reading the physics of basketball.

It is fortunate for physics that Erwin Schrödinger chose to develop wave mechanics on his ski holiday, rather than write about the physics of skiing. (He would later write about the physics of cats, but only in a very limited sense.)

The "physics of whatever" madness began in the late 1960s, when students demanded "relevance" and professors practically fell over backward to show that they and their courses were relevant. Physics was, and is, poorly suited to that challenge. Other sciences—chemistry, for example—have fared somewhat better in the relevance market, but sometimes those professors just don't get it either. My university offers a course entitled "Chemistry in Everyday Life," but if they really wanted a popular and relevant course, they would offer "The Chemistry of Controlled Substances."

I believe it's time to stop the madness and get back to doing useful physics. If you want a hobby, try golf, badminton, caber tossing, or some other activity. But please—don't write about it.

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Authors Clarify Degeneracy Issue

On the first page of our article "The Search for a Permanent Electric Dipole Moment" (PHYSICS TODAY, June 2003, page 33), we wrote that polar molecules can and do have degenerate pairs of states in which the electric dipole is aligned either parallel or antiparallel to the spin. The unintentional implication is that the degeneracy is exact. In fact, although there are often nearly degenerate pairs of such states, the spin–rotation interaction within the molecule does break that degeneracy. See W. Klemperer, K. K. Lehmann, J. K. G. Watson, and S. C. Wofsy in *J. Phys. Chem.* **97**, 2413 (1993), for a clear discussion of this point. We thank those authors for pointing out our article's lack of clarity.

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Corrections

July 2003, page 41—Frederick Sanger also received two Nobel prizes. Both were in chemistry: one in 1958 and the other, with Walter Gilbert, in 1980.

July 2003, page 74—Robert Hugh Tanner was especially proud of his work on the Philharmonic Hall in Naples, Florida, not Naples, Italy.

August 2003, page 40—It was Pierre Bonnet who was codiscoverer of the Gauss–Bonnet theorem in topology.

August 2003, page 62—Paul Falkowski was also named a new fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

September 2003, page 31—Gravitational waves have been inferred from observations of a binary pulsar whose orbital period is decreasing at a rate consistent with losing energy through gravitational wave radiation. ■