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Highlights from this issue

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Welcome to a slightly different issue of *E&P*. There are a lot of additional considerations for editing when you decide you're going to ask authors to aim for a more quirky edition. I'll tell you the two main ones. The first is whether the authors of the more serious papers are going to take offence at being included alongside slightly lighter hearted ones. I have to tell you that I've not contacted all of the authors here to check that they're OK with this; what I was able to do instead was ensure that the quirkier papers we did have were good enough to stand alone—I hope you agree. I do hope the non-quirky authors are OK with this.

The second important consideration was: What makes a good quirky paper? Our much bigger sibling, the *BMJ*, has a seasonal edition, but I don't think I've ever seen a formal setting out of what makes a paper right for that edition. This left me thinking, first, how do I have a sense of what should make a good Christmas *BMJ* paper? And then: What is the difference between what we're doing here and the Christmas *BMJ*? I thought I got the answer when I read the aims of the Ig Nobel Prizes—which are awarded for achievements that first make people laugh and then make them think. This seemed to be a good aim to be aligned with—and you can tell me if these authors have achieved it.

Charlotte Wright tackles an interesting conundrum. We've probably all met children who have feeding

difficulties and whose desperate parents can only get them to take what might be more unkindly described as junk foods. She then takes a look at the contents of those foods, and puts some helpful science around how we might support this (*see page 293*).

Mary Lindsay, in a paper introduced by Sebastian Kraemer, offers some reflections from practice made a quarter century ago (*see page 282*) which, to me, are as fresh and as relevant as ever. It's fascinating to read this with an eye which looks for the features that tie this paper to its time. I could barely find any, which teaches me that however much wisdom I might fancy I've acquired, it's not really that much at all.

Andrew Williams always delivers quirky—which I hope he takes as the compliment I intend. In his paper here he argues that we should pay more attention to the medical humanities, illustrating it with some examples from his own practice, and in particular a time he struggled to understand a child's sign language to him (*see page 310*). In terms of one person misunderstanding another, it's pretty high up...

Helen Williams and Emer McLoughlin give us a Christmas themed Illuminations (*see page 289*). I honestly hadn't realised how many signs could be linked to the season, some in a rather groan-laden way. Because it has so many lovely pictures, I'm going to make this the Editor's Choice, with a shout out to anyone who sends me a picture of

their Christmas tree adorned with the pictures.

And then finally, for the quirky stuff, Daniel Cromb, Helen Thomas, Martin Garcia-Nicoletti and Ronny Cheung decided to look at whether attendance at a team Christmas Party makes their team more cohesive (*see page 285*). Their conclusion—which you'll see as soon as you look at 'what this study adds' feels a little humbugish, and I feel, without wishing to rubbish their paper, I ought to offer a small counterbalance here.

We have complex, fascinating, infuriating, stressful, rewarding jobs. As Andrew Williams points out, we have front row seats on the drama of life. In fact, quite often we're yanked up on stage. We can't do that alone, and it is my sense that the people around you—who support, challenge, nurture, infuriate and encourage—are absolutely key to your survival. A way of reading Cromb and colleagues here is to say that isolated attendance at the Christmas Party does nothing for team spirit. This is as obvious as the fact that Fezziwig's party for the young Scrooge and others in *A Christmas Carol* would be meaningless if he were not essentially the same through the year. Teams, like any good relationship, take work and care and attention. And if the cold and dark of a Northern Hemisphere December isn't a good time to do some of that work, I'm not sure when is.

Keep in touch and tell me what we're getting right or wrong.

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