

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 "A Rare Case Report of Death in a Washing Machine with Patterned Injuries to Trunk," on page 18:

THE EVIDENCE, EASILY SEEN,
WAS ALSO IMPRESSIVELY CLEAN:
HE'D FALLEN RIGHT IN,
AND GONE FOR A SPIN,
THAT CORPSE IN THE WASHING MACHINE.

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 "Icky Cutesy Research Review: Pyramid Collapse, Bored to Death" on page 24:

Bored to death? Bored to death? Bored to death? Are you really, really, really bored to death, Alonzo? You look very alive to me. Very alive. I am astounded that you *are* still alive after that seven-year hospital stay following the fifth (fifth!) time your stupid gymnastics addiction resulted in you having compression asphyxia from a human pyramid.

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

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 "May We Recommend: Historic Dropping of a Body from an Aeroplane" on page 6, or "Do Cats Eat Human Remains?" on page 26.

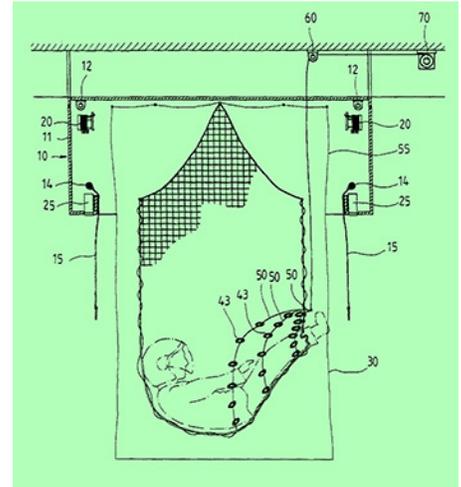
Watch an Ig Nobel Prize winner. The prizes honor things that make people LAUGH, then THINK. Every issue of the magazine mentions a few of them (for example, see "Ig® and Beyond: The Moral Barrier Effect: Real and Imagined Barriers Can Reduce Cheating" on page 28). Go see the moment when a winner was awarded their prize. Videos of most of the ceremonies are online at our web site, www.improbable.com.

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.

If you are a journalist, some of those rabbit holes house bunnies that can make news editors hop to attention.

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



On the back cover of this issue: A technical drawing from Kuo Cheng Hsieh's 2007 Ig Nobel Economics Prize-winning patent (U.S. patent #6219959) for a device that catches bank robbers by dropping a net over them.

CONTENTS

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.

IFC Ways to Use This Magazine

Special Section: Forensics

- 6 May We Recommend: Historic Dropping of a Body from an Aeroplane*
- 7 Forensic Techniques: Corpses, Coconuts, and TV*
- 11 Medical: Sniffles, Bikes, and Bullets*
- 14 Dental Research: Dentures, Death, and Selfies*
- 15 Pubic Hair Forensics*
- 17 Intriguing Deaths*
- 22 Potent, Backfiring Alarms*
- 24 Icky Cutesy Research Review: Pyramid Collapse, Bored to Death*
- 25 Dogs Research: Dog Bite (Dead) Man*
- 26 Cats Research: Do Cats Eat Human Remains?*

Improbable Research Reviews

- 4 Improbable Research: Audience Odor, Sea Legs*
- 28 Ig® and Beyond: Young Cheater Barriers, Legal Obscurity Defense*

News & Notes

- 2 AIR Vents (letters from our readers): Unhanded Pope, Slow-Thumpers
- 27 Teachers' Guide
- 29 Ig Nobel Limericks: Un-thinking Crime, Un-testing Pollution*
- 30 Editorial Board
- 30 Index of Special Issues

IBC Unclassified Ads

ANNALS OF

IMPROBABLE RESEARCH



On the Front Cover

Symbolic depiction of a waiter delivering a measure of justice, even while several hands tip the scale.

Photo: A.S. Kaswell



Some Coming Events

The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced excitingly boundless uncertainty as to whether, when, where, and how various public activities will happen in the near future. In 2021 most (but not all?) will happen teledistantly.

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

September 9, 2021

The 31st First Annual Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony

2021 (Dates TBD, pandemic permitting)
Ig Nobel EuroTour

2021 (Dates TBD, pandemic permitting)
Japan



The Improbable Research podcast is back!

[https://www.improbable.com/
category/the-weekly-improbable-research-podcast/](https://www.improbable.com/category/the-weekly-improbable-research-podcast/)

Where There's More

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