

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EFFECTIVE USE OF COMPUTERS

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(Notes on talk)

The second keynote address for the Western Computer Conference was given by Dr. R. D. Huntoon, Director of the Corona, California, Laboratories of the National Bureau of Standards (a center of activity for work in guided missiles.)

Dr. Huntoon coined the word "psycho-numerosis" to describe the problem of matching computing machines to the needs of research workers and of industry. In his light-hearted but basically serious talk, he suggested to the audience of 600 scientists that Darwin's theories be applied to the evolution of "electronic brains" as well as to living ones -- computing machines, in order to survive and prosper, must adapt to their "environment."

Dr. Huntoon cautioned the group to beware of concentrating on new machines to the neglect of proper training of people to use them, suggesting that much more work is needed in ways of preparing mathematical problems for machine solution.

Dr. Huntoon ended his address by stating that he would not draw any conclusions but would only predict that in the computer art "we ain't seen nothing yet."