

Kill or cure?

Help to make sense of the Daily Mail's ongoing effort to classify every inanimate object into those that cause cancer and those that prevent it.

[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

If any of these results seems incorrect, please report it using the link next to the article.

Facebook **causes** cancer <#>

- [How using Facebook could raise your risk of cancer](#)

false nails **cause** cancer <#>

- [Having your nails done could give you skin cancer, doctors warn women](#)

fatherhood **causes** cancer <#>

- ['Prostate risk' in having a family, according to new study](#)

fatty acids **prevent** cancer <#>

- [Nuts lower cancer risk for babies later in life](#)
- [Can alternative medicine stop cancer reoccurring?](#)
- [Eat to beat prostate cancer](#)
- [More healthy raw food: fish, nuts and seeds](#)

fatty food **causes** cancer <#>

- [Junk food diet linked to cancer in women](#)
- [Fatty diet link to breast cancer](#)
- [Cancer: the facts](#)

fertiliser **causes** cancer <#>

- [How to prevent prostate cancer](#)

fertility drugs **cause** cancer <#>

- [Fertility drug 'may double cancer risk'](#)

fibre both **causes** and **prevents** cancer <#>

- [Fibre 'cancer risk' warning](#)
- [Fibre 'cancer risk' warning](#)



How using Facebook could raise your risk of cancer

By [DAILY MAIL REPORTER](#)

UPDATED: 11:21, 19 February 2009



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Social networking sites such as Facebook could raise your risk of serious health problems by reducing levels of face-to-face contact, a doctor claims.

Emailing people rather than meeting up with them may have wide-ranging biological effects, said psychologist Dr Aric Sigman.

Increased isolation could alter the way genes work and upset immune responses, hormone levels and the function of arteries. It could also impair mental performance.



How did it end up as a headline?

1. Researchers do some work
2. University press office keeps an eye out for what researchers are doing
3. Write a press release (together, or just the press office)

BREAKING NEWS

4 July

SELECT DATE

SUMMARIES

TITLES

The Gaia Sausage: The major collision that changed the Milky Way galaxy

SIMONS FOUNDATION



An international team of astronomers has discovered an ancient and dramatic head-on collision between the Milky Way and a smaller object, dubbed the 'Sausage' galaxy. The cosmic crash was a defining event in the early history of the Milky Way and reshaped the structure of our galaxy, fashioning both its inner bulge and its outer halo, the astronomers report in a series of new papers.

JOURNAL

Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society

New study questions when the brown bear became extinct in Britain

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

New research provides insights into the extinction of Britain's largest native carnivore. The study -- 'The Presence of the brown bear in Holocene Britain: a review of the evidence' published in *Mammal Review* -- is the first of its kind to collate and evaluate the evidence for the brown bear in post-Ice Age Britain.

JOURNAL

Mammal Review

All Breaking News



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Archaeology



Atmospheric Science



Biology



Business & Economics



Chemistry & Physics



Earth Science



Education



Mathematics



Medicine & Health



Policy & Ethics



Social & Behavior



Space & Planetary





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for journalists

When science hits the news agenda, it's our job to pass on to journalists as much accurate information as we can, as quickly as possible. In order to do this we send out quotes from experts, statistical analyses of scientific studies and Factsheets, in addition to running regular press briefings on the latest hot topic. Find our most recent Roundups and Rapid Reactions, briefings, Factsheets and 'Before the Headlines' analyses below, or use the icons on the right.

As well as working with experienced specialist reporters, we also provide support to new reporters, editors and generalists through a series of publications, including 'Briefing Notes' on controversial topics, and guidelines on science and health reporting, and by working with the [National Coordinator for Science Training for Journalists](#).

in this section

- ▶ [for journalists](#)
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- ▶ [for press officers](#)



roundups &
rapid reactions



briefings

Looked at research, press releases (n=462), and associated news stories.

~40% of the press releases contained exaggeration.

When press releases contained exaggeration ~80% of news stories contained exaggeration.

When press releases did not contain exaggeration ~15% of news stories contained exaggeration.

Can you find the original paper?

Well connected? The biological implications of 'social networking'

One of the most pronounced changes in the daily habits of British citizens is a reduction in the number of minutes per day that they interact with another human being. Recent history has seen people in marked retreat from one another as Britain moves from a culture of greater common experience to a society of more isolated experience. She is in good company, as Americans too step back from one another in unprecedented magnitude.

Aric Sigman


Social scientists recently reported that in less than two decades “the number of people saying there is no one with whom they discuss important matters nearly tripled”. The number of both kin and non-kin confidants is described as “dramatically smaller” (McPherson *et al.*, 2006).

Britons now spend approximately 50 minutes a day interacting socially with other people (ONS, 2003). Couples now

spend less time in one another’s company and more time at work, commuting, or in the same house but in separate rooms using different electronic media devices. Parents spend less time with their children than they did only a decade ago. Britain has the lowest proportion of children in all of Europe who eat with their parents at the table. The proportion of people who work on their own at home continues to rise.

Title Image: Man at
computer. Photo:
Geoff Tompkinson/
SPL

Who did the work?




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This November is the Wikipedia Asian Month. [Come join us.](#)

Aric Sigman

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Aric Sigman is a [British](#) musician and psychologist ^[1]. His writings have been criticised for [cherrypicking](#).

Controversy [[edit](#)]

Sigman has been labeled as a "pseudoscientist"^[4] and accused of "cherry picking scientific literature". His essays have been described as fanciful,^[5] and deliberately incomplete. His articles, such as Facebook Causes Cancer, have been sharply criticized for their omissions by scientists such as Dr Ben Goldacre.^[5] In an article in the Guardian in 2011, his paper in the Biologist was described as "misrepresenting individual studies" by Professor Dorothy Bishop.^[4] In response to these claims Sigman said that "It was clear that my article on daycare wasn't a scientific paper."^[6]

Who funded the work?

growing body of evidence, we should now explain the true meaning of the term 'social networking'. At a time of economic recession our social capital may ultimately prove to be our most valuable asset.

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Note:

A full list of papers for further reading about this topic is available from the editor: biologist@iob.org

How was the work done?

Generic things to look out for:

- Claims about humans based on studies on mice.
- Claims based on very low sample sizes.
- Review papers that are not 'systematic reviews'.

*This was a **non-systematic review** discussing the possible effects on health of social networking on the internet.*

Did they actually do what they say they did?

None of the studies looked at whether social networking or computer use directly caused any adverse health effects, or cancer.

Most of the studies looked at the health effects of social isolation or loneliness, but not whether the isolation was caused by increased computer use.

In at least some of the studies adverse health led to greater social isolation rather than the other way round.

What else have others published, before/since?

1. Caplan 2007 “Relations among loneliness, social anxiety, and problematic Internet use.”

“the results support the hypothesis that the relationship between loneliness and preference for online social interaction is spurious.

2. Sum et al. 2008 “Internet use and loneliness in older adults“.

“greater use of the Internet as a communication tool was associated with a lower level of social loneliness”

3. Subrahmanyam et al. 2007 “Adolescents on the net: Internet use and well-being.”

“loneliness was not related to the total time spent online, nor to the time spent on e-mail”.

Can you access the data?

Citation: North AC, Hodgson DJ, Price SJ, Griffiths AGF (2015) Anthropogenic and Ecological Drivers of Amphibian Disease (Ranaviriosis). *PLoS ONE*10(6): e0127037. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0127037>

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Data Availability: The data analysed in this manuscript has been deposited in Dryad (doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.5061/dryad.66k59>). Third party data was obtained from Froglife and are therefore available through the charity Froglife (Registered Charity No. 1093372 in England and Wales). Please submit queries for data to info@froglife.org and asking for access to the data for research purposes. Further contact details can also be found on their website <http://www.froglife.org/contact-us/>.

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