

Just Science starts tomorrow

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February 3, 2008

Just Science is an effort to collect blog posts about science that are written within one week. Just Science 2008 will start tomorrow and ends February 8. Science bloggers that agree to participate should write one daily blog entry for these five days. The blog entries should talk about science, and not about topic related to science (e.g. open access). Interested readers can subscribe to the RSS Feed and will automatically receive all blog posts.

The recently launched Research Blogging is a related effort to aggregate blog posts about science.

Like many other science bloggers, I do not write directly about science, but rather about issues that are important for scientists. I have so far been reluctant to blog about science. Why is that? Jon Udell two weeks ago wrote a blog post where he observes that bloggers talk to bloggers and scientists talk to scientists. I agree with him that we need better tools to integrate scientific publishing and the blogosphere.

But more importantly, many Scientists (including myself) are still reluctant to talk about their science in the blogosphere. This is understandable if you have unpublished results, half-baked ideas, etc that are not yet ready to be shared with the scientific community. But non-scientists usually don't read the scientific literature, as most papers are difficult to impossible to understand – and access to scientific literature can be expensive. We shouldn't forget to communicate our research to the community. If we don't do that, we shouldn't be surprised if the traditional media either don't report our research at all, or give a distorted view that we are not happy with.

Having said that, I don't have any immediate plans to blog about science. My area of expertise is cancer research, and talking about cancer research is even more complicated because of often unrealistic expectations that these findings quickly translate into new treatment options for patients.