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Time Magazine (January 4)
Your Brain On Sesame Street: Big Bird Helps Researchers See How the Brain Learns
In a new study, Jessica Cantlon, a cognitive scientist at the University of Rochester and her colleagues used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to look at brains of children during a normal educational activity—watching Sesame Street—to get a better picture of how the brain changes as it develops reading and math skills. “It is not currently possible to measure the real-world thought process that a child has while observing an actual school session. However, if it could be done, children’s neural processes would presumably be predictive of what they know,” the authors write in the study, published in the journal PLoS Biology. “Everyone would prefer to use the real world as the stimulus because that’s really the goal: to understand what brain regions are important when children are learning in the real classroom and not with isolated stimuli on a black background, because that’s not really how they learn,” says Cantlon, whose research team is making strides in understanding brain development in everyday settings. (Also Reported In: MSNBC, CNN, U.S. News & World Report, Fox News, Huffington Post, MSN, England Daily Mail, Yahoo! India News, Business Insider, Health.com, Science Daily, 10WHEC-TV, 13WHAM-TV, WROC-TV, YNN, and others.)

CBS News (January 1)
Space Radiation Poses Alzheimer’s Risk for Astronauts
Radiation in space might harm the brains of astronauts in deep space by accelerating the development of Alzheimer’s disease, a new study on mice suggests. The research reveals another risk that manned deep-space missions to places such as Mars or the asteroids could pose, scientists added. This study shows for the first time that exposure to radiation levels equivalent to a mission to Mars could produce cognitive problems and speed up changes in the brain that are associated with Alzheimer’s disease,” study author Kerry O’Banion, a neuroscientist at the University of Rochester Medical Center, said in a statement. (Also Reported In: ABCNews.com, Chicago Tribune, United Press International, Reuters, Huffington Post, MSNBC, U.S. News & World Report, New York Daily News, Fox News, Yahoo! Canada, Forbes, Discovery news, Voice of America, Popular Science, Examiner.com, and others.)

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Chronicle of Higher Education (January 28)
Rocker/Academic Leads New Institute for Popular Music at University of Rochester
John Covach, who is an academic by day and a rock musician by night, has found a way to make his two worlds converge. The University of Rochester professor is founding director of the university’s Institute for Popular Music, which opened this year. Mr. Covach, 53, says he wants popular music to be regarded as highly as other types of music. “Talking about the Beatles or Elvis or Springsteen should be no different than talking about Beethoven or Bach,” he says. David LeBlanc, a 2009 Rochester graduate who majored in music says taking Mr. Covach’s rock-history course during his sophomore year opened his eyes to the complexity of popular music. (Also Reported In: Scientific American)

England Daily Mail (January 3)
Researchers Zero In On Memory Problems Associated With Menopause
Dr. Miriam Weber, a neuropsychologist at the University of Rochester Medical Centre, who led the study, said the findings would strike a chord with millions of women going through the menopause. She said: ‘This study suggests that these problems not only exist but become most evident in the women in the first year following their final menstrual period.’ (Also Reported In: MSN, Huffington Post, England Telegraph, US News & World Report, Philadelphia Inquirer, Fox News, and others.)

CNN (January 30)
Tracking the Flu with Technology and Twitter
The University of Rochester has turned research about predicting the spread of diseases with social media into a web application called Germ Tracker. The colorful interactive map pulls up geo-tagged Tweets that contain keywords related to illness. If you find a tweet that’s clearly mislabeled (like someone bragging that their new car is “sick”), click a button to let the app know they’re not actually sick. It also allows self-reporting with a slider you can set to Awful, Sick, Yuck, Meh or Good and options to share specific symptoms. (Also Reported In: Orlando-WKMG)

Slate Magazine (January 15)
Experts Say Not To Bribe Kids. I’ll Give You $10 and Stale Candy If You Prove Them Wrong.
Here’s Dr. Edward Deci, a longtime skeptic of child bribery, on why rewarding desired results is not the way to go: Dr. Deci, now a professor of psychology at the University of Rochester, said the biggest problem with tangible rewards is that they actually work, at least in the short run. “If you want somebody to do something, and if you have enough money, you can get them do it,” he said. “Practically anyone, practically anything.” But with children, he pointed out, since you are trying to get them to do the behavior “more or less ongoingly for the rest of their lives,” the technique will backfire unless you’re prepared to offer the same reward every time. “You don’t want them coming to you when they’re grown,” he said.

Science Daily (January 10)
Study: Model of Brain Signaling Flawed
“Our findings demonstrate that the tripartite synaptic model is incorrect,” said Maiken Nedergaard, M.D., D.M.Sc., lead author of the study and co-director of the University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC) Center for Translational Neuromedicine. “This concept does not represent the process for transmitting signals between neurons in the brain beyond the developmental stage.” “Neurons are like a racing car,” said Nedergaard. “While the driver gets all the credit, there are often 20 people behind the scenes that are optimizing his or her success.”

New York Post (January 12)
Fluish Hot Spots
The Germ Tracker Web app pinpoints key words on the social-networking site—like “headache” and “sick”—to flag high-risk areas in the city. The data are available on smartphones and computers. “It’s amazing. It gives you the opportunity to change your behavior to stay healthy,” said Adam Sadilek, one of the computer scientists who created the system at the University of Rochester.

The New York Times (January 31)
Super Bowl Ad Previews Draw Online Attention, With Criticism
“Pre-announcements can build up hype, but if the ad isn’t seen as dynamic, innovative or exciting, I
don’t think the sneak peeks work,” said George R. Cook, executive professor of marketing and psychology at the Simon Graduate School of Business at the University of Rochester. “There may not be so much ‘wow’ or positive bounce.” Another risk, Professor Cook said, is that “the message can wear out” before the game, lowering the return on the large investment in a Super Bowl campaign. CBS, which is broadcasting Super Bowl XLVII, is charging an estimated $3.7 million to $3.8 million for 30 seconds of commercial time, with some going for $4 million.

US News & World Report (January 15)
Five Tips to Succeed in an Online Course
Online classes can benefit students with busy schedules, but only if they can access the materials. “You’re going to need to understand what the technical requirements are,” advises Andrew Wolf, coordinator of online learning at the University of Rochester School of Nursing. “Make sure before the course starts that your computer will work with [all the online tools], and that you know how to navigate them so that you don’t have to spend time during the course trying to figure out the technology.”

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (January 19)
Eastman String Quartet to Play at Barack Obama’s Inauguration
The violins, viola and cello must pass inspection by the Capitol security team. If that goes as it generally does, Che Ho Lam, Markiyan Melnychenko, Kelsey Farr and Hyeok Kwon—calling themselves The Eastman String Quartet—will play Monday’s inauguration of President Barack Obama. It was U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer who asked the school to provide a quartet for the Presidential Inaugural Luncheon. “It’s definitely a great honor that Senator Schumer wanted a quartet from Eastman,” Lam says. “Four years ago I was watching the inauguration live on the Internet at the opposite end of the globe,” Lam says. “It’s actually unbelievable that the four of us will play, at least, for the president.” (Also Reported In: Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, New York Post, Ithaca Journal, White Plains Journal, Poughkeepsie Journal, 8WROC-TV, 10WHEC-TV, YNN, and others.)

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (January 28)
University of Rochester Men Top D3hoops.com Basketball Poll
The University of Rochester began the season as one of 31 teams “also receiving votes” in the D3hoops.com national poll. Monday, the Yellowjackets stood alone as the No. 1 Division III team in the land. “It’s a good feeling and nice to get recognition on the season we’re having, but we know it’s nothing more than a cool thing,” said senior All-American point guard John DiBartolomeo, the University Athletic Association Player of the Week for the fourth consecutive week. “Being No. 1 is great, but we know it won’t make anything easier for us. There’s a lot of season left, and we’re going to get every team’s best shot.” (Also Reported In: NCAA.com, Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, 10WHEC-TV, 13WHAM-TV, YNN, Waltham Daily News Tribune, and others.)

US News & World Report (January 16)
Fetal Deaths Up Among Unvaccinated Moms in H1N1 Pandemic: Study
Another expert, Dr. Loralei Thornburg, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Rochester in Rochester, N.Y., said the body’s response to infection changes during pregnancy. “It’s kind of an immunosuppressant,” she said. “So when you get a bad virus in pregnancy, your body doesn’t have the same ability to respond. Preventing infection in pregnancy is really the key.” The bottom line: “Every woman should get the flu vaccine,” Thornburg said. (Also Reported In: MSN, HealthDay, Health.com, and others.)

Huffington Post (January 3)
Best Time to Find Love Online Is Near the New Year: Report
“There is no reason to believe that online dating improves romantic outcomes,” Harry Reis, a professor of psychology at University of Rochester and study’s co-author, told Time. “It may yet, and someday some service might provide good data to show it can, but there is certainly no evidence to that right now.” “You can’t look at a piece of paper and know what it’s like to interact with someone,” Reis added. “Picking a partner is not the same as buying a pair of pants.”
**CNN Money (January 7)**

*Why the NYSE Merger May Hurt Average Investors*

Historically, the NYSE has been what’s called a self-regulating organization. The Securities and Exchange Commission looks over its shoulder, but basically the NYSE is in charge of what goes on on its exchange. It creates and enforces the rules, and makes sure they don’t favor some investors—namely the large banks—over others. “The challenge for self-regulatory organizations is balancing the public interest and the economic interest of its members,” says Joel Seligman, who is the President of the University of Rochester and an expert on the NYSE and regulation. He is also a board member of FINRA, a member organization that regulates brokerage firms. “The NYSE has done a good job of this, but some organizations have done a better job of the balancing act than others.”

**NBC news (January 15)**

*Why It’s So Hard To Get the Flu Vaccine Supply Right*

An unusually early flu season has Americans clamoring for vaccines and all of a sudden they are scarce. The hope is for a universal flu vaccine—one that would work against all strains of flu and protect people for years at a time, but progress is slow. “A vaccine that would provide protection against all of the known strains of influenza has been a goal since flu vaccine was discovered,” says Dr. John Treanor, a professor of infectious disease at the University of Rochester in New York. “It’s not going to be a straightforward, easy shot.” (Also Reported In: Discovery News, Health.com, and others.)

**The New York Times (January 31)**

*The Hidden Prosperity of the Poor*

In fact, other respected economists have been raising serious questions for some time about the consumption thesis and the so-called hidden prosperity of the poor. In February 2011, the National Bureau of Economic Research published a paper, “Has Consumption Inequality Mirrored Income Inequality?” by Mark A. Aguiar, of Princeton, and Mark Bils of the University of Rochester. The authors concluded that “consumption inequality has closely tracked income inequality over the period 1980—2007.” In other words, the growing gap between what rich and poor spend parallels the growing gap in the money they take in.

**Prevention (January 8)**

*The Happiest Dollar You’ll Ever Spend*

“If you take our research seriously, then it doesn’t matter what the activity is,” says study author Harry Reis, PhD, a professor of psychology at the University of Rochester. “As long as you’re doing it with someone else.” Indeed, Reis and his colleagues initially set out to prove that material possessions “tend to be more solitary in nature.” And after four separate studies on more than 2,200 people, they not only reached that conclusion, but also found that where experiences are concerned, you’ll get more bang for your buck if you let friends in on the fun. There are myriad ways to squeeze every last ounce of enjoyment out of your dollar. “It could be going to a movie or taking a hike together,” Reis says. “It could be going shopping together. Anything that involves pleasurable interaction with another person.”

**HealthDay (January 11)**

*Flu Widespread in 47 States, Vaccine ‘Moderately’ Effective: CDC*

Flu continues its march across the United States, with 47 states now reporting widespread influenza activity, up from 41 last week, federal health officials reported Friday. Dr. John Treanor, a professor of infectious disease at the University of Rochester in New York, said Fluzone is by far the most widely used flu vaccine in the United States. “But at this point obviously most people who are going to be vaccinated already have been, so the effects of a vaccine shortage would probably be minimal—although frustrating for those people who do still want vaccine,” he said.

**Spectrum Online (January 4)**

*Teaching Computers to Hear Emotions*

A big step in that direction was announced at the IEEE Workshop on Spoken Language Technology, held in Miami earlier this month. A paper there with the imposing title “Speech-Based Emotion Classification Using Multiclass SVM With Hybrid Kernel and Thresholding Fusion,” by six coauthors, described software that can detect six different emotional states with 81 percent accuracy. Some of the research was done during a summer internship at Microsoft Research, by lead author Na Yang, a fourth-year grad student at the University of Rochester. Her Ph.D. supervisor, Wendi Heinzelman, a professor of electrical and
computer engineering, was one of the paper’s coauthors and is my guest today. She joins us by phone.

*Bloomberg* (January 18)
**Flu Crisis Prompts Broadest Vaccine Redesign Since 1981**
With the worst flu outbreak since 2009 gripping the U.S., vaccine makers are determined to do better next season. They’re developing powerful vaccines that hold the promise of cutting incidences of flu by the thousands. “Because flu is so unpredictable, with different strains becoming dominant year to year, producing a four-in-one vaccine can be a big step forward toward keeping breakouts under control”, said John Treanor, chief of infectious diseases at the *University of Rochester Medical Center* in New York.

*8WROC-TV* (January 24)
**New Synthetic Flu Shot, Flublok, Tested In Rochester**
John Treanor, *University of Rochester Medical Center*, said, “This vaccine is very different because of it being made with the flu virus, this vaccine is made with a synthetic protein that’s made using the genes of the influenza at all, that’s a huge improvement on the speed in which we can get the vaccine out in the flu season.” Since this vaccine isn’t grown in eggs, it doesn’t affect those with egg allergies, meaning you or someone you know who can’t have eggs could get this vaccine. (Also Reported In: *YNN, 10WHEC-TV, and others.*)

*WXXI* (January 28)
**UR Professors Design App to Help You Slow Down**
We traditionally think of mobile apps as having the ability to speed up communications, but two professors at the *University of Rochester* have designed an app they hope will cause you slow down and notice the world around you.

*NBC News* (January 28)
**NoroVirus: Why Washing Your Hands Isn’t Enough**
Dr. John Treanor of the *University of Rochester Medical Center* in New York is working on a vaccine against norovirus. But the same properties that make norovirus so hard to kill also make it hard to make a vaccine. For one thing, it’s simple. Like all viruses, norovirus hijacks live cells, turning them into virus factories that kick out particles called virions. “There is only one protein they use to make virions,” Treanor says. “If you have that one protein, it will self-assemble.” (Also Reported In: *Time.com, 13WHAM-TV, 8WROC-TV, WXXI, YNN, and others.*)

*YNN* (January 28)
**Congresswoman Slaughter Receives Champion of Science Award**
University of Rochester President Joel Seligman presented Congresswoman Louise Slaughter with an award Monday morning. Slaughter received the Champion of Science Award for her commitment to funding basic scientific research. “With Representative Louise Slaughter, you have as appropriate a recipient as one could imagine,” Seligman said. “She is someone who has made her career focused impart upon science, health care and economic development.” (Also Reported in: *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, 8WROC-TV, 10WHEC-TV, others.*)

*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* (January 3)
**UR Scientist Investigates the Brain**
Benjamin Y. Hayden is tackling the big questions. What is the nature of free will and why do we make the decisions we do? What causes some people to become drug addicts and why do others suffer from obsessive-compulsive disorder and chronic depression? Hayden, an assistant professor of brain and cognitive sciences at the *University of Rochester*, assumes he will spend the rest of his life studying
these issues. “If we figure this out I’d be pretty happy. And I don’t think we will,” said Hayden, who received a $50,000 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in New York City last year.

**Rochester Business Journal (January 4)**

Fast Start: The Simon Games
If you’re seriously considering going back to school to earn your MBA, an online competition might pay your way. The winner of the Simon Games receives a full ride in the Executive MBA program at the Simon School of Business at the University of Rochester. The competition is a business simulation in which players become the CEOs of their own firms. The games call on the skills needed to run a successful business.

**YNN (January 31)**

Display Honoring Veterans Unveiled at URMC
In honor of U.S. Armed Forces veterans, a wall inspired by philanthropist Philip Saunders is recognizing the Armed Forces for their contribution and sacrifice. On Thursday, the dedication ceremony took place at the University of Rochester Medical Center in the Saunders Research Building. The wall will serve as a lasting reminder of gratitude to our armed forces. (Also reported in: WHAM AM 1180, 10WHEC-TV, and others.)

**The New York Times (January 11)**

Train a Parent, Spare a Child
THE TALKING CURE- Dr. [Edward] Deci, now a professor of psychology at the University of Rochester, said the biggest problem with tangible rewards is that they actually work, at least in the short run. “If you want somebody to do something, and if you have enough money, you can get them to do it,” he said. “Practically anyone, practically anything.” But with children, he pointed out, since you are trying to get them to do the behavior “more or less ongoingly for the rest of their lives,” the technique will backfire unless you’re prepared to offer the same reward every time. “You don’t want them coming to you when they’re grown,” he said.

**Rochester Business Journal (January 31)**

$4.65M grant to enhance resident training, boost PCMH plans
The University of Rochester Medical Center has won a $4.65 million grant to fund enhanced training of medical residents in patient-centered medical home physician offices. The grant would allow URMC primary care residents to spend more time with Medicaid patients at its Strong Internal Medicine, Highland Family Medicine, Golisano Children’s Hospital Pediatric Practice and Culver Medical Group practice groups, URMC officials said.

**Rochester City Newspaper (January 23)**

Presidential Words
The University of Rochester has assembled an exhibit on the history of presidential speechwriting. The exhibit is comprised of more than 50 selections of presidential speeches from public and private collections, including a signed copy of President John F. Kennedy’s 1961 inaugural address, famous for the phrase, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”

Curt Smith, former speechwriter for President George H. W. Bush, was a co-curator for the project. Smith wrote Bush’s “Just War” speech and his speech for the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. (Related story in: 13WHAM-TV)

**Business Insider (January 7)**

Left Leaning Investors Invest Less In The ‘Sin’ Stocks
Two economics professors analyzed the political contributions and stock holdings of U.S. mutual fund and hedge fund managers and found that the ones that contribute blue tend to underweight companies that are considered socially irresponsible. According to this study by Harrison Hong, professor of economics at Princeton, and Leonard Kostovetsky, assistant professor of finance at University of Rochester, Simon School of Business, this result holds true even for funds that are not explicitly SRI (socially responsible investing).

**YNN (January 25)**

The University of Rochester Officially Welcomes New Dean of School of Nursing
At the University of Rochester on Friday, Kathy Rideout was officially installed as the Dean of the School of Nursing. In her address, Rideout spoke about changes ahead for the School of Nursing, innovative programs on the horizon, models of care and research areas of focus.
WXXI (January 3)
Rochester Medical Center To Collaborate On Research For MS Cure
A consortium of three upstate medical schools is to receive $12.1 million in funding to try to create a treatment for people living with multiple sclerosis. The Biomedical Sciences University of Rochester Medical Center, the Upstate Medical University in Syracuse and the University of Buffalo School of Medicine will combine to research the currently incurable disease.

Red Orbit (December 31)
Your Universe Today Podcast: How Planets Form, With Guest Dr. Eric Mamajek (Part 1)
Starting in early 2013, redOrbit will be launching a new podcast series called Your Universe Today, where we interview leading scientists about cutting-edge research in everything from space travel to the origins of our Universe. But we’re in the holiday spirit and couldn’t wait until January to unveil our new podcast project, so we’ve decided to give you a sneak peak of what’s to come. In the second installment of our new series, redOrbit’s resident astronomer Dr. John Millis spoke with Dr. Eric Mamajek, professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Rochester, about the search for planets outside of our solar system and the possibility of finding life beyond Earth.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (January 2)
George Eastman House Takes Steps to Preserve Daguerreotypes
Ralph Wiegandt is determined to preserve the earliest of photographs and has teamed up with the University of Rochester to use the latest technology to understand what might be ailing these treasures.

YNN (January 24)
Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection Students on Road to Success
Students in the Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection spent some time Wednesday evening in a goal setting session. They made posters showing images that represent their hopes and dreams. The Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection helps combat low high school graduation rates. Three years ago, the University of Rochester teamed up with Rochester city schools and local businesses to create a career support program.

Rochester Business Journal (January 9)
UR Professor Awarded $463,000 to Study Chicago Schools
A professor at the University of Rochester’s Warner School of Education has received a $463,000 grant to examine relationships among school district leaders. Kara Finnigan was awarded the grant from the Spencer Foundation to target the social networks in organizational learning in Chicago public high schools. “We hope to answer critical questions about organizational learning and the way that resources, such as innovation, knowledge, and research-based practices, are shared within a district,” Finnigan said of the three-year project.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (January 8)
Author talk: Joseph Vogel presents his ‘Man in the Music: The Creative Life and Work of Michael Jackson’
Joseph Vogel, a doctoral student at University of Rochester, a Huffington Post blogger and author of Man in the Music: The Creative Life and Work of Michael Jackson, will speak and hold a book signing at 2 p.m. Sunday in Kate Gleason Auditorium of the Central Library, 115 South Ave., downtown. Spike Lee is one of Vogel’s fans, giving some credibility to the Michael Jackson biography.

Forbes (January 9)
A Barrage of Legal Threats Shuts Down Whistleblower Site, Science Fraud
Those of us concerned about the decaying credibility of Big Science were dismayed to learn that the whistleblower site Science Fraud has been shut down due to a barrage of legal threats against its operator. With billions of dollars in federal science funding hinging on the integrity of academic researchers, and billions more in health care dollars riding on the truthfulness of pharmaceutical research claims, the industry needs more websites like this, not fewer. Regular readers of Retraction Watch, a watchdog site run by two medical reporters, got the news along with a story about the blog’s anonymous editor, who has since come forward and identified himself as Professor Paul Brookes, a researcher at the University of Roch-
ester. Operated as a crowd-sourced reference site much like Wikipedia, Science Fraud, in its six months of operation, documented egregiously suspicious research results published in over 300 peer reviewed publications. Many were subsequently retracted, including a paper by an author whose lawyer sent Science Fraud a cease and desist letter. (Related stories reported by Times Higher Education, Nature.com)

Discover Magazine (January 11)
100 Top Stories of 2012: 86. Why Kids Make Rash Decisions
In a classic test of willpower, psychologists found that preschoolers who could resist eating one marshmallow now to get two marshmallows later fared better as adolescents, with higher SAT scores and better concentration. For decades the “marshmallow test” has been cited as evidence that self-control leads to success. But this past year, University of Rochester psychologist Celeste Kidd and colleagues proved that things are not so simple.

YNN (January 17)
Young Women in Rochester Charter School Inspired By Success Stories
Dr. Wakenda Tyler is an orthopedic surgical oncologist at the University of Rochester Medical Center. She put her schedule on hold to speak to groups of seventh graders Friday at the Young Women’s College Prep Charter School on Lake Ave. in Rochester. “At their age, I didn’t know that becoming an orthopedic surgeon was an option for me or even becoming a doctor was an option for me. It took later on in life having that exposure to realize that,” said Dr. Tyler. “These girls aren’t going to get that exposure probably on a daily basis in their homes. They need to know there are people just like them that go on to become orthopedic surgeons, doctors and lawyers, and astronauts and business owners.”