

letters

been found to possess an electric sense with which they can detect and attack fish buried in the mud.

Birds are known to be sensitive to magnetic fields and to radar beams. Their remarkably sophisticated long-range navigation techniques (which include stellar navigation) have been satisfactorily explained, but one sticky riddle still remains—what serves as the telepathic “homing beacon” that enables them to sense their distant destination points across trackless oceans so accurately *beforehand*?

Hence so-called “occult,” “supernatural” or “psychic” phenomena appear to have a rational physical energy-field basis, for the most part. Not only have past investigators suggested “teleneural” control of computers and servomechanisms, but NASA people have actually seriously looked into this possibility for the past decade; and science-fiction writers have belabored this theme for decades prior to this.

A bibliography list on the above items will be mailed to readers interested in this esoteric and little-understood field.

TED POWELL
Hofstra University
Technical Services
Hempstead, N.Y.

Browsing library at AIP?

The increasing number and cost of physics books and the concurrent monetary shortage faced by universities have put science libraries into a difficult situation, which is easy to illustrate first hand:

For the 1973-74 academic year our library has budgeted about \$4500 for physics books. During 1973, *PHYSICS TODAY* listed new books (received) having a total retail value of about \$11 700. About 14% of the listed books were reviewed in *PHYSICS TODAY*.

Our science librarian has cheerfully agreed to let the physics department use its expertise to suggest what subset of available books should be purchased by the library from the above-mentioned budget. But even in the New York City area, which is heavily endowed with bookstores and book publishers, it is very difficult to gain direct, efficient access to a reasonably complete display of new physics books. Consequently, it is difficult for us to make confident recommendations, since most of our book information comes from publishers' advertisements.

A natural, significant step toward the solution of the above problem would be the establishment of an AIP Browsing Library. The primary purpose of the library would be to provide a reasonably complete, non-circulating collection of

current physics-related books that could be browsed by librarians and physicists involved in book-acquisition decisions. All books (including conference proceedings) normally listed in *PHYSICS TODAY* would be displayed in the AIP Browsing Library for, say, one year following the date that the book title appeared in the “New Books” section of *PHYSICS TODAY*. It is anticipated that extra copies of those books that *PHYSICS TODAY* decided to have reviewed would be happily supplied by the publishers directly to the reviewers so that as a rigid rule, books would not leave the Browsing Library during the one-year period.

As a possible extension of the above idea, the AIP might explore the possibility of developing a SPIN-type computer filing system where (with proper approval) the table of contents and selected excerpts from the books in the AIP Browsing Library would be available along with the standard Library of Congress information, price, and possibly a mini-review with a standard format (research value, undergraduate text suitability, and so on).

In addition, it is intriguing to consider the possibility of an accessible, permanent, noncirculating physics collection composed of all the books which have served their time in the AIP Browsing Library. Perhaps some well-located public or private institution would agree to house and staff such a collection.

H. FALK
J. BIRMAN
E. ERLBACH
M. LAX

The City College
New York, New York

EDITOR'S NOTE—The American Institute of Physics is actively considering plans to establish a browsing library as proposed above. Further ideas and suggestions would be welcomed.

Invitation from Moscow

The Moscow Seminar on Collective Phenomena cordially invites the participation of visitors interested in a broad range of topics including physics, mathematics, chemistry, economics, cybernetics, linguistics and biophysics. The seminars are held every Sunday at noon, in the apartment of I. and V. Brailovsky, pr. Vernadskogo 99, korp [building] No. 1, kv [apt.] 128. The address may be reached by taxi or by ten minutes walk from Metro Station Yugo-zapadnaya. Visitors are invited to present papers, and are asked to visit the above address the day before the seminar to communicate title and abstract.

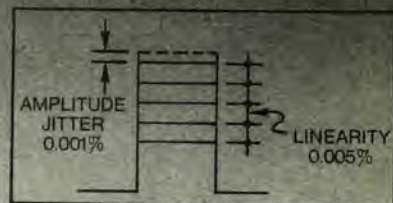
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