

The Fake-Tongue Illusion

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The New Yorker:

The tongue in the title of Oxford University's Crossmodal Research Laboratory's new paper, "The Butcher's Tongue Illusion," does not come from a butcher shop. "I actually just ordered the most normal-looking rubber tongue from a magic store," Charles Michel, the report's lead author and a professionally trained chef, said. "Magicians put them in their mouths and tie them in knots and things like that."

Michel and his co-authors put their magic tongue to use in a simple but provocative experiment, carried out late last year and described in the current issue of the scientific journal *Perception*. Although the involvement of a stretchy pink latex tongue makes it easy to mistake the experiment for a cheap gag, it's actually an important addition to a distinguished tradition of psychological research that studies illusions for what they can reveal about how the brain constructs reality.

Read the whole story: [*The New Yorker*](#)