

A Short History of Stupidity by Phillip W. Weiss

Stupidity: The condition of being stupid. Its symptoms are as follows:

- 1. Rigidity of thought;**
- 2. Denial of facts;**
- 3. Inflated feeling of self-righteousness;**
- 4. Lack of insight; and**
- 5. Intellectual inflexibility.**

If left untreated, the consequences can be serious. This condition is known to produce irrational patterns of thought and behavior that are annoying, baffling or even dangerous. There is no known cure for stupidity. It strikes without warning. Its incubation period varies, depending on the virulence of the infection. Its prevalence is worldwide and every person on the planet is susceptible to contracting it.

Stupidity is as old as civilization itself. The first recorded use of the term occurred in Egypt in the year 2900 BCE during the reign of Pharaoh Hutnkumen IV. According to Victoire's Rock, the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic tablet discovered in a garbage dump outside of Cairo in 1903 by the famous French explorer (and notorious alcoholic) Pierre de la Victoire¹ and brought back to Paris (the discovery vouched for by Victoire's faithful friend Adrien "Beaubeau" du Champ²), the pharaoh is described as acting with stupidity after declaring that the earth is round. The tablet states that even a fool knows that the earth is flat and attributes the pharaoh's foolishness to having been exposed to the teachings of a band of

¹ B. 1851 in Chicago, Illinois. D. April 4, 1938, Rome, Italy. Real name: Reginald Daniel Alexander. After a series of misadventures involving a number of shady financial deals, Alexander joined the Royal British Navy and sailed around the world. During his travels he became proficient in fourteen languages including French, Apache and Swahili. In 1885 he settled in Paris where he reinvented himself as Pierre de la Victoire, a world famous explorer. He selected the name Victoire in honor of France's glorious military exploits in the Franco-Prussian War. He claimed to be the first white man to kiss a Hottentot woman on the lips and the first to share a bottle of gin with Geronimo. The meeting with Geronimo was allegedly filmed by the Edison Film Company, but the film is now considered lost. He also claimed that during his travels he fathered a daughter with an Apache woman named Little Dove with Big Wings, fathered a son named Boris with the daughter of a proud but impoverished Russian count who was employed as a livery driver, and seduced the wife and oldest daughter of the chief of Samoa.

² B. 1873 in Brooklyn NY. D. July 15, 1947 in Brighton, England. Real name: James Buchanan Babcock. He was named in honor of the fifteenth president of the United States whose political courage is legendary. During the Spanish-American War Babcock served in the US Army and was stationed at Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, New York, where he was in charge of an army commissary. After the war he fled the United States. It was alleged that he had deflowered a young lady named Eloise and then refused to marry her, instead thanking her for her graciousness by offering her a Confederate silver dollar (which Eloise accepted). In Paris he became a vagrant and a friend to prostitutes and was living in a bordello with twenty-three women, eighteen of whom were prostitutes of which seven were pregnant, when he was discovered by Pierre de la Victoire who immediately took a liking to the young man, transforming him into a gentleman and renaming him Adrien du Champ a.k.a. Beaubeau (Beaubeau was the name of Victoire's pet macaw that had died a few days earlier).

foreigners from Greece who were spreading all kinds of nonsense about the world, such as that the earth was a sphere and that it revolved around the sun and that invisible organisms called bacteria caused disease. The tablet further states that the pharaoh recovered his senses and ordered the nomads to be banished from Egypt and their rantings obliterated from all tablets and monuments. Victoire later sold the tablet to an anonymous collector for fifty thousand francs (equal to approximately thirty-five American dollars today).

Stupidity was first identified as a mental disorder in 1931 by Dr. Arno von Felschinger, Director of the Institute for Advanced Neuropsychiatric Studies, Heidelberg, Germany. Through funding provided by the Weimar Republic's Ministry for Special Research and later renewed by the Nazis after they took power, Dr. Felschinger, who also served as chief mental health consultant for the Luftwaffe and was greatly admired by Hermann Goering, conducted a series of landmark studies that conclusively proved that stupidity was not a personality trait but a mental illness. He published his findings in 1934 in the *Reich Journal for Popular Culture or Volkskulturreichsjournal* or VKRJ. In the United States Felschinger's findings attracted little serious attention, and in some places inspired crude jokes, but in the Soviet Union it evoked outrage. Felschinger's findings were denounced as a bourgeois plot to discredit the working class. Soon Stalin commissioned a team of scientists led by the famous NKVD and Marxist academician, Doctor Boris V. Domoschenko,³ to study Felschinger's findings. After two years of exhaustive work, the Domoschenko commission, much to Stalin's chagrin, confirmed Felschinger's findings. Domoschenko subsequently disappeared (he resurfaced in Oslo, Norway in 1958.⁴). Efforts, both in Germany and the Soviet Union, to find a cure for stupidity proved futile.

Felschinger's activities during the war years are shrouded in mystery. It was rumored that he was Adolf Hitler's personal psychiatrist and the person responsible for convincing Hitler to marry Eva Braun, but that is unconfirmed. It was also rumored that he served as a double agent for the OSS but that also is

³ B. 1894 in Tsaritsyn, Russian Empire. D. January 24, 1980 in Miami Beach, Florida. During World War One Domoschenko served as a medical officer in the Russian Army. After the war he was personally recruited by V. I. Lenin to organize the first People's Commissariat for Mental Health (despite the fact that Dr. Domoschenko was an internist). In 1927, at the request of Joseph Stalin, Domoschenko became the chief of the mental health inspectorate for the CHEKA. In that capacity Domoschenko certified that Soviet interrogation methods were humane and not excessively brutal and that mental health services in the Soviet Union were the best in the world.

⁴ How Dr. Domoschenko wound up in Oslo is a complicated story, which involves a beautiful woman named Madame Henrietta DuPlante, aka The Hen, the former secret girlfriend of that great French patriot Marshall Philippe Petain and an intimate confidante of that noted military leader, the great Belgium monarch King Leopold III, who the Madame referred to as "Ma petit Leo" which in English means "My little Leo." After the war, The Hen's head was shaved and she was paraded around Paris in recognition of the services she had rendered on behalf of France's most beloved and respected traitors.

unconfirmed.⁵ After the war, Dr. Felschinger was investigated for possible war crimes but was cleared.⁶ He was then transported to the United States along with all of his papers, over twenty seven thousand pages of notes in total, which have proved invaluable in aiding American researchers at the United States Agency for Interactive Research, or USAIR, who to this day are working feverishly to unravel the mysteries surrounding the operations of the stupid mind.⁷

Dr. Felschinger died in 1997, leaving behind a legacy of work that has firmly established his place as a pioneer in the study of stupidity. Efforts to formally recognize his accomplishments have stalled, however, due to politics. Felschinger's admirers blame this alleged injustice on sheer stupidity. Nevertheless, because of the work of Dr. Felschinger and his colleagues, there is hope that soon a cure for stupidity will be found. In the meantime, stupidity remains the number one mental health problem confronting the world today.⁸

⁵ Also never proven was another rumor circulating that Dr. Felschinger was Fraulein Braun's paramour. Later when asked to comment on the truth of the rumor, Felschinger smiled and said that Eva was a very sweet girl and that a gentleman never discusses such intimate matters concerning a lady.

⁶ After the war it was learned that Dr. Felschinger had a fraternal twin brother, Harold, who lived in Hoboken, New Jersey and served as a captain in the New Jersey National Guard. He was also a professional wrestler who wrestled under the name Fighting Joe Feldman, the Jewish Jackhammer from Jersey City. Harold weighed over 350 pounds. His wife, Gertrude, was a noted jazz trumpet player and the first woman in the United States to head a jazz band. She also was a personal friend of Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong and Ethel Merman. Both Harold and Gertrude drank heavily, but confined their drinking to daytime hours so as not to create a disturbance.

⁷ When Harold and Arno re-united after the war, Harold's first words to his brother were, "What would you care to drink?" Later on, Arno wrote in his diary: "Have found the perfect subject for my experiments, much better than Goering. I hope I can cure him." It was also learned that while in Germany Dr. Felschinger developed an obsessive preoccupation with the Brooklyn Dodgers and was a great admirer of Kirby Higbe, Dixie Walker and Leo Durocher. From 1948 through 1957 Felschinger attended every Dodger home game at Ebbets Field where he became known for the Felschinger Shriek, an extraordinarily loud screech that he emitted every time a Dodger hit a home run. He also became friends with a mysterious woman named Senora Maria Conchita Montalvo de la Montoya who Dr. Felschinger claimed was his research assistant. Later on it was alleged that her real name was Ethel Louise Bennington and that she was from Elizabeth, New Jersey and was married to an actor named Ernie O'Shea who appeared uncredited in over nine hundred movies and commercials. In 1963 O'Shea won the coveted Philo Covington Award presented every year to the background extra whose performances most closely epitomize those of the legendary Philo Covington in whose honor the award is named. Between 1918 and 1953 Covington appeared in over four thousand movies and television shows, a record of achievement that probably will never be surpassed.

⁸ A copy of Dr. Felschinger's papers can be found online at www.stupidityresearch.com. It was rumored that the Felschinger papers were a forgery and were actually written by Felschinger's chief assistant, the noted professor of pseudo-Freudian studies, Dr. Hans Ernst Eifenbaum. However, careful analysis of the handwriting in 2003 by a team of FBI and CIA forensic experts, none of whom knew German, proved conclusively that the papers were genuine.

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