

NOESIS

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STANDARD NOTICES: Dues are two bucks per issue. Back issues are a buck fifty. Checks are payable to Rosner, not Noesis or Mega. One free issue for each two pages of published material you submit.

IN THIS ISSUE:

**NINE ITEMS FROM KEVIN LANGDON--
PROPOSED EDITORIAL GUIDELINES
COMMENTS ON RECENT ISSUES OF NOESIS
REPLY TO PAUL MAXIM RE: MENSA & ISPE
REPLY TO RON HOEFLIN ON FREE WILL
REPLY TO CHRIS LANGAN
REPLY TO ROBERT DICK ON PSYCHIATRIC MEDICATION
REPLY TO ROBERT DICK ON THE STATE OF THE EARTH
REPLY TO PAUL MAXIM ON THE LAIT
TO BECOME A GENERALIST**

**INCHOATE DIVAGATIONS BY RICHARD MAY
TWO LETTERS AND A TELESCOPE ARTICLE FROM CHRIS HARDING
CHESS PROBLEMS BY JEFF WARD❖**

**❖(YOU CAN WIN A FREE YEAR OF NOESIS, WHICH, AT THE CURRENT
RATE OF PUBLICATION, MEANS THE REST OF THE MILLENIUM)
BIRD DRAWINGS BY CELIA MANOLESCO**

Proposed Editorial Guidelines

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A number of Mega members have complained about the appearance of certain types of material in *Noesis*.

As demonstrated by the recent election for Editor, members are reluctant to turn out an incumbent who's doing a good job of getting out issues of *Noesis* on a reasonably frequent schedule, but there is nonetheless clearly some dissatisfaction with the way material is selected for publication.

According to Mega's Constitution and established procedures, any member can call for a vote on a proposal at any time. Therefore, without any bad feelings toward Rick, among whose supporters I count myself, I would like to offer the following proposed editorial guidelines, each to be voted on separately by the membership:

1. No accusation of crime or misconduct shall be published without proof of the truth of the accusation being furnished by the accuser nor without the accused person or persons being afforded the opportunity to reply in the same issue of *Noesis* in which the accusation is printed.
2. Each non-member of the Mega Society shall be limited to no more than four pages of material published in *Noesis* per calendar quarter.
3. No dot-matrix-printed material shall be published without retyping.
4. No material shall be reduced below 8-point type.
5. Tabular material shall be limited to a maximum of four pages.

When I spoke with Rick about my intention to offer some proposals to be voted on, he requested that I collect them in a document in a larger point size so that members wouldn't miss them. I have done that here.

Comments on these proposals should be sent to the Editor in time for the next issue, after which we'll take a vote on them.

Comments on Recent Issues of Noesis

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I applaud Paul Maxim's essay, "The Kormes Case and Its Aftermath," in *Noesis* #116. The ISPE has consistently acted to suppress dissent, with no regard for due process. It's good that Mr. Maxim has pointed out the one-sidedness of the ISPE's reporting, in *Telicom*, of the judge's findings in John Kormes' lawsuit against the society. I have one small correction. Mr. Maxim wrote that six ISPE members were expelled in 1979. The members he was referring to are the founders of the Triple Nine Society. There were only five of us, including Ron Hoeflin and me.

I was interested in Glenn Arthur Morrison's proposal for a synthetic-aperture space telescope in *Noesis* #117. Mr. Morrison proposes placing the telescope in orbit around the earth/moon system at a distance of about 1.85 lunar-orbit radii, noting that this orbit would be unstable, requiring periodic corrections. Perhaps the lunar L4 or L5 point would be a better choice. These two points are along the moon's orbit, sixty degrees on either side of the moon. Objects in such orbits which begin to drift away will tend to be shepherded by dynamic forces back into place. Judging from Mr. Morrison's considerable technical knowledge, I would have expected him to have considered this possibility--and perhaps he did so and found this solution technically unfeasible; if so I would be interested to know the reason. (One possible reason is the expected presence in the L4 and L5 regions of a certain amount of naturally accumulated dust and debris, suspended there through the dynamic forces mentioned above, although, as far as I know, such material has not been detected to date.)

I'd like to correct two errors in my "Reply to Paul Maxim on the Norming of the LAIT" in #117. One item out of six (rather than one out of 16) was wrong among the "answers" to items on the *LAIT* published by New Zealand Mensa (Singapore got 16 out of 16). And the number of testees in the sample used in the first norming of the *LAIT* was 147, not 155.

Paul Maxim's character assassination and groundless accusations of fraud in his letter in #119 titled "Response to Kevin Langdon's Letters in NOESIS Nos. 117 and 118" do not deserve a reply.

In his letter in #119, Chris Harding denied being the source of the erroneous *Guinness* "highest I.Q." listing. The 1982 edition includes the following sentence: "Comparison close to the ceilings are impracticable as are comparabilities between one scale and another." I believe that this wording appeared in a document authored by Chris prior to the date of publication of the *Guinness* listing, but this document might have reached the *Guinness* people from another source.

As readers of this publication know, I have not always been able to appreciate Ron Yannone's material, but I found his article titled "The Making of Optical Illusions," in *Noesis* #120, very interesting. I enjoy these effects and would like the reference for the "Optical Toys" company which he mentioned at the end of his article. (I suspect that other readers of *Noesis* would also be interested in this.)

Reply to Paul Maxim on the Relative Performance of Mensa
and ISPE Members on Various Measures of Intellectual Ability

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In "How Intelligent Is ISPE?" (*Noesis* #116) Paul Maxim noted that the scores of ISPE members are not significantly different from those of Mensa members on my tests and Ron Hoeflin's. Mr. Maxim wrote:

Interpretation. In searching for some possible explanation for these unusual results, a number of theories might be considered, as follows:

I. The Mensa members enjoyed some special "advantage" as compared to the ISPE members, such as "self-selection": i.e., only the most intelligent Mensans came forward to take Mega.

This theory doesn't seem to hold any special plausibility, since by the late 1980's, there were enough ISPE members to allow "self-selection" to operate there as well. In fact, the results of this study appear to argue against the entire concept of "self-selection," precisely because the ISPE members did so poorly.

Not everyone can be expected to be equally enthusiastic about submitting answers to very difficult I.Q. tests; a greater percentage of those who can do well will probably do so. Certainly, a higher percentage of ISPE members than of Mensa members actually took the *LAIT* and the *Mega Test*. The fact that the principle of self-selection applies to members of both Mensa and ISPE does not mean that it cannot apply to these two classes *differentially*.

Mr. Maxim wrote:

Further Confirmation Needed. One further mode of confirmation which might be applied to the above studies would be to gather statistics pertaining to the performance of both Mensans and ISPE members on standard tests. The main difficulty here is to obtain the data from those who (presumably) have it; both Mensa and ISPE have proven uncooperative in this regard. After all, it is now rather late in the day; had they *wanted* to perform these kinds of studies, and make their results public, they would have done so a long time ago.

A certain amount of data pertaining to standard test scores reported by members of these two societies is also in the possession of Messrs. Langdon and Hoeflin, since each LAIT and/or Mega testee was called upon to report such scores along with submission of his test form for scoring. So far, to the best of my knowledge, such "standard" score data has never been compiled and published, but perhaps these two testmakers will now come forward, and shed a little more factual illumination on this important topic.

Mr. Maxim is right about the unfortunate failure of the high-I.Q. societies to make use of data in their possession for studies of this kind. I was disappointed, but not surprised, to read in his essay that "We have been told, by a responsible Mensa officer, that, following the testing and/or evaluation of each candidate, *all test data is destroyed*, save for a notation, in the member's file, as to which test he or she qualified on." [italics Maxim's]

Dr. Hoeflin does all his statistical work by hand, so it may be difficult for him to perform a study of this kind, but I am happy to oblige. I did a study on a sample of *LAIT* testees, with the following results:

**Number and Mean Score on Various Tests by Society Membership,
Based on Previous Scores Reported by 3580 Recent *LAIT* Testees**

| Test | Mensa | Intertel | Top 1% | ISPE | TNS | FSS |
|----------------|-------|----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Cattell Verbal | | | | | | |
| N | 20 | 9 | 3 | | 3 | 5 |
| Mean | 154.4 | 150.0 | 138.7 | | 149.7 | 143.4 |
| CTMM | | | | | | |
| N | 18 | 9 | 3 | | 3 | |
| Mean | 141.9 | 141.2 | 130.7 | | 146.7 | |
| GRE | | | | | | |
| N | 7 | | | | | 16 |
| Mean | 1463 | | | | | 1445 |
| Mega | | | | | | |
| N | 7 | | 8 | | 6 | 9 |
| Mean | 24.3 | | 23.5 | | 24.7 | 34.1 |
| Raven | | | | | | |
| N | 6 | | 3 | | 5 | |
| Mean | 34.2 | | 34.0 | | 34.4 | |
| SAT | | | | | | |
| N | 6 | 3 | | | 4 | 21 |
| Mean | 1430 | 1457 | | | 1461 | 1435 |
| Stanford-Binet | | | | | | |
| N | 3 | | | | | 9 |
| Mean | 148.7 | | | | | 167.8 |
| Titan | | | | | | |
| N | 3 | | 3 | | 3 | |
| Mean | 23.0 | | 23.0 | | 23.0 | |
| WAIS | | | | | | |
| N | 8 | 4 | | 6 | 3 | |
| Mean | 140.6 | 140.8 | | 139.0 | 138.7 | |
| W-87 | | | | | | |
| N | 5 | 3 | | 3 | | |
| Mean | 172.6 | 168.3 | | 179.3 | | |

Notes: Results were not reported for N less than three. There was not enough data to include the Prometheus and Mega societies.

The Mensa members included in the *LAIT* sample are not a random sample of Mensans. Results for the *Cattell Verbal*, *CTMM*, and *WAIS* reflect the reliance of Mensa and Intertel on these instruments for selection of members; clearly these standard tests are measuring something which differs in certain respects from what is measured by the high-range tests constructed by Dr. Hoeflin, Alan Aax, and me. The *GRE* and *SAT* lack sufficient ceiling to discriminate at high levels. The *Mega*, *Raven*, and *Titan* tests tend to be taken only by highly gifted individuals and thus do not show significant differences between members of the societies represented here. *W-87* scores are clearly inflated. If the mean of the *W-87* is 100, the standard deviation is in the vicinity of 28. However, *ISPE* members *do* tend to score higher than Mensa and Intertel members on this test used for *ISPE* admissions.

Reply to Ron Hoeflin on Free Will

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In "Ron Hoeflin on Kevin Langdon and Free Will," in *Noesis* #118, Ron wrote:

In *Noesis* #115, page 9, Kevin Langdon concedes that there may be free will, but "the possibility of freedom resides in the attention." But it remains unclear to me why attention itself exists if it cannot be put to use to accomplish anything.

Ron is asking a good question here. If attention did not serve a useful function, the complex circuitry which supports it would not have arisen in the brains of animals.

Many expedient actions are carried out by animals reflexively or through other instinctive (hard-wired) activity, which takes no attention. Brain-dead people have reflexes, blood circulation, etc. Other actions involve only a mechanical, rote attention (one stroke in brushing one's teeth, taking one step, myriads of tiny habits); such actions involve some attention but no intention. Still others involve a weighing process in which motivating forces meet and are felt together, resulting in an intention. But this is still not free will. One is moved by forces; the vector sum of the forces is the intention.

The attention is lazy; it's in the habit of wandering. In order to reason about something, organize all the factors involved, and reach a conclusion, a force must oppose the tendency to free associate. When thought becomes habitual it is no longer properly called thought, but only associating; this, also, is not free will. It takes an active effort to maintain concentration. In addition to intellectual thought, there is a kind of active "thought" involved in the functioning of the emotions, movement, and sensation, although Western psychology has no words for it.

Consciousness is passive; thought is active; will mediates between them. People are confused because their consciousness is active and their thought is passive.

Whenever habitual embroidery of what is perceived is taking place, the energy of consciousness is diverted and one no longer sees the real world. As with thought, this is not properly called consciousness; it is a kind of "waking sleep." The effort to still the mind and recover the natural mirror-like quality of the calm waters of consciousness is the aim of what the spiritual traditions call meditation. Advanced practitioners of meditative disciplines develop an awareness of the presence of the primordial stillness underneath even the most frenetic external activity and remain open to clear perception of reality. This is the meaning of the Taoist and Zen principle sometimes expressed in English as "Don't push the river."

Only through the control of attention by the will do consciousness and thought occupy their rightful places and serve a larger whole.

Reply to Chris Langan's Response

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I have a few thoughts on "Chris Langan Responds to Kevin Langdon," in *Noesis* #118. Chris wrote:

When I called for an election, it was supposed to include editorial guidelines on content, scheduling, circulation, and so on. Since no guidelines were included, the election I called for has not been held.

Any member of Mega can make a proposal to be voted on by the membership at any time, but it's up to the member to word his or her own proposals. I agree that it's a good idea to have some editorial guidelines. My proposals for such guidelines appear elsewhere in this issue of *Noesis*. Chris is free to present proposals of his own to be voted on by Mega members.

As for Chris' remarks about the questionable legitimacy of the election procedures, it doesn't matter, because it wasn't even close. In the real world, Rick is the Editor of *Noesis*; I'm not interested in rehashing this and, obviously, neither is anybody else besides Chris.

I'm not sure you understood me when I asked how to elicit a confession of plagiarism in the absence of legal force. Of the three kinds of proprietary law affecting U.S. citizens, none covers either mathematical or philosophical ideas. If these can be paraphrased, then in the absence of special agreements, they can be stolen with legal impunity. This leaves only professional censure as a deterrent. Unfortunately, professionals tend to run in herds. They aren't generally too interested in what nonprofessionals claim to have thought of first.

I understand the question; Chris doesn't understand the answer. It's true that ideas can't be trademarked, copyrighted, or patented (although the courts have shown an inclination to allow the protection of algorithms under certain conditions). And they aren't eligible for protection as trade secrets, either. It's also true that professionals tend to protect their own and ignore outsiders, though many of the best of them do not share this ignoble trait. Chris' problem is to get his stuff noticed either by *enough* people or by *important enough* people that nobody can get away with stealing it.

Let's try a little thought experiment. Somebody devises a high-range I.Q. test including items showing five views of a three-dimensional object and requesting the testee to draw the sixth view. He claims to have invented this item type. Many people point out that the originator of items of this type was Ronald K. Hoeflin. Ron isn't a millionaire; he doesn't have a huge advertising budget. But he's been smart enough to get his stuff noticed.

You see, after all these years, I'm no longer sure that *anything* of a philosophical nature is capable of impressing any Mega member at this point in his or her life. . . .

Petitioning such people for the kind of attention I need is an exercise in self-flagellation.

I sympathize with Chris on this point. It's very difficult to entice people to make any intellectual efforts. But, as I've said before, the most practical first step would be for Chris to write a primer on his ideas. I'm glad that he's actually doing so. I promise to read it all the way through, eventually, as other commitments permit. If people were able to grasp some simple ideas concretely they might be more willing to struggle with his more abstruse material.

According to you, I'm "the one who craves recognition." If you mean that I'm the only such person in this group, you're dead wrong. not only would you fall afoul of human psychology, but several members (you included) have announced various high-profile projects of your own, and at least one other member--Rick Rosner--has stated repeatedly, in his habitual eye-catching way, that he wants to be famous.

I'm well aware of the presence of a number of well-developed egos in the Mega Society. My remarks were in relation to Chris' complaints about his material not being received as cordially as, in his opinion, would have been appropriate. The point is that other people have their own interests and concerns. If Chris wants his stuff to be recognized, it's up to him to figure out how to get that recognition. Complaining about lack of recognition is a sure-fire recipe for not being taken seriously.

Kevin, one thing should by now be obvious to you: my work isn't easy to shoot down. You attribute this to impenetrability, but you're dissembling. Men have tried and men have died.

Chris' stuff reminds me of the Polish Godfather: he'll make you an offer you can't understand. When a proposition isn't clearly stated, the more sensible critics don't see anything to shoot at, while the fools rush in to dispute what they don't understand. This doesn't prove anything, one way or the other.

Reply to Robert Dick on Psychiatric Medication

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I was interested in Robert Dick's letter regarding psychiatric medication in #118. Robert has calmed down about the matters on which we disagree and produced some thought-provoking material which deserves a serious response.

Robert wrote:

First, let me note that there are two different kinds of "spaced-outness" in the "mentally" ill. First historically, after many years of being overexcited, people fall into a burnt-out stupor. The mental health professionals call this regression.

The problem I am most interested in, because it seems to be mine, is an excess of dopamine in the brain. I think of dopamine as the significance chemical. When I have too much everything seems to be highly significant. You may think you would keep your bearings if this happened to you, but I assure you you wouldn't. Anyway, after decades of universal high significance you burn out. Nothing seems any more significant than anything else, and it all makes no sense, so why bother? You sit in a chair all day, if you are lucky, or you wander the streets a "spaced-out" relic, if you are not.

The other "spaced out" effect is a side effect of medication.

I agree with the implications of the quotation marks around "mentally." The conditions in question are at least as much disorders of the emotions and the body as of the intellect.

I've known a number of people who did large quantities of psychedelics in the 60's who "burned out." They seem to have permanently lost some key circuits in their brains; not a single one I've known has ever recovered a certain basic equilibrium that we recognize as "normal." Some mentally ill people I've known have suffered from a similar condition.

Science has a lot going for it; I have great respect for the scientific method, which insists on concrete verification before conclusions are taken to be true. But a weakness of scientists--and of those who imitate them, like most "mental health professionals"--is the tendency to coin terminology indiscriminately, without regard for that simplicity and order which avoids unnecessary confusion and conduces to the smooth operation of memory. It is unfortunate that burnout after chronic overexcitement is called "regression," because this lends itself to confusion with the same term as it is used in psychoanalysis: to designate the reemergence of ego states corresponding to earlier periods in the life of the analysand.

Robert is right that an excess of dopamine seems to be involved in schizophrenia. According to Robert M. Julien, in *A Primer of Drug Action* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 3rd Edition, 1981), p. 127:

A dopamine theory of schizophrenia is based upon pharmacological evidence that drugs that block dopamine receptors . . . within the CNS are clinically useful in the treatment of schizophrenia. The phenothiazines, of which chlorpromazine is an

example, are a class of drugs that block these dopamine receptors and that are currently the drugs of choice in the treatment of schizophrenia. Conversely, drugs that stimulate these dopamine receptors produce a state that closely resembles schizophrenia. Amphetamine . . . is a drug that is a stimulant of dopamine . . . receptors, and amphetamine-induced psychosis is at the present time the best available model of acute schizophrenia.

The phenothiazines are the drugs mentioned by Robert in #107. He is also correct that the beginning of widespread use of phenothiazines and other psychiatric medications coincided with a marked decline in psychiatric hospitalization. Figure 7.1 in *A Primer of Drug Action* (p. 125) shows a decline of approximately 37% in the mental-hospital population of the United States, from 540,000 to 340,000, between 1956 and 1970.

(There seems to be some uncertainty as to how to count mental hospital patients. An article by Earl Ubell, in the February 11, 1996 issue of *Parade* magazine, gives 630,000 as the U.S. mental hospital population in 1960, while the figure in *A Primer of Drug Action* mentioned above shows the 1960 population as 520,000. This is probably not a serious discrepancy for the purpose of the present discussion, as mental-hospital populations were presumably counted by the same method for each year listed in Figure 7.1.)

Robert characterized dopamine as "the significance chemical." However, drugs which act on the dopamine receptors in the brain, such as amphetamine and cocaine, do not generally produce in users a sense of heightened significance; rather, they relieve the chronic background of psychic pain which people live with without noticing it. When this pain is relieved, they experience a sense of euphoria.

The drugs which do commonly produce a sense of heightened significance are the psychedelics. (The word *psychedelic* means "mind manifesting.") Table 8.1 in *A Primer of Drug Action* (p. 139) differentiates four classes of psychedelics, including *serotonin psychedelics* (LSD, DMT, and psilocybin), *norepinephrine psychedelics* (mescaline, MDMA ["ecstasy," not listed in *A Primer* because it was not available when the book was written, although closely related substances such as MDA are listed]), *acetylcholine psychedelics* (atropine, scopolamine), and *psychedelic anesthetics* (e.g., ketamine), for which the operant neurotransmitter receptor sites were unidentified as of the publication date of Julien's *Primer*.

The first two categories include the drugs which are particularly noted for creating a heightened sense of the significance of thought and perception. In addition, marijuana and hashish (usually not considered true psychedelics) also produce sensations of enhanced significance.

It is worth noting, in this connection, that chlorpromazine (commonly known by the brand name Thorazine), mentioned in the quotation from Julien above, was known as early as the 1960's as an antidote for certain of the effects of LSD and was used to "bring down" people who were undergoing frightening experiences (known as "bad trips").

I experimented with LSD when I was younger. Once I had a trip during which things began to seem entirely *too real*. I took some Thorazine. All the negative, bumper feelings continued, while the interesting, psychedelic perceptions, including the heightened sense of significance, went away.

Since phenothiazines are effective in counteracting heightened significance, it may be that Robert was experiencing an excess of serotonin instead of dopamine.

Keeping one's bearings in the face of a greatly heightened experience of significance is a function of understanding; certain Eastern spiritual disciplines produce tremendously enhanced experiences, in which the interconnection of everything is perceived directly, without causing disorientation and burnout.

Robert wrote, "If Kevin has a history of calming and restoring to normal severely psychotic people may he trumpet his success to the world." I am not optimistic about the prospects of severely psychotic people. I believe in devoting my energies to those near the top of the heap rather than those at the bottom. If you help someone who is already functioning well to function better, he will be in a much better position to pass on the benefits to those on the next tier down than someone who is barely functioning.

This is one aspect of the meaning of the passage below (Matt. 8:21-22):

And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

Robert wrote:

Psychiatric illnesses can be tricky to form conclusions on. I subscribe to the rule of thirds. One third of the ill will recover without help. One third will recover with help. One third will not recover. Possibly Kevin has observed the first third and has drawn unwarranted conclusions about the majority of patients.

I assume we're talking about psychosis here, as *three thirds* of the general population is neurotic to one degree or another.

Without quibbling about exact proportions, I agree with Robert's "rule of thirds," except that I would say that one third will recover *in spite of* "help." It is this group that supports the illusion that "mental health professionals" generally do their "patients" more good than harm.

Those that recover are usually suffering from short-term, acute psychosis. The chronically insane generally don't recover.

As one hospital attendant told me, "It used to be that you went to a mental hospital to stay." Now the middle third can be released and live near-healthy, near-normal lives in the general community--just as long as they take their medication.

There are people who are able to find a new equilibrium through the use of psychiatric medication, then slowly taper off until they are drug-free. In some cases, this produces very good results. I am not opposed to the use of these drugs in every case. But many of those who continue on medication indefinitely are like zombies walking among us; life without highs and lows is not really living. Robert wrote that "some professionals claim that the great majority of mental patients are under-medicated"; it is apparent to me that most of them are *over-medicated*.

Ronald Reagan was not an important factor in emptying the mental hospitals. First of all, these were STATE hospitals. Second, Reagan only slowed the rate of

growth of social spending, he didn't cut it. (This is one point where I see Kevin's left-wing environment showing through.)

Emptying the state hospitals was a reasonable decision, except that the community mental health centers that were to be built to replace them were in large measure never built. Also the courts kept many ill persons on the streets in the same way they keep many criminals on the streets.

According to the *Parade* article mentioned above, "Since the 1960s, NIMH reports the number of Americans in mental institutions has fallen by 85 percent." [This would make the current population approximately 100,000.] While the new psychiatric medications clearly made it possible for many mental patients to live outside institutions, the need for mental hospital beds now exceeds the number available.

I live in California. As Robert lives on the opposite coast, he may not be aware that Reagan was Governor of California before he became President and cut the budget for state mental institutions aggressively. Many other states followed California's lead.

My attitude toward the closing of the mental hospitals and the consequent presence of large numbers of the mentally ill on the streets of American cities is distinctly *right-wing*. In my opinion, the general population needs to be protected from the aberrant behavior of both the criminal element and the mentally ill.

Obviously, deranged people are not guilty of offenses against persons or property to anywhere near the degree that criminals are, but their confusion and negativity are contagious. This is a major factor in the degradation of the quality of life in central business and residential districts of major metropolitan areas in the United States.

I am not without sympathy for people who are suffering from psychosis, but they are simply not equipped to cope with life outside institutions and their presence on the streets of the big cities is harmful both to themselves and to others.

**Reply to Robert Dick's Response
on the State of the Earth**

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In a letter in *Noesis* #118, Robert Dick responded to a number of points in my "Reply to Robert Dick on the State of the Earth" in #115. Robert wrote:

Kevin Langdon writes "It's strange that someone as intelligent as Robert has bought into the anti-intellectual positions and suspicion of science typical of the Christian right."

Kevin's sentence quoted above implies that most intellectuals and most scientists agree with each other. That is not true of intellectuals and in a sense it is not true of scientists. There is an awful lot of left-wing junk science around which masquerades as real science. The worst junk science used to be about nuclear weapons. Now it is about ecology. I would not give two cents for the junk science in an "Earth Week" column in a Berkeley newspaper.

There is no implication in what I wrote that scientists or intellectuals agree with one another. What makes the fundamentalists nervous is the epistemological commitment of scientists and intellectuals sympathetic to science to what can be empirically verified, as opposed to revealed truth.

Robert labels scientific results he doesn't agree with as "junk science," without offering specific rebuttals. Steve Newman's "Earth Week" column in the *San Francisco Chronicle* simply reports the conclusions of papers presented at scientific meetings or published in scientific journals. It's sort of like a Web site with links to other sites, not a primary source at all.

For example, a journal devoted an issue to pesticides. A real scientist wrote an article for it with the following obvious assertion: When people breed vegetables to be pest-resistant, what they are really doing is making those vegetables secrete natural pesticides, i.e., poisons. Needless to say, the journal refused to print his article, because it went against the prevailing pseudo-science orthodoxy.

This is not the only type of pest-resistance. For example, a plant can be bred to contain a lower proportion of the nutrients which appeal to a particular pest. But a journal editor somewhere must have been willing to print an article containing this theory, because I have read about it before. Also, what is poisonous to an insect is not necessarily poisonous to a man.

Incidentally, I read somewhere that some scientist said that yes, some parts of hte earth are warming, but other parts are cooling.

Well, if *some scientist* said it . . . (Was that a *junk scientist*?)

The U.S. government has often dragged its feet on environmental issues like acid rain and protection of old-growth forests, but the Clinton administration has recently taken a strong line on global warming.

The following paragraphs are from "U.S. Says Pact Crucial to Curb Warming," by Elliot Diringer, in the July 18 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

Addressing a high-level negotiating session in Geneva, Undersecretary of State Timothy Wirth urged governments to work toward the adoption of "realistic, verifiable and binding" emissions targets by the end of 1997.

Although skeptics remain, there is broad consensus among atmospheric scientists that the build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, largely as a result of fossil fuel consumption, is beginning to nudge up temperatures worldwide and threatens widespread climatic disruption in coming decades.

"Continued use of nonbinding targets that are not met makes a mockery of the treaty process," Wirth told the Geneva gathering.

For another view of the seriousness of global warming, see "Polar Ice Cap Will Perish, Report Says," by Geoffrey Lean of the *London Independent*, published in the April 7, 1996 edition of the *San Francisco Examiner*; this article is reprinted in this issue of *Noesis* by permission of the *London Independent*.

Robert wrote:

And oh yes, Kevin says he is barely part of the middle class, but he likes wastelands. Who is he kidding? I find it extremely doubtful that taking the entire population of the earth Kevin is below the 90th or even 95th percentile in wealth. And, oh yes, people like Kevin who believe in "overpopulation" always think the excess population is SOMEBODY ELSE. Not a very noble thought.

Who said anything about "wastelands"? I was talking about rainforests, marshes, and other wild places. Millions of people in the U.S. love these natural wonders--and the populations of many of the world's poorest nations have a deeper appreciation of nature than the U.S. population.

"People like Robert" don't understand that the world's resources are limited. We have to put the brakes on sooner or later, and it will be a lot more comfortable for all of us if we do it soon.

As a matter of fact, the excess population is "somebody else." The results of the 1980 Four Sigma membership survey showed that 248 respondents had an average of only .85 children. The average age of these respondents was approximately 34.5. Even if we assume that these Four Sigma members had become parents of only half the children they would eventually have at the time of the survey, this is still well below replacement level. The population of geniuses is not increasing exponentially, but the population of dummies is. This is neither noble nor ignoble, just factual.

Polar ice cap will perish, report says

By Geoffrey Lean
LONDON INDEPENDENT

LONDON — The North Pole is melting, top American and British scientists have discovered. They predict that due to global warming, the year-round polar ice cap will disappear entirely in the next century.

New research from the first-ever sea voyage across the North Pole — made by icebreakers — shows that a layer of water under the ice is warming up astonishingly quickly. The report, by Professor Knut Aagaard of the University of Washington in Seattle, will be published later this year.

Scientists suspect that the rapid rise in temperature is connected to a disruption of currents in the North Atlantic. The disruption, which follows the failure of the "Odden Feature" in the Greenland Sea for the third year in a row, threatens to affect the Gulf Stream. The "Odden Feature" occurs when water is sucked down from the surface to the sea bed, feeding a vast deep current that links all of the world's oceans.

Computer modeling of the likely progress of global warming at Britain's Hadley Center for Climate Research and Prediction forecasts that the Arctic will warm up faster than anywhere else on earth — by between 6 and 8 degrees Centigrade over the next century.

Peter Wadhams, coordinator of the European Commission's Sub-Polar Ocean Program, says that

this would be enough to melt the now-permanent ice. "We would see the sea ice cap going completely in the summer, but remaining in the winter," he said.

Aagaard's research results from a month-long, 2,300-mile voyage through the polar ice from Alaska to Iceland in 1994 by two icebreakers, the U.S. ship *Polar Sea* and Canada's *Louis St-Laurent*. When the ships reached the North Pole in August of that year, they unexpectedly met a Russian icebreaker carrying 75 schoolchildren who had won a competition. The three ships completed the voyage together.

Measurements taken on the journey revealed a large overall warming of a layer of water about 200 meters below the ice cap. Its temperature appears to have jumped by 1 degree Centigrade in just five years.

Other research shows that water flowing up the Norwegian coast into the Arctic — easily tracked because it is contaminated with radioactive pollution — also has grown warmer recently. Meanwhile, the amount of ice drifting down from the Arctic to the Greenland Sea has fallen by nearly 40 percent.

Wadhams, who works at the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge, England, attributes the increasing temperatures to global warming and says the higher temperatures are likely to speed up the melting of the ice.

**Reply to Paul Maxim's Tiresome and Repetitious
Attacks on the Norming of the LAIT
in a Letter to Jeff Ward and an Open Letter
Addressed to Me Published in Noesis #119**

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Paul Maxim's letters in #119 are just as malicious and illogical as his previous outpourings.

Mr. Maxim wrote:

The dam is beginning to crack, and the house of cards is starting to crumble!

The damn house isn't made of cards. Ol' practical pig built his house out of bricks, and all Mr. Maxim's huffing and puffing will get him nowhere.

Kevin Langdon recently revealed to Bob Kopp (VIDYA Editor) that the norming of one of his tests was 5 points too high. Here's the way Bob phrased it to me: "He admits that one of his normings was about five points too high, adding that you already know about it." Since Langdon's LAIT was the only one of his tests I have ever analyzed, and since this remark was directed at a three-sigma society member, what Langdon was saying (in effect) is that the LAIT IQ threshold for admission to Triple Nine should be raised from 150 to 155. It also implies the necessity for a corresponding seven-point increase in the LAIT's 4-sigma threshold, from 164 to 171, which is pretty much what I've been recommending over the past few months. And, in addition, it would imply raising the Mega threshold for LAIT by eight points, from 176 to 184.

As I pointed out in my replies, in ##115 and 117, to Paul Maxim's previous criticisms of the norming of the LAIT, it was the *first norming* of the LAIT on which I.Q. scores were five points too high at the four-sigma level (not the three-sigma level)--relative to the second norming, with a substantially larger sample. The overwhelming majority (98%) of LAIT testees received second-norming score reports, and those who had received first-norming reports also received second-norming reports.

Instead of offering counterarguments to my remarks, Mr. Maxim has simply repeated his inaccurate and unsubstantiated accusations. He's always screaming about anything which he takes to be unfair treatment, but he doesn't give a damn about fairness to anyone else. There's a word for this: Mr. Maxim is a hypocrite.

Not content with assaulting my reputation with his baseless accusations, Mr. Maxim insinuated in his letter to Jeff Ward that Ron Hoeflin and Robert Dick are not really qualified for the Mega Society; he has also questioned the credentials of Marilyn vos Savant. Who's next? Here's Mr. Maxim's answer:

The Society should establish a "blue ribbon" commission, and subject *all* its members and applicants to recertification, so as to insure fairness and accuracy. Where there

has been evidence of fraud, bias, or the exercise of "insider's privilege," new certification of qualifications should be solicited.

Funny, this is just what Mr. Maxim objects to so vehemently in his own case. All he'd have to do to get into Prometheus and Mega is to take the *Mega Test*, or another instrument the societies accept (several other high-range tests will need to be scrutinized soon). Why does he object to this? And why is he demanding that members of the Mega Society dance to the tune of a nonmember?

I would also like to point out that the fraud which Mr. Maxim alleges is not even plausible, let alone proven.

In his "Open Letter," Mr. Maxim wrote:

I computed the mean LAIT IQ for these 284 qualifiers [for Four Sigma, out of 20,000 LAIT testees], and it came out to 166.7, representing about 1 in 70,000 as compared with the general population. Then I also computed the mean IQ that the entire 20,000-testee sample *would have had to have* (assuming a normal distribution), in order for its top 284 scorers to achieve a mean IQ of 166.7 . . . this came out to precisely 3 sigma, equivalent to the nominal entry level for ISPE, Triple Nine, and OATH.

First of all, Mr. Maxim's math is off by approximately a factor of two. But, more importantly, as I have pointed out in numerous replies to Mr. Maxim in this journal and elsewhere, people near the general population mean are not likely to take very difficult high-range I.Q. tests, or to submit them for scoring if they know they haven't been able to solve most of the problems. This self-selection factor operates differentially all the way up the scale, and for this reason it's nonsense to expect that there should be the same proportion of high scorers in the population of those who submit answer sheets to these tests as one would find in the general population.

Mr. Maxim continued to fill the rest of the page with ravings based on the same false premise. I will not bore *Noesis* readers with further responses to his remarks.

I wonder if anyone else is getting just a little tired of this pathetic and vindictive individual insulting and vilifying our members in the pages of *Noesis*.

[Editor's comment: Why did I spend time analyzing Mega vs. LAIT in the July issue? Kevin, does that five-point adjustment (probably from the Reagan administration) take care of the LAIT vs. Mega thing? I've gotta quit reading the material submitted for publication.]

To Become a Generalist

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Reprinted from *Gift of Fire* #60, June 1993

In *Gift of Fire* #59B, there was a long essay by Dr. C.L. Frost (the author's name was incorrectly listed as "C.F. Frost"), entitled "The Changing Face of Intelligence," in which Dr. Frost addressed the question of the meaning of intelligence in changing cultural contexts.

The debate between Spearman, who argued for a general intellectual ability factor underlying special abilities, and Thorndike, who contended that only specialized aptitudes exist, mentioned in Dr. Frost's essay, has long been resolved in favor of Spearman; factor analysis of psychological test data reveals a single factor, called *g* by psychometricians, which accounts for at least 70 percent of the variance in intelligence test scores, even on highly dissimilar instruments (for an in-depth examination of this subject, see *Bias in Mental Testing*, by Dr. Arthur R. Jensen).

On the second page of her essay, Dr. Frost listed two "basic premises" on which her argument was based:

- 1) Innate intelligence is unmeasurable; only *overtly manifested* ability can be evaluated--making intelligence tests, in many ways, akin to achievement tests.
- 2) The definition of "intelligence," or of what component abilities should be most emphasized on an exam, is *socially* determined and thus may change in accordance with the needs of an era or culture.

The first point appears to be simple common sense--but it's not true. Recent studies have shown that psychometric I.Q. is highly correlated with measures of perception and reaction time, alpha brain wave frequency, and "evoked potentials" (involuntary brain activity in response to stimuli such as light flashes). For details, see "A Biological Basis for IQ," by Sharon Begley, *et al.* (*Newsweek*, Oct. 18, 1982) and "EEG Correlates of Psychometric Intelligence," by Paul Elliott (*Telicom*, October 1980). Of course, many poorly-designed tests of "crystallized intelligence" are highly loaded on knowledge of particular specialized subject matter; these tests are, indeed, measures more of a certain type of "achievement" than of neural efficiency or reasoning ability.

In order to reply to the second point, I call attention to the following passages in Dr. Frost's essay:

... most IQ tests examine primarily verbal and numerical reasoning. Thus, to score highly, a man must perform well at tasks deemed important by his particular society. Performance depends upon his previous mastery of vocabulary and various spatial and numerical concepts; he must demonstrate proficiency in skills emphasized by the current educational system and by prevailing custom.

.....
... what we have already learned . . . affects our capacity for future learning; knowledge is often cumulative--new facts being understood only in the context of the

old, new theories and arguments being grasped only when the starting premises are fully comprehended.

While it is true that to score well on any I.Q. test a certain mastery of basic skills is required, the knowledge required to solve problems on tests of fluid *g*, like the *LAIT*, is of a very elementary character; native speakers of English above the 99th percentile, the population for which the *LAIT* was designed, face a level playing field in this regard, as they are *all* in possession of the command of the language and of elementary mathematics needed to solve the problems on the test.

What differentiates between high and low scorers is not different degrees of knowledge of key subject matter areas but different degrees of ability to develop and critique lines of reasoning. While this ability depends, to a certain degree, on practice, it does not depend on the particular subject matter which has been the focus of a testee's past reasoning activity.

Further on, Dr. Frost wrote:

The "classical" education highly valued by the erstwhile British aristocracy emphasized linguistic skills almost exclusively; youths were taught predominantly literature, philosophy, ancient Greek and history. In a more technologically oriented age, some of the most respected scholars of that time might have seemed profoundly inept or "one sided"; conversely, many modern scientists--esteemed for their acute mathematical and spatial reasoning--might have been judged "ill fit for higher learning" or "unintelligent" by an educational system which focused entirely on literary accomplishment.

It is true that British "classical" education is one-sided: it emphasizes knowledge of Western culture to the exclusion of other branches of human civilization, rote memorization of detail, and a kind of "cleverness" that frequently fails to see the forest for the trees. Scientific/technical education is often one-sided as well, leading to narrow specialization, even, in many cases, to the exclusion of the acquisition of normal social skills, as in the stereotypical nerd with thick glasses and assorted pens and pencils in a pocket protector.

Many purported "intelligence tests" share the biases of the British classical model of learning; fewer are biased in the "technical" direction, though tests of this type exist as well, e.g., Chris Cole's preliminary "short form" test published in *Noesis*, the journal of the Mega Society.

In another passage, Dr. Frost wrote:

The ability to "rote memorize"--vital to the retention of knowledge in a pre-literate era and important in the learning of complicated ecclesiastical rituals in the medieval period--has been de-emphasized; moreover, the focus on technologically useful forms of thinking has reduced the value placed on linguistic aptitude *in isolation*.

The memory capacity and attentiveness of people in traditional societies was enormous in comparison with the distracted and half-aware state of the vast majority of people in modern technological civilization. Consider the following passage from *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, by G.I. Gurdjieff:

Ashokh was the name given everywhere in Asia and the Balkan peninsula to the local bards, who composed, recited or sang poems, songs, legends, folk-tales, and all sorts of stories.

In spite of the fact that these people of the past who devoted themselves to such a career were in most cases illiterate, having not even been to an elementary school in

their childhood, they possessed such a memory and such alertness of mind as would now be considered remarkable and even phenomenal.

They not only knew by heart innumerable and often very lengthy narratives and poems, and sang from memory all their various melodies, but when improvising in their own, so to say, subjective way, they hit upon the appropriate rhymes and changes of rhythm for their verses with astounding rapidity.

At the present time men with such abilities are no longer to be found anywhere. Even when I was young [before 1900], it was being said that they were becoming scarcer and scarcer.

I personally saw a number of these *ashokhs* who were considered famous in those days, and their faces were strongly impressed on my memory.

I happened to see them because my father used to take me as a child to the contests where these poet *ashokhs*, coming from various countries, such as Persia, Turkey, the Caucasus and even parts of Turkestan, competed before a great throng of people in improvising and singing.

This usually proceeded in the following way:

One of the participants in the contest, chosen by lot, would begin, in singing an improvised melody, to put to his partner some question on a religious or philosophical theme, or on the meaning and origin of some well-known legend, tradition, or belief, and the other would reply, also in song, and in his own improvised subjective melody; and these improvised subjective melodies, moreover, had always to correspond in their tonality to the previously produced consonances as well as to what is called by real musical science the 'ansapalniaian flowing echo'.

All this was sung in verse, chiefly in Turko-Tartar, which was then the accepted common language of the peoples of these localities, who spoke different dialects.

These contests would last weeks and sometimes even months, and would conclude with the award of prizes and presents—provided by the audience and usually consisting of cattle, rugs and so on—to those singers who, according to the general verdict, had most distinguished themselves.

While these *ashokhs* were undoubtedly highly intelligent, their extraordinary powers of memory and concentration were due in large part, also, to the cultivation of a discipline of attention which formed the centerpiece of education in traditional societies and has been lost in the present era, except among small circles of practitioners of traditional spiritual disciplines.

Dr. Frost wrote:

... an "intelligent" person (who, by definition, knows how to reason in the manner encouraged by his society) should be able to recognize which of several possible answers would most likely be derived by using *conventional*, culturally fostered patterns of thinking.

Indirectly, such tests also measure "adaptability." Just as, in debate, the most persuasive (and winning) argument is tailored to appeal to "common sense" and is built upon widely accepted ("sane") fundamental premises, replies to test questions must be made to conform with the expectations (and cognitive style) of one's culture.

There is some truth to Dr. Frost's principal point in this passage. An essential element in intelligence as measured by I.Q. tests is determining what is intended and expected by the test author. But there is a big difference between the possession of the common sense to recognize that one is expected to take into account obvious facts, such as that the human population is approximately 50% male and 50% female or that a game show host won't do anything that would ruin the game, and knowledge of specialized subject matter. One can be too "clever," fail to take such information into account, and lower one's score on a test by elaborate and tortured reasoning.

As Dr. Frost pointed out, " 'successful' (acceptable) behavior invariably conforms to the demands of one's environment," but it does not follow from this that such demands are arbitrary or culturally determined. An intelligent man will get out of the

way of a speeding train whether he's American, German, Chinese, or a rainforest Pygmy--and so will a gorilla or an elephant.

Dr. Frost continued:

In one of his short stories, Isaac Asimov intimates (with characteristic foresight) that few, in the society of the future, will even be able to add and subtract . . . Because even the desk-top computer can perform the most complex calculations in just a fraction of a second, proficiency at arithmetic and even the understanding of mathematical concepts are rapidly becoming superfluous abilities; to solve a quantitative problem, all (excepting programmers and the most innovative theoretical scientists) can merely "push a button." Many critics of modern society, likewise, worry that the computer will engender a general decline in the species' cognitive ability; they foresee an illiterate, innumerate future generation which, like that portrayed by Isaac Asimov, is virtually incapable of analytical reasoning.

Although there is certainly a tendency for people to become dependent upon technological solutions to problems which formerly required thinking, but the scientific/technical/hacker culture is not as innumerate as Dr. Frost may believe. What we appear to be heading toward was foreshadowed several decades ago in a chilling science fiction story by C.M. Kornbluth called "The Marching Morons," in which humanity had become divided into a small elite of technocrats and a huge mass of people whose dysgenic breeding habits had reduced them to total intellectual incompetence.

On the last page of her essay, Dr. Frost wrote:

The body of modern knowledge is enormous--too huge for one individual to master it even in 5 lifetimes; continual advancement, especially in the technologies, assures that every man will always be "slightly ignorant" (even regarding the developments in his own specialty) and that, inevitably, he will often need to consult references for an explanation of new discoveries.

While this is correct, as far as it goes, I, for one, am not willing to acquiesce to the forces acting to direct modern man into one or another narrow specialty; I have struggled to become a generalist and, to a limited extent, I have succeeded. Those who wish to do the same may be interested in my Polymath Apprenticeship Program, designed as a vehicle for those who wish to do so to become more well-rounded and to "cover the bases" of the various obligations imposed by life more efficiently.

Inchoate Divagations (satire)

The people are only a symbol of the flag. And who are the people? Zygotes, embryos, and even fetuses too, one supposes. If only each fetus worldwide could be born waving a genetically-engineered national flag (American?)... What is needed is flag-care reform and universal flag insurance. Post-fetal humans, an oxymoron, are obviously of no significance, lacking even the right to die, except, of course, for an Ideology. (More precisely living post-fetal humans are without significance. Corpses or fragments of corpses generally equal or exceed in importance even a lofty zygote.) The bizarre idea that postpartum life in the physical world here and now has any value or significance is a despicable Jewish heresy. Zygotes are full actual (rather than potential future) human beings until born, when as "post-fetals" they are completely free to die on park benches, but only slowly and without assistance, as good Christians.

It should be totally unacceptable to us as Americans in a free society that we all share the light and heat of a collective sun, and all breathe the same collective mass of atmospheric gases, the air. This condition parallels that of the European-style welfare-states, is as decadent as American Medicare (communism), and is forced upon us by our enemy, Nature, depriving us of our freedom. (A free society would not tolerate Medicare, and would contain no elderly people who were not also wealthy, i.e., virtuous.) The sun and the air must be privatized as soon as our technology makes this possible. One can fully trust any private sector business or multinational corporation, such as the tobacco industry, but not any agency of government. Power corrupts, but only government power. So must the U.S. military be totally privatized immediately. Nature is, of course, our enemy and we are completely separate from nature. The ecological/environmental movement is treason, and hence, the destruction of the natural environment is a positive goal of the highest priority. Any alleged "negative" impact of environmental destruction on post-fetal human health is in any case good for the health-care industry, physicians, pharmaceutical companies, and, of course, the funeral industry. (The free-market economy is, of course, the only source of all human values, except for religious fundamentalisms. In order to understand the phenomenon of fundamentalism, Jewish, Christian, and Islamic, one must only reflect upon the meaning of the term "fundament.") In any case good health may only prolong life in this world, be conducive to sexual expression, and minimize suffering to a degree, and hence, may not be Christian.

Drunk drivers should without exception be canonized, because they epitomize the supreme American virtue, confidence. Confidence is what counts, not competence certainly.

Throughout the history of Western culture, the ancient Greek philosophers, the Hebrew prophets, the Church fathers, and Jesus are as one in their estimation of confidence as the paramount virtue. The leading U.S. presidential contender when queried as to whom he would choose as his running mate said that he would pick someone who was confident.

Der Fuehrer was confident; Kafka was not. (Be confident and smile for an omnipresent viewing audience, like the Butcher of Brentwood.) Confidence is certainly not merely a psychological convenience for the person possessing it, but the supreme virtue of American culture, as is fitting. After all, confidence is good for the economy, of unsurpassed excellence in military adventures, an essential element of sports worship, - not to mention handy for rapists.

The authors of the U.S. constitution never intended to limit the second amendment right of citizens to bear arms to the weapons technology available at that time. Every American has the constitutional right (which ought to be exercised) to possess state-of-the-art tactical nuclear weapons. Nukes don't kill, people do. The possible annihilation of American cities in domestic disputes is a small price to pay for our freedom.

Rome didn't fall in a day. Americans should not criticize America, because America has freedom of speech. America is the undisputed moral leader of the world, often with a commanding lead over that of many of her allies in the rates of functional illiteracy, homicide, rape, homelessness, AIDS, and citizens lacking health insurance. Ideally, the middle class will eventually be eliminated entirely or greatly reduced in size, and the economic distance between the wealth-elite and the remainder vastly increased by winner-take-all free-marketism which is the source of all value and values. Darwin must supplant the communism of the Roman Catholic Church, Judaism, and Islam.

The Sisyphean jihad known as the "war on drugs" and the casualties of this war serve as a ubiquitous and everlasting monument to our moral superiority. Consequently, there is no drug problem in America and illegal drugs must never be decriminalized.

If possible, in sharp contrast to present practices in America, individuals who are chronically unemployed, individuals with low cognitive ability, individuals who have histories which manifest propensities to violence, especially if unmarried and/or drug and alcohol abusers, should be given significant financial incentives to have (preferably large numbers of) children for others to support and to keep the social service bureaucracies and prison system vital. In the unimaginably unlikely case that there were genetic factors in any of the preceding, such as low cognitive ability or propensity to violent behavior, these individuals should be especially rewarded economically for generating offspring. In the equally unlikely event that social dysfunction increased following such enlightened practices, then obviously the solution would be to give these individuals even larger financial incentives for reproducing.

If the job market does not absorb the resultant progeny, then one could always expand enrollment at Harvard Medical School to whatever extent is required.

It is imperative that the laws criminalizing homicide be repealed immediately and that the Decalogue also be accordingly revised. Clearly these laws discriminate statistically against certain politically-correct groups and not to repeal them is racist (and sexist). We cannot condone laws which discriminate against certain racial, ethnic, or gender groups, while favoring others. This is, of course, not to be confused with "affirmative action" and opposition to the practice of "affirmative action", which is manifestly quite different.

Obviously court-ordered busing to achieve "racial balance" in the public schools did not go far enough and should have been reinforced by Federally-mandated interracial marriage. "Forced boating" ought to have been utilized also to install dolphins from our coastal waters in the public schools to achieve species balance and to enhance academic standards.

On the subject of race and intelligence, it is incontrovertible that I.Q. tests measure nothing but the cultural privilege and racial/gender bias of the dominant oppressor group, and that intelligence could have no possible genetic basis, even if it had any importance. Historically, progress in science and in mathematics in particular can be traced to individuals having high Emotional Intelligence (E.Q.), who are certainly not distinguished by analytical ability and knowledge. (If you entertain a different view, then you are necessarily a racist and/or sexist.) Nevertheless the U.S. government has a clear and obvious moral imperative to institute a program of systematically brain-damaging at birth the infants of any racial-ethnic groups or gender group suspected of distinguishing themselves in the domain of either I.Q. tests or actual intellectual/cultural achievement as a minimalist strategy for achieving equality and combating racism and sexism. Perhaps the fetuses of these groups must be selectively aborted; not to abort them would be genocidal.

Originally there were, of course, an infinite number of distinct and mutually contradictory divine revelations to an infinity of prophets. Endless free-market competition among various infinities of revelations culminated in the Torah of Moses, the Quran, etc. which outsold the others shekel for shekel, thereby validating their value. Hence we see that the free market is the source of revelation itself, and therefore also of all revealed human values. (Fortuitously the revelations received by one's own tribe are inerrant and final for all time, whereas those received by the other tribes are less than inestimable.) Perhaps, too, the Dow of Wall Street is identical synchronistically with the ineffable Tao of Chinese philosophy.

Jesus was a loser, perhaps the ultimate loser. How much did his Father in heaven pay him for dying on the cross and taking away sins and all that? So were the Hebrew prophets, Lao-Tzu, and the innumerable Buddhas - all losers.

Sports worship is the penultimately sublime expression of the human spirit and ought to be everywhere and at all times encouraged as the supreme value, except in so far as it detracts from America worship. Nationalism is never idolatry. (Whatever nation one happens to be born in one owes total patriotic allegiance to every evil present there, which is to be upheld as the good. This allegiance to evil based upon accident of birth is a great virtue.) And, of course, God would only require that the minutiae of our supposed theological beliefs be correct.

The propositions of an Ideology are either absolutely true or absolutely false as mathematical theorems are true or false, or at very least as equations in physics are correct or incorrect. How convenient it is for our leaders that though physical reality has four or perhaps eleven or more dimensions, political reality has only one dimension (left-right) or at most two dimensions, if time is included. The space of Ideology consists of only a left-right dimension with neither a vertical dimension nor a dimension of depth. (Not that Ideological assertions literally lack depth.) There is no up wing and down wing, or front wing and back wing. Liberal and conservative, libertarian and populist, social left and right, and economic left and right: one is the totality of invariant goodness and truth; the other the totality of invariant evil and untruth. The interplay or dance of the polarities in multidimensional space-time is quite unimportant. One's own Ideology is surely an accurate model of reality, not in large measure one which attempts to induce others to believe or not to believe this and to do or not to do that. Reality is so much less unwieldy when it is packaged in an uncomplicated Ideology.

Marxists hold that property is theft, whereas libertarians claim that taxation is theft. Never think that Ideology itself is theft; theft of reason; theft of truth. The people are only a symbol of the flag. Life is always less precious than an Ideology.

TWO LETTERS AND A TELESCOPE ARTICLE FROM CHRIS HARDING

Dear Rick:

5-22-96

Here we go again:

Maxim accuses me and others once more. I suspect that he is aware that many of our Mega members would be classed as public figures by the courts which gives him immunity under U.S. defamation laws.

Please let me say this: On the two tests where Kevin Langdon was compared to other Mega members, he clearly outranked them. These tests are as much a template of mental performance and level as any of the other high-level tests such as those in more common use for Mega selection. I for one have never been one to deny someone something. Topping a data processor's exam is I am sad to say not quite the same thing. Why does Mr. Maxim not take the same tests as Kevin?

As for his assertion that Kevin Langdon and I are very good buddies, one only has to read some of Kevin's on-going comments to realize otherwise. Wasn't I the founder of that Society called I.S.P.E. from which Kevin was expelled (during the late 1970's)? No wounds have ever healed here.

As for norm errors in tests: Knowing (if it's the case) that a test is out by five points at one place on its scale will tell one nothing about any other place on the scale. Populations themselves can be strikingly atypical of each other. Many such reports have been made about this in the psychometric literature. It seems to me that Paul Maxim's attacks have about them a scatter-gun approach to the problem he is grappling with. Rather than engaging in absurdities he might take some of the high-level tests Kevin and others have already taken. If at the end of the day he is able to qualify, he will have proven a point about his ability to take and master tests. If however he cannot, he should forfeit the right to claims of being misunderstood. either way he should cease his attacks on us.

Chris Harding

P.S.: I'm going to add installment number one of my new project--a 30-inch telescope mirror which I'm currently quite excited about. I'll break this contribution up into parts to save any possible member irritation at having to read reams of uninteresting detail about this newer experiment of mine. You see, as before, I'll be reporting it blow-by-blow as the drama unfolds! I might say at the outset I have a strong (guesstimated) probability of failure. a friend and member of the local astronomy club Jeff A., who called back after the meeting last Thursday and who saw the two big glass disks for the first time said, "You are a brave man." Well, a tryer if nothing else!

A 78cm MIRROR?

April 1, 1996: today I took possession of the 3 disks of glass that had been on order from A.B. Glazing: There are 78 cm in diameter and of 12mm thickness (30.7" x .5"). After taking into account the beveled edges this comes down to 30.55 inches which edge will need to be maintained throughout the grinding process to prevent splintering of the disk's edge and potentially fatal scarring of the optical surface. I shall therefore in future refer to the mirror as the 30 1/2 inch mirror or just to the 30-inch mirror to avoid any exaggeration of its size! I immediately took them around to Novus windscreens (by taxi, the taxi driver driving very slowly and refusing to handle them on being told how much they had cost me!) who said they would be able to glue the three disks of glass together and that the ultra-strength glue they would be using would hold the three disks together for a lifetime! Perhaps they had noted I am already of a fair age! Amateurs have for decades experimented with laminated disks for telescope mirrors but only recently with anything that looks like success.

I estimated the weight of the mirror blank at 112 lbs. My current body weight is 212 lbs. (Since first writing this I have learned my scales, bless them, are 5kg or 12lbs under!) Since it would be quite impossible for me to work the mirror by hand face down over a full-size tool given its size and my medical condition, I had instead intended to grind, polish and figure the optical surface face-up using a sub-diameter tool of 51 cm or just over 20 inches which should prove hopefully just within my current physical capacity. At the outset it was unknown how fast the concaving process would be or how far in the focus could be brought before my sheer persistence alone might be found wanting. A few preliminary computer checks using a program I'd written showed me that to correct such a large mirror to within 1/8 of a wave of light would be nigh on impossible. A figure brought to within 1/4 of a wave also looked nearly as bad in the design stage. Instead I planned to make what is commonly called a 'light bucket.' Such a telescope would be quite satisfactory for star work and perhaps even for the lunar surface but would not reveal any more detail on the planets than say a 12 or 16-inch mirror quite apart from the fact that for a perfectly corrected system of this size on would need uncommonly stable seeing conditions to resolve much finer detail than these sizes.

Rockhampton is just within the tropics and not much above sea level. It is separated from the coast by mountain ranges standing as high as 1983 feet and has mountains all around it. The mountain areas are built upon for residential purposes. A test of a lot of these sites using up to a 10-inch telescope showed no noticeable gain over the main area of the town. We have yet to test the Mt. Morgan ranges. Our seeing is in general superior to that of Bundeberg (site of the 19-inch telescope) which sits almost on the coast and ahead of the big cities Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne but our seeing is still far from the best available in the country. At the time of writing the largest full operational

telescope in Rockhampton is that built by my life-long friend Bob Berry which has an aperture of 14 inches and focal length of 130 inches and weighs a quarter of a ton! This can be used with powers up to at least x812 that we have so far tested. It is a very fine instrument and I hope to use a barlow lens on this in the near future as it would be capable of standing a much higher power. As for the focal length of my own mirror I decided to play this one by ear if not by eye! I would begin with both an open mind and with little in the way of expectations about the outcome—given the size of the task I would be setting myself.

April 4, 1996: Thursday—Novus delivered the 30-inch mirror blank to the house; I watched the two men struggle in with it, at this point admitting that one of the outer disks (What other disk could it have been?) had only been 'spot glued,' something which added further worries for me. They did however say I would not be able to get the disks apart at this point. I decided to let everything settle for some time in the hope that the lamination would 'firm up' with time if indeed this could add anything to the quality of the job already done—at least I would maximize my chances if nothing else.

May 10, 1996: Friday—I took delivery of the 20-inch laminated tool I would be grinding the mirror with. This consisted of two 51 cm diameter disks glued together in the same way as the 30-inch blank; one 0.6 of an inch (15mm) thick, the other 0.4 of an inch giving a combined thickness less the glue of 1 inch which I thought should be adequate to act as a tool for the larger blank. Due to out-of-season rains I had been delayed in obtaining my finished tool from Novus who wanted to place the job in the sun to firm it up.

July 22, 1996

Here we go yet again:

How many more times must I repeat that the only person quoted as having a 196 IQ in the 1982 edition of Guinness was Leta Speyer. I did, don't, and probably won't know the EXACT EQUIVALENT score Kevin Langdon's test would make on the Binet, only that he out-ranked considerably those of OTHER Mega members on the two tests reviewed, making it quite obvious he is in. This point has previously been covered in statements by myself and others. As for myself and for others we were at one point required some years ago to back up the Mega membership records which were placed in the official membership list published at the time: THAT OCCURRED BECAUSE THE TWO MEGA SOCIETIES ONCE AGAIN GOT BACK TOGETHER—SOMETHING KNOWN TO ALL THE THEN-CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE MEGA SOCIETY. I don't know how many members have joined since who were not on that list. This comment is for their benefit not Mr. Maxim.

The puzzle to me is that Mr. Maxim is allowed to make demand after demand on each of us whom he disagrees with. It resembles the insults that fly around on the Internet about Mensa. THESE ON-GOING INSULTS WE CAN DO WITHOUT.

I don't usually publish or comment on letters I receive but since he has already indicated such correspondence with some of us I may state his previous letters to me have already questioned the status of Kevin Langdon on a whole range of issues which I have repeatedly denied as have others according to letters I have here from them which I have received from time to time in the last few years: yet he still goes public with the same wild accusations as though he has not read our replies!

That Mr. Maxim cannot check up on many things is something confined to himself; I founded ISPE 22 years ago and my work in psychometrics pre-dates this yet he finds it strange that such data is no longer available presumably to him--why should it be available to him? I know of no one in the field who would make score results available to the public. Results in summary have already been published widely. This is all anyone ever does after all. I would point out to newer members of the Mega Society (points in fact already made) that I was twice asked to join the International Test commission, the world body policing test construction, on the basis of my published work. I resigned in January of this year after being a member for over a decade but my resignation has not been accepted. I cannot have a higher recommendation for my work than this.

There is a point in all our lives for everything--that point having passed we cannot be brought back to account for those interests/activities that have long passed their 'use-by' date. As far as I am concerned I have won acceptance from those who count and in this respect I am by no means alone.

As for fights that go on within the various high-IQ/AQ groups...these are much like back-fence arguments between neighbors--a model I have always thought a good one for wars. More or less amounts of that wonderful stuff called democracy have nothing to do with it. The boundary is reached when the activities of those who wish to continue with their disputes reach the point where it begins to destabilize the organization. There are two views of this--they are held both public (as a concept) and internal (within the personality framework of the person) and at some point the editor issues a statement that the matter is now closed when he starts receiving complaints from the members that XYZ has taken up too much journal space and that others wish also to be published and that people are sick of the debate. ISPE's cutoff in this regard is around one or two letters. In our case it seems to resemble Cantor's transfinite numbers.

Chris. Harding

CHess PROBLEMS BY JEFF WARD
DEADLINE DECEMBER 15, 1996

For your amusement and entertainment, I am submitting eight original chess problems for publication in Noesis. There will be two problems per issue, beginning with this one. I composed most of the problems many years ago when, for a relatively brief period of time, I became fascinated with this type of puzzle. Two of the problems were published in a British magazine; the remainder have never been published. The member or subscriber who correctly solves the largest number (minimum of four correct) will receive a free subscription to Noesis for a full year. In case of a tie, a name will be randomly drawn from those who are tied.

For those unfamiliar with the format of chess problems, the challenge is to find the sequence of moves that accomplishes the indicated goal. With these eight problems, the goal is to checkmate Black in the stated number of White moves. White always moves first. In general, there is only one White move in response to each possible Black move. You must assume that Black will always make the best possible move, even if the only result is to delay the White checkmate beyond the stated number of moves.

For example, if the problem caption says "White mates in two," only one White first move guarantees a checkmate of Black on White's second move. All other White first moves allow Black to at least delay the checkmate.

You need not supply White's checkmating move nor Black's last move as part of your answer. However, all prior moves by both sides must be supplied. Specifically, your answer should contain the following:

- 2-move problems: White's first move.
- 3-move problems: White's first move; each possible Black first move with the appropriate White second move in response.
- 4-move problems: White's first move; each possible Black first move with the appropriate White second move in response; each possible Black second move with the appropriate White third move in response.

Partially correct answers will be disqualified.

You can use any notation system you want to describe the moves as long as it provides clear and unambiguous information. You may want to use the conventional system in which each square of the board has a unique coordinate based on rows (ranks) numbered 1-8 and columns (files) a-h. The pieces are abbreviated: K for king, Q for queen, R for rook, B for bishop, S for knight (to differentiate from the king), and P for pawn.

A move is described by noting the piece moved followed by the destination square. For example, a move by the queen to the lower left corner of the board is described as Qa1. Captures are signified by: x; and checks by: +. For example, if a rook captures a pawn while delivering check on square c2, the notation is: Rxc2+. Castling is O-O (kingside) or O-O-O (queenside); en passant is e.p.; and pawn promotion is indicated by: = followed by the piece selected. (Underpromotion of a pawn, if possible, should always be considered in a chess problem.) For example, a pawn move to the a8 square with promotion to a queen is described as Pa8=Q; or if a knight is selected, Pa8=S. Occasionally, in order to avoid ambiguity, it is necessary to indicate either the origin square of the move or what kind of piece was captured.

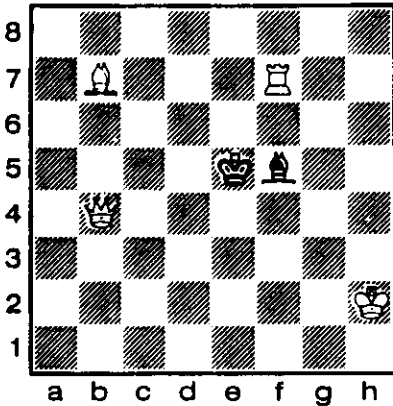
The board is oriented so that Black is at the top and White is at the bottom. In other words, in the starting position of a game, White's king is on square e1.

Send all solutions by the indicated deadline to:

Jeff Ward
13155 Wimberly Square #284
San Diego, CA 92128

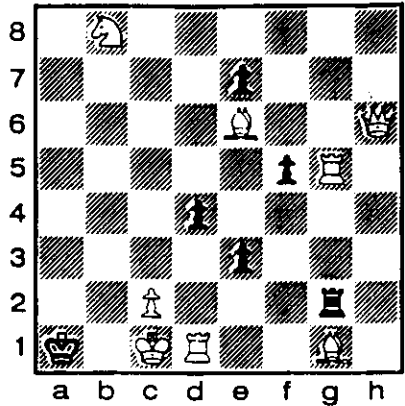
Chess Problems by Jeff Ward

1.



White mates in two

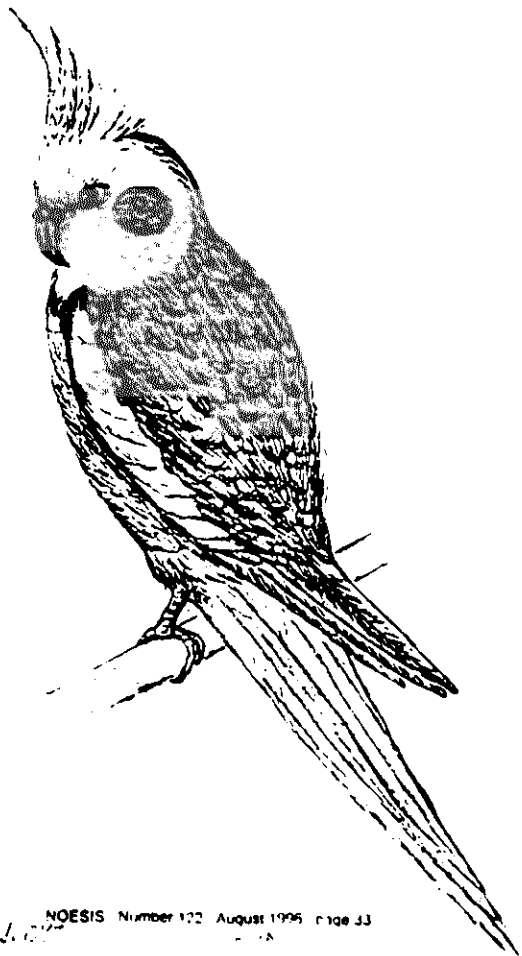
2.



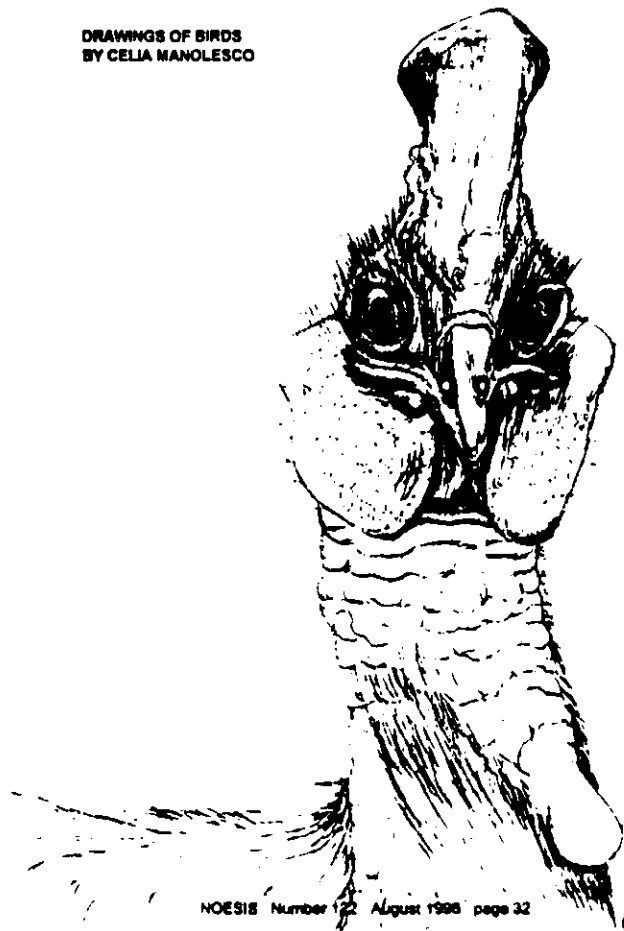
White mates in two

Rich - You will need to supply an appropriate deadline for sending in solutions. I would say about 4 weeks.

DRAWINGS OF BIRDS
BY CELIA MANOLESCO



NOESIS Number 122 August 1996 page 33



NOESIS Number 122 August 1996 page 32

Elisa Rallo