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Cover: A Mariner 9 mosaic of the northern hemisphere of Mars shows the first glimpse of the northern polar cap. Nix Olympica is in the lower left and the equatorial rift begins in the lower right. Scientists are now studying nine regions from which they will choose in December four landing sites for the Viking spacecraft in 1976. See p. 300. (Photo: NASA)

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to the editor

Space imagery

The article by Everly Driscoll on "ERTS and International Relations" (SN: 8/5/72, p. 90), was very well done. The caption on the Monterey Bay imagery was not technically correct, however. The ERTS-1 satellite does *not* produce photographs, since it has no photographic camera on board.

ERTS-1 carries two types of imaging devices: a multispectral scanner (not camera) (MSS) and three return beam vidicon (RBV) "cameras." Each of the RBV "cameras" produces an image in a different part of the electromagnetic spectrum. The MSS instrument produces four separate images, each covering a part of the electromagnetic spectrum. The seven images (from the MSS and RBV instruments) are recorded on photographic film by an electron beam recorder. The recording medium is photographic film, but the ERTS-1 imagery is not photography. The distinction is not unimportant, particularly when one begins to discuss the geometry (geometric fidelity) of an ERTS-1 or any other electronically generated image.

Richard S. Williams Jr.
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Sex differences

I protest the flippant attitude presented in the medical sciences note entitled "Aspirin and the 'weaker sex'" (SN: 9/30/72, p. 216). It begins: "Women's lib won't like it, but women are not equal to men, as far as the side effects of aspirin are concerned. . . ." I know of no women who are denying biological sex-linked differences such as the facts that women have menstrual periods, that men suffer from hemophilia while women transmit it, that men may have hormonal cycles, too, different from women's, that men go bald more often than women do, that women are the ones who may become pregnant and give birth, that men are more often color-blind than women, that there are some differences in male and female sex organs—and I don't think I know anyone who will protest if

responsible studies support the conclusion that women metabolize aspirin less quickly than men. What a lot of women are protesting is the illogical conclusions and attitudes based on such data: The fact I metabolize aspirin more slowly is no grounds for denying me a position of master carpenter or shop foreman or house electrician in a professional theater. It is no basis for my being assigned the task of making the coffee every morning.

Elizabeth Bewley
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Grinnell, Iowa

Reading by syllables

Rozin and Gleitman's syllable-guessing approach to reading, reported in SCIENCE NEWS (9/30/72, p. 213), is enough to drive anybody interested in the reading problem right up the wall. Syllable reading is, of course, basic to Leonard Bloomfield's approach, first discussed briefly in *Language* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1933) and expanded greatly in *Let's Read* (Wayne State University Press, 1961). Guessing, however, has no place in the Bloomfield method. Rather, standard spellings of syllables and words are paired with the words themselves so that the learner need only spell the word to pronounce, and thus identify it. This may take a little longer than Rozin's seven hours, but it is more far-reaching and a good deal more permanent.

Differing from the opinion of Rozin and Gleitman, Bloomfield, a linguist of some reputation, did not feel that children would ever have to be introduced to phonemes in a learning-to-read context, and he demonstrated that the number of syllables, far from being too large to deal with, is relatively small and quite tractable if identification is made by spelling rather than guessing.

In view of the many approaches to reading instruction that are invented and re-invented every year, apparently quite independent of the considerable literature on the subject, one wonders why nobody seems willing to conduct a large-scale experiment with Bloomfield's method. On a small scale, I know from experience that it does a first-rate job.

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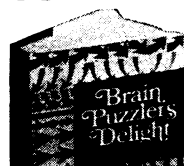
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