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Mildly relativistic cokscrew jets as rotated spirals

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It has been noted before that the observed spiral structure of free-streaming, precessing jets appears to be increasingly “rotated” (i.e., with an apparent increase/decrease of the angle between the precession axis and the plane of the sky) as v/c increases. We derive the value of the rotation angle, and show that this “rotated spiral” description is appropriate for jets with v/c<0.8. We find that in order to obtain the correct predicted image, the half-opening angle of the spiral also has to be modified as a function of v/c.

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