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Racial Proposal

The proposals of the Association of Black Psychologists to the Council of the American Psychological Association (11 Oct., p. 243) were thought-provoking but in a highly negative sense. It is extremely unfortunate that these psychologists, supposedly experts in human behavior, cannot see any further than the color of their skin. No one denies that there has been and there is much injustice and racism in our country, but to substitute positive discrimination for negative is no solution. Only when we assess individuals on the basis of relevant characteristics, rather than skin color, will we begin to solve our racial problems. To demand proportional representation of Blacks in the APA or graduate schools is as ludicrous as if Italians, Norwegians, Holy Rollers, people with strabismus, or any other "minority" were to demand proportional representation.

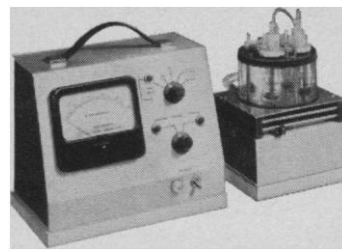
GEORGE DOMINO

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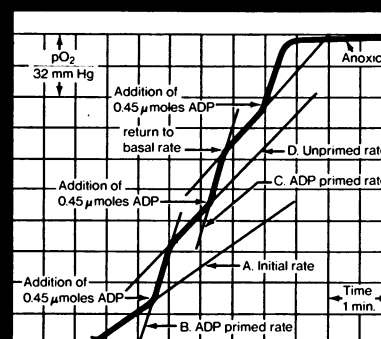
Stringent Drug Regulations

The discovery by Lowinger (Letters, 16 Aug.) that only 10 of 26 reports on new drug studies which he submitted to 19 drug houses had subsequently been received by the Food and Drug Administration would indeed be cause for alarm if taken at face value. It should be noted, however, that the present stringent regulations concerning investigational drugs first became effective in May 1963. Prior to that time, there was no requirement that manufacturers even *notify* the FDA when investigations of new drugs were initiated in man, and the data or "toxicity reports" from such investigations were submitted to the FDA only when and if New Drug Applications (NDA's) were filed. While Lowinger is correct in stating that the 1938 law required filing of all safety data by the manufacturer "... before the drug can be marketed," thousands of compounds were investigated before 1963 and abandoned for a variety of reasons without NDA's being filed. There never was any requirement that toxicity data on such drugs be submitted to the FDA.

Furthermore, prior to 1963, there



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was no requirement that *every* new report on an already marketed drug be submitted to the FDA. Once the NDA became effective, additional data on the drug were not filed unless they represented unexpected and serious new hazards. Since Lowinger's survey covered the period 1954 to 1966, a number of his reports may have failed to reach the FDA because of the above considerations. Without further information, it is impossible to ascertain whether all, some, or none of the cited failures to report were really delinquencies. This, in turn, vitiates the final recommendation that investigators be required to assume the additional burden of sending reports directly to the FDA.

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Statistical Uncertainties

Most of us in the business of statistical consulting would gladly display bumper stickers proclaiming "WIPE OUT $A \pm B$." Eisenhart's article ("Expression of the uncertainties of final results," 14 June, p. 1201) is a much-needed contribution to this campaign. However, his nearly all-inclusive use of the term *uncertainty*, even with the modifying words, gives the reporting scientist what amounts to a cop-out phrase. Wouldn't it be better to use such established statistical concepts as *estimated standard deviation*, *confidence limits*, *sample size*, *degrees of freedom*, and *tolerance limits*?

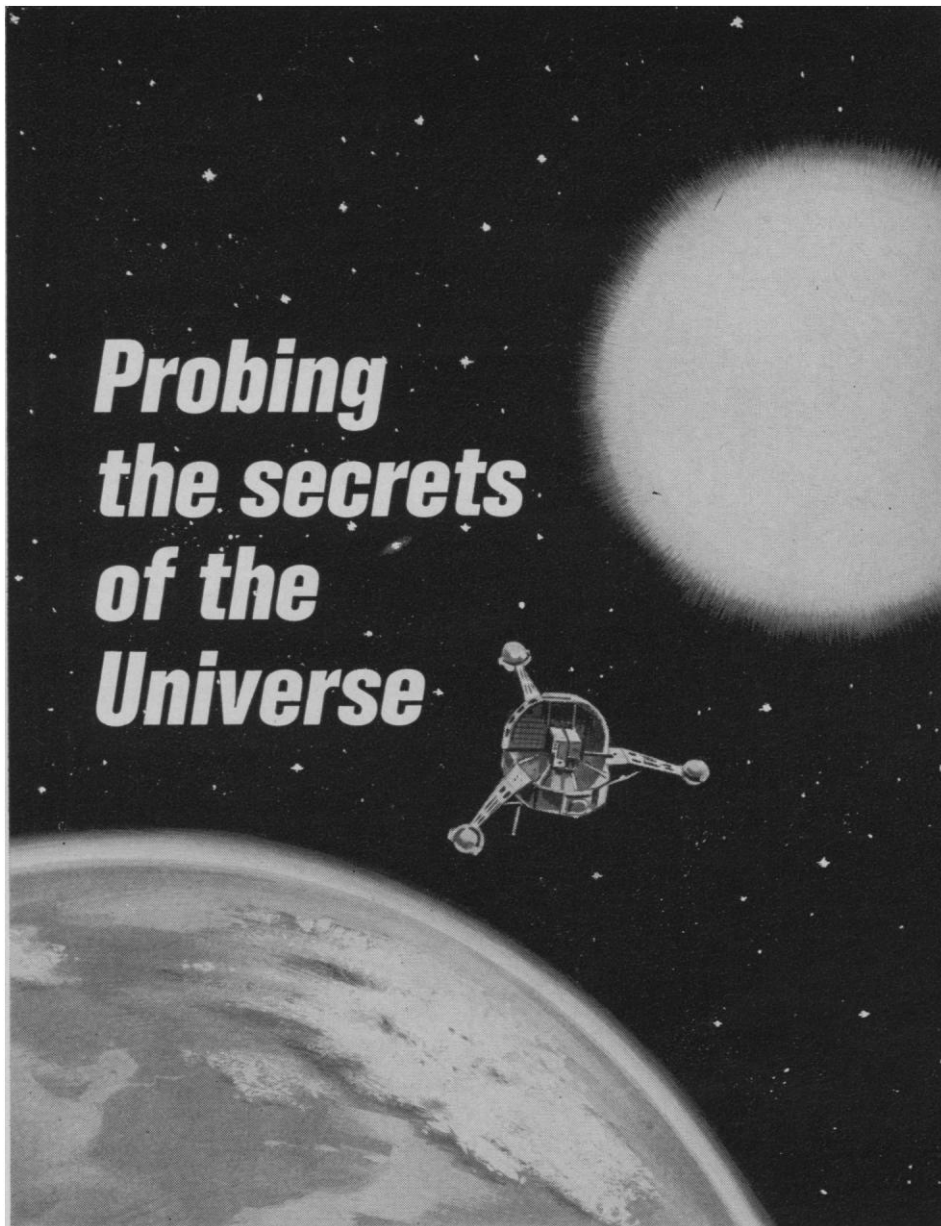
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Eisenhart leaves very little uncertainty as to proper statement of a physical quantity. I only wish that someone would equally clarify some matters of biometrics. For example, the statement, "The average height above ground of an ear of American corn is $1.5 \pm .5$ meters," certainly does not mean that we are unable to measure corn within a meter. It could mean that one half the corn will ear at between 1 and 2 meters, or it could refer to the standard deviation.

The statement, "Hybrid corn type X ears at $1.5 \pm .1$ meter," could mean

20 DECEMBER 1968



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