

## **Gamma-Ray Spectral Variation During the February 1996 3C 279 Flare**

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Although several instances have been described of apparent hardening of blazar gamma-ray spectra with increasing flux (Mukherjee et al. 1996; Sreekumar et al. 1996), none of these has been statistically compelling. Furthermore, the blazar which has been most extensively observed, 3C 279, has shown no such tendency, despite having been well-observed over a wide range of flux levels. An examination of one-day spectra of 3C 279 during its large flare in February 1996 shows the first indication of spectral hardening in that object. As with the earlier instances, the significance of the hardening during the 3C 279 flare is not overwhelming because of the statistical limitations of the one-day spectra. However, it does remove a puzzling non-conformance, and thus supports the general trend which is demonstrated in Sreekumar et al. (in preparation).