Michela Mapelli

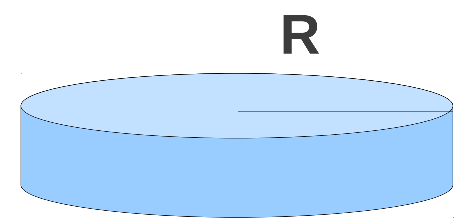
LECTURES on COLLISIONAL DYNAMICS:

1. RELEVANT TIMESCALES, FORMATION OF STAR CLUSTERS, EQUILIBRIUM MODELS

COLLISIONAL/COLLISIONLESS?

Collisional systems are systems where interactions between particles are EFFICIENT with respect to the lifetime of the system

Collisionless systems are systems where interactions are negligible



When is a system collisional/collisionless?

RELAXATION TIMESCALE

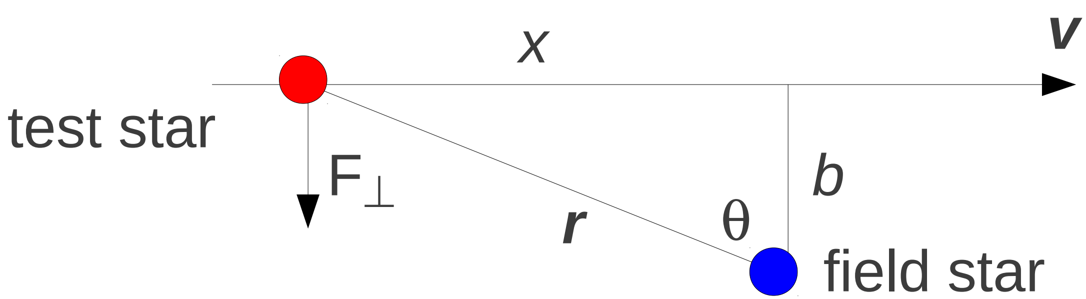
Gravity is a LONG-RANGE force → cumulative influence on each star/body of distant stars/bodies is important: often more important than influence of close stars/bodies

Let us consider a IDEALIZED galaxy of N identical stars with mass *m*, size *R* and uniform density
Let us focus on a single star that crosses the system

How long does it take for this star to change its initial velocity completely?, i.e. by

$$\frac{\delta \vec{v}_\perp}{\vec{v}} \sim 1$$

Let us assume that our test star passes close to a field star at relative velocity *v* and impact parameter *b*



The test star and the perturber interact with a force

$$F_\perp = \frac{G\,m^2}{r^3}\,r_\perp = \frac{G\,m^2}{r^2}\,\cos\theta$$

$$= \frac{G\,m^2\,b}{(x^2+b^2)^{3/2}} = \frac{G\,m^2}{b^2}\,\frac{1}{\left[1+\left(\frac{v\,t}{b}\right)^2\right]^{3/2}}$$

From Newton's second law $m\,\dot{v}_\perp = F_\perp$

we get that the perturbation of the velocity integrated over one entire encounter is

$$\delta v_\perp = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} \frac{F_\perp}{m} dt = \frac{G\,m}{b^2} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} \frac{dt}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{v\,t}{b}\right)^2\right]^{3/2}}$$

$$= \frac{G\,m}{b\,v} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} \frac{ds}{(1+s^2)^{3/2}} = \frac{2\,G\,m}{b\,v}$$

$$dt = \frac{b}{v} d\left(\frac{v\,t}{b}\right)$$

Accel. at closest approach

Force duration

$$2\left(\frac{G\,m}{b^2}\right)\left(\frac{b}{v}\right)$$

Now we account for all the particles in the system

Surface density of stars in idealized galaxy: $$\frac{N}{\pi R^2}$$

Number of interactions per unit element:

$$\delta n = \frac{N}{\pi R^2} \, 2 \pi b \, db$$

We define

$$\delta v^2_{\mathrm{TOT}} = \delta n \, \delta v^2_{\perp} = \frac{2N}{R^2} \left(\frac{2Gm}{bv} \right)^2 b \, db$$

And we integrate over all the possible impact parameters...

And we integrate over all the possible impact parameters...

$$\delta v^2_{\mathrm{TOT}} = 8\,N\,\left(\frac{G\,m}{R\,v}\right)^2 \int_{b_{\min}}^{R} \frac{db}{b}$$

$$\boxed{\delta v^2_{\mathrm{TOT}} = 8\,N\,\left(\frac{G\,m}{R\,v}\right)^2 \ln\frac{R}{b_{\min}}}$$

* low integration limit: smallest *b* to avoid close encounter $\delta v_\perp \sim v$

$$v = \frac{2\,G\,m}{b_{\min}\,v} \qquad \Longrightarrow b_{\min} = \frac{2\,G\,m}{v^2}$$

* top integration limit: size *R* of the system

And we integrate over all the possible impact parameters...

$$\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2 = 8\,N \left(\frac{G\,m}{R\,v}\right)^2 \ln\left(\frac{R\,v^2}{2\,G\,m}\right)$$

Typical speed of a star in a virialized system

$$N\,m\,v^2 = \frac{G\,(N\,m)^2}{R} \qquad \Longrightarrow v^2 = \frac{G}{N\,m}R$$

Replacing *v*

$$\boxed{\frac{\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2}{v^2} = \frac{8\,\ln N}{N}}$$

Number of crossings of the system for which $\frac{\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2}{v^2} = 1$

$$v^2 = \frac{N}{8 \ln N} \, \delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2$$

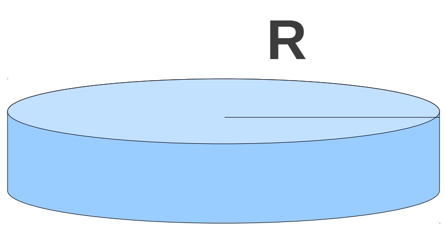
Number of crossings of the system for which $\frac{\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2}{v^2} = 1$

$$n_{\mathrm{cross}} \, \cancel{\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2} = v^2 = \frac{N}{8 \, \ln N} \, \cancel{\delta v_{\mathrm{TOT}}^2}$$

Number of crossings of the system for which $$\frac{\delta v^2_{\mathrm{TOT}}}{v^2} = 1$$

$$n_{\mathrm{cross}} = \frac{N}{8\,\ln N}$$

CROSSING TIME= time needed to cross the system (also named DYNAMICAL TIME)



$$t_{cross} = \frac{R}{v}$$

$$= \sqrt{\frac{R^3}{G\,M}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{G\,\rho}}$$

RELAXATION TIME = time necessary for stars in a system to lose completely the memory of their initial velocity

$$t_{\rm rlx} = n_{\rm cross}\, t_{\rm cross} = \frac{N}{8\,\ln N}\,\frac{R}{v}$$

with more accurate calculations, based on diffusion coefficients (Spitzer & Hart 1971):

$$t_{\rm rlx} = 0.34\,\frac{\sigma^3}{G^2\,m\,\rho\,\ln\Lambda}$$

The two expressions are almost equivalent

If we put $\sigma = v = (G\,N\,m\,/\,R)^{1/2}$
and $\rho \propto N\,m/\,R^3$
and $\ln\Lambda \sim \ln N$

$$t_{\rm rlx} \propto \frac{\sigma^3}{G^2\,m\,\rho\ln\Lambda} \sim \frac{(G\,N\,m\,R^{-1})^{3/2}}{G^2\,N\,m^2\,R^{-3}\ln N}$$

$$\sim G^{-1/2}\,N^{1/2}\,m^{-1/2}\,R^{3/2}\ln N^{-1}\,\frac{v}{v}$$

multiply and divide per v

$$\sim \left(\frac{N\,R}{G\,m}\right)^{1/2} v \ln N^{-1}\,\frac{R}{v}$$

Rearrange and substitute again v

$$\sim \frac{N}{\ln N}\,\frac{R}{v}$$

USEFUL BACK-OF-THE-ENVELOPE expression for t_rlx:

If we put $v = (G\,N\,m\,/\,R)^{1/2}$

$$t_{rlx} \sim \frac{N}{\ln N}\,\frac{R}{v} \sim \frac{N}{\ln N}\,\frac{R^{3/2}}{(G\,N\,m)^{1/2}}$$

$$\sim \frac{N^{1/2}\,R^{3/2}}{(G\,m)^{1/2}\,\ln N} \sim \frac{(m\,N)^{1/2}\,R^{3/2}}{G^{1/2}\,m\,\ln N}$$

$$\sim 15\,\mathrm{Myr}\,\left(\frac{M_{TOT}}{10^4\,M_\odot}\right)^{1/2}\left(\frac{R}{1\,\mathrm{pc}}\right)^{3/2}\left(\frac{1\,M_\odot}{m}\right)$$

Portegies Zwart 2006

RELAXATION & THERMALIZATION

*Relaxation and thermalization are almost **SYNONYMOUS**!*

* ***Thermalization**:*

- is one case of relaxation

*- is defined for gas (because needs definition of **T**), but can be used also for stellar system (kinetic extension of T)*

*- is the **process of particles reaching thermal equilibrium through mutual interactions** (involves concepts of equipartition and evolution towards maximum entropy state)*

*- has velocity distribution function: **Maxwellian** velocity*

**** Relaxation**:*

- is defined not only for gas

*- is the **process of particles reaching equilibrium through mutual interactions***
(but there might be many processes driving to relaxation not only 2-body relaxation)

Which is the typical t_{rlx} of stellar systems?

* **globular clusters, dense young star clusters, nuclear star clusters** (far from SMBH influence radius)
  R~1-10 pc, N~10^3-10^6 stars, v~1-10 km/s

$$t_{rlx} \sim 10^{7\text{-}10}\ \mathrm{yr}$$

→ **COLLISIONAL**

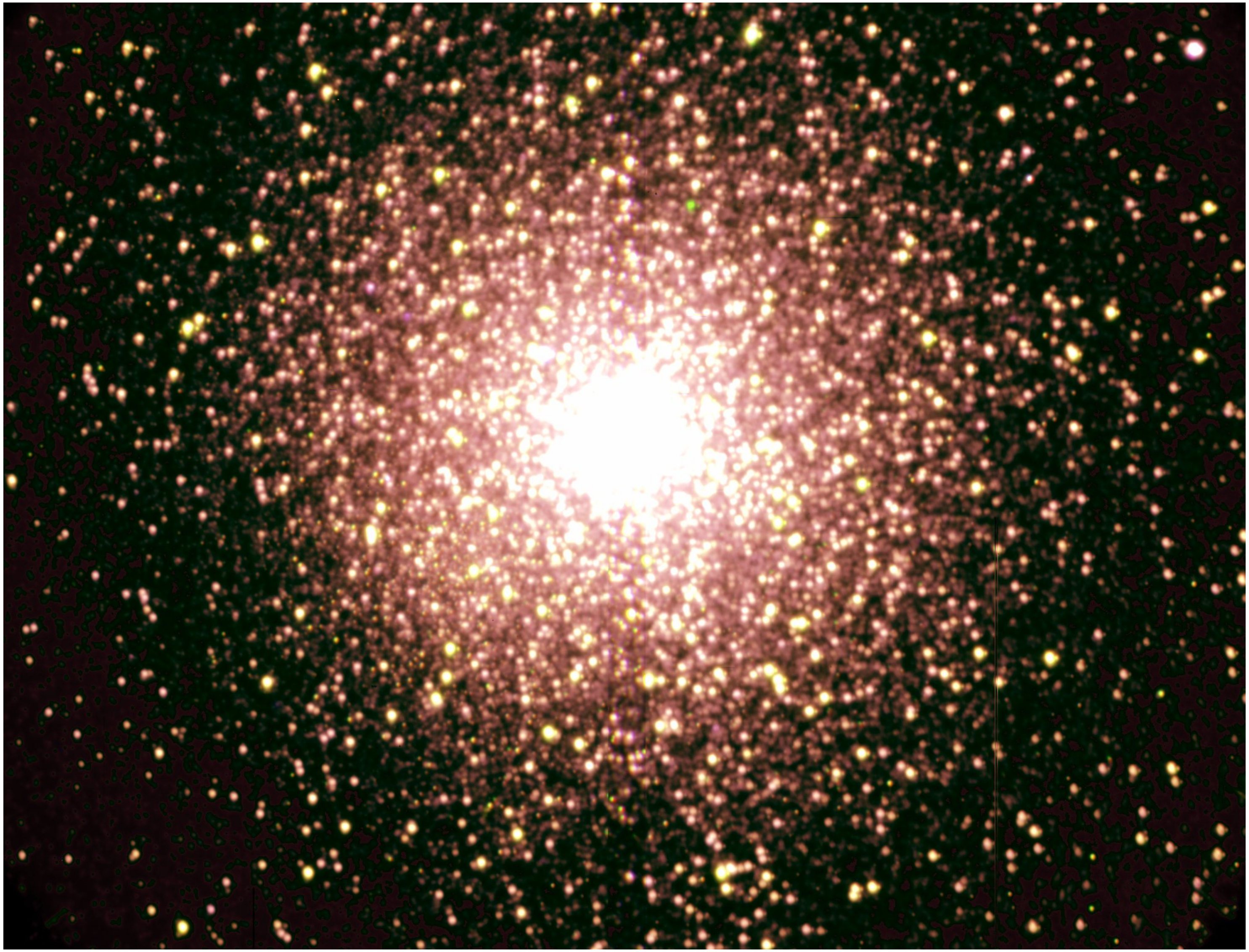
* **galaxy field/discs**
  R~10 kpc, N~10^10 stars, v~100-500 km/s

$$t_{rlx} \gg \text{Hubble time}$$

→ **COLLISIONLESS**
described by collisionless Boltzmann equation

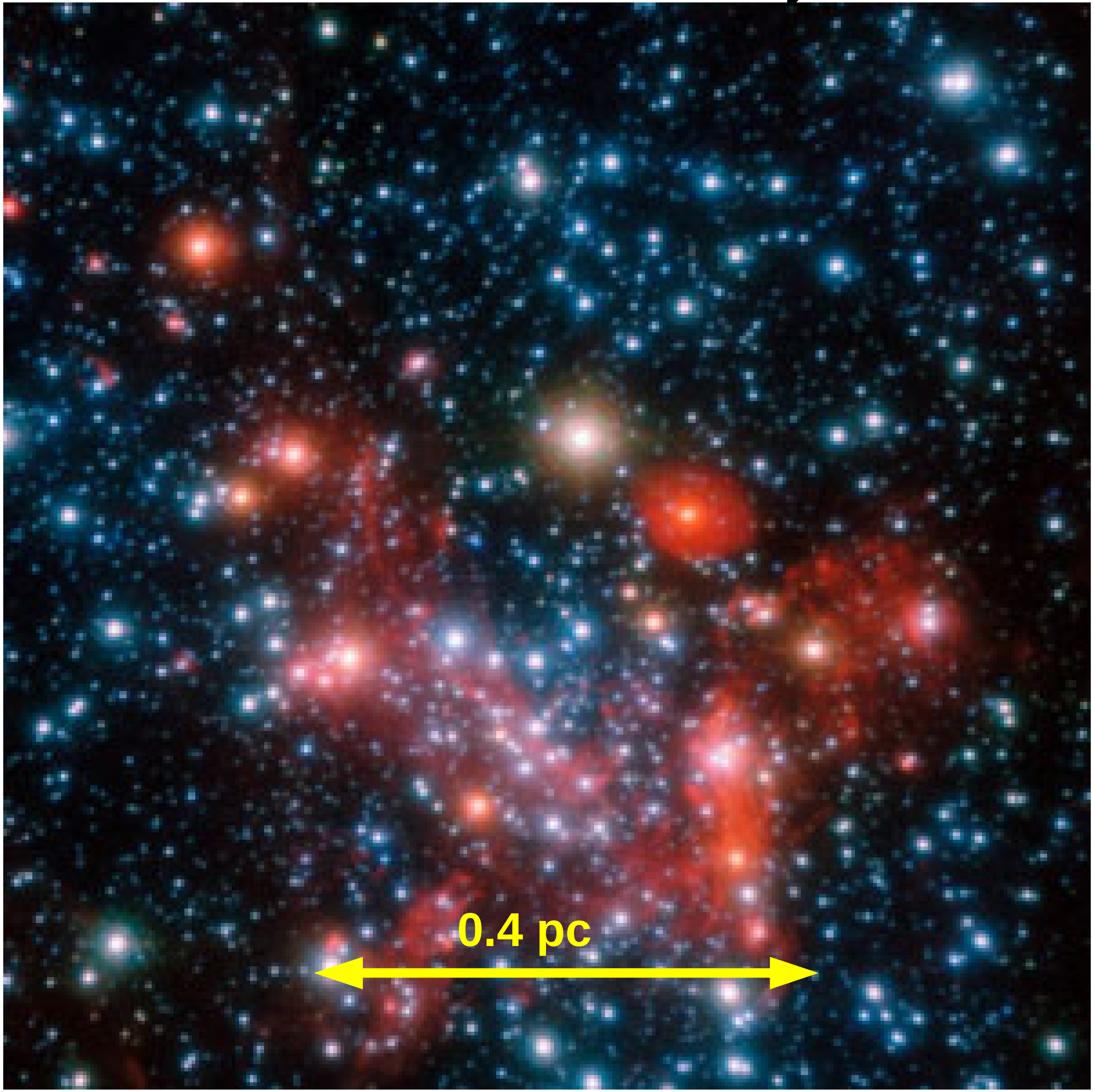
$$\frac{df}{dt} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial t} + \sum_{i=1,6} \frac{\partial x_i}{\partial t} \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_i} = 0$$

EXAMPLES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems



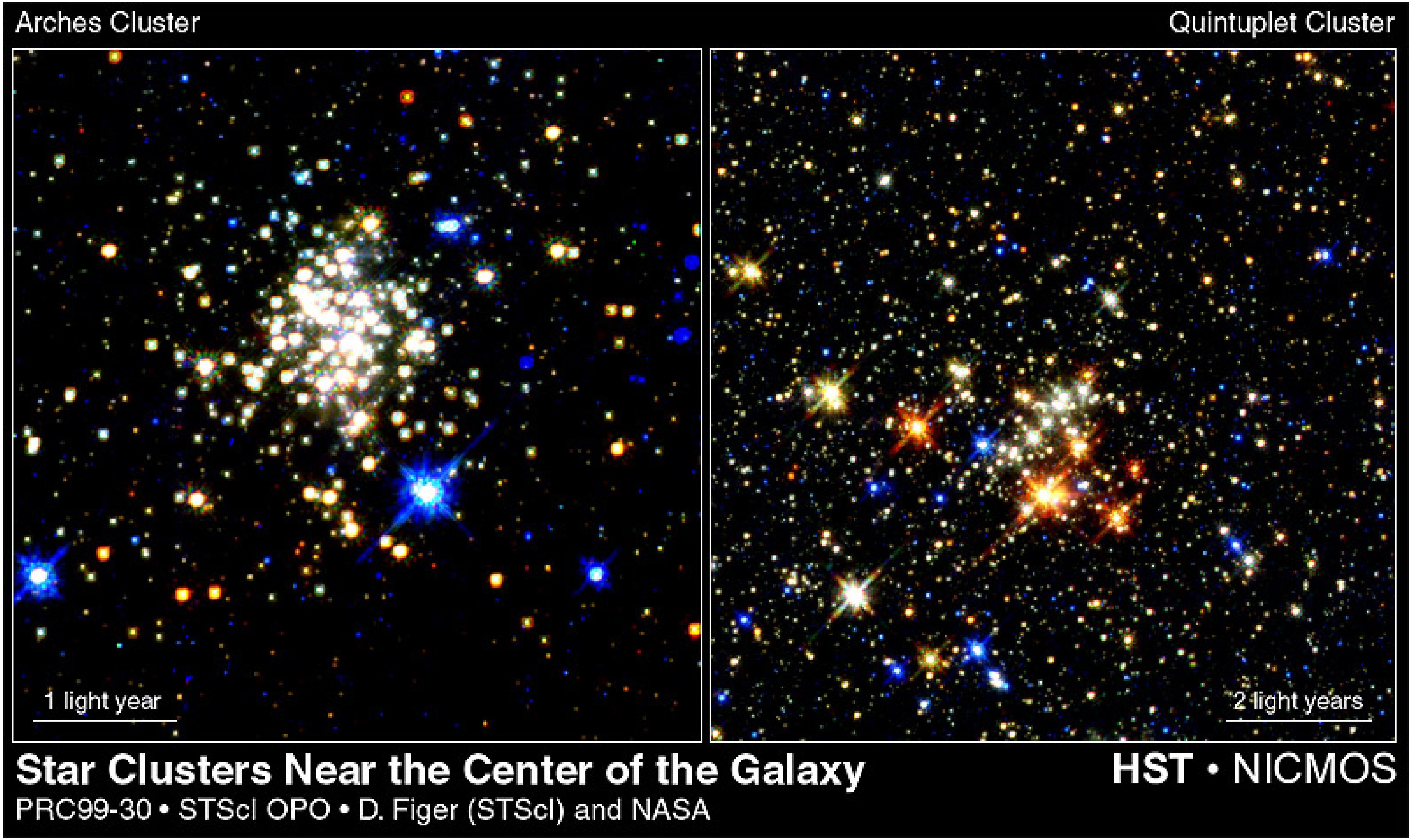
Globular clusters (47Tuc), by definition

EXAMPLES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems



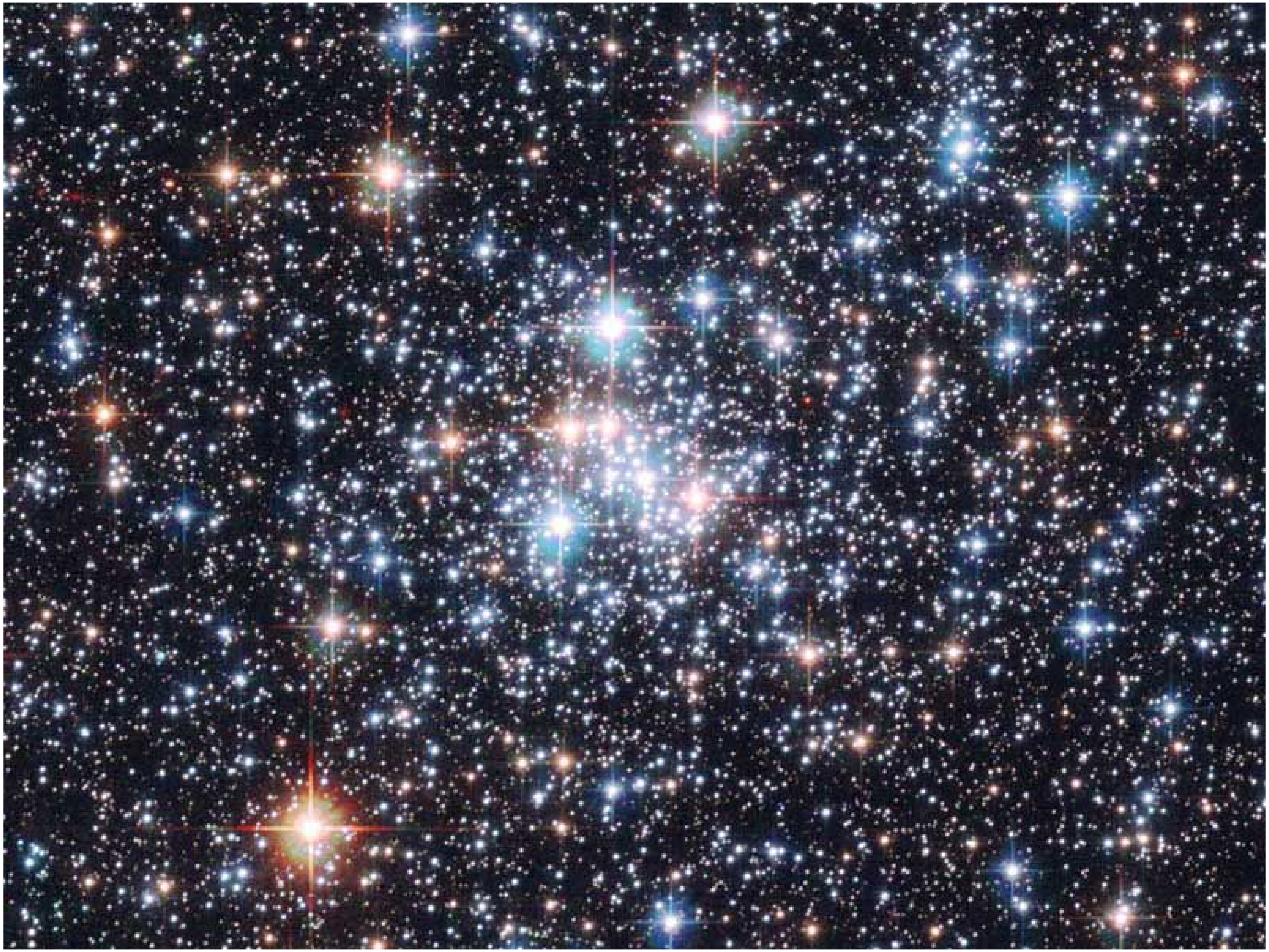
Nuclear star clusters (MW)
NaCo @ VLT
Genzel+2003

EXAMPLES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems



Young dense star clusters (Arches, Quintuplet)

EXAMPLES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems

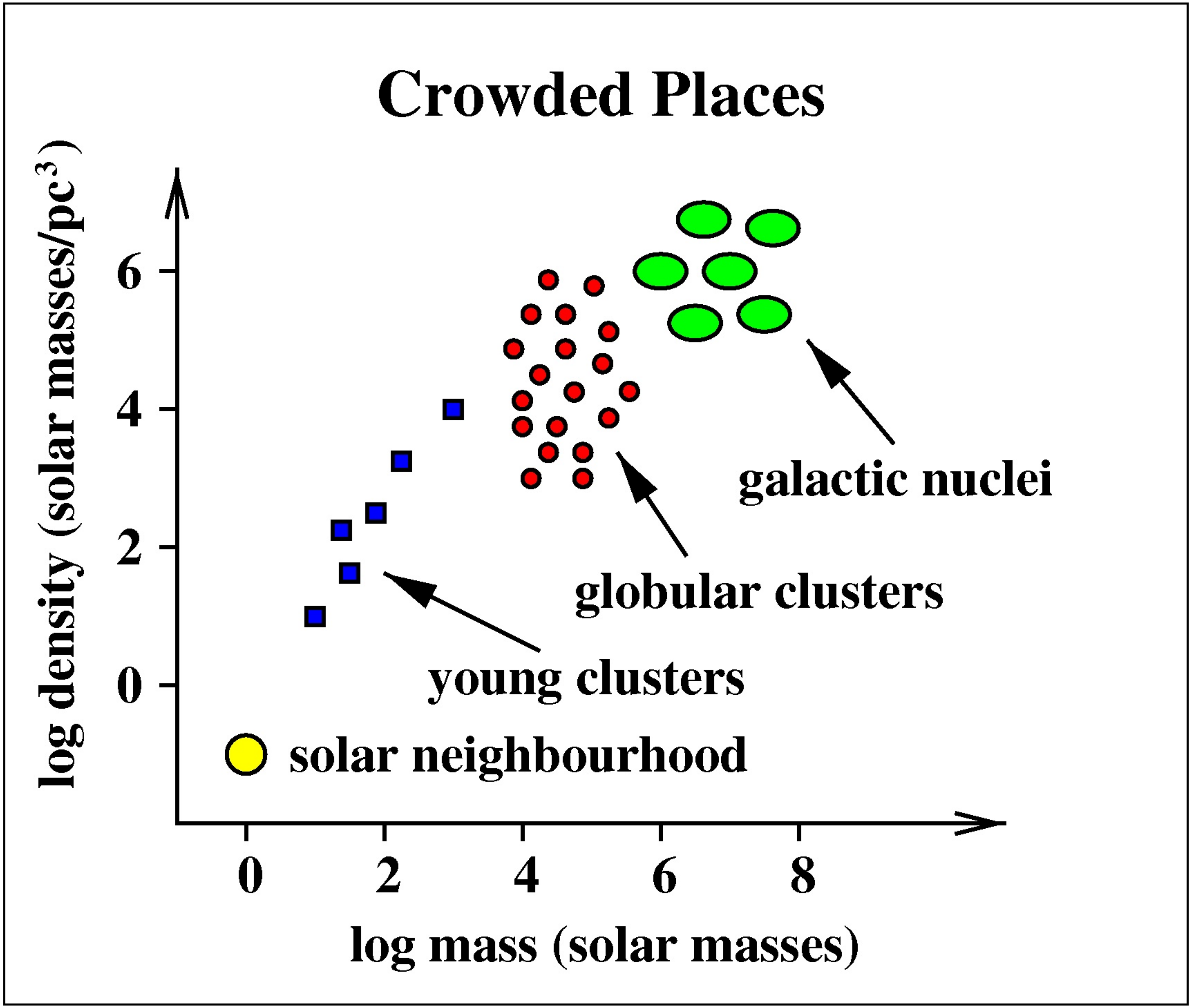


Open clusters, especially in the past (NGC290)

EXAMPLES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems

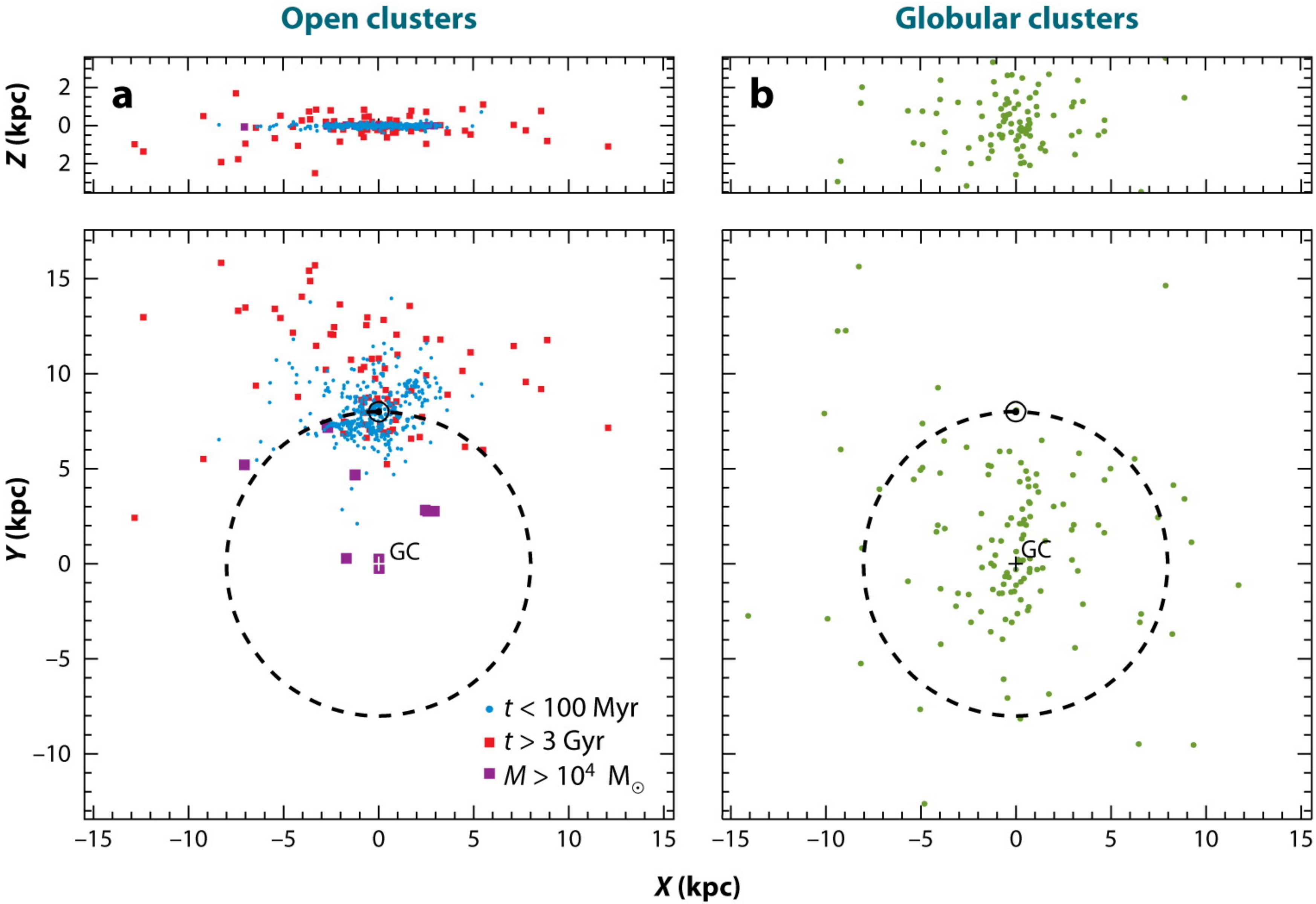
Embedded clusters,
i.e. baby clusters
(RCW 38)
NaCo @ VLT

DENSITY & MASS ORDER OF MAGNITUDES



M. B. Davies, 2002, astroph/0110466

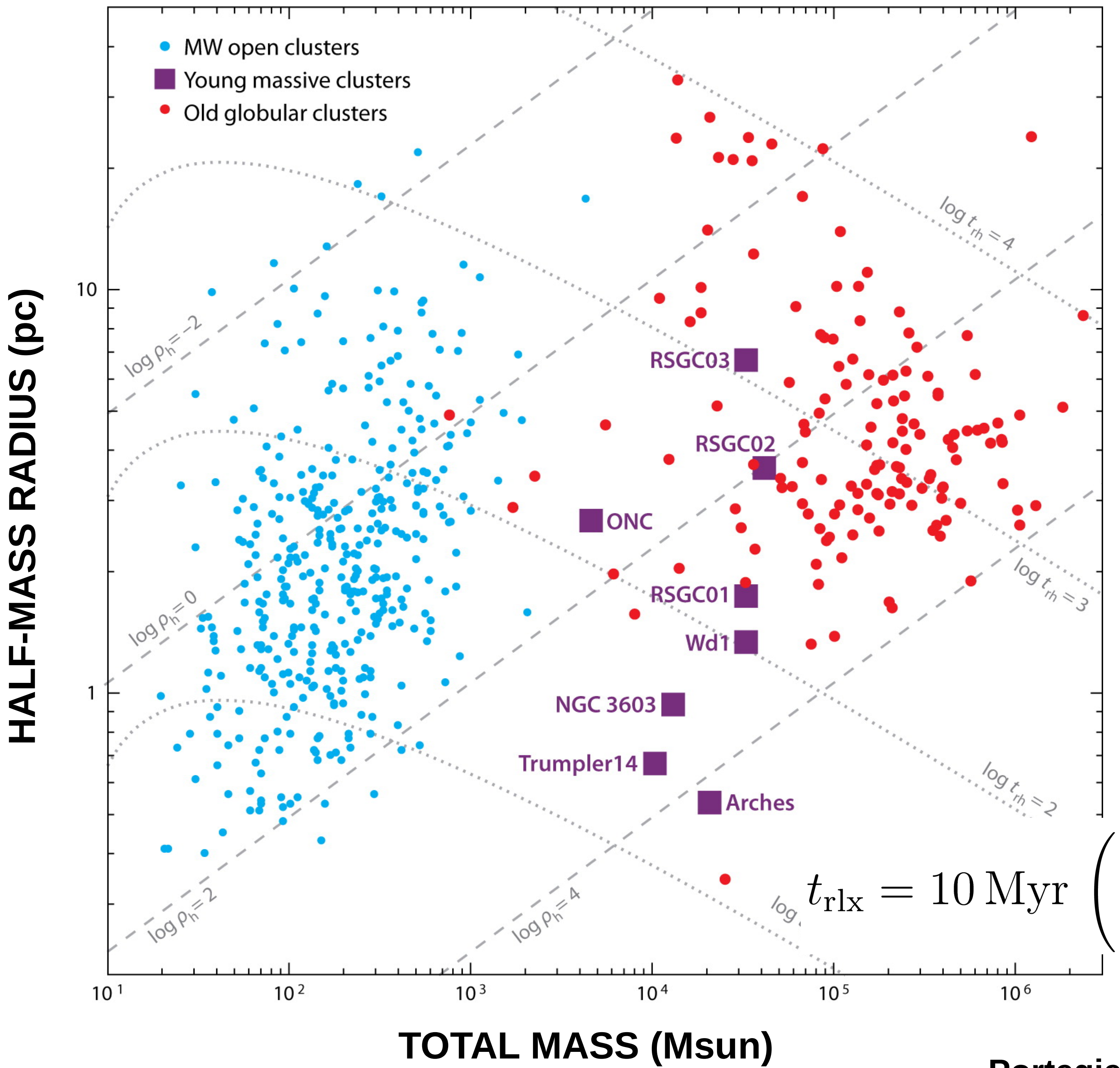
DISTRIBUTION of COLLISIONAL stellar systems in the MILKY WAY



GLOBULAR CLUSTERS ARE A HALO POPULATION
YOUNG and OPEN CLUSTERS ARE A DISC POPULATION

Portegies Zwart, McMillan & Gieles 2010

MAIN PROPERTIES of COLLISIONAL stellar systems in the MILKY WAY



Open clusters

Globular clusters

Young dense star clusters

$$t_{\rm rlx} = 10\,{\rm Myr} \left(\frac{M_{\rm TOT}}{3500\,{\rm M}_\odot}\right)^{1/2} \left(\frac{r_{\rm hm}}{1\,{\rm pc}}\right)^{3/2}$$

Portegies Zwart, McMillan & Gieles 2010

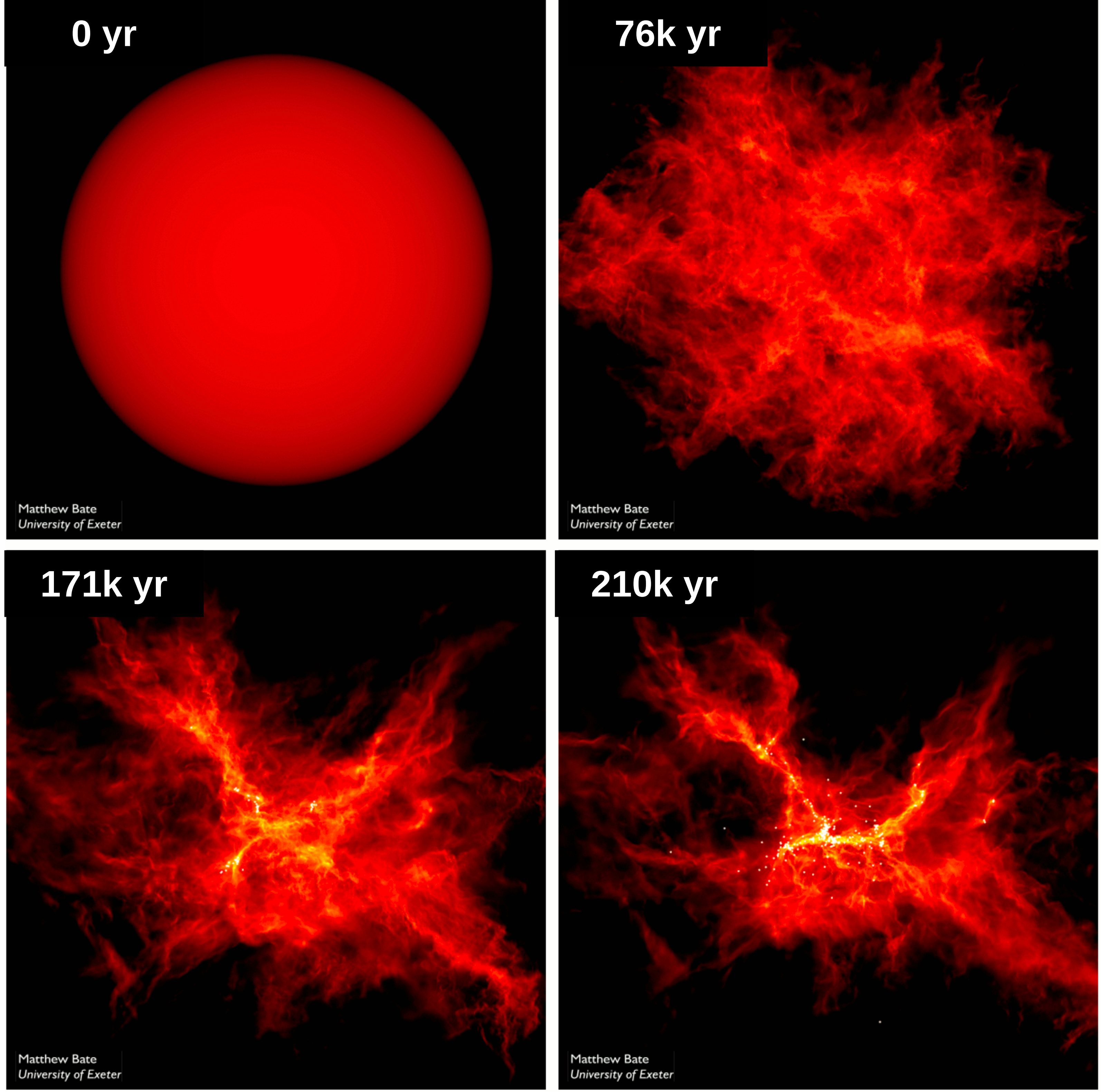
How do star clusters form? BOH

* from giant molecular clouds

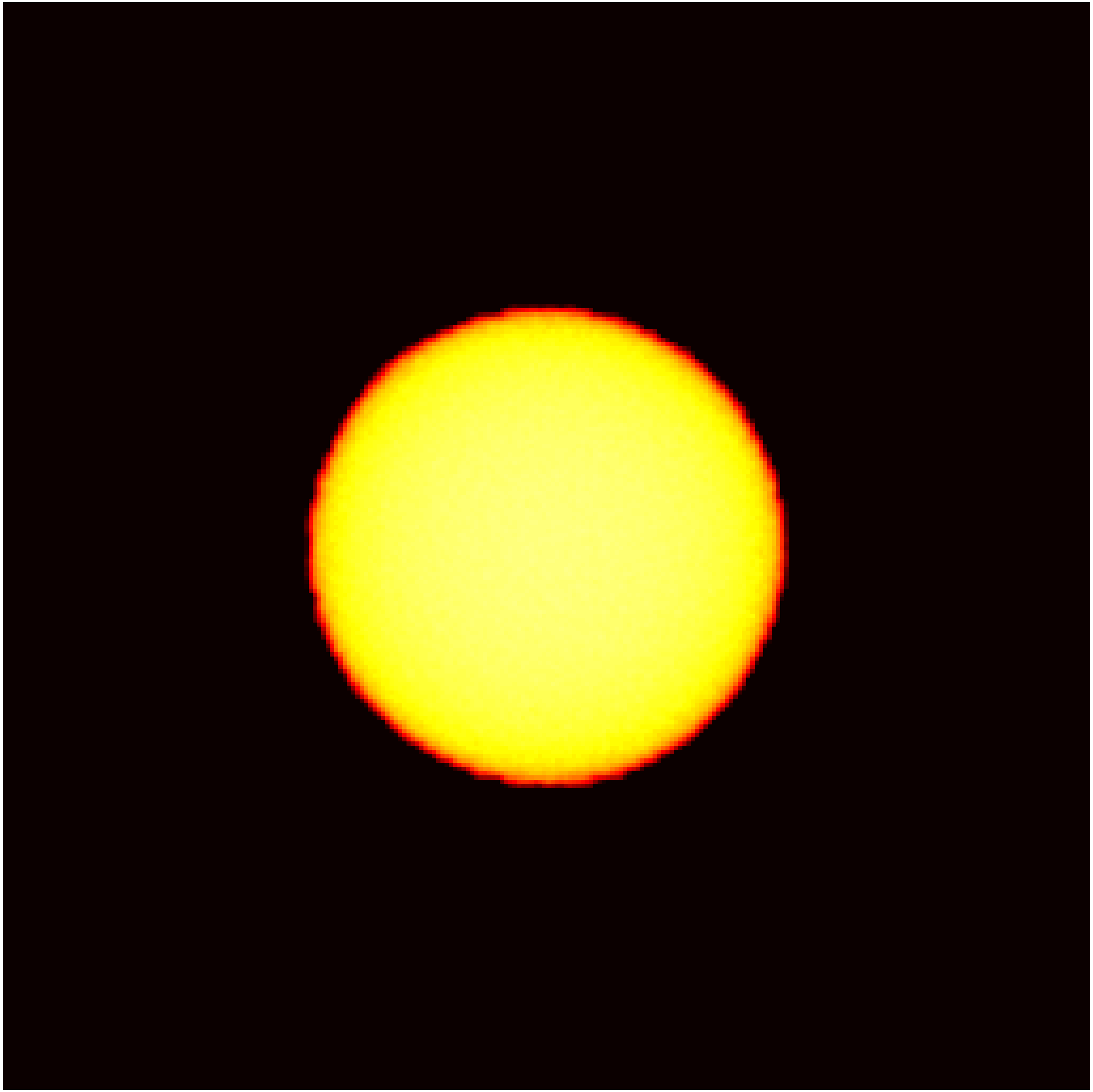
* possibly from aggregation of many sub-clumps

CLOUD SIMULATION by Matthew Bate (Exeter):

- gas
- SPH
- turbulence
- fragmentation
- sink particles



CLOUD SIMULATION MOVIE



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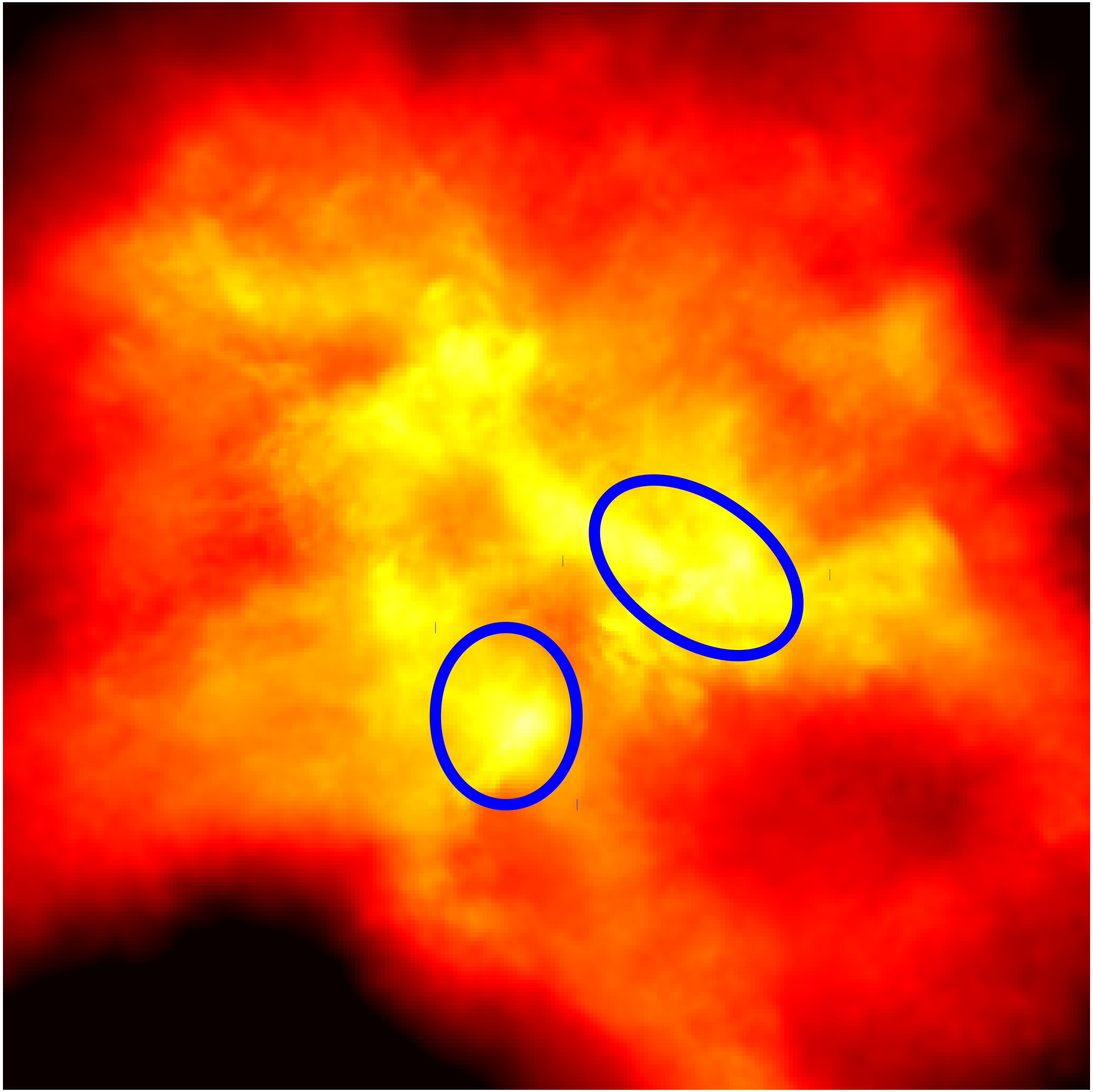

SCs form from different cores of a molecular cloud

More filaments than spherical!

How do star clusters form? BOH

* from giant molecular clouds

* possibly from aggregation of many sub-clumps

* reach first configuration by VIOLENT RELAXATION (?)

VIOLENT RELAXATION? BOH

- Theory by Linden-Bell in 1967 (MNRAS 136, 101)

- Starts from a problem: galaxy discs and elliptical galaxies are RELAXED (stars follow thermal distribution), even if $t_{rlx} >> t_{Hubble}$

- IDEAs: (1) there should be another relaxation mechanism (not two-body) efficient on **DYNAMICAL timescale** (crossing time)

(2) by 2nd law of thermodynamics: such mechanism must MAXIMIZE entropy

(3) RELAXATION DRIVER: the **POTENTIAL** of a newly formed galaxy or star cluster **CHANGES** VIOLENTELY (on dynamical time)

→ changes in potential must redistribute stellar ENERGY in a CHAOTIC WAY (losing memory of initial conditions)

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* after reaching first configuration, they become COLLISIONAL and relax through two-body encounters faster than their lifetime (even without mass spectrum and stellar evolution!)

* can DIE by INFANT MORTALITY!!!

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

Embedded CLUSTERS

GAS REMOVAL →

DENSE CLUSTERs
bound
$n \sim 10^{3-5}$ pc^{-3} (coll.)
$\sim 10^{3-6}$ stars

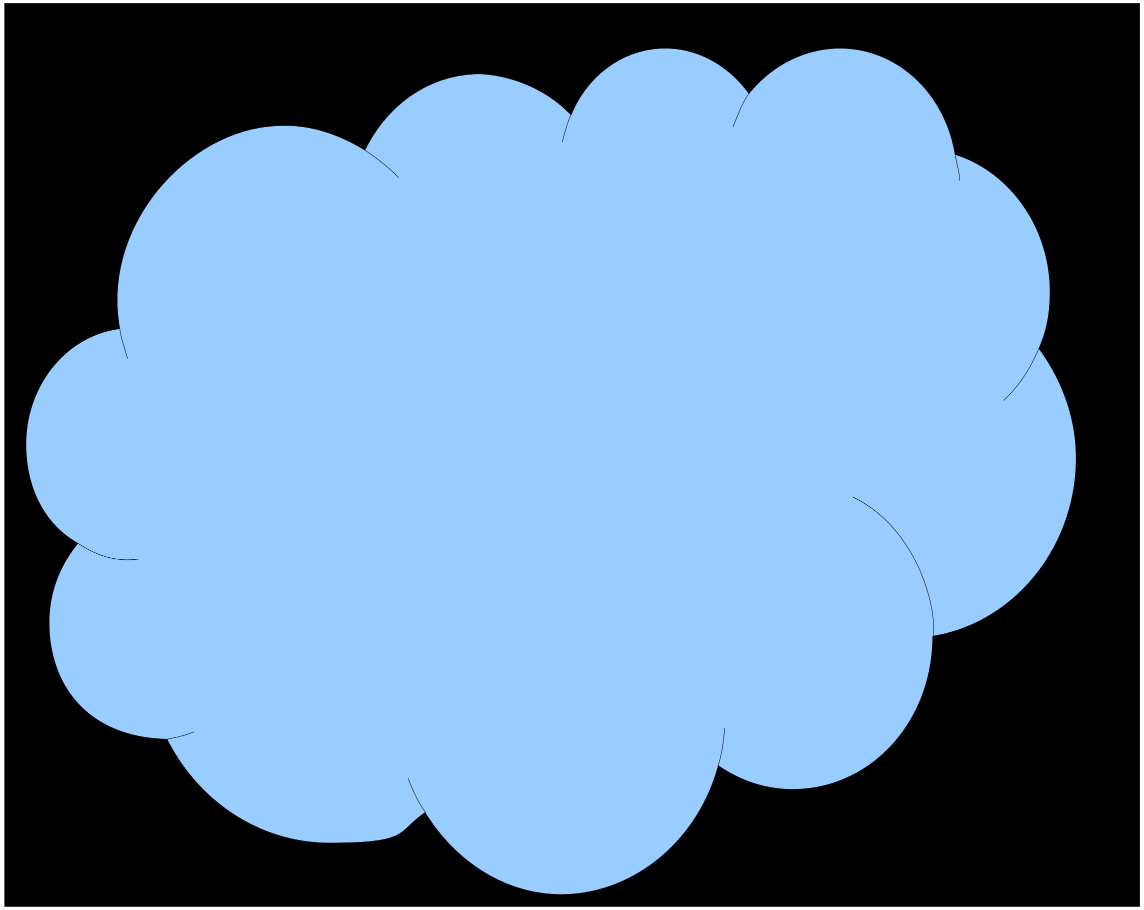
OPEN CLUSTERS
loosely bound
$\sim 10^{3-4}$ stars

ASSOCIATIONS
unbound
$<10^{3}$ stars

OPEN and DENSE STAR CLUSTERS as SURVIVORS of INFANT MORTALITY: how and with which properties?

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

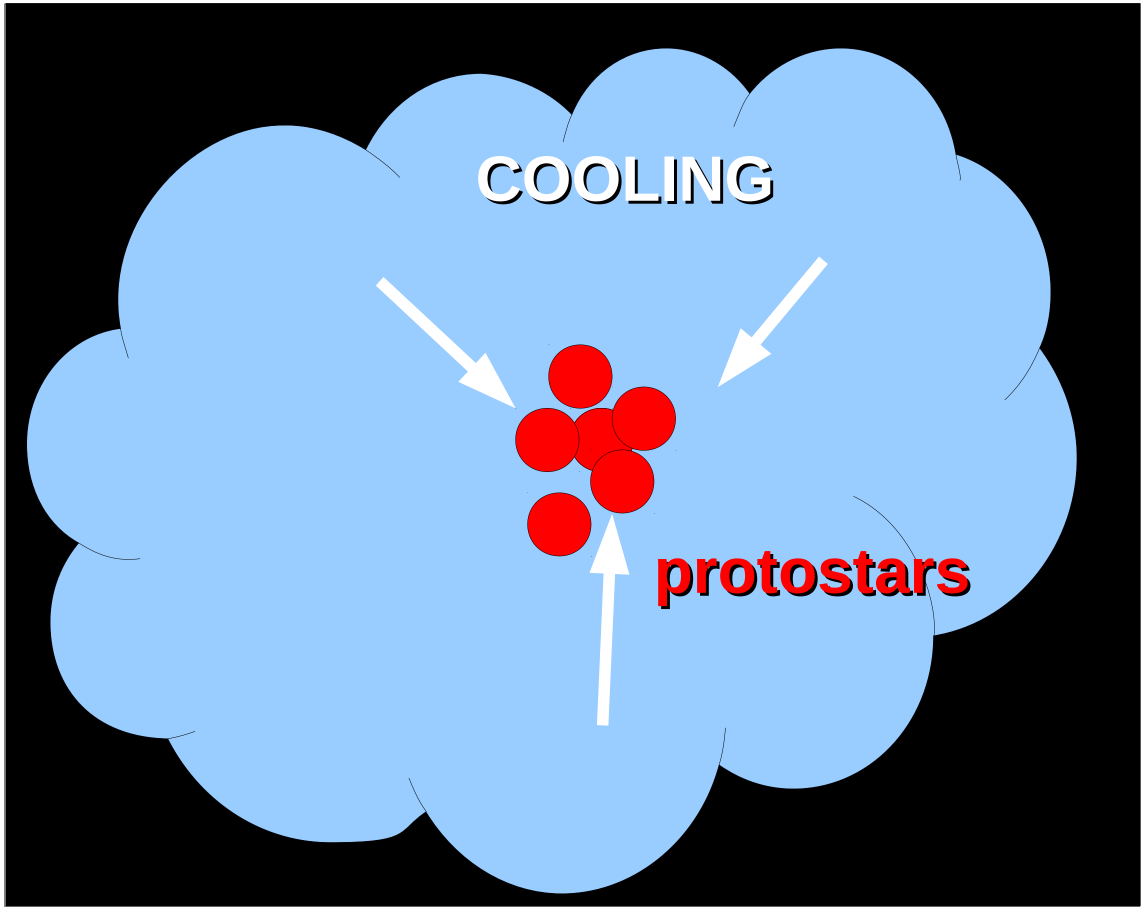
FORMATION of STAR CLUSTERS: basic concepts



1 * giant molecular cloud: $10^{5\text{-}6}$ M⊙ of molecular gas, mainly H_2, in ~10 pc radius, at 10-100 K

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

FORMATION of STAR CLUSTERS: basic concepts

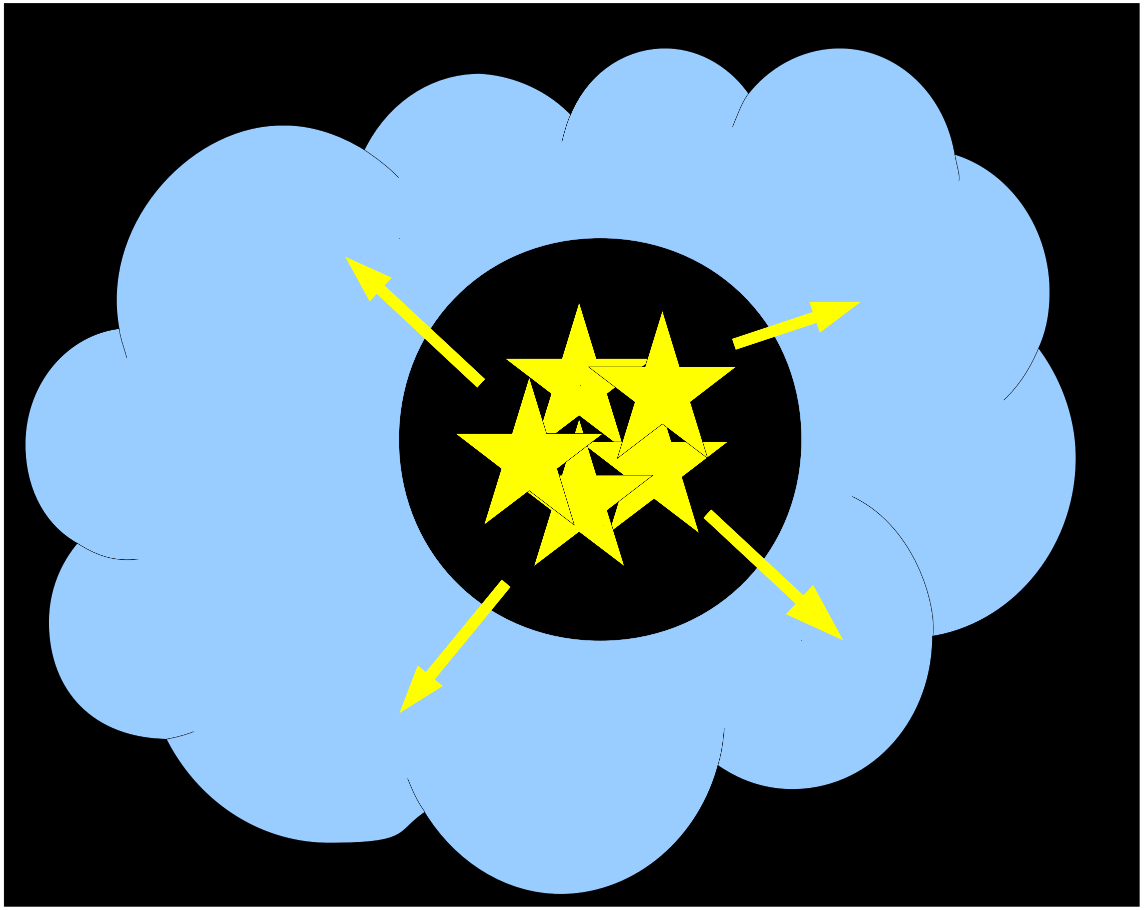


1 * giant molecular cloud

2 * gas cools down and compresses → protostars form

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

FORMATION of STAR CLUSTERS: basic concepts



1 * giant molecular cloud

2 * gas cools down and compresses → protostars form

3 * protostars start irradiating and gas evaporates

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

FORMATION of STAR CLUSTERS: basic concepts

1 * giant molecular cloud

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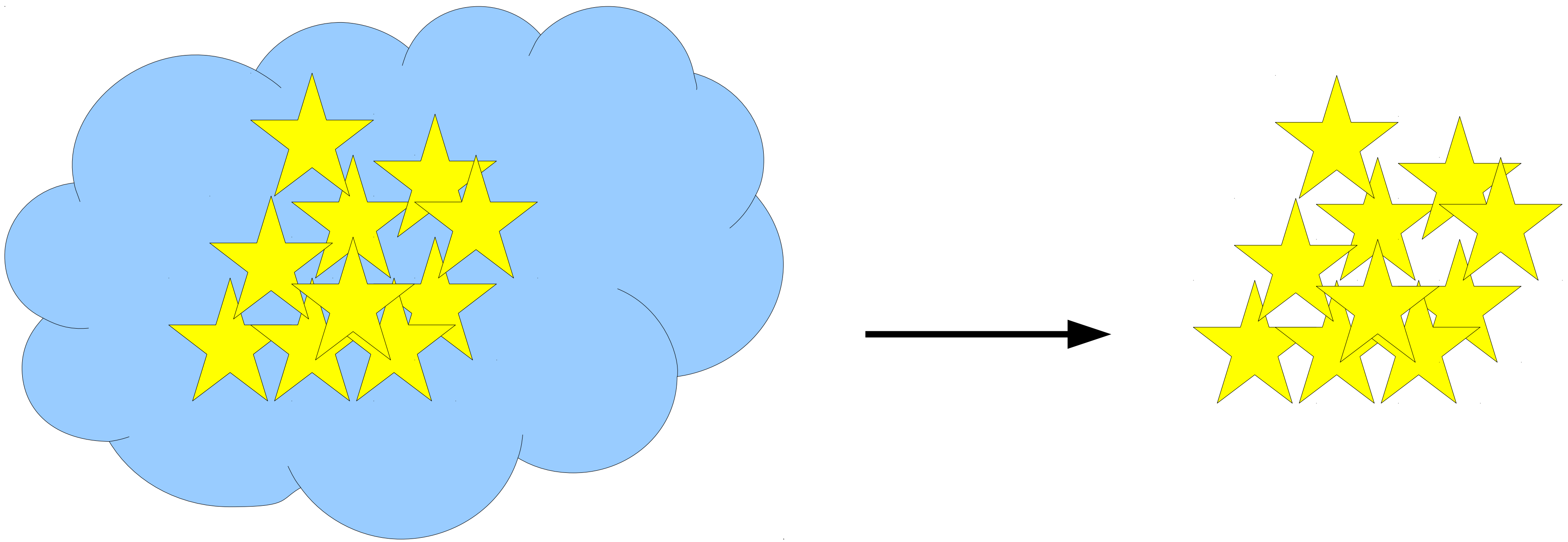
how many SCs survive gas evaporation?

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed

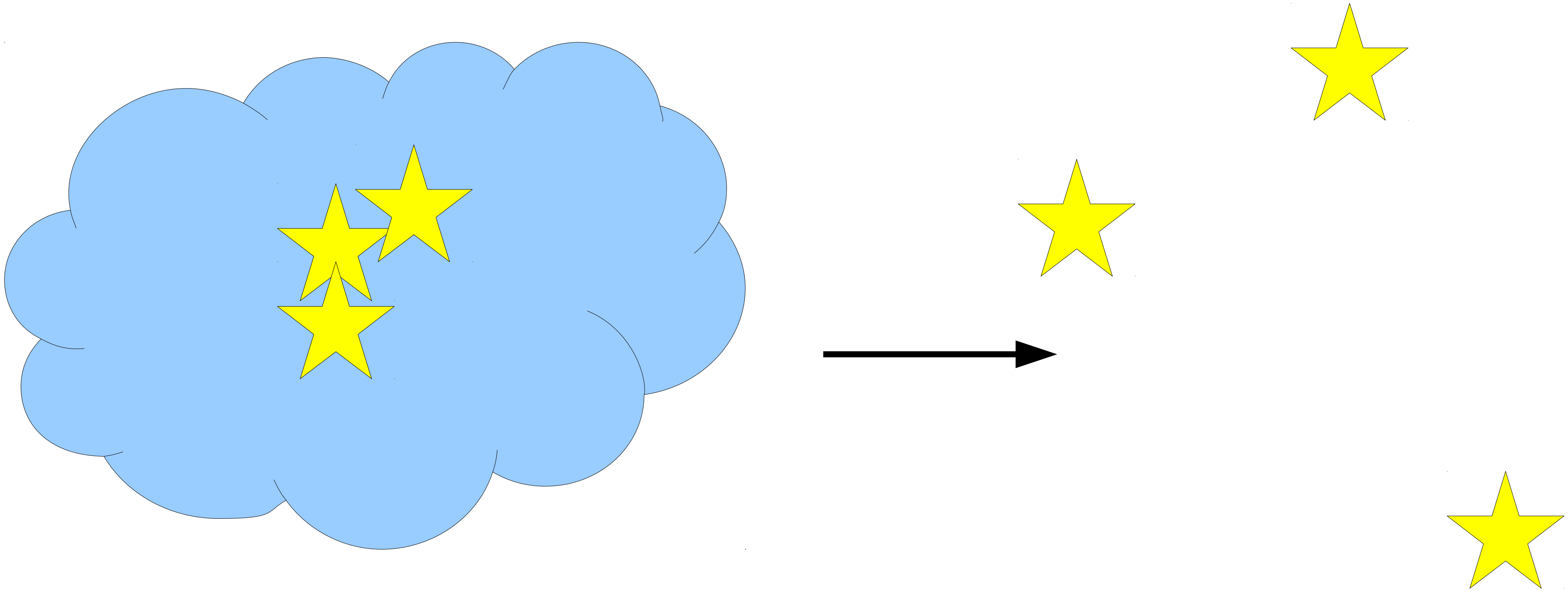


Intuitive argument:

$|W0|=G\ (Mgas+Mstar)^2/R$

If Mstar large with respect to Mgas, cluster remains bound

INFANT MORTALITY:= clusters can die when GAS is removed



Intuitive argument:

$|W0| = G\,(Mgas+Mstar)^2/R$

If Mstar large with respect to Mgas, cluster remains bound

If Mstar small with respect to Mgas, then cluster becomes unbound

INFANT MORTALITY

-DEPENDENCE on SFE : = $M_{star}/(M_{star} + M_{gas})$

(1) Velocity dispersion from virial theorem before gas removal:

$$\sigma_0^2 = \frac{G\,(M_{star} + M_{gas})}{R_0}$$

(2) Energy after gas removal (hypothesis of instantaneous gas removal):

$$E = \frac{1}{2}\,M_{star}\,\sigma_0^2 - \frac{G\,M_{star}^2}{R_0}$$

(3) Energy after new virialization:

$$E = -\frac{G\,M_{star}^2}{2\,R}$$

New cluster size:
- From (2) = (3)

$$-\frac{G\,M_{star}^2}{2\,R} = \frac{1}{2}\,M_{star}\,\sigma_0^2 - \frac{G\,M_{star}^2}{R_0}$$

Hills 1980, ApJ, 225, 986

INFANT MORTALITY

-DEPENDENCE on SFE : = $M_{star}/(M_{star} + M_{gas})$

New cluster size:
- Using (1)

$$-\frac{M_{star}}{2\,R} = \frac{1}{2}\,\frac{(M_{star} + M_{gas})}{R_0} - \frac{M_{star}}{R_0}$$

-Rearranging

$$R = R_0\,\frac{M_{star}}{M_{star} + M_{gas}}\,\frac{1}{\left(2\,\frac{M_{star}}{M_{star}+M_{gas}} - 1\right)}$$

R>0 only if

$$\frac{M_{star}}{M_{star} + M_{gas}} > 0.5$$

Hills 1980, ApJ, 225, 986

INFANT MORTALITY

-DEPENDENCE on SFE : <30% disruption

-DEPENDENCE on t_gas:

explosive removal: t_gas<< t_cross
[smaller systems]

adiabatic removal: t_gas >~ t_cross
[dense clusters]

-DEPENDENCE on the (+/-) VIRIAL state of the embedded cluster

-DEPENDENCE on Z: metal poor clusters more compact than metal rich

Hills 1980; Lada & Lada 2003; Bastian & Goodwin 2006;
Baumgardt & Kroupa 2007; Bastian 2011;
Pelupessy & Portegies Zwart 2011

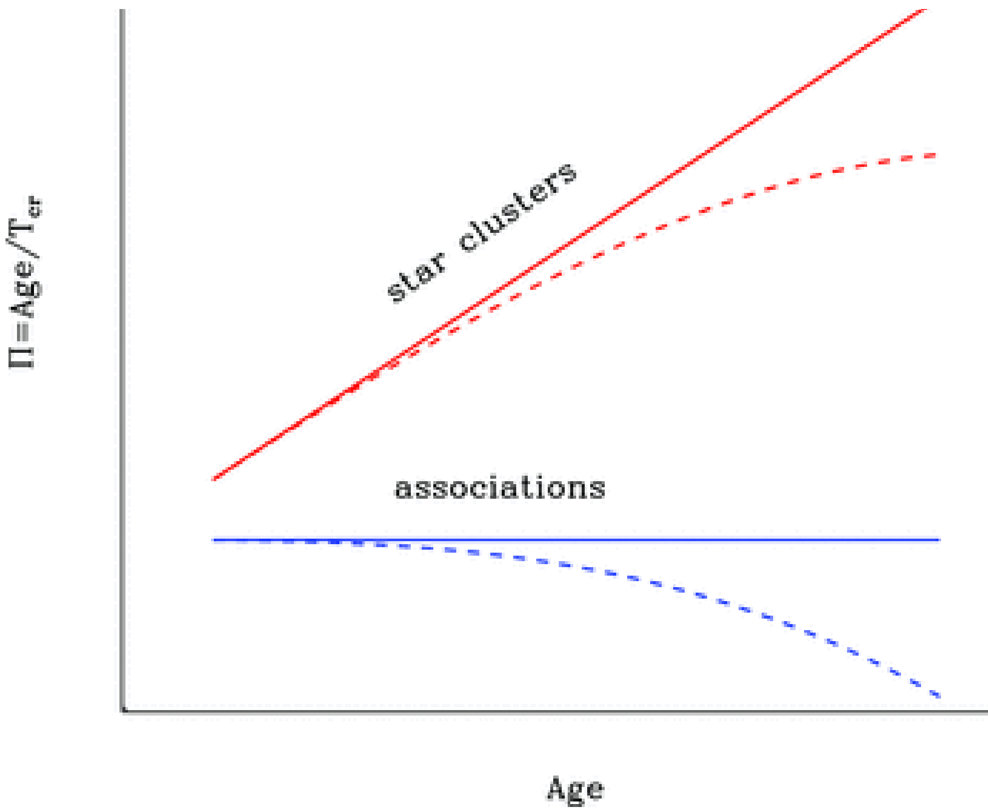
INFANT MORTALITY

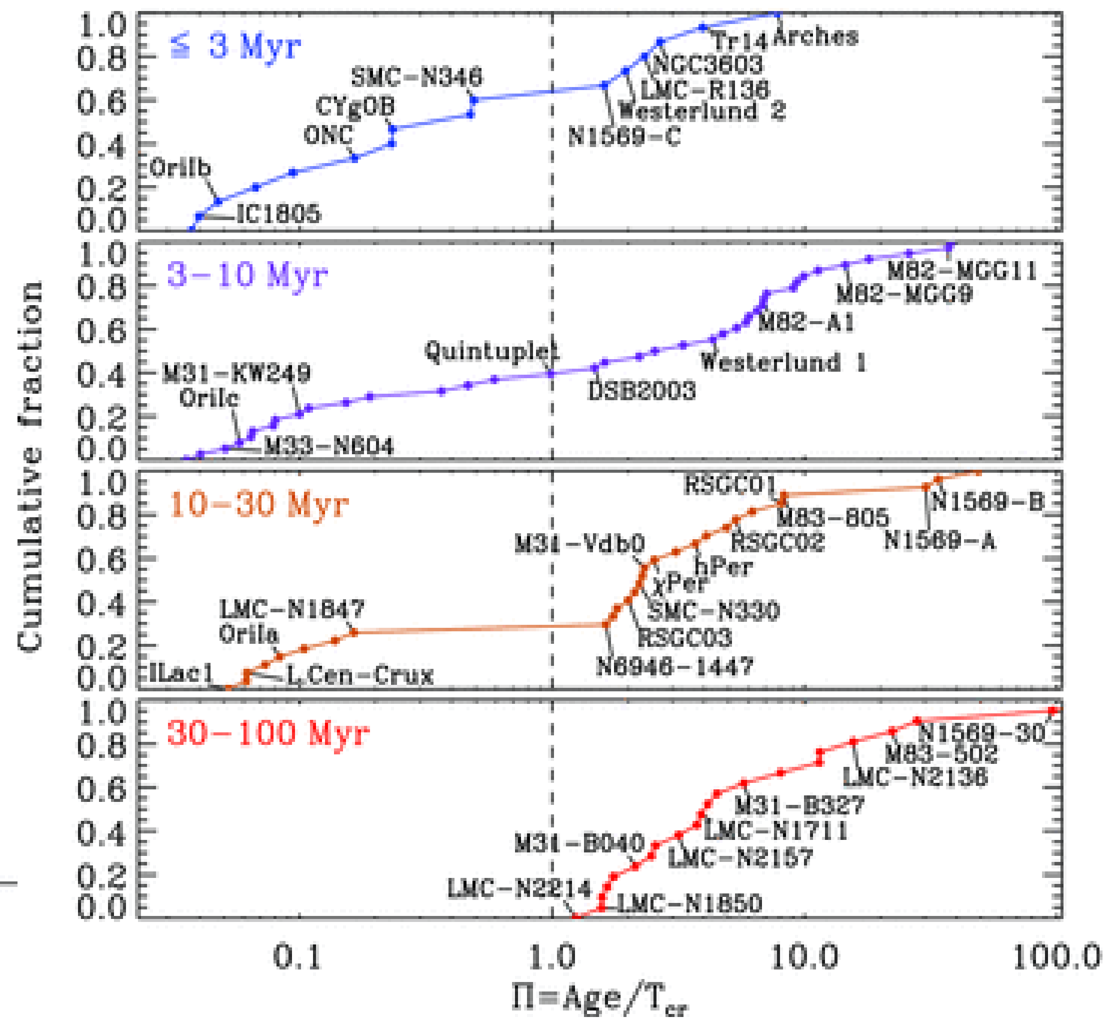
A criterion to infer whether a star cluster is dying or will survive, empirically found by Gieles & Portegies Zwart (2011, MNRAS, 410, L6)

$$\Pi \equiv \frac{Age}{t_{dyn}} \qquad\qquad t_{dyn} \equiv 10 \left(\frac{R_{hl}^3}{G\,M}\right)^{1/2}$$

Π > 1 surviving star cluster

Π< 1 association (maybe)





DON'T YOU NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE IN THIS SLIDE??

How do star clusters form? BOH

* from giant molecular clouds

* possibly from aggregation of many sub-clumps

* reach first configuration by VIOLENT RELAXATION (?)

* after this can be modelled by distribution functions
  - PLUMMER SPHERE
  - ISOTHERMAL SPHERE
  - LOWERED ISOTHERMAL SPHERE
  - KING MODEL

* after reaching first configuration, they become COLLISIONAL and relax through two-body encounters faster than their lifetime (even without mass spectrum and stellar evolution!)

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DISTRIBUTION FUNCTION or PHASE SPACE DENSITY

$$f(\vec{x}, \vec{v}, t)\, d^3\vec{x}\, d^3\vec{v}$$

Number of stars in the infinitesimal volume $d^3\mathbf{x}$ and in the small range of velocities d^3v

DISTRIBUTION FUNCTIONS ARE WELL DEFINED ONLY FOR COLLISIONLESS SYSTEMS!!

Because they can be CONTINUOUS only if potential is smooth

BUT if system is COLLISIONAL potential is not smooth, particles jump from one side to the other of the phase space!

For a short time even a collisional system can be defined by a distribution function (not correct but useful in practice)

Then 2-body relaxation produces jumps and collisional system passes from one equilibrium to another

DISTRIBUTION FUNCTION or PHASE SPACE DENSITY

* Equations of motion in the phase space using distribution functions can be expressed with collisionless BOLTZMANN EQUATION (CBE)

$$\frac{df}{dt} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial t} + \sum_{i=1,6} \frac{\partial x_i}{\partial t}\frac{\partial f}{\partial x_i} = 0$$

-same as continuity equation for fluids: valid only if no jumps

JEANS theorem: any steady-state solution of the CBE is a function of the integrals of motion and any function of the integrals of motion is a steady-state solution of the CBE

* Poisson Vlasov equation describes relation between gravity force and its Sources (same as Gauss)

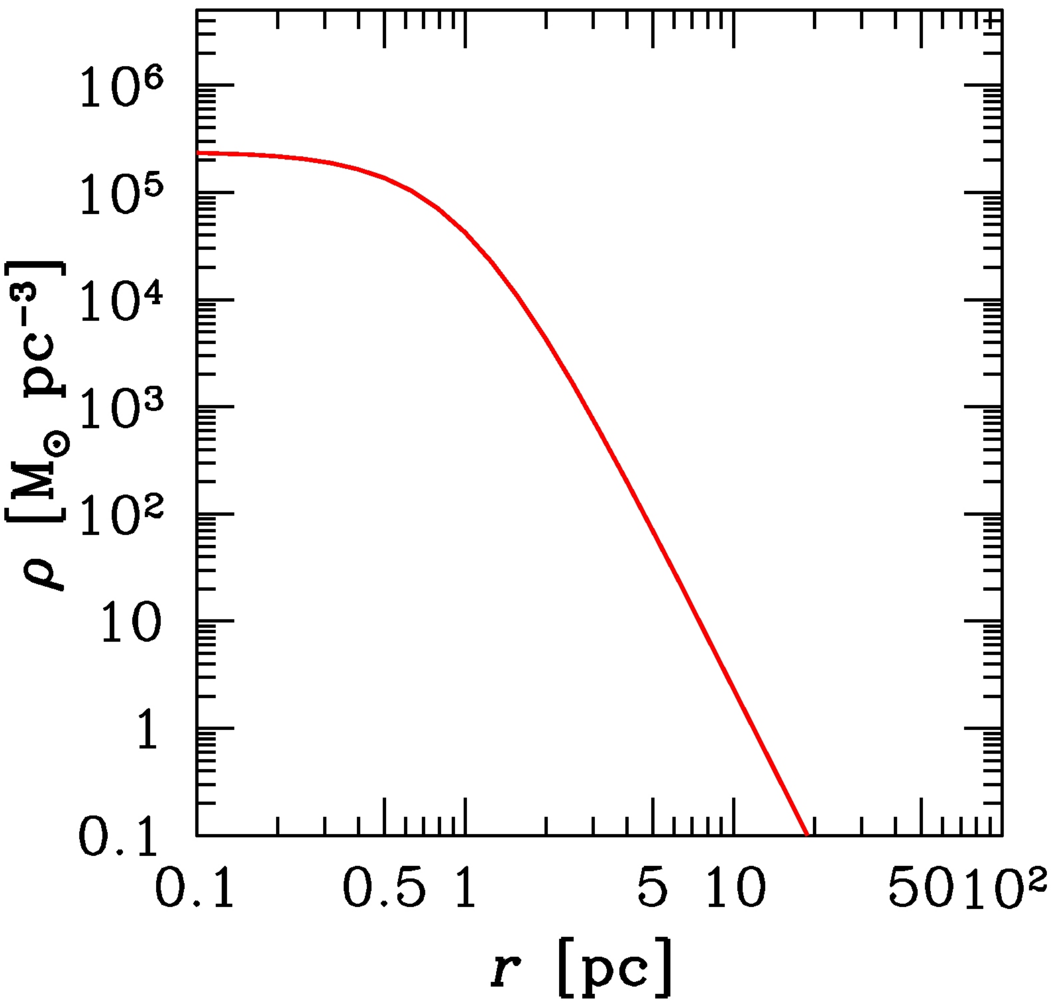
$$\nabla^2 \phi = 4\,\pi\, G\, \rho$$

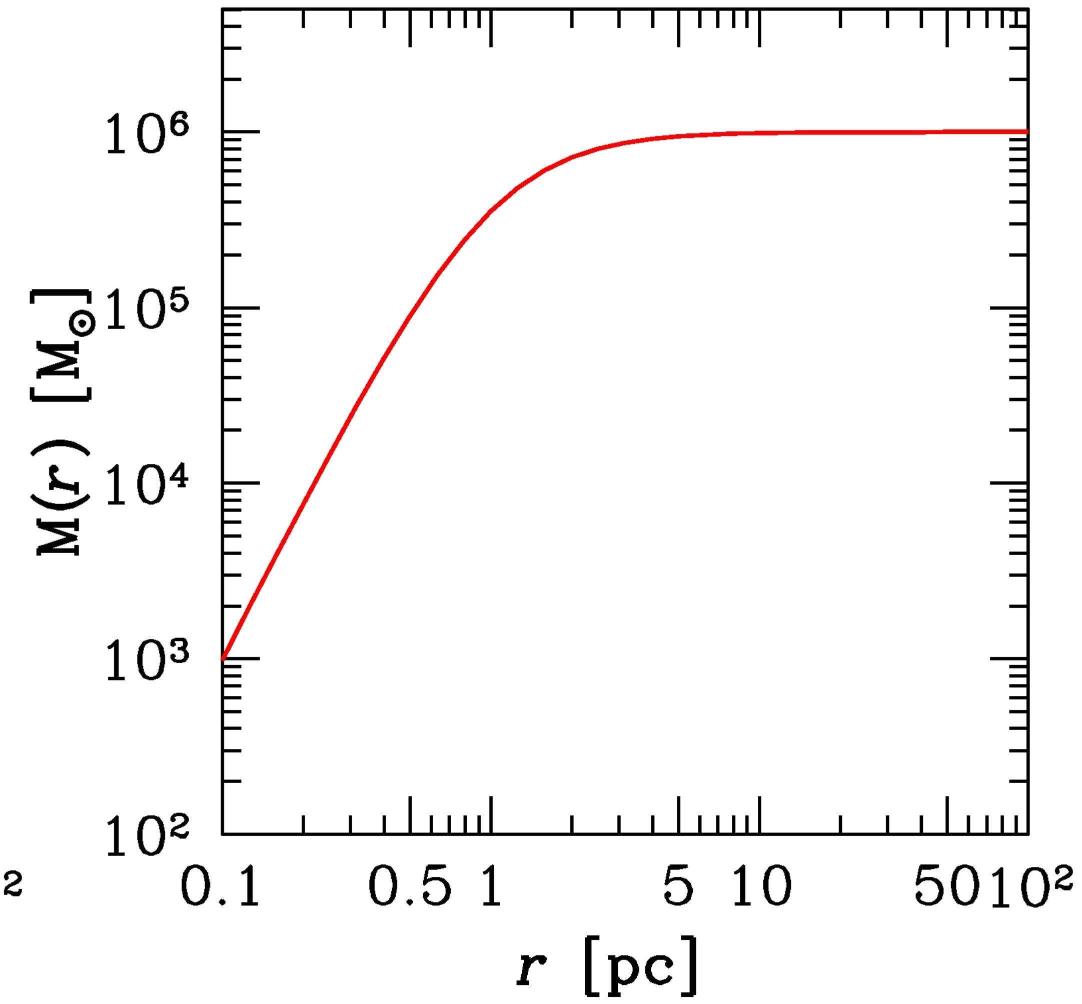
* Often potentials and energies are given as

RELATIVE potential: $\Psi = -\Phi + \Phi_0$

RELATIVE energy: $\varepsilon = -E + \Phi_0 = \Psi - \frac{1}{2}v^2$

Plummer sphere





Plummer sphere

Isotropic velocity distribution function: $$f(E) \propto \begin{cases} (-E)^p & if\, E < 0 \\ 0 & if\, E \geq 0 \end{cases}$$

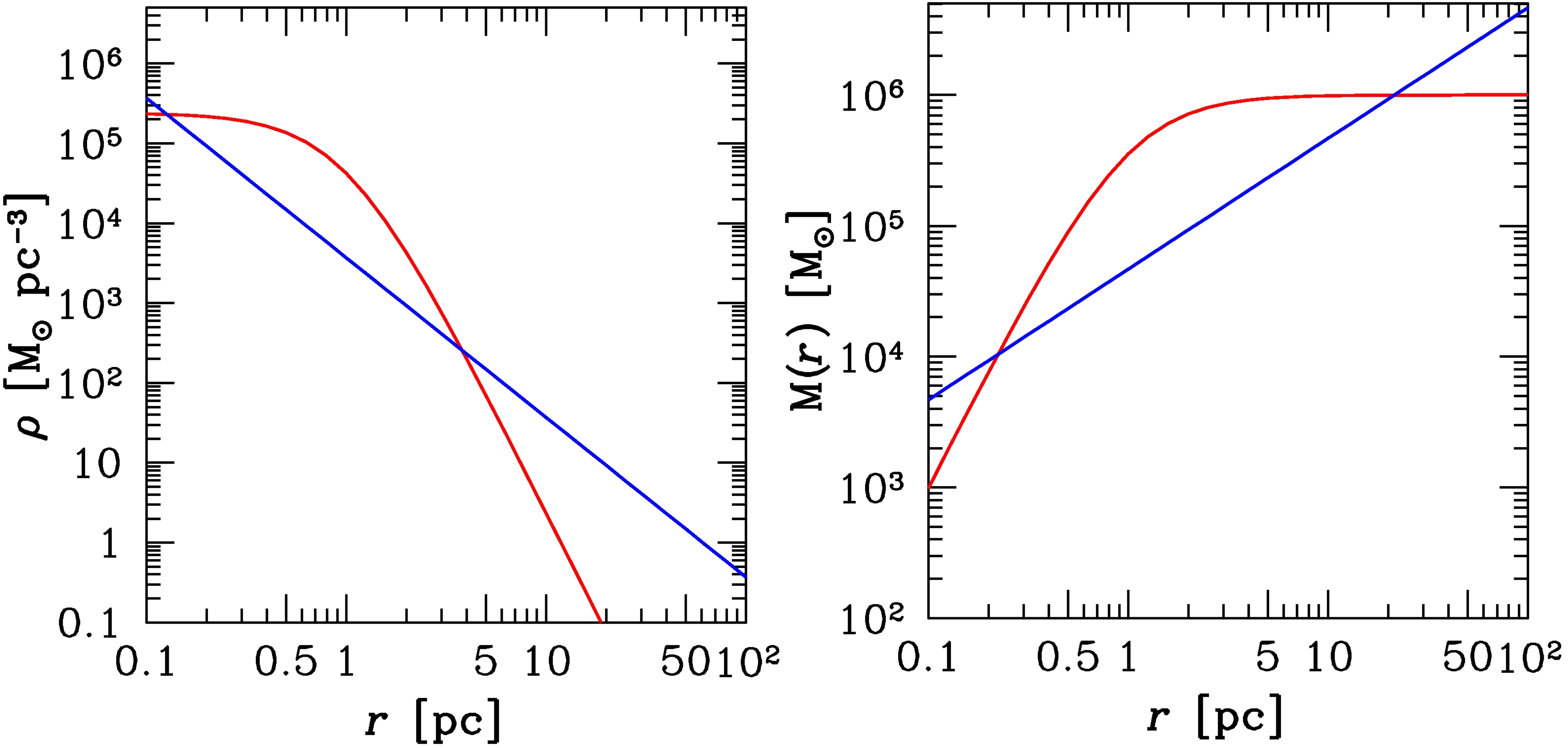
if p=1 corresponds to potential $$\phi(r) = -\frac{G\,M}{\left(r^2 + a^2\right)^{1/2}}$$

From Poisson equation $\nabla^2 \phi = 4\,\pi\,G\,\rho$

We derive density $$\rho(r) = \frac{M}{\frac{4}{3}\,\pi a^3}\,\frac{1}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{r}{a}\right)^2\right]^{5/2}}$$

and corresponding mass $$M(r) = \frac{M}{a^3}\,\frac{r^3}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{r}{a}\right)^2\right]^{3/2}}$$

Isothermal sphere



Isothermal sphere

* Why isothermal? From formalism of ideal gas $$P = \frac{\kappa_B}{\mu m_p} \rho T$$

If T= const → P = const x ρ

* For politropic equation of state $$P = \kappa \, \rho^{\gamma}$$
is isothermal if γ = 1

if we assume hydrostatic equilibrium (γ = 1)

$$\frac{d\phi}{dr} = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{dP}{dr} = -\frac{\kappa}{\rho}\frac{d\rho}{dr}$$

we derive the potential

$$\phi = -\kappa \ln\left(\frac{\rho}{\rho_c}\right)$$

using Poisson's equation we find

$$\rho(r) = \frac{\sigma^2}{2\,\pi\,G} r^{-2}$$

expressing the constant *k* with some physical quantities

PROBLEMS of isothermal sphere

1) DENSITY goes to infinity if radius goes to zero

$$\rho(r) = \frac{\sigma^2}{2\,\pi\,G}\,r^{-2}$$

2) MASS goes to infinity if radius goes to infinity

$$M(r) = 4\,\pi\,\int_0^r \rho(r)\,r^2\,dr = \frac{2\,\sigma^2}{G}\,r$$

Non-singular isothermal sphere or King model

1) King model (also said non-singular isothermal sphere) solves the problem at centre by introducing a CORE

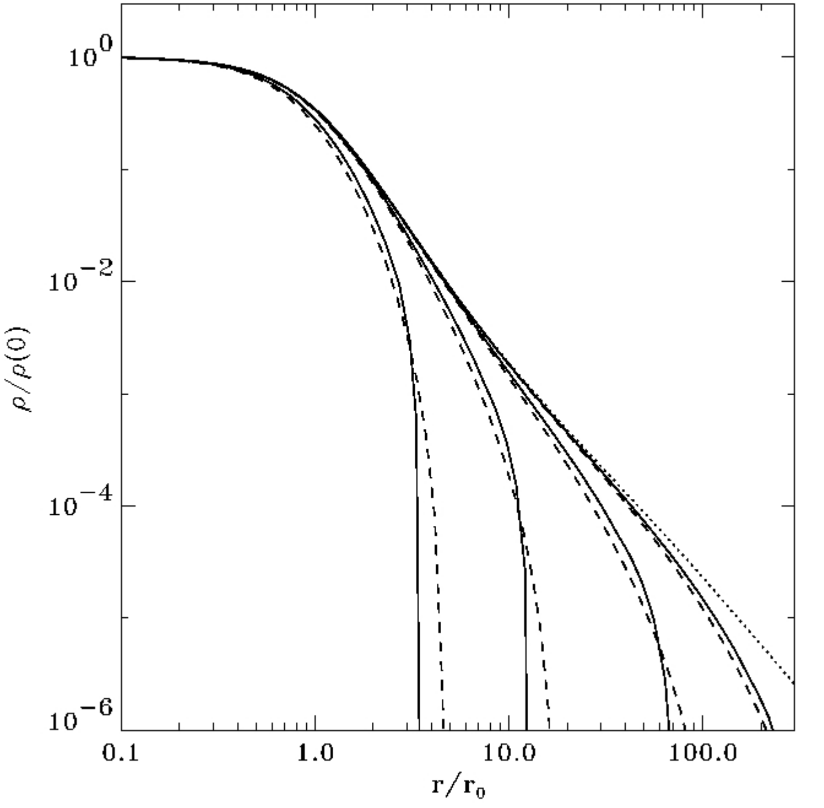
$$\tilde{\rho} = \frac{\rho}{\rho_0} \qquad \tilde{r} = \frac{r}{r_0} \qquad r_0 = \sqrt{\frac{9\,\sigma^2}{4\,\pi\,G\,\rho_0}}$$

r_0 is the radius at which the projected density falls to ~half

with the core, ρ has a difficult analytical shape, but can be approximated
with the singular isothermal sphere for $r \gg r_0$
and with

$$\rho(r) = \rho_0 \frac{1}{\left[1 + \left(\frac{r}{r_0}\right)^2\right]^{3/2}}$$

for $r \lesssim 2\, r_0$



Lowered non-singular isothermal sphere or lowered King model

2) LOWERED non-singular isothermal sphere := all King models where mass is truncated at a certain radius (does not go to infinity)

VELOCITY DISTRIBUTION FUNCTION:

$$f(E) \propto \begin{cases} \kappa \left(e^{-B\,E} - e^{-B\,E_e} \right) & if\, E < E_e \\ 0 & if\, E \geq E_e \end{cases}$$

DENSITY EXPRESSION:

$$\rho_K(\Psi) = \rho_1 \left[\exp\left(\Psi/\sigma^2\right) \mathrm{erf}\left(\frac{\sqrt{\Psi}}{\sigma} \right) - \sqrt{\frac{4\,\Psi}{\pi\,\sigma^2}} \left(1 + \frac{2\,\Psi}{3\,\sigma^2} \right) \right]$$

Relative potential

Error function

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TIDAL RADIUS (r_t):

Radius at which Ψ = 0 (and ρ=0) $0 = \Psi(r_t) = -\Phi(r_t) + Const$

→ we can define

$$Const = \Phi(r_t) = -\frac{G\,M(r_t)}{r_t}$$

$$\Phi(0) = \Phi(r_t) - \Psi(0)$$

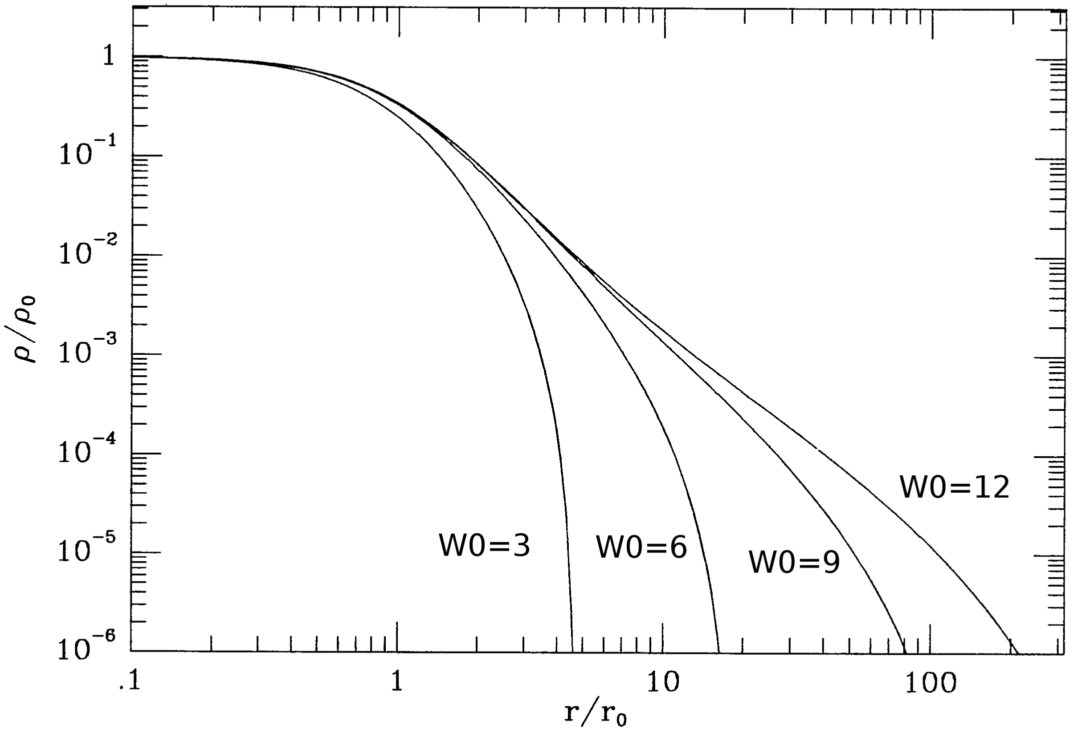
$$W_0 = \Psi(0)/\sigma^2 \qquad c = \log_{10}(r_t/r_0)$$

W_0 ← Dimensionless central potential

$\log$ ← concentration

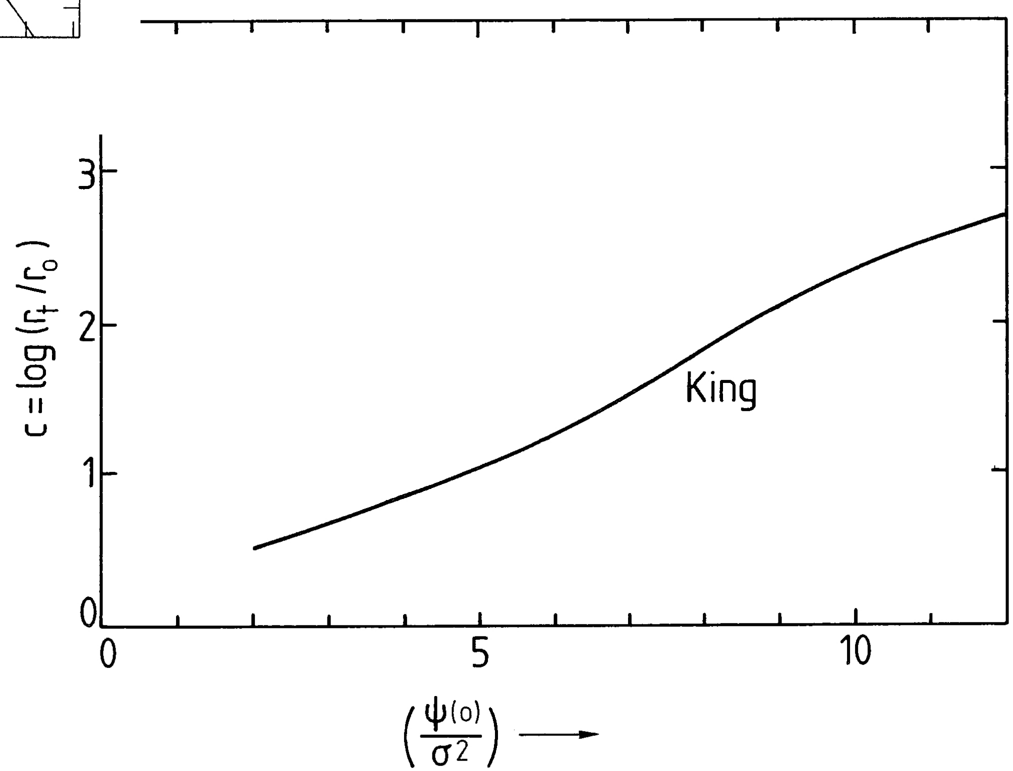
Most important parameters of the King model.

Lowered non-singular isothermal sphere or lowered King model



ρ/ρ0 versus r/r0

***c* versus W0**



Binney & Tremaine 1987

Lowered non-singular isothermal sphere or lowered King model

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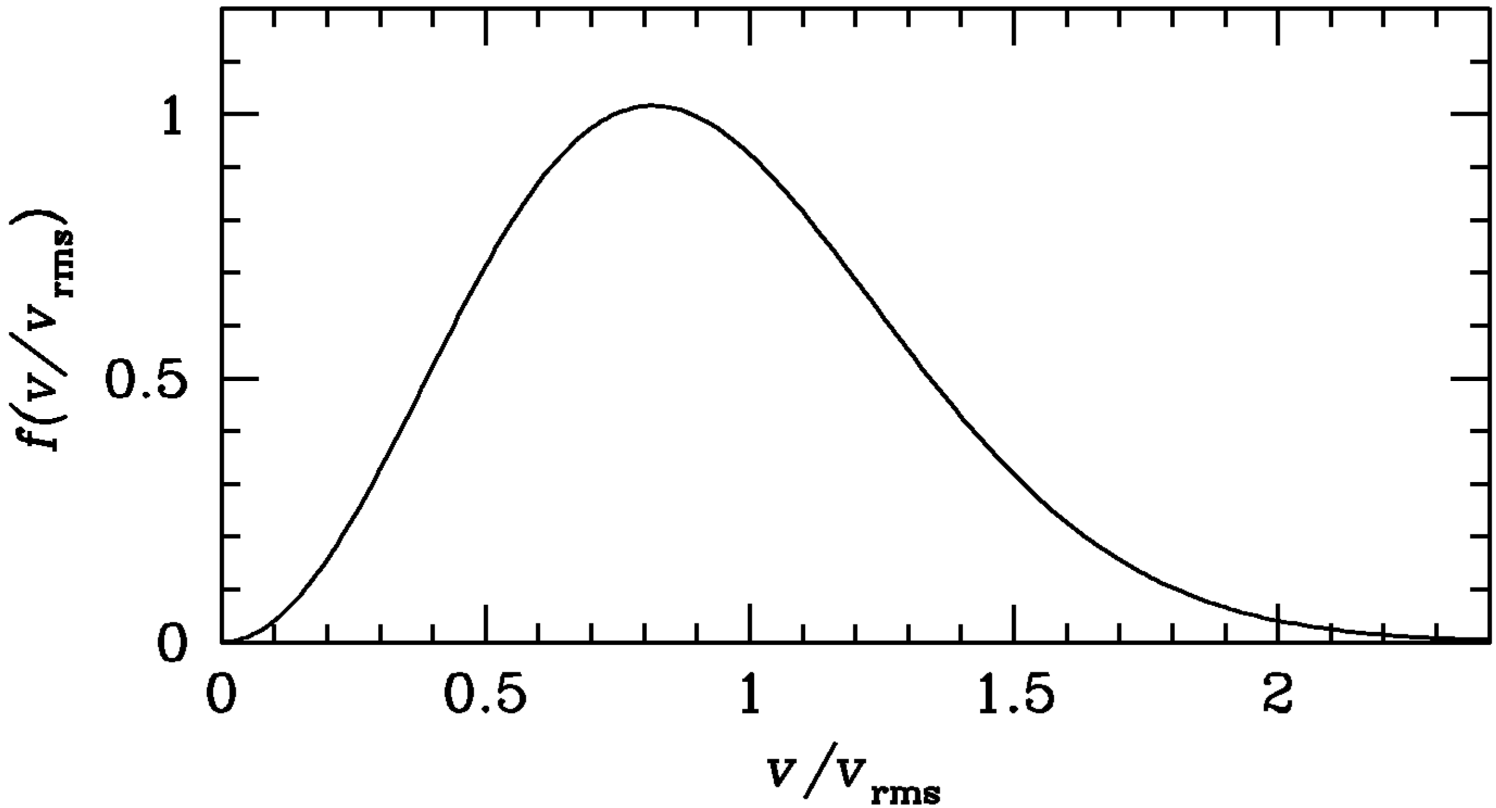
NOTE: **VELOCITY DISTRIBUTION FUNCTION is the MAXWELLIAN for isothermal sphere and truncated Maxwellian for lowered non-singular isothermal sphere!!!**



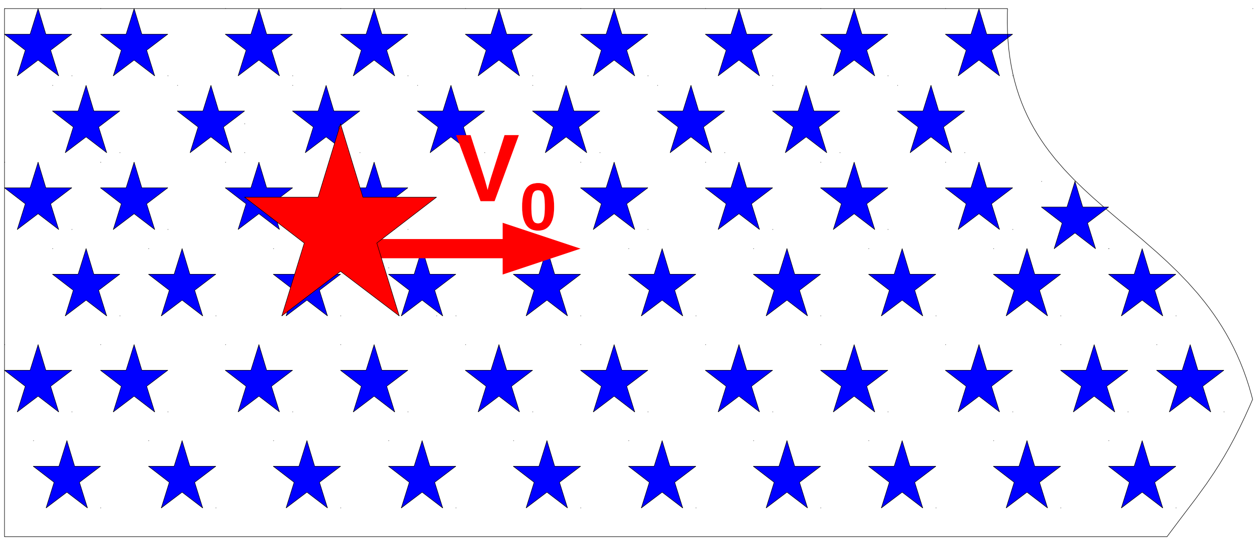
$$f(v) \propto v^2\, e^{-m\,v^2/(2\,k_b\,T)}$$

DYNAMICAL FRICTION

After crossing time, relaxation time, the third important timescale for Collisional (and even collisionless) systems is

DYNAMICAL FRICTION TIMESCALE

A body of mass *M*, traveling through an infinite & homogeneous sea of bodies (mass *m*) suffers a steady deceleration: the dynamical friction



infinite & homogeneous sea: otherwise the body M would be deflected

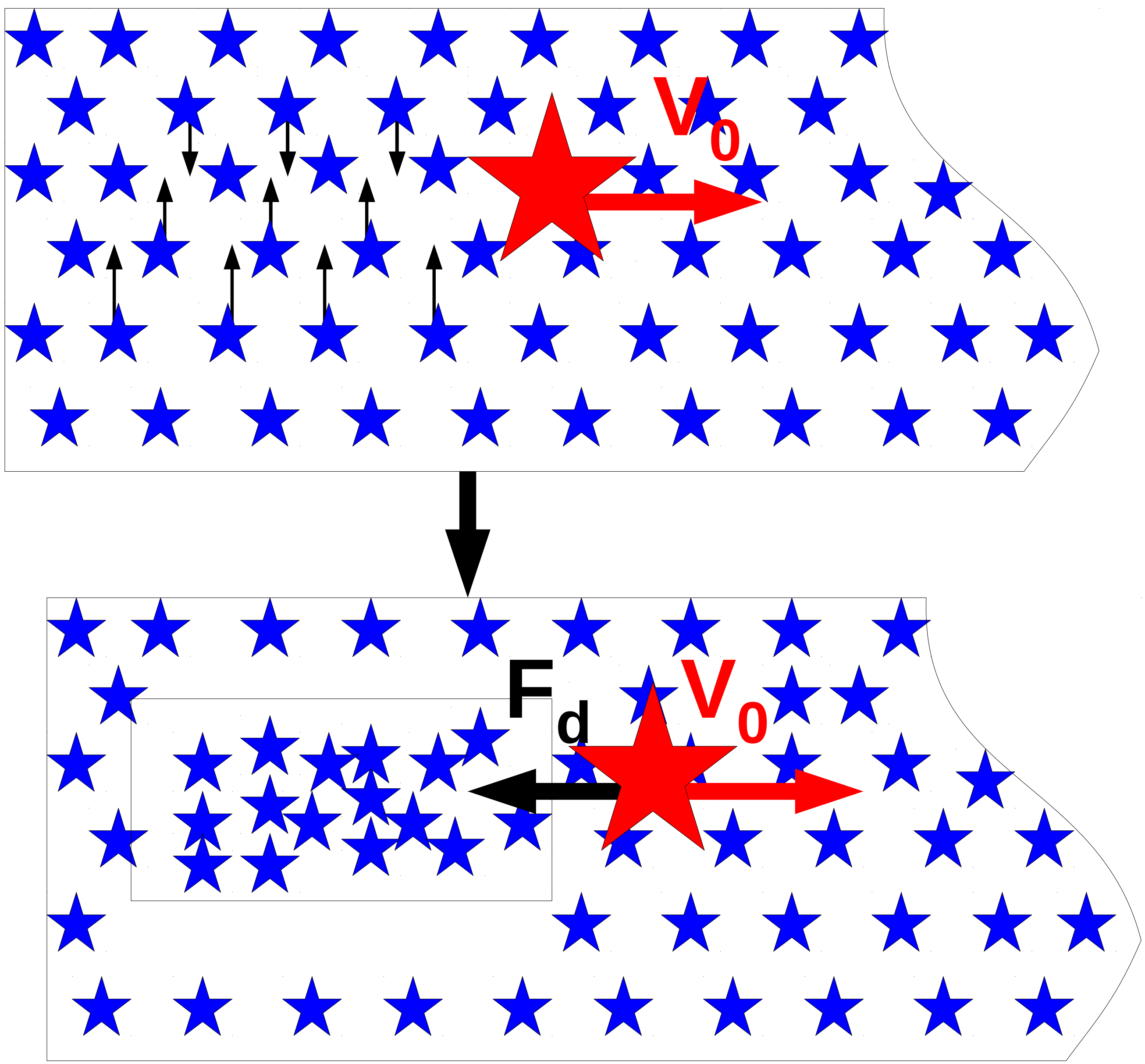
The sea exerts a force **parallel and opposite** to the velocity V_0 of the body

It can be shown that DYNAMICAL FRICTION TIMESCALE is

$$t_{df} = \frac{3}{4\,(2\,\pi)^{1/2}\,G^2\,\ln\Lambda}\,\frac{\sigma^3(r)}{M\,\rho(r)}$$

DYNAMICAL FRICTION

BASIC IDEA:



The heavy body *M* attracts the lighter particles.

When lighter particles approach, the body *M* has already moved and leaves a local overdensity behind it.

The overdensity attracts the heavy body (with force F_d) and slows it down.

DYNAMICAL FRICTION vs 2-body RELAXATION:

Dynamical friction timescale:

$$t_{df} = \frac{3}{4\ (2\,\pi)^{1/2}\ G^2\ \ln\Lambda}\,\frac{\sigma^3(r)}{M\,\rho(r)}$$

Two-body relaxation timescale:

$$t_{\rm rlx} = 0.34\,\frac{\sigma^3}{G^2\,m\,\rho\ln\Lambda}$$

They are relatives..

$$t_{df} \sim \frac{m}{M}\,t_{rlx}$$

References:

* Binney & Tremaine, Galactic Dynamics, First edition, 1987, Princeton University Press

* Elson & Hut, Dynamical evolution of globular clusters, Ann. Rev. Astron. Astrophys., 1987, 25, 565

* Spitzer, Dynamical evolution of globular clusters, 1987, Princeton University Press

* Spitzer & Hart 1971, ApJ, 164, 399; 1971, ApJ, 166, 483

* Portegies Zwart 2006, The Ecology of Black Holes in Star Clusters, http://arxiv.org/abs/astro-ph/0406550

* Portegies Zwart, Gieles & McMillan 2010, ARA&A, 48, 431