

A young girl with blonde hair is shown in profile, blowing a dandelion seed. The background is dark with green foliage. The text 'COLOR IS IN!' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

COLOR IS IN!

WHEN YOU HAVE IRLIN SYNDROME

WHAT IS IRLLEN SYNDROME

TECHNICALLY

The brain is unable to process certain wavelengths of light

IN NORMAL LANGUAGE

It's like the brain is allergic to certain kinds of light



SO WHAT HAPPENS ?

BRIGHT LIGHTS (LIKE SUNLIGHT AND FLUORESCENT LIGHTS) CAN...

- Hurt your eyes
- Give you a headache
- Give you a stomach ache
- Make the words move when you're trying to read
- Make you feel jittery or anxious
- Make the words on the page hard to look at
- Make you blink or squint or rub your eyes
- Make it hard to concentrate
- And much more...



A FEW QUICK FACTS

- 1 ANYONE CAN HAVE IRLÉN SYNDROME, NOT JUST PEOPLE WHO HAVE TROUBLE READING
- 2 IT RUNS IN FAMILIES (YOUR MOM OR DAD GAVE IT TO YOU!)
- 3 YOU CAN ALSO GET IT AFTER HAVING A CONCUSSION OR HEAD INJURY
- 4 DIFFERENT PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT SYMPTOMS (I MIGHT GET HEADACHES WHEN I READ, AND YOU MIGHT SEE WORDS MOVE ON THE PAGE)
- 5 IT'S NOT A PROBLEM WITH YOUR EYES - IT'S A BRAIN THING!

WHAT DO PEOPLE SEE

A FEW EXAMPLES...

BY ANDREW L. SOSTEK
AND RICHARD L. WYATT

As any parent, grandparent, or baby-sitter knows, some babies are adaptable, placid, and regular in their habits, while others are difficult and unpredictable. Differences in temperament show up from the first day of life: some infants sleep very little, others sleep a lot, some infants are highly sensitive and cranky, others are quiet and unresponsive.

Since newborns have not been exposed to the world for long, environmental forces beyond the womb can hardly account for such differences in temperament. Rather, the differences must be largely a result of genetic influences. Yet there have been few, if any, attempts to relate different biological endowments of birth to newborns' behavior.

We have looked in research at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) that behavioral differences in newborns are associated with an enzyme that circulates in both the blood and the brain, monoamine oxidase (MAO). By comparing the amounts of MAO in the blood of newborns with their performance on behavioral tests, we concluded that those with lower levels of MAO tended to be more sensitive and weaker than those with high MAO. The lower MAO newborns were also more active and performed better on items relating to motor functioning.

In the brain, monoamine oxidase (MAO) influences behavior by breaking down the chemical neurotransmitters that carry messages between neurons. By preventing neurotransmitters from building up, MAO keeps the brain cells that would otherwise be activated. Low levels of MAO thus cause more activity—higher arousal—in the brain.

We know that some of our children have MAO deficiency, a hereditary condition that causes low levels of MAO and affects behavior. (Klein, Murphy, and the authors had found that many children with depression and bipolar

sives had lower-than-normal amounts of MAO in their blood. In a study of normal adults, Monte Buchsbaum and his associates uncovered an association between low MAO and a variety of distinctive personality traits, including gregariousness, a tendency to drink and experiment with drugs, an active, varied sex life, and a preference for activities such as motorcycle riding.

Was MAO present in the blood of infants in the same relative amounts?



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However, by the end of the day he had decided that this school was better than the last one even though he didn't like it. Nobody had offered to pull his head off, rip his coat, or throw his shoes over the roof. On the other hand, nobody had spoken to him either. By Thursday after noon, nothing had changed. Bill was not entirely surprised no one spoke to him because no one knew he was there every day he was with another group. He only saw his class together after registration after that they were split up for all their lessons. Maths with his English with his games with 2 a lesson which was mysteriously called GS with his. At the end of that period he was nowiser about GS than he had been at the beginning. It seemed that the class was on page 135 of book 2 while the teacher was on page 135 of book 3 as both books had identical covers the lesson was over before any one noticed. Bill had had no book anyway being advised to share with a boy in a pink shirt who kept his elbow firmly between Bill and the book. When the bell rang Bill grabbed the boy in the pink shirt before he could leave. However, by the end of the day he had decided that this school was better than the last one even though he didn't like it. Nobody had offered to pull his head off, rip his coat, or throw his shoes over the roof. On the other hand, nobody had spoken to him either. By Thursday after noon, nothing had changed. Bill was not entirely surprised no one spoke to him because no one knew he was there every day he was with another group. He only saw his class together after registration after that they were split up for all their lessons. Maths with his English with his games with 2 a lesson which was mysteriously called GS with his. At the end of that period he was nowiser about GS than he had been at the beginning. It seemed that the class was on page 135 of book 2 while the teacher was on page 135 of book 3 as both books had identical covers the lesson was over before any one noticed. Bill had

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BLURRY

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RIVERS

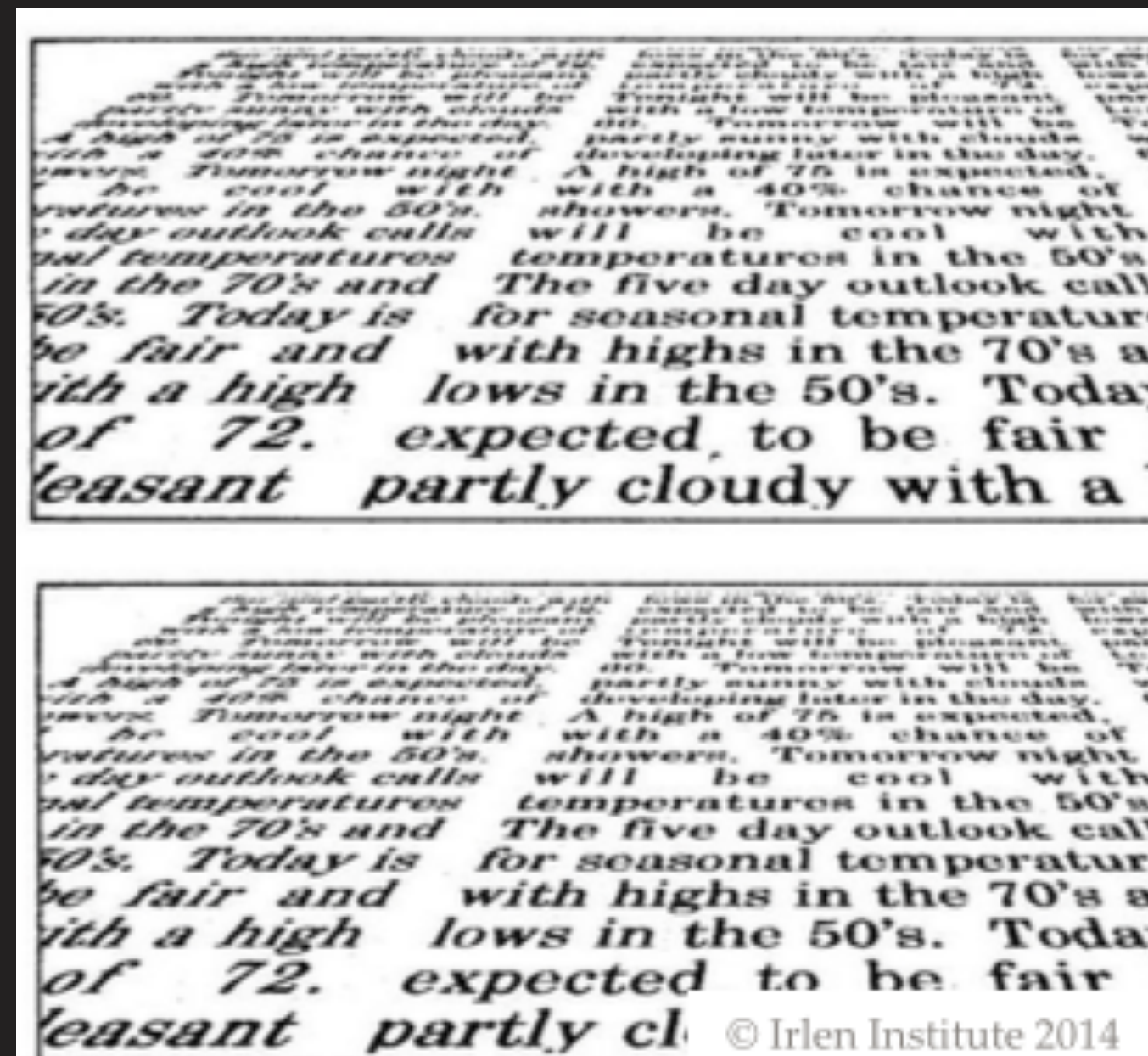


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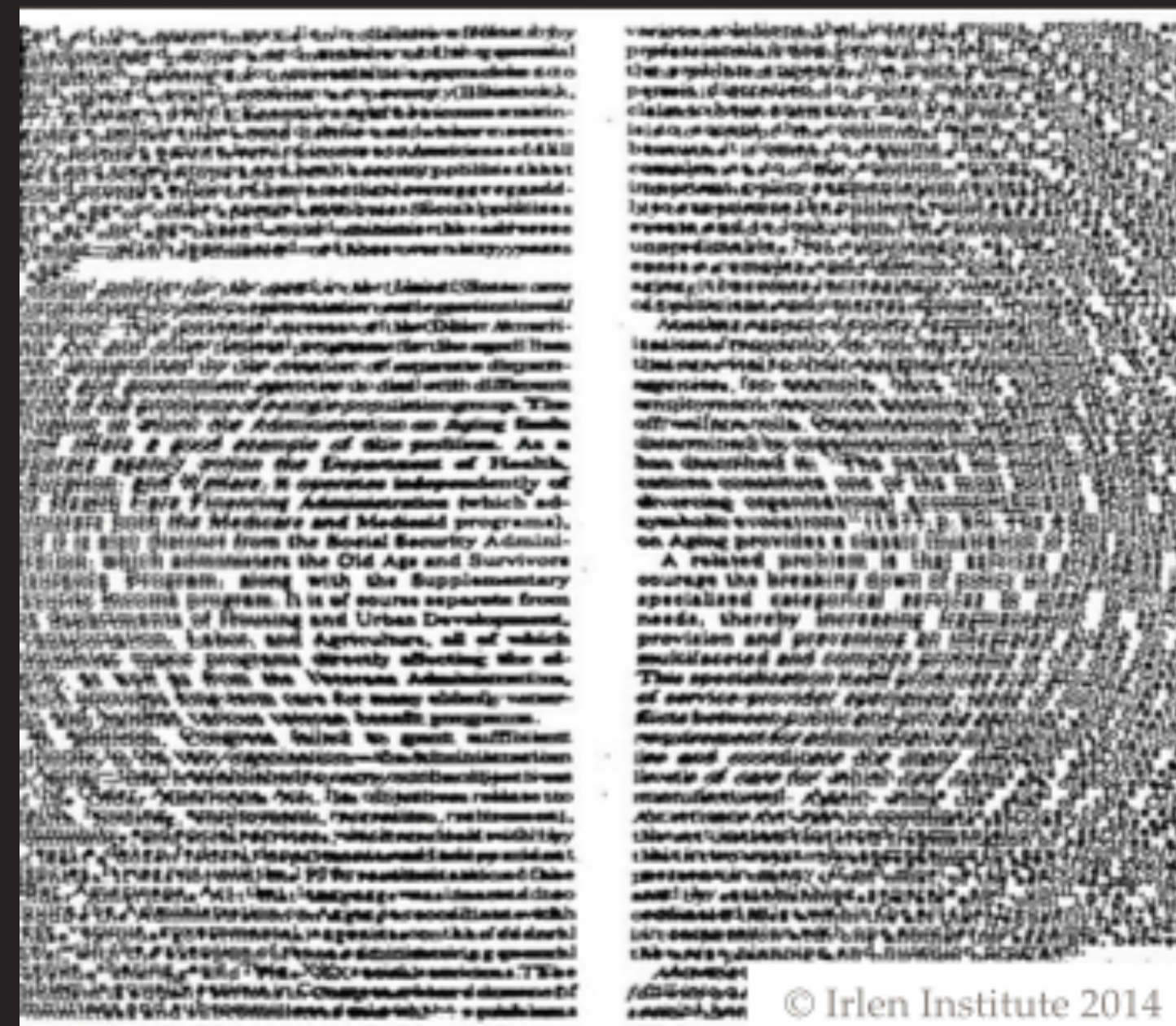
SEESAW

WHAT DO PEOPLE SEE

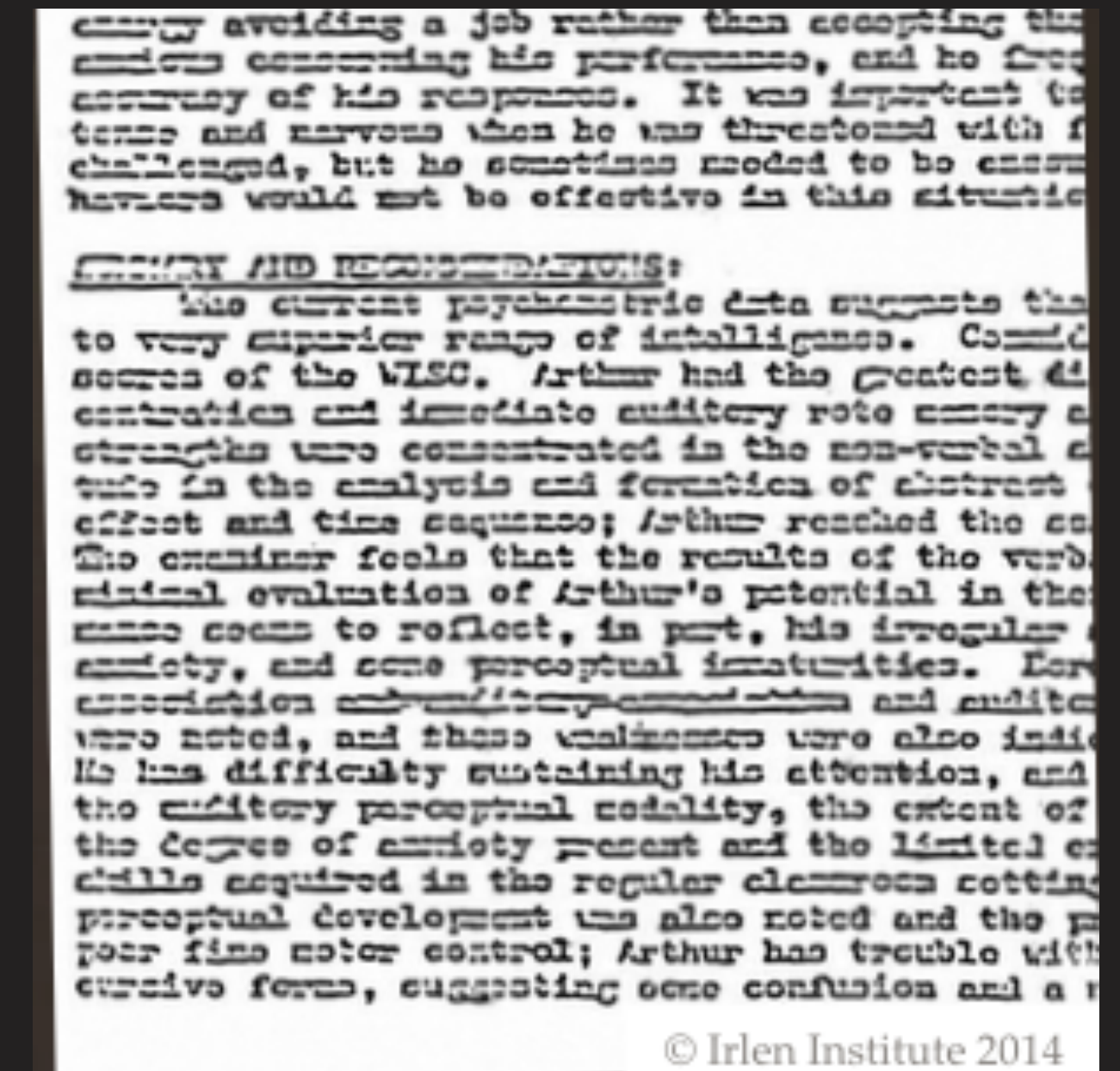
A FEW MORE EXAMPLES...



STAR WARS



SWIRL

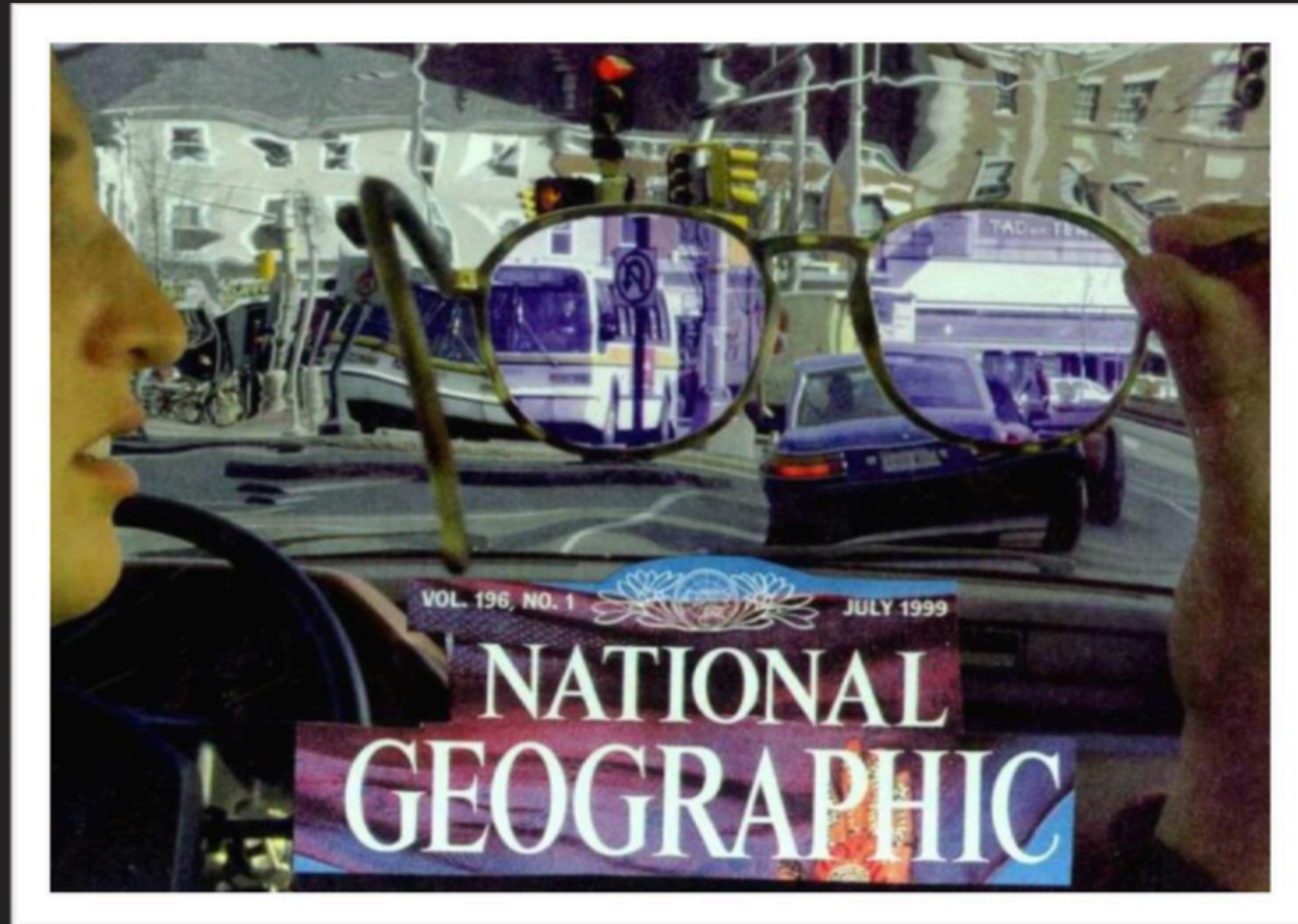


WASHOUT

AND THERE ARE LOTS MORE !

WHAT ELSE HAPPENS

SOME PEOPLE SEE DISTORTIONS
IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT



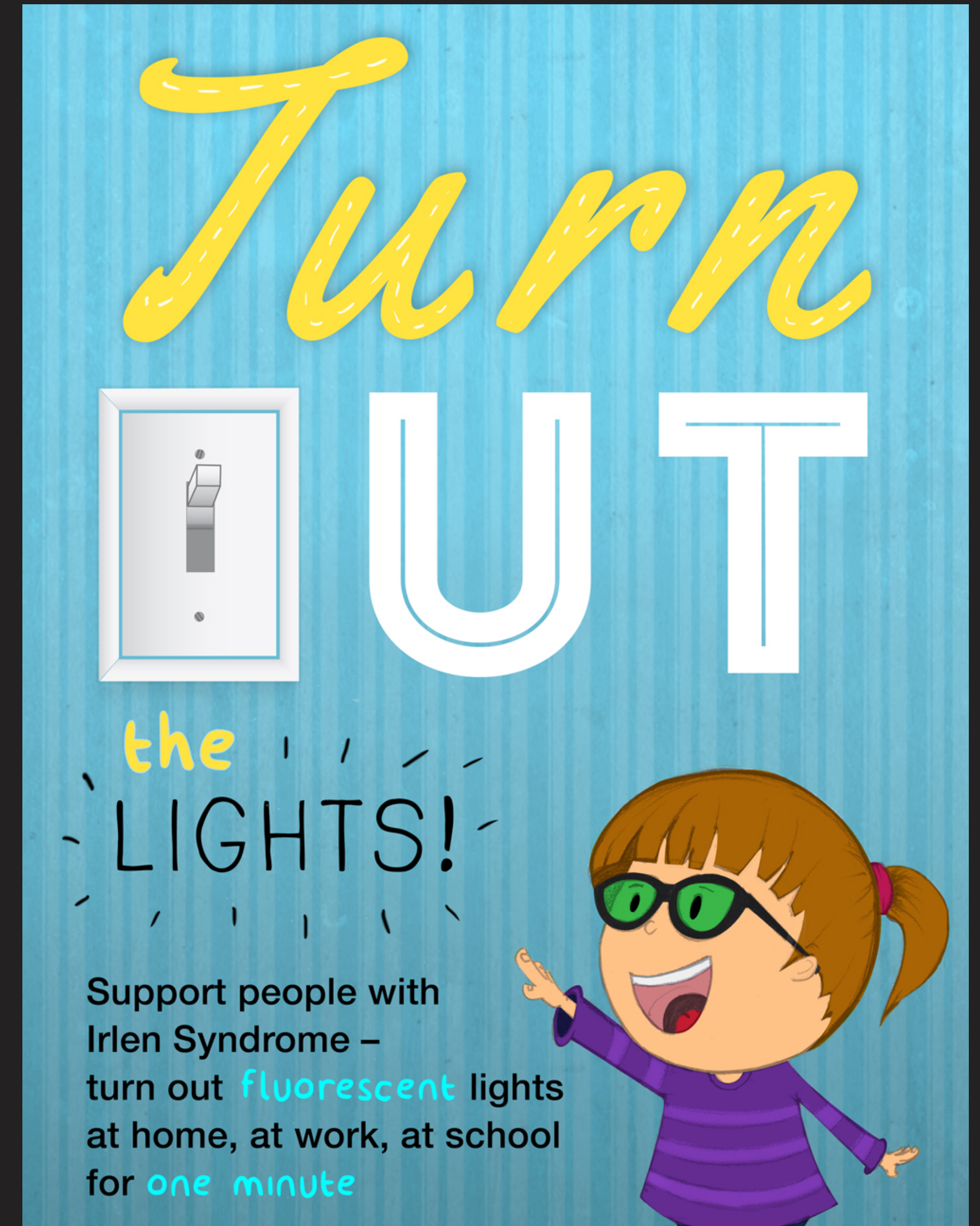
WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT ?

WEAR IRLÉN SPECTRAL FILTERS OR COLORED OVERLAYS TO PROTECT
YOUR BRAIN FROM THE COLOR IT DOESN'T LIKE



WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO ?

- 1 USE COLORED PAPER TO DO YOUR WORK
- 2 WEAR A HAT TO PROTECT FROM LIGHT ABOVE
- 3 DIM OR TURN OUT FLUORESCENT AND OTHER BRIGHT LIGHTS (USE OLD-FASHIONED INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULBS INSTEAD)



HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE IT ?

READING DIFFICULTIES

- Skip words or lines
- Lose place
- Repeat lines
- Misread words
- Reading slow or choppy
- Reading gets harder the longer you read
- Trouble understanding what you read

DISCOMFORT

- Eyes: hurt, ache, burn
- Eyes: dry, sandy, scratchy, itchy, heavy
- Sleepy
- Headache, dizzy, nauseous
- More difficult to read with bright or fluorescent lights

TRY DIFFERENT COLORS

**Is this text easier to see or read
when the background is this color?**

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WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFO?

www.irlensyndromefoundation.org or
www.irlen.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO TAKE A SELF-TEST