

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY
School of Mineral Sciences

March 3, 1962

Dear Dr. Stenzel:

I had already answered Newell's letter of inquiry about superfamily endings before your letter came. My vote had been strongly in favor of -acea. However, after your letter came I thought it would be fair to poll the available students to see how they felt. Out of six students in paleontology that I could poll, only one voted for -icae as a convenient memory aid. No one favored -oidea. The reasons advanced for -acea were:

"Let's keep things as they are. This is the customary ending."

"It's easier to remember a superfamily name if it has a different-appearing ending. The series -inae, -idae, and -icae would be very confusing."

"We still would have to learn the meaning of the -acea endings, for they are already in widespread use, so nothing would be gained by adding a new one."

"Typing -idae and -icae might lead to lots of typographical errors, as these two letters are struck by the same finger."

"Uniform endings have no special advantage, for the groups are almost never cited without addition of the term 'Superfamily' or 'Family', as the case may be."

My own reaction to the -inae, -idae, -icae series is that it is too reminiscent of Caesar's Gallic wars: Veni, vidi, vici, and I am ~~am~~ tempted to be facetious!

We shall be glad to discuss this further with you on your visit here later this month.

Sincerely,

Myra Keen
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