

## Re: Vineland

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2005-02/1393.html>

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**From:** Eric Stevens (*eric.stevens\_at\_sum.co.nz*)

**Date:** 02/18/05

Date: Sat, 19 Feb 2005 11:25:13 +1300

On Fri, 18 Feb 2005 19:18:16 GMT, Philip Deitiker  
<Donevenask@worlnet.att.net> wrote:

>Eric Stevens <eric.stevens@sum.co.nz> says in  
>news:3rcb11tqhdcrf8fkvqk3piv1k0uhdk2lh@4ax.com:  
>  
>> On Thu, 17 Feb 2005 23:45:59 -0700, "Tedd Jacobs"  
>> <Jacobs@mail.boisestate.edu> wrote:  
>>  
>>>  
>>>> "Eric Stevens" wrote...  
>>>> On Thu, 17 Feb 2005 05:23:45 -0500, "Steve Marcus"  
>>>> <smarcus\_spamout\_@cox.net> wrote:  
>>>>  
>>>> --- snip ---  
>>>>> stating that artifact X cannot have been produced later than  
>>>>> date Y \*is\* considered to be dating the artifact.  
>>>>  
>>>> Sez who?  
>>>  
>>>> it's called a typology eric. or were you baiting?  
>>>  
>>>  
>> All this started from Seppo's statement that " The ink hasn't been  
>> "dated" at all, ... " which as far as I know is perfectly correct.  
>> Merely assigning an upper and lower limit to a date range is not  
>> dating.  
>  
>But creating a confidence range based on probabilities is, for  
>everything can be defined this way, and in doing so it makes  
>precise dates and date ranges comparable.

I thought you would have understood the difference between confidence limits and dates set by boundary conditions.

Mozart was born on January 27, 1756 and died on December 4, 1792. These dates are known and there is no uncertainty about them. These dates set absolute boundary conditions.

Re: Vineland

Clearly these dates can be used to assign a limiting date range for a newly discovered manuscript score in Mozart's own hand. It has to have been written between the range described between those two dates.

Radiocarbon dating the paper will yield a specific date but because of the confidence limits of the various steps of the process by which the date was arrived at upper and lower dates can be assigned along with their associated confidence limits. Change the confidence limits and the nominally upper and lower radiocarbon dates also change. In any case, one cannot be absolutely confident that the age of the manuscript paper lies outside the upper and lower confidence limits.

The fact that in both cases we use two numbers to describe the possible age of the manuscript does not mean that the meaning of the numbers is the same in both cases. That's why Steve Marcus's original denial of the Seppo's statement was wrong. He was trying to contradict chalk with cheese.

Eric Stevens