

Films of The Week

Listing for readers' information of new 16mm and 8mm films on science, engineering, medicine and agriculture for professional, student and general audiences. For further information on purchase, rental or free loan, write to distributor.

FIRE: CONDITIONS FOR COMBUSTION. Series of five films. 8mm (standard or Super-8), color, silent, 2 to 4 min each. Lead to an understanding of the conditions needed for ignition, kindling temperature and a supply of oxygen. Also, how to use these concepts to extinguish fires. Audience: elementary grades. Purchase \$14 per film standard 8mm or \$16 per film Super-8 from Systems for Education, 612 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

HUMAN AGGRESSION: KEY TO SURVIVAL. 16mm, b&w, sound, 30 min. Filmed interviews with Dr. Konrad Lorenz, who discusses his discovery of the "imprinting" phenomenon, and his concept of "intra-specific aggression," which he relates to the problem of controlling the aggressive instincts in man. Audience: general, biology students, psychology students. Purchase \$125 or rental \$5.40 from NET Film Service, Indiana University, Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

PATHFINDERS FROM THE STARS. 16mm, color, sound, 48 min. Depicts man's efforts to determine more accurate positions over the earth's surface-on land, on sea, and in the air. Traces these efforts from the earliest attempts of the Polynesian islanders' use of bamboo stick charts to the latest technique of geodetic position determination by means of a worldwide network of satellite triangulation stations. Audience: schools, colleges, professional societies, clubs, and service groups. Free loan from Exhibits Section (ESSA), Room 47, Building #2, Washington Science Center, Rockville, Md. 20852.



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LETTERS

To the Editor

Cats that Don't Purr

Sir:

The Nature Note on cats (SN: 7/29) surprised me because it mentions that the big cats do not purr. I have a memory of hearing a leopard purr at the San Diego Zoo.

And now, a few days later, I am reading Helen Martinis' "My Zoo Family" in which she mentions that her lion cubs didn't purr, but her tiger cubs did. Later she mentions the nearly grown tigers as purring, and further on describes full grown leopards as purring. (And she spent much time in close contact with them.)

All this is at odds with the Nature Note. Can we check it out?

Juanita Matassa
Garden Grove, Calif.

(The low "chuffing" or "pleasure sound" of the big cats of the genus Panthera may often be mistaken for a "purr"—but, according to zoologists, it is not technically a purr. Panthers, leopards, lions, tigers, and jaguars have a bone structure in their throats that prevent them from truly purring. They do have a low roar, and a chuffing that occurs at times but is not continuous. Cubs of the big cat family often make a variety of sounds that may sound like the start of a purr.—Ed.)

SST Wright Bros. Style

Sir:

I read two articles in SCIENCE NEWS (SN: 7/29) with more than passing interest.

The first dealt with "SST Design Changes," and the second pertained to sonic booms, titled "Ground Effects May Slow SST."

It seems to me that aircraft design engineers are married to the concept that all aircraft must rush along the ground, a la Wright Bros. (1903) style, before flight is possible. Either that, or a Rube Goldberg arrangement of tilting the (Wright Bros. 1903) wing is necessary for VTO.

Nothing about the Boeing Co. SST design is dramatically new, and the canard harks back to Kittyhawk.

To be sure, the variable-sweep wing is a new approach to an old problem, but that problem should have been solved by a VTO design back in 1955.

The "Ground Effects May Slow SST"

(see p. 198)



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