and well-supervised student teaching experience. Yet in all those years, only one physics major actively sought secondary teaching credentials and subsequently became a high school physics teacher. My institution’s ethos was strongly biased by a predisposition toward health care. A show of hands in a class of 50 General Physics students might yield five or six who were NOT intending on university physics faculty must see themselves as the first line of defense against the decline of competent high school physics teachers. But they may find that their success heavily depends upon their institutional setting and the culture of the student body it attracts.

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to cancel the SSC on October 27, 1993, by a vote of 283 to 143, cutting its losses on the $2 billion already spent. The decision did not lead to increased funding for other areas of physics. In fact, the biggest beneficiary was the LHC, as the US particle physics community successfully lobbied for a greater role in the international collaboration. That investment paid off handsomely with the discovery of the Higgs boson. An International Linear Collider is planned for the next generation, but whether it will actually be built is still uncertain.

As for the SSC, its empty, abandoned tunnels are still there, under the plains of central Texas. The equipment was sold off long ago, and a multimillionaire named Johnnie Bryan Hunt finally bought the site in 2006, intending to build a large and secure data storage facility there. Alas, six months later, Hunt slipped on a patch of ice and hit his head on the pavement; the fall killed him, and his Collider Data Center project died with him. A chemical manufacturer bought the site in 2012.

Perhaps the SSC’s most lasting contribution has been to fiction: it inspired two novels: a comic novel by Herman Wouk called A Hole in Texas, and John G. Cramer’s Einstein’s Bridge. The latter envisions an alternate history in which the collider was actually built and begins trial runs, with earth-shattering ramifications involving exotic particles, wormholes, aliens, and time travel. It seems a fitting paean to the accelerator that might have been.

Recommended Reading:

By Jerome Malenfant
"Just the place for a S
To encourage the crew
"While my works on
read,
Of this there can be no

“We have sailed from
from the West,
Our one goal sublime
And that is to put our
By hunting the shadow

“The machines and the
(As he polished his N
“The principle task, it is
Is to penetrate the Sm

“It will hide in the de
It will pretend to be a
It will act as a long-Lo
At the same time it as

“It will take all your
socks,
With an outcome that
It will vex with conu
and all sorts of proble

“The Snark, in additi
And will cheat at che
And upon your encot
You may possibly va:

With this last bit of n
On the wisdom of hu