



ON MAY 16, 2009, THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE'S 800LB. COSTAR CORRECTIVE OPTICS PACKAGE - INSTALLED IN ORBIT IN 1993 TO COMPENSATE FOR THE SPHERICAL ABBERATION IN THE TELESCOPE'S PRIMARY MIRROR - WAS REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH THE COSMIC ORIGINS SPECTROGRAPH (COS), AN INSTRUMENT DESIGNED TO STUDY INTERSTELLAR MEDIUM, THE SPACE BETWEEN STARS, AND THE SPACE BETWEEN GALAXIES

The Cosmic Origins Spectrograph uses spectrography (the science of breaking light into its component frequencies) to study the structure and make-up of distant objects in space. From these observations, scientists can obtain an object's temperature, density, chemical composition, and velocity.

COS will not, however, produce the dramatic and beautiful interstellar photographs typically associated with Hubble. Instead, by studying the "empty space" of space, COS could provide important information about the leftover material from the origins of the universe and, thus, those origins themselves.

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