

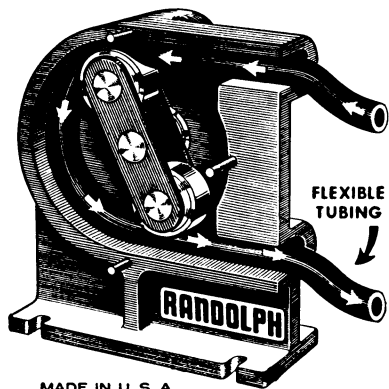
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LETTERS

to the editor

Misguided missile

Sir:

In regard to the letter from Joseph B. Kadane (SN: 7/20, p. 52), I would like to remind Kadane that couples who might be "younger, more open to new sense impressions and experiences" are not necessarily marijuana users.

This form of judgment by implication is a versatile but dangerous tool, which can be used to discredit a great many things. For instance, to relate to Kadane, we can easily launch our misguided missile at statisticians. Taking our lead from Kadane we could say:

Is it possible that people who would choose to be statisticians differ in important ways from those who would not? Might such people be better educated, more rational, adept at making value judgments, skilled in mathematics (unable to count past five)?

Regarding the closing comment that "those who seek joy in new experiences tend to find it," I would suggest a corollary: Those who seek to make value judgments, however unwarranted or unfair, tend to find a way.

Joseph W. Kelly Jr.
Suffield, Conn.

Nothing new

Sir:

The article, "Barging up a slope," (SN: 7/13, p. 41) described the use of the inclined plane on the Chareroi-Brussels Canal. This reminded me of a canal system during the heyday of American canalling, the Morris Canal. Construction on this canal began in 1824 and eventually it extended from Phillipsburg on the Delaware River to Jersey City, covering a total distance of 102 miles. Over this distance there was

a total rise and fall of 1,674 feet requiring a system of 24 locks and 23 inclined planes.

Prof. James Renwick of Columbia University perfected the inclined plane used on this canal. His inclined plane raised or lowered boats as much as 80 feet and required only two men to operate it. Cars were constructed by mounting a heavy wooden frame on two trucks with flanged wheels. The car was lowered into the canal, the boat floated in and secured, then the unit was pulled on tracks up the slope. Initially the weight capacity of the plane was 15 tons but by 1860 adjustments had been made to enable passage of boats up to 75-ton capacity.

As was the case with many of our earlier canals, notably the Chesapeake and Ohio in our own area, its death sentence was announced by a railroad and by the early 20th century it had disappeared from the New Jersey scene.

George F. Daniels
Great Falls, Va.

Confusion and progress

Sir:

Just a brief note regarding the article (SN: 7/13, p. 39) on schizophrenia and the alpha-2-globulin.

I thought this was particularly well done and shows the current state of confusion of the investigators who are trying to make progress.

J. S. Gottlieb, M.D., Director
Lafayette Clinic
Detroit, Mich.

Address communications to Editor,
Science News, 1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20036

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