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Testing Strong-Field QED with X-ray Polarization

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We argue that measurements of X-ray polarization using the recently launched Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer will answer many open questions about magnetars in particular the physical state of their surfaces, whether vacuum birefringence exists, and the nature of the hard X-ray emission from these objects. We outline the capabilities of the instrument, specific models and the results of simulations and observations for the magnetar 4U 0142+61.

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