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NEWS & COMMENT

Science Funding: Up in Smoke?

Biomedical Funding: FDA Scientists

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981 New star dates



Resist Cuts in In-House Research Positions NASA Budget: Red Ink Will Not 977 Wash Out Space Science X-ray Crystallography: Taking a Structured 978 Approach to Understanding Proteins Canadian Social Science: Database Funding 979 Left Out in the Cold Ecology: New Wetlands Proposal Draws 980 Flak RESEARCH NEWS 981 The Universe Shows Its Age Infectious Diseases: A Method in 983 Ebola's Madness Ecology: Of Mice and Moths-and 984 Lyme Disease? Seismology: A Slow Start for Earthquakes 985 Atom Laser Shows That It Is Worthy -986 of the Name Laser Trap Gives Clearer View of 986 Condensates

THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE
EDITORIAL The Budget: Too Good or True?
LETTERS
X-ray Data: To Have or To Ho
Multilab Partnerships: B. Richter; J
of the Same" in Switzerland? I R

Multilab Partnerships: B. Richter; J. J. Rush • "More of the Same" in Switzerland?: J. R. Latham; *Response*: R. Zinkernagel • MRC Commitments: G. K. Radda; S. C. Harvey • Climate Change and Human Health: R. R. Colwell, P. R. Epstein, D. Gubler, N. Maynard, A. J. McMichael, J. A. Patz, R. B. Sack, R. Shope • Heisenberg Meets Photobiology?: D. A. Oren; *Response*: S. A. Kay • Corrections and Clarifications

Astrophysics: Sunquakes May Power Solar Symphony	987					
Ecology: Global Nitrogen Overload Problem Grows Critical	988					
Reef Biology: New Threat Seen From Carbon Dioxide						
SCIENCE'S COMPASS						
Policy Medical Consequences of Antibiotic Use in Agriculture W. Witte	996					
Books and New Media Unraveling Complex Events S. G. Brush	998					
Research Mitotic Arrest: Mad2 Prevents Sleepy from Waking Up the APC S L Elledge	999					
Inner Workings of a Transcription	1000					
B. J. Graves Radical Ideas D. H. Ebbalt	1002					
Warmer and Wetter 6000 Years Ago?	1003					
W. Beck Update: Muscle Contraction:	1004					

DEPARTMENTS

95) 96;

96

ld?: F. Bloom

974

976

a de	SCIENCESCOPE	973
	RANDOM SAMPLES Icelandic Isolation Pays Off • Drinking S Lite? • Similarities Among the Birds and the	991 tudies e Bees
	ESSAYS ON SCIENCE AND SOCIETY The Third Culture K. Kelly	992
	AAAS COLLOQUIUM	994
	TECH.SIGHT: PRODUCTS	1058

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COVER

1008

1018

Gypsy moth outbreaks and Lyme disease are major problems in eastern U.S. forests. The abundance of gypsy moths and the tick vectors of Lyme disease are determined by an ecological chain reaction. Acorn production determines the abundance of white-footed mice and deer. Abundant mice suppress gypsy moth outbreaks, and mice and deer support tick populations, potentially increasing the risk of Lyme disease. See p. 1023 and the News story on p. 984. [Photos: deer, R. J. Winchcombe; acorns, M. Adhean. Collage: P. Morrighan]

REPORTS

Bosonic Stimulation in the Formation **Z** 1005 of a Bose-Einstein Condensate

H.-J. Miesner, D. M. Stamper-Kurn, M. R. Andrews, D. S. Durfee, S. Inouye, W. Ketterle

Three-Dimensional Simulations of Plume-Lithosphere Interaction at the Hawaiian Swell

W. B. Moore, G. Schubert, P. Tackley

Photometry and Spectroscopy of the **1011** GRB 970508 Optical Counterpart

A. J. Castro-Tirado, J. Gorosabel, N. Benítez, C. Wolf, R. Fockenbrock, E. Martínez-González, H. Kristen, A. Broeils, H. Pedersen, J. Greiner, E. Costa, M. Feroci, L. Piro, F. Frontera, L. Nicastro, E. Palazzi, C. Bartolini, A. Guarnieri, N. Masetti, A. Piccioni, M. Mignoli, M. Wold, M. Lacy, K. Birkle, T. Broadhurst, S. Brandt, N. Lund

Temperature and Surface-Ocean Water **1014** Balance of the Mid-Holocene Tropical Western Pacific

M. K. Gagan, L. K. Ayliffe, D. Hopley, J. A. Cali, G. E. Mortimer, J. Chappell, M. T. McCulloch, M. J. Head

Simulated Increase of Hurricane Intensities in a CO₂-Warmed Climate T. R. Knutson, R. E. Tuleya, Y. Kurihara

Chiral Spaces: Dissymmetric Capsules 1021 Through Self-Assembly

J. M. Rivera, T. Martín, J. Rebek Jr.

Chain Reactions Linking Acorns to **1023** Gypsy Moth Outbreaks and Lyme Disease Risk C. G. Jones, R. S. Ostfeld, M. P. Richard, E. M. Schauber, J. O. Wolff

Ca²⁺ Flux Through Promiscuous **1027** Na⁺ Cardiac Channels: Slip-Mode Conductance L. F. Santana, A. M. Gómez, W. J. Lederer

Z 1034

Virus Glycoproteins Z.-y. Yang, R. Delgado, L. Xu, R. F. Todd, E. G. Nabel, A. Sanchez, G. J. Nabel

Indicates accompanying feature

Distinct Cellular Interactions of

Secreted and Transmembrane Ebola

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The Structure of GABP α/β : An ETS \checkmark **1037** Domain–Ankyrin Repeat Heterodimer Bound to DNA

A. H. Batchelor, D. E. Piper, F. Charles de la Brousse, S. L. McKnight, C. Wolberger

Budding Yeast Cdc20: A Target of the **1041** Spindle Checkpoint L. H. Hwang, L. F. Lau, D. L. Smith, C. A.

Mistrot, K. G. Hardwick, E. S. Hwang, A. Amon, A. W. Murray

Fission Yeast Slp1: An Effector of the Mad2-Dependent Spindle Checkpoint

S. H. Kim, D. P. Lin, S. Matsumoto, A. Kitazono, T. Matsumoto

Structure of the Amino-Terminal Protein 1048 Interaction Domain of STAT-4

U. Vinkemeier, I. Moarefi, J. E. Darnell Jr., J. Kuriyan

Uncoupling of Immune Complex Formation **1052** and Kidney Damage in Autoimmune Glomerulonephritis

R. Clynes, C. Dumitru, J. V. Ravetch

The Minor Histocompatibility Antigen HA-1: **1054** A Diallelic Gene with a Single Amino Acid Polymorphism

J. M. M. den Haan, L. M. Meadows, W. Wang, J. Pool, E. Blokland, T. L. Bishop, C. Reinhardus, J. Shabanowitz, R. Offringa, D. F. Hunt, V. H. Engelhard, E. Goulmy



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THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

edited by PHIL SZUROMI

Raising Hawaii

Hawaii is the site of the most active and voluminous volcanism on Earth; magmatism is generally thought to be associated with a hot spot in the mantle, perhaps associated with a mantle plume, that is currently beneath the big



island of Hawaii. Steady movement of the Pacific plate over the hot spot has produced a long chain of islands and seamounts. As a result of this magmatic activity, the ocean floor around the Hawaiian island chain forms a broad topographic swell that extends over hundreds of kilometers and, along with heat flow and other geophysical measurements, can be used to infer the thermal state and convection in the underlying mantle. Moore et al. (p. 1008) present a numerical model of this swell that accounts for the interaction of a mantle plume with the oceanic lithosphere. The results imply that small-scale convection in the mantle beneath Hawaii has thinned the lithosphere and that the plume may be 100 to 150 Celsius degrees hotter than surrounding mantle and dynamically isolated.

Comparing records

The amount that the tropical sea surface cooled during the last glacial maximum has been controversial but is critical for evaluating glacial climates and climate models. Strontium/calcium ratios in corals imply that temperatures were cooler than oxygen isotope values in foraminifera. Gagan *et al.* (p. 1014; see the commentary by Beck, p. 1003) compare these two records in corals from near

Anomalous burst

Gamma ray bursts (GRB) are brief, high-energy flashes of photons from unknown sources and previously undefined locations in the universe. Recently, the Burst and Transient Source Experiment (BATSE) on the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory satellite (launched in 1991) indicated that these events were randomly located in space, while the x-ray satellite BeppoSAX (launched in 1996) determined more precise locations of these bursts within a few arc minutes (see the Perspective by Kouveliotou in the 29 August 1997, p. 1257). These improved observations allowed astronomers to detect transient emissions in other wavelengths related to the initial burst of gamma rays. Castro-Tirado et al. (p. 1011) observed the optical transient related to GRB 970508 from about 4 hours to 4 days after the burst on the 2.2-meter telescope at the Calar Alto Observatory and the 4.2-meter William Herschel Telescope at La Palma, Spain. They observed a sudden peak in the brightness of the optical transient that occurred 2 days after the burst. This peak in brightness is difficult to reconcile with the standard fireball model of a GRB in which an object explodes and the shock wave moves into the gas surrounding the galaxy to produce first gamma ray radiation, then x-ray, optical, and radio radiation. The authors suggest that the fireball model is more complicated and requires a mechanism in the source, the shock waves, the surrounding medium, or a combination of all three to alter the theoretically defined timing of the optical transient duration and strength.

the Holocene maximum about 5000 years ago. The data imply that the seawater was 1 Celsius degree warmer then and that the ocean had a higher oxygen-18/oxygen-16 ratio because of increased evaporation. This increase in the oxygen isotope ratio of seawater could account for the small shift seen in the foraminifera record from glacial times to the Holocene and would be consistent with increased cooling of the tropics.

1

Storms in a warmer climate

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded in their 1995 assessment that it is not possible to conclude whether tropical storm intensity, distribution, and frequency will change in a warmer climate caused by increased greenhouse gas emissions. Knutson *et al.* (p. 1018) show that in a high-resolution hurricane prediction model for the northwest tropical Pacific, more intense hurricanes are observed in the warmer climate compared to current conditions, indicating that global warming may be accompanied by an increase in storm intensity.

Uneven molecular spaces

Certain types of "claw" shaped molecules have been shown to dimerize around appropriate "guest" molecules, thus encapsulating them but not so tightly that they cannot escape. Rivera *et al.* (p. 1021) have now synthesized achiral molecules that can assemble around chiral guests (terpenes) to form two different complexes. (In the schematic example shown, one side of the guest favors the small-arm side of



the caspule shown in red, while the other favors the long-arm side shown in blue.) The different contacts between the molecule and the cavity might ultimately be exploited in performing asymmetric reactions around the guest.

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Bosonic stimulation

In Bose-Einstein condensation, an atomic vapor is cooled to very low temperatures, which causes the atoms to enter a single quantum state. One application of the condensate is to make an atom laser-a device that emits coherent beams of atoms rather than photons. Miesner et al. (p. 1005; see the news story by Hellemans, p. 986) now report the observation of an important part of that process, matter wave amplification. By watching how the condensate evolved with time near the phase transition, the authors were able to observe stimulated growth of the boson population.

Detecting unpaired chromosomes

To assure proper distribution of chromosomes during mitosis, cells have a checkpoint mechanism that delays anaphase and chromosome separation until all of the chromosomes are properly attached to the spindle. The Mad2 protein participates in this checkpoint mechanism and binds to unattached kinetochores (the structure through which the chromosomes contact the spindle). Kim et al. (p. 1045) studied the fission yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae and show how, under conditions where the spindle is not properly assembled, a signal from Mad2 can influence the cell cycle machinery to arrest the cell division cycle. Mad2 interacts with a protein known as Slp1, which is implicated in regulation of the anaphase-promoting complex (which controls progression of cells into anaphase.) Hwang et al. (p. 1041) describe similar findings from the budding yeast

(Continued on page 959)

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(Continued from page 957)

Schizosaccharomyces pombe in which the Slp1 homolog Cdc20 interacts with three components of the spindle checkpoint, Mad1, Mad2, and Mad3. The findings in both reports reveal a molecular mechanism by which cells can sense unpaired chromosomes and delay cell cycle progression (see the commentary by Elledge, p. 999). In this way, cells avoid aberrant chromosome segregation, which is recognized as a potential source of genomic instability in cancer cells

From little acorns...

What connects outbreaks of a defoliating pest moth with human risk for tick-borne diseases? Jones et al. (p. 1023; see the cover and the news story by Kaiser, p. 984) have conducted a series of largescale experiments in oak forest of the northeastern United States to uncover the ecological relations. The experiments connect acorn production, the white-footed mice whose numbers are heavily influenced by the acorn crop, and the gypsy moth outbreaks that are controlled by the mice. They also link acorn production to the presence of deer in the woods, which controls the density of black-legged ticks, ticks that in subsequent stages of development on mice may become infected with the Lyme disease pathogen, thus increasing the risk to humans of contracting the disease. The work confirms the importance of indirect interactions among species in driving population dynamics and will also inform forest management practice.

Calcium entry through sodium channels

Contraction of muscle cells in the heart is initiated by an action potential, which causes voltage-dependent influx of calcium ions (Ca^{2+}) from outside the cell.

However, even when voltagegated Ca2+ channels and the sodium-calcium ion (Na⁺/Ca²⁺) exchanger were blocked, such Ca2+ entry persisted. Santana et al. (p. 1027; see the commentary by Hanks, p. 1004) provide evidence that, under certain conditions, external Ca2+ can actually enter cardiac myocytes through Na⁺ channels in amounts that can substantially influence contractility of the cells. These Na⁺ channels undergo a transient loss of selectivity that allows Ca2+ ions to enter the cell. The results identify an unexpected source of Ca2+ influx that may influence Ca²⁺ signals in heart muscle and other cells types. Furthermore, this unusual conductance property of Na⁺ channels appears to contribute the mechanism by which widely used therapeutic agents related to digitalis produce their effects on the heart.

Creating a binding partnership

Proteins that mediate transcription in eukaryotes appear to increase their specificity by binding as dimers, and structural studies have been performed for dimers where both proteins are members of the same gene family. Batchelor *et al.* (p. 1037; see the commentary by Graves, p. 1000) present the crystal structure of a heterodimer, the GA-binding



protein (GABP), in complex with 21–base pair DNA strand. The partners are from different families: The GABP α subunit contains a DNA-binding domain of

the ETS family, which can bind DNA as monomers, whereas the GABP β subunit exhibits a series of ankyrin repeats. Although GABP β does not contact DNA in this complex, the ternary complex is 100 times more stable than the complex with GABP α alone. The contacts that GABP β makes to GABP α through its ankyrin repeats to parts of the ETS domain and the carboxyl-terminal region appear to reorient some of the α helices of GABP α and stabilize its contacts to DNA.

Cell interactions with Ebola virus

Ebola virus is known to cause lethal outbreaks of hemorrhagic fever. To help define the molecular basis for the virus-cell interactions, Yang *et al.* (p. 1034; see the news story by Wickelgren, p. 983) studied the secreted and transmembrane forms of the viral glycoprotein. The secreted form can bind to neutrophils and inhibit their activation. The transmembrane form interacted specifically with endothelial cells and may be involved in the hemorrhaging that is a hallmark of the disease.

Turning on inflammation

One of the effects of severe autoimmune diseases is kidney damage. Autoantibodies form large complexes with their antigens, which get trapped in the glomeruli of the kidney. It was thought that complement proteins were essential for the subsequent inflammatory damage. Clynes et al. (p. 1052) crossed mice that have a propensity to develop autoantibodies with those deficient in Fc receptor γ chain (an essential part of Fcy receptors, which bind the "Fc' portion of antibodies). The mice still produced immune complexes but did not succumb to renal failure. Thus, although complement seems to be important for the

clearance of immune complexes, Fc γ receptors are critical for turning on the inflammatory response to the complexes, which causes kidney damage. This finding explains the paradoxical propensity for lupus in people deficient in complement and may offer avenues to prevent the damage.

STAT structure

The STATs (signal transducers and activators of transcription) are transcription factors that bring about altered gene expression in response to cytokines and growth factors. In stimulated cells, active STAT dimers move from the cytoplasm to the nucleus where they activate transcription of target genes. STAT dimers bound to adjacent DNA binding sites interact through their amino-terminal domains. Vinkemeier et al. (p. 1048) present the crystal structure of the first 123 residues of STAT-4, which reveals the nature of the protein interface through which this interaction occurs.

Improving transplant matching

Successful human organ transplantation is a goal that cannot be regularly attained. Even when the organ donor is "perfectly' matched at the major histocompatibility locus, the grafted organ my fail to "take." Many of these failures seem to be mismatched at a minor histocompatibility locus called HA-1. den Haan et al. (p. 1054) have determined the sequence of the HA-1 peptide, and found that it comes from a gene that appears in two forms in the population, different in only one amino acid. Those family members that were typed as "HA-1 positive" all had one form of the gene. Determining before transplantation which HA-1 allele is present in a donor and recipient of otherwise "matched" pairs may improve transplantation statistics.

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R&D: Getting Our Money's Worth 23rd Annual AAAS Colloquium on Science and Technology Policy

April 29-May 1, 1998, Renaissance Hotel, Washington, DC

The AAAS Science & Technology Policy Colloquium provides a forum in which federal and industrial policymakers and members of the scientific, engineering, and academic communities can participate in an open discussion of issues relating to science and technology policy.

The Colloquium occurs after the release of the President's budget but before final congressional action, thus allowing for the timely exchange of information about the budget and the consequences of various policy issues involving science and technology.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Scientists, administrators, industrial R&D managers, policymakers, academicians, association officials, federal grant recipients, students, and others with an interest in science and technology policy.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29

(registration opens 12 noon; program starts at 2 p.m.)

KEYNOTE:

John H. Gibbons, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, and Director, OSTP.

BUDGETARY AND POLICY CONTEXT FOR R&D

IN FY 1999 (Plenary Symposium) ■ Congressional Perspectives on S&T Issues for FY 1999 (Sen. Phil Gramm*)

■ AAAS Overview of Federal Budget Proposals for R&D in FY 1999 (Stephen D. Nelson and Kei Koizumi. AAAS)

■ Whatever Happened to the Entitlements Crisis? (Martha Phillips,* The Concord Coalition)

A Scientist Looks at Science Policy (Eric Lander,* MIT)

THE WILLIAM D. CAREY LECTURE

(public invited) Rep. George E. Brown, Jr.

Reception

THURSDAY, APRIL 30

EVALUATING INVESTMENTS AND PERFORMANCE IN RESEARCH

(Plenary Symposium) (Norine E. Noonan, moderator) Franklin D. Raines,* OMB Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, Jr.* Neal Lane,* NSF Sir Robert M. May,* UK

LUNCHEON AND ADDRESS

Richard N. Zare,* Chair, National Science Board

CONCURRENT SYMPOSIA

The Revolution in Military Affairs: The Role of R&D (Ann Markusen, organizer)

Science and Technology Planning in the States (J. Scott Hauger, organizer)

■ 150 Years of American Science Policy (Albert H. Teich, organizer)

MAJOR R&D AGENCY BUDGETS FOR

FY 1999 (Concurrent small group sessions) 4:30 DOD • NIH • NSF

5:15 DOE • NASA • DOC (NIST, NOAA)

Reception and Open House at AAAS

FRIDAY, MAY 1

BREAKFAST AND ADDRESS

SCIENTIFICALLY ILLITERATE VS. POLITICALLY CLUELESS: THE INTERACTION OF SCIENCE AND ITS PUBLICS

(Plenary Symposium)

(J. Paul Gilman, moderator)

Does Science Have a Credibility Problem? Pro and Con

Questions the Public Has for Science

■ "Literacy" Tests or a Dialogue?

LUNCHEON AND ADDRESS

House Speaker Newt Gingrich*

*Invited Speaker

Details and updated program information may be obtained by visiting the Colloquium Website, http://www.aaas.org/spp/dspp/rd/collogu.htm

Budget discussions will be supplemented by AAAS Report XXIII: Research and Development, FY 1999, a comprehensive analysis of the proposals for the FY 1999 budget, prepared by AAAS and a group of its affiliated scientific, engineering, and higher education associations. Registrants will receive this report at the Colloquium; the 1999 AAAS Science and Technology Policy Yearbook (containing most of the Colloquium addresses, plus other significant items) in early fall; and Congressional Action on R&D in the FY 1999 Budget later in the fall.

REGISTER NOW by completing and returning the enclosed form. For further information, contact: Directorate for Science and Policy Programs, AAAS, 1200 New York Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Fax: 202•289•4950. E-mail: snelson or syoung@aaas.org. Phone: 202•326•6600 (for information). To register by phone, call 202•326•7075 (automated service.) A more detailed version of the Colloquium program can be found on the AAAS homepage on the World Wide Web: http://www.aaas.org/spp/dspp/rd/colloqu.htm.



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