

A forum to encourage independent thinking

# The THINK Club

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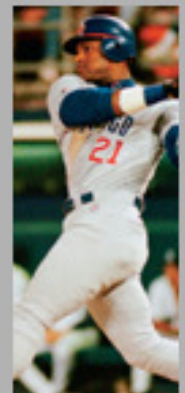


## The Next World War?



## Is It Time For A Woman President?

## Who Is Afraid of the Hispanic Majority?



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Think Club Publications

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# Women Are Angels!

By Musafir



There are no road signs or markers leading to *Kothia* in that forgotten and forlorn part of rural India near the Indo-Nepal border. On a silent night, one can hear the droning sound of incessant melody reciting the life of *Sita*. If you do, you have unmistakably arrived in *Kothia*. That is the distinctive trait of my village – the women of *Kothia* singing songs in praise of *Sita* in eloquent *Maithili* (a local dialect).

I grew up in *Kothia* and lived there until the age of seven. *Sita*, the wife of *Lord Rama* was born fifteen miles away from my village. She personified the image of an ideal wife married to *Lord Rama*. *Sita* decided to accompany her husband *Rama* to the forest who was exiled by his father and step-mother and was ordered to lead the life of a hermit for fourteen years. While living in exile, *Sita* was abducted by a demon named *Ravana* and later was abandoned by her own husband, *Rama* because one of *Rama*'s subjects doubted *Sita*'s chastity because she lived in *Ravana*'s custody. *Sita* suffered and led a miserable life despite her pioussness and good deeds. *Sita* was an angel. Her legacy still lives among the women of *Kothia* who continue to suffer until this day despite their virtues and sacrifices. Women are angels!

My mother died when I was six months old. My responsibility was given to my aunt who lives in the remote village, *Kothia*. She took care of me until I was seven. She would never let me out of her sight and had an inseparable attachment towards me. I never knew that she was not my real mother until the day my father wanted to take me with him to a more sophisticated environment for my education and overall development. At that point, my aunt did not resist. She made this sacrifice for my betterment. Today at the age of eighty, she lives alone in the same remote village of India without any expectations from me.

While living in the village, I was the darling of all the women of *Kothia*. They all loved me and cared for me despite their own horrific and pathetic life. They brought joy and security to my life by adoring me. I owe my life, success and well being to my aunt and all those women of the village who came in my life as angels.

*Sukhia* was our maid. She was very pretty, but belonged to a lower caste and was very poor. Her mother used to lament, "Beauty is a reward for the rich but it is a curse for the poor." Several male members of the village made passes at her and

flirted with her. Her brother-in-law was a drunkard and tried to rape her several times. Despite all that, *Sukhia* always met me with a smile and took care of me with utmost love and care. *Sukhia* is still alive. She lives in the same mud house in my old village. She cannot see anymore. Last time I saw her, it was in 1999. As soon as I stepped inside her door, she asked, "Is this Anil?" She could still tell me by my footsteps.

*Ghulab Devi*, a widow and a social worker used to play peek-a-boo with me. She was regarded as inauspicious because she was a widow. People in the village used to hate her because her mission in life was the upliftment of other widows. She was raped by one of the upper caste males. *Ghulab Devi* committed suicide when she found out that she was pregnant. I remember witnessing her dead body which lay untouched for days. No one would cremate her because she was considered to be an evil spirit.

Everyone thought that *Ragho*'s wife was too beautiful to belong to her husband's family, but she got what her parents' dowry could afford. *Ragho*'s wife was tortured by her mother-in-law while her husband lived in a far-away city to earn money for the family. *Ragho* died of cholera and his mother blamed it all on *Ragho*'s wife who, according to the mother-in-law, had brought bad luck to the family. The mother-in-law tried to burn her alive and then asked her to leave home. *Rago*'s wife, disfigured, ended up as a beggar in a nearby town. How can I forget her smile? I was the reason for it.

I always hated *Kamli* until I became old enough to understand her circumstances. She was the wife of *Siddhu*, a poor laborer and mistress of *Mohan Singh*, the landlord. *Mohan Singh* kept her as collateral for a loan of money to her husband. *Kamli* always considered me as a role model for other children in the village and took pride in my academic achievements. Upon the death of *Mohan Singh*, she ran a school in *Mohan Singh*'s old house and placed a plaque with my name engraved on it at the entrance of the school. I regret that I always misunderstood her and never paid attention to her.

Not much has changed in *Kothia*. Women there still live in a perpetual cycle of misery and abuse. I plan to write about them in my upcoming book, '*Women Are Angels*' in an effort to bring awareness to the plight of women in rural India. Books may come and books may go, but the women of *Kothia* will always stay in my heart and mind. Soaring in an instant over rolling fields of my childhood places, my imagination flies then lands beneath my favorite banyan tree where I find the women of *Kothia* still playing hide and seek with me and chanting hymns in praise of *Sita*. Women are angels!

## Who Is Afraid of a Hispanic Majority?

By Musafir

Hispanics, mostly Mexicans but also inclusive of people from other Spanish speaking countries, are the largest minority group in America. There is an influx of illegal immigrants into the U.S. from Mexico. Many of us seem to be uneasy about this and are concerned that Hispanics will ultimately replace Caucasians as a majority ethnic and racial group in the U.S.

If we are so afraid, why don't we choose to work as farm laborers in the potato fields of Idaho or become household servants to serve the affluent? Why don't we line up on the street corners of New Orleans to be picked up by the contractors to do grunt work? We don't do that either because either we already have a better paying job or some of us just prefer welfare to grunt work. If those jobs are taken by the Hispanics, why are we complaining?

There are estimated 12 million illegal Mexicans in the U.S. working as waiters, maids, gardeners and laborers. They are needed because market forces have created a demand for them. They are here because America and the Americans need them. The employers hire them despite the dysfunctional 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli Act which made it a crime to knowingly hire illegal immigrants. If it were not for those illegal Mexican laborers, many establishments in the U.S. would immediately shut down, giving rise to chaos.

Furthermore, the Center for Immigration Study's data shows that "the average illegal household pays more than \$4,200 a year in federal taxes, for a total of nearly \$16 billion" (Center for Immigration Studies). Illegal immigrants can pay taxes using a nine digit individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) (Gaona, 2004). In addition, "about 43 percent, or \$7 billion, of the federal taxes that the illegal immigrants pay go to Social Security and Medicare" (Center for Immigration Studies).

The perception that the Hispanics will dilute American values and will not assimilate is wrong. The first generation Hispanics speak Spanish for the same reason other first-generation non-English speaking immigrants speak in their own native tongues. According to research conducted by Jack Citrin, Amy Lerman, Michael Murakami (all of the University of California, Berkeley), the second generation Hispanics tend to accept English as their primary language and the third generation Hispanics only speak English.

The Hispanics are equally religious, if not more, compared to any other ethnic group living in America and "there is no evidence that they or their offspring are quicker to abandon God or country than other Americans." (Harvard scholar Samuel Huntington). Antonio Villaraigosa, the first Hispanic mayor of Los Angeles is a good example. He is an American mayor not a Hispanic mayor. His first act as mayor was requiring all city commissioners, his entire staff, and all city employees to sign an ethics pledge. In addition, he removed all lobbyists from city commissions and made it his policy to never appoint a lobbyist to a city commission any time during his term. These efforts were completed to remove what he believed to be a sense of corruption and lack of trust in city government. What is wrong with that?

More Hispanics have fought for America than any other immigrant group in recent years. Twenty thousand Hispanics took part in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm (1990-1991). By 1997, Hispanics made up almost a third of the infantry, artillery crews and specialists deployed to Bosnia for peacekeeping operations. Hispanics have also been on the frontlines in the war on terrorism and in Afghanistan.

Hispanics have also contributed to the American music and sports scene. They have enriched our lives and have mesmerized us with their sweet melodies and vibrant rhythms. Hispanic music's wide variety is represented by artists like Jennifer Lopez, Selena, Gloria Stefan and many more.

In my personal dealing with Hispanics, I have found them to be more polite and courteous than the rest of us. If in doubt, compare the aides, porters, and other support-staff at any of the northeast American airports with their counterparts in San Jose, San Diego or Phoenix. Visit any gas station in those cities and ask questions to the attendants. The difference will be very apparent. This is not stereotyping. These are my experiences after living in America for thirty-five years and upon dealing with both the Hispanic and the mainstream population. It is time we made Hispanic people a part of mainstream America, and provided legal status to the twelve million illegal immigrants living in fear so that they can also receive equal treatment and achieve their American dreams like the rest of us.

## How to Become a Guru without Really Trying

By Musafir

The early signs after I finished my education weren't particularly encouraging, so I left my parents, deserted my friends and changed my country. At the end of my career, I am proud to announce that I have progressed up the greasy pole satisfactorily because, at last, I find myself above the poverty line.

For the vast majority of my miserable survival, I didn't have a life, though I always pretended to have one. In reality I have been lonely, emotionally timid and miserably inept. I conveniently blamed it all on discrimination. Others sympathized with me and believed that I had the potential to do better had I stayed back in the old country.

I succeeded in pulling together a bunch of friends most of whom were as dull and mind-numbingly boring as I was. We became a very close-knit, ferociously loyal team. These friends were the only ones who would listen to my substandard rhetoric at meaningless parties. Nevertheless, this made me feel immensely proud. Encouraged by this mediocrity, I expanded my reach to speaking at marriages and family gatherings.

One of my main reasons for the compulsion to impress my equally inept friends was that I could never escape the tragic state of my soulless job and career that had put my life on hold. For a while, I had this nagging feeling that all my glories were confined to my equally bungling friends. Also, more worrying, my "intellectual factor" was diminishing as many of my friends started competing with me for 'equal time and equal absurdity.'

Fortunately I came across a survey that revealed that a whole generation of men and women had realized that the "You can have it all" dream was just that – a dream. I found a bunch of younger friends and relatives who had beaten themselves up at work desperately trying to achieve the impossible dream. As a matter of fact, they were the ones most concerned about whether their family and friends thought they were doing well in life. Since no one in my equally inept circle of friends cared to fill this vacuum, I decided to take on this daunting task. To my pleasant surprise, very soon I assumed the status of a guru among them. If you too want to be a dominant force among these, off-shored, downsized washouts, follow my expertise. Keep a condescending attitude (at least the five key ones) and remember the corresponding one-liners to go with each attitude type.

1. *Heads I win, tails you lose!* Needless to mention that this is a win-win attitude. You can intimidate any gullible creature by uttering it 'exactly' before letting them go any further:

Gullible Creature (GC): "My life is slipping away."

Guru: "Exactly!"

GC: "I need to change my priorities."

Guru: "Exactly!"

GC: "Oh, what is the purpose of it all?"

Guru: "Exactly."

2. *You ought to respect me!* The idea is to hide your ignorance at all costs. The recommended *mantra* here is, "You bet!"

GC: "Am I failing because of a mid-life crisis?"

Guru: "You bet!"

GC: "Should I start thinking from the right side of my brain, instead of the left?"

Guru: "You bet!"

GC: "Obviously, we can all learn the purpose of our existence from you."

Guru: "You bet!"

3. *You are worthless; I am not!* The idea here is to nip the gullible mind in the bud; otherwise, they may become a threat to your intellect and social standing someday. The killer phrase is, "That's what you think."

GC: "Sometimes I feel that I still have time to achieve my dreams."

Guru: "That's what you think!"

GC: "Well, there must be a place for me in the cosmos!"

Guru: "That's what you think!"

GC: "I firmly believe that God had a purpose in mind before creating me."

Guru: "That's what you think!?"

4. *Always make them feel guilty!* The gullible have two major weaknesses, feelings of shame and feeling of guilt. A guru has to make sure that the gullible masses never rise above their guilt. I highly recommend the one-liner, "I've had just about enough." This has worked wonders for me.

GC: "Socrates taught that the unexamined life was not worth living. Have you ever examined your own life?"

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

GC: "But you have evaded all my questions with one-liners."

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

GC: "How you got here, I mean how did you become a guru? Is that Google, AltaVista or Ask Jeeves? Why don't you directly take me to that search engine?"

Guru: "I've had just about enough."

5. *Obey me!* There will come a time in the life of every gullible when he or she will find you overwhelming. You must show your compassion at that time to bring them back into your fold. The most effective one-liner for such a situation is, "That is your decision." The idea is to allow them some space by keeping a short leash.

GC: "I want to try real medicine instead of sipping herbal tea ten times a day."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

GC: "I really do not want to believe in a guru-of-the-month."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

GC: "I want you to stop intruding in my life and simply go away."

Guru: "That is your decision!"

I hope the above steps will help you reach 'self-actualization' without climbing the steep steps of Maslow's pyramid. It has not only worked for me, but has also provided me with much needed meaning of life. Congratulate me; I am a 'guru' without really trying!

## The Next World War?

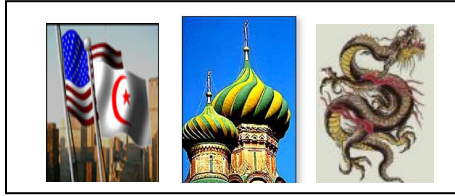
By Musafir

The resurgence of Russian ambitions, Chinese 'Star Wars' capability and the radical Islamic agenda are the three biggest threats facing the American hegemony on the global scene.

Contrary to the popular belief, Russia is still a military superpower despite the breakup of the Soviet Union. We should not forget that their deliverable nuclear missiles are still aimed at the U.S and the European countries. Thanks to the reversal in their financial fortune, Russia is now planning to reestablish its naval base in the Mediterranean which will be a definite threat to American naval supremacy, and that is just the beginning.

On top of that, Russia recently lodged its flag onto the seabed at the North Pole. Russia has thus reiterated its claim to the billions of tons of oil and gas reserves in the Arctic. Canada and Denmark (Greenland) are two other countries which claim parts of the Arctic, but they do not have the might and resources of Russia to validate their claim. The U.S. has the proximity to a small part of the Arctic that borders Alaska. Some U.S. Senators are advocating going to the International Court to resolve the issue, but they forget that power and not international law will ultimately settle this issue.

China recently destroyed an idle satellite in space. Let's not forget that there is more to it than meets the eye. The anti-satellite test (ASAT) is a major threat to America as a superpower. American military might is dependent on its capability to monitor enemies' activities from space. As long as the U.S. has this capability, it can unleash its power anywhere in the world. The only way to stop America from doing this is to shoot down its vital information gathering satellites. China has conveyed that message to America very effectively. China knows that it cannot match U.S. militarily, but can establish its hegemony in Southeast Asia by blinding the U.S. by destroying its satellite capabilities. "This is a shot across the bow of U.S. military power that will give advantage to Beijing during a possible conflict in the Taiwan Strait." With the United States heavily depending on its satellites in space for real-time communications, weapons targeting and intelligence gathering, China's ASAT is a message to Washington that Beijing can overcome its military handicap in a relatively simple way.



There is no secret that the radical Islamists hate America. They are a more dangerous enemy today than ever before. el Queada is as strong now as it was before 9/11 with increased capability in Iraq and on the Pakistan-

Afghanistan border. Its reach has spread throughout the Muslim world and Europe where it has developed a large cadre of operatives. Osama bin Laden has mounted a successful Islamic resistance to America worldwide and his ideas are drawing more followers everyday. Their combined strategy is to draw America into war with more Muslim countries thus bankrupting its resources like they did to what used to be the Soviet Union. Additionally, the Islamists are the enemies of Israel. America alone is supporting Israel. China and Russia are not concerned with Israel's security or survival. At the same time, the ethnic war between Jews and Arabs in Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank shows no sign of abating.

Now imagine the above three forces (China, Russia and the radical Islamists) ganging up against the U.S. The indications are that this is already happening. Russia's foreign policy is quite disturbing. Moscow has given Iran diplomatic protection for its nuclear ambitions. With its enormous oil and natural gas reserves, it has already threatened to stop the much needed lifeline to the Baltic nations and has put the European Union (EU) on notice. Relations with Russia are too vital to the security and prosperity of the EU. As a result, the EU may be forced to share a common foreign policy with Russia. With high energy prices allowing Russia to emerge from the trauma of post-communist transition, it is ready to reestablish its hegemony over the Balkan and beyond. Apart from its ambition in Europe, Russia is trying to be a more active participant in the dynamic Asia created by China.

China is playing its own game by winning friends in Islamic countries and influencing Africa and Latin America. Beijing is seeking to erode Washington's influence in the Western Hemisphere. China's imports from Latin America increased six-fold between 1999 and 2004 and its exports more than tripled. In addition to that, China sent 125 peacekeepers to Haiti, the first

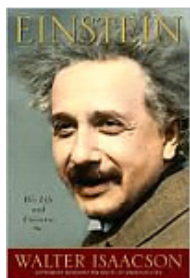
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## Einstein

**Author: Walter Isaacson**

**Publisher: Simon & Schuster**

**Pages: 675**



Isaacson strikes the right balance in describing Einstein's personal and professional life. We learn about Einstein's complex relationships with his family members, but Isaacson does this tastefully and in a fact-based manner. Therefore, the book does not read like a tabloid publication as so many biographies do these days. Isaacson is

particularly adept at distilling complex theories in a manner that can be understood by someone with a high school physics education. An example would be how he describes quantum theory. There were some passages describing general relativity theory though in which I struggled to follow the examples and had to read them multiple times.

We learn a lot about the personality traits that made Einstein so productive in his early career, but less so later in life. As a young man, Einstein innovates by rejecting conventional wisdom and commonly accepted principles. In fact, his theory of relativity supposes that there is no absolute time. His contrarian beliefs are critical to his success early in his career and result in some of his finest work when he is only a junior scientist at the Swiss Patent Office.

Ironically, it is Einstein's refusal in the second half of his career to abandon his own principles that stymies his progress. He rejects quantum theory, which is increasingly embraced by younger scientists. Quantum theory suggests that it is impossible to determine both the precise position and momentum of an electron. Instead, scientists can only determine the probability that an electron is in a certain position at any given time. Despite overwhelming evidence supporting quantum theory, Einstein never reconciles its dismissal of certainty with his view that there is a reality that is concrete and determinable. As a result, Einstein spends his remaining years in a futile attempt to derive a unified field theory.

Einstein endures a great deal of tragedy in his life. His parents do not approve of his first wife because she is not physically attractive enough for their standards. He has a daughter, unaccounted for in history and his

own life, before his first marriage. Einstein's second son is committed to a mental institution for many years and never recovers from severe mental illness. In December 1932 Einstein leaves Germany only a month before Hitler gains power and never returns to his home country. The FBI accumulates a 1,427 page file on him because his pacifist and anti-war comments are misconstrued for sympathy toward communist causes even though Einstein is now a U.S. citizen. Einstein gets through these tough times with a sense of detachment, which Isaacson suggests might have been caused by autism.

*Einstein* is one of the best books I have read in a long time. The biographies I enjoy most are those in which you get a glimpse not only of the subjects, but also other famous people who interact with them. The characters in *Einstein* read from the Hall of Fame of legendary figures I learned about in high school. These characters include Max Planck, Franklin Roosevelt, Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, Sigmund Freud, and Marie Curie to name just a few.

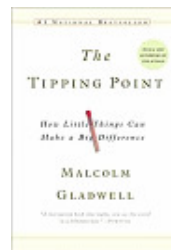
– Reviewed by Rishi Shrivastava

## The Tipping Point

**Author: Malcolm Gladwell**

**Publisher: Little, Brown and Company**

**Pages: 291 Paperback**



*The Tipping Point* is very interesting and fun to read. Gladwell provides a well researched understanding of why certain social epidemics work the way they do. Gladwell very convincingly analyses Paul Revere's ride and the suppression of crime in New York City and equates the two to positive social epidemics.

Gladwell breaks down the reasons behind what he terms as social epidemics. He goes into details of elements like the law of the few, the stickiness factor, and the power of context. The chapters about Blue's Clues and Sesame Street are especially thought provoking. *The Tipping Point* is a 'must read' book for any independent thinker. Gladwell has presented the stories in a way that serve to punctuate his theories very well. While the devil may be in the details, I think it is the broad brush strokes that make this book important. Perhaps with a little knowledge of how tipping points work, one may be able to put a few to work in his or her own life or business.

– Reviewed by Musafir

## Famous and Fascinating Women in History Who Have Changed the World

By: Niru Prasad

How interesting is this title? When I was first assigned to write an article about famous women in the world, I was lost and did not know who to start with. I perused world history books and internet sites, and discussed the topic with my daughter. After giving it some thought, I have decided to share with you some great women in history, in chronological order. I will try to share the biographies of these women who have contributed to our culture in various ways. Some of them are remembered by history more kindly than others, but they all deserve to be acknowledged.

### Cleopatra

Cleopatra VII lived during the Ptolemaic dynasty. She was a strong-willed, Macedonian queen who dreamed of a greater world empire and almost achieved it. Cleopatra was born in 69 BC in Alexandria, Egypt. Her father was Ptolemy Auletes, whose family was allied with the Romans. According to Egyptian law, Cleopatra was forced to have a consort with either a brother or son, with no regard to their age, throughout her dynasty. She was married to her younger brother Ptolemy XIII when he was 12.

During the war between the Romans and Egypt in 48 B.C., Cleopatra was delivered to Caesar and it is presumed that Caesar had planned to make Cleopatra the sole ruler of Alexandria. They got married and had a son called Caesar ion, born on June 23, 47 BC. Cleopatra lived in luxury as a queen while she accompanied Caesar to Rome. After Caesar was murdered by the Romans, she fled back to Alexandria. However, she closely watched the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, and became friends with the next successor, Mark Anthony, in order to get her power back. Cleopatra and Mark Anthony spent time together in Alexandria, where she lived as a queen. Once Mark Anthony committed suicide in 30 BC, Cleopatra was taken to Octavian, where he was destined to live the rest of her life as a slave. She died in 30 BC at the age of 39. The Egyptian religion declared her death a snake bite to secure immortality. Cleopatra's death marked the end of the monarchs, and the Roman Empire quickly came in to rule. Cleopatra will always be remembered as a beautiful, intelligent person who was devoted to her country. She was a shrewd business woman who achieved goals in life with persistence and hard work.

### Queen Elizabeth I

Queen Elizabeth was a happy medium between Catholics and Protestants. She restored Protestant services but still retained many features of Catholicism, including bishops and arch bishops. The most splendid period of English literature is named after her – the Elizabethan Age, which included the works of William Shakespeare and Edmund Spenser. Queen Elizabeth was only 55 years old when the Spanish Armada and leadership from Phillip II of Spain was defeated. She died in London when she was 69 years old. She will always be remembered in history as the Virgin Queen of England, who improved Britain's economy, defeated the Spanish Armada, and allowed the country to flourish in arts and literature.

### Clara Barton

Clara Barton has made world history as being a great American who dedicated her life to humanity, helping thousands of people by organizing the American Red Cross during World War II. Ms. Barton was born to a middle class family in Oxford, Massachusetts, on Christmas Day in 1826. Even though she had no nursing background, Ms. Barton took the initiative and began nursing the sick when she was 15 years old. She actively nursed and treated wounded soldiers in the American Civil War while she lived in Washington, DC. After that, she traveled around the world with army operations, treating wounded soldiers.

In 1865, after the civil war ended, Ms. Barton established an information center for missing and dead soldiers to help give moral support to grieving family members. Years later, Ms. Barton suffered from a major illness and went to Switzerland for recuperation. While in Switzerland, she became aware of the Red Cross, established there since 1864. In 1881, Ms. Barton founded the American Red Cross. She died in Maryland on April 12, 1912, at the age of 91. Ms. Barton will always be remembered as a truly great American who dedicated her life to humanity.

### Florence Nightingale

Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), also known as "the lady of the lamp," was a pioneer of modern nursing, a writer, and a noted statistician. She was born into an

**Continued on Page 16**



## Beeping Ball Lights Fire that launches U.S. to Moon

By Kent Faulk \*

A simple radio broadcast from space 50 years ago this week changed the world and launched the United States on a path to the moon.

Beep . . . Beep . . . Beep.

The signal came from Sputnik, the world's first satellite. The 184-pound sphere, a little larger than a basketball with whiskerlike antennae, was launched into orbit Oct. 4, 1957, by what was then the Soviet Union.

As it circled the globe, ham radio operators listened. Americans living in a world of atomic fallout shelters searched the autumn sky for a glimpse of the communist-made "moon." Generals, politicians and scientists tried to figure out how to get the sputtering U.S. satellite program launched as newspapers reported on the Russian success.

Sputnik's launch did not come as a surprise to many of the scientists and engineers working at the Army's Ballistic Missile Agency at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Ala.

"I was very much impressed. However, my first reaction was, 'I told you so,' " Ernst Stuhlinger said.

Stuhlinger, 93, was among a core group of 118 German rocket scientists led by rocket pioneer Werner von Braun. After World War II, the team came to the United States to use its expertise to build missiles for the Army, moving to Huntsville in 1950.

Stuhlinger said he had been telling the Army missile agency's general that the Soviets were about to launch, and he and others had been trying to convince those higher up in the agency that the United States could launch a satellite atop a modified Redstone missile.

Instead, the Army engineers were ordered to stay away from satellite launch development, and that work was assigned to the Navy and its Vanguard program.

Several reasons were given for the Army not getting the job. One was that President Eisenhower didn't want the same Army missiles that delivered warheads to be used in the space race.

"There's some speculation that, probably because there were Germans in charge of that project, they preferred to have a more American team building it," said University of Alabama in Huntsville history professor Andrew Dunar, who co-wrote "Power to Explore: A History of Marshall Space Flight Center 1960-1990."

Spurred into action

The day Sputnik was launched, incoming Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy was visiting Redstone Arsenal. During a dinner, the public affairs officer rushed into the room with the news. Von Braun told McElroy that, if given permission, the Army in Huntsville could get a rocket ready to launch a satellite in 60 days. Gen. John Medaris, head of the missile agency at the time, chimed in that they had better make that 90 days.

Five weeks after Sputnik's launch, the Army in Huntsville was given the go-ahead to prepare for a launch. Explorer I was launched atop a modified Redstone rocket – called a Jupiter C missile – on January 31, 1958.

It was 89 days after the Army was given the go-ahead.

The satellite launched that day discovered the radiation belts around the Earth, called the Van Allen radiation belts after the satellite's inventor, James Van Allen, who worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California.

The night the American satellite was launched, residents flooded the streets of Huntsville to celebrate, including burning in effigy former U.S. Secretary of Defense Charlie Wilson, whom they blamed for not letting the Huntsville group launch the satellite sooner.

Vanguard, which had a number of failures on the launch pad, successfully flew a couple of months later.

After the Explorer I launch, Stuhlinger got a congratulations gift from Leonid Sednov, the chief scientist of the Soviet space program at the time. It was a small model of Sputnik with the October launch date on it.

During the next two years, Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the German rocket team transferred to the new space agency's Marshall Space Flight Center to develop large rockets. The Saturn V developed by that center eventually sent 12 men to walk on the moon.

Earthly influences

In the space race created by that beeping hunk of metal, the lives of people such as Homer Hickam were transformed.

**Continued on Page 11**

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## Elect Hillary Clinton Now

By Musafir

All male politicians, I have come to know, have proven themselves to be corrupt, child molesters and homosexuals. Therefore, it's time to give a chance to women politicians. So, why not elect a woman president? After all, the buck should start right there.

Our male politicians in Washington have traditionally been selected by the lobbyists and special interest groups. They are not elected. The male politicians have disgraced our system by indulging in partisan politics and neglecting their constitutional responsibilities. Their loyalty is towards their employers and not to the constituents they are supposed to serve.

I think a woman *can* be a successful president because women have been good leaders in other countries for years. Scanning the globe, we find numerous countries with current or past female heads of state: Chile, Iceland, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Argentina, Nicaragua, Ireland, Israel, Switzerland, Pakistan, Panama, Finland, England, Germany, Indonesia and the Philippines, among others. They all have done as good a job or better than their male counterparts. Unlike the male leaders, I have found the women leaders to be more compassionate, dutiful and approachable. Women leaders are authentic, passionate in intention, fair in serving all of society.

Going back in history, Queen Elizabeth I of England defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588 making England a world power, a vibrant commercial force, and a place of intellectual accomplishment. Catherine the Great of Russia (1729) supported progressive ideas, such as reforms in law, education, and provincial and municipal administration. Tzu-hsi's of China (1835) suppressed the anti-West Boxer Rebellion and began a policy of appeasement, allowing reforms and the modernization of the government. There are numerous more examples of powerful and effective women leaders who changed the destiny of the nations they led.

Coming back to America, our constitution guarantees that all mankind is created equal. A woman is a part of mankind. They do a job just as well as men because they are just as smart as men. Women are equal to men, and should have the same opportunities as men. Women follow rules and are fair too. Women can make good choices and effectively deliver speeches. Golda Meir, Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi have proven the above points.

Let's give the women a try. The men aren't doing a very good job.

## Elect the Most Qualified Candidate

By Bala Prasad

Where would we be if we voted for our leaders based strictly on intangibles, such as race, gender, or religion? Would we be admitting that we care more about the package than what is in it? As Americans tasked with the privilege and important responsibility of choosing the leader of the free world, we must think and act responsibly. That means we must set aside our personal preferences, as well as our personal prejudices, and choose the person that is right for the job – someone with impeccable credentials both in terms of experience and background. If that person is a woman, so be it. If that person is a man, so be it.

Some may argue that voting for a woman based on her gender has its own value. Proponents of this type of “presidential affirmative action” will no doubt suggest that a female commander-in-chief might reflect the diversity or progressiveness of our great country, as well as break barriers for millions of women. U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein said that when she became mayor of San Francisco, she appointed a woman treasurer, a woman head of the airport, and a woman city attorney for just such a reason, and that “all of a sudden, the nature and complexion of the city” began to change. While this may be true, the presidency of the United States is not a position that should be used as a symbol or gesture. There should be one requirement of the person voted into office: that he or she is the most qualified person we have. When you are talking about the most powerful position in the country and perhaps the world, it is no time for pie in the sky pursuit of ideals.

I for one would like to believe that women are not foolish enough to vote for a candidate that would reflect poorly on their gender. Geraldine Ferraro, a less accomplished and less qualified woman, didn't court the female vote as effectively as Clinton does. I suspect that is because women – who are often harder on other women than their male counterparts – have a vested interest in supporting a candidate that would be a good spokesperson or model for the female gender. But Clinton could be different. Ferraro, an obscure congresswoman, was defined by her sex. Clinton – like Margaret Thatcher – is viewed as a politician first, a woman second. As John F. Kennedy rose above being an Irish Roman Catholic, Clinton has the potential to become more than just a female candidate. At the end of the day, if we vote for her, we owe it to ourselves and the country to vote for her because she is qualified – not because she is a woman.

## **The Next World War? Continued from Page 6**

military operation in the Western Hemisphere with Chinese troops. China needs natural resources for its growth, particularly oil. Thus China has made special pact with Venezuela and Iran, two countries on U.S.' boycott list.

Amid festering concerns about China's burgeoning global power, Beijing has firmly set its sights on expanding its influence in Africa. According to Peter Brookes, "The jury is still out about whether China's strong engagement in Africa is a good or a bad thing. Some have praised Chinese involvement in Africa, while others have called it neo-colonialism." Think about it, with over 50 nations, the countries of Africa represent more than one-quarter of the United Nations General Assembly — a significant voting bloc which can go in China's favor.

The above scenario presents a dilemma for the United States. Its financial future is linked with the global economy. Therefore, it cannot afford to have enmity with emerging markets of which China and Russia are the key players. Sooner or later the world will have to contend with oil above \$100 a barrel. Politically and economically, the EU and the rest of the world will be drawn towards Russia and the Middle-east for that reason. If history is any guide, only economic stabilization and reassertion of U.S. authority are likely to halt the drift towards chaos. Neither is a likely prospect and this may lead to World War III.

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## **Beeping Ball Lights Fire Continued from Page 9**

"Without the inspiration of Sputnik and the space race, I would have probably become an English teacher," said Hickam.

After seeing Sputnik cross the night sky when he was teenager, Hickam decided he wanted to be a rocket engineer and began launching model rockets with friends in his hometown of Coalwood, W.Va. The book he wrote on that experience, "Rocket Boys," was a New York Times best-seller and turned into the movie "October Sky." Eventually, he became an engineer with NASA in Huntsville.

Ralph Petroff said he might still be living in Canada if it hadn't been for Sputnik. Instead, he's a Huntsville entrepreneur and member of the local 50th Anniversary of America in Space Committee.

Petroff's father, Peter Petroff, tried to emigrate from Bulgaria to the United States after World War II, but he got only as far as Canada. Petroff said his father was told by U.S. immigration authorities that, with the waiting list at the time, it would be 2007 before he and his family could get into the country.

That changed after Sputnik. His father was an engineer, and the United States was scrambling to find technically

trained people. His father got his green card about 18 months after Sputnik launched, Petroff said.

Peter Petroff worked for NASA at Cape Canaveral and later Huntsville during the 1960s. He left NASA but stayed in Huntsville, where he invented the first digital watch and first wireless heart monitor. Peter Petroff died in 2003.

### Huntsville and beyond

Sputnik transformed Huntsville. It was a thriving town of about 46,000, driven mostly by Army missile work. But by 1970, the city had 136,000 people. Today it has more than 168,000 people and is home to the world's second-largest research park.

World history, not just Alabama's future, would have been different if the United States had been first to launch a satellite with its Vanguard program, said several who lived through the space race.

"I think there would have been no NASA and no landing on the moon," said Konrad Dannenberg, 94, a member of the German rocket team.

The Soviets' beating Americans in space embarrassed national leaders, who wanted to reclaim supremacy. The space race was on, and it didn't slow until Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon.

Otherwise, Petroff said, the United States might not have been pushed into a race to the moon until 2019, when China says it plans to send men to the moon.

The space program led to major technological advancements. Better computers and satellite radio are two examples.

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## **Women Who Are Taught to Love Abusive Men Continued from Page 16**

Interestingly, matters are overlooked when it comes to woman's dignity such as, "Be in subjection to one another in fear of Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). Obviously, the position that the Bible places on woman is one of dignity and respect.

Although there are physical and physiological differences between man and woman, spiritually speaking, there is no distinction between male and female. The law of Christ tears down all distinctions that human traditions have built up like barbed fences by stating that for true followers of Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one [person] in union with Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28).

It can be concluded that God sees man and woman as equals. The Bible teaches "The truth will set you free (John 8:32)". It is not human traditions but God's word that is truth. Therefore, it is God's word that frees women from the traditions that bind them to servitude onto abusive men. Once women accept and believe these absolute truths and display them consistently in their lives, they will stop being attracted to abusive men.

## *On Gay Marriage*

By Robert Bickmeyer

I learned early not to be anti-gay when, back in the 1930s and '40s, two of my father's best friends were a gay couple – two fine, respectable men. Today they would be warmly welcomed in my home and church, but I would never dance at their wedding. In Massachusetts, the only state where gay marriage is legal, the state supreme court legalized it with a close 4-3 vote. In fact, my state, Michigan, was one of 18 states where gay marriage was banned until the 2006 election when six more states voted to ban gay marriage. In spite of the liberal media's guardianship of the homosexual community, more and more states will adopt similar amendments to their constitution. Bet on it!

A recent news report disclosed that many thousands of sexual molestations by Catholic priests during prior years were reported in 2005. The guilty clerics were labeled pedophiles by the media, but pedophilia is a sexual desire directed toward children (below the age of puberty). The priests are homosexuals. Homosexuals who prey on pubescent teenage boys are as wicked as heterosexual men who prey on pubescent teenage girls – but neither of these predators are pedophiles.

The Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (H.R. 1592) will include homosexual behaviors in federally-protected "minority" groups. How silly. The shameful murder of homosexual Matthew Shepard in Wyoming by two straight men some years ago was a high-profile case, quoted over and over again in support of a hate crime bill. But no one heard of 13-year-old Jesse Dirkhising in Arkansas who was tied up with duct tape by a pair of homosexual men, drugged, blindfolded, gagged with his own underwear, tortured and repeatedly raped by one of the men while the other man watched. Police found the boy's body covered in feces and duct tape. You are unaware of Jesse's brutal murder because the media chose not to report it.

The killers of both youth, Shepard and Dirkhising, deserved the ultimate penalty existing in their respective states without the need for any special laws.

Christians tolerate gays without endorsing their lifestyle or giving them special rights because we love the sinner, but despise the sin. The Bible clearly states its opposition to homosexuality. Leviticus 18:22 reads: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind; it is an abomination." This is not vague.

No human society, not one during about 5,000 years of recorded history, has ever tolerated marriage between members of the same sex.

If we tolerate such marriage, then what next? Polygamy? Incest? Bestiality? A man in Tennessee was dumped by his girlfriend. He became so bitter toward women that he decided to marry his sports car that he loved. The state of Tennessee refused his application for a marriage license, explaining that they allow marriage only between man and woman. Kudos to Tennessee for drawing this line. Once exceptions are made there could be no end to weird unions – men marrying their cars, men marrying their grandmas, whatever.

Michigan law prohibits marriage of the mentally retarded even though they were born mentally retarded. It is probably a safe assumption that all 50 states have similar laws. If homosexuality was genetic it would disappear from the gene pool as they do not reproduce. If genetic, identical twins would both be gay, but this does not happen.

Those who compare the civil rights of gays with the civil rights of African Americans should know that Gen. Colin Powell said, "Skin color is a benign, non-behavioral characteristic. Sexual orientation is perhaps the most profound of human behavioral characteristics. Comparison of the two is a convenient but invalid argument."

If, for example, two brothers or even two close friends live together, they are not considered family. However, if two men living together commit sodomy with one another, they believe such a "union" should be sanctioned as a family with the benefits of marriage, adoption, joint tax returns, health coverage, social security, ad infinitum! Two men who live together as friends would not receive these entitlements simply because they do not commit sodomy.

A bird house hangs outside our kitchen window. Every summer at least two "families" of baby sparrows are hatched and fed until they take flight and leave the nest. This care and feeding is always provided by two parents, one female and one male. Never are the parents the same gender, whereas some humans believe same-sex parents are an emotionally healthy environment for children. I have to wonder, "Who are the bird brains?"

## Positively Thinking

By David Beagan

An interesting news piece came out the other day. A study was completed showing that people who receive fake acupuncture for chronic lower back pain received just as much pain relief as those who received real acupuncture treatments. This would appear to be yet another manifestation of the well known placebo effect where an inert medicine that is believed to possess beneficial properties actually produces a positive outcome on those who take it. This effect is so strong that scientists who test medications require that test subjects be divided into two groups, one group who receives the active medication and another group who receive an inactive medication, known as the control group. Even the practitioners who are administering the study are not allowed to know which medication is active. This is known as a “double-blind” study because neither the test subjects nor administrators of the study know who is receiving real medicine. Only effects that differ between the control group and the subjects receiving the real medication are considered to be a valid effect of the medication.

There can be much speculation as to the cause of the placebo effect, but it is absolutely real. There is a long history of the strong connection between mind and body. The pain relieving benefits of the fake acupuncture raises a question. If the beneficial effects caused by the belief in an inactive treatment can be so strong, how might people use this power to actually prevent bad things from happening to them in the first place? Could it be that the power of positive thinking is really yet another manifestation of the placebo effect?

Norman Vincent Peale preached the power of positive thinking. His book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, advocated a form of self-hypnosis and attaining divine power for the benefit of one’s life. While Peale’s definition of what constitutes positive thinking seems rather mystical and obscure, the underlying message is valid. But just what does constitute positive thinking? It must be more than simply feeling good about everything as if one were going through life as some sort of happy imbecile. What could be considered the functional elements of positive thinking?

Stress on the body is thought to be a factor in all kinds of medical conditions. Everything from hypertension and gastrointestinal problems to depression and anxiety. And so, one component of positive thinking is employing strategies to deal with stress and to alleviate it. Many find relief from stress with meditation and prayer. But additional suggestions by the Mayo Clinic can prove helpful: develop friendships, take time off, set limits by saying ‘no’ to demands (in a friendly manner), and choose battles wisely. This

last point reminds me of something that I once heard Wayne Dyer say, “when given the choice between being right and being kind, choose kind.” One final insight for stress relief, “you can’t control all of the things that happen to you, but you can control your reaction to them.” (If you feel you have a genuine loss of control, then one should certainly seek help.)

Years ago a doctoral candidate, upon arriving late to class, saw two problems written on the blackboard. He didn’t realize that these were put on the board as examples of unproven statistics problems. He developed proofs for the problems and turned them into his professor. Weeks later, the professor informed the student what he had done and that he was preparing one of the proofs for publication. The student was George Danzig who went on to be an honored mathematician. This reminds me of the story of a man visiting an animal trainer and observed an elephant that was restrained by a small chain around its ankle. The man marveled at how this chain could hold the elephant when obviously it had the strength to easily break the chain. But the trainer explained, when the elephant was very young, the chain was placed around its ankle and it struggled mightily to free itself to no avail. After a several attempts like this, it gave up and assumed the chain could always restrain it. Both of these stories present one aspect of positive thinking. Be willing to challenge established doctrine and accepted wisdom. Challenging the status quo doesn’t have to involve confrontation and conflict, with deference to Wayne Dyer, sometimes one can be right *and* be kind.

A final anecdote on this aspect of positive thinking. I remember a movie, a documentary on body building, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger at the pinnacle of his success. One of his rivals, trying to psyche him out, said to him, “when you are number one, there is nowhere to go but down.” With only the slightest hesitation Arnold responded, “I can stay up.” Schwarzenegger refused to accept a negative limitation another would try to place on him. While his life has not been without controversy, that positive attitude has carried him to the top, or near the top, in three different endeavors, bodybuilding, Hollywood movies, and politics.

Life is a struggle. Many of the modern conveniences and opportunities, while easing many of the physical burdens that our ancestors had to contend with, also seem to have added the burden of greater mental stress. I have often thought of the something I heard from Tony Robbins. He suggested thinking of a task or chore that you really don’t want to do. Now, pose this question to yourself, “How can I do this and enjoy the process of doing it?”



## Dancing Bill

By Bill Phillis

I really like to dance. My conversion to a love of dancing started when I was in the 7th grade at Edsel Ford Jr. High School in Dearborn, Michigan. I was converted by the truck driver at Brock Tool of Detroit, a company that sold tools to plumbers. Brock Tool was founded by my father in 1953. My father offered me a job sweeping, mopping and cleaning the office on Saturdays. I was thrilled. I could spend Saturdays with my father and I could earn money. I wanted money so I could buy my lunch at school. My mother had been making me lunch but it was considered a much loftier position to walk into the cafeteria with money, get into the lunch line, have a hot lunch and sneer at the other 7th graders who brought their lunch in a brown paper sack. My ambition was to buy a cafeteria lunch, join the elite and avoid dancing with those tall (I was short), skinny sticks with freckles and braces. However, dancing and the truck driver, Lester Spenze, entered my life and taught me a life changing philosophy.

Once a week in the 7th grade we had "Social Dancing" class. Which female teacher concocted this mode of torture I do not know but once a week we were hauled down to the cafeteria and were given instructions on the etiquette and principles of social dance. We two-stepped, three-stepped, we waltzed, we did the polka, we did it all. This was abject torture for a slightly prepubescent boy. I really did not want to dance and did not like girls but there we were doing the Virginia Reel, the Three-step ("step, step, step-together, step ...") much to the delight of our female compatriots. It was hard to decide which of the knock-kneed, buck-toothed, braces wearing pixies was least likely to embarrass their dancing partner.

Anyway that was social dance several years before the hormonal ravages of testosterone captured me. Once I became a walking sack of androgen, the girls seemed to look a little more alluring and enchanting. They were developing compelling bumps and lumps in places not noticed before.

Back to my remembrances of dancing and the dance lessons. We boys hated dancing. I was no different. Dancing was torture. I liked movement and I liked music but dancing was beyond my capacity and desire.

One day at Brock Tool I told the truck driver, Lester, of my abhorrence of dancing. He had been a cowboy in Montana, had ridden his horse home, entered the house, confronted his wife and another cowboy in the fervor of adoration. That was the end of wife No. 1. Lester was aged, knowledgeable, crusty and willing to share his experience and memoirs with me. I liked Lester and enjoyed his stories. I assumed he would be



sympathetic to my dancing plight but he wasn't and taught me one of life's valuable and important lessons.

He told me I should learn to dance and one day not only would I enjoy dancing, the ability to dance would make me a much sought after, appealing and successful (with the ladies) man. He said, and I will quote as closely as I am able (this was a half century ago but it is still applicable and vivid in my memory).

He said and I recollect: "Son, there is but one time that you can walk up to an exotic unknown young woman, put your arm around her, hold her hand, gently caress her, press your body against hers, feel the complete femininity she possesses, smell her neck and she will THANK you after you are done. Now that is called dancing. If you walked up to an unknown young woman on the street and held her against yourself she would slap you and call the police. So learn to dance because one day you will know and appreciate its value."

And he was right! I loved to dance. Every time I held a young, busty, alluring, attractive, charming siren against myself, smelled her neck and rubbed against her I said a little thank you to Lester and the young woman almost always said, "Thank you, you dance so well, that was fun!" Thanks Lester.

I have one other dancing memory I wish to share. There was a bar with a big dance floor in Charlotte, North Carolina that I enjoyed. They had a great dance floor and country band named Big Red Fletcher. The band would play one relatively upbeat fast song followed by a waltz. I was good at the waltz and adept at "clogging" (i.e. "hillbilly tap dancing"). Few men could waltz or clog and I could do both. After a few waltzes I had displayed my prowess and some young woman would approach and ask me to dance. It was very enjoyable. One memorable evening I danced with a daughter, her mother and her grandmother. I danced with the daughter first and when we finished her mother asked me for the next waltz. The daughter and mother were very attractive. When I returned the mother to her table following our waltz the grandmother asked me for the next dance. She was not appealing but as a true gentleman I took her hand and led her onto the floor. Towards the end of the dance she blurted, "Oh, you stepped on my toe". I was sure I hadn't but apologized and she gamely accepted and said, "If you give me a kiss my foot won't hurt." I bravely attempted to give her a little peck on the cheek but she grabbed my face in both hands and kissed me on the lips. She was frankly not attractive and was missing a few teeth. I was repelled and she said, "You really didn't step on my toe, I just wanted a kiss."

I have many fond memories of dancing and a few burdensome recollections.

## Women in History Continued from Page 8

upper class, lavish and well-connected English family in Florence, Italy. Ms. Nightingale committed herself to a nursing career against her parent's advice. In those days, nursing was a career with a poor reputation and the expected role of a woman was as a housewife and mother. But Ms. Nightingale felt passionately about caring for the sick. She became a leading advocate for improved medical care in infirmaries around London. In 1846, Ms. Nightingale visited Germany and became acquainted with its pioneering hospitals. She was profoundly impressed by the quality of care given in that country. Later in her life, Ms. Nightingale developed close relationships with famous politicians and poets. But she sacrificed her family life for the humanitarian efforts.

Ms. Nightingale's professional nursing career began in 1851 when she received four months of training in Germany. Her most famous contribution came during the Crimean War, which became her central focus when reports began to filter back to England about the horrific conditions for wounded soldiers. She, along with a staff of 38 female nurses (all trained by her) flew to Turkey in October in 1854 to treat wounded families of the war. Ms. Nightingale returned to England hailed as a hero on August 7, 1857, and was declared the most famous Victorian after Queen Victoria herself. She played a central role in the establishment of the Royal Commission on the Health of the Arm. While she was still in Turkey on her mission, a "Nightingale Fund" was established in England for the training of nurses. Ms. Nightingale published on book on nursing in 1860. In 1883, she was awarded the "Royal Red Cross" by Queen Victoria. In 1907, she became the first woman to be awarded the order of merit award. She also exhibited gift for math and statistics, which led her to write about Epidemiology in the field of medicine. She also made a comprehensive statistical study of sanitation in Indian rural life, and was the leading figure in the introduction of improved medical care and public health service in India. Ms. Nightingale died of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome on August 13, 1910, at the age of 90. Today, her birthday is celebrated around the world as the International CFS Awareness Day.

### Helen Keller

Ms. Keller (1880-1968) was a world famous deaf and blind author, activist, and lecturer. She was born in Alabama to a family of German descent. Although she was a healthy baby, young Helen became deaf and blind at 19 months old from either scarlet fever or meningitis. During her early childhood, Ms. Keller was able to learn sign language and by age 7, she had over 60 signs she could use to communicate with family and friends. She later attended the Perkins Institute for the Blind (in Boston), where she met teacher Anne Sullivan, who was herself visually impaired. In 1904, when she was 24, Ms. Keller graduated Magna Cum Laude from Radcliff College, becoming the first deaf and blind person to graduate from college in this country.

Ms. Keller will always be remembered as an advocate for people with disabilities. In 1915, she founded Helen Keller International, a non-profit organization for preventing

blindness. Keller, along with her teacher Sullivan, traveled all over the world to share her message. She met every U.S. president from Grover Cleveland to Lyndon Johnson, who awarded her the Heller Keller Freedom Award. In 1999, Ms. Keller was listed as one of the most admired people of the 20th century. She died of natural causes at the age of 87. Her two major novels are *Light in My Darkness* (published in 1960) and *The Story of My Life* (published in 1903).

### Mother Teresa

Mother Teresa, a Roman Catholic nun, was born on August 26, 1910, in the Republic of Macedonia. Her birth name was Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu. She was the youngest of several children in an Albanian family. As a young child, Agnes was fascinated by stories about missionaries and their lives. At the age of 12, Agnes left her home to join Sisters of Loreto as a missionary. She arrived in India in 1929, became a nun in 1931, and thereafter became known to the world as Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa enjoyed teaching at school and focused on helping those who were poor and destitute. As missionaries of charity grew under Mother Teresa's leadership, they expanded their missionary work from India to other counties. By the 1970s, Mother Teresa had become an internationally known humanitarian and advocate for the poor and helpless. She ministered to sick and dying orphans in Calcutta for over 40 years.

The purpose of Mother Teresa's missionaries of charity were to care for the hungry, naked, homeless, crippled, and blind people all over the world. It had begun as a small order with 13 members in Calcutta, however today there are more than 4000 nuns running orphanages, AIDS hospices, and charity centers worldwide, making a living caring for life's refugees.

Mother Teresa also traveled abroad to assist and minister to the hungry in Ethiopia, radiation victims in Chernobyl, and earthquake victims in Armenia. By 1996, she was operating 517 missions in more than 100 countries. She received special recognition awards in India and the United States. In 1979, Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. She died on September 5, 1997, after celebrating her 87th birthday in Calcutta, India.

There you have it: a glimpse into the lives of some famous and fascinating women. Of course, there are women everywhere, famous or not, who have accomplished great things in their lives. Mother Teresa said, "In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love." I hope I have given you a glimpse into some famous and fascinating women who have done great things, and small things with great love.

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Women are wiser than men because they know less and understand more.

~James Thurber

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Sure God created man before woman. But then you always make a rough draft before the final masterpiece.

~Author Unknown

## Women Who Are Taught to Love Abusive Men

By Sherie Pineda

Throughout history the role of a woman was to serve the family and obey the husband. In a household where love and respect are rampant this role would be a haven of peace and protection. Yet, in more and more homes, instead of peace and protection, women are humiliated, disgraced, and treated with brutality. These women have become property of their husbands instead of being their partners. According to *Alive* a Canadian Journal of Health and Nutrition, "Research consistently shows that the experience of physiological, physical or sexual abuse has severe effects on a woman's well-being long after the incident itself ... and were six times more likely to continue to experience psychological distress." Why do these women choose to accept abusive men into their lives? Can it be that battered women are somehow programmed to be attracted to men who would abuse them? To correct this dysfunctional pattern, battered women need to look inward to find out why they are attracted to abusive men.

Research has discovered that "3 million women are physically abused by their husbands or boyfriends per year and women of all races are about equally vulnerable to violence by an intimate person. "Until the mid-1970s it was believed that wife abuse affected only a small and relatively unique group." Now it has become a major social problem, which affects women from every social, economic, and racial background. According to an article titled, '*Battered Women*,' the problem stems from the following five basic sources: 1. Male supremacy, wherein male aggression is considered natural. 2. The patriarchal social system or hierarchy, wherein it is the right and duty of men to wield their authority and power over their wives. 3. The social forces at work within society that induces guilt to stop women from leaving abusive relationships. 4. Social tradition which preaches an extreme dependency on the husband. 5. The lack of protection from legal agencies for woman who chose to leave the abusive relationship.

The term many professionals have placed on women who continually end up in abusive relationships is *Battered Women Syndrome*. Battered Women Syndrome is considered a "learned behavior" causing women to feel unworthy of love, respect or honor. The questions that need to be answered are, "How did women learn these beliefs?" and "How can these beliefs be unlearned?"

Children learn by example. A young child can be told a million times not to smoke, but if the parents smoke the only lesson they learn is: adults smoke. Studies on Battered Women Syndrome have suggested that each year from 3.3 to 10 million children see their mothers beaten by their own fathers or stepfathers. No matter how many times these children are being told that boys should not hit girls, the lesson the girls learn is: it is a part of life for men to hit women and the lessons boys learn is: there are times when it is acceptable to beat a woman. Mothers further indoctrinate these lessons by explaining to the abused that they shouldn't have said or done something to make their husband mad. Fathers confirm the mother's explanation by saying that the wife made him do it. Statements such as these teach children that there are situations when women deserve to be hit and this behavior is acceptable and reasonable.

The church and Bible scriptures are a part of the problem causing women to be abused. One erroneous claim of the Bible is that God has put the blame for sin on women. The third chapter of Genesis depicts how Eve used her influence on Adam to sin, thus losing paradise and an eternal life. A closer examination will reveal that, in fact, it is human interpretation and not the Bible that puts the blame on woman. A second erroneously claimed Bible teaching is that God has mandated women to be dominated by men. We believe in what we want to believe undermining the true teaching of the Bible. We hardly hear the preaching where husbands were commanded "to be loving to their wives as their own bodies." Clearly it is the human tradition and not the teaching of the Bible that dictates woman be dominated by man.

In the Christian world, the above traits stem from the misinterpretation of the Bible. The teachings of the Bible are misconstrued to favor the subjugation and abuse of women by men. Another erroneously claimed teaching of the Bible is that God gave man absolute authority over woman when stating that man is woman's head and that the woman should be in subjection to her husband. Even after it was realized that all types of slavery were morally wrong, this was not equated to the family arrangement. "Churches, as institutions ... overlooked the family abuses that masqueraded as orderliness."

**Continued on Page 11**



# Mental Exercise

By David Beagan

## Mystery Route

A man drives to work each day, an eight mile round trip. In the morning he travels just two miles to get to work. In the evening he must drive eight miles to get home. He always takes the shortest driving route. How is this possible?

## Square Arrangement

Can you think of how to arrange six squares so that every square touches four other squares?

## Who's Who

The following display contains seven well known people either from the present day or from history. The last names are on the right the first names on the left have been scrambled and the lines reordered. The challenge is to unscramble and then match to the correct last name (spaces are not relevant).

warden	armstrong
arab bar	madison
nash	clinton
veil	geiger
do yell	strauss
sealech	johnson
line	bush

## Ten Digits

Can you find a ten-digit number that has the following properties? The first digit tells how many ones are in the overall number, the second digit the number of twos, and so on, the ninth digit the number of nines, and finally the tenth digit the number of zeros.

## Count the Shakes

Twelve people attend a meeting and they shake each others hand exactly once. How many total handshakes are there?

---

The problems of puzzles are very near the problems of life.

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**Erno Rubik**

## Answers

### Mystery Route

The man lives next to a highway with specific entrances and exits. His home is next to one exit and his workplace is next to the exit that is two miles away. However, for the trip home from work, there is not an exit by his home, he must go two miles past his house and double back to get home.

### Square Arrangement

If you take the six square and arrange them to form a cube then each square touches six others.

### Who's Who

Neil Armstrong  
Andrew Johnson  
Barbara Bush  
Hans Geiger  
Levi Strauss  
Dolly Madison  
Chelsea Clinton

### Ten Digits

Here is a number meets the stated criteria 2100010006.

### Count the Shakes

There are  $11+10+9+8+7+6+5+4+3+2+1 = 66$  total handshakes.

## To Our Contributors:

Original articles should be submitted for publication to *The THINK Club*, P.O. Box 451, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0451. Our email address is:

**TheThinkClub@AOL.com**

Articles should not exceed 1,200 words. Longer articles, if accepted, may be published in installments. Whenever possible, send all articles on floppy disc in *Word for Windows*. Discs will be returned to the contributors.

Publisher's Desk

Women's Accomplishments

By Bala Prasad



When Nancy Pelosi became the first female Speaker of the House in U.S. history, the highest elected post ever held by a woman, she thanked her husband and children for helping her go “from the kitchen to Congress.” To put this in perspective, 135 years ago, when a feisty, visionary newspaper owner named Victoria Woodhull became the first woman to run for president as a nominee of the Equal Right’s Party, most women could not vote. Today, with a female presidential candidate leading the race in the Democratic primary, women consist of more than half of the voters in the United States.

I like women. My mother was a woman, my wife is a woman, and my daughters are women. Women have historically had and will continue to have an important and vital place in our society and in our culture. And I am pleased to announce that the future of women in this country seems to be getting brighter and brighter. Of course, being from the old country, I must admit that the idea of women running the world does send a chill up my spine. However, I certainly want my daughters to have available to them every opportunity that my sons enjoy. And if they cannot have this in America, the ultimate land of opportunity, then where can they have it? Scanning the globe, there are numerous countries with current or past female heads of state: Chile, Iceland, Argentina, Nicaragua, Ireland, Israel, Switzerland, Pakistan, Panama, Finland, England, Germany, Indonesia, the Philippines, and, most recently, India. So, yes, it is high time that women emerge as leading political figures in this country as well.

Of course, progress has been slow and steady. In 1981, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor became the first female Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. It took over ten years – until 1993 – for a second female Associate Justice (Ruth Bader Ginsburg) to be appointed to the Supreme Court. But in that same year, Janet Reno became the first female Attorney General of the United States. Five years later, Madeleine Albright was the first woman to become United States Secretary of State. Since then, a second woman – Condoleezza Rice – has held that esteemed position.

As another example of the the workplace, last year Katie anchor the weekday evening broadcast networks. This journalists, such as Barbara Vargas, co-anchoring the their male counterparts.

While progress has been progress just the same. To women gain prominence late Jacqueline Bouvier

Diana are two such examples. Those women, though icons, became known because of their male counterparts, although they certainly remained prominent long after their husbands were gone from their lives. Nevertheless, today, women by and large rise and fall based on who they are and what they have accomplished. Senator Hillary Clinton, as an example, will undoubtedly be recorded in the annals of history for her political victories (or defeats), rather than her role as Bill Clinton’s wife. So, to the women reading this article, good luck! And to the men reading this article, get ready!



slow but steady progress of women in Couric became the first woman to solo-news on one of the three major came after decades of leading female Walters, Connie Chung, and Elizabeth Evening News on those channels with

slow and steady, it has been be sure, gone are the days where through the men they marry – the Kennedy Onassis and Princess

Sincerely,

*Bala Prasad*

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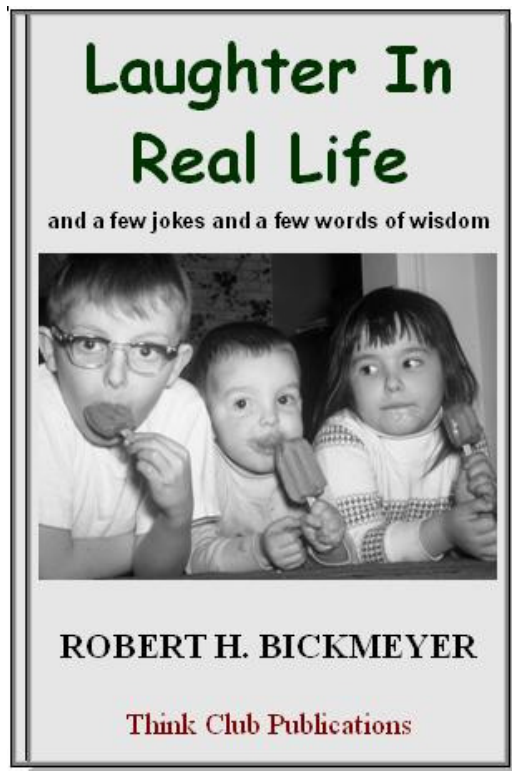
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