Authors have nothing to disclose with regard to commercial support.

that the Earth is round.² There are many other groups, including those in Birmingham, Toronto, and Rome, who have followed that path and have independently confirmed that the Earth is round. It is not surprising that there are still skeptics of the midline unifocalization approach. As Dr Kumar has cited in his editorial,³ the skeptics have contended that “unifocalization confers no long-term benefit”⁴ and have linked this outcome to their observation that major pulmonary collateral arteries are “abnormal vessels.”⁵ However, if one goes back and looks at the underlying data to support these statements, it comes from an entirely different era and used the same antiquated strategy that was condemned by Dr Sommerville and subsequently abandoned. Thus, the skeptics are analogous to the sailors who did not find safe passage around the capes, turned back, and then have maintained that they did so because the Earth is flat and they did not want to sail off the edge.

For the young sailors who are interested in circumnavigating the globe, the question is: Who would you rather believe: those who have been around the world and contend that it is round or those who turned back and insist that the world is flat? Actually, history has answered this question. The Straights of Magellan bear his name because he successfully navigated through them and continued on his journey.

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SCIENTIFIC PROCESS

Reply to the Editor:

I read with great interest the eloquent description by Mainwaring and Hanley of how Ferdinand Magellan successfully circumnavigated the earth, establishing that the earth is round.¹ History is replete with examples of such pioneers who, against all odds, pursued what they believed in. Their resolve has moved the world forward in many ways. Such forward momentum has withstood many a criticism, theories of conspiracy, religious derision, and skepticism. Regardless, it is careful analysis of the approach, scientific scrutiny of the results, and unbiased evaluation of hypotheses that has convinced us beyond any doubt that the earth is round. And more importantly, such an approach has allowed us to find better ways to confirm that the earth is round, and more efficient modes to circumnavigate and enjoy the round earth.

The management of a complex and heterogeneous disease process such as pulmonary atresia with ventricular septal defect and major aortopulmonary collaterals would also benefit from such a rigorous scientific process. The work of pioneering health care providers, including the outstanding team at Stanford, has provided novel insights into managing this condition. More universal implementation of the lessons learned and reproducible outcomes (Figure 1) have vastly improved the prognosis of many a child who suffers from this disease process. However, there

FIGURE 1. Angiogram showing rehabilitated central pulmonary arteries (PA) in a child born with pulmonary atresia, diminutive central PA, and major collaterals supplying bilateral lungs. The child underwent neonatal palliation with implantation of the PA confluence directly into the ascending aorta.

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is still a long way to go before successful management of every afflicted child becomes commonplace. Methodical peer review and wider application of effective single-center management approaches is the most logical route that will rapidly take us to this coveted destination. Healthy skepticism and systematic evaluation are central to such a scientific process, and will certainly positively influence the outcomes. When the real truth emerges, no matter how hard critics might try, it can never be silenced. Scores of healthy children will live to tell the tales. After all, today

every individual would unreservedly agree that the earth is indeed round!

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