

Triton Fun Company

Science Newsletter December 2006

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December 2006

Elemental Mind

J. Brown

Special points of interest:

- Elemental Mind
- Christmas gift ideas
- Triton Fun stuff
- Superfluous questions

Happy Holidays !



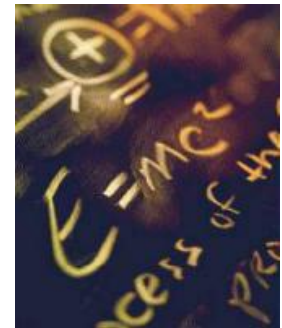
We are always looking for **contributors** to the Science Newsletter. If you would like to write an article about a science subject you are excited about, or contribute a superfluous question, or if you would like to be on our **mailing list** for future newsletters, please e-mail us at:

science@tritonfun.com

There is an interesting comparison of the data rate capability of information systems. TV requires 6,000,000 bits/second, analog telephones 3,000, Morse Code 10, and consciousness 2 or 3. This is not a measure of information input, but of how much we can pay attention to at any one time. It is an infinitesimal portion of what the brain receives, which is something on the order of 10 to the 12th power bits per second, immensely more powerful than TV. But we can assimilate only a miniscule fraction of the total; the brain has to filter out what it considers unimportant in order to avoid our minds being hopelessly overloaded. Yet our consciousness, working with this tiny portion of the total input we receive, is responsible for all our culture and decisions. Rather amazing (and a little unnerving) when you think about it. I noticed that of the systems mentioned, their increasing sophistication progressed on a timeline. The highest, TV, was also the most recent in time, preceded by the telephone and telegraph. It was a long step back to human consciousness with its low-single-digit rating. And therein may lie a reason for some of our major problems. When this capability of the brain evolved it was adequate for the conditions which then prevailed (during the early history of humans).

But in the intervening few hundred thousand years, and mostly in the last hundred or so, we have brought about a situation so drastically different from what our brains evolved to deal with that we are unable to cope with it. It may be that we are already suffering from system overload. Maybe that's why emotional and psychological breakdowns seem more common. We are getting too far removed from the simpler existence evolution prepared us for. Our technological evolution is outrunning biological evolution's ability to keep up with it. It's been said that we only use 10% of our brain capacity. Though I always doubted that, and it has in fact now been discredited, still, in this sense there may be some truth in it.

It's also said that if we had enough information we could understand just about everything, including, say, long-range weather patterns. But having the information is only part of the problem. It has to be processed. And the sheer volume of this information would overwhelm us, making it essentially useless. Quantum mechanics is a good example of something our innate curiosity led us to discover and understand, but which another part of our mind has trouble with.



It's therefore not hard to see why so many far-out notions are being promoted, using quantum theory as a justification. There is a strong temptation to go off the deep end when faced with anything that goes so much against our "common sense", especially when it's so thoroughly proven by strictly materialistic science. This is indeed heady stuff, and we need to keep both feet firmly on the ground and all systems operational when dealing with it. One thing for sure, there's a whole lot in this universe that we humans don't understand, which gets more apparent the farther we go in either direction from our own size. As Richard Feynman said, "Don't ask . . . how it can be like this. Nobody knows how it can be like this." And for determinists who, like Albert Einstein, can't conceive of "God playing dice with the universe", this from Heinz Pagels: "Complete randomness at the heart of things is the most stable situation imaginable, a divinely clever way to build a sturdy universe."

TRITON FUN PRODUCT CATALOG !



Lightweight binoculars - 10x25



Coffee Percolator: enamel



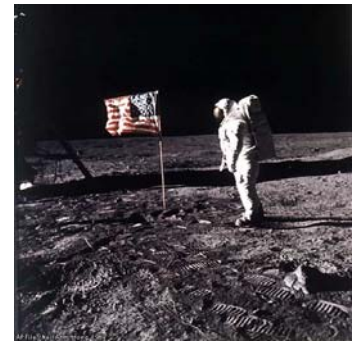
Tableware—great for camping !



Nifty bottle holder



Binoculars harness



Space and astronomy T-shirts



Astronomy necklace -silver/pearl



Magnetosphere hats



Coffee mug—
Triton Fun
Or use your logo !



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useful, stylish,
flippable !



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TRITON FUN PRODUCT CATALOG !

Great gift ideas for the science enthusiast !

Check out our Triton Fun product line for great **gift ideas** ! The holidays are almost upon us and we have many items that would be make **great Christmas presents** for the **science and astronomy enthusiast** in your family ! You can order online on our website: <http://www.tritonfun.com> or by **phone: 800-778-0560**. We take Visa and Mastercard and we have fast shipping: usually 2 days to most places in the U.S. We also ship to Canada.

Please take a look at our website and give us your comments about our products and services. Also, we have now posted earlier issues of our **Science Newsletter** on our website. If you would like to have them mailed, or if you know a school or organization that would like to receive them, please call us toll-free at **800-778-0560** or send us an e-mail at science@tritonfun.com. **We appreciate your business !**



Birdwatchers shirt



Planetary T-shirt



Pluto T-shirt #1



Pluto T-shirt #2



Planetary sweatshirt



Trophy binoculars



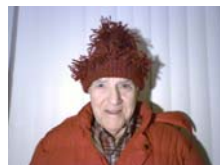
Binoculars -4x30—rubber eyecups !



Spacecraft T-shirt



Birdwatcher's sweatshirt



Magnetosphere hats



Sun visors—neat !



Sputnik shirts

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Happy Holidays to all !
 Let us all enjoy this season as
 one of kindness to others and a
 time of peace and giving.



Triton Fun Company

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 whole family

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** Send us your superfluous questions for a future issue ! They can be on any subject. The funnier, the better. M.D., our editor, appreciates the help and will send you a free Triton Fun coffee mug as compensation for your question. Or write an article for us and be read by professional and amateur astronomers and scientists in the U.S. and Canada ! **

Superfluous Questions:

- Where in the human body is the 5th metatarsal bone ?
 a) in the hand b) in the ribcage c) in the foot d) in the ear
- What is the name of the dwarf galaxy that astronomers just discovered is merging (colliding) with the Milky Way ?
 a) Triangulum Galaxy b) Virgo Stellar Stream c) Antares Cluster d) Circinus Galaxy
- Who did Dr McCoy marry in the Star Trek episode "For the World is Hollow and I have Touched the Sky" ?
 a) Irina b) Zarabeth c) Natira d) Tonia
- What trace element gives jade its green color ?
 a) Chromium b) Iron c) Aluminum d) Beryllium

—> ANSWERS in next months issue of the Science Newsletter ! <---

** ANSWERS to November's Superfluous Questions: 1. d) Osmium 2. c) 4 3. b) 311 4. a) in the country of Mali