

Talking about optical forces: what light can and cannot do

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It has long been known that light does not only carry energy, but also momentum. Yet only recently has the “optical force” been turned into a technology. Optical tweezers enable precise and controllable manipulations of microscopic particles and provide a means to measure forces on the level of mechanical activities in living cells. I will discuss some recent advances, some controversies, and some remaining challenges of optical micro-manipulation in various scenarios from astrophysics to biophotonics

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