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The THINK Club

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QUIZ?

Where on Earth Is Kiribati?

What Happens after Death?

Why Is The United States Exporting Oil?

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Letters



Thinking Trivially

This has reference to your book review (Quiet: The Power of Introverts In a World that Can't Stop Talking -Susan Cain). Interesting take on a misunderstood crowd. I often used to think quiet meant disinterested. I have learned that it is, often times, quite the contrary. After all, real interest comes from stopping to listen. As a journalist, I have learned that some of the best writers are introverts. Just thinking.

Roop Shrivastava
West Bloomfield, MI

Gone through the thoughts about India still emerging. Yes no doubt India is emerging, but there is a big BUT. To my assessment , till villages in India advances in Education, Health and basic infrastructure, population control, it can not reach world standard of living and advancements. Whatever advancement is being achieved, is eaten by population rise and slows nation's progress.

Raj Shekhar Srivastava
Laheria Sarai, India

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The trivia are the three lower Artes Liberales, i.e. grammar, rhetoric and logic. These were the topics of basic education, foundational to the quadrivia of higher education, and hence the material of basic education. The word trivia also described a place where three roads met in Ancient Rome.

During the 20th Century, it was forgotten as the system of education and ironically was appropriated to mean something very new. In the 1960s, nostalgic college students and others began to informally trade questions and answers about the popular culture of their youth. The first known documented labeling of this casual parlor game as "Trivia" was in a Columbia Daily Spectator column published on February 5, 1965.

In wilderness I sense the miracle of life, and behind it our scientific accomplishments fade to trivia.

– Charles Lindbergh

Why is it trivia? People call it trivia because they know nothing and they are embarrassed about it.

– Robbie Coltrane

Trivia, like camp, is a product of the heart, not of the mind. It's a social disease, it's little things for little minds. It's the last time you're able to act immature, to act like the college kid."

– Edwin Goodgold

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

– Will Rogers

Here's something to think about: How come you never see a headline like 'Psychic Wins Lottery'?

– Jay Leno

An overburdened, over-stretched executive is the best executive, because he or she doesn't have the time to meddle, to deal in trivia

– Jack Welch

The formula for achieving a successful relationship is simple: you should treat all disasters as if they were trivialities but never treat a triviality as if it were a disaster.

– Quentin Crisp

Everything is funny as long as it is happening to someone else.

– Will Rogers

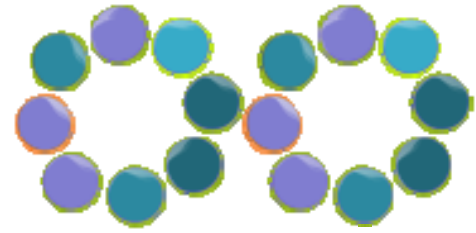
Trivia is a game played by those who realize that they have misspent their youth but do not want to let go of it.

– Edwin Goodgold

The best thing about lying in bed late is that you learn to distinguish between first things and trivia, for whatever presses on you has to prove its importance before it makes you move.

– Max Lerner

Editorial



Amused by Trivia

By Musafir

What good is trivia? On the surface, trivia is unnecessary and it does not put groceries on the table. When will it come up in later life that we need to know the difference between an isthmus and a peninsula or how does it matter that Martin Van Buren was the first U.S. born President of the United States?

Every trivia has a known answer. If there is no answer, it is research not trivia. In trivia, person asking the question must know the answer otherwise it is like discovering a cure for which there is no known disease. Trivia is like planting seeds in one's mind that grows into a curiosity, an interest or a hobby ultimately giving way to research and innovation.

The second half of the twentieth century saw profound progress in science since human curiosity was rekindled during the renaissance. From the Wright Brothers taking off in 1903 to Neil Armstrong's landing on the moon in 1969, humankind fulfilled many of its ambitions which grew from trivial knowledge. Likewise, from Jules Verne's fictitious circumnavigation of the globe in eighty days in 1872 to John Glenn's orbiting in eighty minutes in 1962, the earth became more intimate, its secrets less remote. In 1944 nobody could see an atom; in 1945 the atomic bomb had split one.

And so, with such achievements begins the devolution of the human mind. The secret of humankind's dominance on the planet has been not only how one wins the day but also how one builds the future.

The most difficult thing about studying any subject is keeping track of it. That is where trivia comes into play.

Quite literary, given the speed of discoveries, by the time a textbook gets into print, it is already out of date. Now that we know where everything is in this world (gathered by trivial knowledge), we can take time to go for a closer examination. In so doing, we discover connections between various trivial pieces and we weave them together for a greater good. After we have measured the highest, lowest, longest, shortest, hottest and coldest places, we can start unraveling a mystery that is even more provocative: .

The space race between then Soviet Union and the United States generated interest in science and engineering. I remember how we kept ourselves engrossed in trivial pursuits finding out who did what and when. In 1957 the United States was shocked when the Soviets put Sputnik in orbit. An explanation was offered by a frustrated NASA official; "Their German scientists were better than our German scientists."

All joking aside, the triumph in space generated through trivia or trivial knowledge led us to have artificial limbs, radial tires, microwave ovens, GPSs, remote controls, structural analysis software, thermal protection materials, and polarized lens technology, just to name a few.

Trivia is a healthy pastime. It keeps families together; makes us seek answers. It is a good entertainment that keeps our wandering minds in control. We should form trivia clubs and involve kids from inner cities so that they keep away from mischief and get interested in acquiring knowledge.

If the old saying is correct-that small matters amuse small minds-what does that say about people who are amused by trivia? To anyone interested in the bigger picture, of course, trivia is but a way station on the road to higher knowledge, falling somewhere between nostalgia and SATs. Yet the random factoids that go into trivia also form a snapshot of popular culture, a common reference that serves to bind this sprawling culture together when so much else seems to tear us apart. Trivia is not trivial, after all.

In 1979 Trivial Pursuit is first conceived by Chris Haney and Scott Abbott while playing a game of Scrabble. The board game wasn't commercially released until 1981.

Commentary



Why Obama Will Lose

By Robert Bickmeyer

The Republican presidential contenders have selfishly attacked one another, providing ammunition for the Democrats to woo Independent voters. Meanwhile, may I provide a few facts suggesting why many Americans should not re-elect President Barack Obama? In 2008 Obama secured 52 percent of Independent voters. In a recent poll their approval rating of Obama stood at 35 percent.

Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev once declared, "We will bury you," his assertion being that capitalism would collapse and be replaced by socialism that would redistribute the wealth. Current Russia President Dimitry Medvedev supports re-election of Obama. Hugo Chavez, that American-hating "dictator" of Venezuela praises Obama. Fidel Castro favors him.

When Oprah Winfrey asked him to grade himself any president would have humbly replied, "I'll leave that to the American people" or "I'll let history decide that." But he gave himself a B+. I guess not grading himself with an "A" was his weak attempt at humility. Egobama has now stated, "I have five more years as president," as if Election Day is a mere formality.

When the House voted on the Health Care bill (Obamacare) on Nov. 2, 2009 there were 220 ayes, 219 Democrats. The nays were bi-partisan, 176 Republicans with 39 Democrats voting against it.

Obama demanded that Israel capitulate to the Palestinian's request to draw borders based on pre 1967 boundaries, which incurred a rebuke from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Deeply offended were some prominent Democrats like former New York City Mayor Ed Koch. It is difficult to believe that American Jews will continue to vote for him with his anti-Israel rhetoric.

The Associated Press has reported that unions plan on spending more than \$400 million to re-elect Obama. That has to be a big chunk of the annual

dues collected from members who, I trust, are able to think for themselves without union leaders dictating who they should vote for.

He favors abortion, including late term abortion and even partial birth abortion, reaching into a woman's womb with a scissor to kill the almost born baby.

When Bush became president he said nothing against Clinton who had many weaknesses as a man,

husband and president. Bush showed class. Egobama has relentlessly spoken against the "previous administration" or "the last 7-8 years." No class.

Some have credited our president for killing Osama bin Laden, who was tracked down by our intelligence after a ten year search. All Obama did was to authorize implementation of a

plan concocted by others.

Alan Keyes, a black Catholic conservative who ran for president in 2000 and who has tremendous family values, has written, "Obama is a radical communist. He is going to destroy this country and we are either going to stop him or the United States of America is going to cease to exist." During his run for the presidency in the Democratic primary, Joe Biden said about Obama's readiness for the presidency, "Right now I don't believe he is. The presidency does not lend itself to on-the-job training."

When the Civil Rights Act was approved in 1964 it was approved by 64% of the Democrats in the House and Senate and by 80% of the Republicans. So I wonder, why do so many blacks consistently vote for Democrats?

Khrushchev was proven wrong when he said the Soviet union will bury America. Obama will be proven wrong about this country and what it stands for when he is defeated this November.

What Washington needs is adult supervision.
– Barack Obama



Keep Away

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

I know a bunch of folks who have nothing better to do than waste other people's time asking absurd questions. Beware when someone in your family or circle of friends approaches you with futile question such as, "What is the meaning of life?" That is a red flag right there. He or she is just trying to show intellectual prowess by poking holes in yours. If confronted, simply suggest that person to do a Google search on 'the meaning of life' and leave you alone.

Usually those seekers are unhappy, confused and depressed. My advice to you will be to do one of the following. If you really care about that person, please call 911 immediately and let the system take care of the problem thereon. You do not owe an answer to their absurd questions. In case you do not care, simply delete the person from your life. Believe me, they should be doing something better than seeking the meaning of life.

Another absurd question those lunatics often ask is, "Do you know why were you sent to this earth?" Recognize the warning sign right there! People ask this question when they feel inadequate and worthless about themselves. Let's try to get those people back on track by giving a tit for tat answer: "I was sent here randomly and accidentally. That's why! Did your parents design you genetically by choosing a particular sperm and egg so that you could become a menace to the society and nuisance to others?"

Recently I was enjoying a party by treating myself to drinks and delicious snacks when a nerd walked up to me and interrupted "How do you want to be remembered after you die?"

"First of all this untimely and uncalled for question does not establish you as an intellectual or an intelligent person. Secondly, I don't care about being remembered after I am gone. I simply want to be treated right while I am still here. So, may I enjoy the treats? Meanwhile, why don't you go and join the other nerds in the corner and discuss your burial plan with them?" I replied.

Sometimes situations may arise when one may not have an exit plan, especially if you are assigned

to sit with strangers in a marriage reception. The drips sitting with you usually take full advantage of the situation. Once I had the misfortune of sharing the table with Foo Ling Yu and his wife, Hu R Yu. After half an hour of introduction, small talk and listening to their life stories, Foo Ling Yu posed a question to the captive audience, "If you could offer a newborn child only one piece of advice, what would it be?"

That's it! That was the last straw that broke the camel's back. "First of all, only a screwball will give any advice to a newly born. I may give advice to the newborn's parents instead to keep their child away from eccentrics like Foo Ling Yu and Hu R Yu or whatever your names may be," I answered in frustration.

You may not realize this but there are a lot of schizophrenics walking freely around us. They seem to want to believe their lives are governed by external forces and wandering souls. They, usually, visit psychics and indulge in medium experiences. One sure sign to spot them is by irrelevant questions they ask such as:

"Who am I?"

"What is the nature of reality?"

"How far east can I go before heading west?"

"When does it stop being partly cloudy and start being partly sunny?"

"How old are you before it can be said you died of old age?"

"Where do people in Hell tell other people to go?"

"What will you say if you met God and He sneezed?"

"What is the absolute truth?"

First of all, truth in itself is absolute, but we are not here to argue with the irrational. That person needs immediate professional help and that is the only absolute truth, if there is one. If you find someone having such tendencies, please inform me immediately. I will give the person a free ride to the loony bin. They need to be isolated immediately.

Perspective



Where on Earth Is Kiribati?

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

The **International Date Line (IDL)** is an imaginary line on the surface of the Earth, that runs from the north to the south pole and demarcates one calendar day from the next. It passes through the middle of the Pacific Ocean, roughly following the 180 degrees longitude but it deviates to pass around some territories and island groups.

Mostly, the International Date Line and the moving point of midnight separate the two calendar days that are current somewhere on Earth. However, during a two-hour period between 10:00 and 11:59 each day, three different calendar days are in use. meridian. Using these additional time zones means that the entire planet cannot observe a single date at the instant when midnight crosses the IDL. It also means that the standard time and date in some communities is 24 or 25 hours different from the standard time and date in others.

A traveler crossing the International Date Line eastbound subtracts one day, or 24 hours, so that the calendar date to the west of the line is repeated. Crossing the IDL westbound results in 24 hours being added, advancing the calendar date by one day. The International Date Line is necessary in order to have a fixed, albeit arbitrary, boundary on the globe where the calendar date advances in the westbound direction.

That's what made Kiribati, an island in Central Pacific a tourist attraction. The country was divided by the date line so a person could just walk west of the dateline into yesterday. Walking eastward would get you to tomorrow. On January 1, 1995, the date line in effect was moved eastwards to go around this country to avoid the confusion between yesterday and tomorrow.

If you fly around the world from east to west, you would lose one hour for every 15° of longitude crossed. You would lose 24 hours for one circuit of the globe from east to west if you did not compensate by adding 24 hours when you cross the International Date Line. In contrast, a west-to-east circumnavigation of the globe requires subtracting 24 hours when crossing the IDL. The International Date Line must therefore be observed in conjunction with the Earth's time zones: on crossing it in either direction, the calendar date is adjusted by one day.

The Island of the Day Before

The date line is a central factor in Umberto Eco's book *The Island of the Day Before*, in which the protagonist finds himself on a becalmed ship, with an island close at hand on the other side of the International Date Line. Unable to swim, the protagonist's writings indulge in increasingly confused speculation of the physical, metaphysical and religious import of the date line. Supposedly, we know about the story in this novel because the author acquired the papers of one Roberto della Griva. Born in 1614, he was a member of a minor noble family of northern Italy, self-described vassals of the marquis of Monferrato. This memoir-romance-love letter collection was written while the author was cast away on an abandoned

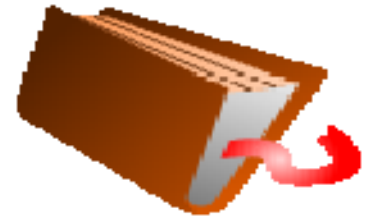
ship, whose whole company save one had been eaten by cannibals. The ship was anchored off an island in the south Pacific, located on a meridian which Roberto believed to be the natural prime meridian. He thus believed that he was on the west side of what today we would call the international date line, the island on the east side. When he looked at the island, he was therefore looking at the day before.

Around the World in Eighty Days

The date line appears as a plot device in Jules Verne's book *Around the World in Eight Days*. The main protagonist, Phileas Fogg, travels eastward around the world. As a consequence of a wager made with some other club members, Fogg had to return by 8:45pm on Saturday, 21 December 1872. Being suspected of a bank robbery, he is trapped for a whole day and reaches London believing it was later than Saturday evening. Believing he had lost the bet and his wealth, early the next morning he sends his servant to arrange a wedding with Aouda, whom he saved from being burned alive in India. The servant returns yelling that the wedding was refused because it was Saturday, not Sunday. Only now does Phileas Fogg realize that he had not accounted for the date line and had actually traveled for 79 days, not 80. Eventually he arrives at the Reform Club just in time to win the bet, his fortune back, and Aouda's love.



Book Review



In My Time: *A Personal and Political Memoir* By Dick Cheney with Liz Cheney

In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir of Dick Cheney is worth reading and informative in its own way since it talks about an important era in history. This is nicely written and has a nice focus on the events Cheney participated in throughout his career. I was interested in hearing about the author's early years, the fact that he was inspired by a call to public service by President Kennedy, and his entrance into government. He was propelled forward at first by his wife, Lynne, without whom he may not have ever finished college, let alone become a PhD candidate; Donald Rumsfeld, who helped him establish himself in politics and government; and Gerald Ford, who named him as his chief of staff at the young age of thirty-four.

At one point, when George W Bush asks him to be his running mate, Mr Cheney asks whether Bush knows how conservative he "really" is. The reader is left to infer how he became ideologically hardened in this "conservative" way. When he served in the House for ten years, he was a go-between between the "old guard" such as Speaker Bob Michel and the "young guard" such as the Gingrich crew; and he won support from the moderates, or as he calls them, the liberal Republicans. Apparently, after serving as Secretary of Defense and then CEO of Halliburton, his world view was solidified into seeing blacks and whites, with few shades of gray, to the point where he was no longer anything like a go-between.

The action that set the tone for his vice-presidency was the exclusionary way that he handled the Energy Task Force. He insisted on not making public the sources from which the report was prepared. Considering he was coming from the position of the CEO of a large corporation that makes lots of money from dirty fossil fuels, it was a one-sided action that presented the appearance that he was only interested in hearing from industry lobbyists. He talks about the subject of conserving energy in the exasperated kind of way of one who cannot get the other side to understand. But just as an example, a number of pages earlier, he is telling us he enjoys riding around Texas in a gas-guzzling Suburban, looking for coveys (families of birds) that he can shoot when "cabelleros" sight them. It sounds as if conserving energy is only a "personal virtue" to which he is only paying lip service.

Mr Cheney's hard line approach, however, ignores the fact that the terrorists win if the U.S. sacrifices it's principles and ideals - subverts the Constitution - for

expediency. The worse things the U.S. can do, it seems to me, is to promote the conditions for terror to occur, such as in Iraq; and to flaunt international law such as denying the validity of the Geneva Conventions.

Obama's Wars By: Bob Woodward

This is the third book that I have read about or by Obama since he became president. Obama announced that he would aim to modestly improve the size and the professionalism of Afghanistan's police force, and almost double the ranks of the Afghan army over the next two years. He had now made Afghanistan a defining element of his foreign policy, and just as Iraq became "Bush's war," so the conflict that now embroils both Afghanistan and Pakistan is "Obama's war."

It is intriguing to get an insider view of interaction among Obama's advisors and generals throughout the book. For example when asked to comment on Obama's Wars, Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said, "We don't do literary criticism." Another exciting one is General Tommy Franks' comment on the senior Bush Pentagon official Douglas Feith—"the @#%& stupidest guy on the face of the earth." There are numerous telling anecdotes about key players in the narrative, such as the one about the intensely focused General Petraeus electing to stay in Iraq rather than attend the funeral of his father.

Woodward details how, early in Obama's term, the Pentagon kept requesting different troop levels to secure the upcoming Afghan presidential election, which was scheduled for the summer of 2009. Those troop requests varied anywhere from thirteen thousand to thirty thousand soldiers, which added "to the suspicion" inside the Obama White House that "someone was trying to pull a fast one on a new president." Eventually Obama agreed to send in 21,000 troops to secure the election. That was in addition to the some twelve thousand troops that President Bush had already ordered in at the end of his administration, reinforcements that had not yet arrived in-country. The net result was that there would be around 33,000 additional American forces going into Afghanistan in 2009 from January to the summer, doubling the American military presence there.

Obama's Wars is mostly anecdotal far removed from the wars Woodward is writing about giving little or no sense of the history, the politics, or the culture of the countries where those conflicts are being fought, and providing mere sketches of America's enemies, such as Osama bin Laden.

Essay



What Happens After Death?

By Cara Santa Maria

Hi everybody! Perhaps you're one of the eight million Americans who claim to have had a near-death experience. Did you see a bright white light at the end of a tunnel? Maybe you floated above yourself in an out-of-body experience. Overwhelmingly, people who've had so-called near-death symptoms report a calmness, lack of fear, and feeling of being one with the universe.

A relatively simple explanation of the near-death experience requires little scientific reasoning and absolutely no measurable evidence. If someone is on death's door and then suddenly pulled back into the realm of the living, perhaps he or she glimpsed into the moments prior to the soul leaving the body and joining the great cosmic consciousness beyond. This ghost-in-the-shell hypothesis, if you could call it that, is

ubiquitous and seems to satisfy the imaginations of the public at large. In fact, 71% of Americans believe in the persistence of the soul after death. And in 1907,

Massachusetts

physician Duncan MacDougall claims to have measured the mass of the soul as it exited the body upon its passing – 21 grams, to be exact.

Granted, nobody has ever managed to reproduce MacDougall's findings, and there exists not a single shred of physical evidence as to the existence of the, let's face it, fundamentally immeasurable soul. So, scientists have set out to find an evidence-based explanation for near-death phenomena.

First of all, I think it's interesting to note that the vast majority of near-death survivors never actually report having a near-death experience. And in one study, around half of the people who reported one were not actually in danger of dying. What's clear is that when the brain undergoes severe trauma, like reduced oxygen

flow, blood pressure drops, or sharp increases in blood carbon dioxide levels, interesting things start to happen psychologically.

First, a white light at the end of a tunnel, as David Hovda of the UCLA Brain Injury Research Center explains, is the only thing we can really expect a person to see as they get closer and closer to death. For efficiency's sake, the brain tends to function only in areas needed for basic survival, like the hindbrain, which includes the pons and medulla. Given that the rest of the higher brain regions are essentially shut down, if visual areas like the superior colliculus or occipital cortex are suddenly activated, no higher-level processing can exist, and a bright light is all we would be able to see.

And in 2005, researchers in Switzerland found that the so-called out-of-body experience so commonly reported in near-death cases can be induced by stimulating the temporo-parietal junction on the right side of the brain. This research offers compelling evidence that disruption of the very brain region thought to be responsible for sensory integration and the so-called sixth sense of proprioception --or understanding where your body is in space--could produce a sensation like we're floating above our own bodies. And anyone who has abused the drugs ketamine or dextromethorphan understands what a dissociative anesthetic can do. These drugs act on NMDA receptors in the brain and can produce a sensation that you're detached from your own body or even from the world.

And in my opinion, one of the most fascinating, yet highly controversial explanations of near-death phenomena comes from Dr. Rick Strassman, who, in the 1990s, proposed that dimethyltryptamine or DMT is actually found within the human brain and released in large quantities from the pineal gland during death's approach (and perhaps during birth, as well). DMT is a naturally occurring psychedelic, and it's been dubbed the spirit molecule for its intense psychotropic properties. So, if Strassman's research pans out, it could be the case that the near-death experience is little more than a really good trip.

Out-of-body experiences can be induced both during neurosurgery and recreational drug use.

Current Affairs



America's Lifeblood

U.S. exports to China topped \$100 billion for the first time in 2011, the latest in a series of rapid expansions, according to a news report from the US-China Business Council.

That means China -- the world's second largest economy -- trails only Canada and Mexico as a buyer of American goods. Exports hit \$103.9 billion in 2011, an increase of \$12 billion over the previous year.

The recent growth will go a long way toward meeting President Obama's goal of doubling exports by 2014. But what is China buying? And from whom?

China bought \$14.7 billion in U.S. crops in 2011, plus \$13.7 billion of computers and electronics, \$13.6 billion of chemicals and \$13.2 billion worth of transportation equipment.

China also purchased a rather large amount of waste and scrap -- \$11.5 billion worth.

As a consequence of favorable geography, China sources most of its purchases from states on the west coast. California is the top exporting state, sending \$14.2 billion of goods across the Pacific. Washington and Texas are next, both registering totals north of \$10 billion.

It is possible, however, that China's slowing economy could hit American exports in the coming months. The Chinese government has lowered its growth target for this year, and has twice hiked gasoline prices in recent months. Other reports have indicated that China's manufacturing sector is contracting.

For the first time since 1949, the United States (the third largest producer of oil) exported more gasoline, heating oil and diesel fuel in the year 2011 than it imported (According to the Energy Department Report). Imports of crude oil and related products fell 11% last year, reaching a level not seen since 1995.

The question comes to mind that why are we paying higher gas prices on pump?

Crude at Gulf Coast refineries is priced at the Brent crude import price, no matter where it comes from. The secret to making a profit in refining these days is for refiners to source crude oil domestically and then sell the refined products to US consumers at prices based on imported oil.

Where does the US get most of its oil? It's not from the Middle East. It's from North America

Canada
18.2%

Mexico
11.4%

Saudi Arabia
11.0%

Venezuela
10.1%

Nigeria
8.4%



Point

Israel Should Destroy Iranian Nukes

By Bala Prasad

Israel is threatened with annihilation once the Iranians have their bomb and their delivery system is finally developed. What choice do they have but to stop this situation, no matter what. The U.S., as their most dependable supporter, recommends that they wait and let sanctions work. We think that an Iranian attack is not possible in the next two to three years. But Israel believes that their window of opportunity is shortening – no more than a year – after which their chances of success of a pre-emptive strike will be very low.

There is also the matter of mutual distrust. Neither the U.S. believes that Israel will not take a military action unilaterally; nor the Israelis believe that when the crunch time comes U.S. will come through militarily. So why not nip this situation in the bud, now that the U.S. has promised not to let Iran have the bomb, but only time can prove this to be true or not. Furthermore, this being an American presidential election year, the most support the Israelis can expect from us is before the election, not after. One must also remember that the ordinary citizens of the U.S. are very wary of fighting other country's wars under any pretext. For example, the Iraqi and Afghan conflicts come to mind. However, chances are very good that once an Israeli-Iranian conflict starts, the U.S. will be drawn into it, sooner rather than later.

Benjamin Netanyahu, faces the ultimate dilemma. As Prime Minister of Israel he does not allow Iran to become nuclear-ready under his watch. No doubt he knows the history of the holocaust, and does not want another spectrum of similar nature. He had said so in 2009, that Iran would not have nuclear power on his watch and preventing Iran from producing a nuclear weapon remains a central mission.

Additionally, some can say that Iran can de-group and try to develop nuclear weapons again later. But they have to know that the same fate will await them again. Remember the Iraqi and the Syrian nuclear program never re-materialized after their bombings in 1981 and 2007 respectively.

Once the nuclear weapons are eliminated certainly, diplomacy will continue to play an important role.

Finally, one must remember the difference between the times of the holocaust and now is that if the world does not stop, Iran-Israel can and will as their survival depends on it.

Counterpoint

Make Peace with Iran, Not War

By Anil Shrivastava 'Musafir'

It is sad that Iran is pursuing the development of nuclear weapons, however, a sovereign nation cannot be dictated, by another sovereign nation, not to do so. One can suggest relinquishment of such an endeavor but cannot dictate that it abandon them altogether. As much as we detest Iran's nuclear ambition, this is the reality we have to live with.

"If Iran is intent on getting a bomb, an attack would delay but not stop it. Indeed, using Western bombs as a tool to prevent nuclear proliferation risks making Iran only more determined to build a weapon – and more dangerous when it gets one." (Economist, March 25, 2012). A preemptive strike against Iran will do more harm than good to western interests in the long run. The strike may be deemed as a war against Islam by several Islamic states who would join Iran in launching rocket strikes and terror attacks against Israeli and American interests all over the world. The interruption and embargo on oil movement will ruin the world economy. We have not fully recovered from the 9-11 terror strike. It has already changed our way of life and has challenged our economic security. Imagine the consequences of a joint terrorist movement against us. We would all fall together instead of rising.

An attack on Iran's nuclear facilities is not easy anymore. They have grown wiser since the Israeli attack of their facility in 1981 when the Iranian program was more vulnerable. Now Iranian facilities are spread out making it harder to pin point a single target. Their facilities are modular in the sense that the surviving units can still operate to build a nuclear weapon and many of those sites can escape unscathed. Moreover, Iran's brainpower, know-how, worldwide suppliers and its vast stock of uranium piles would remain intact for another day.

The only solution to this dilemma is a regime change. We need a friendly Iran not another adversarial regime in that region of the world. We have enough enemies and wars at our hand. Let us make peace for a change.

History Trivia



Points in Time

Trivia Not!

There are many examples of trivia that are commonly held to be true, but are actually not true. Here are some of them.

Abner Doubleday is often mistakenly credited with inventing baseball. He never made such a claim, and there is no evidence to support it.

Thomas Edison did not invent the light bulb, nor did he get a patent for the first light bulb. He did come up with a bulb that was more practical and long lasting bulb.

It is often repeated that people only use 10 percent of their brains. This is simply untrue. Barry Gordon at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore says that this idea is so wrong it is almost laughable. "It turns out though, that we use virtually every part of the brain, and that [most of] the brain is active almost all the time," Gordon adds.

In a lightning storm, taking shelter in a car is safer than staying outside. This is not because of the rubber car tires. It is because the car acts as a faraday cage, a metal enclosure which gives the lightning a path around you in the event of a strike.

If asked what is the farthest point from the center of the earth, one might answer Mt. Everest. However, because the Earth is bigger around the equator, Mt. Chimborazo which is near the equator, is actually has the furthest point from the Earth's center.

Many may think of electricity flowing from the positive to the negative pole. However, the actual electrons move from the negative pole to the positive pole.

Countless movies and other media have portrayed cavemen and dinosaurs coexisting. The fact is, dinosaurs died out millions of years before humans evolved.

It is said that when a muscle bound athlete stops working out and being physically active, his muscle turns to fat. It is simply not true. The muscle shrinks and the fat is added.

It is often said that the Great Wall of China is the only man-made object that can be seen from the moon. This myth was dispelled by Captain Alan Bean, "The only thing you can see from the Moon is a beautiful sphere, mostly white, some blue and patches of yellow, and every once in a while some green vegetation. No man-made object is visible at this scale."

Because of the fiery scale of the Hindenburg disaster, it might be supposed that most if not all of the passengers perished. Actually, 61 people survived of the 97 on board the vessel.

The act of impeachment does not mean the removal from office. Impeachment allows for formal charges against a civil officer of government for crimes committed in office. Two U.S. Presidents have been impeached: Andrew Johnson (trial) and Bill Clinton (trial). Both were impeached by the House of Representatives but acquitted at the trials held by the Senate.

Firsts

First Music

Explanations of the origin of music depend on how music is defined. If we assume that music is a form of intentional emotional manipulation, music as we know it was not possible until the onset of intentionality - the ability to reflect about the past and the future. Between 60,000 and 30,000 years ago humans started creating art in the form of paintings on cave walls, jewellery and so on (the "cultural explosion").

First Farming

Agriculture involving domestication of plants and animals was developed at least 10,000 years ago, although some forms of agriculture such as forest gardening and fire-stick farming date back even earlier to prehistoric times.

First Writing

Writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols (known as a writing system). It is distinguished from illustration, such as cave drawing and painting.

Archaeologists have recently discovered that there was a civilization in Central Asia using writing 4,000 years ago. An excavation near Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan, revealed an inscription on a piece of stone that was used as a stamp seal.

First Math

Before the modern age and the worldwide spread of knowledge, written examples of new mathematical developments have come to light only in a few locales. The most ancient mathematical texts available are Plimpton 322 (Babylonian mathematics c. 1900 BC), the Rhind Mathematical Papyrus (Egyptian mathematics c. 2000-1800 BC) and the Moscow Mathematical Papyrus (Egyptian mathematics c. 1890 BC). All of these texts concern the so-called Pythagorean theorem, which seems to be the most ancient and widespread mathematical development after basic arithmetic and geometry.

Lifestyle



The Unkindest Cut of All

By Niru Prasad

Given the tremendous increase in crime in the United States, it's likely more patients are being treated with stab wounds. Management of these patients can sometimes prove challenging, M Stabbing victims may have also suffered blunt trauma from being kicked or otherwise beaten.

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

A stab wound is a penetrating injury that often results in haemorrhage from a major vessel or solid organ. Depending on the injury sites, the patient may present with altered mental status, hypoxia, paralysis, shock and active major bleeding.

Head/Neck Area. Penetrating injury to the head often causes an altered level of consciousness, the hallmark of brain injury. A stab wound to the head may produce brain contusion, concussion and massive bleeding from epidural, subdural and subarachnoid hemorrhage.

Penetrating injury to the neck can cause hemorrhage from a lacerated major vessel, paralysis from a damaged spinal cord or fractured cervical vertebra, and/or hypoventilation from paralysis of intercostal muscles and involvement of C3-C5 spinal-cord segments.

Chest. A stab wound to the chest may cause tension pneumothorax, massive hemothorax, sucking chest wound, flail chest or cardiac tamponade. The patient may experience severe respiratory distress due to hypoxia, which results from diminished blood volume; contusion of the lungs, leading to ventilatory failure; or changes in the pressure relationship within the pleural space, leading to displacement of mediastinal structures and lung collapse. Since hypoxia is the most important feature of chest injury, early intervention must ensure oxygenation to the portions of the lung that are capable of normal ventilation and perfusion.

Tension pneumothorax develops when a stab wound to the chest creates a valve-like opening in the chest wall. The presence of air in the thoracic cavity causes collapse of the lung; mediastinal shift to the opposite side, resulting in interference with venous return; and compression of ventilation to the other lung. This ultimately impairs cardiac output. The patient will exhibit dyspnea, anxiety and restlessness.

Open pneumothorax (sucking chest wound) causes noisy breathing, as well as bubbling air and blood from the wound. Air is drawn through a hole in the chest wall

into the pleural space by negative intrapleural pressure during inhalation. The larger the hole, the more serious the injury. Initial care is aimed at sealing the wound.

Massive hemothorax results when a stab wound disrupts the systemic or pulmonary vessel, and it occurs with a blood loss of 1,500 cc or more into the chest cavity. As more blood accumulates, the patient experiences dyspnea. His neck veins may be flat due to severe hypovolemia or distended as a result of the mechanical effects of a chest cavity full of blood. He may become severely hypotensive and show signs of shock.

Flail chest develops when the sternum and/or several ribs are fractured in more than one place, resulting in a lack of bony continuity in the thoracic cage. The unsupported portion of the chest wall moves paradoxically, expanding during exhalation and deflating during inhalation. The underlying lung will often suffer contusions, hindering oxygenation.

Cardiac tamponade may result from a stab wound to the anterior chest area. This penetrating heart wound causes bleeding into the pericardial sac and possible rupture of the aorta or cardiac muscle. As blood fills the sac, heart function is increasingly hampered. This is an extreme emergency, necessitating rapid transport to the hospital.

Other potentially lethal chest injuries include pulmonary contusion, disruption of the aorta, tracheobronchial disruption, esophageal disruption, traumatic diaphragmatic hernia and myocardial contusion.

Abdomen. A stab wound to the abdomen frequently leads to hemorrhage from the penetration of major vessels or solid organs, such as the liver or spleen. Patients may also suffer perforation of a bowel segment, evisceration of bowel content, or injury to the kidneys, stomach, ureters or pancreas.

Remember to check the patient's back for stab wounds. Wounds to the kidneys are ominous. You may also find a stab wound that has completely penetrated the torso, with an entrance wound in front and exit wound in back (or vice versa). If you fail to check for posterior wounds, the patient can quickly exsanguinate.

Extremities. Stab wounds to the upper and lower extremities may lead to life-threatening conditions such as massive open fracture, with ragged, dirty wounds; vascular injuries, with or without fracture, proximal to the

knee or elbow; traumatic amputation of an arm or leg; or penetrating injury to the pelvic organs. Limb-threatening injuries include lacerations of the knee or hip; open fractures of the wrist or forearm, with circulatory impairment; amputation (complete or incomplete); and crush injuries.

Continued on Following Page

Unkindest Cut of All

EMS RESPONSE

As with any other patient, the stab victim requires prompt identification and treatment of life-threatening conditions. It's essential for you to recognize prehospital priorities.

EMS dispatchers essentially perform the first patient assessment by attempting to determine the nature and severity of the injury. They must then alert and mobilize EMS units, as well as notify police that a stabbing has occurred. Because a stabbing is a violent crime, you must exercise caution when responding. request police backup before approaching the patient. Once police have secured the scene, you may treat the victim.

Primary Survey. Your primary survey must identify and treat the most life-threatening emergencies. With a stabbed patient, the ABCs are paramount.

Airway. Start by asking the patient if he's OK. If he can speak, his airway is patent, breathing is intact and cerebral circulation is adequate. If he's unresponsive, gently open the airway with a chin-lift or jaw-thrust maneuver, with gentle in-line traction of the cervical spine, and remove any foreign debris from the mouth or nose.

In a conscious, breathing patient, give supplemental oxygen (10 L/min) by face mask. If respiratory efforts are inadequate or the airway is unprotected by gag reflex due to CNS depression or flail chest, maintain ventilation with oxygen delivered by bag-mask device at a high flow rate (15 L/min, or as close to 100% oxygen as possible) until tracheal intubation is performed. In patients with suspected neck injury, the neck should be immobilized with a rigid cervical collar, tape and neck rolls, while your partner provides axial head traction.

Nasotracheal or orotracheal intubation should be performed in the unconscious, nonbreathing patient by qualified personnel. Following intubation, ventilate with 100% humidified oxygen through the bag-valve-mask device.

Breathing. Completely expose the patient's chest to assess ventilatory ex-change. Perform a careful physical examination with the look, listen and feel technique. Look for any obvious respiratory distress, cyanosis, tachypnea and in-adequate chest expansion. Listen for breath sounds in both lung fields. Feel for any crepitus or bony deformity.

If the patient has suffered a sucking chest wound or is actively bleeding, seal the wound at three points with an occlusive dressing. Control hemorrhage by applying a firm dressing and pressure to the area. If excessive hemorrhage persists, the wound may need to be sealed with bulky dressings.

If the patient has a flail chest, the segment should be stabilized properly. Apply constant, firm manual pressure, or use pillows. The patient can sometimes help by holding a pillow firmly against the chest wall.

If the patient is intubated and breath sounds are diminished on one side, withdraw the ET tube 2-3 cm., to

ascertain if the tip is residing in the right mainstem bronchus, and recheck breath sounds. Persistent diminished unilateral breath sounds imply pneumothorax. If this patient is hypotensive, in shock and in severe respiratory distress- and if local protocols allow the appropriate personnel to do so-decompress the chest with a 14-gauge angiocatheter inserted into the second intercostal space in the midclavicular line on the side of the pneumothorax.

Circulation with hemorrhage control. Determine the adequacy of peripheral perfusion and oxygenation by checking the patient's pulse, skin color and capillary refill time. Assess the pulse for quality, rate and regularity. Check the heart sounds. Muffled heart tones indicate cardiac tamponade. Hook up the patient to a cardiac monitor.

Occult hemorrhage into the thoracic cavity, abdominal cavity or muscle surrounding a fracture can account for substantial blood loss. Exsanguinating hemorrhage should be identified and controlled by applying direct pressure to the wound. Abdominal or lower-extremity hemorrhage can be controlled with MAST trousers. Be concerned if you find a stab wound through and through. Turn the patient over with a logroll to ensure control of hemorrhage. Attempt to start two large-bore IVs with 16-gauge needles, while drawing blood for type and cross match, as well as baseline hematologic and chemical studies. IV fluids of choice for stab victims in hypovolemic shock are isotonic normal saline and Ringer's lactate. Don't delay transport if you're unable to start the IV.

Brief neurologic evaluation. After completing the primary survey, assess the level of consciousness (LOC) and determine pupillary size and reaction.

The level of consciousness is determined by AVPU: A (alertness), V (responds to vocal stimuli), P (responds to painful stimuli and U (unresponsiveness). A decreased LOC indicates impaired cerebral oxygenation and perfusion, and immediate reevaluation of the patient's oxygenation and ventilatory status is indicated.

Secondary Survey. If the stab victim has sustained life-threatening injuries, immediate resuscitation and transport to the hospital take priority over the secondary survey. Make immediate contact with medical control, and prepare to transport your patient.

If time permits, you can perform the secondary survey-a complete head-to-toe examination of the patient. This includes:

* **Head.** Examine the head for bruises, deformity and scalp wounds. Impaled knives should be left alone, and bandages should be applied around the wound. Secure objects with tape and dressing to ensure they won't move.

If a stab wound to the scalp area has caused extensive laceration, the flap of skin should be gently replaced over the wound. Apply compression with a dry, sterile bandage. Once bleeding is controlled, the dressing can be secured with a soft roller bandage.

* Face. Look for maxillofacial trauma, loose teeth, blood and leakage of cerebrospinal fluid from the nose and ears.

* Spine and neck. Carefully examine the neck for cervical-spine fracture by gently palpating for crepitus, tenderness or step-off deformity. Control active bleeding with pressure dressings.

* Chest area. Thorough examination of the anterior and posterior areas will reveal a sucking chest wound, stab entrance and exit wounds, or a large flail chest. Breath sounds

Continued on Following Page

Continued from Previous Page

Unkindest Cut of All

are auscultated at the apex for pneumothorax or at the base for hemothorax. Distant heart tones and engorged neck veins indicate cardiac tamponade.

* Abdomen. Examine the abdomen for distension and abdominal-wall wounds. Palpate the liver and spleen for tenderness, guarding and rigidity, and listen for bowel sounds. Examine the back area for bruises, lacerations or any abnormal findings.

* Extremities. Check the extremities and pelvic area for any obvious wounds, bleeding, bony deformity or crepitus. If the patient is hypotensive, apply MAST trousers.

* Neurologic exam Frequently evaluate the patient's neurologic condition-not only motor and sensory evaluation of the extremities, but also level of consciousness and score on Glasgow coma scale.

PREPARING FOR TRANSPORT

Before transport, transfer the patient to a long or short spine board, with adequate immobilization. All serious injuries should have been stabilized, and you must continue to assure the adequacy of the patient's vital signs through periodic monitoring. If a life-threatening injury is present, however, current trauma protocols suggest that you "load and go" with the patient, without delay.

The patient should be adequately ventilated with humidified oxygen, W fluids should be running, and the cardiac monitor should be in place. All bleeding should be properly controlled.

Carefully record all findings and treatment. Repeat assessments must also be documented. The progression of vital signs and neurologic status is especially important to ED personnel.

Obtain a history from the patient or relatives regarding allergies, medications, and alcohol or drug abuse.

En route to the hospital, be sure to monitor vital signs and continue support of respiratory and circulatory systems, including blood-volume replacement.

cards, a box, small plastic wedges to fit into the playing pieces, and a die.

The Game of Trivial Pursuit

The object of the game is to move around the board by correctly answering trivia questions. Questions are split into six categories, with each one having its own color to identify itself; in the classic version of Trivial Pursuit, the Genus edition, these are Geography (blue), Entertainment (pink), History (yellow), Arts & Literature (brown), Science & Nature (green), and Sports & Leisure (orange). The game includes: a board, playing pieces, question

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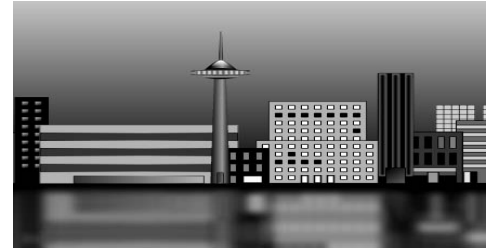
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American Scene



Not So Trivial

By David Beagan

There are many who take delight in trivia. One of my favorites is, "What is the southernmost state?" Lest you think it is Texas or Florida, the answer is Hawaii -- and by quite a bit. I would be hard pressed to think of a situation where this knowledge would be useful, I guess that's why it is called trivia. But when you think about it, trivia is not such a trivial thing. In so many situations, knowledge that was once thought to be of no use turned out to be valuable.

I have always loved the saying, "A weed is a plant that we haven't found a use for yet." The same could be said of trivia, "Trivia is knowledge that has not been applied yet."

In the 1940s Dr. Percy Spencer noticed the seemingly trivial fact that when he was testing a new vacuum tube called a magnetron, the candy bar in his pocket had melted. He could have just left this as a curious observation, but he didn't. He went on to experiment with his new finding and developed a makeshift microwave oven.

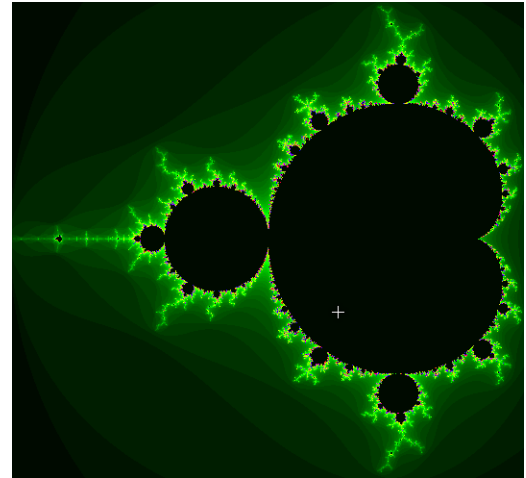
Perhaps one of the most incredible applications of so-called trivial knowledge was the development of cryptography, the science of scrambling information to keep it secure. For years mathematicians had developed and studied something called number theory. Until the 1970s it had only been a plaything in the realm of pure mathematics. Then researchers developed a way to use number theory to perform encryption of information -- even if the two parties never have a chance to meet privately to exchange a secret encryption key. Amazingly, two people can establish a secure communication code even if someone is listening in the whole time. This is crucial to the safe communication on the internet.

Mathematicians may object to the characterization of pure mathematics as trivia or trivial. But it is trivia in the sense of not having practical application at the present time. When you start to look at it that way, it is apparent that we are confronted by a sea of trivia and the challenge is to pick out those drops of information that are relevant or useful. The whole discipline of data mining in the field of computer science is to pick out those nuggets of valuable information from the pile of data that is available.

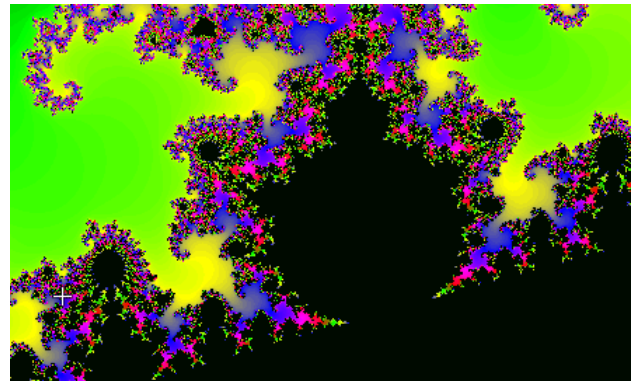
The Mandelbrot set, another mathematical plaything, is mesmerizingly beautiful. The images shown can only hint at its infinite intricacy (see

<http://neave.com/fractal/> to interact with it online.

Overall, it looks something like this:



As you zoom in on one of its edges, more detail emerges. You can keep on zooming and seeing more detail, zoom more, see more detail, forever. It is mathematically generated with a simple formula.



So what good is it, other than being a piece of amusing mathematical trivia? It is said that Michael Faraday when asked this question after demonstrating an electrical apparatus, responded, "What good is a new born baby?" In fact, the Mandelbrot set led to a deeper understanding of objects in the natural world, plants, mountains, clouds, etc., and then to new area of mathematics called fractals. Later, fractal image compression was developed, a way of storing images in less space.

As efforts to digitize the world's library by Google and others, more of the world's trivia will be employed to useful advantage.

Science Trivia



A Miscellany of Trivia

It is amazing how often in the history of science and technology that the same discovery has been made independently at about the same time. Here are some examples.

Isaac Newton and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz each independently developed calculus in the 17th century.

In 1773 Carl Wilhelm Scheele discovered oxygen. The next year, Joseph Priestly also discovered oxygen.

In 1876 both Alexander Graham Bell and Elisha Gray filed a patent for the invention of the telephone on the same day.

“When the time is ripe for certain things, these things appear in different places in the manner of violets coming to light in early spring.”
-- Farkas Bolyai

While many may think of mathematics as a cold logical subject. However, there are many amazing mathematical results:

The Banach–Tarski paradox is a theorem in set theoretic geometry which states the following: Given a solid ball in 3-dimensional space, there exists a decomposition of the ball into a finite number of non-overlapping pieces (called subsets), which can then be put back together in a different way to yield two identical copies of the original ball.



We have all heard of infinity. Mathematicians call this aleph-0 symbolized as \aleph_0 . Beyond this, there is another larger infinity called aleph-1. Beyond this another even larger infinity called aleph-2. This continues on to ever larger infinities without limit.

The Metric System

Long scale is the English translation of the French term *échelle longue*. It refers to a system of large-number names in which every new term greater than million is 1,000,000 times the previous term: *billion* means *a million millions* (10^{12}), *trillion* means *a million billions* (10^{18}), and so on.

Short scale is the English translation of the French term *échelle courte*. It refers to a system of large-number names in which every new term greater than million is 1,000 times the previous term: *billion* means *a thousand millions* (10^9), *trillion* means *a thousand billions* (10^{12}), and so on.

Less than a thousand million, the two scales are identical. At and above a thousand million, the two scales diverge by using the same words for different number values. These “false friends” can be a source of misunderstanding.

For most of the 19th and 20th centuries, the UK uniformly used the long scale, while the US used the short scale, so that the two systems were often referred to as *British* and *American*. In 1974, the UK government switched to the short scale, as reflected in its mass media and official usage.

Prefix	Symbol	Decimal	Short scale	Long scale	Since
yotta	Y	1000000000000000000000000	Septillion	Quadrillion	1991
zetta	Z	1000000000000000000000000	Sextillion	Trilliard	1991
exa	E	1000000000000000000000000	Quintillion	Trillion	1975
peta	P	1000000000000000000000000	Quadrillion	Billiard	1975
tera	T	1000000000000000000000000	Trillion	Billion	1960
giga	G	1000000000000000000000000	Billion	Milliard	1960
mega	M	1000000	Million		1960
kilo	k	1000	Thousand		1795
hecto	h	100	Hundred		1795
deca	da	10	Ten		1795
		1	One		–
deci	d	0.1	Tenth		1795
centi	c	0.01	Hundredth		1795
milli	m	0.001	Thousandth		1795
micro	μ	0.000001	Millionth		1960
nano	n	0.000000001	Billionth	Milliardth	1960
pico	p	0.000000000001	Trillionth	Billionth	1960
femto	f	0.000000000000001	Quadrillionth	Billiardth	1964
atto	a	0.00000000000000001	Quintillionth	Trillionth	1964
zepto	z	0.0000000000000000001	Sextillionth	Trilliardth	1991
yocto	y	0.000000000000000000001	Septillionth	Quadrillionth	1991

Mental Exercise



By David Beagan

Secret Stone

A person has three stones, white, gray, and black, and secretly puts one in his fist. The person says you must guess the color of the stone by asking one question. He will answer the question with one of three answers:

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

What single question can you ask so that you know the stone's color?

Family Birthdays

Jenny tells her teacher, my father and grandfather will pick me up after school today. It is their birthday. The teacher says, that's interesting, what is the difference in their ages? Jenny responds, oh, they were born on the same day. The teacher says that is not possible. But it was possible, how?

What Am I?

I have streets but no pavement,
I have cities but no buildings,
I have parks but no trees,
I have rivers yet no water.

What Am I?

Opposites Attract

Match the word on the left with a word on the right that could be considered its opposite.

capital	alkaline
sublimation	miniscule
ductile	albatross
acid	deposition
triple bogey	strike
gutter	brittle

Blind Deal

You are in a completely dark room. You are given a deck of 52 playing cards with ten cards facing up and the rest facing down. The

challenge is to divide the cards into two piles with the same number of cards facing up. The two piles don't necessarily need to have the same number of cards. Also, there is no way to tell by feel which cards are facing up or down.

Do the Math

What mathematical symbol can be put between 5 and 9, to get a number bigger than 5 and smaller than 9?

Answers

Secret Stone

You ask: If I choose one of the stones that you did not pick, would mine be lighter than yours? He answers **no** he has **white**. He answers **yes** he has **black**. He answers **I don't know** he has **gray**.

Family Birthdays

The grandfather was Jenny's mother's father. Unusual but definitely possible.

What Am I?

A map.

Opposites Attract

capital	miniscule
sublimation	deposition
ductile	brittle
acid	alkaline
triple bogey	albatross
gutter	strike

Blind Deal

Divide the cards into two piles, one of 10 cards and the other with 42 cards. Now simply turn the pile of ten cards over.

With a little reflection, or even trying it out, you should see that it works.

Do the Math

How about a decimal point. The result is:

5.9

Publisher's Desk



Food, Education and the Pursuit of Healthcare

By Bala Prasad

Last two months have been very educational. Every world leader has an opinion as to what ails the US and what is the best cure for it. Furthermore, there are great differences of opinion as to what are the most serious problems affecting mankind. This in turn depends on who we are and where on the face of the earth we are standing. Obviously the problems of sub-Saharan Africa will be different than America.

However, it seems to me that the world economy has its ups and downs, in general the life of most of the people are much better most of the time as compared to hundreds. But even in America, the wealthiest country on the face of the earth, there are a good number of people that are still going hungry, remain uneducated and uninsured; we are the leader of the free world. To want food, health care and education should be considered our right. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor, it does not matter who you are white, black, Hispanic or other. It does not matter whether you are a citizen or immigrant, legal or illegal. What matters is everybody should have access to food, health care and education. If you live in the United States it should be available.

Let me be more clear, I am against any amnesty for illegal immigrants but if we cannot remove them from this country, we must not deny them these rights. After all, what purpose does it serve the people who arrive to this country with barely anything let alone being sick, hungry and uneducated? What would we rather have, educated and healthy people living in this great country of ours or hungry and uneducated sick human beings?

President Kennedy started the Peace Corps in the 1960's. The idea was to teach the world how to improve itself. Why is it as the richest nation and the leader of the free world; we cannot do this for our own citizens?

No doubt other people have other ideas as to what should be guaranteed to us in our constitution and what should be our God given right. No matter what policy government institutes, it cannot make everybody happy. The greatness of a society is not because of its rightness or wrongness, but what we believe to be right or wrong. Look at the issue of capital punishment, the right to live and right to bear arms. Every group of people wants this right or that protection but a line should be drawn some place. In the opinion of this writer there is nothing more basic after your God given right than the right to not go hungry, the right to an education and the right to have basic health care.

Sincerely,

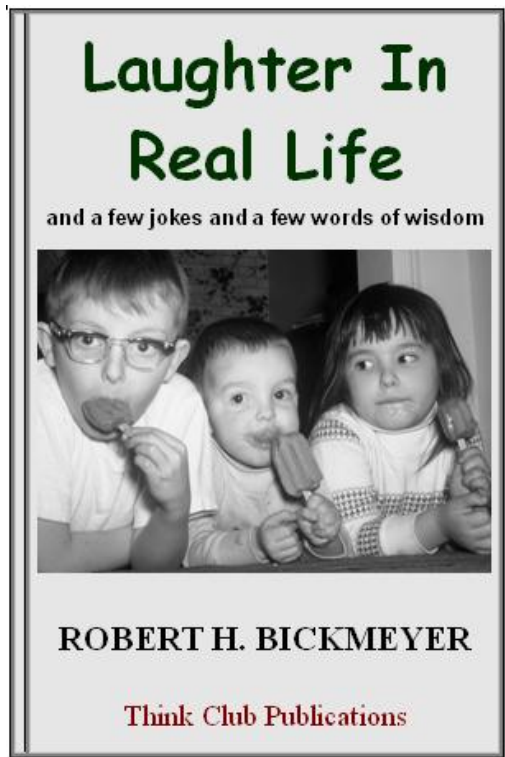
Bala Prasad

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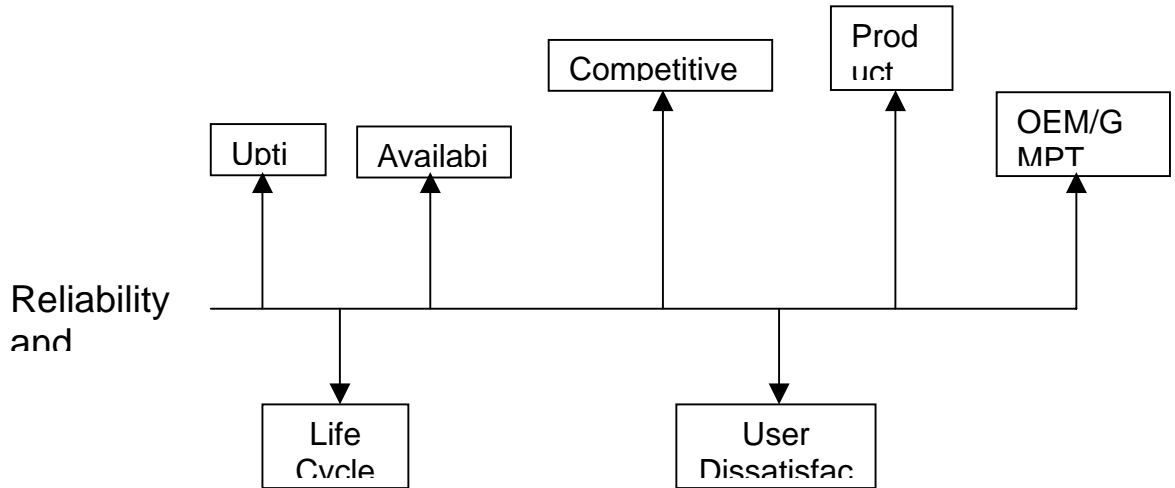
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