

SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication
Volume 136, No. 12, September 16, 1989

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Subscription Department
231 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43305

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$34.50; 2 yrs., \$58.00.
(Foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year.) Change of
address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please
state exactly how magazine is to be addressed.
Include zip code. For new subscriptions only call
(1) 800-247-2160. Printed in U.S.A. POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to Science News, 231 West
Center Street, Marion, OH 43305. Second class
postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional
mailing offices. 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)
ISSN 0036-8423

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Cover: As fatty deposits accumulate, they narrow the coronary arteries supplying blood to the heart — a process that can lead to a heart attack. Some scientists believe a disorder called insulin resistance lies at the core of this process in certain people. (Illustration by Thomas Sims/©American Heart Association)



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Letters

Only the beginning

Dregs? What a way to describe a youthful galaxy ("The Dregs of the Universe," SN: 7/22/89, p.60) that hasn't even arrived at its maturity! Remember, we're seeing it as it was nearly three-quarters of a billion years ago. It takes time to draw in all that tenuous hydrogen, but time is what Malin 1 and its sibling have plenty of.

Arthur J. Morgan
New York, N.Y.

Psychiatric zeitgeist

A statement in "An early start for panic" (SN: 7/22/89, p.61) carries the seeds of an early start for high blood pressure in some psychiatrists.

"The children significantly improved when treated with drugs that ease the panic and agoraphobia of adults," you write. "Each child also attended psychotherapy sessions."

First, if psychotherapy and drugs were used concurrently, one can say very little about the

contribution of either; yet the report implies efficacy for medication and mentions psychotherapy as if by afterthought.

Second, while the present zeitgeist in psychiatry favors chemistry, the extent to which anxiolytics "ease the panic" is still a matter of lively debate.

Malcolm Stewart-Morris
Psychiatrist
Oakland, Calif.

Not just natural selection

I understand J. Eric Triau's comments (Letters, SN: 7/15/89, p.35) concerning Ingrid Wickelgren's misleading use of the verb "evolve," but Triau employs an equally confusing use of the noun "evolution."

Triau uses this word as synonymous with Darwin's theory of evolution, or evolution by natural selection. His interpretation negates other important processes of evolution such as mutation, recombination, genetic drift, migration and inbreeding. Clearly, natural selection interacts with these other processes during evolution, but these are none-

theless considered other valid processes of evolution. If we are looking at subtle misinterpretations, as Triau states he is, then he incorrectly describes evolution as "the non-random trend of species toward adaptation based on successful transmission of random mutations conferring survival."

April Ann Fong
Davis, Calif.

Proximate vs. ultimate

William Check (Letters, SN: 7/15/89, p.44) suggests that behavioral scientists are placing too much emphasis on genetic explanations of social behavior. He cites our work on African bee eaters ("Avian Altruism," SN: 6/10/89, p.364) in which we found that: (1) nonbreeding helpers at the nest greatly increased the production of young fledging from such nests; (2) helpers were closely related to the young being reared; and (3) helpers chose to aid close genetic relatives rather than distantly related or unrelated

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