a refractive index equal to one of the indexes of the fibers as an analyzer. They suggested that such a structure was the basis of biological detection of polarized light. The suggestion seems plausible. Has it been confirmed or refuted?

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References

1. A. N. Fankuchen and I. Fankuchen, *Nature (Lond.)* **182**, 1372 (1958).

Aldrin and Dieldrin

In the report (News and Comment, 16 Aug., p. 601) of the suspension of the manufacture of aldrin and its metabolite dieldrin by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), it is not mentioned that the EPA will continue to permit the use of these compounds against termites, as a dip for roots and tops of nonfood plants, and against clothes moths under certain circumstances (*1*). As a result of these exemptions, aldrin and dieldrin will in all likelihood continue to be manufactured.

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References

1. Environmental Protection Agency, "Aldrin and dieldrin may be used for termite control and two other uses" (News Release R-558, EPA Information Section, Washington, D.C., 1974).

Evaluating Acupuncture

It was refreshing to read Clark and Yang's report (7 June, p. 1096) attempting to objectively evaluate a procedure used in acupuncture. Although I have no scientific evidence to support or refute the use of acupuncture as an analgesic, I have had the opportunity of seeing many unfortunate individuals from various parts of the United States who were "treated" with acupuncture for a neural hearing loss, and I have yet to see a change for the better. I might add that such evidence has not slowed down those who benefit financially from the practice of acupuncture for "nerve deafness."

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Clark and Yang suggest that many studies similar to theirs must be done "before it can be concluded that acupunctural analgesia is a myth." No one thinks acupunctural analgesia is a myth any more than many other unknowns, such as the placebo effect, hypnosis, and the workings of some analgesic medications that we cannot explain, are a "myth." They are real, and the only myths are some of the explanations for them. This is an important distinction. Highly useful techniques may remain unused because adequate physiological explanations for them do not exist.

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Success in Graduate School

As a recent graduate in the biological sciences, I read with interest Warren Willingham's "Predicting success in graduate education" (25 Jan., p. 273). However, I believe it is virtually impossible to predict success in graduate education with any reasonable degree of surety. The data in Willingham's Table 2 indicate that no predictor currently employed is a valid indicator of success in graduate education in biology. This is especially true today, when so many seemingly equally qualified students are entering graduate programs, but not all are attaining a degree.

Perhaps the emphasis of graduate schools, in the absence of any predictor that can measure the myriad intangibles that make successful graduate students, should be on developing valid criteria for judging success. I note with dismay the scarcity of data on the use of departmental qualifying examinations as a criteria of success. As Willingham notes, this "could provide the most reliable and valid criteria of subject competence."

A properly constructed examination, consisting of both objective and subjective written and oral portions and prepared by a well-chosen doctoral committee, serves several functions. First, it provides the student with an opportunity to demonstrate the wealth of important factual knowledge he or she possesses. Second, it provides the doctoral committee, if well chosen, an opportunity to evaluate how well the student can integrate and synthesize the