

Letters

Physics in the evening

I was very much interested in Leon Lederman's letter "Saturday morning physics" (September, page 11) and in the program for high-school students offered by Fermilab. Your readers might like to hear about a somewhat different program for high-school students which we are now offering for the 11th year, our "High-School Physics laboratory Project." Each year about 50 final-year high-school students from Windsor and the surrounding counties, recommended by their physics teachers, spend one evening a week in our general undergraduate laboratory, doing experiments they could not possibly do at school, under the supervision of our teaching assistants. These young people (and their teachers!) have been displaying extraordinary enthusiasm for almost any kind of experimentation and their performance has been noticeably better than that of our regular first-year students. We are immensely impressed and rather touched when we see a full laboratory in a winter evening during a snowstorm, knowing that some of the students live up to 50 miles away. It is obvious that there is a lot of talent and enthusiasm for science among high-school students, if only we could bring it out early enough!

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Refereeing procedures

I would like to comment on Patricia Dehmer's Guest Comment on "APS reviews refereeing procedures" (February, page 9). Dehmer views the problem from the position of a privileged insider, a member of the Publications Committee, while I, on the other hand, view the problem from the underprivileged position of an APS member who has been unable to publish in his society's PR and PRL journals. Of the 35 or so dozen complaints received by her PCAPS, I was responsible for two of them, and much of the information in this letter is the same as that contained in my 27 May 1980 letter to

Dehmer in response to her BAPS appeal.¹

Concerning Dehmer's comment "In choosing appropriate persons to review the numerous manuscripts, the journal editors use various methods that reflect their own style and areas of expertise," I would like to present the following example of how this has worked for me. On 3 June 1969, I submitted a paper, "An Analysis of Inconsistencies in Published Interplanetary Radar Data," to PRL. The last paragraph of the referee report sent back August 15 states "It is suitable for *Physical Review Letters*, if revised, and deserves immediate publication if the radar data can be compared directly to geocentric distances derived from optical directions and celestial mechanics." I revised the paper as the referee recommended and resubmitted it 21 August. The editor, S. A. Goudsmit, sent me a reply 11 September, in which he stated that the paper had been sent to another referee and rejected. I sent a letter 13 September, complaining about the use of the second referee. I received a reply from Goudsmit on 23 September, in which he then stated that he had made a mistake in saying the paper had been sent to a second referee and that it had actually been sent back to the first one. He did this, in spite of the fact that there was absolutely no correspondence between the two reports. They were obviously typed on different typewriters, the first was completely positive, while the second was strongly negative and made no mention of the first report! I eventually published a revised version "Radar Testing of the Relative Velocity of Light in Space" in a less prestigious journal.² At the December 1974 AAS Dynamical Astronomy Meeting, E. M. Standish Jr of JPL reported that significant unexplained systematic variations existed in all the interplanetary data, and that they are forced to use empirical correction factors that have no theoretical foundation. In Galileo's time it was heresy to claim there was evidence that the Earth went around the Sun, in our time it is heresy to claim there is evidence that the speed of light in space is not constant. A

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