

LETTERS (continued from page 15)

tions in 1995 and continued to employ their own and each other's graduates—which may account in part for the stability of their elite reputations.

References

1. Changing Times, November 1983, p. 64.
2. National Research Council, *Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States* (1995).
3. *1995-96 Graduate Programs in Physics, Astronomy and Related Fields*, AIP, New York (1995).

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Eugene Fubini Remembered as Wise Counsel Man

The excellent obituary of Eugene Fubini by Harold Brown and Bert Fowler in your December 1997 issue (page 91) well portrays his estimable but perhaps underappreciated professional career, and I would like to add a brief note about his humanistic approach to life.

Without any fanfare, Gene took a deep interest in helping many of his younger acquaintances with their careers, particularly where he saw unrealized potential. I was one such beneficiary. In the mid-1980s, when I was indecisive about my own future, he took me aside one day after a meeting and offered to help me think things through. We then had a series of discussions over the next year that amounted to my getting very high level, *pro bono* career counseling. Our sessions revealed to me his deep sympathy with not only my situation but that of others he counseled, and with the human condition in general.

Gene's counsel was surely extraordinarily valuable to his government and industry clientele. His personal attention to individuals was fully as valuable within the context in which it was given.

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Author's Expressions Change in Reaction to Superfluidity Glitches

In our PHYSICS TODAY article "Temperature Scales Below 1 Kelvin" (August 1997, page 36), the expres-

sions for the superfluid density and superfluid susceptibility given by way of illustration at the end of box 2 are incorrect. We are indebted to Joseph Serene and Tony Leggett for having separately drawn this matter to our attention. Accurate expressions are to be found in their own papers,¹ and we believe that those equations serve to support the spirit of our article, in that such quantities may be given in terms of the Landau parameters for the fluid in the normal state.

References

1. J. W. Serene, D. Rainer, Phys. Rep. **101**, 222 (1983). A. J. Leggett, Phys. Rev. A **140**, 1869 (1965).

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E-Mail Users Told of Risks of Getting a Bad Code in the Node

I would like to clarify a point made in my article "Information Warfare: A Brief Guide to Defense Preparedness" in your September 1997 issue. I stated (page 45) that "with work-processing macros embedded in text, opening e-mail can now unleash a virus in a network or a hard disk." Although not made explicit, my use of "e-mail" was intended to encompass both attachments, which can contain executable macros and other files, and basic text, which is not known to contain anything executable. Attachments can contain viruses, but there is no indication as yet that basic text can do so.

Elsewhere in the article (page 44), a photo caption claims that the North American Air Defense Command Center is located near Cheyenne, Wyoming. As sharp-eyed Victor Early has reminded me, the facility is actually inside Cheyenne Mountain, near Colorado Springs, Colorado (and individuals with acute vision can even make out the "Colorado Springs Weather" banner on one of the video monitors in the photo).

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Is it really possible to "disable one's computer by opening e-mail," as Martin Libicki claims in his September article? E-mail attachments certainly can transmit viruses and other

forms of malicious code, as he rightly says, but what about basic e-mail text? Does it have the same destructive capability? Libicki seems a bit equivocal on this specific point, so I'd like to clarify what I understand to be the current situation.

Because Java applets and ActiveX controls can be rendered dangerous and because they can be embedded in html pages, users of Web browsers that are Java- or ActiveX-enabled run the risk of importing malicious code from Web sites. Similarly, because some of the latest e-mail software is Java- or ActiveX-enabled and can interpret and read html-coded text, it is now technically possible for e-mail users to unwittingly import malicious code by opening html e-mail text.

Any such imported program is considered to be a so-called Trojan horse, rather than a virus, in that it is not self-replicating. Traditional e-mail software cannot interpret html-coded pages and is therefore immune to Trojan horse programs, as well as to viruses and hostile applets. Although I am not wholly certain, I think it very unlikely that traditional e-mail software can forward such threats to Java- or ActiveX-enabled systems.

The moral of this story, as I'm sure Libicki would agree, is that we all need to keep our virus scanners up to date, wear our protective helmets and be very, very careful.

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Corrections

January 1998, page 44—The story on Brookhaven National Laboratory should have mentioned that the lab's new contractor team, Brookhaven Science Associates, includes MIT.

January 1998, page 88—In the sentence beginning "Committees of the..." near the bottom of column two, the name of the first agency mentioned should have been given as the National Research Council, not the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

January 1997, page 49—In the story about the National Research Council's report on the health risks associated with electromagnetic fields, Louis Slesin was incorrectly identified as a member of the NRC committee that prepared the report, and the last name of committee member Richard A. Luben was incorrectly given as Lubin. ■