Ludwig Boltzmann: Father of statistical mechanics. Statistical definition of entropy (Boltzmann formula); Boltzmann distribution; entropy interpretation of the Second Law. Boltzmann constant (physical constant). Bipolar; died by own hand.

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Sadi Carnot: Father of thermodynamics. Uncle of French president, Sadi Carnot. Sadly, no beard (though the nephew’s is nice…) Heat engines (Carnot cycle, heat engine efficiency); Second Law. Died at 36, suffering from mania and delirium.

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Rudolf Clausius: Father of entropy (thermodynamic definition). First Law; entropy interpretation of the Second Law (Clausius inequality); phase transitions (Clausius-Clapeyron equation). Clausius unit of entropy.

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Pierre Duhem: Important contributions to phase transitions and mixtures (Duhem theorem, Gibbs-Duhem equation). Respectable mane—though nothing compared to that of present-day beard champion with same name (not a joke!).

Source: Wikimedia Commons / Public Domain
J. Willard Gibbs: Key contributions across many areas. Statistical mechanics (ensembles, Gibbs paradox); free energy (Gibbs free energy, Gibbs-Helmholtz equation); phase transitions and mixtures (phase rule, Gibbs-Duhem equation).

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James Prescott Joule: Brewer. Father of heat and the First Law. Absolute temperature; internal pressure (Joule experiment); isenthalpic expansion (Joule-Thomson effect). SI unit of energy.

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Lord Kelvin (William Thomson): Member of the UK House of Lords. First, Second, and Third Laws. Absolute temperature; isenthalpic expansion (Joule-Thomson effect); thermoelectricity (Thomson effect). SI unit of temperature.

Source: Sir Hubert von Herkomer / Wikimedia Commons / Public Domain

James Clerk Maxwell: Huge name in physics. Statistical mechanics (Maxwell and Maxwell-Boltzmann distributions); entropy and Second Law (Maxwell's demon); free energy (Maxwell relations); phase transitions (Maxwell construction).

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Walther Nernst: Father of the Third Law. Chemical reactions (chemical affinity); electrochemistry (Nernst equation). Inventor of the Nernst electric lamp, and the electric piano. Ran afoul of the Nazis in Germany, prior to his death in 1941.

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