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References

1. D. Hamburger, O. Biham, D. Avnir, *Phys. Rev. E* **53**, 3342 (1996).

Responsive Chord

The recent editorial "Opening Science's Compass" by Floyd Bloom (2 Jan., p. 10) struck a responsive chord. I believe that the new *Science's* Compass could prove beneficial in establishing an expanded dialogue with nonscientists and policy-makers. As a

professional environmental engineer, I often travel at the science/nonscience interface and continually marvel at the manner in which we humans can and cannot communicate—especially on scientific topics.

Being a longtime, omnivorous reader of *Science*, I have enjoyed exploring the diversity of unfamiliar subjects in attempts to expand my personal horizons and have composed a poem to this effect (1).

*I don't know chicken hearts from lizard lungs.
 When it comes to reading,
 an unconscious defiance
 Of the arcane term, or unfamiliar subject,
 Precludes the understandable appliance.*

*But as expositions flow so breathlessly
 upon the page,
 From pens of you (and me), and Nobel giants,
 My awareness of our wondrous universe
 Increases geometrically—a Faustian alliance?*

*I attempt to learn the things I do not know,
 But fervently, sincerely, place reliance
 To lead me through the lexicographical maze
 Upon the Compasses of Science.*

Stacy L. Daniels
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Notes

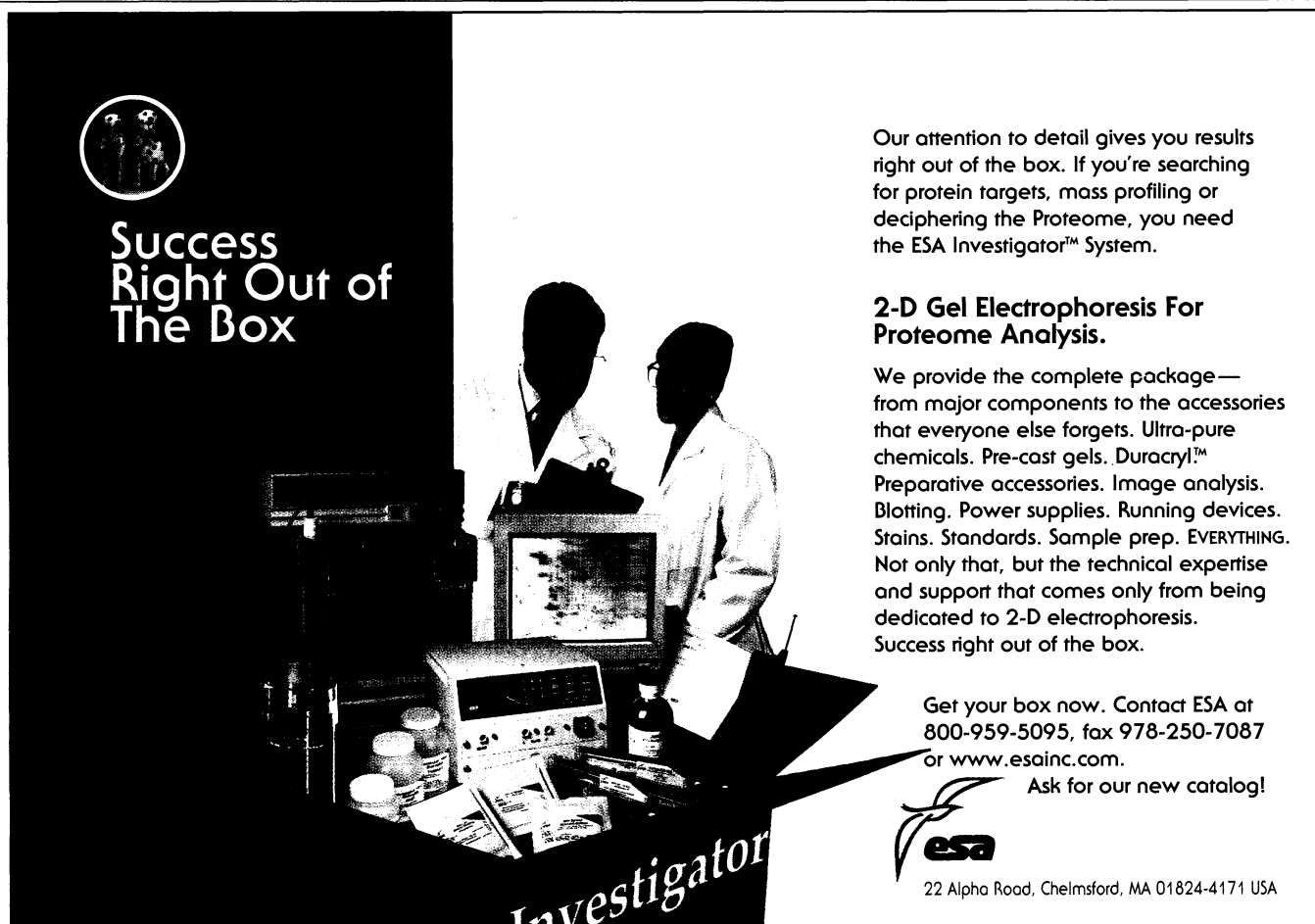
1. The first line was inspired by a letter of 2 January 1998 (p. 15).

Does Public Funding Corrupt?

To judge from the letters about funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (19 Dec., p. 2031) more people should read *The Economic Laws of Scientific Research* by Terence Kealey (1) and apply the argument to funding of the arts. If the case Kealey makes for private funding of science being more effective than public funding has any merit, then the case for private funding of the arts should be even stronger. The assertion that public funding merely corrupts the arts has much to recommend it.

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It was with great enthusiasm that I read Mark A. Emmert's editorial about the failure of scientists to stand up for federal funding for the arts (21 Nov., p. 1381). I completely agree with Emmert's suggestion that



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scientists and artists share common goals. To facilitate this bond, I helped found a group of artists called the NEA Army. We have applied for this year's entire \$98-million NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) budget to purchase a B-2 bomber. Unfortunately, B-2 bombers cost 20 times that amount, so we can only purchase a small fraction. Our project, entitled "Priorities," is aimed at focusing attention on what Americans consider to be their federal budgetary priorities and casting this debate in an artistic (rather than a political) mold. We believe that the NEA as well as the Pentagon budgets should be constantly scrutinized by the public because taxpayers are the ones footing the bill. The same should hold true for the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health budgets.

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Hopping Away?

I hope someone has taken into consideration that deformed frogs, missing limbs or eyes, might not be able to get away from "amphibian counters" (J. Kaiser, News & Comment, 19 Dec., p. 2051). Their able-bodied brothers and sisters must have some advantages in swimming or hopping way. Sorry, scientists, I just couldn't resist.

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Early Education of the Deaf

As deaf and hard-of-hearing research scientists, we were pleased to read about the quickening pace of genetic research into causes of deafness in Elizabeth Pennisi's article "The architecture of hearing" (Research News, 14 Nov., p. 1223). We would not agree, however, that the value of early diagnosis based on genetic screening lies in allowing affected infants to be "taught sign language from a very early age."

Sign language may be widely identified with deafness in the public mind, but learning sign language at an early age does not guarantee that deaf children will develop strong communication skills in English. Early intervention offers other effective educational options to develop oral communication skills during the well-documented critical period for language acquisition that accompanies infancy and early childhood.

These options include assistive listening devices such as hearing aids and cochlear implants; training in speech production and lip-reading; and early education in small mainstreamed classes or oral schools, or both, for the deaf. Many deaf and children who are hard of hearing who are educated in such programs are able to use these skills to pursue productive and satisfying careers.

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Corrections and Clarifications

■ In the second paragraph of the commentary "That flashing sound" by Harold Metcalf (*Science's* Compass, 27 Feb., p. 1322), three Greek μ 's were changed to Roman m's during page layout. Measurements should have read, " $\sim 5 \mu\text{m}$," " $\sim 40 \mu\text{m}$," and " $\sim 0.8 \mu\text{m}$," respectively.

■ The bibliographic information that accompanied the book review by Laurence Trussell (20 Feb., p. 1155) was incorrect. The correct information is as follows. **Excitatory Amino Acids and Synaptic Transmission**. HOWARD WHEAL and ALEX THOMSON, Eds. 2nd ed. Academic Press, San Diego, 1995. xvi, 388 pp., illus., + plates. \$126 or £75. ISBN 0-12-746031-4. Supplementary volume: **Excitatory Amino Acids. Clinical Results with Antagonists**. PAUL HERRLING, Ed. Academic Press, San Diego, 1996. xiv, 156 pp., illus. \$90 or £70. ISBN 0-12-546820-2.

Letters to the Editor

Letters may be submitted by e-mail (at science_letters@aaas.org), fax (202-789-4669), or regular mail (*Science*, 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not routinely acknowledged. Full addresses, signatures, and daytime phone numbers should be included. Letters should be brief (300 words or less) and may be edited for reasons of clarity or space. They may appear in print and/or on the World Wide Web. Letter writers are not consulted before publication.

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