

[ERR: Errata noted 4/22/2000; note that this history was reconstructed from memory after I suffered my sole psychotic episode in early 1997]

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Medical history

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Familial

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My paternal grandmother suffered from atypical epilepsy.

My father was a "character", and my brother is decidedly weird according to societal norms, although neither ever sought psychological treatment or was diagnosed. My father died 3 months after a stroke induced total paralysis on his left side in 6/77; in the years prior to his death he manifested many of the symptoms (emotional lability, gait disorder, and other motor coordination problems) associated with neurological disorders such as the one I believe I have. He also seemed to suffer from narcolepsy, since he tended to doze off frequently at odd times.

My mother has a history of chronic worry (inducing Spastic Colitis) and depression (including a suicide attempt in 1963).

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Physical

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I've long had a tendency to suffer from a very painful charley horse in my right calf if I pronate my right foot, especially after awakening.

I tend to contract the flu less often than most, but when I do I suffer great discomfort and my recuperation is ususally prolonged.

The tip of my spine is not completely formed (my brother Mike has a fairly marked abnormality here).

I had measles around the age of six months.... I was told this was the reason my 12-year molars came in with no enamel (one has now been capped, the others are mostly amalgam due to cavities requiring filling; I've only had one other cavity in another tooth). This might conceivably also have affected other developmental processes (e.g., brain development relevant to gender identity). Measles is a possible cause of both CIDP and epilepsy.

I suffered from allergies from early childhood which caused my nasal passages to be chronically plugged. I was diagnosed and started taking shots to correct this problem in 1970. My primary allergy was to dust; after two years of treatment my allergies had abated.

I was bitten by a dog in 1962 and subsequently given what I believe was a rabies vaccination (although I did not go through the series of shots which would have been given if the dog had actually been rabid). [This shot may or may not have been of the kind associated with the development of Temporal Lobe Epilepsy, cf. "Seized".]

In 1963 I was hit on the head by hardballs when standing "at bat" more than once and retired forthwith from Teeny-Weeny League baseball (though I continued to participate in rough sports in non-organized milieux, including tackle football up through 11th grade).

I fell backwards a lot as a kid in grade school; I liked to balance my chair by leaning back (with no shoes on!) and occasionally lost my balance, usually hitting my head.

I suffered from a nearly fatal illness in 1972 which was eventually diagnosed as mycoplasmic pneumonia. After a week of treatment at home, I was in the hospital for a week (treatment with Erythromycin succeeded where previous antibiotic treatment had failed to combat the disease). I was physically wasted from the disease, and weighed 120 pounds until 1978, at which time I went up to about 130. Since that time I've had recurrent attacks of bronchitis; I haven't had bronchitis in about 5 years.

I had a case of salmonella at some time around 1974.

I also had a bad case of strep throat sometime in '74 or '75. [This organism is also associated not only with the development of obsessive compulsive disorder, but also demyelinating syndromes, since it has a protein length fragment similar to that of the myelin sheath.]

Since working as a retail inventory counter in 1977 I've periodically suffered from hemorrhoids, for which I've used cortisone prescribed by Dr. Breiman of Ithaca's Family Medicine Associates. There have been no recurrences since 3/92.

While living in Cornell's Sage Hall Graduate Residence in 1979, my roommate Bok Kim fell ill and was diagnosed as suffering from infectious hepatitis. I became fairly ill myself, and was presumably infected also; I went to see a doctor at the Cornell Health Clinic, who told me that hepatitis was pandemic and that there wasn't much to be done for it anyway if I was diagnosed with it. (Hepatitis is a possible cause of demyelinating syndromes.)

In early 1982, while experiencing a great deal of interpersonal stress in the co-op where I was living (The Chateau Rosenblatt), I developed stigmatic rashes on palms and innersoles which grew radially from a point as a ring of dots. These rings itched, so I had them examined by Drs. Shallish and Breiman (Breiman was called in because the stigmata were so interesting!). I was referred to Dr. Magre, who prescribed a cortisone cream for treatment. I believe that these were stigmata were associated with the spread of CIDP, and also the experience of Night Terrors (see below).

Sometime in 1983 while visiting my ex-wife's Aunt Sis in Flushing, I had a very strange illness which I believed was due to drinking orange juice which had gone bad (though Sis believed it was still OK afterwards)... I was awake all night, with my nerves blazing as if I had an electrical current running through my whole body; I was incapable of moving, and was afraid I had food poisoning (which I still believe is the cause) and might die from it.

Around 6/84 I suffered a very painful back injury when I slipped and fell flat on my back while attempting to catch a short fly in right field (I usually played first base or first base, thank you!). I recovered from this injury without any treatment or medical assistance after about 6 months.

In 2/94 I had a lipoma on my belly removed by Dr. Agostini at Tompkins Community Hospital.

On 8/7/97 I suffered a cracked or broken rib on the left side of my chest. This was diagnosed by Dr. Breiman.

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## Psychological

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### Personality Type:

According to the DDLI (Duniho & Duniho Life Inventory Assessment) my Myers-Briggs personality type is ENTP, which seems to characterize me fairly accurately... (according to the D&D character scheme I'm "Chaotic Good", which correlates well with my MBTI type!).

### Intelligence:

My IQ is in the 150 range (GRE: 770/700, GMAT: 43/43/680). (More importantly, I'm smart enough to have read Howard Gardner, and to realize that these tests measure certain forms of intelligence but not others.) As far as overall intellectual effectiveness goes, as a programmer I average over 50 lines of code per working day (5X the average, and I also do analysis and documentation: viz. my product, dataComet <<http://www.databeast.com>>; I believe this productivity is partly due to the fact that I seem to have a high level of spatial intelligence). I'm also a reasonably competent pop songwriter and poet. My aesthetics are reasonably well developed, though I'm not artistically gifted myself.

My social intelligence? I don't know... I may be gifted here, but it doesn't show in my behaviors. However... if you put it to use, isn't that a form of cynical manipulation? Does this conform with the Kantian (Christian) moral imperative to treat others as things-in-themselves? I don't think so!

### Emotional States:

I've felt chronic anxiety since I was quite young, displaying behaviors such as nose-picking sequeing into nail-chewing, hair-chewing, and overall twitchiness (to use a phrase a friend used to describe herself, I'm "high-strung").

I had problems with bed-wetting until I was about 9 (since I wasn't punished for it, I don't think this caused me lasting problems). [This is often associated with epilepsy.]

I had a problem with occasional stuttering when under emotional stress until I was about 14.

From about the age of 9 I had problems of "emotional control," in which typical "playground" confrontations would cause me to cry and induce uncontrollable dyspnea. I brought this under control around the age of 13; however, I continued to cry in emotional situations or when very unhappy until I quashed this crying-response at the age of 18 (so thoroughly that I \*could not\* cry until around the age of 34).

I had a tendency to sleep-walking when I was a teenager, once waking up fully clothed in bed with no memory of having dressed.

I've experienced lucid dream states since around the age of 15.

I've identified with female gender roles since I was young, and most of my close friends have been women. I've been describing myself to others as having a Lesbian sexual orientation since the age of 23.

I finally managed to bring my chronic nail-chewing under control at the age of 34.

Since 1977 I've been using cannabis sativa to medicate unpleasant psychological symptoms, primarily irritability, inclining at times of extreme stress to rage states, along with emotional lability (unpleasant not primarily to myself, but to others, such as my wife and co-workers!). I never realized until 1/97 that there were physical symptoms which were also suppressed by use of cannabis. Over most of this time I've smoked every day, taking small quantities from morning through night, except when supplies were unavailable, or I was pressured to quit (6/94-8/94, 6/96-1/97, 3/97-present). [ERR There were several periods where I quit for several months, due primarily to concern over the adverse health impact of smoking, but would resume because I felt that overall I felt better and functioned better when I smoked]

(Presumably Cannabis helps relieve rage states which I infrequently suffer due to its sedative effects, but possibly due also to its well-documented anti-inflammatory effects. I've had to acknowledge that I've had at least one documented rage blackout: in 1979, during a "shoving match" mentioned in the liner notes to "Inside My Brain" by the Angry Samoans. This claim always greatly irked me, since I didn't recall any such event, my memory is generally excellent, and I tend to avoid physical conflict.) [ERR This "shoving match" almost certainly did not occur, since 2 other people present did not recall it, and the author of the notes has repeatedly made false reports about other bandmembers.]

Interestingly, I've always tended to suffer from mild tendencies to paranoia, which also seem to be relieved by cannabis smoking. I've never suffered from a panic attack or paranoia while smoking.

I believe also that smoking cannabis has helped me retain muscle mass; although I was somewhat chubby as a child, as a teenager I was skinny, after the pneumonia I was gaunt, and never gained weight until after I started smoking occasionally in 1977. I never had significant musculature until around 1984, when I joined a health club with my ex-wife and started doing aerobics and Nautilus workouts.

In early 1982 I twice experienced Night Terrors, awakening in the early morning screaming in profound fear and distress; it took my ex-wife several minutes to calm me down in both cases. In the first case I awoke from a nightmare involving some bizarre form of soul vampirism, and for some time feared my wife, whom I believed must be a vampire herself. The second time I awoke hearing steps coming down the stairs when we were visiting her sister; as the steps "marked time", I experienced time congealing, slowing to a halt. In both instances it took about 5 minutes for me to stop screaming and to recover my wits.

#### Psychological Treatment History:

2/90-3/90 [ERR 2/92-3/92]: I was given a two-month leave of absence and referred to Cornell's EAP program as a result of conflicts with my boss at work and concerns regarding my behavior. I completed twelve sessions with Ellen Stotz, and regretted not being able to continue counseling with her.

3/93-11/93: [ERR 5/93-12/93] I sought treatment from Dr. Anna Matusiewicz during a period of profound depression and extreme stress during the failure of my marriage, over which time I feared greatly that I had been infected with HIV (and with good reason, since I had been raped by my soon-to-be-ex-wife's insane "boyfriend"). Dr. Matusiewicz disapproved of my self-medication with sativa, and diagnosed me as suffering from bipolar disorder (although her official diagnosis was Major Depression [ERR Moderate Depression]). I disagreed, since my experiences of depression seemed to be triggered by relationship factors and displayed no periodicity I could discern other than tending to occur more often during the winter months, and also because the descriptions of mania in

"Overcoming Depression", which she recommended to me, did not seem to apply to my experience. I have become convinced that I suffer from Hysteroid Dysphoria.  
[1]

No medications were prescribed to remedy my depression due to Dr. Matusiewicz' fear that I would go manic on anti-depressant medication, and she required that I first cease cannabis use and then go on lithium before she would consider the administration of anti-depressants. I curtailed my consumption of alcohol at Dr. Matusiewicz' suggestion, but did not reduce my use of cannabis. After the fifth confirmation over six months that I was HIV-negative (and that my ex-wife was also HIV-negative), I discontinued this relationship after 19 sessions, since it seemed to offer no therapeutic value for me.

At this time I also became seriously addicted to tobacco, which I'd "chipped" at since 1977 without becoming truly addicted; although I smoked occasionally to excess prior to this time, use had not become compulsive.

5/96-1/97: I sought treatment from the Family and Children's Service of Ithaca in order to help cope with relationship problems and symptoms of depression, primarily obsessive internalized critical disparagement. I was diagnosed as suffering from Cannabis Dependence, Dysthymia, and Borderline Personality Disorder, despite the fact that I fit none of the diagnostic criteria for these disorders (excepting mood instability in the case of BPD; note that "weekend smoking" was regarded as "acceptable," but not my avowed self-medication). [ERR I was never informed of the diagnoses of Cannabis Dependence and BPD at any time during this "therapy," but was instead misled into believing that I had been given the diagnosis of Dysthymia, and was told at the time I signed the treatment plan that "diagnosis doesn't matter"]

Starting 7/23/96 I performed a trial with Prozac at 10/mg/day and found that it dramatically and promptly quashed the obsessive internal criticism. I discontinued Prozac in October, since I found that it interfered with work; I tended to lose interest in programming and found my mind focusing on other topics of interest (as a self-managed employee of my own corporation, I have no source of discipline outside myself).