

1972

Rebuilding a Tornado to See What Makes It Tick

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Recommended Citation

(1972) "Rebuilding a Tornado to See What Makes It Tick," *Iowa Science Teachers Journal*: Vol. 9 : No. 2 , Article 11.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/istj/vol9/iss2/11>

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summaries that students are skipping physics because of the difficulty of the course or the standards of the instructor. The implications here may be significant. If students are *not* avoiding physics because of its rigor, would it not be a mistake to modify physics instruction in such a way as to attempt to make it more appealing to this non-existent student?

Rebuilding a Tornado To See What Makes It Tick

Hurricanes can be studied from airplanes flown through them and from instruments located in their paths. But even if a meteorologist or engineer could predict the narrow path of a tornado, any instruments he might place in its path would be swept away by the force of the storm. As a consequence, relatively little research has been done and little is known about the forces that swirl inside those funnel-shaped land storms.

So the National Science Foundation is supporting a combined effort by teams of Texas engineers and meteorologists to work backwards: to reconstruct from the damage it caused the tornado that ripped through Lubbock, Texas, on May 11, 1970, killing 26 persons and destroying property worth some \$130 million.

The engineers, led by Kishor C. Mehta and Albert J. Sanger of the Department of Civil Engineering of Texas Tech University, have been examining and documenting in detail the structural damage done by the storm.

The meteorologists, behind Joseph L. Goldman of the Institute for Storm Research at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas, are attempting to use the engineers' and

other available data to construct a model of the storm.

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