

SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

Science Service Publication
Volume 150, No. 13, September 28, 1996

Donald R. Harless	Publisher
Julie Ann Miller	Editor
Blair Burns Potter	Managing Editor
Dan Skripkar	Production/Design Director
David Lindley	Associate Editor
Janet Raloff	Senior Editor
Ron Cowen	Environment/Policy
Bruce Bower	Astronomy
Corinna Wu	Behavioral Sciences
Richard Monastersky	Chemistry/ Materials Science
John Travis	Earth Science
Kathleen Fackelmann,	Biology
Steve Sternberg	Biomedicine
Tina Adler	Life Sciences
Ivares Peterson	Mathematics/Physics
Dan Vergano	Science Writer Intern
Meghan Mitchell	Editorial Assistant
Cait Anthony	Books/Advertising

SCIENCE NEWS (ISSN 0036-8423) is published weekly on Saturday, except the last week in December, for \$49.50 for 1 year or \$88.00 for 2 years (foreign postage \$6.00 additional per year) by Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Preferred Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing office. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to SCIENCE NEWS, P.O. Box 1925, Marion, Ohio 43305. Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required — old and new addresses, including zip codes, must be provided. Copyright © 1996 by Science Service, Inc. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper. ♻️
Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS without written permission of the publisher is prohibited.

Editorial and Business Offices:
1719 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036
202-785-2255; scinews@scisvc.org

Advertising Representative:
Lewis Edge & Associates, Inc.
366 Wall St., Princeton, N.J. 08540, 609-683-7900

Subscription Department:
P.O. Box 1925, Marion, Ohio 43305
For new subscriptions only, call 1-800-247-2160.
For customer service, call 1-800-347-6969.

SCIENCE NEWS ONLINE <http://www.sciencenews.org>

This Week

- 196 Human Origins Recede in Australia
- 196 Detecting a sound heartbeat
- 197 Life in the Jurassic: Stability amid chaos
- 197 Ocean bacteria need iron with dinner
- 198 Rods enhance superconductor performance
- 198 How many genes does a bacterium need?
- 199 New multiple sclerosis drug clears hurdle
- 199 'Clean' water may infect swimmers

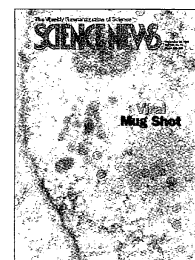
Research Notes

- 201 Biology
- 202 Physics
- 202 Technology

Articles

- 204 Interplanetary Odyssey
- 206 Allegations of Cancer

Cover: This color-tinted electron micrograph shows a newly identified herpesvirus in the nucleus of a human cell. The tiny spheres are infectious viruses. Medical detectives suggest that human herpesvirus 8 is the perpetrator of Kaposi's sarcoma, a cancer that often strikes gay men with AIDS. (Photo: Nancy W. Abbey and Brian Herndier)



Departments

- 195 Letters
- 203 Books

Science Service, which publishes SCIENCE NEWS, is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921 to increase the public understanding of science. Through its youth programs, it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair and the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse science scholarships.

Board of Trustees — *Chairman*, Dudley Herschbach; *Vice Chairman*, Gerald F. Tape; *Secretary*, David A. Goslin; *Treasurer*, Willis Harlow Shapley; Joseph W. Berg Jr.; Robert W. Fri; J. David Hann; Shirley M. Malcom; C. Bradley Moore; Ben Patrusky; H. Guyford Stever; Sanford J. Ungar; Deborah P. Wolfe.

Honorary Trustees — *Chairman Emeritus*, Glenn T. Seaborg; Edward Bliss Jr.; Bowen C. Dees; Elena O. Nightingale; O.W. Riegel; John Troan.

Letters

Correspondence confirms collision

Some of the letters (SN: 7/20/96, p. 35) objecting to "When Science and Beliefs Collide" only confirm the thrust of the article.

Marilyn M. Cooper claims I was "unwilling to admit that there are any truths other than those arrived at through scientific methods." I have never held that absurd position, but it is similar to the caricature of the scientist perpetuated by Hollywood and bad courses about science. Similarly, she would not have claimed that no postmodernists equate science with myth and fiction if she had read at least the evidence presented in my book referred to in the SCIENCE NEWS article.

Joel J. Mintzes writes that many reject traditional logical positivism as useful in teaching, that observations are theory-laden, and that learning requires more than what he calls a "search for universal truths." These are old findings, with which I agree and which I have incorporated in my science

textbooks and research articles. As one who has long worked to improve the professionalization and working conditions of teachers, my distress is focused chiefly on the well-documented failures of a significant fraction of the educational system—on which Mintzes prefers to be silent.

Gerald Holton
*Professor of Physics and of History of Science
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.*

No confirmation is no contradiction

In "Second look finds no comet reservoir" (SN: 7/22/96, p. 395), you state that we failed to find any distant comets in a second look and falsely imply that perhaps our first observations were not correct.

For reasons that neither I nor the people at the Space Telescope Science Institute can understand (but for which there are possible causes), the later images contained more electronic noise than the first observations. This noise meant that we could not see any-

thing as faint as the brightest of the objects we had in the first data set. We therefore did not detect anything. This is consistent with the first data set, not contradictory.

Anita L. Cochran
*Department of Astronomy
University of Texas
Austin, Texas*

Life on Mars first on Earth?

If a rock can be ejected off Mars' surface and fall on Antarctica, the reverse can happen ("Meteorite Hints at Early Life on Mars," SN: 8/10/96, p. 84). Bacterial spores can survive harsh environments for extended periods, so Antarctica may have yielded little more than a terrestrial colonist returned home.

It is asking too much of extraterrestrial evolution to yield morphologies identical to our own.

Peter B. Humphrey
Washington, D.C.

See "Interplanetary Odyssey," p. 204.

—The Editors