

MILDRED COHN

That last year's General Assembly should have allocated three million dollars for the acquisition of a whole-body nuclear magnetic resonance facility on our campus is only one testimony, if a vividly topical one, of the vitality and distinction of Mildred Cohen's work as a biochemist.

Those who can understand as well as merely pronounce such things as "adenine nucleotides" and "oxidative phosphorylation" will probably be familiar with her scientific achievements. For most of us it will be enough to know that she has made two great contributions in her field: the use of an oxygen isotope (O^{18}) to study the mechanisms of enzyme reactions and the use of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) techniques in the study of enzyme metabolism. The speed with which both contributions have been put into practical use is striking testimony to their impact.

A native of New York City, she earned a bachelor's degree at Hunter College and advanced degrees from Columbia, where she worked with Harold Urey. Her long career as a teacher and researcher in physical biochemistry was mostly at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, from which she retired as Benjamin Rush Professor of Physiological Chemistry. In 1982 she became senior member of the Institute for Cancer Research in Philadelphia.

To honorary degrees from the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Radcliff, Washington University, Hunter College, Brandeis, and the University of Pennsylvania, should be added as well, recognition from several countries, the National Medal of Science 1983, the American Philosophical Society, the National Academy of Sciences and the American Society for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).