

PHENOMENON



The Magazine of the World Intelligence Network



Edited by Krystal Volney and Graham Powell

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	Pg 3
BIOGRAPHY OF ERIC LITWIN	Pg 4
AN INTERVIEW WITH ERIC LITWIN	Pgs 5-10
BIOGRAPHY OF GRAHAM POWELL	Pg 11
AN INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM POWELL	
About THE WORLD INTELLIGENCE NETWORK	Pgs 12-20
A SECOND INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM POWELL	
About THE WORLD INTELLIGENCE NETWORK	Pgs 21-27
BIOGRAPHY OF RAS MOSERA	Pg 28
“JUSTICE” POEM BY RAS MOSERA	Pgs 29-30
AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ROBERTO STEFAN FOA	Pgs 31-38
ART FROM MIKE FULLER	Pgs 39-40
“THE ENTREATMENT” POEM BY GRAHAM POWELL	Pg 41
AN INTERVIEW WITH RICK ROSNER AND KIRK KIRKPATRICK	Pgs 42-55
ART FROM ARNOLD TOULON	Pg 56
THE CURVES OF DUBAI BY GRAHAM POWELL	Pgs 57-60

INTRODUCTION



Dear readers,

Welcome to the third Phenomenon magazine.

This edition is quite extensive and has in-depth interviews about concerns for humanity, plus art which bolsters those concerns, yet presents the world beautifully too.

Krystal Volney and I thank all the contributors. We acknowledge the debt we pay for their time and expressiveness during the COVID 19 pandemic.

The review of the Paris climate agreement is also due soon and elections are occurring which will impact on that. It is a time to be united, to stand up for what is right, not only for humanity, but for all living things on the planet.

We hope you enjoy the magazine and find much to reflect upon.

Yours,

Graham Powell

Cover Photos: Eric Litwin, Dr. Roberto Stefan Foa, Ras Mosera, poet Melissa Studdard and poet Bruce Boston

BIOGRAPHY OF ERIC LITWIN

Eric Litwin is a song singing, guitar strumming, # 1 New York Times Best Selling author who brings early literacy and music together. He is the original author of the Pete the Cat series as well as the author of The Nuts and Groovy Joe. Eric's books have sold over 12.5 million copies, been translated into 17 languages, and won 26 literacy awards including a Theodor Geisel Seuss Honor Award."

"Best-selling author of the **Original** four Pete the Cat books, The Nuts and Groovy Joe."



AN INTERVIEW WITH ERIC LITWIN

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: How did you originally get into writing and reading? What were the first sparks of literacy for you?

Eric Litwin: Wonderful, I will give some context now and leading up to it. At this time, I have written the original four Pete the Cat books. The series has about 50 books in it. I wrote the original four. They're really becoming classics. You may find that they are available and found at so many places in Canada, nearly all pre-schools, day-cares, and first grade classrooms, and pre-K classrooms in the United States. I have written the Groovy Joe series. Recently, I came out with my first development book for teachers called The Power of Joyful Reading. It talks about the role of joyful, engaged shared reading experiences, and how it is the root of learning to read, and how we can implement these ideas in our early childhood classrooms, and how all our children build their reading foundations that they need. I will talk about how that is important. I sold over 13,000,000 books. My books have been translated in over 17 languages. I have won 26 awards.

How I came to become a writer of children's books, and now professional development books, I was a teacher. I was working with 3rd graders. So many of them were struggling to read. They had lost the love of reading. One day, I was walking down the kindergarten classroom, heading to my 3rd grade class. I passed the kindergarten class. I heard a teacher say, "Who wants to read a book?" The children erupted with joy. I looked in the class. I saw the teacher reading with some students. Some were reading together. All of the sudden, a little girl jumped out of her desk, ran to the bookshelf, and grabbed her favourite book, and held it in her arms like a baby. I could tell at that time moment. Her and the children loved books. They love reading and saw themselves as readers. When I went to the 3rd grade class, inspired by what I had seen, I said, "Who wants to read a book?" Some politely shook their head and said, "Yes." Many looked at me, shook their head, and said, "No." I asked myself a question on that day. I would end up leaving the classroom and work on becoming a writer, and working on how to make books more engaging, how to develop the love of reading.

That question was, 'What happened between kindergarten and 3rd grade?' Where did the love of reading go? Scott, that's what I've been focused on for a few decades now. What I came to a conclusion was, it was in the engagement with literacy that children developed key foundations of their reading foundation. I can share those. Without those key elements, they get very frustrated with trying to learn to read. With my 3rd grade students, many were missing these key elements. I started thinking about how I can help them develop those key elements of reading. How can I make books more engaging? What I did, I started writing books with music, movement, call and response, repetition, fluent rhyme schemes and rhythm. All developed to help children get involved with the reading process. My first book came out in 2008. But I was a storyteller and a writer working on my craft since 2000. It was a couple decades ago.

Jacobsen: Now, when we're thinking about children, they're at a time of life, which is rapid development. They're going to be differing from grade to grade. Sometimes dramatically, but pretty big changes compared to later life, so when a child comes to a kindergarten class, grade 1, grade 2, grade 3, they have this excitement in one grade for reading, even for writing. They come to another grade later on, even on grade later, without much enthusiasm for the art of writing or solitary reading [Ed. Or, "shared reading"]. What explains the fact North American children in particular can lose the enthusiasm fairly quickly? What are some practical tips for teachers to re-engage those kids who are in those pre-k through grade 3 levels who appear to have lost the enthusiasm about the written word, about stories?

Litwin: To answer that question, we want to go back to day-care, kindergarten, and pre-K. We want to see what it is that sets children up to keep their joy of reading moving along, and what it is that sets them up to lose that joy of reading. What we have found, what it turns out to be, children need an abundance of joyful, engaged and shared reading experiences. Here is what is fascinating about this, with young children, this starts right at birth. They experience oral language. This oral language gets connected to print. This needs to happen all the time. This is a full-time job. They need to be immersed in oral language connected to print. What will happen, to the degree that the children enabled and empowered to be immersed in language and print, it is the degree to which they are building reading foundations. So, oftentimes, this reading foundation is called pillars. It consists of a few things.

First, you have to know a lot about sound. I don't know how technical you want me to get, but there are 44 phonemes. Let's keep it simple, there's a certain limited number of sounds. Those sounds are represented by letters, but there are not as many letters as sounds. You have combinations of letters. Some represent combination of sounds. These make words. This is called phonological awareness and phonemic awareness. So, first, they need a lot of sounds. Second, they need a lot of words. Vocabulary is a major predictor of how well they will do in school. Another is "speaking like a storyteller." This is called fluency. It is how appropriately quickly that they recognize the word. Also, it is how they use expressions. An expression in a word is what conveys meaning. This is what we call prosody. Finally, they need to know a lot about print. This is called print awareness.

These are the three components. I break it down into a simple reading chart. These are the things that kids need to know. When they get into nursery rhymes and see the words on the board, all the components come together. When you say, "Humpty Dumpty had a great fall," you can see the words. There are two ls there. It is in a book. There is print awareness. We also are learning words: fall, wall. You can start to make connections. All of these experiences are important. What my suggestion is in the joyful reading approach book, co-written with Dr. Gina Pepin, *The Power of Joyful Reading: Help Your Young Readers Soar to Success!*, the basic point is: we can immerse our early childhood students in these joyful, engaging reading experiences throughout the whole day. We can interweave them into our routines, our activities, and our instruction. Let me give you an example, many schools, most teachers, will have expectations. The rules repeated many times a day. Why not put the rules in a

poem, write it out on the wall? “Sittin’ in your chair, hands in your lap, smile crocodile, and clap, clap clap!”

We are doing this because we need to share and express ourselves. We can interweave this into our lunch menus, our activities. In addition, we can interweave them into our lessons. So, all of my lessons, I am not sure if you have children, Scott. All of my books have messages of resiliency. I have many books with math lessons built into them, like the original Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons has subtraction. These are all important components of how we can provide a strong reading foundation for all of our students. Here is the thing, everything relies on this. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, shared reading experiences are necessary for children to develop their oral language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. If you think about it, it puts shared reading experiences in the health category with food, love, and shelter. Many pediatricians, now, are recommending books to families and children in a program called “Reach Out to Read,” which is a thoroughly research-based program on its absolute necessity.

If you are not having these shared reading experiences, then you are already at a disadvantage because you’re not building the key components of a reading foundation. What will happen is, children will reach 3rd grade without these fully developed, without having the reading foundation, and reading becomes frustrating. After a certain level of frustration, they lose interest. At that point, everything becomes harder, and harder, and harder for them. Everything depends on basic reading skills. From educational success, which will affect our future opportunities, but also our self-esteem, how we view the world, everything relies on it. Everything is built upon it. That is the message of the power of joyful reading. Here is the wonderful thing, when we introduce reading to children in a way that is most effective, it looks like joy and happiness because there is human interactivity, engagement, and joyful expression. All of the things that make up joy.

Jacobsen: In terms of the reading and educational statistics coming out now, girls tend to do better in school. They do better in the areas in which English language is more demanding, e.g., English, English literature. How does this play out in early years behaviourally and cognitively in terms of the literacy of young girls and young boys?

Litwin: That is a really wonderful question. I will acknowledge that I do not know the answer to it. I will also acknowledge this is similar to another question that you asked. Why is this happening? What are the variables involved? I will share a number of variables that are highly correlated to lower achievement in reading. The first variable is poverty and low income. This must be seen without judgment or blame. There are many, many reasons that children who grow up in homes that would qualify as poverty or low income would have less achievement in reading, e.g., less access to books parents moving between jobs and so are busier. They don’t have as much time to engage in joyful reading experiences. In the United States, children who live in households that fall in the category of free or reduced lunch; you are 125% of the poverty line. To receive a reduced lunch, it is 185%.

That is a rough indicator of poverty and low income in the United States for children. It is a rough indicator because, sometimes, schools have so many children who qualify or participate. The statistics in the United States and the number of children in household who qualify, subsequently, as homes at or below the poverty line are between 41-42%.

Jacobsen: Wow.

Litwin: Right, that's the exactly reaction I'd expect here. It is a stunning, stunning, fact. So, it is no surprise so many children have so much trouble learning to read. Also, let's also go back to the research, the American Academy of Pediatrics shows poverty severely impacts reading. We have studies showing this. There is also something called the ACE, adverse childhood experiences. This could be a parent who is an alcoholic, or abuse or neglect. According to the CDC, 1 in 7 children come from homes where they experience ACEs. We also have a number of children who are English learners. It is not their first language. Obviously, there are many benefits to having a second language, but it does produce a lot of challenges if you're not hearing as much English. It makes it harder to learn it. It is certainly not as negative. It requires just understanding of the situation. Finally, now, there is also competition with electronic devices.

So, learning to read, language experiences, they have characteristics that make them optimized. One is that children learn through interactivity with cherished adults. I go through this in my books. There is enormous interactivity going on, in my books. Engagement and interactivity are part of what optimizes initial learning to read. In addition, experiential has to be part of the experience. Children don't learn by just listening. They need engagement, singing along, physical activity. It needs to be recurring, needs to have over, and over, and over again. Finally, we can optimize this. What I am trying to say, sitting in front of an electronic app, it is not going to be a highly effective way to learn to read. It is possible for electronic devices to benefit learning to read, e.g., reading a book with grandma on Skype is wonderful. If there is no recurring process, actual experiential engagement, it is not going to be an effective way of learning. At this point, children are spending more and more time in front of screens.

So one, parents who are distracted by their own screen may engage less with their children. Second, children engage is their own screen. There was a recent study. I think it was the Cincinnati or Cleveland one. The outcome of the study is that children who spend more time in front of screens have lower language development. I am going to read from the book, right now, because I go over all these things:

For example, researchers at the Reading and Literacy Discovery Centre at Cincinnati Children's Hospital found a troubling association between an increase in screen use and a decrease in the development of our young children's brains, especially in areas related to language development. The exact cause of the decrease is not known.

That's important. We don't know why.

However, it may be the result of a decline in the use of everyday language and in reading experiences between young children and their cherished caregivers. That's another reason why children may have difficulty learning how to read.

Learning challenges and reading challenges, what is being discovered is that many children are facing these challenges. So, they need even more, even more, engagement and immersion in joyful and engaging, shared reading experiences to build their reading foundation and to make sure their primary reading foundation is joy. There must be a condition that even though reading will be frustrating for many children. We can't help that. But it shouldn't be the primary experience. We have to meet every frustrating experience with overwhelming joyful experience. Those are some of the experiences why some of those children are having difficulty reading. But, as you can see, these are big challenges.

Jacobsen: In the United States, decades ago, there was a search for and a great emphasis on genius. This came alongside standardized testing. This phenomenon, cultural trend, has declined in terms of an emphasis on these things, as a culture in America. At the same time, there are still accelerated programs, gifted programs, etc. For those children who do fall under those categories, or would be suitable for some of those resources, what are ways in which to meet the demands of children who have a seemingly insatiable need for the written word?

Litwin: Fortunately, there are so many ways to feed that demand. Libraries are, obviously, an astonishing resource. In addition, we are surrounded by print in our lives. We can also encourage our gifted children to write their own print. But the most important answer to that has to do with what is called deep reading. This is a phenomenon that is often thought of in graduate school. When you go deep into a subject, it does wonderful things for your brain. It is part of the magic, when you are lucky enough to go to college and graduate school, especially when you get to specialize in an area. It takes us to new levels. With our children who have an insatiable desire, we would encourage deep reading into subjects. That is an endless, endless resource for them. It is such a joy. I have to say, this recent book, *The Power of Joyful Reading*. I have been thinking and reading about this topic for two decades. I left the classroom to advocate for this.

My picture books, which became big commercial successes, were designed to model the successes of this reading program. I love reading fiction. But the opportunity to deep read and write about a topic is just wonderfully joyful! [Laughing] It is just wonderful. You know that! You're a writer.

Jacobsen: Yes [Laughing].

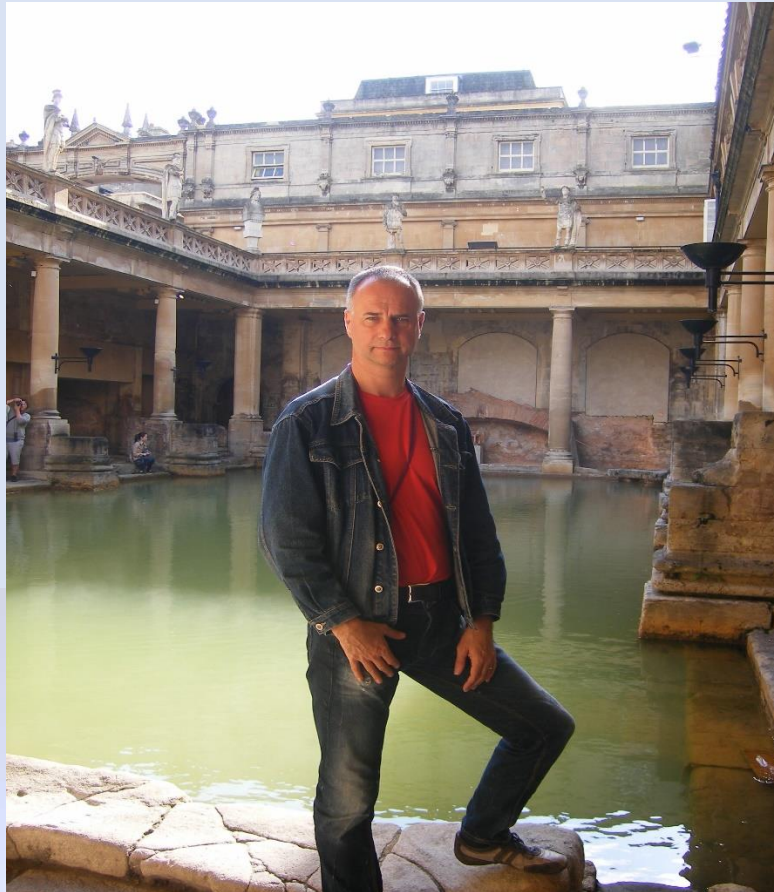
Litwin: Our gifted and talented students will benefit greatly from it. So will everyone else, some of my attention goes to the goal of every child having a strong reading foundation. To do that, learning to read needs to be joyful, immersive, something that we just do all the time. It is to read in everything we do: At school - definitely, at home - hopefully. That's my primary focus. How do we make that happen? How can we make this happen in our society? Because all the efforts to improve reading scores, in my opinion, if we do not get to the root problem, will not succeed.

Jacobsen: Eric, last question, any recommended organizations or other authors, in fact, who could be resources for individuals who might be reading this for a young person that they are mentoring or a child of their own?

Litwin: Absolutely, in our book, in terms of research, we wanted to make sure our research was accessible. We focused on four sources. One is the American Academy of Pediatrics. You can Google that: “Early Literacy.” They have statements and a lot of wonderful advice. Also, the American Psychological Association has a lot of brain-based research. In terms of our parents, there is a website called leading rockets. It is a phenomenal resource. The International Reading Association is also a wonderful resource as well.

Jacobsen: Eric, it’s been a lovely conversation. And I thank you so much for your time today.





Biography of Graham Powell

Graham Powell is a management consultant with over forty years' experience. His early career was in financial accounts, this developing into International Human Resource Management. Graham subsequently gained an MA in HRM, after which, he gained qualifications in both teaching and training, before becoming a Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development.

In May 2000, Graham was nominated by John Deacon, CBE, to become a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Art, Manufactures and Commerce. Graham has also won academic awards for his research into communication and adaptation within organizations.

Graham Powell has published a novel, which is primarily for teenagers, plus contributed to, and edited, the World Intelligence Network book entitled *The Ingenious Time Machine*, which is available on Amazon and elucidates a range of topics relevant to modern society.

Graham is especially interested in creativity and the nurturing of positive mindsets within complex organizations, ones which thereby develop a learning-focused environment and culture.

In October 2017, Graham was proud to be invested as a Knight Officer of the Order of Saint Stanislas, mainly in recognition of his work benefitting society in general.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM POWELL ABOUT THE WORLD INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Issue IX was published on 12/12/12, as some may see the patterns - if they looked into the publication dates on the cover pages - of the materials with the publishing dates: 10/10/10, 4/4/11, 11/11/11/, 6/6/12, and 12/12/12, and so on. Why these patterns? A fine touch to the ideas of problem solving with numeric sequences within the dates of the publication too. So, in another tone of not only the fact of the patterns themselves, why these patterns, too?

Graham Powell: When I agreed to take over the role of WIN ONE editor, Evangelos Katsioulis mentioned that the date of publication could have some numerical sequence. Since that conversation, I have gained a certain amount of joy continuing the tradition, the first one having the obvious value of being all 10s. The second series is more subtle, 4 divided by 4 and then divided by 11 coming out with the series 0.09090909 (recurring). Some later dates, which you have not quoted, were Fibonacci sequences; others were prime number sequences; one was International Pi Day - which is also Einstein's birthday. Therefore, it's mainly just a quirky feature of the magazine. We've tended to produce the magazine every six months, so finding a sequence within a particular period of the year is a challenge. It is, in fact, what dictates the publication date. The next publication date will be 3-11-19, these being prime numbers.

Jacobsen: This issue works within the framework of “philosophical notions” challenging to “ardent intellectual brains” with an emphasis on the “thought-provoking” and “amusing” nature of the works. This issue continues to represent a stabilization in issue size and the complement to the eighth issue with the inclusion of the post-reportage on the 12th Asia Pacific Conference on Giftedness and announcements from WIN, including the appointment of Dr. Manahel Thabet as the Vice-President of the World Intelligence Network or WIN and the continuation of efforts by Dr. Katsioulis (the President) on work for WIN. How did these additions improve the format, the content, and the generality of the presentation to the WIN membership? How does the inclusion of a Vice-President help with the organization?

Graham Powell: Manahel Thabet has been a stalwart of the WIN for many years and she finances many aspects to it, which is very generous of her. She advises on how to run the WIN more efficiently and, though it is primarily a charitable, online entity, she makes it run in a more economically sound manner. This is mainly regarding the maintenance of the website - which inevitably had costs covered by the WIN administration, that is, before she intervened. I volunteered to help her organise the conference in Dubai and that developed into a series of workshops, which for me was a chance to put out into the world some thoughts, especially ones I had been developing during a sabbatical from work. I also wanted to include photographs from the conference and the cover shows the waterfall by the entrance to Dubai Mall, a

place where Evangelos and I had dinner. It was a special few days during which we enjoyed each other's company. From our discussions, a few more ideas became projects, the appointment of Manahel, for example, stemming from one such talk. I think overall, the WIN website is much better now than it was, the earlier versions being cumbersome and overly complex to navigate around easily. People just didn't bother much - or took the easy route by asking me to advise them. Access to the magazine is also easier as a consequence of all that I've mentioned about the site.

Jacobsen: "The Importance of Kant's Concept of the Highest Good (Pt. 1)" by Paul Edgeworth contained sections 8 through 11. He begins the issue with a philosophical mind wallop, with Kant's conceptualization of virtue, happiness, and the highest good with fancy terminology including *supremum*, *consummatum*, *originarium*, *perfectissimum*, *phenomenal*, *noumenal*, and so on, where focus is on the modern commentators' neglect of "his conception of the highest good." Within the context of the nature of the think-piece, one idea comes from the idea of existence, personality, and rational being with the existence of a rational personality. Another comes from the Stoic idea of virtue and the Epicurean concept of happiness as an interplay and a hybrid between Stoicism and Epicureanism to come to the "highest good," which appears to take on the Aristotelian maxim of moderation between virtue and happiness. Even so, Edgeworth places virtue as "cause" and happiness as "effect." For the true attainment of the highest good, Kant requires the existence, through reason, of the soul and God. Without the eternality of the soul and the absolute existence of God, the cause of virtue and the effect of happiness cannot lead to the highest possible good. It begins to sound like lay notions of a Christian heaven. The rational being, through the eternality of the soul, must continue endlessly for the existence of the highest good. The complete subsuming of the will to the moral law for achievement of moral perfection becomes impossible in one's own lifetime (thanks, Kant). However, one can strive towards the highest good through pure reason, as "the pursuit of the highest good." As Edgeworth quotes in a statement, "Thus Kant declares, 'We ought to strive to promote the highest good (which must therefore be possible).'"[1] This highest good is permitted in the light, as aforementioned, of an ultimate cause of "supreme being." This may hold bearing on some of the previous articles on atheism. I like the explanation of the co-incident nature of nature and human rational beings as enacted virtue in line with moral law to produce happiness closer to the highest good with the explanatory framework around which nature's larger manifestation - in a manifestor, i.e., God. Humans co-incide in the Good with God.

Edgeworth brings forth the work of Terry Godlove, Jr.[2] An argument for the non-coherence of moral acts by non-theists, not a-theists interestingly, without the supreme being, God, because the ultimate cause for a penultimate end of good acts in a highest good requires an omnipotent unifier of moral virtue, for moral law, where non-theist moral acts, even if moral, become disjunct from one another and in some sense foundational sense dis-unified and, therefore, worthless in an eternal view. This, to Edgeworth and Kant, paves the road to the "Kingdom of God" in which "nature and morals come into a harmony through a holy author who makes the derived highest good possible." Intriguingly, Edgeworth describes the Christian ethic

as heteronomous, or non-theological (counter-intuitively), and autonomous pure practical reason with devotion duly placed in duty. Happiness does not become the goal, but the result of a partial achievement in attainment of a targeted objective, the highest good: some worthy of happiness; others not worthy of happiness in proportion to their attainment of the good oriented towards the highest possible good bound to the eternality of the soul and the absolute existence of God and, in the end, leading to the necessity in some practical philosophic sense to the need for proper religion for proper moral virtue and real happiness of which one becomes worthy.

What was the reaction of the community to this article? What changed the orientation to a philosophically heavy one in this issue as an executive editorial decision? What seems right in Kant's thinking about the highest good? What seems incomplete, if at all? What about a non-theist religion? Would this - a non-theist religion - by definition become impossible to attain in some manner?

Powell: Firstly, Scott, I must congratulate you on what is, without doubt, the longest introduction terminating with questions that I have ever had put to me. I will try to break it all down a little, and, indeed, this was the main factor in presenting this essay in the magazine. The notion of "an author who makes the highest good possible" summarises neatly the article, though the reaction of the community to the article was, as usual, not specific. Only Evangelos Katsioulis expressed appreciation of the content and tipped his intellectual hat towards the contributors, particularly Paul Edgeworth. Paul is a good friend - as are, still, the majority of people who contributed to edition IX. I think this steered the content towards the philosophical, it being part of the friendship I share to this day. As to what is 'right' in Kant, well, in retrospect, my girlfriend believes in the kind of predetermination that Kant and Paul describe, Lena being convinced that we are destined to emerge with our good intentions made reality, primarily by God's will. This approach has fortified my altruistic mental framework, if I can express it that way for now. I sense that many people prefer to act on behalf of an extraneous force, or being, which, when genuine and demonstrable by action, is implicitly of 'a higher good'. I think the current Pope, Francis, is of a similar line of thinking, the majority of great religious figures too. To have a sense that you are primarily doing things and creating thoughts for the benefit of the universe outside yourself, in whatever way that manifests itself (and towards whichever essence) is the highest good. I don't necessarily believe that a god is necessary to attain that supreme level of goodness, to the point where I think such thinking is restrictive and ultimately, risks divisiveness. "Divine, divisive, divide" to summarise in three words. In short, I think a non-theist interpretation of the highest good is possible. Buddhism is a non-theist "religion", though (and hence) the word "religion" is not usually ascribed to it by those who practice Buddhist thought. Taoism is also, by definition, "of the way", to give another example. I don't usually discuss religion in everyday life because, in my mind, I have a caveat that I call "Powell's Law", put simply, that discussing religion inevitably leads to division. I try to live peacefully and have no problem, per se, that people believe differently from each other, believe differently from me. I consider that the highest good.

Jacobsen: “Meeting of Minds” images presented interesting displays from the 12th Asia Pacific Conference on Giftedness. Christina Angelidou, Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, Jonathan Wai, Marco Ripà, and yourself can be seen in some. I like the one with the gargantuan Burj Khalifa behind Wai and Katsioulis. What was meeting everyone in person like for you?

Powell: I have no doubt in placing the experience of meeting all the people you mention, plus colleagues from the European Council for High Ability, right at the pinnacle of my joyous existence. It was just wonderful! Everyone was so enthusiastic and ready to make a difference in the world. Meeting Christina Angelidou, then going around the arena at the centre of the conference, was delightful, and we discussed my first workshop too, which was intellectually rewarding. Christina is the founder member of Mensa Cyprus and she was introduced to me via my contacts in America: I was interested in getting Mensa members to the event, Mensa International being based in the USA. British Mensa, which I joined in January 1987, directed me to liaise with the Americans about attendance at the conference. Christina and I are still in regular contact. Dr Jonathan Wai was also a joy to meet, so calm and mild mannered, yet with a subtle, incisive sense of humour. We got on very well. I was also very pleased to meet Marco Ripà in person, something Evangelos arranged. I helped Marco with his presentation, which he was nervous about, quite naturally, because English is his second language and he doesn't get a great number of opportunities to speak it. I was happy to reassure him about his ability to communicate, which he did very well in the end. It was also an opportunity for me to speak Italian, which was useful for me. Quintessentially, it was astonishing to reflect on the fact that I was often standing in front of four people, knowing that the SD 15 IQ points of those four people added up to well over 650. That is truly tremendous brain power!

Jacobsen: “The Importance of Kant’s Concept of the Highest Good (Pt. 2)” continued with sections 9 through 16 of the essay. Edgeworth starts with some commentary of the highest good made apparent, as a transcendent object, to the rational being through pure practical reason. This gives grounds to actualize the highest good here-and-now, to bring the Kingdom of God, according to Kant, into the present and the future. He - Kant - makes immanent the highest good. I like this point in the argument for extension from the theoretical into the practical with a Kantian ethic meaning someone must act in such a way as to do that which they have not ever done if it leads them into a state of approximation of the highest possible good further than before. A sub-argument for individual growth as axiomatic, or at least derivatively unavoidable. In describing the base of transcendent moral law, Kant eked out some normatives. In a sense, every individual rational being becomes, or can become, a locus of the highest good in the real world on the condition of promoting it “with all his capabilities.” The idea implied before through the endlessness of the soul becomes explicit with mention of an afterlife. Edgeworth notes a limitation or blindspot in the thought process of Kant with “the highest good” implying “the reincarnation or rephenomenalization of the moral self.” Only infinite existence, hence the soul, permits the arena in which the endless striving for moral perfection or towards the moral law exists. Edgeworth provides a tip of the hat to

an accurate description of a physicalistic, naturalistic, and secular interpretation to ethics-in-action with morals as something achieved in the here-and-now by human beings, where Kant's first two, earlier, works began as more theological and latter, and third, work began to lean more secular in orientation in the morality. In short, a secular interpretation of the targeted objective of Kant becomes social ethics. Also, the, apparent, in-between comes in the form of an ethical commonwealth, which reminds one of The Commons from Anglo-American law in which everyone contributes and all benefit. This ethical commonwealth as a means by which to attain a status of a "rational church," back to religion as a foundation for a unified ethic with God and an eternal soul. As Edgeworth states, "We can therefore state without fear of contradiction that Kant's formulation of the highest good makes it abundantly clear that it is fundamentally about a common and shared human destiny," whether secular or religious and, in this sense, more humanistic but atemporal too. What was the final takeaway from this extensively researched and well-written academic essay for you? Of those in the community who read some or all of it, what was their commentary on it? By chance, any commentary by scholars of Immanuel Kant?

Powell: With these points that you make, Scott, I am now of the mind that a review and a prompting of discussion would be beneficial, a kind of 'afterword', as I would call it. The production of the WIN book was intended to put these notions out into the general public and to stimulate discussion and some reassessment of the current milieu. The most apparent result of publishing such well-researched pieces was, I think, the generation of enthusiasm to read further and to attempt to produce work of a high standard to publish on the internet, whether for the WIN ONE, or on other sites, in other blogs. I still wish to produce books that will have more of an impact on broader society, but the acceptance of that is still being negotiated. As mentioned earlier, from my part, 'peacefulness' as immanent in the highest good was what I carried away from the essay, though I remain sceptical about any eternality of self regarding that.

Jacobsen: "The Corporate Strategy Column" by Elisabetta di Cagno gives a punchy set of thou shalts and thou shalt nots about corporate culture - take from it what you may, I suppose. "Differentiating features of gifted children and dealing with high IQ societies" by Marco Ripà examined giftedness, identification, and, sometimes, problems, even "big PROBLEMS" encountered by the gifted young with some connection to hyperactivity. The orientation of the academic article comes in the form of a human rights perspective and a compassionate one, too, in which myths abound about the gifted and their needs in life. Does di Cagno miss anything about corporate culture and output? Does the article on giftedness sufficiently differentiate the identifications of the different levels of the gifted? How does British Mensa, of which you remain a member, help the gifted and talented and distinguish the needs of the levels of gifted, of cognitive rarity and exceptional mentation?

Powell: Elisabetta's piece is fictional, yet with overtones from reality, as the best fiction does - it's part of what makes prose 'literature'. Having read it again, I see it

primarily as a statement about preparing for an interview and how that asks people to transcend, even betray, their inherent instincts in the name of 'Business'. As a postgraduate student of Human Resource Management, I was most interested in Organisational Culture as part of the course. Dr Jackson liked my contributions and essays. Even Hugh Scullion, Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management, admitted to the class that the best way to earn a promotion and 'getting on' in an organisation was via getting involved in events outside of work hours. Elisabetta's piece hints at that, plus an inordinate display of knowledge and expression about share pricing (which she calls 'stock') and basically kow-towing to those in a position of power. If I may enlarge the discussion for a moment, this pays homage to what we talked about earlier on in this series of interviews, when we talked about Hollingworth and the difficulties of communicating and relating across broad spans of intelligence. In the context here, the more recent writing of Michael Ferguson and his popular essay about The Inappropriately Excluded has many 'hits' on his blog, so I recommend people to read it, plus the discussion pieces that surround it.

Marco's article was originally his presentation at the 12th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness, a presentation I helped him with just prior to him delivering it. It helped forge our friendship. In no way is it an attempt to cover all aspects of giftedness in youth and the associated problems; it was more an attempt to open people's minds to some of the almost universal aspects of giftedness, especially prejudices and the lack of understanding and identification of hypersensitivities. British Mensa does contribute to the aspects you mention, especially via its promotion of national entities which are dedicated to provision for the gifted. I contacted British Mensa with a view to it sending people to Dubai for the aforementioned conference, but I got deferred to Mensa International in order to get contributors. Amongst my numerous friends in the high IQ community, the most ardent people who are transforming matters for fellow high IQ folk are not members of Mensa anymore, if, indeed, they ever were.

Jacobsen: Dr. Manahel Thabet wrote "Organizing the 12th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness." A significant event, as stated, "6,000 participants, all of them experts, teachers, researchers, decision makers, parents and educators. 325 papers were presented, from 42 countries." Dr. Chris Fischer, Dr. Christina Angelidou, Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, Dr. Jonathan Wai, Dr. Lianne Hoogeveen, Marco Ripà, and yourself took part in the event as well. "Artistic License," "Between You and You," "Seventy Shades of Gray," "Safe Between the Fluffy Covers," "The Sleeping, Roving Genius Among Us" in "Poems" by Dr. Greg A. Grove provided some reflection on, in many cases, stark contrasts without direct opposites. What did "Poems" evoke for you? How important was the post-event reportage of Dr. Thabet for wrapping up the event? Any further developments since that time?

Powell: I asked Doctor Thabet to write something, which I could have done myself, having been heavily involved in the organisation and supply of people for it, but I was already contributing much to the IX edition, so I wished for someone else to write an article. As it was, she was busy, so I outlined for her what I considered should be written, then added the summary at the end anyhow. I had hoped that

the filming of the event would produce extensive courses and presentations for posterity, but that never happened. Several of the WIN members put their presentations on Youtube, but that was it. I was really looking forward to seeing my presentations, especially the second one: it went down really well and Manahel's assistant came running up to me afterwards saying what fantastic feedback I had received. It's all part of the low-key work I have done in the eyes of the majority these last ten years. As for Greg's work, they were extracts from a book he produced and it is still available in Kindle format. They form part of a total assessment and expression of psychological states and attitudes. I enjoyed the read and have the entire kindle book "Leopards in the Sky" on my computer. I recommend people look for it and make what they want of it. Its subtitle is "For the Preconscious Mind".

Jacobsen: Then we come to "On the Epistemic Standing of Claims of the Nonexistent" by Phil Elauria. Another interesting twist on the content of old, often boring and sterile, debates found only in philosophy classes and theology seminars. The first two points remain salient with principles of non-contradiction as a point of thought contact for existence as a property and the knowledge of the non-existent, as in the statement of "formal (deductive) logic and mathematics are, when applicable, the highest form of certainty." Paraconsistent logic in Dialetheism is an interesting notion. However, Elauria finds this dishonest approach dishonest. He runs through the logic of non-contradiction with the famous problem of evil, often seen as the most difficult problem to theologians within Abrahamic traditions in search of an omnibenevolent, omniscient, and omnipotent self-existent (with property aseity) being. Elauria asserts, "Indeed, the fact that there is apologetics concedes my point. For, if reason weren't important in the defense of theistic claims, then apologetics would be a waste of time at least, and an elaborate red herring constructed to mislead people from the fact that reason actually plays no role in coming to the conclusion about the existence of God," as Elauria identifies as an atheist (one can assume an absolute atheist). Does this problem of evil in the midst of the Law of Non-Contradiction seem like a serious problem to the hypothesis of a God? He makes other examples with 2-dimensional objects and the statements of a single object having the complete set of properties of two 2-dimensional objects at the same time: a square and a circle, which amounts to a contradiction, e.g., a square circle or a circle square. His next methodological placeholder ideas become plausibility and likelihood. Is a God plausible? Is a God likely? He presents science and fallibilism as the next premises.[3] These through contacts of plausibility, likelihood, science, and fallibilism form the basis for the argument called the Weak Knowledge of Non-Existents. Much of modern science seems premised on the opposite secondary part of the title with tentative of weak knowledge, ever-improving and searching and refining, of the existent. This becomes the basis for the doubt inherent in the position of atheism for Elauria. Does this argument convince you? The argument for the non-existence of God. Also, in personal experience with 2-sigma and higher high IQ community, what tendencies in religious and non-religious beliefs exist among them? Does a tendency exist more towards theism, whether mono-theism or poly-theism, or a-theism, or an agnosticism amongst members? Does Elauria's professed

atheism seem as if atheistic as an assertion in a philosophical sense and then agnosticism in an empirical - plausibility, likelihood, science, and fallibilism - sense?

Powell: In a literary context, the notion of evil was an initial criticism of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, his stated aim of 'justifying the ways of God to man' faltering because many thought the depiction of the Devil more engaging than that of God. People empathised with the fallen angel, who reacted to the vicissitudes of God and was punished eternally for it. The Epicurean Paradox, which Phil Elauria alludes to, has often fascinated me and I have talked to Phil about choices and how they make for life's experience, because in life, we have choices, right up until our death - and even then, perhaps, there are more choices to take. We cannot be certain about that, as we cannot be certain of the existence of God. I favour an approach which (to paraphrase Pascal) does not concern itself so much as to whether or not there is a god, but rather, focuses on the notion that we should behave as if there is one.

As for the 'Weak Knowledge' and the your interpretation that science proceeds via searching with the ever improvement and refinement of knowledge of the extant, again, this is a linear progression as stated, but knowledge does not proceed like that, according to Popper and Kuhn - for example. Phil Elauria chooses, as a corollary of his arguments, to be atheistic, though I prefer the agnostic stance whereby there is still a possibility of an alternative existence, even if it must remain within the realm of post-death. I actually think the confrontation with what is regarded as an inevitable in life (death) is the reason why mankind has confronted existence with the idea that there is something after death, preferably something good.

As for the high IQ community, discussions on belief and the existence of God always divide vehemently, the arguments for and against often becoming so intense that even the highly intelligent start resorting to ad hominem after ad hominem. I am loathed to try and define trends in the high IQ community regarding this topic, but most of the people I respect express strong arguments in their particular paradigm (as I wish to express it here) and that is intrinsically what retains my respect for them. My experience notes that those who believe in a god believe that there is only one, so they have monotheistic beliefs, and, moreover, this places them within a deistic stance. Those who counter the argument for the existence of God take a similar line of argument as Phil Elauria, so are atheistic. That's my experience, Scott, especially online.

To summarise, your notion about atheism having a philosophical sense, agnosticism an empirical one, has credence, based, again, on my experience.

Jacobsen: Finally, we come to the "3D Lego Griddler 'Chasing Nessie'" of Alan Wing-lun. Are puzzles an important inclusion for each issue? How do you vary the puzzles in order to maintain interest in these sections of the issues?

Powell: I like to have puzzles in the magazine, yes, the magazine genre demanding them to a certain extent. Most of the magazines pitched towards the high IQ sector have puzzles and quizzes and I produce most of them myself, which I also enjoy. Akin to the concept of having a series of numbers in the publication date (which began this interview) I like the inherent creativity involved in creating diverse and

interesting puzzles. Alan certainly veers into the esoteric, which is very much his personality too. I was very pleased to meet him in London and we had a lively discussion about many things. I hope more people will contribute puzzles in the near future to maintain a diversity of interest and an enhanced expression of puzzle creativity. Most puzzles are derived from others. I read quite widely and, if I like a puzzle, I try to adapt it into something not seen before. I especially like puzzles which also tell a story.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Graham.

Powell: You are welcome, Scott. It has been a very enjoyable interview.



A SECOND INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM POWELL ABOUT THE WORLD INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Issue X set a different tone than the previous issue of WIN ONE. It opens with the quote, “To the tranquil mind, flowers are great friends, radiating beauty without recourse to words.” Why this quote or statement for this particular issue? Who owns the quote? You note the problems inherent in the issues of the early 21st century with some turbulent times while also acknowledging the benefits in the ease of travel for in-person discussions within members of the meta-society known as the World Intelligence Network. How important was the tenth issue to get right? Once more, you solo edited. What is the workload in terms of hours and level of effort per issue, as the size and scale of the issue began to stabilize?

Graham Powell: Yes, Scott, this Edition took on a new 'voice', I think this a corollary of the meeting of minds at the 12th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness, plus the fact that I was in Al Ain at the time, an Emirate that is part of the United Arab Emirates. In the heat of the desert, the mood was reflective. Usually I was walking to the Internet Cafe in temperatures above body temperature. I reflected on the beautiful flowers at my home in Sardinia - the quotation is my own. It was a struggle to get this edition finished, especially as many of the inclusions arrived late, so, yes, repeated treks to the internet cafe took some pluck as the hours ticked by and the deadline got closer and closer. There is a mood in this edition of discussion and, I think, a little remorse; there is poetry and an artistic intensity that is greater than in previous editions. I wanted everything to be right, yes, despite the challenges. The world was in the middle of an economic meltdown and the effects on people's daily lives were coming through. There is always a kind of backwash to the wave of macroeconomic hardships, which is tough to bear. It strikes homesteads across the world and this was being reflected on people's faces. I put in a great deal of effort for this edition too, having time to do that, but also because it was the beginning of an era whereby people had other things to concentrate on. Much of this edition came from friends, or via my own hand. I had just met Gwyneth Wesley Rolph (prior to going to the Emirates) and that was great. I am pleased that she has now realised her potential and is pursuing what, at that time, was a dream. Her research on intelligence and related neurophysiology reminds me of the work by Rex Jung, who I admire greatly.

Jacobsen: “Biofeedback” by Gwyneth Wesley Rolph covers the issue of biofeedback as a research topic. The article provides some grand claims about health benefits and the forms of equipment used for the biofeedback, e.g., EMG or electromyography, temperature or thermal feedback, galvanic skin response training, heart rate variability training, neurofeedback through the EEG or electroencephalogram, and others.[1] Does biofeedback still seem reasonable as a practice and valid as a tool for self-knowledge and awareness? You reviewed Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes by Anna Konnikova (Dr. Maria

Konnikova) in "A book review." She writes about the fictional personhood of Holmes. His personality, abilities, and how this ties to modern psychological research with some reference to the work of Professors Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald by you. The most important point, or takeaway for me, comes from the way in which Holmes focused on a goal to filter information, as a means to solve problems before him, as per "Peter Gollwitzer's 5 Goal-orientated Behaviour traits." Sections included mindfulness and motivation, interpretation of the world as the world, the DMM or default mode network, the importance of common sense found through deduction or, more properly, induction/abduction described as "systemised common sense," and knowledge of self. You gave an enthusiastic review of Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes. What was some feedback on the text since the publication of the review? How has Dr. Konnikova's career progressed?

Powell: Interesting that you ask about this, Scott, because I am involved in neurofeedback at the moment, a new adventure that has taken me back to Dubai. It is, indeed, just that: feedback. In my work, there's low electrical input, mainly just sensors. People undergoing the feedback monitor their responses alongside the technician and they are 'rewarded' via a notification system. This reward system is decided upon via consultation. I have undergone some of the light and sound sessions and it is effective. I have found that my sleep patterns have returned to a healthy rhythm, with theta waves being emitted more than previously. As such, I think the three main goals espoused by Gwyneth are being met: I self-regulate, know more about how the brain is functioning, and I am taking the results into my everyday life. I have a hunch that the other forms of biofeedback can have similar effects, hence Gwyneth's three, generic goals.

As for Maria Konnikova Hamilton (her full name), her writing career has progressed and she has produced several books of note, her latest book resulting in her becoming a gambler in casinos. She is about to move on from that, but, unfortunately, due to a certain amount of fame, she has distanced herself from me these days, so I don't know in what direction she is about to go.

Jacobsen: "A Brief History of IQ Tests" by Thomas J. Hally talked about the history of low range and normal range testing, and high range testing, of general intelligence with a tip of the hat to Paul Coijmans, Ron Hoeflin, Robert Lato, Laurent Dubois, Mislav Predavec, Jonathan Wai, Kenneth Ferrell, Jeff Leonard, Jason Betts, and Ivan Ivec. Of course, noting, the test scores do not define the person and the HRT test creators remained all men at the time. This may stay the same into the present. However, as a caveat, as a singular trait pervading aspects of an individual's life, access to joining societies, access to contribute to and write in journals, and the like, the test scores, at minimum, define part of the person, if defined in an extended sense of "person" as in an extended relational self. What are the issues of high range tests from the most serious to the trivial? What are the benefits of high range tests over low range and normal range tests? How do the politics and personalities of the HRT world impact the dynamics of the societies, the development of tests, and so on? If someone donates money to a high IQ society and to the career of an individual within the HRT world, and if one exists as a member

of a society in which a test developer uses individuals for the purpose of increasing the relevant sample size of the tests in development, do these amount to financial conflicts of interest and other forms of conflict of interest? How do these considerations impact the legitimacy of the creation of some tests and some societies in the 3-sigma and higher world of the high IQ?

Powell: Okay, let us break this down, then push people in a direction to learn more. A fundamental issue is said to be the lack of people to provide data, though the current world population is 7.8 billion, which statistically indicates the possibility of at least one person having an IQ of 201, SD16. One in 7.2 billion reach that score. It also equates to one in nearly a million scoring 176 SD 16, (1:982,001), so a quantitative sample of at least 7,385 is possible. This poses the following problem: from where can we find these people? I think a more serious consideration is: how many of these people wish to participate collectively? Having spoken face to face with one such person, the related anecdotes don't bode well for these people to interact. A further example is an article by Michael Ferguson, who calls them 'The Inappropriately Excluded'. In a previous round, I cited Hollingworth's research and the issues of the isolationism of a group which would now, utilizing Gaussian distribution IQ scores, be considered to have an IQ score of around IQ 159 SD 15, or above. Ferguson also refers to this. Generally, the HRTs may identify certain people, but my knowledge about the interactions which take place at the very high IQ level, does not make for pleasant reading. That's the 'trivial part'.

As for conflicts of interest, attempting to identify and further research and data collation is necessary. If there is a monetary gain in doing that, I provisionally say that it is fine. In the end, individuals have a choice about whether to participate, or not. At the IQ societal level, I don't think the funding of individuals occurs very much, at least not due to particular membership of a society. Rather, members of the very exclusive societies can make themselves available for exceptional research and development work - if they so desire. It's a vicious circle for them, really: the opportunities are there, if they want to run the gauntlet of what may seem banal. As stated before, in the end, many of the plethora of tests are not sufficiently tested to be both reliable and verifiable. In the end, I'm not sure how beneficial all this is to these people anyway. Other factors in life are more important than an IQ score.

Jacobsen: "Feedback on 'Atheism'...." by Dr. Claus D. Volko provided a short retort to the eighth issue article by Phil Elauria. His critique focusing on the non-need to move to multi-valued logic where classical binary logic suffices to resolve proposed problems in logic. Any thoughts on the retort by Dr. Volko? "The Writer's Dilemma" by Thomas J. Hally provides an implicitly amusing frolic on the nature of writers, literacy, mathematicians, and other intellectual types. In "Juggler of Day," a poem by Emily Dickinson, accompanied pictorially by Dr. Greg A. Grove, we discover a new fact: Dr. Grove's synesthesia or cross-talk between senses. "Emily Dickinson Eats Out" by Dr. Grove was a charming little piece. You wrote "Meeting In-flight." Where was this a trip towards at the time - other than someone's lips? Or was this more of an imaginary production? "Not Quite Carbon Copies" by Hally is a delightful, and humorous, observation-bound poem on sex and gender dynamics in general. What

made this poem stand out to you? “The Lost Child” by Therese Waneck put forth a one-word poem, in a way, which brought to mind, “Cooked.” What words and images come to mind for you, in this poem? “Dying Dawns” by Waneck brings the sorrow known to and expressed by many elderly friends to me, in intimate conversations. What does this poem evoke for you? “Renewal” by Hally brings forth a strangely depressing but hopeful tale of reflection on the generation and the hope for the metaphysical and spiritual - “transformation” - in spite of the flaws, failures, and follies of the generation. I am ambivalent on an emotional judgment of this piece. What do you think, feel?

Powell: I tried to encourage feedback on the pieces in the magazine, so Claus-Dieter’s was a welcome inclusion within this edition. I recognized the logical sequence that Claus-Dieter proposes, though I had to liaise with him on it at that point in time. It was a steep learning curve for me, so rewarding too. One of the joys of editorship is learning along the way. A curious aftermath was the fact that Phil Elauria took a course in Computer Programming and it is at the core of his career path now, though I’ve no idea if this intervention by Claus-Dieter made Phil consider entering that job sector. All I do know is that Phil is proving successful in his new job.

As for Doctor Grove and his synaesthesia, I knew about it and indeed took part in an experiment involving art. Greg loves music by Scriabin, whose atonal scale was influenced by synaesthesia. Greg also loves the poetry of Emily Dickinson, hence the artwork. Greg would make a fascinating person to interview.

The Meeting In-flight poem is a modern version of Meeting at Night by Robert Browning, though I must confess that it is also based on a real-life experience in Izmir, Turkey. I think Tom Hally and I share a poetic interest in these facets to life, though I am perhaps more of a romantic. That comes out in Renewal, too. Tom is more sardonic in his outlook.

Therese Waneck’s poems always entreat me. Like Emily Dickinson’s, they are bijoux expressions, yet pierce to the core. I love Therese’s work.

Jacobsen: “Another Friend Dies From AIDS” by Beaux Clemmons portrays a moving depiction of loss, of death and coping, and moving on, once the shock disappears. Clemmons, as a Christian, comes to confront an apparent injustice with anger at purported love for his Creator. Doubt, anger, and a generally pissed off demeanour seeps through portions of the text, understandably. In a seriocomic stance, Clemmons pretends God is imaginary, not present, and remains unconvinced of the view here in the thought experiment too, which belies a certain agnosticism, implicitly. Clemmons ends on a re-invigoration of strength by putting the feelings to text. What stood out about this piece to you?

Powell: Beau (his actual name) is a devout Christian who I’ve known and, indeed, assisted sometimes for a few years, now. This piece arrived as I was walking through around 45 degrees centigrade to publish the magazine from the internet café in Al Ain. It was a heartfelt piece, one which clearly made Beau question many aspects to life, his sexuality, his beliefs, the seemingly unfair judgement that is bestowed

upon us at times. I had to go back through the scorching heat to add his article. Beau expressed that he had to let the emotions go and was keen that I help him by publishing the piece. I think it was a cathartic experience for him, which these occasions often require, whatever your belief.

Jacobsen: "As I Recall" by Hally opens with the psychological knowledge of the most prominent memories tending to be emotional ones. Although, Professor Elizabeth Loftus's, from the University of California, Irvine, memory research may buffer direct statements about this, especially in regards to Rich False Memories, for example. Hally's focus is "arousal" and "valence" and "mood" as integral to strong, detailed, and lasting memories. A wonderful, concise, and effective summary of memory research to this point, at an intermediate level. Does educational material, as opposed to that which requires some interpreting, become more easily accepted into the journal? You wrote "A festive poem" and "The Challenge," which provided some mental food for thought. "WIN Meetings" provide some further context of the relationships between executive members of WIN with visits to Dubai in April and June of 2013 with pictures of Dr. Thabet, Dr. Katsioulis, and Dr. Karyn Huntting Peters. How were the subsequent meetings in person with Drs. Thabet, Katsioulis, and Peters? What have been fruitful dialogues since that time?

Powell: I think people like to learn, yes. I also did a little research and high IQ people are not interested in doing puzzles within magazines. I didn't realize that at the time, but it seems to be a prevailing viewpoint.

On a different tack, I was pleased to make the interactions of WIN members evident visually, which had been done in an earlier WIN magazine, G2G Manifest. There was quite a lot of interaction while I was in the Middle East, so it was a great opportunity, in that respect. The three WIN members that you cite are at the epicentre of my high IQ experience, even to this day. We continue to change the world, I am sure, in a positive manner.

Jacobsen: Dr. Volko wrote "Gödel and the Limits of Computability." In it, he describes the ways in which the two incompleteness theorems - 1) incomplete and consistent, or complete and inconsistent and 2) consistent systems cannot be proven consistent within their own formalities - describe the limits of computability. Any further thoughts on the incompleteness theorems for you? Any known additional theorems adjunct to these two theorems? What do these theorems appear to mean for computability and human computation? What stands out about Dr. Volko's material over the years? "Epigraphs," clever as well as entertaining as a word, connects to "The Editor's Anagdoku." What inspired the tying of these together? Also, what is the image behind the text, the background picture?

Powell: I think you would do best to ask Claus-Dieter about the theorems and the lasting nature of his work. The magazine is largely a snapshot of intellectual considerations at certain moments in time. As I said before, my real-life interactions with the people you mentioned previously are more significant to me now and take up a great deal of my time. The results of that will become clear, I am sure. Please watch the media.

Regarding the Epigrahams, I have kept a journal since April 1983. The Epigrahams were a collection of epigrams from those journals. As I hinted near the beginning of this interview, in the desert, reflections on matters often bring quite original thoughts, with neologisms, if you will. I like anagrams and I also enjoy writing the occasional Sudoku, so some of the anagrams and a Sudoku combined to produce the Anagdokku. The picture behind the text (the watermark) I don't recall now, though I am sure it is an engraving which is redolent of the work of William Blake, so it is a hark back to the cover of Edition VI, which was very much styled on Blake's Songs of Innocence.

Jacobsen: "X-Test Solutions Finally Revealed!" by Marco Ripà pulled a first with the exposing and exposition on the solutions to an IQ test developed by the test creator himself. Not too much commentary here in the question other than the unique laying out the solutions to problems on an IQ test, as if Penn & Teller. Any thoughts on the prospect of benefiting from the practice of HRT with provision of the solutions for an educational purpose? You did accept and publish the article after all. Then there were some individual images of famous mostly dead smart people for consideration as parts in a puzzle inside the issue as a whole. Alan Wing-Lun published "About 'Codin' Code Al Coda'" in response to the 'composing' (I was a bit loose in the language before, sorry, and so partially wrong, in a prior interview part) of the puzzle and the literal zero correct responses sent in about the puzzle, in spite of a competition placed for it. He ends, humorously, on a quote by Oscar Wilde stating, "I refuse to have a battle of wits with an unarmed man." What comes to mind when a puzzle remains so difficult for the international high IQ community that no correct solutions come into the creator of the puzzle until after a competition and not during?

Powell: I remember that a couple of the items in Marco's test had been compromised, by unscrupulous people either asking for the answers, or by giving the items as puzzles to solve, thereby gaining insight via other people offering solutions, or by actually giving the solutions. Marco was getting frustrated about this, as one can understand, and he decided that he would submit all the answers and put his X Test into IQ-testing history. We also moved on, with another type of test. It is computer generated and changes each time a person decides to take the test. It was a bold move by Marco and Gaetano Morelli, with a small contribution by me towards the end of the project - what was really a consideration of the best practical way to administer the test, though I did check the workings of it too.

Jacobsen: You composed "Music: 'Theme from Love, Injury, Fear, Embarrassment'." Then comes a rapid succession of solutions to puzzles throughout the issue. If you had to guess, how many readers look to the solutions before solving the puzzle? How many get them right on the easier puzzles and on the harder puzzles (excluding the one with zero solutions)?

Powell: As I mentioned before, generally, it seems that high IQ people are not interested in puzzle solving when reading online magazines. Occasionally, people compliment me on the ingenious nature of the puzzles, but I sense that less than 1% of readers do them. The lack of solutions submitted for Alan's conundrum I feel

validates my point. As a point of further interest, the music you cite was composed in 1988 for my play Love Injury Fear Embarrassment, which was performed at the Betchworth Festival, Surrey, England, that autumn.

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Graham.

Powell: It was a pleasure, Scott.



BIOGRAPHY OF RAS MOSERA

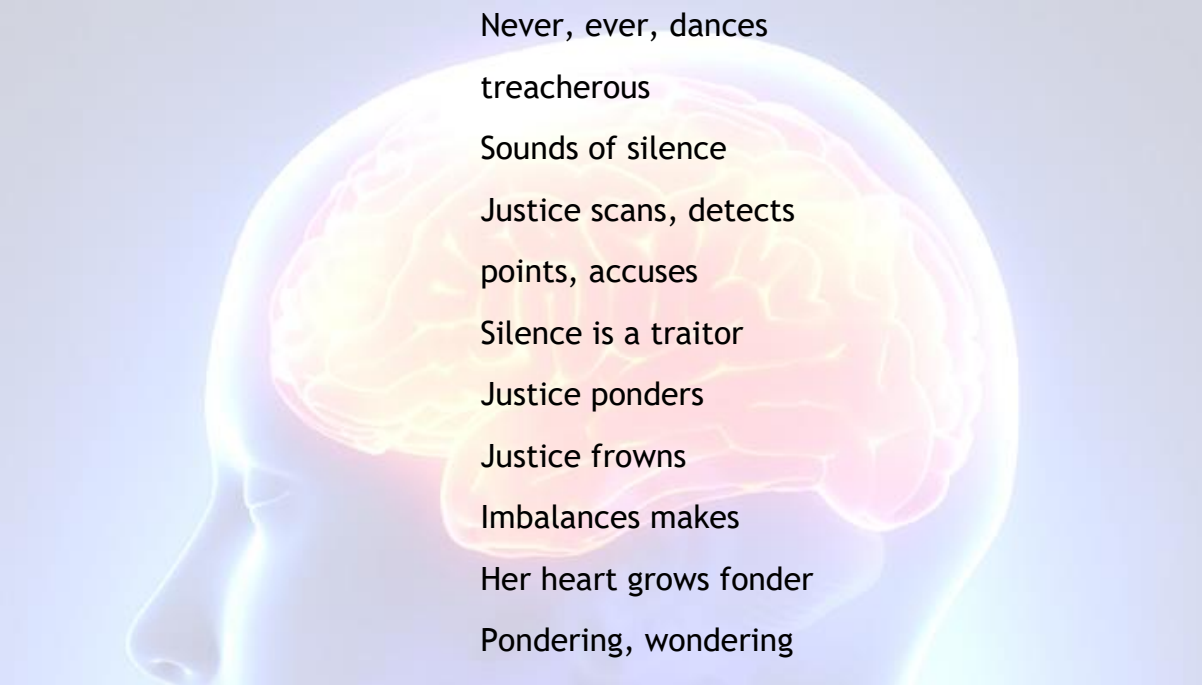
Ras Mosera is a Saint Lucian artist who has long been resident in St. Martin. He has been exhibited in Curacao, St. Maarten, St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, Hawaii, Dominican Republic, Amsterdam, France, Belgium, Sweden, Cuba, Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Venezuela, Holland and in the U.S.A in places such as embassies, hotels and at the World Bank in 2010.



“Justice”

by Ras Mosera, the Poet and Artist

Justice never dances to
the music of brutality
rhythm of partiality
never ever grinds
twerks to victory music
Of dearth of equality



Never, ever, dances
treacherous
Sounds of silence
Justice scans, detects
points, accuses
Silence is a traitor
Justice ponders
Justice frowns
Imbalances makes
Her heart grows fonder
Pondering, wondering
Injustices! Injustices

When Justice dances
freedom's on the
Horizon like the sun
Liberation rises
Solace of peaceful
Injustices fall, falling, falling
Justice gives justice takes
Never breaking, cracking
Bending backward defending,

The defenceless never dances old
Rhythm's perpetuation
Perpetuation of status quo
Justice sighs and cries
To keep the light burning
Oil of truth burning, burning,
Justice dances
Ten million becomes one
One voice, one clamor. Selah!!



AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ROBERTO STEFAN FOA



Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Let's take some of the fundamental research of recent, what are key terms in the analysis of the quality of government?

Roberto Stefan Foa:

"Quality" of government - or "good governance" as it is also termed - is fundamentally a normative concept, that gets used to describe what features of our political institutions might be considered desirable. As such, there is no single agreed definition, and it is more of an umbrella term.

That said, absence of corruption, congruity between citizen preferences and policy outcomes, quality of public services, rule of law, or political stability are typically the things authors have in mind. There are obviously differences between these, so it can be thought of as multidimensional, rather than operating along a single spectrum.

Jacobsen: The Centre for the Future of Democracy was founded in January 2020. Its inaugural *Global Satisfaction with Democracy 2020* report examined some of the indices of "satisfaction" with democracy writ large. What were some of the most startling findings in the midst of the research? It's a 60-page report.

Foa: The main finding is that there has been a sustained decline in citizen satisfaction with democracy across the world over the last generation, especially in the United States, Southern Europe, and Latin America. By using a dataset that has been compiled by my colleague Andrew Klassen, which combines over 4 million respondents from over 25 datasets across all major world regions, we were able to get the most comprehensive overview on this issue to date.

The second finding, however, is that some parts of the world have bucked this trend. In much of Asia, for example, people are fairly satisfied with their political institutions, so to some extent, the "crisis" of democratic legitimacy is also simply a crisis of the West. And in sub-Saharan Africa, though satisfaction has fallen since the 1990s, it remains comparatively high relative to other regions of the world. While the headline finding of global democratic dissatisfaction received the most press attention, the report itself sought to highlight these differences, not least of all as until now most empirical research is based on western democracies.

Jacobsen: We have been seeing concerns about Brexit, about inept handling of Covid-19, about populism and national reactionaries in much of the West, and the crumbling of infrastructure in several societies. Do these factors emerge in some of the data analyses? For example, we have seen more democracies in the world at any time in the history of the world now. So, I would not necessarily expect a massive drop in the number of democracies. Rather, I would predict a slowing or a declining of the rate of the institutionalization of democratic systems in previous autocratic or theocratic societies with said realities.

Foa: The data in the January report only public examined satisfaction with democracy and not the “health” of democracy in a broader sense. For example, we are not looking at the health of liberal democratic institutions, such as freedom of the courts or of the press. It is not that those things are not important, but rather that they are already covered very well by other projects, such as *Freedom House* or *V-Dem*. And there is already a very vigorous debate about whether the world is currently undergoing a democratic recession, and if so, whether that should be seen as a temporary plateau in the adoption and spread of democracy or if it is the start of a more profound reversal. But that’s not the focus of our January report. Academic research is a collective enterprise, so you have to focus on the areas where you are able to make an original contribution.

So instead the contribution of the report was deliberately very narrow - just to examine democratic legitimacy, measured via the indicators for which truly comprehensive comparative data are available. That is less a measure of the health of democratic institutions, and more a measure of how well citizens feel they are performing in delivering the other outputs citizens care about, such as public services, rule of law, and accountability in office.

That’s an important metric, though, because if citizens do not feel that democracies are delivering then it augurs badly for the stability and consolidation of democracy going forwards. While it is possible to have a democracy in which civil liberties are generally respected, but which are losing the faith of citizens, it may not be a sustainable equilibrium in the long term. If you look at countries like Venezuela in the 1990s, there was widespread disillusionment with the political system even though the country had been a liberal democracy for four decades. Then Chávez was elected and began to chip away at political rights and liberties. More recently we’ve seen the same thing in many western societies, and that has foreshadowed the rise of populism, so we need to see it as a warning indicator of potential instability.

Jacobsen: Following from the previous question, another facet is the decades-long view on the “satisfaction” with the level of democracy or democratic participation in societies, which leads to some questions about the international perspective or the global view on democratic participation and satisfaction. How pleased or satisfied are citizens in each region of the world with democracy as an idea?

Foa:

There are huge differences by region, while as I say was one of the key messages from our January work. The “crisis of democratic legitimacy” that we see today is disproportionately concentrated in specific regions, such as Latin America, Southern Europe, and the United States. Of course, those regions contain a significant proportion of the world’s democratic citizenry, so that means there is also a “global” crisis in a very real sense.

Jacobsen: Are there countries in the world in which the citizen population do not like democracy, do not see it as an ideal?

Foa:

Back in the 1990s, when global comparative survey research was still in its infancy, scholars noticed that majorities in every country agreed with the statement that “democracy” is the “best way to govern the country”. That was seen as proof that liberal democracy had emerged as the only remaining legitimate form of governance and fit with the *Zeitgeist* of the times.

But the problem with that conclusion is the ambiguity inherent the term “democracy” itself. It is what Walter Bryce Gallie had called an “essentially contested concept,” in that is interpreted very differently across different regions and within different ideologies. To give a very simple example, the country which in the 1990s had the lowest public support for democracy as a system of governance was Russia, where “democracy” was associated with the country’s anarchic transition from communism. Today, by contrast, a much higher proportion of Russians say they are “satisfied with democracy”, but they have in mind the system of “managed” or illiberal democracy set in place by Vladimir Putin. So that is hardly evidence of support for *liberal* democracy, in the western sense of the term, even if it is more pluralistic than the system of Soviet authoritarianism that prevailed in the 1980s.

More recently scholars have become a great deal more attentive to this issue, and there have been some innovations in survey design to attempt to tease out differing understandings of democracy. There is also good research on how those vary across the world, such as the work of Doh Chull Shin at the Center for the Study of Democracy at UC Irvine using the Asian Barometer surveys. But I still think comparative survey research has a long way to go on this issue. For example, comparative survey projects are only now starting to do bring in items examining “populist” conceptions of democracy, for example based on the principle of the “will of the people” or the denigration of political elites. Scholars of populism have examined this for decades, but somehow it never permeated through to the broader comparative survey community.

Finally, though, I think there is a more fundamental problem in making inferences about citizen support for democracy, which goes to the root of the assumptions inherent in survey research as a field. While survey respondents may have well-formulated opinions about their own lives, most people don’t have deep or fixed theories about political concepts. There is a longstanding tendency among political scientists to over-estimate the degree to which citizens are literate and fluent in political ideas. But since the classic work of Philip Converse in the 1960s, we know that isn’t true: people may have intuitions about certain issues, but those can be fairly shallow and labile. Perhaps one of the reasons why political scientists failed to anticipate the rise of populism, was an overly strong inference from responses to survey items, as the example of “support for democracy” above illustrates. Often people have a vague sense of what prevailing norms or socially desirable responses

are - but if those are skin deep, then they can alter rapidly when a society undergoes a dramatic change in the climate of ideas.

Jacobsen: Are there nations of the globe where the citizenry love democracy in spite of known or perceived flaws in the system, the leadership, the laws, and the institutions?

Foa: Yes, there are. This is something we generally observe in transitional democracies, where citizens are still fresh with the euphoria of democratic transition and the demise of an autocratic regime that was widely seen to be corrupt, oppressive, and illegitimate. In such cases, citizens are prepared to forgive the flaws and failures of their democratic institutions. So we see that today in Southeast Asia (e.g. Malaysia or Indonesia), as well as sub-Saharan Africa.

Secondly, it is still fundamentally true for many western democracies, insofar as many citizens who are frustrated or dissatisfied with the functioning of democratic institutions in practice still desire such institutions to function better. So for that reason, low levels of citizen satisfaction with democracy do not in and of themselves portend a systemic crisis. But the issue in my mind is how stable it is to have a society in which citizens desire a functioning democracy, but “really-existing” democratic institutions seem to be structurally incapable of reform. Something has to give - and the risk is that sooner or later that feeling turns into something more destructive, a desire to tear down the status quo and upset existing institutions, rather than implement gradualistic improvements.

Jacobsen: Is there dial relationship between populism, as in negative populism such as ethnic nationalism or some such thing, and democracy in which the increase in one, as a principle, tends to lead to declines in the other?

Foa:

Actually, I don't think that is a simple relationship. There are liberal forms of nationalism, such as that which swept across Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism. And not all forms of populism are authoritarian, though there is obviously a relationship between the two.

Just as importantly, however, it is important to remember that many forms of authoritarianism derive their legitimacy from being explicitly anti-populist. This was clearly the case for the dictatorships in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, which saw themselves as vanguards against democratic populism, as well as more recent military coups in countries such as Turkey, Pakistan or Thailand. The late political scientist Guillermo O'Donnell referred to these as forms of “bureaucratic” authoritarianism, as in contrast say to fascist or communist regimes which legitimated their rule by claiming to represent “the people”, they did so by claims to technocratic competence and political stability. One avenue historically by which populism leads to authoritarianism is democratic erosion when populists are afraid

of losing office, and there is an extensive recent literature on this following the “populist wave” of 2016 to date. But another has been in the reaction to populist excesses by societal elites, and that probably merits greater awareness.

Jacobsen: Do post-colonial politics play a role in satisfaction with democracy, e.g., Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States, and Australia?

Foa:

Well, most of the countries you list there are former British colonies, which either inherited their democratic institutions directly from colonial governors, in the case of Australasia or Canada, or developed democratic institutions based on the inspiration of English radicals, in the case of the United States. These are also countries in which democratic institutions and national identity have been fairly closely intertwined, and historically that provided a baseline legitimacy to democratic institutions, so in those cases there are limits to how far a politician can go in making explicitly authoritarian appeals.

Jacobsen: Men leading countries in the rule rather than the exception. A type of male leader has been seen more and called strongman or strongmen leadership. What characterizes it? Who represent it? Why are these threats to democratic ideals?

Foa: I don’t think a “strongman” leader necessarily has to be male - there are plenty of examples of strong female leaders, from Margaret Thatcher to Indira Gandhi - though I suppose the attributes of “strength” or “decisiveness” are probably more strongly associated with a certain understanding of masculinity.

But at any rate, I think the reason why such “strongman” leadership has been appealing in many developing democracies is linked to the lack of strength - the weakness - of the state itself. It is sometimes said in politics that institutions should be strong, so that individuals do not have to be. The flipside of that, is that when institutions are weak, people look for “strong” leaders to take their place.

I think that is a very important and neglected explanation for the rise of authoritarian populism in developing democracies today, and I am working on a new article on this currently. If we look at many new democracies in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, or the former communist bloc, the period of democratic transition has been accompanied by a steady erosion of the state’s basic prerogative to provide rule of law, accountability, and fair access to services. In Brazil, the homicide rate has soared by six times since the 1980s, reaching a peak in the year before Bolsonaro was elected president. In Russia in the 1990s, crime and corruption became rampant, while public salaries stopped being paid. In India, the political system was mired in corruption scandals in the years before Narendra Modi was elected prime minister. So it is not surprising that when citizens see signs of dysfunction around them, they will be attracted by outsider “strongman” politicians who say they will drain the

swamp, take back control, and restore order. In many developing democracies, this appeal to restore order is at least as important as appeals to identarian politics.

Jacobsen: Do you believe this is the end of the democratic century or not? This would oppose certain visions of the world of some inevitable march towards progress. What are the indicators of this?

Foa: For context, that is a reference to an article Yascha and I wrote in 2018 in *Foreign Affairs*; for which the final assigned title was *The End of the Democratic Century*. In the end I quite liked the heading, in that there's an oblique reference there to Hobsbawn's "short" twentieth century, from 1914-1989 - a period that saw both the "second wave" of democratisation after World War II and the "third wave" in Southern Europe, Latin America, and eventually Eastern Europe - and of course Fukuyama's End of History thesis.

But when we talk about the "end of the democratic century" we are not saying that the world is about to descend into autocracy, as some people might misinterpret it. Rather the core idea there is about what we can know based on the past and whether it still allows us to make inferences going forward. In many ways, the twentieth century has an exceptional period, in which western democracies were economically and culturally dominant and played a key role in spreading democratic institutions throughout the world. So now as we enter a new century in which this is no longer the case, we need to re-examine the question of whether the established relationships between economic prosperity and democratisation will continue to hold. Now, it might well be that those theories will be vindicated. But already there are other signs that the relationship is changing: compare the fates of democracy movements in Venezuela, Hong Kong or Iran to those of Chile, Korea, or Turkey in the 1970s to 1990s, which could rely upon extensive international linkage and support.

So this is really an epistemological issue more than anything else. Almost all of the theories - and most of the data - we have in comparative politics about democratisation are based on this short period of time, going back to the early twentieth century. That's an important scope condition. We simply don't yet know how well predictions based on data from this period will hold up in a world in which western powers are no longer dominant, and liberal democracy is not the only form of governance among the most economically developed powers. Of course, they *might* do. The point is, we don't really know.

On a similar note, the same holds for an earlier piece we wrote in the *Journal of Democracy*, in which we introduced the notion of "democratic deconsolidation". I think there was a widespread misconception that somehow we were conjecturing that democracies across the world were about to collapse, not least of all as the piece got caught up in the wave of debate over U.S. democratic stability that followed Donald J. Trump's election in 2016. But what we actually wrote was something far more nuanced - namely that the *conditions* for consolidation, or *certainty* about the future of democratic stability, might be eroding, such that in

the future we wouldn't be able to assert with confidence that currently democratic countries will remain so indefinitely. Ultimately, that is a claim about what we *don't* know: we tended to assume that countries that have been democratic for a certain duration of time, one generation say, had almost no chance of backsliding away from democracy. So this is an argument about the end of the "consolidation paradigm" as a way of thinking about democratisation.

Jacobsen: What is secularization? How does this play a role in some of the analyses of democracy, autocracy, authoritarianism, and the like?

Foa: It depends on your definition. Secularisation in its broadest sense, as Weber's "disenchantment" of the world, does not necessarily produce democratic outcomes - after all, there are secular authoritarian regimes, just as there are longstanding democracies in religiously devout societies. Once you take away divine legitimation as a justification to exercise authoritarian rule, there still remain secular alternatives such as the nation state, historical progress, or claims to technocratic competence.

On the other hand if we think of secularisation in a narrower sense, as the distantiation of the secular and the religious realms, with the notion that religion should be confined to the private sphere while the public sphere, then there is both a conceptual and an historical link to democratisation.

Historically that was a very important moment in the emergence of western democracy, because you had a period after the sectarian conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries following which religiously-divided countries such as England or the Netherlands had to find new means to govern. And conceptually, once you "desacralise" political authority, you take its legitimacy out of the divine realm, and in to the realm of humanity. In England that meant parliamentary sovereignty, and in the Netherlands it meant confederation and constitutional protection of religious freedom.

Such historical comparisons might not seem relevant to understanding the position of democracy today, but arguably there are some post-colonial states, such as India, Lebanon, or even Nigeria where religious pluralism has pushed societies on the road to more democratic and decentralised models of governance. But the key point here is that it is not about secularisation in the sense of a society becoming less religious, but rather, in terms of how you manage ideological diversity. And unfortunately, it is still a lesson we are learning today in many parts of the world, where deepening political polarisation and divides between secular and non-secular ideologies continues to strain the governance of the public realm. Ironically, secularisation in the former sense can actually exacerbate that, and that is part of what we have seen since the 1990s in countries like the United States, where progressive secularism has reopened a conflict about the ideological neutrality of the state, that in a formerly more pluralistic society had been relatively more settled.

ART BY MIKE FULLER

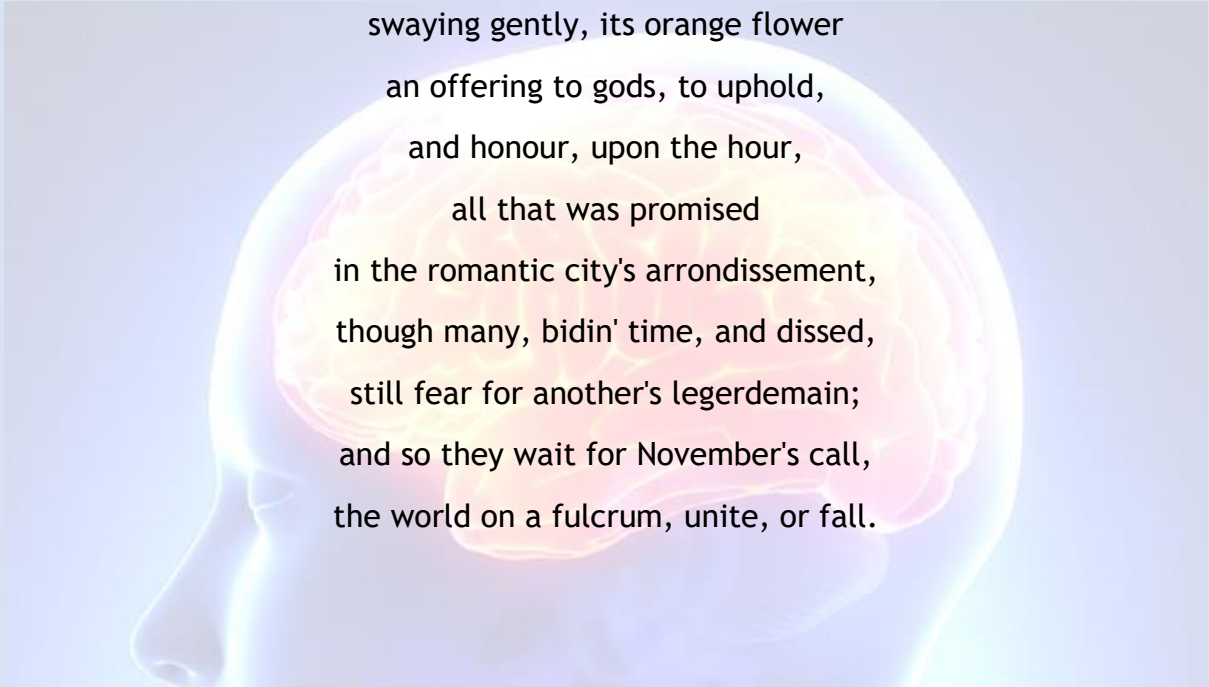




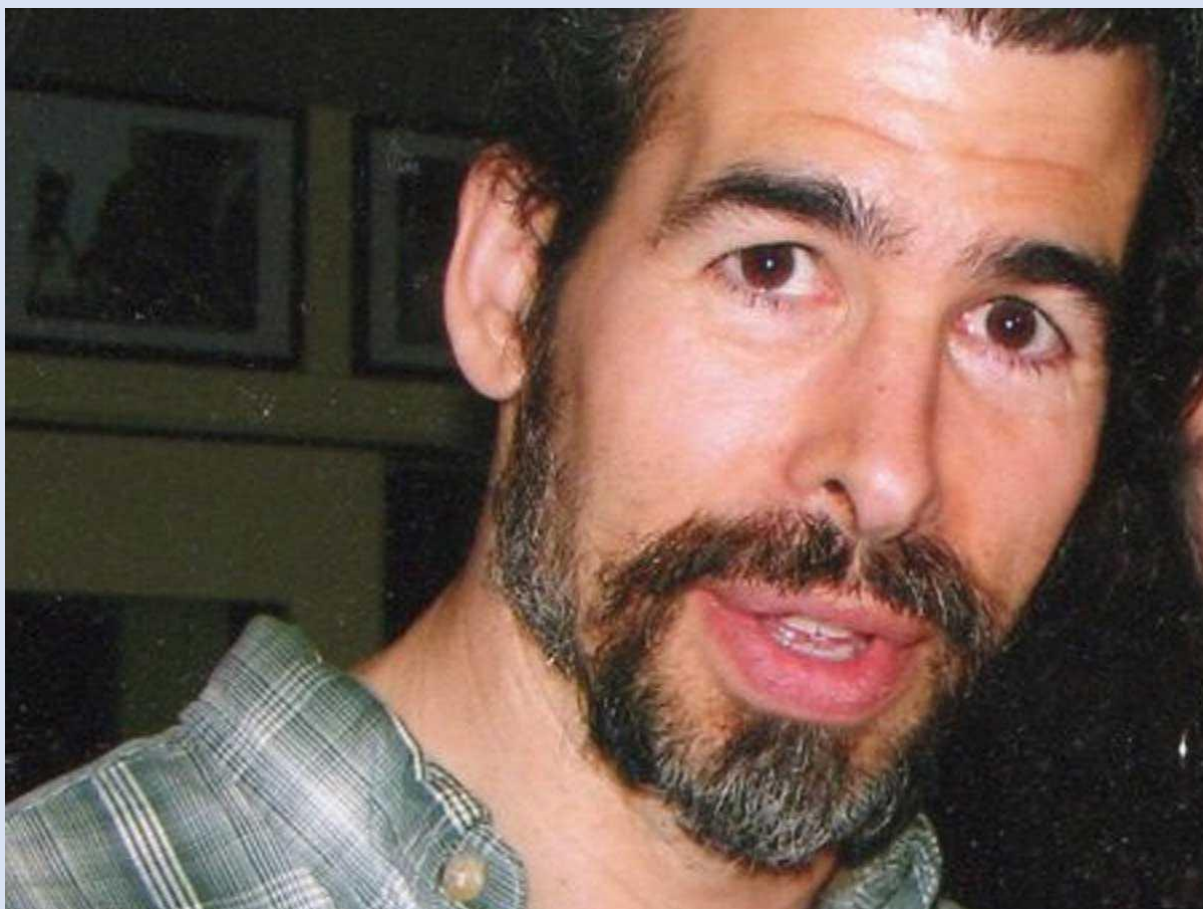
Poem by Graham Powell

The Entreatment

The divine Helen walks the woods
with Paris redolent within her heart,
gushing thoughts of rains, then floods,
swirling in the forecaster's worldly chart;
she kneels and observes the marigold
swaying gently, its orange flower
an offering to gods, to uphold,
and honour, upon the hour,
all that was promised
in the romantic city's arrondissement,
though many, bidin' time, and dissed,
still fear for another's legerdemain;
and so they wait for November's call,
the world on a fulcrum, unite, or fall.



AN INTERVIEW WITH RICK ROSNER AND KIRK KIRKPATRICK



Rick Rosner and I conduct a conversational series entitled Ask A Genius on a variety of subjects through In-Sight Publishing on the personal and professional website for Rick. Rick exists on the World Genius Directory listing as the world's second highest IQ at 192 based on several ultra-high IQ test scores developed by independent psychometricians. Kirk Kirkpatrick earned a score at 185, near the top of the listing, on a mainstream IQ test, the Stanford-Binet. Both scores on a standard deviation of 15. A sigma of ~6.13 for Rick - a general intelligence rarity of 1 in 2,314,980,850 - and ~5.67 for Kirk - a general intelligence rarity of 1 in 136,975,305. Of course, if a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population. This amounts to a joint interview or conversation with Kirk Kirkpatrick, Rick Rosner, and myself on the "American Disease," as identified and labeled by Kirk, and "Super Empowerment," as observed and named by Rick.

Keywords: general intelligence, Kirk Kirkpatrick, Rick Rosner, sigma, Stanford-Binet, World Genius Directory.

Ask A Genius (or Two): Conversation with Kirk Kirkpatrick and Rick Rosner on the “American Disease” and “Super Empowerment”

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, let’s open the discussion with the election and lead into healthcare. Rick, I believe you had some thoughts on the election. We had some discussions before.

Rick Rosner: Kirk wanted to go deeper than that. Right before we started taping, he wanted to talk about deeper causes because everybody has had a stomach full of the more obvious proximate causes, but I believe deeper trends help generate the situation we’re in.

Kirk Kirkpatrick: Yes, I think he’s right. If I can start the conversation, my background is rather diverse considering most Americans. I lived in 8 countries. I have probably have been to every country in the northern hemisphere. I speak several languages.

My wife is a native Chinese. I tend to take a more international look at things. But when I returned back to living in the United States, one of the things that struck me was the way people think they are entitled to hold an opinion.

And they confuse the entitlement of holding an opinion with the veracity of the opinion. In other words, “I have a right to hold an opinion, and that means you need to consider this opinion as valid.” So, I see, if I can give an example.

If I had never been to LA and I was speaking with Rick, and we were having a discussion about Los Angeles, and Rick said to me, “You know, Kirk, I grew up here. I lived here all of my life.” I would start deferring to him about finding out what Los Angeles was like.

I would be the last person in the world to start arguing with him about a place I had never been to before, and that he happened to live in and had grown up in, and is a rational, intelligent human being. Do you understand my point?

Rosner: Yup.

Jacobsen: Yes.

Rosner: And I agree with it. I've been calling it "super empowerment." Where a lot of our tech and social media give people reinforcement of the idea that whatever you believe must be the truth, you're entitled to spread that truth by whatever means necessary.

Kirkpatrick: The evangelists, I think that's a very good point. The way I put it, or the succinct way I say it, "A Google search does not an expert make." Because you Googled an article and read it doesn't even tell me that you 1) had the background to understand the article that you read or 2), and more importantly, to validate the article and find out whether or not the author knew what he was talking about.

Rosner: I heard on NPR yesterday, day before. Some country or entity wants to install something before you're allowed to comment on the article. You have to take a quiz on the article to make sure you even read it and understood it.

Kirkpatrick: [Laughing].

Jacobsen: [Laughing] That's very good.

Kirkpatrick: I can give you a perfect example that will illustrate it excellently. If you remember a while back, we did a deal, or I say we were part of a deal, with Iran to try to prevent them from developing nuclear weapons.

While that was going on, I had a phone call from a woman who claimed to be from my congress, which I don't believe. But she said she was. I'll quote her as quickly or as accurately as I can. She wanted to know my opinion on "Obama's deal with Iran."

And those were her exact words. I said to her, "Ma'am, can I ask you a couple of questions first?" She said, "Yes." I said, "What is your opinion on Obama's deal with Iran?" She said, "I don't like it."

Rosner: Sure.

Kirkpatrick: I said, "Have you been to Iran?" She said, "No." I said, "Can you name 5 cities in Iran?" She said, "No." I said, "How about 3?" She said, "No." I said, "Can you name the countries that border Iran?" She said, "No." I said, "Then, what is it that bothers you about this deal?" She said, "It threatens Israel." I said, "That sounds reasonable. Can you name 5 cities in Israel?" She said, "No." I said, "Can you name 3?"

She said, "No." I said, "Can you name the countries that border Israel?" She said, "No." I said, "Have you ever visited the place or been there?" She said, "No."

I said, "Then allow me to answer your question." I said, "Firstly, I don't know any deal that Obama did with Iran, but I know a deal that the P5+1 nations did with Iran under the auspices of the Security Council at the UN. If that's the one that you're referring to, I've been to Iran and can easily name 5 cities in the place, and can tell you every country that touches it."

I continued, "And on top of that, I lived in Israel. So, 5 cities are really easy. I can tell you every country that touches Israel. I have been to all of them. And in spite of all of this, I still don't know enough about this arms deal to form an opinion one way or another. So, the operative question for me is, 'Why do you care what I think? And why do you even have an opinion?'"

Of course, she hung the phone up.

Rosner: Nice.

Kirkpatrick: That's my point. You're going to have an opinion on an arms deal that you incorrectly describe to these people, and it's an arms deal! You know, it's like, who are you?

Rosner: What she characterized as an arms deal was the nuclear weapons development negotiation going on, I guess, right?

Kirkpatrick: She meant the P5+1 nations' deal with Iran. But my point is, you're going to form an opinion about something like that. You're not bothering to educate yourself? Not knowing the countries that border Iran?

It isn't that advanced. Let's put it this way, if Rick and I were talking, and Rick put an equation in front of me that said, " $y + 8 = 4$," and I looked at him and said, "You can't add letters to numbers." I'm not sure he'd take my opinion on math very seriously.

Rosner: Yes, Yes.

Kirkpatrick: That's the point I'm trying to make. This is what I call the "American Disease." Where because we have TV, cable news, and Google, we think, "Oh, I'll Google this." The American becomes unaware of the fact that the guy who wrote the article doesn't know any more about the subject than he does. He's writing down what somebody else has said, over and over again.

Rosner: I've watched a lot of the middle to Left-leaning news. I watched a lot of MSNBC. I reluctantly watch CNN. With Fox News, at least you know, you're getting biased news. CNN presents itself as news and tries to be even handed, or at least they present the appearance of being even handed.

That involves assembling these panels of 6 or 8 people. Most of whom either don't know what they're talking about or who are dispensing fairly pure bullshit. And this was a staple of coverage during the election. CNN has stayed with that format.

All of the little tricks they learned about drawing in eyeballs during the election. These cross-partisan panels. People on Trump's side. People on the other side. Countdown clocks, town halls, they've kept it all. It's as if the election is still going on.

It is endless presentations of uninformed and/or deliberately misleading opinion.

Kirkpatrick: Yes, I have to give you credit here because I can't stomach any of it. I watch no, absolutely zero, television news. So, you understand, I can't do it.

Rosner: I used to write jokes for late night TV. Which meant that I...

Kirkpatrick: you had to...

Rosner: Yes, I had to be informed. I've kept the habit. Much to the detriment of my blood pressure.

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Kirkpatrick: Here's what I advise my friends who come and ask me, because my news is a little tough, in that, I speak multiple languages. I am able to read Het Parool in Holland or Die Welt in German. So, I get a little different viewpoint.

But what I tell them is to go to Google News, if they go down to Google News at the bottom, there's a link that says, "Other languages." Or there's about 20 overseas editions of Google News that are English but presented from the perspective of the person in that country.

So, for example, India has an English Google News and Australia has an English Google News, Israel has an English Google News, and South Africa has an English Google News. If you click that, then there's every article that you'll never see in the United States.

Rosner: That's really good to know. I get sick of my three stupid go-to sources. The ones that I can stomach. I go through it pretty fast. I'm unnecessarily informed after going through it.

Kirkpatrick: They all have to buy it. That's why I say, "If you get a bunch of them, you read them in the middle." The other thing I tell people is that if you want to, for example, tell me about Germany and the problem they're having, or perhaps not having, with the immigrants, and then try to sit there and argue with me.

First thing I'm going to do. I'm going to research it in the German press. Because when I lived in Europe, sometimes, you can see the European press writing in glee about a problem The United of States was having.

When you look down into the problems, it wasn't nearly as bad. There was a lot added to it because they wanted that. That goes in all directions for any country. I'm not blaming Europeans or anybody else.

Rosner: I had a discussion with a super conservative friend about Sweden being the rape capital of Europe because of the Muslims. My buddy is an artist, which means he's using his eyes and hands all day but his ears are free.

He pipes in ten hours a day of conservative talk about this stuff. He is very informed on all the conservative talking points. The story about this rape in Sweden. You poke at it a little bit. It starts to fall apart because it starts turning into mush where you really have to do a lot of research on it.

It's all the parts, but you're not left with anything because now you're left with uncertainty. One reason that Sweden seems rapey is that they have a super inclusive definition of sexual assault that can include things such as micro aggressions.

Kirkpatrick: It is worse than that, okay? Now, let me give you an example, my company, the one I am the CEO of, has about 15 employees who has 10 on contract. We build countrywide telecommunication systems, but we generally use the manpower of whoever is buying our system to build it.

So, let's get to Sweden, I'm talking to some young thing in the bar. I tell her I'm the CEO of a telecommunication company. Then we go to bed because she thinks I'm hot. In the next morning, I get a phone call.

I say, "I've got to do this and that. It's my accountant. I don't have a secretary." She asks, "How big is your company?" I reply, "We have five employees and ten contractors." Now, she thought I was this rich Apple type CEO, but, in fact, now she found out that my company is not as big as she thought it was.

That's right; I deceived her. That's rape after the fact. That's what Julian Assange has been accused of; that exact thing. That he lied to the woman about who he was. I'm not going to show what they do about it, but I don't think that that's right in the other direction.

But it's the same thing when you're talking to a conservative about the crime rate in the UK. If I raise my fist to you in the UK, then I've assaulted you, even though I've never hit you. In the United States, that's not a violent crime and in the UK it is.

But I think that's my point in the case of discussing this about Sweden. I will move this on social media. This will come up and almost lead into the conversation. A guy who is not only Swedish, but he lives there. He's living there now. He's never lived any place else.

I'll still have Americans who argue with him. Sure, that's much more.

Rosner: Yes, so, in a deeper sense or looking at its people feeling super empowered, at the same time, they're almost more manipulable than at a lot of other points in history.

Kirkpatrick: Does that mean the Dunning-Kruger effect?

Rosner: Yes, I love that thing. I tweeted about that during the election so many times. To explain to everybody, the Dunning-Kruger Effect, let me explain: in movies, there are magical characters. Often, in movies, dumb people have a special wisdom. They know they're dumb.

Forrest Gump, he's retarded. He's got an IQ 70. Yet, he's full of this wisdom, a deeper wisdom that goes beyond his academic difficulties. That's in the movies. In real life, the Dunning-Kruger Effect is that somebody who's dumb is also dumb about their level of dumbness.

So, a lot of people who are dumb think they're super smart because they're too dumb to realize that they're dumb. There's nothing magic about them. There's no deep wisdom about them. There's a deep assurance that they know what's what.

They've been catered to by these news sources. Fox being the first one to it. I'm not sure my understanding is completely accurate, but it is my understanding. That 30-40 years ago conservative think-tanks started researching how to win people.

They realized that dumb, colourful, easy branding, easy issues were the way to grab low information - meaning dumb - voters, and yank them around. They started by that. Anyway, Fox News has been going for 37 years. People have their brain tenderized.

They are super confident about what they think, but they're not good in the head.

Kirkpatrick: I think you're giving them a little too much credit.

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Kirkpatrick: Let me tell you what mean by that. I think this is more Rupert saying that there's the gullible objects. First, what I'll say is this, we say it about CNN and MSNBC. I think MSNBC tried to be FOX a little bit.

But what I would say is most of the American media and a lot of European media are biased towards sensationalists. If it bleeds, it leads. They want to be sensational. CNN is the worst with this, but Fox is appealing to a specific constituency that Rupert Murdoch realized CNN wasn't available to feed these people.

When I was dealing with a man who was very close in the group, I helped set up Sky Latin America for him down in Latin America. He told me that they had brought in a bunch of marketers who'd do a marketing plan for Sky Latin American.

The groups produced a document about a 158 pages long. Rupert wasn't there. Rupert came down. My friend whose name happens to be Scott, came in to say you may have this marketing plan in his hand, which they put together.

He said, "I handed it to Rupert." As I see Rupert glance at the cover, he said, "This hand never stopped moving towards the next page." Finally, he dropped it. He looked at him. He said, "Scott, you buy the football. You put dishes on the roofs. That's the marketing." You get it?

I would say deep understanding of these markets. 80% of the decisions when multi-channel video is made on the basis of sports program in Latin America; soccer is everything. So, Rupert was much more fundamental than Scott was.

Guys, it's really simple. These guys want football, buy the rights, then y'all run to you to get it, okay? Same with FOX. You could out that conservative being this The people will have confirmation by us. They want that to be right and will turn you into the exclusivity of everybody.

Rosner: I can't get me to shut up about the size of the American population. 325-329 million people You got the dumbest half of the country. Then half of that again is the dumbest half of the dumbest half. That's still 80 million people.

Kirkpatrick: FOX has this subscribership of about 30 million. So, that's not even half of that, but look at how much money they've made.

Rosner: By the way, this is little off what you were saying, where the coverage is people who are on the Left. They lost the election, lost the government. All the branches feel pretty angst and bereft.

Perhaps, beyond even the immediate or midterm consequences of the laws, I think it's hard on people's sadness that the coverage took the form of sports coverage during the election. So, it's not the political implications, but there's this emotional bond you have with your political team now.

The way that people either love or hate you the way they do with the Patriots.

Kirkpatrick: You definitely have this, but I think there's ignorance. I know that there's a lot of - I didn't say - angst because we lost the election, but this in my opinion is fundamentally different. I'll tell you why for a couple of reasons. Number one, as I told you, I've lived more than half of my life in other countries.

You might imagine other countries follow American politics closely. The reason is because it affects their lives. But until the second George Bush election, I had never seen that end up with the American people. What I mean by that is people saying, "I don't like your government at all, but I think the Americans are best people who work." You understand what I mean?

Rosner: We're starting to get hit hard with our own brushes.

Kirkpatrick: Yes. After the second George Bush election, people started saying, "Straighten this out, if that is the way you are, then, maybe, the American people are not who we thought they were." I don't think the average American understands the picture that we started painting for over the border.

If I can give you an example, did either of you gentlemen see the movie 'The American Sniper'?

Jacobsen: Nope.

Rosner: No.

Kirkpatrick: I haven't either, on purpose. But I know about the scene because I went out and looked at it, because of the description of the scene. The first scene of this movie they're attacking a neighborhood in Iraq. I believe it's Iraq.

The red's a woman in a Hijab and Abaya, where she's got a 10-year-old kid.

Rosner: I heard about that scene too.

Kirkpatrick: You've heard about it? So, he shoots the woman. The whole time he's sitting there saying, "Please don't throw the grenade, please don't throw." But she starts to throw and he kills her. The little 10-year-old kid picks up the grenade and he starts back with this.

Of course, to make it more dramatic, his partner says, "If you're wrong about this, you're going to go to prison." And, of course, he hesitates, the boy throws the grenade, but it doesn't make it all the way to Americans. So, he saved their lives.

I say to people, "If you watch this scene in this movie, the only thing about the movie is that you convert the American soldier into a Soviet Union informant and make the woman and the boy Afghans, how would you feel? Would you feel the Soviet guy was a hero because he is saving the other Soviet soldiers from this evil Afghani woman and her child, as they're invading their country?"

Rosner: Not so, much.

Kirkpatrick: Not so much, what's different about the situation with Chris, Scott? We're invading their country. They're defending their homes the same way. Yet, now, he's a hero and the whole world looks and wonders.

Let me give you a second example to chock the crap out of them, my wife is Chinese. She became an American citizen. She applied for American Citizenship. They had a nationalization ceremony. 80 people got their citizenship. I went to it.

While she went to what should have been a solemn ceremony, they had a big screen in the centre of the room that would pop down when they played the national anthem. People stood up. After they said their oaths and stuff, they handed out to these little American flags.

After the ceremony, the screen comes back down, then they start playing Proud to be an American, the country music song. A woman walks on stage swinging a huge American flag back and forth. She yells at these guys and says, "Now, new American citizens stand up, wave your flag and sing."

Now, I'm sure my wife has never heard this song before. She's sitting right in front of me. They (new immigrants) were sitting together. But my point was when the song is over, of course, the 80 guys stood up and smiled and waved their flags.

It was as soon as it was over my wife not knowing what she was doing looks over at me six rows across the room and says out loud, "Just like IN CHINA, So Communist."

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Kirkpatrick: Guys, that's exactly what I was thinking. I spent time behind the Iron Curtain. I was thinking "This looks eerily like in Moscow." What do you mean stand up, wave your flag and sing? Is that an order? I never did anything for it. Scott, you're Canadian, right?

Jacobsen: I am, yes.

Kirkpatrick: Yet, can you imagine a lumberjack in the middle of the nationalization ceremony?

Jacobsen: [Laughing] If on the condition that it was a replay of a Monty Python song.

Kirkpatrick: Oh, right, right. And you don't have the guy doing Doug & Bob McKenzie impressions from the podium. No, I can end this by saying my team I hired him out of Moscow. He grew up in the Soviet Union and has lived in the US for 5 years. ,

He came to me and said "One of the big differences between the Soviet Union and the US is that we have understood that our propaganda was all bullshit, "But you guys believe yours!"

Rosner: Because it comes out of an earnest people because the basic American values are not cynical. The 20th century marked the decay of American institutions that people used to believe in wholeheartedly: the church, Boy Scouts, patriotism, and so on. Everything got torched.

That stuff worked great for a while. So, it's easy to sell people on stuff that used to work without examination and qualification. I remember in the '60s being taught critical thinking skills in elementary school.

There was a lesson on the nine ways advertising manipulates you. It was good to have that.

Jacobsen: [Laughing].

Rosner: If that is still taught, but I know that we're in the middle of a bunch of new technology and new social media, that makes us vulnerable because we haven't learned the considerate bullshit. We're still virgins.

When I worked in bars, one of my jobs was walking through the bar and looking for underage people who'd snuck in one way or another. One way I found them was I'd look for the clump of lame guys over there night after night without picking anybody up.

If there were several of those gathered around somebody, I knew at the center of the cluster of lame-Os would be an underage girl who had yet to bullshit. She didn't have the experience yet on how to detect bullshit, how to push it away.

We are in that situation, where there's all this new stuff. It looks shiny and powerful and makes us feel powerful. It makes us manipulable.

2. Jacobsen: Then maybe a closure question for the two of you: do you think social media, the new technology, amplifies the American Disease as you call it, Kirk, or the Super Empowered population as you call it, Rick?

Kirkpatrick: I think we're both right. What I mean by this is I think it amplifies the American Disease, but as Rick implies, it's probably going to be solved. In the end, it's probably going to be the closest to the point that, as he mentioned before, you're going to pull something and it's going to pop up.

Instead, I've marked this is incorrect for anybody who might read.

Rosner: I totally agree with that. It takes a while to get resistant. When people first had cell phones, only 10% of the population had cell phones. We saw a lot of behaviour because it made everybody else pissed off: talking really loud on your phone in the line at the bank or in a restaurant.

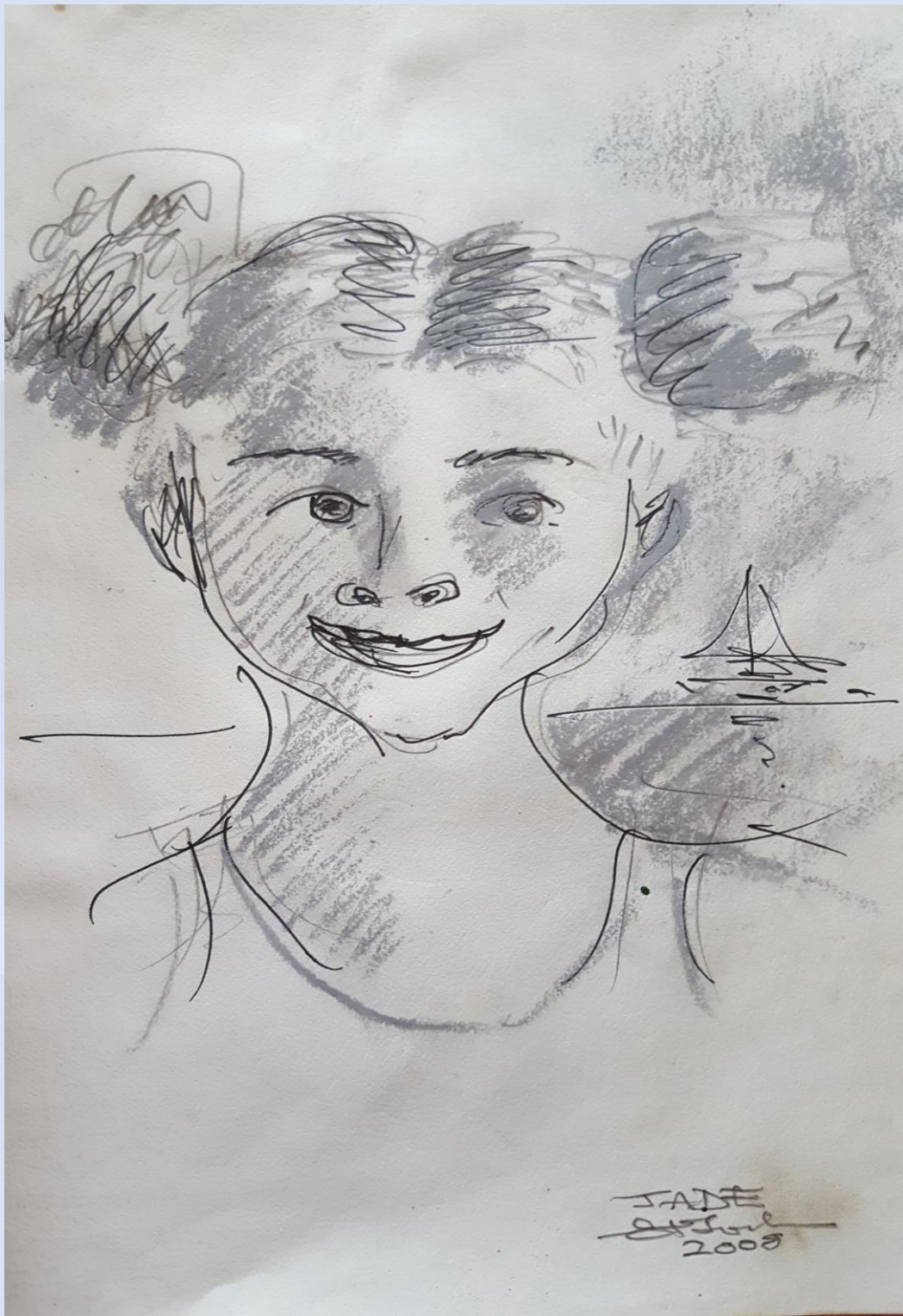
Over time, people calmed down with that. Now, the new prop is texting all over the place, in crosswalks or while driving. Eventually, people will calm down with that and will learn to make better use of technology and understand. They will be less swayed by it. The trouble is by that time. It will be two or three new ways of tech to mess with people, but I remain optimistic.

Kirkpatrick: I do too.

Rosner: Is that a good place to end right there?

Jacobsen: That is a good line to end on, I think.

ART FROM ARNOLD TOULON



Arnold Toulon is a Dominican artist who has been exhibited in hotels and buildings around the World.

The Curves of Dubai



by Graham Powell

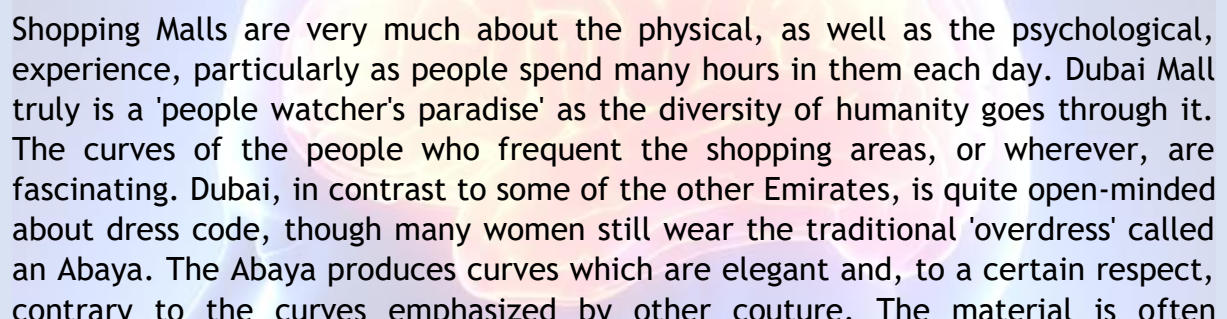
I asked a few friends and colleagues about the first thing that they associate with the word 'curves'. The answers, as expected, were varied, and, as indicated in the above title, this article takes some of those replies and relates them to some experiences and sights in Dubai.

My initial inspiration for writing this article came from a friend who saw some of my photos of Dubai and mentioned about the shapes in the architecture. Dubai has a large number of well-known buildings that exemplify the use of modern, stylish materials to produce ever more diverse shapes and textures in the design, these often being very curvaceous. The Burj Khalifa is not only the tallest building in the world, it has many curved shapes in the structure which deflect the wind, so the swaying of the tower is minimised.

Another building with extenuated curves is the Burj Al Arab, a hotel which resembles a yacht's spinnaker, the neighbouring Jumeirah Beach Hotel and the accompanying building with mansions, Marsa Al Arab, also having curves, ones which resemble a rollercoaster or water slide along the rooftop. The mansions have a fascia which resembles a Venetian blind, the 'slats' echoing the horizontal stripes in the Burj Al Arab. Fundamentally, it reflects the 7 star luxury rating of the Burj Al Arab, the buildings usually glistening majestically as the commuters view from afar on the Metro.

The Metro, inaugurated at 9.09 on 9th September, 2009, is a feature in Dubai which is used by the majority of the population on a daily basis. Winding its way across the whole of the city, the main 'Red Line' takes the Dubai workforce to places like Business Bay, the Financial Centre and Dubai Mall. Dubai Mall is the largest shopping centre in the world in total construction area. The walk along the tunnel, as it twists and turns from the Metro to the mall entrance, gives a great view across the main business sector of the city.

Inside many malls, the shopping experience is enhanced by the avoidance of straight walls, this occurring as much as possible, and the Dubai Mall is no exception. The various floors are, in essence, circuits to be taken as more and more shops appear around each bend, making the 'discovery' more interesting. In a similar way to the design of casinos, reminders of the time (plus the whereabouts of exits) are kept as discreet as possible, one of the most likely references to time being in a jeweller's, or watchmaker's, window. Otherwise, the tours around each floor can seem timeless, almost eternal... Even strolling inside the shops is designed to avoid straight-line monotony, so look out for that when next you go out to purchase something.



Shopping Malls are very much about the physical, as well as the psychological, experience, particularly as people spend many hours in them each day. Dubai Mall truly is a 'people watcher's paradise' as the diversity of humanity goes through it. The curves of the people who frequent the shopping areas, or wherever, are fascinating. Dubai, in contrast to some of the other Emirates, is quite open-minded about dress code, though many women still wear the traditional 'overdress' called an Abaya. The Abaya produces curves which are elegant and, to a certain respect, contrary to the curves emphasized by other couture. The material is often lightweight, so flows in a concave manner while the lady walks along. The narrowness of its cut emphasizes the almost catlike placing of the feet, one in front of the other. It gives supreme elegance, and, when accompanied by the highly aromatic perfumes favoured by many women the Middle East, the effect is striking and long-lasting.

Other curves that will be seen in detail are those of the eyes. Clothing and make-up emphasise the eyes to a great extent, along with a preference for high heeled shoes, the elegance of the long, flowing clothes being duly enhanced. It is also noticeable how tall the local people are, the good diet and genetics playing a part, many men looking elegant in their finely tailored garment called a Kandura. Of course, Dubai is in a desert, so the temperatures are often high, so the loose, free-flowing clothes are practical, as well as elegant, especially in Dubai, where the Kandura is traditionally made of fine quality cotton.

To offset the desert feel, there are several waterways in Dubai, bridges crossing them, a large white suspension bridge near Business Bay straddling the meandering river as an impressive parabola. This greets me each day as I travel to Emirates Towers. Of course, the effect of meandering here is manmade, thoughts on that taking me back to my geography lessons in school and the explanation of Oxbow lakes and the depositing of silt, amongst other aspects to the meandering process.

As such, the curves of Dubai are inspirational and, when it rains, the redolence of it also brings thoughts of how the area was once rich in vegetation, the economic boom for Dubai being based on fossil fuels. I recall my first job as a Geophysicist, studying many sections of the earth's crust that emerged as printed displays. My team's aim was to reveal the curves of the strata, particularly those downward sloping curves of impervious rocks, similar in shape to the bridge just described, these curves trapping oil rising through the pervious layers and stopping it from evaporating at the surface. When the entrapment of oil or gas seemed likely, our discovery was transmuted into action, drilling often commencing, so giving us some gratification.

Meanwhile, forward-thinking Dubai is transforming its economy and diversifying into many other sectors, Expo 2020 being a major opportunity for the city to display and promote new ventures. The word 'Dubai' appears on the majority of billboards and the curves of the letters strike me as I walk around the city. The first four letters are ideal for cursive writing, the final letter standing like a throwback to traditional architectural design, somewhat reminiscent of the World Trade Centre, Dubai, with its globe sitting upon the roof, like the dot over the letter 'i'.



Of course, the local, Arabic calligraphy is about making curves, the original writing being akin to a form of art. Words are about meaning too, of course, thoughts being transmitted by them. Words of Arabic origin, like 'algebra' and 'algorithm' come to

mind. 'Algorithm' has a particularly interesting etymology, it meaning 'Man of Kwarizm' - 'al Kwarizm'. It refers to a great mathematician, Abu Ja'Far Muhamed ibn Musa al-Kharismi, a man from what is now Khiva, Uzbekistan. From a great tradition of mathematics and scientific reasoning, the leaders of Dubai are currently very interested in Futurism and scientific progress, the Museum of the Future, which I see close up when I alight at Emirates Towers Metro station, being a supreme example of architecture embracing curves. It is a giant, horizontally-elongated, oval, the structure reminding me, curiously, of my father making a model of the Vickers Wellington bomber.

Why would the museum remind me of a bomber? Well, close up, the structure of the museum looks geodetic, like the wings of the Wellington bomber. My father explained it all to me as he glued and painted a model Wellington about 45 years ago. A geodetic framework spreads the forces applied to it, so making it a strong structure in comparison with its weight.



Anyway, from the Emirates Towers Metro station, which, in itself, is wonderfully arrayed with gold and silver curves, I return home to the Internet City. I particularly enjoy the walk from that Metro station to my apartment, the bends, twists and turns, fascinating me. When I first received the message from my friend about the "shapely architecture" in my photos, I was walking along the pavement that winds its way to my home. It was then that I decided to write this article.

I must say that I have enjoyed the thoughts which have emerged. I hope you have too. I hope you will be inspired to look around where you live. I hope you will be able to conjure some pleasant memories. I recall many other related memories of laughing during my school geography lessons, romantic strolls along beautiful pathways, the intense, but informative, discussions with my father, and the many cultural treasures that I have encountered during visits to architectural splendours. I may live in a desert, dear reader, yet, far from there being nothing, with thought, wherever you are, there's always something.