

JOKE

PAPER OF THE YEAR

23.12.2024

I have occasionally selected a paper of the year, that I enjoyed most for reading. Usually this was not a breakthrough paper but a more hidden pearl. [BMJ Christmas](#) and [Ig Nobel 2024](#) were funny, sure, but here is my selection from the literature, a correspondence

Can a biologist fix a radio? — Or, what I learned while studying apoptosis [Cancer Cell Volume 2, Issue 3 P179-182 September 2002](#)

A more successful approach will be to remove components one at a time or to use a variation of the method, in which a radio is shot at a close range with metal particles. In the latter case radios that malfunction (have a “phenotype”) are selected to identify the component whose damage causes the phenotype. Although removing some components will have only an attenuating effect, a lucky postdoc will accidentally find a wire whose deficiency will stop the music completely. The jubilant fellow will name the wire Serendipitously Recovered Component (Src) and then find that Src is required because it is the only link between a long extendable object and the rest of the radio. The object will be appropriately named the Most Important Component (Mic) of the radio. A series of studies will definitively establish that Mic should be made of metal and the longer the object is the better, which would provide an evolutionary explanation for the finding that the object is extendable.