The Constellation-X Mission

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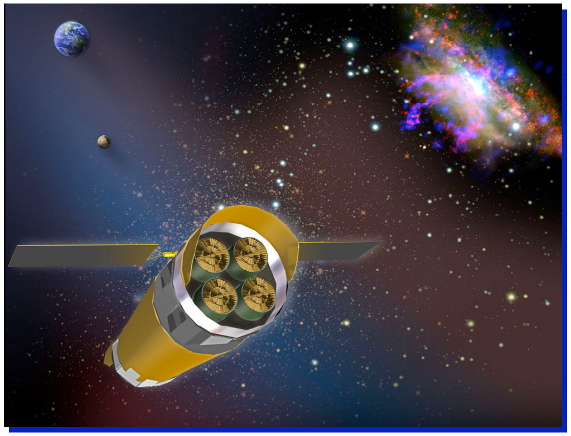
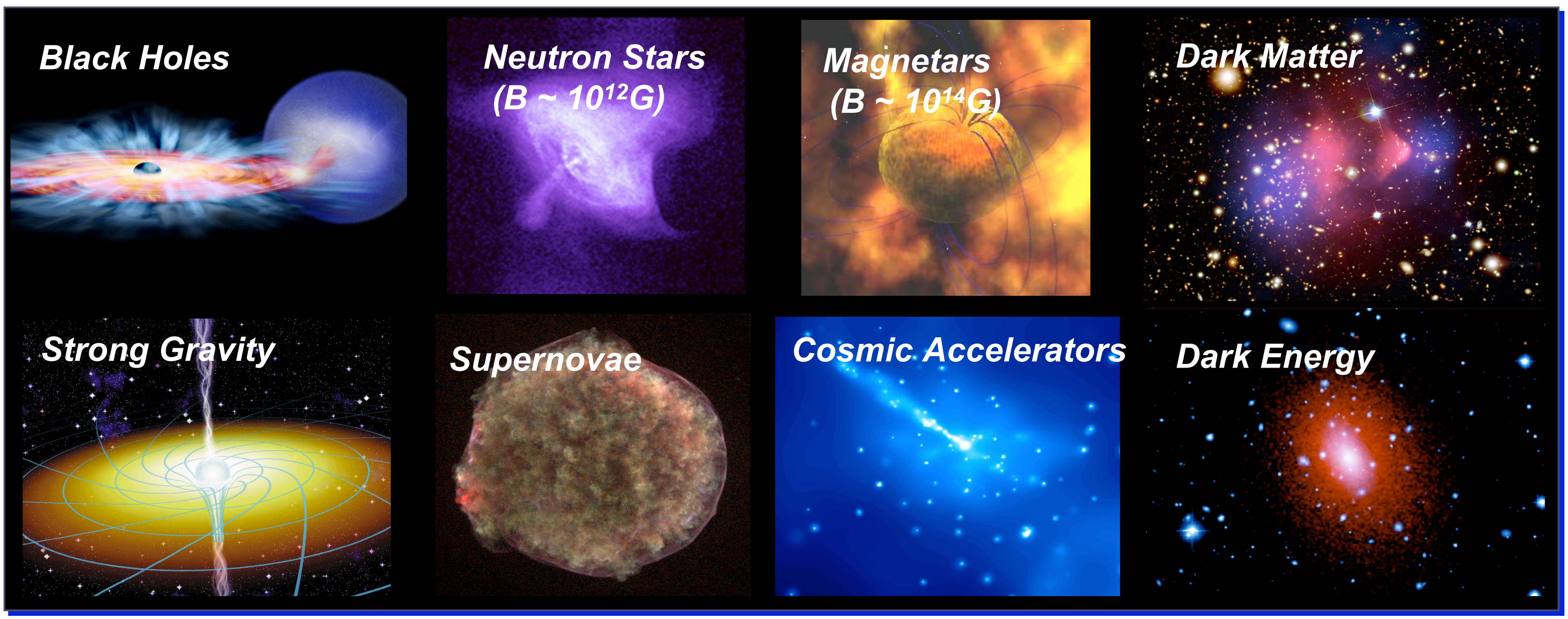
Constellation-X Will Open a New Window on X-ray Spectroscopy

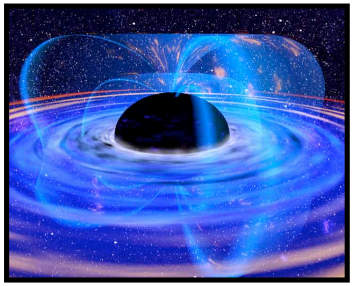


- X-ray emission probes the physics of extreme processes, places and events.
- Chandra and XMM-Newton brought x-ray astronomy to the forefront
- Con-X throughput for high resolution spectroscopy is 100 times higher than Chandra and XMM

  ⇒ X-ray astronomy becomes X-ray astrophysics

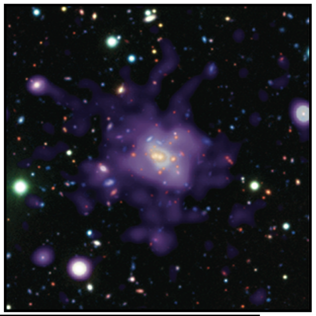


Driving Science Objectives



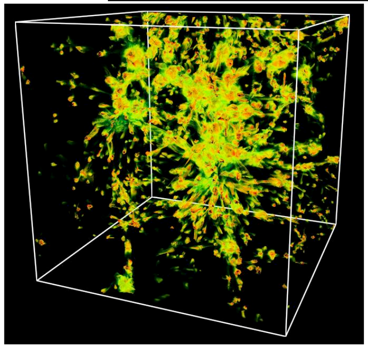
Black Holes

♣ Use black holes to test General Relativity and measure black hole spin



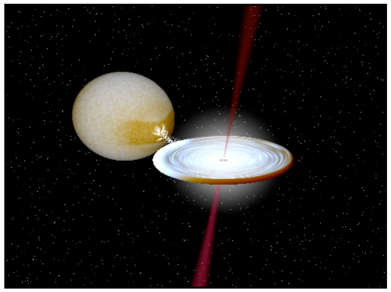
Dark Energy (and Dark Matter)

♣ Use Galaxy Clusters to provide factor of ten improvement in key Dark Energy (DE) parameters



Missing Baryons

♣ Unambiguous detection of the hot phase of the Warm-Hot Intergalactic Medium (WHIM) at z>0

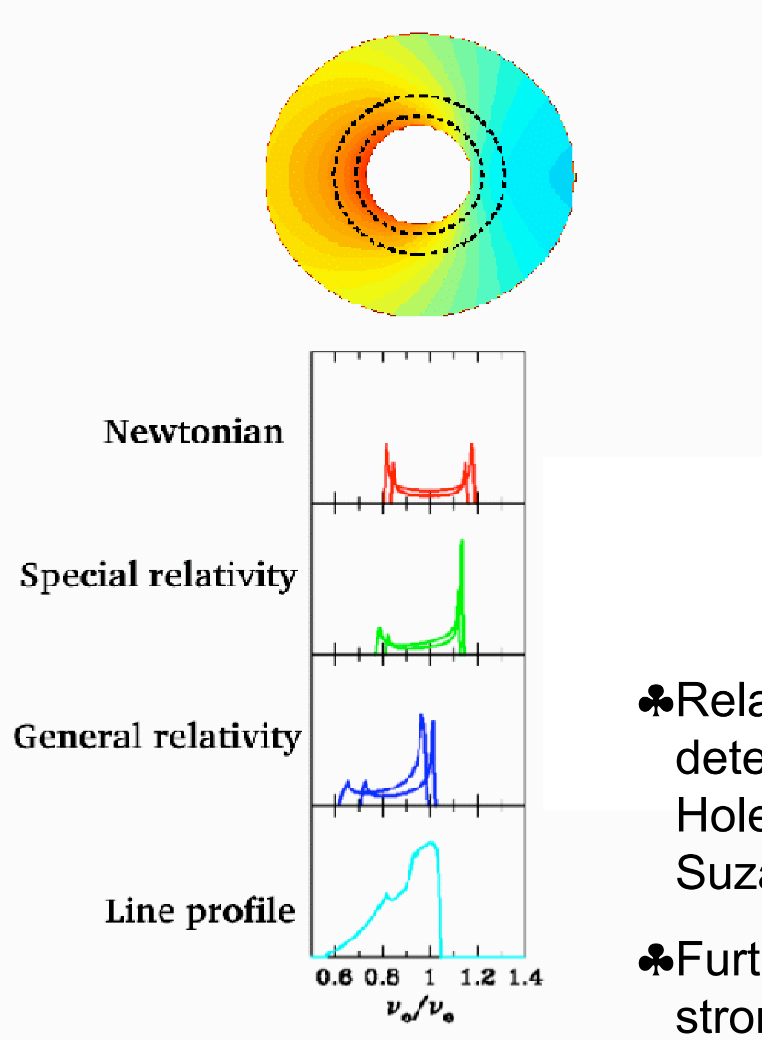


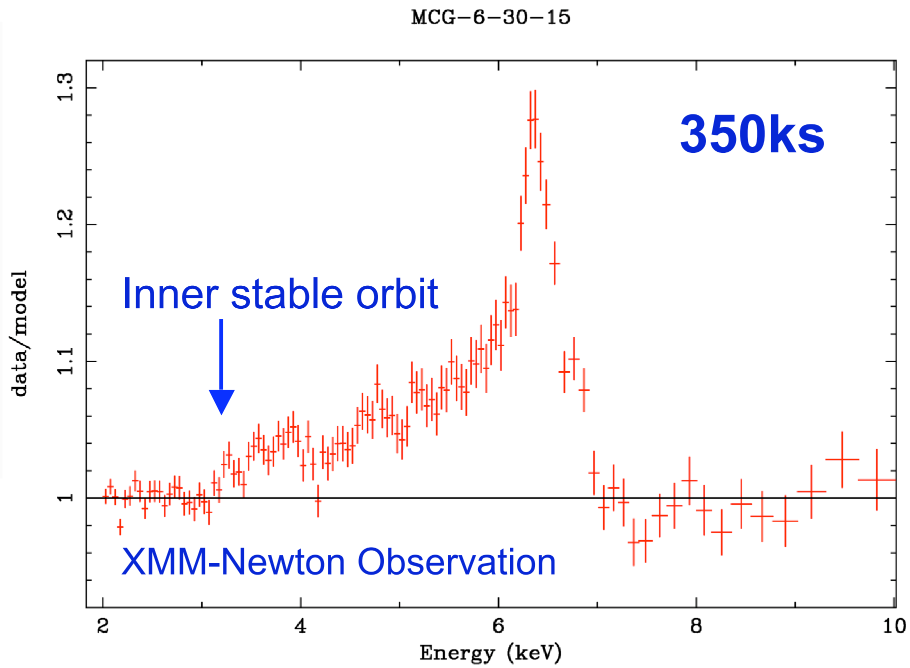
Neutron Star Equation of State

♣ Measuring the mass-radius relation of neutron stars to determine the Equation of State (EOS) of ultra-dense matter

Black Holes: *Accretion Disks and X-ray Reflection*

The Iron fluorescence emission line is created when X-rays scatter and are absorbed in dense matter, close to the event horizon of the black hole.



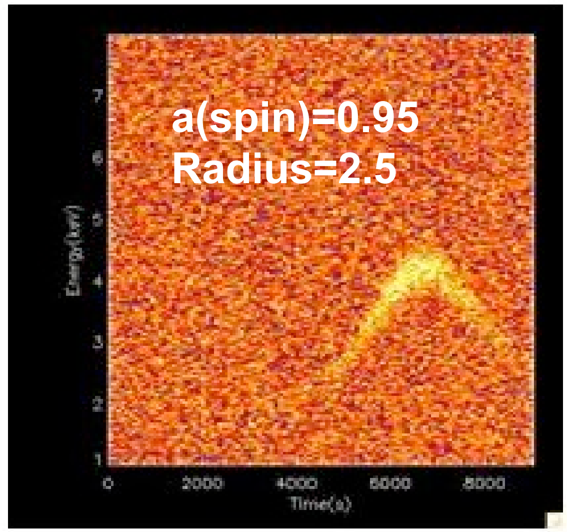


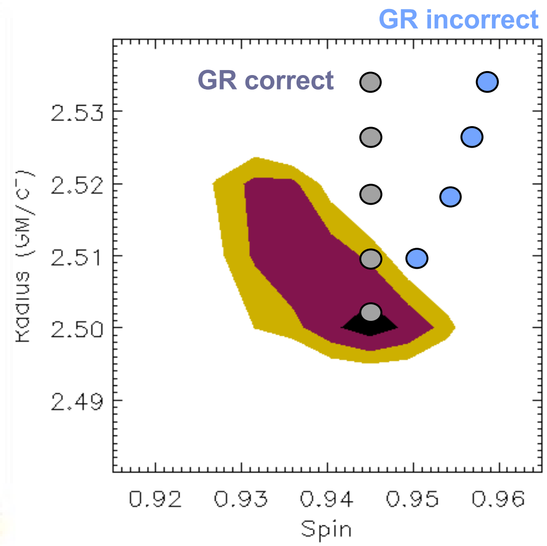
- ♣Relativistically broadened iron K lines have been detected from within 6 gravitational radii of Black Holes by ASCA, XMM-Newton, Chandra and Suzaku
- ♣Further progress towards using this feature as a strong gravity diagnostic requires Constellation-X

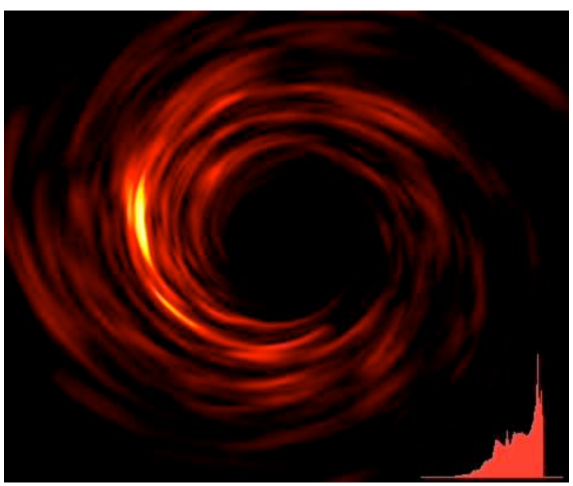
Black Holes

Use black holes to test General Relativity (GR) and measure black hole spin

- Con-X will probe close to the event horizon with 100× better sensitivity to:
  - Follow dynamics of individual "hot spots" to determine spin as a function of radius in disk.
  - Spin measurements vs radius provide a powerful consistency check of GR in the strong gravity regime.



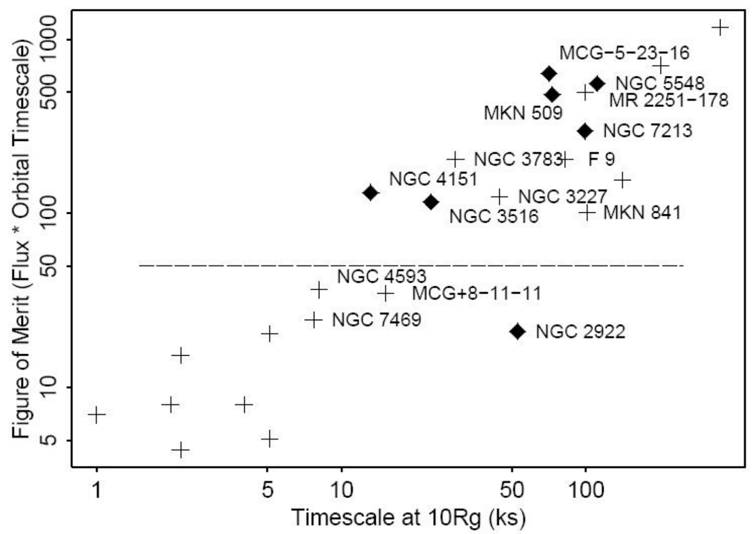




Detectability depends on X-ray flux, line intensity, and orbital timescale (FOM)

Key to GR tests with hot spots: large collecting area and good spectral resolving power

Black Holes: *Measurements*



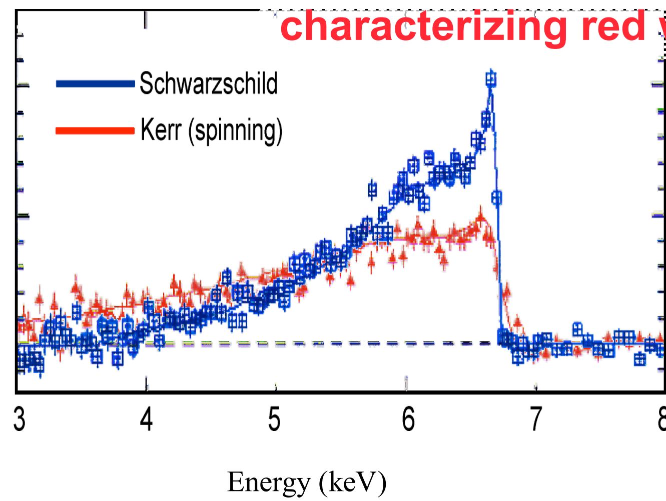
ASCA X-ray sample of AGN

Time-variable Fe K measurements

- Target list for GR tests known and growing
- Single target sufficient to test GR under strong gravity
- Currently >dozen targets over FOM requirement
- Range of masses at least 1, perhaps 3 orders of magnitude

Detailed characterization of broad FeK line to measure spin for several hundred AGN over a range of luminosity and redshift

Key to spin measurement, characterizing red wing

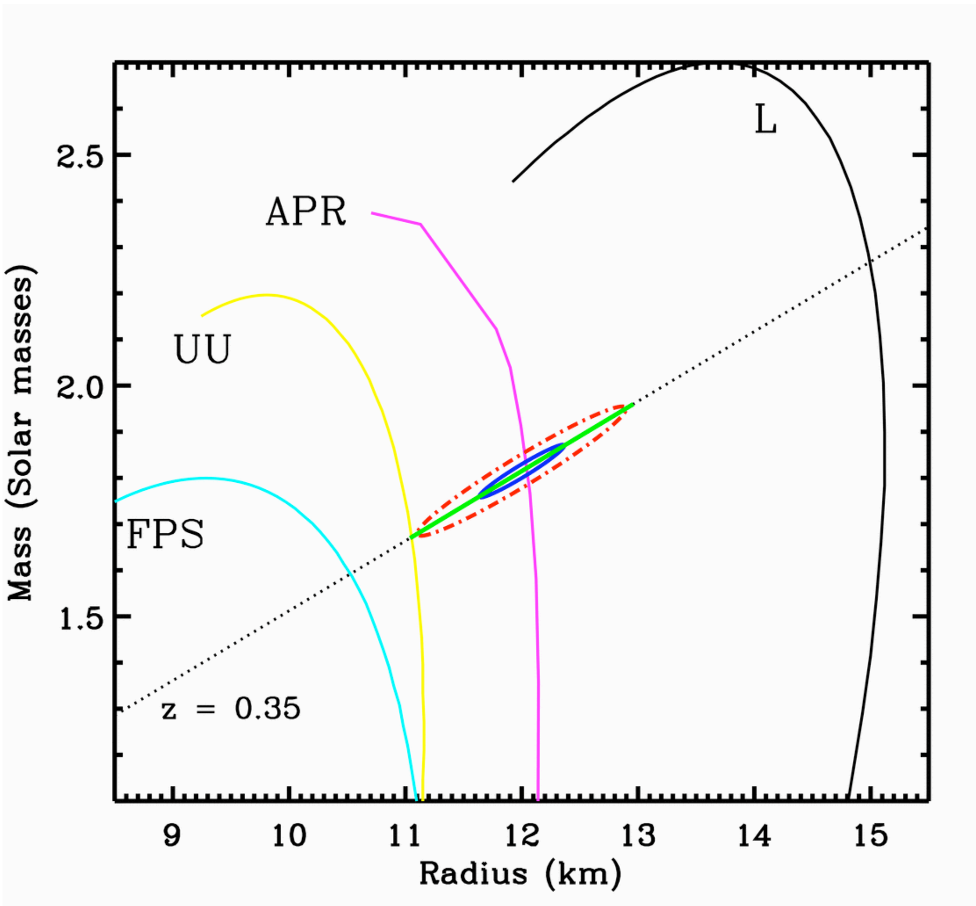


Continuum Is Key For Spin Measurements:

- Require 150 cm^2 at 10-40 keV
- Spectral resolving power R=2400 required to resolve warm absorber (permits continuum to be measured)

Neutron Stars

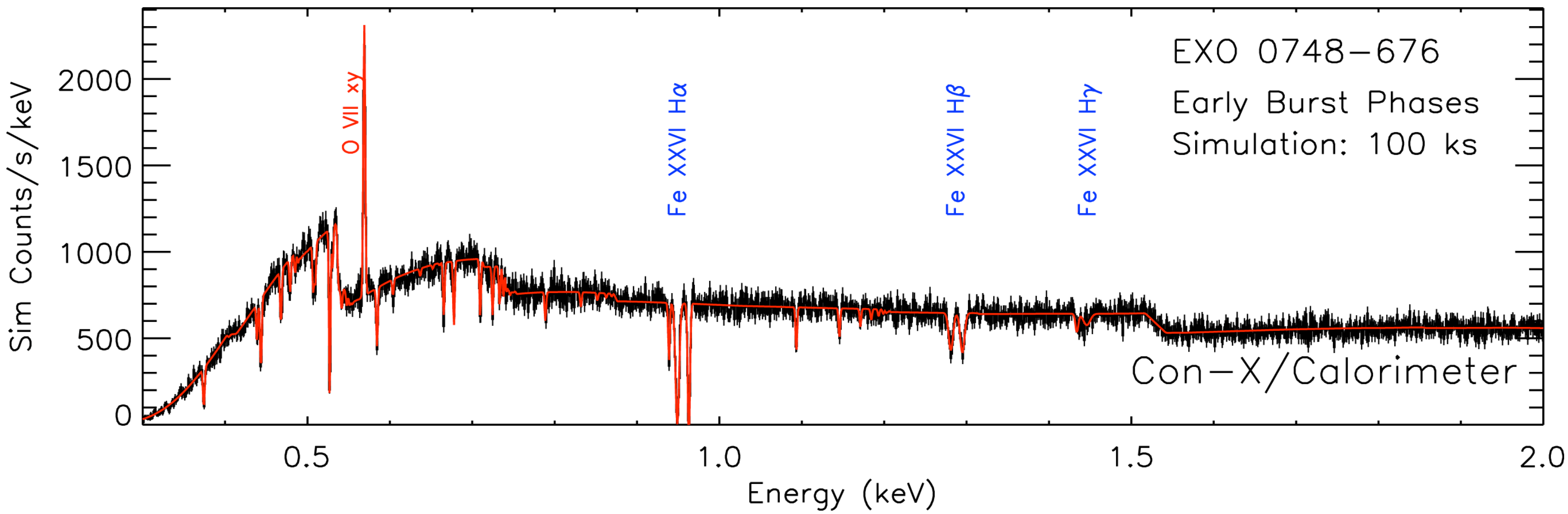
Measuring the mass-radius relation of neutron stars to determine the Equation of State (EOS) of ultra-dense matter



- NS contain the densest states of matter in the universe.
- The nuclear physics that governs the interactions between constituent particles predicts mass/radius relations.
- X-ray bursts from LMXBs provide ideal conditions for measuring the Equation of State for neutron stars.
- Con-X will provide high S/N atmospheric absorption spectra, and measure burst oscillations for a large sample of neutron stars covering a range of masses.

Neutron Star EOS

Two measurement techniques:



Measurement #1 – Absorption spectroscopy:

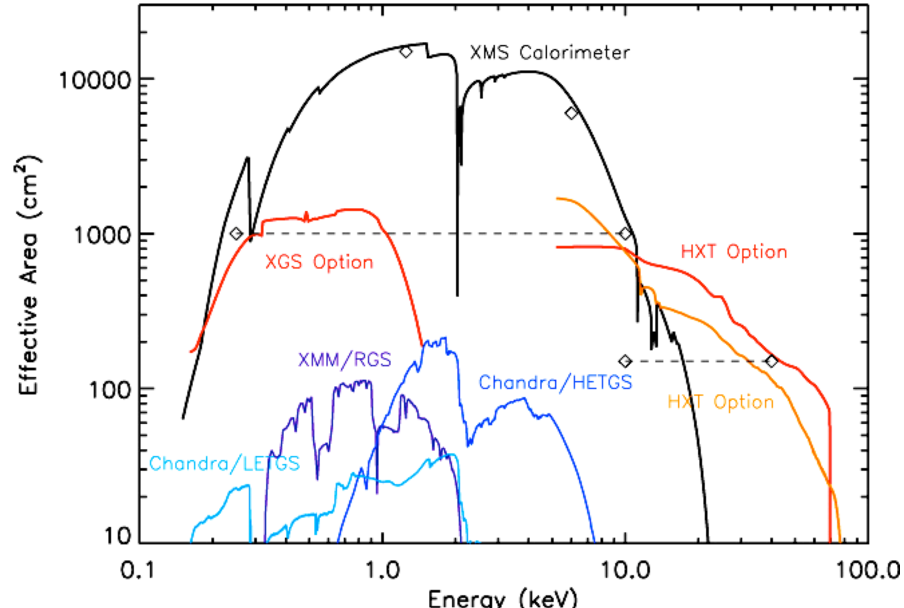
- Absorption spectra provide a direct measure of gravitational redshift at surface of the star ($z \propto M/R$).
- The measured widths of the lines constrains the NS radius to 5-10% (compare to best present constraints: 9.5-15 km for EXO 0748-676).

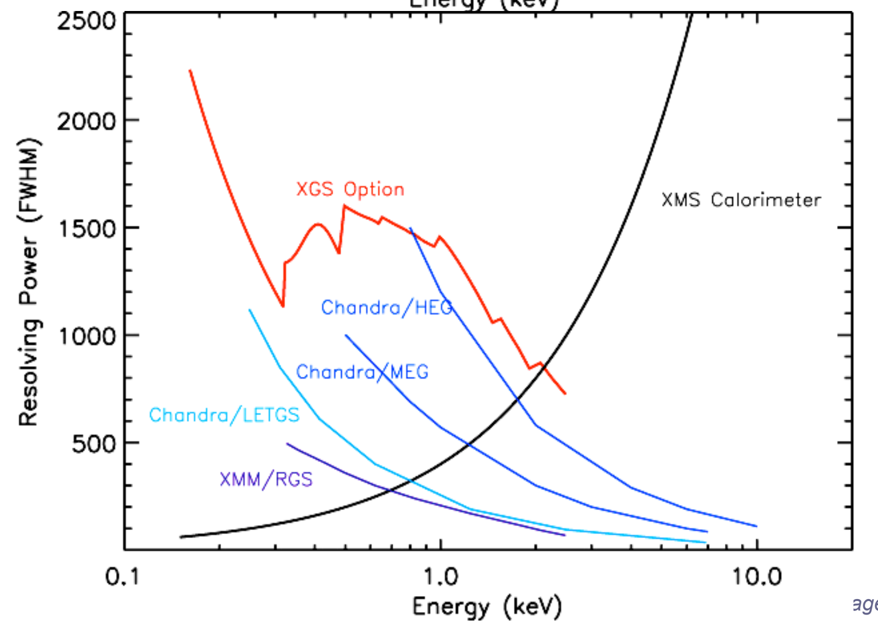
Measurement #2 – Burst oscillations:

- Pulse shapes of burst oscillations can provide an independent measure of the mass and radius to a few percent. Requires 100 microsec timing and ability to handle count rates up to 0.25 Crab.

Science Objectives Flow Into Key Performance Requirements

Bandpass:	0.3 – 40 keV
Effective Area:	15,000 cm^2 @ 1.25 keV 6,000 cm^2 @ 6 keV 150 cm^2 @ 40 keV
Spectral Resolution:	1250 @ 0.3 – 1 keV 2400 @ 6 keV
Angular Resolution	15 arcsec 0.3 – 7 keV (5 arcsec goal) 30 arcsec 7.0 – 40 keV
Field of View	5 x 5 arcmin

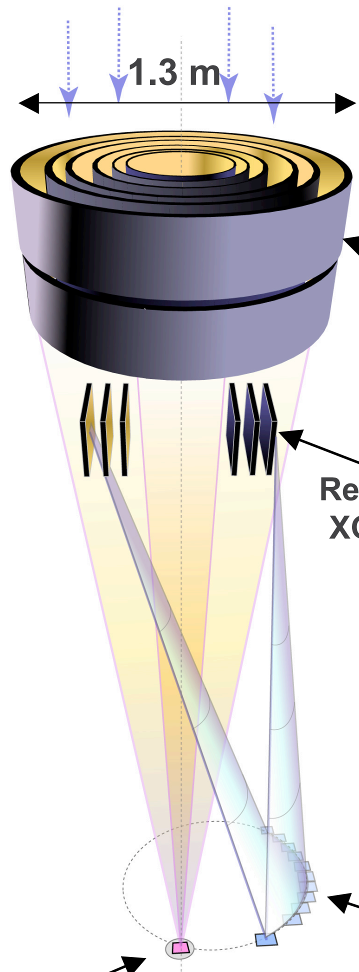




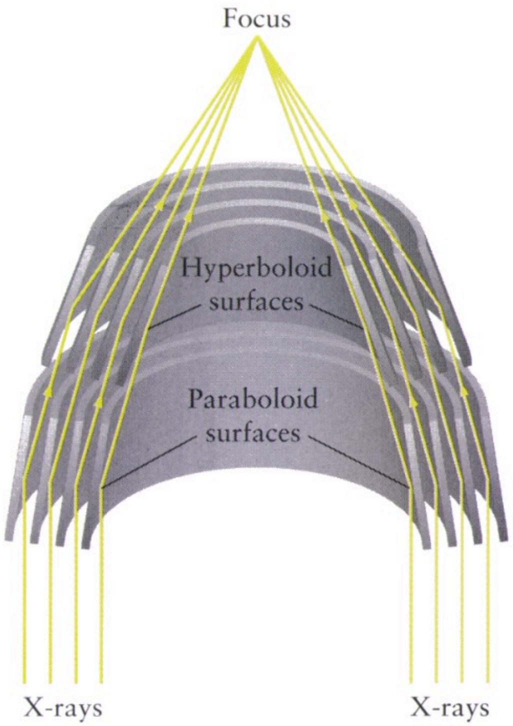
Mission Implementation

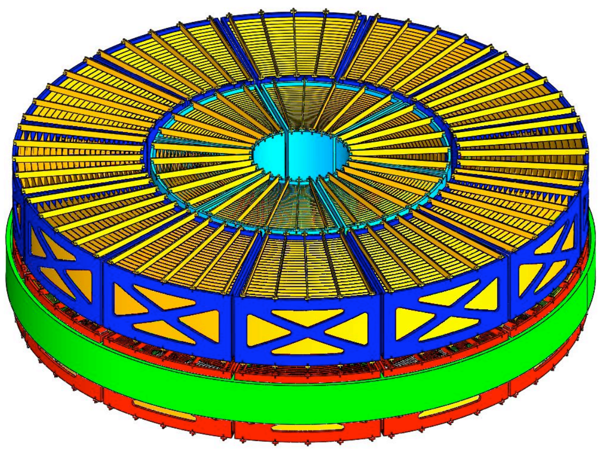
- To meet the requirements, our technical implementation consists of:
  - 4 SXTs each consisting of a Flight Mirror Assembly (FMA) and a X-ray Microcalorimeter Spectrometer (XMS)
    - Covers the bandpass from 0.6 to 10 keV
  - Two additional systems extend the bandpass:
    - X-ray Grating Spectrometer (XGS) – dispersive from 0.3 to 1 keV (included in one or two SXT's)
    - Hard X-ray Telescope (HXT) – non-dispersive from 6 to 40 keV
- Instruments operate simultaneously:
  - Power, telemetry, and other resources sized accordingly

4 Spectroscopy X-ray Telescopes



Spectroscopy X-ray Telescope (SXT)

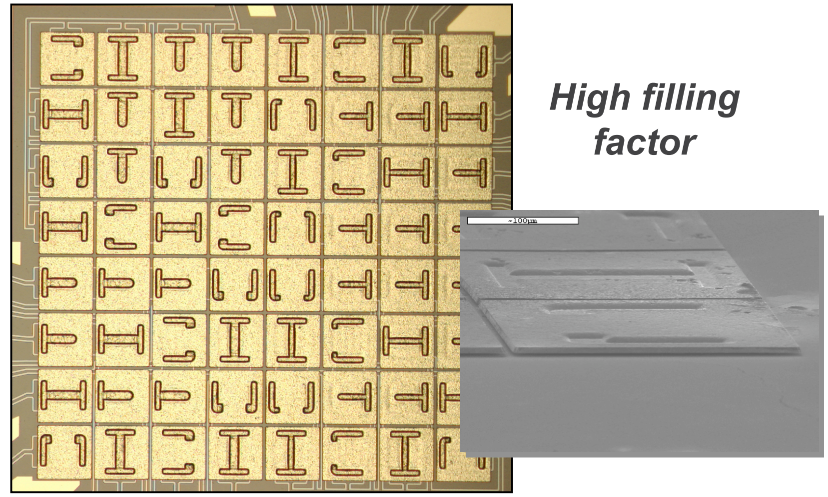




- **Trade-off between collecting area and angular resolution**
- The 0.5 arcsec angular resolution state of the art is *Chandra*
  - Small number of thick, highly polished substrates leads to a very expensive and heavy mirror with modest area
- Constellation-X collecting area (~10 times larger than *Chandra*) combined with high efficiency microcalorimeters increases throughput for high resolution spectroscopy by a factor of 100
  - 15 arcsec angular resolution required to meet science objectives (5 arcsec is goal)
  - Thin, replicated segments pioneered by ASCA and Suzaku provide high aperture filling factor and low 1 kg/m^2 areal density

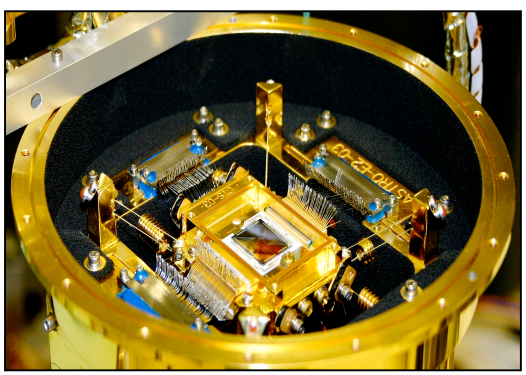
X-ray Microcalorimeter Spectrometer (XMS)

- X-ray Microcalorimeter: thermal detection of individual X-ray photons
  - **High spectral resolution**
  - **ΔE very nearly constant with E**
  - **High intrinsic quantum efficiency**
  - **Non-dispersive — spectral resolution not affected by source angular size**
- Transition Edge Sensor (TES), NTD/Ge and magnetic microcalorimeter technologies under development

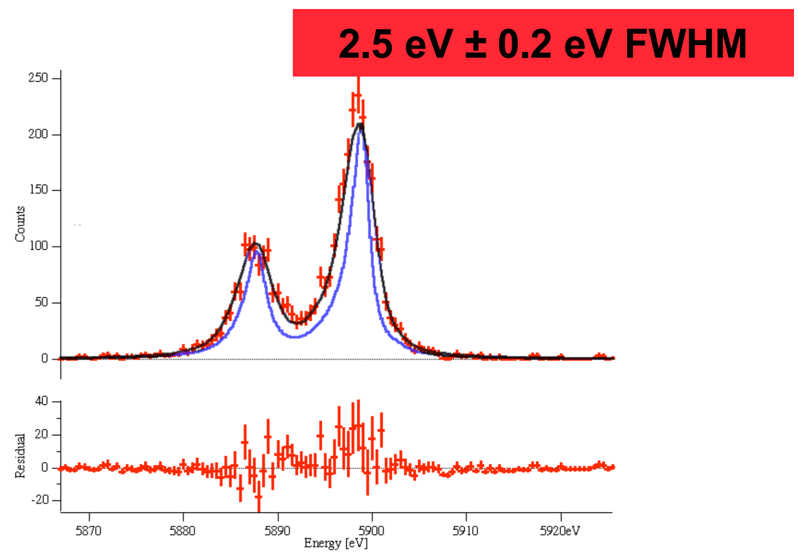


High filling factor

8 x8 development Transition Edge Sensor array: 250 μm pixels



Suzaku X-ray calorimeter array achieved 7 eV resolution on orbit



Current Status

- Constellation-X is an approved NASA astrophysics mission, currently pre-phase A with the focus on technology development and optimizing the mission configuration
  - Recently completely a reconfiguration study that streamlined the mission configuration and maintained the science goals
- Constellation-X is the next major NASA astrophysics observatory, to follow after JWST (2013 launch), based on its ranking in the 2000 Decadal survey - budget wedge opens around 2009/2010 with 2017/18 the earliest realistic launch date
- A National Academy Review is currently examining the five Beyond Einstein missions (Con-X, LISA, JDEM, Black Hole Finder, Inflation Probe) to resolve conflicting advice between 2000 Decadal Survey and Quarks to Cosmos Academy reports and will recommend in Sept 2007:
  - which Beyond Einstein mission should be launched first, and
  - technology investments for the 2010 decadal survey

Summary

- Constellation-X opens the window of X-ray spectroscopy with a two order of magnitude gain in capability over current missions
- Two science goals driving the need for this new capability are:
  - Black Holes: precisions tests of GR in the strong field limit and determination of Black Hole spin in a large sample
  - Neutron Stars: Precision measurements of the mass-radius relation of neutron stars to determine the Equation of State (EOS) of ultra-dense matter
- Constellation-X is a Great Observatory that will enable a broad range of science that will engage a large community — Astrophysicists, Cosmologists, and Physicists through an open General Observer Program

http://constellation.gsfc.nasa.gov