physical life, and (ii) has human parents.

The problem with any other set of criteria (for example, social or intellectual awareness), aside from those which are wholly arbitrary, is that they would exclude not only unborn infants but also many children and, quite possibly, a number of handicapped adolescents and adults as well. By some stringent standards only a handful of people could legally qualify as persons. Neither Rosenberg nor any of the authorities he quotes offers a definition of a human being—the only thing they say for certain is that a fetus is not one. . . .

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I found Rosenberg's testimony before Senator East's committee very interesting. His point of view is a novel one for a geneticist and certainly thought-provoking. It would have been a more interesting commentary if the testimony of geneticist LeJeune (University of René Decartes), Gordon (Mayo Clinic), and Matthews-Roth (Harvard University) had also been presented. . . .

The implication for our society in the matters discussed are not trivial. May we scientists have all the evidence.

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Information Management

The News and Comment article by Constance Holden about the dispute between the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and Excerpta Medica (5 June, p. 1125) raises the more general issues of the appropriate role of government agencies in the dissemination of scientific information and the prices that should be charged for information produced by or distributed by the government. Holden indicates that, despite regulations from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (*1*), and a judicial decision exempting MEDLARS (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System) information from the Freedom of Information Act (*2*), the policies under which NLM operates its information system are neither clear nor beyond controversy.

Unfortunately, these problems are pervasive. Recent studies by the General Accounting Office (*3*), the Federal Coordinating Committee on Science, Engineering, and Technology (*4*), and others (*5*) have documented the inconsistent application of those policy statements that are extant. This lack of rational and consistent policy and practice affects users of the Educational Resources Information Center, the National Cartographic Information Center, the Landsat program, and the National Technical Information Service—to name but a few of the government organizations that provide information to the scientific community.

If we, as a nation, are to be able to utilize scientific information efficiently, we may well need a complete overhaul of Title 44 (which establishes the Government Printing Office and its relationship to the Joint Committee on Printing), as well as the inconsistent and inappropriate OMB guidelines.

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1. *User Charges* (Circular A-25, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C., 1974); *Policies for Acquiring Commercial or Industrial Products and Services for Government Use* (Circular A-76, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C., 1978); 31 *U.S. Code* Section 483a.
2. S.D.C. Development Corp. *v.* Matthews, 542 Fed. Rep. 2nd Suppl. 1116 (9th Cir. Ct.) (1976).
3. *Better Information Management Policies Needed: A Study of Scientific and Technical Bibliographic Services* (Report PSAD-79-62, General Accounting Office, Washington, D.C., 1979).
4. Federal Coordinating Committee on Science, Engineering, and Technology, *Report of the Working Group on Private Sector/Governmental Relationships for Scientific and Technical Information* (National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1980).
5. D. King and N. Roderer, *Report on Pricing of NCIC Information Products and Services* (King Research, Rockville, Md., report for U.S. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C., 1978).

Wine Ranking

Wyatt (Letters, 12 June, p. 1212) suggests that differential light-scattering (DLS) patterns are predictive of wine quality. It would have been more convincing had an a priori prediction of quality been compared to the test panel's judgment. I therefore ranked the wines according to my own interpretation of the DLS patterns (Wyatt's figures 1 and 2) and compared these rankings to those of Wyatt's test panel. In addition, I compared the panel's ranking to a ranking based on cost.

Table 1. Wine rankings.*

Identification†	DLS				Cost rank
	Smoothness	Slope	Total	Rank	
G	1	1	2	1	1
F	3	3	6	2	2
C	7	2	9	4.5	4
A	4	6	10	6	5.5
B	2	5	7	3	5.5
E	5	4	9	4.5	3
D	6	7	13	7	7

*Data taken from or reinterpreted from Wyatt. †In order of preference by panel.

My wine-ranking scheme considered both slope and smoothness of the DLS curve for each wine. I ranked the wines separately for each parameter, summed the two scores, and ranked the result (Table 1). The Spearman rank correlation coefficient, r_s (*2*), was significant ($r_s = .78$, $P < .05$) for the DLS-panel comparison, indicating that DLS patterns were good predictors of wine quality. However, the cost-panel relationship was equally good ($r_s = .78$, $P < .05$). Thus, the wine consumer would be as likely to make a satisfactory choice based on cost as one based on DLS pattern.

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References

1. S. Siegel, *Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1956), pp. 202–213.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if wineries followed Wyatt's suggestion and recorded a wine's differential light-scattering (DLS) pattern, rating, or "parameterization thereof" as an aid to the enophilic consumer. Then we could all select wines which are gloriously indistinguishable. How wines are "polished" before release certainly affects their clarity, but aging, nature's time-honored way to remove the "noisy" particulates, also imparts to the wine the subtle nuances we have come to associate with the gallo- and ellagitannins and other sensory-associated highlights. This is a slow process, and if one notes that even the smoothest DLS pattern (wine G, $12) was associated with a wine judged by the taste panel as "young," it would appear that a single DLS rating may be of as little value to the consumer as Wyatt's attempt to try and find Pinot Noir worth loving before its time.

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Erratum: In an article titled "How safe is Bendectin?" (News and Comment, 31 Oct. 1980, p. 518), it was reported that Richard W. Smithells conducted a Bendectin study of 2000 women and 11,000 controls. The correct number of women in the control population is 1100.