SCIENCE'S COMPASS

Ph.D.'s as Science Teachers: Notes from the Field

Only 0.8% of the scientific Ph.D. workforce is employed teaching kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12), according to Jeffrey Mervis's News Focus article "How to produce better math and science teachers" (1 Sept., p. 1454). A National Research Council committee "suggests tapping a talent pool that is relatively underrepresented among teachers [to teach K–12]: newly minted Ph.D.'s."

I am a newly minted Ph.D. (October 2000) teaching high school. I find my extensive education in science to be a benefit in teaching my advanced-placement classes, but not so in teaching my standard classes. Teaching the latter challenges not my depth of knowledge, but my skills in interacting with adolescents. This is a different field from the one for which I pursued my degree. I also find the lack of time available for professional development as a scientist to be greatly limiting. A Ph.D. in science is trained to pursue research. These skills are not exercised in the general high school experience.

Using science Ph.D.'s to teach general high school classes is a misappropriation of resources. Assigning them to teach advanced classes or to serve as advisors for curriculum development and research projects would be a more efficient use of resources, and this should be accompanied by the opportunity for such individuals to pursue professional development to prevent their dissatisfaction.

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CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

News Focus: "Help needed to rebuild science in Yugoslavia" by R. Stone (27 Oct., p. 690). The photo at the bottom of page 691 should have been credited to Vojislava Katic.

Pathways of Discovery: "The ascent of atmospheric sciences" by P. J. Crutzen and V. Ramanathan (13 Oct., p. 299). The editors would like to acknowledge Dr. James R. Fleming of Colby College for his assistance in the preparation of the timeline for this essay.

News of the Week: "Texas scientist admits falsifying results" by David Malakoff (13 Oct., p. 245). A caption with the figure on page 245 misstates the journal in which the original paper and the retraction appeared. It is *Immunity*, not *Immunology*.