

Abstract Submitted
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James Clerk Maxwell’s life, science, and early legacy: some recent scholarship PHILIP L. MARSTON, Physics and Astronomy Dept., Washington State Univ. — Since the International Year of Light recognizes Maxwell’s seminal 1865 paper joining the sciences of optics, electricity, and magnetism [1], it is appropriate to examine some recent scholarship concerning Maxwell and his early influence. At the time of Maxwell’s death in 1879, his contributions to other areas of physics were so widely appreciated that Maxwell’s friend Tait asserted that Maxwell “. . . had no rival. . . in the whole wide domain of molecular forces. . .” in connection with his initial and advanced versions of his statistical kinetic theory of gases and his masterful measurements of the viscosity of gases. There was significant public interest in Maxwell’s opinions on various topics even prior to Hertz’s experimental demonstration of electromagnetic waves in the late 1880s. Some of Maxwell’s perspectives are evident from one of his anonymous publications [2] and recently discovered correspondence [3].

[1] J. C. Maxwell, *Phil. Trans. Royal Soc.* 155, 459-512 (1865).

[2] P. L. Marston, *Am. J. Phys.* 75, 731-740 (2007).

[3] P. L. Marston, in *James Clerk Maxwell: Perspectives on his Life and Work*, edited by R. Flood et al. (Univ. Press, Oxford, 2014).

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