## Average Semidiameter

## Define

- *a* semi-major axis of the orbit
- *e* orbital eccentricity
- *s* Sun's radius
- $\nu$  the true anomaly
- *P* the Earth's orbital period

then the semi-minor axis of the orbit is  $b = a\sqrt{1-e^2}$ and the Sun-Earth distance is  $r = \frac{a(1-e^2)}{1+e\cos\nu}$  which takes extreme values  $r_{\max} = a(1+e)$ ,  $r_{\min} = a(1-e)$ .

From conservation of angular momentum or equivalently Kepler's second law it can be shown that  $\frac{P}{2\pi a^2 \sqrt{1-e^2}} r^2 dv = dt$ .

In the approximation  $\sin^{-1}\frac{s}{r} \approx \frac{s}{r}$  The time averaged semidiameter is  $\frac{1}{P} \int_{0}^{P} \frac{s}{r} dt = \frac{s}{2\pi a^{2} \sqrt{1 - e^{2}}} \int_{0}^{2\pi} r \, dv = \frac{s}{a} \, .$ 

The average of the maximum and minimum semidiameters is  $\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{s}{r_{\text{max}}} + \frac{s}{r_{\text{min}}}\right) = \frac{s}{a(1-e^2)}$ .

## Proportion of time with r > a

Use  $r = \frac{a(1-e^2)}{1-e\cos\theta}$  where  $\theta = 0$  corresponds to aphelion Then r = a when  $\cos\theta = e$ . The area

swept out while 
$$r \ge a$$
 is  $2 \int_{0}^{\cos^{-1}e} \frac{r^2}{2} d\theta = -2 \int_{1}^{e} \left( \frac{a(1-e^2)}{1-eu} \right)^2 \frac{1}{2\sqrt{1-u^2}} du = a^2 \sqrt{1-e^2} \left( e + \frac{\pi}{2} \right)$ 

where the substitution  $u = \cos \theta$  has been made. The total area of the ellipse is  $\pi ab = \pi a^2 \sqrt{1 - e^2}$  so the proportion is  $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{e}{\pi}$ .

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