

normal development of space perception is independent of the stimulation normally received from a varied environment.

It is apparently still difficult to escape from the false dichotomy of an extreme nativism versus an extreme empiricism. Neither view can be taken seriously today.

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I must agree with Hebb: the demonstration that a human neonate was able to turn her eyes to the side on which auditory stimulation was produced does not in any way exclude the possibility that space perception in the human adult is greatly influenced by experience. But one need not share his optimism—much as one might wish to—about the demise of extreme views.

In his stimulating *The Organization of Behavior* (Wiley, New York, 1949), Hebb himself concludes that all that is present perceptually at birth is discrimination of the "primitive unity" of figures, not their shape or identity as distinctive wholes—these, and by implication other aspects of adult perceptual performance, are "slowly acquired through learning." My little experiment demonstrates that, without learning, more is present than primitive unity: primitive space perception.

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### Scientific Consultants

Your item in "Science and the news" on scientific consultants [*Science* 134, 1739 (1 Dec. 1961)], their high pay, their conflicts of interest, and so on, neglects a point.

The highly paid employees of the nonprofit corporations can also be fired without regard to Civil Service regulations. They can be promoted and shuffled around, likewise. Their work is subject to the criticism and approval not only of congressional committees but of the Service and Civil Service employees of the Department of Defense. The impending investigation, so long as it avoids excesses and abuses, is merely a normal exercise of prudence that should be welcomed by all.

WILLIAM GEORGE MACKENZIE  
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania

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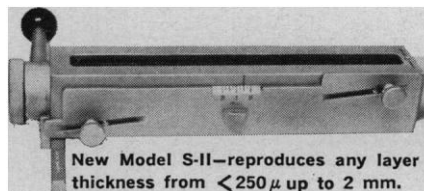
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