

# Social Science Notes

## GENETICS

### **LSD May Damage Chromosomes**

LSD may be damaging the chromosomes of its users. Two New York researchers have found the hallucinogenic drug will markedly increase the rate of abnormal change in chromosomes, those basic units of heredity and the models for cell regeneration.

Drs. Maimon M. Cohen and Michelle J. Marinello of the State University of New York, tested LSD on cell cultures from the blood of two healthy individuals. It was therefore a "test tube" study. However, they also found similar abnormal changes in the blood of a schizophrenic patient who had been treated with lysergic acid diethylamide.

The cell-cultures showed a two-fold increase in chromosomal breaks over the normal rate. The patient's breakage rate was 12 percent, compared to the normal 3.7 percent.

The New York study published in *SCIENCE*, March 17, indicates that in addition to psychosis, LSD can also produce biological damage at the most basic level.

There is no evidence yet as to whether the chromosomal damage can be transmitted from one generation to the next. But New York's Bellevue Hospital, which handles a good many patients suffering from LSD psychosis, is conducting an investigation along those lines.

## ORTHOPSYCHIATRY

### **To Prevent Race Riots**

Some 400 neighborhood centers, funded directly by the Federal Government and completely under the control of local residents—not of city governments—are needed to alleviate the riot potential of U.S. cities, according to psychologist Louis S. Levine, visiting professor at Yeshiva University in New York.

Dr. Levine's studies on the racial crisis, conducted primarily in San Francisco, formed the basis of a discussion, "Can Race Riots be Prevented?", held in Washington last week at the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

He noted increased Negro impatience and anger when civil rights laws and poverty programs do not produce immediate concrete changes in daily living—thus the need to give ghetto residents control over centers that provide more than the usual welfare and employment programs.

Dr. Levine estimated initial cost of the centers at \$2 billion, a sum equal to next year's entire War on Poverty budget.

Such centers, however, are to be a new major focus of the poverty program. Office of Economic Opportunity director Sargent Shriver has called them "crucial" and the budget provides \$120 million for medical, legal, and other services. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will pay additional costs for the facilities.

## ORTHOPSYCHIATRY

### **T-Groups Called Unjustified**

The so-called "T-groups" or group therapy sessions that have become so popular in industry constitute a "mischievous" invasion of privacy, management specialist Dr. William Gomberg charged last week.

Dr. Gomberg, an experienced industrial arbitrator and now a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, called the T-groups an "amoral invasion of privacy in a completely inappropriate power (corporate) structure."

A corporate setting is not compatible with the democratic characteristics of group therapy, Dr. Gomberg told the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association. Moreover, little of value therapeutically can be accomplished during the brief two-week sessions, said Dr. Gomberg.

T-group proponents claim the sessions have a salutary effect on the personalities of executives and therefore on the organization.

Dr. Gomberg said that until he sees hard evidence of this, he is inclined to view T-groups, which he calls "Titillating Therapy," as mischievous.

## ANTHROPOLOGY

### **Basques Choose Isolation**

The fact that Basque people live apart from the rest of the world is a matter of choice, not geography, according to anthropologist Dr. Morton H. Levine.

Dr. Levine, a professor at Vassar College, lived among the Basques for a year. He reported in the April issue of *NATURAL HISTORY* that the Pyrenees mountains where these people live are not formidable and have long been a highway between France and Spain, ruling out the "geography" thesis.

The Basques, in fact, use their language, Eskuara, to help maintain isolation, said Dr. Levine. Eskuara has never been linked to any family of languages, he said, and is so difficult, "even the devil couldn't learn it," according to an old Basque boast.

Many Basque customs are holdovers from medieval Christian rites and some even antedate Christianity, Dr. Levine observed.

Dr. Levine gives no explanation as to why the Basque people have chosen isolation.

He said that Basque colonies in the United States have generally maintained their isolation and their language. Some urban impact, however, is being felt among a few villages in the Pyrenees. One sign of change is an increased number of telephones.

## EDUCATION

### **Computer Package Ready for Sale**

A computerized educational package, including both hardware—the computer—and software—the educational material—has been put together by the Radio Corporation of America. In announcing his company's new division of Instructional Systems, RCA president Robert W. Sarnoff said the combination package is the first such system commercially available to schools.

Cost of the program is \$50 per student per year and one system will serve 6,000 students. Besides the software—in this case drill and practice exercises in math, reading and spelling—one RCA system includes a central computer and 200 "terminals"—teletypewriters and television screens that can be scattered throughout schools.

The instructional materials were developed by Dr. Patrick Suppes of Stanford University.