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## Letters

### From the sublime to the formulaic

Regarding the report about mucin in breast milk ("Breast milk: Can it slime away disease?" SN: 12/5/92, p.390), is the most useful conclusion that there is now another component to add to formula? A more logical (and helpful) inference would be that there is even greater evidence that breast milk is a necessary food for human infants.

The prevalent notion that artificial milk is an adequate substitute for breast milk is one of the reasons why diarrhea is a leading cause of death in children under the age of 5 worldwide. Even in our country, we would do well to promote breast-feeding, which costs virtually nothing, and to support social policies that encourage mothers to nourish their children with this unduplicated natural resource.

The economic costs of artificial milk include the formula or cow's milk, water, containers,

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Cover: The snout of a tiny dinosaur discovered in Argentina bears a set of sharp, serrated teeth, presumably used for cutting flesh. Called *Eoraptor*, the dinosaur is the most primitive yet found, opening a window onto the early evolution of these beasts. (Photo: P. Sereno)



### Departments

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**Science Service**, a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921, gratefully accepts tax-deductible contributions and bequests to assist its efforts to increase the public understanding of science, with special emphasis on young people. More recently, it has included in its mission increasing scientific literacy among members of underrepresented groups. Through its Youth Program it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair, the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships, and publishes and distributes the *Directory of Student Science Training Programs for Precollege Students*.

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fuel to sterilize materials, ecological waste from container disposal, and higher incidence of disease requiring medical attention. It costs less to feed the mother the additional 500 calories a day she uses in breast-feeding. Even if the mother is undernourished, most experts now agree that breast-feeding is the preferred method of feeding.

Why must we keep looking for new and expensive ways to interfere with a system our biology has already perfected?

Mary M. Coffield  
Montezuma, Iowa

### What a wonderful sight to feel!

It was with the greatest of interest that I read your article "Talking Maps" (SN: 12/5/92, p.392), which discusses tactile maps and how maps are being made to accommodate the needs of persons with severe visual impairments.

Oh, what an exciting world will be presented to the visually impaired and what a wonderful window will be opened onto the unseen world if such dreams become realities!

As a severely visually impaired person, I have really been disheartened as a student from grade school through college at the paucity of accessible maps. Geography has been very unmeaningful to me as a result.

I view with the utmost of enthusiasm the arrival of these new technological marvels.

Cynthia L. Groopman  
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Please limit letters to 250 words.  
All letters subject to editing.

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