

the nation need to be mobilized to cope with the major social problem of mental illness, it is essential that responsible committees have a broad viewpoint which encompasses diverse and varied approaches. Evaluation reports should be factual, supported by documentation, and not the medium for expression of sectarian opinion.

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### Recording the Data

Taking exception to the point of view expressed in P. M. Newberne's letter (9 July, p. 137), I should like to voice my feelings in defense of shutterbugs at scientific meetings. The tendency at these gatherings seems to be to present as much data as possible in the brief time allotted. This necessitates the use of a number of slides full of information. The listener who desires to study the presented data in detail or at his leisure must either be an extremely rapid transcriber (and draftsman, in the case of graphs and diagrams), have a photographic memory, or be able to operate a camera.

In the printed material (such as abstracts), one is indeed fortunate to be provided with one or two equations, much less with tables and diagrams.

As for the author's not wanting his data used and quoted, presentation at a scientific meeting is hardly the way to keep them confidential.

Banning of cameras at scientific meetings would achieve little except inconvenience for those who are most interested in the presented material, as it would require them to copy the data longhand while missing much of the oral discussion or to wait, possibly for many months, until the report is published in full elsewhere.

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### Thoreau and "Ecology": Correction

Since I was inadvertently responsible for confusing the record on the history of the word *ecology*, I would like now to try to set it straight once

Fig. 1. Part of a letter dated 1 January 1858 by Thoreau to his cousin George Thatcher. The word in question occurs at the beginning of the next-to-the-last line.

more. In 1958, with Carl Bode, I edited *The Correspondence of Henry David Thoreau* (New York Univ. Press), and in it I transcribed a sentence from a newly found letter of 1 January 1858 as reading, "Mr. Hoar is still in Concord, attending to Botany, Ecology, &c with a view to making his future residence in foreign parts more truly profitable to him" (see Fig. 1). In the issue of *Science* of 17 April 1959 (129, 992), Paul H. Oehser, quoting from the volume, pointed out that this use of the word *ecology* preceded the generally accepted coinage of the word by Ernst Haeckel by eight years.

Recently, Richard Eaton of Harvard University called my attention to the fact that Haeckel's word was *oecology*, and that American botanists did not adopt the simpler spelling until the Madison Botanical Congress of 23 August 1893. In the light of this new information, I reexamined photostats of the letter (the manuscript is in the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library) and realized for the first time that, while at first glance the word seems obviously to be *Ecology*, it can without too much imagination be read as *Geology*. I also noted that several times in his *Journal* that winter Thoreau mentioned Hoar's interest in rocks and quarries. Under these circumstances I think I must assume that, since *geology* makes as much sense in the context as *ecology* does, *geology* must have been the word that Thoreau intended. I think we may once more assume that it was Haeckel who originated the word, in 1866—although, as

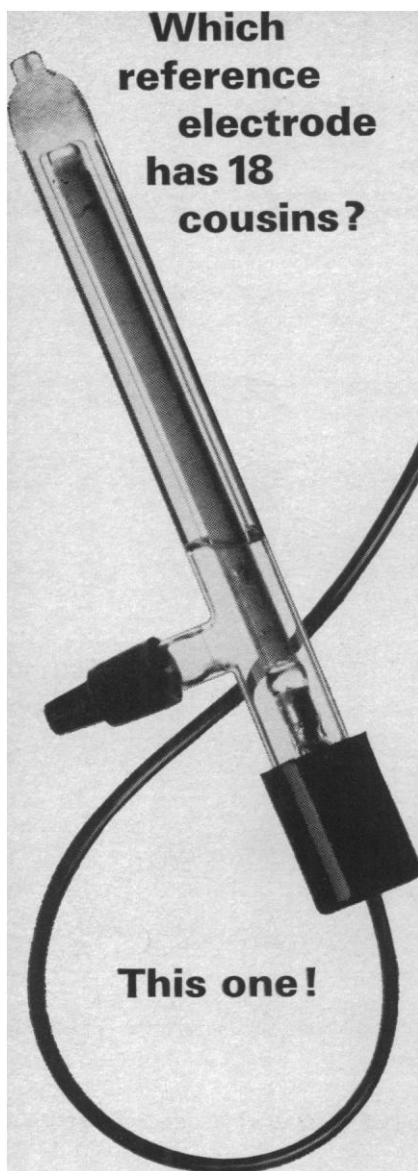
students of Thoreau will realize, even if Thoreau did not coin the word, he was unquestionably a pioneer in the science of ecology.

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### Women—in Science or Out

I should like to add one item to the list of "tasks ahead" in Alice S. Rossi's article ("Women in science: Why so few?") 28 May, p. 1197: High school guidance teachers should be persuaded that a career in science or engineering will not ruin a girl's future. Several years ago, when I expressed a desire to enter M.I.T., I received from my high school adviser—a warm and friendly woman—a stunned and slightly horrified look. She wished to save me from my "immature desires" by getting me admitted to Bryn Mawr or Smith, where I could write poetry and avoid those brutal, masculine calculus courses if I wished. Well, I have an "unusually supportive" father such as Rossi mentions. I entered M.I.T., and in 1963 left it with a Bachelor of Science degree. But at last report my high school adviser was still doing her best to dissuade girls—even if they were excellent in high school mathematics, physics, and chemistry—from applying to schools oriented toward science.

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... Rossi says that a working mother is a better example to her children than one "who shelves her books along with her diploma." There are two fallacies in that statement. First, many homemakers read, participate in community affairs, and retain a lively interest in the world. How many truly educated women shelf their books and their intellectual curiosity? Second, Rossi ignores the contribution women can make by showing their children how to use leisure. Experts tell us that one of the crises of the future will be the growth of leisure and the inability to use it wisely. Surely an educated mother who employs her education constructively while remaining at home can teach her children, by example, that free time is a gift to be cherished. . . .

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### The Critic Criticized

It is clear from his recent letter to *Science* (16 July, p. 245) that all of us have been taking Banesh Hoffman much too seriously in his role as objective test critic. His argument shows no trace of his scientific training. Briefly, it is this: he has raised certain objections to the use of objective tests; Chauncey and Hilton state that they do not have *direct* evidence that these objections are false; hence Hoffman concludes they are true. Note that Hoffman has no evidence to support his arguments; they are entirely a priori ones. Note also that Chauncey and Hilton have a good deal of *indirect* evidence, all of which hangs together, that the arguments are fallacious. For a scientist it is surely a strange sort of argument that the absence of direct data to the contrary proves that a theory is the correct one.

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Hoffman's letter indicates that he is interested in statistical evidence and may have some of his own. I should therefore like to pose two questions for him: (i) Just what kind of statistical evidence would cause him to proclaim publicly that his charges were indeed refuted and that he had been wrong in his evaluation of the best of the multiple-choice tests? (ii) What are the

magnitudes of the negative correlations of "depth, subtlety, creativity, intellectual honesty, and superior knowledge" with Scholastic Aptitude Test scores?

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### VA Hospitals:

#### Length of Stay

In his argument concerning length of stay of patients in Veterans Administration hospitals (Letters, 11 June, p. 1411), Spratt overlooks these most important points of difference between "private university hospitals" and those of the VA:

1) Patients discharged from surgical wards in private hospitals are not always ready to walk the streets upon discharge. The operation has been successful, but the recovery takes a long time, and when the patient has run out of insurance money he prefers to hobble home rather than go bankrupt at the rate of \$30 a day. A VA hospital, by law, cannot discharge a patient until the patient is ready for discharge.

2) With the aging of the population of veterans, disabling neurological diseases (such as strokes) are on the increase. Such illnesses are not like acute appendicitis; the treatment is long, the progress is slow, the complications frequent. A "private university hospital" usually shuns this kind of patient after a week or two of diagnostic work-up (which, again, takes up the largest chunk of insurance money, leaving the rest for "chronic care" in some nursing home). Through no fault of the private hospital, to the patient it looks as if once he has been squeezed dry of financial resources (usually insurance) he is shipped somewhere else. One can imagine the howling in Congress if VA institutions were to follow this policy.

3) The VA carries on the most extensive training program for medical residents, a benefit which may tend to lengthen hospital stay in some cases.

4) The VA is a very large organization; therefore anecdotes of particular instances are bound to be misleading. The fact is that it provides the cheapest high-quality medical care in our country today.

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