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Cover: U.S. Apache helicopters fly support for M-1 Abrams tanks during Desert Storm. The war produced few combat casualties, but thousands of veterans suffer from a host of undiagnosed symptoms. Some believe chemical agents are the cause. (Watercolor by Tom Freeman)



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Science Service, which publishes SCIENCE NEWS, is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921. It 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 Programs 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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Letters

Logical fallacy

I take issue with the concept expressed in "Comprehending Those Who Can't Relate" (SN: 4/16/94, p.248) that there is a dichotomy between emotion and logic. Damasio states that "if you are going to run your personal and social life on logic alone, it's not going to work." I bring this up only because it seems to be at the core of numerous fallacies based on the premise that logic is limited as a tool in directing our actions and is superseded at its limits by emotion and intuition.

Emotional and intuitive responses are merely information to be integrated into logical processes. If an individual cannot experience emotional arousal, a large block of useful information is not available in the decision-making process. This naturally degrades the decision but in no way diminishes the function or worth of logic.

It is logic which allows normal people to know when to heed and when to ignore emo-

tional information. We could not live without its constant and reasonably skillful use.

*Paul Shelton
Seattle, Wash.*

Cool new cancer treatment

In "Pummeling tumors with localized therapies" (SN: 3/26/94, p.198), you describe how to take "better aim with both chemical and radiation treatments . . . to beat back hard-to-treat liver and pancreas cancers." There is an additional way to take better aim at cancers — by freezing them.

In cryosurgery for prostate cancer, probes with circulating liquid nitrogen are inserted directly into the prostate gland, causing the cancer cells to freeze. The surgeon uses ultrasound to guide the probes and follow the freezing process. A similar cryosurgical technique has been used to treat tumors of the liver.

*Reynold Greenstone
Brookeville, Md.*

New approach to crash prevention

"Loafing at the Landfill" (SN: 4/16/94, p.252) discusses the hazards posed to aircraft by seagulls and other birds being sucked into jet engines. Apparently the only response to the problem has been various attempts to control the birds, including lethal methods of control.

It would seem that with all of the talent, brains, technology, and other resources available to the aircraft industry, it could come up with a way to shield jet engines from birds to prevent their being sucked in, thus eliminating this potentially disastrous problem.

*Roger M. Wernicke
Pensacola, Fla.*

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JUNE 18, 1994

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