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THE ELIXIR OF ETERNAL YOUTH?

Many of us would wish to recapture our youth in some form or another, whether it might be those youthful good looks or the ability to remember where we put our car keys. A recent study in *Science* suggests that there might be good news around the corner, even if only for your pet mouse. Researchers found that injecting ageing mice with serum extracted from young mice stimulated vascular remodelling and neurogenesis in the older mice. Although this is clearly a very exciting finding, before you take a syringe to your children you should note that the study did not investigate whether this neurogenesis led to behavioural improvements.

Science 2014;344:630–4

DISPOSSESSED

An ‘intervention’ is an orchestrated attempt by loved ones to help someone face their demons; primarily to seek professional help with addiction. Although featured in sit-coms as a narrative device and thought of as an American invention, James Joyce describes an intervention for alcoholism (of course) in *Dubliners*. Irmak, writing from a Turkish perspective, describes the broadly positive results of faith healers in dealing with people with psychosis in ‘Schizophrenia or Possession?’ A Fo Ben must admit that there have been times when faced with seemingly intractable functional illness that an attempt at exorcism (or the culturally appropriate alternative) has flitted across the mind....

Journal of Religion and Health 2014;53: 773–7.

NOTES FROM THE GRAVE

Cotard’s delusion is a rare psychosis where the patient believes himself or herself to be dead. While we may increasingly understand more about the underlying cause, it is almost unheard of to hear a first-hand account of what it feels like to suffer

Figure 1 Detail from Warm Glow or fabric, MRI: Bill’s Brain. Rug hooked from wool fabric strips. Made by Marjorie Taylor, Professor of Developmental Psychology, University of Oregon.



from the delusion. In a recent on-line piece, writer Esme Wang clearly recounts her experiences of living with the delusion. It is a fascinating and wonderfully written account of a profound psychotic episode that sheds light, and humanity, on a condition that can be difficult to understand, let alone to manage.

<http://the-toast.net/2014/06/25/perdition-days-experiencing-psychosis/view-all/>

RUNNING RINGS AROUND YOU...

A Fo Ben, shamefully, must admit to enjoying a juicy story about academic fraud; and this is a good one. *The Journal of Vibration and Control* (thankfully, the academic repository of articles such as ‘Hydraulic engine mounts: a survey’) has retracted 60 papers. The journal identified a ‘peer-review ring’ where up to 130 fabricated identities were created as aliases to generate supportive reviews of submitted work. The investigation centred on Peter Chen of Pingtung University, Taiwan—he has subsequently resigned from his post; and more recently so has the Thai education minister! Is there no end to this ring cycle?

<http://www.uk.sagepub.com/aboutus/press/2014/jul/7.htm>

CALL THE KNIT NURSE

What do you get for the spouse who has everything? If you are looking for a new hobby to occupy your time in those long winter evenings or want to create a unique Christmas present, then maybe this is the site for you. The Museum of Scientifically Accurate Fabric Brain Art may inspire you to translate your neuro-anatomical knowledge into a design for a cushion cover or tapestry (figure 1). The featured work is beautiful, anatomically detailed and fascinating. As the site notes, however, they “cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of using fabric brain art as a guide for functional magnetic resonance imaging, transcranial magnetic stimulation, neurosurgery, or single-neuron recording.” You have been warned.

<http://harbaugh.uoregon.edu/Brain/>

Competing interests None.



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