If the translated journals become self-sustaining, we will take this as an indication of acceptance by scientists. If, after 3 years or so, the subscription list to any one journal is still very small, we will probably take this as an indication that we should not continue to support the translation of that journal.

In essence, Luts and I are both right; which one is the most right depends on the subject matter, the need for information, the quality of particular journals, availability and price of "to order" translation, and other similar details.

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Transabdominal Amniocentesis

I should like to point out a problem in ethics involved in a recent paper by Parrish, Lock, and Rountree [*Science* **126**, 77 (1957)]. The authors report on 50 cases of transabdominal amniocentesis in normal pregnant women. Mention should be made of the disregard of patients involved in trying this procedure on these cases in view of the high incidence of congenital abnormalities following amniocentesis in mice reported by Trasler *et al.* [*Science* **124**, 439 (1956)]. Although no fetal trauma was reported, this was an experiment, and the result might have come out the other way. Were the patients aware of the dangers?

LUCILLE MOROWITZ
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In response to Lucille Morowitz, who questioned the ethics involved in our performing transabdominal amniocentesis in normal pregnant human beings [*Science* **126**, 77 (1957)] after Trasler *et al.* [*Science* **124**, 439 (1956)] had reported congenital malformations in mice following a similar procedure, we would like to offer the following considerations.

First, Rivett [*Am. J. Obstet. Gynecol.* **52**, 890 (1946)] did not observe amniocentesis harmful to the mother or child in 50 human cases of polyhydramnios, nor did Dieckmann and Davis [*Am. J. Obstet. Gynecol.* **25**, 623 (1933)] note any deleterious effects produced by the procedure in 25 normal human patients. Second, our work was completed during 1955, before the publication of Trasler's report. Also, Trasler's work was done on mice, which have two uterine horns accustomed to multiple pregnancy, in contrast to the single uterine segment of human beings in which a single pregnancy usually develops. Perhaps here we have an example of the inapplicability of the results of animal experiments to the results obtained in human beings. Third, the nature of the test was explained carefully to each patient, after which written permission was obtained to perform the test.

Reports in the literature and our own results do not seem to indicate that transabdominal amniocentesis is a dangerous operation in human beings; however, further evaluation is necessary before the procedure can be recommended for general use.

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EQUIPMENT NEWS

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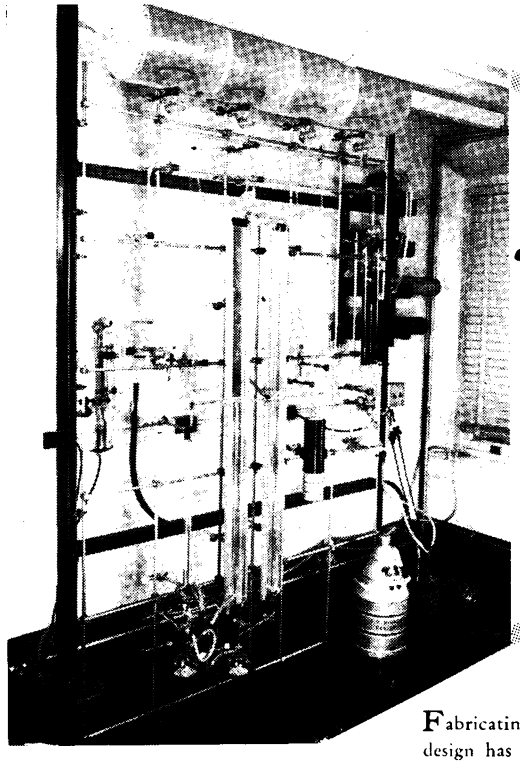
■ DELAY GENERATOR consists of a trigger generator, a delay generator, and a regulated power supply. The trigger generator furnishes a standard negative pulse



High vacuum Apparatus for the Determination of Surface Area by the Brunauer-Emmett-Teller Method operating in the plant of C. K. Williams & Company, Easton, Pennsylvania. The apparatus, for measuring gas adsorption isotherms, is made of "Pyrex" brand glass. It was designed in cooperation with the Surface Chemistry Laboratory of Lehigh University.

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