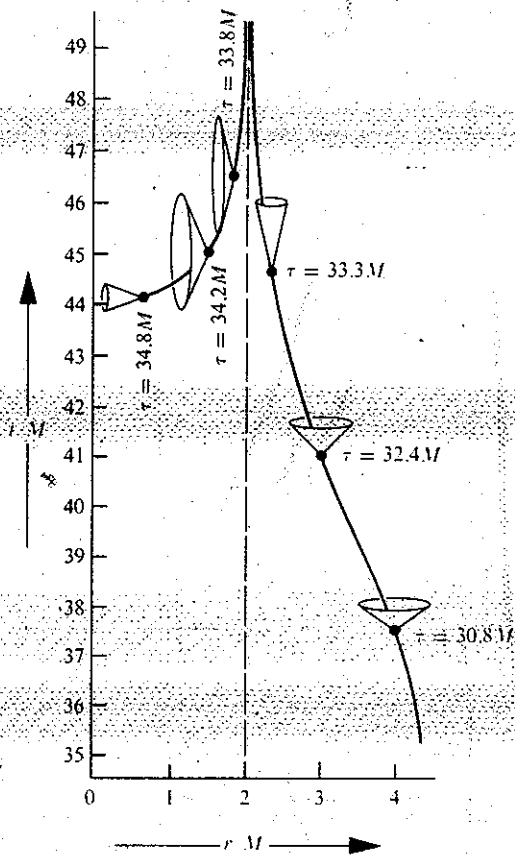


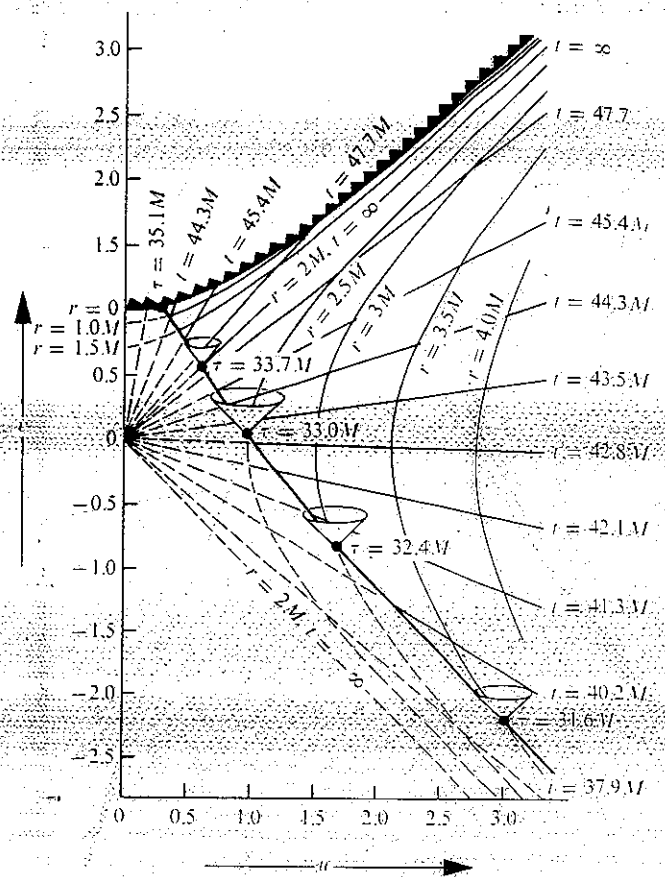
Fig. 8.3 The forward light cones near and inside a black hole. As $r \rightarrow \infty$, the light cone assumes its usual shape and direction, that is, $dr/dt = \pm 1$. The curve $ABBC$ is the worldline of an ingoing light signal.

The existence of an event horizon at $r = r_s$ is obvious from an inspection of the light cones in Fig. 8.3. Any kind of signal must necessarily travel in a spacetime direction that lies within a light cone. Since the light cones in the black-hole region are oriented toward $r = 0$, any signal in this region is unavoidably pulled toward decreasing values of r and can never leave the black hole.

Note that the light cones are tangent to the surface $r = r_s$ (indicated by the dashed line in Fig. 8.3); this means that, viewed in spacetime, the horizon is a null surface. This is a general property of event horizons, since a light signal that starts exactly on a horizon and



(a) Schwarzschild



(b) Kruskal-Szekeres

Figure 32.1.

The free-fall collapse of a star of initial radius $R_i \approx 10 M$ as depicted alternatively in (a) Schwarzschild coordinates, (b) Kruskal-Szekeres coordinates, and (c) ingoing Eddington-Finkelstein coordinates (see Box 31.2). The region of spacetime inside the collapsing star is grey, that outside it is white. Only the geometry of the exterior region is that of Schwarzschild. The curve separating the grey and white regions is the geodesic world line of the surface of the collapsing star (equations [31.10] or [32.10] with $r_{\max} = R_i = 10 M$). This world line is parameterized by proper time, τ , as measured by an observer who sits on the surface of the star; the radial light cones, as calculated from $ds^2 = 0$, are attached to it.

Notice that, although the shapes of the light cones are not all the same relative to Schwarzschild coordinates or relative to Eddington-Finkelstein coordinates, they are all the same relative to Kruskal-Szekeres coordinates. This is because light rays travel along 45-degree lines in the u,v -plane ($dv = \pm du$), but they travel along curved paths in the r,t -plane and r,\bar{V} -plane.

The Kruskal-Szekeres spacetime diagram shown here is related to the Schwarzschild diagram by equations (31.13) plus a translation of Schwarzschild time: $t \rightarrow t + 42.8 M$. The Eddington-Finkelstein diagram is related to the Schwarzschild diagram by

$$\bar{V} = t + r^* = t + r + 2M \ln |r/2M - 1|$$

(see Box 31.2).

It is evident from these diagrams that the free-fall collapse is characterized by a constantly diminishing radius, which drops from $R = 10 M$ to $R = 0$ in a finite and short comoving proper time interval, $\Delta\tau = 35.1 M$. The point $R = 0$ and the entire region $r = 0$ outside the star make up a physical "singularity" at which infinite tidal gravitational forces—according to classical, unquantized general relativity—can and do crush matter to infinite density (see end of §31.2, also §32.6).