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Letters

The season of rape

Re the Michael-Zumpe report (SN: 7/23/83, p. 53) that rape peaked in summer according to statistical analyses of crime data from 13 U.S. states: Dr. Joel Ehrenkranz' data (*Time*, 5/10/82) on Eskimo birthdates provide a clearer-cut climatic reason for heightened sexual activity during the summer.

Eskimo records going back two centuries show a sharp increase in births every March. Why? The answer seems to be that time marches backward exactly nine months from March to the preceding June... and June culminates the lengthening days of Spring... whose lengthening periods of daylight increase the amount of sex hormones secreted by the pituitary and pineal glands.

So it would seem the sexual spring is wound up tighter in June with the alarm set to go off in the weeks immediately following.

Walter L. Finlay
Port Townsend, Wash.

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Cover: The high prevalence of emotional disorders among women has been blamed on everything from female hormones to sexism in society. The latest theory suggests that the traits of normal, healthy womanhood can be — and probably are — routinely diagnosed as sick. (Illustration: Vincent van Gogh, "Sorrow," a lithograph from 1882, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam from *Seeing the Insane*, Brunner/Mazel, N.Y., 1982)



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Legitimate higher dimensions

It was nice to see a serious "second annual" conference on higher dimensionality, to try to combine gravity with quantum theory ("Many Dimensions in Gravity Theory," SN: 7/23/83, p. 60). In the summer of 1969, while a Stanford Summer Faculty Fellow, working at NASA in Moffett Field, Calif., I submitted such a paper to the APS division of particles and fields, since it was meeting in San Francisco that summer. It came back rejected, I was told, because each section chairman had said it didn't fit in his section's topic category. Now it seems to be in fashion to talk of higher dimensions in physics. (Researchers are getting desperate after several decades of failure in attempts to unify gravity and quantum theory.)

Your article mentioned 8-, 10-, and 12-dimensional spaces that current researchers in this field are considering, and the group SU(3,2). I am no longer active in this line of research, but my own examination of this higher dimensional space approach. (Edmonds in *After Einstein*, Memphis S. U. Press, 1981, p.

111-116) led very naturally to 6-dimensional space-time, with the two extra dimensions replacing rest mass as an *ad hoc* number for fundamental particles.

It appears to me that the next big revolution in physics (which may be centuries away, unfortunately) will involve "quark" structures in 6-space, or such, with no-rest-mass ideas as basic. The Special Relativity group fits here due to algebra, not due to relative motion — as Einstein thought. Humans don't move in 6-dimensions, but the group structures there still limit the possible laws.

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