

## Re: Article: Is RNA inheritance possible?

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.bio.evolution/2005-03/0643.html>

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Date: Thu, 24 Mar 2005 00:29:44 -0500 (EST)

"Robert Karl Stonjek" <[rstonjek@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rstonjek@bigpond.net.au)> wrote in  
news:d1sna4\$2qfp\$1@darwin.ediacara.org:

- > *Is RNA inheritance possible?*
- > *Researchers find plant clues to a non-DNA pathway for genetic*
- > *transmission* By Laura M Hrastar
- >
- > *Evidence for inheritance based on RNA has been found in a particularly*
- > *unstable plant gene, researchers suggest in Nature this week. Robert*
- > *Pruitt and colleagues at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.,*
- > *found that Arabidopsis plants homozygous for recessive mutant alleles*
- > *of particular gene may inherit genomic information that is not found*
- > *in the parent plant, but that existed in earlier generations.*

Thanks for the references, which I snipped from this follow.

- > *Comment:*
- > *The impact of this discovery can not be underestimated.*

I agree. I think the impact of this discovery will be minimal – or perhaps you meant to say "overestimated". But in fact this type of inheritance is unlikely to be a significant factor in evolution – if it were, T.D. Lysenko would be a respected figure in plant genetics. If additional work supports the reported research, however, this may be another good example of the maxim that "evolution is cleverer than you are" – Arabidopsis managed to evolve a way to create backups long before human computer programmers did.

Yours,

Bill Morse