

SCIENCE NEWS[®]

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication
Volume 141, No. 12, March 21, 1992

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SCIENCE NEWS (ISSN 0036-8423) is published weekly on Saturday, except the last week in December, for \$39.50 for 1 year or \$68.00 for 2 years (foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year) by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing office. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to SCIENCE NEWS, 231 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43305. Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required—old and new addresses, including zip codes, must be provided.

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Editorial and Business Offices:
1719 N St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
(202-785-2255)
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Subscription Department:
231 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43305
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Letters

Dioxin data gap

I read the article purporting to "demystify dioxin's dangers" ("Dioxin's Other Face," SN: 1/11/92, p.24) but remained mystified. My bewilderment arises from the failure of the scientific community to do studies of the Vietnamese population. They have been exposed more intensively and in greater numbers than any other group.

Are we suffering from an inability to face up to the fact that our government waged chemical warfare on civilian and combatant alike?

Joan Blumenkranz
Los Angeles, Calif

Troubled by tactic

It was appropriate that "Practice what you

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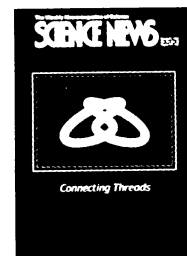
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Cover: Unlike the knots that a sailor might tie, a mathematical knot forms a complete loop, as seen in this computer-generated image of a trefoil knot. Recent studies have revealed that important concepts in knot theory unexpectedly link areas of mathematics and physics in which knots had hitherto played no role. (Illustration: Thomas F. Banchoff, Nicholas Thompson/Brown University)



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preach" (SN: 1/18/92, p.44) appeared under the subject heading "Behavior," although "Behavior Modification" would have been more accurate.

The most revealing statement was: "AIDS education campaigns in schools might profit by holding discussions in which each student first tries to persuade others of the need for sexual safety precautions and then acknowledges his or her own past failures in that regard." You should have forced the study's team leaders to give credit to the people who pioneered and then perfected this type of "education."

I refer, of course, to the Soviets and their allies. This form of AIDS awareness campaign sounds remarkably like the "reeducation" get-togethers of Allied prisoners of war in North Korea during the Korean War, the Cultural Revolution in Red China, the post-Vietnam War reeducation of former South Vietnamese

soldiers and civilians by their North Vietnamese "brothers," and the revelations now coming out of Eastern Europe regarding STASI and other secret police activities.

I do not denounce the goal of AIDS awareness. Yet I do find it troubling, but not surprising, that a university would consider using this type of tactic to get its point across.

Michael V. Stratton
Brea, Calif

Address communications to:

Editor, **SCIENCE NEWS**
1719 N St., NW
Washington, DC 20036

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All letters subject to editing.

MARCH 21, 1992

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