

Noesis

The Journal of the Mega Society Number 100 December 1994

EDITOR

R. Rosner

5139 Balboa Blvd #303

Encino CA 91316-3430

(818) 986-9177

IN THIS ISSUE

STUPID ROSNER OBSERVATIONS

POSTCARDS FROM RICHARD W. MAY

LETTER FROM CHRIS LANGAN

A LETTER, TWO ARTICLES, AND AN ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT FROM ROBERT DICK

LETTER FROM ROBERT HANNON

ON STUPIDITY BY RICK ROSNER

While we debate the stupidity of material in *Noesis*, lemme say a few things about dumbness in the outside world.

Observation one: Fifty years ago, the Era of National Stupidity reached its peak. We are now in the Era of Individual Stupidity. During WWII, nations were psychotic, but the individuals that comprised those nations generally behaved themselves according to the rules established by their crazed leaders. Today, the world's largest nations generally behave with some restraint, but the individuals in those nations misbehave.

I blame an increasing population and productivity for widespread dumb behavior. Since WWII, the U.S. population has doubled and productivity has increased five or ten times. This is too much productivity. There's not enough stuff to do, and people must fritter away their time, going to college, watching cable, playing video, filing lawsuits, pursuing meaningless (and usually vicarious) sex. This is fine with me, except that, as a professional moron, I can't keep up with all the amateur morons.

Self-destruction through individual misbehavior is certainly preferable to the destruction of populations through national aggression. It's fun to wonder where this trend will lead. (Incidental) Observation two: In political propaganda, "Where it will lead" is the type of argument most frequently made. Most court cases, most political decisions, are piddly and can be seen as significant only through the magnifying glass of trend-mongering--"If stuff like this keeps happening," the argument goes, we'll end up in some politically-extreme dictatorial dystopia. (That's how I feel we're trending now under the Republicans, but I should know better.) Most trends exist only to fill newscasts. Piddliness in one direction is usually scuffed out a succession of other piddly trends.

But, maybe individual media-abetted technosexualcriminal foolishness is an actual trend. Then things can only get more interesting. With more people with more resources to create their own little worlds,

each individual slice of life, each biography, is going to be thinner, more tweaked, a more distant random divergence from some 1950's average.

And, sociobiologists et al like to argue that altruism is genetically based. They do the math and show how genes survive better under cooperation. Observation three: I bet there's some other math to be done showing that when a species is too successful, some genes survive better using chaotic, violent strategies. Everybody knows when too many rodents are crammed in a cage, they engage in antisocial behavior. There's gotta be some sociobiological math behind that.

Quick review of I.Q., in which Walter Matthau plays Albert Einstein—Much of the movie takes place at Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies. Podolsky and Kurt Godel get lots of screen time as Einstein's sidekicks. So during the first few minutes, I was pretty excited. But the movie is real dumb, even for non-physics people. President Eisenhower comes to campus to congratulate Einstein and Tim Robbins for developing cold fusion. Einstein rigs a car to malfunction by remote control. There're enough moments of okayness to keep you interested, but the movie ends with a messy cluster of coincidences and unlikely behavior. You might impress a date by pointing out all the wrong stuff, but you'll probably just sound annoying.

WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT EDITORIAL AND MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Some people dislike the new requirement of 10 pages of material per year to remain active Mega members. So forget it. Try this policy instead. From now on, Mega members, while not required to submit anything, can extend their subscriptions by sending in material. Your subscription will be extended by one issue for every two pages you submit. This applies to members only, unless I really, really like particular pieces by non-members.

Next thing—Chris Langan wants me out as editor. Many times, especially in the last year, I've thought, "I really do suck. I should ask the other members if they wanna replace me." But until now I haven't been that brave.

I don't think I've been entirely awful. People send me stuff, I make some lame comments, let it age three months, and send it to the publisher. I think the issues I've put together have often contained interesting and varied material (along with lots of other stuff). You sent in most of it. Would a different editor get you to submit better material? I think I've discouraged some people through lateness and ill-considered commentary, and perhaps overencouraged other people by indiscriminately running their stuff. Do you think a new editor would make a difference, or do you share my laissez-faire attitude that people are gonna do what they're gonna do?

Do you think someone else would produce issues that are more prompt and interesting? Would someone else be willing to do so for a reasonable length of time? I'm willing to continue as editor. I probably won't improve much. (Especially since my wife will be having our first child in three months.)

So, let everyone know what you think, and **SEND IN MATERIAL**. Dues remain two bucks per issue, payable to me (not *Noesis*, since I don't have a DBA).

POSTCARDS FROM R. W. MAY

Dear Rick,

Hear, O Rosner and Cole! The Mega our Society, the Mega is One.

Remember, Rick, that you promised not to create multiple classes of membership? Many members, including Kevin Langdon and R. May among others, objected to this with good reasons. Surely a class of cryonically-suspended members is a bit extreme.

Best, Richard

Dear Rick

Since you have demanded that we "publish or perish," then do we not have a right to expect submissions to be published? Mega member Kevin Langdon has called my essays on "religious and metaphysical traditions" "quite fascinating." He has also offered to publish them, seemingly thinking them of positive value. Robert Dick, member of Mega, has said that my philosophical essays "make abstruse philosophies comprehensible." Kevin Schwartz said of an essay of mine, "Existentialism," that it was "absolutely excellent." My submission "Four Eastern Philosophies," which has incidentally appeared in no high-IQ society journals, was apparently considered less worthy of publication by you than crackpot science and mathematics or your own work on a novel. You published only about 2/9ths of "Four Eastern Philosophies," it is evidently so inferior in form and content to other published material evidently. Some have liked my essays, the absence of crackpot science and math and vulgarity notwithstanding. (Hissy Wissy.)

Best, Richard

[Editor's comment: You're right, I should have run the whole thing. I sent it to Chris Cole, told him to run what fit. Please send another copy, and I'll run the whole thing. Sorry.]

Dear Tom, [Richard May sent a Xerox of a postcard to somebody else.]

I have invented or discovered a new discipline, admittedly somewhat pedestrian though it may be: cybercentric theology, the study of God from the viewpoint of computer systems. If computers are able to think, then computers will presumably develop their own theologies or anti-theologies, nicht wahr? Cybercentric theology, a de-constructionist analysis. What a doctoral dissertation topic. Now I must learn a little French and present myself to the academics in a miniskirt as an albino Haitian cross-dresser! I will be awarded lots of money and new departments will be created in academe in Albino Haitian Cross-dressing Studies, especially cybercentric theology, my own specialty! R. W. May

Dear Rick [May added to the Xerox],

When the idea of cybercentric theology first occurred to me I found it very amusing. I still do find it hilarious, but now believe that cybercentric theology, philosophy, esthetics, and cybercentric culture or subculture generally, are inevitable consequences of high-level AI or computer cognitive ability, if such is developed. Of course, cybercentric physics and mathematics would tend not to diverge from that of homo sapiens, whereas esthetics and theology might be rather different. (Perhaps reality should be available by prescription only!)

Best, Richard May

P.S. Obviously, all previous culture, including philosophy and theology, was anthropocentric.

LETTER FROM CHRIS LANGAN

In *Noesis* 94, I made a certain recommendation and stated that its implementation would assure that *Noesis* would "not lose me as a contributor". Until the problem is acknowledged, I will submit no further contributions of serious moment.

To be frank, I haven't felt good about contributing to *Noesis* for a while now, and Krakatoic crankery isn't the only reason. Another is exemplified by issue 94, which began with an editorial in which editor Rosner, well in character, makes a disgusting reference to geriatric hygiene and automotive nose picking (I won't even get into issue 99, except to say that I stopped at paragraph 1).

Having been given the privilege of first and last word, the editor of a journal represents all of its contributors. For example, say that someone influential enough to do the Mega Society some good were to find a copy of *Noesis*. His first impression will depend on what he sees up front. If that's an editorial strain of Tourette's syndrome, he will be unlikely to proceed with any expectation but gutter entertainment. Sadly, despite all contrary intentions, expectations often find circular ways of fulfilling themselves.

If any of you don't know why a Nobel Laureate, for example, might react poorly to a group of *soi-disant* geniuses whose (presumably elected) spokesman has a thing for writing about "old people's underwear" and "wiping boogers on transmission humps" (pg. 2, *Noesis* 94), I don't have the time to explain it to you. But for the sake of argument, let's consider a journalist instead, and suppose that lowbrow diversion is exactly what the prospective Mega Society publicist is seeking. Then he will have found what he wants immediately, and will probably focus primarily on the source of it... i.e., on the Tourette-stricken editor himself.

The bottom line? If anybody has anything to gain from the journal, it is probably the editor. He may become the new Alfred E. Neuman, a new "Van der Jeenius", maybe even a new counterculture antihero of mythic proportions. But that's it. An image like that is a one-man show, and nobody is likely to benefit by it but he who owns it. The game is finally rational from nobody's viewpoint but his, and all he needs to reflect his glory is a funhouse mirror.

And that, my fellow Megarians, is why *Noesis* is currently for the Rosners and the Hannons of this world and their reflective satellites, but nobody else. If any of you disagree with my opinion, by all means get it off your chest. Otherwise, like our hypothetical beneficent Nobel Laureate, I have no rational choice but to seek a less Rosneroid "readership" for material I actually care about... at least until I see a more encouraging trend.

This letter has been severely abridged. In place of the above, it originally contained several pages of vintage Einstein... Jojo Einstein. I've dropped Jojo's section as a personal favor to the publisher (Chris Cole), who felt that it was - and I quote - "the most vitriolic thing I've ever read". In fairness to Chris, the irrepressible clown did indeed reach new heights of bitterness and sarcasm in making the same points I've just tried to make (you'll simply have to trust me when I tell you that these heights crowned a skyscraping mountain of laughs!).

But before we proceed with the letter, I should probably recount a little Noetic/Mega Society history touched on by Jojo. For all practical purposes, I've been here from the beginning. As editor, I personally carried *Noesis* through its darkest days, a six-month lull when we were down to exactly three paying subscribers. Since

then, I've submitted original contributions on a fairly regular basis. For instance, I invented the novel concept of a simulative *computative regression* to resolve a philosophical conundrum called "Newcomb's Paradox". I suggested a means for resolving the quantum-theoretic paradox known as "Schrodinger's Cat". I tied the theory of inductive probability into the higher-order predicate logic... and threw in a charismatic street clown to boot. I established the criteria for a self-consistent theory of reality and metaphysics, and used them to synthesize a new mathematical structure, a *transductive algebra*. I introduced another new mathematical concept, an *R-morphism*, in order to solve the relationship between reality and language, and yet another, *relativistic many valued logic*, to put the beleaguered Special Theory of Relativity on an unprecedented logical footing. And as any nondyslexic reader knows, this is far from a complete listing.

But after these many years, I've finally had to wake up and smell the java: *nobody cares*. Some of you may boast high IQ's, but as Jojo put it, I "might as well have been performing for the swing shift on Monkey Island". As recently as *Noesis* 94, I had to listen to Ricky fantasize about how really good it would be, some day far away and somewhere over the rainbow, to have something of "high quality...beyond ridicule" to publish. And this, from somebody who tepidly admits that he already neither reads nor understands what other members submit! Whatever his angle, it just isn't that *cute* anymore (unless you happen to be him).

Believe me when I tell you it's been all I could do to keep from writing the whole thing off for good. And on that note, here's the challenge that formed the crux of my letter:

* I can see exactly why Jojo is upset. The bullchips really *have* piled up here. Even though I've made definite assertions on a variety of logical and mathematical subjects, no one has ever come up with a valid critical logical or mathematical error in my writings. These writings are not trivial in bearing; they involve the deep logical structure of reality. Any error in a logical theory must take logical form. Yet, as Jojo points out, nobody seems either able to find one in my contributions, or willing to admit in the light of day that he can't.

Accordingly, I'd like to propose a solution to the five-year-old problem of who wins and who loses in the Mega Society Sweepstakes. We all know IQ is only part of the package we call "intelligence". *Real* genius is measured by the ability to solve big, important real-world problems...for instance, a momentous, high-profile, hyperdifficult mathematical conjecture of my choosing.

Obviously, the entire burden of proof is on me. But just as obviously, I have no solid experiential reason to expect a fair shake from this group. First, nobody has gotten one yet; the more recognition a contributor has deserved, the less he got. Second, it is not clear that any of you have the ability to referee such a contest. Even if you are intelligent enough, you probably lack the required knowledge in fields like mathematical logic, abstract algebra and topology. And third, none of you seems positioned to do a "winner" the slightest bit of good. Since play is risky (read on), there should be some kind of reward in the balance.

In case this proposal rings hollow, here's a news flash for you. For the last few months, an eminent mathematician - in fact, one of the most famous in recent times - has been in possession of a

paper in which I prove four important, previously unproven mathematical conjectures. This luminary kindly agreed to give me a fair shake, and he promised it in writing. I insisted on this because, unlike professional mathematicians, I lack professional recourse in the event of a false claim of priority (i.e., theft). Although such concessions are rare within the academic system, I'm plainly not a member of that system. In fact, my personal academic experiences have given me neither credentials, nor any expectation of fairness from random academics. So I must insist on full confidentiality until I possess written verification from somebody within the system...a solid testament of priority to protect me from misfortune in the course of "peer review". Unfortunately, constant delays have seemed to cast doubt on my contact's readiness to provide the written verification I require. The problems are several: he is spread thin, he has recently met with numerous distractions, and he is admittedly not up to date on certain kinds of mathematics that might have made it easier for him to follow the proofs. While anyone schooled in new math should know the basics of algebraic symmetry, while every mathematical formula has a definite logical structure which seems to call for a passing knowledge of mathematical logic, and while basic topology is merely a "spatial" shift of perspective on logic and algebra, most mathematicians simply lack confidence in any field other than their specialties. Such is the compartmentalization of Academia. [As a mark of my contact's honor and integrity, he has never asked to be released from our agreement. It will stand, and it is only a matter of time before he yields his own verifiable evaluation. Of course, this might not come soon enough to do much good.] If my insistence on strict confidentiality and written verification seems "paranoid", consider the history of mathematics. For example, the way Cardano weaseled the general solution of depressed cubic equations out of Tartaglia and, against Tartaglia's express wishes, published it in a book of his own. To show you that the situation has not improved, I include this excerpt from an interview with the highly intelligent mathematician Edward O. Thorp, who became famous in the sixties for contributions to the mathematics of gambling (i.e., for pioneering so-called "card-counting" techniques):

OMNI (9/88, p. 78): Have you had any ideas stolen?

THORP: Twice, from papers stolen and published under another's name. It's traditional in science to send out preprints to a bunch of people to critique when something's going to be published. Once in a while someone will steal it. It's hard to be sure, but evidence I have in two cases persuaded me that it's a pretty high probability they were outright thefts. They dress them up in different clothes, but the key ideas are there and organized in much the same way.

To academics, publications are like money or possessions to other people. They represent the equivalent of power, wealth, and prestige. Ten years ago, at UC Irvine, we figured out how much one math paper was worth. From the salary differential as a function of people's publication, we figured that the present value of the lifetime income stream was ten thousand dollars per paper [in 1978 dollars].

Thorp's calculation allows the impetus for theft to be quantified. Obviously, it is foolhardy to hand a stranger \$10,000 with no IOU. Remember, because I'm an outsider to the world of professional mathematics, and because the theorem I propose is of high academic value, my risk of theft is very high...much higher than that of Thorp, who was robbed despite being an influential insider. Note that if he weren't eminent, this interview would not have been published and nobody would even know that he was robbed; the system would have chewed him up and spit him out. Unlike doctors and even lawyers, academics take no oath of honesty or compassion prior to getting jobs. So my criteria for a referee are as follows:

OCCUPATION: University/college professor

LOCATION/AFFILIATION: LI/NY-area institution (optional/preferred)

PROFESSIONAL STATURE: respectable to eminent (ideally, capable of "one-man verification")

TRAINING: logic / formalized theories / language theory (possibly including many-valued logics and model theory); algebraic systems (group theory, field theory, etc.); graph theory or combinatorial topology; computation theory/computer science

SPECIALIZATION/INTERESTS: graph colorability; problem intractability and algorithmic complexity; the foundations and/or philosophy of mathematics; information theory/cybernetics; etc. (optional)

ATTITUDE: willing to admit that opinion is not a sound criterion with respect to the (ease or possibility of) solution of difficult or unsolved mathematical conjectures; willing to admit that credentials are secondary to raw intelligence as a requirement of mathematical achievement; willing to let me take full (or top) credit for my own work

AND WILLING to provide in advance a signed letter agreeing to:

- (a) treat my material with complete confidentiality until I say otherwise;
- (b) verify this proof in writing if it is found to be error-free, or specify in writing whatever critical error(s) have supposedly been detected, within a reasonable set period of time (e.g., two months for a 20-30 page proof, given my availability and readiness to clarify details and answer questions);
- (c) provide a written deposition in the event of a priority dispute involving this proof, provided it is valid.

That about does it. The main point is, I have already put - and am still willing to put - "my money where my mouth is" regarding the respect due me. There are thirty-odd people in this group, most of whom have at some point been involved with Academia; many of them are better positioned than I to find a referee. If none of you can generate sufficient initiative to help - or, as you may hope, to discredit - a fellow Mega Society member, then your fellowship obviously has little to recommend it from a practical standpoint. One last remark. If you don't know any professional mathematicians willing to comply with these conditions, then you don't know any professional mathematicians who are honest, confident of their abilities, and properly responsive to mathematical progress. Jojo and I convey our best regards to all of you. Chris Langan *

And there you have it. I've done all I can for Mega without a little cooperation in return. In any case, this one's a wrap. CML

December 5, 1994

13 Speer Street

Somerville, NJ 08876

Dear Rick:

Mr. Hannon has been kind enough to send me a copy of his letter to you dated 1 Dec 94. In it he attacks me, albeit in a civil manner. Therefore I shall try to reply in a civil manner, but I warn you, this is the last such reply he will get from me.

My comments in no way stated that to differ with me in making a hypothesis automatically makes Mr. Hannon wrong. Etc.

Let us be clear just what we are talking about here. Mr. Hannon wrote an article entitled "Is the Future Real?" In this article he advanced two dubious propositions:

- 1) The future is only real if events in the future can influence events in the present.
- 2) A "wave analyzer" may in fact have the property that it can react in the present to events in the future.

Mr. Hannon worded his article in such a way as to disguise his outrageous proposition 2 in gobbledegook about Fourier series and Fourier transforms. I have spent the past 20 years of my life working intimately with these devices. On that basis I find that Mr. Hannon has written NOTHING about these things which lends ANY credence to his supposition.

I feel ludicrous trying to argue about this any more. Mr. Hannon claims that a "wave analyzer" may be a time-machine! He rejects all criticism of this hypothesis because none has PROVEN it incorrect! This is the closed, air-tight logic of a paranoid delusional system. I therefore withdraw my criticism that Mr. Hannon was and is mistaken. I replace it with the criticism that Mr. Hannon is deluded. He may or may not be a "crackpot." I will defer judgment on that.

Why do I take this absurd affair so personally? I was raised by one parent to believe an extremely wordily-presented thesis which after many years I found to reduce to this: If you believe something strongly enough, passionately enough, thoroughly enough then it is true. I cannot tell you how much misery this delusion has cost me and my family. I defy Mr. Hannon to PROVE that this aforementioned delusion is NOT true. All he can say against it is what I say: Believe all you want. That only establishes your belief, not the truth. One cannot provide any evidence against this proposition because to TOTALLY believe and at the same time assert that one's belief is not reality is impossible.

Therefore, Rick, you now have my vote to withhold Mr. Hannon's scientific articles from publication. I promise to help do my best to squeeze them out with other writings.

Very truly,



Robert Dick

THOUGHTS ON RECENT ISSUES OF NOESIS

By Robert Dick
13 Speer Street, Somerville, NJ 08876

Reading over my stuff in Oct-Dec 94 Noesis, I realize that my writing is violently, painfully concise. I guess I feel that to be worth reading my writing has to be well-crafted, which seems to always mean very concise. But our estimable editor wants more material. I calculate I do not need to change my style to meet the ten-pages-a-year minimum, but perhaps to help crowd out less desirable material I will try for once to be what is for me breezy and wordy. I recall a psychologist's advice to one of his patients who complained that he was being asked to be too uninhibited: "Yes, it can be overdone, but NOT BY YOU."

Initially I have two reactions: One to Ron Yannone, on his exegesis on the Bible: You can't be serious! I want to oppose your views, but I'm afraid you and others will think me comical for taking your ideas seriously.

Second to Rick Rosner: I confess I don't find your ribaldry interesting, but at least I don't consider you a minion of Satan for writing it.

Come on Ron, don't you know the book of Daniel is FICTION? You really think three men walked around in a bonfire unsinged? You really think a good dream interpreter could recreate a forgotten dream? You think a disembodied hand could write upon a wall? I feel silly even pointing out that such things CAN'T HAPPEN.

And your little article about astronomers discovering the truth of Old-Testament miraculous astronomy: I think this gives you away. You MUST have known you were writing fiction there. Why not, for that matter, write about astronomers discovering that the universe has no history back beyond 5 or 6 thousand years ago? There are Jewish Fundamentalists who so believe.

What suggests to me that you are not joking is your assumption that Daniel's rivals in dream-interpretation were minions of Satan. Now THAT is not funny. I recall one writer saying that the Protestants have four gods: The Father, Jesus, the Holy Ghost, and Satan. He went on to say that the Catholics also have four gods, but their version is a little different: The Father, Jesus, the Holy Ghost, and Mary. C. G. Jung approved in fact of the Catholic version the writer mentioned in jest. He wrote that the Pope's assertion that Mary the mother of Jesus is now the Queen of Heaven makes very good psychological sense. But I digress.

Let me tell you where I am coming from. I am a radical monotheist. Radical, because I do not believe in the Hellenic maxim "All things in moderation." Monotheist, because I, though a Gentile, believe in the God of the Jews (and the Moslems). Trinitarians, have, in my view, been tripping themselves up for a long time with their God-in-three-persons. Fundamentalist Protestants have been painting themselves into a corner for some time with their doctrine (supposedly revealed by an infallible inerrant Bible) that Satan is so powerful and so malignant that he amounts to an Antigod. Augustine (I won't call him a saint, because of his condemnation of little children) had a great deal of trouble with the Manicheans of his day trying to deny

that Satan is in fact co-equal with God.

But now I'm getting angry. The notion that everyone you don't agree with, Ron, is a minion of Satan probably goes back to the Apostle Paul. I won't call him a saint either. Paul wrote that everyone who gives a different doctrine from his (Paul's), "Let him be accursed! I say again, let him be accursed!" The letter of James answered this abomination with the simple idea that moral people never curse. It is a shame that our mouths, which should give blessings, should also curse, because a fountain that gives forth sweet waters should not also give forth bitter. I remember a Lutheran pastor reading Paul's words with relish. Shame on him! In contrast to Paul, who knew nothing of the teachings of Jesus (and was gravely deficient in his knowledge of the teachings of Judaism), James quoted a parable of Jesus, with understanding, giving the lie to the claim that Jesus told his parables to Jews in such a way that they could not understand them.

Now I'm getting frustrated. Ron, apparently you ARE serious. Why else would you advocate purchasing a fundamentalist tract on reproduction? So I will take you seriously. It is simply not true that every prophecy in the book of Daniel has come true except for the second coming of Christ. Scholars, in fact, can DATE the book of Daniel by when its (rather bizarre) imagery departs from historical fact. They diverge, as I recall, about 400 years after Daniel supposedly made the prophecies.

As one Rabbi told a Unitarian study group, Jewish prophets never made predictions about the far future. Prophecy (I say) is a good deal different from prediction. Prophecy is the explication of the MEANING of events. Let me tell you of how angry I used to get at some of my fellow students at MIT. They would say in derogation of some remark: "That's just semantics." Poppycock. Language consists only of syntax and semantics. Syntax is the structure of language and semantics is its meaning. Semantics is by far the MOST important part of language, and it is this part that genuine prophets are good with.

That Daniel was fiction is confirmed for me by its self-conscious interpretation of itself as predictions about the far future. Incidentally, Daniel is still considerably above the level of Revelation, because in Daniel the kingdom of the people of God is represented as a human being. Contrast the grotesque image of Revelation of the Lamb!

OK, Ron, you got me dead to rights. I'm a blaspheming minion of Satan, am I not? I am going straight to hell when I die, without passing GO, am I not? Isn't that what you believe about your opponents? Allow me to contradict you once again. I know for certain that I am a child of God, not Satan. How do I know, you ask? Because everything and everyone comes from God. Note that in the book of Job, which is also fiction, Satan is described as a son of God. So he is, if there is such a being.

To those of you who read Gift of Fire, it may come as a surprise that I can be so hostile to a fellow believer in God. There I have been arguing extensively with an atheist. Now here I am arguing, considerably less coherently, with a theist. Am I never satisfied? No! As Rush Limbaugh puts it, I am in relentless pursuit of the truth. I argue with atheists because God is the UNI of the universe. Without the One Who created reality and knows it exclusively there is

first no absolute reality, then no absolute morality, then no fundamental meaning in anything, and finally no joy making life for anyone worth living. With Trinitarian semi-poly-theism, there is again no UNI in the universe. As I have said before, I am a Jewish Fellow Traveller (to use a Communist phrase). I say with the Jews: We God-fearers are One. As Jesus said, "Be you perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." We cannot be like the Trinitarian God-monster of Revelation. We cannot seek our own torture and murder as supposedly God the Son did without being perverse fools. But we CAN aim to be as one with the One, beside whom there is no other, whose love (and life) is from everlasting to everlasting.

I remember a Fundamentalist friend (if I may call so someone who believes I am rightly damned) telling me that I have no quarrel with him (my friend) but "only" with God. He thereby admitted that he rejects Jesus' admonition to try to be like (ie be at one with) God.

Well, I don't see how to continue this. I'm trying to be effusive, earthy, and yet true to my best convictions all at the same time. Let me conclude this diatribe with one last plea to Ron Yannone: "Come on Ron, you seem to be fairly rational, except on the subjects of religion and bowels. Can you address my concerns without just calling me a whitewashed sepulcher, or a child of the Devil, or one of a generation of vipers? Can't you see that your views cannot stand the light of reason?" I will NOT sacrifice my intellect. I will NOT believe absurd things just because they are absurd (contra Tertullian). Give me a break, Ron. Convince me that your views on God and Christ and the Bible make sense. Don't give me that drivel that prophecies like Rorchasch (pardon my spelling) ink-blots have all come true. And DON'T insult my and most other Mega Society members' intelligence by claiming that every last sentence in the Bible is literally and inerrantly true.

It is time to stop counter-preaching at Mr Yannone. I look forward with eagerness to the time, perhaps six months hence, when I may read Mr Yannone's reply to this reply. (I confess I also have a little dread at seeing a reply) Finally, if Mr Yannone laughs at me for thinking he was actually serious I am going to be extremely put out.

- December 1, 1994

WORK IN PROGRESS: WHO WAS BARABBAS?
(What happened to Jesus part 1)

By Robert Dick, 13 Speer Street, Somerville, NJ 08876

I am currently planning to put together the pieces of a puzzle resulting in a thesis which I believe will be one of the most satisfying of my life. In keeping with Rick Rosner's admonition to be more anecdotal, rather than wait until the work is composed I will submit these working notes to Nosis. My thesis is that there is good reason to believe that Jesus "of Nazareth" survived his crucifixion. As some scholars would put it, such evidence must have been lost long ago in the "mists of history." Not so, I say. Here's a rough outline of my argument:

Main Thesis: The Shroud of Turin is genuine, and shows that the man it contained was at no time dead while he was enfolded in it.

Objection I: The Shroud was carbon-14 dated by three independent laboratories and found to have been made in the 13th or 14th century.

Counter: There is a recent book, which I have a copy of, which shows that the carbon-14 dating was a hoax. The investigative reporter who wrote the first half of the book did extensive and intensive detective work. One of the surviving pieces of the material used for dating (the rest destroyed in the dating process itself) was compared by computer-aided photography to a known close-up photo of the weaves of the Shroud. The weaves are superficially similar, but the two fabrics are obviously entirely different.

Then the question arises: why the hoax? Answer: Because if the Shroud proves Jesus did NOT die on the cross the most basic dogmas of the Christian religion will be overturned. In particular--the Catholic Church would be shaken to its foundations if a relic IT approved turned out to show such a thing. Investigation showed that only two men in a closed room could have performed the switch (of the cloth samples)--or witnessed that there was no switch. Thus is by no means the ENTIRE Catholic Church to blame.

The book shows a Bishop's cape made of a similar weave to the Shroud which definitely dates to the time the carbon-14 dating processes indicated.

Objection II: There is certainly no consensus that the Man of the Shroud was alive at all times while in it. I have in my possession a book called A Doctor at Calvary by one Pierre Barbet, MD (a 1963 translation of a 1950 book) (I have it on loan from the local public library). This book, written by a devout Catholic surgeon, described what the author deduced happened to the Man of the Shroud, which he was convinced was Jesus "Christ".

Counter: The book which shows the dating-fraud gives suggestive evidence that the Man of the Shroud was alive. After all, to rationalists what else could the "miracle" of the "resurrection" have been? The second half of the book gives supporting evidence and conjectures. More on this in my part II.

On to the conclusion of the first part of my thesis: Jesus was arrested during the fall harvest festival (Succoth? The feast of the tabernacles).

Evidence: Jesus cursed a fig tree for being barren when he entered Jerusalem. Pointless if it was April. Sensible if it was harvest time. Jesus supped with his disciples in an "upper room." This was probably a harvest temporary shelter built on the roof of a house. a) Because Jerusalem was crowded. b) Because Jesus and his audiences were poor (Consider the candle which "gives light to all in the house." That of course would have to be a one-room house.

I read a book by one Hyan Maccoby, called Revolution in Judea, which among other things makes this harvest-time conjecture. Consider also, though Maccoby does not mention this: Jesus was considered so insignificant that no historical document of his time mentions him. Consider the supposed chronology of his trial and death: Thursday night: arrested. Midnight: Appears before the Sanhedrin. 6 AM(?): Appears before Pilate. 9 AM: Appears before Herod. Noon: Appears before Pilate, is whipped, mocked, and carries his cross and is crucified. Now I ask you, why would the authorities be in such an all-fired hurry to deal with such an insignificant upstart? I say they wouldn't.

Note: The harvest arrest is important for my main thesis because it gives time for a "tomb" to be carved in the limestone near the crucifixion site. It gives time for Joseph of Arimathea (spelling?) to obtain the Shroud and over a hundred pounds of ointments (NOT embalming supplies. The Jews never embalmed their dead).

Now we can answer the question "Who was 'Barabbas'?" He was Jesus! If we split the name into two words it becomes Bar-Abbas. Bar means son of. Abbas means father, but more particularly, it means daddy, or even dada. It was the first name for its father that nearly every Jewish baby of the time learned. It is the name for God that appears in the Lord's Prayer. There is no evidence from that time that any other Jew but Jesus called God Abba, which again, as one Protestant theologian put it, means "Daddy dearest." There must have been crowds or even mobs shouting around Jerusalem "Give us Barabbas!" while Jesus was locked in a dungeon for six months. Hence the bizarre incident in the Gospels supposedly causing this cry.

Counter-argument: The Jews, in particular the Sanhedrin, condemned Jesus for blasphemy.

Counter to this counter: I have just bought a book called "The Trial and Death of Jesus" by Haim Cohn (KTAV press, \$19.95). This author is a judge on the Supreme Court of Israel. He is also, judging from this book, an accomplished scholar. He does not advance the autumn-arrest history, but makes a good case that the "trial" by the Sanhedrin was actually a last-ditch attempt to SAVE Jesus. The chief priest must have begged Jesus, BEGGED him, to give up his claim that he was the Messiah. Claiming to be the Messiah, Cohn points out, was no blasphemy. After all, SOMEBODY had to be. The chief priest tore his robe at Jesus' reply. This was a sign of MOURNING. The sign of hearing blasphemy was the entire Sanhedrin tearing its robes. Jewish law defined blasphemy very narrowly, just as narrowly as the American Constitution defines treason. Blasphemy consisted only of conjuring using the 4-letter name of God. Nobody ever claimed Jesus did that.

One historian, "A Historian Looks at the Gospels" wrote that Jesus said he (Jesus) had the power to forgive sins, and for this the Sanhedrin condemned him. This is answered again by the preceding

paragraph.

An interesting aside: The late political philosopher Hannah Arendt has written a book I highly recommend called "The Human Condition." One chapter she called "Irreversibility and the Power to Forgive." She makes the point that everybody all the time is setting in motion processes which will never come to an end. These processes can be good or bad. One often does not know which for a considerable length of time. The answer to this is forgiveness. The world would come to an end if everybody avenged every wrong anybody does, because the vengeance would be processes, irreversible processes, as well, and at least some of them would create new wrongs, and so on. I.e. political entropy must increase. The answer to this is forgiveness. The main innovator in the concept of forgiveness, Arendt says, was Jesus. He told people that if man forgives FIRST, then God will "do likewise." This was a major innovation, to say that forgiveness starts with men (and women), NOT with God. This is why I interpret "the meek shall inherit the earth" to mean "They who forgive renew the world." After all, what action merits such a great reward? Forgiveness, the action that is the specialty of the meek.

Be that as it may, both Maccoby and Cohn and parts of the Gospels make the point that Jesus was very popular with his Jewish audiences. Furthermore, I think it was Maccoby, among others, who pointed out that Jesus basically had NO conflict with the Pharisees. Cohn writes that Jesus' "Generation of vipers" speech is the common stock-in-trade of many preachers. As long as the target of the abuse is everybody, i.e. no one in particular, it does little or no harm (and is widely accepted). And I say: Consider: Jesus said the Pharisees sit at the best places at feasts. And where, pray tell, did Jesus sit when he was the guest (of honor) in someone's home? Jesus, like the (dare we say "rest of"?) the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead. Jesus agreed with the Pharisees in the two greatest commandments (the first of which is the duty of every highly observant Jewish man to recite every day). He stressed ethics over animal sacrifice, like the Pharisees. And so on.

That is, my point I must make is that Jesus was very popular with his fellow Jews. Again, one Jewish author points out that some Jews still today wince at the vehemence of some of Jesus' anti-Gentile sayings.

So there we have work-in-progress part I. What happened leading up to the crucifixion. It is important to my main thesis to set the stage that various Jews (and a Roman centurion) entered into a conspiracy to save Jesus from death (from himself? I don't know). Further, they had the TIME to ready elaborate preparations, such as preparing a healing-chamber disguised as a tomb in which no dead person had ever been laid.

Part II will continue: How Jesus "died" and evidence that makes it likely (the Shroud makes it just about certain, I conjecture) that Jesus survived his crucifixion. Hooray for Jesus! I say. Too bad for the (Pauline) Christians. Any man who called God "daddy dearest" deserved a chance to become a father himself. Jesus, so one author conjectured, had three children and still today his tomb stands--in India! But enough for now.

Dec 6, 1994, Dateline Somerville, NJ: Today the prestigious public-service Society for the Reduction of Entropy (SoRE) announced that it is immediately embarking on an unprecedented new venture: developing the world's first Self-Powered Refrigerator-Stove (SPoReS).

Spokesperson Robert Dick described how the astonishing new product is the result of a scientific effect hitherto unknown. This effect was first hypothesized by one Robert Hannon, Genius of Distinction (GoD). Dick said that Hannon is the world's greatest genius since "Wile E. Coyote," of "Roadrunner" fame. However, to quote Dick, "The Coyote is fiction. Hannon is fact."

Hannon first revealed his startling new concept in an article he wrote for Noesis (the word means "thinking"), a magazine published by and for the prestigious "Mega Society", a group of geniuses with stratospheric IQs. However, these eggheads were highly skeptical at first of Hannon's astounding observation. But finally the only one of them to publicly criticize the article recently wrote "I... withdraw my criticism that Mr. Hannon was and is mistaken..."

Basically, Hannon theorized that an extremely high-tech device called a "Wave Analyzer" can react to wave-like events **EVEN BEFORE THEY HAPPEN!** "And since modern physics teaches that everything is part wave," Dick pointed out, "just about any event is wave-like." Hannon's argument was too technical for the general public, but basically it concerned mathematical constructs invented over 100 years ago by a French engineer named Fourier. However, Dick explained, the incredible power of these constructs was never ever properly appreciated until Hannon revealed it.

"To understand the revolutionary potential of Hannon's discovery," Dick explained, "requires going back to a theory of the world's foremost early authority on electricity and magnetism, James Clerk Maxwell." Maxwell hypothesized that a tiny entity (which became known as "Maxwell's Demon"--MaD) could open and shut a tiny door in a wall in such a way as to let only fast molecules pass one way and only slow molecules pass the other way. The result would be that gas on one side of the wall would grow steadily hotter, and on the other steadily colder, without using up any significant energy to accomplish this feat. An astounding violation of the so-called "laws" of thermodynamics!

Until recently a MaD was thought to be impossible because of an effect called the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle (HUP). This "law" of physics stated that if a MaD knew how fast a molecule was going it could not be sure the molecule would hit the door. Conversely, if the MaD knew exactly where the molecule would hit it could not also know how fast the molecule was going. "But," says Dick, "Hannon's radical breakthrough changes all that."

Basically, a HaND (a Hanon's Demon, similar to a MaD) could operate as follows: Again it sits at a tiny door in a wall. However, now it has a Hannon Wave Analyzer (HWA) which informs the HaND whenever a molecule has hit the door in the near future (You read correctly. New terminology is required because of Hannon's astounding conceptual breakthrough). Then the HaND has only to determine if the

molecule has/will hit gently or hard. The Hand then opens the door briefly--or not--in accordance with a few simple rules. The result is that the HUP is defeated! One side of the wall grows hotter and the other colder.

Dick, an experienced electrical engineer with a PhD, went on to describe how the SPoReS will be constructed. There will be two chambers, namely the oven and the refrigerator, with a special wall in between. This wall will be covered with an array of Very Large Scale Segregated Circuits (VLSSC--alias Politically Correct Integrated Circuits). These will be built of the finest materials - Sapphire on Diamond (SoD). The Hand, Dick explained, because of its simple job, will be built to embody Artificial Stupidity (AS--alias Politically Correct Artificial Intelligence). The sliding doors will be micro-mechanical devices powered by micro-electrical-motors fabricated right along with the VLSSC. "But the guts of the thing," Dick explained, "the key to it all, will be the HWAs." Finally, the electronics may be powered by thermocouples--devices which generate electricity when subjected to differences in heat. Thus a SPoReS will literally power itself! "This appliance will be fantabulous!" Dick exclaimed.

The SoRE will not sell the new products. Rather, it will GIVE them away. "If Hannon can defeat the HUP and the 'laws' of thermodynamics," Dick explained, "the least the rest of us can do is defeat the 'laws' of economics." Therefore, Dick explained, the SoRE needs numerous financial donations. "Unfortunately," Dick said, "the informal nature of the SoRE does not permit donations to be tax-deductible. Furthermore," Dick went on, "our lawyers require that each donation of \$1000 or more be accompanied by a certification of mental competency signed by a licensed psychiatrist." Donations, no matter how large, may be sent to:

Society for the Reduction of Entropy
13 Speer Street
Somerville, New Jersey 08876
United States of America
Earth

Note: The above information is based on an hypothesis. Therefore results cannot be guaranteed. But scoffers beware! They laughed at Columbus!

Advertising Supplement

Advertising Supplement

ROBERT J. HANNON 4473 Staghorn Lane Sarasota FL 34238-5626
1 DEC 94

Rick Rosner • NOESIS • 5139 Balboa Blvd • Encino CA 91316-3430

Dear Rick,

1) I hope the idea of requiring MEGA members to submit at least 10 pages/year to NOESIS is successful. I eagerly await the diverse and unique new ideas and views that should dominate NOESIS in the future. My search for such ideas and views is the primary reason why I subscribe to NOESIS.

2) Assuming that, at least in part, it is your publication of my "looney" and "crackpot" writings which has raised objections from "many" MEGA members: I must say I find it remarkable that I have not received a single letter from any MEGA member in which my ideas are rationally, logically, and objectively proven incorrect. Note: unsupported opinion, arm-waving, authoritarianism, and/or ridicule a la Langan are not proof.

While I do not agree with some things published in NOESIS, I believe others are entitled to their opinions, and even to have them published.

3) Doug Ratcliffe's STUFF AND SENSE should be carefully read and seriously pondered. It is a predominantly-valid description of the sorry state of today's physics, and how it got that way. If similar critiques disappear from NOESIS in the future, that will be MEGA's loss.

4) To Robert Dick: I am honored to be categorized with Escher! The implication of your comments is that to differ with you in offering an hypothesis automatically makes me wrong. Somehow, the very act of differing with you means that you "caught" me in a "mistake". Your belief that no physicist or mathematician has ever discussed the possibility of what I proposed means that I am unquestionably mistaken. Fascinating!

5) To Celia Manolesco: thanks for your encouragement, and for your support of the fact that unorthodox views are not necessarily the products of deranged minds.

Best regards,



Robert J. Hannon

M.C. Price: Your scholarship, as embodied in *Noesis* 96, is admirable, and your article is very interesting...as far as it goes. Most influential physicists who like many-worlds tend by their own accounts to like it weakly. But local or not, it is intensely disliked by others. That includes Everett's mentor John Wheeler, who said of his early support for it: "it creates too great a load of metaphysical baggage...nobody knows sin like a sinner." Indeed, "heavy baggage" seems downright euphemistic for the idea that each quantum event invisibly creates countless new "universes". Wheeler is right about MW being metaphysical. When, on any grounds whatsoever, we split reality into multiple universes, we require what the logician Tarski called a "metalanguage" to describe their relationship. This metalanguage, which encompasses multiple cosmologies, precedes any particular reality as a logical necessity of discourse. Quantum mechanics is not a complete metalanguage in this sense, and Everett's interpretation of it requires a logical extension which has not yet been provided by mainstream physics. Whether or not you maintain that physics can "expand from within" to create and absorb such an extension, this realm of discourse is purely metaphysical with respect to the current *weltanschauung* of physical science (readers can sample typical floundering attempts to construct such a metalanguage in Andrei Linde's piece on inflationary cosmology in the 11/94 issue of *Scientific American*). Wheeler is also right about MW being "heavy". Splitting reality in this way entails an endless multiplication of mass-energy from the viewpoint of any given reality. As you point out, some physicists explain this apparent absurdity by saying in effect that since realities are non-interacting, the mass-energy in any ancestral universe need not interact with or divide among its descendants. But descendant universes *intersect* prior to splitting. So their combined mass-energy must nonetheless inhere in the ancestral universe, and the combined mass-energy of all the descendants of any given particle must inhere in the ancestral particle, as an indeterminate Hilbert space "measure". Now, replacing "multiplication of mass-energy" with "division of Hilbert space measure" is a pretty slick trick. However, since the probability space referred to in this context is not just abstract, but corresponds directly to the "meta-universe" containing all of the mass and energy of all of these energetic, internally concrete parallel universes, we're merely deflecting the issue with some mathematical "sleight-of-terminology". Many-worlds has placed a concrete construction on an otherwise abstract mathematical space; and as goes the shell, so goes the pea beneath it. Even in a zero-sum model, where mass-energy is defined as "self-cancelling", the situation retains its logical difficulties. E.g., we still have an attribute of mass-energy (a) that's invisibly splitting or "multiplying"; (b) only an unknowable portion of which we can observe. So we've merely begged the issue of energy conservation by distinguishing "global energy" (defined in the totality of universes) from "local energy" (defined in any given universe) on the basis of a "hidden variable", the unknowable probability of the given universe. Defining local energy conservation on our blindness to the progressive subdivision of global energy nails it to a cognitive limitation, and ultimately ties reality to

cognition in as problematic a way as any other interpretation of quantum mechanics.

For example, we must still ask ordinary common-sense questions like "if global energy is real, then why can't we detect it or its consequences?" Many-worlds answers this question with a tautology: "because we can observe only the world in which we can observe". This kind of tautology is conceptually terminal; once we invoke it, our power to deterministically impute "reality" to anything outside it vanishes. Saying that an irrelevant, non-interactive form of concreteness "can exist" is one thing. But saying that it "must exist" on an exhaustive basis is another story. Because our locally-detectable reality is our only concrete justification for anything, to say that something "must exist" is to say that the integrity of this reality *logically depends on it*. Unfortunately, many-worlds defines this reality as logically and physically *independent* of all "others", thereby forfeiting concrete justification for anything it might impute to them from this vantage.

Thus, many-worlds appears self-contradictory. As used with respect to physical reality, mass and energy remain terms whose meanings depend critically on our power to detect them, either directly or through their observable effects, in *this* reality. So until things like "reversible machine intelligences" really exist, many-worlds will remain practically equivalent to all other unverifiable interpretative variants of quantum mechanics. This, of course, tells us that we should be looking for a theory which treats all of them within one coherent formalism designed to resolve quantum-theoretic paradox on a logical basis (this theory already exists).

Even if we accept many-worlds in some modified form, its logical structure - in which descendant universes intersect in common ancestors - implies that the wherewithal for mass-energy proliferation must distribute over any given reality. This implies in turn that the source of all these "realities" is the *distributed identity* of something introduced in *Noesis 70*, a *transductive algebra*. In issues 70 and 76, transductive algebra was shown to inevitably describe the structure of the metaphysical metalanguage required by high-level theories of reality. Here in the Mega Society, in whose journal it was originally set forth, we call the expanded version of this description "the CTMU" (greater detail has been precluded at this time by protracted editorial dysfunction).

Please don't take this reminder negatively. It is only necessary because our extended readership, and perhaps a high-profile member or two, has extreme difficulty keeping track of logical continuity among journal inclusions. Until that changes, I applaud your clarity and encourage you to persist in your inquiries.

Chris Harding: For reasons already given, R-morphic algebra is the only way to describe the relationship of language to reality. Noam Chomsky isn't going to argue with it for two reasons. (1) I have better things to do than supplicate for his attention, especially given my obvious political disadvantages. (2) He'd ultimately be sacrificing much of his well-deserved credibility. Don't blame me if you lack the means to explore the mathematical ramifications of my hypothesis, which are nothing short of amazing. If you really want to learn about the mathematics of AI, concentrate your nega-

tive energy on those who have destroyed *Noesis* as a fit place for me to explain it. And meanwhile, take some advice: don't hang your AI research on the ability of a simple linear microprocessor to efficiently emulate a massively-parallel multi-context neural network, or "brain". That's a sure recipe for further disappointment.

Richard May: Okay, I give up. Was your remark about the CTMU in issue 98 supposed to be derogatory, or what? (If so, watch out; you wouldn't be the first reader who let his alligator mouth run off with his canary can and lived to rue it). I haven't been this confused since Glenn Arthur Morrison played peekaboo behind Martin Gardner. Not even *Martin Gardner* hides behind Martin Gardner! Incidentally, you'd better not invest too much hero-worship in Frank Tipler. He apparently failed to mention the most important "Ph.D." of all, mathematical logic, as a requirement for understanding the subject matter of his theory (actually, you'd do well not to equate insight, which underlies and overshadows the tallest ivory towers, with doctorates, which are heavy on parroting). I point this out because his work seems in some ways to approximate the CTMU, but lacks its power and concision. The CTMU not only predates Tipler's theory, but provides an exclusive logical basis for the entire class of grandiose theories to which it belongs.

Ricky: Apropos of alligator anteriors and canary posteriors, kindly stow your generalizations regarding the relatively high and low quality of material in *Noesis*. As everyone here knows but few will admit, we've already established that you can't tell the difference. If you want to put that to another test, I'm ready when you are. We'll appoint in-house referees, and I'll even let you choose the subject for debate (how about your old "metaprimes" theory?). In any case, as long as you want to keep calling yourself the "editor" of *Noesis* - a position I never officially relinquished - stick to what you're good at (pagination) and stop passing judgments you can't back up (e.g., "the most clever members hardly ever submit stuff", and similar oblique slurs on those members who have supported the journal with frequent contributions). By doing that, you make it look like we *all* do it. We don't. If you prefer not to acknowledge even those editorial responsibilities involving fairness and impartiality, well, then, you have my permission to "resign". I put the word in quotes because you were never "elected" or even "appointed" in any credible way, and this is no longer a meaningful possibility now that the standards of *Noesis* have already hit rock-bottom under your stewardship. Ron Hoeflin and I may have had our differences, but we do agree that *Noesis* is not a trash pit for vulgarity and pornography. Why not, you ask? Here's why not. Your supporters, if you really have any, can go out and buy their copies of *Hustler*. But there's only one *Noesis*, and I find it personally offensive to watch you turn it into a sewer after what some of us have gone through for it.

Robert Low: I've reviewed your contribution and find it passable. Actually, I wouldn't mind doing *all* the reviewing. Just think of it - an editor capable of understanding what you and other contributors are talking about! What a *concept*. (Chris Langan)