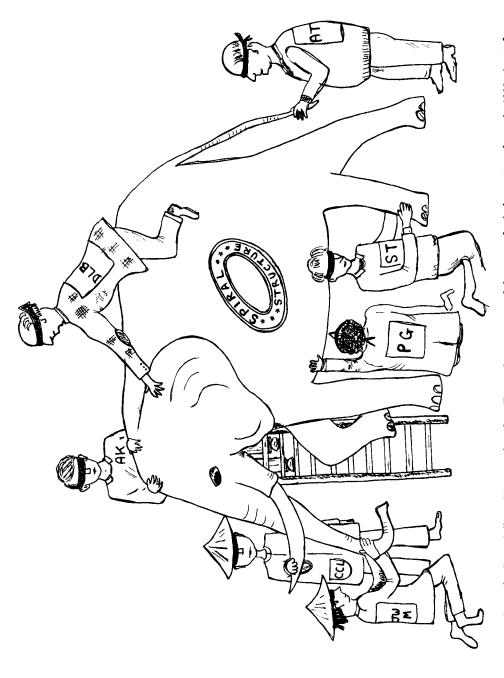


Dynamics of Astrophysical Discs



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Cartoon, drawn by Janet Sellwood in 1984, based on Toomre's assessment of the state of spiral structure theory in 1980. Apart from a few extra blindfolded individuals, this still seems appropriate today.

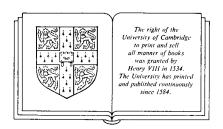


Dynamics of Astrophysical Discs

The proceedings of a conference at the Department of Astronomy, University of Manchester, 13 - 16 December 1988.

Edited by

J. A. SELLWOOD



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Preface

Discs occurring in a wide diversity of astronomical objects prompt similar questions about their dynamical behaviour. Astrophysicists working on problems related to just one type of disc may find that a similar problem has already been addressed in a different context. This is especially true of the dynamical behaviour: the dispersion relation for spiral density waves was originally derived for galaxies but has been applied, with more success even, to Saturn's rings, the formalism of a global mode treatment for gaseous accretions discs has some similarity to that for the collisionless stellar discs of galaxies, aspects of the dynamics of planet formation around a young stellar object are reflected in the response of a galaxy disc to a co-orbiting giant molecular cloud complex, etc.

In order to encourage thinking along these lines, the Department of Astronomy in the University of Manchester organised a four day conference in December 1988 to bring together experts on discs in a number of contexts. In rough order of increasing physical size, these are: planetary ring systems, accretion discs in cataclysmic binary stars and active galactic nuclei, protoplanetary and protostellar discs and disc galaxies.

The aim of the conference, and of these proceedings, was to present those aspects of the behaviour of each type of disc that could be of relevance to other types. To emphasise this theme, the sequence of talks was deliberately arranged so as ensure that many different disc types were discussed on any one day. Though this worked very successfully at the meeting, it is less appropriate for a reference volume; the sequence of papers in these proceedings has therefore been rearranged so that those concerning each particular disc type are grouped together.

Of the papers presented at the meeting, this volume contains articles by all ten review speakers, reports of 15 out of the 17 contributed papers, 33 out of the 34 poster papers and summary talks of both the observational data and theoretical work. The editor is particularly grateful to the overwhelming majority of these authors for transmitting their manuscripts to him in machine-readable form and for not exceeding the requested lengths. Two of the papers by authors from the Soviet Academy of Sciences were given considerably more space than other contributed papers as their work is less widely available in the West.

Full postal addresses of all the participants are listed at the front of the book—the affiliations only of the authors are given in each paper. The abbreviations used for the main astronomical journals are those recommended in Astronomy and Astrophysics Abstracts. I have included a citation index of all papers referenced in the book which is followed by an index of authors. I hope that together these will provide more useful information than the customary names index, which has no obvious advantage (aside from boosting the egos of those most frequently cited!).

The enthusiasm of the ninety-five participants, who came from sixteen different countries, and the generally high standard of their presentations ensured the success of the meeting. The conference could not have taken place, however, without the willing help of a very able group of Manchester locals.

The invaluable and constant guidance of Professor Franz Kahn, in matters both scientific and organisational, is greatly appreciated. The local and financial arrangements for the meeting were almost exclusively, and ably handled by Mrs Ellen Carling, assisted



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by Miss Melanie Thomas. Mrs Carling also typed most of the manuscripts not received in machine readable form. Mrs Yvonne Cain printed the conference programmes etc. and an especially well presented book of Abstracts for participants. Mr John Turner assisted with slides, videos and other aids during the sessions. The conference photograph was taken and printed by Mr Ian Callaghan.

The text of this volume was prepared using TeX on the Manchester Starlink facilities. I hope it will serve both as an accurate record of the meeting and a useful reference work in years to come.

JERRY SELLWOOD June 1989



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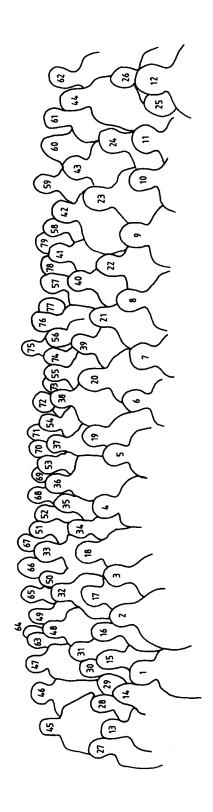






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