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*Theory of modules*, by Alexandru Solian, John Wiley & Sons Limited, London, New York, Sydney, Toronto, 1977, x + 420 pp., \$26.50.

Somewhere between saying too little and saying too much lies good exposition. Most of the pitfalls are located to one side or the other of that rather narrow ridge where the essential ideas are provided without a deluge of trivialities. Being one who tends to fall off the ridge at regular intervals, it interests me to speculate on the reasons behind difficult lecturing or writing styles. One reason, of course, is inexperience, and I believe that criticism of exposition is an important part of graduate education. In seminar presentations, I feel that students are too often let off the hook because what they are doing is mathematically correct, even though what they are saying may be devastating for the understanding of the other participants. However teaching someone to teach is difficult, and perhaps dangerous too, if one is not absolutely sure of the difference between what enlightens and what confuses. Let us consider some of the other possible reasons behind incomprehensibility.

In my early years I was aware that I invariably understood some people and rarely understood others, without attributing this to any particular qualities of those involved. It was only later that I realized that those whom I could follow tended to be secure individuals, with enough self-confidence to tell me something I already knew, or remind me of something I knew a week ago. We are probably all a little sensitive to the reply, "But that's trivial," especially when it concerns something which we have found anything but trivial, and perhaps those who are least affected by the reply are by and large those who refrain from using it. When someone begins an explanation by assuming that his audience is plunged into the matter as deeply as he is, I usually feel that he is protecting himself from something. But of course insecurity is not always the reason for a bulldozer style. Sometimes it is a simple matter of insensitivity, an inability to realize that others are not