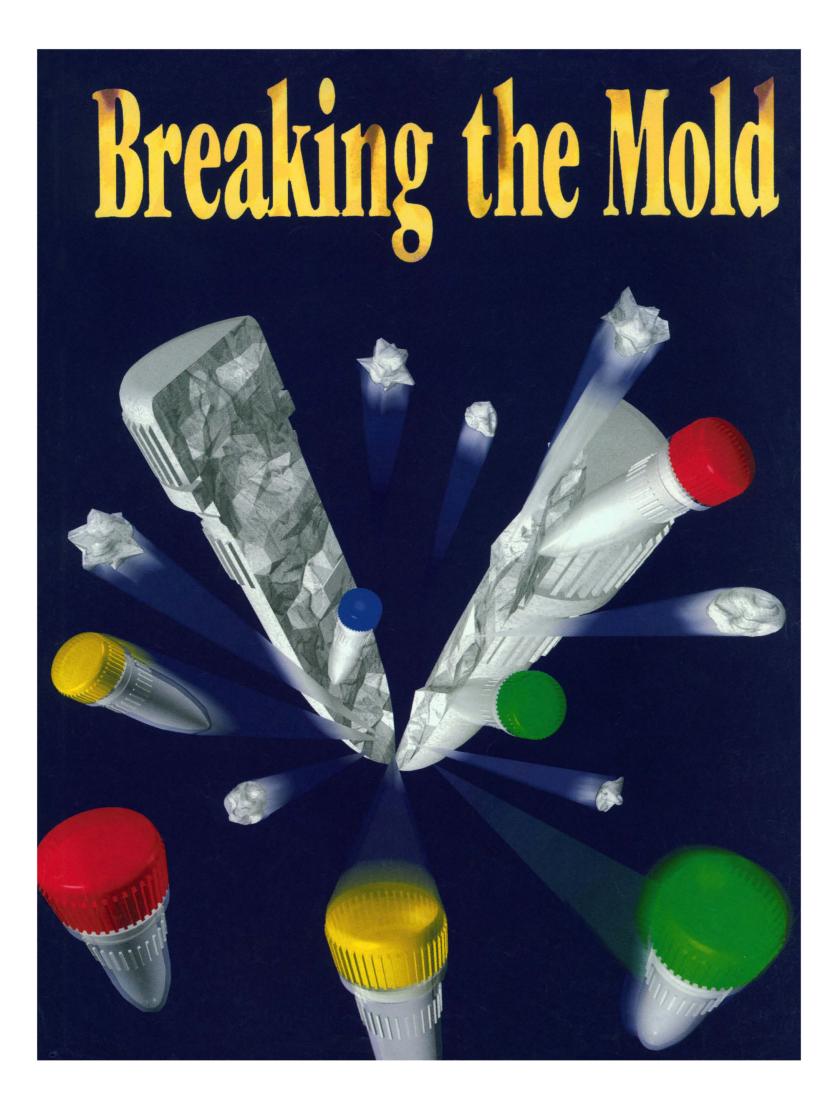
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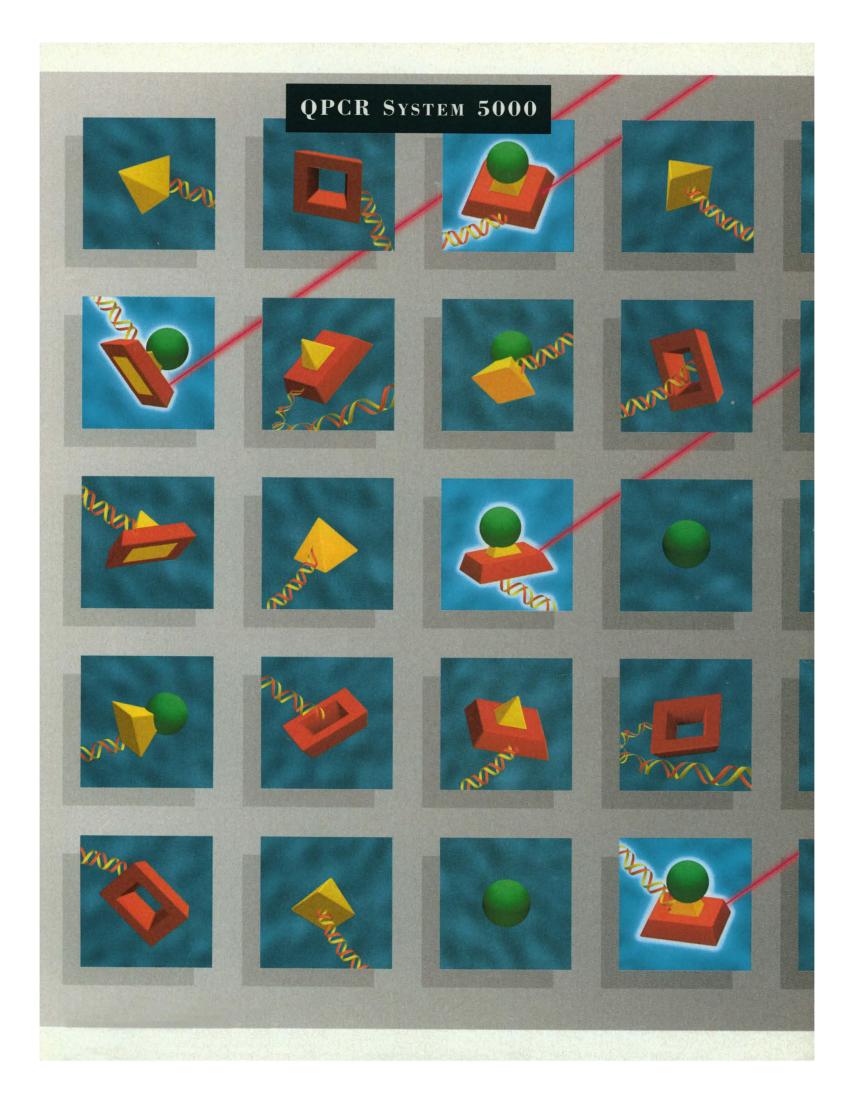
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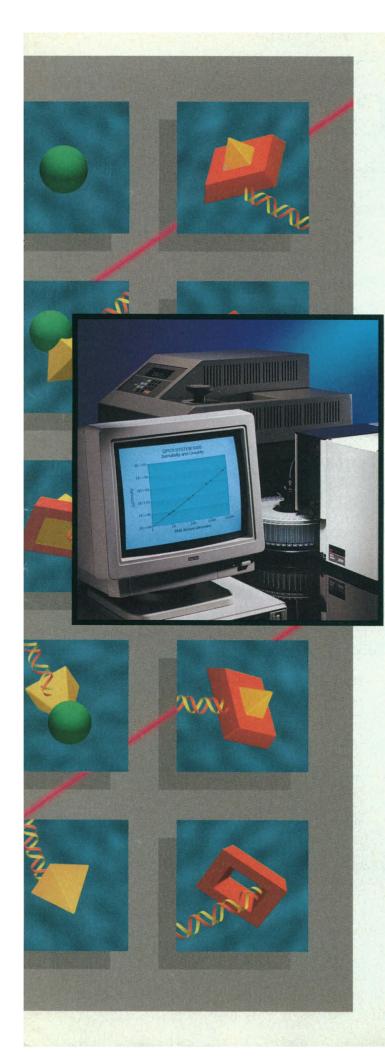
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POLICY FORUM

Science and the Toxic Tort

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1518 & 1564 Unsolved extinctions

K. R. Foster, D. E. Bernstein, P. W. Huber	
NEWS & COMMENT	and a
Senate Turns Up the Heat on NSF	1512
White House Plans New Science Council	1513
EPA Analysis of Radon in Water Is Hard to Swallow Radon Risks Up in the Air	1514
Conflict of Interest: White House Seeks Uniform Policy	1516
A New Study Finds There's Life Left in the Green Revolution	1517
RESEARCH NEWS	
How Lethal Was the K-T Impact? A Bigger Death Knell for the Dinosaurs?	1518
New Lead to an Alzheimer's Mouse?	1520
Closing In on X-Ray Background Origins	1520

1509	Holding the Lines in High-Temperature 1521 Superconductors
1509	PARC Builds a World Saturated With 1523 Computation
	PERSPECTIVE
1512	
1513	Gene Expression and the Cell Cycle: A Family Affair B. J. Andrews and S. W. Mason
1514	
	ARTICLE
1516	Chemistry of the Fullerenes: 1545 The Manifestation of Strain in a Class of Continuous Aromatic Molecules
1517	R. C. Haddon
1017	RESEARCH ARTICLE
	A Role for the Transcription Factors 🛛 🖊 1551
1518	Mbp1 and Swi4 in Progression from G1 to S Phase C. Koch, T. Moll, M. Neuberg, H. Ahorn,
1520	K. Nasmyth
1520	
PART	MENTS

DEPARTMENTS

THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE EDITORIAL A Multipurpose National Laboratory	1501 1503	RANDOM SAMPLES 152 Moondust in Your Eyes • Toxicologists Watch the Worm Turns French Get a Head in the Fossil Hunt	as
LETTERS B Factory Proposals: B. Richter • Bio Caltech: R. L. Sinsheimer and N. H. H R. Olby • Genetic Variation in A. G. Thorne, M. H. Wolpoff, R B. Ed L. L. Cavalli-Sforza, P. Menozzi, A. Piazza	orowitz; Africa:	BOOK REVIEWS 160 A View to a Death in the Morning, reviewed R. W. Rydell • Emerging Viruses, W. Dowdle Molecular and Cellular Aspects of Basema Membranes, L. A. Liotta • Vignettes • Boo Received	by • ent
SCIENCESCOPE	1511	PRODUCTS & MATERIALS 162	20

John Abelson Frederick W. Alt Don L. Anderson Michael Ashburner Stephen J. Benkovic David E. Bloom Floyd E. Bloom Piet Borst Michael S. Brown Henry R. Bourne James J. Bull Kathryn Calame C. Thomas Caskey Dennis W. Choi John M. Coffin Paul J. Crutzen Robert Desimone Nicole Le Douarin Bruce F. Eldridge Paul T. Englund Richard G. Fairbanks Douglas T. Fearon Harry A. Fozzard K. Friedrich Theodore H. Geballe Margaret J. Geller John C. Gerhart Roger I. M. Glass Stephen P. Goff Peter N. Goodfellow Corey S. Goodman Stephen J. Gould Ira Herskowitz Eric F. Johnson Stephen M. Kosslyn Michael LaBarbera Charles S. Levings III Alexander Levitzki Harvey F. Lodish Richard Losick Diane Mathis Anthony R. Means Shigetada Nakanishi Roger A. Nicoll

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1

COVER

Confocal immunofluorescent detection of wingless protein (green), engrailed protein (blue), and enhancer trap 5953 (red) in a reiterated segment of embryonic Drosophila neuroectoderm (ventral midline, center; anterior, top). The wingless protein nonautonomously

REPORTS

Mechanism and Dynamics of Ion 1558 Transfer Across a Liquid-Liquid Interface I. Benjamin

Cross-Shelf Sediment Transport by an 1560 Anticyclonic Eddy Off Northern California L. Washburn, M. S. Swenson, J. L. Largier,

P. M. Kosro, S. R. Ramp Chicxulub Multiring Impact Basin: **1564**

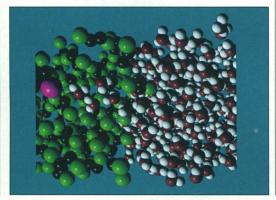
Size and Other Characteristics Derived from **Gravity Analysis**

V. L. Sharpton, K. Burke, A. Camargo-Zanoguera, S. A. Hall, D. S. Lee, L. E. Marín, G. Suárez-Reynoso, J. M. Quezada-Muñeton, P. D. Spudis, J. Urrutia-Fucugauchi

Chemical Modification of the 1567 Photoluminescence Quenching of Porous Silicon J. M. Lauerhaas and M. J. Sailor

A Potentially Realizable Quantum 1569 Computer S. Lloyd

A UV-Sensitive Mutant of Arabidopsis 1571 Defective in the Repair of Pyrimidine-Pyrimidinone(6-4) Dimers A. B. Britt, J.-J. Chen, D. Wykoff, D. Mitchell



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1574 Major Groove Accessibility of RNA K. M. Weeks and D. M. Crothers

Probing the Mechanism of Staphylococcal 1578 Nuclease with Unnatural Amino Acids: Kinetic and Structural Studies

page 1594. [Photo: Chris Q. Doe]

J. K. Judice, T. R. Gamble, E. C. Murphy, A. M. de Vos, P. G. Schultz

Thymic Selection of Cytotoxic T Cells 1581 Independent of CD8α-Lck Association

I. T. Chan, A. Limmer, M. C. Louie, E. D. Bullock, W.-P. Fung-Leung, T. W. Mak, D.Y.Loh

Disappearance of the Lymphoid System in 1584 Bcl-2 Homozygous Mutant Chimeric Mice

K.-i. Nakayama, K. Nakayama, I. Negishi, K. Kuida, Y. Shinkai, M. C. Louie, L. E. Fields, P. J. Lucas, V. Stewart, F. W. Alt, D. Y. Loh

Immunoglobulin V_H3 Gene Products: 1588 Natural Ligands for HIV gp120

L. Berberian, L. Goodglick, T. J. Kipps, J. Braun

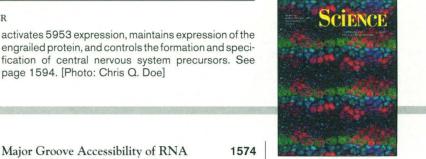
IRS-1: Essential for Insulin- and 1591 IL-4-Stimulated Mitogenesis in Hematopoietic Cells

L.-M. Wang, M. G. Myers, Jr., X.-J. Sun, S. A. Aaronson, M. White, J. H. Pierce

Neuroblast Specification and Formation 1594 Regulated by wingless in the Drosophila CNS Q. Chu-LaGraff and C. Q. Doe

1558 Simulation of ion transfer





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THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

edited by PHIL SZUROMI

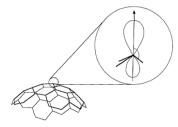
Tackling toxic torts

The U.S. Supreme Court recently decided a case—*Daubert* v. *Morrell Dow Pharmaceuticals*—with broad implications for the admissibility of scientific evidence in the courts. In a Policy Forum, Foster *et al.* (p. 1509) discuss the decision with respect to toxic tort cases and suggest several directions for judges, lawyers, scientists, and scientific societies to take in response to the decision.

 \square

Stressing strain in fullerene chemistry

What drives the chemical reactivity of fullerenes such as C_{60} ? Haddon (p. 1545) argues that the fullerenes can be best described as aromatic molecules that undergo reactions which relieve the strain inherent in their closed, nonplanar structures. The author uses π -orbital axis vector analysis to charac-



terize the energetic penalties of fullerene geometries, which force carbon-carbon σ bonds together and which inhibit resonance in the π -orbital network. The formation of organometallic derivatives of C₆₀ and C₇₀ can be understood in terms of relieving local and global strain.

100

Across the great divide

The transfer of ions across an interface between two immiscible liquids is a fundamental process, but one which has been difficult to simulate with mo

Transcription and the cell cycle transition in yeast

Late in the G1 phase of budding yeast, transcriptional factors are activated for the cyclin genes and for proteins that synthesize DNA. The SBF transcription factor, which acts on certain cyclin genes, is known to be a heterodimer consisting of a DNA binding domain (Swi4) and a regulatory element (Swi6). Koch et al. (p. 1551) have purified and cloned the p120 protein of the MBF transcription factor complex that activates the genes encoding Btype cyclins and genes involved in DNA synthesis. This protein, Mbp1, binds DNA and like Swi4 forms a complex with Swi6. Swi4 and Mbp1 also show a number of structural similarities. Deletion mutants for MBP1 were viable but genes normally transcribed periodically in response to the MBF target, the MCB element, were expressed at a low, constant rate. The SWI4 and MBP1 genes have an essential, overlapping function; mutants in which both of these genes are deleted failed to synthesize G1 cyclins and were not viable. In a Perspective, Andrews and Mason (p. 1543) discuss the role of gene expression in the cell cycle.

lecular dynamics methods without ad hoc assumptions and conditions. Benjamin (p. 1558) used only the basic known properties of water and dichloroethane to construct a convincing simulation of the interface between the two liquids and of the movement of simple ions across it. Fingers of water constantly protrude into and retreat from the organic layer across a boundary that remained stable throughout the simulation. Ions did not simply diffuse across the barrier but crossed it through a process characterized by an activation energy.

ß

A greater crater

Evidence has recently accumu-

lated that the long-sought cra-

ter formed by the impact of a

large asteroid at the Cretaceous-

Tertiary (K-T) boundary is the

Chicxulub structure in Yucatán,

Mexico. One problem both in

its initial identification and sub-

sequent study is that it is buried

by hundreds of meters of younger

rocks. Sharpton et al. (p. 1564;

see news story by Kerr, p. 1518)

present an analysis of recent

gravity data and suggest that the crater may be nearly 300 kilometers across, considerably larger than initially assumed. The key evidence is in the interpretation of a fragmentary fourth ring in the gravity data. If it is this large, the Chicxulub crater would likely mark one of the largest impacts since life began on Earth. In a related news story, Morell (p. 1518) discusses some of the paleontological puzzles posed by the impact theory of the K-T extinction event.

S

Bit by bit

All digital computers encode information as strings of zeros and ones, but in a quantum computer the zeros and ones are supposed to be represented by two states of a quantum mechanical system, and superpositions of different states can be incorporated into calculational procedures. Lloyd *et al.* (p. 1569) bring the hypothetical quantum computer a step closer to feasibility by showing how a coupled system of quantum states—for example, a polymeric chain in which each unit has an electron that can be switched from the ground state to the excited state by a photon of the right energy —can be loaded with a specified series of zeros and ones. Laser light pulses of the appropriate frequency and duration would move bits up and down the register and perform logical operations in a molecularlevel computer.

In the major groove

In RNA duplexes, the major groove provides a more extensive array of hydrogen bond donors and acceptors than the minor groove does, which would facilitate sequence recognition, yet the major groove appears less accessible because it is deep and narrow. Weeks and Crothers (p. 1574) found that the major groove is accessible at duplex termini and that availability could be enhanced by asymmetric and large loops between helices.

1271

Stem cell fates

The identity of the genes that control the assignment of cell identity to the stem cells of the developing neuroblasts in the central nervous system (CNS) is unknown. Chu-LaGraff and Doe (p. 1594; cover) studied the role of the wingless gene in neuroblast determination in the Drosophila CNS. With the use of a conditional mutant, they demonstrate that the function of wingless in segmentation can be separated from the requirement for wingless in the CNS. Expression of wingless is necessarv for the determination and formation of neuroblast cells adjacent to those expressing the wingless protein, which is a secreted glycoprotein.

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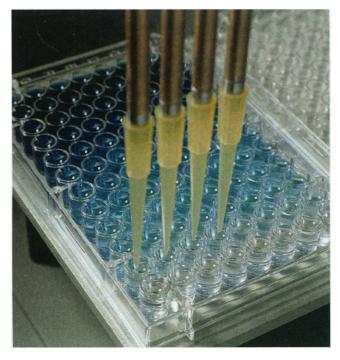
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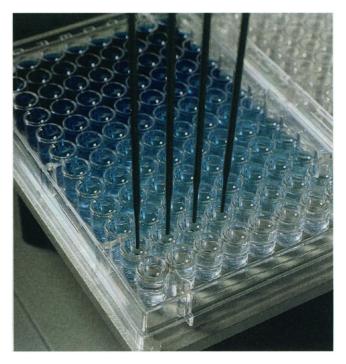


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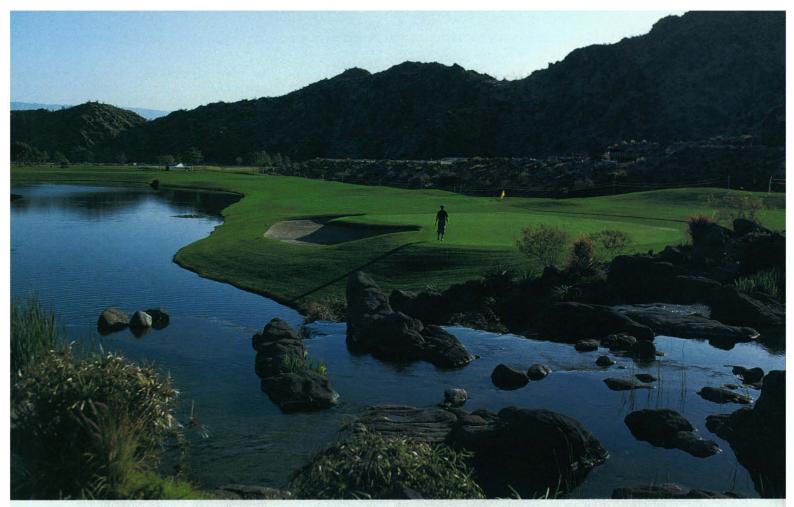


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That's why it's critical for you to have a water purification system that removes contamination instead of one that con-

tributes to it. If you don't, you could end up like one of these facilities:

1. A lab doing protein purification with HPLC found that endotoxins in its water system contaminated proteins.

2. Organics in another facility's water system kept mammalian cells from growing in defined medium.

3. A semiconductor plant testing for copper had its chromatographic results ruined by contamination in their water system.

4. In yet another lab, phosphates

being used to clean the water system got into the water used for polyacrylamide gels, rendering them useless. In each of these cases, when the

In or mese cases, when me lab switched to a Milli-Q[®] Plus Water Purification System, all their problems disappeared.

That's because the Milli-Q Plus system delivers the highest quality water

available: 1.5 liters per minute at 18 megohm and < 10ppb TOC (with RO pretreatment).

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And unlike other systems, changing our module is easy. Instead of separate bowls, our QPAK™ purification module has an all-in-one design that takes hardly any time to

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change out and prevents you from ever having to come in contact with wetted surfaces.

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To further prevent water degradation, the system even recirculates water automatically every hour for approximately five minutes.

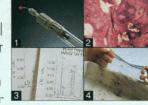
So beware of less expensive water purification systems that claim to do as good a job as the Milli-Q Plus system: They may prove hazardous to

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For additional information about the Milli-Q Plus system, including a brochure, technical bulletins and data sheet, call 1-800-225-1380.



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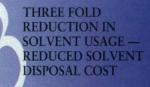
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> OligoPilot[™] Large Scale Oligo Synthesizer is designed for synthesis from 10 µM to 400 µM (up to 800 µM capacity with high load support).



OligoPilot[™] utilizes an innovative pump driven flow-through column design and a new polymer support matrix, Primer Support. The flow-through design gives you the following benefits:

- Significant reductions in amidite usage, 1.5 molar equivalents
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- \bullet Short cycle times, 7 hours at 200 μM for a 20-mer
- Reduced waste volume, 415 ml at 200 µM scale
- Average yield per cycle of over 99%
- 12 amidite ports for DNA, RNA or modified amidites

The pump driven flow-through design ensures the active phosphoramidite concentrations remain high even at small molar excesses. This design also makes the most efficient use of other reagents and allows for rapid reagent change at up to 75 ml per minute.

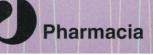
Primer Support contributes to the overall performance due to its hydrophobic nature. Its hydrophobicity ensures that any water introduced with the oxidation step does not remain in the system, reducing coupling efficiency in later steps. The lack of labile sites also minimizes spontaneous chain elongation off the support which is sited for silica based supports.

OligoPilot is fully programmable via an external computer. In addition, the computer tracks reagent usage and identifies the batch numbers for each reagent used for each oligo synthesis.

The on-line trityl monitor provides continuous display of coupling efficiency of each step. In the event of a poor coupling, the monitor can stop the synthesis before additional reagents are wasted.

Lab scale synthesis users can enjoy similar benefits of Primer Support and the pump driven flow-through design with the Gene Assembler® DNA/RNA Synthesizer.

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5'-ATC GAA TGA GTT CCA GTT-3

Column: Pep RPC HR5/5.(C₁₈) Buffers: A: 100mM TEAA, 5% Acetonitrile, pH 7.0 B: 100mM TEAA, 30% Acetonitrile, pH 7.0 Flow: 1.0 ml/min

20

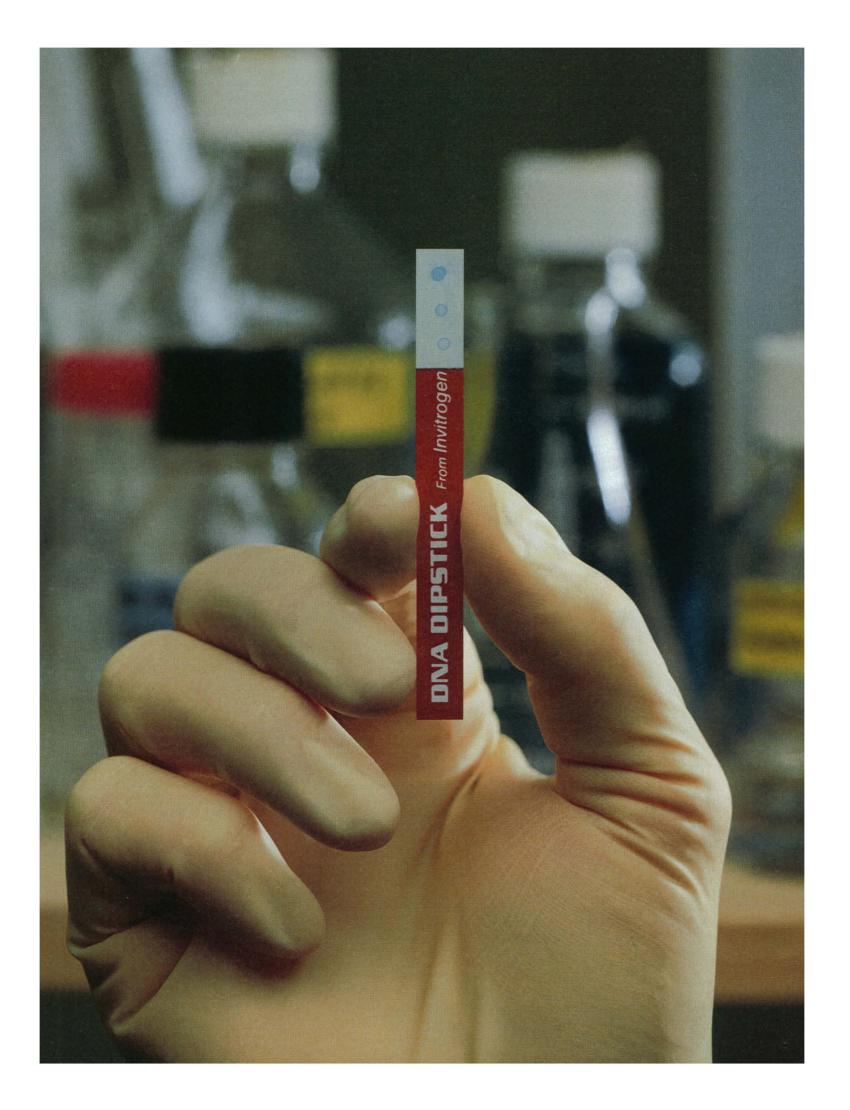
Gradient: 0-100%

10

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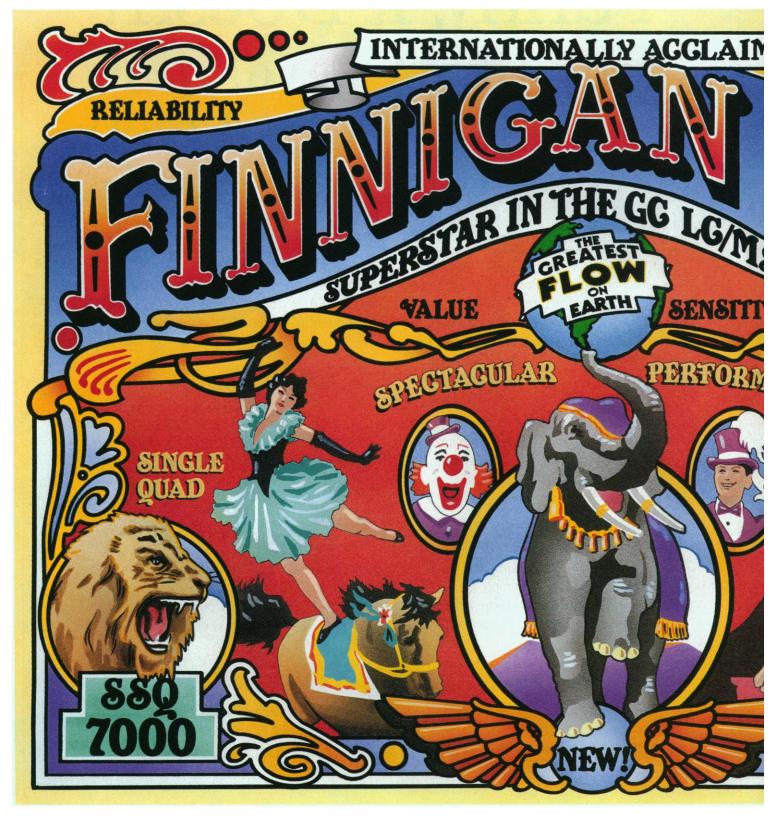
With the DNA DipStick,[™] you'll get results in less than 10 minutes. It's as easy as spotting 1 µl of sample on the DipStick and placing it in three solutions.

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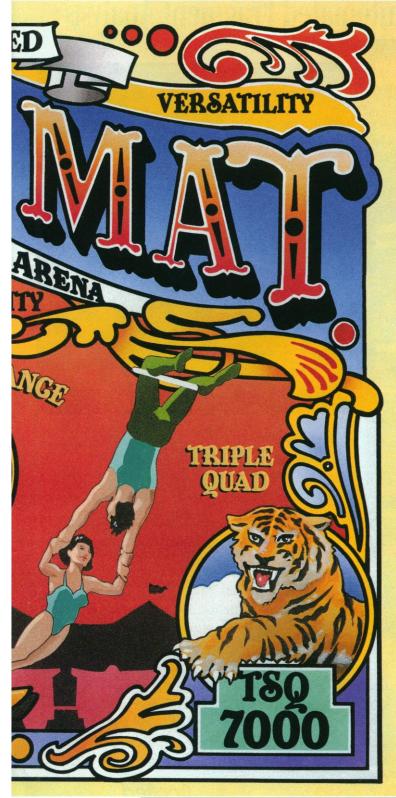
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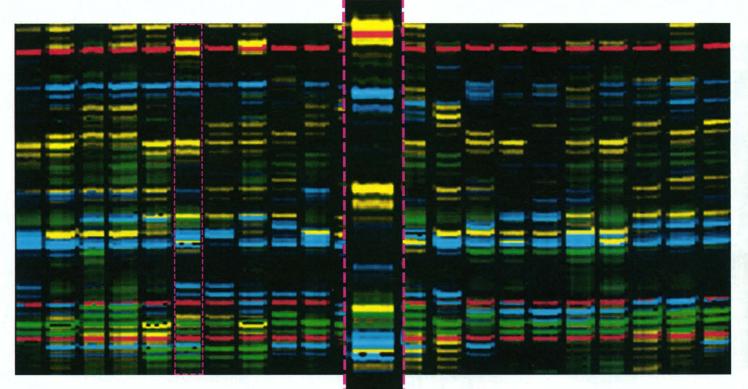


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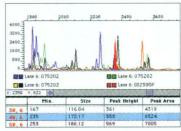
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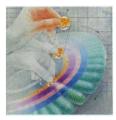
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truly multipurpose centrifuge, the GS-15 combines the capabilities of a refrigerated microcentrifuge, microplate centrifuge, and general purpose centrifuge. Offering a top speed of 14,000 rpm and centrifugal force of 17,530, the new GS-15 centrifuge dramatically expands the researcher's range of applications with one compact, versatile unit.

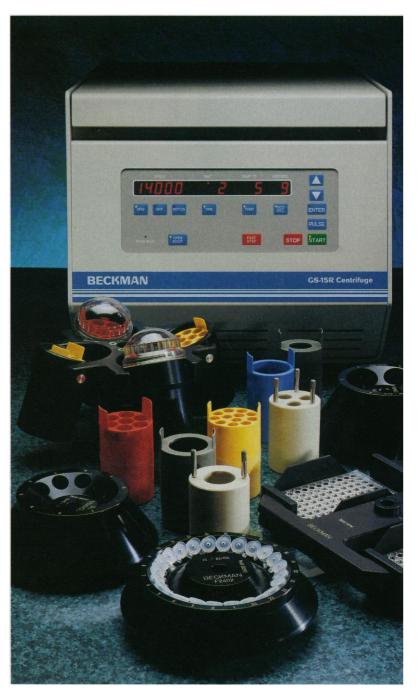
MICRO TO MACRO APPLICATIONS

You can rely on the GS-15 for microvolume separations such as pelleting, binding studies, nucleic acid work, immunoassays, protein extractions, and subcellular fractionation. Use the larger volume, multi-adapter swinging bucket rotor and the GS-15 doubles as a general purpose centrifuge. It accommodates virtually every popular tube — microvolume, 50 mL conical, 100 mL tubes, up to 180 mL bottles — expanding the centrifuge capabilities to allow pelleting cells and bacteria, clearing cell lysates and homogenates, preforming gradients, cell separations in gradients, phase separations, binding studies, and filtration.

RUN PLATES, RACKS, AND MICROPLATES

A unique microplate carrier allows the GS-15 to accommodate Deep-Well plates, MiniTube racks, and up to six microplates, making this the perfect centrifuge for pelleting, immunoassays, and DNA sequencing.

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CENTRIFUGATION The new J2-HC stretches the limits of high-speed centrifugation

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FOUR CENTRIFUGES IN ONE

HIGH SPEED: The new J2-HC accommodates Beckman's complete line of high-speed rotors including the new unique JA-12 fixed angle, which runs 12 common 50 mL conical tubes without adapters.

HIGH CAPACITY: The new JS-4.3 swinging bucket rotor adds a new dimension to floor model capabilities. Run a range of labware, from 1.5 mL tubes to 750 mL bottles, with incredible versatility...you can choose to run 148 3 or 5 mL tubes, or three liters.

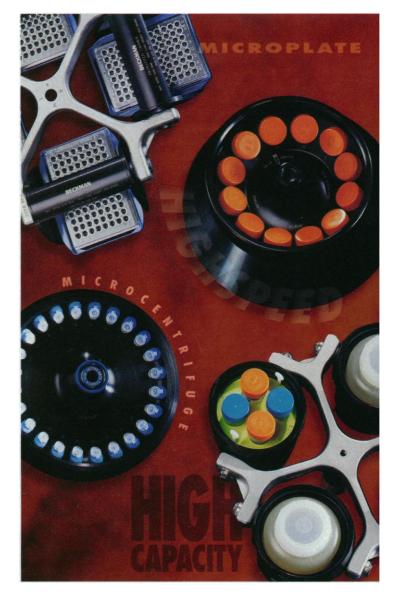
MICROCENTRIFUGE: The J2-HC is ideal for efficient processing of plasmid mini-preps. With the JA-18.1 rotor, it can spin 1.5 mL tubes at $33,260 \times g$.

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Dr. R. Rott, from the Institute of Virology at the University of Giessen, Germany, comments on the benefits of FRS: "Beckman's FRS...considerably decreases energy requirements, positively affecting ambient temperature and supporting a concern for all of us, efficient use of energy."



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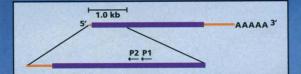
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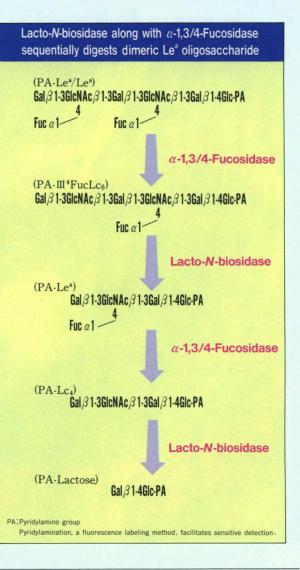
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Reference 1) Sano, M. et al. (1992) Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 89, 8512-8516.





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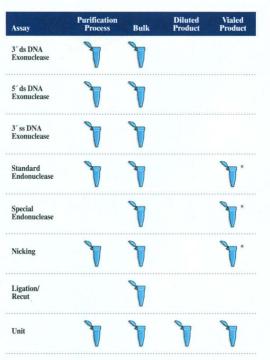
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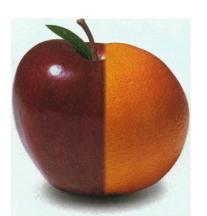
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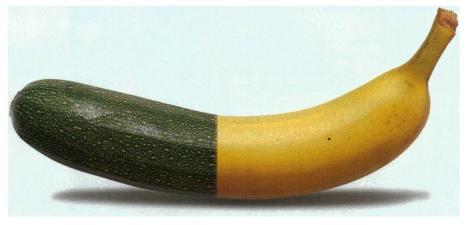
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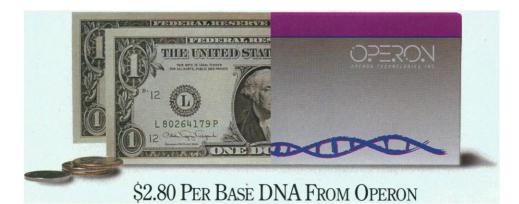
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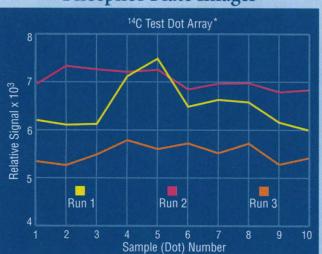


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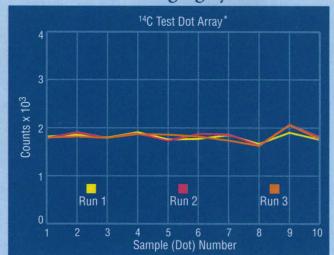


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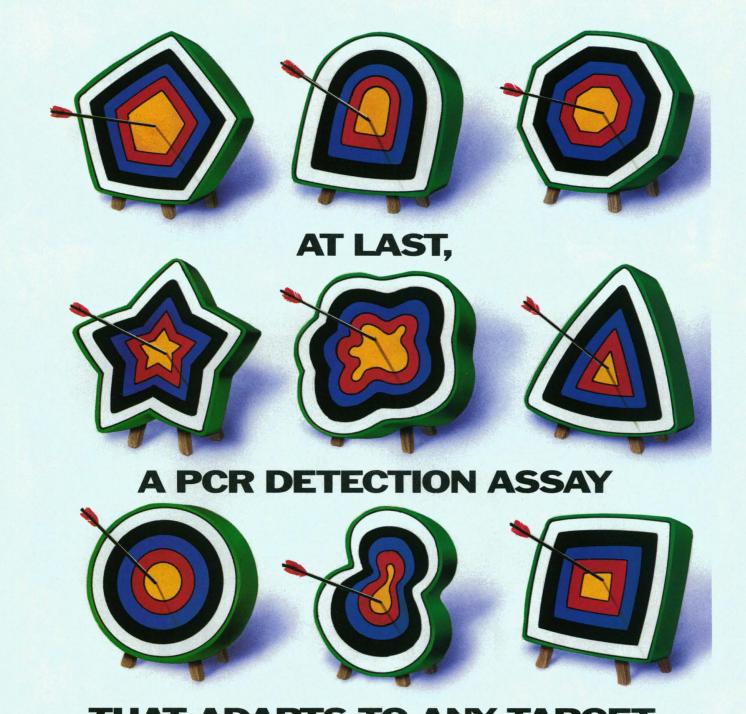
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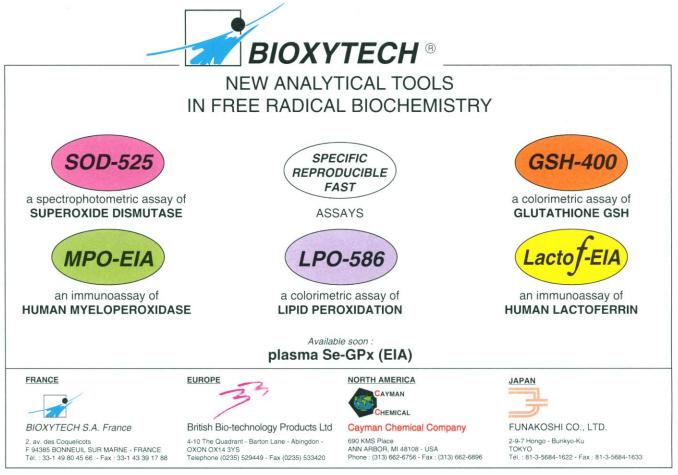
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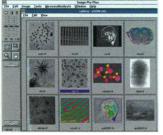
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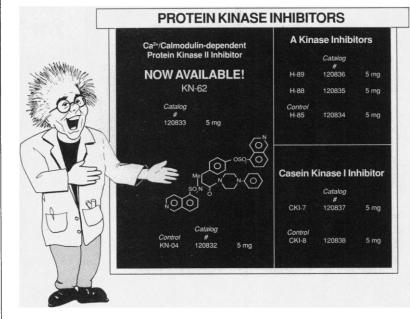
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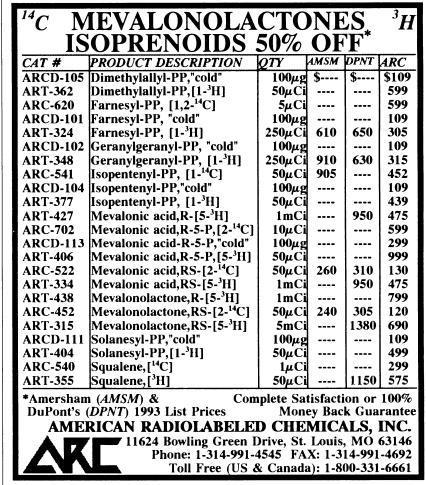
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