

Bruce S. McEwen
Laboratory of Neuroendocrinology,
Rockefeller University,
1230 York Avenue,
New York, NY 10021, USA

Robert M. Sapolsky
Department of Biological Sciences,
Stanford University,
Stanford, CA 94305, USA

Michael J. Meaney
Douglas Hospital Research Center,
6875 Boulevard LaSalle,
Montreal, Quebec H4H 1R3, Canada

References

1. M. J. West, *Neurobiol. Aging* **14**, 287 (1993); D. G. Amaral, P. R. Rapp, *Soc. Neurosci. Abstr.* **19**, 599 (1993).
2. T. Rasmussen *et al.*, *Neurobiol. Aging* **17**, 143 (1996).
3. P. D. Coleman and D. G. Flood, *ibid.* **8**, 521 (1987).
4. P. D. Coleman, D. G. Flood, M. J. West, *J. Comp. Neurol.* **266**, 300 (1987).

Recent research suggests that loss of hippocampal pyramidal cells may not occur in normal aging, forcing the question as to what *does* change in the aging hippocampus that may underlie age-related benign memory loss. In this context, it is important to note that strong evidence for an alternative to the cell-death explanation has been

known for some time. Studies involving iontophoretic application of neurotransmitters to hippocampal pyramidal cells in aging rats clearly demonstrate reduced responsiveness of these cells to two neurotransmitter agents heavily implicated in memory processes: acetylcholine (1) and met-enkephalin (2). These changes in neural responsiveness with age may be the mechanism behind the "disruption of cells' ability to communicate chemically" that "could underlie a fading memory." The death of the "cell death" hypothesis may give birth to a renewed interest in neural changes such as those that occur in the normal aging hippocampus.

Larry Cahill

Center for the Neurobiology
of Learning and Memory,
University of California,
Irvine, CA 92717-3800, USA

Henry J. Haigler
Room 9C04, National Institute
of Mental Health,
5600 Fishers Lane,
Rockville, MD 20857, USA

References

1. H. J. Haigler, L. Cahill, M. Crager, E. Charles, *Brain Res.* **362**, 157 (1985).
2. H. J. Haigler, L. F. Cahill, M. R. Crager, E. Charles, *Life Sci.* **40**, 203 (1987).

Corrections and Clarifications

The caption for the illustration accompanying the 17 May Perspective "Stratospheric control of climate" by Alan Roback (p. 972) should have begun, "Surface air temperature anomalies over North America for December 1982 through February 1983."

The ScienceScope section of the issue of 26 April (p. 473) was edited by Jocelyn Kaiser, not Richard Stone, as stated.

In the affiliation given for R. M. Zinkernagel (Letters, 3 May, p. 635), "Universität Zürich" was inadvertently omitted.

Letters to the Editor

Letters may be submitted by e-mail (at science_letters@aaas.org), fax (202-789-4669), or regular mail (*Science*, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not routinely acknowledged. Full addresses, signatures, and daytime phone numbers should be included. Letters should be brief (300 words or less) and may be edited for reasons of clarity or space. They may appear in print and/or on the World Wide Web. Letter writers are not consulted before publication.

Whatever your target...



Be sure to get the native DNA!

Proteinase K— DNA grade

... ready-to-use solution of the highest purity available ... free of contaminating nucleic acids ... packed under laminar flow in an aerosol free environment ... the next generation of quality!

For further information,
please contact us:

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt/Germany
Phone (+49) 6151-72 75 93
Fax: (+49) 6151-72 68 59