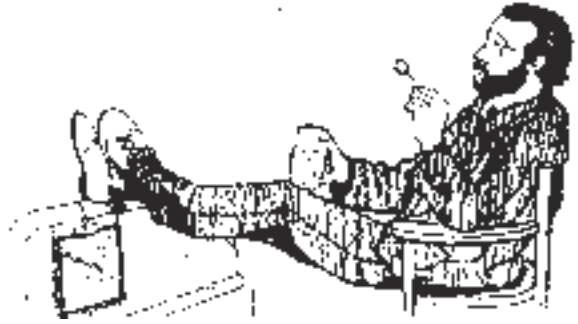

Improbable Medical Review

Improbable diagnoses, techniques, and research

compiled by Bertha Vanatian, Improbable Research staff



Shodden Freud

“The Shod Foot and Its Implications for American Women,” S.A. Rudicel, *Journal of the Southern Orthopaedic Association*, vol. 3, no. 4, Winter 1994, pp. 268-72. The author, who is at Tufts/New England Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts, explains that:

Throughout history, members of human societies have gone barefoot, and those societies seemingly had a low incidence of foot deformities and pain. Only one study has addressed the problem of infection through injury to the bare foot; otherwise, the unshod foot seems to have had minimal problems. Initially shoes were made in the shape of the foot and were sandals. Over time, shoes became decorative items and symbols of status and vanity. As the shape of shoes changed, they became deforming forces on the foot and the source of pain.

Hamburger: Harmonica

“Harmonica as Source of Danger” [article in German], Erich Hamberger, *Der Praktische Arzt*, vol. 5, no. 48, May 1951, pp. 1002-3.

Tales of the Unexpected: Responses of Mistreated Patients

“How Experiencing Preventable Medical Problems Changed Patients’ Interactions with Primary Health Care,” Nancy C. Elder, C. Jeffrey Jacobson, Therese Zink and Lora Hasse, *Annals of Family Medicine*, vol. 3, 2005, pp. 537-44. (*Thanks to Kristine Danowski for bringing this to our attention.*) The authors report that:

Anger was the most common emotional response, followed by mistrust and resignation.



A Loud Noise in the Service of Sleep

“Didgeridoo Playing as Alternative Treatment for Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome: Randomised Controlled Trial,” Milo A Puhan, Alex Suarez, Christian Lo Cascio, Alfred Zahn, Markus Heitz and Otto Braendli, *BMJ*, December 2005, DOI:10.1136/bmj.38705.470590.55. The authors, who are at various institutions in Zurich, Switzerland, conclude that:

Regular didgeridoo playing is an effective treatment alternative well accepted by patients with moderate obstructive sleep apnoea syndrome.

Baby Mathematics

“An Empirical Study of Freud’s Penis-Baby Equation,” R.L. Jones, *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, vol. 182, no. 3, March 1994, pp. 127-35.

We welcome your suggestions for this column. Please enclose the full citation (no abbreviations!) and, if possible, a copy of the paper.