

THE STAR FORMATION HISTORIES OF THE MAGELLANIC CLOUDS

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ABSTRACT. Existing observations of the Magellanic Clouds suggest substantially different star-forming histories for the two systems. The reliability of this conclusion is discussed in the context of the uncertainties and age resolutions of various empirical methods of studying galaxy evolution. An attempt is also made to relate likely evolutionary scenarios for the Clouds to the histories of other Local Group systems, to the evolution seen in galaxies at high redshift, and to possible histories determined by interaction with the Galaxy.