



THOSE WHO LAUGH LAST DEFINITELY LAUGH BEST
BY JUDY CHINITZ



One of the truest quotes of all time is by the great German philosopher, ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER, who said, “All truth passes through three stages. First, it is RIDICULED. Second, it is violently OPPOSED. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.” Today, we are going to have a look at 5 brilliant HISTORICAL figures who are living proof that when you are right, you are right...and someday, history will credit you because, as WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, said (in his play, *The MERCHANT of Venice*), “The truth will out.”

SPELL: RIDICULED SPELL: OPPOSED SPELL: HISTORICAL

What philosopher is mentioned in this paragraph? ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

What was Schopenhauer’s nationality? GERMAN

What playwright is mentioned in this paragraph? WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Name another play by William Shakespeare.

What is your interpretation of the words, “The Truth Will Out”?

In the time of COVID, the contributions of the HUNGARIAN physician, IGNAZ SEMMELWEIS, cannot be understated. And too, his story is one of the most tragic. In the 19th century, before the INVENTION of microscopes, no one knew that germs existed. Basic HYGIENE, like washing your hands, was NONEXISTENT, even in the most extraordinary circumstances...like physicians in hospitals. You might want to be sure you're sitting for this one: medical students would often go straight from DISSECTING CADAVERS [dead bodies] of women who had died in childbirth to, you guessed it - to birthing babies...without washing their hands.

SPELL: INVENTION SPELL: NONEXISTENT SPELL: DISSECTING

What is the name of the physician we are talking about? IGNAZ SEMMELWEIS

What was Dr. Semmelweis' nationality? HUNGARIAN

What did physicians not do back in the early 1800s? WASH THEIR HANDS, HAND WASHING

Doctors went straight from the dissecting room to do what without washing their hands? BIRTHING BABIES, HELPING WOMEN GIVE BIRTH

What is another word for cadaver? CORPSE

Dr. Semmelweis noted that PUERPERAL fever - also known as “childbed fever” – infections would kill close to 10% of new mothers at that time in one clinic of the hospital, but only about 3.6% in the MIDWIVES clinic of the same hospital. Unlike the medical students, the midwives did not conduct POSTMORTEM examinations. In 1847, he suggested that the medical students were transferring “MORBID matter” (later he called it “DECOMPOSING animal organic matter”) on their hands, and had them wash their hands in a special solution before entering the MATERNITY ward. The death rate dropped to about 1.3% in both clinics.

SPELL: MIDWIVES SPELL: MORBID SPELL: MATERNITY

What is another name for childbed fever? PUERPERAL FEVER

What did Dr. Semmelweis suggest the doctors were transferring? MORBID MATTER, DECOMPOSING ANIMAL ORGANIC MATTER

What percentage of women died in the hospital from childbed fever? 10%

With hand washing, the percentage of deaths dropped to what? 1.3%

Why was the death rate lower for the midwives than the physicians?

How could anyone argue when Dr. Semmelweis was so obviously right? Well...the medical ESTABLISHMENT managed to find a way. Doctors throughout Europe were INFURIATED that he had dared to suggest that they were dirty, and they refused to believe it possible that they could be the cause of disease and death. His discovery was utterly and completely REJECTED and his fellow physicians viewed him as an EMBARRASSMENT. In fact, he was so humiliated and ISOLATED by his peers that he was driven to alcoholism and depression, ending up in a mental asylum where he died, utterly forgotten...for a time.

SPELL: ESTABLISHMENT SPELL: INFURIATED SPELL: REJECTED

Dr. Semmelweis' fellow doctors regarded him as an ____?
EMBARRASSMENT

What was Dr. Semmelweis driven to? ALCOHOLISM, DEPRESSION

Why were doctors so infuriated? HE SUGGESTED THEY WERE DIRTY, HE SAID THEY WERE THE SOURCE OF DISEASE AND DEATH

Fortunately, now Dr. Semmelweis is LAUDED as the "SAVIOR of mothers." He PIONEERED the very ANTISEPTIC procedures that are now commonplace, not only in hospitals, but everywhere. It's mind-boggling to think of how many lives he has ended up saving. He has hospitals all over the world named after him. He is a hero of modern medicine. Perhaps

most remarkable of all is that what happened to him is now actually called The Semmelweis REFLEX, i.e. the well-established human behavior we are talking about today: instant REJECTION of new ideas and knowledge because it CONTRADICTS the established norms, belief and PARADIGMS.

SPELL: LAUDED SPELL: CONTRADICTS SPELL: PIONEERED

What is Dr. Semmelweis now called? SAVIOR OF MOTHERS

What kind of procedures did he pioneer? ANTISEPTIC

What is the knee-jerk rejection of new ideas called? SEMMELWEIS REFLEX

What institutions around the world are named after him? HOSPITALS

Why do you think people have such a knee-jerk reaction and immediately reject new ideas and information?

So, let's move on and take a look at other famous instances of the Semmelweis Reflex.

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS was a Polish MATHEMATICIAN, born in 1473. He was the first to propose that planets orbit the sun, which we now call the HELIOCENTRIC (sun centered) model of the universe. Sometime between 1508 and 1514, he wrote a manuscript called, "Six Books Concerning the REVOLUTIONS of Heavenly Orbs). Prior to this, there were a variety of accepted paradigms, including one that had the earth was the center of the universe (a GEOCENTRIC model), and that the other CELESTIAL bodies revolved around us. Unfortunately, he did not have enough established science to prove his theory: this was years before the invention of the TELESCOPE. Thus, his hypothesis was considered interesting but...not true.

SPELL: MATHEMATICIAN SPELL: CELESTIAL SPELL: TELESCOPE

What mathematician are we talking about now? NICOLAUS COPERNICUS

What was Copernicus nationality? POLISH

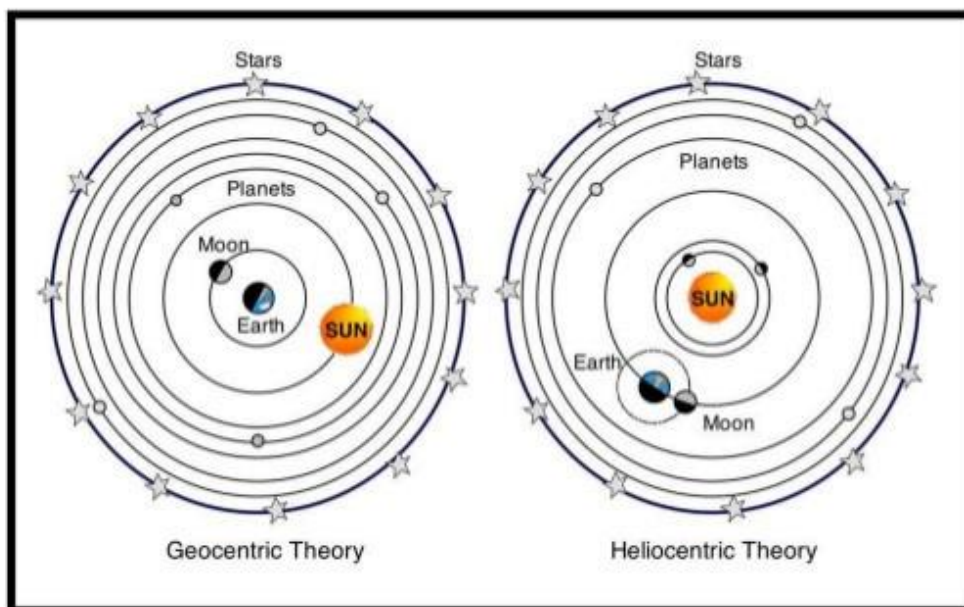
What word means with the earth at the center? GEOCENTRIC

What word means with the sun at the center? HELIOCENTRIC

What was the name of his book? SIX BOOKS CONCERNING THE REVOLUTIONS OF HEAVENLY ORBS

How did his fellow scientists regard his theory? WRONG, INTERESTING

Geocentric vs. Heliocentric



VAKT: Thanks to Copernicus and then, Galileo, we know that the earth is not the center of our solar system!

It was GALILEO GALILEI, was an Italian ASTRONOMER, mathematician and philosopher who took the brunt of the heat for the heliocentric universe. Galileo's contributions to science are so enormous that he merits an entire lesson but to sum up briefly: he made FUNDAMENTAL contributions to the

laws of the motion of objects (physics), astronomy, the strength of MATERIALS, and the scientific method. It was in 1609 when the seeds to his downfall were sown. He heard that in the NETHERLANDS, an instrument had been created that showed distant things as though they were close by. He began to experiment, and ended up inventing the telescope, even teaching himself how to grind LENSES to create incredibly powerful instruments for that time.

SPELL: ASTRONMER SPELL: FUNDAMENTAL SPELL:

What revolutionary scientist are we talking about now? GALILEO GALILEI

In what country was an instrument that could make far things look near first created? NETHERLANDS

What did Galileo invent? TELESCOPE

What were just some of Galileo's contributions to science?

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LAWS OF MOTION/PHYSICS, ASTRONOMY, STRENGHT OF MATERIALS, SCIENTIFIC METHOD

In what year did he invent the telescope? 1609

Describe the scientific method.

Galileo began to use his new invention to observe the heavens: he was the first to see that the moon's surface was, in fact, not smooth but ROUGH and uneven. He was the first to see there were moons ORBITING JUPITER (he could see 4), and that there were far more stars in the universe than could be seen by the naked eye. And then...unfortunately for him (but fortunately for POSTERITY), his OBSERVATIONS of the workings of the solar system led him to confirm the findings of Copernicus: the sun is the center of the solar system. Uh oh...

SPELL: ROUGH SPELL: OBSERVATIONS SPELL: ORBITING

What did Galileo see orbiting Jupiter? MOONS

There are more stars in the universe than can be seen by what? NAKED EYE

What word in this paragraph refers to future generations? POSTERITY

What did he realize about the surface of the moon? IT WAS NOT SMOOTH, IT WAS ROUGH AND UNEVEN

Name all 8 planets in our solar system: MERCURY, VENUS, EARTH, MARS, JUPITER, SATURN, NEPTUNE, URANUS

The Roman CATHOLIC church decided that this VERSION of the universe was against the scriptures. He was eventually SUMMONED to Rome to face the INQUISTION [an extremely powerful institution set up by the church to root out non-believers], and was accused of HERESY. He was condemned to lifetime IMPRISONMENT. While he was permitted to live in relative comfort – house ARREST, essentially – his imprisonment did indeed last until his death, in 1642.

SPELL: VERSION SPELL: SUMMONED SPELL: ARREST

Which church objected to Galileo's heliocentric assertions? CATHOLIC

What powerful institution was he called to face? INQUISITION

What word in this paragraph means sacrilege or deviation? HERESY

What was his punishment for his heresy? ARREST, HOUSE IMPRISONMENT, LIFETIME IMPRISONMENT

Copernicus was right. Galileo was right. Dr. Semmelweis was right. None lived to see themselves VINDICATED. Fortunately, some people do get to see themselves VICTORIOUS. For heaven sake, JK ROWLING, the author of Harry Potter, had her original book PROPOSAL, which included the book's opening chapters, rejected by 12 publishers before it was finally accepted. Talking about laughing last: JK Rowling is laughing last all the way to the bank. According the *Times of London* in 2003, she overtook the Queen of England on the rich list, with a neat \$445.5 million in the bank...and that was years ago. At this point, her FORTUNE is estimated to be between \$650 million and \$1.2 billion dollars. (Bear in mind that when the first book in the series, *The Philosopher's Stone*, was published in

1997, Rowling was living in relative POVERTY. She is now considered the world's first BILLIONAIRE author.)

SPELL: VICTORIOUS SPELL: PROPOSAL SPELL: FORTUNE

Who is the author of the Harry Potter books? J K ROWLING

What was the name of the first book in the Harry Potter series? THE PHILSOPHER'S STONE

How would you define the word vindicated? PROVEN RIGHT, SHOWN TO BE CORRECT, JUSTIFIED

How many publishers rejected Harry Potter? 12

In what year did she become richer than the Queen of England? 2003

Name one of Harry Potter's friends: RON, HERMIONE

And how about WALT DISNEY? Harry Potter being rejected 12 times is peanuts compared to the number of times the big M (i.e. Mickey Mouse) was dumped into the PROVERBIAL trash heap. Walt Disney had to overcome unbelievable HURDLES on his way to his final successes. His first commercial art studio, in Kansas City, went BANKRUPT in only 2 years. UNDAUNTED, he packed his bags, took himself, those bags and his last \$40, and headed for Los Angeles. He considered acting, but failing that too, he decided to try his hand at ANIMATION, noting there were no animation studios in California. His first major character, OSWALD the Lucky Rabbit, had brief success but was stolen out from under him (he'd negotiated a bad contract). Once again, he was left destitute.

SPELL: HURDLES SPELL: BANKRUPT SPELL: UNDAUNTED

What was Walt Disney's first business? COMMERCIAL ART STUDIO

What city did he head to when his first business went bankrupt? LOS ANGELES

What did he notice a lack of in California? ANIMATION STUDIOS

What was the name of his first successful cartoon character? OSWALD
THE LUCKY RABBIT

What word in this paragraph means penniless and poor? DESTITUTE

Name another cartoon character you like and tell me why.

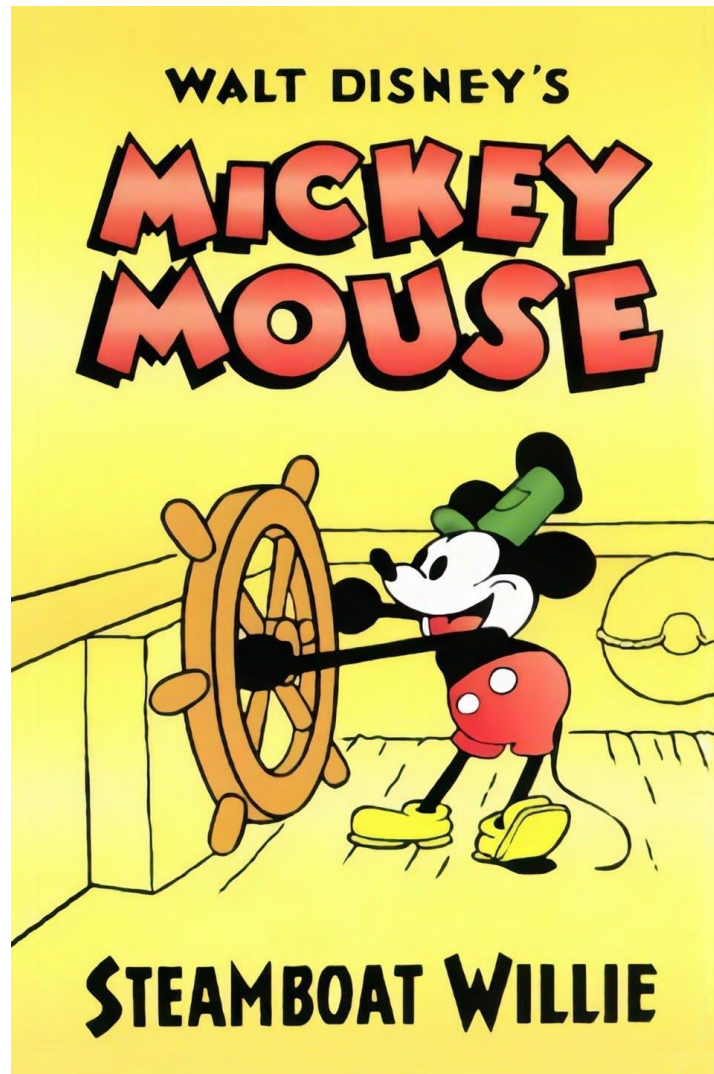
Walt was nothing else if not a fighter. He DETERMINED to start over once again...and Mickey Mouse was born. When he created his first full cartoon of Mickey in 1928 – *STEAMBOAT WILLIE*, he'd suffered through years of eating beans and INCURRING massive debts. Bankers and INVESTORS rejected Mickey over 300 times!!! Even when Mickey had some success, Walt's life was still very difficult for years to come.

SPELL: DETERMINED SPELL: INVESTORS SPELL: INCURRING

What was the name of Mickey's first cartoon? STEAMBOAT WILLIE

How many times was Mickey rejected by investors and bankers? 300

In what year did Steamboat Willie come out? 1928



VAKT: Watch Steamboat Mickey! Animation came into its own!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBgghnQF6E4>

In 1937, however, Walt finally had his first really big success. He created the first ever full-length animated film, *Snow White and the Seven DWARFS*, which was a massive box office success...quickly followed by many other of his most iconic films: *FANTASIA*, *Bambi*, *PINOCCHIO*...which, believe it or not, all bombed. But Walt still did not give up, battling through many more business hardships. As he himself said, "All the **ADVERSITY** I've had in my life, all the troubles and **OBSTACLES**, have strengthened me. You may not realize it when it

happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you." He most certainly survived that kick in the teeth as, at the time of his death in 1966, his net worth was a solid \$1 billion.

SPELL: PINOCCHIO SPELL: ADVERSITY SPELL: OBSTACLES

What was the first feature length animate film? SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVERN DWARFS

How much was Disney worth at the time of his death? 1 BILLION

Name another Disney movie.

What were the names of the 7 Dwarfs: SLEEPY, HAPPY, GRUMPY, SNEEZY, DOPEY, BASHFUL, DOC

The Semmelweis Reflex is alive and well in today's world. There are countless examples of it in the world of science (take a look Dr. GERD BINNING who invented the atomic force microscope – scientists literally laughed out loud at him), medicine (Google Dr. Kilmer McCully or Dr. BENNET OMALU (watch the movie, CONCUSSION, starring Will Smith, about what Dr. Omalu went through), the arts. The impressionist paintings we now consider masterpieces and which are now valued in the tens of millions, were initially ridiculed and regarded as AMATEURISH by the art establishment. When Russian American composer, IGOR STRAVINSKY's, ballet, The Rite of Spring, was first performed, the Parisian audience actually RIOTED! Still, as former British Prime Minister, WINSTON CHURCHILL, once said, "The truth is INCONTROVERTIBLE. Malice may attack it, IGNORANCE may deride it, but in the end...there it is."

SPELL: AMATEURISH SPELL: CONCUSSION SPELL: IGNORANCE

Who invented the atomic force microscope? GERD BINNING

What doctor's life is depicted in the movie, Concussion? BENNET OMALU

Who starred in Concussion? WILL SMITH

Who wrote The Rite of Spring? IGOR STRAVINSKY

What did the audience do when they first heard The Rite of Spring?
RIOTED

VAKT: Listen to The Rite of Spring. Does it give cause to riot????!!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rP42C-4zL3w>

VAKT: Here is a video of a reconstruction of part of the original choreography of the Rite of Spring.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6d8wacBjPQ>

VAKT: One more example of the novel choreography of The Rite of Spring: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPpq44uEyXo>

Judy Chinitz is the Founder of [Mouth-to-Hand Learning Center](#) in Mt. Kisco, New York where she delights in teaching nonspeakers how to type.

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