

SCIENCE NEWS®

A Science Service Publication
Vol. 109/March 13, 1976/No. 11
Incorporating Science News Letter

OF THE WEEK

Leakey/Johanson conference	164
Insect chemical alarm	165
Vitamin A affects cancer	165
U.S. science: Slowing pace	166
MS: Quest for cause	166
Neutron stars produce elements?	166
Space gravity-wave probe	167
OTA: Mass transit no panacea	167

RESEARCH NOTES

Science & Society	168
Behavior	169
Biomedicine	169

ARTICLES

Axial scanners: Diagnostic boon	170
---------------------------------	-----

DEPARTMENTS

Books	162
Letters	163

COVER: Computerized axial tomography is a new technique that consists of shooting X-ray images of a particular area of the brain or body from many different angles, then combining the images mathematically by computer into a cross-sectional picture of the area. Reproduced here is a computerized axial tomography picture of the skull base of a patient. The technique has been revolutionizing medical diagnosis since it was introduced on the market in late 1973. See p. 170. (Photo: Pfizer Medical Systems, Inc.)

Publisher	E. G. Sherburne Jr.
Editor	Kendrick Frazier
Senior Editor and Physical Sciences	Dietrick E. Thomsen
Senior Editor and Behavioral Sciences	Robert J. Trotter
Biomedical Sciences	Joan Arehart-Treichel
Biology/Chemistry	Janet L. Hopson
Science and Society	John H. Douglas
Space Sciences	Jonathan Eberhart
Contributing Editor/ Mathematics	Lynn Arthur Steen
Copy Editor	Michelle Galler Riegel
Art Director	Dale Appleman
Assistant to the Editor	Susan Strasburger
Books	Margit Friedrich
Advertising	Scherago Associates, Inc. 11 W. 42nd St. New York, N.Y. 10036 Fred W. Dieffenbach Sales Director

Copyright © 1976 by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS is prohibited.

Editorial and Business Offices
1719 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Subscription Department
231 West Center Street
Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$10; 2 yrs., \$18; 3 yrs., \$25. (Add \$2 a year for Canada and Mexico, \$3 for all other countries.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is to be addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices.

Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. (202-785-2255). Cable SCIENSERV. Telex 64227.

LETTERS

Nuclear debate: Replies

I was greatly disappointed in the cross section of letters on "The Great Nuclear Power Debate" presented in your Feb. 21 issue. After reading the letters, I was very surprised at the number of people accusing SCIENCE NEWS of emotionalism. I can remember feeling that you had given a concise, clear, and accurate summary of the arguments used on both sides as I have seen them presented in a number of other journals and news sources. To see whether I had been wrong, I reread both issues. After a careful rethinking, I find the complaints of emotionalism and bias entirely unjustified.

Your restraint in forgoing reply is admirable.

I think the points in Mr. Yuhnke and Mr. Deimel's letters were well taken. But I am afraid the other letters demonstrate an old hazard in journalism: People seem to be accusing you of bias simply because you don't agree with their views on a very emotional issue. But cheer up! On close examination, the evidence is on your side. You've provided an accurate look at a very tangled issue—what more could a conscientious journal do?

C. David Rees
Glenwood Springs, Colo.

(Mr. Rees's letter contained detailed critiques of three of the letters published in the Feb. 21 issue. We've had to omit his analysis for space reasons.—Ed.)

I think both John Douglas's article on the breeder and his editorial make a significant contribution to public understanding. Keep up the good work!

Mike McCormack
Member of Congress
Washington, D.C.

My heartiest congratulations and gratitude to you, and Mr. Douglas in particular, for presenting what I consider to be the most balanced and unbiased article I have yet seen regarding the nuclear power debate.

Paul J. Vitu
Chicago, Ill.

I have read with interest the remarks of the critics of "The Great Nuclear Power Debate." Many critics used only hysterical tirades to refute John H. Douglas. One example was the reader who called Douglas

a jerk. By using such language, he put himself in the same category.

I haven't seen the critics present any valid facts yet. The few scientists whose letters appeared had vested interests in alternative sources of energy.

Emotional outbursts won't change the facts; the nuclear industry is the safest industry in the nation. No other industry has as good a safety record.

John R. Jay
San Diego, Calif.

Pronouncing on pronunciation

A typographical error in our recent letter (SN: 2/21/76, p. 115) may be perplexing some of your readers. The sentence beginning "Turning to these files we find . . ." should continue "that 82.5 percent of the citations for *kilometer* are for second-syllable stress and the remaining 17.5 percent for first-syllable stress." Some judicious listening by one of our editors at the recent AAAS meeting brought in further evidence, allowing us to revise these figures to 75 percent and 25 percent. This does not, however, reflect a general trend; rather a breakdown of all our citations from scientists alone indicates a split of about 50-50 in the pronunciation of this word.

May we also take this opportunity to comment on the letter by Harry L. Arnold Jr. in the same issue on the pronunciation of *joule*? We find in our files that *joule* is pronounced in the scientific community with variants rhyming with *fool* and *foul*. Both are perfectly acceptable. Turning to our biographical files we find for James P. Joule's surname testimony (albeit second-hand) that the variant rhyming with *fool* was used by such colleagues of his as Lord Kelvin and Prof. P. G. Tait. We have further evidence from more recent, though no less distinguished, scientists that Joule's family accepted this pronunciation. A letter from the late Sir W. Lawrence Bragg, Cavendish Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge, states that Prof. Harold Dickson, a friend of Joule's son, said that "the right pronunciation rhymed with *hole*, but that family quite accepted the pronunciation rhymed with *tool*." This is another of those many instances in which there is no absolute right or wrong. We see no objections to rhyming *joule* with either *fool* or *foul* or to rhyming *Joule* with *fool*, *foul* or *foal*. All these variants are attested and are thus included without prejudice in our current dictionaries. We recommend that each speaker adopt that variant which feels most natural.

John K. Bollard
Assistant Editor
G&C Merriam Co.
Springfield, Mass.

SCIENCE SERVICE

Institution for the Popularization of Science founded 1921; a nonprofit corporation

Board of Trustees—Nominated by the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE: **Deborah P. Wolfe**, Queens College of City University of New York; **Bowen C. Dees**, The Franklin Institute; **Athelstan Spilhaus**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Nominated by the NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: **Gerald F. Tape**, Associated Universities; **Allen V. Astin**, Bethesda, Md.; **Glenn T. Seaborg** (President), University of California, Berkeley. Nominated by the NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL: **Gerald Holton**, Harvard University; **Joseph W. Berg Jr.**, National Research Council; **Aaron Rosenthal**, National Academy of Sciences. Nominated by the JOURNALISTIC PROFESSION: **Edward Bliss Jr.**, American University; **Julius Duscha**, Washington Journalism Center; **O. W. Riegel** (Secretary), Washington and Lee University. Nominated by E. W. Scripps Trust: **Milton Harris** (Treasurer), Washington, D.C.; **Edward W. Scripps II** (Vice President and Chairman of the Executive Committee), Edward W. Scripps Trust; **John Troan**, Pittsburgh Press.

Director: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Assistant Director: Dorothy Schriver; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless; Things of Science: Ruby Yoshioka.