

SUNFLOWER SEEDS



Saturday 1st, 12:45pm – MONTHLY HANG WITH THE GANG PIG OUT

AVI SEAFOOD BAR AND CHOPHOUSE

135 N WACO (Downtown)

<http://www.aviwichita.com>

Saturday 8th, 2:00pm – GUEST SPEAKER/STATED MEETING

FAIRMOUNT COFFEE MEETING ROOM

3815 E 17TH ST (ACROSS FROM WSU)

Saturday 15th, meet up 11:00am – GET OUT FIELD TRIP

B-29 DOC HANGER TOUR, 1788 S AIRPORT RD

GROUP MEETS AT: 4701 E DOUGLAS (CORNER OF DOUGLAS & OLIVER)

Saturday 22nd, 7:00pm – BANTER AND BOOKS

BARNES & NOBLES, EATING AREA

1920 N ROCK RD (BETWEEN 13TH & 21ST ST)

Saturday 29th, 12:45pm – BLUE MOON GATHERING

WICHITA ART MUSEUM – MUSE CAFE

1400 W MUSEUM BLVD (RIVERSIDE AREA)

February 2020, Volume – 48, Issue # 2

Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter



Sunflower Seeds ©2020, Wichita, Kansas Sunflower Mensa, is distributed to chapter members and select individuals. Mensa is a non-profit international society whose sole requirement for qualification for membership is a score at or above the 98th percentile on any accepted standard tests, or by submission of properly certified prior evidence.

All unsigned material in the *Sunflower Seeds* is either by the editorial staff or obtained from public domain. Items may be reprinted (if not individually copyrighted) if you're another Mensa publication. Be sure to provide proper credit to the author and *Sunflower Seeds*. No other reprinting is permitted without prior written permission of the Publication's Editor.

Contributions may be submitted at any time, but for publication in the next issue, it must be received by the 20th of the preceding month. All contributions must be signed but may be published anonymously or under a pseudonym. The Editors have total discretion to reject or edit submissions and advertisements according to style, taste and space requirements. Though the decisions of the Editors may on occasion be capricious, they are always final. **Any and all opinions expressed herein are solely that of the editor unless otherwise specified and in no way reflect the attitudes of other members of the chapter or of Mensa.**

Paid advertising is accepted on a space-available basis at \$40 per full page, \$25 per 1/2 page, \$15 per 1/4 page. Rates are double for non-members. All ads must be renewed each month. Classified ads are free to members in good standing.

Sunflower Seeds is the Official Publication of the Wichita Kansas Sunflower Mensa #670, published twelve times a year. ISDN applied for. The subscription fee of \$5.00 is included in annual dues paid to Wichita Sunflower Mensa and American Mensa, Ltd.; other subscriptions are \$18.00 per year.

Editor: R. Klaus Trenary, contact me at:
editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Officers for 2020:

LocSec: Larry Paarmann, 316-209-3752,
locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Asst. LocSec: Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,
asstlocsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Treasurer: Diane Powell, 316-617-8423,
treasurer@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Program Chair: Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,
programchair@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Publications Chair: POSITION OPEN -
publications@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Editor, Seeds: R. Klaus Trenary, 316-648-6536,
editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Recruit & Test: Dan Gollub, 316-322-3087,
testing@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Associate Proctor: POSITION OPEN -

Mem. at Large: Ronnie Lee Ingle, 316- 631-3514,
memberatlarge@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Ombudsman: Mike Dickson, 316-651-4707,
ombudsman@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org

Region – 7 VC: Rich Olcott, 720-390-7889,
rolcott@mindspring.com

American Mensa Ltd.:

1-888-294-8035

Chapter's Official Web Sites:

<https://www.kansassunflower.us.mensa.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460/>

So gewiß ist der allein glücklich und groß, der weder zu herrschen noch zu gehorchen braucht, um etwas zu sein!

- He alone is great and happy who fills his own station of independence and has neither to command nor to obey. Goethe

Sunflower Mensa Financial Report

4TH Qtr. [10/01/2019 – 12/31/2019]

Diane Powell, Treasurer Sunflower Mensa

Balance October 1, 2019	\$4049.54
SEEDS EXPENSES	- \$200.00
[sept/oct/nov/dec]	
CHRISTMAS PARTY	-\$110.67
[91.42 + 19.25]	
National Funding	
[\$92.80; 92.80; 97.35]	+ \$282.95
Balance December 31, 2019	\$4021.82

I have examined the Income, Expense and Balance Statements of Kansas Sunflower Mensa for the 2018 fiscal calendar year. In my opinion they present fairly in all material respects the organization's financial position, results of operations, and cash flow for 2019.

- Respectfully submitted, John Prechtel

LocSec Korner By: Larry D. Paarmann

In January our Pig Out location was Café Maurice, 9747 E. 21st St. North, Wichita. It specializes in Mediterranean cuisine. It has excellent food at reasonable prices.

The January Program Meeting was a presentation on highlights of the 2019 AG in Phoenix, Arizona. The slides are posted on our web site under articles. Also posted is a report on the 2019 AG, which gives more detail.

An open meeting on Political Correctness, Civility, and Freedom of Speech was held immediately after the Program Meeting. It was a profitable time of

discussion. We went over a draft of *Kansas Sunflower Mensa Statement on Civility and Freedom of Speech*. A copy of the statement is on our web site under articles. Any feedback or suggestions you may have would be welcome. Email them to locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org and mark the email with "Civility" in the subject line for easy identification.

The January field trip was to be to the B-29 "Doc" museum, in the hanger constructed just for "Doc." However, since the museum closed earlier than expected, the trip has been postponed till February.

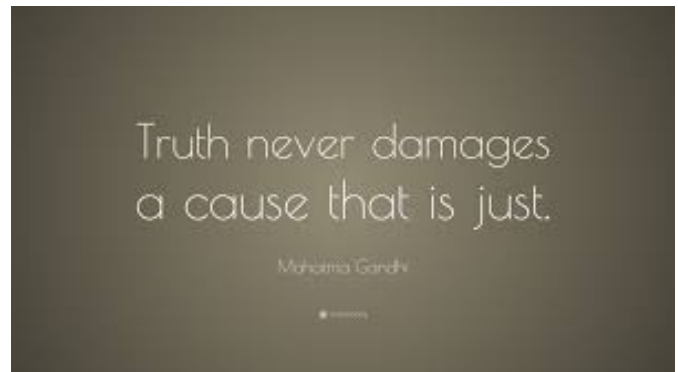
The February Pig Out will be at the AVI SeaBar & ChopHouse, 135 N. Waco, Wichita. It is located in the Drury Plaza Hotel Broadview downtown. It is known for steaks and seafood. If you go for their main items on the menu it may be a little pricier than what we usually do, but it also has sandwiches, etc., which are quite reasonable.

The February Program Meeting will be a presentation on cattle trails in Texas and Kansas, by Gary Kraisinger, author of three books on cattle trails. The most recent was published in 2017, with the title of *The Shawnee-Arbuckle Cattle Trail 1867-1870: The Predecessor of the Chisholm Trail to Abilene, Kansas*.

The February field trip will be our second attempt to see the Boeing B-29 "Doc" museum, in the hanger constructed just for "Doc."

The fourth Saturday activity will be our usual Banter & Books meeting at Barnes & Noble.

This February, although unusual for February, has a fifth Saturday, so we will have our Blue Moon SIG meetings at the Muse Café in the Wichita Art Museum.



This Month's Field Trip:

Wichita was transformed from a simple cow-town into an industrial giant in aircraft manufacturing. Come with us and view one of only two airworthy B-29's in the World. We will tour the new hanger constructed just for "Doc" and have a chance to inspect the airplane and even enter the cockpit. Admission is \$10 plus \$5 more if you want to access the cockpit. Closes at 1:00pm.

We did not make it here in January but will get together closer to 11:00 this time to leave by 11:30.

Located next to the airport @ 1788 S Airport RD, (316) 260-4312. <http://www.b29doc.com>

This Month's Pig-Out:



The Avi Deli is an upscale seafood and steak deli located in the heart

of downtown Wichita, with a nice selection of wines, beers and alcoholic beverages.

This Month's Guest Speaker:



Award-winning author Gary Kraisinger has published three books and various articles on Texas cattle trails. The couple researches, lectures, and writes about the Texas cattle trail industry that lasted only about 50 years from 1846 to 1897. They have mapped all four South to North cattle trail

systems. Their latest book addresses the Famous Chisholm Trail. Their historical research has been recognized by the Oklahoma Historical Society, the National Parks Service, True West Magazine, the Wild West History Association (Sixth Shooter Award 2016), the Kansas Cowboy Hall of Fame (2015 inductees), and the National Cowboy & Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City (Wrangler Award 2016).



Heartland Mensa Region 7



February is not my favorite month, but it does have my granddaughter's birthday, Presidents Day and Valentine's Day so there's something. This year there's even that weird extra day at the end.

It's been extra stressful recently in American Mensa's National Office. They started off with good stress -- Executive Director Trevor Mitchell told everyone that in gratitude for their hard work over the year the office would be closed over Xmas week. Then came the other kind of stress, in the form of an electrical fire in the office building they use. Not on Mensa's floor, thank goodness, but everyone had to leave and the fire department embargoed the building for weeks until repairs could be made and checked out.

In the meantime, staff worked from home doing what they could over the internet without access to the paperwork (including tests to be scored) that was back in the building. Our computer facilities are in a different location, so the national and Local Group websites weren't affected but many of us found that the office phone system was inoperative.

All's well that ends well. By the end of the year the office was open for business again, but in catch-up mode. By the time you read this, things should be back to normal again. Mostly.

One operation that was negatively affected was the Foundation's Scholarship Essay competition. The good news was that because all essays are submitted and stored electronically, none of that part of the process was affected by the building outage. The bad news was that the Foundation is migrating the scoring process from paper to electronic. The building outage got in the way of the final steps in that migration. Everything's been moved back a month so our estimable judging panels will be working in February this year instead of their normal January.

~ Rich

Sunflower Seeds Official Editorial Policy.

With a few exceptions, the first amendment guarantees all Americans the right and responsibility of unencumbered freedom of speech. As a matter of principal, this publication will fervently avoid all forms of censorship, irrespective the intent or pretense. To mete out and ration facts to sway opinions and obfuscate the truth will be considered akin to an assault against truth, intelligence, Human dignity and our much-prized Democratic way of life.

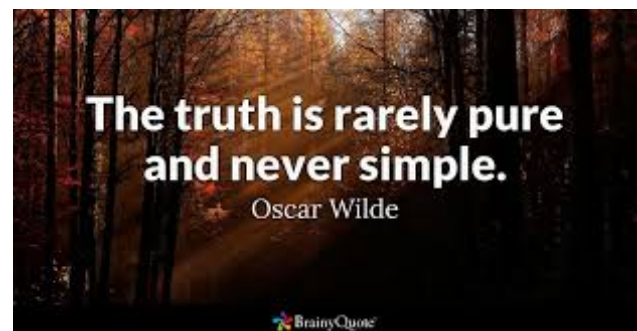
The sole purpose of our humble publication is to promote group cohesion and rational analysis leading to intellectual discourse, and hopefully to occasionally engross, enthrall and entertain. The Seeds will place an emphasis on presenting material pertaining to intelligence, science, technology and philosophy, but any subject that is studious, pertinent and/or of recreational value to the top 2% of humanity will be encouraged. Discussions of diverse & controversial subjects or opinions will not only be allowed, but heartily encouraged.

- 1) Short of being patently illegal or promoting unwarranted violence against individuals or ideologies, no subjects, images, ideas, language or terminologies will be considered taboo.
- 2) Political correctness is becoming more ubiquitous despite it being used simply as a tool to manipulate the thought and ideals of the masses. To have to carefully choose one's words or even remain silent consigns us to be denigrated to the status of the basest of slaves. To avoid 'telling it like it is' because you fear that someone might be upset by your views is to blithely don the same cumbersome collar as the people you seek to enlighten.
- 3) "Opinions are like assholes; everybody's got one." With this prosaic adage in mind, we have an obligation to allow dissenting or even offending ideologies to be publicly expressed, regardless of our own personal stance on an issue, without exception.
- 4) To always allow uncomfortable opinions pass over us and dissipate harmlessly if they do not fit our own personal Worldview. This does not preclude that rational analysis and an appropriate discussion should be started, or an argument be tendered if we disagree with another's thesis.
- 5) Assure that you present your arguments rationally and forcefully if necessary but do so with upmost respect. Do not forget that the tone and manner of your argument must be that of an intellectual befitting your stature as a member of Mensa. If you make a fool of yourself it reflects badly on not only your fellow members, but to intelligence in general.
- 6) Ad hominem attacks against individuals will not be tolerated if such are intended to solely bring harm and promulgate negativity. Object to the facts or beliefs, not the individual.

- 7) The airing of possibly inflammatory statements being made is not precluded that are both factual and integral/necessary to the pertinent argument so long as analysis and truth is the goal.
- 8) Since we are a diverse group with different standards and ideals, a degree of decorum and appropriateness is necessitated and will be adhered to pertaining to what will be presented for public consumption. I will be the first to admit that being "appropriate" is just short of being politically correct, but we are an imperfect species subject to imperfect laws/rules.
- 9) The question might be asked as to what criteria will be used as a standard against which content will be judged. This is a difficult and pertinent query but will not be addressed here. An ephemeral boundary will therefore delineate what is acceptable and what is not. Unfortunately, due to a lack of a more workable system, propriety is to be determined on a case by case basis by the editor who will be solely responsible for all content and have final say.



Caricature of The Editor in his glorious perfection!



Democracy, Capitalism, and Socialism

Bill Barnett, January 13, 2020

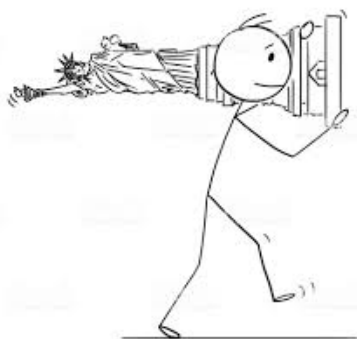
The purpose of Democracy is not for people to get what they want. It will never do that. Getting what someone wants from democracy is a self-defeating idea. With a million people there are a million ideas and wants. People's ideas and wants often contradict other ideas and wants. In the end no one gets what they want. And this is good. It is the true result of democracy. What a worker wants competes with what a business owner wants which competes with what a consumer wants, etc. And then there are educators, taxpayers, small-business people, farmers, and the whole spectrum of political and religious beliefs. It is not possible for everyone to meet and discuss their ideas.

The logistics of doing so prevent that, so they have representatives. And that complicates it even more. It adds another level of what should be done. And forces compromise where no one gets what they want, if democracy is actually working.

Capitalism can be a very efficient way to drive an economy. It can also be a very cruel taskmaster. Take the American experiment with slavery for example. With no rules, capitalism people can be converted into capital and sold like cattle. The slave owner takes despotism to its full potential in a very efficient system to rob people of all human rights and in doing so their humanity. In the end it poisoned the American experiment in constitutional government tearing the country in two and pitting the two halves into destruction of each other. And all the capital built by the slaves was destroyed. The promise of prosperity from humans as capital was a complete failure. Unregulated capitalism was so bad it destroyed itself.

Another example of unregulated capitalism is where a product and the company producing it fail because without regulation it is buyer beware and the product that sells well and fails because of poor quality poisons the company and its capital as much or more than it poisons the consumer. Look at the Max 737 airplanes. In theory passenger aircraft production is regulated. With the Max 737 airplanes it was the fox guarding the henhouse with no real regulation. The people certifying the airplane cut corners and laughed at the regulations and delivered an airplane designed to fail thinking it was good. At more than one hundred million dollars apiece, almost four hundred delivered and not in use and four hundred more undelivered in storage it is a major financial loss. Almost five thousand were ordered and production was stopped. More loss.

An honest appraisal of capitalism is it is neither good nor bad. It is a tool that can be used either way.



Socialism can be a very effective way of providing service to people. Public education is pure socialism. Without it a democracy will fail, as well as most governments in the modern world. Without an educated public,

modern economies will fail. The cost of public schools is a necessary cost of maintaining a modern country. And the cost of public education is a conflict between business and educators. Education is a twenty-year investment which is good for a community, but bad for businesses who pay taxes and look at a much shorter return on their money. Public roads are socialism. In the past in places where all roads were private the roads were expensive, in bad condition, and a great hinderance to the economy. In ancient Rome, which was more conservative than most modern countries, there was no public prosecutor. If someone stole another person's stuff or killed

their family member that person had to hire a prosecutor if they wanted the crime addressed.

Our courts, parks, and public safety projects are socialism as well as many things in our modern world.

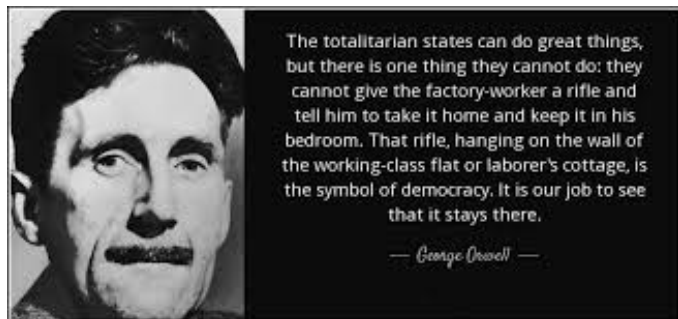
Socialism can fail and be as cruel as unregulated capitalism. Look at the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. They had unregulated Socialism with the idea of helping people and the country and did a great deal of harm as well as good. Tens of millions of people were killed by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, or what is more often called Communism. In reality, Communism is a totalitarian dictatorship, just like American slavery, which is an irony.

Two opposite political systems were in the end the same. Chinese communism started as dictatorial socialism and did what unregulated political systems do, killed people and destroyed as much as it built. Today China is a modern communist country that has as much capitalism as socialism. It is still a cruel dictatorship. So, in short communism is not about socialism, it is about dictatorship.

An honest appraisal of socialism is it is neither good nor bad. It is a tool that can be used either way.

The common thread in all this is accountability through regulation. Something neither the Bolsheviks nor Laissez-Faire Capitalists want. But something provided by democracy. Without a constitution democracy has no structure. To work it requires well informed people. Or in other words, well educated people, as well as freedom of speech, press, and religion. When democracy works it forces a compromise where no one gets what they want, but everyone gets what is good for them.

Looking at the United States of America today it seems we are a pretend democracy. There is a minority who has taken power through voting suppression, gerrymandering, and other forms of undemocratic political power and ignores the rest of the population and their wants. Better education on the constitution, executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government as well as history would address much of this, if it was done before people are of age to drop out of high school. Leveling the playing field of influence between rich and poor would also address it. Both should bring back the accountability of democracy. God help us if we don't. And if you don't believe in God then find something that will save us from the gaping pit of Laissez-Faire Capitalism / Bolshevikism.



ON HATE –

Do you hate anything or anybody? If not, have you ever? For most of us, the answer to that would certainly be yes.



Personally, I hate chocolate ice cream, cold weather, driving at night in the rain and stubbing my toe. I might remember a few others if I thought

a bit. As to hating other people, at least at this point in my life, there are few. However, there are some. For example, I hate criminals. I think they are bad for our country. When I read of a kidnapper/murderer, I generally feel hate toward him. I would also say that I hate the Mafia. So, I do have a list.

Is this hate bad? If it is, I don't know why.

However, when I read the newspaper, they always say hate is bad, and we need to wipe it out. There may be some wisdom there. Some writers have tried to tell us how destructive hate can be, not necessarily to the recipient, but to the hater. The hater feels worse about life when he hates, and that usually does him no good. My recollection is that Jesus said we should have no hate. "Love your enemies," he said. Perhaps that is good advice.

However, on a more earthy level, it seems to me that hate, at least in some cases, is not so bad. For example, our hate of pain motivates us to seek better medicines. Our hate of car breakdowns has motivated the car manufacturers to build better cars. Our hate of crime has motivated us to create a police, court and prison system to reduce that. If we didn't dislike pain, auto breakdowns and crime so much, we might have more of them.

Yet the news media never says anything good about hate. They always say it is bad. With all the hate there is in the world, I am fascinated by what hate they are concerned with. It seems that what I observe to be the strongest personal hates in America – domestic hate and political hate - bother them not at all. Strange.

In fact, I think I have ever read either of them even being called "hate." The most common one, namely the hate between the Democrats and the Republicans, seems to be accepted by them as normal and acceptable. It seems that they do not hate "hate" at all, they only hate certain "haters."

There seems to be primarily two groups of "haters" that bother them. They are those who promote the well-being of

White people, and those who frown on those who are not "sexually straight" (LGBTQ).

Actually, most of those who do not approve of LGBTQs do not hate them, and certainly do not persecute them, but only disapprove of their lifestyle, like I disapprove of those who use recreational drugs. It seems like individuals should have the right to disapprove of these actions if they want.

Criticizing pro-Whites is another matter. In fact, calling them "haters," seems like a misnomer. The media is not criticizing them for hating someone, but for caring more about some people than others. That may not be the perfect charity that Jesus taught, but is it really so bad? Most of us care more about one group of people than we do about others. Our families are an example. Fellow labor union members, people of my religion, my State, or my country may be other examples. Most of us care more about some groups of people than we do about others. Again, is that so bad?

Actually, the media's campaign against "hate" seems more like a campaign promoting hate, but only against groups that they dislike. If you are looking for an intellectual challenge, consider this one. Try to figure out who it is that they hate, and why.

Gordon Bakken

Part Neanderthal, me too?

The question of possible interbreeding between Neanderthals and [anatomically modern humans](#) (AMH) had been looked into since the early archaeogenetic studies of the 1990s. No evidence for interbreeding had been found as of 2006. As of 2009, analysis of about one third of the full genome of the Altai individual was still reported as showing "no sign of admixture". The variant of [microcephalin](#) common outside Africa, which was suggested to be of Neanderthal origin and responsible for rapid brain growth in humans, was not found in Neanderthals. Nor was the [MAPT](#) variant, a very old variant found primarily in Europeans.



Positive evidence for admixture was first published in May 2010. "The proportion of Neanderthal-inherited genetic material is about 1 to 4 percent [later refined to 1.5 to 2.1 percent] and is found in all non-African populations.

It is suggested that 20 percent of Neanderthal DNA survived in modern humans, notably expressed in the skin, hair and diseases of modern people. Modern human genes involved in making keratin—the protein found in skin, hair, and nails—have especially high levels of [introgression](#). For example, around 66% of East Asians contain a POUF23L variant introgressed from Neanderthals, [\[clarification needed\]](#) while 70% of Europeans possess an introgressed allele on [BNC2](#).

Neanderthal variants affect the risk of several diseases, including [lupus](#), [biliary cirrhosis](#), [Crohn's disease](#), and type 2 [diabetes](#).^[15] The genetic variant of the [MC1R](#) gene which was originally linked to red hair in Neanderthals is not found in Europeans but in Taiwanese Aborigines at 70% frequency and at somewhat high frequencies in East Asians; hence, there is actually no evidence that Neanderthals had red hair. While interbreeding was viewed as the most [parsimonious](#) interpretation of the genetic discoveries, the 2010 study still could not conclusively rule out an alternative scenario, in which the source population of non-African modern humans was already more closely related to Neanderthals than other Africans were, because of ancient genetic divisions within Africa.

Research since 2010 has refined the picture of interbreeding between Neanderthals, [Denisovans](#) and [anatomically modern humans](#). Interbreeding appears to have occurred asymmetrically among the ancestors of modern-day humans, and that this is a possible rationale for differing frequencies of Neanderthal-specific DNA in the



Le Moustier Neanderthal skull reconstitution, Neues Museum Berlin

genomes of modern humans. In Vernot and Akey (2015) concluded that the relatively greater quantity of Neanderthal-specific DNA in the genomes of individuals of East Asian descent (than those of European descent) cannot be explained by differences in selection. They further suggest that "two additional demographic models, involving either a second pulse of Neanderthal gene flow into the ancestors of East Asians or a dilution of Neanderthal lineages in Europeans by admixture with an unknown ancestral population" are parsimonious with their data. Similar conclusions were reached by Kim and Lohmueller (2015): "Using simulations of a broad range of models of selection and demography, we have shown that this hypothesis that the greater proportion of Neanderthal ancestry in East Asians than in Europeans is

due to the fact that purifying selection is less effective at removing weakly deleterious Neanderthal alleles from East Asian populations cannot account for the higher proportion of Neanderthal ancestry in East Asians than in Europeans. Instead, more complex demographic scenarios, most likely involving multiple pulses of Neanderthal admixture, are required to explain the data."

Wikipedia

The evolution of religion?

[Life](#) 4 March 2016

By [Rowan Hooper](#)

See this stone? I'm going to make a really loud noise with it. All hail the sacred tree. I've often wondered aloud in the newsroom about the possibility of finding evidence of a chimp shrine, the discovery of a place where chimps pray to their deity.

This week, my half-whimsical dream almost came true. Biologists working in the Republic of Guinea found evidence for what seemed to be a "sacred tree" used by chimps, perhaps for some sort of ritual.



Laura Kehoe of the Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany, set up camera traps by trees marked with unusual scratches. What she found gave

her goosebumps: chimps were placing stones in the hollow of trees and bashing trees with rocks. The behavior could be a means of communication, since rocks make a loud bang when they hit hollow trees.

Or it could be more symbolic. "Maybe we found the first evidence of chimpanzees creating a kind of shrine that could indicate sacred trees," [Kehoe wrote on her blog](#).

Of course it's not proof that chimps believe in any kind of god, as [the Daily Mail would have it](#), but it is the latest evidence of their extraordinarily rich behavior. In recent years we've seen [chimps using spears to hunt bushbabies](#), [going to war](#), and [seemingly using doll-shaped sticks as toys](#).

I especially liked this last study, which found that juvenile wild chimps – more commonly females – played with sticks as children play with dolls, cradling them and even making nests for them to sleep in. But most pertinent to the discovery of

the “shrine trees”, we’ve seen evidence of chimps displaying strange ritual-like behavior in the last few years.

First, a [“ritual” dance performed during rainfall](#). Then a [peculiar slow-motion display in the face of a bush fire](#) in Senegal.

[Jill Pruetz](#) of Iowa State University, who observed the “fire dance” in 2006, said that the behavior seems to suggest that chimps have a conceptual understanding of fire. Perhaps they are paying respect to it, in some way. I’ve also heard stories of chimps performing dances in front of waterfalls.

Maybe chimps have some understanding of impressive natural phenomena such as rainstorms, wild-fires and waterfalls and are paying “respect” to them. So, I always hoped that we’d find evidence of a “temple” in the forest.

Pruetz, who is involved in the new study, thinks the chimps bang stones to communicate. Many males drum on root buttresses as the noise carries further than the standard chimp cry, the pant-hoot, she says. But often there aren’t any trees with buttress roots, so perhaps they bang stones instead.



What about chimps storing stones in hollow trees, though? “It does seem to be a tradition found in some groups,” she says. “If that fits

the definition of proto-ritualistic, I have no problem with it.” “It’s such a cool observation,” says primate cognitive psychologist [Laurie Santos](#) of Yale University. “But I worry that we don’t yet know how to interpret it.” “In my monkey behavior experience, low noises often serve a communicative function – males trying to act dominant, etc. – so my instinct is that this behavior might work a lot like that,” she says.

Naturally, it’s way too soon to conclude that this is proto-religious behavior. For one thing, [even pigeons have been described as showing “superstitious” behavior](#). “We’d need more observation – and perhaps actual experiments – to know if chimpanzees are using the behavior as anything like a ritual,” Santos says.

Incidentally, I used to think of stories like these as chipping away at the various claims to uniqueness that we erected to separate us from other animals. For example [the creation of musical instruments by wild apes](#), [evidence that chimps show empathy](#), and [intimations of mortality in a range of animals](#).

I don’t see it quite like that anymore. It’s hard to argue that we’re not unique when asked if chimps could build their own LHC, as one primatologist once asked me.

But I do see these stories as vital for the way they spectacularly illuminate our own roots. The [evolutionary origin of religion](#) is profoundly important to understanding human culture, for example. So, it’s essential to examine any possible roots of this in other animals. And for their own sake, with [all the conservation pressures chimps face](#), a deeper understanding of [our closest relatives](#) can only be a good thing.

The aim of argument or discussion should not be victory, but progress. *-Joseph Joubert*



Dedicated to Randy H.

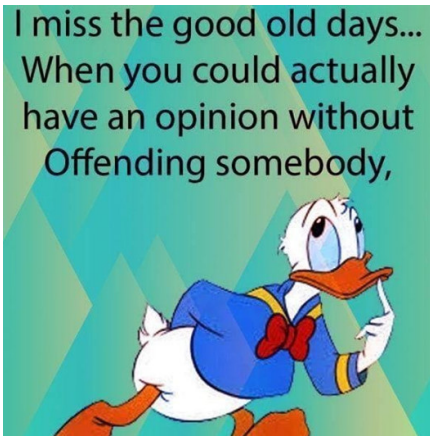
Remember, remember the first of November,

And all the great things that ye do?

Remember, remember the songs of forever,

and you'll clean the fireplace flue.

Dan Gollub



Ad hominem

Ad hominem (Latin for "to the person"), short for **argumentum ad hominem**, typically refers to a fallacious argumentative strategy whereby genuine discussion of the topic at hand is avoided by instead attacking the character, motive, or other attribute of the person making the argument, or persons associated with the argument, rather than attacking the substance of the argument itself.

The term *ad hominem* is applied to several different types of arguments, most of which are fallacious. The valid types of *ad hominem* arguments are generally only encountered in specialist philosophical usage and typically refer to the dialectical strategy of using the target's own beliefs and arguments against them while not assenting to the validity of those beliefs and arguments.

The most common form of ad hominem fallacy is "A makes a claim *a*, B asserts that A holds a property that is unwelcome, and hence B concludes that argument *a* is wrong". The various types of *ad hominem* arguments have been known in the West since at least the ancient Greeks. Aristotle, in his work *Sophistical Refutations*, detailed the fallaciousness of putting the questioner but not the argument under scrutiny.

Many examples of ancient non-fallacious ad hominem arguments are preserved in the works of the Pyrrhonist philosopher Sextus Empiricus. In these arguments the concepts and assumptions of the opponents are used as part of a dialectical strategy against the opponents to demonstrate the unsoundness of their own arguments and assumptions. In this way the arguments are to the person (ad hominem) but without attacking the properties of the individuals making the arguments. This kind of argument is also known as "*argument from commitment*." Italian polymath Galileo Galilei and British philosopher John Locke also examined the argument from commitment, a form of the ad hominem argument, meaning examining an argument on

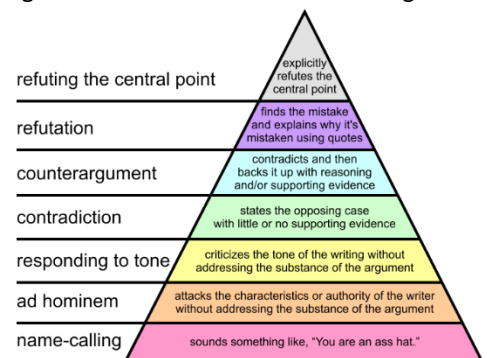
the basis of whether it stands true to the principles of the person carrying the argument. In the mid 19th century the modern understanding of the term *ad hominem* started to take shape, with the broad definition given by English logician Richard Whately. According to Whately, ad hominem arguments were "*addressed to the peculiar circumstances, character, avowed opinions, or past conduct of the individual.*"

Except within specialized philosophical usages, the modern usage of the term *ad hominem* signifies a straight attack at the character and ethos of a person, in an attempt to refute its argument.

The latin phrase *argumentum ad hominem* stands for "argument against the person". "Ad" corresponds to "against" but it could also mean "to" or "towards". The terms *ad mulierem* and *ad feminam* have been used specifically when the person receiving the criticism is female. Fallacious *ad hominem* reasoning is categorized among informal fallacies, more precisely as a genetic fallacy, a subcategory of fallacies of irrelevance.

Ad hominem fallacies can be separated in various different types, among others are Tu quoque, Circumstantial, Guilt by association and abusive ad hominem. All of them are similar to the general scheme of ad hominem argument, that is instead of dealing with the essence of someone's argument or trying to

refute it, the interlocutor is attacking the character of the proponent of the argument and concluding that it is a sufficient reason to drop the initial argument. ~ Wiki



In Closing - The editor regrets to have been put in a position to deny the publication of an article that was deemed in violation of acceptable standards. It was removed by the author rather than submit to minor changes (yes, I said it) or censorship. To protect the integrity of Mensa, members and the group, on rare occasion hard choices will be made and standards ruthlessly enforced if need be.

