



SPACE PHYSICS SEMINAR

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More than 50 years of planetary exploration: A plasma science perspective.

Friday, April 25, 2014

725 Commonwealth Ave.

Refreshments at 3:30pm in CAS 500

Talk begins at 4:00pm in CAS 502

Abstract:

Fifty-two years ago, Mariner 2 flew by Venus, initiating an ambitious program of planetary exploration. Images of moons and planets acquired by an armada of spacecraft now grace our hallways and are individually recognizable. Spacecraft have also characterized the invisible environments of the planets and their moons, identifying structures formed by charged particles moving in magnetic fields, structures referred to as magnetospheres for magnetized bodies, such as the Earth, or what we might call pseudo-magnetospheres for unmagnetized bodies. This talk will describe some of the high points of magnetospheric studies, focusing on the diversity of the invisible environments of solar system bodies and what has been learned from the past half-century of planetary exploration.