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COVER: A chimpanzee makes a face at himself in the mirror. Recent experiments indicate that great apes have the capacity for self-recognition. Such a prospect raises serious questions about mental evolution and casts considerable doubt on the belief that man alone has the capacity for self-awareness. See p. 340. (Photo: State University of New York at Albany)

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Advertising	Scherago Associates, Inc. 11 W. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036 Fred W. Dieffenbach, Sales Director

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Editorial and Business Offices
1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Subscription Department
231 West Center Street
Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$12.50; 2 yrs., \$22; 3 yrs., \$30. (Add \$2 a year for Canada and Mexico, \$3 for all other countries.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is to be addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices.

Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. (202-785-2255) TWX 710-822-9433 SCIEN NEWS.

LETTERS

Early humans on Santa Rosa

In the article "Early Man Confirmed in America 40,000 Years Ago" (SN: 3/26/77, p. 196), I was surprised to read the statement that "no actual human remains have been found on Santa Rosa" Island off the California coast. Rainer Berger could not possibly be the source of such a blunder. He wrote a "Foreword" to Phil Orr's "Prehistory of Santa Rosa Island" in 1968. Orr has done more work on Santa Rosa than any other archaeologist or anthropologist.

Page 88 describes the Arlington Springs site with "10,000-year-old human bones." At Survey Point, mammoth bones in a fire area are dated 29,750 BP. Fig. 51 on p. 155 is a photograph, *in situ*, of human bones in Cemetery A, Canada Verde site. There are numerous other human remains noted in Orr's book.

I think what Berger said was probably that no human bones as early as 40,000 years have, as yet, been found on Santa Rosa.

Give Phil Orr credit for his 21 years of work on Santa Rosa, and note that he wrote in 1968, "extrapolation from the spacing of datable stratigraphic levels leads to the conclusion that man's first presence on the island falls into a time span of from ca. 50,000 to 100,000 years ago."

Rev. Henry David Gray
Hollywood, Calif.

(Berger was referring to the absence of human bones 40,000 years old.—Ed.)

Leboyer's babies

Your article on the Leboyer method of delivery (SN: 1/22/77, p. 59) and the study of physical and psychological benefits represent an encouraging change of attitude toward birth at a professional level. There is nothing really new about Leboyer's approach; prepared parents and supportive lay people already handle millions of births around the world in a loving and humane way. Of course births in underdeveloped countries may not have benefit of prenatal attention and adequate medical services. But the reverse hazard—too much medical intervention—is hard to escape in the U.S. where rates of infant mortality, brain damage and Caesarian operations are higher than many other countries. The choices for expectant parents are often limited to the extremes of the expensive, risky, inhumane

hospital procedure by appointment or no assurance of medical back-up at all. Even the support of an experienced midwife in some states is of uncertain legality or discouraged by hospital interests.

Because lay attitudes on birth are already changing, Leboyer's books are popular. Leboyer's contribution may be just to change professional practices a little from within. But hospital studies to vindicate "Leboyer's method" are short-sighted, if not unscientific. Needed instead is clarification of which aspects of the method are beneficial, and which detrimental, leading toward even more supportive kinds of delivery.

Robert E. Gotsch
Baltimore, Md.

Misdiagnosis of epilepsy

Regarding the article "Misdiagnosis: A Schizophrenic No Longer" (SN: 4/30/77, p. 281): It is of obvious concern to us that an individual who has epilepsy was misdiagnosed for five years, especially when one reads this alongside articles that indicate advances in scientific research.

Complex partial seizures (psychomotor epilepsy) can often be distinguished from a psychotic episode, in that a psychomotor seizure has a distinct beginning and end, usually lasting no more than several hours.

Persons experiencing this should have a complete medical history taken, a description of these incidents given by the patient, and if possible, a witness, and a complete neurological evaluation so that appropriate anticonvulsant medications can be prescribed. It is even more alarming that the man cited in the article was known to a hospital for a five-year period and this did not apparently occur.

Reina Berner, MSW, ACSW
Director, Mental Health Services
Greater New York Chapter
Epilepsy Foundation of America
New York, N.Y.

CT X-ray scanners

As a long-time reader of your magazine, I am horrified at the headline "CT Scans: Profiteers and Gadgets Fads" which graced the report on the Institute of Medicine study on CT scanners (SN: 5/7/77, p. 293). Since I have read the report on which the story was primarily based and was represented at the press conference as well, I am aware that the article picked up on a single remark rather than upon the substance of the report and is thus not a valid reflection of either the content of the report or of the situation as we understand it in some detail.

Otha W. Linton
Director of Governmental Relations
American College of Radiology
Washington, D.C.
More letters on p. 351

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