

equipped to be appropriately selective—and even kind—in making post-retirement appointments, usually on a part-time basis (and at an appropriately lower stipend). They are ill equipped and incompetent to discharge elderly colleagues for cause when the seniors become liabilities rather than assets to the academic enterprise. To expect them to use performance criteria to discharge superannuated tenured faculty, their friends and colleagues, is wishful and unwise. The arbitrary age limit is an essential protection.

The most valuable among the aging faculty often welcome retirement as giving their options greater flexibility. Some of the less valuable follow Koshland's blue-collar pattern and opt for early retirement. There are, however, a number of other less valuable faculty who will hang on until the bitter end. Without reasonable and arbitrary age limits, most faculties and administrators are morally incapable of coping with the problems that these tenacious colleagues present.

Reconsideration of national policy with respect to retirement age is seriously needed.

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Stunned Sex Interviewers?

William Booth's account of the lost sex survey (News & Comment, 4 Mar., p. 1084) says that sex interviewers should not be "phased" by details of sexual aberrations. Have no fear. They may be "fazed" by such items, but they can only be "phased" by weapons in the hands of crewmen from the starship Enterprise.

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La Différence?

In her well-informed article "Why do women live longer than men?" (Research News, 9 Oct., p. 158), Constance Holden mentions Verbrugge's suggestion that the difference in longevity "appears to be to some extent biological." This may be so, although no attempt was made to specify the biological roots of this difference by relating it to the difference in metabolic rate between men and women.

A plot of age-specific death rates of the general population against the rate of oxy-

gen consumption—the oxygen quotient per hour in calories per square meter of body surface—separately for men and for women at all adult age levels displays parallel curves revealing that women, in contrast with men, burn their fire of life at a rate that is 8 to 10% lower than that of men (1). Evidently, a constant proportion of the difference in longevity is based on the body mass–energy expenditure relation. Truly, and literally: "Vive la différence!"

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REFERENCES

1. R. Fischer, *Experientia* 22, 178 (1966).

Erratum: In the letter "Behavioral research and AIDS prevention" by William W. Darrow (25 Mar., p. 1477), (1) in line 7 of the second paragraph should have been (2).

Erratum: In the report "DNA amplification for detection of HIV-1 in DNA of peripheral blood mononuclear cells" by Chin-Yih Ou *et al.* (15 Jan., p. 295), the fourth sentence of reference 21 (p. 297) should have read, "The PCR reaction mixture contained 1 µg of PBMC DNA, 100 pmol each of primers (Table 2), 200 µM each of four deoxyribonucleoside triphosphates, 10 µM tris-HCl, pH 8.3, 50 mM KCl, 2.5 mM MgCl₂, 0.01% gelatin, and 0.6 unit of thermostable DNA polymerase of *Thermus aquaticus*."

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