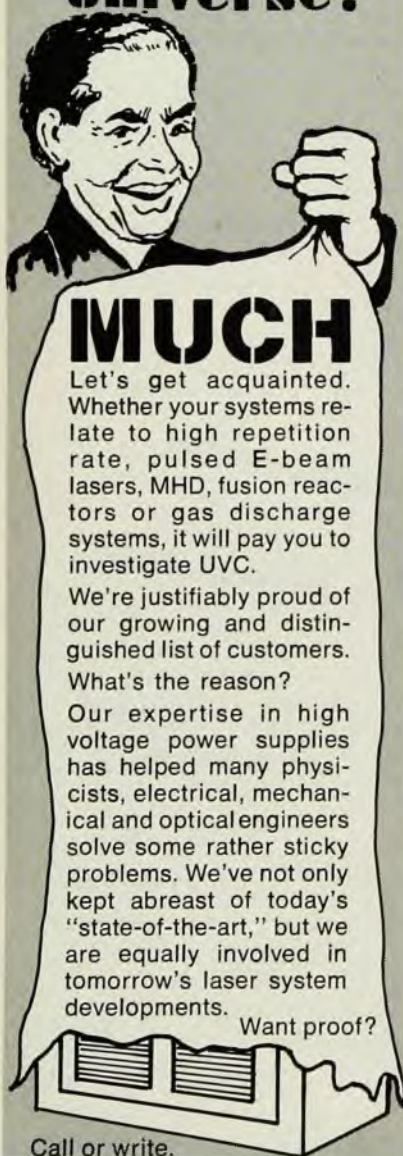


WHAT'S NEW IN 1976 MODELS OF High Voltage POWER SUPPLIES for the laser universe?



MUCH

Let's get acquainted. Whether your systems relate to high repetition rate, pulsed E-beam lasers, MHD, fusion reactors or gas discharge systems, it will pay you to investigate UVC.

We're justifiably proud of our growing and distinguished list of customers. What's the reason?

Our expertise in high voltage power supplies has helped many physicists, electrical, mechanical and optical engineers solve some rather sticky problems. We've not only kept abreast of today's "state-of-the-art," but we are equally involved in tomorrow's laser system developments.

Want proof?

Call or write.



**UNIVERSAL
ELECTRONICS
CORPORATION**
27 Radio Circle Drive, Mount Kisco, N.Y. 10549
(914) 241-1300

Circle No. 96 on Reader Service Card

letters

some changes in attitude on the part of the physics community. Otherwise the number of universities having departments of physics will become less than Epsilon where Epsilon is the number having departments of Greek today.

T. G. STINCHCOMB
De Paul University
Chicago, Illinois

Letters overrated?

I would like to add a remark to the Layzer-Goudsmit exchange (September 1974, page 9) on the refereeing policies for *Physical Review Letters*. Most people I know who try to publish in *Physical Review Letters* agree that submission of a manuscript to PRL is, except perhaps for very famous and highly esteemed physicists, indeed simply a disagreeable "black-box" experiment, with no way of predicting in advance what the reaction to the manuscript will be. Irritation on this point runs very high.

I suggest that the reason is that there is in fact no way of ascertaining, in the time scale allowed for refereeing, whether a manuscript really does represent work of extraordinary significance. Even assuming that one wants a journal that publishes only work of extraordinary significance, how many such contributions will there be? Surely not fifty or sixty a month. Some months there may not be any.

The inevitable result is that most of the papers that appear in PRL, particularly after a year or two have gone by, clearly do not meet the standards of novelty and importance that have been set for them. Then everyone who has done just a good, solid-quality piece of research feels he has as much right as the next man to appear in PRL, and feels discriminated against when his contribution appears to be arbitrarily (and, of course, anonymously) rejected.

My suggestion is to revive the old pedestrian category of "Letters to the Editor" for short communications in *Physical Review*. The inflated criterion of extraordinary significance, a child of the euphoria and hot air of the late 1950's and early 1960's, has outlived its utility.

DAVID MONTGOMERY
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

Physicists as engineers

With reference to the letter by Wesley Aman in your May issue (page 9), I want to question the self-defeating reluctance of physicists to seek employment in allied fields, such as engineering. In many states the refresher course, study, and testing that leads to registration as a Professional Engineer

costs about \$50 and minimal part-time effort. In my experience, a registered Professional Engineer or Engineer-in-Training still has very good job prospects, certainly above janitor or cab driver. Industrial line and staff salary levels are comparable between engineering and physics, with engineers starting perhaps 33% lower until some patents (or other evidence of value to society) are obtained. Certainly there are potential job-satisfaction and skill parallels between engineering and physics, depending upon individual interest and background:

Physicist	Engineer
particle	solid-state electrical engineer
high energy	lightning or power electrical engineer
physical chemistry	chemical engineer
geophysics, rheology	civil engineer
meteorology, plasma	pollution, chemical engineer
research manage- ment	industrial engineer, business administrator
optics, astronomy	industrial engineer, photography
mechanics	mechanical engineer, aerospace engineer
crystallography	materials, metallurgy
in any field	cost estimator, design

As a hint, the physicist should practice using the term "engineer" both in describing himself and in referencing jobs he has held or for which he is applying. This may help remove the stigma that he might leave as soon as a proper physics job is offered.

CHARLES E. RIEDEL
Villa Park, Illinois

Inadequate communication

Your editorial "Basic science in jeopardy" decries the current de-emphasis on basic research and pleads for a more responsive long-term federal policy towards science. The Mansfield Amendment, placement of the RANN Program in NSF, and the dismantling of the White House advisory position are cited as evidence that "not only is the honeymoon over but there are imminent prospects for separation or divorce." I prefer to think of the present situation as the end of a love affair during which the Federal government sought to keep Mistress Science in a manner to which she soon became accustomed. It is to be hoped that this experience will lead to a more rational and enduring relationship between science and public purpose. Science re-