

to the editor

Bioethics

At least some of the difficulty in bioethics mentioned in your articles (SN: 10/30/71, pp. 294 and 298) seems to stem from who should have the responsibility for life and death decisions over fetuses, healthy or defective. Part of the problem would go away if parents had the full responsibility, financially, for the rearing of their offspring. "Society" would not then have the overweening interest in eugenics and birth control because nobody but the parents would have to bear the expense of the children. The decision would also be more clear-cut for the parents as to whether to have a child diagnosed as defective if they alone had to face a prospect of lifelong caretaking.

Christopher D. M. Winstanley
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How can there be "large efforts" at therapy in utero before the requisite experience and research? Prenatal transfusions have been attempted (for Rh incompatibility)—but they have been followed by troubles with graft vs. host reactions from an outgrowth of leucocytes.

The "defective fetus abort list" overlooked the children "who might have been," but will not be conceived because of parents' terror at having another Tay-Sachs. It also left out the argument that we quite casually permit millions of fertilized ova to be wasted that might be salvaged. But we don't regard this complicity in spontaneous abortions to be comparable to negligent homicide. Scientific analysis cannot answer the ethical question, "when does an individual human life begin," but it can point to inconsistencies in efforts to formulate the problem.

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Journal references

I have just read Mr. B. I. Silkin's letter (SN: 11/6/71, p. 306), and as a science librarian, I agree with him. Theoretically, the date alone, or the volume number should be enough to locate an article referred to. Practically, however, both are often needed to locate, with certainty, a given reference. You may not wish to include page references, but volume and issue number in addition to date would most certainly be a great help.

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films OF THE WEEK

COLLEGE GEOMETRY SERIES. Twelve 16mm, color, sound films produced by the College Geometry Project, University of Minnesota. Titles: Orthogonal Projection (13 min); Central Similarities (10 min); Dihedral Kaleidoscopes (13 min); Geometric Vectors (17 min); Inversion (12 min); Curves of Constant Width (16 min); Central Perspectives (13½ min); Equidecomposable Polygons (10½ min); Symmetries of the Cube (13½ min); Isometries (26 min); Protective Generation of Conics (16 min); and Caroms (9½ min). Audience: college. For purchase or rental information, write International Film Bureau, Dept. SN, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60604.

DIROFILARIA IMMITIS, DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSMISSION. 16mm, color, sound, 16 min. A concise research report on the dog heartworm, which can affect many dogs, is presented. Shows the feeding activity of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, the uptake of *Dirofilaria immitis*, and the development of the larvae in the mosquito. First and second stage larvae, and the means by which the infective third-stage larvae leave the proboscis of the mosquito and are deposited on the skin surface of the host are shown. Includes extreme close-ups of the mosquito probing and feeding, and also shows the cinemicrographic recording equipment used in the research. An end title lists published research on the subject. Audience: veterinarians, biologists. Purchase \$190 or rental \$13 from University Extension, University of California, Dept. SN, Berkeley, Calif. 94720.

POLLUTION IN PERSPECTIVE: OUR AIR AND WATER. 16mm, color, sound, 15 min. Critical issues related to air and water pollution are identified and explored. Should we cut down on the amount of fuel consumption in the United States? What are the chances of reducing automobile emissions and would this reduce air pollution significantly? How should we attack water pollution: By building more treatment plants to remove phosphates from water, or by eliminating the phosphates in detergents? It is clear that there is no easy answer or solution to any of these questions. Gaining one advantage often means giving up some others. The panel cautions that resolving the problems of air and water may take patience and continuing commitment on the part of the general public. Audience: general. Purchase \$180 from General Electric Educational Films, Dept. SN, 60 Washington Ave., Schenectady, N.Y. 12345.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF DEATH. 16mm, b&w, sound, 39 min. This is the dramatized story of a leukemia patient, his wife, and a nursing student who is facing the death of a patient for the first time. The patient, even though he has a terminal disease, is unrealistic in that he continually looks toward the future. His wife is pregnant and very much wants him to live to see the baby. When he unexpectedly dies, the nurse—who has become very attached to the patient and his wife—becomes emotionally upset but must learn that her job still consists of helping the family. Audience: College, adult, special. Purchase \$200 or rental \$9.50 from Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, Dept. SN, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

REFLECTIONS IN A POND. 16mm, color, sound, 10 min. Sometimes music can do better than words in describing a mood. Here music and natural sounds combine to make us feel a part of the life that lives in a pond. Our case is a family of mute swans, six Chinese white geese, and one great blue heron. Audience: elementary, secondary, general. Purchase \$125 from Journal Films, Dept. SN, 909 W. Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill. 60614.

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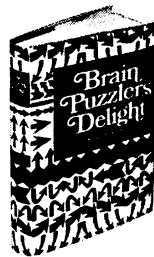
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