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Centre d'Etude Nucléaire at Saclay and Oakland University in Michigan, Furst performed most of his research at New York University as a research associate, then as a research scientist. Meanwhile he taught at Hunter College, where he began as a lecturer in 1953 and became full professor in 1967. He was a dedicated teacher. It is believed that he did not miss a single class in his 29 years at Hunter.

Furst's relentless honesty and devotion to principle were coupled to great warmth and sincere interest in others. His pointed questions, therefore, were not resented, and they often resonated in the consciences of the people he addressed. His retirement, which took place only a month before his sudden death, was the result of his concluding that it was not right to occupy a position and amass more wealth than he had need for—his needs were quite modest—while young physicists could not find jobs. He planned to pursue his interests in physics in some nonremunerative capacity.

GRACE MARMOR SPRUCH
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Peter Axel

Peter Axel, noted experimental nuclear physicist and professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, died on 3 February 1983. He was 59 years old.

Axel was born in Brooklyn, New York, and attended Brooklyn College, where he earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry and physics in 1943. From 1943 to 1945, as a staff member of the Radiation Laboratory at MIT, he participated in wartime research that contributed to the development of radar. In 1946 he entered graduate school at the University of Illinois. He earned his PhD in 1949 under the direction of Maurice Goldhaber. Afterwards, he joined the faculty at Illinois, where he remained for the next 34 years.

Axel's research interests included nuclear physics, radioactivity, photon-induced reactions, electronics, and nuclear instrumentation. He conducted his experiments with innovative technique, careful analysis and an individual theoretical interpretation of the data. His early research concentrated on the properties of nuclear isomeric states, an important testing ground for the then-new shell model theory. He was one of the first physicists to recognize the potential of beams of electrons and photons to explore the properties of nuclei and to apply photon-tagging techniques to nuclear-structure problems. His studies set a standard for all future work in the field. They elucidated



AXEL

ed the nature of the multipole strength functions in nuclei, intermediate structure in the strength functions, and the couplings between the giant resonances and other modes of nuclear excitation. Axel's leadership in the field was confirmed by his invitation to organize the first Gordon Research Conference on Photonuclear Reactions in 1958.

Axel was an active proponent of high-duty-factor electron accelerators. From the late 1960s, he was co-director, with Alfred O. Hanson, of a project to build a series of such accelerators at Illinois and to develop new experimental techniques appropriate for exploiting the unique beams from these accelerators.

Axel maintained a keen interest in teaching and the development of new course materials in physics. From 1957 to 1959, he was an active participant in the Physical Science Study Committee, which developed a revised curriculum for high-school physics courses.

His career also included important public service. From 1953 to 1966 he served on the board of directors and as secretary for the Education Foundation for Nuclear Science, which publishes the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*. From 1975 to 1980 he was a member of the evaluation panel for the Center for Radiation Research of the National Bureau of Standards and from 1976 to 1978, its chairman. Axel's many contributions to nuclear physics were recognized when he was elected chairman of the Division of Nuclear Physics of the American Physical Society in 1978.

To perpetuate Axel's contributions to physics, a memorial lecture fund is now being established at the University of Illinois.

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