

the Large Bright QSO Survey (LBQS), have shown no significant change in the fraction of BALQSOs with redshifts from 1.6 to 2.8.

2.10 : Optical Polarization and Continuum Variability

The broadband optical polarization of most QSOs is small ($P < 1\%$), and cases of large polarization ($P > 5\%$) among optically selected QSOs are fairly rare, occurring in $\sim 1\%$ of the objects. High polarization QSOs (HPQs) tend to be radio-loud objects (Moore and Stockman 1984). It has been claimed that among radio-quiet QSOs, the HPQs tend to be BALQSOs (Moore and Stockman 1984, Stockman *et al.* 1984), however the numbers are fairly small, and it is not clear whether this is statistically significant. There were no correlations between radio brightness or the presence of BALs with polarization strength in the set of low polarization QSOs (LPQs).

In a more recent survey of the PG QSO sample, no HPQs were found, with $\langle P \rangle = 0.5\%$ and $P_{max} < 2.5\%$ (Berriman *et al.* 1990). Among these low polarization objects, there was no correlation between polarization and radio brightness or the presence of BALs.

Optically violently-variable QSOs often exhibit high polarization, so if high polarization is significant in BALQSOs, it is natural to look for excess continuum variability in BALQSOs. Although, there have been indications of increased variability in past studies (see references within Turnshek 1988), our own project has indicated that BALQSOs, in general, are not any more variable than other QSOs (see chapter 8). However, our observation time span was fairly short (~ 3 years), and large amplitude variations may be rare events. In fact, in one BALQSO, UM 232, showed a large (~ 0.8 magnitudes) continuum change using spectrophotometric observations. Unfortunately, this was prior to the beginning of the more accurate and reliable broadband imaging monitoring project.

2.11 : What Can We Expect To Learn From Time Variability?

From the residual intensity time variations of BALs, we can potentially improve our knowledge of BALQSOs in the following ways: (1) Better determinations of the ionization