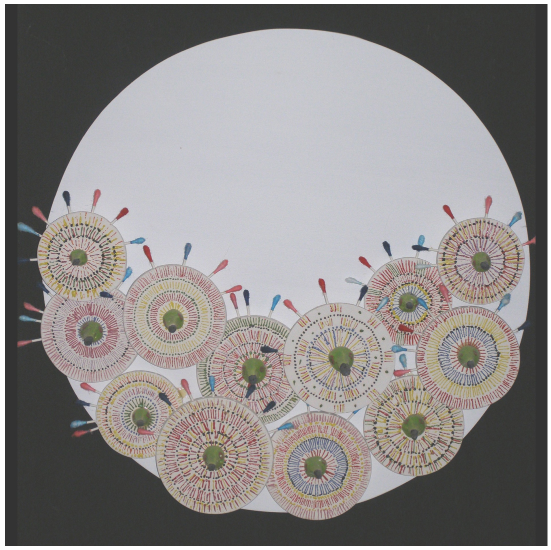

# Noesis

**The Journal of the Mega Society**
**Issue #195, December 2013**

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# About the Mega Society

The Mega Society was founded by Dr. Ronald K. Hoeflin in 1982. The 606 Society (6 in $10^6$), founded by Christopher Harding, was incorporated into the new society and those with IQ scores on the Langdon Adult Intelligence Test (LAIT) of 173 or more were also invited to join. (The LAIT qualifying score was subsequently raised to 175; official scoring of the LAIT terminated at the end of 1993, after the test was compromised). A number of different tests were accepted by 606 and during the first few years of Mega's existence. Later, the LAIT and Dr. Hoeflin's Mega Test became the sole official entrance tests, by vote of the membership. Later, Dr. Hoeflin's Titan Test was added. (The Mega was also compromised, so scores after 1994 are currently not accepted; the Mega and Titan cutoff is now 43—but either the LAIT cutoff or the cutoff on Dr. Hoeflin's tests will need to be changed, as they are not equivalent.)

Mega publishes this irregularly-timed journal. The society also has a (low-traffic) members-only e-mail list. Mega members, please contact the Editor to be added to the list.

For more background on Mega, please refer to Darryl Miyaguchi's "A Short (and Bloody) History of the High-IQ Societies"—

http://www.eskimo.com/~miyaguch/history.html

—the Editor's High-IQ Societies page—

http://www.polymath-systems.com/intel/hiqsocs/index.html

—and the official Mega Society page,

http://www.megasociety.org/

*Noesis* is the journal of the Mega Society, an organization whose members are selected by means of high-range intelligence tests. Jeff Ward, 13155 Wimberly Square #284, San Diego, CA 92128, is Administrator of the Mega Society. Inquiries regarding membership should be directed to him at the address above or:

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Opinions expressed in these pages are those of individuals, not of *Noesis* or the Mega Society.

# Editorial

**Kevin Langdon**

Here is the second issue of 2013, barely in time, as usual.

This issue contains a very interesting article on human activity and the world ecosystem by David Seaborg, a reflective essay on how much we miss through our lack of perspective and heedless living by David Minster, an essay on the change of the pole star over time by Carl Masthay, seventeen very difficult verbal analogies and a curious finding on the Internet by Ruediger Ebendt, a short biographical note by the Editor, and a selection of poetry by Richard Badke, Ray Faraday Nelson, Kevin Langdon, and May-Tzu (Richard May).

Once again we're overdue to elect officers. If anyone is interested in the rather thankless task of Administrator, Internet Officer, or Editor, please make your interest known.

And if that seems like a lot of work, Mega members might consider guest editing an issue of *Noesis*, possibly a special issue on a particular subject.

Since 2009 Ed Schreiber has arranged five conferences under the name ggg999—Global General Gathering of the Triple Nine Society. This was a private project, though done with the assistance of many TNS members and others, but now ownership of ggg999 has been transferred to the Triple Nine Society.

Members of other societies with credible admission standards at the 99.9th percentile and above (including the Mega Society) are invited to these conferences; see:

http://www.ggg999.org

My report on the 2013 ggg999 conference can be found at:

http://www.polymath-systems.com/intel/hiqsocs/meetings/ggg999_2013

Cover: Quetzal 4, by Richard Badke.

Cartoon on page 10 by Kevin Langdon.

# The Greenhouse Diet

**David Seaborg**

**Author's Note:** This article is on the environmental effects of high atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide that are not related to global warming and the greenhouse effect. They are very serious and could cause ecosystems to crash, because they result in plants not providing enough protein to animals that eat them. These effects are known to science, but not to the general public. This article is a synthesis and summary of the science of this issue. It appeared in the Winter, 2004 issue (Volume 18, Number 4) of the *Earth Island Journal*, the journal of the Earth Island Institute, an effective environmental organization headquartered in San Francisco, California, founded by the late distinguished environmentalist David Brower.

You may be familiar with the dangers of climate disruption as a result of human-induced increases of carbon dioxide ($CO_2$) and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. But recent scientific discoveries hint at disastrous disruptive effects of increased $CO_2$ concentrations on ecosystems—effects that are quite distinct from the climatic effects of this gas.

Carbon dioxide is the gas that plants use for photosynthesis, the process by which they produce carbohydrates for their growth. Increased atmospheric $CO_2$ allows more rapid photosynthesis, and thus increased carbohydrate production and plant growth. But nitrogen uptake by the plant does not keep up with the increase in carbon uptake. Since protein synthesis demands nitrogen, plants that grow faster under high-$CO_2$ conditions end up with a lower ratio of protein to carbohydrate than they'd have under normal atmospheric conditions. Hence, the quality of the plant as a protein source plummets. Insects feeding on the plant may have to eat more to get enough protein. The result: insects face increased malnutrition, starvation, attacks from predators, and overall death rates. Insects are crucial to most ecosystems, and their depletion could cause ecosystems to crash. The potential effects of protein-deficient plants on vertebrate herbivores, such as sheep and antelope, appear ominous as well.

David N. Karowe, an entomologist at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, fed cabbage white butterfly caterpillars leaves from plants grown in two different $CO_2$ chambers: one in which the air matches today's $CO_2$ levels (about a third higher than pre-industrial levels), and one in which the concentration of the gas was double that. Caterpillars that ate carbon-enriched leaves ate 40 percent more plant material than controls did. Yet they still did not acquire sufficient protein: the caterpillars' growth slowed by about 10 per cent, and it took them much longer than normal to develop into adults. When the adults finally emerged, they were smaller than those raised as caterpillars on leaves of plants grown at today's atmospheric $CO_2$ levels.

Richard Lindroth of the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that gypsy moth caterpillars ate significantly more than controls when fed leaves of aspen, birch, and oak trees grown in high $CO_2$ concentrations. They also grew into much smaller adults. Lindroth says that caterpillars of both moths and butterflies generally tended to eat more, yet ended up smaller, when fed plants grown in elevated $CO_2$.

Moth and butterfly caterpillar feeding studies are generally done in the laboratory, as it is very difficult to track individuals in the field. But other insects are less difficult to study in the wild. Peter D. Stiling of the University of South Florida and his colleagues studied leaf miners in nature. Leaf miners are easier to study in the field, as they spend their entire larval stage inside “mines” (small blisters carved out within leaves), which the miners depart when they become adults. It is easy to tell how much the larva has eaten by the size of its mine.

The mines also record the insects’ fates. If the larva starves to death, the shriveled body can be found in the mine. Predation leaves telltale signs as well. After small predatory wasps make a meal of leaf miner larvae they burst out of the mines, creating shotgun-like holes. Ants, spiders, and lizards rip open mines to devour the miners. And leaf miners that survive the larval stage slice a distinctive round or crescent-shaped escape hole, then drop to the forest floor and metamorphose into adults.

Stiling and his colleagues pumped $CO_2$-enriched air into small artificial chambers in the field, and normal air into other such chambers. Oak leaves with leaf miner larvae were placed inside these chambers, which were open at the top to allow moisture and insects to get in and out. Insects in chambers with high $CO_2$ levels dug out mines 20 percent larger than those in the normal-air control chambers, indicating that they had eaten much more leaf fiber. Yet autopsies showed that the leaf miners in the chambers with high $CO_2$ levels were twice as likely to die of starvation as the insects living in the chambers with standard air. Since the leaves were not protein-rich enough to support them, they ate more and still starved.

In addition, compared with leaf miners in chambers with regular atmosphere, four times as many insects in the high-$CO_2$ chambers were killed by parasitic wasps. Stiling speculates that bigger blisters might make the miners easier for the wasps to locate. And if a miner spends more time growing in the mine, predators have more time to attack it.

## A matter of chemistry

Increased $CO_2$ may also interfere with the complex chemical systems by which plant and insect populations communicate.

Plants release chemicals into the air when an insect bite wounds them, and parasitic wasps can home in on these chemical signals. Some researchers think that increased atmospheric $CO_2$ could prompt insect herbivores to telegraph their presence to their enemies by this mechanism: the more damage an insect does to a plant in its quest for protein, the more “distress” chemicals the plant will emit.

Parasitic and predatory wasps are also attracted by caterpillar droppings. Caterpillars raised in elevated $CO_2$ levels produce up to twice the normal amount of waste, both because they are eating more and because the leaves are harder to digest. But the situation may not work to the wasps’ advantage. Malnourished caterpillars cannot support as many parasites as caterpillars of normal size and nourishment can. Wasps that emerge from malnourished caterpillars tend to be smaller and lay fewer eggs.

Aphids, another common plant-eating insect, actually reproduce 10 to 15 percent faster under elevated $CO_2$ conditions. The reasons for the increase are not fully clear. Aphids feed on phloem, vascular tissue containing the sugary sap that nourishes growing parts of the plant. This plant sap does not seem to be affected by $CO_2$ concentration, so aphids are not subject to the problems discussed earlier.

Aphids seem to know what is good for them instinctively. Caroline S. Awmack, an ecologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, put aphids, one at a time, into a Y-shaped tube that gave insects a choice between dining on wheat grown in air with a normal concentration of $CO_2$ or on wheat grown in air high in $CO_2$. The aphids preferred the wheat grown in high-$CO_2$ air.

However, sensible decisions for aphids can spell big trouble for plants. Awmack found that under high $CO_2$ conditions, bean plants infested with aphids cannot grow flowers or new shoots. Thus, if global atmospheric increase in $CO_2$ boosts aphid populations, bean crops could be catastrophically damaged.

Awmack may have found a point of vulnerability in the aphid. In normal conditions, when aphids are disturbed, they give off a pheromone as a chemical alarm that warns other aphids of danger. In experiments with high $CO_2$, aphids stop making the pheromone in response to stress and even fail to respond to the hormone when researchers provide it. Such complacent insects would be easy prey for parasitic wasps and ladybugs.

John B. Whittacker, an ecologist at Lancaster University in England, and his colleagues have followed several generations of spittlebugs living in $CO_2$-enriched chambers. Spittlebugs, unlike aphids, suck xylem sap. Xylem is vascular tissue that carries water and dissolved minerals.

The spittlebugs did poorly in high-$CO_2$ environments. Instead of adapting to the bad food over time and over generations, the insects did progressively worse. Survival rates plummeted 27 percent over three generations.

But what about mammals? Scientists in New Zealand and Kansas are currently leading sheep to $CO_2$-enriched pastures to see what happens to grazing mammals and their grasslands under high $CO_2$ levels. Clenton Owensby at Kansas State University and his colleagues built greenhouses over patches of the Kansas prairie and pumped air with high $CO_2$ levels into some and ambient air into others. They let sheep graze in the greenhouses, and then collected food from their throats before they digested it. As expected, the grasses grown in air with elevated $CO_2$ levels had much less protein than those grown in standard air.

Cud-chewing animals differ from insects in that they eat less when their plants are grown in elevated $CO_2$. That is because bacteria in their digestive tracts control how much food ruminants ingest. The bacteria digest plant matter, extracting maximum nutrients for their host, but the bacteria's digestive ability falls as the protein content of the food falls. The grazing herbivore thus soon fills its rumen to capacity and must wait for the bacteria to complete the digestive process before it can eat again.

More time between meals means more time on the farm before the animal gains enough weight to be marketable. Ranchers could feed their animals protein supplements, but that could greatly increase the price of meat.

It is not known, nor is it easy to study, what the effect of enhanced $CO_2$ has on wild herbivores, such as deer, elk, antelope, and gazelle, but there is no reason to believe that they won't have similar problems, and they won't have the luxury of humans giving them protein supplements.

The effect of such stress on domestic and wild herbivores is not clear, but is potentially devastating to human food production and ecosystems. Certainly the collapse of an herbivore population on the African savanna, for instance, would be an environmental catastrophe. Predators would starve, and some areas would be overrun by weedy plants with no herbivores to control their growth.

The ecological impact of high $CO_2$ as a result of its ill effects on insects is clearer. The effects on plants and insects are now reasonably well understood, and known to be serious. Insects constitute about three quarters of all animal species. Their ecological importance is far greater than that of vertebrates, and in fact than that of any other animal group. Insects pollinate a huge variety and number of economically important domestic and wild plant species, the latter being of paramount ecological importance. Their value as food for birds, bats, lizards, and other animals is immeasurable. Insects regulate plant growth, a far from trivial environmental service. The loss of a substantial portion of insect species could cause the collapse of entire ecosystem; indeed, the human race could not survive without insects.

The changes brought about by high $CO_2$ levels as a result of differential responses of various plant species to these changes may cause a new set of plants to dominate ecosystems, as some plant species will adapt to high $CO_2$ levels better than others. This will likely result in more weedy species, some of which tend to adapt better to high levels of $CO_2$. Further, differences between classes of plant eaters in their ability to adapt to high-$CO_2$ conditions could lead to shifts in the ecological balance among insects and the plants on which they feed. It will likely be harder for some plants than others to adapt to rapid increases or decreases in insect herbivore populations. All this could result in the extinction of many plant species and the animals higher on the food chain directly and indirectly dependent on them.

*David Seaborg is an evolutionary biologist. He founded and heads the World Rainforest Fund and the Seaborg Open Space Fund, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to saving open space, named after David's father, Nobel laureate Glenn Seaborg. He lives in the San Francisco Bay area.*

# The Relativity of Being

**David Minster**

Most people go about their daily lives without realizing how extraordinary everything around them is. Everything we see, including ourselves, is the result of evolutionary processes that have not just taken place on Earth, but also the universe. The sheer complexity of everything is just a snapshot in time of the current state of being. We walk around on ground that is the result of hundreds of millions of years of still ongoing geological processes of one sort or another. The continents we live on are changing shape, size and position constantly. The life forms around us, including us, are, as we are discovering now, incredibly complex, and we are still scratching the surface in our quest to understand them. We have constructed frameworks to describe the larger picture (relativity) and the smaller (quantum mechanics) though we don't yet know how to consolidate the two; at minimum we need a greater understanding of everything to do so. as the universe works irrespective of how we think it should work, in much the same way that the fossil record gives us unbiased hints of what has gone before us, no matter what our belief systems say.

Then there is the question of time. Even though we can measure the progress of time very accurately for our own affairs, it remains local. For instance my daytime is someone else's night. Also, everything we see is the result of absorption, reflection or emission of light which travels at a constant speed for the medium it is passing through. This has served us well till now as light speed is fast enough for most applications, but when we start going further afield things are not quite what they seem. We see the moon as it was half a second ago, the sun as it was 8 minutes ago, the next closest star to ours 4.4 years ago, the Andromeda galaxy 2.5 million years ago, and the occasional really eye-visible distant supernovae as they occured anywhere from thousands to billions of years ago. So when we look up at the night sky we are seeing a multiplicity of whens. The velocity of light is important to us now as it affects the top speed of our computers and communications. Traders in New York want to know what is happening in Tokyo almost as it happens; for example, as trading is done by computers and the internet, a delay of even half a second can cause havoc.

Next up are the seasons. which vary from hemisphere to hemisphere as a result of the axial tilt and wobble of our planet as it makes its way around the sun. My summer could be your winter, my longest day your shortest and so on. This dichotomy illustrates that there is more than one truth at any time.

Then we move on to our lives. We are all the result of our genetic codes, upbringing and societal norms. I remember someone in London trying to lump myself and a friend together in one box, homogenous white South Africans. My friend pointed out that we might both be South Africans but we are the result of two completely different cultures, chalk and cheese. Then there are the questions of health, wealth and IQ, all three minefields for the unwary, as are our belief systems or lack thereof. Also, our acquired knowledge and comprehension of the world around us varies considerably, depending not only on our abilities but also on the limits imposed on us by our belief systems and those who teach.

# Polar Star Placed by God?

**Carl Masthay**
6 December 2013

Recently I was asked if Polaris, the Polar Star, will always be the polar star. I answered that it was not and would change because of precession of the Earth over 26,000 years. Some do not understand the workings of the universe and celestial mechanics and find these things mysterious.

Here is how it works in detail, step by step: Our Milky Way spiral galaxy is moderately large. Our Sun, a moderate-sized main-sequence star, makes a circuit around the center of our galaxy about once in 220 million years. Other stars do the same but in their own different orbital paths. Our Sun also travels in a sinusoidal course above and below the plane of the disk of our galaxy at about 22,000 years per cycle. That means that at any particular cycle the surrounding stars do not match where they were at the corresponding point in another cycle.

Our Solar System goes around our Sun. All the planetary bodies and disk detritus move closer to or farther from our Sun and never take the exact same course as time goes by. A spinning top will precess if it is subject to an external force. This makes the top wobble, and its axis traces out a circle as the top itself spins. The Earth is a slowly spinning top. Tidal forces from the sun and moon act on the slight equatorial bulge, and that causes a slow wobble in the rotation. So our Earth precesses over a 25,800-year period. Our Earth's geographic poles pointing north and south are thus temporary with respect to the distant stars. They come back approximately to a similar point once each 25,800 year cycle or period. There is a 23.5-degree angle that marks the angular width of the precession circle as it is projected upon the celestial sphere.

Our polar star is temporarily Polaris and even now does not align with the actual geographical pole because a long-exposure picture shows that it makes a small circle. It is just a reference point for us. The South Pole pointing up into the night sky has no reference star at all, but in the far future it too probably will have one for a while. Our Polar Star, anciently called Phoenice, is presently shifting toward our North Celestial Pole, closely aligning with it on 24 March 2100, when Polaris will be 0.4525 degree from the pole at that time (a little less than the angular diameter of the moon when at its farthest from Earth), according to the computation wizard Jean Meeus. Back 5000 years ago in ancient Egyptian times another star, Thuban ('serpent', Alpha Draconis), was the pole star, almost exactly at the North Celestial Pole in the year 2787 BCE, and then in 1100 BCE Kochab ('star', Beta Ursae Minoris) in the Little Dipper served as a rather poor pole star. After Polaris, Errai ('the shepherd', Gamma Cephei) will become the northern pole star around the year 4000 and then Alderamin ('the right forearm', Alpha Cephei) will take its turn around 7500.

There is another “small” matter: More than a hundred tons of meteorites land on the Earth every day, adding to the Earth’s mass, and so they change the momentum of the entire Earth a very small amount that adds up over millions of years. That change might affect where the geographic pole lies only if deposition is highly asymmetric. In addition, the magnetic pole varies geographically over the years, wandering this way and that but independently from the geographic pole. Its course depends on the interior of the Earth in the very slow nonuniform movement of the viscous hot mantle under the crust of the Earth, probably affecting the Earth’s momentum.

So we can see how Polaris is only temporary in position. In addition, Polaris itself is moving in its own course (its proper motion) anyway. So 25,800 years from now there will be a slightly different placement for our geographic pole.

HOWEVER, there is still one more huge event coming up: The Andromeda Galaxy, our sister galaxy about 2.5 million light years away, and the Milky Way galaxy are falling toward each other and will collide 2 or 3 billion years from now. That means that every star in both systems will be affected and will enter an unusual orbit, and so that alone will change our assumed polar star to be a completely different one from what we see in this little slice of now. It’s all just celestial mechanics!


God gets pissed off for the first time.

# Seventeen Verbal Analogies

**Ruediger Ebendt**

To receive a report on your score on this set of analogies please write to Ruediger (“ruediger dot ebendt at yahoo dot com”); there is no scoring fee.

1) Animals : Fable :: Humans : ?

2) Giant : Cyclops :: Storm : ?

3) Joke : Jocular :: Neck : ?

4) God : Apotheosis :: Gourd : ?

5) Rough breathing : Grave :: Smooth breathing : ?

6) On air : On camera :: In private : ?

7) Specific class for a more general class : Synecdoche :: Brief tale for a more general truth : ?

8) Elegance, not benevolence : Goodliness :: Jesting, not ridicule : ?

9) Pipe : Wire :: Head : ?

10) To consecrate a bishop : Ordination :: To promote to a bishop : ?

11) ln(-1)/pi : Imaginary :: sqrt(E/m) : ?

12) Idler : Faineant :: Diddler : ?

13) 5 : Platon :: 92 : ?

14) Ceramic sculpture of one of the Nereids : Clay Neso :: Canonic set of countably many notations : ?

15) Sea adventurer : Buccaneer :: Stockbroker : ?

16) Ice : Skating star :: Space : ?

17) {palindrome, portmanteau, oxymoron} : palindrome :: {mondegreen, pun, word} : ?

# A Mare's Nest?

**Ruediger Ebendt**

This is just a find on the web which may be curious enough to share:

It seems that the architect has created an interesting illusion, which the photographer then (unwittingly?) turned into a real "mare's nest". More pictures of this nice "stork nest farm" near Benesov, Czech Republic, can be found at:

http://www.sglprojekt.cz/projects.php?catid=11&id=61

# School

**Kevin Langdon**

Nursery school and kindergarten were OK. It was kind of boring but at least there was quite a bit of play time. Then I skipped the first grade. And second grade on was hell for me, not because of a year's difference in age but because of the regimentation, the mind-numbing repetition, the closed-mindedness of teachers, and the herd mentality of my contemporaries, with only a very few partial exceptions.

I had a few good teachers who recognized that in me that needed encouragement and stimulation, but most couldn't see beyond their boring curriculum and various arbitrary rules. And one of the exceptions was my second-grade teacher, Miss Goldstein, so my exposure to the full horror of school was gradual. I had some good friends too, but only a few.

Once our teacher became ill and we had to have a substitute for several months. And the guy we got was a sadistic creep who liked to torment and humiliate the students in my class, especially those least well equipped to defend themselves. I wrote a nasty, obscene rhyme about him and shared it with the other kids.

I hated the bullying that came my way from other kids too. I didn't ever get the crap beat out of me but I got roughed up a few times, and the feeling of helpless subjugation to mindless beasts was terrifying. Schools and other institutions need to do whatever it takes to stop bullying within their facilities and in their activities.

My favorite subject was recess. It was good to be free for a few minutes. I'd think about things, play by myself and play with others. Some of the games were fun to play, like kickball and four square, and sometimes some of the kids made up rule variations. I was quite interested in this myself, and eventually I moved on to inventing new games.

We weren't supposed to be inside during recess and there were female "hall monitors" assigned to enforcing the rules. I remember, on one occasion, refusing to obey them (while actually stepping outside), tearing up a bit, and saying "I don't take orders from *girls*!" (And then I snuck in again through a bathroom that opened both to the outside and the inside.)

I continued to be rebellious as long as I stayed in school. At the rehearsal for the graduation ceremony for the one kid a year ahead of me in our K-8 school, I tied his shoelaces together. Fortunately, he thought it was funny and (for once) I escaped disciplinary sanctions for my mischief-making (but, of course, it was just the rehearsal).

I wasn't so lucky when I ripped up the teacher's grade book in my senior year of high school when he gave another student a chance to earn extra credit that wasn't offered to the rest of us. I was suspended for two days, right before graduation.

# An Ordinary Stone

**Richard Badke**

I saw it break.  An ordinary stone
of mottled grey and green, without a name.
I cannot count the years it laid unknown,
unseen.  It was a Tuesday when it came.

What ancient hand has tatted a white lace
within your azure sky, its hue on loan
from summer's day?  Your breaking did atone
for eons in a stony cold embrace.

Your mottled grey and green was like a koan,
whose answer lies like light within the flame.
A riddle lying there unseen, alone,
until that ancient hand released its claim.

# Flute

**Richard Badke**

Air rushing through holes
Fingers pass, resist the flow.
Soundless sound…flute…flute…

# My Death

**Ray Faraday Nelson**

My death will be a big event.
Too bad I won't be there.
I'll either be some other place
Or won't be anywhere!

# Skeptical Religion

**Kevin Langdon**

Pray without ceasing,
The prayer of the heart
—And that and a nickel
Will buy you a fart.

For faith without works
Is like eggs without bacon.
If you don't know that
Then you're badly mistaken.

And if there's a God
Who deserves your respect
You'd better be careful
About what comes next.

Have you really lived
Your life all that well,
Or are you possibly
Going to hell?

Every life is like a threat,
A notice you must pay a debt,
And time is running out for you.
You'll soon be dead. You know it's true.

You need to find what matters most.
And do what's right before you're toast.
As far as you acknowledge this
It obligates; don't be remiss.

The recognition of one's duty
Has a certain sombre beauty.
And if you can fulfill it well
You may not even go to hell.

*(Inspired by association from "Every Life Is Like a Thread," by David Rogers, in* Vidya *[the journal of the Triple Nine Society] #252/253, February 2009—but the first four stanzas were written in 2009 and the last three [in a different pattern but containing the variation on David Rogers' title] were written in 2013. Strange how that came together.)*

# The Offensiveness of the Universe

**May-Tzu**
June 20, 2011

When I was a child I was very offended
that the universe was bigger than I was.
I didn't ask to be born in a universe
that was so much bigger than I was.
I suppose a little bigger would have been acceptable for geometric reasons,
so I wouldn't have to be stuffed into it.
But I see no need for so much additional wasted space in the universe
beyond my own skin,
the volume of which could detract from my importance.

# More and Less Than Stardust

**May-Tzu**
June 16, 2011

The perceiving subject and the object perceived, 'internally' and 'externally', are usually separate in our ordinary, biologically useful state of 'consciousness'.

Duality, the subject-object dichotomy, can be abolished, as in cosmic consciousness or 'objective consciousness'.

We are the universe observing itself. But as skin-encapsulated egos, we live the delusion of 'our' separateness.

There is only the One, the Cosmos, at various levels of scale 'within' and 'without'.

But there are an infinite number of points within the hologram, Indra's net of gems, from which to *see and be* the totality, depending upon state and station, knowledge and being, "hal" and "makam."

The observer is the observed. — J. Krishnamurti

— May-Tzu or a flock of geese