

LETTERS

must be competitive with other opportunities.

It is interesting to note that in all the innovatory curricula the emphasis has been on "hardware" first. Certainly, most of the text materials, teacher's manuals, films and other paraphernalia are needed; these are useful and even exciting, but these are

concluded by suggesting that he might get more help at a prominent institution near his home. Yesterday I got a thank-you note which included the sentence, "Until now I had not been able to get a definition or a straight (answer?) out of _____."

George L. Trigg
Physical Review Letters

Placement of Physics Teachers at Western Michigan University, 1962-1966

Year	Available jobs	Seniors placed	Beginning salary
1961-62	49	1	\$4900
1962-63	83	1	4800
1963-64	98	2	4500
			4800
1964-65	71	1	5400
1965-66	173	1	5300

no more than working tools. Of enormous help to the good teacher, they puzzle and confuse the poor teacher.

Let us have a moratorium on curricula packaging and Madison-Avenue-style promotions. These will not stop or reverse enrollment trends. It is high time to concentrate on the recruitment, training and retention of the most important component of the introductory physics education—the high-school physics teachers.

Haym Kruglak
Western Michigan University

Any time for students?

So we are concerned, are we, about the dropping interest in physics on the part of students? Consider, then, the sequence of events I will now describe.

About two weeks ago, there was posted on the bulletin board of the theory group here at Brookhaven a letter from another part of the country which read in part as follows: "I am a high school student. . . . I have been told that you were the place to write for information on antimatter. Please tell me all you can about it." After about a week, I took the bull by the horns and wrote the boy a letter of slightly over two pages, trying to give him at least some sort of a start on the business but warning him that without any knowledge as to his background I might not do too well. I

Make room for drop-ins

I wish to contribute a brief comment on the feature content of the March issue of *PHYSICS TODAY* and in particular on the article by Susanne Ellis on "Enrollment Trends."

Take the case of a college sophomore with no particular background in physical science who enrolls in the traditional noncalculus arts and sciences general physics course for a two-semester introduction to physics. Some students in this group will always find such a course interesting and stimulating. A dozen years ago such a student could decide near the end of his fourth college semester that he would like to major in physics, and he (or she) could do so, completing the required major courses in the junior and senior years—taking a great deal of math and physics in those two years. This made the physics majors a very heterogeneous group—with a few outstanding students who needed special honors courses or seminars to provide a mechanism for intellectual growth at a rate commensurate with their abilities. The great majority of the physics majors of that time went into industrial or commercial positions of an engineering nature while small numbers went into other fields (such as law, medicine, business) or secondary school teaching and graduate school. The situation has changed—and now a first semester freshman college student may feel that it is already too late for him to consider majoring in physics if he did not have PSSC physics in high school.

It is understandable that engineering students should have physics in their very first three or four college semesters since it is fundamental to all that follows in that curriculum. It is understandable that engineering-oriented students will generally take high-school physics. It is understandable that college physics depart-

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(AND THAT'S NOT ALL . . .)

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