

sent the total impact of these sources.

Because of our findings we are concerned that the Environmental Protection Agency has failed to include 1-hour standards for SO₂ in its proposed National Primary and Secondary Ambient Air Quality Standards. Without such a standard in Massachusetts we would have had no bench mark with which to compare the calculated concentrations. We hope EPA will correct this oversight when standards are promulgated.

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Drug Abuse?

If more evidence were needed of the schizophrenia of our society, the sanction of the use of amphetamines for hyperkinetic children (26 Mar., p. 1223) supplied it.

I have worked in the Los Angeles Juvenile Hall, and have seen many kids "busted" for using the same "yellow jackets," "reds," and "bennies" that my Beverly Hills patients use regularly. And here they are sanctioning the use of drugs for which other children are arrested. No proof—but let's try it. No proof marijuana is harmful—but let's jail its users.

Schizophrenia if I ever saw it!

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Snake Eggs

Burghardt's report "Chemical-cue preferences of newborn snakes . . ." (5 Mar., p. 921) states, "Newborn garter snakes . . . responded similarly to worm and fish surface extracts regardless of whether the mothers were fed exclusively on fish or worms during the gestation period."

All snakes are either oviparous or ovoviviparous. In neither case is there any connection between the mother and the young which is developing within the egg. Consequently, any experience by the mother regarding food or environment would have nothing to do with the young.

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The founder and former editor of *Herpetologica* has stated a commonly held view which, by implication, renders my experiment superfluous. However, contrary evidence has been in the literature for many years. In a recent review, Bellairs (1) states, "Viviparity in reptiles thus shows all gradations between a state of affairs where the mother does little more than act as a mobile incubator for her unborn young, to one in which she probably supplies the embryo with a fair amount of food to supplement its inadequate yolk." In the species I used (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) there is a functioning placental connection with the mother (2).

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References

1. A. d'A. Bellairs, *The Life of Reptiles* (Universe, New York, 1970), vol. 2, p. 452.
2. H. Clark *et al.*, *Copeia*, pp. 9-13 (1955).

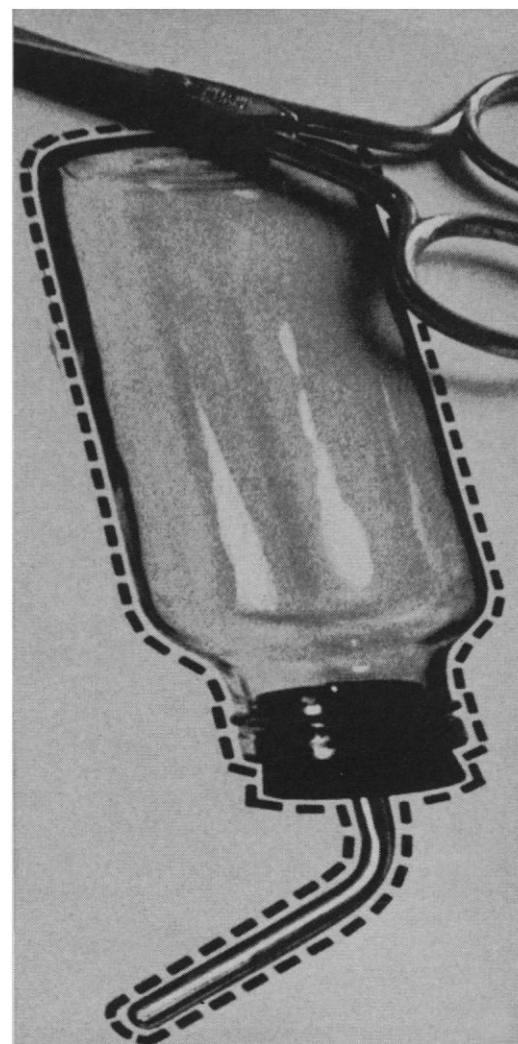
Calculus of Risk

In his review of *Nuclear Power and the Public* (Book Reviews, 26 Feb., p. 792) Lee Loevinger has performed a long-needed service in pointing out the sophistry in comparing risks from automobile and aircraft accidents to risks from radioactive pollution. I have listened with impatience many times to this argument, which, as often as not, is made by well-known and competent persons. [Loevinger said: "The implicit suggestion that (these risks) are comparable illustrates some of the confusion in this field. Most of the concern about nuclear power plants has to do with the effects of . . . normal operation . . . , not the danger of nuclear accidents. . . . The hazard from radioactive pollution is cumulative, genetic, and statistically almost indeterminable—quite in contrast to the discrete, non-genetic, and quite determinable hazard of automobiles and airplanes."]

I would like to add that, although automobile transportation is a necessity, the driver has some choice as to when, where, how long, and how carefully he will drive—in other words, he has a reasonable control of the risk. Populations exposed to fallout and either planned or accidental releases not only have no control of the risk but are often unaware that a risk exists.

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