

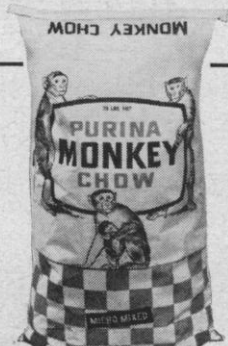
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LETTERS

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Pseudopregnancy in Rats

Several years ago we completed a project similar to that reported by Doyle and Margolis [*Science* 139, 833 (1963)] with opposite results. Using the Holtzman modification of Sprague-Dawley rats, we studied the effects on ensuing pregnancy of a preceding deciduoma associated with pseudopregnancy. This was an attempt to find the physiological and anatomical reasons for human infertility associated with the use of a Graffenburg ring.

The pseudopregnancy was produced and deciduomata followed traumatization of one horn and the leaving in of a loop of silk or cotton thread. When these animals recycled, pregnancy occurred only in the untreated horn although blastocysts were seen in the treated one. Our technique was then modified, and the deciduoma was produced only at the ovarian end of the uterine horn through a flank incision. The same loop of thread was used, and this was associated with pseudopregnancy. Operations were performed on the 15th day of the pseudopregnancy to verify the deciduoma, but the horns were not handled.

In the ensuing pregnancy approximately half the animals had implantations in both horns, and the treated horn usually had the least. Our interest being primarily in the absence of pregnancy, we discontinued the study when it became evident that pregnancy would occur if we did not manipulate the horn excessively. Pregnancies have been reported in patients using the Graffenburg ring. Thus, the factor producing infertility has not been identified.

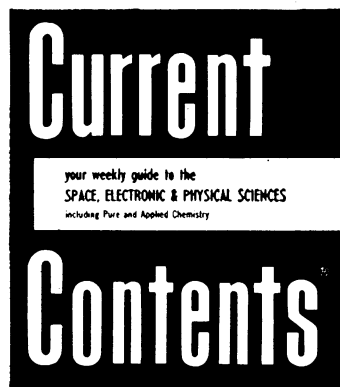
EDUARD EICHNER

10605 Chester Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

The experiments described by Eichner seem similar to those reported by Nichaman [*Am. J. Physiol.* 186, 6 (1956)] which differed from ours in that deciduomata were produced in pseudopregnant animals which were subsequently bred.

Apparently we did not make it clear that our sutures were placed in cycling animals prior to the time they were bred, and that at no time did we find decidual changes in the sutured horn. These facts would seem to rule out excessive manipulation as a possible cause of nonpregnancy.

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Eichner describes neither his original nor modified technique in detail, and he does not state if the presence of the suture was verified in the horns of the 50 percent of animals that were implanted in his second series. Therefore we are unable to compare our data with his.

Additional animals have now been added to the series reported in *Science*, and we have observed no pregnancies or decidual changes. We have also shown recently that, in sutured animals littered and rebred on the postpartum estrus, pregnancy is again unilateral if the suture is still present and bilateral if it is not.

L. L. DOYLE

A. J. MARGOLIS

*Department of Obstetrics and
Gynecology, University of California
School of Medicine, San Francisco*

Metric System of Measurement

The world trend toward adoption of the metric and Celsius systems seems unmistakable, and advanced science courses and graduate schools in the United States have long used them. The adoption by the British of the Celsius system as an alternative to Fahrenheit, the adoption of the metric system by India, and the use of this system in cartography by the 12 Antarctic treaty nations are recent illustrations. However, up to the present time some college biology courses have retained the use of inches, feet, miles, acres, and such units of measurement although they generally use the metric system for objects of small size. They may also use the Fahrenheit system of temperature as well as the Celsius. Some recent botany and zoology texts for college students use a mixture of measurements. If students can think in terms of the metric system for small units, only little encouragement is needed for them to think in terms of meters and kilometers.

When a text in entomology from a western university with many foreign students consistently uses terms like 1/16 or 1/4 inch for lengths, and the Fahrenheit system for temperatures, one wonders why those students are needlessly confused. Proportions here are sometimes in milligrams per kilogram (poison) and sometimes pounds per gallon (insecticides). In this example part of the explanation may be the orientation towards practical United

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