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Harry Lustig

Myriam P. Sarachik and Brian Schwartz

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obituaries

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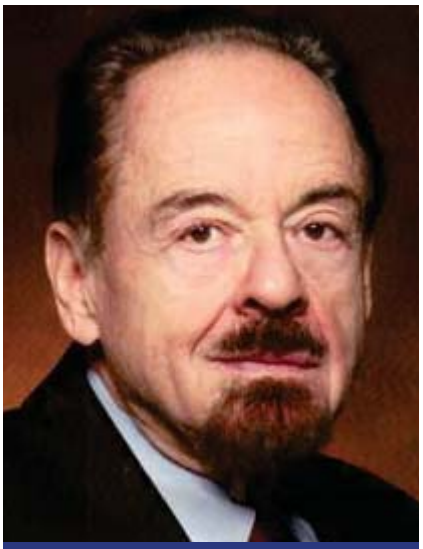
Harry Lustig

Harry Lustig, professor emeritus at City College of New York (CCNY) and former treasurer and acting executive secretary of the American Physical Society (APS), died of prostate cancer on 17 March 2011 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



Harry Lustig

Born in Vienna, Austria, on 23 September 1925, Harry sailed with his family to the US from Naples in November 1939 to flee Nazi persecution. He entered Boys High School in Brooklyn, New York, as a freshman with no knowledge of English and graduated two and a half years later with highest honors. Shortly after entering CCNY, he was drafted on his 18th birthday to serve in the US Army; he returned to Europe on the same ship on which his family had traveled from Italy, now commandeered for use as a troop transport.

In 1946, following his discharge, Harry reentered CCNY, where he majored in physics. He earned a doctorate in theoretical nuclear physics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1953. Compelled by his wish "to repay the debt that I owed to the College and the City" of New York, he joined the faculty of his alma mater; he spent the next 33 years as a member of the physics department and served in positions of increasing responsibility.

One of Harry's major achievements was building an outstanding physics department at CCNY. Shortly after he was elected chair in 1964, he obtained a $1 million grant from NSF to establish a center of excellence in physics. With additional resources provided by the college, he recruited outstanding faculty by following his oft-stated principle to hire people who were better than he was. Harry felt that one of his greatest accomplishments was the recruitment of Robert Marshak as college president. By the mid 1970s, CCNY was ranked in the top 20 of the nation's roughly 160 PhD-granting physics departments.

From 1970 to 1972, Harry took a leave of absence to serve as senior officer in the department of science and technology at UNESCO in Paris, where he revived the dormant program in solar energy, an issue that engaged his attention and focus for the remainder of his life. He returned to CCNY as dean of science and was instrumental in the creation of the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education, the Institute of Oceanography, and the Benjamin Levich Institute for Physico-Chemical Hydrodynamics. He assumed the position of provost and vice president for academic affairs in 1983.

After his retirement in 1986, Harry embarked on a second career as treasurer of APS. During the move of APS headquarters from New York to Maryland in 1993, he held two of the three APS operating officer positions—treasurer and (acting) executive secretary—for nearly a year. He was instrumental in the planning, programming, and funding of the APS 1999 Centennial Celebration and wrote a comprehensive article, "100 years of the American Physical Society," for the *American Journal of Physics*. Harry established the first successful capital campaign. During his 10-year tenure, the net worth of the society increased ninefold, he put the journals on a sound financial footing, and he greatly expanded APS's educational, minority-outreach, and international programs. Harry's heroic tenacity and strong commitment to freedom of publication were central to the successful defense of a protracted suit brought by Gordon and Breach against APS and the American Institute of Physics (AIP) in the US, Germany, Switzerland, and France. The court transcripts attest to Harry's wry sense of humor and sharp linguistic skills; during the proceedings Harry often corrected the opposing lawyers' grammar and helped clarify their arguments.

After Harry and his wife Rosalind Wells retired to Santa Fe in 1996, he continued to be actively involved in the issues of the day. He codeveloped a series of public symposia at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York to coincide with the Broadway opening of the play *Copenhagen* in 2000. Characteristic of Harry's exceptional dedication, his last published work began as a book review and grew into a 27-page article, "The life and times of Werner Heisenberg," published in *Perspectives in Physics*. For the APS Forum on the History of Physics, he spearheaded a fundraising effort to support the newly established joint APS–AIP Abraham Pais Prize for History of Physics.

Throughout his life, Harry was active in defending and promoting free speech, reasoned discussion, and civil liberties. When the Marxist Discussion Club needed a faculty adviser so that it could operate legally as a student organization on campus in the 1950s, Harry volunteered despite his opposition to Communism and to "scientific" Marxism. He spoke to more than 100 community groups and on radio and television in favor of a nuclear test ban, and during the Vietnam War he helped organize and became chair of the Universities Committee on the Problems of War and Peace, an organization that developed into a center of opposition to the war.

Recently posted notices at http://www.physicstoday.org/obits:

Jack Marburger
8 February 1941 – 28 July 2011
Einar Tandberg-Hanssen
6 August 1921 – 22 July 2011
Katherine Mays
16 May 1927 – 30 June 2011
Kusiel Solomonovich Shifrin
26 July 1918 – 2 June 2011
John Hardy
9 January 1935 – 5 May 2011
Albert Erwin Jr
1 May 1931 – 5 April 2011
Albert Sekela
24 October 1948 – 4 March 2011
Henry Bohm
16 July 1929 – 4 February 2011

Harry was equally serious about excellent wine, mushroom hunting, great music (most particularly opera), and objets d'art. He was a bon vivant, a *feinschmecker*, a connoisseur in all matters of fine living. Even during his final illness, Harry continued his devotion to food, waking at any hour of the day or night and saying in his sly voice: "Don't you think it's time we did something about dinner?"

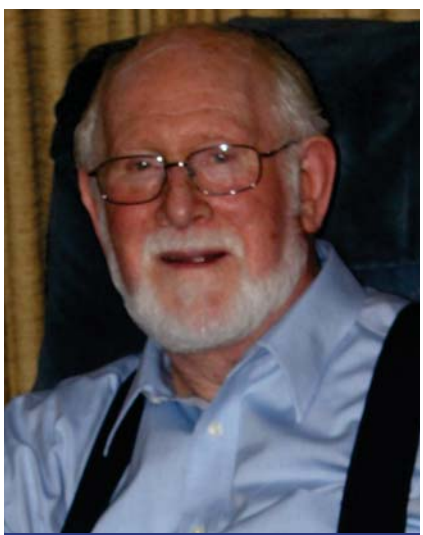
Harry lived a long, rich, and meaningful life. He will be missed by many for his strong commitment to justice and reason, his involvement in the world around him, his energy and creativity, his wit, and his deep and abiding friendship.

Myriam P. Sarachik
City College of New York
New York City
Brian Schwartz
Graduate Center of the City University of New York
New York City

Simon Charles Moss

Simon Charles Moss, one of the world's foremost authorities on using x-ray and neutron scattering as probes of order and disorder in matter, died of a heart attack at his home in Houston, Texas, on 14 March 2011. At the time of his death, he was emeritus professor of physics at the University of Houston, where for many years he had been the M. D. Anderson Distinguished Professor of Physics.

Born in Woodmere, New York, on 31 July 1934, Simon received his bachelor's and master's degrees in metallurgy from MIT in 1956 and 1959, respectively. In 1962, working in the lab of pre-



Simon Charles Moss

eminent MIT physicist B. E. Warren, he earned his doctorate in metallurgy and materials science for research determining atomic-scale structures of disordered materials from their x-ray scattering. Simon taught in the department of metallurgy and materials science at MIT before traveling to Melbourne, Australia, as a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellow for 10 months during 1968–69. In 1970 he and a small group of colleagues from the Boston area went to Troy, Michigan, to work for Energy Conversion Devices, a small company founded by Stanford Ovshinsky. There, Simon brought in Nevill Mott, David Turnbull, Morrel Cohen, John Cahn, and many other luminaries as consultants.

Ultimately, Simon preferred to return to a university, and the idea of helping to build up a physics department in Houston appealed to him. In 1972, influenced by Melvin Eisner, he joined the University of Houston physics department. There he found his niche, doing innovative research on the full gamut of materials from heterostructures and multilayers to quasicrystals and decagonal crystals. He studied fullerenes; ordered and disordered metallic alloys; oxide superconductors, glasses, and liquids; amorphous semiconductors; and more.

Simon's early research on correlation functions of disordered binary alloys made a major impact on the field. During the 1960s Simon and his colleague Philip Clapp published three scientific papers on their groundbreaking studies of the local structure of disordered alloys as a function of the energies of interaction among atomic species. Ultimately redefining the field of alloy research, the Clapp–Moss theory became known as the Krivoglaz-Clapp-Moss theory, which added the work of Mikhail Krivoglaz, the great Russian theorist. Even today prominent theorists continue to update the correlation functions in disordered systems via the theory.

Atomic-scale disorder continuously fascinated Simon. During the 1980s he extended his earlier experimental and theoretical work on disordered materials to low-dimensional structures. One heroic result of his research during that period was the achievement, in collaboration with colleague George Reiter, of what became known as the Reiter–Moss theory—a theoretical understanding of two-dimensional liquids modulated by the underlying substrate.

Simon's brilliance and his sharp wit were particularly apparent in scientific discussions. He profoundly influenced a generation of young German scientists during his annual summer stays in Munich. His deep insight into order and disorder in matter and his ability to tease information from the subtleties of diffraction patterns are legendary. For his work he received wide recognition, including the American Physical Society's David Adler Lectureship Award in 1993 and the Minerals, Metals, and Materials Society's William Hume-Rothery Award in 2007. The Materials Research Society bestowed the 2001 Von Hippel Award on Simon "for consistently timely and essential contributions to identifying and understanding the atomic-level structure of almost every new type of material discovered in the last thirty years."

Simon was larger than life. He was a superb experimentalist, but he also deeply understood theory and sympathized with theorists. He was a man with many talents and interests, a good travel companion, a dangerous driver, a bon vivant who had to give up fine wines, a splendid athlete despite teenage polio until struck by secondary polio. He was an avid art collector and a lover of ballet, classical music, opera, poetry, and tennis.

In recent years he had become very frustrated with his physical limitations, but his extraordinary mental capacity never diminished. The physics world has lost one of its most influential researchers in disordered and defective solids and thin films. His lasting legacy lies with the many scientific colleagues, successful students, and postdoctoral associates he influenced over the course of his exceptional career.

Helmut Dosch
German Electron Synchrotron
Hamburg, Germany
Gabrielle G. Long
Argonne National Laboratory
Argonne, Illinois ■