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Cell Cycle Arrest

We were pleased to see the three reports (*1*–*3*) and Research News article by Jean Marx (p. 963) in the 17 February issue that highlight the induction of the protein p21(WAF1) cyclin-dependent kinase (Cdk) inhibitor in myogenesis (*1*) and the high level of expression of p21(WAF1) in terminally differentiated tissues (*2*). These findings elegantly extend the findings published last fall in our papers "Induction of p21(WAF1/CIP1) during differentiation" (*4*) and "Induction of differentiation in human promyelocytic HL-60 leukemia cells activates p21, WAF1/CIP1, expression in the absence of p53" (*5*). We had reported that multiple differentiation inducers caused immediate-early and sustained up-regulation of p21 in many cell types through a p53-independent pathway. The report by Skapek *et al.* (*3*) demonstrating p21(WAF1) reversal of a cyclin D1-mediated differentiation block in muscle raises the hope that in some settings p21(WAF1)-inducing agents may be anti-oncogenic. We would caution, however, that this strategy would be ineffective in settings in which p21(WAF1) induction is uncoupled from growth arrest. An example is our demonstration that deregulated c-myc expression is capable of uncoupling p21(WAF1) induction both from growth arrest and from differentiation (*4*).

Richard Steinman
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA
Barbara Hoffman
Dan A. Liebermann
Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA 19140, USA
Paul B. Fisher
Comprehensive Cancer Center, Columbia University, New York, NY 10032, USA

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"More" Is Not "Different"

I agree with Sheldon Krimsky (Letters, 17 Feb., p. 945) that "[m]odifying an inert chemical structure and modifying an organism are two very different things." Yet, he illogically extends this observation to a comparison of two organisms. Modification of an organism by traditional breeding and by recombinant DNA methods are not very different things. The fact that we can make a greater variety of changes by recombinant DNA is not an inherent reason to place a higher regulatory burden on products of recombinant DNA techniques.

Ulrich Melcher
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078–0454, USA

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Sampling Zooplankton: Correction

We have learned that there is an internal inconsistency in the zooplankton dataset used in our report "Climatic warming and the decline of zooplankton in the California Current" (3 Mar., p. 1324) (*1*). The data