The IG NOBEL PRIZE CEREMONY

2006

This Year’s Theme: INERTIA
About the Ig® Nobel Prizes

Ig Nobel Prizes are awarded for achievements that first make people LAUGH, and then make them THINK. The Igs are intended to spur public curiosity and interest in science and other fields of endeavor. Ten prizes are awarded each year. Winners travel to the ceremony at their own expense.

The Ig Nobel Prize winners are, despite possible appearances to the contrary, real. Their achievements are well documented.

The Prizes themselves are said to be a legacy from the estate of the legendary Ignatius (“Ig”) Nobel, who believed himself to be a relative of Alfred Nobel, and who claimed to be the inventor of excelsior (packing material) and co-inventor of soda pop.

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Annals of Improbable Research
“Ig” and the "tumbled thinker" logo are each reg. U.S. Pat. and Tm. Off.
The Sixteenth 1st Annual Ig® Nobel Prize Ceremony

Thursday, October 5, 2006, 7:30 pm
Sanders Theatre, Harvard University

Reluctantly inflicted on you by
the international science humor magazine
Annals of Improbable Research (AIR)

and co-sponsored by
The Harvard-Radcliffe Science Fiction Association
The Harvard-Radcliffe Society of Physics Students
The book “The Man Who Tried to Clone Himself”

The theme of this year’s ceremony is
INERTIA

Paper Airplanes

Paper airplanes are a tradition at the Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony, Tonight that tradition takes a bold stumble into the future. Listen for the special Paper Airplane Announcement right after the pre-ceremony event, and just before the start of the ceremony proper.

We ask that you hold onto, rather than launch, your airplanes. As you’ll see, they will be put to a new, massive kind of use.
The Ig Nobel Board of Governors gives special thanks to the Harvard Extension School, Apple Computer, and Real Networks (www.real.com) for helping make this year's live webcast possible!
The Ig Informal Lectures!

SATURDAY afternoon, Oct. 7, 2006, 1:00 pm

Stata Center, Kirsch Auditorium
(a.k.a. MIT Building 32, room 123)
32 Vassar Street, Cambridge

FREE!
(But to ensure getting seats, get free tix in advance at the MIT Press Bookstore, 292 Main Street)

A Saturday Treat...
At tonight’s Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony, each winner is allowed just ONE MINUTE to deliver an acceptance speech. But of course you’ll want to hear more juicy details, and ask them questions, and so...
You are invited to come enjoy a lazy, lively half-afternoon of brief (five minutes each, plus questions & answers), high-spirited talks by the 2006 Ig Nobel Prize winners.

Produced by the Annals of Improbable Research in cooperation with
The MIT Press Bookstore (mitpress.mit.edu/bookstore)

Mysterious refreshments will be provided courtesy of The Fulbright Academy of Science & Technology.

Ig Nobelliana
Roy Glauber is the Mallinckrodt Professor of Physics at Harvard University. In 2005, after ten years of sweeping paper airplanes at the Ig Nobel Prize ceremonies (though not because of it) he was awarded a Nobel Prize in physics.
Schedule of Events

- Pre-ceremony: “Franz Liszt versus Inertia” (begins at 7:20)
- Appearance of the Ignitaries and Delegations
- The Traditional Ig Nobel “Welcome, Welcome” Speech
- Entrance of the Swedish Meatball Royalty
- Introduction of Past Winners and Nuptialists
- The 24/7 Lectures *
- *Inertia Makes the World Go Around:* A Mini-Opera in 4 Acts *
- The Win-a-Date-With-a-Nobel-Laureate Contest
- The Great (and quick) Inertia Debates
- **Awarding of the 2006 Ig Nobel Prizes** * (weather permitting)
- The Traditional Ig Nobel “Goodbye, Goodbye” Speech
- Disappearance of the Audience

* scattered throughout the evening

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HARVARD SQUARE
NPR Broadcast

On the day after Thanksgiving, listen to the traditional Ig Nobel Broadcast on National Public Radio (NPR)’s Talk of the Nation / Science Friday with Ira Flatow. You can listen to many of the previous year's broadcasts at www.ScienceFriday.com. You can see video highlights of several past ceremonies at www.improbable.com.

“Franz Liszt versus Inertia”
A special pre-ceremony concert/dance performance will be performed by pianist Michael Hawley, choreographer Verena Wieloch, and a cast of several.

Michael Hawley was first prize co-winner at the 2002 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition for outstanding amateurs. Verena Wieloch is a storied choreographer, dancer and organic farm manager.

This performance will begin promptly at 7:20 p.m., and will lead directly into the beginning of the Ig Nobel Prize ceremony.

Ig Nobelliana

The 1994 broadcast of that year's Ig Nobel Prize ceremony, on NPR's Science Friday, program, included the complete, wordless performance of “The Interpretive Dance of the Electrons,” a ballet starring the Nicola Hawkins Dance Company and Nobel Laureates Dudley Herschbach, William Lipscomb and Rich Roberts, with music orchestrated by jazz harpist Deborah Henson-Conant.
Authority-Like Figures

As always, IgBill had incomplete information at press time. You may not be able to tell the players even with this scorecard.

(NOTE: ** indicates name is misspelled)

Producer/Director: Marc Abrahams
Opera Director/Diva: Margot Button
Writers: Marc Abrahams, Alice Shirrell Kaswell, and friends
Stage Manager: David Kessler
Lurking Presences: Robin Abrahams, Stanley Eigen, Rose Fox, Tom Ulrich
Lighting & Tech Innovation: Dave Feldman, David Kessler, Josh Kroll, Rob Sanders
Props and Scenery: Eric Workman
House Sound: Jeff Bryant
Sound Recording: Miles Smith, Frank “Barefoot” Cunningham
Ig Slide Extravaganza: Betsy Devine and Keith Clark
Prize & Props Creation: Eric Workman
HRSFA Coordinator: Noam Lehrer
HRSPS Coordinator: Lamar “Bailes” Brown
Grand Panjandrum of the Delegations: Louise Sacco
Videography: Seven Generations (Bruce and Julian Petschek, plus Mags Hart)
Internet Telecast Coordinator: Dave Feldman
Diplomats: Susan Kany, Dany Adams, Alisa Cohn, Steve Beeber
Master Keeper of Lists: Michael “Mr. Memory” Ricca
Provisionary Logistician: Doug Krabbenhoft
Photographers: David Holzman, John Bradley, Kees Moeliker, Robin Abrahams, Bob Frenay
Ig Informal Lectures (Saturday) Coordinator: John Jenkins
Butterfly Specialists: Jessica Girard and Harriet Provine
Ig Nobel Webmaster: Amy Gorin
Internet Provider: www.cybercom.net
Artwork & Logos: Lois Malone, Peaco Todd
Want the inside story?

Read about who, what, where, when, and to some extent, why. And learn what else the Ig winners have been up to...

Available now in bookstores and online.
People

Master of Ceremonies
Marc Abrahams, editor, *Annals of Improbable Research (AIR)*

Nobel Laureates
Jerome Friedman (Physics, 1990)
Roy Glauber (Physics, 2005)
Dudley Herschbach (Chemistry, 1986)
William Lipscomb (Chemistry, 1976)
Rich Roberts (Physiology or Medicine, 1993)
Richard Schrock (Chemistry, 2005)
Frank Wilczek (Physics, 2004)
and perhaps some others

“Franz Liszt versus Inertia” Pianist: Michael Hawley
“Franz Liszt versus Inertia” Choreographer: Verena Wieloch

Returning Bride & Groom: Lisa Danielson and Will Stefanov, who were married in a 60-second-long ceremony as part of the 2001 Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony.

Returning Ig Nobel Prize Winners: Don Featherstone (Art Prize 1996), Stefano Ghirlanda (Interdisciplinary Research Prize 2003), Kees Moeliker (Biology Prize 2003)

Welcome Welcome Speaker: Professor Helen Haste

Opera Pianist: Scott Nicholas
Opera Soloists: Margot Button, Gina Beck & Pierre Fontaine

Ig Musicians (The Ig Leaves): Nicholas Carstoiu

Parade and Opera Announcer: Karen Hopkin

Simultaneous Translators: Kees Moeliker, Shoichi Fukayama, Dennis Mendez Contreras, Yesim Taskor, Ali Pirnar, Gary Dryfoos

Human Spotlights: Jim Bredt & Katrina Rosenberg

Human Curtain Rods: Maria Eliseeva & Edmund Caldwell

Referee: Mr. John Barrett

V-Chip Monitor: Attorney William J. Maloney

Attorney William J. Maloney: Himself

Majordomo: Gary Dryfoos

Prize Deliverers: Sylvia Rosenberg, Ellen Mahoney & Julia Eliseeva

Performing Chemists: Joost Bonsen, Daniel Rosenberg, et al.

Performing Property Master: Eric Workman

Miss Sweetie Poo: Meghan Carroll

Royalty: HRSMH Brian Donnelly & HRSMH Kathleen Snyder

Official Sweepers: Doug Berman, Stefano Ghirlanda, & Roy Glauber

 Hecklers: You, the audience

Goodbye Goodbye Speaker: Professor Helen Haste

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**Ig Nobel Tours of the U.K. and Europe**

In March 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006, National Science Week in the United Kingdom featured live appearance/performances by Ig Nobel Prize winners, in many cities. There have also been tours in Australia and the Netherlands, and events in Austria, Greece and Sweden and Canada.

For details of upcoming events (including the U.K. tour in March 2007 and the subsequent tour of Europe), see the Improbable Research web site, [www.improbable.com](http://www.improbable.com).

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**Ig at AAAS**

For a decade now, the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science has featured Ig Nobel Prize appearance/performances, hosted by Marc Abrahams. If you are in San Francisco in mid-February 2007, please come to the show at the 2007 Annual Meeting!

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**Ig on TV**

The Japanese Public television network, NHK, produced a special hour-long program about the 2002 Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony. It was broadcast in prime time on Christmas Eve, 2002, and drew approximately 11 million viewers -- the largest audience for any program broadcast on the network that entire year.
The 24/7 Lectures
Each 24/7 Lecture will be delivered by one of the world’s great thinkers, and will consists of two parts:

• a complete technical description of the subject, in 24 SECONDS
• a clear, accurate summary of the subject, in SEVEN WORDS

The time limit and word limit will be strictly enforced by Mr. John Barrett, the Ig Nobel Referee.

This year’s 24/7 lecturers include:
Benoit Mandelbrot, creator of fractal geometry. TOPIC: Fractals
Missy Cummings, aviator and pioneer of technology-human interaction. TOPIC: Automobile Safety
Frank Wilczek, Nobel Laureate in Physics. TOPIC: Dark Matter
Irene Pepperberg, wizard of parrot-human communications. TOPIC: TBA
William Lipscomb, Nobel Laureate. TOPIC: Inertia

This Year’s Theme: INERTIA
Each year’s Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony has a new theme. This year’s theme is INERTIA. The theme applies to the opera and various other goings-on, though not necessarily to any of the particular achievements being honored with an Ig Nobel Prize. The evening includes several possibly inertial activities.

Franz Liszt versus Inertia: Beginning at 7:20, and continuing for about 10 minutes. (See page 7 for details.)

The Great Inertia Debates: The Inertia Debates will happen.

The Mini-Opera: Tonight's ceremony includes the world premiere of a new mini-opera, “Inertia Makes the World Go Around.” The main characters are two sisters—one at rest and tending to stay at rest, the other in motion and tending to stay in motion—and the little boy who moves into their neighborhood. The opera stars Margot Button, Simon Chaussé, and many of the distinguished scientists whom you will meet tonight.
Special Thanks to...


** Name misspelled.
Recent Past Winners

For references and other details, including links to some of the original prize-winning work, see www.improbable.com and also the books The Ig Nobel Prizes, and The Man Who Tried to Clone Himself.

The 2005 Ig Nobel Prize Winners

AGRICULTURAL HISTORY. James Watson of Massey University, New Zealand, for his scholarly study, “The Significance of Mr. Richard Buckley’s Exploding Trousers.”

PHYSICS. John Mainstone and the late Thomas Parnell of the University of Queensland, Australia, for patiently conducting an experiment that began in the year 1927—in which a glob of congealed black tar has been slowly, slowly dripping through a funnel, at a rate of approximately one drop every nine years.

MEDICINE. Gregg A. Miller of Oak Grove, Missouri, for inventing Neuticles—artificial replacement testicles for dogs, which are available in three sizes, and three degrees of firmness.

LITERATURE. The Internet entrepreneurs of Nigeria, for creating and then using e-mail to distribute a bold series of short stories, thus introducing millions of readers to a cast of rich characters—General Sani Abacha, Mrs. Mariam Sanni Abacha, Barrister Jon A. Mbeki Esq., and others—each of whom requires just a small amount of expense money so as to obtain access to the great wealth to which they are entitled and which they would like to share with the kind person who assists them.

PEACE. Claire Rind and Peter Simmons of Newcastle University, in the U.K., for electronically monitoring the activity of a brain cell in a locust while that locust was watching selected highlights from the movie Star Wars.

ECONOMICS. Gauri Nanda of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, for inventing an alarm clock that runs away and hides, repeatedly, thus ensuring that people DO get out of bed, and thus theoretically adding many productive hours to the workday.

CHEMISTRY. Edward Cussler of the University of Minnesota and Brian Gettelfinger of the University of Minnesota and the University of Wisconsin, for conducting a careful experiment to settle the longstanding scientific question: can people swim faster in syrup or in water?

BIOLOGY. Benjamin Smith of the University of Adelaide, Australia and the University of Toronto, Canada and the Firmenich perfume company, Geneva, Switzerland, and ChemComm Enterprises, Archamps, France; Craig Williams of James Cook University and the University of South Australia; Michael Tyler of the University of Adelaide; Brian Williams of the University of Adelaide; and Yoji Hayasaka of the Australian Wine Research Institute, for painstakingly smelling and cataloging the peculiar odors produced by 131 different species of frogs when the frogs were feeling stressed.

NUTRITION. Dr. Yoshiro Nakamats of Tokyo, Japan, for photographing and retrospectively analyzing every meal he has consumed during a period of 34 years (and counting).

FLUID DYNAMICS. Victor Benno Meyer-Rochow of International University Bremen, Germany and the University of Oulu, Finland; and Jozsef Gal of Loránd Eötvös University, Hungary, for using basic principles of physics to calculate the pressure that builds up inside a penguin, as detailed in their report “Pressures Produced When Penguins Pooh—Calculations on Avian Defaecation.”

The 2004 Ig Nobel Prize Winners

MEDICINE. Steven Stack of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, USA and James Gundlach of Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, USA, for their published report “The Effect of Country

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Music on Suicide.”

PHYSICS. Ramesh Balasubramaniam of the University of Ottawa, and Michael Turvey of the University of Connecticut and Haskins Laboratory, for exploring and explaining the dynamics of hula-hooping.

PUBLIC HEALTH. Jillian Clarke of the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, and then Howard University, for investigating the scientific validity of the Five-Second Rule about whether it’s safe to eat food that’s been dropped on the floor.

CHEMISTRY. The Coca-Cola Company of Great Britain, for using advanced technology to convert ordinary tap water into Dasani, a transparent form of water, which for precautionary reasons has been made unavailable to consumers.

ENGINEERING. Donald J. Smith and his father, the late Frank J. Smith, of Orlando Florida, USA, for patenting the combover (U.S. Patent #4,022,227).

LITERATURE. The American Nudist Research Library of Kissimmee, Florida, USA, for preserving nudist history so that everyone can see it.

PSYCHOLOGY. Daniel Simons of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Christopher Chabris of Harvard University, for demonstrating that when people pay close attention to something, it’s all too easy to overlook anything else -- even a woman in a gorilla suit.

ECONOMICS. The Vatican, for outsourcing prayers to India.

PEACE. Daisuke Inoue of Hyogo, Japan, for inventing karaoke, thereby providing an entirely new way for people to learn to tolerate each other.

BIOLOGY. Ben Wilson of the University of British Columbia, Lawrence Dill of Simon Fraser University [Canada], Robert Batty of the Scottish Association for Marine Science, Magnus Whalberg of the University of Aarhus [Denmark], and Hakan Westerberg of Sweden’s National Board of Fisheries, for showing that herrings apparently communicate by farting.

The 2003 Ig Nobel Prize Winners

ENGINEERING. The late John Paul Stapp, the late Edward A. Murphy, Jr., and George Nichols, for jointly giving birth in 1949 to Murphy’s Law, the basic engineering principle that “If there are two or more ways to do something, and one of those ways can result in a catastrophe, someone will do it” (or, in other words: “If anything can go wrong, it will”).

PHYSICS. Jack Harvey, John Culvenor, Warren Payne, Steve Cowley, Michael Lawrance, David Stuart, and Robyn Williams of Australia, for their irresistible report “An Analysis of the Forces Required to Drag Sheep over Various Surfaces.”

MEDICINE. Eleanor Maguire, David Gadian, Ingrid Johnsrude, Catriona Good, John Ashburner, Richard Frackowiak, and Christopher Frith of University College London, for presenting evidence that the brains of London taxi drivers are more highly developed than those of their fellow citizens.

PSYCHOLOGY. Gian Vittorio Caprara and Claudio Barbaranelli of the University of Rome, and Philip Zimbardo of Stanford University, for their discerning report “Politicians’ Uniquely Simple Personalities.”

CHEMISTRY. Yukio Hirose of Kanazawa University, for his chemical investigation of a bronze statue, in the city of Kanazawa, that fails to attract pigeons.

LITERATURE. John Trinkaus, of the Zicklin School of Business, New York City, for publishing more than 100 academic reports about things that annoy him.

ECONOMICS. Karl Schwärzler and the nation of Liechtenstein, for making it possible to rent the entire country for corporate conventions, weddings, bar mitzvahs, and other gatherings.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH. Stefano Ghirlanda, Liselotte Jansson, and Magnus Enquist of Stockholm University, for their inevitable report “Chickens Prefer Beautiful Humans.”

PEACE. Lal Bihari, of Uttar Pradesh, India, for a triple accomplishment: First, for leading an active life even though he has been declared legally dead; Second, for waging a lively posthumous campaign against bureaucratic inertia and greedy relatives; and Third, for creating the Association of Dead People.

BIOLOGY. C.W. Moeliker, of Natuurmuseum Rotterdam, the Netherlands, for documenting the first scientifically recorded case of homosexual necrophilia in the mallard duck.
The 2002 Ig Nobel Prize Winners

BIOLOGY. Norma E. Bubier, Charles G.M. Paxton, Phil Bowers, and D. Charles Deeming of the United Kingdom, for their report “Courtship Behaviour of Ostriches Towards Humans Under Farming Conditions in Britain.”

PHYSICS. Arnd Leike of the University of Munich, for demonstrating that beer froth obeys the mathematical Law of Exponential Decay.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH. Karl Kruszelnicki of The University of Sydney, for performing a comprehensive survey of human belly button lint -- who gets it, when, what color, and how much.

CHEMISTRY. Theodore Gray of Wolfram Research, in Champaign, Illinois, for gathering many elements of the periodic table, and assembling them into the form of a four-legged periodic table.

MATHEMATICS. K.P. Sreekumar and the late G. Nirmalan of Kerala Agricultural University, India, for their analytical report “Estimation of the Total Surface Area in Indian Elephants.”

LITERATURE. Vicki L. Silvers of the University of Nevada-Reno and David S. Kreiner of Central Missouri State University, for their colorful report “The Effects of Pre-Existing Inappropriate Highlighting on Reading Comprehension.”

PEACE. Keita Sato, President of Takara Co., Dr. Matsumi Suzuki, President of Japan Acoustic Lab, and Dr. Norio Kogure, Executive Director, Kogure Veterinary Hospital, for promoting peace and harmony between the species by inventing Bow-Lingual, a computer-based automatic dog-to-human language translation device.

HYGIENE. Eduardo Segura, of Lavakan de Aste, in Tarragona, Spain, for inventing a washing machine for cats and dogs.


MEDICINE. Chris McManus of University College London, for his excruciatingly balanced report, “Scrotal Asymmetry in Man and in Ancient Sculpture.”

For a complete list of all Ig Nobel Prize winners (1991-now) see the Improbable Research web site
WWW.IMPROBABLE.COM
SANDERS THEATRE
Sanders Theatre in Memorial Hall is operated by the Office for the Arts at Harvard. All inquiries should be addressed to:
    Memorial Hall/Lowell Hall Complex
    45 Quincy Street, Room 027
    Cambridge, MA 02138-3003
    Phone: 617.496.4595 Fax: 617.495.2420

CALENDAR OF EVENTS -- Available at the Harvard Box Office web site: www.fas.harvard.edu/~tickets

SMOKING -- There is no smoking allowed in Memorial Hall.

RESTROOMS/PUBLIC TELEPHONES -- Located on the Lower Level.

PARKING: THERE IS NO PARKING AT SANDERS THEATRE. Free parking for Sanders Theatre events is available at the Broadway Garage, corner of Broadway and Felton Streets, from one hour pre-performance to one hour post-performance.

LOST AND FOUND -- Call 617.496.4595 or visit the Administrative Offices, Memorial Hall room 027. Memorial Hall and Harvard University are not responsible for lost or stolen property.

LATECOMERS -- Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the management.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING -- Use of cameras and audio and video recording equipment is prohibited. Film and tape will be confiscated.

ACCESS FOR PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES
Wheelchair accessible seating is available through the Harvard Box Office by telephone at 617.496.2222, TTY 617.495.1642, or in person. Sanders Theatre is equipped with Assistive Listening Devices which are available at the Box Office one-half hour before performance time.

For information about parking for disabled patrons, call Marie Trottier, University Disability Coordinator, at 617.495.1859, TTY 617.495.4801, Monday through Friday 9am to 5pm. Please call at least two business days in advance.
Ig Nobelliana
In 2005 and again in 2006, episodes of the television game show Jeopardy had an entire category devoted to the Ig Nobel Prizes. The Ig Nobel Prizes are the subject of a question in the latest edition of the game Trivial Pursuit.

Ig Nobelliana
“I’d be pleased to have [Edward] Teller get a second Ig Nobel Prize so he could become listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the person who’s achieved the most Ig Nobel Prizes.”
—Linus Pauling, winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1954) and the Nobel Peace Prize (1962), and founding editorial board member of the Annals of Improbable Research.
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