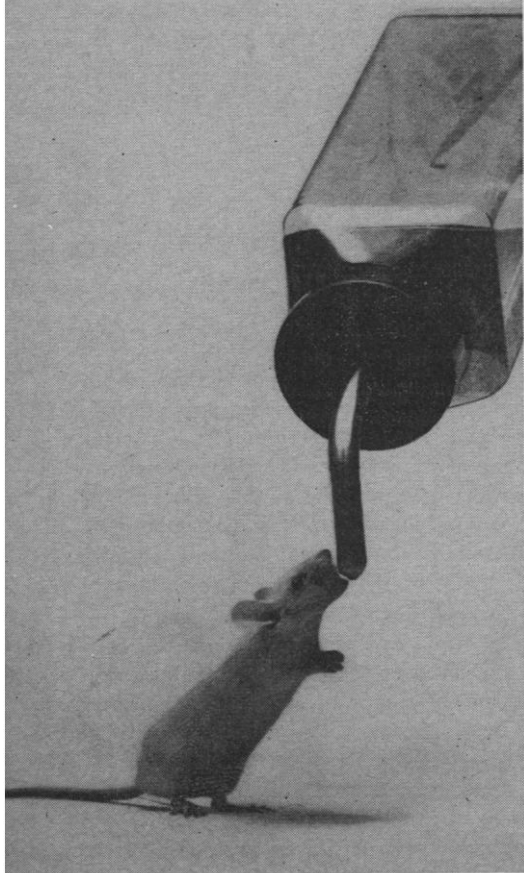


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1. D. H. Meadows, D. L. Meadows, J. Randers, W. W. Behrens III, *The Limits to Growth* (Potomac Associates—Universe Books, New York, 1972).

Nature's Highways

R. G. Lynch (Letters, 6 Oct., p. 11) hopes that "biologists can describe the needs of mammalian offspring generally, and the needs of *man's* [italics mine] offspring specifically." Is it one of "the highways nature intended" that the "love, discipline, and care" he and I agree are among those needs be provided exclusively or even predominantly by a woman? Lynch answers this question, which he never asks, with an unequivocal "yes." My children, my wife, and I disagree.

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It is difficult to argue in a logical way with the letter from R. G. Lynch. It contains many of the clichés frequently used to suppress women and members of minority groups. Appealing to "nature's laws" is a time-honored and traditional way of preventing change. As a reproductive biologist, I recognize that natural laws exist. Those which are relevant to the issue at hand, namely, the equality of opportunity for women, are rather small in number. They include the fact that women, not men, become pregnant; that women, not men, carry children until birth; and that if it is desired by the parents that the child suckle, it is the woman who plays this role. I do not know of any other natural laws which are relevant to the issue. No one has described how many hours a day for how many months a given woman needs to be with a given child. Furthermore, there is another "law" which Lynch does not recognize. Every child has two parents, the mother and the father. This is a biological as well as a sociological fact. There is no natural law that says that child care must be only the responsibility of the mother. Therefore, the question of extended maternity leave should be an individual decision of the parents of a child, perhaps in consultation with experts.

Lynch says that "Women certainly deserve fair and enlightened treatment." The women in our country, both professional and nonprofessional, have

learned a simple truth; in order to get fair and enlightened treatment, we must act together and get it for ourselves. We are very pleased that the American Association for the Advancement of Science has recognized at its meetings and in the columns of *Science* that the women's movement, specifically as it is related to science, is here to stay. We are pleased that there are an increasing number of stories about the movement. There may be times when individual women may disagree with individual stories, or, indeed, when an entire women's professional association may disagree. Nevertheless, we think this is a problem which is important not only to women, but to men, and that it needs to be looked at openly. We hope that the AAAS will continue to increase its interest and not permit letters such as those from Lynch to deter them from this exceedingly important issue.

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More Parts per Million

With reference to the letter "One part per million" by William W. Porter II (11 Aug., p. 477), I should like to quote from the fourth edition of *Toxicology of Drugs and Chemicals* (1). The following appears in the front of the volume on page VI:

Parts Per Million

- 1 ppm is equal to 1 inch in 16 miles,
- 1 ppm is 1 minute in 2 years,
- 1 ppm is a 1-gram needle in a ton of hay,
- 1 ppm is 1 penny in \$10,000.00,
- 1 ppm is 1 ounce (30 gm) of salt in 62,500 pounds (28,375 kg) of sugar,
- 1 ppm is 1 large mouthful of food when compared with the food a person will eat in a lifetime,
- 1 ppm is the theoretical concentration that 1 teaspoon of DDT will impart to the hay when spread on 5 acres of alfalfa,
- 1 ppm is 1 drop in 16 gallons, or in 80 "fifths," a very dry martini indeed!

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References

1. W. B. Deichmann and H. W. Gerarde, *Toxicology of Drugs and Chemicals* (Academic Press, New York, ed. 4, 1969).