

# CORRESPONDENCE

## Setting the record straight (again)

In our view, Daniel Greenberg's book review of 'The Climate Fix' by Roger Pielke Jr (*Nature* 467, 526–527; 2010) does a disservice to your readership by besmirching the integrity of the climate-research community.

*Nature* should have pointed out to its readers that Greenberg has served as a round-table speaker and written a report (see [go.nature.com/otwvz2](http://go.nature.com/otwvz2)) for the Marshall Institute (see [go.nature.com/4u9tttd](http://go.nature.com/4u9tttd)).

We also object to Greenberg's misleading comments relating to our recently deceased colleague Steve Schneider. Greenberg reiterates a misinterpretation of a statement Schneider made in *Discover* magazine in 1989, which has since been corrected on numerous occasions. What Schneider crucially said, in addition to the phrase quoted in Greenberg's review, was "Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest. I hope that means being both." And that is exactly what Steve Schneider fought for all his professional life: effective communication of an honest and balanced assessment of the risks of climate change.

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## Nature redesign: what's not to like?

I find nothing to dislike in your redesign (*Nature* 467, issue 7314; 2010). In fact, I enjoy

being directed to material that is of interest to me, including to papers and articles that I didn't know would be of interest to me.

Having had only web contact with *Nature* over the years through MedLine and other search engines, I should perhaps now consider cancelling the Sunday papers to free up some extra reading time to dig into the print edition.

**George Russell** *University of Aberdeen, UK,*  
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## Nature redesign: what is to dislike

I think your new cover style is a misfire, unless your goal is to increase news-stand sales (a questionable objective for a magazine such as yours). You de-emphasize image and emphasize text. The result is stuffy and constrained.

Combining nuclear power plants with gorillas or a cheerful Francis Crick with the globe in crisis is just annoying clutter — most subscribers are going to scan the issue anyway. It's a step backwards from the aesthetic appeal of one big, striking image, which was often breathtaking even if you knew nothing about the field that produced it.

As for the journal's content, please do away with intrusive or sensational typographical abuse. For example, the emphasis on "manipulation" and "science" in a World View quote box (*Nature* 467, 501; 2010) is inane and better suited to a gushy fashion or celebrity magazine. It reminds me of the 1970s, when some Wall Street lawyers tried wearing bell-bottomed trousers and decorating their office walls with orange stripes. Fortunately, they got over it.

Also, the 'SABOTAGE!' trick of turning article titles into

huge graphic items (*Nature* 467, 516; 2010) makes it harder to distinguish editorial content from advertisements. One hopes that this isn't intentional.

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## Concrete evidence of confusion

As a chemist and one of the 'groaners' about DNA's oft-misrepresented chirality (*Nature* 467, 789; 2010), I have made a point of complaining whenever I find a left-handed helix in a biotech company logo, on an international charity's website or in an undergraduate textbook — to name a few offenders. But until now, I have never seen the mistake cast in concrete and the size of a house.

On a recent visit to the Australian National University in Canberra, look what I found as part of their medical-faculty building (pictured, top). Luckily,



a little way along the street I saw that the geneticists had got it right (bottom).

Then I thought, "No: one right and one wrong, not a statistically valid result." I must resume my campaign.

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## Let's keep the debate focused

Samir Okasha (*Nature* 467, 653–655; 2010) deplores the dispute triggered by the latest broadside against inclusive-fitness theory (*Nature* 466, 1057–1062; 2010). But his concerns that it could threaten research funding and provide ammunition for creationists should not be allowed to mute scientific debate.

I do not impute that Okasha wants scientists to be swayed from their research by such secondary policy issues. Rather, he seems to believe that the debate itself is about secondary points, claiming that the central question — how altruism evolved — was answered decades ago, and that researchers should stick to existing theoretical frameworks unless there is good reason to invent new ones.

Inclusive-fitness theory, however, is full of pitfalls. This is not just the view of a handful of rebels. It is the considered opinion of some of the foremost proponents of inclusive fitness: Alan Grafen, for example, says that there is reason to think inclusive fitness "is not fully and logically established" (*A. Grafen Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B* 364, 3135–3141; 2009). Others may be forgiven for seeking an alternative approach.

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