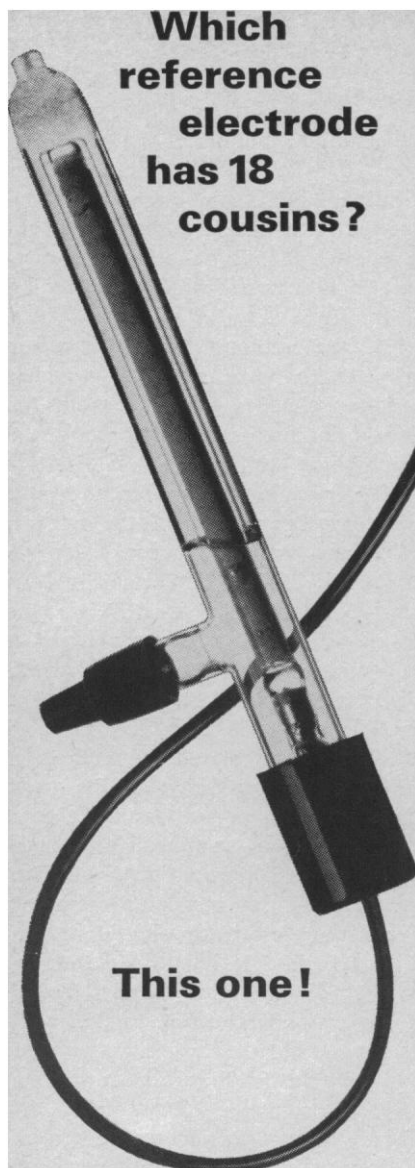




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only nine lines. Much of the literature published today is obscure and ungrammatical, and these faults will only be corrected when the rules of grammar are applied and clarity of expression is set high on the list of standards by which a manuscript is judged.

Forscher omits to mention that the referee has a responsibility to the author, who is entitled in this highly competitive age to prompt consideration of his manuscript. If a referee is too busy or too lazy to fulfill his obligations within a reasonable time, he should not be entrusted with the responsibility. . . .

If it is the editor's responsibility to make the final decision about publication, it should also be his responsibility to weigh the advice of his referees. He need transmit to the author only those comments that he deems necessary for the improvement of the manuscript or for justifying its rejection; this he can do without disclosing the referees' names.

PETER H. WRIGHT
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Forscher's suggestion that verbatim comments from the referee be accompanied by his name appears to offer one way to curb the tendency of some referees to make unsupported judgments such as "naive," "superficial," or, in an extreme case, "stupid."

Moreover, communication of the author with the referee could in some instances prove to be mutually beneficial.

BARBARA J. POWELL
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Competence in the Universities

With regard to the Reuss subcommittee's inquiry into the relation between federal support for basic research and the quality of university science teaching (News and Comment, 22 Oct., p. 464), I offer the following observation: Having completed some 20-odd undergraduate and graduate courses in botany and genetics at four institutions (Washington University, the University of Michigan, Claremont Graduate School, and the University of California at Berkeley) during the pre- and post-Sputnik era, I have encountered teaching ranging from excellent to very poor. In every case the good-to-excellent teachers were those who were actively engaged

in significant basic research, whereas the poor teachers were also ineffectual as researchers. Thus my experience does not bear out the assumption that teaching and basic research are antagonistic duties of the university scientist. One might better regard poor teaching as simply one more aspect of professional incompetence.

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Antiunion

In the issue of 15 October (p. 292) there is a letter headed "No antineoplastic effects." Now, what can *an-īn'-ē-plas-tīk* mean? I get it! It means *anti-neoplastic*.

Why is the hyphen so avoided? The dashed little dash makes for clarity. How can one pronounce and divine the meaning of *picornaviruses* without hyphens? It's easy when you write it right: *pico-RNA-viruses*. That does for many another inelegant formulation born out of the modern, hasty need for neologisms and nonce words.

There ought to be a law: Dash it! As for acronyms: To hell with them.

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Erratum

The 22 October issue presents the wildly improbable coincidence of containing both a letter about parapsychology and "spontaneous cases" (p. 436) and a "spontaneous case." For on page 463, as part of my comments on the 1965 Nobel Laureates in Medicine or Physiology, there appears the phrase "The operator 'loses'. . .," though what I had actually written was "The operator 'closes'. . . ." Now since I happen to have some doubts about the validity of the operator concept, doubts that I certainly would not consciously have wished to introduce on this happy occasion [though I did voice them earlier in *Science* 144, 816 (1964)], this strange error can be explained only as a Freudian slip by a member of the editorial staff of *Science* acting under the telekinetic influence of an author's psyche.

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