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LETTERS

to the editor

Flyspecks well noted

On page 61 of SCIENCE NEWS of Jan. 18, I found a very well written article on neurophysiology, probably by Patricia McBroom, who interviewed me at Dallas.

I found the article very perceptive of what I was trying to transmit at Dallas, and very instructive. There are only a few small matters of fact which I should like to point out, not by way of caviling, for they could not have been generally known and might be overlooked by your readers. Nevertheless, they represent flyspecks which you might wish to avoid.

Paragraph 2: the weight increase of the brain is shared by neurons and glia; the neurons by elaboration and extension of processes, that is, by growth of the individual cells, and glia by multiplication. I suppose the weight increase is at least equal between these two, and certainly not dominated by production of glia.

Paragraph 4: the nuclei of neurons rotate rapidly, not the neurons themselves. The beginning of paragraph 3, column 2, reports the "effects of culture in the choice of color and form at about 3 years of age." I presume Miss McBroom learned this from some other source; in any event, I don't recognize the source of that idea and don't know whether or not it is true. At the bottom of that column, the light flash experiments (originated by Roy John and Keith Killam) were done in cats, although they may since have been done by others in dogs. At the top of column 3, the electrodes were implanted in the cat's lateral geniculate body, which receives from the retina.

I appreciate the privilege of being interviewed by a reporter of Miss McBroom's talent and integrity and I assure you of my desire to help SCIENCE NEWS and other media give an accurate report to the public.

Robert B. Livingston, M.D.
Department of Neurosciences
School of Medicine
University of California
San Diego, Calif.

Accent on proof

In your article, "Culture Molds the Brain" (SN: 1/18, p. 61) you mention that "the ability to learn a new language without accent ends about the age of 10." Considering the view this state-

(See p. 182)

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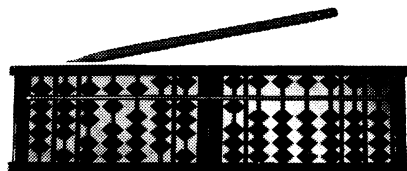
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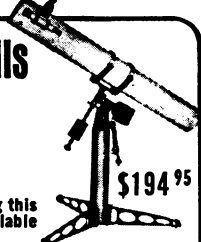


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