

## Macromolecular interactions: tracing the roots

The late Paul Srere used the above as the title to his last publication in *TiBS*<sup>1</sup>. Two major theses of that paper are first, that the importance of macromolecular interactions is not 'new' to biochemistry; and second, that contemporary scientists have the responsibility to recognize previous contributions from other scientists and integrate these findings whenever possible into the new work being presented. The recent contribution to 'Talking Points' by Kisters-Woike *et al.*<sup>2</sup> fails to consider a single example of what is, in fact, a substantial body of previous work that is directly relevant to their principal conclusion – that protein surfaces are of importance in the formation of multi-enzyme complexes. This forum is neither an appropriate nor adequate one in which to document all the previous work that has established the reality of such complexes, and the importance of protein surfaces in their formation. Indeed, that could require an entire issue of *TiBS*. Instead, we refer readers to papers by Srere<sup>1,3,4</sup> and McConkey<sup>5</sup>, three fairly recent books<sup>6,7,8</sup>, a web site that provides an entry to the literature (<http://gepasi.dbs.aber.ac.uk/dbk/canon.htm>), and three reviews of historical interest written over 20 years ago<sup>9,10,11</sup>. All of these, in their own way, provide a sampling of the rich literature that was completely missing in the paper by Kisters-Woike *et al.*<sup>2</sup> In addition, a series of Gordon Research Conferences (<http://www.grc.uri.edu>) has been devoted to this and related topics since 1987, most recently attracting more than 100 attendees (<http://www.bio.vu.nl/hwconf/program.html>).

Details of the 2002 conference can be found at <http://www.bio.vu.nl/hwconf/grc2002.html>

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### Response from Kisters-Woike *et al.*

We are grateful to James Clegg and his colleagues for pointing out to the readers of *TiBS* that a large number of papers have been published on an issue that we raised in our article, namely macromolecular interactions. 'Alles Gescheidte ist schon gedacht worden, man muss nur versuchen es noch einmal zu denken' (everything clever has already been thought, one must just try to think it once more), wrote Goethe<sup>1</sup>. He is certainly right. The way we looked at the matter seemed novel to us. It is up to the readers of *TiBS* to decide whether it is also novel for them.

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### Reference

- 1 Goethe, J.W.v. (1830) *Werke*, p. 215, Cotta, Stuttgart u. Tübingen

## Letters to *TiBS*

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