

RANDOM SAMPLES

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Rolling Stone Rolls Over for Koprowski

In a "clarification" that fills up nearly half a page, *Rolling Stone* magazine states in its 9 December issue that its editors "never intended to suggest...that there is any scientific proof, nor do they know of any scientific proof" that Hilary Koprowski, "an illustrious scientist," introduced AIDS to the human population. The unusual statement stems from an article the magazine ran last year titled "The Origin of AIDS: A Startling New Theory Attempts to Answer the Question 'Was It an Act of God or an Act of Man?'" The story explored the hypothesis that a polio vaccine developed in the 1950s by Koprowski, former head of Philadelphia's Wistar Institute, was contaminated with a form of the AIDS virus. This raised the possibility that Koprowski was, in the magazine's words, "the father of AIDS."

Many scientists lambasted the account for piling speculation upon speculation (*Science*, 20 March 1992, p. 1505). Koprowski, now with Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, did more than lambaste: He sued the magazine, alleging that he had been defamed. He also sued the Associated Press, which sent out a wire story about the article. The AP suit is still pending, but the *Rolling Stone* clarification brings that case to a close. "I feel very well" about it, says Koprowski.

Once Again Parkfield Quake Is a No-Show

No one said predicting earthquakes was going to be easy, but the researchers in the Parkfield Earthquake Prediction Experiment in central California may be wondering if it's possible at all. First their long-range prediction, made in 1985, failed to pan out: They had suggested a moderate quake (6 on the Richter scale) would hit the San Andreas fault near the tiny town of Parkfield by 1992. As of last January, it hadn't arrived. Then this month they



Jumbos. Museum staffer Ed Rodley checks out 65 million year-old eggs.

Henan Province of China, where farmers have uncovered thousands of eggs in one of the richest dinosaur nesting regions ever. (*Science*, 6 August 1993, p. 679). The pride of the show is a pair of 16.5-inch long eggs from a collection of 50—the largest eggs ever found—imported by The Stone Company in Denver before China outlawed such commerce early this year. Eggs this big exceed many experts' estimates of what the maximum size of a dinosaur egg could be, because as the egg size grows, the shell gets thicker, limiting the amount of oxygen available to an embryo and also making it more difficult for a hatchling to escape.

Early analysis of eggshell structure and nearby embryo bones indicate that these oversized eggs are those of a meat-eating Asian cousin of the North American *Tyrannosaurus rex*—the largest meat-eating dinosaur known. "If we would ever find tyrannosaur eggs, this is what they would look like," predicts Peter Larson, a professional fossil collector who has seen the eggs.

sweated through their second short-term warning in little more than a year—prompted by a 4.8 quake on 14 November—still without seeing the expected magnitude 6 shock materialize.

There is a bright side, says seismologist Andrew Michael of the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park. Theorists had hoped that the intense monitoring of the Parkfield area would reveal a sure-fire precursor of a moderate quake—accelerating deformation of the crust. Nothing like that was seen in the time period surrounding the 14 November quake, so if a magnitude 6 quake had hit, it would have shattered

Scrambling for Dino Eggs

On 11 November, as the media crushed forward to photograph the unveiling of a new exhibit at the Boston Museum of Science, a TV cameraman's light pole came crashing down on the side of an uncovered display case. "It scared the heck out of me," recalls Don Lessem, founder of The Dinosaur Society. In the case, inches from where the light shattered, were some of the largest dinosaur eggs ever found.

The exhibit stems from the recent influx of eggs out of the

theories about quake precursors. So the theories are intact, even if the quake prediction is a bit tattered.

Optimists in the Parkfield group might also claim that the alert-triggering quake is a sign that the magnitude 6 is on the way, if a little behind schedule. The 14 November quake is the latest and largest of three earthquakes that have marched progressively closer to a point just north of Parkfield where the previous magnitude 6 started in 1966. The small November rupture, a kilometer below this starting point, transferred additional strain to the spot equal to the

amount of strain that normally accumulates in 5 years, says Michael. So whenever the expected Parkfield quake happens, it'll come sooner thanks to this month's tweak.

HHMI Cuts Cardiologist Loose

Well-known heart disease researcher Bernardo Nadal-Ginard has lost his funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) because he drew an outside salary. The information surfaced in a furor surrounding the apparent disappearance of funds from a retirement fund that he oversaw at Children's Hospital in Boston.

Nadal-Ginard's research has focused on genes involved in heart development. A professor at Harvard Medical School and chief of cardiology at the hospital, he is also president of the Boston Children's Heart Foundation Inc., a group of cardiologists that practices at Children's. Earlier this month, colleagues of Nadal-Ginard notified the hospital that \$4 million to \$5 million may be missing from the foundation's retirement fund, prompting a probe by the Massachusetts attorney general.

HHMI sources told *Science* that the state inquiry, reported on 10 November in the *Boston Globe*, turned up public records showing that Nadal-Ginard has been getting a salary from his cardiology group. That didn't bother the state, but it did trouble HHMI, which prohibits its investigators from receiving salaries from any other sources.

Robert Potter, director of communications at HHMI, says that the Institute's portion of Nadal-Ginard's lab, which employed 10 of the lab's 60 workers, will be closed down. HHMI plans to continue employing those researchers, and to ease the transition HHMI will try to place them in the labs of other HHMI investigators at Children's Hospital. Nadal-Ginard and his lab workers, through a lawyer, declined to comment on the situation.