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COVER: The number 561 is an example of a pseudo-prime, a number that masquerades as a prime because, like primes, it satisfies Fermat's theorem. New ways of detecting these numbers have speeded up computer algorithms for proving whether a number is prime. See p. 158.

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SCIENCE ON THE AIR

SCIENCE NEWS prints the latest written word of scientific developments and noteworthy news. We've set this space aside to inform our readers of programs of scientific interest that are scheduled on television and radio. Check your local listings for exact times.

• **March 10 (PBS) National Geographic Society—"Polar Bear Alert"** is a story of human coexistence with nature. It documents the ways in which the residents of Churchill, Manitoba, which is on the migratory path of the great white polar bear, deal with the annual influx.

• **March 17 (PBS) The Cousteau Odyssey "The Warm-Blooded Sea: Mammals of the Deep"** is the finale to the "Cousteau Odyssey" series. The program explores the origins, habits and personalities of marine mammals.

Series

• **"Omni"** is a syndicated science series of one-half-hour programs inspired by OMNI magazine. Check local listings for more complete program information. **Week of March 8** includes a look at a "bionic kidney," an 8 lb., wearable artificial kidney machine, and a demonstration of how some magic tricks are performed.

• **(PBS) "NOVA": March 7 "Palace of Delights"** is another name for San Francisco's Exploratorium, also called "the best science museum in the world." Founded by Frank Oppenheimer 15 years ago on the principle that people learn by doing, the museum's aim, according to Oppenheimer, is to "make people feel they can understand the world around them."



Exploratorium's "anti-gravity mirror."

The program follows the development of three new exhibits from conception to completion; **March 14 "Animal Imposters"** penetrates nature's most cunning disguises and shows how they evolve.

The disguises are worn by both the hunters and the hunted and examples come from all over the globe; **March 28 "Aging: The Methuselah Syndrome"** explores the strides scientists are making toward understanding the mechanisms of aging. Research is proceeding along many different lines, from the molecular and cellular to that of the brain.

• **(PBS) "Life on Earth": March 9 "The Rise of the Mammals"** recounts the development of such mammals as the platypuses, numbats, wombats, Tasmanian devils, kangaroos and opossums; **March 16 "Theme and Variations"** spotlights the apparent descendants of a tiny shrew-like mammal that co-existed with dinosaurs. The list includes anteaters, moles, bats, porpoises and whales; **March 23 "Hunters and Hunted"** includes a look at such vegetarian mammals as capybaras, vicachas and maras, and carnivorous animals such as lions, cheetahs and hyenas; **March 30 "Life in the Trees"** tells the story of primates and how they solved the problem of living high up in the forests.

• **(PBS) "The Natural History of a Sunbeam": March 13 "Making Light Work, Part I"** looks at how the random motion of molecules can be converted into an efficient source of power in the science of thermodynamics; **March 20 "Making Light Work, Part II"** examines the various kinds of solar collectors, explaining what they are made of and why some materials are better than others for absorbing the sun's radiation; **March 27 "Survival Under the Sun, Part I"** looks at alternatives to fossil fuels such as solar-powered silicone cells.

The next issue of SCIENCE NEWS, on March 13, will be a special, 32-page magazine commemorating our 60th anniversary. The issue will be devoted to the developments in science over the last 60 years and how these changes have affected the lives of everyone.

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