

# SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MENSA CHRONICLE

If you or someone you know would like to be a speaker at our monthly dinner, please contact Jim Mizera at 203-522-1959 or [Jmizera@hotmail.com](mailto:Jmizera@hotmail.com). The dinner is held the third Saturday of the month.

## ARCHIVED COPIES OF THE CHRONICLE



going back to 2000 are available on the Internet at <http://www.doctechical.com/scm>. You can download the latest e-mail version of the Chronicle there, as well as previous issues. All issues are in read-only Adobe Acrobat format so there is no chance of viruses accompanying the files.

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Southern CT Mensa is looking for an Activities Coordinator. If you would like to fill this position, please contact President Rick D'Amico at [usamarbiol@aol.com](mailto:usamarbiol@aol.com)



**SCHEDULE OF CHAPTER EVENTS FOR DECEMBER**

Friday, December 9, 7:00.

**Southern CT and Western MA Joint Dinner**

Monthly dinner at the Old Sorrento Restaurant, Newtown Road, DANBURY, CT. Interested Mensans should contact Ward Mazzucco at (203) 744-1929, ext. 25, wjm@danburylaw.com, or Rev. Bill Loring at (203) 794-1389, frbill@mags.net.

Saturday, December 17, 8:00 pm

**Theater Event: Bram Stoker's Dracula**

performed by the Renaissance Theater Company Actor's Ensemble at Fellowship Hall, 45 Tabor Drive, Branford, CT (www.actorsensemble.com). Tickets are \$12. Contact Jim Mizera at (203) 522-1959, jmizera@hotmail.com, for info or reservations.

**Monthly Dinner**

There is no monthly dinner in December. Please see January's events for information on the next dinner.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR JANUARY**

Friday, January 13, 7:00.

**Southern Connecticut and Connecticut/Western Massachusetts Joint Dinner**

See above listing for details.

Saturday, January 21, 7:00.

**Monthly Dinner**

**NEW Members Dinner.** Southern CT Mensan Dave Wittenberg will speak on innovation. New members are encouraged to attend to meet with Mensans new and old. Before the presentation, we will enjoy dinner in our private dining room at the Stony Hill Inn, 46 Stony Hill Road (right off Exit 8 on Rte. 84), Bethel, CT 06801, (203-743-5533). You can bring a donation of money or food to benefit the Connecticut Food Bank.

*Admitted in CT, NY & OR*

**Sharon Oberst DeFala, Esq.**  
GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW

<p>Law Offices <b>Gary Oberst</b> <i>A Professional Corporation</i> 111 East Avenue Norwalk, CT 06851</p>	<p>Office (203) 866-4646 Home (203) 852-9571 Fax (203) 852-1574 <i>sharon@oberstlaw.com</i></p>
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Dress is casual. Contact Jim Mizera, jmizera@hotmail.com, 203-522-1959, for information and reservations. Please try to MAKE RESERVATIONS by FRIDAY, January 20 so we can assure that the restaurant can provide seating in the main area for everyone. Guests are welcome. If you make reservations and can't attend, PLEASE call and cancel.

Directions from New Haven/Bridgeport: Take Route 25-8 all the way past Brookfield into Bethel, where it becomes ROUTE 6 West. OR take I-84 and get off at Exit 9 (Route 25 Brookfield). At the end of the ramp take a left if heading west or a right if heading east. At the first light take a right on to ROUTE 6 West. The hotel is located 2 miles on the right, not far over the Bethel line.

From Stamford/Norwalk: Take Route 7 to I-84 and follow the above directions.

**CONNECTICUT AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS MENSA CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS**

This is not a complete listing WE - Weekly Event, ME - Monthly Event, YE - Yearly Event CT & W. Mass Calendar Editor Gisela Rodriguez, (860) 872-3106, email: lilith@snet.net.

**Mensans on the Radio:**

C&WM Mensan Janine Bujalski is on the airwaves every 1st & 3rd Friday 6-10 a.m. on 89.5FM, WPKN in Bridgeport, CT. There is a limited internet broadcast - about 25 can listen simultaneously at www.wpkn.org. From 6-9 AM there's jazz, blues & music from Brazil and from 9-10 AM the music is from Louisiana, mostly Cajun & zydeco.

If you wish to comment on articles or submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, Jmizera@hotmail.com. E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and e-mail address or telephone number. Anonymous material will be rejected, although names will be withheld on request. Items will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Currently, the deadline for postal submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication, and the 20th of the month for e-mail submissions.

Vice LocSec Will Mackey is hosting Friday evening Classics from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. weekly on 91.3 FM, WWUH, in West Hartford. The name of the program is "What You Will" and its focus is chamber music.

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For event listings in the Media, leave a message for me by the 10th of the previous month at (860) 872-3106 or email Lilith@snet.net Subject: Calendar There's also the [CWM-Announce] upcoming events reminder email list, which I send out \*approximately\* weekly. Subscribe and unsubscribe options are located at <http://lists.us.mensa.org/mailman/listinfo/cwm-announce> for your convenience. And any Mensan who wants to notify their fellow Ms about any late-breaking event s/he wants to share with our delightful chapter, please email me ASAP with the details and I'll get it out to the list. You may also check the website [www.cwm.us.mensa.org](http://www.cwm.us.mensa.org) for our calendar updates.

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## DECEMBER

1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Thursdays 7:00 pm  
**Scrabble** (WE) at Emmanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Drive, West Hartford. Ellen Leonard, (860) 667-1966 (Please call first to make sure this is happening today).

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2 Friday 5:30 pm  
**Happy Hour**  
 in Wallingford (ME, 1st Fridays) Ann Polanski (contact her at 203-269-4565 or [ann.polanski@rfsworld.com](mailto:ann.polanski@rfsworld.com)) hosts us upstairs at George's II Restaurant, 950 Yale Avenue, Wallingford, CT 06492 Phone: 203-269-1059. Directions: Exit 66 off Wilbur Cross Parkway. Turn left (south) onto Rte 5. Take first left that's not a highway entrance onto Yale Avenue. George's II is in the Yale Plaza on the right.

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9 Friday 6:30 pm  
**Trivial Pursuit Night**  
 Henry Greene would like to host another pot luck dinner and Trivial Pursuit night at his home in Windsor, CT. Yay Henry! All are welcome, rsvp by Dec 5, call 860-298-0323 or [hgreene@ixguys.com](mailto:hgreene@ixguys.com) for directions and food coordination.

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16 Friday 7:00 pm  
**Annual Holiday Party**  
 (YE) at the Solomon Welles House, 220 Hartford Avenue, Wethersfield, CT ([www.wethersfieldct.com/rec/directions.html#swhouse](http://www.wethersfieldct.com/rec/directions.html#swhouse)) Come feast and mingle with old and new friends, and maybe give your intellectual 2% at the Chapter Annual Meeting, too. Everybody welcome! Contact any ExComm member (contact info on the inside back cover of the Media) if you have questions or want to add anything to the agenda.

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23 Friday 5:00 pm  
**Happy Hour** (ME, 4th Friday) Colonial Tymes, 2389 Dixwell Ave, Hamden. Located about 1/2 mile north of Exit 60, Wilbur Cross Parkway. We are now reserving the middle tables on the left as you walk in the bar. Dinner is a possibility if enough people are interested. Come on down and join us this month, we'd love to see ya. Contact Gail Trowbridge (203) 877-4472 or [Gail.Trowbridge@att.net](mailto:Gail.Trowbridge@att.net).

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28 Wednesday 12 noon  
**Middlebury Lunch** (ME, last Wednesday) at Maggie McFly's in Middlebury, visible on the right from Rte. 63 just south of the Rte 63 and Rte 64 intersection. This intersection is at the end of a long ramp at Exit 17 on Rte 84 west. From this exit, turn left at the 63/64 intersection. If you use Exit 17 on Rte. 84 east (heading toward Hartford), turn left off the exit ramp and see Maggie McFly's on your left. Contact Richard Fogg at 860-274-2370 for more info.

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31 Saturday 5:30 pm  
**New Year's Eve VII - Celebrated our Way!!**  
 (YE) The tradition continues! It's back to Cromwell for C & WM's own unique New Year's Eve bash. Unlike the rest of the nation (M's love to be different), we celebrate New Year's Eve at

Greenwich Mean Time - 7 p.m. The party starts anytime after 5:30 p.m. At 7, we uncork the champagne, sing Auld Lang Syne loudly and off-key, hug everyone in sight, & celebrate. We eat around 7:30 ish. By 9 p.m., you're outta' there - plenty of time to go on to another party, celebrate First Night in Hartford, or simply get home before the serious drinkers hit the road.

Wear your absolute fanciest outfit, BYOB, your favorite show-off dinner dish to share, and \$2 for the champagne kitty. RSVP to Barb Holstein - 860-632-7873 or BarbCPA@att.net - I need a head count to plan champagne.

Note: This party is typically the largest house party of the year and is an absolute command performance - only a note from your mother or the LocSec will excuse you!!

Directions: 2 Old Colony Lane, Cromwell. I-91 N or S to Exit 22S onto Rte 9 South toward Middletown. First exit off Rte 9 = West St, Cromwell. Turn Right at end of exit ramp, first Right on Rte 3 No., first Right on Evergreen Rd., & second Right onto Old Colony Lane. #2 is the very first house on the right - gray colonial, pink door, and lots of gargoyles to greet you. Contact me if you need other directions.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

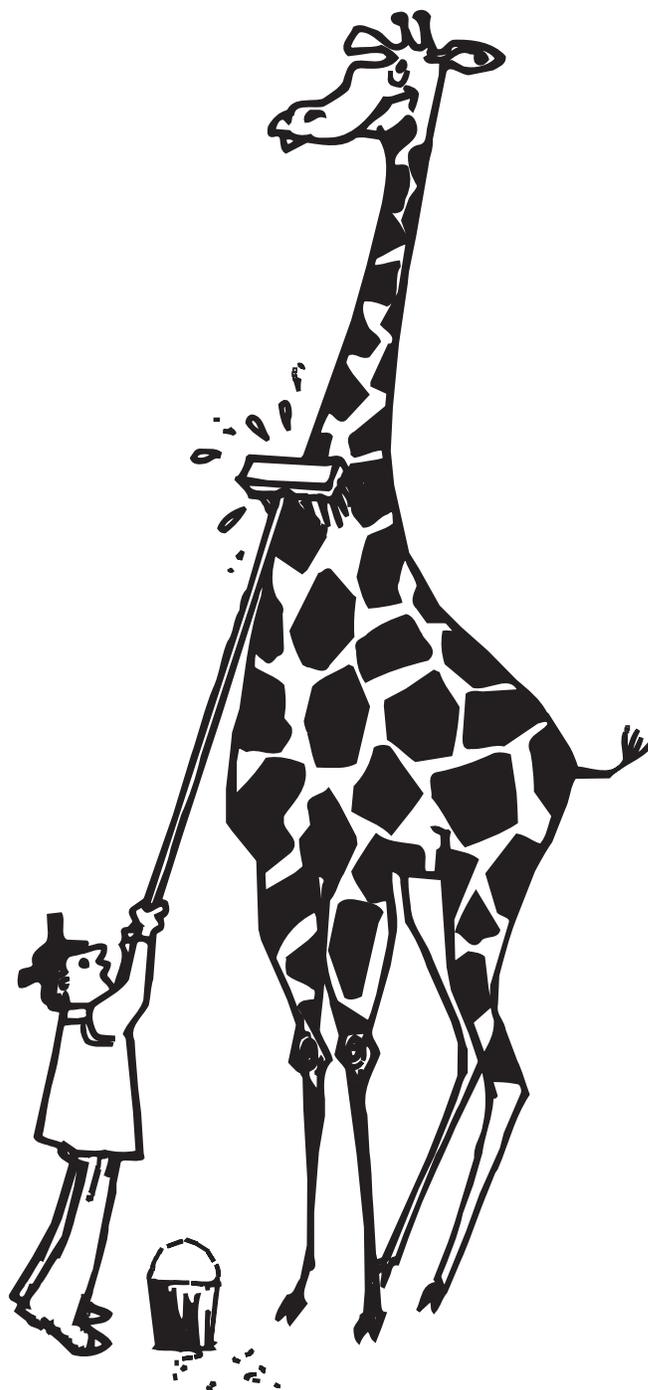
Sunday, January 15, 2:00 pm

**Book Discussion:** *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert Heinlein

will be discussed in Vernon. Contact LocSec Bob Smith BoboRobDOS@snet.net or 860-872-3106. Amazon.com sez: *Stranger in a Strange Land*, winner of the 1962 Hugo Award, is the story of Valentine Michael Smith, born during, and the only survivor of, the first manned mission to Mars. Michael is raised by Martians, and he arrives on Earth as a true innocent: he has never seen a woman and has no knowledge of Earth's cultures or religions. But he brings turmoil with him, as he is the legal heir to an enormous financial empire, not to mention de facto owner of the planet Mars. With the irascible popular author Jubal Harshaw to protect him, Michael explores human morality and the meanings of love. He founds his own church, preaching free love and disseminating the psychic talents taught him by the Martians. Ultimately, he confronts the fate reserved for all messiahs.

The impact of *Stranger in a Strange Land* was considerable, leading many children of the 60's to set up households based on Michael's water-

brother nests. Heinlein loved to pontificate through the mouths of his characters, so modern readers must be willing to overlook the occasional sour note ("Nine times out of ten, if a girl gets raped, it's partly her fault."). That aside, *Stranger in a Strange Land* is one of the master's best entertainments, provocative as he always loved to be. Can you grok it? --Brooks Peck



**REGIONAL GATHERINGS****COLLOQUIUM 2006 - "Revolution in Cosmology"**

Oct. 6 - 8, 2006 Albany, NY

Presented by Mensa and the Mensa Education and Research Foundation.

Hosted by Mensa of NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK.

Einstein unified space, time and matter 100 years ago; recent events have revealed the existence of a mysterious new kind of matter and energy. This existence was unforeseen by even Einstein, and it demands a new vision of unification. This new matter/energy has now been confirmed by many of the world's top scientists in astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology. It encompasses 96 percent of the known universe. It is quite likely that the resolution of this conundrum will impact the world as we know it forever.

We are inviting speakers from an elite group of world renowned scientists. These guests are not simply familiar with the current state of knowledge; they created it! Topics will include: Dark matter, Dark energy, String theory, Quantum loop gravity, The accelerated expansion of the universe, and more....

**REGISTRATION:**

Register online at

[www.colloquium.us.mensa.org](http://www.colloquium.us.mensa.org). Space is limited!

"Revolution in Cosmology" will take place at the Albany Marriott in Albany, N.Y. To make your reservations, call 800/443-8952 and mention Mensa to get our group rate of \$109 per person for single or double rooms. If making reservations online, enter the code "amsamsa" to get the group rate.

The hotel provides free transportation to and from Albany International Airport; for pick up, use the courtesy phone kiosk in the luggage claim area. Hotel parking is free.

Albany Marriott

189 Wolf Road

Albany, N.Y. 12205

Phone: 518/458-8444

Fax: 518/458-7365

<http://marriott.com/property/property/page/ALBNY>

Adult member registration rates:

\$170 until April 30, 2006

\$220 until Aug. 31, 2006

\$270 after Sept. 1, 2006

Non-Mensa registration rates: add \$50

Student registration rate: \$220

Your registration includes lunch on Saturday and dinner on Friday and Saturday.

All Colloquium 2006 reservations must be made by the cut-off date of Sept. 15, 2006. Reservation requests received after this cut-off date will be subject to availability and rate review. All reservations must be accompanied by a first night's room deposit or guaranteed by a major credit card.

If you wish to comment on articles or submit material, please write or e-mail Jim Mizera at PMB #181, 7365 Main St., Stratford, CT. 06614-1300, [Jmizera@hotmail.com](mailto:Jmizera@hotmail.com). E-mail submissions are preferred. Please include your name, address, and e-mail address or telephone number. Anonymous material will be rejected, although names will be withheld on request. Items will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Currently, the deadline for postal submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication, and the 20th of the month for e-mail submissions.

**BOOK REVIEW**

by Rick D'Amico

**The Enemy Within: Saving America from the Liberal Assault on Our Schools, Faith, and Military**by *Michael Savage*

Michael Savage hosts the 4th most listened-to talk radio show in the US. This book spent fifteen weeks on the New York Times Bestseller List. His previous book, *The Savage Nation*, was a No. 1 and spent over twenty weeks on the Times list.

Savage contends that the greatest threat to the US doesn't come from outside its borders. Instead, liberal policies are the biggest menace to our freedoms and way of life. Much like his radio program, Savage's book deploys a brash and abrasive style that will put off many of what he calls the RDDB (Red Diaper Doper Babies, for those unfamiliar with the term). Targets of Savage's ire include illegal immigration, health care, political activists among Hollywood-types and the Supreme Court.

Early in the book, Savage tells about his upbringing. It might come as a surprise to those familiar with his writings and broadcasts, but Michael Savage was a fairly liberal person as a young man. He began his professional career as a social worker, and became disillusioned by what he found to be rampant abuses of the welfare system. Determined to make a difference in society, he went into teaching. However, he found that the Affirmative Action environment in the profession seriously impeded his attempts to move up in his field despite his advanced degrees and authorships. That was his "Saul-on-the-road-to-Damascus" conversion; a fervent conservative was born. I found this part of the book particularly enlightening, as often the most energized proponents of one school of thought started as members of the opposing school. It helped me understand Michael Savage.

In a chapter entitled "COURTS: Stench from the Bench," Savage contends that the U.S. Supreme Court is more to be feared than is al Qaeda. He also is critical of state supreme courts and the American Civil Liberties Union. To make his case, he gives various examples of bizarre court decisions (e.g., a rape and kidnapping case where a

"cultural defense" resulted in the perpetrator receiving a light sentence).

On the military, Savage maintains that the Far-Left is undermining the Armed Forces [--"there's a fine line between dissent and sedition"]. He gives several examples of this, for example, Norman Mailer's comment that it took courage to do what the terrorists did, and Chrissie Hynde's (lead singer for The Pretenders) statement during a concert that she hopes the Muslims win [the War on Terror].

As a man who holds two master's degrees and one Ph.D., Savage takes on liberals in the education system in two chapters. In "SCHOOLS: Condoms on Cucumbers," he comments on several issues, from Ritalin to the opening of the Harvey Milk School, a high school in New York City exclusively for homosexual students. He opposes both, Ritalin because it is overused and dulls the senses of potentially brilliant students, and the Harvey Milk School because it diverts large amounts of funding from a schools system where a large percentage of the schools are getting failing grades from the Department of Education.

He also revisited a time when he was in elementary school, and was elected class president--twice. Each time the teacher disallowed the election, and finally held a third election where he wasn't eligible. He held it out as an example of how teachers attempt to control the minds of the students.

In "COLLEGES: Houses of Porn and Scorn," he attacks what he feels is a curriculum that has taught that black-and-white issues no longer exist. He is particularly concerned with the arts ["rather than creating a painting or sculpture that stands the test of time, today's crop of neophytes view their works in terms of how much they can shock the senses of a morally jaded audience"].

While Savage may cross over the edge sometimes, I find it difficult to disagree with him on most points. However, his caustic writing only serves to obscure his legitimate points. *The Enemy Within* is less of a persuasive argument and more like meat for true believers. As one whom some might consider a true believer, I was disappointed that this was all that the book offered.

**FROM THE VICE CHAIR**

Marghretta McBean

I visited Chicago for the first time and attended Chicago Mensa's HalloweeM RG. What a blast! All the reports about this being the largest Regional Gathering in the country were true. Over five hundred Mensans of all ages partied and partied some more. Of particular interest to me was the large number of younger members: well over 100 GenXers and GenYers. Their presence seemed to make it a livelier affair: dancing to MP3 tunes and Pretentious Drinking were just a few of the crowd pleasers. Dedicated volunteers were the key; they did an excellent job organizing this 30th production of a Mensa tradition.

The waning days of autumn have always been a time of reflection for me. For many, it means gearing up for holiday festivities, which seem to start earlier and earlier; I saw Christmas decorations in a store on October 15th, two weeks before Hallowe'en. Scary! Everyday the news brings information about yet another natural or man-made disaster: it is hard at times to find anything for which to be thankful. But as year end draws near, items do come to mind: the wonderful gift of higher intelligence; good health, particularly for uninsured folks like myself; the ability to run in the crisp sunlight; a wonderful daughter; my dozens of houseplants. The more thought we give to what we do have, the less time we can take to worry about what we don't have. Give thanks and give it often.

The smell of gingerbread means cold weather to me. These pancakes are great for a weekend brunch, or even for dessert.

**GINGERBREAD PANCAKES**

1 cup all purpose flour  
 1/3 cup (packed) brown sugar  
 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder  
 1/4 teaspoon baking soda  
 2 teaspoons ground ginger  
 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
 Pinch ground cloves  
 Pinch freshly grated nutmeg  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 3/8 cup sour cream  
 1/2 cup milk  
 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled  
 2 tablespoons molasses  
 1 large egg  
 Ice cream (french vanilla or eggnog are especially yummy)

1. Heat a griddle. Whisk together all dry ingredients, making sure brown sugar does not clump.
2. In another bowl, whisk together all the remaining ingredients except ice cream. Pour liquid ingredients over dry, and mix gently with a whisk.
3. Grease the griddle, if necessary. Spoon 1/4 cup batter onto griddle for each pancake, allowing space for spreading. Lightly press batter into rounds with a spatula. Cook until undersides are very brown and tops are lightly speckled with bubbles. Flip pancakes over, and cook second side until light brown.
4. Serve hot, topped with ice cream.

Yield: About 12 medium-size pancakes.

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The views expressed in this publication are the view of the individual submitting items for publication, and DO NOT represent the opinions of American Mensa, Ltd., the Chapter Executive Committee or the Editor unless so stated in the article Unless otherwise noted, material is not copyrighted and may be used in other publications; please let us know by sending two copies to the Editor (one copy for the Editor, one copy for the Author).

**PUZZLES & QUESTIONS**

(Answers may be in next month's Chronicle.)

1. What percentage of known species are insects?
2. How many recessions and depressions have you lived through?
3. How far apart are clouds?
4. What percentage of American adults own their own business?
5. What are the best characteristics of the English language?
6. What is the difference between a mountain and a hill?  
What is the smallest mountain?
7. List as many diets as you can.
8. How many cowboys are there in the United States?
9. What drug has been the most beneficial to mankind?
10. What new technologies will you be adapting in 2006?

**ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES:**

1. When do Fahrenheit and Centigrade temperatures coincide?

A: The Fahrenheit and Centigrade scales coincide at -40 degrees.

4. When was the word "terrorist" coined?

A: The word "terrorism" appears to have been first used to describe the Jacobins during the French Revolution. It's first known English use is 1798. Different forms of the term sprung up in the 19th and 20th centuries.

6. Approximately what percentage of India's population consists of untouchables?

A: The Dalit, the Untouchables, number somewhere between 160 million and 250 million, or about 15% - 25% of India's population.

8. What is the world's largest island?

A: Officially, Greenland is the world's largest island, with an area of about 822,700 sq. miles (2,130,800 sq km). It's population is only 40,000. New Guinea is second, having an area of 309,000 sq. mi. (800,000 sq. km.), followed by Borneo, 280,100 sq. mi. (725,500 sq. km.), Madagascar, 226,658 sq. mi. (578,041), and Baffin Island, Canada, 195,928 sq. mi. (507,451 sq. km.).

If Australia were considered an island, it would be the world's largest island, with an area of 2,966,200 sq. mi. (7,682,300 sq km). Australia is officially considered a continent. However, the criteria for classifying continents and islands are debatable - geological, political, and cultural standards are all used. For example, some say that Australia is an island because a continent must have more than one country. On the other hand, those who say a continent must have an independent, stable continental crust are justified in calling Australia a continent instead of an island. But the same criterion would make Madagascar and some other islands continents and Europe a series of peninsulas.

9. What percentage of Americans carry over a monthly balance on their credit cards?

A: More than 60% of Americans carry over a balance on their credit card. The average American now owes about \$9,000 on their revolving credit balance and pays about \$1,000 in interest a year. According to a survey by a college lending agency, the average undergraduate has an outstanding credit card balance of over \$2,000.

## NOVEMBER DINNER

Fairfield and New Haven counties have dozens of community theaters. What's it like to work in these amateur theater groups? According to Bob Liftig, our November dinner speaker, it's a job that's uniquely demanding and rewarding. His presentation was filled with stories that he's gathered from his years of teaching and acting, and the laughs, tears, pains, and pleasures of the stage world.

Bob caught the acting bug in high school and pursued a professional acting career after college. But faced with the need to make a living, he became a high school English teacher in Westchester. He earned advanced degrees and taught English, Literature, and Drama at night at Fairfield and Sacred Heart universities. After retiring from high school teaching, though, Bob heard the call of the playhouse again. He ventured into community theater with the Clan Na Gael in Fairfield, Shakespeare on the Green and the Curtain Call Players in Stamford, the Westport Community Theater, and the Darien Players. He has played a variety of dramatic and comic roles, the most recent being Hercule Poirot's assistant Hastings in the Darien Players' performance of Agatha Christie's detective story *Black Coffee*. Mensans enjoyed that play last month and saw Bob display the same gusto there that he brought to his November talk.

What type of people toil in community theater? Bob's worked alongside a variety of moonlighters, including policeman, lawyers, cooks, actors who do voiceovers and cameo roles, and even a homeless man. Beginners who are trying to become professional actors, older people who gave up on professional theater or cinema in favor of more pedestrian jobs, and those somewhere in between are the three main groups of amateur actors. No one in community theater gets paid except the directors. Members of Actor's Equity cannot work in these productions but actors from the Screen Actors' Guild can. This can create problems, however, as professional actors sometimes get calls to take professional roles on a moment's notice and leave the amateur production they are working on. Non-professionals who work ordinary jobs have to make tremendous sacrifices to do weeks of rehearsals after their day jobs. As Bob noted, it's almost

impossible to do unless you're single or have a very supportive family, as he has with his wife Inez.

One of the highlights of the presentation came when Bob showed clips from his DVD tape of the Westport Community Theater's 2004 play *Spider's Web*, by Agatha Christie. This was one of the best shows Bob has worked in but it almost fell apart during rehearsal. Three weeks before the opening, the director walked out and the entire cast save one actress followed him. The show had to go on, however, and this actress stepped from a minor role into one of the leads. She did a superb job, learning all her lines in a few days. What could have been a fiasco turned into a triumph that season subscribers will remember for years.

Besides working in mysteries, modern dramas and comedies, Bob loves doing Shakespeare. He studied Shakespearean Acting at the American Globe Theater in New York City and has attended several of the many Shakespearean festivals across the country. His favorite role was Sir Toby Welch in Shakespeare on the Green's production of *Twelfth Night* (Stamford, 2004). To fill parts like this, he's had to learn British accents and unlearn several misconceptions that Americans have about both modern and Elizabethan British speech.

Dr. Liftig has gained many other insights from his return to acting and he generously shares them with students in his drama classes. He said that there is a lot that you discover from rehearsing that you don't pick up from just reading scripts or watching a finished play. For instance, the gestures in Shakespeare's plays were almost spelled out in the dialogue. There is much stage technique like this that one learns best by acting. Bob now has his students attend rehearsals of plays put on by companies like the Darien Players. The students get a better understanding of the decisions that directors and actors make and the actors get valuable audience feedback before opening night.

Bob looks forward to doing many more shows. He will be appearing in upcoming productions of the Darien Players, including Tennessee William's "*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*" (January 13 - 28), and "*Room Service*" (March 10 - 25), the Players'

Marx Brothers comedy. You can get the full schedule for the Darien Players by checking their website at <http://arts.darien.org/players/playersShows.php>. In the summer, he will be performing in the Curtain Call Theaters Shakespeare on the Green play (<http://www.curtaincallinc.com/sog/index.asp>.) Make it a point to take in some of these performances and see for yourself the talent and vitality that actors like Bob Liftig bring to the community theater.

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There will be no Southern CT Mensa dinner in December, but we will be returning in January. One of our members, Dave Wittenberg, will be speaking on innovation.

**KICK IRRATIONAL**

Brian Lord is a cartoonist and member of Middle Tennessee Mensa (Nashville area). His cartoon Kick Irrational is read weekly by people in 192 cities, 46 states and 9 countries via the Internet. You can see the Kick Irrational comics page at [www.kickirrational.com](http://www.kickirrational.com)

KICK IRRATIONAL by Brian Lord

[www.KickComics.com](http://www.KickComics.com)



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[www.KickComics.com](http://www.KickComics.com)



## NOTED AND QUOTED

These Macedonians are a rude and clownish people; they call a spade a spade.

- Plutarch, (46? - 120), Greek biographer and moralist

It is better to have tried and failed than to have done nothing and succeeded. - Karen Heaster

I persist on praising not the life I lead, but that which I ought to lead. I follow it at a mighty distance, crawling. - Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.E? - A.D 65), Roman Stoic philosopher

History is the transformation of tumultuous conquerors into silent footnotes.

- Paul Eldridge, (1888 - 1982), U.S. educator and poet

The only person who listens to both sides of an argument is the fellow in the next apartment.

- Ruth Brown

To be remembered after we are dead, is but poor recompense for being treated with contempt while we are living.

- William Hazlitt, (1778 - 1830), English critic, essayist

Everyone is an explorer. How could you possibly live your life looking at a door and not open it?

- Robert D. Ballard, (1942 - ), oceanographer and explorer

How long should you try? Until. - Jim Rohn, American Businessman, Author, Speaker, Philosopher

I was a queen, and you took away my crown; a wife, and you killed my husband; a mother, and you deprived me of my children. My blood alone remains: take it, but do not make me suffer long. - Marie Antoinette [Josephine Jeanne], (1755 - 1793)

Indeed, man wishes to be happy even when he so lives as to make happiness impossible.

- Saint Augustine, (354 - 430)

It is feeling that sets a man thinking, and not thought that sets him feeling.

- George Bernard Shaw, (1856 - 1950)

Positive. Mistaken at the top of one's voice.

- Ambrose Bierce, (1842 - 1914?)

We need to learn to set our course by the stars, not by the lights of every passing ship.

- Omar Bradley, (1893 - 1981)

Miracles sometimes occur, but one has to work terribly hard for them. - Chaim Weizmann, (1874 - 1952), 1st president of Israel, 1948 - 1952

Sometimes I get lonesome for a storm. A full-blown storm where everything changes.

- Joan Baez, (1941 - )

Anxiety is the space between the "now" and the "then". - Richard Abell

Art is nature seen through a temperament.

- Emile Zola, (1840 - 1902), French novelist, journalist

Life is very nice, but it lacks form. It's the aim of art to give it some. - Jean Anouilh, (1910 - 1987), French novelist, playwright, screenwriter

And men live by art, greatly in great arts or cheaply in small arts.

- Joyce Cary, (1888 - 1957), British novelist.

Commuters give the city its tidal restlessness; natives give it solidity and continuity; but the settlers give it passion. - E. B. White, (1899 - 1985)

Search the parks and search the cities. You'll find no statues of committees. - David Ogilvy, (1911 - 1999), founder of Ogilvy and Mather advertising agency

Most conversations are simply monologues delivered in the presence of a witness. - Margaret Millar, (1915 - 1994 ), U.S.-Canadian mystery writer

Death is just a distant rumor to the young.

- Andrew A. Rooney, (1919 - )

What is elegance? Soap and water! - Cecil Beaton, (1904 - 1980), English fashion and portrait photographer

We spend our time envying people whom we wouldn't wish to be.

- Jean Rostand, (1894 - 1977), French biologist and writer

There is no such thing as a good excuse.

- Dero Saunders, (1914 - 2002), Forbes Thoughts editor

Experience is a private, and a very largely speechless affair.

- James Baldwin, (1924 - 1987), African-American novelist

And if there had been more of the world, They would have reached it. - Luis Vaz de Camoens, (1524? - 1580), Portuguese epic poet, author of "The Lusians", 1572

## RUMINATIONS

### OF THE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF PHILOSOPHY

by David Hume,

From An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, (1777)

1. MORAL philosophy, or the science of human nature, may be treated after two different manners; each of which has its peculiar merit, and may contribute to the entertainment, instruction, and reformation of mankind. The one considers man chiefly as born for action; and as influenced in his measures by taste and sentiment; pursuing one object, and avoiding another, according to the value which these objects seem to possess, and according to the light in which they present themselves. As virtue, of all objects, is allowed to be the most valuable, this species of philosophers paint her in the most amiable colours; borrowing all helps from poetry and eloquence, and treating their subject in an easy and obvious manner, and such as is best fitted to please the imagination, and engage the affections. They select the most striking observations and instances from common life; place opposite characters in a proper contrast; and alluring us into the paths of virtue by the views of glory and happiness, direct our steps in these paths by the soundest precepts and most illustrious examples. They make us "feel" the difference between vice and virtue; they excite and regulate our sentiments; and so they can but bend our hearts to the love of probity and true honour, they think, that they have fully attained the end of all their labours.

2. The other species of philosophers consider man in the light of a reasonable rather than an active being, and endeavour to form his understanding more than cultivate his manners. They regard human nature as a subject of speculation; and with a narrow scrutiny examine it, in order to find those principles, which regulate our understanding, excite our sentiments, and make us approve or blame any particular object, action, or behaviour. They think it a reproach to all literature, that philosophy should not yet have fixed, beyond controversy, the foundation of morals, reasoning, and criticism; and should for ever talk of truth and falsehood, vice and virtue, beauty and deformity, without being able to determine the source of these distinctions. While they at-

tempt this arduous task, they are deterred by no difficulties; but proceeding from particular instances to general principles, they still push on their enquiries to principles more general, and rest not satisfied till they arrive at those original principles, by which, in every science, all human curiosity must be bounded. Though their speculations seem abstract, and even unintelligible to common readers, they aim at the approbation of the learned and the wise; and think themselves sufficiently compensated for the labour of their whole lives, if they can discover some hidden truths, which may contribute to the instruction of posterity.

3. It is certain that the easy and obvious philosophy will always, with the generality of mankind, have the preference above the accurate and abstruse; and by many will be recommended, not only as more agreeable, but more useful than the other. It enters more into common life; moulds the heart and affections; and, by touching those principles which actuate men, reforms their conduct, and brings them nearer to that model of perfection which it describes. On the contrary, the abstruse philosophy, being founded on a turn of mind, which cannot enter into business and action, vanishes when the philosopher leaves the shade, and comes into open day; nor can its principles easily retain any influence over our conduct and behaviour. The feelings of our heart, the agitation of our passions, the vehemence of our affections, dissipate all its conclusions, and reduce the profound philosopher to a mere plebeian.

4. This also must be confessed, that the most durable, as well as justest fame, has been acquired by the easy philosophy, and that abstract reasoners seem hitherto to have enjoyed only a momentary reputation, from the caprice or ignorance of their own age, but have not been able to support their renown with more equitable posterity. It is easy for a profound philosopher to commit a mistake in his subtile reasonings; and one mistake is the necessary parent of another, while he pushes on his consequences, and is not deterred from embracing any conclusion, by its unusual appearance, or its contradiction to popular opinion. But a philosopher, who purposes only to represent the common sense of mankind in more beautiful and more engaging colours, if by accident he falls into error, goes no farther; but renewing his appeal to common sense, and the

natural sentiments of the mind, returns into the right path, and secures himself from any dangerous illusions. The fame of Cicero flourishes at present; but that of Aristotle is utterly decayed. La Bruyere passes the seas, and still maintains his reputation: But the glory of Malebranche is confined to his own nation, and to his own age. And Addison, perhaps, will be read with pleasure, when Locke shall be entirely forgotten.

The mere philosopher is a character, which is commonly but little acceptable in the world, as being supposed to contribute nothing either to the advantage or pleasure of society; while he lives remote from communication with mankind, and is wrapped up in principles and notions equally remote from their comprehension. On the other hand, the mere ignorant is still more despised; nor is any thing deemed a surer sign of an illiberal genius in an age and nation where the sciences flourish, than to be entirely destitute of all relish for those noble entertainments. The most perfect character is supposed to lie between those extremes; retaining an equal ability and taste for books, company, and business; preserving in conversation that discernment and delicacy which arise from polite letters; and in business, that probity and accuracy which are the natural result of a just philosophy. In order to diffuse and cultivate so accomplished a character, nothing can be more useful than compositions of the easy style and manner, which draw not too much from life, require no deep application or retreat to be comprehended, and send back the student among mankind full of noble sentiments and wise precepts, applicable to every exigence of human life. By means of such compositions, virtue becomes amiable, science agreeable, company instructive, and retirement entertaining.

Man is a reasonable being; and as such, receives from science his proper food and nourishment: But so narrow are the bounds of human understanding, that little satisfaction can be hoped for in this particular, either from the extent of security or his acquisitions. Man is a sociable, no less than a reasonable being: But neither can he always enjoy company agreeable and amusing, or preserve the proper relish for them. Man is also an active being; and from that disposition, as well as from the various necessities of human life, must submit to business and occupation: But the mind requires some relaxation, and cannot always support its bent to care and industry. It seems, then, that nature has pointed out a mixed kind of life as most suitable to the human race, and secretly admonished them to allow none of these biasses to "draw" too much, so as to incapacitate them for other occupations and entertainments. Indulge your passion for science, says she, but let your science be human, and such as may have a direct reference to action and society. Abstruse thought and profound researches I prohibit, and will severely punish, by the pensive melancholy which they introduce, by the endless uncertainty in which they involve you, and by the cold reception which your pretended discoveries shall meet with, when communicated. Be a philosopher; but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man.

5. Were the generality of mankind contented to prefer the easy philosophy to the abstract and profound, without throwing any blame or contempt on the latter, it might not be improper, perhaps, to comply with this general opinion, and allow every man to enjoy, without opposition, his own taste and sentiment. But as the matter is often carried farther, even to the absolute rejecting of all profound reasonings, or

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what is commonly called "metaphysics", we shall now proceed to consider what can reasonably be pleaded in their behalf.

We may begin with observing, that one considerable advantage, which results from the accurate and abstract philosophy, is, its subserviency to the easy and humane; which, without the former, can never attain a sufficient degree of exactness in its sentiments, precepts, or reasonings. All polite letters are nothing but pictures of human life in various attitudes and situations; and inspire us with different sentiments, of praise or blame, admiration or ridicule, according to the qualities of the object, which they set before us. An artist must be better qualified to succeed in this undertaking, who, besides a delicate taste and a quick apprehension, possesses an accurate knowledge of the internal fabric, the operations of the understanding, the workings of the passions, and the various species of sentiment which discriminate vice and virtue. How painful soever this inward search or enquiry may appear, it becomes, in some measure, requisite to those, who would describe with success the obvious and outward appearances of life and manners. The anatomist presents to the eye the most hideous and disagreeable objects; but his science is useful to the painter in delineating even a Venus or an Helen. While the latter employs all the richest colours of his art, and gives his figures the most graceful and engaging airs; he must still carry his attention to the inward structure of the human body, the position of the muscles, the fabric of the bones, and the use and figure of every part or organ. Accuracy is, in every case, advantageous to beauty, and just reasoning to delicate sentiment. In vain would we exalt the one by depreciating the other.

Besides, we may observe, in every art or profession, even those which most concern life or action, that a spirit of accuracy, however acquired, carries all of them nearer their perfection, and renders them more subservient to the interests of society. And though a philosopher may live remote from business, the genius of philosophy, if carefully cultivated by several, must gradually diffuse itself throughout the whole society, and bestow a similar correctness on every art and calling. The politician will acquire greater foresight and subtlety, in the subdividing and balancing of power; the lawyer more method and finer

principles in his reasonings; and the general more regularity in his discipline, and more caution in his plans and operations. The stability of modern governments above the ancient, and the accuracy of modern philosophy, have improved, and probably will still improve, by similar gradations.

6. Were there no advantage to be reaped from these studies, beyond the gratification of an innocent curiosity, yet ought not even this to be despised; as being one accession to those few safe and harmless pleasures, which are bestowed on human race. The sweetest and most inoffensive path of life leads through the avenues of science and learning; and whoever can either remove any obstructions in this way, or open up any new prospect, ought so far to be esteemed a benefactor to mankind. And though these researches may appear painful and fatiguing, it is with some minds as with some bodies, which being endowed with vigorous and florid health, require severe exercise, and reap a pleasure from what, to the generality of mankind, may seem burdensome and laborious. Obscurity, indeed, is painful to the mind as well as to the eye; but to bring light from obscurity, by whatever labour, must needs be delightful and rejoicing.

But this obscurity in the profound and abstract philosophy, is objected to, not only as painful and fatiguing, but as the inevitable source of uncertainty and error. Here indeed lies the justest and most plausible objection against a considerable part of metaphysics, that they are not properly a science; but arise either from the fruitless efforts of human vanity, which would penetrate into subjects utterly inaccessible to the understanding, or from the craft of popular superstitions, which, being unable to defend themselves on fair ground, raise these intangling brambles to cover and protect their weakness. Chaced from the open country, these robbers fly into the forest, and lie in wait to break in upon every unguarded avenue of the mind, and overwhelm it with religious fears and prejudices. The stoutest antagonist, if he remit his watch a moment, is oppressed. And many, through cowardice and folly, open the gates to the enemies, and willingly receive them with reverence and submission, as their legal sovereigns.

7. But is this a sufficient reason, why philoso-

phers should desist from such researches, and leave superstition still in possession of her retreat? Is it not proper to draw an opposite conclusion, and perceive the necessity of carrying the war into the most secret recesses of the enemy? In vain do we hope, that men, from frequent disappointment, will at last abandon such airy sciences, and discover the proper province of human reason. For, besides, that many persons find too sensible an interest in perpetually recalling such topics; besides this, I say, the motive of blind despair can never reasonably have place in the sciences; since, however unsuccessful former attempts may have proved, there is still room to hope, that the industry, good fortune, or improved sagacity of succeeding generations may reach discoveries unknown to former ages. Each adventurous genius will still leap at the arduous prize, and find himself stimulated, rather than discouraged, by the failures of his predecessors; while he hopes that the glory of achieving so hard an adventure is reserved for him alone. The only method of freeing learning, at once, from these abstruse questions, is to enquire seriously into the nature of human understanding, and show, from an exact analysis of its powers and capacity, that it is by no means fitted for such remote and abstruse subjects. We must submit to this fatigue, in order to live at ease ever after: And must cultivate true metaphysics with some care, in order to destroy the false and adulterate. Indolence, which, to some persons, affords a safeguard against this deceitful philosophy, is, with others, overbalanced by curiosity; and despair, which, at some moments, prevails, may give place afterwards to sanguine hopes and expectations. Accurate and just reasoning is the only catholic remedy, fitted for all persons and all dispositions; and is alone able to subvert that abstruse philosophy and metaphysical jargon, which, being mixed up with popular superstition, renders it in a manner impenetrable to careless reasoners, and gives it the air of science and wisdom.

8. Besides this advantage of rejecting, after deliberate enquiry, the most uncertain and disagreeable part of learning, there are many positive advantages, which result from an accurate scrutiny into the powers and faculties of human nature. It is remarkable concerning the operations of the mind, that, though most intimately present to us, yet, whenever they become the

object of reflexion, they seem involved in obscurity; nor can the eye readily find those lines and boundaries, which discriminate and distinguish them. The objects are too fine to remain long in the same aspect or situation; and must be apprehended in an instant, by a superior penetration, derived from nature, and improved by habit and reflexion. It becomes, therefore, no inconsiderable part of science barely to know the different operations of the mind, to separate them from each other, to class them under their proper heads, and to correct all that seeming disorder, in which they lie involved, when made the object of reflexion and enquiry. This talk of ordering and distinguishing, which has no merit, when performed with regard to external bodies, the objects of our senses, rises in its value, when directed towards the operations of the mind, in proportion to the difficulty and labour, which we meet with in performing it. And if we can go no farther than this mental geography, or delimitation of the distinct parts and powers of the mind, it is at least a satisfaction to go so far; and the more obvious this science may appear (and it is by no means obvious) the more contemptible still must the ignorance of it be esteemed, in all pretenders to learning and philosophy.

Nor can there remain any suspicion, that this science is uncertain and chimerical; unless we should entertain such a scepticism as is entirely subversive of all speculation, and even action. It cannot be doubted, that the mind is endowed with several powers and faculties, that these powers are distinct from each other, that what is really distinct to the immediate perception may be distinguished by reflexion; and consequently, that there is a truth and falsehood in all propositions on this subject, and a truth and falsehood, which lie not beyond the compass of human understanding. There are many obvious distinctions of this kind, such as those between the will and understanding, the imagination and passions, which fall within the comprehension of every human creature; and the finer and more philosophical distinctions are no less real and certain, though more difficult to be comprehended. Some instances, especially late ones, of success in these enquiries, may give us a juster notion of the certainty and solidity of this branch of learning. And shall we esteem it worthy the labour of a philosopher to give us a true system of the planets, and adjust the position and order of

those remote bodies; while we affect to overlook those, who, with so much success, delineate the parts of the mind, in which we are so intimately concerned?

9. But may we not hope, that philosophy, if cultivated with care, and encouraged by the attention of the public, may carry its researches still farther, and discover, at least in some degree, the secret springs and principles, by which the human mind is actuated in its operations? Astronomers had long contented themselves with proving, from the phaenomena, the true motions, order, and magnitude of the heavenly bodies: Till a philosopher, at last, arose, who seems, from the happiest reasoning, to have also determined the laws and forces, by which the revolutions of the planets are governed and directed. The like has been performed with regard to other parts of nature. And there is no reason to despair of equal success in our enquiries concerning the mental powers and economy, if prosecuted with equal capacity and caution. It is probable, that one operation and principle of the mind depends on another; which, again, may be resolved into one more general and universal: And how far these researches may possibly be carried, it will be difficult for us, before, or even after, a careful trial, exactly to determine. This is certain, that attempts of this kind are every day made even by those who philosophize the most negligently: And nothing can be more requisite than to enter upon the enterprize with thorough care and attention; that, if it lie within the compass of human understanding, it may at last be happily achieved; if not, it may, however, be rejected with some confidence and security. This last conclusion, surely, is not desirable; nor ought it to be embraced too rashly. For how much must we diminish from the beauty and value of this species of philosophy, upon such a supposition? Moralists have hitherto been accustomed, when they considered the vast multitude and diversity of those actions that excite our approbation or dislike, to search for some common principle, on which this variety of sentiments might depend.

And though they have sometimes carried the matter too far, by their passion for some one general principle; it must, however, be confessed, that they are excusable in expecting to find some general principles, into which all the vices and virtues were justly to be resolved. The like has been the endeavour of critics, logicians, and even politicians: Nor have their attempts been wholly unsuccessful; though perhaps longer time, greater accuracy, and more ardent application may bring these sciences still nearer their perfection. To throw up at once all pretensions of this kind may justly be deemed more rash, precipitate, and dogmatical, than even the boldest and most affirmative philosophy, that has ever attempted to impose its crude dictates and principles on mankind.

10. What though these reasonings concerning human nature seem abstract, and of difficult comprehension? This affords no presumption of their falsehood. On the contrary, it seems impossible, that what has hitherto escaped so many wise and profound philosophers can be very obvious and easy. And whatever pains these researches may cost us, we may think ourselves sufficiently rewarded, not only in point of profit but of pleasure, if, by that means, we can make any addition to our stock of knowledge, in subjects of such unspeakable importance. But as, after all, the abstractedness of these speculations is no recommendation, but rather a disadvantage to them, and as this difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by care and art, and the avoiding of all unnecessary detail, we have, in the following enquiry, attempted to throw some light upon subjects, from which uncertainty has hitherto deterred the wise, and obscurity the ignorant. Happy, if we can unite the boundaries of the different species of philosophy, by reconciling profound enquiry with clearness, and truth with novelty! And still more happy, if, reasoning in this easy manner, we can undermine the foundations of an abstruse philosophy, which seems to have hitherto served only as a shelter to superstition, and a cover to absurdity and error!

**POETRY CORNER****Before the Rain**

Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1836-1906)

WE knew it would rain, for all the morn  
 A spirit on slender ropes of mist  
 Was lowering its golden buckets down  
 Into the vapory amethyst.  
 Of marshes and swamps and dismal fens--  
 Scooping the dew that lay in the flowers,  
 Dipping the jewels out of the sea,  
 To sprinkle them over the land in showers.  
 We knew it would rain, for the poplars showed  
 The white of their leaves, the amber grain  
 Shrunk in the wind--and the lightning now  
 Is tangled in tremulous skeins of rain!

**The Tiger**

William Blake (1757-1827)

TIGER, tiger, burning bright  
 In the forests of the night,  
 What immortal hand or eye  
 Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
 Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
 On what wings dare he aspire?  
 What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art  
 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
 And, when thy heart began to beat,  
 What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?  
 In what furnace was thy brain?  
 What the anvil? What dread grasp  
 Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
 And water'd heaven with their tears,  
 Did He smile His work to see?  
 Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright  
 In the forests of the night,  
 What immortal hand or eye  
 Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

**Clouds**

Rupert Brooke (1887-1915)

DOWN the blue night the unending columns press  
 In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,  
 Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow  
 Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.

Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,  
 And turn with profound gesture vague and slow,  
 As who would pray good for the world, but know  
 Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain  
 Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.  
 I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as these,  
 In wise majestic melancholy train,  
 And watch the moon, and the still-raging seas,  
 And men, coming and going on the earth.

**The Windy City**

Carl Sandburg (1878 - 1967)

WINDS of the Windy City  
 Winds of corn and sea blue,  
 Spring wind white and fighting winter gray,  
 Come home here--they nickname a city for you.  
 The wind of the lake shore waits and wanders  
 The heave of the shore wind hunches the sand piles  
 The winkers of the morning stars count our cities  
 And forget the numbers.



**CHAPTER NOTES**

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