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Letters

Breast milk is best milk

Shame on you for failing to include an editors' note that mother's milk is the best food for all babies, especially premature infants ("Premie diets linked to IQ," 12/5/98, p. 358). Studies have shown that human infants who are fed human milk have better brain development and thus higher IQ scores than their formula-fed contemporaries. Numerous other benefits of breast milk include better infant resistance to disease, lower incidence of obesity in adulthood, and lower incidence of various female cancers in the nursing mother. Past articles in SCIENCE NEWS have discussed benefits of breast-feeding. Too bad you missed another opportunity to get the word out.

*Michelle Walden
Austin, Texas*

Don't discount psychoanalysis

I appreciated your article on the Freud exhibit very much ("Dr. Freud goes to Washington," SN: 11/28/98, p. 347). I have one

minor comment, however. You quote Drew Westen as reporting that there is no solid evidence for the effectiveness of psychoanalysis or psychotherapy beyond 2 years after the completion of treatment. Although there are studies that do demonstrate the long-term effectiveness of psychotherapy, a more important point involves the difficulty in assessing long-term gains for all psychiatric and psychological treatments because of the complex interactions of multiple variables and the unanticipated vagaries of life.

Leon Hoffman

*The American Psychoanalytic Association
New York, N.Y.*

The objective vision thing

The lack of creative thought in science as it is practiced today is the obvious place for well-deserved criticism ("Objective visions," SN: 12/5/98, p. 360). The true criteria of objectivity, however, remain as always reproducibility and the ability to predict a result not yet obtained. And the clever experiment is still the one in which the experimenter has

seen what everyone has seen and thought what no one has thought. That such substantial leaps occur rarely must be true, almost by definition, but that they still do occur cannot be denied. The very state of the body of knowledge today is testimony to that fact.

*Joseph F. Gennaro Jr.
Gainesville, Fla.*

There's vroom to grow, too

As a former auto mechanic, I read the article "Fill 'er up . . . with veggie oil" (SN: 12/5/98, p. 364) with great interest. You may be interested to know that Bugatti, a very successful competing marque during the '20s and '30s (especially in Formula 1 racing), designed their engines specifically to be lubricated with refined castor oil. Most of the owners of now-vintage Bugattis still insist on using castor oil—not only from a sense of dedication to Bugatti, but also because this derivative of the castor bean is still considered to be an excellent lubricant.

*Seth McQuale
Huntington, N.Y.*

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Worldwide warming has tripped up
U.S. forecasters
Richard Monastersky

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Cover: Infants squirm, crawl, and toddle their way into mental life without needing to traverse genetically orchestrated developmental stages, according to dynamic systems theorists. Their research cuts against the grain of much cognitive and developmental psychology.
Page 184 (Illustration: Kay Salem)

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