

Latest evidence suggests college is harmful to health

'Your head can explode' says medical professionals

by Stephen Hamilton

An experiment conducted by Dr. Edgar Schulman and Dr. John O'Connell has come up with staggering results. "It might well be that colleges are an unhealthy atmosphere for our children," stated Dr. O'Connell in a press conference held on April 17.

Dr. Schulman and Dr. O'Connell, the 1996 winners of the National Science Award, found that more than 75 percent of the student population in many colleges have a rare disorder: HCE. HCE, or Hyper-Cerebral Electrolysis, is a disorder which can be fatal. The following article is what lead the two doctors to their fates as this years National Science Award winners.

Taken from the WEEKLY WORLD NEWS, May, 24, 1994 MOSCOW:

Doctors are blaming a rare electrical imbalance in the brain for the bizarre death of a chess player whose head literally exploded in the middle of a championship game.

No one else was hurt in the fatal explosion but four players and three officials at the Moscow Candidate Masters' Chess Championships were sprayed with blood and brain matter when Nikolai Titiov's head suddenly blew apart. Experts say he suffered from a condition called Hyper-Cerebral Electrolysis or HCE.

"He was deep in concentration with his eyes focused on the board," says Titiov's opponent,

Vladimir Dobrynin. "All of a sudden his hands flew to his temples and he screamed in pain. Everyone looked up from their games, startled by the noise. Then, as if someone had put a bomb in his cranium, his head popped like a firecracker."

Incredibly, Titiov's is not the first case in which a person's head has spontaneously exploded. Five people are known to have died of HCE in the last 25 years. The most recent death occurred just three years ago in 1991, when European psychic Barbara Nicole's skull burst. Miss Nicole's story was reported by newspapers worldwide, including WWN. "HCE is an extremely rare physical imbalance," said Dr. Anatoly Martinenko, famed neurologist and expert on the human brain who did the autopsy on the brilliant chess expert. "It is a condition in which the circuits of the brain become overloaded by the body's own electricity. The explosions happen during periods of intense mental activity when lots of current is surging through the brain. Victims are highly intelligent people who tended to keep those cerebral circuits overloaded. In a way it could be said they were literally too smart for their own good."

Although Dr. Martinenko says there are probably more undiagnosed cases, he hastens to add that very few people will die from HCE. "Most people who have

it will never know. At this point, medical science still doesn't know much about HCE. And since fatalities are so rare it will probably be years before research money becomes available." In the meantime, the doctor urges people to take it easy and not think too hard for long periods of time. "Take frequent relaxation breaks when you're doing things that take lots of mental focus," he recommends.

Although HCE is very rare, it can kill. Dr. Martinenko says knowing you have the condition can greatly improve your odds of surviving it. A "yes" answer to any three of the following seven questions could mean that you have HCE:

1. Does your head sometimes ache when you think too hard? (Head pain can indicate overloaded brain circuits.)

2. Do you ever hear a faint ringing or humming in your ears? (It could be the sound of electricity in the skull cavity.)

3. Do you sometimes find yourself unable to get a thought out of your head? (This is a possible sign of too much electrical activity in the cerebral cortex.)

4. Do you spend more than five hours a day reading, balancing your checkbook, or other thoughtful activity? (A common symptom of HCE is a tendency to over-use the brain.)

5. When you get angry or frustrated do you feel pressure in your temples? (Friends of

people who died of HCE say the victims often complained of head pressure in times of strong emotion.)

6. Do you ever overeat on ice cream, doughnuts and other sweets? (A craving for sugar is typical of people with too much electrical pressure in the cranium.)

7. Do you tend to analyze yourself too much? (HCE sufferers are often introspective, "overthinking" their lives.)

Dr. O'Connell and Dr. Schulman urge people to inform friends and acquaintances about HCE, because fore-knowledge of having HCE is one way to protect yourself against the eventuality of your head blowing up.

Is HCE present on the Clark campus? Dr. Schulman had this to say, "HCE is everywhere you are. This is not something that you can escape. In any community of intellectuals assuredly one of them at bare minimum has this condition." How many Clark students have HCE? Estimates range anywhere from 20 to 300 students are afflicted (taken from Dr. O'Connell and Dr. Schulman's chart of HCE versus population distribution).

Many other officials, in opposition to the HCE condition state that overthinking about HCE can lead to HCE, to which Dr. O'Connell said in his award speech, "Isn't that the point we were making, gentlemen? That thinking of any kind is dangerous!" •

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