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— from the publisher



"Keeping Young Athletes Healthy is an encyclopedia of information that should provide significant help to those working with children in sports."

— Michael Pfahl, National Executive Director,
National Youth Sports Coaches Association



"I only wish I had had this book to guide me when my own sons first picked up a tennis racquet."

— Jane E. Brody in her introduction

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**KEEPING
YOUNG
ATHLETES
HEALTHY**

**WHAT EVERY PARENT AND
VOLUNTEER COACH SHOULD KNOW**

ALAN R. FIGELMAN, M.D., AND PATRICK YOUNG
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY JANE E. BRODY

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Letters continued from p. 131

demyelination and neuron death. To induce these experimental diseases, an immunostimulating bacterial "adjuvant" and a protein mimicking one found in the nervous system (such as myelin basic protein) are combined and inoculated into an animal. Neither alone is sufficient to cause the disease process, but in combination they produce an autoimmune reaction that destroys the blood-brain barrier and then destroys the myelin sheaths and neurons.

Autopsy records of patients with dementias involving demyelination—a large proportion of dementia patients—almost always reveal a combination of bacterial (usually mycobacterial) and herpesvirus (usually cytomegalovirus) infections. People who do not develop such dementias have one or neither infection, but almost never both.

The importance of these observations for understanding AIDS dementia is fourfold. First, the known prerequisites for producing nervous system destruction in animals exist in both AIDS and non-AIDS dementia, but not in people who are spared this problem. Second, there is no correlation between dementia and the presence of HIV, since HIV is present in virtually every AIDS patient, with or without dementia. Third, once the blood-brain barrier has been breached by the autoimmune process, HIV (and many other infectious agents) have access to the central nervous system, explaining the frequent isolation of the virus without implicating it directly in the dementia. And fourth, if my explanation is correct, then antimycobacterial and antiherpesvirus treatments should protect many HIV-positive pa-

tients from developing dementia.

Robert S. Root-Bernstein
Associate Professor of Physiology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Mich.

Not a lobbying group

"Ecologists seek help for menaced hybrids" (SN: 8/17/91, p.102) misrepresents the activities of the Association of Systematics Collections. The article states, "Although the association primarily seeks to preserve individual species, it is also considering lobbying for the protection of plant hybrids."

I had said that the *Endangered Species Act* primarily seeks to preserve individual species, and that the *Endangered Species Act Reauthorization Committee* (an ad hoc coalition of organizations) was discussing the issue of protection of hybrids.

ASC is not considering lobbying for the protection of plant hybrids. We will take no position on this issue. We are not a lobbying organization.

K. Elaine Hoagland
Executive Director
Association of Systematics Collections
Washington, D.C.

Glitches that grow

"Phone glitches and other computer faults" (SN: 7/6/91, p.7) sounded very familiar to one who experienced the Great Northeast Blackout of 1965. In the blackout, a network of interconnected power stations designed to cope with every conceivable emergency nevertheless had a built-in instability that closed down almost every power plant in New York state, and several in New England, following

the relatively minor failure of a single relay at Niagara Falls. After an analysis of the blackout and its causes, the instability appeared to have been corrected—until another blackout darkened all of New York City and many of its northern suburbs a few years later.

In his description of the Patriot missile failure, computer scientist Peter G. Neumann seems to miss the point of failures such as these and the recent telephone system disruptions. His description, if accurate, showed that no hardware or software failure was involved and that no human error of omission or commission took place, except possibly the decision to use a software timer with a small inaccuracy—and that, given the assumption of regular shutdowns for maintenance, could not be considered important.

The failure here was in communication. Were there no written instructions calling for the shutdown after 14 hours? If there were, didn't the missile crew read them? Why did the cassette with the corrected software take so long to reach the missile crew?

Neumann is 100 percent correct in his statement about not learning the lessons well enough to avoid future problems. I'm willing to bet that the telephone problem will turn out to be something similar to the relay failure that triggered the 1965 blackout.

Wallace B. Riley
San Francisco, Calif.

CORRECTION

Sputnik I, the world's first space satellite, went up in 1957, not 1958 as stated in "We learned that he really does it right" (SN: 8/10/91, p.83).

