

John Heilbron was my advisor at UC Berkeley and my Doktorvater. He was tough but fair, and his direct manner and unsparing judgement made an indelible impression. I appreciated his honesty. There was no guile or flattery between us, and gradually we became friends. He found employment for me at the Lawrence Hall of Science and encouraged me to apply for jobs in the field. He wrote candidly of my strengths and weaknesses, and I believe that was more helpful than the customary recommendation letters that other professors wrote, because his acute judgement and precise expression of it were legendary. I took his criticism of my work very seriously, because I knew it was the unvarnished truth. On a number of occasions during my career, I had the benefit of his confidence and his generosity. He evaluated a large number of my writings, and honored me with his collaboration in writing Lawrence and His Laboratory. Time does not permit, nor does the occasion require, an enumeration of the many contributions he made to my career, and I know that other graduate students here will provide examples of his mentorship and guidance. I have missed him a lot since his retirement, and had looked forward to seeing him again, as I was not expecting him to pass so quickly. Thank you.

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[Robert W. Seidel](#)

P.S. I would appreciate if if this comment could be read by you or by a former graduate student of John's, like Robin or Rebecca.