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The American Astronomical Society's First Century

Edited by David H. DeVorkin

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remains speculative and therefore of uncertain relevance to the modeling of tumor risk. The effect of carbon-14 transmutation on genetic material was considered in the 1950s, as was, later, that of tritium, but the interest in the subject died out after it was found that the effects are marginal compared to those of radiation.

Finally, there's the letter from Harry Ellis. I have no comment other than that I have no differences with him.

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[Editor's note: Because of space limitations, we have deferred publication of two other letters on this subject; they will appear, together with a reply from Zbigniew Jaworowski, in the May issue.]

Faculty-Position Ad's Underemphasis on Teaching Is MITigated

In his letter in your November 1999 issue (page 81), Jay Pulli chastises MIT's physics department for having failed to emphasize teaching in its PHYSICS TODAY advertisement for faculty positions. His criticism is well placed, and it is clear that we made a mistake by overlooking the importance that the department gives to teaching. As Sputnik-era physics professors retire, and we begin the process of renewal in the department, we place a very high value on talent for and dedication to teaching, especially at the undergraduate level, when hiring faculty members. Furthermore, as the department head interviewing faculty candidates, I stress the critical role their teaching record will play in the promotion and tenure process.

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