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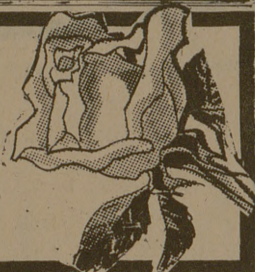
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**Weather can kill,
A&M prof claims**

Is the weather a killer?
That's a question of keen interest to Dr. D. M. Driscoll, A&M meteorology professor.
While not inclined to issue any indictments, Dr. Driscoll has compiled some statistics which reflect a distinct increase in the death rate following marked changes in the weather.
Dr. Driscoll launched his research in human biometeorology while studying for a Ph.D. degree

at the University of Wisconsin and has continued the project since joining the A&M faculty last year.
His doctoral research involved relationships between weather and mortality in 10 metropolitan areas from 1962 to 1965. Cities included in the study were Dallas, Atlanta, Seattle, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, New York and Chicago. New York and Chicago studies

clearly revealed an increase in the number of deaths with rising temperatures and humidity levels.
The study also showed a marked increase in the death rate prior to a cold front passage and a decrease after it.
Driscoll said changes in the weather definitely put stress on the human body.
"The older or sicker a person is," he said, "the more apt he is to succumb to a heat wave." He added that in such cases, air pollution is "highly suspect."
He emphasized, however, that changes in the weather and pollution are separate considerations.
"Pollution has been tied to increases in daily mortality in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles,"

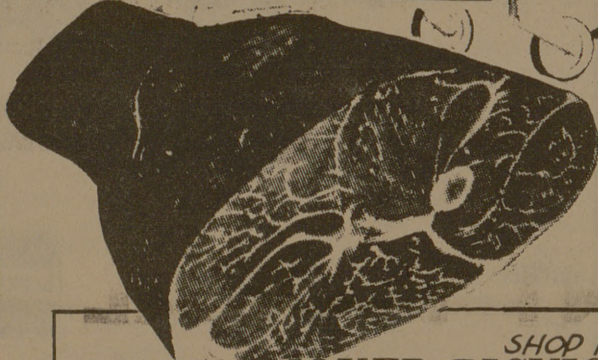
he said.
While weather changes and pollution are separate factors, Dr. Driscoll noted pollution is often related to an interaction of heat and humidity.
"You can't have serious pollution unless the weather cooperates," he quipped.
The meteorologist's death tabulations were divided into five categories. Two categories pertained to strokes and heart attacks, which jointly account for 40 percent of all deaths on a typical day. These two categories were then split into brackets of above and below 70 years of age. The fifth category was devoted to "total deaths."
"All categories were respon-

sive to weather," the professor said, "but the most responsive was the category reflecting total deaths."
If the weather is a killer, the professor contends the big question is: What is it about weather that causes death?
Leading theories point to ions and electromagnetic long wave radiation, he said.
Much more study is needed to specify more accurately the relationship between weather and all aspects of human response, he added.
Asked if he had any general suggestions concerning the most healthful climates and localities, Dr. Driscoll advised: "Stay out of the big cities."

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