

tion, fluoridation of water supplies as an effective method for reducing the incidence of dental caries. Support of these highly successful programs was based on evidence from critical evaluation of conjectures—hypotheses—about solutions for the problems and the results of rigorous experimentation directed toward disproving the various existing hypotheses. This is how scientific knowledge is established.

Nutrition scientists have supported recommendations for healthful diets for over 60 years. They have supported strongly recommendations for inclusion of vegetables, particularly those rich in vitamins A and C, and a moderate amount of fiber in diets (1); they have not recommended either low- or high-fat diets, but have recognized that appropriate recommendations for fat intake depend on many factors; they have emphasized control of caloric intake and weight control (2). They have not, however, promised, by implication or innuendo, that consuming a healthful diet will reduce the incidence of chronic and degenerative diseases, because that hypothesis has failed to withstand critical evaluation.

When close to 80 percent of infants born live to age 65 and beyond, when the life expectancy of male infants is 72 years and that of females is 78 years—even for those who die of coronary heart disease (3), and when those who reach 65 have a life expectancy of 15 years, the evidence has to be very good indeed to support a prediction with any degree of certainty that eating more vegetables and fiber and less fat will reduce the incidence of early deaths from diseases associated with aging.

It is not surprising that nutrition scientists are skeptical about claims for disease prevention through diet modification.

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3. C. H. Slater *et al.*, *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* **42**, 329 (1985).

Hic, Haec, Hoc . . .

"*De gustibus non est disputandum*"? Quousque tandem, Catilina, must we endure such headlines? That Mark R. Braford, Jr. (Reports, 25 Apr., p. 489), and perhaps the editors of *Science* as well, could do with a few Latin lessons, *non est disputandum*. Although it has now been more than 65 years since I studied Cicero and Horace, I offer my (free) services as Latin Headline Editor.

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Erratum: In the article "Solving knotty problems in math and biology" by Gina Kolata (Research News, 28 Mar., p. 1506), the affiliation of Morwen Thistlethwaite, mentioned in the legend of the second figure on page 1507, should have been Polytechnic of the South Bank in London.

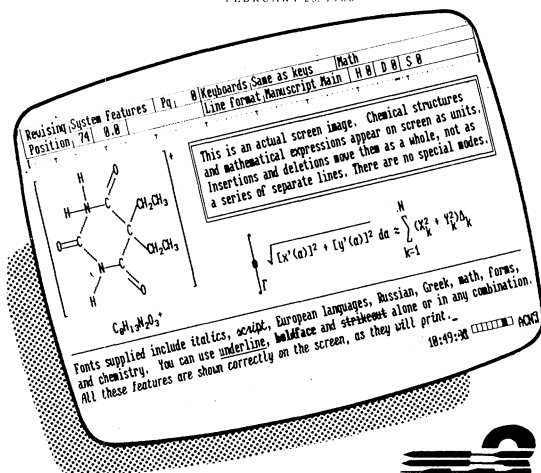
Erratum: The title of the report by Mark R. Braford, Jr., in the issue of 25 April (p. 489) should have been, "*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum*: A Spiral Center for Taste in the Brain of the Teleost Fish, *Heterotis niloticus*."



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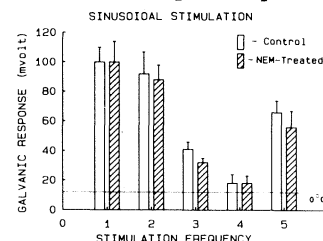
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