

Improbable Research

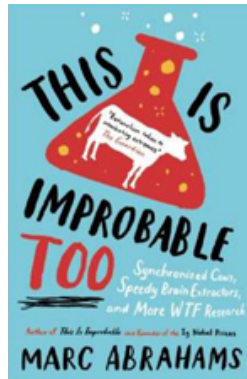
Research that makes people LAUGH and then THINK

[Subscribe to the Magazine](#)

- [Home \(Improbable Blog\)](#)
- [What is Improbable Research?](#)
- Ig Nobel Prizes
 - [About the Igs](#)
 - [2016 Ceremony](#)
 - [The Winners](#)
 - [24/7](#)
 - [Archive](#)
- Publications
 - [Magazine \(Annals of Improbable Research\)](#)
 - [Newsletter \(mini-AIR\)](#)
 - [Newspaper column](#)
 - [Classics](#)
- Podcast & videos
 - [Podcast](#)
 - [Improbable TV](#)
- Events Schedule
 - [Upcoming Events](#)
 - [Past Events](#)
- [Press Clips](#)
- [Luxuriant Hair Clubs for Scientists](#)
- [Store](#)
- [Info / Contact Us](#)



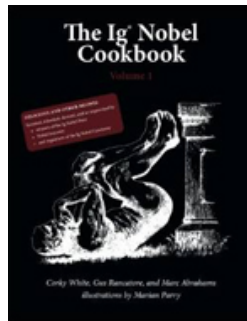
[2016 Ig Nobel Prize Ceremony](#)



[This Is Improbable Too](#)



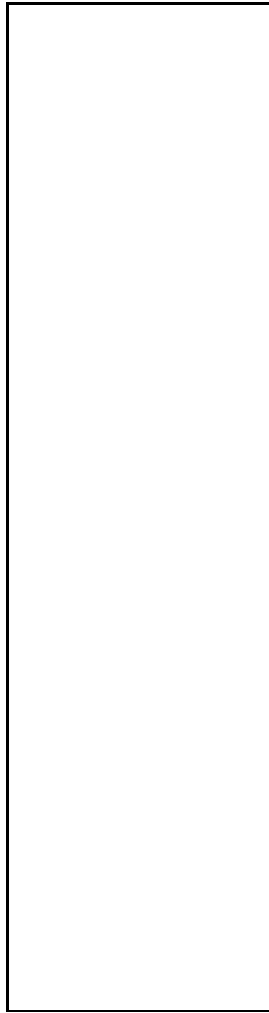
[Shop the Improbable Research® store!](#)



[Ig Nobel Cookbook vol.1](#)



[Get books about improbable research and the Ig Nobel Prize](#)



« [Dr Solomon's \(new\) buttock augmentation method](#)
[Report of the scientific investigation: Can farts be lit on fire by a laser?](#) »

A randomness as to which of a scientist's publications will have the most oomph



Despite common belief (and some earlier research on the question) that success tends to come early for scientists, a scientist's single most successful publication is likely to occur at *any* point in the sequence of papers that she or he publishes. That's the gist of a new study.

The study explains that people in general tend to produce more papers and everything else early in their careers, which gives the misleading appearance that their first papers are most likely to be the most successful.

The study is "[Quantifying the evolution of individual scientific impact](#)," by [Roberta Sinatra](#) [pictured here], [Dashun Wang](#), [Pierre Deville](#), [Chaoming Song](#), and [Albert-László Barabási](#), published in *Science* [04 Nov 2016: Vol. 354, Issue 6312].

The scientists also prepared a vivid set of [visualizations](#), which they put online.

And *Nature* magazine prepared a video that explains it all:

(Thanks to [Andrea Rapisarda](#), who won an Ig Nobel Prize for his own randomness research, for bringing this to our attention.)

Like { 2



Posted by **Marc Abrahams** on **Friday, November 4th, 2016 at 12:49 am** under [Arts and science](#), [News about research](#).

Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

Improbable Research is powered by [WordPress](#) and hosted by [Pair Networks](#).
You can [subscribe to our newsfeed](#) (RSS).

↵