

letters

with his own interests and with our wish to provide a foundation for the advanced courses. At present, the latter, which have been chosen because of the mutual interest of students and faculty, include the following:

- ▶ *Cosmology and Extraterrestrial Intelligence*, which is a descriptive survey of theories of the universe, of the origin of life, and of the problems of communication with other civilizations.
- ▶ *People's Electronics*, which teaches students to construct and repair their personal electronic devices.
- ▶ *Physics of Music*, which encourages students to build their own instruments.
- ▶ *Physics and Society*, which studies scientific developments and technologies with stress on their relation to society and the human environment.
- ▶ *Popular Optics*, which introduces students to the artistic and utilitarian possibilities of cameras, lasers and other optical devices.
- ▶ *Physics of Structure*, which discusses experimental and recently invented structures such as geodesic domes, zomes, pneumatic, ferro-cement and wire-supported structures.

We have found all of these courses to have a large appeal for our students; some of the sections are filled to overflow. This fact suggests to us that, as we had always supposed, physics is a discipline rich enough and deep enough to be of relevance even to the undergraduate whose curiosity about the world he lives in does not require the precision of abstract generalizations or the rigor of mathematical analysis. Had we built this idea into our curriculum a dozen years ago, it is likely that we would not now be confronting the prospect of oblivion to which overspecialization has driven us.

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Corrections

September, page 71—The late James E. McDonald was *not* a member of the National Academy of Sciences; he was a member of a panel on atmospheric studies that reported to the National Academy.

October 1971—In the article "Physics and social change" by George E. Brown Jr, three paragraphs are transposed from their correct order. The last three paragraphs on page 25, beginning "Many physicists have tried . . ." and ending on page 26 "So says the *Fortune* article" should appear on page 23, column 2, between the paragraph ending ". . . a static knowledge base" and the heading "What can we do about it?" □

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