

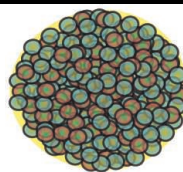
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LETTERS

edited by Jennifer Sills

Lost in Transliteration

THE RANDOM SAMPLES ARTICLE "ONE WEI OR ANOTHER" (15 February, p. 881) addressed the confusion caused in the scientific community by Asian names that use the same English transliteration. This situation becomes more serious as increasing numbers of Asian scientists publish papers in English journals (1). To complicate matters even further, about half of the Chinese names have three words: one for the family name and two for the first name. Just like the two-word names (2), they sometimes use the same English spelling. For instance, the name "Lixin Wang" is a transliteration of at least 1600 possible Chinese names. The three-word scenario may lead to citation confusion because journals follow different styles. Some journals treat "Lixin Wang" as "L Wang," whereas others abbreviate it as "LX Wang." Both ways make sense given that the first name "Lixin" includes two words (Li-Xin). However, some major databases (such as Web of Science) misinterpret "L Wang" and "LX Wang" as two unique names; changing affiliations only add to the confusion.

To be more precise, *Physical Review Letters* allows authors with Asian names to include the original spelling on papers (2). It is a good start, but it is still difficult for non-Asian researchers to identify the characters and thus the specific author. Instead of including Asian spellings, I suggest that researchers each adopt a unique identification number, which can be published along with their names (3). Scientists with Asian names are not the only ones who would benefit from a more precise naming system.

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References and Notes

1. Editorial, *Nature* **447**, 885 (2007).
2. K. W. Burton, *Science* **319**, 881 (2008).
3. One such "ResearcherID" is developed by the Thomson Corporation (www.researcherid.com).

Source of confusion. All of these Chinese names could use the transliteration "Lixin Wang."

those "traumatized" by the fact that the Sun does not revolve around the Earth? Or earlier, would we have seen such gentle treatment of those "devastated" by the realization that the Earth is not flat? While Dr. Godfrey's escape from the ignorant shroud of Biblical literalists is praiseworthy, *Science* magazine is not the place to give even a hint of respectability to those who would deny the fundamental fact of evolution. There is too much at stake, for our children and our society, to give any credence to those promoting unscientific nonsense (creationism or intelligent design) and justifying irrational beliefs under the guise of religion.

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Evolution and Faith: Empathy Is Crucial

THE NEWS FOCUS STORY BY J. COUZIN, "CROSSING THE DIVIDE" (22 February, p. 1034) accurately and respectfully describes the crux of the challenge that our scientific understanding presents to members of faith communities. With more than 20 years of experience in teaching biology to evangelical undergraduates, I can state with a high degree of confidence that the situation within evangelicalism is to a great extent just as Couzin presented. The worldview in which so many conservative Christians are raised and trained gives them but two stark choices: Either there is a God, the world is a few thousand years old, and therefore evolution cannot have occurred, or the scientific community is correct, evolution occurred, and there is no God. The heart of the matter revolves around meaning in life, not around scientific knowledge. If we can understand the tremendous cognitive and spiritual stress this presents to the faith community, then we as truth-seeking scientists should be willing to listen to the concerns of those holding such positions.

We within the scientific community must continue to present the demonstrable evidence from the physical realm and clearly express how that evidence supports our current interpretations. This effort is not served well at all by dogmatic pronouncements such as "Evolution is fact," even if such statements are accurate. Furthermore, for members of the scientific community to make theological statements in the name of science is philosophically illegitimate, and destructive in our truth-seeking efforts. In this short essay, *Science*

Evolution and Faith: Empathy Is Misplaced

I FOUND THE NEWS FOCUS STORY "CROSSING THE DIVIDE" (J. COUZIN, 22 February, p. 1034) to be particularly disturbing and unworthy of publication in *Science*. Three full pages were dedicated to paleontologist Stephen Godfrey, who (finally) rejected creationism and embraced evolution and "is still recovering from the traumatic journey." Give me a break! Had *Science* magazine been around during the 17th century, would we have seen such consolatory text for

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has published the only example I have read in the leading scientific literature that takes the time and effort to understand and express what really drives the concerns of the majority of evangelicals, and does so in a manner that respects the integrity of both the scientific endeavor and the integrity of the faith commitments within the evangelical community.

Allow me to suggest that this serves as a call to us in the sciences to be more humble as we interact with the faith community. We as scientists ought to be those most keenly aware of the tenuous and ever-changing nature of human knowledge, even as we build on that which has stood the test of time. We ought to behave as though the faith community poses no threat to the integrity of science, just as the faith community ought to behave as though science poses no threat to the integrity of faith. That is the challenge to us brought forth so eloquently in this piece, and is a major focus of organizations such as The American Scientific Affiliation. Let us all humbly seek for truth as we respect one another's efforts to do so.

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Data Discrepancies in Solar-Climate Link

CONTRARY TO THE IMPRESSION GIVEN IN J. Pasotti's News of the Week story ("Daggers are drawn over revived cosmic ray-climate link," 11 January, p. 144), neither I nor any of the other climate scientists quoted in the story seek "to strangle the hypothesized climate-geomagnetism connection in its crib." However, it is not unreasonable to expect that a hypothesis that neglects well-established greenhouse gas and aerosol radiative forcings should at least be based on appropriate and accurately described data.

Letters to the Editor

Letters (~300 words) discuss material published in *Science* in the previous 3 months or issues of general interest. They can be submitted through the Web (www.submit2science.org) or by regular mail (1200 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not acknowledged upon receipt, nor are authors generally consulted before publication. Whether published in full or in part, letters are subject to editing for clarity and space.

Courtillot and co-workers (1) made two errors that exaggerate the solar-climate correlation (2, 3). First, they showed only the most recent 50 years of a solar irradiance proxy; application of the same data analysis to the readily available full-century record causes the apparent correlation to fall apart. Second, the temperature record used as a basis of comparison was not a global mean temperature or any of the other temperature curves discussed in the paper (4) cited as a data source. In (1), this temperature curve was labeled "Tglobe," and it was described explicitly as giving a "global temperature trend" at two places in the paper. Furthermore, when Bard and Delaygue raised questions about the data source, the original publicly posted version of Courtillot's response gave the name of a global land and ocean data set. It was only after a further challenge by Bard and Delaygue that the actual data set was revealed, and it turned out to be a record of growing season temperature for Northern Hemisphere extratropical land alone, derived originally for calibrating tree ring proxies, unambiguously described in the data set header as such.

The corrected version of the erroneous figure reproduced in Pasotti's article can be found in (2), or compared side by side with the original in (3).

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References

1. V. Courtillot *et al.*, *Earth Planet. Sci. Lett.* **253**, 328 (2007).
2. E. Bard, G. Delaygue, *Earth Planet. Sci. Lett.* **265**, 302 (2007).
3. Real Climate (www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2007/12/les-chevaliers-de-l%e2%80%99ordre-de-la-terre-plate-part-ii-courtillots-geomagnetic-excursion/).
4. P. D. Jones *et al.*, *Rev. Geophys.*, **37**, 173 (1999).

Living Up to Ancient Civilizations

THE CLASSICAL PERIOD OF GREECE AND Rome lasted more than a thousand years (from about 750 BCE to about 400 AD). By contrast, the modern world, beginning with Columbus's discovery of America, has lasted just over 500 years.

As a result of overpopulation, overconsumption, global warming, and environmental degradation, it now looks increasingly likely that there will be a major societal collapse within the next 200 years. How ironic that a civilization capable of tracing the origin of the universe from 10^{-43} seconds after

its formation and putting a lander on Titan does not have the rigor and self-discipline to sustain itself for as long as the ancients managed to do.

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CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Editorial: "New career paths for scientists" by B. Alberts (18 April, p. 289). The page number for *Science Careers* should have referenced the *Science* Online table of contents on page 283. The link to *Science Careers* in the HTML version is correct.

Reports: "Age and evolution of the Grand Canyon revealed by U-Pb dating of water table-type speleothems" by V. Polyak *et al.* (7 March, p. 1377). Reference 8 was incorrect and should have been "I. J. Winograd *et al.*, *Science* **258**, 255 (1992)." The HTML version has been corrected.

Reports: "Evidence for positive epistasis in HIV-1" by S. Bonhoeffer *et al.* (26 November 2004, p. 1547). The HIV sequence studies in this paper were not deposited in GenBank at the time of publication but are now available there. The accession numbers are EU606356 to EU615822.

TECHNICAL COMMENT ABSTRACTS

COMMENT ON "Absence of Cooling in New Zealand and the Adjacent Ocean During the Younger Dryas Chronozone"

Patrick J. Applegate, Thomas V. Lowell, Richard B. Alley

Barrows *et al.* (Reports, 5 October 2007, p. 86) presented cosmogenic exposure dates and data from an ocean sediment core that challenge evidence for glacier advance in New Zealand during the Younger Dryas event. We use modeling of geomorphic processes to argue that their cosmogenic exposure dates are inconclusive.

Full text at www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/320/5877/746d

RESPONSE TO COMMENT ON "Absence of Cooling in New Zealand and the Adjacent Ocean During the Younger Dryas Chronozone"

Timothy T. Barrows, Scott J. Lehman, L. Keith Fifield, Patrick De Deckker

Applegate *et al.* present the results of a moraine degradation model and suggest that the age of the Waiho Loop may be 1000 years older than the age we presented, thus raising the possibility that the moraine is a Younger Dryas landform. We show that this assessment is misleading on a number of grounds.

Full text at www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/320/5877/746e