

Hiram's Lighthouse



PROVIDING MASONIC *LIGHT* FROM TORONTO EAST DISTRICT

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Grand Lodge Website

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Nullius in verba

... by the Lighthouse Beam

Hiram's Lighthouse - April 1, 2021

Grand Lodge Merit Award Winner for District Newsletter 2008



Brethren, once again I hope both you and your families are all doing well and staying safe.

The following are the dates of our April Virtual Official Visits. Check with your Lodge Secretary or Master for the links. Please take advantage of these VOV and visit your Brethren.

- Monday April 5, 2021 – Mimosa Lodge 576
- Wednesday April 7, 2021 – Brougham Union Lodge 269
- Wednesday April 14, 2021 – Markham Union Lodge 87
- Monday April 19, 2021 – Caledonia Lodge 637

Toronto East District Education Series.

- Wednesday April 21, 2021 - Alchemy & The Acacia Stone, The Hidden Roots of The Acacia Symbol in Freemasonry
- Presenter – Bro, P D Newman is a member of Tupelo Lodge No. 318, under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi. He is also a member of the Society of Rosicrucian in the United States (SRICF).

There is light at the end of the tunnel, and hopefully we are nearing the end of this pandemic. Do not let our communications lapse and please stay in contact with each other and do not forget our younger members and prospective candidates.

Brethren more so today than ever the future of Freemasonry is in your hands. Only you can make a difference. Remember our Brethren of the future will judge what we do today.

May the Great Architect of the Universe continue to protect and guide us in all our endeavours.

Fraternally,

R.W. Bro. Gilbert L. Carreiro
District Deputy Grand Master
Toronto East District

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Alpha Tuscan 384 Doric 424 The Beaches 473	2 Wexford 683	3
4	5 Mimosa 576	6 Canada 532	7 Brougham Union 269 West Hill 670	8 Coronati 520	9 Birch Cliff 612	10
11	12 Scarborough 653	13 Universe 705	14 Friendship 729 Imperial East Gate 543 Markham Union 87	15 Doric 424 Alpha Tuscan 384	16 Wexford 683	17
18	19 Acacia 430 Caledonia 637	20 Riverdale JR Robertson 494	21	22	23 Birch Cliff 612	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

EVENTS

Wednesday April 21st - Alchemy & The Acacia Stone
 The Hidden Roots of The Acacia
 Symbol in Freemasonry

[Click Here to Print Calendar](#)

...Now there was's a Lodge in



Gore Bay,

Ontario



[Gore Bay Masonic Lodge donates \\$20,000 to the Manitoulin Health Centre](#)

Around and About
(News & Notices)

**Wednesday April 21st - Alchemy & The Acacia Stone, The Hidden Roots of The
Acacia Symbol in Freemasonry**

Presenter – P D Newman is a member of Tupelo Lodge No. 318, under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Mississippi. He is also a member of the Society of Rosicrucians in the United States (SRICF).

Month of JUNE

Voter registration from June 12, 2021 9:00AM EST through June 17, 2021 4:00PM EST

Voting will take place on Friday June 18, 2021 starting at 9:00AM EST until Saturday June 19, 2021 at 4:00 PM EST.

Results will be distributed to all voters as soon as they are available. Once available, the DDGM may further announce and distribute the results to the lodges.

This Month in History

April 2, 1513 - Spanish explorer Ponce De Leon sighted Florida and claimed it for the Spanish Crown after landing at the site of present day St. Augustine, now the oldest city in the continental U.S.

April 3, 1860 - In the American West, the Pony Express service began as the first rider departed St. Joseph, Missouri. For \$5 an ounce, letters were delivered 2,000 miles to California within ten days. The famed Pony Express riders each rode from 75 to 100 miles before handing the letters off to the next rider. A total of 190 way stations were located about 15 miles apart. The service lasted less than two years, ending upon the completion of the overland telegraph.

April 5 Birthday - African American educator Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) was born a slave in Franklin County, Virginia. Freed by the Civil War, he taught himself the alphabet and eventually graduated from an agricultural institute. In June of 1881, he was asked to become the principal of a new training school for blacks at Tuskegee, Alabama. The Tuskegee Institute began in single building with 30 students but through his efforts grew into a modern university.



Please take the time to log in and review the new Grand Lodge website.
www.grandlodge.on.ca

Nature & Science



What does it mean to be human? Human Characteristics: Language & Symbols

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN®

Quantum Mechanics, the Chinese Room Experiment and the Limits of Understanding

Like great art, great thought experiments have implications unintended by their creators. Take philosopher John Searle's [Chinese room experiment](#). Searle concocted it to convince us that computers don't really "think" as we do; they manipulate symbols mindlessly, without understanding what they are doing.

Searle meant to make a point about the limits of machine cognition. Recently, however, the Chinese room experiment has goaded me into dwelling on the limits of *human* cognition. We humans can be pretty mindless too, even when engaged in a pursuit as lofty as quantum physics.

Some background. Searle first proposed the Chinese room experiment in 1980. At the time, artificial intelligence researchers, who have always been [prone to mood swings](#), were cocky. Some claimed that machines would soon pass the Turing test, a means of determining whether a machine "thinks."

Computer pioneer Alan Turing [proposed in 1950](#) that questions be fed to a machine and a human. If we cannot distinguish the machine's answers from the human's, then we must grant that the machine does indeed think. Thinking, after all, is just the manipulation of symbols, such as numbers or words, toward a certain end.

Some AI enthusiasts insisted that "thinking," whether carried out by neurons or transistors, entails conscious understanding. Marvin Minsky espoused this "strong AI" viewpoint [when I interviewed him in 1993](#). After defining consciousness as a record-keeping system, Minsky asserted that LISP software, which tracks its own computations, is "extremely conscious," much more so than humans. When I expressed skepticism, Minsky called me "racist."

Back to Searle, who found strong AI annoying and wanted to rebut it. He asks us to imagine a man who doesn't understand Chinese sitting in a room. The room contains a manual that tells the man how to respond to a string of Chinese characters with another string of characters. Someone outside the room slips a sheet of paper with Chinese characters on it under the door. The man finds the right response in the manual, copies it onto a sheet of paper and slips it back under the door.

Unknown to the man, he is replying to a question, like "What is your favorite color?," with an appropriate answer, like "Blue." In this way, he mimics someone who understands Chinese even though he doesn't know a word. That's what computers do, too, according to Searle. They process symbols in ways that

simulate human thinking, but they are actually mindless automatons.

Searle's thought experiment has provoked countless objections. Here's mine. The Chinese room experiment is a splendid case of begging the question (not in the sense of raising a question, which is what most people mean by the phrase nowadays, but in the original sense of circular reasoning). The meta-question posed by the Chinese Room Experiment is this: How do we know whether *any* entity, biological or non-biological, has a subjective, conscious experience?

When you ask this question, you are bumping into what I call [the solipsism problem](#). No conscious being has direct access to the conscious experience of any other conscious being. I cannot be absolutely sure that you or any other person is conscious, let alone that a [jellyfish or smartphone](#) is conscious. I can only make inferences based on the behavior of the person, jellyfish or smartphone.

Now, I assume that most humans, including those of you reading these words, are conscious, as I am. I also suspect that Searle is probably right, and that an "intelligent" program like Siri only mimics understanding of English. It doesn't feel like anything to be Siri, which manipulates bits mindlessly. That's my guess, but I can't know for sure, because of the solipsism problem.

Nor can I know what it's like to be the man in the Chinese room. He may or may not understand Chinese; he may or may not be conscious. There is no way of knowing, again, because of the solipsism problem. Searle's argument assumes that we can know what's going on, or *not* going on, in the man's mind, and hence, by implication, what's going on or not in a machine. His flawed initial assumption leads to his flawed, question-begging conclusion.

That doesn't mean the Chinese room experiment has no value. Far from it. The [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) calls it "the most widely discussed philosophical argument in cognitive science to appear since the Turing Test." Searle's thought experiment continues to pop up in my thoughts. Recently, for example, it nudged me toward a disturbing conclusion about quantum mechanics, which [I've been struggling to learn](#) over the last year or so.

Physicists emphasize that you cannot understand quantum mechanics without understanding its underlying mathematics. You should have, at a minimum, a grounding in logarithms, trigonometry, calculus (differential and integral) and linear algebra. Knowing Fourier transforms wouldn't hurt.

That's a lot of math, especially for a geezer and former literature major like me. I was thus relieved to discover [Q Is for Quantum](#) by physicist Terry Rudolph. He explains superposition, entanglement and other key quantum concepts with a relatively simple mathematical system, which involves arithmetic, a little algebra and lots of diagrams with black and white balls falling into and out of boxes.

Rudolph emphasizes, however, that *some* math is essential. Trying to grasp quantum mechanics without any math, he says, is like "having van Gogh's 'Starry Night' described in words to you by someone who has only seen a black and white photograph. One that a dog chewed."

But here's the irony. Mastering the mathematics of quantum mechanics doesn't make it easier to understand and might even make it harder. Rudolph, who teaches quantum mechanics and co-founded a [quantum-computer company](#), says he feels "cognitive dissonance" when he tries to connect quantum formulas to sensible physical phenomena.

Indeed, some physicists and philosophers worry that physics education focuses too narrowly on formulas and not enough on what they mean. [Philosopher Tim Maudlin](#) complains in [Philosophy of Physics: Quantum Theory](#) that most physics textbooks and courses do not present quantum mechanics as a theory, that is, a description of the world; instead, they present it as a "recipe," or set of mathematical procedures, for accomplishing certain tasks.

Learning the recipe can help you predict the results of experiments and design microchips, Maudlin

acknowledges. But if a physics student “happens to be unsatisfied with just learning these mathematical techniques for making predictions and asks instead what the theory claims about the physical world, she or he is likely to be met with a canonical response: Shut up and calculate!”

In his book, Maudlin presents several attempts to make sense of quantum mechanics, including the [pilot-wave](#) and [many-worlds models](#). His goal is to show that we can translate [the Schrödinger equation](#) and other formulas into intelligible accounts of what’s happening in, say, the double-slit experiment. But to my mind, Maudlin’s ruthless examination of the quantum models subverts his intention. Each model seems preposterous in its own way.

Pondering the plight of physicists, I’m reminded of an argument advanced by philosopher Daniel Dennett in *From Bacteria to Bach and Back: The Evolution of Minds*. Dennett elaborates on his long-standing claim that consciousness is overrated, at least when it comes to doing what we need to do to get through a typical day. We carry out most tasks with little or no conscious attention.

Dennett calls this “competence without comprehension.” Adding insult to injury, Dennett suggests that we are virtual “zombies.” When philosophers refer to zombies, they mean not the clumsy, grunting cannibals of *The Walking Dead* but creatures that walk and talk like sentient humans but lack inner awareness.

When I [reviewed Dennett’s book](#), I slammed him for downplaying consciousness and overstating the significance of unconscious cognition. Competence without comprehension may apply to menial tasks like brushing your teeth or driving a car but certainly not to science and other lofty intellectual pursuits. Maybe Dennett is a zombie, but I’m not! That, more or less, was my reaction.

But lately I’ve been haunted by the ubiquity of competence without comprehension. Quantum physicists, for example, manipulate differential equations and matrices with impressive competence—enough to build quantum computers!—but no real understanding of what the math means. If physicists end up like information-processing automatons, what hope is there for the rest of us? After all, our minds are habituation machines, designed to turn even complex tasks—like being a parent, husband or teacher—into routines that we perform by rote, with minimal cognitive effort.

The Chinese room experiment serves as a metaphor not only for physics but also for the human condition. Each of us sits alone within the cell of our subjective awareness. Now and then we receive cryptic messages from the outside world. Only dimly comprehending what we are doing, we compose responses, which we slip under the door. In this way, we manage to survive, even though we [never really know what the hell is happening](#).

Leadership Development



Dr. Dianne B. Collard Visual Symbols in Leadership

Importance of Visual Symbols in Leadership

(excerpt)

Any visit to a mega-bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, or even an internet search at the Amazon.com site will confirm that organizational and leadership issues are a hot topic in today's world. This plethora of offerings may include books proposing new trends in management and theory of leadership, but often one finds merely a re-hashing of the same issues in new dress. What isn't found, however, is an abundance of proponents of the use of symbolism, especially visual symbols, as an effective organizational or management technique. Such is the topic of this paper.

Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal present the role and value of symbolism in their book on organizational management, *Modern Approaches to Understanding and Managing Organizations*. They recognize that "of the four major organizational perspectives, the symbolic is the newest, least developed, and least mapped" (1984:223), but its newness doesn't diminish its value. It behooves anyone interested in the study of leadership, organizational theory or the use of the visual arts to consider the resource of a symbolic approach in organizational motivation.

This paper will begin with a definition of the term symbolism and offer a valid basis for its use in regards to leadership. Included also is the nexus of visual art and symbolism. In the main body of the paper, a discussion of values- or meaning-based leadership will be undertaken, especially as it relates to the use of symbolism. Some specific examples of the use of symbols in various contexts will follow. Finally, a warning concerning the negative use of symbolism will form the conclusion.

A word concerning the limitations of this study is appropriate. While Bolman and Deal rightly include the use of myth (1984:153), ritual and ceremony (1984:158), stories and fairy tales (1984:155), and metaphor, humor and play (1984:163) as indices of the use of the "The Symbolic Approach" (1984:148), this paper will attempt to chart a more limited (and difficult to research) course of the use of the visual object as a symbol. It was a daunting, but worthwhile, endeavor.



"Symbols are powerful because they are the visible signs of invisible realities."

-St Augustine

... by the Lighthouse Beam



Why are these 32 symbols found in caves all over Europe | Genevieve von Petzinger

Administration

NOTICE: Hiram's Lighthouse is currently looking to expand its Editorial Board, should you or someone you know be a good candidate, please contact the editor at hramslighthouse@gmail.com with a brief bio.

ADMINISTRATION:

Hiram's Lighthouse is your newsletter. It is published on the last day of every month. If Hiram's Lighthouse does not have the content you would prefer, it is because the editor does not have that content available. If you want something more, please submit it. Please feel free to offer suggestions, submissions for ... by the Lighthouse Beam, book and film reviews, and topics of Masonic interest.

We also ask all Secretaries and Worshipful Masters to inform their lodge members of the existence of the newsletter and how to subscribe to it.

Anyone wishing to get on the subscription list should personally send a message to hramslighthouse@gmail.com including your full name, lodge and lodge location with a subject of Newsletter.

To get a notice into the newsletter at least one month before the event, send a message to hramslighthouse@gmail.com with all the information and we'll run it every month until the function is past.

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