

CORRESPONDENCE

Edward Madden, Hugh Falconer, Richard Strachey, J. E. Winterbottom, J. F. Duthie and many more conducted exploration works in inaccessible terrains as early as the 19th century? Or is the tradition of field work, in the lack of due recognition¹⁶, dying in India?

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Koinophilia and the exception reporting model of face recognition: Ill-fated solitary neologisms?

I read with interest the article by Unnikrishnan¹ on the evolutionary link between mate selection and face recognition¹. While the arguments presented are convincing, I was surprised to see that koinophilia remains mostly unknown. The article quotes six papers on koinophilia, five of them in the *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, a prestigious journal with a strict peer-review record. It is unlikely that nobody noticed it. In spite of having parsimoniously explained several evolutionary paradigms, why has koinophilia been ignored for so long?

A Google search gave me a clue. Is it because the proponent of koinophilia hails from a relatively unknown university in South Africa, a developing nation²? Or is it because the author worked in isolation? Probably, it is a combination of both. Interestingly, five of the six papers on koinophilia, cited by Unnikrishnan, are single-author papers.

It would be interesting to study the fate of neologisms emerging from the developing world. Science thrives in the shadow of the West. With English taking over as the lingua franca of contemporary scientific communication, neologisms are almost always the monopoly of dominant players in the English-speaking world. Even the European countries such as Germany, France, etc. who contributed a lot before the world wars, are losing out. The developing world makes news only when things go wrong. For instance, recently, *Nature* promptly reported a series of cases on scientific misconduct by eminent Indians^{3,4}. Even a letter about the reluctance of Indian professors to answer e-mails⁵ instantly caught the imagination of *Nature India*⁶.

I do not foresee a bright future for the exception reporting model of face recognition proposed by Unnikrishnan. Neologisms by solitary scientists from the developing world would be wiped clean

from memory by stubborn silence from peers.

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