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COVER

Propagation of an intercellular calcium wave through glial cells on the surface of the retina. Five frames (clockwise, starting at upper left, 0.93-second intervals) show the leading edge of the calcium wave as it travels outward from the point of stimulation. The wave was imaged by labeling rat retinal astrocytes and Müller cells with a calcium indicator dye and is shown as a pseudocolor image. The largest ring is 190 micrometers in diameter. See page 844 and films at http://enlil.med.umn.edu/www/phsl/ work/caw.htm. [Image: E. A. Newman and K. R. Zahs]

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This Week in Science

edited by PHIL SZUROMI

Distant relatives

Fossil evidence indicates that primates arose by the Eocene, about 55 million years ago. Although some new finds have provided key information on their early history, some other aspects are uncertain or controversial, such as the relation (and in some cases identification) of early anthropoids (distant ancestors of humans) to other primates. In an article, Kay *et al.* (p. 797) overview recent fossil finds and present a phylogenetic synthesis.

Warming trend

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation phenomenon in the tropical Pacific has a periodicity of 3 to 4 years, but longer term oscillations may be superimposed on these fluctuations. Gu and Philander (p. 805) present a mechanism for these longer oscillations in a model that links the extra-tropics and tropics. Influx of warm water from higher latitudes into the tropics triggers a feedback cycle with an interdecadal periodicity. Such a mechanism may be responsible for the recent but yet unexplained warm conditions that have persisted over the tropical Pacific.

Westward flow

A circumglobal equatorial seaway, the Tethys Seaway, existed during the Cretaceous from about 145 to 65 million years ago, and perhaps even longer ago. It has been suggested that a westward flowing current through this seaway was important in dispersal of fauna and in controlling at least equatorial climates, but numerical models of ocean circulation

Joining the resistance

Hybridization between the sugar beet and related species has brought resistance to pathogenic soil nematodes into the naturally unprotected sugar beet. Cai *et al.* (p. 832; see the news story by Moffat, p. 757) mapped chromosomal breakage points to identify and clone the gene conferring resistance. The $Hs1^{pro-1}$ gene encodes a protein with similarities to those that confer gene-forgene response to bacterial pathogens.

have had difficulty in reproducing this flow pattern. Bush (p. 807) now reports results from a coupled atmosphere-ocean model in which a westward circumglobal current appears as a robust feature.



Clusters within water

Two reports focus on the chemical and physical properties of water and their dependence on cluster size and charge. Gregory *et al.* (p. 814) combined theory and experi-



ment to study the dipole moments of water clusters consisting of two to six molecules. The polarizability of the water hexamer is close to that of liquid water and ice, indicating that the water hexamer may represent the dominant interactions present in these condensed phases. Tuckerman *et al.* (p. 817) present ab initio calculations for the charged water complexes $H_5O_2^+$ and $H_3O_2^-$, which are prototypes of strong and intermediatestrength hydrogen-bonded systems. The quantum character of the shared proton depended on the oxygen-oxygen distance and thus, bond strength; the strong $H_5O_2^+$ complex behaved classically, whereas the $H_3O_2^$ complex showed quantum effects even at room temperature. These results may also have implications for proton transfer dynamics.

_

Tagged for ready recovery

A synthetic route is successful only if the desired product can be recovered cleanly. Studer et al. (p. 823) have taken advantage of the unusual solubility of fluorocarbon groups to recover products without chromatographic separations. For example, by tagging one of the reactants with a fluorocarbon group, the product, which carries the tag, can be recovered in a fluorocarbon liquid phase. Leftover reactants and byproducts will separate into organic or aqueous phases.

Recharging volcanoes

Isotopic studies have provided important information on processes in magma chambers, such as the extent that magmas melt and then mix with adjacent rocks or the amount of mixing with other magmas. Davidson and Tepley (p. 826) show that a detailed record of such processes can be extracted by looking at strontium isotopic variations in zoned plagioclase crystals forming from the magmas. In three case studies, sudden jumps in the isotopic composition corresponded to changes in mineral chemistry and likely mark discrete recharge events.

Visual searching

How do we find the ten of diamonds in a deck of cards thrown faceup on a table? The biased competition model of visual attention suggests that we bias our search for cards with red pips (a top-down factor) and we detect which of these cards most strongly matches the requirements of ten pips and diamond shapes. Rees et al. (p. 835) provide evidence from functional imaging studies suggesting that the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex in humans contributes the bias signal to the inferior temporal cortex that mediates object recognition.

Neuron protection

The loss of dopaminergic neurons in a critical spot in the brain, the substantia nigra, is a hallmark of Parkinson's disease. Choi-Lundberg *et al.* (p. 838) have used an adenoviral vector to deliver a neuronal growth factor to just that region of the brain. Tests of this procedure in a rat model of Parkinson's disease show that loss of the neurons after induced degeneration is slowed relative to the rate in untreated rats.

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Figure 1. Inducible on/off control of gene expression. HeLa Tet-Off and Tet-On cell lines stably expressing a tet-regulated pTRE-derived plasmid with the *E. coli lac2* gene were cultured in the absence or presence of 1 μ g/ml Dox. For Northern analysis, 10 μ g of total RNA per lane was hybridized simultaneously with *lac2* and GAPDH probes.



Figure 2. Inducible, high-level expression of the Bcl-2 apoptosis gene. HeLa S3 Tet-Off Cells stably transformed with tet-regulated pTRE-Bcl-2 were grown in 2.0, 0.006, 0.004, 0.002, 0.001, 0.0005, 0.00025, and 0 µg/ml of Tc (Lanes 1–8, respectively). A Western blot containing 100 µg of total protein from each condition was simultaneously probed with human Bcl-2-specific and human cyclin-B1-specific mouse monoclonal antibodies. Tc gave 100-fold induction of Bcl-2.

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[™] MJ Research Notebook

Volume VII...No. 1

A Bulletin of Technological Advance in Molecular Biology

Winter 1997

The Peltier-effect Thermal Cycler That Began A Technological Trend: The MJ RESEARCH PTC-100



Left to right: A PTC-100-96AgV with a speedy silver-gold block that can ramp at up to 2.5°C/sec, a PTC-100HB with improved Hot Bonnet heated lid that applies heat and pressure to the tops of tubes or plates for oil-free reactions, and a PTC-100-16MS that holds 16 slides & 24x0.2ml tubes for *in situ*.

How Peltier-effect Heat Pumps Actually Work

The Peltier effect is a solid-state physical phenomenon that was first described by Jean Peltier in the *Annales de chimie* in 1834. Peltier observed



that when current passes through a bimetallic junction, one side gets hot and the other gets cold. In the 20th century, this "effect" has been combined with semiconductor technology to construct small, bi-

directional heat pumps that are electronic in nature. These pumps are extremely precise and reliable, and they are the basis of MJ cyclers.

RIGHT WAY TO USE PELTIER

It is now widely accepted that Peltier heat pumps are the best technology for thermal cyclers—but exactly how these pumps are applied is critical. A design was pioneered with the PTC-100 where the pumps are mounted between a low-mass sample block and a large, efficient heat sink. Permanent mounting allows fast, efficient heat flow between the pumps and the block. The heat sink can store heat to be later pumped back into the sample block, or it can disperse the heat to outside air—this depends upon the action of a computer-controlled fan.

The Cycler That Went To War in the Persian Gulf and Battled Plague in India

When adversity flared in the Persian Gulf six years ago, the tools of molecular biology were brought to the front. Biological weapons were threatening; means to detect their use were needed. PTC-100s were there—and they did their duty.

In 1994, unsettling reports were circulating that plague had erupted in Surat, India. Indian authorities were addressing the problem as best they could, but the skills to detect Y. pestis had atrophied over time. Working with the WHO, MJ RESEARCH donated several PTC-100s, allowing Indian scientists to use molecular methods to battle the disease. In the final analysis, only these molecular tests⁺ proved that the plague pathogen was ever present (see Nature Med 1:1237-9).

* PCR is covered by patents owned by Hoffmann-La Roche, Inc. & F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. Users should obtain license to perform the reaction.



MJ Engineer Paul Titcomb in 1990, with a PTC-100 that was camouflaged by the U.S. Marine Corps for field use in *Operation Desert Storm*. **Circle No. 38 on Readers' Service Card**



WATERTOWN, Mass. — In 1986 and 1987, much "buzz" was circulating in the biology community about a new method for identifying and amplifying sequences of DNA that was being developed by the Cetus Corporation. A tantalizing paper describing an early form of PCR* had appeared in *Science* in late '85, but a critical refinement—the use of thermostable polymerase enzyme—was not described officially until '88. At that time, the need for significant numbers of instruments to thermally cycle tiny aliquots of biological reagent first became apparent.

The partner of the Cetus Corporation, The Perkin-Elmer Corporation, concentrated on the development of a thermal cycler based upon mechanical vapor compression technology. MJ RESEARCH, INC.—then a year-old start-up company—recognized the opportunity and began development of instrument based upon the more promising Peltier-effect heat pump. Several other companies in the U.S. and England also began development of thermal cyclers—mostly based upon resistive heating and passive air or water cooling (though one other US firm also developed a variant of the Peltier cycler).

In late '88, MJ RESEARCH introduced the world's first Peltier thermal cycler—the PTC-100. Since that time, the instrument's design has been modified, crafted, tweaked—and perfected. To this day, the PTC-100 outperforms most competing cyclers in uniformity, speed, accuracy, and capacity—even though at least twenty other manufacturers have since entered the market. MJ has introduced newer designs—the Mini-Cycler, DNA Engine, and Tetrad—yet the PTC-100 remains a respected workhorse of science.

But perhaps the greatest compliment to this pioneering design is the ubiquitous imitation. Though it was scorned at first by some, the PTC-100's configuration is now mimicked by virtually every manufacturer in every new introduction. E-MAIL: SALESOMUR.COM • WEB: HTTP://WWW.MJR.COM

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1. The PCR process is covered by patents owned by Hoffman-La Roche.

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Figure 1. Colonies were screened for the TGF- 81 gene with a fluorescein-labeled oligonucleotide probe and Enhanced Luminol. This film demonstrates results obtained using the Renaissance 3'- End Labeling Fluorescein Kit with Antifluorescein-HRP (NEL823) and the detection substrate Enhanced Luminol (NEL201). Discs were exposed to Reflection film for 15 minutes.

Figure 2. Mouse ß-actin was detected using a fluorescein-labeled ssRNA probe and ready-to-use CDP-Star. This film demonstrates results obtained using Renaissance RNA Fluorescein Labeling Kit with Antifluorescein-AP (NEL633) in conjunction with ready-to-use CDP-Star (NEL601). Blots were exposed to Reflection film for 5 minutes.

Figure 3. The v-Fos gene was detected in 125 ng of blotted mouse genomic DNA in less than 5 minutes using CDP-Star. This film demonstrates results obtained using the Renaissance Random Primer Biotin Labeling Kit with Streptavidin-AP (NEL604) in conjunction with ready-to-use CDP-Star (NEL601). Blots were exposed to Reflection film for 5 minutes.



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Genomics's Wheelers and Dealers

Affymetrix

Santa Clara, California

Key feature: Designing DNA probe arrays using GeneChip system

Key technologies: Semiconductor fabrication techniques that put DNA sequences on glass "chips"

"Our chips allow people much easier access to genetic information. There's a lot we can do by looking at patterns."

Stephen Fodor, President

Key corporate collaborators Focus **Deal value** Hoffmann-La Roche H. influenzae and undisclosed S. pneumoniae genes Merck & Co. Glaxo Wellcome human gene expression undisclosed detection of mutations undisclosed **IPO** date Value Share price 6 June 1996 \$90 million \$15 Stock holdings Salaries and other Key players (number of shares) compensation Stephen Fodor, President 153,333 \$188,819 base salary Alejandro Zaffaroni 140,000 none reported Paul Berg 38,488 none reported

Genset

Paris

Key feature: Identifying genes and regulatory regions of genes

Key technologies: Large-scale, high-throughput sequencing; technique for isolating "5 prime' sequences at beginning of genes (including regulatory regions); "functional polymorphism scanning" for analyzing gene variations in a population; bioinformatics

"We discover pathways with minimal benchwork."

Daniel Cohen, **Chief Genomics Officer**

key corporate collabor	rators Focus	Deal value
Synthelabo Johnson & Johnson	prostate can schizophrer	cer \$70.5 million nia under negotiation
IPO date	Value	Share price
5 June 1996	\$86.4 millio	on \$16
Key players	Stock holdings (number of shares)	Salaries and other compensation
Pascal Brandy, CEO	Because Genset is a for U.S. Securities and Ex not require the reporting	preign-based company, the change Commission does of individual officers' stoc
Marc Vasseur, Chief Biology Officer	and compensation inf does, however, report t	ormation. The prospectus



Genome Therapeutics Corp.

Waltham, Massachusetts

Key feature: Sequences pathogen genomes

Key technologies: Proprietary high-throughput "multiplex" DNA sequencing; positional cloning; bioinformatics

"In bacteria, the gap between gene discovery and drug discovery is so much shorter than in humans." Bernd Seizinger, Chief Scientific Officer



(ey corporate colla	borators	Focus		Deal value
Astra AB Schering-Plough Schering-Plough	access <i>H. pylori</i> gene database access unspecified pathogen database asthma		\$11 million e \$13.3 million \$22.5 million	
PO date	Value		Share price	
982	not available		not available	
Subsequent offeri	ng date	Va	alue	Share price
5 February 1996		\$39	million	\$7.69
Key players	Ste (nur	ock holdings nber of share	* Salaries (s) comp	s and other ensation*
Robert Hennessey,	CEO	1,600,000	\$260,000 ba	se salary,
Bernd Seizinger	no	ot available	not available	1

Bernd Seizinger Philip Leder, Director 137.250 * From 16 January 1996 proxy statement

Human Genome Sciences Rockville, Maryland

Key feature: Sells subscriptions to the Human Gene Anatomy Project, putatively the world's largest collection of cDNAs from normal and abnormal human tissues

Key technologies: Large-scale sequencing; bioinformatics

"Our database is a tool of invaluable power for asking medical questions." William Haseltine, CEO

Key corporate collaborators

SmithKline Beecham Merck KGaA Schering-Plough Synthelabo **IPO** date 1 December 1993

William Haseltine, CEO

J. Craig Venter, TIGR

Key players

Value \$27 million

1.

1.

Focus

access to cDNA database

access to cDNA database access to cDNA database

access to cDNA database

none reported

\$12

Deal value

\$125 million \$50 million

\$55 million

\$35 million

Share price

Stock holdings Salaries and other (number of shares) compensation

162,887	\$200,000 base salary, \$50,000 min. annual bonus, \$9000/year car allowance, \$70,000 legal and account-
376,513	ing fees none reported

Officer

Daniel Cohen.

Chief Genomics

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officers have options on an aggregate of 534,200 shares of stock. They also split \$357,000 in compensation with seven directors (who only received "limited" amounts and "incidental" expenses).

Incyte Pharmaceuticals

Palo Alto, California

Key feature: Sells subscriptions to Internetaccessible LIFESEQ database of cDNA sequences and expression patterns

Key technologies: Large-scale sequencing; expression analysis; bioinformatics

"In biotech before, people were staking out claims and trying to mine. [Now we're] making a business out of selling tools to miners." Roy Whitfield, CEO >



Key corporate collabora	ators Focus	Deal value
Pfizer Upjohn 8 other customers	access to cDNA access to cDNA	database \$15.75 millior database \$10 millior undisclosed
IPO date	Value	Share price
4 November 1993	\$15 millio	n \$7.50
Subsequent offering of	date Value	Share price
8 November 1995	\$32.3 milli	on \$19
Key players	Stock holdings* (number of shares)	Salaries and other compensation*
Roy Whitfield, CEO Randall Scott, Chief Scientific Officer	435,320 228,345	none reported none reported
*From subsequent offering		A. Martin Martin

Millennium Pharmaceuticals

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Key feature: Identifying disease genes with synergistic approaches

Key technologies: Large-scale DNA sequencing; rapid analysis of differential gene expression; positional cloning; high-throughput expression cloning; bioassays for high-throughput drug screens; bioinformatics; comparative genetics

"Genomics is a whole set of technologies, and it's going to dramatically change the pharmaceutical industry." Mark Levin, CEO >>

Key corporate collabora	tors Foc	us	Deal value
Hoffmann-La Roche Eli Lilly Astra AB American Home Products	obesity and type atherosclerosis a inflammatory resp CNS diseases	Il diabetes and cancer piratory disease	\$44.5 million \$61 million \$53.3 million \$90 million
IPO date	Valu	e	Share price
6 May 1996	\$54 m	illion	\$12
Key players (n	Stock holdings umber of shares	Salaries a	and other nsation
Mark Levin, CEO	1,563,216	100,000 share \$300,000 base relocation expe \$100,000	option, e salary, enses up to
Eric Lander, consultant	749,591	maximum \$95,	000/yr. fees

Unless otherwise noted, all stock and compensation information comes from company prospectuses filed for initial public offerings (IPOs), and the value of all collaborative deals listed is the total potential revenue, excluding milestone and

Myriad Genetics Salt Lake City

Key feature: Developing predisposition tests using more than 25,000 clinical samples from large, multigenerational Utah families

Key technologies: High-speed gene sequencing; positional cloning; bioinformatics

"There's a significant opportunity in genetics predisposition testing rather than in developing therapeutics on our own, which is a much riskier proposition."

Peter Meldrum, CEO >



Sequana Therapeutics La Jolla, California

Key feature: Has access to more than 30,000 DNA samples from individuals and families affected by specific diseases

Key technologies: Positional cloning; highthroughput DNA sequencers and analyzers; high-throughput cell-based drug screens; bioinformatics; comparative genetics

"All biotechnology companies, by dint of the power of genomics, will have to tailor their research programs toward genomics."

Kevin Kinsella, CEO



royalty payments if products are developed. Note that the quoted stock prices likely have changed significantly as the market fluctuates daily, and that stock holdings may include options that have yet to become vested.

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