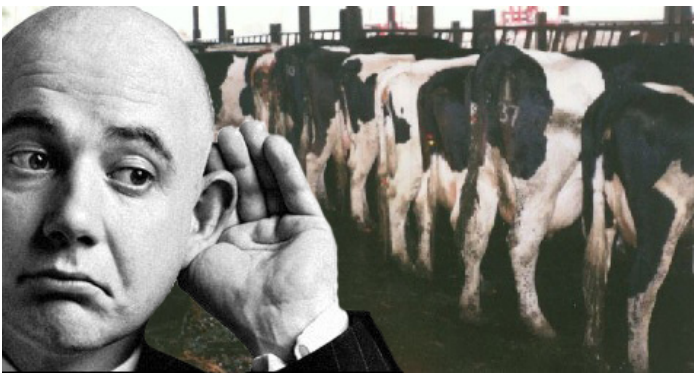


SCIENCE

Disappointed Would-Be Translator Told "Farting is Not a Language"

Stink Creek, Mississippi - Ronald W. Odious has always known that he was special, but he did not realize just how special he was until he reached the fifth grade. "That's when I realized I had the gift," Mr. Odious said, taking bite out of a triple-layer chili cheeseburger and eyeing a side of batter-encrusted deep fried re-fried beans. "I always sensed that I was different from other kids, but it wasn't until I got to the fifth grade that I realized that I was naturally bilingual, and had found my true calling."

Mr. Odious, who works at a local dairy farm said he was delighted to discover this natural talent as a child, but was overwhelmed with joy when he realized, as an adult, that he could use it to communicate with the cows who are in his charge. "Sometimes it's hard if I haven't had a lot of beans for breakfast, then the cows would say something and I'd have to stand there for a while before I can answer. It gets to be a little straining after a while." Wilson Beakman, a doctoral student in linguistics who is writing his dissertation on Mr. Odious, said that he has so far identified a vocabulary consisting of over ten thousand individual sounds and nearly one thousand distinct smells. Mr. odious, however, has found out that just because he has a unique talent it doesn't mean that everyone appreciates him. Recently he applied for a translator position at the US State Department, only to be told in no uncertain terms that "...farting is not a language."



Mr. Odious, who clearly considers himself a patriot, is still upset at the way he was treated by the government. "I mean really, we have this war on terror happening, and I volunteer my services - it's not like I speak some dead language like Latin or Esperanto, and I'm naturally bilingual! Most people only know a few words, and they don't even know what they're saying half the time," Mr. Odious said, looking thoroughly disgusted. He then adding something in a language which this reporter can only guess emphasized his disappointment with the federal government.

The State Department press office declined to comment for this story.



HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Study: Massachusetts Has Highest Rates Of Wicked Retarded



Boston, MA - A newly published study by Harvard researchers suggests that children born in Massachusetts have a 98% increased risk of being of wicked retarded compared to children in any other state. "The findings from this study are wicked surprising," explained lead researcher Catherine Conner, M.D.

"We essentially found that this condition is almost entirely contained to the state of Massachusetts, with a few isolated cases observed in Rhode Island and New Hampshire."

The condition is characterized as a unique form of developmental delay, which can lead to serious but non-fatal disabilities such as impaired highway driving and general rudeness. Currently, there are no proven risk factors for the condition, though statistical models have found associations between its prevalence and consumption of Dunkin Donuts coffee. Dr. Conner and her team are optimistic that cure will be found, based on preliminary results of an ongoing randomized controlled trial which she believes are "wicked awesome."



ENTERTAINMENT

Spam Writers' Union Enters Tenth Year

The Internets - The strike that started in 1998 of the Union of Unsolicited Junk Email Authors continues, and for nine years internet email users have had to make do. Today, as is well known, all spam email is either a garbled, recycled version of a junk mailing penned by a member of the Union before 1998, or else automatically generated by a computer program that outputs nonsensical yet oddly compelling phrases.



Union officials strongly maintain that the poor quality of spam over the past decade has led to billions in lost revenues, fleeced from unsuspecting saps who blindly click on any link they're sent. As employers are reluctant to meet the Union's demands, such as adding discount "\|/\gR/\\" and "C1aLi\$" to prescription health plans, the strike seems unlikely to end any time soon. It was, however, jeopardized once in recent years, when a Nigerian spam writer crossed the picket line with a bold email scam that gained some brief notoriety, but he was quickly pummeled to death by badly misspelled signs carried by angry strikers.

