

## Dating the COHMAP Project

It is remarkable how many startling bits of news one finds hidden in the articles in *Science*. Before reading Richard Kerr's article "Climate since the ice began to melt" (Research News, 19 Oct., p. 326), I had no idea how long the Cooperative Holocene Mapping Project (COHMAP) had been constructing climatic maps on the basis of pollen distribution. Kerr tells us that

Since the 1960's an increasing number of pollen studies have been dated using radiocarbon technique.

And he reports that

Thompson Webb and his group at Brown University have plotted abundances of 30 pollen types in eastern North America every 2000 years since 18,000 years ago.

One might be a bit skeptical about this, but the secret comes out a few paragraphs later, where we learn that these workers had help.

To complete the maps, including the oceans, COHMAP workers are drawing on studies by 20 collaborators that include marine plankton . . . .

This is the best trick on marine life since the walrus and the carpenter en-

ticed the oysters to attend their seminar on the beach. Perhaps they did it by offering the little fellows coauthorship.

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## Law, Science, and Technology

A recent News and Comment briefing by John Walsh (16 Nov., p. 815) quotes law school dean Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., as saying that Columbia Law School's chair in law, science and technology is "the first in this vital subject at any major law school."

While we are pleased to see that Columbia is embracing this important topic, we must point out that the Yale Law School's chair of law, science and technology (currently occupied by Steven Duke) will be celebrating its 20th birthday next year. In addition, the Yale Law School is home to Stephen Carter (a young, but noted, scholar in the field) and to the Yale Law and Technology Association, a student organization that supports speakers, research, and a clinical

program in technology-related law.

This is not to understate the importance of what has happened at Columbia. It is high time that law schools everywhere begin paying attention to the pervasive influence of science and technology on the law. In the interest of accuracy, however, the Yale Law School's efforts in this area should not be ignored.

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*Erratum:* In the News and Comment article "EPA scraps radionuclide regulations" by Marjorie Sun (9 Nov., p. 672), the reduction of risk to cancer was incorrectly calculated. Individuals living near elemental phosphorus plants have an increased risk of dying from cancer of 1 in 1000. The Environmental Protection Agency is proposing to cut the cancer risk to 4 in 100,000. The plan would reduce the risk by just over one order of magnitude, not three orders of magnitude, as stated in the article.

*Erratum:* The price of *The General History of Astronomy*, volume 4, part A, was omitted from the heading of the review that appeared in the issue of 30 November (p. 1067). The price is \$29.95.

*Erratum:* In the report "Growth inhibitor from BSC-1 cells closely related to platelet type  $\beta$  transforming growth factor" by Ronald F. Tucker *et al.* (9 Nov., p. 705), figures 1 and 2 on page 706 were incorrectly interchanged. The figure captions are correct.

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