

Writing Guidelines for DNAtured Journal

Thank you for your interest in submitting to DNAtured! Due to our current net income of negative dollars, we cannot currently pay for submissions :(, but we are very actively working on getting revenue to do so and we hope to do so soon :)

Overview of the website

A satire and humor site that scientists and nonscientists can both appreciate and relate to, based on the world's most popular scientific journal, Nature.

DNAtured.com articles

A smart or silly (not smarmy or smug) satirist take on larger scientific issues like global warming, space exploration and also social science topics (politics, for example). Articles should use scientific languages and tropes, as well as relatable and absurd content about everyday life, especially for those in research and STEM.

Submission Guidelines

Please send 10 headlines with a brief overview of what the article would be about along with a sample joke. Example:

Parents Demand Recall After Child Who Read 'Quantum Physics For Babies' Still Can't Explain String Theory

Overview: An article about parents trying to get their kids ahead with "Physics For Babies" books and their disappointment when it (obviously) fails.

Example joke: "He still can't tell a quark from a hadron," fumed the boy's father, who lost several deposits after 8-month-old Jordan failed the entrance exam for a summer college prep course.

General Dos and Don'ts

DO

- Draw inspiration from real life! Did something funny happen in your lab? Try turning it into a headline!
- Draw inspiration from frustration! Fed up with the effects of climate change? Write about how mermaids are washing up on shore with stomachs full of "thing-a-ma-bobs"

DON'T

- Make jokes about anyone's body or appearance in general (e.g. size of body parts).
- Reference recent science articles where you need the context to understand the joke. Headlines must be able to stand alone with no added context.

- Use individual people's names in article headlines (including politicians). Issues are often systematic and not reliant on a single individual, call out the system instead!
- Be smug or condescending. Scientific knowledge is not accessible to everyone equally, education does not equal intelligence, and scientists are not infallible etc etc. Dunking on anti-science people (anti-vaxxers, flat earthers) is played out, find something fresh!

Headlines:

All submissions should have clear SUBTEXT and point of view, i.e. what the headline *isn't* spelling out. The headline must contain the joke or "game" of the article, and **should NOT be easily mistaken for actual real science news.**

For example, subtext could be serious, like "global warming is causing bad things" or as mundane as "office coffee tastes like shit".



Example Headline

"Incredible! These Military Engineers Created An Invisibility Cloak Made Of Women Over 40"

Subtext: Women over 40 are invisible in society

Language/trope: Military engineering inventions for combat

Ideally the more political headlines will "punch up" to powerful institutions and ideologies, and less on individual people. No jokes on anyone's appearance, please!

Articles

Around 200 words, each paragraph containing a joke that expands on and heightens the headline. The formatting and tone of DNAtured articles is mostly satirical, but we also like other stuff outside the box! Humorous infographics/graphs/quizzes are also welcome.

Article Writing Guidelines

Here are some guidelines for writing full articles for DNAtured Journal.

1. Have a clear intro

Have a clear and concise introduction sentence (or two sentences) that reiterates the joke in a different way, and could provide more details. Treat the headline as normal in this world.

E.g.

Headline:

Incredible! These Military Engineers Created An Invisibility Cloak Made Of Women Over 40

Introduction:

"Military engineers are celebrating the discovery of a revolutionary new fabric that reflects 99% of male attention; any woman who has passed her 40th birthday."

2. Serve the headline

Each beat should serve the joke of headline, try to go deeper into the world. Ask yourself, if this, then what? Put the beats in order of most normal to most outlandish.

E.g. If women were used as a military-grade fabric, then WHERE would they collect the women?

“Women required for the material were carefully collected from Wine & Paint nights and Lifetime Channel movie auditions, then spun them into fabrics using a converted SoulCycle gym.”

3. End on a joke

Always end on a laughline, unless you are setting up the next sentence (“bridging the gap”). Start a sentence in a normal way, then end with a surprise that still serves the headline.

E.g.

“It’s like, why not? Men have been ignoring me for free for years,” said one actress who now works as a sleeve.

4. Clear conclusion

Where would this story naturally end, or look to the future?

E.g.

The engineers hope that one day they can recycle all middle-aged women into defence technology that the military can use to undermine foreign democracies.

5. Miscellaneous

- The second or third paragraph is often a quote from someone involved in the headline, who treats this situation as normal. You can undermine the speaker by providing more context to ridicule them.
- Build a realistic world around the joke in the headline
- Make lists of 10+ things related to the headline - ask who, what, where, why, how etc, then add a twist.
- If this is a News item, treat the situation neutrally. If this is an opinion piece, provide the character’s opinion.

General categories of articles

1. News & Views

- a. Broad content that non-scientists and scientists alike can understand, there are endless possibilities and most articles will fall under this section
- b. Articles would read similar to other satire news pieces
- c. E.g. “Study On The Negative Psychological Toll Of Social Media Has Only Received 12 Likes”

2. Research

- a. Content relatable to scientific researchers, professionals and students
- b. E.g. “Professor Excited For Decades Of Research To Be Completely Misinterpreted By Media”

3. Protocols

- a. Our version of “how-to” articles. Can cover broad topics, often sarcastically
- b. Format: Start with an an action word ending in “-ing”
- c. E.g. “Protocol: Transforming Funding Cuts Into More Efficient Mental Breakdowns”

Examples from DNAtured (instagram format)



Science Examples from The Onion

These are some examples from the Onion that touch on science and would fit the tone of DNAtured.

1. Great Barrier Reef Offers Scuba Divers Chance To See Beautiful Diversity Of Ocean Death
2. Newly Discovered DNA Evidence Suggests Children Could Be Closely Related To Humans
3. Study Finds Humans Evolved Fingers To Stop Dropping Stuff
4. Young Girls Creeped Out By Older Scientists Constantly Trying To Lure Them Into STEM

DNAtured Ideas for Science Topics

Here is a list of topics that could be covered for DNAtured Journal, especially when paired together or with a larger subtext, topical event, or idea.

Astronomy

- Stars
- Galaxies
- Space travel
- Black holes
- Planets
- The universe
- Astroid belt
- Life on Mars (is not possible.)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_astronomy

Biology

- Bacteria
- The microbiome
- Animals
- Plants
- Cells
- Viruses
- Genetics
- Fossils
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_genetics
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_ecology

Chemistry

- Nuclear reactions
- Laboratory
- Crystals
- Plastic
- Metals
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_chemistry_terms

Engineering

- Cars
- Planes
- Robots
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_engineering

Environment

- Climate change
- Renewable energy
- Rocks
- Recycling
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_environmental_science

Medicine

- Psychology
- Disease
- Nutrition
- Anatomy

- Stem cells
- Cosmetic surgery
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_clinical_research

Physics

- String theory
- Quantum mechanics
- Time travel
- Math
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_physics
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_areas_of_mathematics

Research

- Anything related to surviving grad school!
- Experimental procedures
- Publish or perish