

place; scientific procedure assumes we are able to make conscious choices about what is a sound theory and what is not.

Reference

1. J.-M. Lehn, *Supramolecular Chemistry: Concepts and Perspectives*, VCH Verlag, New York (1995).

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Handling DNA Credit with Care

As a biographer of Rosalind Franklin, I want to go on record as commending Robert Langridge's obituary of Maurice Wilkins (PHYSICS TODAY, September 2005, page 72). Langridge appropriately summarizes Wilkins's accomplishments without misappropriating any of Franklin's and, without assigning blame, describes their inability to communicate. Since 2003, nearly all other articles and books supporting Wilkins attempt to diminish Franklin, as if acknowledging their respective DNA work involved a pulley system, but Langridge deftly avoids that trap. Both Wilkins and Franklin deserve acknowledgment, for different accomplishments, along with James Watson and Francis Crick. Langridge makes only one minor mistake regarding the DNA work: Franklin arrived on 8 January 1951, already reassigned from protein research to DNA in a December letter from John Randall.

Since the DNA contributions by Wilkins were crucial, I included a box on Wilkins in my brief Franklin article in PHYSICS TODAY (March 2003, page 42). Unfortunately, some people had previously extrapolated an unflattering and inaccurate portrait of Wilkins from mistaken descriptions of conditions for women at the King's College Medical Research Council unit.

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Scientists Don't Want New Careers in Desktop Publishing

To save money, publishers of scientific journals have outsourced

much of their graphic design, typesetting, and clerical work to a cheap source of labor—you!

Nowadays we who want our research papers published are usually required to prepare the camera-ready article, which means using programs like LaTeX, supplying figures in the proper electronic size and format, inserting them into the text, and following pages and pages of rules. Worse yet, for submission, we can't simply send a readable document via mail or e-mail. We must use the journals' own websites to set up an account, log in, wade through all their windows, and hope a glitch or improper keystroke doesn't force us to start all over again. This process takes time away from what we should be doing: science.

The publishers claim that their new system is better—better for whom? For them. They don't have to hire people to do layout and typesetting. Where are all these savings going? Have your page charges been reduced lately?

From my experience as a scientist, editor of many proceedings, and the former atmospheric optics editor for the *Journal of the Optical Society of America A*, I have some recommendations.

Journal publishers should allow all papers to be submitted by e-mail as a single file containing the complete paper—text, figures, tables, references, everything. A PDF (portable document format) file makes sense, but there should be enough flexibility to accept at least the two or three most frequently used word-processing programs. This one file can then travel by e-mail to the referees, who can read the paper and comment on it.

Scientists should not be required to meet journals' formatting or submission demands beyond the single electronic file. They should have no forms to fill out, no uploading and downloading, no templates, no logging onto websites and fighting with the publisher's system, no overhead in putting figures into a certain format or size. The author should have to do nothing beyond actually producing a readable paper in electronic form.

Similarly, the referees should not be asked to fill out a web-based form. In fact, there should be no forms at all. Referees could simply send an e-mail to the editor with their comments and recommendations. Editors may prompt the referees

with questions like "Does the paper present new and significant scientific results?" but they and their editorial system should not require that forms be filled out. Editors should be able to judge from a referee's free-form response what to do. Isn't that the editor's job?

Finally, when the time comes for publication, authors should be able to send in their finished document and revised figures in any common format—for example, Microsoft Word or TIFF (tagged image file format). It should be up to the journals to take this input and produce the final typeset paper. That's how it used to work.

Scientists are not in the profession of desktop publishing. They would rather spend their time doing research than doing work that the journals ought to, and used to, do themselves. More science would get done.

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Note on a Rosalind Franklin Note

In the caption to figure 4d of my PHYSICS TODAY article about Rosalind Franklin (March 2003, page 42), I had interpreted Franklin's writing "i.e. chains are in pairs, one upside-down wrt the other" as meaning that she had "determined that the backbone chains of A-form DNA are antiparallel." It was recently pointed out to me that the statement could mislead readers into believing that those chains were definitely within one molecule, as opposed to possibly being in adjacent molecules. However, if Franklin had definitely realized that the two chains of the A form were within one molecule, she probably would have had a more obvious eureka moment.

I stand corrected as a result of a mutual acquaintance recently informing me that the expert, Franklin's Birkbeck colleague Aaron Klug, thought my interpretation unjustified. However, the error does not affect my overall conclusion that Franklin was close to solving DNA structure by herself—a conclusion reached independently by both Klug and Crick.

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