Wednesday, November 6, 2013

Reading: Chapter 9: all except 9.6.3, 9.6.4

Wheeler at meeting in Washington D. C. on Monday. 2008 film from History Channel, Supernovas. Brief appearances by JCW and Robert Quimby.

Astronomy in the news?

20% of Sun-like stars have rocky Earth-like planets. Maybe a billion Earth-like planets in the Galaxy. Not yet sure if water, life.

India launched a mission to orbit Mars, search for Methane.

Goal:

To understand how time works in curved space and near black holes.

Falling According to Einstein

According to Einstein - curved space around gravitating objects "flows" inward - ***inward escalator.*** Necessary to truly understand orbits.

If an object floats with ***no force*** in space (free fall), it will move toward the center of gravitation

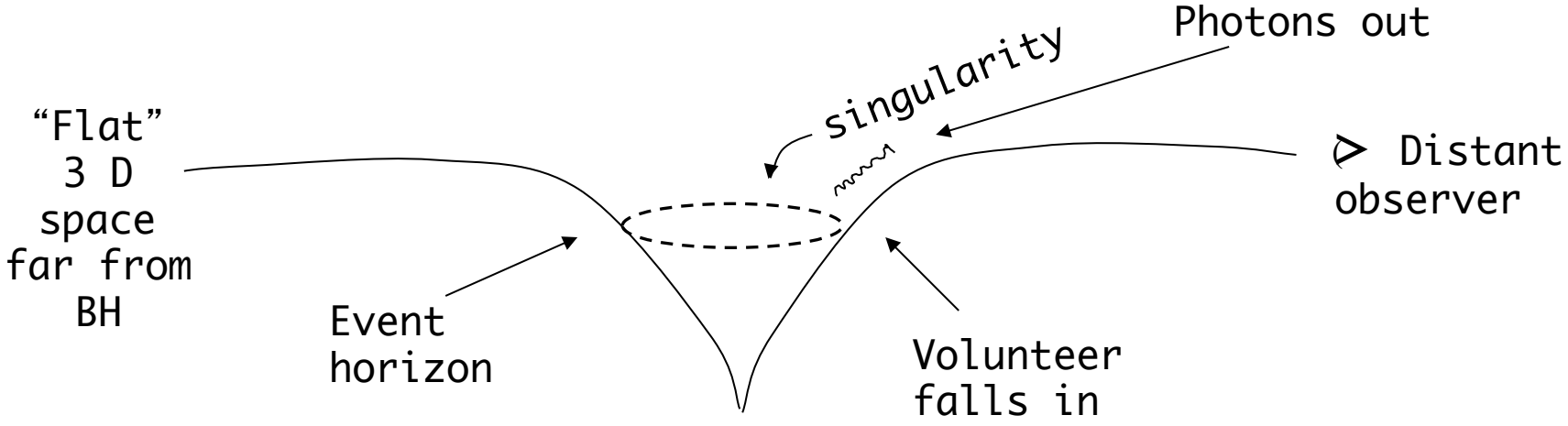
$\Rightarrow$ falling - all objects respond to the same curvature, have the same acceleration

Like water down a drain - sit still in the water, but go down the drain.

Must exert a force to resist, to avoid free fall, to avoid the flow of space inward toward the center of the gravitating object.

Freely falling object has no force on it. You, sitting there, do.

Specifically for Black Holes



Volunteer finds herself rapidly falling through event horizon, she is noodleized, and dies

Distant observer sees Doppler and gravitational redshifts

Received photons get longer, longer wavelength

Time between photons gets longer and longer

Infinite time for last photon emitted just as volunteer reaches the event horizon; space is moving inward at the speed of light compared to distant observer

⇒***Distant observer never sees volunteer cross the horizon***

⇒***Photons get undetectable, very long wavelength, most of the time is between photons - absolutely black*** **- why black holes are black.**

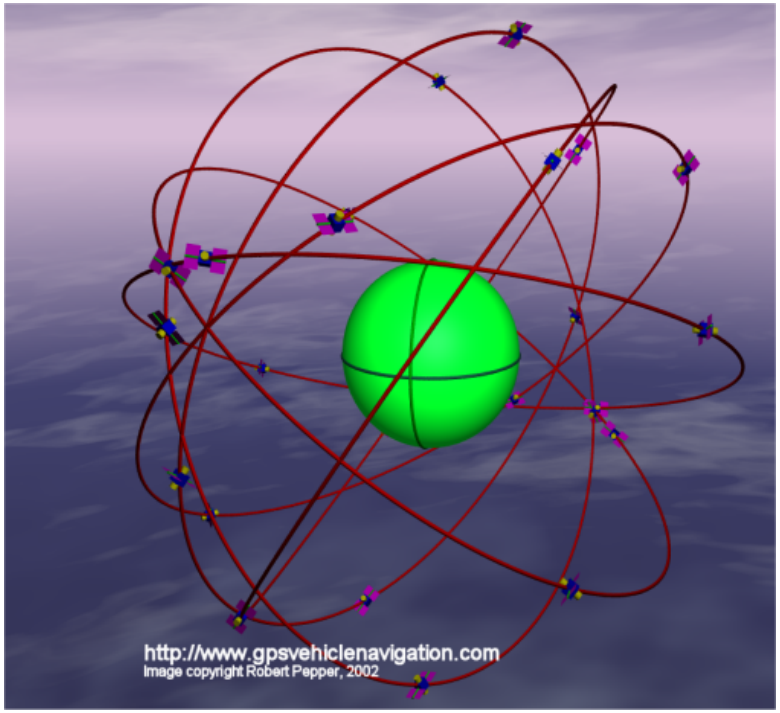
A distant observer watching an object falling into a black hole will see it getting dimmer and dimmer and ageing more and more slowly.

A distant observer will perceive an object to turn black, stop ageing, and stop falling and never see the object fall inside the event horizon.

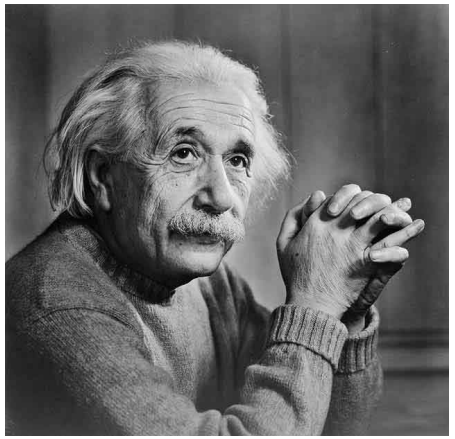
An observer within a gravity well will see a clock, or a human, far away (in less-gravitating, less curved space) ageing more rapidly.

Device to measure the curvature of space and the different flow of time at various levels in a gravitational field.

One especially fascinating application: the Global Positioning System

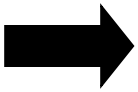


GPS depends not only on an array of satellites in orbit, but must be programmed to understand Einstein's theory of warped space and time to function properly.

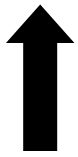


One Minute Exam

From the point of view of a distant observer, a volunteer who falls into a black hole

 Will be noodleized and die

 Will turn black before arriving at the event horizon

 Will age more rapidly

 Will shrink to a point

The story so far:

Look up at the sky and wonder about the stars.

Betelgeuse is a red supergiant about to collapse.

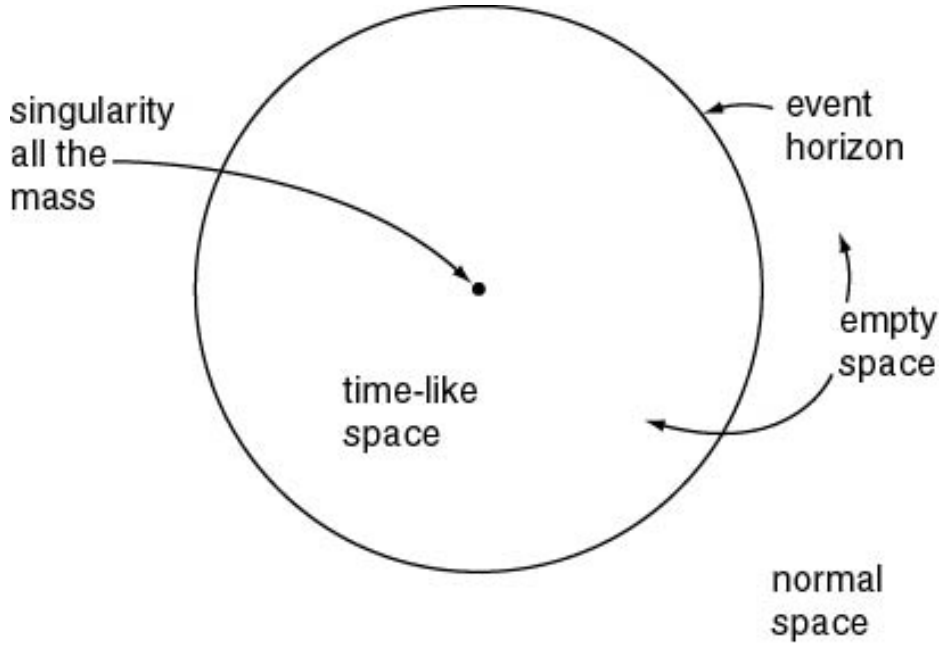
Collapse can lead to supernova explosions and the production of neutron stars, but also of black holes.

Black holes are predicted by Einstein to have a singularity, infinite density, infinite tidal forces, the end of space and time.

We need a new all-embracing Quantum Gravity to know what the “singularity” really is.

Goal:

To understand the conflict between Einstein's theory of gravity and the Quantum theory.



Einstein's theory does not incorporate any of the tenets of the quantum theory.

Singularity - all the mass is in a zero volume point in Einstein's theory.

Violates the Uncertainty Principle of Quantum Theory: cannot specify the position of anything exactly.

Need theory of ***Quantum Gravity*** to rectify, to understand what the "singularity" really is. **Deepest issue in modern physics**.

Goal:

To understand how Stephen Hawking added some quantum theory to Einstein's theory and revolutionized our understanding of black holes.

Black Hole Evaporation
Hawking Radiation - Chapter 9 § 6

Nature of vacuum in Quantum Theory - cannot specify the energy of anything precisely, even "zero" in a vacuum:

Vacuum "boils" with creation/annihilation of particles/anti-particles
easiest to make photon = anti-photon (no mass)
but also $e^- e^+$, $p^+ p^-$, neutron anti-neutron, neutrino anti-neutrino
=>affects behavior of electrons in atoms - *measured to high accuracy*

Quantum Fuzzy Event Horizon - at the event horizon, the position of the event horizon and of particles is *quantum uncertain*

One particle in a pair can be swallowed, the other escapes - carries off mass, energy - pure quantum effect.

Black holes are not just one-way affairs, with quantum effects they will lose mass and energy - Stephen Hawking's dramatic discovery.