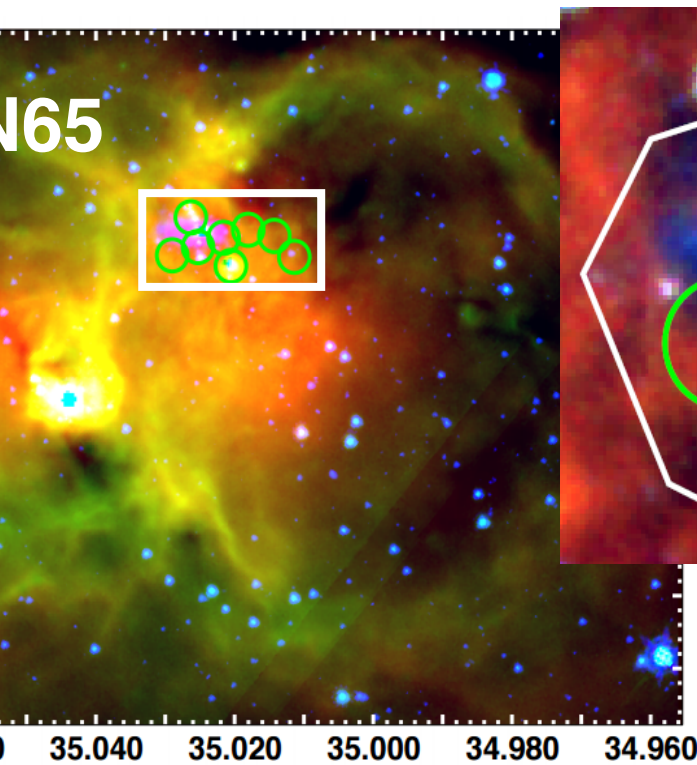
Watson, Devine et al. 2016: CS line profiles show evidence of infall



Cartoon: J. M

162-1, b) N90-2 and c) N117-3.

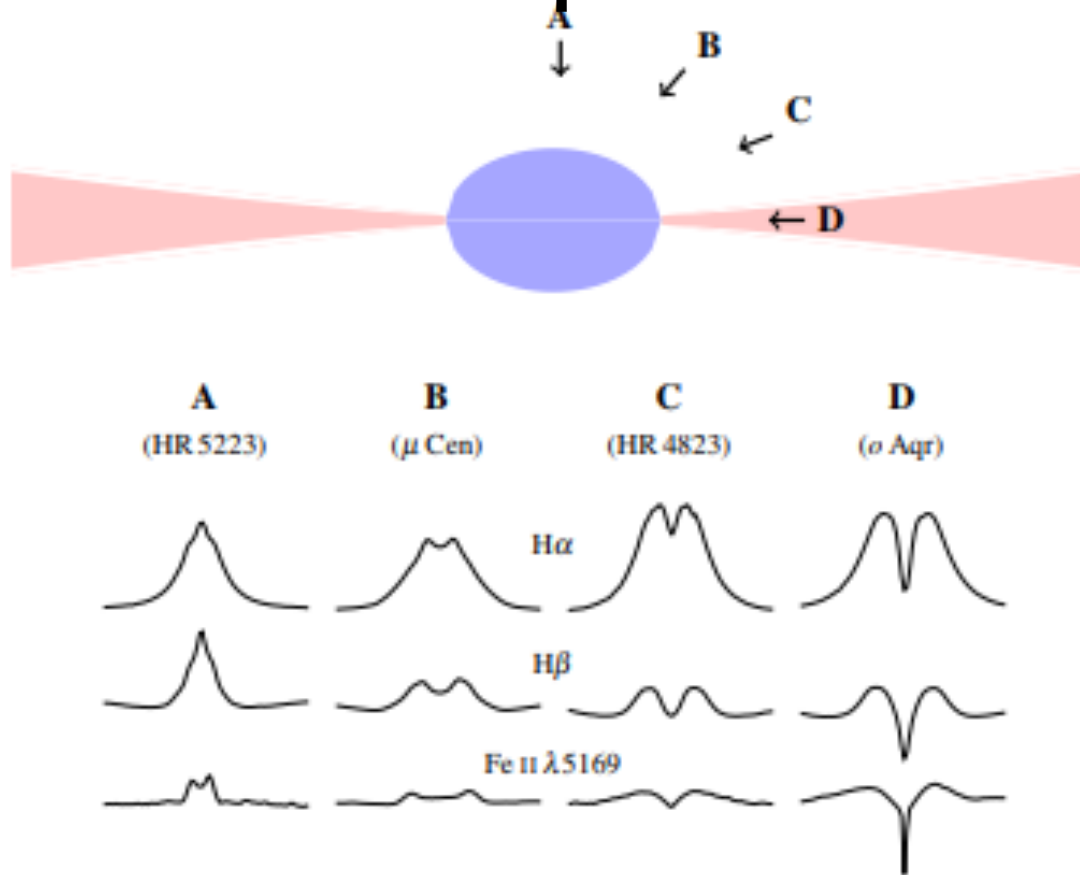
# an science example: using spectra to examine motion of gas in clouds



CS (1-0) central velocity

**image of N65.** White outline shows region  
mapped in CS (1-0).

# an science example: using line profiles interpret Be Star spectra



**Fig. 1** Schematic view of a Be star at critical rotation and with a flared disk. The lower part shows example spectral profiles from pole-on to shell Be stars

# Summary

Origin of emission/absorption spectra, conditions for each  
(Kirchhoff's Laws)

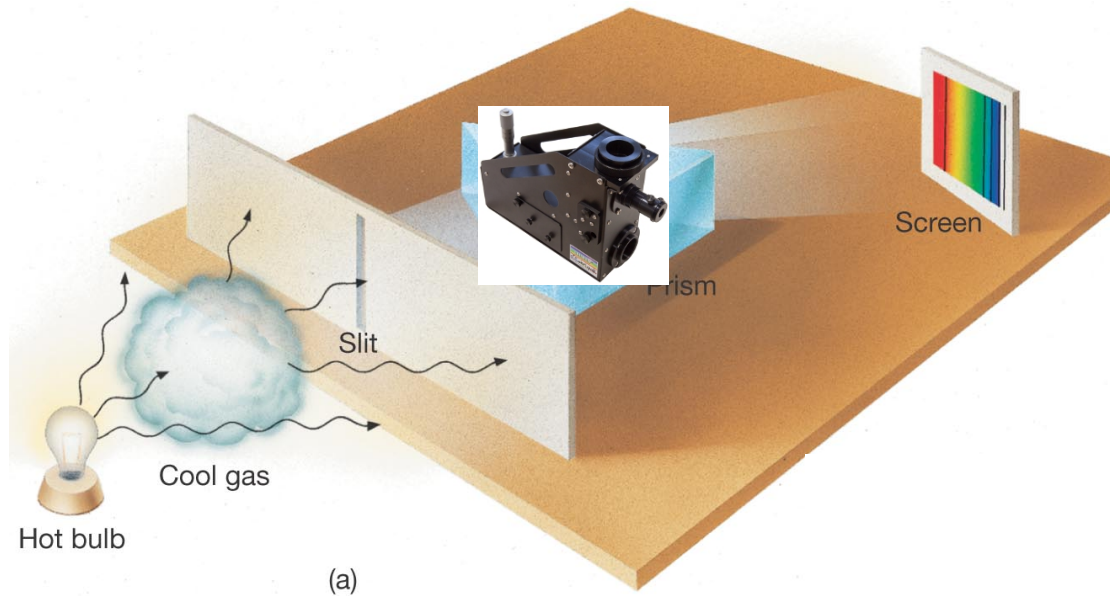
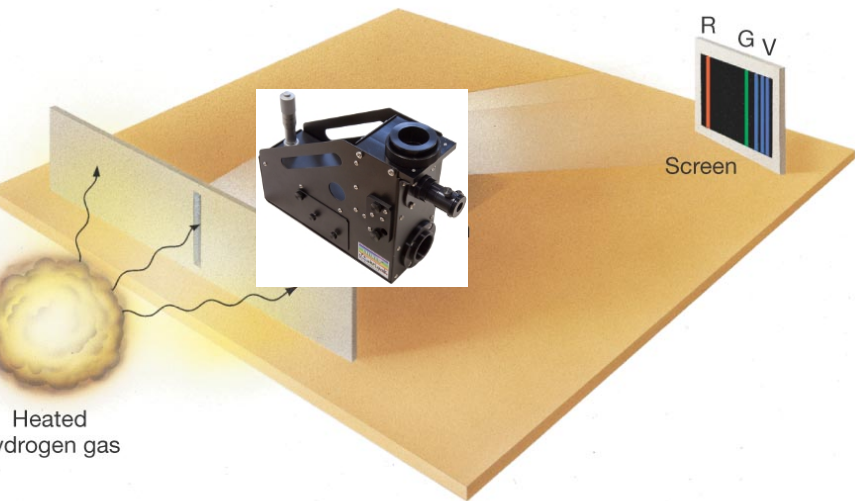
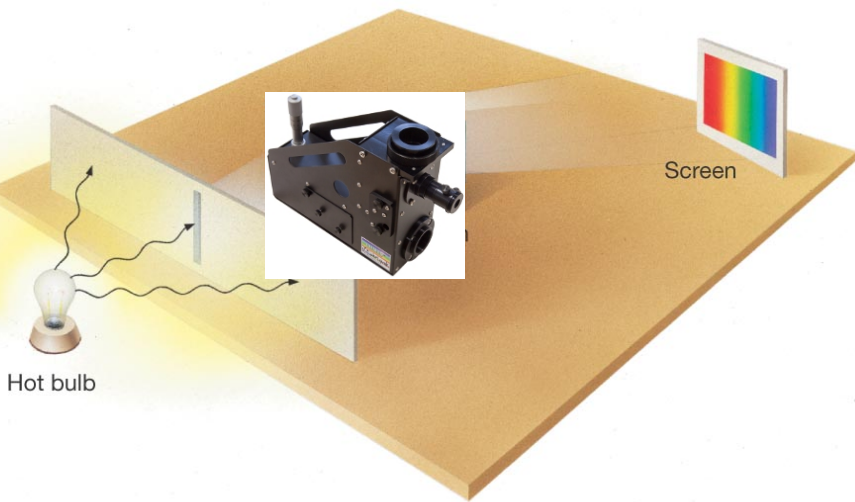
Doppler shift, and how to convert from wavelength to line-of-sight velocity

Bulk motions of gas: galactic rotations, galactic motion, planetary rotation

Motion within gas and line broadening, thermal vs. turbulent motion

Science examples: using line profiles to probe star formation, dense gas conditions, stellar atmospheres

# Review: Sources of Emission (simplified version)



Images: Pearson education  
Shelyak Instruments (