

Origin of Antimatter Cloud Discovered

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U.S. astronomers said the origin of a giant cloud of antimatter surrounding the galactic center of the Milky Way has been traced to binary stars.

The findings, published in the journal *Nature*, said observations from the European Space Agency's Integral satellite shows an imbalance that matches the distribution of a population of binary star systems that contain black holes or neutron stars, NASA said in a release Wednesday.

Scientists said the finding suggests the binaries are churning out at least half of the antimatter.

The reported Integral detection of an asymmetry represents a significant step forward toward a solution of one of the major outstanding problems in high-energy astrophysics. I think I can hear a collective sigh of relief emanating from the community, Marvin Leventhal, a University of Maryland professor emeritus, said in a statement.

The cloud itself is roughly 10,000 light-years across and generates the energy of about 10,000 suns, the report said.