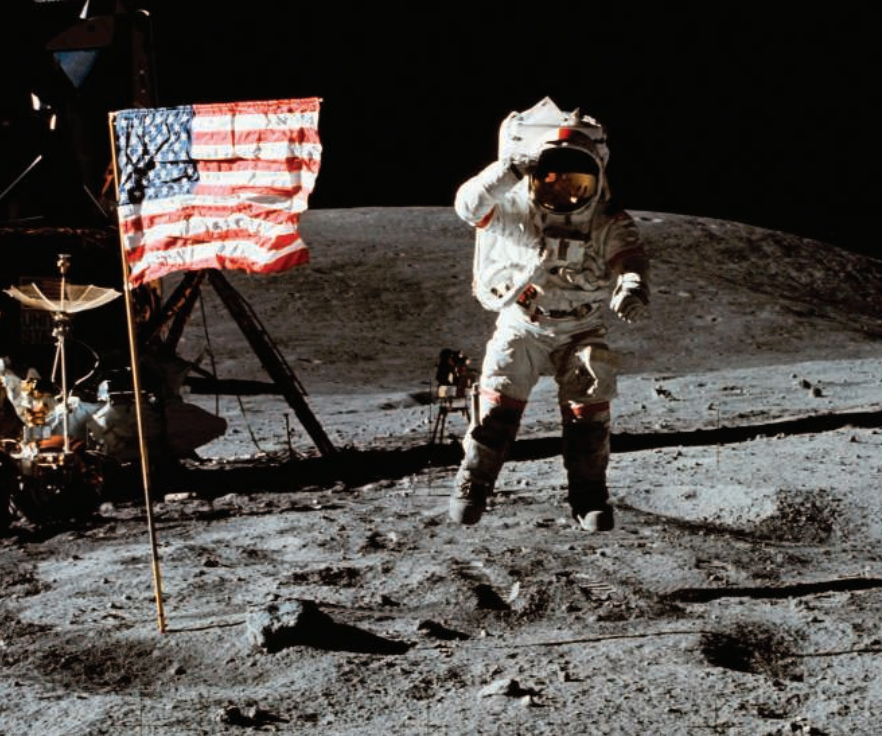


Mashing Moon Myths

To conspiracy theorists, this photo of Apollo 16 Commander John Young in midjump furnishes telling evidence that NASA faked the moon landings in the 1960s and 1970s. Why does the flag seem to be flapping when the moon has no atmosphere, they demand, and where is Young's shadow if the only illumination is sunlight from the viewer's left? At Moon Base Clavius, systems engineer Jay Windley of Salt Lake City, Utah, dissects the lunar hoax arguments, which are still circulating. A strength is Windley's meticulous analysis of photos and video. The wrinkles and creases in the flag cause its apparent motion, he notes. And the edge of Young's shadow—which is offset because he's above the surface—is visible at the right of the photograph. >>

www.clavius.org



EDUCATION

What Tortured the Artist?

Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) endured frequent mental breakdowns and killed himself not long after painting the hallucinatory *Starry Night* (below). Hypotheses for his instability include bipolar disorder and poisoning from drinking absinthe. At The Illness of Vincent van Gogh, biochemist Wilfred Niels Arnold of the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City lays out the case for an alternative diagnosis: acute intermittent porphyria. In this inherited metabolic disorder, noxious compounds accumulate because the body's production line for heme—a key component of hemoglobin—falters. With its embedded questions and lecture format, the site is geared toward medical students, but any curious visitor can gain insight into the painter's condition. >>

www.med.wayne.edu/elab/vangogh/MainIndex.htm



CREDITS (TOP TO BOTTOM): NASA; YALE FACES DATABASE; GETTY IMAGES

WEB LOGS

All Physics, All the Time

Don't have time to check all of your favorite physics blogs? Neither did undergraduate Jeff Hodges of Bowling Green State University in Kentucky, so he created the compilation Mixed States. Every hour, the site automatically gathers the latest posts from more than 80 Web logs and physics news collections. You can snag headlines from PhysicsWeb, ponder quantum chromodynamics with the folks at Life on the Lattice, and probe the confluence of physics and biology with the BioCurious group, all without straying from the site. >>

mixedstates.somethingsimilar.com

COMMUNITY SITE

Do I Know You? >>

You can usually recognize a friend even if he changes his facial expression, dons a hat and dark glasses, or grows a beard. Teaching machines to be equally discerning might help thwart terrorists and criminals and clarify how our brains perform the feat. The Face Recognition Homepage from computer scientist Mislav Grgic of the University of Zagreb in Croatia and colleague Kresimir Delac is a hub for researchers in the field. You'll find links to more than 20 databases that hold facial photos for testing machine perception. The site also gathers PDFs of papers that describe face-recognition algorithms and highlights new and classic articles. Other resources include a roster of companies working on identification systems and a calendar of upcoming conferences. >>

www.face-rec.org



RESOURCES

Plants Under Pressure

Heat, drought, salt buildup, cold, and other forms of adversity shrivel agricultural production in many parts of the world. One clearinghouse of information on these environmental conditions and how crops respond to them is Plant Stress, curated by emeritus researcher Abraham Blum of the Volcani Center in Israel. Backgrounders explain the effects of nine plant stresses and explore methods for alleviating their impact. For instance, solutions for saline soil include hauling away the contaminated dirt and genetically engineering crops for salt resistance. Plant Stress has also sprouted a news section that notes fresh research findings, a bibliography, and how-tos on more than a dozen techniques for studying suffering plants. >>

www.plantstress.com

Send site suggestions to >> netwatch@aaas.org

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