NETWATCH

edited by JOCELYN KAISER

FUN

Chemical Haiku

6 Carbon

Dead stars reborn
as diamonds, buckyballs,
and beings
—Stephanie A. Hall

That's a sample from the Periodic Table of Haiku, where visiting writers have provided literary accompaniment for even the most prosaic of elements, from argon to ununoctium. For more element-inspired verse, follow the link to a Periodic Table of Poetry.

www.iscifistory.com/scifaku/elements/periodichaiku.asp

DATABASES

Corporate Disclosure

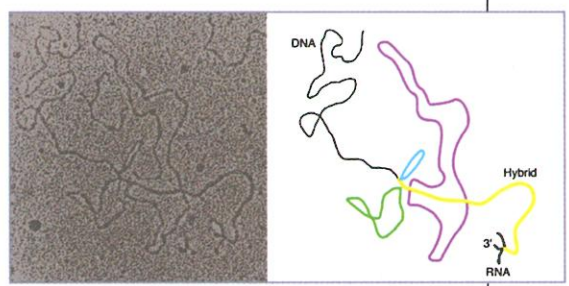
A new Web site aims to shed some light on the increasingly controversial topic of the proper relationship between academia and industry. The Integrity in Science site, from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), lets visitors search a database describing industry connections for 1200-and-counting researchers in fields such as biomedicine and environmental science. Find out that bioethicist Arthur Caplan serves on DuPont's biotech advisory panel, that global warming skeptic Patrick Michaels gets support from the coal lobby, and that 84 academic scientists have received industry funds to study or consult on olestra, the fat substitute.

Much of the information comes from public sources such as news reports, company press releases, journals, and Web sites, so CSPI's claim to have "lift[ed] the veil of secrecy" seems a bit of a stretch. Still, it's an interesting browse.

www.integrityinscience.org

EDUCATION

Modern Biology's Classics



Watson and Crick's 1953 report on the structure of DNA lit the fire, but it then took decades of research to unravel the inner workings of cells and lay the foundation of cell and molecular biology. At Ergito, an online textbook site being developed by a team headed by Benjamin Lewin, former editor of *Cell*, a stellar cast of biologists describes their classic experiments in a series that will eventually include 100 essays.

Among papers up so far, you can read Arnold Levine on his discovery of the *p53* tumor-suppressor gene, Thomas Cech on RNA catalysis, and Phillip Sharp on RNA splicing and introns —stretches of DNA within genes that don't code for protein. Written at a "medium to advanced undergraduate" level, Lewin says, the essays even explain figures from the original papers [above, Sharp's micrograph showing matched mRNA and DNA (yellow) and loops of intron].

Ergito also holds an online version of *Genes*, Lewin's widely used textbook; genetics and cell biology modules are coming soon. Although next year the site will begin charging for these sections, the 100 experiments will remain free.

www.ergito.com

RESOURCES

The Lowdown on the Colorado Plateau

Centered on the Four Corners of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona, the Colorado Plateau is 337,000 square kilometers of paradox. It's a desert that's also home to the Colorado and Green Rivers; geologically stable, but riddled with eroded canyons; hostile to settlement, but rich in archaeological treasures. Explore the region's past and present at Land Use History of the Colorado Plateau, the brainchild of Thomas Sisk, an environmental scientist at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. Sisk's team has built a rich compendium of research from many disciplines for students, scientists, land-use planners, and fans of the Southwest.

Start at one of six main topics—people, places, biota, tools, trends, or change—and create your own journey through the plateau. Learn about the Anasazi people, who built cliff dwellings and kivas before mysteriously disappearing 800 years ago. Find out how scientists use fossilized garbage piles left by packrats to trace past vegetation and animal life. Other sections cover timely topics from fire ecology to the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf.

Each entry is an easily digested nugget linked to other pages, including primary research. The site also contains a bibliography of more than 2500 books, articles, and reports. Contributors are experts on the plateau, and their passion is infectious.

www.cpluhna.nau.edu/index.htm

Send great Web site suggestions to netwatch@aaas.org

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