

to the editor

Scientific manpower

Sir:

Your article "Cracks in the Ivory Tower" (SN: 10/5, p. 340) appears to be completely factual. My only quarrel with its author would be in the inference that might be derived by readers from the juxtaposition of three ideas—the problems created by student dissent in its virulent form; the relationship of Federal research funds to universities with dissident faculties; and the impact of current draft policies on graduate schools and on the ultimate production of graduate trained manpower, especially in the sciences.

The present draft rules did not come about because of student dissent—in- stead they are an almost direct result of an 18-month dialogue (in Congress and elsewhere) which concluded that the draft rules as they previously stood were not "fair." In this case, the lack of fairness was believed to affect principally the "thousands of young men who lack the social and economic advantages to pursue graduate study." The fact that the abolition of graduate deferments and continuation of the oldest first order of call focused the draft on this group of graduate students bore no relationship to the activities of dissident students or faculty.

There is of course a distinct relationship between the review of defense contracts in universities and the activities of dissenters, both student and faculty. However, a much more serious problem for universities across-the-board in terms of research efforts has resulted from the cutback of Federal funds for research—a cutback again generally unrelated to dissent.

You may be interested to know that the Scientific Manpower Commission, in conjunction with its individual constituent societies, will survey the current draft status of the first- and second-year students in graduate school this fall; and try to find out how much is known of those students who were expected but did not appear, as it relates to the draft. We expect to follow up the survey in the spring in an effort to assess the draft's effect on the graduate student population and on the research and teaching activities of universities which are dependent on the use of graduate students. Our efforts are confined to an assessment of specific scientific disciplines—chemistry, physics, mathematics, psychology and a few others.

The fragmentary data now available to us indicate that although there does not seem to be an appreciable change in total graduate enrollment, there are some departments where the impact of the draft is as extensive as had been anticipated, and there may be a subtle change in quality of students which has occurred because of draft related loss of some of our best young people in science balanced by over admittance of students who were further down the "quality" group of applicants.

(Mrs.) Betty M. Vetter
Executive Director
Scientific Manpower Commission
Washington, D. C.

No tonic

Sir:

re: Books of the Week:

I suffer pain
because your worthy column
lists sources I want
but, alas, for others' gain.
Will you not agree
and lend tonic to many,
—and especially to me—
that with such wealth
of scientific media,
there be listed reprints
with no cash needia?

Dr. Louis J. Polskin
Contributing Science Editor
Institute of Electrical and
Electronic Engineers (Florida Section)

(Publishers, book and magazine,
Say costs are the highest ever seen.
And authors to journals are asked to pay
A charge per page to help defray
The cost of publication.

For this they get some reprints free,
But never many, so you see
They give them out for friendship's sake
But aren't prepared to undertake
A wide dissemination. Ed.)

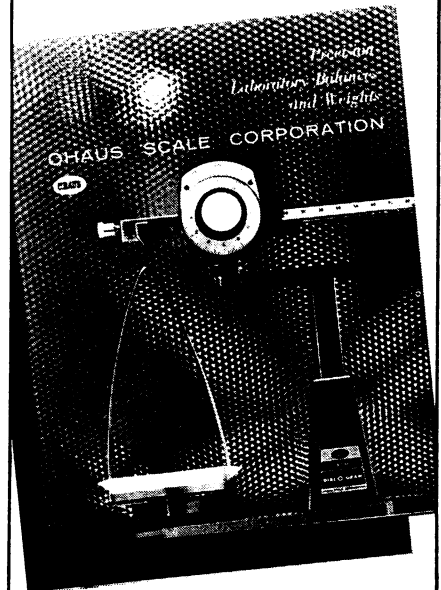
Compliment accepted

Sir:

The article "Crystallography: An Old Science Retains its Spark" (SN: 9/21, p. 298), is truly outstanding. Barbara Culliton should be complimented for writing it.

Dorita A. Norton, Ph.D.
Head, Biophysics Department
The Medical Foundation of Buffalo
Buffalo, N.Y.

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