

to the editor

Unitons: Playing with numbers?

Your article on the paper I gave in Washington ("In the beginning . . . there were unitons?" SN: 5/13/72, p. 312), is excellent and gives a clear explanation of my work. I do not agree with the listener you quoted who stated that "So far this is all playing with numbers." It would, indeed, be playing with numbers if all I had done had been to juggle the constants G (gravitational constant), h (Planck's constant), c (speed of light), m (mass) into a single relationship. But, as your article so aptly presents it, I have been able to deduce the basic relationship among the above quantities from a fundamental analysis of the general relativistic two-body problem. I have also deduced it from a number of other fundamental principles so that the result is far more than numerology. Thank you again for a topnotch exposition of my paper.

Lloyd Motz
Professor of Astronomy
Columbia University
New York, N.Y.

I've known about the work of Prof. Lloyd Motz for over a quarter of a century, and the article referring to his work is a great stimulus to all those interested in the sciences.

However, it is to be regretted that the statement in the last paragraph quoted

one listener: "So far this is all playing with numbers." Doesn't it seem unwarranted to quote one listener's rash remark without having him furnish some supportive evidence? Prof. Motz, in sharp contrast, wasn't "playing with numbers" but worked diligently for years to derive data from well-established equations by world authorities during recent decades.

Albert Einstein himself would have been the first to grant the need to call upon some measure of intuitive thinking in the formulation of novel viewpoints for explaining many of the unknown universal phenomena plaguing physicists today.

You are to be congratulated on the excellent and often exciting editorial work of this magazine.

William Brandt Rose, M.D.
New York, N.Y.

Our anti-militarism?

Your anti-militarism appalls me. Many articles in SCIENCE NEWS show a nonmilitary attitude. While you may feel our military has too much power you should remember the Communists already control over one-half the world. At present their first-strike capabilities could stop our defenses cold.

I realize you'll have the last word in print if my letter is published but when renewal time rolls around it will be my turn again.

I may be an old-fashioned, patriotic, Spiro Agnew, flag-waving American, but I know liberalism when I see it.

Gary Dameron
Laddonia, Mo.

A science legislation section?

Would it be possible for you to create a new section for SCIENCE NEWS to report the major or crucial legislation concerning science, health, ecology, and freedom of philosophy, military, etc. which is before the U.S. House and Senate?

It would be so useful to know what the name of a bill is, its number, who is sponsoring it, a resume of its contents with a comment upon important small points, and the probable dates it will be voted upon.

If such a weekly column could be printed on just the outermost column of a page it could more easily be clipped out and be put up on a bulletin board, or placed in a file.

SCIENCE NEWS is a very useful and readable digest of current science news. A science legislation section would make it all the more useful, spurring those of us who are interested in science to be more articulate about it in public affairs.

Joanne Ashley
Manlius, N.Y.

(We welcome other readers' comments. We point out that we do cover such legislation on a news basis, which is different from the comprehensive tabular form suggested here.—Ed.)

A happy subscriber

Your magazine has given me much pleasure and enjoyment.

It seems that recent evaluations in your magazine are tending to reverse previous findings on some important issues. Perhaps this is good. I refer to the March 25 article "Social characteristics of alcoholics," the March 11 article "Genetics and alcoholics." I agree with the March 25 article "Increase of male impotence," all in the behavioral sciences column. I sympathize with the "Despairing monkeys" of the March 18 issue.

I was happy to see the articles, "Economic growth versus human survival," "Warm-footed animals," "A clockwork orange in a California prison," "Retaining memory in older people," "Noise: The unseen pollution" (people can do something in their own homes on this too), "Choice for the space shuttle: Solid-fuel rockets," "Using educational technology," and "Cerebral and hemisphere learning." I wish I had had benefit of these while I was in school.

A happy subscriber.

Carol J. Hanrahan
N. Olmsted, Ohio

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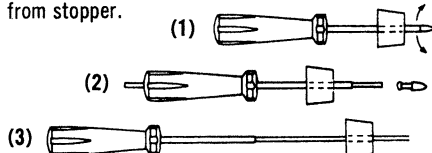
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