

A forum to encourage independent thinking

The THINK Club

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No Longer the Third World?

When will they join the ranks of developed nations?



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Letters



Thinking Wildly

I read with interest your article, "The art of living happily" (The Think Club; Summer 2013). I personally like the following *Five Simple Rules to be Happy*:

- ▶ Free your heart from hatred.
- ▶ Free your mind from worries.
- ▶ Live simply.
- ▶ Give more.
- ▶ Expect less.

Pradeep Srivastava
Detroit, MI

Ref. Good Life (Publisher's Desk in Summer 2013 issue). I like the message on Education ... everything else follows.

Pratap Srivastava
Redding, CT

REMEMBERING DOTS AND DASHES in the Summer 2013 issue of The Think Club was well written. It had a good blend of history, sentiment and humor. I will certainly miss the telegraphic service. Thanks for the memories!

Kishen Prakash
Pune, India

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Publisher: **Bala Prasad**

Managing Editor: **Anil Shrivastava "Musafir"**

Consulting Editor: **David Beagan**

Address: **The THINK Club**
PO Box 451
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451

Phone: **248-651-3106** Fax: **248-651-3106**

email: letters@thethinkclub.com

Visit us: www.thethinkclub.com

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts.

Will Rogers

Be thankful we're not getting all the government we're paying for.

Will Rogers

Everything is changing. People are taking their comedians seriously and the politicians as a joke.

Will Rogers

The only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

Will Rogers

Politics has become so expensive that it takes a lot of money even to be defeated.

Will Rogers

Ancient Rome declined because it had a Senate, now what's going to happen to us with both a House and a Senate?

Will Rogers

It isn't the mountains ahead to climb that wear you out; it's the pebble in your shoe.

Muhammad Ali

A wise man can learn more from a foolish question than a fool can learn from a wise answer.

Bruce Lee

The past is a ghost, the future a dream, and all we ever have is now.

Bill Cosby

I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed.

Michael Jordan

A diplomat is a man who always remembers a woman's birthday but never remembers her age.

Robert Frost

Don't marry a man to reform him - that's what reform schools are for.

Mae West

Editorial



A Solution to Stem Terrorism

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

I was in Minneapolis when the terror attack took place in a Kenyan shopping mall in Africa. The unfortunate part was that the Somalia-based Islamic group responsible for the attack had recruited fighters in Minnesota. According to the report, at least 20 young ethnic Somali men had left Minnesota since 2007 to join *al Shabaab* (responsible for the attack) in Somalia.

Ethnic Somalis are a common sight in Minneapolis. Minnesota's ethnic Somali population has mushroomed in the last two decades from a small group to more than 50,000, due in part to generous social services for refugees, decent schools and a low cost of living. This country gave them shelter and provides good life that they did not have in the old country.

Biting the hand that feeds one is the height of thanklessness. It is not only the Somalis in Minnesota; the trend is everywhere. Just in April 2013, two pressure cooker bombs exploded during the Boston Marathon killing three people and injuring an estimated 264 others. The culprits were two brothers, Tamerlan Tsarnaev and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev whose family was given refuge by the United States to avoid prosecution in Chechnya. The surviving brother later confessed that their actions were motivated by extremist Islamist beliefs.



These extremists are not happy in Egypt, Somalia, Chechnya, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco or Pakistan. So, they come to Australia, the U.S., Canada, the UK and France. They do not blame the leadership or the country they were unhappy in. They blame the country they are happy in and then they want to change those countries to be like the country they came from where they were unhappy.

The best solution in my mind is that the Muslims living in the western world should denounce these extremists and report them to the authorities. I have not seen or heard of that happening effectively. Just chanting, "Islam is benevolent" after every such incident is not going to establish their credibility. They must join the mainstream in denouncing the extremist Islamic beliefs and reporting the perpetrators to the authorities. They have to come out of the shadow of doubt and

show to the world that they are true nationalists and are different from the extremists. The onus is on them.

Talking of Islamic belief, the Quran specifically denounces the ungrateful, "Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity: For He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked." (Al-Baqara, Chapter #2, Verse #276).

Commentary



ABCs of the Debt Ceiling

If you are like most of us, you may be wondering about all the fuss going on around the U.S. debt ceiling. Here are some fundamental facts to give you a clearer concept.

The U.S. spends a lot more money than it takes in.

This ongoing deficit adds up to the ongoing debt.

Congress sets a cap on how much debt there can be.

In May 2013 the debt reached the ceiling.

Since then the government has shuffled accounts to avoid any further debts.

But they are out of tricks and still need to pay the bills.

They can't borrow more because that would push debt above the ceiling.

So either the debt ceiling must be raised or the taxes have to go up to an unrealistic level (or spending must be slashed to an unrealistic levels).

If none of these is implemented, the country would default.

That would mean recession, lower value of the dollar, bond market crisis, decline in the stock market, greater unemployment.

In the fiscal year 2013 the U.S. paid 416 billion dollars to its lenders in interest alone.

The U.S. is in a conundrum. If we ran our households like our country, we would be considered insolvent. Here is what the United States owes to the world. At the end of July 2013, foreign holders of U.S. Treasury securities totaled close to \$5.6 trillion.

Countries	What the U.S. Owes
China	1.2 Trillion
Japan	1.14 Trillion
Caribbean banking (Bahamas, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Netherlands Antilles and Panama)	288 Billion
Oil exporters (Ecuador, Venezuela, Indonesia, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Gabon, Libya, and Nigeria)	258 Billion
Brazil	256 Billion
Taiwan	286 Billion
Switzerland	178 Billion
Belgium	168 Billion
UK	157 Billion
Luxembourg	147 Billion
Russia	132 Billion
Hong Kong	120 Billion
Ireland	118 Billion
Other lenders include Singapore, Norway, Canada, Mexico, India, Germany, Turkey, S. Korea, France, Thailand, Philippines, Australia, Columbia, Sweden, Poland, Chile, The Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Israel, Malaysia, Peru, South Africa, and Denmark.	

Just imagine what If we really ran a family budget like the politicians run the government?

Humor



Thanks for Deluging Me with Your Facebook Postings

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

I wanted to thank all my friends and family who have overwhelmed me with their postings on Facebook in recent years. Because of your kindness I stopped going to the movies for the fear of sitting on a needle infected with AIDS. I don't leave my car in the parking lot or any other place for the fear that someone will drug me with a perfume sample and try to rob me. I make sure to cover my car's VIN number to stop the car thieves from peering through the windshield of my car and then going to the local car dealership to request a duplicate key.

I smell like a wet dog since I stopped using deodorant because it causes cancer. I don't shampoo either because shampoos have a substance by the name of Sodium Laureth Sulfate, or simply SLS, which turns human muscles into Jell-O. My wife, a vegetarian, stopped using lipstick because it contains fish scales.

I also stopped answering the phone for fear that they may ask me to dial a stupid number and then I will get a phone bill with calls to Uganda, Singapore and Tokyo. When I go to parties, I don't look at any girl for the fear that she will take me to a hotel, drug me then remove my kidneys.

I've stopped eating bananas as several shipments from Costa Rica have been infected with necrotizing fasciitis, otherwise known as flesh eating bacteria. I stopped eating chicken ever since Kentucky Fried Chicken changed their name to KFC because their genetically altered chickens are part chicken and part rodent.

I also stopped drinking Coca Cola after I found out that it's good for removing toilet stains. I stopped eating at Taco Bell and Pizza Hut since they use cockroach eggs in chicken soft tacos and pizza toppings. Again, thanks to your kindness, my family now lives on grass weeds and goat milk (we have our own goat).

My utilities have been disconnected because I stopped checking my mail since there have been 23 confirmed cases of people attacked by the Klingerman Virus, a virus that arrives in the mailbox. I don't go to the birthday parties anymore for the fear of helium-filled balloons. If I breathe any helium into my lungs, death is instantaneous! I don't let my wife use public restrooms anymore, no matter how urgent the situation, because they're all equipped with two-way mirrors

to snoop on her from the other side.

I also donated all my savings to the Amy Bruce account, a sick girl who was about to die in the hospital years old since 1993...). I went bankrupt from bounced checks that I wrote expecting the \$15,000 that Bill Gates was supposed to send me for forwarding his e-mail to a thousand friends.

My marriage is in trouble since I keep calling Divya Singh (a Victoria's Secret employee) who needs help for her hubby suffering from lung cancer, especially after my wife found out that she was never married.



Perspective



To Err Is Human

By Robert Bickmeyer

A friend and his wife disagreed on a rule in the card game Bridge. When he proved her wrong by showing her the rule in a book on Bridge she rebutted “That’s an old book.” Some people cannot be wrong. This is for those people.

It was decades ago that I read Winston Churchill was a humble man, contributing to his greatness. Said Churchill, “In the course of life I have often had to eat my words and I confess that I have always found it to be a wholesome diet.”

I was once accused of believing I am always right. I agreed as it is perfectly normal to think you are right at that moment on any matter. I asked my accuser, “On which subject are you wrong?” He was speechless so I added, “Then you are always right?”

It is mandatory that we all keep an open mind, considering the possibility we may be wrong. I have changed my opinion on at least five issues - abortion, gun control, racism, divorce and Judaism, but wonder if my current position on any of them may be wrong. I have always had an open mind, thus enabling me to change it - or admit I was in error.

One of my earliest memories of making a poor choice was in 1951 when I was drafted into the U.S. Army. Randomly selected to train in a heavy weapons infantry company I was given the choice of being assigned to the mortar or 75 mm. recoilless rifle or machine gun platoon. After reading about the “Commiss” attacking in waves I chose the machine gun platoon to enable me to “mow them down.” Making myself a specific target of the enemy proved me to be very young and not very bright. After thorough training in the use and maintenance of 30 caliber air cooled and water cooled machine guns I was deployed to Korea, but sent to radio school in Japan. I never learned the army’s reasoning for my conversion, but today I am thankful for my good

fortune, being a radio operator instead of the ill chosen machine gunner.

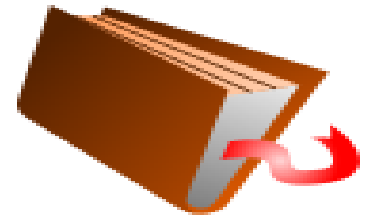
It was back in the 1950s and ‘60s before we had snow blowers. I had a long driveway that was quite wide as it reached our two car garage behind our house. Clearing it of snow after a snow storm was an exhausting job. Aware that shoveling snow was taxing on the heart, I wisely rested every 15 or 20 minutes. I then “wisely” helped myself to relax by smoking a cigarette.

There are matters of fact where I erred that will always be a mistake - my first marriage, agreeing to have cataract surgery and then to have an invasive procedure on my prostate. I had a disagreement with a teammate on a rule in softball. When I read the rule book I learned he was right. He was shocked, when we next met, and I informed him he was correct. Another teammate and I disagreed about the age of another. My search of our team roster disclosed that I was again wrong. Because I was so vehement in my belief I quickly telephoned him to correct myself. There is a certain amount of satisfaction in advising someone, “You were right” or as Churchill said, “Eating your words is a wholesome diet.” Those who are able to admit errors have an inner strength that I once lacked, but have acquired from my multitude of mistakes. Those who are unable to admit an error are weak and should realize “To err is human.”

To err is human, to forgive, divine.

Alexander Pope
An Essay on Criticism

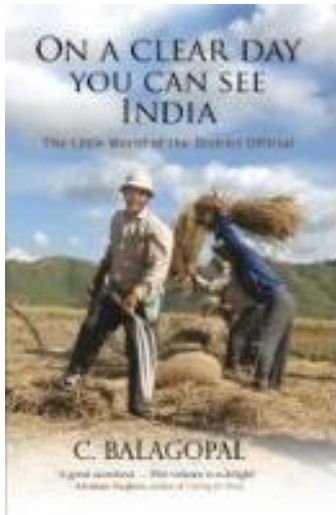
Book Review



On a clear day you can see India

Author: C. Balagopal

Publisher: HarperCollins Publishers
(July 1, 2013) 240p.



Chandrasekhar Balagopal (Bala) started his career as an officer in Indian Administrative Service (IAS). *On A Clear Day You Can See India* is his diary of recollections and anecdotes from his time in Manipur (a state in India where he was posted) as a twenty something

The very first chapter explains the title when his boss takes him to a vantage and pointing with his walking stick, says, “East is in that direction...Ukhrul and Burma....To the north lie Nagaland and Assam....To the south lies Central District, then South District, and then Burma....and there, to the west, my young friend, on a clear day, you can see India”.

Balagopal provides very interesting insight in the bureaucracy, arrogance and manipulations that plagues the Indian administration. The young and idealistic Balagopal always stood up for what was correct and the right thing to do. He had to pay a price for just doing that. When he rejects a list of beneficiaries for a government scheme drawn up by a Minister’s half-brother, he was transferred to another location the very next day. The book is full of incidents when the politicians insisted him to bend the law for their own benefit.

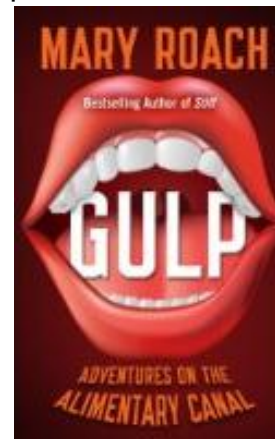
Balagopal is a wonderful storyteller. He has an easy style and all the chapters of his book are engrossing, full of wit and humor, nevertheless he does not lose the sensitivity and poignancy of the message he wants to convey. He talks about a little

known but troubled part of India through the eyes of a young man on a quest to do something for his country will serve as an inspiration to young Indian nationalists.

Gulp

Author: Mary Roach

Publisher: Norton, W. W. & Company, Inc.
p.352



Digestive system of the human body is the link to a healthy body and healthy mind. Mary has been able to capture the working knowledge of the digestive system in a very simple language which is very informative especially if you happen to be a health freak. Nothing good in life is possible without a healthy

body especially a healthy digestive system since that is where we get all our vitamins and minerals needed to build, nurture, repair and rejuvenate the rest of our body. Being in many different sports especially hiking and mountain biking, the first thing that I learned was that saliva is the best antibiotic available for all my cuts and scabs. In fact, individuals who do not have enough saliva in their mouth due to genetics or medications taken for any chronic disease like blood pressure, end up with a dry mouth and tooth decay. In Gulp, Mary offers knowledge for digestive system from saliva to all the way down to anus. Mary has interviewed many individuals from scientist to hard core criminals who have a scientific to actual knowledge of their digestive system in carrying different items inside prison cells without being detected. Mary even discusses fart. If you want to learn about your digestive system, there is much to be learned here.

Essay



No Longer the Third World

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

The term *Third World* has its roots in the nonaligned movement championed by the likes of Nehru, Nasser, Tito, Sukarno, and Nkrumah in the fifties. To be exact, the above leaders met at the Bandung Conference in 1955 and collectively called for national independence, economic development, and Cold War nonalignment while basing themselves on the support of millions of followers in the under-developed nations. According to Vijay Prasad, (*The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*), "France launched colonial wars to hold on to its power over Madagascar, Vietnam, and Algeria. In reaction, in 1952 the Parisian journalist Albert Sauvy pointed to a "Third World" between the first and second worlds which was in the process of initiating a global struggle against colonialism."

However, the *Third World* had its problems from the beginning. Many of the African countries turned itself into a state dictatorship cutting itself off from the peasantry and working class. Many of the third world regimes proceeded to centralize power in the state, enforcing its own monopoly over politics. In countries like India and then Yugoslavia, socialism was imposed from above rather than from below, thus thwarting the economic progress of those countries. The nations were overburdened by bureaucracy, rationing and a maze of regulations that inhibited their real economic progress.

The situation in many countries in the third world even worsened due to the role of military coups and dictatorships and the rise of flawed nationalism. This gave rise to wasteful military expenditure (the Indian-Chinese War, 1961), and the catastrophic effects of petroleum on the internal development of third world countries (Venezuela prior to Chávez). The state-directed agrarian socialism did not help either. As a matter of fact, it resulted in an exercise in political authoritarianism and economic failure.

Then came the globalization in the new millennium. Countries like China and India liberalized their economic policies and became world powers in terms of economy. Their consumer based economy dwarfed the developed nations due to their overwhelming population. Almost every other person in the world today is either a Chinese or an Indian. They moved out of the boundaries

of the third world and became developing nations along with Brazil, South Africa, Russia and sundry others. They have now joined the ranks of G-20. "GDP projections for the G20 nations – based on anticipated labor force growth, rates of investment and the speed of technological change – indicate that the global economy will more than triple in size by 2050. China, the United States and India – in that order – will emerge as the largest economies, and six of the seven largest economies will be drawn from today's developing countries."(Uri Dadush and William Shaw -World View).

Though developing countries will come to dominate the global economy, they will remain relatively poor. By 2050, China's per capita income will be only 37 per cent of the U.S. level, and India's just 11 percent. This contrast between economic wealth and size will complicate the ability to reach international economic agreements, as relatively poor countries with growing influence are likely to have different perspectives on many issues from advanced countries. International institutions will need to adapt to reflect the emerging power equation. The recent promotion of the G20 over the G8 is just one signal that the power shift has already begun.

But this rapid progress is far from assured. The rise of the developing world will generate severe threats – from awakening the geopolitical tensions associated with great power transitions to increasing the risk of financial crisis and protectionist backlash. Higher living standards have already increased carbon emissions and heightened the potential for environmental disaster. And the rise of developing countries has made global cooperation to cope with all these issues more difficult.

There are caveats and the emerging nations must deal with them .Political exclusion of peasants and workers, failure of land reform, bureaucratization, military confrontation, corruption, ongoing economic dependency on the West, and the emergence of ethnic and religious extremism are plaguing nations like India. If not taken care of quickly, they may spell doom to the rise of developing countries.

Current Affairs



Who's Afraid of the Government Shutdown

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

The U.S. government is in a shutdown mode. Not many Americans know about this (unless someone is a furloughed federal employee) nor does anyone care. The last time Americans cared about any shut down, it was when they shut down the Twinkie factory.

Living in America for 40 years now, I am accustomed to government shutdowns. It has happened 17 times since 1976. Shutdowns did not entail a real stop to government functioning; they were often simply funding gaps that didn't. I remember the first government shutdown in September 1976. Gerald Ford was the accidental president who often stumbled on steps. The major budget conflict during this period came because Ford vetoed a funding bill for the Departments of Labor and Health, Education, and Welfare. Both the House and the Senate were controlled by the Democrats.

A year later the next shutdown took place under the presidency of Jimmy Carter. Both the executive and the legislative branches were controlled by the Democrats at the time. The House insisted on continuing the ban on using Medicaid dollars to pay for abortions except in cases when the life of the mother was at stake. By that time government shutdowns had become a monthly event occurring again in October and November of 1977. Two more shutdowns took place during Jimmy Carter's presidency one in 1978 and the other in 1979 bringing to a total of five shutdowns during his four-year term.

If I remember correctly, the sun still rose in the east and set in the west. People woke up and went about their lives like nothing happened. They still stretched, yawned, and scratched.

By that time I had become immune to government shutdowns. As a matter of fact, I started looking forward to it as it provided me with talking points at the Toastmaster's Club and other social and family gatherings. The long-awaited shutdown took place again in November 1981 when Ronald Regan was the president. The Gipper enabled seven shutdowns during

his presidency between 1981 and 1987. He led us to believe that a partial government shutdown somehow was not bad for the economy.

The next two shutdowns happened after long gaps in 1991 and 1995 during George H. Bush and Clinton's eras respectively. Recently there has been a drought of government shutdowns. So, I am glad that it has happened again. 'Ask not what your country can do for you.' Seriously, don't even ask because the country is shut down now. All we have to do is make sure that it is shut down properly in safe mode, so safe that the incumbents will not be able to enter the U.S. Capitol building again.

Previous U.S. Federal Shutdowns			
Year	Start date	End date	Total days of funding gap
1976	30-Sep	11-Oct	10
1977	30-Sep	13-Oct	12
1977	31-Oct	9-Nov	8
1977	30-Nov	9-Dec	8
1978	30-Sep	18-Oct	18
1979	30-Sep	12-Oct	11
1981	20-Nov	23-Nov	2
1982	30-Sep	2-Oct	1
1982	17-Dec	21-Dec	3
1983	10-Nov	14-Nov	3
1984	30-Sep	3-Oct	2
1984	3-Oct	5-Oct	1
1986	16-Oct	18-Oct	1
1987	18-Dec	20-Dec	1
1990	5-Oct	9-Oct	5
1995	13-Nov	19-Nov	5
1995-1996	15-Dec	6-Jan	21
2013	30-Sep	17-Oct	16

Point

Third World Will Become Developed

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

Today's economy is mostly consumer based, therefore, the nations with the largest populations will keep on growing economically. That means that the present developed nations will shrink in economic power and the Third World countries will rise to become developed nations. In the past few decades the rise of countries like South Korea, Japan, and others to developed status is a point in place.

We all know that China has been growing rapidly, more than doubling its economic output per person every decade, for about three and a half decades. China has close to one quarter of the Third World's population, so China's success is a large part of the total picture. China's growth is based on its consumerism which is related to its population. China is quickly transforming itself from a Third World country into a First World nation.

India is about one fifth of the Third World, and through Internet outsourcing it has gotten fairly close to super growth. India averaged close to six and a half percent per capita growth 2000-2011 according to World Bank figures. Between China and India 45 percent of the Third World has at least approached super growth. What was once the miracle of Japan and then a few other East Asian Tigers has been the norm for almost half of the Third World.

While the rest of the Third world has not been doing quite as well, they have been growing fairly rapidly and more rapidly than they have in the past. In the 2000-2011 period per capita Gross Domestic Product, GDP, in the developing countries (low and middle income combined) grew 5% per year. With compounding that means doubling every fourteen years.

The growth of the Third World before the current long economic slump was very impressive, perhaps the best ever. Even the First World's current slump has not stopped the rapid growth of the Third World, though admittedly it has slowed the rapid growth some. When the First World finally pulls out of this slump, the Third World's growth will accelerate.

Furthermore, the Third World countries are racing to educate its masses. There are more trained individuals in the Third World than all First World countries combined. They are comparatively younger compared to the population in the First World countries. Another factor is the mass migration of people from the Third World to the First. This has created a great diaspora for the developing countries easing trade with their motherland. The opening of new routes to the First World, particularly through the Internet, may dramatically shift the advantage to economic growth in the Third World and will eventually pave the way for them to join the status of developed countries.

Counterpoint

Third World Rise Is Not Imminent

By Bala Prasad

Is the rise of third world countries imminent? One can read volumes in favor and against this hypothesis. Learned men and women try to prove or disprove their point of view with the same set of facts and figures. Reading and researching did not help me reach a conclusion either. So, after having traveled extensively all over the world during the last two decades or so, my views are based on what I have witnessed myself. For society to move up, first of all our basic requirements must be fulfilled. We must have shelter overhead; we must have access to food, healthcare, and protection from crime against us. These quite often are perpetrated against the by their own government. Grandiose ideas as to how the poor countries will rise soon, are just that, grandiose plans. So they have natural resources in vast amounts. How will these countries get to the market and reap the benefits? When people do not have the means to buy food, where will the resources come from? From rich countries? At what price? Certainly any rich country is not expected to finance the development of the world for the long haul. This would turn a rich country into a poor one and leave the poor ones further in debt. Handouts can only go so far. In some countries the government has to pay half or more of its revenue to satisfy the interest on their outstanding loans, the principle never going down. And this doesn't even consider the rampant corruption. Look around. Does any poor country have poor leader? The people in charge of running the show are rumored to have amassed wealth beyond imagination. Leadership maintains its grip on power by coercion, threats and outright violence against its own citizen. No need to name names, but there are countries on the face of the earth who were much better off decades ago than today. Countries that were the breadbasket in their region, now can barely grow enough to feed themselves.

What is the solution? Glad you asked because I don't have one. In the history of mankind eventually time takes care of everything and everybody gets their chance in the sun. Look at Egypt and Rome. There was a time when they were the wealthiest and mightiest power of their time. Then again look at Middle East countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and others in the area. Less than 100 years ago, before the oil was discovered, they were barely able to survive. So much so that when oil was discovered these people were quite unhappy, as they hoped for water. So who knows when their turn will come. But as I see it, only because of the miracle of time. Nothing I am seeing, makes me believe it is because of this reason and that. Because their leaders are doing this wonderful thing or that. No sir.

The Neighborhood



Mathnasium of Rochester North

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

U.S. students are falling behind nations like China, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong and Finland in math competency. Laurie Shappee and her husband, Bill Sobolewski are doing something about that. Their



approach is to utilize students' critical thinking in understanding math concepts rather than just getting them through homework and tests. Laurie is the owner of Mathnasium of Rochester North and Bill is the business

manager.

Mathnasium's primary role is to delve into the reasons why homework is such an issue. The most fundamental issue according to Bill is the knowledge gaps students have incurred over the years. According to Bill, "Children don't hate math. They hate being confused and intimidated by math. We try to find out what the students are thinking about while coming up with an answer to a mathematical problem."

Mathnasium is meant to be a place for acquiring math concepts through heuristic techniques such as 'Law of Sameness' and not a place for rote learning and memorization. At Mathnasium, students learn in a bright, open and inviting setting, where they get personal attention from an instructor. Students can enroll and pay on a month-to-month basis rather than committing to a long-term contract.

Laurie spent her career as an educator. She retired from Troy School District after serving for 35 years in various



roles consisting of teaching, deploying curriculum, teacher's development and maintaining consistency of standard tests. Laurie believes in giving back to the community. After retiring from Troy School District, she was instrumental in starting a charter school in Detroit. Now she owns four Mathnasium learning centers including Mathnasium of Rochester North which is at the intersection of Rochester Road and Tienken next to Papa Joe's.

Laurie and Bill live in Oakland County and race sail boats as a hobby. They hope to make math smooth sailing for area students and help them win the race.

Psychology in mathematics education is an applied research domain, with many recent developments relevant to elementary mathematics. A major aspect is the study of motivation; while most young children enjoy some mathematical practices, by the age of seven to ten many lose interest and begin to experience mathematical anxiety. Constructivism and other learning theories consider the ways young children learn mathematics, taking child developmental psychology into account.

Lifestyle



Women's Health Issues in Third World Countries

By Niru Prasad

Worldwide, women live an average four years longer than men. In 2011, women's life expectancy at birth was more than 80 years in 46 countries, but only 58 years in the WHO African Region. Girls are far more likely than boys to suffer sexual abuse.



Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among adolescent girls in high- and upper-middle-income countries. Almost all (99%) of the approximate 287 000 maternal deaths every year occur in developing countries.

Globally, cardiovascular disease, often thought to be a "male" problem, is the number one killer of women. Breast cancer is the leading cancer killer among women aged 20–59 years worldwide.

Infancy and childhood (0-9 years)

Both death rates and the causes of death are similar for boys and girls during infancy and childhood.

Pneumonia, prematurity, birth asphyxia and diarrhea are the main causes of death during the first five years of life. Malnutrition is a major contributing factor in 45% of deaths in children aged less than 5 years.

Adolescent girls (10-19 years)

Depressive disorders and – in adolescents aged 15-19 years, schizophrenia – are leading causes of ill health.

HIV/AIDS

In 2011, about 820 000 women and men aged 15-24 were newly infected with HIV in low- and middle-income countries; more than 60% of them were women.

Globally, adolescent girls and young women (15-24 years) are twice as likely to be at risk of HIV infection compared to boys and young men in the same age group. This higher risk of HIV is

associated with unsafe and often unwanted and forced sexual activity.

Adolescent pregnancy

Early childbearing increases risks for both mothers and their newborns. Although progress has been made in reducing the birth rate among adolescents, more than 15 million of

the 135 million live births worldwide are among girls aged 15-19 years.

Pregnant adolescents are more likely than adults to have unsafe abortions. An estimated three million unsafe abortions occur globally every year among girls aged 15-19 years. Unsafe abortions contribute substantially to lasting health problems and maternal deaths. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are an important cause of death among girls aged 15–19 in low- and middle-income countries.

Nutrition

In 21 out of 41 countries with data, more than one third of girls aged 15-19 years are anemic. Anemia, most commonly iron-deficiency anemia, increases the risk of hemorrhage and sepsis during childbirth. It causes cognitive and physical deficits in young children and reduces productivity in adults. Women and girls are most vulnerable to anemia due to insufficient iron in their diets, menstrual blood loss and periods of rapid growth.

Reproductive age (15-44 years) and adult women (20-59 years)

HIV/AIDS

For women aged 15-44 years, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death worldwide, with unsafe sex being the main risk factor in developing countries.

Continued on Next Page

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Biological factors, lack of access to information and health services, economic vulnerability and unequal power in sexual relations expose women, particularly young women, to HIV infection.

Maternal health

Maternal deaths are the second biggest killer of women of reproductive age. Every year, approximately 287 000 women die due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth, 99% of them are in developing countries.

Despite the increase in contraceptive use over the past 30 years, many women in all regions still do not have access to modern contraceptive methods. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, one in four women who wish to delay or stop childbearing does not use any family planning method.

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis is often linked to HIV infection and is among the five leading causes of death, in low-income countries, among women of reproductive age and among adult women aged 20–59 years.

Both self-inflicted injuries and road injuries figure among the top 10 causes of death among adult women (20-59 years) globally. In the WHO South-East Asia Region, burns are among the top 10 leading causes of death among women aged 15–44. Women suffer significantly more fire-related injuries and deaths than men, due to cooking accidents or as the result of intimate partner and family violence.

Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer is the second most common type of cancer in women worldwide, with all cases linked to a sexually transmitted genital infection with the human papillomavirus (HPV). Due to poor access to screening and treatment services, more than 90% of deaths occur in women living in low- and middle-income countries.

Violence

Violence against women is widespread around the world. Recent figures indicate that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. On average, 30% of women who have been in a relationship experienced some form of physical or sexual violence by their partner.

Women who have been physically or sexually abused have higher rates of mental ill-health,

unintended pregnancies, abortions and miscarriages than non-abused women. Women exposed to partner violence are twice as likely to be depressed, almost twice as likely to have alcohol use disorders, and 1.5 times more likely to have HIV or another sexually transmitted infection. 42% of them have experienced injuries as a result. Increasingly in many conflicts, sexual violence is also used as a tactic of war.

Depression and suicide

Women are more susceptible to depression and anxiety than men. Depression is the leading cause of disease burden for women in both high-income and low- and middle-income countries. Depression following childbirth, affects 20% of mothers in low- and lower-middle-income countries, which is even higher than previous reports from high-income countries.

Every year, an estimated 800 000 people die from suicide globally, the majority being men. However, there are exceptions, for instance in China where the suicide rate in rural areas is higher among women than men. Attempted suicide, which exceeds suicide by up to 20 times, is generally more frequent among women than men and causes an unrecognized burden of disability. At the same time, attempted suicide is an important risk factor for death from suicide and shows the need for appropriate health services for this group.

Disabilities

Disability – which affects 15% of the world's population – is more common among women than men. Women with disabilities have poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than women without disabilities. Adult women with disabilities are at least 1.5 times more likely to be a victim of violence than those without a disability.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

Tobacco use and the burning of solid fuels for cooking are the primary risk factors for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – a life-threatening lung disease – in women. One third of all of the COPD deaths and disease burden in women is caused by exposure to indoor smoke from cooking with open fires or inefficient stoves.

Continued on Next Page

Older women (60 years and over)

Globally, men slightly outnumber women but, as women tend to live longer than men, they represent a higher proportion of older adults: 54% of people 60 years of age and older are women, a proportion that rises to almost 60% at age 75 and older, and to 70% at age 90 and older.

Noncommunicable diseases, particularly cardiovascular diseases and cancers, are the biggest causes of death among older women, regardless of the level of economic development of the country in which they live. Cardiovascular diseases account for 46% of older women's deaths globally, while a further 14% of deaths are caused by cancers – mainly cancers of the lung, breast, colon and stomach. Chronic respiratory conditions, mainly COPD, cause another 9% of older women's deaths.

Many of the health problems faced by women in older age are the result of exposure to risk factors in adolescence and adulthood, such as smoking, sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diets.

Other health problems experienced by older women that decrease physical and cognitive functioning include poor vision (including cataracts), hearing loss, arthritis, depression and dementia. Although men also suffer from these conditions, in many countries women are less likely to receive treatment or supportive aids than men.

These factors combine to increase vulnerabilities, and reduce access to needed and effective health services.

In summary author has reviewed the pertinent issues regarding women's health in 3rd world countries. Proper health care measures should be taken to improve their well-being.

Sent your comments to:

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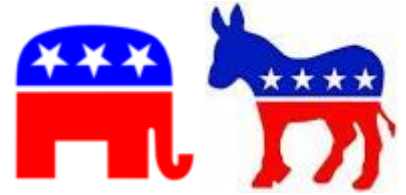
Sandboarding is a boardsport similar to snowboarding, but competitions take place on sand dunes rather than snow-covered mountains. Here, an aviation ordnanceman of the US Navy sandboards down a dune in Jebel Ali, Dubai.

Photo: Steven J. Weber - US Navy

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American Scene



Government by Brinksmanship

By David Beagan

The trouble government is that it is full of politicians. Make that rich and clueless politicians. In 2011 the Center for Responsive Politics estimated that about 47 percent of Congress, or 249 members are millionaires. In 2010, the estimated median net worth of a U.S. senator stood at an average of \$2.56 million. Here on day 11 of the government shutdown, with programs like Head Start on hold and thousands of federal government employees on furloughed, the House member's gym remains open. In monetary terms it means practically nothing. But the appearance is that the shutdown must not inconvenience the congressmen and women. They are so out of touch with the average person that they don't realize or don't care how it looks.

Over the last twenty years we have witnessed the optimization of the elements of the political process. The science of political polling has become ever more exacting. The machinery of raising campaign funds is as productive as ever incorporating the internet to solicit funds. And the politicians have become ever more polished at communicating on television.

The pollsters are gathering more information than ever data to decide what topics to pump into campaign ads, bought with ever greater campaign funds. In interviews it is, of course, a well worn strategy to for a politician when asked a question to simply answer the question he wants to answer. The modern nuance of this tactic is to pivot, to make it sound as if the answer is connected to the question. Another particularly annoying tactic is the verbal filibuster. The politician answers a question by talking and talking and talking. The more he talks, the less chance there is of having to answer a question that she doesn't want to be asked, or a question she is not prepared for. But all of this refinement of the elements of the process does not produce a leader, a thinker, a problem solver.

Thomas Sowell has a written a nice piece, "Who Shut Down the Government?" It clearly explains that that House sent a budget to the Senate that includes funding for everything except Obamacare. The Senate chose not to act on that budget. Sowell laments that the Republicans have done a bad job in getting this message out. But with so much hot air, bombast, smug certainty, and endless spin, how can a simple message get through? If the Republicans think they are right they

need to dispense with the verbal manipulation and state their case simply and succinctly. The real problem is that the GOP has split into two factions. As the first Republican president said, "a house divided against itself cannot stand." This is why the GOP has fared worse, even though both parties have seen a decline in confidence.

The spokespeople for each political party are most intent on explaining why their side's position is the most reasonable, why the other side is being unreasonable, and why the other side is the one at fault. People from both sides were heard to say, when they didn't know they were being recorded, that they thought they could win. To them it is a high stakes game, but the constituency is losing either way. The thinking was that to let the U.S. debts to go into default would be horribly bad, so bad that even this dysfunctional congress would find a way to forge a deal.

As David Zeiler wrote and Moneymorning.com:

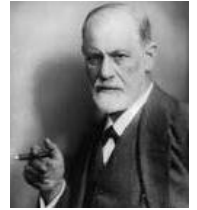
Both the Tea Party Republicans driving this impasse and the Democrats see this as a fight they must win at all costs. And both are convinced the grave threat of a U.S. default will force the other to surrender. In this high-stakes game of chicken, even a small miscalculation by either side could trigger the U.S. debt default that everyone fears.

Nevertheless after 16 days the two parties came together and forged a deal to end the shutdown and raise the debt ceiling. Really they have kicked the can a little farther down the road. Leading up to January expect more disingenuous brinksmanship. The trouble with politicians is that keep going into government.

Save us from the madness . . . Deliver us from the hypocrisy of attempting to sound reasonable while being unreasonable. . . . remove from them that stubborn pride which imagines itself to be above and beyond criticism. Forgive them the blunders they have committed.

Barry Black
Senate Chaplain in Opening Prayer

Travel



Sigmund Freud Museum

By Anil Shrivastava

Visiting Sigmund Freud's home in Vienna (now Sigmund Freud Museum) was a cerebral experience. It's like glancing at Mona Lisa in Louvre. Though small in size compared to other attractions of Vienna, it has a colossal significance. I am glad that my wife, who is a psychology major, insisted that we visit the shrine of the father of Psychoanalysis.

The museum is on the slope of Bergasse which is a narrow artery leading to broader avenues. It is very easy to miss this landmark if the visitors do not look up for a red sign, 'FREUD' reading up vertically. A narrow staircase led us to the second floor where Freud lived for 47 years and produced majority of his writing before fleeing to London in 1938 because of his Jewish ancestry. Thanks to Anna

Freud, the youngest daughter of Sigmund Freud, who preserved the landmark and dedicated it as a museum for people to experience a piece of Freud, the uncanny. My wife and I were transcended to the early nineteenth century as if we were watching a paranormal phenomenon. We walked through the original waiting room, touched his furniture and the famous couch, saw his antique collections, and the first edition of his works.

We also watched historic films from the private life of Freud and his family. We were mesmerized by the cultural surrounding and the emergence of psychoanalysis. We were living a dream created by Freud until we came out and realized our true existence.

Some people remark that the museum is not magnificent. I will say this, "It is interesting for the interested."



Mental Exercise

By David Beagan



Flipping Chips

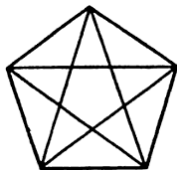
Start with 64 poker chips that are red on one side and black on the other. Arrange them red side up in an 8x8 grid. The goal is to flip some chips to get an alternating red and black arrangement, like a checker board. However, you can only flip a whole row or column of checkers at a time.

Oh Buoy

From Russian puzzle maven Boris Kordemsky:
Two diesel ships leave a pier at the same time. One travels upstream, the other downstream, each with the same motive power. As they depart, one drops a lifebuoy into the water. An hour later, both ships reverse course. Which will reach the buoy first?

Triangle Star

How many triangles are in this figure?.



Typing Test

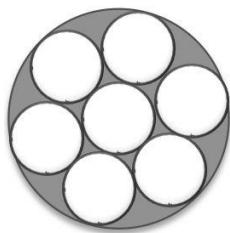
What's unusual about this paragraph, composed by Lawrence Cowan?

Trade was arrested as a base act after federated reserves regressed faster as extracted free trade was saved as extra reverted waste. Deserted as better fates were created, a few brave castes feared effects as excess stargazers were severed. Statecraft fretted, staggered, braced as steadfast braggarts beat state stewards, stewardesses. Tested as a great craze, trade traversed war; zest was dead as a few eager asses abated better treats, detested street fracas. Facts were effaced as we attested a great faded age.

Hint: See the title of this one.

Circled Circles

What is the area of the shaded portion between the circles? Assume the total area of the larger circle is 1.



Average Age

Five people are in a room. They need to figure out their average age without anyone finding out anyone else's age. They don't want to just to secretly write their ages on pieces of paper and put them in a hat, because one of them would need to see the ages to add up the numbers to get an average. They don't want to anyone to even see an age number. How can they accomplish their task?

Cubed Digits

The late Martin Gardner, venerated Mathematical Games columnist for Scientific American, has just had his autobiography published. Martin tells a friend that 370 was one of only four numbers (not counting 1 and 0) that is the sum of the cubes of its digits.

$$3^3 + 7^3 + 0^3 = 373.$$

The friend asked what is the next one after 373 and said he felt like a fool, because it was so obvious, when Martin told him. Do you know the answer?

Answers

Flipping Chips

Flip every other horizontal row (4 rows). Then flip every other vertical row.

Oh Buoy

Consider the situation from the perspective of the floating buoy. Now there is no current; the two ships move away from the buoy at equal speeds and return at equal speeds. They'll reach it simultaneously.

Triangle Star

There are a total of 35 triangles.

Typing Test

Type the paragraph on a keyboard, you won't need your right hand.

Average Age

Each person can write down two numbers on two slips of paper that add up to their age. The ten slips of paper are mixed in the hat and then whoever adds them up doesn't know any age.

Circled Circles

Notice that the outer circle is three times larger than each of the smaller circles. Therefore the larger circle is nine times larger. The seven circles make up 7/9ths of the area. So the shaded area is 2/9.

Cubed Digits

371.

Publisher's Desk



Divisions and Subdivisions of Nations

By Bala Prasad

In the day's long gone by – I am talking the beginning of human civilization and the arrival of *homo erectus* – people followed the supply of water and food for survival. Later on, they learned to farm and raise cattle. That led to their desire to settle down, which they did. Similar groups of people who were brought together for whatever reason found a homestead by claiming land to farm and raise cattle. Little communities thus developed and everybody lived in peace.

Then our desire to expand, to own more, and become more powerful got the better of us. We have ancient invaders and expanders. The most well known of these were Alexander the Great (4th Century BC) and Julius Caesar (1st Century BC). They conquered vast amounts of land all over the world and expanded their kingdoms. During their lifetime, and more so after their demise, these land masses were divided and subdivided into different countries governed by their successors and quite often by their generals.

In modern times – that is in the last five hundred or so – the same has happened at the hands of strong monarchs all over the world. To name a few changes, Khan in 13th Century AD reached from Mongolia to within striking distance of Western Europe. In wake of that tumultuous campaign, many boundaries were changed. Some endure until today but some have changed again.

Then came the time of the British, the French and the German emperors. Their campaigns to expand their kingdoms and their successes and failures resulted in new boundaries that to some extent are still prevalent.

In more recent times, there were invasions and colonization of different parts of the world by powerful outsiders. Portugal, Spain, France, England and others have colonized many countries across the world. While some are still under their control, most have been liberated. Now these countries are fighting among themselves on whether to abide by the boundary lines

decided by their occupants or draw new ones. The Middle East is a prime example of this and so is India. When the Middle East was let go by its colonial occupants, they divided and drew boundary lines all over the place. Some of them still hold.

When the British occupation of India ended in 1947, before they left, the country was divided in two: India and Pakistan. Before that, Burma and China had new boundaries and new status as new countries. The division of India into India and Pakistan was a massive tragedy no matter what your political view might be. Millions of people were slaughtered on each side in the name of religion and more millions were rendered homeless. The same thing happened again when Pakistan was split into two in the 1970's. Another great slaughter and homelessness was let loose on the people of Eastern Pakistan which now is known as Bangladesh. So it seems that the creation of new boundaries – these divisions of land masses – is associated with the slaughter of innocent people on both sides and unwanted massive migration on the part of the losers. Where will it take us and will it ever stop? Who knows? Now international courts have gotten in on the action and are splitting continents, not so much physically the land, but more so the political the local realities which also divides nations, with the results being the same.

Sincerely,

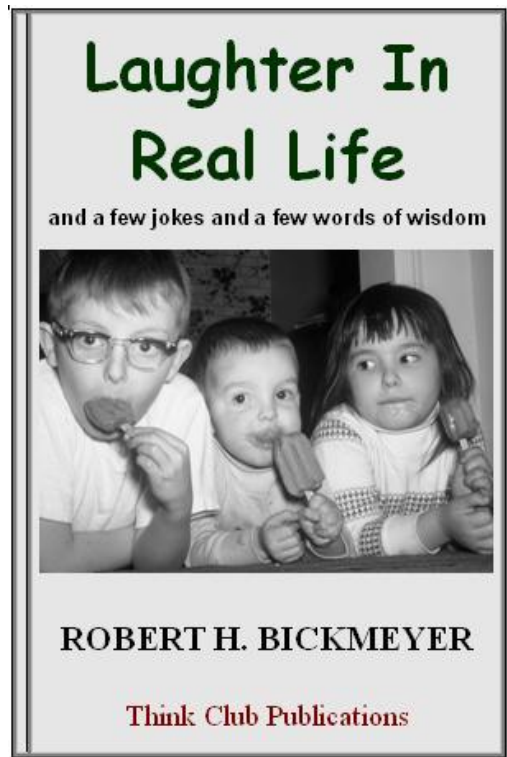
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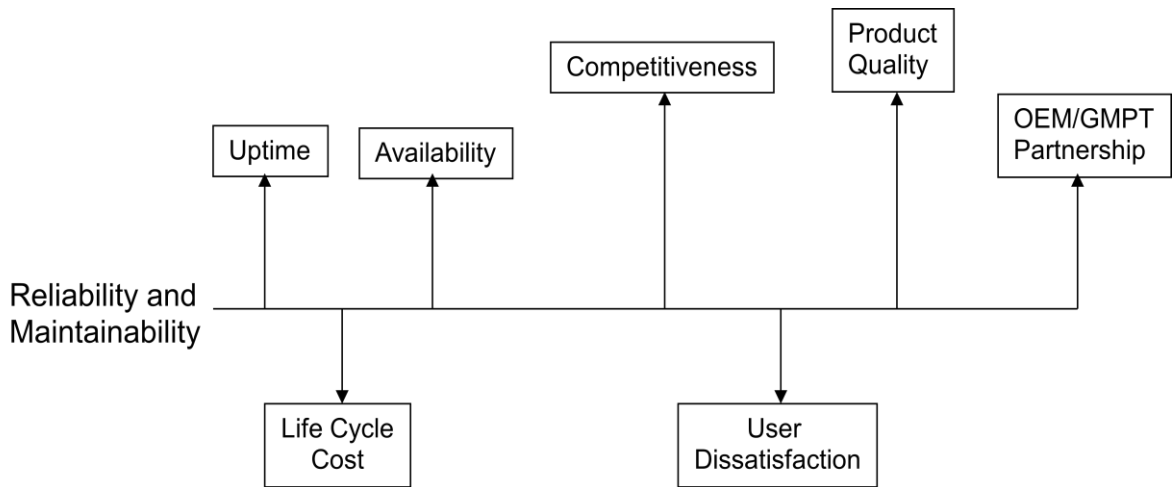
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