

RANDOM SAMPLES

edited by CONSTANCE HOLDEN

Last-Minute Help for Turkish Site

A U.S. foundation is stepping in with \$5 million to help emergency rescue activities in a Roman-era Turkish city, Zeugma, that is about to be flooded by a new dam. The Turkish government announced last week that the Packard Humanities Institute of Los Altos, California, has agreed to fund salvage work and help develop future plans for the area.

Scholars have known of Zeugma, and looters have been picking away at it, for more than a century. But the rest of the world took note only when a dam on the Euphrates was



1.5-meter high statue of Mars retrieved from future lake bottom.

completed in December, and the waters started to rise. This month, following intensive press coverage, including a front-page story in *The New York Times*, the Turkish government ordered a 10-day delay in the drowning so archaeologists could complete a feverish effort to remove mo-

saics, murals, and other materials from the lower levels of the 200-hectare site. About 20 hectares are slated to go underwater on 28 June; more will be submerged next October.

Despite the attention, Zeugma is neither a "second Pompeii" (as the *Times* called it) nor unique, scholars say. But it is "a critical frontier town in a critical period of the Roman buildup in the east," says Richard Hodges of the University of East Anglia in Norwich, U.K. Despite complaints that Turkey isn't doing enough to preserve its heritage, some ar-

chaeologists say it is doing its best to reconcile protection of antiquities with pressing needs for power and water. Turkey is littered with the remnants of 10,000 years of civilization, notes archaeologist Toni Cross, director of the American Research Institute in Ankara, so it's practically impossible to do any big public works project without destroying something.

Memories Are Made of This and That

We all know memory can play tricks, but might we have our childhood all wrong? It's possible, judging by an unusual longitudinal study of men who answered the same questions at ages 14 and 48.

In 1962, psychiatrist Daniel Offer of Northwestern University asked 73 Chicago male high school freshmen questions about their parents, home, friends, and school. Years later Offer was able to locate 67 of the group and ask them the same questions about their adolescence.

It turns out that these men—normal, healthy, middle-class types—held memories of their youths that had little to do with what they had reported at 14. Indeed, "accurate memory was generally no better than expected by chance," the researchers report in the June issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. Whereas at age 14 61% of the respondents said that playing sports and other physical activities were their favorite pastimes, for instance, at age 48 only 23% remembered it that way. And 58% of the men remembered hating schoolwork, although as adolescents just 28% had said they didn't like it. The 48-year-olds also seemed to have forgotten their earlier views on religion, their parents' best and worst traits, and whether they found discipline "upsetting." They approached accurate recall on only three matters: the im-

portance of having a girlfriend, the expectation of earning more than one's father, and parental encouragement in sports.

The results suggest that people's memories are "even poorer than we thought," concludes Offer. They also contradict the notion that events laden with emotional significance are remembered more accurately, the authors say. The study is "fascinating," says psychologist Elizabeth Loftus of the University of Washington, Seattle. It shows that even healthy people can't be relied on to give accurate accounts of their childhood, she says, and it bears on the heated controversy over people's memories of child sexual abuse. Clinicians taking a patient's history, she warns, "should be very wary."

The Royals on GMOs

Britain's Prince Charles doesn't like genetically modified foods, as he made clear in a well-publicized recent speech lamenting the unnatural things scientists are doing to nature (*Science*, 26 May, p. 1331). But although they may be genetically related, other members of the royal family don't agree. Both sister Anne and dad Philip have gone out of their way to contradict the prince in a family feud that has captivated the British press.

Invasive species, such as squirrels, could do "far more damage than a genetically modified piece of potato," Philip told *The Times*. And the *Grocer* magazine recorded Anne's rebuke: "Man has been tinkering with food production and plant development for such a long time that it's a bit cheeky to suddenly get nervous about it when, fundamentally, you are doing much the same thing."

Genetic engineering is a bit more drastic than selective breeding, however, cautioned Tory spokesperson Tim Yeo. Traditional practices, he told the BBC, are a far cry from "taking genes from one species, such as a fish which is normally confined to the Arctic, and sticking it in something like a tomato to make it more frost-resistant."

Black Hole Beaming

About 450 million light-years away, a black hole loses its lunch. This super-high-resolution picture from the year-old Chandra X-ray Observatory is one of a bunch of new images released at the American Astro-

nomical Society meeting in Rochester, New York, last week. Scientists believe that this 360,000-light-year-long streamer, 3.6 times the width of our galaxy, is material ejected from the black hole at the center of galaxy Pictoris A. The bright spot, another 440,000 light-years from the tip of the streamer, may be the shock wave caused by the ejected particles slamming into the intergalactic medium.

