

## This Week

- 68 How Inhaled Dust Harms the Lungs  
*Janet Raloff*
- 68 Uric acid linked to multiple sclerosis  
*Mari N. Jensen*
- 69 Sign of spring: Science finalists picked  
*Susan Millius*
- 69 Spotting a sparse crystal of trapped ions  
*Ivars Peterson*
- 70 Spy satellite plumbs secrets of Antarctica  
*Richard Monastersky*
- 70 Hormone signals the death of fat cells  
*John Travis*
- 71 Expensive drug thwarts deadly lung ailment  
*Nathan Seppa*
- 71 Family gives genetic clue to language  
*Bruce Bower*

## Articles

- 73 Tuberculosis Outbreak  
An ancient killer strikes a new population  
*Kathleen Fackelmann*
- 76 The Coyotes of Lamar Valley  
In Yellowstone, the master adapter learns to deal with wolves  
*Christine Mlot*

## Letters

### Dental sealant stance questioned

I applaud the American Dental Association's (ADA) sponsorship of further research into the safety of dental sealants ("Dental Sealant Safety Reconsidered," SN: 11/22/97, p. 324). However, I find it troubling that ADA would continue its "strong recommendation that dental sealants be used as appropriate."

Dental sealants are now big business within the dental community. Consequently, ADA must maintain its impartiality regarding sealant safety until all of the data can be gathered and analyzed.

ADA's apparent lack of objectivity undermines its credibility and the credibility of the studies it sponsors.

*John Scalise  
Mount Pleasant, Mich.*

### Enhancing the beholder's eye

The title "Supernormal Vision" may be misleading (SN: 11/15/97, p. 312). I was fortunate enough to have attended the meeting where David R. Williams presented the work on achieving better imaging by warping optics,

and I am not at all sanguine about this leading to promising improvements in patients' vision through the development of new types of spectacles or contact lenses.

Among other things, these new elements add their own source of optical aberration. Glasses may slide down the nose to different positions, for example, or contact lenses may rotate or float on tear films of different thickness.

The great promise of this work lies in enhancing the ability to observe the back of the human eye. Better visualization of the retina, vasculature, nerve fiber layer, and optic nerve head should prove extremely helpful in characterizing normal structure, as well as the effects of disease.

*Alfredo A. Sadun  
Professor of Ophthalmology  
University of Southern California  
Los Angeles, Calif.*

### Magnetic fields in hospitals

Did anyone suggest that the magnetic field of the average hospital room be examined ("Magnetic fields can diminish drug action," SN: 11/29/97, p. 342)? Often, the most aggressive

drug therapy takes place in the hospital setting. Clearly, this might influence the results of certain clinical trials also.

*Bart Miaullis  
Los Altos, Calif.*

### Social forces and chip technology

I just finished reading "Fine Lines for Chips" (SN: 11/8/97, p. 302). The concluding paragraphs comment briefly about economic and political factors potentially affecting technologies for future chips. Maybe these factors should have been discussed first.

We live in such a politicized and profit-driven society that, realistically, economics and politics will probably be the driving forces behind technological advancement.

*Leo Uzych  
Wallingford, Pa.*

### CORRECTION

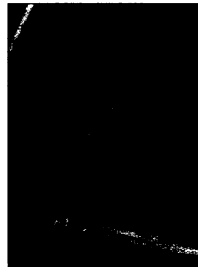
"Astronomers Aglow About Infrared Maps" (SN: 1/10/98, p. 20) notes that the accompanying map reveals the pattern of extragalactic background light at a wavelength of 240 millimeters. The correct number is 240 micrometers.

## Research Notes

- 78 Biomedicine  
Appendectomy? Scan me first, Doc  
Snoring impedes blood flow in brain
- 79 Astronomy  
Mapping the universe  
Dino death: A stellar weapon . . .  
. . . or a high-energy flash?

## Departments

- 66 Science News Books
- 67 Letters



**Cover:** The Yanomami Indians are fighting for their lives as a tuberculosis epidemic rages in the heart of the Amazon. Researchers say their studies of the Yanomami may reveal how the human immune system reacted to this disease long ago. **Page 73**  
(Photo: Alexandria O. de Sousa)

Visit **SCIENCE NEWS ONLINE** for special features, columns, and references.

<http://www.sciencenews.org>