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Letters to the Editor

Letters (~300 words) discuss material published in *Science* in the previous 3 months or issues of general interest. They can be submitted through the Web (www.submit2science.org) or by regular mail (1200 New York Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA). Letters are not acknowledged upon receipt, nor are authors generally consulted before publication. Whether published in full or in part, letters are subject to editing for clarity and space.

References and Notes

1. Office of Research on Women's Health (<http://orwh.od.nih.gov/index.html>).
2. The authors are all directors or co-directors of NIH/ORWH Specialized Centers of Research on Sex and Gender Factors Affecting Women's Health (SCORs) funded by ORWH and sponsoring NIH institutes.

The Nonscientist Science Adviser

E. KINTISCH'S NEWS FOCUS STORY ("BENDING the president's ear," 2 January, p. 28) on the role of the science adviser to the president contains an important historical error: The first science adviser, James Killian, was not an electrical engineer. In fact, Killian was not a scientist or engineer at all. His academic training was in management and administration, and his experience included serving as the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and on a number of government advisory committees (*1*). That the first science adviser was not a scientist is not widely appreciated, and it is not widely advertised in the science community that Killian did not earn a doctorate. Killian had been awarded an honorary doctorate from Middlebury College in

1945 (*2*), and he was later awarded honorary degrees from Union College, Drexel Institute of Technology, and the College of William and Mary (*3*). That the first science adviser—often held up as the exemplar of the role—was a management expert should not be overlooked (*1*).

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References

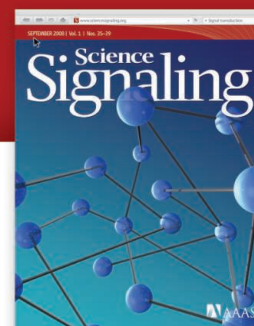
1. R. Pielke Jr., R. Klein, *Minerva* **47**, 5 (2009).
2. Anonymous, *The Tech* **65**, 4 (13 July 1945).
3. Anonymous, *The Tech* **77**, 1 (26 April 1957).

The Enduring Spoken Word

IN HIS PERSPECTIVE ("UNLOCKING THE potential of the spoken word," 26 September 2008, p. 1787), D. W. Oard describes how writing caused a landslide in humanity's cultural landscape, in large part because it was a findable, permanent record. He suggests that today's speech recognition and recording technologies may mean that the comeback of the spoken word is upon us. However, Oard's argument suggests a radical turn where there is none,

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