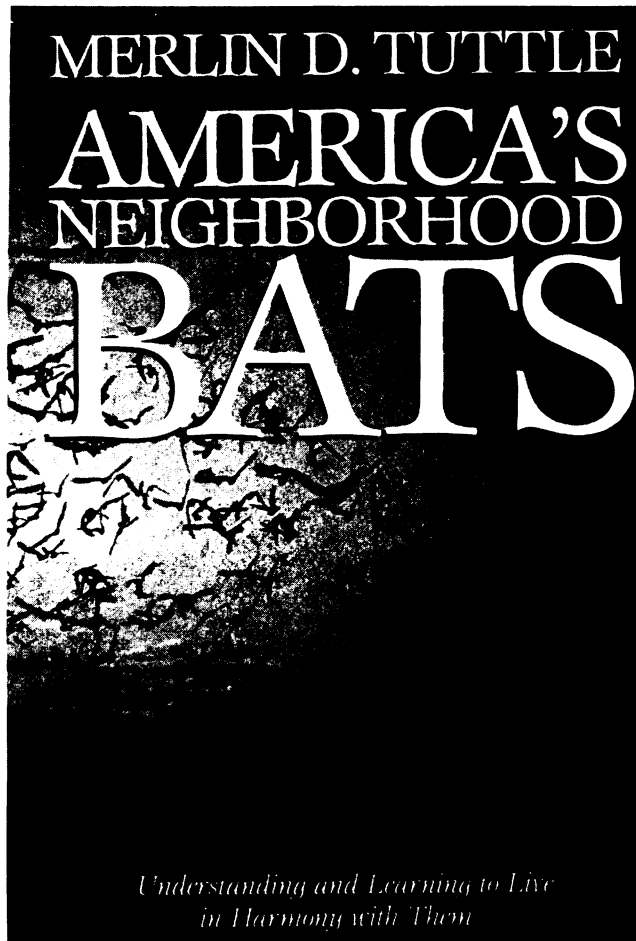


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Letters continued from p. 179

Is math to go the way of English, with "forget the phonics" education producing a generation of poor spellers and near illiterates? The function of education is to develop the mind so that the educated can use *this* to solve problems. Without the fundamental concepts of math firmly understood, a math student using a calculator or other tool is only playing a game someone else thought up. How much better if they could invent their own game from understanding all the basic facts.

No, I was not a math teacher. I don't really recall liking the subject much. But I can add (and use a calculator and computer too!).

Margaret N. Smith
Palmetto, Fla.

Configuration clarified

In "Ripples in a crystalline copper bed" (SN: 1/28/89, p.62), the atomic structure of copper is described as having a copper atom at each corner of a cube and one atom at its center. This configuration incorrectly identifies copper as having a body-centered cubic atomic structure. The correct structure for copper is face-centered cubic, in which a copper atom resides at each corner of the cube and one atom on each face of the cube.

James C. McMahon
Temecula, Calif.

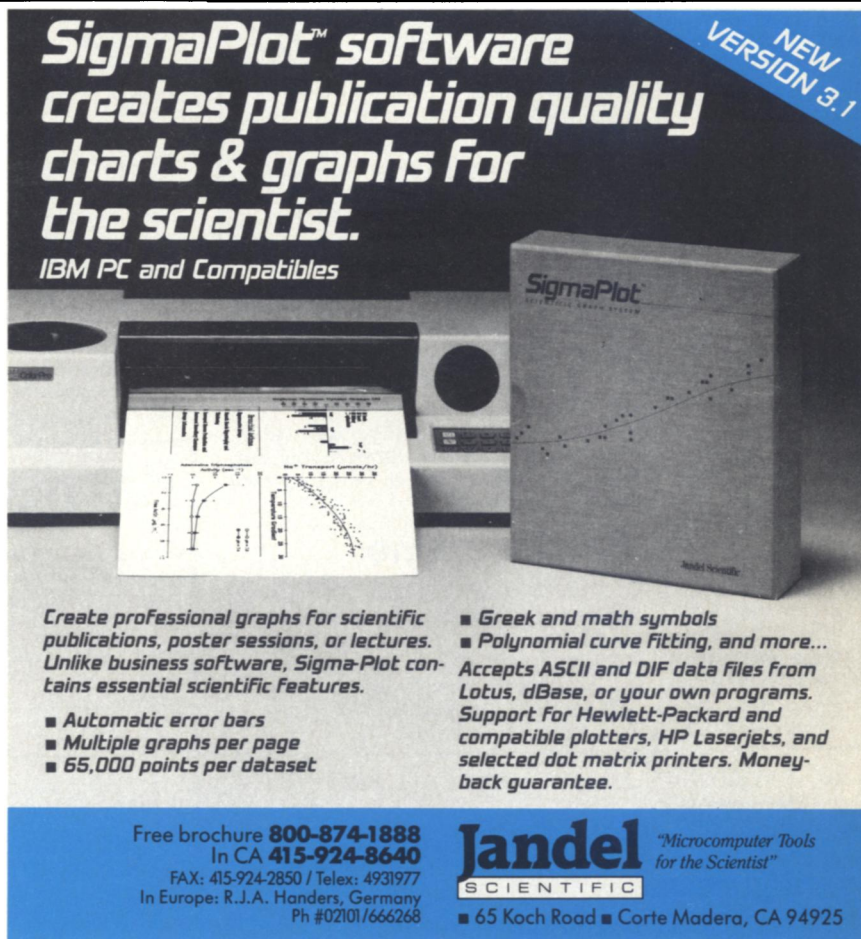
CORRECTION

Polar stratospheric ice clouds develop when stratospheric temperatures fall below -85°C . An error omitted the minus sign of this number in "Fate of Arctic ozone remains up in the air" (SN: 1/21/89, p.37).

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