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Letters

And still champ — Trieste I

As a former senior crewman on the bathyscaphe *Trieste II*, I must comment on "Back to the Jurassic in Space-Age Subs" (SN: 8/20/94, p.122).

As far as I know, *Trieste I* is the only manned submersible to dive the 35,800-foot Challenger Deep (since renamed the Trieste Deep). The French bathyscaphe *Archimede* made a dive in the Kurile Trench of some 33,000 feet, but I never heard of her diving any deeper.

Actually, *Archimede* was the only boat ever designed to dive 40,000 feet or more. *Trieste I* was modified to dive beyond her original 20,000-foot design depth. She was restored to her 20,000-foot capability after the Mariana dive series. It was not until many years later that *Trieste*, in her last incarnation, got back to her design depth. All of the bathyscaphes were in museums as of 1984, when *Trieste II* was sent to Bremerton.

The manned depth record of *Trieste I* may someday be equalled or exceeded, but the

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Cover: In living systems, the molecules RNA and DNA have learned how to reproduce. Chemists want to know how. What are the mechanisms and rules of molecular self-replication? Is it possible to make molecules that will copy themselves? (Image: A schematic diagram of a system of self-replicating molecules, designed by Julius Rebek Jr., Morgan Conn, and Edward A. Wintner. Diagram by Wintner.)



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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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achievement will stand for all time. There is a lot of difference between a 1950s vintage bathyscaphe and the kind of vehicles being designed for tomorrow.

Norman J. Brandt
Boynton Beach, Fla.

Lack of symptoms may be symptom

Children can adapt in numerous ways to abusive situations in order to deal with the emotional and physical pain ("Deceptive veneer of child abuse," SN: 8/27/94, p.143). One common response involves the creation of alternate personalities.

A client of mine, John (an alias), was abused as a child. When John was 6, his uncle suspected the abuse and questioned him. A personality called Bobby was created to handle these questions. Bobby denied there was any problem and, indeed, wasn't aware of any abuse. Bobby showed no signs of abuse and was a happy kid. John, however, had a lot of problems. Anytime the uncle came over, John switched with Bobby. As an adult, John didn't remember ever talking to his uncle, even though he knew the uncle was a frequent visitor.

When we take multiple personality into account, we have at least one explanation for the confusing results of Elliott's study. Questionnaires would be of limited value. The real test is to observe how the child fares in life.

The report said that the children who "did not cite their apparent abuse showed virtually no traumatic symptoms." Aren't amnesia and denial considered traumatic symptoms? The fact that the children who seemed least affected by evidenced abuse had no memory of their abuse tells us something important, doesn't it?

Dennis Alsop
Stockton, Calif.

No mistake in identity

The pictures on p.116 and p.119 (SN: 8/20/94) are obviously the same photograph. Who would have thought the missing 90 percent of the universe would be surrounding a creature from the sands of Tampa Bay?

Monty Zieball
Wausau, Wis.

Much as the two photos look the same, they are in fact different!
— The Editors

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