

(Continued from page 147)

Hunter-Gatherers and Humane Living

Thanks for Roger Lewin's interesting piece (Research News, 27 May, p. 1146) on Lee and DeVore's *Man the Hunter* (1) 20 years later. As organizer of the conference on which the book is based, I need to add a question.

The changing !Kung Bushmen indeed continue to provide important evidence of human behavior before the onset of "peasantry" 10,000 years ago. Perusal of *Man the Hunter* will show that among the peoples who survived peasantry and urbanization the North American Indians provide us with evidence incomparably richer than that of other continents. Everywhere else hunters-gatherers were squeezed out of favorable environments, while in North America the very extent and variety of virgin environments made it possible for the Indian peoples to resist domination by large peasant societies and to provide incomparable evidence of what we might have learned from their rich experience in humane living.

Since the brilliant success of our latest stages of evolution into a few competing hierarchical nation-states with lethal power might rather be an evolutionary trap, the question is whether we might still escape

from it by applying what we might learn from the few surviving hunting-gathering peoples!

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REFERENCES

1. R. B. Lee and I. DeVore, Eds., *Man the Hunter* (Aldine, Chicago, IL, 1968).

DOD Lab Quality

As president of the Association of Engineers and Scientists, American Federation of Government Employees, Local 3176, at the U.S. Army's Materials Technology Laboratory in Watertown, Massachusetts, I wish to take exception to Daniel Charles' remarks regarding our facility in his article "Report asks upgrade of military R&D labs" (News & Comment, 25 Mar., p. 1484). The U.S. Army's Materials Technology Laboratory does *not* have a "bad reputation," as Charles states. It does have a fine collection of dedicated engineers and scientists working hard to fulfill their mission of providing advanced materials for the U.S. Army. This

work has resulted in many significant contributions in the areas of lightweight equipment, armor, antiarmor penetrators, and numerous other aspects of materials science and engineering. The Materials Technology Laboratory's problem is the same as that of other Department of Defense laboratories, that is, the lack of competitive salaries that would allow us to attract and retain more of the outstanding scientists and engineers that are available. Massachusetts is an extremely competitive region for scientists and engineers.

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Erratum: The bibliographic listing that appeared at the head of the book review entitled "The militarization of physics" (15 Apr., p. 341) should have read *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences*, vol. 18, part 1. The work in question is also known by the informal title "Cooperation or Cooptation? Science and the Military."

Erratum: The address given for Small Talk/V, Digitalk, Inc., in reference 2 of the software review "PC software for artificial intelligence applications" by Helmut Epp *et al.* (6 May, p. 824) was incorrect. It should have been 9841 Airport Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045.



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