

# Goal of physicist-- precise predictions

A young physicist at TAMU is doing research that may provide a solution to a quandary that has plagued scientists and philosophers for nearly 50 years.

"The question is concerned with our ability to make precise predictions about interaction between small particles such as electrons, photons or atoms," Dr. Edward S. Fry, the researcher, said.

"Quantum mechanics was a new approach developed to solve such problems," he said. "It provided us with an excellent way of making statistical predictions or rather of predicting what will happen on the average during interactions between these particles.

"However, it is generally incapable of making a precise prediction of the result of a single interaction between these particles. For example, one can't make precise predictions of the result of firing a single electron at an atom.

"We normally live in a world where, given the physical conditions, we can predict with certainty what will happen," Fry pointed out. "For example as a child can learn that if you touch something hot it will burn you; this is a precise prediction. But, if you try to fire an electron at an atom, you can only make predictions of probabilities; one can't say for certain.

"Scientists were assessed with the nagging problem that they

couldn't predict a single event," he said. "Einstein was one of the first to write down his objections to quantum mechanics in 1935 but he provided no solutions.

"One way out of the problem is the suggestion that there are additional variables whose values are unknown to us," Fry said. "Presumably if one knew the values of these variables one could make precise predictions. The problem then becomes one of making a measurement in the region where quantum mechanics and any theory incorporating the unknown variables are inconsistent.

## Agricultural head Hiler announced

Dr. Edward A. Hiler succeeds Price Hobgood as the new head of the TAMU Agricultural Engineering Department, effective September 1.

Hobgood, who has headed the department since 1959, is resigning to enter private business.

Hiler, an Ohio native, has been with TAMU and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station since 1966. He was promoted to associate professor in 1969 and to professor in 1973.

"Such experiments are extremely difficult," he explained. "The first successful example was completed in 1972 at Berkeley and was in agreement with quantum mechanics, which is what most physicists expected. However, a just completed experiment at Harvard got the opposite results so the quandary is still with us.

"Now, the experiment I have designed should resolve this controversy between quantum mechanics and hidden variable theories," Fry said. "My experiment provides much higher rates of data accumulation so that systematic errors can be more thoroughly investigated."

Hiler plans no major changes in the department, which he said has an excellent national reputation and is a tribute to Hobgood's 15 years of leadership.

"One thing I would like to emphasize is that we are engineers specializing in optimizing environments for plant and animal growth and production, while maintaining and improving man's environment," he said. "Our goal is to engineer systems which best utilize and conserve natural resources to provide adequate food and fiber supplies for our ever-increasing world population.

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## Eye test available for home screening

One in every 20 preschool-age children in the U. S. has a vision problem. But help is now available for these children, according to one authority.

Dr. Barbara Sears, TAMU health education specialist, reported the Home Eye Test Kit which parents can use to do a vision screening of their preschoolers at home is now available.

The kit is free from the Texas Society for the Prevention of

## Craft show preparations in last week

This is the final week for teens to register for the Teen Crafts Show and Sale on Saturday, June 29 at the Manor East Mall.

Anyone between the ages of 13 and 19 may exhibit and sell their paintings, sculptures, wood or metal works, knitting, or any other craft. There is no charge for participation in the show, although exhibitors must provide their own displays.

For space reservations, or more information, call Gail Hogan, at 846-4837, extension 40.

Blindness, 3617 Fannin St., Houston, Tex. 77004, and is also available in Spanish.

"Any vision screening only indicates that a child may have a visual defect," Dr. Sears said.

"Vision screening is not diagnostic and does not take the place of a professional eye examination," the specialist said.

But the Home Eye Test Kit is the chance to locate children who have never had their vision tested, who show no outward signs of eye or vision abnormality, but will show readily in a screening that they are near-sighted, that they are using only one eye effectively, or that they can 'read' the chart with each eye separately but not with both eyes together," the specialist explained.

The Home Eye Test Kit includes a scale version of the E chart, directions for training the child to take the test, for giving the test, and for interpreting test results.

A report form, to be returned to the Society, asks the parent whether the child passed the test, and if not, whether an appointment has been made for an eye examination and with whom.

"We hope this will be an inducement for parents to obtain early visual care for their young children," Dr. Sears said.

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