



PixelPapers the Twenty Third.

1 April, 2003.

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No attachments please

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PP24 WILL NOW BE ACCEPTED.



Editorial

Computers are marvellous tools for a range of jobs especially for creative writing (see [Writing with a Computer PP1](#)).

But they are notoriously unreliable. I can think of no other product which inflicts so much pain or failure on its users. We consumers have been beguiled by tricks, bells and whistles, into accepting faulty standards of reliability.

Who would accept a new car if it suddenly stopped on occasion for no apparent reason, did not mate with your old trailer, did not accept your old passengers and required advice from the help desk on how to put it in gear, turn a corner or get to the highway?

I bought my first computer, a Mac 128, in 1985, for a considerable amount in real terms. Since then, computers have become immensely powerful and very much cheaper.

But my old Mac did not freeze or misbehave. I did not have to consult anyone about how to use the machine. I suppose that it was the T Model Ford of its time, but imagine how many Fords there would now be on the road if their development had been along computer lines!

Automobiles have become better and better, more reliable and cheaper. We should insist that computers should be the same.

(I HAVE LOST THE QUAIN OLD ENGLISH FONT THAT WAS USED FOR TITLES AND HAVE REVERTED TO TIMES THROUGHOUT, HENCE THE NEW LOOK,)

Wordsworth

Blitzkrieg or **blitz** is in common usage again, now that we have again reverted to the despicable human pastime of waging war.

It is of German origin, combining the words for lightning and war, and came to prominence in World War 11 to describe the rapid advance of highly mobile troops who used bicycles and motor vehicles to overrun defensive positions before they could be properly manned.

Lightning was used to denote speed but it is obvious that its other meaning, a strike with intense light and sound, thunder and lightning (donner und blitzen), loomed large in the minds of those on the receiving end, hence blitz.

The scenes of the night sky of Baghdad under attack seen on our television screens are surely terrible, man-made lightning storms.

Lehrer is the German word for teacher and the surname of the superbly able presenter of PBS *The Newshour*, re-broadcast on SBS. It is pleasing that SBS has bowed to criticism and corrected its introduction. We live in hopes that something will be done about mispronunciation of **kilometres** as kill-om-a-ders.

News & Views

According to media reports, the federal Department of Communications Information Technology & the Arts has spent four million Australian dollars on its website, a truly excessive sum. Critics have pointed out that the work could have been done by an Australian company for anything from \$10,000.00 up to \$100,000.00 at the outside.

The minister, Richard Alston, is said to be furious, but surely an item of this magnitude should be a ministerial responsibility.

The arts are starved for money. This amount could have funded a hundred or so practitioners for a whole year.

The site is complex, but does not seem to be vastly different to many others. Have a look for yourself at

<http://www.dcita.gov.au/Subject_Entry_Page/0,,0_1-2_2,00.html >

Joker

Followed by The Thermodynamics of Hell.

(Reproduced from the Australian Rationalist, Winter 2000).

The following is an actual question given on a University of Washington chemistry mid-term. The answer by one student was so "profound" that the professor shared it with colleagues, via the Internet, which is, of course, why we now have the pleasure of enjoying it as well.

Bonus Question: Is Hell exothermic (gives off heat) or endothermic (absorbs heat)?

Most of the students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law, (gas cools off when it expands and heats up when it is compressed) or some variant. One student, however, wrote the following:

First, we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate that souls are moving into Hell and the rate they are leaving. I think we can safely assume that once a soul gets to Hell, it will not leave. Therefore, no souls are leaving.

As for how many souls are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Some of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell. Since there are more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all souls go to Hell.

With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially. Now, we look at the rate of change of the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand proportionately as souls are added.

This gives two possibilities:

1. If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.
2. If Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it?

If we accept the postulate given to me by Teresa during my Freshman year,

that

"É. it will be a cold day in Hell before I sleep with you", and take into account the fact that I still have not succeeded in having sexual relations with her, then #2 cannot be true, and thus I am sure that Hell is exothermic and will not freeze.

The student received the only "A".

Regards :LD

Ouch!

from Net Anon

I have been guilty of looking at others my own age and thinking.. I definitely do not look that old! If you've ever done the same, you may enjoy this short story.

While waiting for my first appointment in the reception room of a new dentist, I noticed his certificate, which bore his full name. Suddenly, I remembered that a tall, handsome boy with the same name had been in my high school class some 40 years ago. Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, grey-haired man with the deeply lined face was too old to have been my classmate.

After he had examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended the local high school.

"Yes," he replied.

"When did you graduate?" I asked.

He answered, "In 1961."

"Why, you were in my class!" I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely and then asked, "What did you teach?"

Bet you didn't know some of these.....

1. A rat can last longer without water than a camel.
2. Your stomach has to produce a new layer of mucus every two weeks or it will digest itself.
3. The dot over the letter "i" is called a tittle.
4. A raisin dropped in a glass of fresh champagne will bounce up and down continuously from the bottom of the glass to the top.
5. A female ferret will die if it goes into heat and cannot find a mate. (I know some people like that!)
6. A duck's quack doesn't echo. No one knows why.
7. A 2 X 4 is really 1-1/2" by 3-1/2".
8. During the chariot scene in "Ben Hur", a small red car can be seen in the distance.
9. On average, 12 newborns will be given to the wrong parents daily! (That explains a few mysteries....)
10. Donald Duck comics were banned from Finland because he doesn't wear pants.
11. Because metal was scarce, the Oscars given out during World War II were made of wood.

12. The number of possible ways of playing the first four moves per side in a game of chess is 318,979,564,000.
13. There are no words in the dictionary that rhyme with orange, purple and silver.
14. The name Wendy was made up for the book "Peter Pan". There was never a recorded Wendy before.
15. The very first bomb dropped by the Allies on Berlin in World War II killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.
16. If one places a tiny amount of liquor on a scorpion, it will instantly go mad and sting itself to death. (Who was the sadist who discovered this?)
17. Bruce Lee was so fast that they actually had to s-l-o-w film down so you could see his moves. That's the opposite of the norm.
18. The first CD pressed in the US was Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA".
19. The original name for butterfly was flutterby.
20. The phrase "rule of thumb" is derived from an old English law which stated that you couldn't beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.
21. The first product Motorola started to develop was a record player for automobiles. At that time, the most known player on the market was Victrola, so they called themselves Motorola.
22. Roses may be red, but violets are indeed violet.
23. By raising your legs slowly and laying on your back, you cannot sink into quicksand. (Remember this one!)
24. Celery has negative calories. It takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it to begin with. (Eat more celery I say!)
25. Charlie Chaplin once won third prize in a Charlie Chaplin

look-alike contest.

26. Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying.

27. Sherlock Holmes NEVER said "Elementary, my dear Watson".

28. An old law in Bellingham, Washington, made it illegal for a woman to take more than 3 steps backwards while dancing. (What the?)

29. The glue on Israeli postage is certified kosher.

30. The Guinness Book of Records holds the record for being the book most often stolen from Public Libraries.

31. Astronauts are not allowed to eat beans before they go into space because passing wind in a spacesuit damages them. (Not to mention the other drawbacks to farting in such a confined space...)

32. Bats always turn left when exiting a cave! (Hmmm)

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