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A Case of Misinterpretation

LEWIS WOLPERT, IN HIS REVIEW OF MY BOOK *Science, Truth, and Democracy* (Books *et al.*, 25 Jan., p. 633), attributes to me positions that I do not hold and then sometimes criticizes those positions using points I actually make. I address a few of the examples here.

Wolpert says I seem "too sympathetic to the concept [of] the underdetermination of theory by evidence," and that I should have provided examples of underdetermination as it might affect our views about DNA, for example (1). I actually said that we should be "wary of the global underdetermination thesis," and I offered the example of the Watson-Crick hypothesis as a case in which

the thesis is implausible precisely because it is hard to think of serious rivals (2, p. 36).

Later in his review, Wolpert supposes that, on my view, "motives determine scientific understanding." I claim no such thing, and indeed in chapter 2, I articulate his point that scientific "validity" is independent of "motives."

Wolpert also asserts, apparently contrary to me, that "science by popular appeal would be a disaster." I begin chapter 10 of my book by recognizing the perils of vulgar democracy and go on to consider, at some length, how scientific research might respond to public needs while recognizing the expertise of scientists (which Wolpert sees me as neglecting).

Wolpert ends by complaining that he has learned nothing from my book (and, by implication, from others in the philosophy of science). Like some of my fellow philosophers, I take pains to write for a nonphilosophical audience, but no amount of clarity is proof against a hasty reading.

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References and Notes

1. The underdetermination of theory by evidence is the thesis that there are always alternative theories that are equally well supported by the available evidence.
2. P. Kitcher, *Science, Truth, and Democracy* (Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 2001).

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

REPORTS: "Dynamic brain sources of visual evoked responses" by S. Makeig *et al.* (25 Jan., p. 690). In reference 36, the name of the first author of the conference proceeding should be R. Goldman, not R. Chapman.

LETTERS: "Amplifying importance of new research in Peru" by D. H. Sandweiss, M. E. Moseley (23 Nov., p. 1651). An erroneous affiliation was given for M. E. Moseley. He is at the Department of Anthropology, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-7304, USA, and his e-mail is moseley@ufl.edu

REPORTS: "The sequence of the human genome" by J. C. Venter *et al.* (16 Feb. 2001, p. 1304). There were errors in two references. First, the author list was incomplete for reference 176. It should have read, "A. Krogh, M. Brown, I. S. Mian, K. Sjolander, D. Haussler, *J. Mol. Biol.* **235**, 1501 (1994)." Second, the title of the proceedings in reference 177 was incorrect. The reference should have read, "K. Sjolander, *Proc. Int. Conf. Intell. Syst. Mol. Biol.* **6**, 165 (1998)."

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