

WAYS TO USE THIS MAGAZINE

Some of the many ways to do it

Write a limerick about one of the cited studies. To get you started, here's a limerick about the study "Sneezing During Micturition: A Possible Trigger of Acute Bacterial Prostatitis," that's in the article "Medical Research: Sneeze/Wee, Placebo Overdose, Apple Output" on page 7:

THOUGH SNEEZING WHILE VOIDING'S A BREEZE,
IT'S TRAGIC, JUST LIKE A DISEASE.

THE EASE OF THE ACT

DISTRACTS FROM THE FACT

IT'S NOTHING AT WHICH ONE SHOULD SNEEZE.

Write a long-single-sentence short story that includes the titles of every study mentioned in one of the review articles. To get you started, here's a story using the study titles mentioned in the article "Improbable Research: Wasted Gum, Imperiled Emperors, Hair-worn Steel" on page 4:

"You can't stay silent about the evidence, when lives are at stake, so spit it out," huffed Detective Chief Inspector Egrett, puffing filthily on the famous baked-spittle-encrusted imitation-meerschaum (though there's some as calls it imitation-sepiolite) pipe, "and let's see what the wasted chewing gum bacteriome can tell us about how this strange corpse came to its tragic end, the gained knowledge of which, bolstering what we have already learned from Professor Doctor Boganbloyd's 400 page summary of her 500 page statistical reliability analysis for a most dangerous occupation—roman emperor—should give us a clue about last week's mysterious antique-carving-knife death of the Prime Minister, which in turn, and perhaps finally, given the PM's only-partially-deranged coiffure, will maybe teach us something new about how hair deforms steel."

Do dramatic readings, in person, or in live or recorded video, of little chunks from the magazine. Keep them short—say, a maximum length of two minutes for each dramatic reading. To get you started, we suggest over-dramatically reading the article "Mechanics of Chewing Raw Goat" on page 41.

Go down a rabbit hole. For some item that catches your fancy, go find a copy of the study itself (the internet often makes this quite easy to do). And/or go look up the authors of that study, and see what other surprising things they have done. And/or go look up what's happened since that study was published. And/or in the study itself, look at the list of other studies it mentions, choose one, and go down the rabbit hole of exploring that earlier study.

Go down a maybe-important rabbit hole. The history of science is chock full of (maybe is mostly?) things that [1] got noticed and celebrated, then [2] got forgotten or overlooked, and then, much later, [3] got noticed again. This magazine is full of such things. Go explore some of them.

Start an argument about whether some particular study is good or bad, important or trivial, valuable or worthless.

Watch an Ig Nobel Prize winner. The prizes honor things that make people LAUGH, then THINK. Every issue of the magazine mentions a few of them (for example, see the year's Acoustics Prize winners on pages 14 and 24). Go see the moment when a winner was awarded their prize. Videos of most of the ceremonies are online at our web site, www.improbable.com.

PS. If you write something (a limerick, or whatever) that gets a good reaction from your colleagues, maybe send it to us, too.

What is this picture? (see page 1)



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On the back cover of this issue: Because of the pandemic, only one paper airplane was thrown in Sanders Theatre, the traditional home of the Ig Nobel Prize ceremony.

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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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There's always new improbable — it's not what you expect! — stuff on the **Improbable Research blog** at [IMPROBABLE.COM](https://www.improbable.com)

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On the Front Cover

Paper airplanes, this year launched in many countries, found their way into the Ig Nobel Prize ceremony.



On the Back Cover

The one paper airplane, in this pandemic year, in the ceremony's traditional home.



Some Coming Events

The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced excitingly boundless uncertainty as to whether, when, and where public activities will happen in the near future.

See [IMPROBABLE.COM](https://www.improbable.com) for details of these and other events:

November 2020 – January 2020

The Ig Informal Lectures (see online for release dates)

January 11, 2021

Intersci, Edinburgh

January 16, 2021

Arisia, Boston

February 2021

AAAS Annual Meeting

February 22, 2021

Israel Physics Society

September 2021

31st First Annual Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony

Date TBA

Ig Nobel EuroTour

Date TBA

Japan

