Abstract

The advent of XMM-Newton and Chandra led to major advancements in our comprehension of the physics at the heart of the Milky Way. I will discuss some of the most recent constraints on the current quiescent and flaring activity of Sgr A* (the supermassive black hole at the Milky Way center). I will then present evidence of Sgr A*'s glorious past and a tool to derive its past activity as well as the distribution of molecular clouds at the Milky Way center. Finally, I will use the sensitive X-ray observations to infer the presence of warm and hot plasma associated with energetic energy releases and particle acceleration. Such plasma might be associated with an inhomogeneous hot ”atmosphere” over the GC, perhaps fed by continuous or episodic outflows of mass and energy from the GC region.