

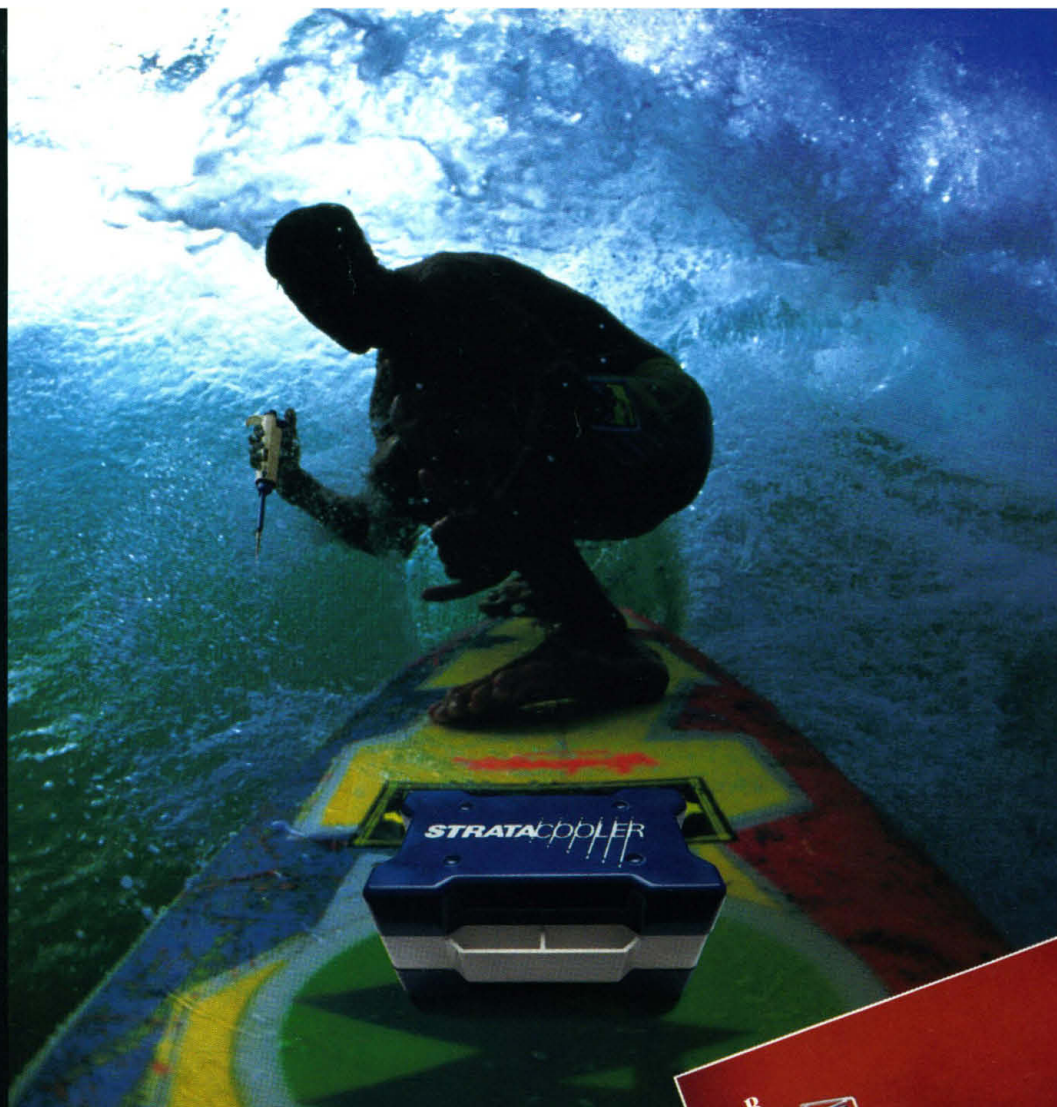


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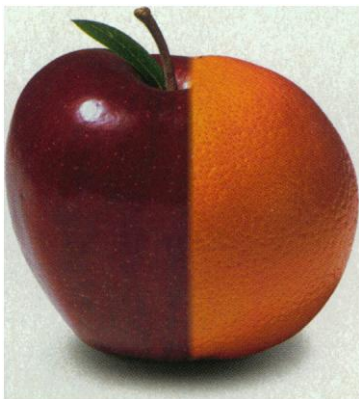
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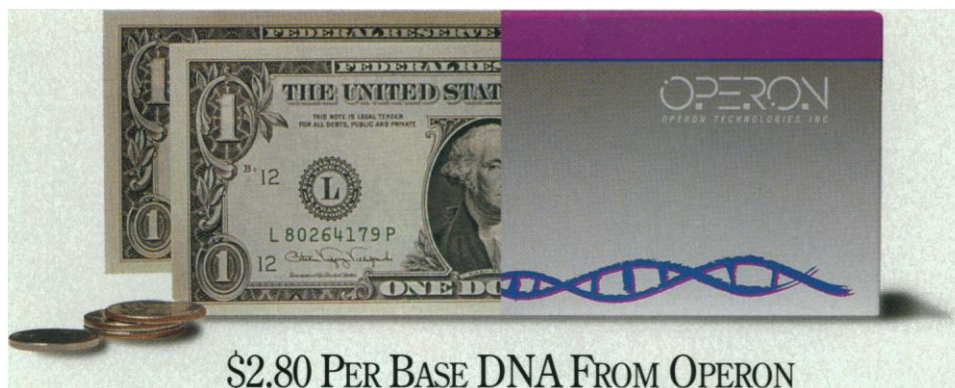
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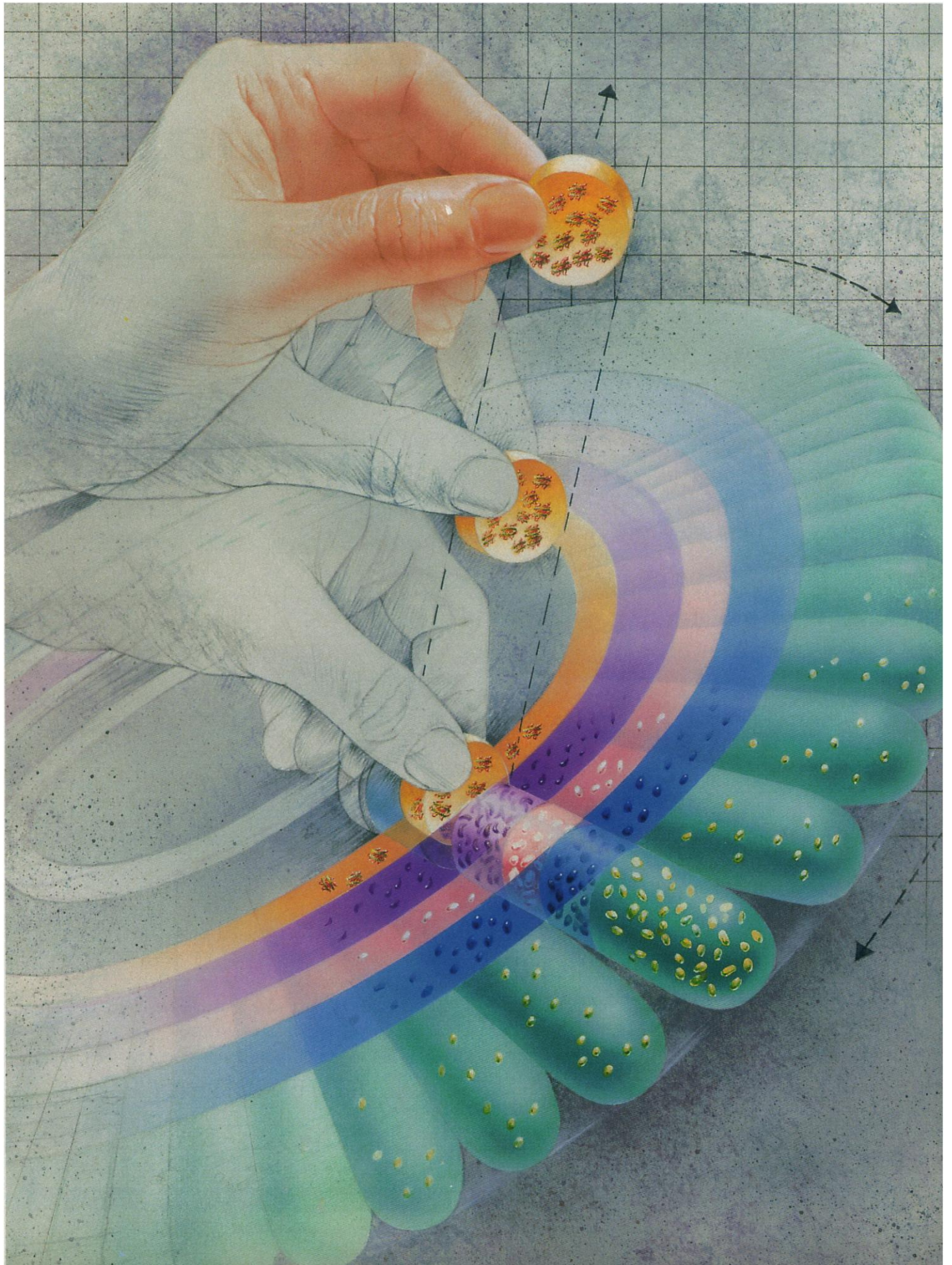
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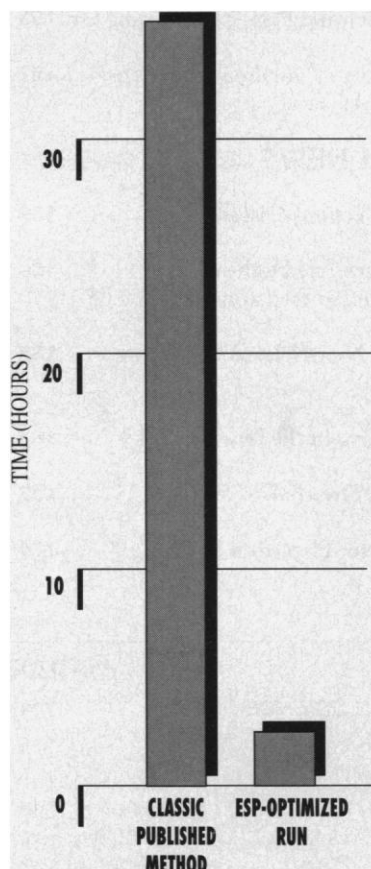
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NEWS & COMMENT

- Genome Project Plans Described 152
- Clinton Asks for a Greener DOE 153
- Surprise! A Fungus Factory for Taxol? 154
- At Tokyo University, a Parting Shot 155
- The Cost of Scientific Pork Keeps Going Up 156

- Early AZT Takes a Pounding in French-British 'Concorde' Trial 157

RESEARCH NEWS

- Ulcers as an Infectious Disease 159
- Why Some Fishes Are Hotheads 160
- A Balancing Act in Predatory Fishes
- Biologists Visit New Orleans (Under an Assumed Name) 162
- A New Supernova in the Northern Sky 163
- Tribe of Brown Dwarfs Discovered? 163
- Condensed Matter Physicists Shrink Their Horizons 164

PERSPECTIVES

- Forging an Asteroid-Meteorite Link 167
- M. J. Gaffey
- Measuring Single Protein Motors at Work 169
- R. D. Vale

ARTICLES

- Near-Field Investigations of the Landers Earthquake Sequence, April to July 1992 171
- K. Sieh, L. Jones, E. Hauksson, K. Hudnut, D. Eberhart-Phillips, T. Heaton, S. Hough, K. Hutton, H. Kanamori, A. Lilje, S. Lindvall *et al.*

- A Nickel Metal Hydride Battery for Electric Vehicles 176
- S. R. Ovshinsky, M. A. Fetcenko, J. Ross

RESEARCH ARTICLES

- Regulation of Gene Expression in Hippocampal Neurons by Distinct Calcium Signaling Pathways 181
- H. Bading, D. D. Ginty, M. E. Greenberg
- Chips off of Asteroid 4 Vesta: Evidence for the Parent Body of Basaltic Achondrite Meteorites 186
- R. P. Binzel and S. Xu

DEPARTMENTS

- THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE 141
- EDITORIAL 143
- Science and Society
- LETTERS 145
- Audit at Woods Hole: C. E. Dorman • Drugs from Third World Plants: Creative Approaches: I. S. Johnson • No Lack of NO Activity: F. T. Bonner and M. N. Hughes; T. Michel • Tyrolean Paraphernalia: M. L. Grant; R. Temple; N. Denman; K. A. Klar • Sociological Discourse: J. A. Witkowski

- SCIENCESCOPE 151
- RANDOM SAMPLES 158
- BOOK REVIEWS 244
- Dynamic Biological Networks*, reviewed by C. L. Sahley • *Terrestrial Ecosystems Through Time*, J. W. Valentine • *Wealth and Hierarchy in the Intermediate Area*, W. Creamer • Vignettes • Books Received
- PRODUCTS & MATERIALS 248

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Fishes of the suborder Scombroidei, like this school of *Euthynnus affinis* in the Red Sea, are capable of endothermy. A molecular phylogeny of this suborder (which includes mackerels, bonitos, tunas, and billfishes) indicates that endothermy has evolved three

times within Scombroidei. Comparison of endothermic scombroids with their closest living ectothermic relatives provides a further understanding of how endothermy evolved. See page 210 and the News story on page 160. [Photo: Jeffrey L. Rotman/Peter Arnold, Inc.]



REPORTS

Silica Precipitation in Fractures and the Evolution of Permeability in Hydrothermal Upflow Zones 192

R. P. Lowell, P. Van Cappellen, L. N. Germanovich

Production of Metallo-Carbohedrenes in the Solid State 195

S. F. Cartier, Z. Y. Chen, G. J. Walder, C. R. Sleppey, A. W. Castleman, Jr.

Metastability of Superconducting Compounds in the Y-Ba-Cu-O System 196

E. L. Brosha, P. K. Davies, F. H. Garzon, I. D. Raistrick

Electrostatic Screening of Charge and Dipole Interactions with the Helix Backbone 198

D. J. Lockhart and P. S. Kim

Pressure-Induced Amorphization of R-Al₅Li₃Cu: A Structural Relation Among Amorphous Metals, Quasi-Crystals, and Curved Space 202

R. R. Winters and W. S. Hammack

Velocity Structure of a Gas Hydrate Reflector 204

S. C. Singh, T. A. Minshull, G. D. Spence

Impairment of V(D)J Recombination in Double-Strand Break Repair Mutants 207

G. E. Taccioli, G. Rathbun, E. Oltz, T. Stamato, P. A. Jeggo, F. W. Alt

Evolution of Endothermy in Fish: Mapping Physiological Traits on a Molecular Phylogeny 210

B. A. Block, J. R. Finnerty, A. F. R. Stewart, J. Kidd

Taxol and Taxane Production by *Taxomyces andreanae*, an Endophytic Fungus of Pacific Yew 214

A. Stierle, G. Strobel, D. Stierle

Frequency-Dependent Natural Selection in the Handedness of Scale-Eating Cichlid Fish 216

M. Hori

Distinct Functions of SR Proteins in Alternative Pre-mRNA Splicing 219

A. M. Zahler, K. M. Neugebauer, W. S. Lane, M. B. Roth

Spatially Resolved Dynamics of cAMP and Protein Kinase A Subunits in *Aplysia* Sensory Neurons 222

B. J. Bacskaï, B. Hochner, M. Mahaut-Smith, S. R. Adams, B.-K. Kaang, E. R. Kandel, R. Y. Tsien

Increased Frequency of Calcium Waves in *Xenopus laevis* Oocytes That Express a Calcium-ATPase 226

P. Camacho and J. D. Lechleiter

Acceleration of Intracellular Calcium Waves in *Xenopus* Oocytes by Calcium Influx 229

S. Girard and D. Clapham

Force of Single Kinesin Molecules Measured with Optical Tweezers 232

S. C. Kuo and M. P. Sheetz

Decreased Expression of Myotonin-Protein Kinase Messenger RNA and Protein in Adult Form of Myotonic Dystrophy 235

Y.-H. Fu, D. L. Friedman, S. Richards, J. A. Pearlman, R. A. Gibbs, A. Pizzuti, T. Ashizawa, M. B. Perryman, G. Scarlato, R. G. Fenwick, Jr., C. T. Caskey

Regulation of CREB Phosphorylation in the Suprachiasmatic Nucleus by Light and a Circadian Clock 238

D. D. Ginty, J. M. Kornhauser, M. A. Thompson, H. Bading, K. E. Mayo, J. S. Takahashi, M. E. Greenberg

TECHNICAL COMMENTS

Effect of Scale on Food Web Structure 242

N. D. Martinez; K. Havens



167 & 186
Meteorite origins

Indicates accompanying feature

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Making Met-Cars

Gas-phase reactions of vanadium and titanium with hydrocarbons can form clusters such as V_8C_{12} and Ti_8C_{12} , which have dodecahedral structures, as well as larger species. Metallo-carbohedrenes, or Met-Cars, have now been found in a solid-phase product. In a process analogous to the synthesis of fullerenes, Cartier *et al.* (p. 195) find that arc discharge of a metal-graphite composite rod can produce Met-Cars. The products, which are stable in air, were produced with yields of about 1 percent.

Crystals in curved space

How disordered are amorphous materials? On scales of a few angstroms, there is the bonding and coordination of individual atoms, whereas on scales of hundreds of angstroms there may be little observed order. The degree of order on scales of 5 to 20 angstroms is less well understood. Winters and Hammack (p. 202) report an observation of pressure-induced amorphization of a metallic crystal, the intermetallic alloy $R-Al_3Li_3Cu$, in which medium-range ordering was probed by x-ray diffraction. This ordering can be studied by the mathematical stratagem of examining a crystal in curved space.

How much methane?

An enormous amount of methane, a greenhouse gas, is presumed to be trapped along continental margins in and beneath a layer of methane hydrate. The base of the hydrate layer seems to be marked seismically by a prominent bottom-simulating reflector (BSR). Singh *et al.* (p. 204) show that seismic reflec-

A choice of channels

The concentration of intracellular calcium in neuronal cells can be increased by Ca^{2+} influx through various ion channels. However, the cell does not respond in the same manner to increases in intercellular calcium that result from influx of Ca^{2+} through these different channels. Bading *et al.* (p. 181) found that entry of Ca^{2+} into cells through two different channels—voltage-sensitive L-type Ca^{2+} channels or the *N*-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptor—activated transcription of *c-fos* through two different elements in the *c-fos* promoter. Although Ca^{2+} from both sources activated Ca^{2+} -calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II, the activity of that enzyme was required only for transcriptional activation resulting from Ca^{2+} entry through L-type Ca^{2+} channels. Thus, Ca^{2+} appears to regulate specific signaling pathways depending on its mode of entry into the cell.

tion data can be used to infer the thickness of the zone of gaseous methane beneath the BSR and estimate the amount of trapped methane on a global scale.

Asteroid-meteorite link

Binzel and Xu (p. 186) present evidence that the asteroid Vesta is the source of many basaltic achondrite meteorites on Earth and, in a Perspective, Gaffey (p. 167) overviews the origin and dynamics of the mani-belt asteroids.

Recombination and DNA repair

Cells of the immune system can respond to the diversity of antigens they encounter by recombining the lymphocyte antigen receptor genes. This process, V(D)J recombination, can be activated in nonlymphoid cells by introducing the recombination activation genes *RAG-1* and *RAG-2*. The recombination process generates DNA double-strand breaks both at the genes and at their conserved flanking sequences. Taccioli *et al.* (p. 207) introduced the *RAG* genes into cell lines that had defec-

tive DNA repair and identified two mutants that did not correctly repair DNA during V(D)J recombination; this impairment differs from that seen in *scid* mutants. They provide evidence for the presence of two non-lymphoid-specific genes that express factors that are involved in both DNA repair and V(D)J recombination.

Two fish stories

Some fish are endothermic and maintain a higher body temperature than the water they live in. Two different strategies have evolved in the *Scomboidei* for endothermy. Billfishes and mackerels warm only the brain and eyes, whereas tunas, like birds and mammals, have vascular countercurrent heat exchangers. In a phylogenetic analysis, Block *et al.* (p. 210; cover) show that endothermy arose three separate times and was associated with niche expansion.

Lake-dwelling cichlid fish feed on the scales of other fish and have mouths that open to the right (right-handed) or to the left. Hori (p. 216) shows that the mouth direction is determined by a one locus-two allele system and that the fre-

quency of each type oscillates around unity. Conditioning of prey drives selection: As right-handed fish become more abundant, prey fish tend to guard their left side, making the rarer left-handed predators more successful until the balance shifts. Watson (p. 160) overviews both studies in news stories.

Selective splicing

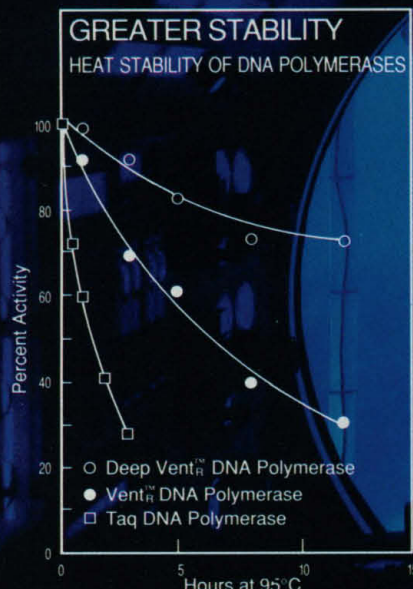
Many pre-mRNAs are alternatively spliced to produce tissue-specific products. Zahler *et al.* (p. 219) examine the activity of multiple pre-mRNA splicing factors (SR proteins) and find that particular SR proteins allow differential splice-site selection in an in vitro splicing system. They also demonstrate that SR proteins vary in expression in different tissues. Thus, SR proteins may regulate tissue-specific alternative splicing in vivo.

Controlling circadian rhythms

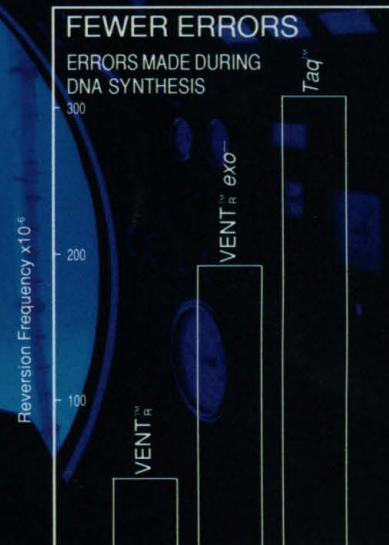
Circadian rhythms in mammals are controlled by a biological clock in the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) of the hypothalamus. Selective exposure of animals to light can shift the behavioral rhythms. The shifts are associated with increased expression of *c-fos*. Ginty *et al.* (p. 238) produced an antibody that specifically recognizes the phosphorylated, active form of the transcription factor CREB (cyclic adenosine monophosphate response element binding protein). They used the antibody to show that CREB became phosphorylated in the SCN of hamsters exposed to light at the appropriate time to shift their circadian rhythm. The results suggest that CREB takes part in control of circadian rhythms.

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Shedding Light on Nucleic Acids Detection

Nucleic acids detection



Analysis of microbial genomes: Southern blot of genomic DNA from (i) *Yersinia pestis* and (ii)(iii) *Yersinia enterocolitica* digested with *EcoRI* on Hybond™-N, hybridized with an IRP2 gene specific probe, using ECL random prime labelling and detection system. 6 minute exposure to Hyperfilm™-ECL. Data supplied by Dr Carniel, Laboratoire de Bactériologie Moléculaire Médicale, Institut Pasteur, Paris, France.

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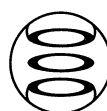
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