PublisherInfo		
PublisherName	:	BioMed Central
PublisherLocation	:	London
PublisherImprintName	:	BioMed Central

Don't blame the translocations

ArticleInfo		
ArticleID	:	3693
ArticleDOI	:	10.1186/gb-spotlight-20000602-01
ArticleCitationID	:	spotlight-20000602-01
ArticleSequenceNumber	:	130
ArticleCategory	:	Research news
ArticleFirstPage	:	1
ArticleLastPage	:	2
ArticleHistory	:	RegistrationDate : 2000–06–02 OnlineDate : 2000–06–02
ArticleCopyright	:	BioMed Central Ltd2000
ArticleGrants	:	
ArticleContext	:	130591111

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Chromosomal rearrangements could, in theory, cause speciation by inducing chromosome loss and missegregation after the mating of two recently diverged species. Fischer *et al*. test this theory in the 25 May Nature and find it wanting (*Nature* 2000, **405**:451-454). They detect translocations by hybridizing probes from each arm and centromere of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* chromosomes to chromosome blots from five other *Saccharomyces* species. The distribution of the ten detected translocations amongst the species indicates that the rate of formation of new translocations is not constant, and translocations are not a necessary part of speciation. Breakpoints occur preferentially in regions with repeated sequences, such as tRNAs and Ty elements.

References

1. The mismatch repair system contributes to meiotic sterility in an interspecific yeast hybrid.

2. Nature magazine, [http://www.nature.com/nature/]