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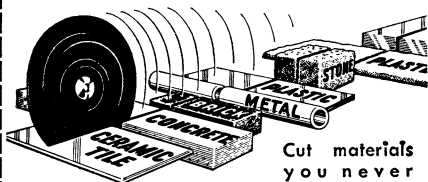
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LETTERS

to the editor

Some like it hard

Sir:

Re Mr. Miessner's letter (SN: 7/13, p. 28): I agree wholeheartedly with him. Whereas in past years I felt I had some understanding of most of your articles, this is certainly no longer true. I suspect that great numbers of your lay readers are not so sophisticated about science as you assume.

I must assume, for instance, that the work done with an accelerator is very significant and important to mankind, but if scientists do no better at explaining to Congress why they need such things as a 200-400 GeV machine than you do in explaining the value and rudiments of such things to your lay readers, it is little wonder that the President and Congress are less and less enthusiastic about funds for basic scientific research.

Please allow me to change the subject. I hope you keep plugging with the powers that be for formal adoption of the metric system.

*Lila Andreasen
Los Angeles, Calif.*

I think SCIENCE NEWS is just the right level for its purpose, namely, to enable those who are not working full time in the sciences to keep up on what is going on. As you see, I am teaching ancient languages. From early years on I have enjoyed the sciences, and surely am grateful for your splendid help in keeping up with the chief developments. The level is just right, not too technical, but sufficiently so. My only suggestion would be to add references to articles in the technical journals along with each of your principal summaries, not necessarily with all.

*Rev. Wm. G. Most
Dept. of Latin and Greek
Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa*

I too feel you have lost much of the appeal your magazine formerly had. Please refer to issues of about five years ago. You will surely note the difference. Shorter, more easily understood articles are there.

Your magazine has performed a great service to those of us who are interested and wish to try to keep up with the fast moving world of today. If you are writing for a "sophisticated lay audience" I feel you are missing it.

*Mrs. L. J. Forney
McLean, Va.*

Mr. Miessner feels that "you constantly write over the heads of your readers. . . ." I most emphatically disagree. I am a senior in an engineering school, a major in mathematics, and I have always found your articles interesting and informative. It does not seem as if they are directed to the highly specialized Ph.D.'s. I completely agree with your aims and feel that SCIENCE NEWS is adequately fulfilling them. I do not know what type of magazine Miessner wants, but please maintain the current level of sophistication.

Your coverage of general news that relates to scientific fields should receive special recognition. It is important that scientists and engineers understand the effects of their work on the social sciences and related fields.

*David A. Kriegman
Florida Institute of Technology
Melbourne*

I'm with Mr. Miessner.

*H. V. Lamberti
Reno, Nev.*

(See Letters, p. 129)

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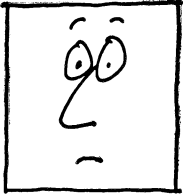
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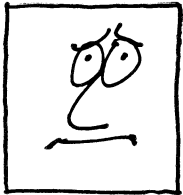
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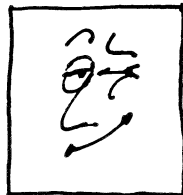
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As an adult school administrator, one who is concerned with the gamut of recorded knowledge, I have yet to find a publication which provides scientific information for the sophisticated layman in such readable form, in such great quantities, and in so many fields as does SCIENCE NEWS. I take issue with Mr. Miessner and request that SCIENCE NEWS continue its fine service with the present format and at the present reading vocabulary level.

*Robert W. Rupert, Principal
Venice Adult School
Los Angeles City School Dist.*

I must agree with Mr. Miessner. For many years, yours is the only one of 15 periodicals which come to my home, which I have always read every syllable of. The old SCIENCE NEWS LETTER was quite unsophisticated, and I feel that its upgrading was good at the start of SCIENCE NEWS. At that time I was still able to read and understand everything. But during the past year, I am sorry, but only about half of your periodical gets through to me anymore.

*Parker Johnstone
Burlingame, Calif.*

After many years of enjoyment and ease of reading, SCIENCE NEWS has changed and I find it more difficult to read.

*W. R. Cummings
Hoyt Lakes, Minn.*

I find your magazine one of the most information packed "little magazines," meaning something one can browse through during a coffee break, being published. Contrary to Mr. Meissner's criticism of pedantic explanations of current science developments, I find your accurate reporting to be invaluable. As one who's academic education was in the humanities, but who is now processing technical information in a research library for use by scientists and students of science, your interdisciplinary overview is very helpful. Every discipline has its own jargon so that a dictionary does not always help one discover the point of view necessary to understanding. An additional advantage of reading your magazine is that it makes conversation with my own high school and college age children possible.

*Mrs. Lewis L. Parker
Oroville, Calif.*

I am a Brazilian student who has been studying in the U.S. for the past three years and have experienced no difficulty in comprehending your clear, concise articles.

(see Letters, p. 130)

films OF THE WEEK

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.

ACTION AND REACTION. 16mm, color, sound, 15 min. Newton's Third Law is developed in a logical series of demonstrations and experiments. Whenever possible, familiar materials are used, but special techniques are also used to indicate the presence of forces affecting solid objects. Before each experiment, hypothetical results are proposed and illustrated, and viewer is asked to choose one. Audience: High school, college. Purchase \$180 from Film Associates, 11559 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025.

BIRDS THAT MIGRATE. 16mm, color or b&w, sound, 16 min. Birdbanding and other records have established four great migratory flyways across North America. Migrants using these routes are illustrated by 27 species, including the Blue-Winged Teal, which is traced from its breeding grounds in Manitoba to its winter home in Mexico. Difficulties encountered by the teal on their 1,000-mile flight are typical of such migratory flights. Audience: Junior high. Purchase color \$180 or b&w \$90 from Coronet Films, 65 E. South Water St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

FROM POT TO PSYCHEDELICS. 16mm, b&w, sound, 32 min. Provides a look at the social, legal, and moral aspects of drug use and abuse in the United States. Interviews are conducted with drug users, legal authorities, sociologists, and medical researchers. Scenes of hippies in San Francisco; an interview with Timothy Leary, self-styled psychedelic prophet; and New York's Greenwich Village are included. Audience: general. Purchase \$180 or rental \$5.90 from NET Film Service, Indiana University, Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

THE GREAT EAR—S-18. 16mm, b&w, English or French sound track, 12 min. Construction and erection of one of the five great radiotelescopes at Nancay designed to investigate the natural radio waves emitted by the stars. Audience: general. Rental \$5 from Society for French American Cultural Services and Educational Aid, 972 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10021.

LET'S FINISH THE JOB. 16mm, color, sound 9½ min. Encourages all citizens to join in the drive to wipe out the threat of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, carrier of yellow fever and dengue, by eliminating the breeding places in water holding containers. The success depends upon the cooperation of the entire community in cleaning roof gutters, and in disposing of cans and other receptacles that can hold water. Audience: Health and related organizations, fraternal groups, general public. Free loan from National Medical Audiovisual Center (Annex), Chamblee, Ga. 30005, Attn: Film Distribution, or purchase from DuArt Film Laboratories, 245 West 55th St. New York, N.Y. 10019.

MINE FIRE CONTROL. 16mm, color, sound, 26 min. Recognizing fact that the effects of fires in abandoned coal mines are little understood outside of coal regions, film opens with sequences showing how conditions are altered in land above the fire through fumes from below and settling. Shows how mine fire control is a task requiring cooperation of many local and Federal agencies. Describes how fires may be controlled. Audience: educational institutions, citizens' groups. Free loan from Motion Pictures, Bureau of Mines, 4800 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

POWER TOOLS. Loops on Electric Drill: Drilling, Electric Drill: Boring and Sanding, Belt and Orbital Sanders, Saber Saw: Wood Cutting, and Saber Saw: Metal Cutting. 8mm Super, color, silent, 4 min. each. Shows how correct adjustment and use of tools improve efficiency. Helps establish safe practices in the use of power tools. Teaches proper nomenclature relating to these tools. Audience: High school. Purchase \$95 for series of five, \$20 each from Bailey Films, 6509 De Longpre Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90028.

ROTTING PEAR. 8mm Standard or 8mm Super, color, silent, 3½ min. Progressive destruction of a pear by brown rot fungus is seen in time-lapse. In five weeks of development, the deterioration of a fine specimen of fruit shows the successive stages of the spread of the rot, the destruction of the interior tissue of the fruit, and the formation of vast numbers of spores which may then infect other nearby fruit. Audience: High school, college. Purchase 8mm Standard \$13 or 8mm Super \$14.50 from Modern Talking Picture Service, 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036.



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Jorge Almeida
Bethesda, Md.

As a strictly lay reader (teletypist, by trade), I wish to protest the watering-down request of Mr. Miessner.

Thus far I've found no difficulty in understanding the articles which most interest me. When technical details elsewhere are beyond my comprehension, I have the choice of skipping them or of informing myself on the subject—a choice which should be welcomed by any adult who prefers mental expansion to stagnation.

To delete information of consequence to the professional simply because some of us fail to assimilate it at first glance strikes me as unfair to all concerned.

Teresa Michael
Hilliard, Fla.

A Mr. Miessner, in Letters to the Editor, has complained that SCIENCE NEWS articles are overly pedantic and much more directed to specialized fields. Such is not the case. It is true that none of us is equipped to understand the "in jargon" of all the scientific disciplines. However, SCIENCE NEWS is remarkably free of such "in jargon." Furthermore, if I find a term or two with which I am not familiar, I feel it is my responsibility to look it up and become familiar with it. After all, this is one of the fundamental processes of self-education.

Arthur Gregory,
University of California
Riverside

With regard to Mr. Miessner's letter, anyone who is interested in science and possesses curiosity will have few problems reading SCIENCE NEWS. We have been receiving SCIENCE NEWS for seven years and never had any problems comprehending the articles. We are not college educated, but do possess an unquenchable thirst for knowledge.

Elizabeth Higgins
Kingman, Ariz.

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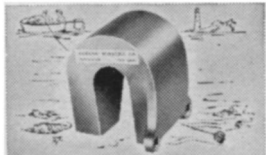


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