

Correction **FREE**



Physics Today **72** (6), 12 (2019);
<https://doi.org/10.1063/PT.3.4218>



View
Online



Export
Citation

CrossMark

the first time since Dublin, there was still something “special” between them. When the officials told the delegation some cars were waiting to take them somewhere, Peng told them, “No, this one walks with me.” She recalled that as the two of them walked, he simply told her, “I’m so glad that you’re still wearing sensible shoes.”

I took Cécile with me on a business trip to China in 2004, and I had the privilege of accompanying her as she met up once more with Peng, who by then was in his nineties. When we were in his apartment, she opened up her old photo album of Dublin, and I saw his demeanor completely transform: He switched suddenly from communicating formally with her through an interpreter to speaking perfect English, and the two of them disappeared into another world, another time, two old dear friends kidding each other and reminiscing. Later that day, Cécile gave a talk at Peking University, with Peng in attendance. What surprised me the most was that the Chinese lecture attendees all seemed aware of the special relationship between the two of them.

Thank you for writing so nicely about

Cécile and for the opportunity to reminisce about this old love story.

Nicolette DeWitt
(nicolette.dewitt52@gmail.com)

Wanting funds to “look everywhere”

David Stevenson’s Commentary on the habitable zone as a guide for the search for life in the universe is, as always, trenchant (*PHYSICS TODAY*, November 2018, page 10). Certainly, we should not focus all of our astrobiology efforts into searches for Earth-like life, lest we miss the variety of life and habitats that may exist elsewhere.

Many proponents of the habitable zone concept never argued otherwise. Rather, they find its value to be not in how it can help us exclude “unhabitable” planets from search efforts but in how it can help us chase the only lead we have in the hunt. Ideally, we would explore all potential habitats for life. But in a funding-constrained environment, it makes sense to allocate resources according to our best guess for where life can be found, with nonzero but smaller efforts spent on unlikely habitats and larger efforts on planets with “naked oceans.”

Until “look everywhere” is a funded strategy, spending most of our time in the habitable zone will have to do.

Jason T. Wright
(astrowright@gmail.com)
Pennsylvania State University
University Park

The Heisenbergs and the Goudsmits

Like my father, Werner Heisenberg, I have been the recipient of many questions regarding his role during World War II. After recently rereading Mark Walker’s review (*PHYSICS TODAY*, March 2018, page 55) of David Cassidy’s book *Farm Hall and the German Atomic Project of World War II: A Dramatic History*, I would like to reiterate what I personally know about Sam Goudsmit.

He approached me at an American Physical Society meeting around 1978,

shortly before his death, and expressed to me how sorry he was about his immediate and strong rebuke of my father at war’s end. He felt that our whole family must have been harmed by it. That friendly outreach at the time caught me unaware about the detailed circumstances he referred to. My father’s letter on Goudsmit’s behalf is a most welcome addition to the factual record. I thank Walker for highlighting it and sharing it with the larger physics community. There was actually such slim hope for Goudsmit’s parents, once they were in the horrendous machinery of the Nazi genocide.

My father was an unassuming man with a mind schooled in antiquity (his father was a professor of classics), and he carried the tragedy of the Third Reich within him. He probably accepted that he had tried his best, against great odds, to save Goudsmit’s parents. By the same token, he also believed he had done his utmost to prevent Adolf Hitler from having access to a weapon of mass destruction.

The Farm Hall tapes, secretly recorded conversations among 10 captured German scientists including my father, essentially reflect the dense moment of a truth that was irreversible in its consequences for mankind. Great minds are observed as they stumble through that complexity, each from a unique vantage point. No wonder the events at Farm Hall remain a subject of deep inquiry.

Jochen Heisenberg
(j.heisenberg@comcast.net)
Durham, New Hampshire

Correction

May 2019, page 46—In “Microswimmers with no moving parts” by Jeffry Moran and Jonathan Posner, the affiliation of Walter Paxton, Ayusman Sen, Thomas Mallouk, and colleagues should be the Pennsylvania State University. **PT**

Letters and commentaries are encouraged and should be sent by email to ptletters@aip.org (using your surname as the Subject line), or by standard mail to Letters, *PHYSICS TODAY*, American Center for Physics, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740-3842. Please include your name, work affiliation, mailing address, email address, and daytime phone number on your letter and attachments. You can also reach us at <http://contact.physicstoday.org>. We reserve the right to edit submissions.

**CONTACT
PHYSICS
TODAY**

High Resolution AFM



- Atomic step resolution
- Low cost, do-it-yourself AFM
- Closed loop nanopositioners
- Precalibrated position sensors
- Integrated z- axis control loop
- Automated software control

MCL +1 608 298-0855
sales@madcitylabs.com
MAD CITY LABS INC. www.madcitylabs.com