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Letters

Wrong C

In "Fish should avoid rock concerts" (SN: 11/30/91, p.367), you describe middle C on a piano as having a frequency of 256 hertz. Pianos are commonly tuned so that A above C has a frequency of 440 hertz and successive keys differ in frequency by a common factor. This places middle C at $440 \text{ Hz} / \sqrt[4]{8} = 261.6 \text{ Hz}$.

The 256-hertz note is known as scientific C, a little flatter than a piano's middle C.

Stephen M. Curry
Dallas, Texas

Loaded language

I was very pleased that you felt my paper on adolescent *cholo* groups in Chihuahua, Mexico, merited attention ("Females show strong capacity for aggression," SN: 11/30/91, p.359). I would like to convey, however, some concerns about the language used to paraphrase information from my paper.

Just as there are stereotypes of passive Latin

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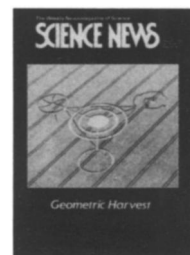
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- 76 Euclid's Crop Circles

Cover: Crop circles — swirled patterns of flattened grain that mysteriously appear overnight in grainfields in southern England — have attracted considerable attention. Astronomer Gerald Hawkins argues that certain arrangements of these circles and rings have definite mathematical properties suggesting previously unknown theorems in Euclidean geometry. The photograph shows a complicated, 200-foot pattern created during the night of July 17, 1991, in a wheat field near Barbury Castle. This particular pattern incorporates the second of five such geometric theorems. (Photo: Busty Taylor/Centre for Crop Circle Studies)



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American women, there are also harmful stereotypes of Mexicans as violent, knife-wielding, etc. In my presentation, the word "gangs" was never used because, in my opinion, the social organization of young *cholo* women and men in Chihuahua cannot accurately be characterized that way. "Gangs" implies organization for purposes of illegal economic or criminal activity, something that is not true of these groups in Chihuahua. (It is true for some *cholo* groups in Los Angeles and El Paso, for example.)

My paper stated that many *cholo* girls in Chihuahua carry knives. However, they are not "knife-wielding" girls, as described in your article. After seven years of field work with *cholo* girls in Tijuana, Nogales and Chihuahua, I do not know of a single instance of a fight between young women where knives were used. There is a difference between carrying a knife and using one. Girls stated that they carried knives in case they were ever obliged to use them.

Just as Latin women have been stereotyped as passive, they are also stereotyped as "hot-blooded" and volatile. I do not wish to perpetuate either of these stereotypes in my work, so I have been careful to contextualize the information on aggression. In the paper, I tried to emphasize the social organization of aggression in the groups in Chihuahua and to stress the intricate rules for fighting, which revolve around notions of fairness.

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