Ode to E Pluribus Unum for Sunday July 24 2022

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Stephan's Quintet from Webb, Hubble, and Subaru

Image Credit: Webb, Hubble, Subaru; NASA, ESA, CSA, NOAJ, STScI;
Processing & Copyright: Robert Gendler

OK, but why can't you combine images from Webb and Hubble? You can, and the image shows one impressive result.

Although the recently launched James Webb Space Telescope (Webb) has a larger mirror than Hubble, it specializes in infrared light and can't see blue -- only up to about orange. Conversely, the Hubble Space Telescope (Hubble) has a smaller mirror than Webb and can't see as far into the infrared as Webb, but can image not only blue light but even ultraviolet.

Therefore, Webb and Hubble data can be combined to create images across a wider variety of colors. The featured image of four galaxies from Stephan's Quintet shows Webb images as red and also includes images taken by Japan's ground-based Subaru telescope in Hawaii. Because image data for Webb, Hubble, and Subaru are made freely available, anyone around the world can process it themselves, and even create intriguing and scientifically useful multi-observatory montages.

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First Five Images from Webb from NASA

https://www.nasa.gov/webbfirstimages

Yes you can pass on these and subsequent images from the JWST, but they will provide the basis for entire new understandings of the universe. Why does that matter? Well it doesn't…yet again it does. Take your choice

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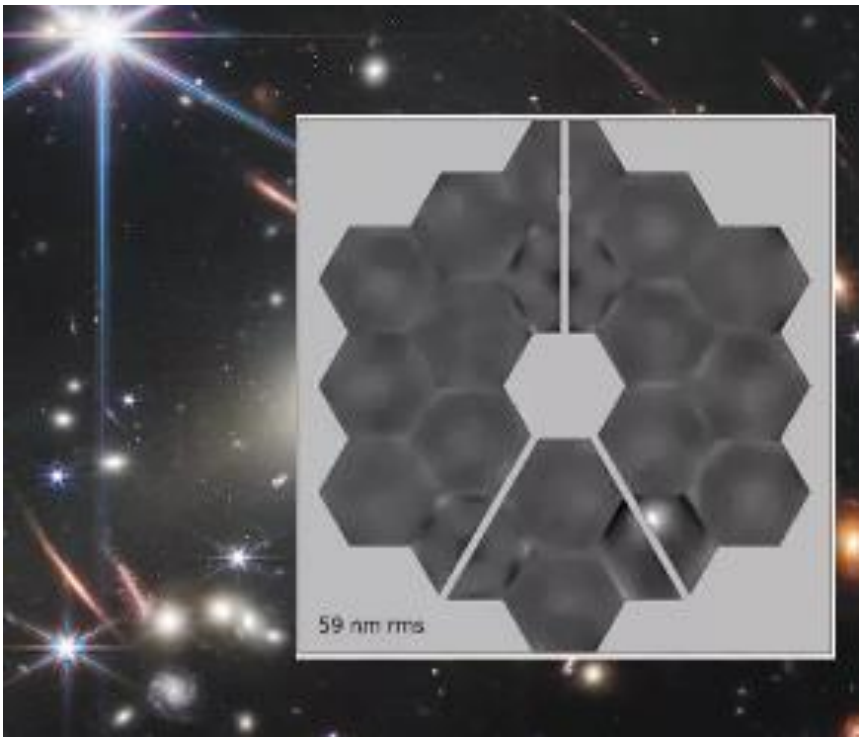
All is not Peaches and Cream Out There in Space

Meteor impact left 'uncorrectable' damage to the Webb telescope's mirror



NASA

https://bit.ly/3OjCfiD

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Deee-Lite

Deee-Lite, an American house and dance music group formed in New York City,whose best-known single was "Groove Is in the Heart", released in 1990 from their debut studio album World. Billboard ranked them as the 55th most successful dance artists of all time.

Groove is in the Heart https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etviGf1uWlg

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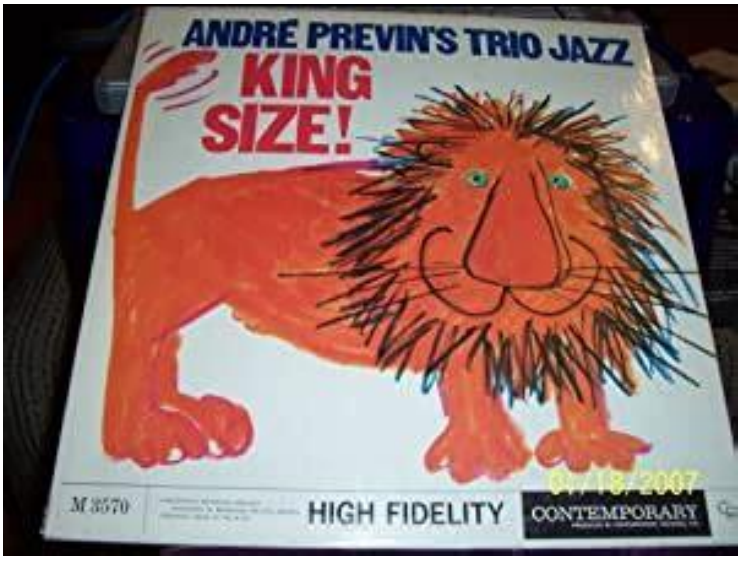
Andre Previn Trio



André George Previn was a German-American pianist, composer, and conductor. His career had three major genres: Hollywood, jazz, and classical music. In each he achieved success, and the latter two were part of his life until the end.

It Could Happen to you https://youtu.be/Km3XRrhIeYM

Trio for Oboe, Bassoon, and Piano https://youtu.be/5Xuhz79IkdE?t=7

Just in Time https://youtu.be/J2bCQMj3D9w

Andre Previn is known for a whole bunch of things including a dazzling array of wives, but for me it was his tempestuous approach to jazz that surmounted all.

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"You getting athlete's foot is about as ridiculous as a coal miner with sunstroke!"

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The Streets are Las Vegas' Hot Spots

https://go.nasa.gov/3ziefrK

It would be nice to think everything there might stay there.

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Using AI to Find Disease-Causing Genes

By Helen Santoro

A new artificial intelligence program is helping scientists speedily sift through thousands of data sets and millions of papers to home in on genes that underly disease, drastically condensing a search process that once took months.

Using computer software, scientists can scan entire genomes, or an organism's full set of DNA, of mice that model human diseases. The goal: to identify genetic mutations that cause those diseases and open new doors for scientists to better harness genetics to develop disease treatments, said Gary Peltz, MD, PhD, professor of anesthesiology, perioperative and pain medicine at Stanford Medicine.

But to do that, scientists must search through massive sets of genomic data, which yields more false positives than researchers care to admit. It's also time intensive. Peltz wanted to make the genetic discovery process easier, faster and more accurate.

To this end, Peltz and postdoctoral fellow Zhuoqing Fang, PhD, created an automated program that sorts through DNA sequence data and can analyze more than 10,000 data sets - in this case, of mouse disease traits -- at a whack. The program sorts through 29 million published papers and assesses possible links between genes and disease traits. Then, it narrows that information down to identify the genes that may be contributing to a certain disease.

In a recently published paper in the journal Bioinformatics, the team used their automated pipeline to identify genes that are linked to diabetes and obesity, as well as cataract formation in mice.

I spoke with Peltz about what motivated his team to combine AI and gene discovery, how this new computer pipeline works and what this may mean for the future of medicine.

What did your lab do to improve the gene discovery process?

We began analyzing large data sets detailing disease phenotypes, or physical traits, from many different types of mice. We then performed genome-wide association studies, which identify correlations between genes and phenotypes that are specific for certain diseases.

But this requires analyzing huge amounts of incoming data, which creates a lot of work. You end up with a lot of genes that may just be randomly linked with disease susceptibility or resistance. However, that correlation doesn't mean that a gene is

actually involved in causing or protecting against that disease. So, you have to sort through those correlations. I'd spend three months reading the literature on the different genes, trying to figure out which ones were most likely to be involved in a given disease.

How does your new automated pipeline make this process even more manageable?

Being a little bit lazy, I asked: "Couldn't we get the computer to help sort through these genetic correlations?" That's the basis for this pipeline.

Zhuoqing Fang, the co-author of the study, had a lot of experience with AI and computer programs. What he did was really nothing short of phenomenal. His work uses AI to assess the likelihood that a candidate gene is involved in disease development.

The AI program identifies genes correlated with disease traits, such as in diabetes and cataracts, in mice. Fang downloaded 29 million papers and the AI program read all of them and determined if a candidate gene was mentioned in a paper about a particular disease. The program is looking for the co-occurrence of gene X and disease Y in a paper.

And, since many human diseases result from interactions between proteins, we used the AI program to analyze a database of protein-protein interactions. That way we get a better sense of if a protein produced by a candidate gene is related to a disease.

The algorithm then compiles this data, which is used to assess the strength of the relationship between a candidate gene and a disease phenotype.

Has the pipeline helped you identify genes that are associated with a given disease?

In one instance, we saw some, but not all, mice that had a mouse version of cataracts had a very high incidence of the condition. So we asked a simple question: "What's the difference between the mice that develop cataracts and those that do not?" The AI program identified a gene called Nid1, which is active in cells that sit right in a membrane located inside your eye. The program discovered this by finding a paper, which identified a type of mutation that was just like the one we saw in the mice, but it caused cataracts in cattle.

It really lets the cream rise to the top and filters out a lot of junk.

What do you hope to do with this computational pipeline?

I hope it will enable us to make additional genetic discoveries, which can be the basis for new diagnostic tests and therapies that will improve patient care. Right now, we're using our AI program to analyze mouse genomes. However, this tool can also be used to analyze other types of data sets, such as human genetic data or lists of proteins, that could further reveal how genetic changes cause diseases.

Understanding the genetic architecture underlying disease susceptibility could enable doctors to diagnose diseases in their patients more precisely, and a person's genetic information can be used to identify the best treatment or to develop a disease

prevention plan. It could also help guide new drug development. If AI can drive your car, why can't we use AI to make genetic discoveries?

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UCI Neuroscientists Create Maps of the Brain After Traumatic Brain Injury

Co-first author and Anatomy & Neurobiology graduate student, Alexa Tierno, holds a mouse brain made transparent to visualize connections between nerve cells in the entire brain. An image of neurons in medial entorhinal cortex projecting to transplanted interneurons in damaged hippocampus is shown in the background.

Findings shed new light on memory and epilepsy

Irvine, Calif., June 17, 2022 – Scientists from the University of California, Irvine have discovered that an injury to one part of the brain changes the connections between nerve cells across the entire brain. The new research was published this week in Nature Communications.

Every year in the United States, nearly two million Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Survivors can live with lifelong physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities. Currently, there are no treatments.

One of the biggest challenges for neuroscientists has been to fully understand how a TBI alters the cross-talk between different cells and brain regions.

In the new study, researchers improved upon a process called iDISCO, which uses solvents to make biological samples transparent. The process leaves behind a fully intact brain that can be illuminated with lasers and imaged in 3D with specialized microscopes.

With the enhanced brain clearing processes, the UCI team mapped neural connections throughout the entire brain. The researchers focused on connections to inhibitory neurons, because these neurons are extremely vulnerable to dying after a brain injury. The team first looked at the hippocampus, a brain region responsible for learning and memory. Then, they investigated the prefrontal cortex, a brain region that works together with hippocampus. In both cases, the imaging showed that inhibitory neurons gain many more connections from neighboring nerve cells after TBI, but they become disconnected from the rest of the brain.

"We've known for a long time that the communication between different brain cells can change very dramatically after an injury," said Robert Hunt, PhD, associate professor of anatomy and neurobiology and director of the Epilepsy Research Center at UCI School of Medicine whose lab conducted the study, "But, we haven't been able to see what happens in the whole brain until now."

To get a closer look at the damaged brain connections, Hunt and his team devised a technique for reversing the clearing procedure and probing the brain with traditional anatomical approaches.

The findings surprisingly showed that the long projections of distant nerve cells were still present in the damaged brain, but they no longer formed connections with inhibitory neurons.

"It looks like the entire brain is being carefully rewired to accommodate for the damage, regardless of whether there was direct injury to the region or not," explained Alexa Tierno, a graduate student and co-first author of the study. "But different parts of the brain probably aren't working together quite as well as they did before the injury."

The researchers then wanted to determine if it was possible for inhibitory neurons to be reconnected with distant brain regions. To find out, Hunt and his team transplanted new interneurons into the damaged hippocampus and mapped their connections, based on the team's earlier research demonstrating interneuron transplantation can improve memory and stop seizures in mice with TBI.

The new neurons received appropriate connections from all over the brain. While this may mean it could be possible to entice the injured brain to repair these lost connections on its own, Hunt said learning how transplanted interneurons integrate into damaged brain circuits is essential for any future attempt to use these cells for brain repair.

"Our study is a very important addition to our understanding of how inhibitory progenitors can one day be used therapeutically for the treatment of TBI, epilepsy or other brain disorders," said Hunt. "Some people have proposed interneuron transplantation might rejuvenate the brain by releasing unknown substances to boost innate regenerative capacity, but we're finding the new neurons are really being hard wired into the brain."

Hunt hopes to eventually develop cell therapy for people with TBI and epilepsy. The UCI team is now repeating the experiments using inhibitory neurons produced from human stem cells.

"This work takes us one step closer to a future cell-based therapy for people," Hunt said, "Understanding the kinds of plasticity that exists after an injury will help us rebuild the injured brain with a very high degree of precision. However, it is very important that we proceed step wise toward this goal, and that takes time."

Jan C. Frankowski, PhD; Shreya Pavani; Quincy Cao and David C. Lyon, PhD also contributed to this study. Funding was provided by the National Institutes of Health.

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Physicists Rewrite the Fundamental Law That Leads to Disorder

Is the rise of entropy merely probabilistic, or can it be straightened out by use of clear quantum axioms?

Maggie Chiang for Quanta Magazine

https://www.quantamagazine.org/physicists-trace-the-rise-in-entropy-to-quantum-information-20220526/?mc_cid=bac94ded8a&mc_eid=636bc88d2e

The second law of thermodynamics is among the most sacred in all of science, but it has always rested on 19th century arguments about probability. New arguments trace its true source to the flows of quantum information.

Long and not for the timid, but for those who live for challenges this is one for the ages

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A Look at 'Infantile Amnesia'

Will either sibling remember this momentous meeting?
Credit: eclipse_images/Getty Images

https://bit.ly/3oclCLi

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How Did Consciousness Com About?

Two leading voices in evolutionary consciousness science explore the subject through words and images.

https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/how-did-consciousness-evolve-an-illustrated-guide/?utm_source=join1440&utm_medium=email

In their book "Picturing the Mind," Simona Ginsburg and Eva Jablonka, two leading voices in evolutionary consciousness science, pursue these and other questions through a series of "vistas" — over 65 brief, engaging texts, presenting some of the views of

poets, philosophers, psychologists, and biologists, accompanied by Anna Zeligowski's lively illustrations.

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The Human Body Replaces itself Every 7 Years, Right?

By Donavyn CoffeyUhh…(ding!)
Even when new cells are 'born,' aging still takes a toll.

There are trillions of cells in your body, but the cells that you have today are not all the exact same cells that you had yesterday. Over time, cells age and become damaged, so your body's cells are constantly replicating, creating their own replacements.

This constant cellular activity has sparked a popular idea: Every seven years or so, your cells have been so productive that your body has replaced every part of itself — from your eyelashes to your esophagus. In other words, after about seven years of cellular replication, you're an entirely new collection of cells, inside and out.

But is that true? Not exactly. Certain cells in some organs and systems in your body are totally replaced in a matter of months, but others remain much the same as they were on the day you were born.

"Most of the skin and gut are replaced very fast, most likely within months," Olaf Bergmann, a principal researcher in the Department of Cell and Molecular Biology at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, told Live Science in an email. Cells in the liver regenerate at a somewhat slower pace, Bergmann and his colleagues reported June 15 in the journal Cell Systems.

For the study, the authors analyzed liver tissue using radiocarbon dating and found that most liver cells are replaced within three years. However, cells in other organs and systems are even slower to replicate and lag behind the seven-year cut-off.

For example, "the human heart renews at a rather low rate, with only 40% of all cardiomyocytes [the cells responsible for the contracting force in the heart] exchanged throughout life," Bergmann said. Skeletal cells, meanwhile, need around 10 years to replicate a skeleton in its entirety, according to the New York Times.

In the brain, cell renewal can be even more leisurely. Scientists have uncovered evidence showing that some neurons in the hippocampus are renewed, but only at a rate of 1.75% annually, according to a 2013 study in Cell. And some types of neurons within the striatum also regenerate, according to a 2014 study in Cell. But other types of neurons stay with a person for their entire lifetime, Bergmann said. And even the distinct cell populations that can rejuvenate are not replaced entirely, but only partly over a lifetime, he said.

But that raises another question: If parts of us, like our skin, gut and liver, are renewed every few years, then why don't we stay young forever?

Regardless of how "young" our skin, guts and liver may be, we feel older as years go by because of our biological age, Bergmann explained. Even if a person's cells are relatively young, their biological age reflects how their body responds to the passage of time. As organs renew their cells, the organs still age due to changes in the replicating cells, such as mutations, Bergmann said. As cells replicate, the DNA continually divides and copies; and over time, mistakes are made. Mutations can thereby accumulate and affect the life of the cell or the expression of certain genes.

So even if the cells in parts of our bodies are relatively new, our aging, much-copied DNA makes us feel the weight of all those years that have passed.

This article was originally published on Live Science on April 4, 2011 and updated on June 28, 2022.

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The Sky May not be Falling, But Some Satellites Are

Wild solar weather is causing satellites to plummet from orbit.

The European Space Agency had to raise the orbit of the Swarm satellites as they were sinking too fast because of space weather.
(Image credit: ESA)

https://bit.ly/3Oi60jE

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Bunk Beds on Airplanes? In Economy?

Natalie Neysa Alund

Air New Zealand this week announced its innovative "Skynest" concept, which features six full-length sleeping pods.

According to the airline, economy bunk beds will be among several new offerings on long-haul flights included on its new Boeing 787 Dreamliners expected to take to the air in 2024.

https://youtu.be/AWmwQv6TbIs

"It's time to swap the headrest for some bed rest," the airline posted on Twitter Tuesday. "Say hello to the world's first sleep pods in the sky, Skynest. Stretch out in one of six pods for part of your journey and catch some shut-eye. A game-changer for economy travelers."

In what the airline says will be a world first, each pod will be located between economy and premium economy cabins and include a pillow, a privacy curtain, ear plugs, a reading light, a USB port and a ventilation outlet.

The pods will be in two rows and include three beds. According to the airline, they come with a mattress and sheets – changed by cabin crew after each booking – and will be stacked on top of one another.

Five economy seats will be removed to make space to install six of the pods, the airline reported.

Air New Zealand's program manager Louise Leaupepe called the move a world first lie-flat option for economy customers.

"It's so awesome to be part of a culture that is prepared to think differently and be light years ahead of others," said KerryReeves, head of the airlines aircraft programs.

Air New Zealand in June 2022 announced its "Skynest" concept, which features six full-length sleeping pods. It will be among several new offerings included on its new Boeing 787 Dreamliners expected to enter into service in 2024.

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Rugged Textures and Serene Colors of Earth's Landscapes

Using a combination of drones and cameras equipped with wide lenses to frame the natural colors and textures of Earth's topographies, Vadim Sherbakov's body of work capture the breadth and beauty of landscapes around the world.

https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2022/06/vadim-sherbakov-landscape-photography/?utm_source=join1440&utm_medium=email&utm_placement=newsletter

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Switzerland's Underground Autonomous Cargo Delivery

After half a decade of study, Cargo Sous Terrain is ready to start on its first tunnel

https://spectrum.ieee.org/cargo-sous-terrain

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Ada Limón Named New U.S. Poet Laureate

Shawn Miller/Library of Congress

By Meghan Collins Sullivan

Ada Limón was named Tuesday by the Library of Congress as the nation's 24th poet laureate.

She will take over in September from Joy Harjo, who has held the position since 2019. Harjo was only the second poet laureate to be named to a third term; Robert Pinsky also holds that honor.

Limón's latest collection, The Hurting Kind, was published in May. In a review of the book, NPR's Jeevika Verma notes: "As in her previous notable collections — The Carrying won the National Book Critics Circle Award and before that, Bright Dead Things was a National Book Award finalist — Limón is acutely aware of the natural world in The Hurting Kind. And she has a knack for acknowledging its little mysteries in order to fully capture its history and abundance."

Limón has published six poetry collections and is the host of the podcast The Slowdown. She also teaches in the MFA program at Queens University of Charlotte.

In a press release, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden said, "Ada Limón is a poet who connects. Her accessible, engaging poems ground us in where we are and who we share our world with. They speak of intimate truths, of the beauty and heartbreak that is living, in ways that help us move forward."

Limón described to All Things Considered her reaction to receiving the news of her appointment. She said thoughts of previous poets to hold the post ran through her mind.

"To me, it felt like 'how am I even allowed to stand in that lineage,'" she said. "And so I took a deep breath, and I said 'yes,' and we all sort of laughed together. An incredible honor and the shock of a lifetime."

And Limón reflected on being chosen for the position at this particular time in U.S. history.

"I think that it's really important to remember that even in this particularly hard moment, divided moment, poetry can really help us reclaim our humanity," Limón told All Things Considered. "I think we need to remember that we possess the full spectrum of human emotions. And I think moving through that grief and trauma, anger, rage — through poetry I think we can actually remember that on the other side of that is also contentment, joy, a little peace now and again, and that those are all a part of the same spectrum. And that without one, we don't have the other."

The Library of Congress has had a poet consultant since 1937. In 1985, an act of Congress officially establish the role that is now known as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry. The position is appointed annually.

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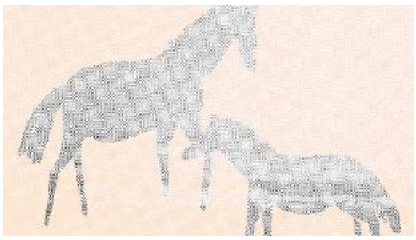
The Unspoken



If I'm honest, a foal pulled chest-level
close in the spring heat, his every-which-way
coat reverberating in the wind, feels
akin to what I imagine atonement might
feel like, or total absolution. But what
if, by some fluke in the heart, an inevitable
wreckage, congenital and unanswerable,
still comes, no matter how attached
or how gentle every hand that reached
out for him in that vibrant green field
where they found him looking like he
was sleeping, the mare nudging him
until she no longer nudged him? Am I
wrong to say I did not want to love
horses after that? I even said as much driving
back from the farm. Even now, when
invited to visit a new foal, or to rub the long
neck of a mare who wants only peppermints
or to be left alone, I feel myself resisting.
At any moment, something terrible could
happen. It's not gone, that coldness in me.
Our mare is pregnant right now,
and you didn't even tell me until someone
mentioned it offhandedly. One day, I will
be stronger. I feel it coming. I'll step into
that green field stoic, hardened, hoof first.

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Would You Rather

Remember that car ride to Sea-Tac, how your sister's kids
played a frenzied game of *Would You Rather*, where each choice
ticktocked between superpowers and towering piles of a food too-often denied,

Would You Rather
have fiery lasers that shoot out of your eyes or eat sundaes with whip cream for every meal?
We dealt it out quick,
without stopping to check ourselves for the truth.

We played so hard that I got good at the questions, learned
there had to be an equality
to each weighted ask. Now, I'm an expert at comparing things
that give the illusion they equal each other.
You said our Plan B was just to live our lives: more time, more sleep, travel—
and still I'm making a list of all the places
I found out I wasn't carrying a child.
At the outdoor market in San Telmo, Isla Negra's wide iris of sea,
the baseball stadium, the supermarket, the Muhammad Ali museum, but always
the last time tops the list, in the middle of the Golden Gate Bridge,
looking over toward Alcatraz, a place they should burn and redeliver
to the gulls and cormorants, common daisies and sea grass.
Down below the girder that's still not screened against jumpers,
so that it seems almost like a dare, an invitation,
we watched a seal make a sinuous shimmy in the bay.
Would you rather? Would I rather? The game is endless and without a winner.
Do you remember how the seal was so far under the deafening sound
of traffic, the whir of wind mixed with car horns and gasoline, such a small
speck of black movement alone in the churning waves
between rock and shore?
Didn't she seem happy?
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The Great Blue Heron of Dunbar Road

That we might walk out into the woods together,
and afterwards make toast
in our sock feet, still damp from the fern's
wet grasp, the spiky needles stuck to our
legs, that's all I wanted, the dog in the mix,
jam sometimes, but not always. But somehow,
I've stopped praising you. How the valley
when you first see it—the small roads back
to your youth—is so painfully pretty at first,
then, after a month of black coffee, it's just
another place your bullish brain exists, bothered
by itself and how hurtful human life can be.
Isn't that how it is? You wake up some days
full of crow and shine, and then someone
has put engine coolant in the medicine
on another continent and not even crying
helps cure the idea of purposeful poison.
What kind of woman am I? What kind of man?
I'm thinking of the way my stepdad got sober,
how he never told us, just stopped drinking
and sat for a long time in the low folding chair
on the Bermuda grass reading and sometimes
soaking up the sun like he was the story's only

subject. When he drove me to school, we decided
it would be a good day, if we saw the blue heron
in the algae-covered pond next to the road,
so that if we didn't see it, I'd be upset. Then,
he began to lie. To tell me he'd seen it when
he hadn't, or to suppose that it had just
taken off when we rounded the corner in
the gray car that somehow still ran, and I
would lie, too, for him. I'd say I saw it.
Heard the whoosh of wings over us.
That's the real truth. What we told each other
to help us through the day: the great blue heron
was there, even when the pond dried up,
or froze over; it was there because it had to be.
Just now, I felt like I wanted to be alone
for a long time, in a folding chair on the lawn
with all my private agonies, but then I saw you
and the way you're hunching over your work
like a puzzle, and I think even if I fail at everything,
I still want to point out the heron like I was taught,
still want to slow the car down to see the thing
that makes it all better, the invisible gift,
what we see when we stare long enough into nothing.

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The 2022 Audubon Photography Awards

https://bit.ly/3co1Olm

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'Dancing On The Ceiling' – An Old School Mash Up

https://youtu.be/RtIl1CGRu4M?t=3

Who knew Elizabeth Taylor could dance? Well maybe not much.

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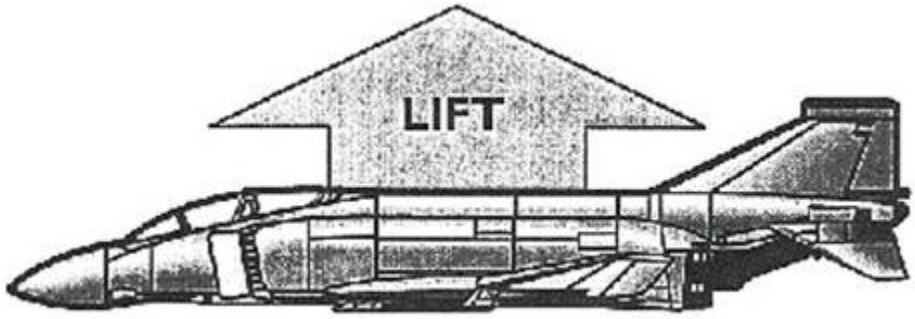
No One Can Explain Why Planes Stay in the Air



Do recent explanations solve the mysteries of aerodynamic lift?

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/no-one-can-explain-why-planes-stay-in-the-air/

This article is from the most recent Scientific American, so t I think you can open it with confidence.

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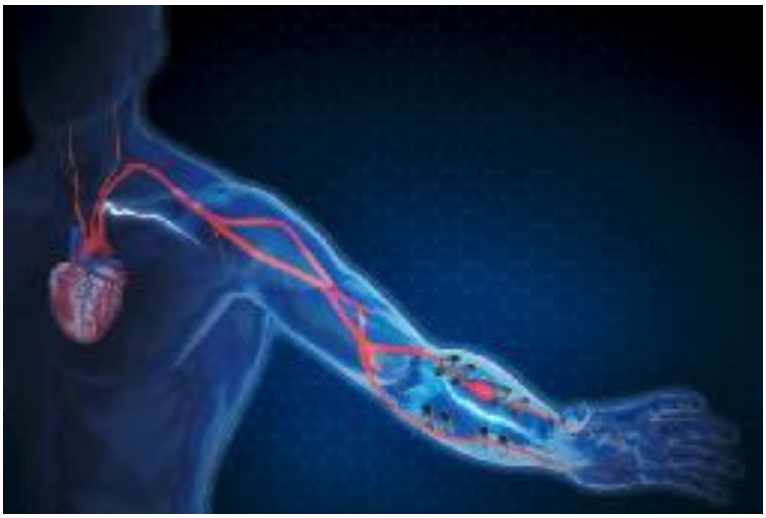
Graphene Tattoo Provides Cuffless Blood-Pressure Monitoring



A group of researchers from the University of Texas and Texas A&M University are developing a sticky and stretchable graphene electronic tattoo that is comfortable to wear for long periods and does not slide around. They describe the new blood-pressure monitor in Nature Nanotechnology.

https://bit.ly/3z4LJtM

Want more depth?

https://go.nature.com/3Pw4yLw

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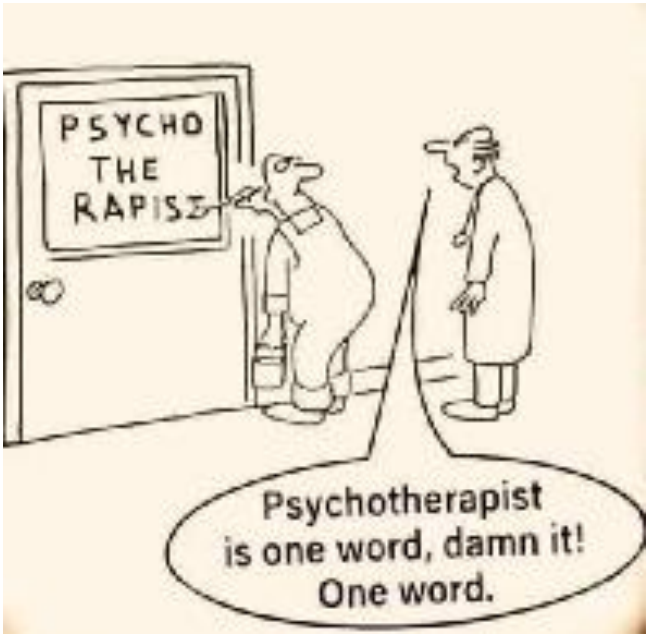

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The Glenn Gould Corner

In April 1964, Gould gave his last public performance in Los Angeles, California. For the rest of his life Gould devoted his career to recording, writing, and broadcasting. His Grammy awarded 1981 studio recording of 'Goldberg Variations', as well, as his other recordings of music by Johann Sebastian Bach, are widely considered as definitive.

Gould was posthumously awarded another Grammy for his recording of Piano sonatas Nos. 12 and 13 by Ludwig van Beethoven. His unusual and inspirational interpretations of classical repertoire were criticized by some and acclaimed by many. He died of a stroke on October 4, 1982, and was laid to rest in Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

In a world filled with unbelievably skilled pianists, Glenn Gould sits on the top step, a man of prodigious talent, intellectual attainment, and above all a seeker of perfection. In recognition of his spectacular virtuosity, I am launching my paean to his genius,

Glenn Gould talks about the influence and architecture of Bach's music and his own philosophy of classical music. Afterwards he performs Johann Sebastian Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major BWV 1050"

He is seen here playing it on a harpsipiano, an altered version of an ordinary piano, in which objects such as thumbtacks or nails are placed on the felt-padded hammers of the instrument at the point where the hammers hit the strings, giving the instrument a tinny, more percussive sound.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 https://youtu.be/gvs4v_aswfk?t=23

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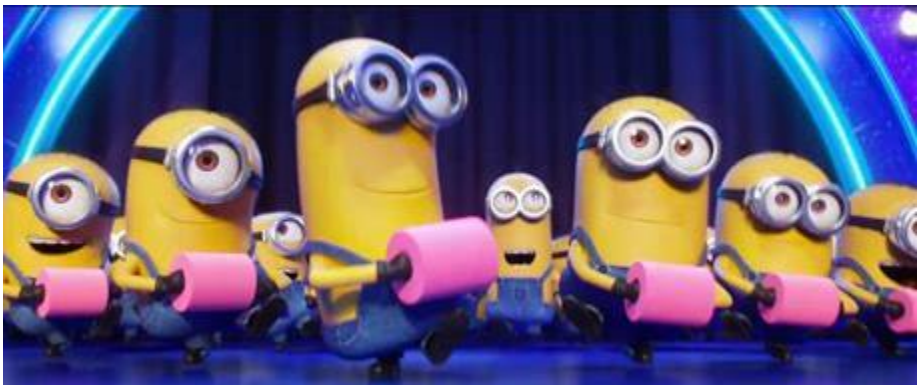
Major General Song from Pinafore in Minionese



https://youtu.be/_RG8hoGMxKw?t=4

Gilbert and Sullivan would be dismayed…if not actually pleased.

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Student Pilot Charged with DWI After Interstate Landing

By Russ Niles -

It was not the normal alcohol-related highway crash near Kansas City on Friday night, but the results for the student pilot of a Piper Cherokee could be the same. John T. Seesing, 35, was arrested after a short stay in a local hospital after he put the Cherokee down on Interstate 70 about 22 miles from KC. He was headed for the downtown airport but ran out of gas. The plane was damaged and Seesing needed patching up before being booked into cells charged with driving while intoxicated, careless and imprudent driving involving a crash, felony drug and gun possession, and possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

As remarkable as all that is, the journey that preceded is also noteworthy. Seesing, who has only a student certificate, took the aircraft all the way to Florida, making multiple stops along the way there and back. It all ended when the tanks went dry near Grain Valley, Missouri. When the plane flew over truck driver Crystal Lipham's big rig about 2:45 a.m., she used the truck to block the highway while Seesing set down. She said she got out of the truck and opened the plane and immediately smelled alcohol. The

plane is registered to Warrior Aviation, of Prairie Village, Missouri, and Seesing is also from that town.

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The Three Little Pigs as Told by John Branyan

https://1funny.com/three-little-pigs-like-youve-never-heard-before-john-branyan/

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Hidden Van Gogh Self-Portrait Discovered Under 'Peasant Woman' Painting

Senior Conservator Lesley Stevenson views "Head of a Peasant Woman" alongside an X-ray image of the hidden Van Gogh self-portrait.
(Image credit: Neil Hanna)

By Jennifer Nalewicki

Conservators at the National Galleries of Scotland recently experienced quite a surprise after they X-rayed a painting by Vincent van Gogh. Hidden on the reverse side of the painting "Head of a Peasant Woman(opens in new tab)," which Van Gogh completed in 1885, was a previously unknown self-portrait of the Dutch painter staring back at them.

The hidden self-portrait had been obscured by layers of glue and cardboard that had been attached to the back of the canvas; museum officials suspect the materials were applied sometime during the early 20th century to help protect the artwork for an upcoming exhibition, National Galleries representatives said in a statement(opens in new tab).

"It was absolutely thrilling," Lesley Stevenson, the museum's senior paintings conservator, told The Guardian(opens in new tab) about the discovery. "We weren't expecting much [of the] modest little painting" when they performed the scans, she said. But museum experts quickly revised their expectations when they looked at the X-rays. "We don't see much of the peasant woman, but what we have is the lead white, the much heavier pigment [Van Gogh] used for his face, showing up after the X-ray goes through the cardboard."

Van Gogh painted "Head of a Peasant Woman" as part of a series of works focused on the working-class residents of Nuenen, a small farming community in the southern portion of the Netherlands where he lived briefly in the 1880s. The woman in the painting is Gordina de Groot, a farm worker. She wears a flowing white headpiece, and her face is partially obscured by shadows.

In a letter(opens in new tab) that Van Gogh penned about the series in 1885 to Anton Kerssemakers, a friend and fellow artist, he described his fascination with his working-class subjects. "I'm working with almighty pleasure these days, for I would much rather paint figures than anything else," he wrote. "The heads of these women here with the white caps — it's difficult — but it's so eternally beautiful. It's precisely the chiaroscuro — the white and the part of the face in shadow, that has such a fine tone."

Van Gogh was also fond of creating self-portraits, producing about 20 paintings of himself toward the end of his lifetime while he was living in Paris, The Washington Post(opens in new tab) reported. Recreating his own image was a thrifty way for him to practice portraiture without spending money to hire models, according to The Washington Post.

Art historians at the National Galleries hope that the hidden self-portrait may offer insights into the life of the troubled Van Gogh, who took his life with a revolver at the age of 37. The museum is currently investigating how to best remove the unwanted layers of protective materials without harming the painting.

The painting and an image of the self-portrait will be on display later this summer as part of the museum's upcoming A Taste for Impressionism(opens in new tab) exhibition, which runs from July 30 through Nov. 13.

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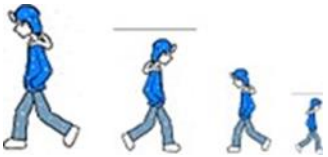
My Walking Thoughts



For Sunday July 24 2022

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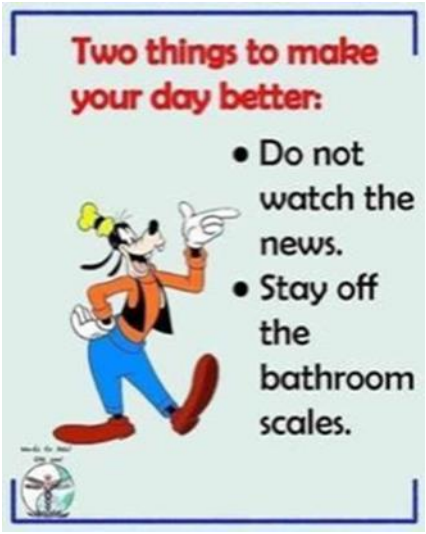
Useless Gnus

Nearly forty years ago—March 8, 1983 to put it into the proper context—I came to the conclusion that that I had had it with 'THE NEWS.'



While it was a bit edgy at the time, I was by no means near the head of the line of those whose blood pressure soared the instant we allowed Tom Brokaw, Barbara WhaWha, or others of their ilk intrude on our lives. The same was true as I unfurled the pages of the LA Times or Santa Barbara News Suppress. Such intrusions on my inner peace prompted me to take the pledge to do everything in my power to wage war in the only ways I legally could.

My first act was to sequester a copy of the local rag in the back of my underwear drawer with the understanding that a decade hence--on March 8, 1993--I would exhume it and compare with that date's edition to see if anything had changed in the intervening decade other than perhaps the precise location of the event, the names of the culprits, and anything other than the minutest of details of whatever outrage de jour caught the attention of the members of our fourth estate.

Guess what? Ta Da…No change had taken place.

In the interim my sphygmomanometer reading (try saying that three times in a row) had retreated a full ten points down the scale, I laughed 80% more often than before, I was blissfully ignorant of what prompted the likes of Ted Bundy or Richard Speck to

pursue their goals, and no longer did I have to fight the urge to throw something through the eyeball of my aging b&w Muntz TV.

In short, I was a far happier liberated man, no longer plagued by events over which I had nary the scintilla of control. (I owe the use of that word to ousted Nixon VP Spiro Agnew in his denial of being a criminal so perhaps I have to admit the utility of one piece of news.)

What prompted this rant? The following snippet from the Gallup Poll folks that you might get a kick out of.

https://bit.ly/3PWUID1

Is a turnaround in their findings likely?

What do you think as new generations of tic-toc advocates line up at the trough for what the talking heads promise?

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More Outtakes from Phantoms from Vietnam

More on Miss Apfelbaum and her vision of what were known as Miss A's Specials in its ranks. The terms Specials was not necessarily one of approbation, indeed quite the opposite in many of her colleagues' minds, referring to students who made things difficult for those of an authoritarian bent, a fair representation of whom could be found in the teachers' room across the hall.

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Top of the list of annoyances was that the group, as the district's psychiatrist, Helen Durkee was fond of saying, was "spring-loaded to the why question." While it could be argued that most of the kids weren't necessarily interested in learning the answers, it was just that the likes of Nancy Goldsmith, Bonnie Alvarez, and Gordon Talbott in this new batch of hooligans were greatly admired by their peers for their ability to rattle their teachers' cages with their persistent demands for more information.

Miss A, however, reveled in such disruptive behavior, looking forward to matching wits with minds that were still open to nearly everything, and not ashamed to question simple authority. She saw in their youthful enthusiasm the opportunity to turn the table on the bright ones, asking them the whys underlying their questions and thoughts, a technique she put into practice within two minutes of the start of the school year, neglecting the exploits of her brother on a manicure grass field 3,000 miles to the east where the leaves were just beginning to take on their autumn colors.

"What is it that you want to know about why school begins at eight in the morning?" she responded to Bonnie Alvarez's challenge, putting the little fireball on the hot seat for a moment.

"Because my family begins its day at 4:30, my father and brothers tend the farm before going to work at the Kern Canyon Hydroelectric Project. They have to be there at 6:45 and don't get home until nearly six in the evening."

"That's important work, Bonnie" she skillfully guided the subject along a more fruitful path. "Do you know why?"

"They keep power going to this whole area."

"Do you know how it works?"

"It uses water in the Kern River to turn huge…uhh they call them dynamos…to generate electricity that is then transmitted to power stations around the area." Bonnie's words were reminiscent of those found in the electric utility's handout.

"It sounds as if you know quite a lot about the system," and turning to the class as a whole, "Does anyone want to ask Bonnie some questions?" And right from the start the rest of the morning or afternoon as was the case would be taken up on topics such as this one introduced by a student.

Miss A loved watching the students get into such things, thinking that with her specials like Bonnie, Nancy, or Gordon, she really didn't have much to do in the way of lesson planning. Moreover, as September passed into October, the number of why questioners had grown to where there were only three of her 30 charges yet to find the thrill of challenge the status quo.

Miss A was careful in conducting discussions on current events—the war in particular—convinced that the majority of information passed to the public by the radio, newspapers, and especially magazines was doctored to fit the agenda of the Washington bigwigs.

So when Jimmy Hartley made the flat statement that "All the dirty Japs in the country should be taken out and shot"—it was his reaction to a piece in Time magazine about atrocities in the Pacific Theater--she was on the verge of shutting down discussion of the topic when Gordon spoke up in rebuttal.

"Jimmy," he said firmly but without rancor, "there may be enemy sympathizers among the thousands of Americans of Japanese descent, but they aren't a threat to the nation. Most are like the Nakanos; honest citizens who are being treated as criminals for no good reason."

Jimmy as well as the majority of the class sat silent waiting for Gordon to continue.

To be continued