Edward Mills Purcell Encyclopedia Article

Edward Mills Purcell

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Edward Mills Purcell

1912-

American physicist whose work led to the discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance imaging (now known as magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI). Purcell was also one of the first scientists to detect the ubiquitous 21-cm radiation from neutral hydrogen in interstellar space, now used to map the distribution of hydrogen gas in galaxies and intergalactic space. Purcell shared the 1952 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on the nuclear magnetic moment studies of liquid and solid helium.