Studies of Starvation

As referee editors of several physiological and nutritional journals, we are perturbed by the continuing submission of mediocre papers dealing with starvation. Usually the only experimental method used consists in starving rats to a near-terminal condition and then determining one of the many parameters which can be affected by starvation. Sometimes determination of the duration of survival on a given diet is the only "technique" employed. Previously obtained information, available in the U.S. and foreign literature—often admittedly older literature because of the very simplicity of the techniques used —is generally ignored.

The application of the "findings" to problems of human survival involves questionable extrapolations. What little new information, if any, is obtained in these studies does not seem to us to be commensurate with the suffering inflicted on the animals. There is little doubt that we need to know more about the physiological mechanisms involved in resisting starvation and about the pathological consequences of prolonged undernutrition, whether continuous or intermittent. We would certainly approve for publication papers in which a great many pertinent correlations are studied in order to close the book, at least for a while, on death by starvation. But we find it difficult to approve of these piecemeal dissections which have resulted, and which will continue to result in perhaps dozens of papers, none of them definitive.

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Electronics and the Life Sciences

In their article "Biomedical electronics: potentialities and problems" [*Science* **135**, 198 (1962)], Robert Ledley and Lee Lusted argue the need for conditions which are more favorable to the development of "biomedical electronics." They review the highly important role which electronics has played in the development of devices and systems of major contemporary importance and foresee a similar role for electronics in