part of the "missing carbon problem" (*4*) and balance the global carbon budget for 1980.

Such issues should be studied in detail, but we do not think our study lends support to Sedjo's argument. In response to a climatic warming, the boreal zone can act as a source of carbon dioxide rather than as a sink. Soil organic carbon in active exchange with the atmosphere constitutes approximately two-thirds of the carbon in terrestrial ecosystems (*5*). Increased release of carbon from soil in response to climatic warming may more than compensate for the effect of growth stimulation.

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La Différence

Donald S. McLaren (Letters, 22 July 1988, p. 399) contends that the sex difference in the relation between resting oxygen consumption and surface area that I have postulated to prevail (Letters, 8 Apr. 1988, p. 130) disappears when expressed in terms of lean body mass. McLaren's contention is supported by experiments "carried out by medical students on themselves" (*1*). However, extensive studies by others, particularly those of Novak (*2*), clearly show in 215 healthy men and 305 women that fat-free mass and cellular mass are significantly lower ($P < 0.001$) in women than in men *at all adult age levels*. Fat-free, that is, lean body mass, was determined with ^{40}K gamma-ray spectrometry (fat does not contain potassium), and it was found that relative (fat-free) body cell mass is 18.5, 13.4, 17.21, 19.4, and 13.4% lower in women in the age brackets 18–25, 25–35, 35–45, 45–55, 55–65, and 65–85 years, respectively. The data on the 18- to 25-year-old group, that is, the age group of the medical students (*1*) cited by McLaren, display a large standard deviation.

My contention that women live longer than men because of their more efficient use of energy is expressed in terms of resting oxygen consumption. That a constant proportion of the difference in longevity is based on the relation between body mass and energy expenditure is, however, also manifest in the differential response to performance on a variety of tasks, including standing, walking, household work, football, and mining. On all tasks men expend more energy than women (*3*). I reiterate, therefore: "Vive la Différence!"

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