



Canadian Association
of Physicists

Association canadienne
des physiciens et physiciennes

Contribution ID: 679

Type: **Invited Speaker / Conférencier(ère) invité(e)**

(I) Discriminating between theories of the very early universe

Tuesday 8 June 2021 16:35 (25 minutes)

Different theories of the very early universe that can explain our observations of the cosmic microwave background are presented. The current paradigm - inflationary cosmology - has received much attention, but it is not the only theoretically viable explanation; indeed, several alternative scenarios exist. It thus bares the question: how can we discriminate between the various theories, both from a theoretical and an observational point of view? A few pathways to answering this question are discussed in this talk.

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Session Classification: TS1-4 Early Universe (DTP Symposium on Cosmology: James Peebles Nobel Celebration) / L'univers jeune (Symposium DPT sur la cosmologie: le prix Nobel de James Peebles)

Track Classification: Symposia Day (DTP) - Cosmology/Jim Peebles celebration