



Science Service Publication
Volume 151, No. 20, May 17, 1997

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SCIENCE NEWS (ISSN 0036-8423) is published weekly on Saturday, except the last week in December, for \$49.50 for 1 year or \$88.00 for 2 years (foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year) by Science Service, 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Preferred Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SCIENCE NEWS, P.O. Box 1925, Marion, Ohio 43305. Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required — old and new addresses, including zip codes, must be provided. Copyright © 1997 by Science Service. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper. ♻️ Reproduction of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS without written permission of the publisher is prohibited.

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This Week

- 300 Found: Mouse Circadian Rhythm Gene
- 300 Computer triumphs over human champion
- 301 Can preventive mastectomies prolong lives?
- 301 Health may succumb to grief reaction
- 302 Grim prospects for flood-ravaged R&D
- 302 Checking out Hubble's new eyes
- 303 Impurities give crystals that special glow
- 303 A price tag on the planet's ecosystems

Research Notes

- 305 Astronomy
- 305 Biology
- 309 Archaeology
- 309 Biomedicine

Articles

- 306 Those Old Dioxin Blues

Cover: These lake trout eggs appear normal. However, if they have been exposed to dioxins, the fry that hatch from them may die within a month. New data suggest that dioxins fostered the trout's extinction in most of the Great Lakes. Lessons being learned from such fish may help explain the pollutants' toxicity in higher organisms, including people. (Photo: Paul Kivlin)



- 310 Proliferation of Pills

Departments

- 298 Books
- 299 Letters

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Letters

Polarized views

"Does the Cosmos Have a Direction?" (SN: 4/26/97, p. 252) quotes me as saying that the difference in polarization of radio waves recently claimed by Nodlund and Ralston "appears to be on a sound footing," and is "statistically significant." This did not and does not reflect my view. Not only is my earlier work inconsistent with Nodlund and Ralston's result, but my current data on the polarization structure of radio-extended quasars is totally incompatible with their claims.

Philipp P. Kronberg
Department of Astronomy
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

Verdicts on medical marijuana use

I am neither an attorney nor a marijuana user, but it seems to me that people wanting marijuana legalized for glaucoma treatment have a constitutional argument for it in light

of the existing legal use by other citizens ("Marijuana on Trial," SN: 3/22/97, p. 178). Here we have an elite group of people legally entitled to a treatment option that is actively denied to other citizens with the identical disease.

On what basis does the government enforce such a discriminatory practice? Aren't we all entitled to equal treatment under the law?

Anthony M. Castaldo
San Antonio, Texas

I am a plaintiff in a suit to protect doctors and patients from federal government prosecution when doctors prescribe medical marijuana and patients use medical marijuana in states where it is legal. Three states—Connecticut, Virginia, and California—now have such laws.

We argue that the federal government cannot prosecute doctors for their prescriptions because prescriptions are protected speech under the First Amendment. We also argue that the federal government cannot

regulate the physician prescription of and patient use of medical marijuana under state law because the Constitution limits federal powers under the Ninth and Tenth Amendments, as well as the commerce clause.

In short, the federal government does not have the constitutional authority to regulate intrastate medical practice that is legal under state law.

Sandy Shaw
Tonopah, Nev.

I don't see the significance of 85 percent of hard-drug users beginning with marijuana, as cited by Califano. I'd have expected all hard-core drug users to have first tried marijuana—and alcohol as well.

More significant would be the percentage of marijuana-smoking teens who do or do not go on to harder drugs.

Paul Hewitt
Hilo, Hawaii

Letters continued on p. 311