

Best of Last Week—Hand disorder traced to Neanderthal genes, a giant leap in computer sorting, a way to live longer

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Sunil Ahuja, Muthu Manoharan et al. describe immune resilience to explain why some people, regardless of age, have intact immune systems and reduced inflammation while others do not. The blue-clad spheres are T-cells. The lower sphere is COVID-19 featuring its characteristic red spike proteins. Credit: The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

It was a good week for human history and archaeological research, as a team of geneticists from Sweden, the U.S. and Germany found evidence that the ["Viking disease" hand disorder may have come from Neanderthal genes](#). The team found 61 variants associated with Dupuytren's disease, as it is officially known. Also, a team of archaeologists working in Peru examined [a mummy surrounded by coca leaves](#) on a hilltop in Peru's capital. Another team of German archaeologists working at a dig site in Bavaria found [a Bronze Age sword so well-preserved](#) it was very nearly still shiny.

In technology news, a team of computer scientists with Google DeepMind achieved [a giant leap forward in sorting speed](#)—one of the core processes done by computers. And a team at Google Research developed [StyleDrop](#), an AI-based application that renders images based on user descriptions of objects. Also, a team at the University of Science and Technology of China created [a model to create synthetic speech that matches a speaker's lip movements](#). And a team with members from several institutions in Japan developed [a novel, completely solid, rechargeable air battery](#).

In other news, a combined team of neurobiologists from the University of Melbourne and the University of Cambridge found evidence that [neurotypical people who take cognitive enhancing drugs such as Ritalin experience a decrease in productivity](#). Also, a climate graph created by mathematician Eliot Jacobson went viral, as one of its parts, called ["the line."](#) was crossed in a big way—it showed that temperatures in the North Atlantic Ocean last week were 1.09°C higher than the mean, an unprecedented level of warming. And finally, an international team of health scientists found that [people who preserve their "immune resilience" tend to live longer and resist infections](#) compared to everyone else.

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