

This Special Issue is Dedicated to Paul Adrien Maurice Dirac on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday

The contents of these combined issues¹ of the *International Journal of Theoretical Physics* are contributions made to a symposium honoring the 80th birthday of one of the patriarchs of modern physics, P. A. M. Dirac. The criterion proposed for presentations to the symposium was that they should relate to aspects of physics that Dirac's own work has illuminated; the overarching scope of that criterion can be judged from the variety of papers included, and is itself a tribute to the seminal nature and pervasive influence of the honoree's work. Just as the contemporaries of Newton are said to have recognized the "claw of the lion" in even anonymously submitted solutions to the most difficult problems of that era, so today's physicists can see the mark of the master builder in every part of the edifice of 20th century physics. Counting from his earliest work to his contribution in the present issues, the characteristic clarity and precision of Dirac's insights are educating a fourth generation of students of nature, and we can hope that the undiminished flow of his guiding influence will be with us into the next generation—*ad multos annos*.

The Dirac Symposium was held in New Orleans in May of 1981, and may be somewhat unusual in the annals of festschrift literature in that the results see the light of publication in time for the event celebrated (August 8, 1982). The guest editor cannot possibly discharge the debt of gratitude owed to all those who helped make the symposium a reality, but certainly without the financial and moral support of the administration, Physics Department faculty, staff and students of Loyola University, it could not have occurred. In addition, special thanks are owed to Germaine Murray, Jaime Ayarza (Conference coordinator), Keith and Marian Bonin, Thomas Swyden, Peter McCarty, Barry Hebert, Karl-Heinz Zelt, Raul Navarro,

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