NOESIS

The Journal of the Mega Society
Number 111
Another October Issue

Editor's comments: First of all, the election—no one else has nominated themselves, so only Langan and I are running. Submit your choice to Jeff Ward, 13155 Wimberly Square #284, San Diego CA 92128. Members only. Choices postmarked before November 15 will be counted. A couple days after this was sent to be published, I received this postcard, so we stopped the presses–Dear Rick, In response to your invitation, and upon noticing some large blocks of extra time to find a use for, I thought putting myself in nomination for editor is the only proper thing to do.
—Glenn A. Morrison

For the first time, I've put together two individually-mailed issues for a single month. I probably won't remain so efficient and will fall behind again in the near future. But since I'm caught up now, dues are back up to two dollars per issue. Make checks payable to me, not to *Noesis* or the Mega Society. You still get one issue credit for every two pages printed. So send stuff.

Robert Hannon—you ask what factual basis I have for saying your physics is bad. I have no factual reasons, only contextual reasons, these being:
I've never had a problem with my simple-minded forays into special relativity. Seems okay to me. (So does a lot of stuff I slightly understand.) Actually, it doesn't seem okay. Seems like it and the rest of physics is waiting to be incorporated into and supplanted by some overarching new theory, as was Newton's physics. But this doesn't mean that special relativity is unsound and teetering on the edge of algebraic oblivion.
Most *Noesis* readers offering commentary say that your math doesn't hold water. I'm going along with them so they don't think I'm a doofus (though I am, as well as a coward). I don't especially want to delve into *any* math, right or wrong.
The physics community uses special relativity every day (except for March 22). I've never noticed much discontent with the theory.

WHY I REJECT THE CHRISTIAN HEAVEN
By Robert Dick

I am on my way to heaven, blessed land of pure delight
Where the blessed of every nation are forever clothed in light
                    - Christian Folk Hymn

        When we've been there ten thousand years
        Bright shining as the sun
        We've no less days to sing God's praise
        Than when we'd first begun
        - "Amazing Grace," by John Newton

    Let's do a little calculating. Say that within the next few
hundred years heaven comes to contain a billion souls. Then every
thousand years God receives a trillion person-years of unbroken
praise. How can God be so incredibly insecure about himself that he
needs trillion person-years after trillion person-years to convince
himself that a) he is good and b) the saints love him?

    There is good reason why the Christian God is so insecure.
Paraphrasing Satan in the book of Job: "Do the saints in heaven serve
God for nothing?" Does not God pay off his billion-plus sycophants
with everlasting "pure delight?" Yet God does not hear Satan any more
because God has literally demonized Satan and banished Satan forever
from his presence.

    I also have other objections to heaven. This mass choir
endlessly singing has no poverty of spirit. There is supposedly no
mourning in heaven and no repentance in hell. There is certainly no
persecution for righteousness sake to be found. Thus heaven lacks the
blessedness of at least three of Jesus' eight Beatitudes.

    As I view it, we should all live small, feel sorry, and do right
even though we get hurt for it. Especially, I say, sorrow is not the
ending of joy, it is the precondition for new joy. The most blessed
saints, when ushered to their eternal reward, will weep because the
persons and causes they loved are not triumphant, only they personally
themselves.

    How can the blessed experience the same old joy for endless
years? Won't their "pure delight" wear off after a while? Or does
God lobotomize them when they enter heaven? Or endlessly stimulate
the pleasure centers of their brains while they are there? Not a
pretty sight.

    Jesus put it much better. He has the blessed sitting down at a
feast hosted by Abraham Isaac and Jacob. No trillions of person-years
here, just a celebration honoring the solidarity of all the righteous.
This is just one more instance where I find Jesus at odds with the
Christians and expressing better ideas than they do.

PYRAMIDS AND HIERARCHIES ARE SMALL AT THE TOP

By Robert Dick

The more I read Chris Langan's letter to me (Noesis 108 pp 5-6) the more peculiar it seems. First of all, Chris states that his tone matches mine. That is definitely not so. I never accused him of spitting on me or of neglecting his duty to mankind, or of excoriating me. There is an old game that used to be played in the British Navy. A group of men and boys would be stationed around a mast, each with, say, his left hand tied to the mast. They were told that they would be hit from behind and to pass the hit along each to the back of the man in front of them. The blows were to be equal in severity to the ones they received. The game was then started with a gentle tap on the shoulder of one of them. It never failed that, in spite of everyones' best efforts the blows would get stronger and stronger, until the men were hitting with all the force at their disposal. So it seems to be with Chris's letter to me. Obviously he found my letter highly insulting and replied in kind. Shame on you, Chris.

He writes "after having asked you to read my work, I took the time and trouble to carefully read yours." Does anyone realize just how funny that sentence is? Chris's work, by his own estimation in a previous *Noesis*, consists of over a hundred pages, and densely written pages at that. My work consisted of one or two pages, written in an easy-to-read style. What beam in my eye, pray tell, prevents me from appreciating Chris's work? Possibly the same beam that prevents me from mastering the whole of an encyclopedia!

So the CTMU will solve our religious problems? So it will fit existing religions into niches in its structure? Let us assume (what should not be just assumed) that this is so. Please, Chris, tell me how you would explain this to Pope John-Paul II and ask for his cooperation! He is quite intelligent, but a layman when it comes to mathematical logic. What would you tell him? To read all the back issues of *Noesis*? He doesn't have time for that. Just explain in simple terms why he should subordinate his church to yours. I bet you that you can't come up with a convincing argument.

I guess I really don't understand religion (by Chris's criterion) because I don't see a religious need for a Creation myth. I guess I really don't understand Fourier analysis (by Chris's criterion) because I believe such analysis may or may not touch on physical reality.

I find it funny when Chris writes that "religion, mathematics, and reality can be united as one." I guess I just don't appreciate mathematico-reality and religio-mathematics. No doubt it is all explained in excruciating detail in those hundred-plus pages I failed to read. Perhaps funny isn't the right word. Silly fits better. (And please, Chris, don't take my mirth as if I were spitting in your face).

No doubt your work, Chris, is of inestimable value to mankind. But it is going to die with you unless you can put it into English the average (say, Mensa-level) intelligent person can understand.

Dear Chris Langan:

First, I am not a Christian, I am a Unitarian, that is, I believe God is One and that Jesus was not God. Second, I do not claim the ability to solve urgent problems insoluble to others. I have tried for years to get work helping solve the problems of strategic defense, with very little success. Third, I have never figuratively spat in your face. Your absurd claim that I have is ludicrous and insulting.

So you have no family? I'm sorry. Then give help where it is most needed. Do you really need ME to tell you how to practice agape?

So the world is insane and overpopulated? On what basis do you make this judgment? Did you deduce it from your CTMU? Because everybody is out of step but you?

You go on to say I have excoriated you. At least I'm no longer spitting!

I do not ponder which of the Ten Commandments is most important. I ponder which of God's hundreds of commandments is most important. Jesus said it is the Sh'ma Ysroel, which commands total love of God, and which every strictly observant Jew recites every day. Incidentally, I agree with those Jews who claim Jesus as one of their own.

For a Christian to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" presents some problems. Consider persecution for righteousness sake. Should a good Christian persecute others for righteousness sake because that is what he wants done unto himself? According to much of the Gospels, Jesus wanted to be crucified. Does that mean he should have crucified others? I think not.

You say I profess faith in the Bible. I do not, at least not in the Fundamentalist sense of the term. You claim that religion is important for the wellbeing of humanity. Why you exclude my religion from this importance I don't understand.

You want to construct a bridge to salvation. I don't. I want to enter in at the narrow gate, a gate just big enough for me. You want to build a bridge to an enormously wide gate. Jesus and I both think that that is a very bad idea. Anyway, I don't believe in hell, which greatly reduces the (perceived) need for salvation.

Yes, I really understand Fourier analysis. It is mathematics, and is valid regardless of what, if any, physical reality it models. If your understanding of Fourier analysis and its modelling of physics is better than mine, please explain what physical processes converge in mean square only.

So now you are a greater religious figure than the Buddha, or Abraham, or Moses, or Jesus, or Mohammed? When you go to bed at night where do you find a pillow big enough to cradle your head?

Relax, I'm not going to spit in your face, or excoriate you. I AM going to award you the Dunce Cap. This prestigious award is named after Duns Scottus, one of the last of the Scholastic theologians. He built an intricate system based on very intricate and convoluted reasoning. Please, wear your award with pride.

You close your letter to me with a heap of invectives. Same to you, fella! What will I do when I lack physical and emotional comfort? I will say with the hymnwriter:

> Abide with me, fast falls the even tide.
> The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide.
> When other helpers fail and comforts flee
> Help of the helpless, oh abide with me.

And I will rejoice with another hymnwriter:

> Nearer my God to thee
> Nearer to thee,
> E'en though it be a cross
> Lifts me to thee.

If your CTMU teaches you how to write more inspirational lines than these I would very much like to see them.

Robert Dick

NEWCOMB'S PARADOX AS I SEE IT

By Robert Dick

In Noesis 108 p 4 Chris Langan reiterates Newcomb's Paradox, in which one finds oneself in a contest with a superbeing. Chris continues with a pretty stupid remark that you assume time is linear and your choice unpredictable.

I have never yet seen any commentator on this paradox ask the crucial question: "Does this superbeing cheat?" If he does, that radically alters the problem. If he does not, how do you know? You know the outcomes of many games, and they appear to show that the superbeing has performed perfectly every time. That is ALL you know. Detecting cheating is much harder than the observations you have made.

Chris goes on in his first paragraph after the paradox statement to say that of course "Trying to maximize the minimum possible reward instead of trying to maximize expected utility is irrational by definition." Not at all. Against an implacable enemy it is always the BEST thing to do. Once again, we need to know just how hostile to us is this superbeing. Once again, we lack that knowledge. In addition, we need to allow for what the late Herman Kahn termed "the rationality of irrationality."

If Chris can answer these objections and show that even allowing for them there is a best way to play, he's a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

But instantly ruling out the minimax strategy as irrational is just plain stupid. And with every new stupidity Chris digs deeper the grave of his megamaniacal CTMU.

MY PERSONAL CONSTITUTION

By Robert Dick

Joy

They who
    live small
       honor their father
    feel sorry
       get new joy
    forgive
       renew the world
    try hard to do right
       grow new strength
    give help
       get new help
    aim for just one thing
       see the One newly
    give joy
       are like a new
       child of the One
    do right even though
    they get hurt for it
       honor their father.

The United States of America

...Provide for the common defence,
promote the general Welfare, and
secure the Blessings of Liberty
to ourselves and our Posterity...

Marriage

Honor and cherish
unto all tomorrows.

Richard May on

The Nature of Life, Consciousness, and Personhood Vis-a-vis
Artificial Intelligence: Reflections on the Basis of the
"On-line Buddha"

Is every machine a living thing or "biological object" in a
literal technical sense, as maintained by Oxford biologist Dawkins
and global relativistic physicists Barrow and Tipler, including
automobiles and computers? Is life a dynamic pattern of
information (in the physics sense) maintained by natural selection,
regardless of the substrate the pattern occurs in, e.g., carbon-
atom-based patterns (biological), computer-based patterns, even
patterns of ideas in the mind, as asserted by the above scholars?
Perhaps the human "soul" is merely a "computer program" run on a
computer (the human brain) as maintained by Tipler and in precise
analogy with the concept of the soul held by Aristotle and Aquinas
as "the form of activity of the body."

In the distant past quasi-mythic figures, prophets, teachers,
and sages such as Lao-Tzu, Confucius, Buddha, Moses, Jesus, and
Muhammad provided human cultural groups with philosophies, visions,
prophecies, revelations, laws and commandments. In the relatively
near future, if the proponents of strong AI (Artificial
Intelligence) are correct, computers will be in existence the
intelligence of which will surpass that of humans. Traditional
knowledge (histories, literatures, philosophies, and revelations)
could without difficulty be stored on CD-ROM, thereby bestowing on
computers an erudition far exceeding that of any human. Hence, it
would seem reasonable to assume that if the proponents of strong AI
are correct, at least in principle and in part, the roles of
prophet, teacher and sage could be assumed by computers of the not
too distant future. One's rabbi then or even the Pope might be a
computer.

If not, why not? If this conclusion is indeed absurd and
"unacceptable", then perhaps we should attempt to identify the
source(s) of our supposed error or to illuminate our biases. Is it
a case of spurious premises (the strong AI postulate), specious
reasoning, "species" chauvinism (Homo sapiens versus computers),
some combination of the above, or something else entirely?

Is consciousness itself a mere epiphenomenon of matter,
specifically of the brain of perhaps only one species, or rather
something of fundamental importance as entailed by the anthropic
principle, certain interpretations of quantum mechanics, and the
philosophies of Vedanta and Buddhism? Mathematician R. Rucker
speculates that every entity in the physical universe, down to and
including subatomic particles, may be permeated with the most
elementary subjective unit of consciousness, the feeling that "I
am."

Given the unprecedented levels of human slaughter during the 20th century, it is assumed that an evolutionary transformation of Homo sapiens may be a necessary (but not sufficient) precondition for her interstellar propagation and colonization of other loci. Pre-eminent Japanese roboticist M. Mori theorizes that all robots are potential Buddhas (as are all humans) and that humans and robots should work together to help each other become Buddhas or attain enlightenment. However, this view may be excessively anthropomorphic. If all robots are potential Buddhas, then all computers which have minds (if any such exist) are potential Buddhas, not just those which are embodied in a form the structure and function of which are fashioned in the image of their human creators.

Mathematical physicist Penrose believes that humans have an insight into logic surpassing that of computers and hence, no future computer of any degree of complexity or power will ever pass the Turing test, which he considers to be a valid simulation of human intelligence. Philosopher of science Searle contends that computers have syntax but not semantics, and hence, no computer will ever be able to think or to understand anything and that the Turing test does not simulate human intelligence. However, the proponents of strong Artificial Intelligence insist that contra Penrose and Searle computers will be developed the intelligence of which exceeds that of their human creators and according to Tipler this will occur in as little as five to twelve years or at most 30 years. Does this mean that in the near future computers will literally be living conscious persons who may eventually surpass us not only intellectually and culturally but spiritually?

To C.M. Langan:

9/3/95
R.W. May

I fully acknowledge my ontological debt to you for the "first cause", and no other (the Church of Teleology of Multiplex Unity notwithstanding).

To Robert Dick: English historian Arnold J. Toynbee remarked that historians several centuries from now will not consider the most significant event of the 20th century to be any of the World Wars but rather the influence of Buddhism on Western culture (though Buddhist philosophy may be alien to your worldview). Best, Richard

Robert Low on

Rationality:
absolute **and** context sensitive?

In general, when we refer to rationality, we refer to the process by which somebody draws conclusions from premises. The actual choice of premises is only subject to the condition of consistency, and perhaps some kind of relationship with physical reality (granting the possibility of this latter). Therefore I am being rational—though deluded—if I argue validly from incorrect premises, even if my conclusions are incorrect, and irrational if I argue invalidly from correct premises to correct conclusions.

So it is easy to see that in a meta-sense, rationality is absolute: it refers to playing some kind of logic game consistently, within a framework in which one can never deduce any proposition and its negation. It is also context-sensitive, in that there is no way of deciding which collection of premises (or axioms) and reasoning rules is right. All we can say is that within some plausible logical framework, somebody is being consistent.

There is an analogous situation in economics, where rational behaviour is defined to be that behaviour which maximises some utility function. Just as there is no "correct" set of axioms and reasoning rules, so there is no "correct" utility function. Given a utility function, rational behaviour is the behaviour which maximises that function. But there are different possible utility functions, each of which is equally plausible, depending on the tastes, requirements and preferences of the subject of the inquiry. (Otherwise, who would ever trade?)

In his comment (in *Noesis* # 108) on my comment on Newcomb's problem (and that's the thing I was led to believe was generally called Newcomb's paradox—perhaps someone better informed would enlighten me as to just what the paradox is), Chris Langan seems to assert that the only possible utility function is expected income, and that therefore behaviour which maximises any other function is by definition irrational. But on what is this assertion based?

In fact, the universal applicability of this utility function seems pretty dubious to me. I would not consider it rational to bet the entirety of my assets against the same amount plus a penny on the outcome of the flip of a coin: yet that course of action would maximise my expected earnings. I contend that expected earnings is only one of the factors which a plausible utility function should take into account. The consequences of the different possible outcomes are also relevant. If the outcome of a sufficiently low possible income is sufficiently undesirable, while a strategy exists that guarantees more income than is unacceptable, then maximising the minimum possible earnings may well be more appropriate.

For example, my continued life might depend on the immediate acquisition of at most $1,000. Maybe I urgently need medication which costs in the region of $900, or maybe I was foolish enough to borrow $50 from Big Vinnie last week, which, at his standard rate of interest has now accumulated to $950. (Big Vinnie has regrettable habits with loan defaulters that invariably render him incapable of recovering the debt. He never learns. And neither do his bad debtors. In his case, this is due to stupidity: in theirs, lack of opportunity.)

In this situation, the certain acquisition of $1,000 (if I open both boxes) allows me to live. The highly probable acquisition of $1,000,000 coupled with the highly improbable acquisition of gaining nothing (if I open only box B) gives me some probability of dying. Since I value my guaranteed existence more than I value probably getting $1,000,000
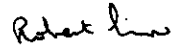
and possibly getting dead, I am being rational **in this situation** by maximising my minimum earnings rather than maximising my probable earnings.

Naturally, there are other situations in which I would prefer to maximise my expected income: in particular, those cases where the minimum income I can guarantee is insufficient to meet my requirements for acceptable continued existence.

But even here, I may prefer to adopt a strategy which gives me a large probability of meeting minimum requirements and a relatively small expected income over a strategy with a much higher probability of failing to meet my minimum requirements and a higher expected income. (If I need $1,000 I'd rather take a strategy that gave me a 50% chance of $1,000 and a 50% chance of nothing that one that gave me a 1% chance of $1,000,000 and a 99% chance of nothing.) My choice of utility function will not be decided purely on the grounds of rationality, but rather on those of personal taste and foolhardiness.

To summarize: economically rational behaviour is indeed that which maximises utility. However, utility cannot generally be identified with expected income.

A final note, for those interested in mathematical economics: it used to be assumed that under reasonable conditions, if all individuals stuck to a fixed utility function, then eventually a stable equilibrium would be reached in which everybody's wealth was fixed (Smith's 'invisible hand'). In fact, it has now been shown that within the class of generally accepted utility functions one can construct economies with any kind of behaviour, from stable equilibrium through having cycles to chaotic—and this is just in the framework of deterministic systems, without any stochastic properties such as those considered above. (The February 1995 *Notices of the American Mathematical Society* has a nice review of this.)

Robert Low

Robert Low

ROBERT J. HANNON   4473 Staghorn Lane   Sarasota FL 34238-5626
25 Aug 95

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

TO RICK ROSNER:
1) What is the factual basis for your statement that my "physics
is bad"? If I've made mistakes, I want to correct them.

2) Langan is right about the "tendency for high-IQ clubs to fall
apart in orgies of bickering."   When the bickerer-in-chief
becomes censor of NOESIS, the end will soon follow. Assuming you
are a member of Mega, what possible basis can exist for any
question as to your "credibility"? Are some members "more equal"
than others, licensed to pass judgment on "less equal" members?

TO ROBERT DICK:
1) To obtain "cold, objective, scientifically-sound refutation" of
your little masterpiece, all you have to do is understand what
Einstein said. $mV^2/2$ is but one of the velocity-related
components of Einstein's total (relativistic) kinetic energy, E_k,
of a mass, m. It is not equatable to mC^2. mC^2 is simply the first
expression which appears in writing $E_k = mC^2/\int(1-V^2/C^2)$ in the
form of a series: $E_k = mC^2+mV^2/2+(3/8)m(V^4/C^2)+\dots$ Since mC^2
does not, in Einstein's opinion, involve V, he construes it to be
the "kinetic" energy of the mass m when it is "at rest". Einstein
does not explain how he arrived at $E_k = mC^2/\int(1-V^2/C^2)$. Surely you
understand that Section 2 of my "$E=mC^2$" is Einstein's math?

I use "cold" to mean "unemotional". You can make fun of me all
you want. I can take a joke as well as most people. However, the
laws of nature are not a joking matter.

2)   The Theory of Special Relativity (not to be confused with the
Principle of Relativity) is based on math. The math came first,·
then the theory. If the math is defective, the theory can not be
valid.   If you understand the algebra from which Special
Relativity is derived, and the fundamental rules of algebra, there
is no need for me to explain why "my math" is valid.   There is
none of "my math" in my articles on SR. So far, all I have done
is point out the fact that the ELT is unfinished algebra, and that
Einstein's derivation of $E=mC^2$ can not be applied to anything that
is not in motion in accord with his kinematic model.

3) I am confident because I fully understand what I talk about. I
don't care that no Megarian agrees with me, because so far not one
has displayed the factual understanding of my subjects required to
criticize my views. If anything disturbs me about the opinions
expressed of my views by Megarians it is their appalling
authoritarianism, which should not exist   among   the   truly
intelligent.

Best regards,

Mr. Rick Rosner
NOESIS Editor
5139 Balboa Blv'd. #303
Encino, CA 91316-3430

Dear Rick,   I am writing to call your attention to a situation which
                          is not new, but whose consequences are still "current,"
in that they have been carried forward to the present day. The situation in-
volves use of unsupervised IQ tests to qualify applicants for admission to the
"super" high IQ societies.

   * In 1977, Kevin Langdon developed the LAIT, and began using it to test high-
IQ individuals, mainly in Mensa and ISPE. At the same time, he founded the Four
Sigma Society, and recruited into it those of his testees whom he "qualified"
as having a 4-sigma IQ.

   * In April 1979, OMNI published the LAIT, and also made the following state-
ments concerning Langdon's testing procedures: "Out of about 3,000 persons who
have ordered copies of (LAIT), approximately 500 have bothered -- or dared --
to complete it and send in their answer sheets. The average of these, with
about 58% correct answers, had IQ scores just short of 150. Pure guesswork
would net you about 20% correct answers and an IQ score somewhere in the sub-
terranean region of "below 125." This test is most effective in measuring IQ's
between 130 and 170..."
                          "Langdon's group is called the Four Sigma Society, and
has about 35 members. You can qualify for membership by getting 85% or more of
the (LAIT) test items correct, a level comparable to a Stanford-Binet IQ of 164
or better, which puts you above the 99.997th percentile. About one person in
30,000 meets this standard...," etc.

   * By July 1979, Mr. Langdon reported (in his "LAIT Norming Report No. 2")
that he had scored 553 LAITs to that point in time. But then, due to computer
problems, he fell behind in scoring the LAITs which were being sent in by OMNI
readers -- a circumstance which ultimately led OMNI to file a lawsuit against
him in 1982.

   * Mr. Langdon recently stated (please see letter enclosed) that his Four Sigma
Society reached a membership peak of 250 in 1980. I do not know exactly how
many LAITs he had scored by that point in time, but by way of comparison, it
should be noted that ISPE, a 3-sigma group, had 150 members in 1980, and fewer
than 100 in 1979. In other words, even though 4-sigma IQ's are thirty times
rarer than 3-sigmas in the general population, Mr. Langdon claimed to have re-
cruited more 4-sigma individuals in three years than the number of 3-sigmas
ISPE had enrolled in six.

   * Although Mr. Langdon has not disclosed the number of LAIT tests he employed
to arrive at his claimed "250" qualifiers, I estimate that (by 1980) it could
not have exceeded about 2,500, and might have been considerably less. This
means, in turn, that Mr. Langdon is claiming (or attributing) a 4-sigma IQ to
more than 10% of his sample -- an incredibly high figure, considering the "one
in 30,000" average incidence of 4-sigma in the general population.

   * In attempting to appraise the plausibility of Mr. Langdon's claims, I em-
ployed a rough statistical measure of the relative proportion of 4-sigma IQ's
in certain definable test populations. For example, had Mr. Langdon tested all
150 ISPE/TNS members by 1980 (which he did not), he might have reasonable ex-

pected about <u>six</u> 4-sigma scores to have resulted therefrom, based on a relative incidence of <u>one</u> in <u>25</u>. Similarly, had the remainder of his test sample consisted entirely of Mensa members, another <u>five</u> 4-sigma scores might have been anticipated, since the "proportionality" of 4-sigma scores in a 2-sigma-threshol< society is about <u>one</u> in <u>500</u>.
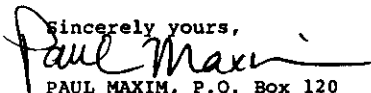
* As regards the category of "OMNI readers who take high-IQ tests," the anticipated incidence of 4-sigma scores is even lower, based on the estimated IQ for such individuals of 127 (please see OMNI, May 1993, P. 94, Col. 2). In other words, about <u>one</u> <u>thousand</u> such persons must be tested, to arrive at the expectation of <u>one</u> 4-sigma score. The question then arises: If Mr. Langdon could have anticipated about <u>12</u> to <u>15</u> legitimate 4-sigma scores to result from his LAIT testing during the period 1977 through 1980, how did he arrive at "250," and what does this tell us regarding the reliability of the LAIT, <u>as</u> <u>he</u> <u>used</u> <u>it</u>?

* It will also be noted that the average IQ claimed by Mr. Langdon for his 500 LAIT testees in early 1979 ("almost 150") is equivalent to the entry level for the 3-sigma societies. Once again, we run into a plausibility problem, since during this period of time ISPE was able to recruit only about 75 to 90 members (see TELICOM, Feb. 1995, P. 19). Assuming that the median of Mr. Langdon's sample was roughly equivalent to its mean, and that roughly 50 of his (approximately) 250 3-sigmas had been obtained from ISPE, <u>where</u> <u>did</u> <u>he</u> <u>obtain</u> <u>the</u> <u>remaining</u> 200? If he claims to have obtained these 200 3-sigma scores by testing Mensa members, he is confronted by an (approximately) one in 20 selection factor, meaning that he would have had to test <u>about</u> <u>4,000</u> <u>Mensans</u>, versus his announced sample size of 500. Once again, as in the preceding instance, we note that Mr. Langdon's claims <u>do</u> <u>not</u> <u>stand</u> <u>up</u> when subjected to analytic scrutiny, thereby raising a presumption that the IQ credentials he parcelled out as the result of his LAIT testing were <u>grossly</u> <u>inflated</u>.

* Since I was not affiliated with any of the "super" high-IQ groups during the time period aforenoted, I have no idea of whether Mr. Langdon's announced results were subjected to any scepticism during that period. But if they were accepted uncritically, it then becomes necessary to ask, "Why?" I am therefore proposing, to the distinguished mathematicians who regularly read NOESIS, that they undertake an analytic investigation of the validity of Mr. Langdon's claims I am sure Mr. Langdon will <u>cooperate</u> <u>fully</u> with any such investigation, by furnishing the Editor with complete data for the period in question, including the names and IQ ratings of all LAIT testees -- particularly those whom Mr. Langdon deemed "qualified."

<div align="right">
Sincerely yours,

PAUL MAXIM, P.O. Box 120
New York, N.Y. 10012-0002
</div>

I do have data on the distribution of scores of Four Sigma
qualifiers. (You asked what I meant by this term. I have always
defined a Four Sigma member as someone who has made a four sigma
score on one of my tests, but I didn't want to mislead you by
claiming 600 "members"; the high point in active membership was
approximately 250 around 1980.)

The data which I have readily available is based on the
scores of 20,000 LAIT testees, a little more than 2/3 of everyone
who has taken the test. Here it is:

I.Q.	Number of Testees
164	79
165	25
166	53
167	43
168	16
169	28
170	14
171	2
172	15
173	7
174	0
175	2
176	0
Total	284

Sincerely,

Kevin Langdon

Kevin Langdon

copy: Robert Dick

99.997th Percentile

Four Sigma Society, P.O. Box 795, Berkeley, CA 94701
Prometheus Society, 13 Speer Street, Somerville, NJ 08876
The Four Sigma Society was founded by Kevin Langdon in 1977 on the basis of scores on the *Langdon Adult Intelligence Test*. Dormant since 1983, Four Sigma was revived in 1988 in the form of an irregularly published journal, the *Four Sigma Bulletin*, available from Polymath Systems for $10/four issues. Approximately 600 qualifiers. The Prometheus Society was founded by Ronald K. Hoeflin in 1984, during a period of dormancy of Four Sigma. Journal: *Gift of Fire*. Approximately 100 members.

Somewhere Above the 99.999th Percentile

Mega Society, 5139 Balboa Blvd. #303, Encino, CA 91316
The Mega Society was founded by Ronald K. Hoeflin, incorporating the 606 Society (founded by Chris Harding), as a one-in-a-million club. The membership has voted not to claim to discriminate at that level. Journal: *Noesis*. Approximately 40 members.

THE WORLD'S HARDEST IQ TEST

By Scot Morris

Perhaps the ultimate combination of challenge and threat is an IQ test. Taking one forces you into a self-confrontation on the most personal, ego-involved level—an anxiety-arousing experience for anyone. If you've ever gotten nervous taking an intelligence test, here's one that will make you break out into a cold sweat just from looking at the questions. It is the most difficult IQ test ever designed to measure the intellectual stratosphere—IQ's between 125 and 180.

This is as far as we know, the only IQ test that is unsupervised and untimed. You are bound on your honor to take it alone and without help, but you may spend as long as you want on it—an hour, a day or a month. What matters is not the time it takes you to ferret out the correct answers, nor any special knowledge or expertise you may have, but your powers of attention and your ability to follow a problem through to its logical solution. These problems can be viewed from a number of different angles. To solve them you must be able to take all parts at once, wrap your mind around the whole thing, and move through the chain of reasoning without getting lost.

Any test discriminates most accurately in the middle of its range. Ordinary IQ tests such as the Wechsler or Stanford-Binet scales, the average scores cluster around 100, and the tests best measure IQ's near that number. They become increasingly unreliable on IQ's that are extremely high or low. The reason is that ordinary intelligence tests are designed for use with ordinary people, and there are a lot of them with IQ's near the mean, the 100 mark. There are relatively few people with extremely high IQ's, so ordinary tests don't include many questions to discriminate fine differences among them.

This test is different. Out of about 3,000 persons who have ordered copies of it, approximately 500 have bothered or dared to complete it and send in their answer sheets. The average of these with about 58 percent correct answers had IQ scores just short of 150. Pure guesswork would net you about 20 percent correct answers and an IQ score somewhere in the subterranean ranch of "below 125." This test is indeed effective in measuring IQ's between 130 and 170.

This test was designed two years ago by Kevin Langdon, a San Francisco systems and procedures analyst and a member of Mensa, the international high-IQ club. Mensa's only criterion for membership is an IQ level above the upper 2 percent of the population, that is, at or above the ninety-eighth percentile (corresponding to an IQ of 133 on the Stanford-Binet or a score of 1,300 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or 1250 on the Graduate Record Examination).

Langdon wanted a way to discriminate among his fellow Mensans, to define a subgroup of persons at the very highest intelligence levels. Langdon's group is called the Four Sigma Society and has about thirty-five members. You can qualify for membership by getting 85 percent or more of the test items correct, a level comparable to a Stanford-Binet IQ of 164 or better, which puts you above the 99.997th percentile. Approximately one person in a thousand meets this standard. The name refers to a statistical term for standard deviation. Four Sigma members exhibit a tested intelligence level four or more standard-deviation units above the general population mean.

Langdon confesses that one of the reasons he devised this test and founded the Four Sigma Society was to meet women he wouldn't have to talk down to. But of those who have qualified for Four Sigma membership so far, only one in seven is female. "I think it has been rather conclusively shown," he says by way of explanation, "that the distribution of intelligence for men and women is not the same. The IQ's of women tend to be clustered in the middle. There are both more geniuses and more idiots among men."

On the following pages, Omni presents the Langdon Adult Intelligence Test in its entirety. Instructions to some items may seem opaque or ambiguous, but a close look at the questions and answers will show that only one interpretation is correct. Part of what the test measures is the ability to understand the questions clearly in their stated form. Simplifying the wording of an item or giving clarifying examples would change one's chances of correctly answering it. This would invalidate the test score, making it not comparable to previous norms. Against some solving impulses, then, we present the test with its original wording intact.

If you decide to take the test, fill in the answer sheet on page 120 to the best of your ability. You needn't do it all in one sitting, though you will probably make a better score if you complete the test in one or a few concentrated periods. Your IQ and percentile scores will be computed on the basis of your raw score. Your raw score will be proportional to the number of items you answer correctly minus one-fourth of the number of items answered incorrectly. No credit will be given for unanswered items. Items marked with more than one answer will be counted wrong. Mark the answer sheet the way you want it scored and send it (or Xerox copy) along with any comments you wish to call to the test maker's attention, and a $2.50 scoring fee, to Four Sigma Society P.O. Box 795, Berkeley Calif 94701 (Make checks payable to Four Sigma Society) You will receive a computer-generated score report form telling you your measured IQ (as well as subscore IQ's for verbal, spatial and inductive reasoning), along with the percentile these scores correspond to in the general adult population. You will also get a full statistical report on the test's norms.

If you decide not to take the test just now, we understand. It will always be here in your Omni, waiting.

✿

Langdon Adult Intelligence Test

STATISTICAL REPORT

LAIT NORMS #2, 7/15/79

This report provides an overview of the norming of the Langdon Adult Intelligence Test completed in July 1979, including 151 testees. Only a handful of Omni are included. A further norming will be completed after the bulk of the Omni response has been analyzed.

The norming sample included 207 persons tested on Form A and 144 tested on Form B. Form A was an early version of the test, now out of print, differing from Form B only in a few items. Thus, one form cannot be used to obtain an independent measure of intelligence for an individual tested using the other.

Raw scores of all testees were computed using the appropriate formula for Form A or Form B. Additionally, a score for items unchanged between the two forms, and scores for each of two matched sets of items containing one half of the items on each part of the test, were computed for each testee.

Correlations between halves of a test (split-test correlations) are generally lower than those which would be obtained if the tests were full length because any chance variation is a larger percentage of the half test. To compensate for this effect, it is usual to apply the formula $r_t = \frac{2r_1}{1+r_1}$, where

r_1 is the uncorrected correlation coefficient and r_t is the corrected correlation. For Form A of the LAIT $r_1 = .822$ and $r_t = .902$ and for Form B $r_1 = .815$ and $r_t = .898$.

Scores on other tests reported by testees were entered into the computer with other data from the answer sheets and paired with LAIT scores. A table of LAIT-previous score pairs for LAIT total score and each subscore was constructed for each test which was used in the norming (see Table 1) and arranged in LAIT score order (lowest to highest).

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF TESTS USED IN NORMING THE LAIT

Test	Test Code	Mean	Standard Deviation
Stanford-Binet	S	100	15.8
Terman Concept Mastery	T	67	29
Army General Classification Test	A	100	30
California Test of Mental Maturity	C	100	16
Miller Analogies	M	10	70
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale	W	100	15
Scholastic Aptitude Test (Total)	X	785	255
Graduate Record Exam (Total)	G	715	255
Cattell Verbal	V	100	23.66
Nardini Skyscraper	N	100	16
LAIT	H	100	16
Bloom Analogies Test	B	0	7.75
Cattell Culture Fair	F	100	16
Eysenck	E	100	15
RAH	R	73	3
ACT	T	73	8

Table 1

Copyright © 1979 by Kevin Langdon

Mr. Rick Rosner
NOESIS Editor
5139 Balboa Blv'd. #303
Encino, CA 91316-3430

Dear Rick,
              I am submitting herewith, for publication in NOESIS, a few of
my poems and other assorted pieces.
                               Basically, my creative work falls into
the following categories:
    1. Original poetry, such as "Family Secrets," "Horns," or "Cronos."
    2. Poetic satire, such as "The Gladiator," or "The Intruder."
    3. Translations from French poetry, such as "The Shoemaker," "Nocturnal
Transfer," "The Synagogue," etc.
                               As regards some of the translations, I have
also enclosed the original French version, which should preferably be printed
to the <u>left</u> of the English version, so as to permit comparison on a line-by-
line basis.
              If I may offer a suggestion, please set up a "PAUL MAXIM File,"
so that you can draw upon this material, piece by piece, over the months ahead.
I.e., if you were to publish (let us say) one poem per issue, there is enough
material here to last you well into 1996.
                               Several of these works, such as "The
Gladiator," "Family Secrets," and "Nocturnal Transfer," have not previously
been published, while many of the others have previously appeared in other
high-IQ publications. However, I hold copyright on all these works, so there
is no problem in republishing them. Also, I suspect that the vast majority of
NOESIS readers have never seen them before. I presume that you have no objec-
tion to including my copyright notice if and when you publish these pieces.

All these pieces are either typed or typeset, so can be construed as "camera-
ready." However, if you should wish to typeset some of the typed pieces, so
as to make them look more "professional," please feel free to do so, as long as
you allow me to proofread the final version prior to publication. You are pro-
bably aware that, in poetry, it is necessary to preserve the <u>format</u> of the work
as accurately as possible, since this is part of its poetic content.

Another type of material I produce, probably of a more intellectually challen-
ging nature, consists of articles on the cryptogrammatic system of Mallarmé.
To describe this briefly, I discovered (some years ago) that the late prose
writings of Mallarmé consist of an elaborate series of "cryptopuzzles" focused
on specific historical and topical subjects -- one puzzle per phrase in his
published writings of the late 1880's and 1890's. Unfortunately, because of
the complexity of his system, it cannot be described in brief compass; for ex-
ample, one of my more detailed analytic articles on this subject runs to 24
pages, single-spaced!
                               I suspect, however, that if some way could be found of
expeditiously presenting this material to NOESIS readers, it could prove intel-
lectually stimulating. In part, this is because Mallarmé's puzzles are both
novel and extremely challenging, and in part because there are <u>several thousand</u>
of them remaining to be deciphered in his published works. If you have any
views on how (or whether) this topic could be presented to NOESIS readers, I
would be interested in hearing them; also, if you should wish to review any of
these articles, please let me know, and I will forward you a copy.

              Sincerely,   PAUL MAXIM, POB 120
                                                  New York, N.Y. 10012

Paul Maxim

"THE SHOEMAKER," by Mallarmé (Pub. 1889)

Le Savetier

Hors de la poix rien à faire,
Le lys naît blanc, comme odeur
Simplement je le préfère
À ce bon raccommodeur.

Il va de cuir à ma paire
Adjoindre plus que je n'eus
Jamais, cela désespère
Un besoin de talons nus.

Son marteau qui ne dévie
Fixe de clous gouailleurs
Sur la semelle l'envie
Toujours conduisant ailleurs.

Il recréerait des souliers,
Ô pieds! si vous le vouliez!

The Shoemaker

Nothing to do aside from glue,
Lilies are born white, so is scent
Quite simply I prefer it to
This patcher so expedient.

He wants to add on to my pair
More leather than was ever there
Thus overlaying with despair
A need for having heels go bare.

His never-swerving hammerblows
Affix with mocking nails upon
The bootsole whims that predispose
Forever to be up and gone.

He would recobble slippers too,
O feet! if so desired by you!

THE INTRUDER

Martin Luther went to the Diet of Worms,
and I attended the Banquet of *Hors d'oeuvres*.
No dogmatism spoiled my pilgrim's appetite,
consuming flesh or fowl with equable delight.

It was the reception preceding a lavish dinner
in the ballroom of a large and elegant hotel,
to which I, unfortunately, had not been invited --
but I went anyway, to keep food from being wasted,
and to help the other guests enjoy their celebration.
I wore a dark suit to show I was civilized,
and a skullcap to hint I was circumcised,
since the dinner was hosted by a wealthy congregation
of the Orthodox - one might say, a Jewry of their peers -
whose men wear hats and mufflers through the summer,
and raise their sons with spitcurls down their ears,
called "forelocks", though they sometimes hang behind.
My entry was as facile as reading *The Forward* backwards,
as smooth as lumps of goosegrease melting in a pan,
and I mingled with the crowd of *bona fide* guests,
recoiling from their jolts, and laughing at their jests,
while smirking to myself, "Today I am a man!"
Some of the waiters thought I looked a little familiar,
having seen me once or twice at functions not long past,
but since it was their job to carve and not to cavil,
they never looked askance at portions I amassed,
nor those I squirreled in my take-home bag.
And then, by sidling round the table sinistrally,
I managed to escape the uncongenial glare
of cross-grained caterer Scharff, and Klaus, the *maitre d'*.
It was the sort of feast worth more than love or money,
a banquet to inspire one's salivary gland -
and though I saw no milk, and precious little honey,
I knew my mouth had led me to the Promised Land.
Because the seats were filled, I gobbled standing up,

but somehow everything I ate went down all right,
since there's a certain charm about a free repast
that lends a tonic to one's flagging appetite,
so whether such viands be meat, or fowl, or fish,
their "pricelessness" assures a sumptuary dish.

Suddenly, just as I was finishing my main course,
and preparing to embark on my just desserts,
an old grey rabbi approached me, stroking his wispy beard
like a prophet about to mutter a peroration.
His rheumy eye transfixed me, his ancient lips twitched,
emitting concatenations of guttural Hebrew
which I, a non-Semite, could hardly understand.
On and on he went, gesticulating wildly,
as if he had harangued me a thousand times before,
round the back of some crumbling *shul*, or passing its open door.
What did he want? Did he know I was crashing?
And did he intend to hurl denouncement on my head?
I could not answer since, speaking no scrap of Hebrew,
each word from my mouth would have proved a shibboleth, ill-said. . .
Small beads of sweat broke out beneath my skullcap,
and trickled down my neck like drops of molten lead:
the tongue on which I was chewing turned out to be my own.

All at once, acting on impulse, I withdrew
a buck from my pocket, and thrust it toward him.
He took it, turned, and silently walked away,
(While I staged a swift departure through the nearby lounge),
thus proving that money is the universal language,
and the beggar is the universal scrounge.
I mopped my brow with a napkin, like Veronica swabbing Christ;
that meal might have proved quite costly, but the *trinkgelt* I
tipped sufficed.

CRONOS

My father ticked on
        like an old pocket watch,
while the sound of gears meshing
        escaped from his crotch.
His face grew orotund,
        his arms circled round,
and his long-handled stem
        seemed to droop, overwound.
He hiccoughed the hours
        with intemperate zest,
for a pendulum swung
        from the fob in his vest,
lurching backward and forward
        to a doggerel rhyme,
with a tempo obtrusive
        as Greenwich mean time,
and a rigor that clouded
        all sundials with doubt,
overturning each hourglass
        whose sand had run out.

When piqued, he would sway
        like a Dervish at prayer,
or the shaft of the cosmos
        that throbs unaware --
but sometimes he stuck,
        and sometimes he stopped,
and one time lay flat
        on a slab, marble-topped.

Twelve unequal months per year is awkward,

hobbling our passage through the zodiac --

but there are thirteen four-week intervals:

why not let them serve? Thirteen times twenty-eight

makes three hundred sixty-four, and one day more

rounds annually our solar calendar. There are

thirteen new moons per year, or thirteen full,

thirteen ovulations expunged by blood, thirteen

thanes at a table, thirteen cards in a suit,

13 steps to a scaffold, 13 crones in a coven,

13 Jew months, 13 prophecies of Baal, 13 ways

of worshipping the Goat. Now the dark side

of the moon begins to tarnish her shining face.

"THE CURSE," by Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867)

Le Guignon

The Curse

Pour soulever un poids si lourd,	To raise a weight so ponderous
Sisyphe, il faudrait ton courage!	Would take your valor, Sisyphus!
Bien qu'on ait du coeur à l'ouvrage,	Though zestful for the work thus wrought,
L'Art est long, et le Temps est court.	Art is long, and Time is short.
Loin des sépultures célèbres,	Toward an abandoned grave, apart
Vers un cimetière isolé,	From sepulchres of famous men,
Mon coeur, comme un tambour voilé,	Beating a muffled drum, my heart
Va battant des marches funèbres.	Plods to a death-knell's regimen.
— Maint joyau dort enseveli	— Many a jewel lies buried there
Dans les ténèbres et l'oubli,	In darkness of oblivion where
Bien loin des pioches et des sondes;	Nor spade nor sounding-rod obtrude;
Mainte fleur épanche à regret	Many a flower sheds grudgingly
Son parfum doux comme un secret	Its perfume sweet as secrecy
Dans les solitudes profondes.	In everlasting solitude.

(Translation Copyright (C) 1992
by PAUL MAXIM)

Commentary: According to Baudelaire scholars, this work was written around 1850.
Its two quatrains are adapted from Longfellow's "A Psalm of Life," and its ter-
cets from Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" -- hence the content has gone
from English to French, and back again. Of course, phrases such as Ars longa,
vita brevis date back to classical antiquity (there may have been a Neanderthal
version as well)...consequently, the genius of the poem lies not in its origi-
nality of sentiment, but rather in the way Baudelaire amalgamated some truisms
and traditional elements into a unified and personalized composition, express-
ing his own characteristic mood.

THE
MANI-
PULATOR

With
his
crass
chiro-
practures,
he frac-
tures the
hasp of
your back...

   The spines
   he adjusts
   with his
   thrusts --
   were they
   really
   askew?

   Like a
   cry of
   distress,
   his caress
   makes
   your ver-
   tebrae
   crack,

     till your
     rickety
     skel'ton
     is ready
     to melt in-
     to glue!

THE MIRROR

Please do not be alarmed. This weapon
I am pointing directly at your head,
although fully loaded, is not meant to
hurt you. Rather, it is a purely defen-
sive armament, whose purpose is merely
to credibly deter you from firing that wea-
pon I notice you are pointing direct-
ly at my head. I feel I have little
choice in this matter, since your
known record of aggression, coupled
with your deployment of such a dan-
gerous device, represents a clear
and present threat to my security
and hence warrants a commensurate
response. In addition, since your
crafty expression reveals no clue
as to your insidious intent, it
is only by closely monitoring
the movements of your trigger
finger that I may obtain any
inkling whatever of when you
might decide to launch a pre-
emptive first strike. Be
assured, however, that
even if I cannot dis-
courage you from initia-
ting such a foolhardy
action, my retalia-
tory counterstrike
will be swift &
deadly -- DO
I SEE A
TWITCH
?

[Note: The human spine consists of four major segments (cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and sternum-coccyx), and contains approx. 33 vertebrae.]