



If you do not try, you will never know!

Foreword for the Tim Clark 70th Birthday Festschrift

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Published online: 3 February 2020

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Tim Clark

Editing a special issue in honour of your friend and mentor is one of the biggest pleasures one can take on. On the other hand, writing the editorial can be a scary experience. *How do I find the correct words to honour my mentor? What if I fail to acknowledge key achievements in his academic life? What if I try to crack a joke that is completely misinterpreted?*

This paper belongs to the Topical Collection Tim Clark 70th Birthday Festschrift

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These questions at first appear harder to answer than the toughest and most difficult research projects in your daily work as a scientist. However, the answer to these questions is also closer than expected and was already handed to you by the mentor you are trying to honour in writing: ‘If you don’t try, you will never know!’

You cannot argue the fundamental truth of this statement that over time has burned in your mind, so much so that it has even started to manipulate your own behaviour and you realise you are unconsciously passing this piece of wisdom onto your own students. And, it also tells you a different story. The story about a mentor and supervisor being not only a great scientist but also a personal mentor with charm, humour, and persistence that changed your own view on science and your pathway in life and research. This is exactly how we would like to honour Tim Clark’s achievements during his long and continuing career in science and as a friend and mentor for so many of us: in person, from our heart and looking toward the future, as we know that there is so much more to come.

Tim’s scientific achievements are well represented in the academic literature. His achievements as a mentor, friend and colleague on the other hand are expressed in his influence on all those he accompanied, guided and supported on their scientific journeys. His influence will stay with us wherever we roam, and the author list of the collection of 28 research papers presented in this collection on the occasion of Tim’s 70th birthday in front of you represents only a subset of researchers Tim has influenced in different ways during his career.

You will find contributions from friends and colleagues and from young academics to well-known leaders in their specific field. The breadth of topics covered range from method development, over materials

science, to biomolecular simulations—and even these reflect only a part of Tim’s own interest and expertise. Other personal stories are not written down, but we can imagine that the reader would easily be able to think of one or more specific and personal occasions.

With these thoughts in mind, we want to thank you Tim once again and wish you all the best for your 70th birthday. We wish you and Moni health, joy, happiness and a never-

ending interest in solving all the mysteries that will cross your path in the future!

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