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X-ray Polarimetry Techniques

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Polarimetry promises to be an important tool for discriminating between competing models in many areas of high-energy astrophysics including black holes, pulsars, and gamma-ray bursts. However, limitations in instrumental sensitivity have hindered progress since the first measurement of the Crab in the 1970's. In recent years there have been numerous efforts to develop instruments with the sensitivity required for astronomical polarimetry. We describe the historical measurements in the 2-10 keV band, the available techniques, and the missions proposed that will make these measurements a reality.

Primary author: Dr JOANNE, Hill (NASA)

Presenter: Dr JOANNE, Hill (NASA)

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