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Letters

In defense of Mosher

I have no choice. I am not a letter writer, especially to magazines, but I simply must answer Mr. John Mangyn's letter as it appeared in SCIENCE NEWS (SN: 5/7/83, p. 291). As the subject of both "The Man Who Would Be Anthropologist" (SN: 4/16/83, p. 252) and Mr. Mangyn's letter, Mr. Mosher needs some defense.

To be a scientist does not relieve a man of his moral responsibility to speak out against that which is morally wrong. God does not care that "definitions of infanticide and abortion vary from culture to culture." He decreed that murder was wrong, no matter the age of the victim. It is the duty of any man to speak out against immorality whenever and wherever he observes it. Should Mr. Mosher have failed to expose such atrocities, he would have been in violation of the laws of morality and human rights, a far more important set of laws than the laws of scientific observation.

I would certainly prefer to have Mr. Mosher around if someone should attempt to take my life. Mr. Mangyn might just choose to "be a bit more scientific" than I would appreciate.

Joel Lichtenwalner
Anaheim, Calif.

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Condor update

In response to reader inquiries, we asked San Diego zoo representatives about the long-term plans for the condor chicks hatched in captivity (SN: 4/19/83, p. 229) (a third condor was hatched in captivity May 25). Their reply:

At this time, plans are to keep recent California condor hatchlings in a safe, captive flock where they may reproduce and replenish the wild with their progeny. Once the captive breeding flock is established — perhaps in three or four more years — condor eggs may still be taken for captive hatching in order to induce parents to double-clutch — that is, to lay another egg and thereby double their reproductive rate. These later, captive-hatched California condor babies would be puppet-reared for immediate return to wild habitat. Use of puppet parents is meant to block the condor baby's overall association with mankind. While this is an important step to facilitate captive breeding, it is also an integral part of preparations for returning captive-hatched condors to the wild. A condor which associates with human beings would stand a slim chance of survival if released.

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