

Margaret Lindsay Huggins Encyclopedia Article

Margaret Lindsay Huggins

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Margaret Lindsay Huggins

1848-1915

Irish-English astronomer whose observations of the spectra of celestial objects, made in collaboration with her husband William Huggins, revolutionized astronomy and laid the groundwork for modern cosmology. The Huggins used spectroscopy to prove that the elements in stars are the same as those in the sun and the earth. They also proved that gases make up nebulae, discovered hydrocarbons in comets, and measured stellar velocities using Doppler shifts of spectra, providing data for theories concerning the origin and expansion of the universe.