

Solving Political and Legal Mysteries

What is this thing, this funny thing, called problems? Just who can solve its mystery?

Scientists pursue and apply knowledge of the social and natural worlds based on evidence, objective observation, data, and critical analysis, and propose hypotheses to be tested.

In the light of this it is useful to survey some actions and human behavior which lack scientific plausibility or remain mysteries.

Some mysteries are solved but many remain unsolved. A reminder of the latter appears in a new Swedish TV documentary about the assassination of the Social-Democratic Swedish prime minister Olaf Palme on the evening of February 28, 1986, on the busiest street in central Stockholm, on which several people were walking. Who killed Palme and why does it remain a mystery? A police investigation examined thousands of people, but no murder weapon was found, and no forensic evidence was uncovered, and there was no clear motive for the murder. Serious mistakes were made. Finally, in June 2020 the police announced that a particular individual, a graphic designer, was the perpetrator.

But he had committed suicide earlier that year, and the investigation was closed. A flat ending to an intriguing mystery.

More benignly on November 17, 2021, a pair of cufflinks were sold at an auction at Oxford for 5,700 pounds. They belonged to Ian Fleming, author of James Bond, and bear inscriptions on the underside. One side has LIS, WUS. The other side has FUN, UDH. No one knows the meaning of the inscriptions, or whether they represent an unsolved secret message. Here is a mission,

for Bond or any aspiring spy to crack the code on the jewelry.

Another mission is the correct price of wine. Consumers tend to judge the quality of wine by how much it costs and by the label on the bottle. Yet there appears to be little relationship between a liking for wine and its price. Tests have shown that a photo of a French chateau on the label of a bottle of wine is more likely to convince shoppers the wine is premier quality than one without such a label, and the same with a heavier bottle. About 34% of those surveyed ranked a 10 pound bottle with a chateau label as having most quality, while 15% choose a 95 pound bottle which had no similar label. According to a study by Oxford University and supermarket giant Aldi, about 25 percent of individuals in a survey believed a cork instead of a screw on the bottle indicated higher quality. Yet, a cheaper bottle with a plain label can be rated more highly than an expensive brand. They preferred a 6.49 bottle to one costing 36.99 during a blind tasting test. They got no kick from the higher priced wine which didn't thrill them at all.

Who would prefer a dog's life? Apparently, those who are bidding for a Tuscan style mansion in Miami which has nine bedrooms, eight bathrooms, large pool and waterfrontage, and was once owned by Madonna. But the owner is a German Shepherd Gunther VI, the wealthiest dog in the world, with a fortune calculated at \$688 million, whose family inherited the fortune of \$58 million from a German countess, Karlotta Liebenstein who died in 1992. Will the owner, whose ancestor Gunther IV is in a portrait in the living room, sell for the now estimated \$31 million? Or will Gunther, who sleeps in Madonna's former master bedroom, travels by private jet, eats steak and caviar for dinner, and owns multiple yachts and cars, prefer to remain? Or is it all a publicity stunt? Miami has not yet become the Canine Islands.

Another mystery is the favorable view of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi German regime by members of the British upper class and

aristocracy in the 1930s. A pertinent revelation is analyzed in a book by history Professor Helen Roche of Durham University, who discusses the relation between British and Nazi schools before World War II. The Nazi schools, Napolas, created in 1933, accepted and trained youngsters with Aryan racial and physical characteristics: by 1945 there were 43 of them. They admired British private schools, looked to them as models, and soon began links and exchange programs between the top Nazi schools, set up to train future leaders of the Reich, and the top elite UK private schools, Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Rugby, Westminster, Leys school, Cambridge, between 1934 and 1939. There were sporting tournaments between the two sides.

This school relationship is relevant for an understanding of British foreign policy and appeasement policy in the 1930s. In the early years of the connection with Napolas, British educators in the elite schools admired the strength and physical development of German boys, and felt that what they saw in Nazi Germany was in some ways superior to British society. They did not recognize the German boys were cultural ambassadors, better at the job than the Hitler Youth. One can view this shortsighted view of the educators as a microcosm of the friendly attitudes towards Nazi Germany of individuals such as the Duke of Windsor and Wallis Simpson, Lord Rothermere, newspaper mogul Lord Londonderry who said of Hitler he was "a kindly man with a receding chin and an impressive face," the Duke of Buccleuch, dismissed from his post as Lord Steward of the Royal household in 1940 for Nazi sympathies, and Unity Mitford, who moved to Germany.

On November 18, 2021 an old mystery reappeared. Who really assassinated Malcolm X, civil rights leader who was gunned down as he began a speech in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom on February 21, 1965. On November 18, 2021, two men convicted of the crime were exonerated after a long investigation admitted that key mistakes were made in the 1966 trial that found them

guilty. The two men, Muhammad Aziz and Ite Khalil Islam spent decades in prison, and maintained their innocence. Aziz, now 83, was released in 1985, and Islam released two years later died in 2009. The third man arrested for the crime, Thomas Hagan, confessed to the crime but was released in 2010 at age 69. Hagan insisted that the other two were not guilty. He explained that Malcolm X was targeted because in 1964 he split with the leadership of the Nation of Islam, for which he had previously been the leading spokesman. Hagan was not believed by everyone. The search for the real killer goes on.

Who is healthy and why? The British Medical Journal, referring to the years 2012-18 held that a white ethnic group had a lower life expectancy and higher overall mortality than all ethnic minority groups except the Mixed group. The same point was made in the British government report directed by Tony Sewell, chair of the Commission on Race and Ethnic disparities which held that pre-pandemic health outcomes among ethnic minority groups was better than among white people. However, this overall mortality advantage of some ethnic groups, Bangladeshi, Pakistanis, and black Caribbean males had been reversed because of the higher risk of death during the pandemic of COVID, living in densely populated areas, in large households, and working in jobs, health and social care, which involved facing people. The Sewell report did not deny that racism was a factor in the COVID results, but there was no evidence of institutional racism.

The virus of cancel culture has spread to the Holy Trinity Church of England primary school in Richmond, London. The school had houses named after Winston Churchill, JK Rowling, Sir David Attenborough, and Emmeline Pankhurst. The school has cancelled Churchill and Rowling as house names because the two were not "diverse enough." Churchill was regarded as a racist because of his actions during the 1943 Bengal Famine. Rowling was accused of transphobia.

The houses have been renamed after Marcus Rashford and Mary

Seacole. These two are not known for their political or intellectual achievements. Rashford had a career as a footballer and campaigner for school meals. Seacole was a black nurse who served on the battlefields of Crimea. Almost as famous as Florence Nightingale, she died in 1881. The mystery is the real reason for the school action.

More surprisingly, the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust has removed the pictures of the former prime minister from its websites and changed its name to the Churchill Fellowship.

Lastly, another survey, the YouGov-Cambridge Globalism Project tells us that people are more deeply divided by identity than by issues, and that culture wars are fueled mostly by partisanship, "them against us." Though political groups that dislike each other often agree on substantive issues, a major problem of is that, by stressing differences, political compromise is difficult if not impossible. This was shown in the U.S. where 93% of Trump supporters said they disliked Democratic politicians, and 90% of Biden supporters said the same of Republicans.

Will the identity of voters in 2022 and 2024 be a mystery?