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The features marked with a star (*) are based entirely on material taken straight from standard research (and other Official and Therefore Always Correct) literature. Many of the other articles are genuine, too, but we don’t know which ones.

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On the Front Cover
Identical twins Dr. Andy Aguirre and Dr. Aaron Aguirre help demonstrate some of the principles involved in the research that led to the Cognition prize. Photo: Alexey Eliseev.

On the Back Cover
Audience members launch paper airplanes, during the 27th First Annual Ig Nobel Prize ceremony. Photo: Howard I. Cannon.

Some Coming Events
See IMPROBABLE.COM for details of these and other events:
November 2017
EMBL, Heidelberg, Germany
January 21, 2018
Princeton U, USA
February 2018
SLAS Conference, San Diego, CA, USA
Salk Institute, La Jolla, CA, USA
AAAS Annual Mtg, Austin, TX, USA
Atlanta, GA, USA
March/April 2018
Ig Nobel Spring EuroTour
April 26, 2018
Portland, Oregon, USA
July 2018
Ig Nobel Ceremony Tickets go on sale
September 2018
Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony, Harvard U
Ig Informal Lectures, MIT
Fall 2018
Ig Nobel Fall EuroTour
Japan

Where There’s More
There’s always new improbable — it’s not what you expect! — stuff on the Improbable Research blog at IMPROBABLE.COM

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The 2017 Ig Nobel Prize Winners

Here are the 2017 Ig Nobel Prize winners. Each has done something that first makes people laugh, then makes them think.

PHYSICS PRIZE — [FRANCE, SINGAPORE, USA]

Marc-Antoine Fardin, for using fluid dynamics to probe the question “Can a Cat Be Both a Solid and a Liquid?”


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Marc-Antoine Fardin

On the rheology of cats

M.A. Fardin1,2,3, *

1Université de Lyon, Laboratoire de Physique, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, CNRS UMR 5672, 46 Allée d’Italie, 69364 Lyon cedex 07, France.
2The Academy of Brachyologists.
3Member of the Extended McKinley Family (EMF).

(Dated: July 9, 2014)

or I highlight some of the recent developments around the rheology of Felis catis for applications for other species of the felidae family. In the linear rheology regime the determination of the characteristic time of cats: from surface effects and nonlinear rheology regime flow instabilities can emerge. Nonetheless, the usual dimensional control parameter, can be hard to compute because cats

LEFT: Detail from the study “On the Rheology of Cats.”

BELOW: Further detail from the study “On the Rheology of Cats.”
PEACE PRIZE — [SWITZERLAND, CANADA, THE NETHERLANDS, USA]

Milo Puhan, Alex Suarez, Christian Lo Cascio, Alfred Zahn, Markus Heitz, and Otto Braendli, for demonstrating that regular playing of a didgeridoo is an effective treatment for obstructive sleep apnoea and snoring.


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Milo Puhan, Christian Lo Cascio, Markus Heitz, and Alex Suarez

NOTE: Alex Suarez was the first patient, and was the inspiration for the study.

ECONOMICS PRIZE — [AUSTRALIA, USA]

Matthew Rockloff and Nancy Greer, for their experiments to see how contact with a live crocodile affects a person’s willingness to gamble.


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Matthew Rockloff and Nancy Greer

Detail from the study “Didgeridoo Playing as Alternative Treatment for Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome: Randomised Controlled Trial.”

Detail from the study “Never Smile at a Crocodile: Betting on Electronic Gaming Machines is Intensified by Reptile-Induced Arousal.”
ANATOMY PRIZE—[UK]
James Heathcote, for his medical research study “Why Do Old Men Have Big Ears?”
WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: James Heathcote

BIOLOGY PRIZE—[JAPAN, BRAZIL, SWITZERLAND]
Kazunori Yoshizawa, Rodrigo Ferreira, Yoshitaka Kamimura, and Charles Lienhard, for their discovery of a female penis, and a male vagina, in a cave insect.
WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: The winners delivered a short video acceptance speech, filmed in a cave.
THE 2017 IG NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS [continued]

FLUID DYNAMICS PRIZE — [SOUTH KOREA, USA]

Jiwon Han, for studying the dynamics of liquid-sloshing, to learn what happens when a person walks backwards while carrying a cup of coffee.


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Jiwon (“Jesse”) Han

NOTE: Jiwon Han was a high school student when he wrote the paper, at Korean Minjok Leadership Academy, Gangwon-do, Republic of Korea.

NUTRITION PRIZE — [BRAZIL, CANADA, SPAIN]

Fernanda Ito, Enrico Bernard, and Rodrigo Torres, for the first scientific report of human blood in the diet of the hairy-legged vampire bat.


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: The winners delivered their acceptance speech via recorded video.

MEDICINE PRIZE — [FRANCE, UK]

Jean-Pierre Royet, David Meunier, Nicolas Torquet, Anne-Marie Mouly, and Tao Jiang, for using advanced brain-scanning technology to measure the extent to which some people are disgusted by cheese.


WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Dr. Royet delivered the acceptance speech via recorded video.
COGNITION PRIZE — [ITALY, SPAIN, UK]
Matteo Martini, Ilaria Bufalari, Maria Antonietta Stazi, and Salvatore Maria Aglioti, for demonstrating that many identical twins cannot tell themselves apart visually.
WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Matteo Martini and Ilaria Bufalari

OBSTETRICS PRIZE — [SPAIN]
Marisa López-Teijón, Álex García-Faura, Alberto Prats-Galino, and Luis Pallarés Aniorte, for showing that a developing human fetus responds more strongly to music that is played electromechanically inside the mother’s vagina than to music that is played electromechanically on the mother’s belly.
NOTE: They also offer a product named “Babypod,” based on this research.
WHO ATTENDED THE CEREMONY: Marisa López-Teijón, Álex García-Faura, Alberto Prats-Galino, and Luis Pallarés Aniorte

Babypod, the product that was inspired by the research that was honored with the Ig Nobel obstetrics prize.