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BigBOSS and the Milky Way

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Gaia will provide by the end of this decade astrometry and photometry for a billion stars in the Milky Way down to V~20, and radial velocities for 150 million stars down to V<17, leaving a glaring hole in an otherwise unbiased catalog of the stellar populations of the Galaxy. BigBOSS is the only project/instrument capable of filling in the Gaia gap, providing radial velocities and chemistry for tens of millions of faint Milky Way stars. Those stars have the key to characterize the potential well of the dark halo of the Milky Way, understand the formation, accretion history, and early evolution of the Galaxy, and finding the oldest stars with the most primitive compositions. I will summarize results from SDSS and other ongoing surveys, describe the latest results from BOSS on halo stars, and glance at what BigBOSS could do for the Galaxy.

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