

INSIGHT

THE JOURNAL OF THE TITAN SOCIETY

(Issue #8, Oct.-Nov. 1986)

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EDITORIAL

Ronald K. Hoeflin
P. O. Box 7430
New York, NY 10116

This issue contains responses to the questionnaire in the previous issue of Insight from five of our members, plus a new questionnaire. Additional responses to the previous questionnaire are still welcome.

Chris Cole is going ahead with plans for a first annual meeting of the Society in Southern California in 1987. If you have any suggestions to make regarding the date, contact him.

Richard May (463 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02115) has qualified for membership and is our thirteenth member.

Grady M. Towers, whose letter to Richard May appears in this issue, has agreed to do a computer analysis of the psychometric data concerning the Mega Test that I have supplied in this issue. He may seek to have the results of his analysis published in a professional journal.

TRIP REPORT

Chris Cole
2240-314 Park Newport Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660

High IQ societies usually attract oddballs and cranks, so I have never joined one. However, the Mega Test was so difficult that I figured it would weed out these people, since they wouldn't have the patience to work out the answers. This is also why they never make important contributions. However, all of this was pretty much conjecture on my part, so it was with some trepidation that I set out to meet some fellow members of the Society. I figured I would either meet the creme de la crank, or a bunch of people more or less like myself.

During September I met with four fellow members of the Society: Jeff Ward and Dean Inada in Southern California and Ron Hoeflin and Ray Wise in New York. To my great relief, I found that they were not cranks. Not one crank idea was proposed during any of the several hours of discussions. The ideas that were discussed were fairly examined from all sides and people were willing to change their opinion when presented with sufficiently strong evidence. It was very comforting.

We discussed the solutions to Trial Test A and formulated a consolidated solution set (we could not solve problems 33 through 35 -- these are still unsolved as of this writing). We agreed that it is important to expand the Society, and that tests such as the Mega Test are the appropriate vehicle to do so. We had several suggestions on how to minimize cheating on the tests:

1. Don't publish the test.
2. Have the person requesting the test sign a contract stating that he or she will not reveal the contents of the test.
3. Change the test every year.
4. Specify that admission to the Society will require an interview that will involve some follow-up questions, even though this may not be true.
5. Tell the person before he or she requests the test that the test will require a considerable amount of time, and then be strict in requiring that the test be returned within the time limit (say, three months).

We also discussed several projects for the Society. Jeff suggested a forum (television show? magazine?) for critical, objective assessment of arguments on both sides of issues of public interest. I suggested a long term project in the area of cellular automata and artificial intelligence. We all agreed that there would be no shortage of ideas on projects, nor any shortage of energy and talent to apply to the projects. All in all, they were two very enjoyable meetings and I look forward to more.

TESTING HIGH INTELLIGENCE

Eric Hart
P. O. Box 831
Miller Pl., NY 11764

Readers of the newsletter are aware that the untimed, unsupervised testing strategy, which underlies the primary admission criterion for this society, is frequently a target for vague criticism. A good deal of this centers on the potential for collaboration; unfortunately, there is no infallible method by which every such lapse can be identified. Some criticism, however, casts doubt on the validity of the strategy irrespective of subterfuge. It is argued indirectly that the problems*on such tests are not reliable indicators of intelligence, whereas those on the "established" (timed and supervised) tests are above reproach.

The young field of psychometrics does not provide the kind of solid guidelines implied by such criticism; intelligence is not yet so thoroughly understood as to make such judgments possible. In fact, it can be coherently maintained that timed, supervised tests, particularly those containing a preponderance of multiple-choice (aleatory and "reverse-soluble") problems, provide a rather artificial scenario in comparison to the less tightly-controlled variety. After all, the great thinkers of past and present acclaim attack "real" unsolved problems in more or less individual ways, in more or less familiar settings, on more or less protracted timescales, and with no explicit restrictions on reference aids.

The matter seems to boil down to whether "intelligence" is the ability to solve many less-difficult problems in a short time, or fewer more-difficult problems over a longer time. It is currently plausible neither to equate the two "abilities" nor to elevate the former above the latter, particularly when virtually all of the world's most pressing problems require deep as opposed to superficial (or reverse-reasoned) insight... and when the actual points of distinction are defined poorly if at all.

This is why statistical methods are preferred by psychologists in the design and evaluation of intelligence tests. It is characteristic of statistics-intensive disciplines that the "traditional" means of acquiring data, inasmuch as they condition the data itself, come to be regarded as essential to the acceptability of future data, the interpretation of which is greatly facilitated by invariance of experimental parameters. In statistical psychometrics, this means that the "best" data is data gathered in "the usual way", under conditions of strict timing and supervision.

It does not follow, however, that established constraints on data acquisition are ideal, or even appropriate, for measurement of the variable in question (assuming, for the sake of argument, that something as ill-defined as intelligence qualifies as a measurable "variable" at all). Statistical induction is, in a way, a methodology of last resort; it can be used even in profound ignorance of the illative principles governing a context. It is thus well for statisticians to remind themselves occasionally that the proper aim of such a nomologically-blind approach is to abstract just these principles, which alone can endow their data with meaning. Low correlations between experiments among which parameters are varied do not constitute prima facie indictments of the less-tried parametrizations, and critiques to this effect are naive at best.

All of this leads to a final objection which must be addressed: if "I.Q." is what is measured by timed, supervised tests, and given that the members of this class display good correlation over identical (or parallel) samples, then how can a test not (or only marginally) displaying such correlation measure I.Q.? First, I.Q., while being a function in which age is a parameter, is putatively age-invariant; age serves only to adjust the absolute score of a subject to account for what is finally an irrelevant detail. Thus, I.Q. is tacitly interpreted as "absolute problem-solving ability". Any test which contains primarily "context-free" problems - i.e., the solutions of which are independent of special propaedeutics as opposed to "developmental universals" (an arbitrary distinction, the variance generated by which is in part alleviated by free access to reference aids) - measures problem-solving ability, and can in principle be adjusted for age to yield I.Q.. Any meaningful distinction between tests must therefore be made in terms of a comparison among context-free problems... which presupposes that the common elements of problemic structure have been isolated. As yet, they have not.

Speculating now: were it to be determined that the "difficulty-curve" of problems in general (i.e., where we have n critical elements of problemic structure, the curve of a suitable n-ary function in "problemspace") displays "virtual discontinuities", then problems on the upside of the discontinuities would have great discriminative potential relative to those beneath. There now arises a possibility: that certain subjects able to solve problems below such "catastrophic" junctures with great facility may lack some function of the intellect by which the discontinuity can be bridged. At this point, I.Q. takes on a whole new meaning, having one or more definite "make-or-break" dimensions.

This, as I understand it, is a major premise behind the MEGA test strategy. If valid, it makes this strategy vastly superior to the others presently in vogue. In fact, it qualifies even now as a "more promising line of research". In keeping with this description, the society might attempt to validate such a premise along complementary inductive pathways: empirical and ideological, statistical and theoretic. Even in the event that the premise is found to be conditional, mere explication of the conditions would enable an appropriate revision of the testing strategy... and a quantum-jump in psychometrics.

As members are doubtless aware, the society's test-designer (Ron Hoeflin) is already using statistical means to find "ultradiscriminative" problems which appear delineative at high levels of intelligence. Despite what may still be a paucity of good examples, it may not be too early to begin formulating the general characteristics of such problems. Points of conceptual orientation are far from impossible to find: a number of healthy theories, including those of computation, information, cybernetics, algorithms, cognition, and learning, might be made to yield tentative categories for the beginning stages of schematization.

The benefits of such a program to the society could be considerable. Ultradiscriminative problems could eventually be designed with every expectation of statistical validation; thus, the power of statistical methods could be optimised by virtue of sound theoretical underpinnings. In vindicating its testing strategy, the society might enhance its own "credentials". Perhaps the effects of "synectic" collaboration between subjects of complementary aptitudes (if not compulsive honesty) could somehow be minimised. In the long run, even greater benefits - e.g., a deeper understanding of the human intellect, an "enlightened heuristics" for educational application, and more - might accrue to the world at large. In any event, the credits of such a program are certain to outweigh its liabilities, rendering further justification superfluous.

Speculation aside, we should resist becoming distracted by the controversy over testing strategies and psychometrics in general. Intelligence is by nature polymorphic, consisting of passive and motivational, analytic and creative aspects in unknown, and perhaps unstable, proportion. The last thing that those who study it can afford to do is arbitrarily restrict themselves to an habitual methodology at the expense of all others... and especially of this one, as relatively conducive as it is to the natural manifestation of intelligence.

* - "problem" is here to be read in the widest sense, its definition encompassing the constraints imposed on solution.

SOLUTIONS TO TWO LOGIC PROBLEMS

Chris Cole
2240-314 Park Newport Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Labeled Boxes

Two boxes are labeled "A" and "B". A sign on box A says "The sign on box B is true and the gold is in box A". A sign on box B says "The sign on box A is false and the gold is in box A". Which box contains the gold?

Solution

A common line of reasoning is to assume that each statement must be either true or false, and to deduce that the gold is in box A. However, the assumption that a statement must be either true or false is not valid, as can be seen from the paradox which results from applying this assumption to the statement: "This statement is false". Therefore, the problem cannot be solved with the information given.
(cf. Smullyan, "What Is the Name of This Book?", Prentice-Hall, 1978, #70)

N-Person Fair Division

If two people want to divide a pie but do not trust each other, they can still ensure that each gets a fair share by using the technique that one person cuts and the other person chooses. Generalize this technique to more than two people. Take care to ensure that no one can be cheated by a coalition of the others.

Solution

Number the people from 1 to N. Person 1 cuts off a piece of the pie. Person 2 can either diminish the size of the cut off piece or pass. The same for persons 3 through N. The last person to touch the piece must take it and is removed from the process. Repeat this procedure with the remaining N - 1 people, until everyone has a piece.
(cf. Luce and Raiffa, "Games and Decisions", Wiley, 1957, p. 366)

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Ronald K. Hoeflin
P. O. Box 7430
New York, NY 10116

I have received responses to the questionnaire that appeared in Insight #7 from five Titan members so far (out of twelve). It is not too late for the rest of you to submit responses. Here are the responses received so far, arranged alphabetically:

Name: Chris Cole
Address: 2240-314 Park Newport Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660
Day phone: (714) 855-3923
Evening phone: (714) 720-1761
Occupation: President, Peregrine Systems, Inc. (computer software)
Hobbies or interests: Travel, reading mysteries, walking along beach, adventure games, movies, TV, challenging puzzles, hunting, philosophy, frequenting comedy clubs.
Are you satisfied with the name "Titan Society": No.
If you have alternate names to suggest (regardless of how you answered the previous question) put them here:
Delphi, Enosis, Esemplastic, Quivira, Philomel, Logos, Sentinel.
Would you be able and willing to attend a meeting of the Titan Society in Southern California in 1987 if some convenient weekend could be found: Yes.
Suggested questions for future questionnaires: Suggestions for projects for the Society; suggestions for methods of expanding the Society.
Miscellaneous remarks: I propose that in collecting the members' votes for a new name, you allow each member 100 points in absolute value which they may distribute as positive and negative values amongst the candidates. The winner would have the highest total.

Name: Eric Hart
Address: P. O. Box 813, Miller Pl., NY 11764
Day phone: No home phone; not reliably available by
Evening phone: Phone at work
Occupation: Variable, though generally maintain a security position in some resort or nightclub.
Hobbies or interests: Logic and philosophy; weightlifting (about 6', 235 lbs.); music (e.g., electronic: writing, recording); writing poetry and fiction; reading (gen.

science); occasionally, sketching. Also: Artificial Intelligence; conservation; psychology, parapsychology, and mysticism; medicine.

Are you satisfied with the name "Titan Society": At times (i.e., a qualified affirmative).

If you have alternate names to suggest (regardless of how you answered the previous question) put them here: A few possibilities: Societas Minervae, the Alembic, Athenic, Avatar, Eidolon/Eidos, Kalon, Noetic, Paragon/Paramount, Prajna, or Samahdi Society. Come to think of it, some of these are worse than "Titan". I guess a little hubris never hurt anybody, lately.

Would you be able and willing to attend a meeting of the Titan Society in Southern California in 1987 if some convenient weekend could be found: Unlikely, but not inconceivable. Producing my physical presence at set coordinates is not my forte (with due respect, of course, to the other members).

Suggested questions for future questionnaires: What is your conception of the Society? What should be its goals? Is it actually representative of the top 40,000 minds on Earth? What is your opinion of intelligence testing in general? Can it really be used to locate those capable of (or likely to make) extraordinary intellectual contributions to mankind? If yes: in its present, or a more evolved form?

Miscellaneous remarks: It might be advisable, given that the (untimed, unsupervised) testing strategy has been a frequent target for nebulous criticism, to provide some theoretical underpinnings for the statistical research done to date. See attached observations.

Name: William Hacker

Address: 812 J Gallup Hill Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Day phone: (301) 240-4632

Evening phone: (301) 777-3337

Occupation: Systems analyst

Hobbies or interests: Bridge, puzzles, old movies, reading, political/social science, conversation, psychometrics, searching for Ms. Right, and above all, daydreaming.

Are you satisfied with the name "Titan Society": No.

Alternate suggestions: How about "Epsilon"? Not "The Epsilon Society," just "Epsilon." The name has a certain ring to it, has a classical flavor, and, because it is the fifth letter of the Greek alphabet, suggests the fifth (inverse) power of ten. By extension, a new Mega Society might be "Zeta."

Would you be able and willing to attend a meeting of the Titan Society in Southern California in 1987 if some convenient weekend could be found: I would probably be able to attend a Southern California meeting if it were held after 2/87. I too am a Southern California resident. The above address is my temporary residence while on assignment.

Miscellaneous remarks: Do everything in your power to involve more women, even if that means bribery or bending the rules.

Name: Dean Inada

Address: 55 North Saint John Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91103

Day phone: (818) 796-0331

Evening phone: ---

Occupation: Programmer

Hobbies or interests: Programming, rock climbing, counting pieces formed by symmetrically interpenetrating figures.

Are you satisfied with the name "Titan Society": No.

Alternate suggestions: ---

Would you be able and willing to attend a meeting of the Titan Society in Southern California in 1987 if some convenient weekend could be found: Yes.

Name: Ray Wise

Address: 50 Fairview St.
Huntington, NY 11743

Day phone: (516) 346-3109

Evening phone: (516) 673-8054

Occupation: Software engineer

Hobbies or interests: Competitive running and biking, puzzles and games, words & language, books & movies, woodworking.

Are you satisfied with the name "Titan Society": Yes

Alternate suggestions: In keeping with "mega" or one million, how about something meaning 100,000 (Lakh, C, or the more antiquated Plum).

Would you be able and willing to attend a meeting of the Titan Society in Southern California in 1987 if some convenient weekend could be found: Willing, yes; able, maybe.

Suggested questions for future questionnaires: Family: age and education of parents, siblings, offspring, and IQ's if available.

Miscellaneous remarks: ---

CALCULATING FULL-RANGE CORRELATIONS

FOR THE MEGA TEST

Grady M. Towers

(Editor's note: This letter is published with the permission of Mr. Towers. It is in response to Professor O'Rourke's remarks on the unreliability of IQ tests in Insight #7, page 4.) Mr. Towers is a former anthropology student and a self-taught expert in psychometrics.)

Thank you for the O'Rourke data; it's always fun to play with the numbers. I'm afraid, however, that Professor O'Rourke should stick to engineering and leave psychometrics to psychometricians. His conclusion that "if these tests measure anything, they do so rather unreliably, so unreliably as to make individual scores nearly meaningless" is completely incorrect. He obviously doesn't understand the term reliability in its psychometrically correct sense. What his calculations prove is that the Mega test is a parallel test to some tests but not to others. The general rule of thumb in psychometrics is that two tests are parallel if the correlation between them is "nearly" the same as the reliabilities of the tests — preferably KR-20 reliabilities. From the data given here, the Mega Test is parallel to the LAIT, the GRE and the SAT. It is not parallel to the CTMM or S-B. That's not surprising. The CTMM doesn't have enough top, and too many S-B scores were probably childhood IQs that have regressed to the mean, making the data meaningless.

Before any of the data can be analysed, we first must derive the standard deviations for each test. This is quite simple and turns out to be ...

$$\hat{s} = \left[\frac{1}{n-1} \left\{ \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{n} \right\} \right]^{1/2}$$

O'Rourke data

LAIT

$$\bar{x} = 155.269231$$

$$\hat{s} = 11.433231$$

Mega

$$\bar{x} = 23.961538$$

$$\hat{s} = 8.6526661$$

CTMM

$$\bar{x} = 142.111111$$

$$\hat{s} = 10.806377$$

Mega

$$\bar{x} = 18.174603$$

$$\hat{s} = 8.9524545$$

S-B

$$\bar{x} = 145.644444$$

$$\hat{s} = 13.134195$$

Mega

$$\bar{x} = 17.333333$$

$$\hat{s} = 9.4532342$$

GRE

$$\bar{x} = 1452.919540$$

$$\hat{s} = 106.04181$$

$$\bar{x} = 21.96557$$

$$\hat{s} = 9.1415844$$

SAT

$$\bar{x} = 1376.103030$$

$$\hat{s} = 115.45784$$

$$\bar{x} = 19.000000$$

$$\hat{s} = 8.8193247$$

Next, we correct the reported correlations for range restriction. Unfortunately, the formula supplied to Ron Hoeflin by Fred Britton is incorrect. The correction is usually made using McNemar's formula, which is ...

McNemar's formula

$$r_c = \frac{r_u (S_x / s_x)}{\sqrt{1 - r_u^2 + r_u^2 (S_x / s_x)^2}}$$

where

r_c = the corrected correlation

r_u = the uncorrected correlation

S_x = the unrestricted standard deviation

s_x = the restricted standard deviation.

See equation 9N.13 in BIAS IN MENTAL TESTING.

Another formula that gives exactly the same result as McNemar's was derived by Gulliksen.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sigma_x r_{xy}}{\sqrt{\sigma_x^2 (1 - r_{xy}^2) + \sigma_x^2 r_{xy}^2}}$$

where r_{xy} = the corrected correlation.

r_{xy} = the uncorrected correlation

σ_x = the standard deviation in the unrestricted group

σ_x = the standard deviation in the restricted group.

So, using either of these two formulas, the corrected correlations become.

	<u>original correlation</u>	<u>corrected correlation (McNemar's)</u>
LAIT	.625512	.6965385
CTMM	.258045	.3676387
S-B	.224477	.267126
GRE	.461738	.7814215
SAT	.517292	.80050

For the standard deviations on the original norming samples for each test, I used those supplied by the Langdon Statistical report, norming number 2: LAIT = 13.84; CTMM = 16; S-B = 15.8; GRE = 255; SAT = 255.

Remember that three of these tests were not normed on the general population. The LAIT was not, and neither was the GRE or the SAT. This is also another good reason that the Mega Test correlates so highly with them, but not with the CTMM or S-B. Also, the "general population" standard deviation for each is whatever the standard deviation was for its original norming sample, not the true general population standard deviation unless that really was the norming group.

Since we're on the subject of correcting for range restriction, I might as well point out that there's

also a correction for range restriction on reliabilities. This was also derived by Gulliksen.

$$\underline{r_{xx}} = 1 - \left[\frac{\sigma_x^2}{\sigma_x^2} (1 - r_{xx}) \right]$$

r_{xx} and σ_x are the reliabilities and standard deviation in the original group, and σ_x is the standard deviation in the unrestricted group. $\underline{r_{xx}}$ is the corrected reliability.

The interesting thing about this formula is that it can be turned around. It allows us to estimate the probable reliability in a homogeneous high level group. This is important because there's a psychometric "law" that says that no test can correlate more highly with a criterion than the square root of its reliability. Most of the tests cited here have reliabilities near .9 or better. If you work out their probable reliabilities for some of this data, you will find that there's surprisingly little drop even in very high level groups.

The formula also has some surprising implications for the Mega Test. The Mega Test data from the LAIT group shows a mean of 23.96 and a standard deviation of 8.65. I calculated a mean of 15.67 and a standard deviation of 8.55 for the 3047² scores obtained from the OMNI sample (uncorrected for classification error.) There was little or no drop in reliability in this lower range, apparently. That's a little surprising.

Grady

The Lowest 100 Scores on the Mega Test
(continued)

Person	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200					
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
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A Sampling of Intermediate Scores on the Mega Test

(✓ = right answer)

Raw Score	Problem																				Person
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
4																					1
4																					2
4																					3
4																					4
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Problem

Person

A Sampling of Intermediate Scores on the Mega Test

(continued)

Raw Score

Raw Score	Person
281	281
282	282
283	283
284	284
285	285
286	286
287	287
288	288
289	289
290	290
291	291
292	292
293	293
294	294
295	295
296	296
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311	311
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318	318
319	319
320	320

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate what amount you believe would be appropriate for an annual subscription to Insight:

\$ _____

Please rate the following proposed names for the Society on a scale from +5 (very positive) to -5 (very negative), using only integers, including 0 (neutral).

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Titan Society . . . | _____ | Kalon | _____ |
| Delphi | _____ | Noetic | _____ |
| Enosis | _____ | Paragon | _____ |
| Esemplastic | _____ | Paramount | _____ |
| Quivira | _____ | Prajna | _____ |
| Philomel | _____ | Samahdi Society | _____ |
| Logos | _____ | Epsilon | _____ |
| Sentinel | _____ | Lakh | _____ |
| Societas Minervae . | _____ | C̄ | _____ |
| Alembic | _____ | Plum | _____ |
| Athenic | _____ | Savant Society | _____ |
| Avatar | _____ | Socratic Society . . . | _____ |
| Eidolon | _____ | The Cerebrators | _____ |
| Eidos | _____ | Society of Cerebrators | _____ |

(continued on reverse side)

QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued)

Suggested projects for the Society:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

Suggested methods of expanding the Society:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

What is your opinion of intelligence testing in general? Can it really be used to locate those capable of (or likely to make) extraordinary intellectual contributions to mankind? If yes, in its (intelligence testing's) present or more evolved form?

Age and education of parents, siblings, offspring, and IQ's if available:

(Relation)

(Age)

(Education)

(IQ)

