not a matter of conscription. Patients should be asked in advance of a sample being taken whether they are willing to have it used for genetic research or whether, if the researcher is planning to recontact them with results, they want to refuse that contact. This is unlikely to, as some pathologists have suggested, "totally cripple" research in the country. In institutions that already ask for consent for genetics research, it is seldom, if ever, refused.

Lori B. Andrews
Chicago-Kent College of Law,
565 West Adams,
Chicago, IL 60661, USA

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Access to the Internet

I would like to comment on the editorial "An enhanced perspective" by Floyd E. Bloom (9 Feb., p. 741). Issues of equity should be taken into account in education and scientific research in general. It was stated in a CNN broadcast on 16 February that students from low-income households have fewer opportunities to have access to the Internet in schools. Responding to that report, President Clinton announced that inequitable use or access to the information highway in schools should be addressed.

The "resources required to provide" the enhanced information network are enormous. Some are able to afford the infrastructures for such a network to be enhanced. However, in some low-income communities, and in low-income countries, people may live far away from the information highway. More than 60 million people worldwide, most of them in high-income countries, currently use the Internet. Without improving access, the enhanced perspectives could further widen disparities between the privileged and the underprivileged.

Susumu Wakai
Tochinoki Hospital,
39-5 Daicho, Tochigi,
Japan 328

Editor's note: We would be interested in a wider expression of opinions on this matter.

From Plants to Mammals

We read with interest Rachel Nowak's piece on the American Society of Human Genetics meeting describing the dominant negative mutation in myotonic dystrophy that occurs in RNA (Research News, 17 Nov., p. 1120). The idea that an aberrant RNA (truncated, improperly processed, or overly abundant) can also "knock out" normal copies of the RNA is not, however, entirely new. This possibility has been recognized by plant molecular biologists studying the phenomena sense suppression (*1*) and RNA-mediated virus resistance (*2*) in transgenic plants. An examination of the plant literature on these topics [for reviews, see (*3*)] might be helpful to researchers identifying similar and possibly related processes in mammals.

M. A. Matzke
Austrian Academy of Sciences,
Institute of Molecular Biology,
Billrothstrasse 11,
A-5020 Salzburg, Austria
E-mail: mmatzke@oeaw.ac.at
R. A. Jorgensen
Department of Environmental Horticulture,
University of California,
Davis, CA 95616–8587, USA

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Sea Grant Fellows

In their Policy Forum "Graduate education and research for economic growth" (6 Oct., p. 48), T. P. Smith III and J. C. Tsang make a compelling argument for putting greater emphasis on doctoral training for industrial careers. The National Sea Grant College Program, located in the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, has done just that. Sea Grant initiated an Industrial Fellows Program in 1995: Graduate students, selected competitively, may spend up to 3 years at their university or a corporate site, working on a research issue of mutual interest. Provisions are made for involvement by the student's faculty advisors as well. Funds are provided by Sea Grant and the industry sponsor. The intent is to nurture and strengthen ties between universities and the industry, address problems important to industry, and provide additional opportunities for industry to influence Sea Grant research priorities. The willingness of those in industry, universities, citizen groups, and local, state, and federal agencies to share in the cost of the work through contributions of funds, facilities, or vessels is seen as indication of the importance of the initiative to a broad constituency.

Our desire is to expand the number of fellows beyond the seven currently available in the program. To do so, Sea Grant is seeking co-sponsors from interested companies, trade associations, and professional societies. With greater industrial participation and university support in efforts such as this, we can begin to achieve the kinds of results envisioned by Smith and Tsang. The Sea Grant Industrial Fellows Program is an exciting addition to our efforts to prepare the next generation of marine scientists and engineers for broad participation in the U.S. economy.

Ronald C. Baird*
National Sea Grant College Program,
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Silver Spring, MD 20910, USA

*Director designate

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Consider the Amateur

Two recent letters (9 Feb., p. 745) suggest that the pursuit of science for the love of research is "disturbingly out of touch at the end of the 20th century" and that "a scientist in this day and age can only enjoy his or her chosen field by being employed in it."

How ironic that in the issue of *Science* preceding the one in which these professional scientists express their views appeared an important report about major storms on Saturn co-authored by amateur astronomer Donald C. Parker (A. Sanchez-Lavega *et al.*, 2 Feb., p. 631). Recognized worldwide for his extraordinary planetary photographs taken with his homemade 40.6-centimeter telescope (*1*), Parker pursues astronomy for the love of it and, the last I heard, still earns a living as an anesthesiologist.

Forrest M. Mims III
Sun Photometer Atmospheric Network (SPAN),