

Few Persons Use Brains to Capacity

A scientist has figured out that the human brain, at maturity, consists of one billion nerve cells. He said 10,000 of these die each day, without replacement, which might explain our declining ability to recall names and faces.

Doctors at Tulane University have been experimenting with "brain pacemakers" to stabilize mentally disturbed patients. Elsewhere, efforts are being made to develop chemicals to enable people to adjust their capabilities and moods with drugs.

Undoubtedly, more is known about the human brain today than ever before, but researchers readily admit that they have explored only the very edges of our organ of thinking that distinguishes man from lower animals. The degree to which a person utilizes his power of thought distinguishes him or her from other people.

So far, no explanation has been advanced as to why someone with

little formal education may be gifted with generous amounts of "common sense," or logical thinking, while such talent may be lacking in another, highly educated person.

It is not known, either, why citizens so frequently will select people with obvious deficiencies in "horse sense" to serve as lawmakers, judges and public officials.

Many people fastidiously regulate amounts and kinds of foods they eat, lest something cause malfunction of the digestive system or the body. Yet, the same individuals may make no effort to screen what they hear, see or read.

The stuff that people feed their minds may be far more contaminating than anything they feed their bodies, but the foul effects of pornography, profanity and triviality are ignored.

"It is not junk food that endangers us; it is junk talk," Herbert Stein, former economic adviser to presidents, wrote a few months ago.

"Junk talk not only provides no food for thought; it displaces discussion that might be nourishing."

Probably few people use their brains to capacity. The noted educator, Dr. Albert Edward Wiggam, said: "By practicing mental arithmetic 20 minutes a day for 20 days, adults can more than double their ability to calculate. By the same token, creative exercise can regain for us much of the imaginative power we have lost through neglect."

Thomas J. Watson gained fame with his business machines and he added to his fame by his one-word motto: "THINK!" A lot of the plaques are still hanging around. If people would dust them off and start thinking logically, many of the world's problems might be solved, such as energy, employment, inflation, big government and so on.

In light of thinking being applied in these and other areas, one might easily assume that "horse sense" went out of existence when automobiles took over the highways.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
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Mr. Ferdie J. Deering
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Dear Sir:

I never fail to read your column in The Daily Oklahoman and the one March 7, 1978 interested me more than usual. I would like to give you my explanation for your question as to why someone with little formal education may be gifted with more intelligence than someone who is highly educated.

Many do not know and the few who do know forget, at times, that our conscious mind is a late bloomer in human affairs. The sub-conscious mind served life for many millions of years before man acquired the big head, brain and conscious mind. During the time that the sub-conscious mind ruled the roost, life was very hard on dim wits; split second decisions were necessary, if death were to be avoided. The acquisition of this big head and brain served largely as excess baggage and the conscious mind played a minor part in man's life until about ten thousand years ago, when changing conditions forced men, in some parts of the earth, into farming. This marked the beginning of the conscious mind's ascendancy and the appearance of human parasites; the smart guys who dreamed up religions, priesthods, royalties and other diversions that enabled them to avoid honest labor and to live at the expense of their sweaty brethren.

This conscious mind is a flawed instrument; it is the mind that makes history and remembering Gibbon's definition of history as being little more than the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind, we must judge that this mind has a poor track record. This is the mind for which humanity sets up school systems and spends its money lavishly supporting, trying by this process to train their young, with results that, in our case, become progressively more unsatisfactory.

In my opinion, which lacks a hell of a lot of being humble, schools do one of two jobs well, above all others: If they do not kill the curiosity of the child with an active, inquiring mind, (if that job wasn't done at home, beforehand) they bore him almost to idiocy. War is hell, according to Sherman, but boredom has its hellish aspects, too.

Shortly after I left high school, I worked for a man who had little more than a grade school education, who taught me how to use my sub-conscious mind in solving some of the problems we had in our work. Years later, I read an article in The Scientific American, by a French mathematician, Henri Poincare, who used his sub-conscious mind to solve some of his problems, in much the same way. This mind and its use is taught in no school of which I've heard. The possessors of good minds of this sort are accused by the scholarly of using hunch and guesswork.

My association with the learned has been limited and the intelligence of that small sampling did not impress me. I am impressed with the intelligence of my father and of my associates, over the years, who had or have little formal schooling, but did have generous amounts of common sense.

The difference between these two groups, is this: We live in an age of specialization, in which the possessor of a high IQ is apt to be trained to his limit, at the expense of his sub-conscious mind. This training produces an individual whose view of this world is narrow and deep, more often than not.

The individual who used to quit school to avoid boredom or, since compulsory schooling is the order of the day, does not allow school to bore him, but who attends to his own education by reading, for example, has a wider and, probably, more shallow view of the world. They have a mind which the computer imitates; it can gather, store, correlate, and retrieve information. Of course, this mind has the same flaw as the computer, stated by its adepts as, "garbage in - garbage out". But when its possessor is not biased, but open minded, he makes logical decisions faster and faces reality more readily than his learned brother.

Irvin Cobb told a story of a young fellow, a candidate for the bar, which illustrates the flaw in the minds of many of the learned. When this young fellow appeared for his bar examination, the examiner found out quickly that he had no knowledge of Blackstone's Commentaries or Coke's Institutes and the examiner demand to know how he had prepared himself for the law. The lad proudly announced that he had practically memorized the Revised Statutes of the State of Kentucky. The examiner mulled this information, for a moment, and said, "Son there is one thing wrong with your knowledge of the law. The legislature may meet next year and repeal every damned thing you know".

Such is the fate of many highly trained specialists. Advances in knowledge, which cross the lines of several disciplines, may repeal every damned thing they know, but, by their actions, one is led to believe that the knowledge in their disciplines is written on tablets of stone. Hell hath no fury like that of authorities whose hard won, cherished knowledge is considered nonsense. They persist in error until their credibility is damaged and they defend their positions with all of the fury of the medieval papacy when its infallibility was questioned.

Witness, in recent times, Spengler with the historians and Velikovsky with the astronomers.

Yours truly,

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