

films OF THE WEEK

STANDING WAVES AND THE PRINCIPLE OF SUPERPOSITION. 16mm, color, sound, 11 min. One of the basic principles of physics used to explain the behavior of matter is that of standing waves. From the function of the musical instruments to the structure of atoms, an understanding of standing waves is basic. This film examines the behavior of wave patterns which produce standing waves. Computer animation designed specifically for this film, and experiments making springs demonstrate the formation of standing waves by the superposition of two identical wave patterns traveling in opposite directions are shown. The characteristics of standing waves and the principle of superposition are clearly explained and demonstrated. Audience: physics students. Purchase \$135 from Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corp., Dept. SN, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

PROPERTIES OF LIGHT. 16mm, color, sound, 20 min. Provides a complete overview of contemporary thought about the properties of light. Specialists in the science of light verbally and visually describe the wave-like and particle-like nature of light. The scientists demonstrate the phenomena of reflection, refraction, dispersion, diffraction, interference, polarization and the photoelectric effect. A segment of the film is especially devoted to the laser with an experiment in diffraction using an argon laser. Audience: high school, college, adult. Purchase information from General Electric Educational Films, Dept. SN, 60 Washington Ave., Schenectady, N.Y. 12345.

MAN LOOKS AT THE MOON. 16mm, color, sound, 15 min. A study of the moon in an historical perspective shows how our understanding has developed from ancient myths to first-hand scientific findings by the astronauts. Line drawings, rare photographs taken through telescopes, and dramatic films taken both in Mission Control rooms and by astronauts establish what is currently known about the moon's geology. Earth-based observations reveal the major landforms of the moon. Manned landings and return of samples confirmed earlier postulations that the moon is made mostly of basaltic rocks that crystallized some 4.5 billion years ago. Personal observations by the astronauts and lunar scientists point up the importance of continuing study of the moon to provide a possible answer to the formation of the solar system. Audience: intermediate, junior high. Purchase \$167.50 from Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corp., Dept. SN, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

NO TURNING BACK. 16mm, color, sound 27 min. Film visits some of the men involved in AEC-supported ecology studies at laboratories and sites across the country. As these scientists discuss their own areas of research, the camera dwells, at each location, on the forms and variety of life, the interaction of plants and animals and man's impact on nature and the environment. Among the experts and the research areas visited are: Dr. Thomas P. O'Farrell, manager of the Terrestrial Ecology Section, working in the Arid Land Ecology reserve—a desert steppe laboratory in southeastern Washington state, and Dr. David Gates, director of the "Climatron"—a tropical forest study at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Audience: high school, college, general. Free loan information from Audio-Visual Branch, Dept. SN, Department of Public Information, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, Washington, D.C. 20545 or purchase information from National Audiovisual Center, Washington, D.C. 20409.

Listing is for readers' information of new 16mm and 8mm films on science, engineering, medicine and agriculture for professional, student and general audiences. For further information on purchase, rental or free loan, write to distributor.

to the editor

Indians and sociologists

In my opinion the article "Indians and sociologists: Science or exploitation?" (SN: 10/2/71, p. 234) was a succinct account of the feeling between the Indians and the white man. The condescending attitude of the latter to the former could not have been better represented than by the statement of John J. Bodine: He congratulates social scientists, historians and anthropologists for aiding the Indian in solving his problems by having provided him with a valuable record of his cultural heritage. Surely, if the christianizing white man had not destroyed so much of the Indians' past, there would not be the need for these purported records!

Bodine even admits that social scientists in a majority of cases do not have the answers for solving the Indians' plight. Might I respectfully suggest social scientists, et al., to study expediently the destructive drives of the self-righteous Christian white man to obtain their answers.

*Enrique P. Gentsch, Ph.D.
Lexington, Ky.*

Personal question

In the article on the American Psychological Association annual meeting—"The Psychologist as Social Engineer" (SN: 9/11/71, p. 166) you reported that "and a group of women psychologists thanked the board for using the word 'chairperson' rather than 'chairman'. . . ." Shouldn't "women" have been "wopersons" and in the next paragraph "human" been "huperson"? Logical?

*David V. Walker
Newark, Del.*

Sterility badge

Shockley's shocker (bonus for sterilization) (SN: 9/18/71, p. 190) should be supplemented with a smiling sterile sign on a badge, so that the sterile males might selectively satiate the females without fecundating them and inundating the rest of us with low-I.Q. babies.



*James A. Duke
Beltsville, Md.*

On Skinner's critics

Your non-review of the Skinner book (SN: 8/7/71, p. 96) and the resulting letters (SN: 9/4/71, p. 134) are most interesting to the casual bystander. Freedom is well illustrated by a vision of your correspondents compulsively flinging themselves at their typewriters in wild denunciation while dignity shines forth in the resulting artful invective. If Pavlov proved that salivation could be conditioned, Skinner has certainly surpassed him by doing the same for expectoration. But such attacks are of little importance; with enemies like these, Skinner will need little help from his friends.

*L. F. Goeller Jr.
Haddonfield, N.J.*

Mass of Pluto

Dietrick E. Thomsen has done an excellent job of summarizing our work in his article "The Shrinking Mass of Pluto" (SN: 9/4/71, p. 154). The article reflects his diligence in researching the background material and he is to be commended for a job well done.

*R. L. Duncombe
W. J. Klepczynski
P. K. Seidelmann
U.S. Naval Observatory
Washington, D.C.*

In your article on the mass of Pluto, I believe your value for the mass of Mercury should be .056 that of the earth's mass rather than the reported value of .56.

*Mark Stutman
Wilmington, Del.*

(A number of readers caught the typo, as they did a misstatement that uranium, instead of osmium, is the densest element.—Ed.)

Autos and mass transit

Richard Gilluly's report on the Pittsburgh Conference on Urban Transportation (SN: 10/9/71, p. 250) reminds me inevitably of the late Walter Reuther. In his last public address, Reuther took the automobile industry to task for failing to develop systems of mass transport. The "insuperable" problems discussed by the panel have, as Reuther understood, a very simple solution: Let the automobile manufacturers stop flooding the nation with their lethal toys and turn their energies to setting up a real transport system.

*James Fanning
Stamford, Conn.*

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