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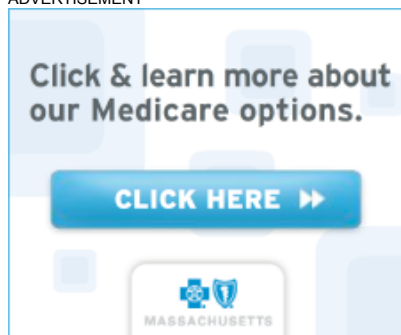
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | LETTERS

A scientific trailblazer, Margulis will be missed

November 26, 2011

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WITH THE passing of Lynn Margulis, we have lost one of the giants of scientific thinking, teaching, and research ("Evolutionary biologist Lynn Margulis dies in Mass.," Boston.com, Nov. 23). Twenty years ago, when she left Boston University, Margulis handed an important baton to me – teaching her graduate biology course in symbiosis. I have tried to fulfill this daunting task, but of course I could never hope to match her dynamism, energy, and genius.

Lynn's original work in the 1960s showed that close partnerships between different life forms in nature - symbiosis - is at the root of understanding evolution and how life systems on earth function. Her innovative ideas of 50 years ago were then ridiculed, in part because she was a woman in a heavily male field and in part because researchers can sometimes stay too readily within traditional views. Her courage, brilliance, compassion, toughness, and resilience will be deeply missed in the science and education worlds.

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