Non-resonant Particle Heating due to Collsional Separatrix Crossings\textsuperscript{1} F. ANDEREGG, M. AFFOLTER, D.H.E. DUBIN, C.F. DRISCOLL, UCSD — We observe weak plasma heating when a pure ion column is “sloshed” back and forth across a partial trapping barrier, and coherent laser diagnostics characterize the resulting particle distributions. Here, an externally applied theta-symmetric “squeeze” potential creates a velocity separatrix between trapped and passing particles, and weak collisions at rate $\nu_c$ cause separatrix crossings. The trapped particles are repeatedly compressed and expanded (by $\delta L$) whereas the passing particles counter-stream and Debye shield the resultant potential variations. The LIF diagnostics then clearly determine the separatrix energy $E_{\text{sep}}(r)$, since the trapped and passing particle distributions are in-phase and out-of-phase with the plasma motion. The measured $E_{\text{sep}}(r)$ is in agreement with that calculated from a $(r, z)$ Boltzmann-Poisson equilibrium solution. Theory predicts heating from separatrix crossings scaling as $\nu_c^{1/2}E_{\text{sep}}^2(\delta L/L)^2$, distinct from bulk viscosity heating scaling as $\nu_c^1$. Experimental scalings with density and temperature will allow direct comparison to theory.

\textsuperscript{1}Supported by NSF/DOE Partnership grants PHY-0903877 and DE-SC0002451.