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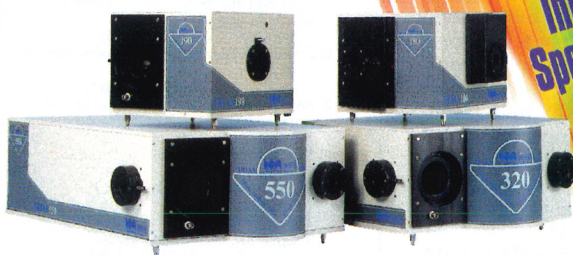
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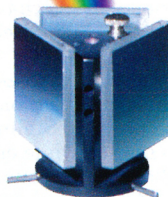
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a greater sensitivity to when somebody is at least trying to be funny (PHYSICS TODAY, October 1997, page 11), and have even been lectured on the inappropriateness of joking about matters of great gravity in this age of polemics and position papers (August 1999, page 82). Susanna bawled out Figaro for joking about serious business. Not much changes.

I put Mark Stevens's tough questions to Professor Mozart and got back this laconic reply: "I deny the validity of a distinction between research that is or is not 'curiosity-driven.' Research support at American universities should be given directly to the research assistants as fellowships and not to the faculty as research assistantships. Graduate students are much better placed than peer reviewers to sniff out where the action is."

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Geophysicists Dare to Seek Dual Careers

Upon reading Robert Dennis's letter about his troubles with a pair of married physics teachers (PHYSICS TODAY, September, page 78), I realized that I could be accused of having chosen the wrong career. You see, I majored in physics at the University of California, Berkeley while my father was an astronomy professor there. Although I carefully avoided his courses, most of his students were friends of mine. According to Dennis, there must inevitably have been a conflict of interest when two family members encountered the same student. Whether that cosmic imbalance caused grade inflation or deflation, I don't know, but I regret my part in any such catastrophe.

I have since compounded my crime by marrying a fellow geophysicist and worse, by daring to hope that we can both have academic careers at the same institution. I pray that I may somehow receive forgiveness if I do not abandon my career or my marriage.

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Correction

July, page 39—The fissile material used in the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was not plutonium as stated, but uranium. ■