



Max Delbrück
and the New Perception of Biology
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Max Delbrück (1906–1981) was a founding figure of molecular biology, sharing the 1969 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work on gene replication. A physicist by training who began his career in the lab of Lise Meitner, he became interested in genes in the 1930s and had already made important contributions before becoming a Caltech professor in 1947; he remained on the faculty here for the rest of his life. This book collects the reminiscences given at a celebration at the University of Salamanca in honor of his centenary year—one of three such; for an account of the Caltech one, see *E&S*, 2007, No. 1. The editor, Walter Shropshire Jr., was a research fellow in biology at Caltech from 1957 to 1959. □—DS

I very much enjoyed your article about the late David Elliot. I was an undergraduate at Tech in the 1963–67 time period, and had the great good fortune to be able to take history courses from both Elliot and Huttenback, and English courses from Peter Fay (and I learned to write for news from your predecessor).

The courses about the British Imperial experience in India were absolute gems, taught by people who had been part of the Raj and understood it from both the point of view of historians and participants.

My favorite experience was a class meeting at the Huttenback's home—he was at that point the Master of Student Houses as well as a history professor—and one of the students asked the Huttenbacks and Elliot what it was actually like to live for a number of years in India at that time. Mrs. Huttenback's eyes narrowed ever so slightly, and then she smiled and gently asked, “Do you know that there are seven different kinds of amoebic dysentery?”

BTW, I was an unlikely Caltech student. My father had been professor of California history at City College of San Francisco, and my mother was an English teacher. . . .

Thanks again for your article. Keep up the good work!

Robert D. Parker (BS '67)



Caltech and JPL have left an indelible imprint on the historical record. Among the outstanding faculty are many who have reached beyond their original fields in academe, and pursued new horizons with vision and courage. My father, Fritz Zwicky, was a pioneer in the field of astronomy and astrophysics, pronouncing the amazing theory of Dark Matter in the 1930s. It is not widely known that his efforts also extended to jet propulsion. While serving as research director at Aerojet Engineering Corporation (1943–1949), he helped develop the JATO motors referred to in your article [“From Rockets to Spacecraft: Making JPL a Place for Planetary Science,” by Eric M. Conway, *E&S* 2007, No. 4]. He also holds important patents in jet propulsion, including for ramjets and hydrojets.

The enclosed photograph shows him receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, given to him at the Aerojet offices in Azusa on September 21, 1949, for his wartime efforts. Dan A. Kimball, Undersecretary of the Navy for Air, is pinning the medal on

his lapel while Brigadier General T. C. Chapman of the U.S. Air Force assists. The citation reads, in part, “As Technical Representative, United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe, he contributed immeasurably to Air Technical Intelligence. His initiative, remarkable linguistic abilities, broad knowledge of physics and chemistry as pertains to the art of rocketry—together with an outstanding ability to exploit a foreign technology in rockets, guided missiles and associated equipment for further utilization by the United States, made his services most valuable to our war effort.”

Barbarina Zwicky

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