

NOESIS

THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE ONE-IN-A-MILLION SOCIETY

Contents

Letter from Peter Schmies	2
Letter from the Editor of <u>Guinness</u>	3
Letter from George Dicks	4
Cartoons sent by George Dicks	5
Note from Keith Raniere	6
Note from George Dicks	6
Note from Marilyn vos Savant	7
Letter from John Springfield	8
Contents page from <u>Brain Building</u>	9
Letters from C. M. Langan	10
Editor's Note	11

Publisher & Editor

Ronald K. Hoeflin, Ph.D.
P. O. Box 539
New York, NY 10101

To the Editor:

In the last two editions of the German Guinness Book of Records the entry on highest intelligence quotient is missing. Does that also apply to the American Guinness? If so, do you know the reason?

In a back issue of Vidya (No. 27) I saw one of your tests. The answer to problem 42 was "net." When I read that, I immediately thought of a collection of journals in my library. A copy of a half-page is enclosed. I wonder how you came across that one [i.e., Samuel Johnson's definition of "net" as "anything reticulated or decussated at equal intervals, with interstices between the intersections]?

These journals were written for German POW's. My father got in British captivity on the Western front. He was, by the way, exactly 18 years of age when Hitler committed suicide.

Peter Schmies
Gruterstr. 6
5760 Arnsherg 1
Germany

Excerpt from English for All (No. 6, June 11, 1946), a fortnightly publication for German P.O.W.'s:

WHAT IS A NET?

Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) who compiled a Dictionary of the English Language (1755) defined a NET as :

" anything reticulated or decussated at equal intervals with interstices between the inter-sections " !

Instead of attempting to explain these clumsy and pedagogic terms, which are unfamiliar even to the average intelligent Englishman, we shall give the definition to be found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, namely :

" A meshed fabric of twine, cord or hair ".

This is much simpler but, in case you are still in the dark, here is a definition given by a schoolboy in an examination :

" A net is a lot of holes tied up with string."

Editor's comment: After Norris McWhirter retired as editor of Guinness, the new editor decided to drop the "Highest IQ" entry, for reasons he gave in the following letter to me:

GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS



DMcF/TR

Mr R Hoeflin
P.O. Box 7430
New York
NY 10116
U.S.A.

24th May 1989

Dear Mr Hoeflin,

Many thanks for your letter of 17 May and the latest information regarding the Mega test.

I had been meaning to write to you for some time to tell you that I have decided to drop the entry for highest I.Q. and to explain my reasons.

It is not that I am in any way against I.Q. tests, nor that I am 'anti-elitist' (although I am sure that I will be accused of that). Simply, I feel that to include an entry for the 'Highest I.Q.' implying, as it does, that this is the world's most intelligent person, is invidious. Also, unlike the process of putting someone on a racetrack against a stopwatch, there are many different types of test, and we are talking about such minute differences between individuals that I feel we could not be considered to be making valid comparisons.

I'm not sure if you will agree with my thinking but I am sure that The Guinness Book of Records is not in a position to monitor the highest I.Q.

Yours sincerely,

Donald McFarlan
Editor

To the Editor:

I wanted to take some time to say hi and wish you all happy holidays. I'd very much like to hear from any of you so if you find the time just drop me a line sometime. Also, I am preparing my dissertation on Set Theory and am wondering if anyone would mind helping me proof-read the thing.

Even if you aren't interested in helping me, have a wonderful holiday season and drop me a line some time.

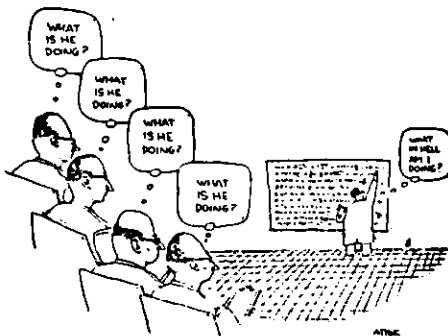
George W. Dicks, Jr.
198 Sturm St.
New Haven, IN 46774
(219) 749 - 8511

As a Christmas Present, here is my newly proposed Mega Test. It shouldn't take much more than 1 hour although there is no time limit.

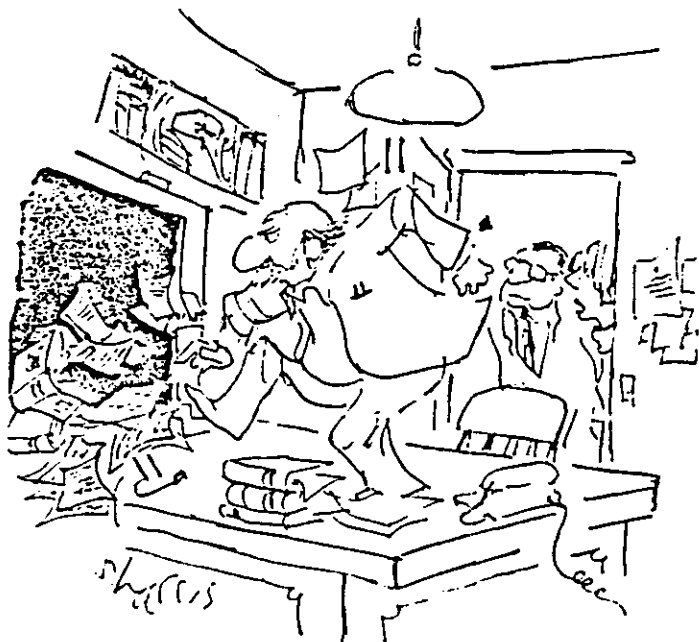
1. Demonstrate Hawking's Anthropic Principle in the laboratory. As a minimum requirement construct at least 2 universes and demonstrate that your choices of universal constants led to lifeforms with characteristics of your choosing.
2. By means of straightedge and compass trisect an angle of 1 tenth of a circle.
3. Using Greek words of no fewer than 8 syllables, compose a romantic sonnet completely understandable to an average American 3 year old.
4. With resorting to inductive means, demonstrate conclusively that $n+1 > n$ for positive integers. Partially correct solutions do not count.
5. Construct a Crossword-Type Puzzle such that using letters of finite size, Hilbert Space will be completely filled.
6. Construct a time-travel device. Use said device to journey into history. Chop down the tree of knowledge of good and evil, totally destroying the remains before Eve is created from Adam's rib. Report on the effects.
7. Given 25 cubes which intersect such that the maximum number of volumes is generated. Placing an ant at any arbitrary vertex and moving the ant from vertex to vertex such that no vertex is reached more than once. What is the probability that the ant will return to the original vertex after no more than 150 moves? Clarification: The ant, having been stunned by a near brush with a spider, has an equal probability of choosing any edge leaving a given vertex.
8. Commit suicide. Report on the accuracy of both the Dante and Niven accounts of the forest of the suicides in the underworld. Escape from Hades giving each arch-fiend encountered a tweak on the nose followed by a 3 Stooges poke in the eye. Report on the effect this has upon diabolic psychology.
9. Demonstrate conclusively that in order: Grandma got run over by a reindeer. All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth. Santa Claus is coming to town. And finally: I'm a Pepper, He's a Pepper. Wouldn't you like to be a Pepper too?
10. Report conclusively on the psychological defects leading individuals of above average intelligence to waste hours of their lives taking tests.



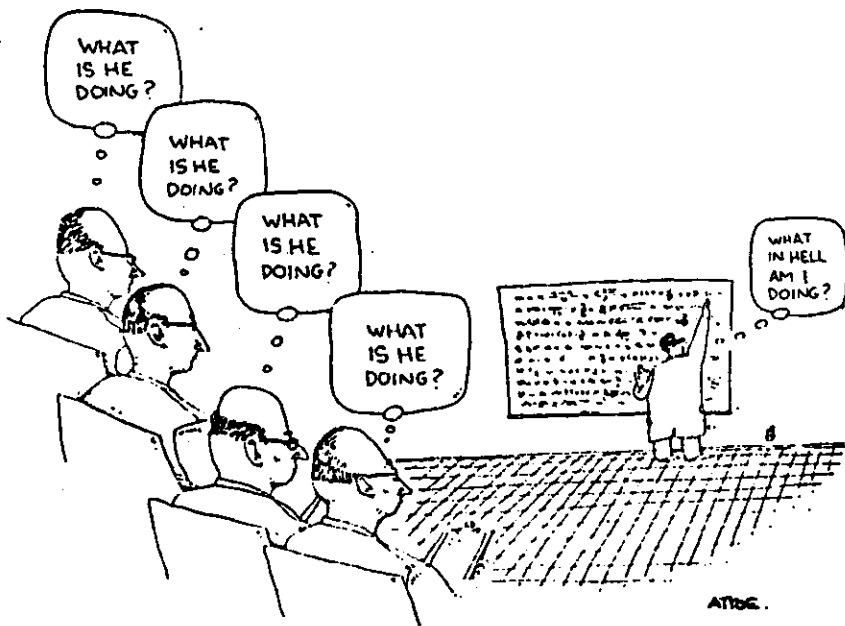
"It's terribly frustrating. For 37 years he's been trying to prove that things equal to the same thing are not equal to each other."



ATAC



"It's terribly frustrating. For 37 years he's been trying to prove that things equal to the same thing are not equal to each other."



Dear Ron -

Please sign me up for both of your news letters. Sorry for the delay - I have no bad feelings toward you - I've just been very busy. I'm still interested in doing the thorough normings. I'll be in touch in the next few months.

- Keith Randle

P.S. Hope this finds you well - Happy Holidays!

- Ron -

I'm sorry for letting you down in the past. I will try to be a better friend.

As to your issues, my article, & my \$10 subscription, I was prepared to send them until you insulted my character.

I'm mailing them today & they should arrive by Jan 1.

Let's let bygones be bygones!

George Dickens

11/2/90

Ron,

Thanks for the kind words.
I thought you might like to see
a copy of my reply, which
appeared on 7/1.

Marilyn

Ask Marilyn™

BY MARILYN VOS SAVANT



With regard to the reader's question—"If a hen and a half can lay an egg and a half in a day and a half, how many hens

does it take to lay six eggs in six days?"—your answer, "one hen," is in fact "too obvious," as you said. The answer should instead be "one and a half hens."

In the puzzle, the production mechanism is one and one-half hens. The fixed rate is one and one-half eggs per one and one-

half days. Now, if the above logic is correct, multiplying the time period by four will correspondingly increase the production by four. Therefore, simply let the hen-and-a-half machine run for six days, and the resultant output will be six eggs.

—Stephen C. Johnston,
St. Louis, Mo.

Good catch, you guys! Those of you who said "one and a half hens" are right, and my "one hen" is wrong. I realize that some of you said "six hens" or "nine hens," but maybe you're just reluctant to accept the concept of half a chicken, the way I was. And here I'd always assumed this was one of those "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck?" kind of tongue-twisters! It's actually a logic puzzle.

To the Editor:

I wanted to express my gratitude to you for coming all the way to Minnesota to attend the first annual meeting of the Top One Percent Society, on Dec 2. The variety and depth which characterized the discussions made this event unique for me -- in no small part due to your presence and participation.

Cyd Bergdorf, who hosted this event, is to be congratulated for having made us all feel at home and at ease, which greatly contributed to the successful outcome.

John Springfield
2910 Franklin Ave E #1905
Minneapolis, MN 55406

PS: I have just had another opportunity to see Marilyn vos Savant's new book, which I mentioned to you at the meeting. The title is Brain Building, and is co-authored by Leonore Fleischer, and forwarded by Robert Jarvik (Copyright 1990, Bantam Books). The book is well-written and offers many helpful and practical suggestions regarding such subjects as building a more extensive vocabulary, improving skills in mathematical calculations, and insightfully perceiving the world about you.

Sincerely,
John Springfield

CONTENTS

FOREWORD: Robert Jarvik, M.D.	vii
PREFACE: Marilyn vos Savant	ix
1. THE BRAIN BUILDING PROGRAM: Twelve Weeks to a Stronger Intelligence	1
2. WEEK ONE MONDAY—WEDNESDAY: THE BRAIN—NOT AN ORGAN OF MINOR IMPORTANCE	6
3. WEEK ONE THURSDAY—SATURDAY: I THINK, THEREFORE, WHAT IF . . . ?	17
4. WEEK ONE SATURDAY NIGHT: WARMING UP WITH GEORGE	33
5. WEEK TWO BUILDING VOCABULARY	41
6. WEEK THREE BUILDING A CALCULATING BRAIN	55
7. WEEK FOUR BUILDING A LOGICAL MIND	76
8. WEEK FIVE BUILDING INSIGHT AND INTUITION	96
9. WEEK SIX BUILDING ORIENTATION	122
10. WEEK SEVEN BUILDING ATTENTION SPAN AND THE SENSES	135
11. WEEK EIGHT BUILDING COMMUNICATION	153
12. WEEK NINE BUILDING INFORMATION	178
13. WEEK TEN BUILDING COMPREHENSION	198
14. WEEK ELEVEN BUILDING PERSPECTIVE	214
15. WEEK TWELVE THE WELL-BUILT MIND	239

To the Editor:

December 12, 1990

Please try to remember, when drafting your reply to my letters, that (1) you were offered an opportunity not to print them (the price was a simple apology); (2) Noesis 54 featured not just a "one or two sentence critique" of me, but an active injunction against me. That is, you offered to hand over the journal to any old member at all, save for those two "miscreants", Langan and Dicks. Critiques are different from active statements: "Tex Howdy, you old hoss thief!" differs markedly from "Tex Howdy, you're a hoss thief. This here court sentences you to hang by the neck 'til dead!" In the first case, Tex can laugh it off. In the second, Tex might be expected to react in a more purposeful way.

As for your characterization of me as a "long-winded", pedantic blowhard, you might count the pages I wrote (p), the problems (s) solved in those pages, and then determine their average importance (i). Then compare the "profundity ratio" $s(i)/p$ to that of any other writer, living or dead. Unless you have a weird way of doing this, I should not suffer by the comparison.

As for my being "paranoid", paranoid behavior lacks realistic basis. But everything I wrote *has* a basis. I'll admit to paranoia as soon as you truthfully assure me that you have never considered using your position against any member (of any organization) with whom you disagreed.

If - as you seem to imply - any of the other members have poor impressions of either the philosophical or mathematical side of my remarks, I can answer their criticisms as thoroughly as they merit.

If Chris Cole told you that he didn't like my using the word "God" in my presentation, I would have to point out that religion is only a nonproductive topic when discussed illogically. On the other hand, if one wishes to speak of "brains in the vats of mad scientists", then one defines a regression that leads straight to the concept to which he apparently objects. I'd consider it more likely that Chris suspected me of "pontificating", and found the references to God a convenient handle. Of course, logical and pontifical viewpoints differ, and I am guilty only of the former.

I regret having placed this much of a strain on your ego, but you sometimes tend to present yourself in a way which encourages just that. I know how you feel about "bickering", and wish that no one had decided to bicker about my handling of the editorship.

For all I know, Mr. Hoeflin, you may be quite a regular guy. But the fact remains that when you take pot-shots at sentient targets, they occasionally react. As I said, your remarks were probably unconsidered, and it would accordingly look better if you were to relax and admit it.

Sincerely,

C. M. Langan

December 20, 1990

To the Editor:

Despite my many attempts to reach you through the device of written language, I never seem to get more than "I've read your remarks only cursorily...", and the like, with no sign that you understand the content. Such protestations are at best annoying. At worst, they are a device to avoid acknowledging my authorship of certain ideas whose origins you prefer to ignore.

Yet, there are distinct indications, in your own treatise on philosophy, that you not only read Noesis 44-49 carefully, but have used the concepts you found there to personal advantage. I

can cite several clear instances of this (deny it, and I'll be more specific). But you show no inclination to cite me, or even to acknowledge the indirect nature of your "original" and "novel" insights. I am disinclined to offer you more insight on these terms, which are utterly without advantage or appreciation for me.

Your philosophical thesis, insofar as it reflects some of the ideas presented in Noesis 44-49, is logicomathematically extremely complex. I am the only person currently able to handle these complexities. If you are ever able to tackle them at all, it will be many years before you know what I know of them, or can write about them with the same degree of confidence and authority. Yet, you persist in antagonizing me with a posture of false independence which is already plainly unreal.

If I edit Noesis again, it will not be because you have "let" me do so (#55). If I again donate my time and knowledge, despite what you say are the vague grumblings of members unable to grasp my writings, it will not be at my own monetary expense. Nor will be in a way which lets you retain the "authority" to pass the editorship around like a privilege, when it is obviously expensive, thankless, and an invitation to insults like those made by you and (allegedly) over your telephone.

But I do not wish to overtax your admittedly brief attention span. I will merely observe that people will not play games of 0 advantage with you; when you unbalance things to that extent, your own purposes must suffer. You seem to playing this like a game of chess; but if it is a game, chess is the wrong one. So is "bickering" (it is common knowledge that the best way to avoid "bickering matches" (Noesis 55) is not to start them (Noesis 54)).

You should probably print this in #56, so the members are clear on where matters stand.

Incidentally, I have received no issue of In-Genius since October. In ironic contrast to Noesis 44-49, In-Genius costs money. Is there any particular reason for the delay?

Sincerely,

C. M. Langan

Editor's comment: Isn't it slightly inconsistent to accuse me on the one hand of having a "brief attention span" and on the other hand of "playing this like a game of chess"?

Editor's note: This is my last issue as editor of Noesis. Those who paid \$10 for issues 57-62 will receive 12 issues of my other journal, In-Genius, in exchange, a \$20 value, unless you request a \$10 refund. If anyone is interested in serving as editor for the next six months, let me know and I'll supply you with the current mailing list. Counting George Dicks, we have 16 members and 21 subscribers. Thanks to all of you for participating.

Ron Hoeflin

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