

dream to read all the books in the library. She could, however, be stern. Thus, displeasing a librarian ranks alongside displeasing Genghis Khan on my list of nightmares. The issue number appears on the Table of Contents page, only one flip away from the cover, and as I have recently put magazine designers on the same pedestal as librarians, I shall stay with the current arrangement for awhile. Besides, Miss Gildersleve kept adding books as fast as I could read them, so a little connivance in getting librarians to read our Table of Contents may be just retribution.

In response to other letters, we are earnestly trying to solve the problem of the mailing label marring our covers.

—DANIEL E. KOSHLAND, JR.

Punctuated Equilibrium: From the Other Side

It is most irregular, but I appear to be the medium by which the shade of Francis Galton wishes to respond to Stephen Jay Gould (Letters, 25 Apr., p. 439). Finding both secretaries and word processors in markedly short supply on the other side,

Galton respectfully requests that Gould and others reread Galton's earlier letter to *Nature* (4 May 1871, p. 105), merely substituting "punctuated equilibrium" for "Pangene-sis." Galton feels that his views, thus amended, will be shared by many evolutionary biologists.

Since some readers may not have ready access to copies of *Nature* from over a century ago, Galton's letter is repeated below (1).

I do not much complain of having been sent on a false quest by ambiguous language, for I know how difficult it is to put thoughts into accurate speech, and again, how words have conveyed false impressions on the simplest matters from the earliest times. Nay, even in the idyllic scene which Mr. Darwin has sketched of the first invention of language, awkward blunders must of necessity have occurred. I refer to the passage in which he supposes some unusually wise ape-like animal to have first thought of imitating the growl of a beast of prey so as to indicate to his fellow-monkeys the nature of expected danger. For my part, I feel as if I had just been assisting at such a scene. As if, having heard my trusted leader utter a cry, not particularly well articulated, but to my ears more like that of a hyena than any other animal, and seeing none of my companions stir a step, I had, like a loyal member of the flock, dashed down a path of which I had happily caught sight, into the plain below, followed by

the approving nods and kindly grunts of my wise and most respected chief. And now I feel, after returning from my hard expedition, full of information that the suspected danger was a mistake, for there was no sign of a hyena anywhere in the neighborhood. I am given to understand for the first time that my leader's cry had no reference to a hyena in the plain, but to a leopard somewhere up in the trees; his throat had been a little out of order—that was all. Well, my labour had not been in vain; it is something to have established the fact that there are no hyenas in the plain, and I think I see my way to a good position to look out for leopards among the branches of the trees. In the meantime, Vive Pangene-sis!

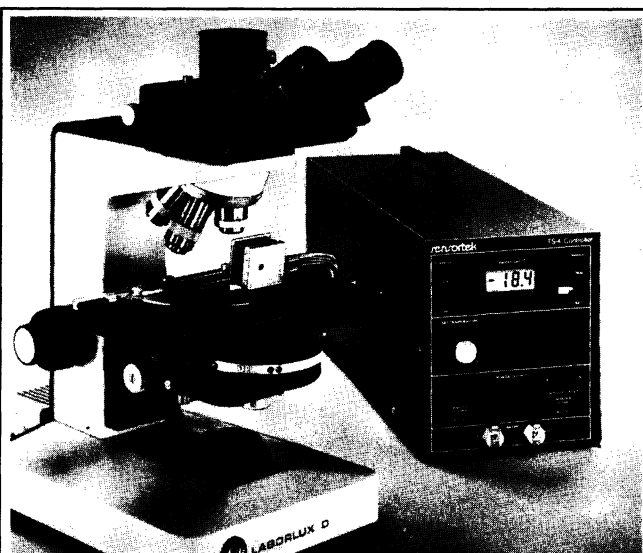
This is highly metaphorical, of course, and I'm not sure that I fully understand it all yet. But I can report that Galton seemed agitated over trusted leaders who took pride in having others pursue their ambiguous, untested ideas for over a decade to an inconclusive end.

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REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. It can also be found, with the background to the matter, in W. B. Provine, *The Origins of Theoretical Population Genetics* (Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1971).



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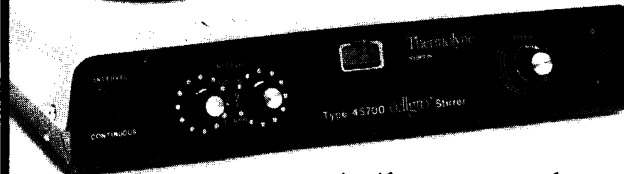
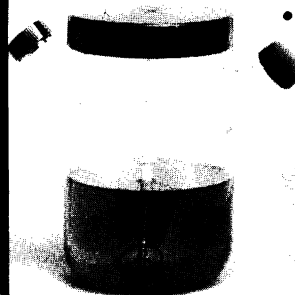
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