

# SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication  
Volume 136, No. 15, October 7, 1989

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Subscription Department  
231 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43305

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$34.50; 2 yrs., \$58.00.  
(Foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year.) Change of  
address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please  
state exactly how magazine is to be addressed.  
Include zip code. For new subscriptions only call  
(1) 800-247-2160. Printed in U.S.A. POSTMASTER:  
Send address changes to Science News, 231 West  
Center Street, Marion, OH 43305. Second class  
postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional  
mailing offices. 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)  
ISSN 0036-8423

## Letters

### On moderation and morals

I found "Where Acids Reign" (SN: 7/22/89, p.56) informative but somewhat disappointing. Janet Raloff's moderate tone is characteristic of the "oh no, let's not sound like environmentalists" school of science and journalism. This is somewhat understandable when so much research on this problem is funded by power companies. However, I expect a higher moral standard in SCIENCE NEWS.

I challenge scientists, journalists and legislators to tell it like it is. We are at a critical time. Placing stringent controls on pollution is the least we can do to slow the rapid spiral of degradation now turning our planet into a wasteland.

Though I commend Raloff for the conclusions reached in her summation, I can only hope the general public gets the message.

Timothy Kohchi  
New York, N.Y.

OCTOBER 7, 1989

## This Week

- 228 New Record for World's Oldest Rocks
- 228 Drug duo takes on deadly colon cancer
- 229 Tracing living signs of ancient life forms
- 230 Bladder cancers: One in four due to jobs
- 230 Accounting made easy for gene mappers
- 230 Alcohol abuse grows among pregnant poor
- 231 FDA broadens use of unproven AIDS drug
- 231 Listening for hints of the sun's heliopause

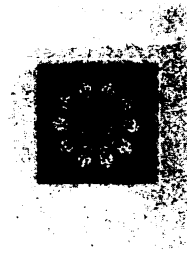
## Research Notes

- 233 Biomedicine
- 239 Behavior
- 239 Earth Sciences

## Articles

### 234 DNA's Extended Domain

Cover: Most scientists have assumed that DNA, shown here as a single molecule viewed from one end, resides only in the nucleus and mitochondria within a cell. But in the past two decades, some biologists have reported discovering it bound to cell surfaces as well. Recent findings strongly point to DNA's presence on cell membranes, prompting speculation about a possible physiological role for this exiled nucleic acid. (Image: © Regents, University of California/Computer Graphics Laboratory, UCSF)



## Departments

- 226 Books
- 227 Letters

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SCIENCE NEWS sees its "higher moral standard" as reporting scientific findings and their implications as accurately and fairly as possible. We leave advocacy, especially in areas where data are incomplete or conflicting, to others.  
— the editors

### Reforestation on the road

I have an idea to help offset the tree destruction that threatens to intensify a future greenhouse warming ("Surveys slash away at forest estimates," SN: 8/19/89, p.124). The United States is carpeted with superhighways. All have grass-covered median strips that are maintained regularly at great expense. If these median strips could be planted with trees, deciduous ones down the middle and evergreens down the sides, it would go a long way in helping to counteract the 1.2 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide we now spew out yearly. The evergreens on the sides would help keep the leaves in the middle,

where they could decompose and provide nutrients for both kinds of trees. This idea would even put the carbon-dioxide-using trees where some of the gas is being produced. It would also save the energy needed to mow the medians.

Nurserymen's associations could get involved by recommending the best trees for each area and perhaps providing them at cost. Beautification committees, environmental groups, service clubs and concerned citizens would all have a common cause.

We complain about Third World countries destroying trees and the environment, but we do the same, contributing 20 percent of carbon dioxide's total greenhouse effect. We must counteract it ourselves, and do it on "wasted" land that will never see a saw.

Nancy Irving  
West End, N.C.

Letters continued on p.237

227