



## Dr. Henry writes about Science and Us

I have observed that considerable discussion has resulted from some postings by scientific minds. I have known many scientific minds and have been involved in clinical research in the past. As a group, most scientific researchers that I have met and known are imaginative, creative, inquisitive, bright people who usually have an appreciation for the arts, nature and even religion. One has to have some investigative imagination to develop a theory or postulate. Yes, much of scientific discovery is trial and error. When antibiotics, steroids, and antihypertensives were discovered, many doctors overused them in an effort to help many people who wanted relief from their maladies. From this experience, we learned of the harmful effects of overusing steroids and other drugs. Even today, if a young mother takes her child with a viral sinus infection to the pediatrician, the pediatrician will often prescribe an antibiotic because it will comfort the mother, even though the infection is probably viral and the antibiotic will not be effective. But if that same child has bacterial meningitis, you better believe that same pediatrician will depend on antibiotics to save that same child's life.

The interesting insight to me is that many PPSers are just as inquisitive, imaginative, religious, and bright as most scientists. We really have a lot in common. Many of us are willing to try various treatments, some help some of us, some do not. But, I believe that if a researcher found that drug X improved the PPS symptoms in over 50% of a clinical sample of 100 patients with significant PPS, I believe most of us would want to try that drug immediately.

Galileo was one of the first to believe that human beings might better understand the world we live in by making objective observations about the world we live in. This got him in conflict with the Catholic Church. Issac Newton was often involved in heated disputes with his academic colleagues and was also in conflict with the Church in his time, but he made objective observations and proved his conclusions. Albert Einstein is well known to this century. He was a genius with equations, but was pulled into politics and was fortunately living in the free world during the critical phases of WWII. He was offered the presidency of Israel in 1952, but refused, stating "equations are more important to me, because politics is for present, but an equation is something for eternity."

One of my personal heroes is Dr. Stephen Hawking, the ventilator dependent English physicist with ALS. I close this post with a quote from the end of the conclusion of his book "A Brief History of Time."

"Even if there is only one possible unified theory, it is just a set of rules and equations. What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe? The usual approach of science of constructiong a mathematical model cannot answer the questions of why there should be a universe for the model to describe. Why does the universe go to all the bother of existing? Is the unified theory so compelling that it brings about its own existence? Or does it need a creator, and, if so, does he have any other effect on the universe? And who created him?"

Up to now, most scientists have been too occupied with the development of new theories that describe

what the universe is to ask the question why. On the other hand, the people whose business it is to ask why, the philosophers, have not been able to keep up with the advance of scientific theories. In the eighteenth century, philosophers considered the whole of human knowledge, including science, to be their field and discussed questions such as: Did the universe have a beginning? However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, science became too technical and mathematical for the philosophers, or anyone else except a few specialists. Philosophers reduced the scope of their inquiries to much that Wittgenstein, the most famous philosopher of this century, said, 'The sole remaining task for philosophy is the analysis of language.' What a comedown from the great tradition of philosophy from Aristotle to Kant!

However, if we do discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists, and the ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason--- for then we would know the mind of God."

Henry Holland, Richmond., Virginia, USA. [Henry4FDR@aol.com](mailto:Henry4FDR@aol.com)

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**The Secretary, Lincolnshire Post-Polio Network**

**PO Box 954, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN5 5ER United Kingdom**

**Telephone: [+44 \(0\)1522 888601](tel:+44(0)1522888601)**

**Facsimile: [+44 \(0\)870 1600840](tel:+44(0)8701600840)**

**Email: [info@lincolnshirepostpolio.org.uk](mailto:info@lincolnshirepostpolio.org.uk)**

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