



SAARP
NEWSLETTER
Number 143
October 2018

adding life to your years

As a psycholinguist I am compelled to add that the English language has far more words for negative emotions than for positive ones.

Steven Pinker

(So, we should think before we speak)

WATER IS LIFE – SAVE IT

Water quality and continuity of supply are problems in South Africa. This is exacerbated by the fact that South Africa experiences a brain drain that also affects the availability of qualified engineers in water and sanitation utilities. The number of civil engineers in municipalities has declined from 20 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1994 to 2.8 in 2009.

Wikipedia

So - please use it sparingly and wisely.

SAARP NEWS

EMAIL – Problems

We are – inexplicably – subject to non-delivery of e-mails, both outgoing and incoming. If you request, or expect a reply, to any e-mail to ...@saarp.net and you have not received a reply within a couple of days please contact Anne on 021 592 1279. **(Please note that ...@saarp.co.za no longer exists.)**

RETIREMENT BOOKLET

Our Retirement Guide booklet – available on our website www.saarp.net (see below) – has been deemed so useful that a company has subsidised the printing of a certain number. It will also be of great help to your children and/or grandchildren who need to plan for the future.



TALKS – Various subjects

During the past month we have delivered talks on SAARP and on what information you should have with your Will to assist your executor(s) and those left behind. We are happy to share our knowledge with any organisation.

WILLS – Reminder

It was recently National Wills Week – even in New Zealand - and this is an extract of what their government distributed to its Senior Citizens:

“Have you sorted your will? If not, now is the time. As we go through life, we acquire assets and develop relationships that come with certain responsibilities. Think of these things as the stuff in the 'room of your life' and a will as the way to sort and tidy that room when you die. Having an up-to-date will means taking responsibility for the people and things in your life. It means leaving well and doing what's right for those left behind.”

There's more to a will than just how you want your house or financial assets to be divided.

It's also where you can:

- Name a guardian for your children
- Outline your funeral wishes
- Name who will receive particular valuable items as special gifts
- Provide special instructions around the distribution of particular assets
- Detail your preferences for the ongoing care of your pets.

NZ Ministry of Social Development

PS Don't forget to check the beneficiaries on your insurance and funeral insurance policies

ANOTHER HAPPY MEMBER

“Hi Anne, Received card. Thanks so much! You the BEST.”

SAARP SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

UMHLANGA CLUB

It is with a heavy (and angry) heart that I advise of the death of Hamish McLeod, long time treasure of the club and a true “scholar and a gentleman”. While recovering from a hip operation at his home he was attacked by thugs who, not content to steal, assaulted him. An attack from which he never recovered. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, Ann and his fellow club members.

*(South Africa is either the 5th, or the 10th, most murderous country in the world – it merely depends on which source you choose to use. See, **THE TRUTH – Whose truth?** further on in this newsletter.)*

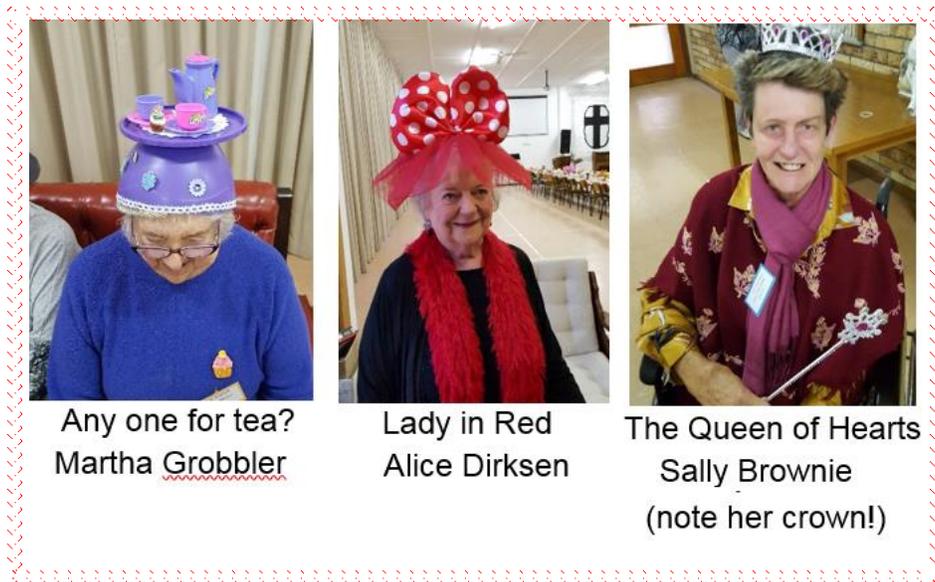
BIRTHDAY TEAS

Sedgefield club has a wonderful custom, each month those who have a birthday are invited to a birthday tea paid for by the club. Congratulations Janice and company for a novel and innovative idea:

22nd October – Monday `Birthday Date` for members who have birthdays in Oct.
Tiffany's at Tea Time (3pm) . By invitation only. Invites will be sent closer to time.

CLUB MEETINGS – Mad Hatters Tea Party

Helderberg is one of the clubs who host an annual Mad Hatters Tea Party. I liked these three:



SAARP SERVICES

CRUISE OFFERS

Call Lifestyle Cruises to Book on 0861 11 33 88, visit lifestylecruises.co.za or email info@lifestylecruises.co.za

Package Name: **Springtime Dutch Discovery**

7 NIGHTS RIVER CRUISE HOLIDAY PACKAGE: DEPARTING 12 APRIL 2019

Return Economy Flights and Taxes from Johannesburg

1 Nights Hotel Stay in Amsterdam

5 Nights Full Board River Cruise on **Fred Olsen Brabant**

1 Nights Hotel Stay in Düsseldorf

Port Taxes & Baggage Charges

River Cruise Itinerary

Amsterdam, Netherlands | Cruising Across IJsselmeer, Netherlands | Hoorn, Netherlands | Kampen, Netherlands | Cruising on IJssel River, Netherlands | Deventer, Netherlands | Cruising by Zutphen, Netherlands | Arnhem, Netherlands | Cruising Pannerden Canal & Fortress, Netherlands | Nijmegen, Netherlands | Düsseldorf, Germany

Prices

Standard Room: R 31 999 per person sharing

Juliet Balcony Strauss: R 34 999 per person sharing

Focus price: Solo Traveller (limited cabins available)

Standard Room: R 38 999

Juliet Balcony Strauss: R 42 999

SAARP HOLIDAY CLUB

The following are examples of discounted off-peak holidays which our Holiday Club has on offer for you and your families. **To book phone Renske on 021 592 1279 or renskes@saarp.net**

RESORT	AREA	DATE	UNIT	PRICE
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	5-9 Aug	1 bedroom	R1 380
Castleton	Plettenberg Bay	18-22 Feb	1 bedroom	R2 760
Tableview Cabanas	Blouberg	28 Jan – 1 Feb	1 bedroom	R2 760
Drakensberg Sun	Drakensberg	4-8 Feb	1 bedroom	R2 760
Kiara Lodge	Clarens	11-15 Feb	1 bedroom	R2 760
Crystal Springs	Pilgrims Rest	18-22 Feb	1 bedroom	R2 760
Kruger Park Lodge	Hazyview	4-8 Feb	2 bedroom	R3 795
Ngwenya Lodge	Komatipoort	5-9 Nov 2018	2 bedroom	R3 795

NOTE 1: The above prices include 15% VAT.

NOTE 2: The price is for the entire period.

NOTE 3: All cancellations must be made 7 weeks before check-in date.

PAYMENT: Once Renske has **CONFIRMED** your booking she will submit an invoice containing SAARP's bank details. Once you have deposited the required amount in SAARP's bank account, please provide proof of payment using one of the following:

Fax: 021 592 1284

E-mail: info@saarp.net

And remember to quote your ID Number and name.

DO NOT PAY ANYTHING UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE CONFIRMATION OF THE BOOKING AND THE INVOICE.

YOUR MEMORY

IT'S BETTER THAN YOU THINK

While overall memory declines as we age, there are in fact, certain things older people continue to remember quite well. Our memories are our identities and we tend to remember what matters to us, especially as we age. There are many things older adults remember quite well. Here are some:

1. Older people tend to remember the essentials.

Imagine you're packing for a trip. You want to make sure you've put in the most important items, the ones that would be extremely costly and/or inconvenient if you forgot them (e.g., your passport, your credit cards). In an experiment subjects were given 20 possible items that you might pack on a trip. When they were later asked to recall the items, the older adults (average age was 68) recalled more of the items that they felt were important than the younger adults (average age of 20), even though they remembered fewer items overall.

2. Older people tend to remember what they need to do in the future.

Sometimes the most important things for us to remember involve future actions. This is called "prospective memory" — and it might take the form of remembering to take medications at a certain time tomorrow, or paying a credit card bill on a particular date. While prospective memory might be worse in older age, there are important exceptions. Researchers have found a "prospective memory paradox": despite older adults doing poorly on laboratory tasks of prospective memory, they fare well in the real world. As many of us know, older adults have often developed strategies to prompt their prospective memories, like putting their wallet by the front door or their medications by their eyeglasses.

3. Older people tend to remember what intrigues them.

Humans are curious from an early age. Our curiosity blossoms with age, but we typically become interested in different things as we get older. In one study younger and older adults were given questions that we guessed almost none of the participants knew the correct answers. Afterwards, the subjects gave each a curiosity rating — showing how interested they were in learning the answer. They were then told the answers. A week later, the same subjects were presented with the same questions and they were asked to recall the answers. It was the older adults who remembered the ones they were more curious about — and they forgot the less interesting ones. The younger adults didn't show this pattern.

P.S. Don't get too hung up on what you can and can't remember.

Our beliefs about our memory can be very influential. In fact, many of us have negative beliefs and expectations about aging's impact on the brain. This kind of "stereotype threat" can make people perform stereotypically — in a way that is consistent with what they think is expected of them. Stereotype threat has been examined to determine if it causes older adults to underperform on tests of memory. Labelling something a memory test, or asking people to come to a memory study, does appear to invoke anxiety, and research has shown that renaming it as a "wisdom test" (and then administering the same memory test) leads to better performance by older adults. So, the next time you start to worry about forgetting a world capital or a famous actor's name and wonder what this means about your brain and your memory, try not to sweat it.

Alan D. Castel

HEALTH

PROBIOTICS – Are all equal?

I recently read an article on <http://takimag.com> entitled: ***Probiotics: Here, Drink Some Gut Slime.***

I asked Professor JP van Niekerk for his comments and here is what he said:

*Some years ago we published a paper in the SA Medical Journal which reported on the analysis of probiotic products (done at the specialised laboratory in Belgium) taken from the shelves of pharmacies. Most contained nothing, others had active ingredients that were not those advertised, and a few were fine. I have a large file on the legal threats and other pressures that I endured as a result of not buckling to the demand to withdraw the paper. However, probiotics have benefits but not as great as often claimed. The flora of the gut is increasingly recognised as important, not only in assisting in the digestion of food, but also having resulting effects on the brain. These organisms greatly outnumber the cells in our bodies leading to the comment that they constitute an additional organ. He suggested I read Prof Tim Spector's book, ***The diet myth: The real science behind what we eat.****

EATING PLANS - Fads, fails and fixes

WHICH OF THESE WILL GIVE YOU A HAPPY STOMACH?

Eating Gluten Free 'Just Because'

- **Fad:** A 2013 survey showed that nearly 30 percent of U.S. adults were trying to minimize or avoid gluten. That makes sense only if you have celiac disease or other symptoms of gluten sensitivity.

Getting a Colon Cleanse

- **Fail:** This involves putting large volumes of liquid into the rectum to detoxify the body, enhance immunity and fight disease. Risks include cramping, pain, nausea, potentially fatal electrolyte imbalance, renal failure and gut perforations.

Prebiotic Supplements

- **Fail:** These nondigestible fibre compounds promise to decrease inflammation and lower your risk of disease. Save your money, Instead, eat foods that are rich in prebiotics, such as garlic, onions, asparagus, bananas, dandelion greens and Jerusalem artichokes.

Probiotic Foods

- **Fail:** Stores sell bacteria-spiked foods like dark chocolate and muffin mixes, not to mention probiotic pills. Don't buy in. You should consume naturally probiotic-rich, unpasteurized fermented foods and drinks like yogurt and sauerkraut.

Peppermint Oil

- **Fix:** A review of 121 trials found that peppermint oil is effective at treating irritable bowel syndrome.

Faecal Transplant

- **Fix:** Donor stool with healthy bacteria is inserted into a patient's colon to alter the flora and treat ailments such as lupus and diabetes.

WHAT WILL GIVE YOU A SLIM, FIT PHYSIQUE?

Palaeolithic Diet

- **Fad:** Paleo advocates argue that evolution points us to a diet similar to that of caveman times. From a short-term perspective, research has shown good results from the paleo diet. The catch? Excluding dairy, grains and beans means people may not get enough calcium, vitamin D and fibre, all important for older adults.

Cleanses and Detox Diets

- **Fail:** The Master Cleanse — 10 days of consuming nothing but a lemon juice, maple syrup and cayenne concoction plus a nightly laxative — was conceived as a detox process. Remember: between your liver, kidneys and other organs, your body is already well-designed to detoxify itself.

Ketogenic Diet

- **Fail:** Any diet that limits bread or sugar will help you lose weight. But a 2017 analysis concluded that maintaining weight loss "is a major problem," and the benefits seen with keto diets are "usually limited in time."

Weight-Loss Supplements and Teas

- **Fail:** Alas, there is no magic pill. Herbal teas that promote weight loss but accomplish it through diuretic water loss, not fat loss.

Mediterranean Diet

- **Fix:** A permanent diet high in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fish and healthy fats, with an occasional glass of red wine, is the healthy way to lose weight and keep it off. Even better: A new study found that older adults who follow this diet had higher mental function.

AARP Bulletin, May 2018

LIFESTYLE

ALCOHOL - There is no safe level of consumption

A large new global study published in the Lancet has confirmed previous research which has shown that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption. The researchers admit moderate drinking may protect against heart disease but found that the risk of cancer and other diseases outweighs these protections. A study author said its findings were the most significant to date because of the range of factors considered.

The Global Burden of Disease study looked at levels of alcohol use and its health effects in 195 countries, including the UK, between 1990 and 2016. Analysing data from 15 to 95-year-olds, the researchers compared people who did not drink at all with those who had one alcoholic drink a day. The lead author of the study Dr Max Griswold, at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), University of Washington, said:

"Previous studies have found a protective effect of alcohol on some conditions, but we found that the combined health risks associated with alcohol increases with any amount of alcohol. The strong association between alcohol consumption and the risk of cancer, injuries, and infectious diseases offset the protective effects for heart disease in our study. Although the health risks associated with alcohol start off being small with one drink a day, they then rise rapidly as people drink more."

Yet Prof David Spiegelhalter, Winton Professor for the Public Understanding of Risk at the University of Cambridge, sounded a note of caution about the findings. *"Given the pleasure presumably associated with moderate drinking, claiming there is no 'safe' level does not seem an argument for abstention," he said. "There is no safe level of driving, but the government does not recommend that people avoid driving. Come to think of it, there is no safe level of living, but nobody would recommend abstention."*

BBC

THE WORLD

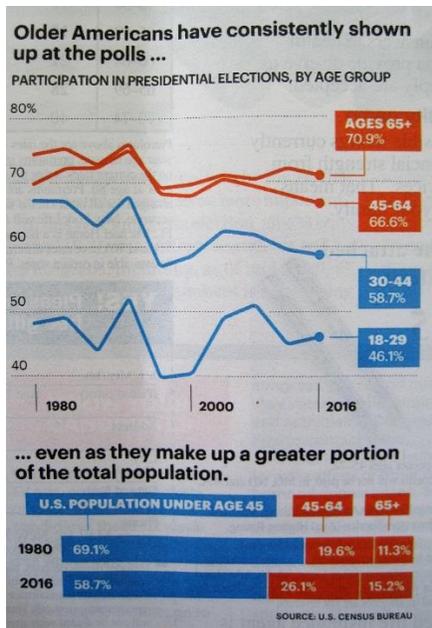
VOTING – The ‘Oldies’ rule

In the UK's 1975 EEC referendum those least keen to stay were the 18 to 29 year olds. They are now 59 years plus and voted en masse to leave the EU while the majority of today's youngsters (who want to remain in the EU) did not bother to vote.

Older Americans make up the largest portion of the USA's population and there the voting patterns were similar to the UK's referendum.

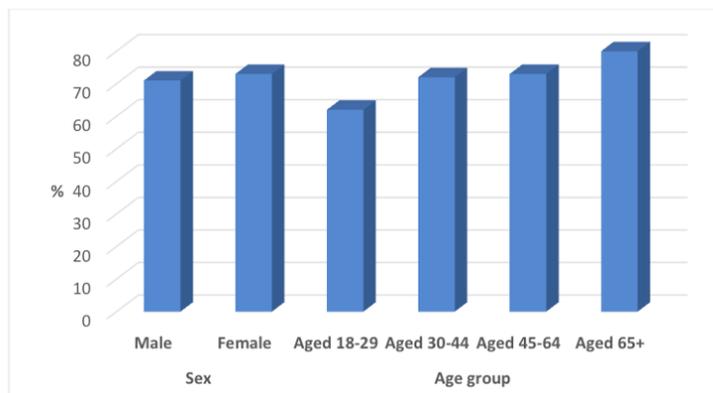
The result: The Republicans and BREXIT.

(In 2040 the over 64's will account for 21% of the USA's population.)



AARP Bulletin

Figure 1 Per cent voting to stay in the EEC in the 1975 referendum, by sex and age group



ARTIFICIAL LEARNING

CHES – From zero to champion in 4 hours

On 7 December 2017 a critical milestone was reached, not when a computer defeated a human at chess – that’s old news – but when Google’s AlphaZero program defeated the Stockfish 8 program. Stockfish 8 was the world’s computer chess champion for 2016. It had access to centuries of accumulated human experience in chess, as well as to decades of computer experience. It was able to calculate 70 million chess positions per second. In contrast, AlphaZero performed only 80,000 such calculations per second, and its human creators never taught it any chess strategies – not even standard openings. Rather, AlphaZero used the latest machine-learning principles to self-learn chess by playing against itself. Nevertheless, out of a hundred games the novice AlphaZero played against Stockfish, AlphaZero won twenty-eight and tied seventy-two. It didn’t lose even once. Since AlphaZero learned nothing from any human, many of its winning moves and strategies seemed unconventional to human eyes. They may well be considered creative, if not downright genius. Can you guess how long it took AlphaZero to learn chess from scratch, prepare for the match against Stockfish, and develop its genius instincts? Four hours. That’s not a typo. For centuries, chess was considered one of the crowning glories of human intelligence. AlphaZero went from utter ignorance to creative mastery in four hours, without the help of any human guide.

Harari, Yuval Noah. 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK - 'ugly truth' growth memo haunts firm

A Facebook executive's memo that claimed the "ugly truth" was that anything it did to grow was justified has been made public, embarrassing the company.

The 2016 post said that this applied even if it meant people might die as a result of bullying or terrorism. Both the author and the company's chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, have denied they actually believe the sentiment. But it risks overshadowing the firm's efforts to tackle an earlier scandal. Facebook has been under intense scrutiny since it acknowledged that it had received reports that a political consultancy - Cambridge Analytica - had not destroyed data harvested from about 50 million of its users years earlier. The memo was first made public by the BuzzFeed news site, and was written by Andrew Bosworth.

The 18 June 2016 memo:

That can be bad if they make it negative. Maybe it costs a life by exposing someone to bullies. Maybe someone dies in a terrorist attack co-ordinated on our tools.

And still we connect people.

*The ugly truth is that we believe in connecting people so deeply that anything that allows us to connect more people more often is *de facto* good. It is perhaps the only area where the metrics do tell the true story as far as we are concerned.*

[...]

*That's why all the work we do in growth is justified. All the questionable contact importing practices. All the subtle language that helps people stay searchable by friends. All of the work we do to bring more communication in. **The work we will likely have to do in China someday. All of it.** (? Sic).*

BBC

OUR "INFORMATION" AGE

THE TRUTH – Whose truth?

This extract is quite frightening in the light of the results of three Google searches listed below:

Just think of the way that within a mere two decades, billions of people have come to entrust the Google search algorithm with one of the most important tasks of all: searching for relevant and trustworthy information. We no longer search for information. Instead, we google. And as we increasingly rely on Google for answers, so our ability to search for information by ourselves diminishes. Already today, 'truth' is defined by the top results of the Google search.

Yuval Noah Harari: 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

Google searches for the origin of zero:

- *The first evidence we have of zero is from the Sumerian culture in Mesopotamia, some 5,000 years ago.*
- *Carbon dating shows an ancient Indian manuscript has the earliest recorded origin of the zero symbol. The Bakhshali manuscript is now believed to date from the 3rd or 4th Century, making it hundreds of years older than previously thought.*
- *The first recorded zero appeared in Mesopotamia around 3 B.C. The Mayans invented it independently circa 4 A.D. It was later devised in India in the mid-fifth century, spread to Cambodia near the end of the seventh century, and into China and the Islamic countries at the end of the eighth. Zero reached western Europe in the 12th century.*

WORLD WIDE WEB

GOOGLE - tracks users who turn off location history

Google records users' locations even when they have asked it not to, a report from the Associated Press has suggested. The issue could affect up to two billion Android and Apple devices which use Google for maps or search. The study, verified by researchers at Princeton University, has angered US law-makers. Google said in response that it provides clear descriptions of its tools and how to turn them off.

The study found that users' whereabouts are recorded even when location history has been disabled.

For example:

- Google stores a snapshot of where you are when you open the Maps app
- Automatic weather updates on Android phones pinpoint roughly where a user is
- Searches that have nothing to do with location pinpoint precise longitude and latitude of users

To illustrate the effect of these location markers, AP created a visual map showing the movements of Princeton researcher Gunes Acar who was using an Android phone with location history turned off. The map showed his train commute around New York as well as visits to The High Line Park, Chelsea Market, Hell's Kitchen, Central Park and Harlem. It also revealed his home address. To stop Google saving these location markers, users have to turn off another setting called Web and App Activity, which is enabled by default and which does not mention location data.

Disabling this prevents Google storing information generated by searches and other activities which can limit the effectiveness of its digital assistant. "You would think that telling Google that you didn't want your location to be tracked by disabling an option called "Location History" would stop the internet giant from storing data about your location," writes security researcher Graham Cluley on his blog.

"It seems pretty sneaky to me that Google continues to store location data, unless you both disable "Location history" and "Web & App Activity.""

Technology firms are under fire for not being clear about privacy settings and how to use them. In June, a report from the Norwegian Consumer Council found evidence that privacy-friendly options are hidden away or obscured. Location-based advertising offers big opportunities to marketers. According to research firm BIA/Kelsey, US brands are poised to spend up to \$20.6bn (£16.3bn) on targeted mobile ads in 2018. Since 2014, Google has let advertisers track the effectiveness of online adverts with a feature based on footfall data, which relies on location history.

Jane Wakefield Technology reporter BBC

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TRIVIA

SNIPPETS

Third Street: second most common street name in the US

It's as delightfully perverse as the famous Abbott and Costello 'Who's on first?' sketch: first place on the list of most common US street names goes to Second, while second

place is occupied by Third. Coming third is First. There are 10,131 thoroughfares called Third Street, compared to 10,866 called Second Street. The name First Street appears 9,898 times, ahead of the 9,190 Fourth Streets, which makes that the only 'logical' name on the whole list. (Elsewhere Fifth is sixth, Sixth is eighth, Seventh is tenth and Eighth is fourteenth.) The explanation is that the 'major' street in a town or city is often called Main rather than First.

The Book of Seconds: The Incredible Stories of the Ones that Didn't (Quite) Win (Mason, Mark)

High speed railway lines

More than 50 percent of these are located in China. If we add China and Japan together the percentage rises to 60 percent.

SMILE

If you don't smile you will wince:

- On a bag of Fritos -- *"You could be a winner. No purchasing necessary. Details inside."*
- On Tesco's Tiramisu dessert (printed on the bottom of the box) -- *"Do not turn upside down."*
- On an American Airline packet of nuts -- *"Instructions -- Open packet, eat nuts."*
- On Sainsbury's peanuts -- *"Warning -- Contains nuts."*
- On Korean kitchen knife -- *"Warning -- keep out of children."*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The real problem with robots is not their own artificial intelligence, but rather the natural stupidity and cruelty of their human masters.

Yuval Noah Harari. 21 Lessons for the 21st Century

EXCHANGE WITH A 7-YEAR-OLD

'Gogo, who do you love the most – Dad or me?'

'Well Harry, it's like segments on a lemon.'

'One is Dad, One is Mom, One is Harry, One is Auntie Ali, and One is Gumps

So all of you go to make one beautiful whole, and I love you all the same, just a bit differently.'

'OK, Gogo, I get it.'

QUOTE

Poverty, too, needs no explanation. In a world governed by entropy and evolution, it is the default state of humankind. Matter does not arrange itself into shelter or clothing, and living things do everything they can to avoid becoming our food. As Adam Smith pointed out, what needs to be explained is wealth. Yet even today, when few people

believe that accidents or diseases have perpetrators, discussions of poverty consist mostly of arguments about whom to blame for it.

Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress by Steven Pinker

Ray Hattingh

PS Life is simpler when you plough around the stump.

Contact us at SAARP Tel: 021 592 1279

Fax: 021 592 1284

Call us and we'll call you back to save your phone bill

e-mail: info@saarp.net

Or see it all at www.saarp.net

adding life to your years