



The Secret Lives of INTPs

by

Anna Moss

Dedicated to Amy.

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Oddly Developed Types

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Table of Contents

A Dark Confession	11
Cautions about Research; Citation Notes	11
Notes for Type Junkies	11
A Better Alternative	13
Example: An NTIP	14
Example: A TNPI	14
Non-Preferred Functions	15
Strong Preference(s)	15
Conclusion	15
<u>1. General</u>	16
<u>The Universe Within</u>	16
<u>Weird Sense of Humor</u>	17
<u>Argumentation</u>	18
<u>Politics</u>	21
<u>Religion</u>	22
<u>Spiritual Life</u>	22
<u>Church</u>	23
<u>An INTP Church Culture</u>	23
<u>Cults</u>	24
<u>The Lazy Rationals?</u>	25
<u>Useful Inventions</u>	26
<u>Fake Social Skills</u>	26
<u>A Nice Little Chat</u>	27
<u>The Death Glare</u>	28
<u>Systems Design</u>	29
<u>Practice Makes Perfect</u>	30
<u>The 16PF</u>	30
<u>Leisure Habits</u>	31
<u> Reading</u>	31
<u> Games</u>	31
<u>Customer Loyalty</u>	32
<u>INTP Writing Style</u>	33
<u> Pitfalls</u>	33
<u> Editing</u>	34
<u>INTP Holiday Spirit - Or Lack Thereof</u>	34
<u> An INTP Christmas Tale</u>	35
<u>Cats</u>	35
<u> Were INTPs Burned as Witches?</u>	36
<u> Cats and Liberty</u>	36
<u> Cats and Egypt</u>	36
<u>Truth and Lies</u>	37
<u>Stress</u>	38
<u> Coping Mechanisms/Responses to Stress</u>	38
<u>Smoking</u>	39

<u>Drugs and Alcohol</u>	39
<u>Quitting</u>	40
<u>How Many INTPs are There?</u>	40
<u>Percentages by Sex</u>	41
<u>Percentages and Mistyping</u>	41
<u>How do INTPs Mistype?</u>	41
<u>INTPs - A Rough Population Estimate</u>	41
<u>I Want to Meet Other INTPs!</u>	42
<u>2. How to Tell INTPs Apart From INTJs</u>	43
<u>Judging vs. Perceiving (General)</u>	44
<u>Various</u>	45
<u>Stress, Sickness, Bad Habits</u>	45
<u>Jobs</u>	45
<u>Values</u>	46
<u>School</u>	46
<u>Recreation</u>	46
<u>Religion</u>	46
<u>Areas That Are Too Similar to be Used as Diagnostic Criteria</u>	46
<u>I Still Don't Know My Type</u>	47
<u>3. INTP Clothing and Hygiene</u>	48
<u>INTP Fashion Statements</u>	48
<u>Albert Einstein</u>	48
<u>Thomas Jefferson</u>	48
<u>James Madison</u>	49
<u>Albert Speer</u>	49
<u>The Author</u>	50
<u>Clothing, Hooray</u>	50
<u>The Smell</u>	50
<u>Hot Beauty Secrets for Female INTPs</u>	51
<u>Prudishness</u>	51
<u>4. INTPs in Love</u>	52
<u>Problems with Studying Type and Love</u>	52
<u>INTP Matches: Research and Theory</u>	52
<u>What Do INTPs Want in a Relationship?</u>	55
<u>INTP/Idealist – “The Soulmate”</u>	56
<u>Most Important Values</u>	56
<u>Least Important Values</u>	56
<u>Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Idealist Value</u>	57
<u>INTP/Rational – “The Mindmate”</u>	57
<u>Most Important Values</u>	58
<u>Least Important Values</u>	58
<u>Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Rational Value</u>	58
<u>The INTP – INTP Pairing</u>	59
<u>INTP/Artisan – “The Playmate”</u>	60
<u>Most Important Values</u>	60
<u>Least Important Values</u>	60
<u>Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Artisan Value</u>	61

<u>INTP/Guardian – “The Helpmate”</u>	61
<u>Most Important Values</u>	62
<u>Least Important Values</u>	63
<u>Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Guardian Value</u>	63
<u>What Do People Love About INTPs?</u>	63
<u>INTP Courtship Behaviors</u>	64
<u>INTP Marriage, Marital Satisfaction, and Divorce</u>	66
<u>Those 3 Little Words</u>	67
<u>Giving Emotional Support</u>	68
<u>Fighting For Principles</u>	69
<u>Children</u>	71
<u>Housework</u>	71
<u>Contracting</u>	72
<u>Hypermindfulness</u>	74
<u>Recommendations</u>	76
<u>5. INTP Identifications</u>	77
<u>Historical INTPs</u>	77
<u>Fictional INTPs</u>	77
<u>Advantages of the “Mirror of Fiction”</u>	78
<u>Problems with the Mirror of Fiction</u>	78
<u>Notes on Type Identifications</u>	78
<u>Process</u>	79
<u>6. Walter Bailey – Hero Busboy</u>	81
<u>Story</u>	82
<u>Analysis</u>	83
<u>Discussion</u>	84
<u>Application</u>	85
<u>Conclusion</u>	86
<u>7. INTPs in Charge</u>	88
<u>Why INTPs Do Not Seek Command</u>	88
<u>The Preferred INTP Role</u>	89
<u>Characteristics of INTP Leaders</u>	90
<u>8. Aramis - A Swashbuckling Schemer</u>	92
<u>Analysis</u>	95
<u>An Honorable Plot</u>	96
<u>An INTP Who Specialized in Intrigue</u>	96
<u>How Aramis Joined the Musketeers</u>	98
<u>Those Half-Finished Projects</u>	99
<u>Friendship</u>	100
<u>The Secret Emperor</u>	101
<u>Those Exact Words</u>	102
<u>Grief response</u>	102
<u>The Abbe Faria and Aramis</u>	103
<u>Where it All Went Wrong</u>	103
<u>9. Thomas Jefferson - 3rd President of the United States</u>	105
<u>The Effect of a “Soft T” on the INTP Personality</u>	107
<u>The INTP Renaissance Man</u>	108

<u>What Would You Save From Your Burning House?</u>	108
<u>Farming</u>	108
<u>Marriage</u>	109
<u>Relationship</u>	110
<u>Founding Documents</u>	112
<u>An INTP President</u>	112
<u>10. James Madison - 4th President of the United States</u>	114
<u>General</u>	115
<u>Marriage</u>	116
<u>Dolley Madison</u>	116
<u>Somber vs. Playful</u>	118
<u>Old Age</u>	118
<u>An INTP President – Part II</u>	118
<u>Conclusion</u>	120
<u>11. Albert Speer – Nazi Minister of Armaments</u>	121
<u>Building the Chancellery: A Perceiver Approach</u>	125
<u>The Empire Builders</u>	126
<u>Moral Questions</u>	127
<u>Slavery and the Holocaust</u>	128
<u>The Nuremberg Trial</u>	131
<u>12. INTPs in Prison</u>	133
<u>Hardships of Prison and INTP Responses</u>	133
<u>Harrelson - A Unique Perspective on Life in Prison</u>	133
<u>INTP Complaints About Prison</u>	135
<u>Do INTPs Go To Jail a Lot?</u>	136
<u>Escape</u>	136
<u>The Count of Monte Cristo—A Brief Portrait of an INTP in Prison</u>	136
<u>The Count of Monte Cristo—An INTP Escape Plan</u>	137
<u>Conclusion</u>	144
<u>13. INTPs at Work</u>	146
<u>INTP Careers</u>	146
<u>Working Conditions Amenable to INTPs</u>	147
<u>Interviewing Issues</u>	147
<u>Scenario 1</u>	147
<u>Scenario 2</u>	147
<u>Job Satisfaction</u>	148
<u>Work Related Miscellanea</u>	150
<u>E-mail</u>	150
<u>Showing up on time</u>	150
<u>Obeying the dress code</u>	150
<u>There is No INTP in Team</u>	150
<u>Following the Rules, Bureaucracy, and Other Silly Notions</u>	150
<u>Burnout</u>	151
<u>Attention to detail</u>	151
<u>Increasing Efficiency</u>	152
<u>How to Select Your Next Summer Job</u>	153
<u>Assembly Line Job</u>	154

<u>No Brainer</u>	154
<u>Customer Service Jobs</u>	154
<u>Miscellaneous Occupational Notes</u>	155
<u>INTPs in Medicine</u>	155
<u>INTPs in the Library</u>	155
<u>14. INTPs and the Intellect</u>	156
<u>I.Q. Testing and Type</u>	156
<u>Artisan Tactical Intelligence</u>	157
<u>Idealist Diplomatic Intelligence</u>	158
<u>Guardian Logistical Intelligence</u>	158
<u>Rational Strategic Intelligence</u>	159
<u>The Value of I.Q. Tests, Continued</u>	159
<u>Giftedness</u>	160
<u>Discussion</u>	161
<u>INTP Geniuses</u>	161
<u>Child A - IQ 187 - 191 (As tested by the Stanford-Binet, 1920s version)</u>	161
<u>Discussion</u>	162
<u>Child F - I.Q. Unmeasurable (Tested by the Stanford-Binet, 1920s version)</u>	163
<u>Discussion</u>	165
<u>15. INTP Parenting Style</u>	168
<u>General</u>	168
<u>Discipline</u>	169
<u>Pygmalion Projects</u>	169
<u>Conclusion</u>	170
<u>16. INTP Children</u>	171
<u>Early Learners</u>	171
<u>Play</u>	171
<u>Games</u>	171
<u>Designing as a Form of Play</u>	171
<u>Engineering</u>	172
<u>Logical Play</u>	172
<u>The Design of Play</u>	173
<u>Art</u>	173
<u>Thoughts and Fears</u>	174
<u>Fitting In</u>	174
<u>Curiosity Killed the INTP</u>	174
<u>Whyyyy?</u>	174
<u>Blunt Statements of Truth</u>	175
<u>Lack of Role Models</u>	176
<u>17. INTPs in the School System</u>	177
<u>The Elementary School Experience</u>	177
<u>The High School Experience</u>	178
<u>What We Have Here is a Failure to Communicate</u>	178
<u>Busywork—And Other Scholastic Activities</u>	179
<u>School Will Socialize You</u>	180
<u>The University Experience</u>	180
<u>GPA Per Major</u>	180

<u>Other Notes on Course/Major Preferences</u>	181
<u>Languages</u>	181
<u>Engineering</u>	182
<u>Scholarships</u>	182
<u>National Merit Finalists</u>	182
<u>Judging Teachers, Perceiving INTPs</u>	183
<u>What About Unsuccessful Perceiving Students?</u>	185
<u>Conclusion</u>	186
18. INTPs in the Military	187
<u>NP vs. SJ (Again)</u>	187
<u>Autonomy vs. Control</u>	187
<u>Privacy</u>	188
<u>Other Drawbacks</u>	188
<u>PTSD</u>	188
<u>Positives</u>	189
<u>Conclusion</u>	189
19. INTP Environments	190
<u>"North to the Future"</u>	191
<u>An INTP Family</u>	192
<u>Conclusion</u>	193
20. Intipiland - Ethnography of an Insular Utopia	194
<u>A Brief Geology Lesson</u>	194
<u>Climate</u>	194
<u>Lifestyle</u>	195
<u>Speech and Body Language</u>	195
<u>Language</u>	195
<u>Sports</u>	196
<u>Architecture</u>	197
<u>Government</u>	197
<u>History</u>	198
<u>1st Occupation, 180 BC to 340 BC - "The Evil Time"</u>	198
<u>2nd Occupation, 616 to 956 AD - "The Oppression"</u>	199
<u>3rd Occupation, 1220 to 1256 AD - "The Tyranny"</u>	201
<u>Prehistory</u>	201
<u>Childrearing</u>	202
<u>Industry</u>	202
<u>Holidays</u>	202
<u>Final Words</u>	202
21. INTPs As a Minority	203
<u>Female INTPs</u>	203
<u>Male INTPs</u>	204
<u>A Fieldtrip Through the Wonderful Land of Cultural Bias</u>	206
22. INTPs and Psychology	208
<u>Childhood "Problems"</u>	208
<u>The Crummy Life Scales</u>	210
<u>The Big Five (NEO-PI-R)</u>	210
<u>Positive and Negative Affectivity with the PANAS Scales</u>	211

<u>Coolidge Axis II Inventory (CATI)</u>	212
<u>23. INTPs and ADD</u>	215
<u>ADHD and NPs</u>	217
<u>How to Diagnose any INTP with ADD</u>	217
<u>Disorganization</u>	218
<u>Forgetfulness</u>	219
<u>Easily Distracted</u>	219
<u>Losing Important Items</u>	221
<u>Not Listening When Addressed</u>	221
<u>Has Difficulty Staying Focused on Tasks or Play</u>	221
<u>Does Not Follow Instructions or Finish Tasks</u>	223
<u>Doesn't Pay Close Attention to Details or Makes Careless Mistakes</u>	223
<u>Avoids/Dislikes Activities That Require Prolonged Mental Effort (I.e. Homework)</u>	223
<u>Discussion</u>	225
<u>Can We Prove the Existence of ADD?</u>	226
<u>Why INTPs Tune Out</u>	226
<u>How to Daydream Without Suffering For It</u>	228
<u>Techniques</u>	229
<u>Bird-Dogging</u>	229
<u>How to Avoid Being Asked Pop Questions</u>	230
<u>24. INTPs and Asperger's Syndrome</u>	232
<u>ASD and the Big Five</u>	232
<u>Type and/or Disorder?</u>	233
<u>Conclusion</u>	234
<u>25. Frankenstein</u>	235
<u>Summary</u>	236
<u>Commentary</u>	238
<u>Count Dracula - INTP?</u>	239
<u>Conclusion</u>	242
<u>26. INTPs in the Future</u>	243
<u>Rise of the Introverts</u>	243
<u>Accelerating Change</u>	243
<u>Computers</u>	243
<u>The Internet</u>	243
<u>Education</u>	244
<u>For the Good of All Mankind</u>	245
<u>Cloning</u>	246
<u>Robots</u>	246
<u>Appendix: Type Bigots, the Scourge of the MBTI Community</u>	248
<u>7 Ways To Combat Type Bigotry</u>	250

Preface & Caveat Lector

A Dark Confession

Perhaps when you bought this book you were under the impression that it was written by a certified type practitioner with thirty years of experience. Boy were you wrong!

The type practitioner certificate costs \$850, and I'm too poor to afford it. As for decades of experience, all I can offer is some twenty years spent as an INTP.

So before you make any major life decisions based on this book, perhaps you'd better be aware of the following:

Myth: The author is qualified to give me advice about my life.

Truth: The author knows just enough to be dangerous, and she's been wrong before.

Myth: The author has a degree.

Truth: Yes, in Geology.

Myth: This book was painstakingly researched.

Truth: This book was haphazardly researched. The author read one of a dozen available studies on each area, the rest being inaccessible due to various reasons. It's a fact of life that studies tend to conflict with one another, and the author would not be the slightest bit surprised to find that information in this book turned out to be wrong after further research. Besides errors of fact, there are no doubt numerous errors of omission. The author is confident that this book is missing vital information that might change a reader's perspective upon the information presented.

Basically, all you're getting is a jumble of stuff that I happened to stumble over while meandering through the halls of knowledge. Few efforts have been made to corroborate what you're reading by checking multiple sources. My only hope is that randomly selected, uncorroborated information is preferable to no information at all.

By now you're probably thinking, "Thank goodness she got the book checked by a real editor. At least there's that." Actually, this book was self published. But you probably figured that out by the second sentence. All I can say is *caveat lector*--let the reader beware. I apologize in advance for all the mistakes that you and I won't find until too late.

Cautions about Research; Citation Notes

Another thing you should be aware of is that I have not actually read all the studies I reference in this book. In some cases, I merely read the abstract, but not the entire research paper. In other cases, interesting (but unobtainable) studies were described within other studies or articles. This was indicated in the customary fashion by adding the words "(Cited in Name, Date)" to the citations, where "Name, Date" is the name of the study, book or article where I discovered the secondhand research.

Notes for Type Junkies

Those of you who are well versed in type theory may be surprised to note that book does not cover

“type dynamics,” i.e. the introversion or extraversion of one’s Intuition, Sensing, Feeling, and Thinking preferences. The reason type dynamics have been left out is that this portion of the MBTI theory rests on some pretty shaky ground.

Briefly, the problems are these:

1. There is no empirical evidence for the existence of type dynamics, which were described by Myers in 1962. Type dynamics are still purely anecdotal after half a century.¹
2. Almost no research has been done on whether or not there is such as thing as a tertiary or inferior function. Who knows if they exist, or what they might be? At this point their existence is purely speculative, and while there are three different models explaining them, none of them have any proof.
3. Cognitive functions appear to rest mainly upon the authority of Myers’ original writings, which were based on the authority of Jung’s original writings. Although the writings have taken on the status of canon, this does not mean that Jung was right to begin with. In addition, what he wrote was different from what Myers came up with. Historical precedent does not constitute proof of the cognitive functions’ existence any more than it can prove that the Earth is flat. The fact that everyone has always believed something does not make it correct.
4. There is not yet any study showing that different functions emerge over the course of one’s lifespan, or that the development of these functions leads to a midlife crisis. Therefore these ideas cannot constitute proof for the existence of type dynamics.
5. There have been--and still are--multiple theories about how the cognitive functions are actually arranged, which ones are dominant, how many dominants and auxiliaries there are, and which attitudes are preferred and nonpreferred. The *best known* model is simply the one that made its way into the official MBTI manual. However, what evidence there is suggests a random arrangement unique to each person—i.e. there appears to be no such thing as dominant, auxiliary, tertiary and inferior. For example, the evidence supports the conclusion that an INTP might have introverted thinking as their dominant and introverted intuition as their auxiliary, while another might have introverted intuition as their dominant and extraverted thinking as their auxiliary—insofar as such constructs can be considered valid at all. No evidence has been found for the typical construct in which $Ti > Ne > Si > Fe$ for type INTP.
6. Nor is there any proof that functions are extraverted or introverted. Reynierse and Harker examined whether dominant functions that are extraverted (i.e. dominant extraverted feeling) turned up more clearly than dominant functions that are introverted (i.e. dominant introverted feeling). If type dynamics theory are real, then those who extravert their feeling function should show it more clearly and obviously than those who introvert it. But no differences were noted by observers; in fact, traits of both extraverted and introverted dominant functions were seen as being just as clear and obvious. The perceived differences, then, are due to plain, simple Introversion and Extraversion, and not to the type dynamics explanation that certain parts of oneself are either introverted or extraverted.
7. But the biggy is this. A recent study² set out to determine what exactly each of the cognitive functions consisted of—i.e. the researchers set out to determine a standard, agreed-upon definition of each cognitive function. To do this, they collected 152 descriptive words and

1 Reynierse & Harker, 2008a; Reynierse & Harker, 2008b

2 McPeek & Martin, 2012a; McPeek & Martin, 2012b

phrases used in type literature to describe each cognitive function and its attitude (i.e. thinking introverted, thinking extraverted, intuition introverted, intuition extraverted, etc.). 31 type experts—authors, practitioners, trainers--were called in to review the list and decide which descriptors fit each of the eight function-attitudes.

The experts rated each descriptor's applicability to each function-attitude on a 1 to 5 scale. For 72 of the 152 descriptors, there was an expert consensus that a descriptor primarily matched a unique function attitude. For the rest of the descriptors, it was found that experts tended to assign the descriptors equally to two or more function-attitudes, or else didn't agree on any particular function-attitude at all.

So, how does this apply to type INTP? The INTP/ISTP dominant is believed to be introverted thinking, and 12 descriptors were found that primarily matched Ti.³ The list was as follows: aloof, cold, desires internal logic, detached, in-depth concentration, independent, individualistic, likes mental models, overcomplexifies, pure intellectual, research-minded, and unique use of logic.

So, do these 12 descriptors fit type INTP, as would be expected since Ti is believed to be the INTP's dominant function?

Yes. But as nearly as I can tell, all 12 descriptors match *both* INTPs and INTJs equally well. Further, only *five* of the descriptors seem to fit type ISTP (aloof, cold, desires internal logic, independent, and individualistic). Ti is not the dominant of INTJs, yet the descriptors of Ti seem to fit both INTJs and INTPs to a tee. Ti is the dominant of ISTPs, yet the descriptors do not seem to fit type ISTP very well at all. As for Ni, the dominant of INTJs and INFJs, well. The experts agreed on only two descriptors: “Mystical” and “Trusts the unconscious.” Both descriptors had secondary matches with Fi, Ne, and Fe. The descriptors for Ni clearly do not match the INTJ personality very well. Yet Ni, not Ti, is believed to be the dominant of the INTJ.

What can we say about this? Even if one accepts that the cognitive functions exist, the murkiness and paucity of these descriptors must give one pause. The researchers also compared the descriptors found for each cognitive function to data compiled on hundreds of typed people to see if they exhibited the traits said to be characteristic of their cognitive functions. Very little support for the theory of cognitive functions was found. There was no evidence that could not be more clearly, accurately and simply explained by plain type theory without cognitive functions. Occam's razor dictates that the simplest explanation is most likely to be true.

In the absence of both evidence and working definitions, it is hard to think of any logical reason to continue to use the cognitive functions. Ergo, I have left them out of this book.

A Better Alternative

One proposed replacement scheme (which I happen to agree with) drops type dynamics entirely.⁴ Instead, a person's letters (i.e. INTP) are ranked in order of “strength.” And what is meant by strength, exactly?

³ However, for 5 of these 12 descriptors, secondary matches with Te, plain N, and Ni were found. In short, the surveyed experts thought that those five descriptors mainly matched Ti, but also secondarily matched Te, N, and Ni.

⁴ Reyneirse, 2012

Well, when you took the Myers-Briggs test (or any of the other MBTI knockoffs floating around) you probably noticed that some of your personality traits--i.e., Thinking, Feeling or whatever--were very clear and obvious, i.e. you answered 9/10 questions as a Thinker rather than a Feeler. For other personality traits, perhaps Sensing vs. Intuition, you might have noticed that you were pretty middle-of-the-road in that you didn't have much preference for either way of functioning. For example, perhaps you only answered 6/10 questions as an Intuitive.

In the traditional way of looking at type theory, it doesn't matter whether your preference for any particular letter is clear or slight--a letter is a letter. If you answer 10/10 questions about Introversion vs. Extraversion as an Introvert, then it is considered the same thing as if you had answered only 6/10 questions as an Introvert. In short, the strength of each preference was ignored. However, it turns out that this information has predictive value and can actually be useful in understanding one's own unique personality.

If we put each of the traits on a spectrum, i.e. E – I, S – N, T – F, and J – P, allowing for shades of grey in the middle rather than just black and white choices, we can get a much clearer picture of an individual's unique personality. "Types" become simplified representations of the spectrum, the way a rainbow is divided up into six colors rather than a million different shades. The goal, then, is to find a scheme that adequately represents this added complexity without becoming too overdetailed to be useful.

Example: An NTIP

For example. Let us suppose that a person tests with the following:

- 10/10 preference for Intuition
- 8/10 preference for Thinking
- 8/10 preference for Introversion
- 6/10 preference for Perceiving

These preferences indicate an INTP, but more than that, they indicate an NTIP. This "NTIP" has Intuition as their strongest preference and will be most skilled at making connections and seeing patterns and relationships. Compared to the other INTP variants (INPT, TPNI, etc), this person has only a slight preference for Perceiving, and thus they may be almost as comfortable using Judging as Perceiving.

Example: A TNPI

Suppose that a person tests with the following:

- 10/10 preference for Thinking
- 9/10 preference for Intuition
- 8/10 preference for Perceiving
- 6/10 preference for Introversion

Using our ranking system, we would identify this person as a TNPI. As a strong Thinker, the TNPI would be most skilled at logic, reasoning, and task-oriented analysis. Intuition, which was *almost* as favored, will also be strongly preferred, at the expense of skills in Sensing. The least favored preference, i.e. Introversion, indicates that the TNPI will demonstrate Introversion only slightly more than Extraversion. Thus, they would be better than the average INTP at interfacing with the outer

world, but they would also sacrifice something of the inner world of Introverts. Incidentally, people who have neither a strong preference for Introversion or Extraversion are called Ambiverts.

Non-Preferred Functions

Since we acknowledge that the strength of one's preferences *is* important, and that a person with a slight preference may exhibit nearly as much of one preference as the other preference, it is good practice to note the non-preferences at the end of the basic letter code. So for example, an NTIP is really an NTIP*jefs*--meaning that they will use Sensing the least of all possible preferences and Intuition the most of all. By a similar token, a TNPI is actually a TNPI*ejsf*--meaning that this person will use Feeling the least of all their possible preferences and Thinking the most. Note that the lower-case non-preferences will always be an exact mirror of the upper-case letters of the preferences. The last four letters aren't a "shadow" or "inferior"--they are preferences in their own right, albeit less used ones. Indeed, for a person who has several borderline 6/10 preferences, the lowercase trailing letters may be almost as important as the upper case letters. Thus it is proper to include them.

Strong Preference(s)

There is no reason why a person cannot have more than one strong preference. Suppose that an INTP has both very clear I and very clear P, and both preferences are 10/10 when measured on a test? In this case, we can designate this INTP as (say) an IPTNsfe, underlining the top preferences to show that they are clearest.

It is possible to have one, two, three or even four clear preferences. It is also possible to have no preferences at all.

Conclusion

The method above explains individual variation without the need to resort to unproven hypothetical constructs, namely type dynamics and cognitive functions. Furthermore, it is empirically sound and can be measured on a test. It also matches up with existing field observations. As a simpler and more elegant solution, it deserves consideration within the internet type community as an alternative to an increasingly shaky theory.

1. General

INTPs are curious about many things—not least of which are themselves. When I first learned about psychological type, I was eager to learn all about type INTP, and dove into the material available on the internet. After awhile, however, it all started to sound the same. Then too, something was missing: where were the juicy little numbers, the dark, edgy secrets, and all the typical weirdness of science that usually lurks somewhere if you dig deep enough? Alas, there was nothing for it. Having exhausted the internet, I was forced to resort to reading actual research papers.

In this book we will investigate some of the more unusual facets of the INTP personality type as well as delving deeper into familiar type-based subjects. Some of results will be undoubtedly be unexpected, even bizarre. In this first chapter we will cover a hodgepodge of INTP information that will stand us in good stead throughout the rest of the book.

Are you ready to absorb raw information?

The Universe Within

The most abstract of the Rationals, INTPs are often found working at the cutting edge of thought as mathematical/political/economic/etc theorists. Theory, as opposed to application, is the domain of the INTP. They would rather come up with the math or principle than create the device or prove the theory. That said, INTPs were the most overrepresented type in a group of inventors,⁵ so some of them can obviously carry out their ideas.

The INTP's greatest strength is their mind. Indeed, INTPs' thoughts have a mind of their own. Many INTPs report not being able to fall asleep because their brain wants to keep processing a problem, leading to occasional insomnia. They cannot help but think things through, even if they want to stop. Keirsey (1998a) described this thought style as “involuntary,” because once the mental machinery has been started there's no turning it off. Trying to solve an interesting problem is like having a song stuck in one's head for an INTP.

Since INTPs have such a rich thought life, they are often content to observe without participating. They're happy listening to the conversation, watching, analyzing, and thinking. Since they are usually not involved or emotionally invested, INTPs remain calm. Even in crisis situations, they are remarkably unflappable and keep their reserve.

One INTP of my acquaintance was in a car that ran off the road in such a manner as to apparently take the lives of everyone onboard. With characteristic detachment, the INTP observed aloud, “Wow. Death.” Nobody died, but his companions later rebuked him, “You're not supposed to say, ‘Wow, death’ before you die!”

But this detachment may take a back seat if the INTP gets involved in a controversy about their subject of interest. Deceptively mild, INTPs can become surprisingly sharp when debating theories and ideas they feel strongly about.

The habit of being perpetually lost in thought has its downsides, of course. INTPs are one of the most absentminded types, rivalled perhaps only by the INFP. The comedy staple of the grey-haired professor with his head in the clouds and his nose in a book, deaf to the world and absurdly oblivious to his environment, is a classic INTP. But even INTPs who are young and can't plead age-related memory failings frequently forget/lose/ignore things.

⁵ Forsgren, 1990

“I didn’t notice,” the INTP will plead to a Sensor.

“How could you *not* have noticed?” the Sensor exclaims in disbelief. “It’s a giant pink elephant balloon.”

“I wasn’t paying attention,” the INTP protests. “I was thinking about something else.”

But the Sensor cannot even remotely comprehend how anyone could miss such an obvious phenomenon. INTPs, for their part, find themselves stunned at how anyone could notice, let alone care about, the things which Sensors notice, i.e. which hairbrush currently has the least hair clogging its bristles. *How can they possibly notice stuff like that?* the INTP wonders privately.

An INTP heading towards the library may drive past the building because they were lost in thought. Once they realize what has happened, they will turn around, rebuking themselves sharply for their absentmindedness, and form a resolution to pay closer attention in the future. Then they will mentally design a proximity warning system for their car that will make a noise when approaching a preprogrammed destination, i.e. the library. But how to make it cheap and affordable? Meanwhile, they will have driven past the library again. Third time’s the charm.

On the subject of library books. Beware of loaning things to an INTP. Though well-intentioned, the INTP’s cluttered personal space ravenously devours other people’s possessions, and even if the INTP doesn’t lose the item, it will probably take several tries before they can finally remember to bring it back.

Rebuking an INTP for absentmindedness is a hopeless gesture and will not produce any sort of change--though it may drive the INTP to hide their internal thought processes. (My family used to tease me about leaving items behind when going out to the car, necessitating multiple trips back into the house to get it all. I stopped saying goodbye; then they never knew when I actually intended to leave for real. I took a certain petty satisfaction in thinking that if I died in a car accident, they wouldn’t realize until too late that they had never said farewell.)

Weird Sense of Humor

When small talk isn’t required, INTPs can make charming conversationalists, providing that they aren’t feeling too shy. Witty and drollly ironic, the INTP can humorously twist an incident or idea and make their listeners break up laughing.

INTPs have a well-developed sense of humor, though it can be a bit odd--sort of like the Far Side, but with more wordplay. Some INTPs enjoy telling jokes that require the listener to have eight years of math and speak fluent Latin--a sick pastime indeed. They revel in the fact that there are only a handful of people in the world who would get it.

On the other hand, some INTPs report that they keep all the hilarity contained in their heads; outsiders see nothing but a vaguely bemused expression or perhaps a smirk, if anything at all. These impassive Rationals may not show what is hiding underneath.

Like all Rationals, INTPs enjoy one-liners, tongue-in-cheek quips, dry witticisms, puns, and double entendre. Their sense of humor may take a satirical bent, or may tend towards the appreciation of the absurdities of life. As creatures of logic, Rationals spend a good deal of time observing their illogical fellow beings with amused bewilderment. They attempt to bring these inconsistencies to light in their jokes. Much Rational humor consists of simply stating unspoken irrational or bizarre human behavior

aloud so that the oddity can be plainly seen--and laughed at for its absurdity. A curious number of comic strips feature main characters that are Rationals; I have vague sense that NTs are overrepresented in the funnies.

The INTP sense of humor is less socially acceptable than for most types, and may even appall listeners with its irreverence. Unfortunately, the INTP may be oblivious to the fact that their jokes are in bad taste. If an INTP behaves this way and you want them to stop, be obvious about the fact that you dislike it. Remember, when dealing with an INTP you often have to be bonk-over-the-head obvious.

However, despite the occasional problem of poor taste, the INTP sense of humor is considered by many to be one of the most attractive features of the type.

It has been speculated that INTPs are not very good at telling actual jokes.⁶ But like everything, there are exceptions; it was said of Madison that “few men possessed so rich a flow of language, [or] so great a fund of amusing anecdotes, which were made the more interesting from their being well-timed & well-told.” It may be, however, that typical INTPs simply don’t have the facial and vocal expressiveness for really good joke-telling.

Argumentation

INTPs also enjoy a good debate. One study measured type and argumentativeness⁷; it turned out that the four most argumentative types were all the Rationals. The ordering was like so: ENTJ, INTJ, INTP, ENTP. INTPs are therefore the third most argumentative type.

In light of this, it may be interesting to study INTP argumentation.

INTPs often find themselves standing alone as they defend their views, which are frequently likely to be “unusual,” to say the least. Because their views so often differ from those of the prevailing majority, and because it is almost a knee-jerk reaction for people to reject such views as absurd, INTPs will adapt sneaky strategies to bypass the gag reflex.

One tried and true technique is the Socratic method, which consists of asking question after question until others are finally forced to reason their way to the INTP’s own conclusion. This generally does a better job of convincing people than stating the truth flat out.

Person A: “There’s an entire mountain made of garbage now. If we don’t start recycling and using less packaging, we’ll be flooded in trash--like in Wall•e.”

INTP: “How many mountains are there in a mountain range?”

Person A: (Not expecting to have their remark taken seriously) “Uh...I don’t know.”

INTP: “Let’s say that there are a thousand mountains in a *small* mountain range. Now, how many years did it take to make that mountain of garbage?”

Person A: “I can’t remember, why?”

INTP: “Let’s just say 20 years, does that sound good?”

Person A: “Alright, sure...but--”

INTP: “So then, to fill up a small mountain range would take about twenty thousand years.

6 James, 2000; Keirsey, 1998a

7 Loffredo & Opt, 2006

How many mountain ranges are there in the world?"

Person A: (seeing the coup de grace coming and attempting to deflect it) "But I don't think it's a good idea to just store up trash."

INTP: (coup de grace) "Considering the remaining surface area of the planet and the amount of time it would take to fill even a fraction of that surface area up with trash, it seems obviously that the fears of the world being filled up with garbage are greatly exaggerated."

Person A: (irritably) "So you don't think that we should worry about recycling then?" (Person A misrepresents INTP's viewpoint)

INTP: "No, I didn't say that. In fact, I'm a member of the Recycling Committee and I vote Green."

Person A: "But you just said--" (Person A can't understand why the INTP has seemingly argued against their own cause.)

INTP: "The mere fact that I disagree with the mountain of trash scenario does not imply that I think recycling is a bad idea."

For the INTP, the point is to ascertain pure truth, even if leaving an untruth standing would actually help their cause. This may frustrate allies, who mistakenly come to believe that the INTP does not support their point of view.

An INTP in debate about a subject *they know well* is like a chessmaster who is one mental step ahead of their opponent. They will lay traps in the form of seemingly innocuous statements, wait for their opponent to agree with them, then snap the trap closed and prove their point.

In the example below, an INTP uses their knack for staying one logical step ahead to enlighten a person who has fuzzy, anthropocentric ideas based on faulty information.

Person A: "So you really think aliens exist?"

INTP: "Why wouldn't they?"

Person A: "Well, it just doesn't seem likely that intelligence could evolve twice. I mean, what are the odds?"

INTP: "How many stars are there in the universe?"

Person B: "I don't, billions?"

INTP: "There are billions of billions. And that is only in the part of the universe we can *see*. So actually there are tons more. Thus the odds are actually quite good that one of those billions of billions of stars could have a planet that could host life."

Person A: "Well, I could see *animals*. But I mean sentient life--you know, the kind that can talk."

INTP: (lays trap) "Do you think that the ability to talk defines sentience?"

Person A: "Sure. What else?"

INTP: "In that case, humans are not the only sentient species on Earth."

Person A: (baffled) "What do you mean?"

INTP: (snaps trap) “Since gorillas and chimpanzees can both speak in sign language, they are sentient by your definition.”

Person A: “But they’re animals!”

INTP: “Animals who can *talk*. If not one, but three Earth species are able to communicate, then why should it be any different on another planet?”

Another thing that INTPs will do is present each link of their chain of reasoning separately, i.e. “Do you agree with proposition A?” “Do you think B is valid?” “Do you believe in statement C?” The other person will cautiously agree to each individual item, not really understanding what the INTP is getting at. Then finally, when all the prerequisites have been proven, the INTP connects the dots and reveals the whole: “Very well, since you believe A, B, and C, then you must believe in D.” This revelation is often greeted by a stunned look or an immediate protest, “Wait, I never said that--” The INTP will then review A, B, and C and ask how exactly the logic is faulty. Squirming will commence. One fictional account of this technique has the NT’s opponent say, “My friend, you seem to entangle me with invisible threads, then you will all of a sudden cry out, ‘Caught!'” This is an apt description of the process.

The role of the INTP as devil’s advocate bears reviewing. It often annoys people how INTPs argue against things that they actually believe in. Keirsey (1998a) has suggested that INTPs do this to look for what truth there might be in an opponent’s position. I think that an INTP also wants to refine the terms of the argument into a set of definitions that are as accurate as possible from the perspective of both parties. They wish to ensure that statements are universally true, with any exceptions noted.

For example, here an overly logical INTP notices an inconsistency in Person A’s declaration and feels impelled to enlighten them by playing devil’s advocate, meanwhile totally missing or ignoring the probable emotional context of Person A’s statement:

Person A: “Children aren’t supposed to die before their parents.”

INTP: “Hm, but what of the child mortality rate in third world countries? It’s a normal occurrence there.”

Person A: (stunned that anyone would say such a thing) “You don’t think it should be like that, do you?”

INTP: “Of course not.”

Person A: “But you just said--”

INTP: “I didn’t say I approved of it. I merely noted that there is nothing out of the ordinary about children dying before their parents in most parts of the world.”

The INTP has corrected the arbitrary opinion “not supposed to die” and replaced it with the truth “nothing out of the ordinary about dying” while adding a qualifier, “in most of the world.” The statement is now objectively true in a universal sense.

(Now the INTP will get to hear the rest of the story about the terrible tragedy that has befallen Person A’s heretofore unmentioned acquaintance. Person A will be glad that the INTP is so good at listening, but the INTP will feel awkward at the requirement to express sympathy.)

As has been noted, other people frequently misrepresent or oversimplify the views of INTPs. The INTP may be forced to say, “No, you’re the one who said that. All I said was that...” INTPs choose

their words carefully, each word having a precisely chosen weight and meaning, with appropriate qualifiers added so as not to imply an incorrect generalization. Other people, of course, treat words in the most casual way, flailing them everywhere in gross oversimplifications and violating the rules of logic with blissful abandonment. And then they have the nerve to accuse INTPs of being “nitpickers.”

In fact, it is often the case that arguments would not exist if the terms had been defined correctly beforehand. People say the same words, but the words don’t mean the same thing. Does anyone take an advertisement at its word when it claims that a product is proven to be the “BEST!*”? What the advertisement actually means is that a study of the product and two competitors’ products found that in 6 out of 10 measures of quality, their product was superior. But you won’t know that unless you read the long explanation described in tiny print at the bottom of the box. You can’t truly evaluate the advertisement’s statement until you know what the term “best” means.

For an INTP, every term used in a debate has a little asterisk on it indicating that the true meaning is probably quite complicated. Thus, before any real discussion can be undertaken, the terms must be compared and a common definition agreed upon by all parties. Often, by the time the terms have been defined, the disagreement has entirely disappeared.

Say for example an INTP with a dog is having a discussion with a person who makes broad generalizations and does not qualify their statements.

Person A: “I hate dogs.”

INTP: “Oh?”

Person A: “It’s so annoying how they jump up on you and slobber.”

INTP: “But that’s a sign of poor training.”

Person A: “Sure, but they’re all like that.”

INTP: “Not really. Only the large, poorly trained ones are like that. What you actually hate are large, poorly trained dogs.”

Person A: “Well, I guess that’s true. I don’t mind the little ones so much, when they don’t bark all the time. When I was a kid...”

Note how the INTP narrowed the definition down to its true scope, from “dogs” (gross generalization) to “large, poorly trained dogs” (true definition). By undermining an opponent’s terms, an INTP strips away the very foundation on which the other’s argument stands. The INTP knows that to get to the root of the matter, one must go for the definitions.

As a final note, while INTPs enjoy calm, civil debate, they do not like fighting. Emotionalism, anger, and baseless declarations made without facts--an INTP dislikes such arguments, which are seldom productive for either side.

Politics

What do INTPs like debating about? Well, there's politics. Did you know that type and politics are related? Sensing is correlated with a more conservative political stance, while Intuition is correlated with a more liberal political stance.⁸ In addition, Intuitives reported having higher political interest

⁸ Macdaid in Boozer & Forte, 2008

than Sensors.⁹ INTPs are thus likely to be politically interested liberals.

Another study¹⁰ found that TJ (Thinking, Judging) was associated with the American Republican party and F was associated with the American Democratic party. It was also found that NTPs are more likely to vote Independent. So INTPs are most likely liberal Independents. In addition, other researchers found that the Democrats were associated with FP.¹¹

Boozer and Forte (2008) measured “political alienation,” which they described as “discontent or disconnect from the political process.” They found that a preference for introversion was associated with more political alienation, and noted that this may be part of a larger pattern of overall introverted alienation. So INTPs are most likely to be disillusioned liberal Independents.

The researchers also measured specific political views; it turned out that Perceivers tended to favor abortion while Judgers did not, and that Thinkers tended to favor the death penalty while Feelers did not. Bear in mind here that the main types being measured are SJs and SPs; they outnumber Intuitives and may drown them out in generalizations such as “all Perceivers” or “all Judgers.” We will say cautiously that being an INTP *may* predict support for abortion and the death penalty.

Gerdes (2010) found that both NTs and NFs tend to give more than average to environmental causes ([read here](#)). Therefore INTP views may be more green than most.

So there you have it. A group of green, disillusioned, liberal, environmentalist Independents who may support abortion and the death penalty and are interested in politics.

Religion

When INTPs aren't busy talking about politics, they're busy talking about religion.

It is a common misconception that INTPs are not religious. It is true that INTPs have a higher than average rate of agnosticism (16.2% are agnostic) and atheism (11.1% are atheistic).¹² It is also true that they are the type second most likely to be agnostic and the third most likely to be atheistic. But, 72.7% of INTPs *do* believe in a higher spiritual power. This is only 18.7 percentage points below the ENFJs, who were the most likely of all types (91.4%) to believe in a higher spiritual power. It would thus be inappropriate to conclude that INTPs are not religious; the majority of them are. Whether that religion takes the form of a mainstream belief system or a modern day version of Deism is a different story.

Spiritual Life

The spiritual disciplines favored by introverts include prayer, meditation, study, and reading.¹³ (One suspects that INTPs are also attracted to remote hermitages and monasteries with a rule of silence.) INTPs want logical consistency in their spiritual life as everywhere else, and Keirsey (1998a) has speculated that the Rational temperament is most drawn to the area of theology and correct doctrine. Oswald and Kroeger have further suggested that Thinkers are drawn to teaching and the seminary, the latter being an NT stronghold. They are interested in finding the truth and value justice over mercy.

Oswald and Kroeger have proposed that INTPs are “conceptual mystics.” Like the INFPs, they are the type most likely to explore new spiritual experiences in solitude through intuition; but unlike the INFPs

9 Boozer & Forte, 2008

10 Hammer in Boozer & Forte, 2008

11 Constantini & Craik in Boozer & Forte, 2008

12 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

13 Oswald & Kroeger, 1988

they incorporate an intellectual streak.

When some people hear the word “religious” they tend to interpret it as dependency or weakness, as if they suspect that religious people need God to hold their hand. This is sometimes true, though the need to have one's hand held is certainly not limited to religious people. INTPs, however, were the type least likely (20.2%) to use “rely on religious beliefs” as a coping method for stress.¹⁴ Considering that most INTPs believe in a higher spiritual power, it would seem that religion does not tend to create dependency in this type. Perhaps the saying, “Work like it all depends on you, pray like it all depends on God,” describes the INTP approach in this regard.

Church

Most religious organizations are led by Extraverts, because being a pastor requires lot of people contact; Feelers, because pastoral work is a helping profession; and Judgers, because Judgers run everything anyway.¹⁵ In short, most pastoral staff is EFJ, and they naturally create an EFJ culture.¹⁶ I fear this approach does not naturally endear INTP churchgoers.

For example, is an INTP likely to be enthusiastic when the EFJ pastor says cheerfully, “Okay, everybody! Stand up and give your neighbor a hug!”? (Your only hope is to sit at the far end of the pew, where your neighbors can't reach you.) Or how about when the pastor suggests that members of the congregation stand up if they want prayer? How many INTPs are going to want to stand up in the middle of a *crowded room* to reveal that they *need help with something* and want prayer? INTPs do not deal with their problems by asking loved ones for help (in fact, they hate asking for help, period); how much less a roomful of strangers? Then too, EFJs express their emotions freely and loudly; this makes INTPs uncomfortable. (What? Cry? In public?) The net result of this is to produce INTPs who have faith, but prefer not to set foot in a church building.

An INTP Church Culture

Not that all pastors are EFJs. In fact, I had one pastor who was an INTP. Not only does his church remain my favorite after many years, it is also the one community where I felt free to be myself. I offer the following mini-ethnography as a description of this unusual culture.

One of the most obvious effects of the INTP leadership was that there was no ceremony, ritual, or formality of any kind. There was no dress code. The pastor had adopted the characteristic INTP habit of wearing just one style of clothing; he preferred Hawaiian shirts. Getting started on time wasn't a big deal either; it was just a matter of gathering the scattered members up to the tune of “Are we starting now?”

An egalitarian culture prevailed, and those in leadership were not treated with the special respect and deference commonly encountered in churches. Things were casual and literally laid back: it was okay to lay down on the rows of chairs that served for pews in the church.

The INTP pastor was good at dissecting scripture and drawing out meanings, though his sermons tended to amble around rather than heading towards a goal. He also tended to leap from idea to idea in an intuitive fashion, interrupting one point to make another. His sermons seldom evoked an emotional

14 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

15 Oswald & Kroeger, 1988

16 Oswald & Kroeger found that Rationals are actually overrepresented among pastors (SPs are the underrepresented temperament) along fairly typical lines: ENTJs are the most likely NT type to lead a church, INTPs least likely. ENTJs composed 7.3% of one clergy sample while INTPs composed 1.8% of said sample. Curiously, females clergy tended to be more INP than males.

response, nor were they meant to do so. Rather, he preferred to convey information from his studies of the Bible. (Rational pastors love dissecting the original Greek and Hebrew roots of words; given the INTP aptitude for languages, I assume this tendency is only amplified.)

For obvious reasons, the pastor wasn't very loud or emotionally expressive, and his attempts to smile when it would be socially appropriate failed because they looked forced and awkward. (This is, fyi, a good lesson for every INTP.) His wife, however, was good at filling in his shortcomings in the areas of empathetic expression. The pastor was not supported by church offerings; rather, he owned his own business and supported himself. He came across as being somewhat stiff and detached, but his INTP sense of humor ("Hehe, we should do a rock and roll version of Silent Night") and well-meaning attitude saved him from appearing cold.

The church also had some unusual innovations. For example, the regular service was held at 2 pm in the afternoon, so that people could sleep in. In addition, the regular members were given a key to the church building so that they could come and go as they pleased during off hours. Often there were a few people hanging out during the evening socializing, praying, practicing on the instruments, or doing odd work.

INTPs tend to like misfits, and the church's membership included a veritable swarm of wildly-dressed teenagers, homeless people, and the occasional drunk. It appears that INTP church culture is a magnet for the weirdos and down-and-outs. Even the church itself was a misfit; it was a small, independent group and did not belong to any denomination.

Altogether, this church culture presents an interesting picture of how an institution can be shaped by the personality of a leader.

Cults

Of course, sometimes this shaping can take on a more sinister character.

Did you know that cults can fundamentally alter their members' personalities? The changes can even be tracked using the MBTI. Here's how it works: the cult leader chooses one particular "ideal" type (hint: it's his own) and tries to conform the members into that type. A cult is essentially a Pygmalion project on steroids.

There was a study on the Boston Church of Christ cult which has implications for INTPs.¹⁷ The book, "The Discipleship Dilemma" is freely available online ([read here](#)) for anyone interested in a more in depth look at type and cults.

The Boston Church of Christ was very successful in gaining and retaining new members, but their success met with criticism. In particular, critics claimed that the church's "discipleship" methods were turning members into unhealthy copies of the group leaders.

In most Christian circles, "discipleship" simply means being taught to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ in one's life. Within the context of the Boston Church of Christ, however, this term had a different meaning: unconditional surrender to the leadership and conformity to their opinions even on topics that had nothing to do with the teachings of Christ.

Each disciple was given a mentor who would exercise authority over them; these mentors were in turn subordinate to their own mentors, who held a higher rank in the church. Those mentors in turn had

¹⁷ Yeakley, Norton, Vinzant & Vinzant, 1988

their own mentors, and so on and so forth until the pyramid of authority reached its apex: the senior pastor, head of the church.

Immediately one can see how it is possible for a cult leader to propagate his personality type to his followers.

Yeakley, Norton, Vinzant & Vinzant (1988) used the MBTI to test whether or not personality changes were taking place in the church members. He did this by having the members take the MBTI three times: once for the person they were before they joined, once for how they saw themselves now, and once for the person they saw themselves becoming in five years. This type of triple testing is also used by MBTI practitioners on children to find out if parents are trying to change their child's type.

Approximately 800 people completed all three tests. The results showed that before they joined, the church members had the expected distribution of personality types. But when it came to their current personality type, church members indicated that they were now behaving like types ESFJ, ESTJ, and ENFJ. Furthermore, the five year prediction of type revealed that most people saw themselves becoming ESFJs.

To test if these personality mutations were simply par for the course in ordinary religious organizations, Yeakley et al. did comparative studies of a non-“discipling” Church of Christ as well as five other Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches.

None of these groups showed any statistically significant changes in the types of its members. Distributions of each type within the churches also remained constant; i.e. the percentage of nonESFJs neither waxed nor waned over time.

To test whether personality mutations *are* normal for cults, Yeakley et al. then surveyed six cult chapters, namely the Hari Krishnas, the Church of Scientology, the Unification Church (the Moonies), the Children of God, Maranatha, and the Way. Three of the cults were slowly changing their members into ESFJs, two were changing them into ESTJs, and one was changing them into ENFJs.

The degree of psychological damage done by these cult-based Pygmalion projects is directly related to the amount of change that a person must undergo to conform to the cult leader's personality type. For example, if you have parents who try to raise their little INTP to be an ESFJ, that's going to mess up the child more than if they tried to raise their kid to be an INTJ, which is quite similar to the INTP type.

You see the implications: ESFJs seem to be a common cult leader type; therefore, based strictly on statistical probability, INTPs would be one of the types in the most danger if they joined a cult, because they would have to make the greatest personality adjustment.

Could there be such a thing as an INTP cult? It is an interesting question worth further examination.

The Lazy Rationals?

INTPs tend to have a reputation as the “lazy” Rationals. This is due to their emphasis on the mental world coupled with their Perceiving tendencies. The NTJs, by contrast, need closure and exhibit our society's Judger-based definition of “work ethic.” The ENTPs don't need closure, but as Extraverts they focus on the visible outside world and their hard work can be easily seen.

For INTPs, an achievement in the internal world is satisfaction enough; many see no reason to go to all the effort of actually translating their thoughts into physical reality. “I know I could do it. But why would I want to? I've already figured it out,” says the INTP, shrugging. Recognizing their own lack of

motivation, the INTP ruefully concludes that they are lazy.

Actually, an INTP will put intense mental effort into processing problems, including sleepless nights and days spent reading, studying, or staring into nothingness while smoking hot gears whirl in their head. But to outsiders, the only sign that work is going on is a bead of saliva gliding down the corner of the INTP's mouth, provided that the INTP can be seen behind the cover of their book.

If you watch a team of horses working, you can see sweat on straining muscles and listen to the snorting breaths as the horses bear their load along. But if you watch a computer work, you hear a quiet hum and there are some little lights that flicker, apparently indicating strenuous activity. ENTPs, ENTJs, and INTJs are like the team of horses--it's easy to see how hard they work. But what of the INTP computer that is being overclocked to the point of meltdown? There's no way of appreciating how hard your computer is working by staring at the warm plastic casing. This is the problem of INTP laziness: cogitation just doesn't count as real work in the eyes of most.

Think of it this way: a brain on its own can do no work, but hands on their own have no ideas to carry out. Does one call a cerebellum lazy because it does not crawl out of one's skull and do real work with the hands? Or does one simply say, "The cerebellum's fulltime job is to create ideas. It is the job of the hands to carry those ideas out"?

Of course, the case is not helped by the fact that INTPs will suffer endless inconvenience rather than take care of simple, boring, repetitive tasks. Rather than taking out the trash, they will stack it up as high as possible to make a tower. (This pastime also engages their love of building things.) Generally speaking, an INTP would rather come up with an elaborate system that will automatically perform the chore for them than do the chore themselves. The creation of the system will require a hundred times more labor than the chore itself, but the INTP won't mind. They like creating systems. "And," they will add happily, "This will solve the problem once and for all!" Other types find this mindset incomprehensible. "Why not just take out the trash! It only takes a minute," they say, shaking their heads. Then they go about their daily work, using various labor-saving devices designed by INTPs who didn't want to do monotonous repetitive tasks that only take a minute. Goodness knows how much human progress is driven by such laziness. Which brings up another point.

Useful Inventions

A study of casual inventors found that INTPs and to a lesser extent ISTPs were the dominant types.¹⁸ A "casual inventor" was defined as someone who spends ~36 hours a week developing inventions. (The thirty-two inventors were identified through a one day workshop on inventing.) The results? There were 5.88 times as many INTPs as would be expected (9 total out of the 32 participants) in comparison to the general population. The nearest runner ups were the ISTPs; there were 2.55 times as many ISTPs as would be expected. The amount of ENTPs was average. It may be that something about the initial workshop particularly attracted INTPs, resulting in overrepresentation. Still, these findings are significant because they shed light on the fact that INTPs can and do build prototypes of their ideas. Indeed, 36% of the sample had patented one or more of their inventions. One last finding was that for 71% of the sample, the inventions they created were not related to their occupation.

Fake Social Skills

Unlike most people, INTPs do not come preprogrammed with acceptable social behavior patterns.

¹⁸ Forsgren, 1990

Rather, they learn to fit in through conscious observation and deliberate mimicry. While other people talk, the INTP watches and wonders, “Am I nodding too often? Should I speak up, or remain silent? Should I fold my arms, put my hands in my pockets, or try to gesture? Should I touch this person in a friendly, casual way? Where? How much are they smiling? Am I smiling too much? How long should I laugh? How close should I stand?” If it ever becomes possible to control one’s own muscles using computer programs installed in the brain, then INTPs will have onboard control programs such as `big_smile.cpp` and `concern.py`, allowing them to arrange their faces into appropriate shapes as required by the situation. They will be considered sociopaths.

Like actors on a stage set, INTPs are playing a role. They know that being true to themselves doesn’t fly too well with average people, and since they want to be liked and accepted just like everyone else does, they slowly accumulate a little store of acting knowledge to help them get by. (It would be interesting to find out if taking real acting courses could improve an INTP’s social standing.) James (2000) has noted that INTPs tend to be human chameleons, imitating the people they meet like a mirror ([read here](#)). If a person is friendly, funny, boisterous, and waves their hands around a lot, the INTP will start gesticulating, speak in a louder voice, and smile and joke more to match the other’s behavior. Then, two hours later, the INTP will run into a tough, hurry-hurry-hurry-we’ve-got-work-to-do-snap coworker. Miraculously the INTP will now become brisk, businesslike, and speak in clipped tones. Finally, they will bump into a cool, silent, terse person, and will themselves become cool, silent, and terse.

Most of the time this mimicry is unconscious and is basically the result of playing a role deeply enough that it becomes embedded. Chameleons don’t have to think about changing their skin color to match leaves and branches—it just happens. INTPs can maintain good relations with a diverse circle of acquaintances because they can mold their behavior to fit in with what is socially required in each one.

Not that INTPs are *good* actors. They only act because they have to, and only put forth as much effort as is required to get by. An INTP, for example, does not have a giant palette of varied emotional responses that seem totally genuine. Instead, they are controlling their bodies like a puppetmaster controls a puppet, and the resulting clumsy imitation of reality is just not lifelike. But it’s enough to get by, as long as there isn’t too much pressure. If the pressure increases or the situation warrants it, however, an INTP will switch back to their regular selves for as long as necessary, perhaps stunning their acquaintances with a display of cool, clear, cogitant reasoning.

A Nice Little Chat

Like all Rationals, INTPs are disinterested in small talk, meaning everyday chitchat about coworkers, cars, barbecues, shopping trips, etc. They are more intrigued in discussing the question of whether dolphins have language or complaining about how Star Wars breaks the laws of physics.

Since INTPs are not terribly interested in the everyday details of other people’s lives, they tend to have a poor recall for names, faces, and personal information. It doesn’t help that they tend to “space out” when people begin to discuss the boring stuff, either.

With practice, INTPs become skilled at nodding and making responsive noises at appropriate times, while internally wondering whether dolphins have language or thinking about how Star Wars breaks the laws of physics. They do not intercept half the personal information poured upon them, and they easily forget what they do hear because they find it rather uninteresting.

A popular ice breaking activity has each person in a group share their name and a personal detail about themselves. (INTPs don't like sharing personal details about themselves, but if compelled...) Will this exercise help the INTP get to know the rest of the group? No. Shortly after the exercise is over, they will wipe every name and personal detail from their brain.

For example. I went on a school trip with about a dozen strangers whose names and faces got all jumbled up in my mind. One of these people was a young woman from South America who wouldn't eat pig meat because members of her family had been murdered by guerrillas and the corpses subsequently devoured by the pigs on the farm where they lived. A couple days later I was having breakfast and a young woman standing next to me said that she didn't want to eat her bacon. Eagerly I volunteered to eat it, but then she uncomfortably said that she would eat it--and did, though later she said she felt ill and regretted it. Sometime later I put these two facts together. Oops.

In middle school I had a red-haired friend in gym and science. One day I decided to jump out from behind the bleachers and scare her. During science class I reminded her of what had happened, but she didn't seem to understand. She insisted that the incident hadn't happened, and that I didn't have gym class with her. It turned out that I actually had *two* red-haired friends. Another person whose name I can no longer recall was shocked when I gestured at him and referred to him as "what's-his-name." He exclaimed, "You've known me for years and you still don't know my name?"

Amusingly, while the INTP does not remember anyone's name or face, everybody else knows the INTP's name and face.

Some INTPs are basically invisible; they've managed to integrate well enough that they aren't noticed. But less "adjusted" INTPs are quite distinctive. In fact, when a group of non-type-savvy volunteers was asked to describe people of various types, it was found that INTPs elicited some of highest rates of description of all types.¹⁹ From this it can be seen that INTPs are one of the most clearly identifiable types from the perspective of ordinary people.

This also means that INTPs are doomed to be perpetually clueless about all the people who come up to them and seem to know them from somewhere.

It is probably inevitable that people feel uncomfortable around INTPs sometimes. This is because average folks really do not understand how to deal with a person who seems to be an exception to so many unwritten rules. INTPs do not behave or respond in a socially expected way; thus people cannot predict INTP behavior, and this makes them nervous. For example, they cannot tell for sure what will make the INTP smile, laugh, or become annoyed. Nor do they know how to approach an INTP in such a way as to get what they want from them. Their usual techniques fall flat, and the INTP is too impassive to read anyway. This can create an awkward predicament.

Fortunately, as INTPs age their social skills improve and they find themselves more fluent in relating to other people.

The Death Glare

There is a characteristic INTJ expression²⁰ which has become popularly termed "the Death Glare." This facial expression (which is also used by INTPs) is actually not a glare, but the INT's neutral face. The mistaken effect of a glare is produced by unbroken direct eye contact, prolonged silence, and an

19 Thorne & Gough, 1991

20 Keirsey, 1998a

utterly impassive face. The Death Glare may also be mistaken for depression.

It is the absence of any sort of emotional cues that tends to make the INT look less-than-pleased, even if they are feeling neither happy, sad or upset. Females and males alike will exhibit this expression; those being pinned under the glare squirm inside, imagining all the things that the INT must see wrong with them. Really, the INT is thinking, “It would probably save a slight amount of gas if I went to the grocery store first, then gas station, but the traffic might be a factor if I can’t make it before the rush...”

If you ever wondered why the Founding Fathers--largely NT--seem to be glowering at you, now you know why. The effect seems to be stronger for INTJs, but you can see James Madison (INTP) affixing you with a displeased-looking stare in a later chapter.

Systems Design

The beauty of perfectly designed systems is not lost on INTPs. They appreciate the design of cleverly-engineered products and carefully constructed statements of logic, whether in the form of arguments, governments, equations, or computer code. They feel a sense of satisfaction when they see new facts fall in line with their mental model of a situation.

They also cannot resist criticizing the faults they notice in imperfectly designed systems. Being the best system designers in the world, INTPs are adept at seeing problems, flaws, and ways in which a system might fail. This may lead ungrateful people to decry them for negativity; such people may also complain that INTPs are good at discovering problems, but not at offering solutions. Such complaints ignore the simple fact that problems are a dime a dozen and solutions are costly, complex and fraught with difficulty. It is easy, for example, to note that there is a problem with the government, the environment, or the code of Microsoft Windows. How about fixing the problem? Is that easy? Sadly, it takes ten times as much effort to fix a problem than to find one.

And of course, many do not like having flaws in their theories pointed out. One quasi-phrenological type website referred to INTPs as the “termites” burrowing at the heart of its erroneous conclusions. A bad idea is like a rotten tree which INTPs gnaw holes through until it falls.

Like all Rationals, INTPs find it hard not to correct mistakes when they see them. Young INTPs will correct their teacher’s math mistakes on the board. INTPs will point out when a movie violates reality, “Bullets won’t throw you against the wall like that.” “Horses can’t run that long without getting tired.” Rationals in scientific circles enjoy getting together to watch unrealistic disaster movies (e.g. “The Core”) and laughing at their improbable science.

Even in everyday conversation, Rationals feel almost impelled to correct misperceptions, even ones that have nothing to do with the topic at hand. “Actually, George Washington never chopped down a cherry tree.” “Actually, there are such things as imaginary numbers.” “Actually, that won’t electrocute you.” My Russian math professor would use the word “defenestrate” (“to throw out a window”) instead of “derivate.” He would say, “Now we will defenestrate the equation...” I couldn’t bear it; I sent him an e-mail explaining the difference. (He still didn’t change his ways.) To some extent, of course, this habit is characteristic of all Rationals. My classmates and I went on a fieldtrip to a national park, and our ENTP geology professor discovered that one of the park’s informational plaques had given the wrong age for a landscape feature. He took a permanent marker and surreptitiously corrected the error. But I think that nitpicking is most commonly associated with the INTPs.

INTPs are also interested in absolute Truth as established through logic and reasoning. For this reason,

philosophy is a beloved INTP pastime. INTPs are interested in deep universal questions; they will also question everything. Does reality really exist? Does time really exist? Do I really exist? These questions bother them even as children. One might think that such philosophies would have no real bearing on a person's life, but to an INTP these questions can assume great importance, with very real happiness or misery bound up in the answer.

Practice Makes Perfect

Rationals must be continually outdoing themselves.²¹ To an INTP, everything in life is an opportunity to practice their skills and become more competent. They expect constant forward progress without any regression. Today's best is tomorrow's baseline; anything less than the new normal is viewed as a failure. The INTP's drive towards ever greater efficiency and their ever heightening standards drive them towards new accomplishments.

This does not mean that those accomplishments will be spectacular. In fact, the aforementioned behaviors apply to even the most trivial of things. For example, an INTP lighting the candles on a birthday cake may ask themselves, “Is there a way to strike this match better?” “Have I improved my striking technique over the years or not?” “How many candles can I get off this match compared to my last match?” An INTP cracking nuts may ask, “Am I getting better at this? Am I removing the shells more easily? Am I breaking the inner meat less often?” An INTP trying to count themselves to sleep may say to themselves, “Okay, I'll keep an unofficial mental tally of how high I get before I go to sleep. Then I'll track my progress and try to go to sleep in less and less time.”

For the most part these little games are unconscious, and the INTP does not actually realize they are “keeping score.” Once you become conscious of them, however, it can be amusing to see how the need to constantly improve plays out. I find myself tracking how well I put caps back on milk jugs and flip calendar pages. I try to optimize the way I place bookmarks in my reading material and crack squares off a chocolate bar. One can easily see how INTPs can be perceived as perfectionists, and at least one type researcher has tied this trait to INPs.²² Keirsey (1998a) believed that perfectionism led Rationals to be (mis)diagnosed with OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), though research tends to indicate that ISTJs are more likely to be so (mis?)diagnosed ([read here](#)).²³

A side effect of this need for improvement without backsliding is that measures of progress which have a high degree of randomness wreck havoc on an INTP's psyche. Suppose there is a graph that measures “daily progress” generally well, but it is jaggy. The up-down-up-down-up-down nature of the graph torments INTPs because of their need for continual uphill progress without regression. Yet they cannot look away from the graph because of their need to make sure they are achieving. A cruel addiction. As we shall see, this tracking can even have effects on an INTP's love life.

The 16PF

The 16PF is a personality test that measures various traits that have been found to be semi-associated with MBTI types. For example, the trait of “self reliance” turns out to be most strongly associated with INTPs and ISFPs. “Reasoning” was more strongly correlated to INTP than any other type. Furthermore, INTPs were the type that exhibited the second most “Privateness,” right after ISTPs.²⁴

21 Keirsey, 1998a

22 Demarest, 2006

23 Coolidge, Segal, Hook, Yamazaki & Ellett, 2001

24 McPherson & Hindmarch, 2004

What INTPs were *not* is also interesting. With other NPs, INTPs were the fourth lowest in “Global Self-control.” Actually, this is fairly good--it means INTPs have the best self control of all NPs. INTPs also scored third lowest for “Global Extraversion” with other Introverts. They tied with the ENTPs for second lowest on “Rule-consciousness” and they were second to last on “Warmth.”

Leisure Habits

Reading

Like all *Rationals*, INTPs enjoy science fiction, books about politics and society (particularly NT men), literature, fiction and mysteries/thrillers (particularly NT women).²⁵ *Rationals* are the type most likely to get books at the library, and the more intuitive a person is, the more books they read (something like 30 – 40 per year).²⁶

Being deep thinkers with excellent taste, INTPs (particularly males) appreciate the virtues of comic books and graphic novels.²⁷ Some INTPs even write comics. About psychological type. Self promotion: [Oddly Developed Types webcomic](#).

Games

A survey of the leisure pastimes of each type also yielded the result that INTPs enjoy “Playing with computers or video games” more than all other types.²⁸

More precisely, it fell out like this:

1. INTP - 1.96 times as many INTPs as expected played with computers or video games.
2. INTJ - 1.62 times as many INTJs as expected played with computers or video games.
3. ENTP - 1.48 times as many ENTPs as expected played with computers or video games.
4. ISTP - 1.39 times as many ISTPs as expected played with computers or video games.

The other types didn’t view computers or video games as more fun than average. So, we’ve isolated the chunk of the population that likes gaming and fiddling with computers, and it is mostly *Rational* with a touch of *Artisan*. All are *Thinkers*, and almost all are *Perceivers*. It is mostly introverted. Now you know the types of those anonymous people you’re up against on the internet.

Game designers too are interested in the question of what personalities are most attracted to what sorts of games. They have made an effort to catalogue different styles of play and relate them to Keirsey’s temperaments.

Bateman (2006) ([read here](#)) has noted that games which particularly appeal to *Rationals* should be *complicated*, allowing lot of opportunities to discover and manipulate the environment. *Rationals* will also accept a longer learning curve; they care more about having lots of potential choices than about getting a jumpstart on gameplay (not that they mind a jumpstart). They are willing to learn lots of rules and to consult the 70 page booklet included with the game.

Type INTP often occurs in association with the following sorts of games:

- Wordgames like Scrabble

25 Parent, 2012

26 Hicks in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

27 Parent, 2012

28 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

- Boardgames involving strategy such as chess, Risk, or Monopoly
- Tabletop roleplaying games such as Dungeons and Dragons or Warhammer 40k
- Adventure games and RPGs that involve puzzles, i.e. Myst, Zork, Monkey Island, Portal
- Minesweeper and other games based on abstract reasoning
- Strategy games such as Ages of Empires, Civilization, Masters of Orion, etc.
- Sandbox games such as Minecraft, Sim City, or Zoo Tycoon.
- MMOs that offer lots of complexity, i.e. Eve Online, World of Warcraft, Guild Wars, etc.
- Games that allow you to design your own add-on levels
- Online poker (the mathematically inclined may make a living off of it)

It should be noted that INTPs will play almost any sort of game; the above list is simply what INTPs tend to be more attracted to *in comparison to other types*. In fact, most INTPs probably prefer a diet of Halo and other FPSs (First Person Shooters), if only because that's what game designers currently make. But whatever game the INTP plays, underneath is the goal to explain, predict, and control everything within the game world. Gameplaying INTPs are sort of like scientists of the fantasy realm.

Since this affords us an opportunity to study the INTP mindset, let's go into it a little more deeply. An INTP approaches a game much the same way as they approach everything else in the world: as an opportunity to pick apart patterns, perform experiments to see if their hunches are correct, and then formalize the best response into a rule of thumb (an algorithm or principle) that produces maximum efficiency with a minimum expenditure of resources. What an INTP really wants to do is to learn the principles of a game so well that a robot could be programmed to win simply by following the principles the INTP has figured out. In fact, I have no doubt that INTPs do program AIs in this manner, only in this case winning takes the form of "gold farming." (Gold farming is when you kill monsters/perform tasks to earn game currency in a massively multiplayer online game, then sell the game currency to other players for real money.)

There is also the usual Rational drive to develop intricate long-range strategies, for example, "First I'll level up my character's skills by slaying hundreds of easy monsters on the first level, then I'll use my new powers to kill the hoardes of monsters on the really hard level so that I can loot all their items, then I'll go to the trading post on the next level and convert everything into cash, and then I'll use it all to buy the ultimate weapon when I get to the shop near the final endpoint, which will allow me to kill the final boss in two minutes. Hahaha! And they said it couldn't be done! We'll see about that!"

Though unlikely to be inspired by grinding (performing the same action at length to level up a character or collect items), the INTP's strategic abilities serve them well in designing the most efficient path through the gameworld.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty can be defined as how long a customer maintains a relationship with a particular business. If so, then INTPs are the second most loyal customers (right after INTJs). A study tracked how long the people of each type had maintained a business relationship with an automobile dealership ([read here](#)).²⁹ It turned out that the average "customer organization relationship" length for INTPs was 13.0 years; for the INTJs, it was 18.0 years, five years longer. By comparison, the average customer relationship lasted only 5.7 years. The study concluded that if an automobile manufacturer could identify and deliberately attract INT customers (i.e. with a customized INT-oriented webpage) then

²⁹ Duncan, 2008

they could continue to reap business from them for some time. Also of interest, the study suggested that “the traditional paradigm of the gregarious salesperson may not be the most compatible with the MBTI introvert market segment.” (Introverts as a whole tended to have higher customer loyalty than extraverts.)

What if this study caught on? Would INTPs become the new used car salesmen? Would INTPs be specifically targeted by advertisers? How long have you been favoring the local businesses with your patronage?

It may be that INTP customer loyalty is simply an expression of a broader pattern of INT behavior. For example, an INTP may choose a single style of dress and stick with it for twenty years, then make a change and stick with that for another twenty years. Or, an INTP may fix upon a group of favorite foods and eat nothing but those particular foods for months or even years straight. Choosing a few favorite stores and frequenting them for decades is not so different.

INTP Writing Style

INTPs, like all the types, have a particular writing style. In terms of writing assignments, INTPs would choose original, self-defined topics with a broad scope.³⁰

INTPs prefer to write alone, without background noises or voices. They tend to heap ideas together in their brain and let them bake and mature, gnawing on them night and day as they go absent-mindedly about their business, forgetting things and losing their car keys.

At a certain stage in the “pregnancy” the pondering is complete, and then the INTP gives birth to their ideas in the form of swiftly writing them down on paper--not because they are afraid of forgetting them, but because all the real writing has already been done inside their heads.

Nor is this mental pondering limited to processing facts; INTP novelists can write entire scenes in their heads with complete dialogue. In a similar fashion, they can envision the plot of their novel without writing a single sentence down on paper.

Pitfalls

INTPs, like all Rationals, may fall prey to the trap of using too-elaborate sentences and paragraphs (“academese”) to convey the complexity of their thoughts. When a reader must review a sentence several times before they can comprehend it, then sentence complexity has gone too far. I know of one case where a Rational geologist came up with a revolutionary idea, but he couched his thesis in such dense and erudite language that no one read his book, and the idea didn’t catch on until years later, when another man rewrote the original ideas in a more user friendly format. Abstruse writing is *ineffective*.

One downfall peculiar to intuitive writing is to make a sweeping generalization without providing adequate facts or examples to back it up.³¹ For example...oops, I don’t have an example!

Intuitives may also make the intuitive leap, but fail to build a bridge for their audience. When this occurs, the readers are left saying, “Wait, how did they get *this* conclusion out of *that* evidence?” or “Where the heck did that idea come from?”

Like most Perceivers, INTPs like to do plenty of research before narrowing down their topic, which is

30 Fabrizio, n.d.; DiTiberio & Jensen, 2007

31 Fabrizio, n.d.

apt to be rather broad. Unlike most Perceivers, INTP research tends to be outright voluminous, and they don't even like to start writing until the research is done and they feel they have a complete view of the topic. But the topic keeps expanding. "I'll just squeeze one more thing in," they say. Or "Oh wow, I can't leave *that* out." Drafts tend to get lengthy.³²

INTP writing may be inappropriately dry or impersonal, boring their audience or leaving them cold.³³ Though less of a problem in technical fields, those INTPs writing for a popular audience may have difficulties in this area. Wenger (2009) suggests that INTPs should make a conscious effort to add anecdotes and examples to their work. This is particularly important if one's target audience consists of Sensors, who proceed from examples to theory rather than from theory to examples.

Wenger also cautions that INTPs may lose interest in writing about a subject once they have finished their research. To counteract the problem, she suggests writing while researching--i.e. getting down your thoughts with a book in one hand while you sit in front of your computer or notepad.

Editing

The editing process--exchanging poorly chosen words for apt words, rephrasing sentences for maximum clarity, rearranging sentences and paragraphs for optimal flow--is likely to be enjoyed by INTPs. Anxious to perfect their creations and to achieve maximum precision, an INTP may spend considerable time pouring over their own work.

Indeed, INTPs have earned something of a reputation as grammar Nazis and typo nitpickers. In INTP internet communities, the members' habits of editing and reediting their own posts is the subject of frequent amusement. There is even something like a game to capture other members' posts before they can be edited, allowing the capturer to gleefully repost the original unedited version.

But note that editing is different from *drafting*. Perceivers disdain the artificial requirements for a first draft, second draft, and final draft.³⁴ Rather, the first draft is the final draft, and any fixes after this point are merely cosmetic. This dislike of drafting is particularly true for Rational Perceivers, who shudder at the thought of deliberately doing less than perfect work the first time and loath unnecessary redundancy (i.e. rewriting). (The author used to dislike writing multiple drafts so much that she would consciously add mistakes to the first draft, partially fix the problems in the second draft, and only do real work on the final draft.)

If an INTP loses their work, they have no interest in trying to recreate it. Let's hope they backed up their work in three places.

INTP Holiday Spirit - Or Lack Thereof

It is often noted that ESFJs are the type that seems to get the most enjoyment out of celebrating the holidays--putting up decorations, cooking a feast, inviting friends and family over, trimming the tree, and carrying out all the family traditions.

What is usually neglected, however, is the fact that INTPs--the reverse of ESFJs--are probably the type least inclined to celebrate the holidays. One might be tempted to attribute this to the relatively higher percentage of agnostics and atheists in the INTP population, but no, INTPs of faith also neglect holiday traditions--it is a type thing.

32 Fabrizio, n.d.

33 DiTiberio & Jensen, 2007

34 Beckham, 2012

INTPs are lethargic about decorating, apathetic about preparing a feast, and not keen on crowded gatherings. An INTP office will probably not have any seasonal decorations up; the INTP doesn't even own any, and putting them up and taking them down would be too much trouble. The same goes for the holiday trappings of the house. INTPs will put off getting a tree, or else leave the tree up until the needles fall off (a process that will be hastened because they forget to water it).

It isn't that INTPs hate Christmas or don't enjoy the holidays, but the things that go into celebration tend to require opposite interests than the ones they are gifted with. INTPs would rather appreciate the holiday creations of others than make such creations themselves.

But we shouldn't let this stop us. In an effort to infuse Christmas spirit into the type, I have prepared the following heartwarming holiday story, drawn loosely from my own family history.

An INTP Christmas Tale

Christmas was approaching, but there was no tree up, no nativity, and no presents to be seen. The little family, composed of three INTPs and one ENTP (the ESTJ mother was on a trip this year) discussed this fact among themselves.

"Who's going to get the Christmas tree?" they asked each other. But none of them felt eager to go outside into the subzero cold, forge their way through the dark, scary forest, saw down a spruce, and drag it back to the house step by step through the sucking snow—only to be criticized for their poor taste in trees. Though the matter was brought up again and again, no movement occurred.

Then there was the matter of the tree ornaments and the nativity.

"Who's going to get the tree ornaments and nativity?" they asked each other again and again. But none of them felt eager to dig through the dim, unheated garage with a flashlight, particularly because finding anything in the box-crammed garage seemed a well-nigh hopeless venture.

Christmas was approaching, but you would never have guessed it from the bleak house and the lack of sugar cookies. It looked like it was going to be an INTP Christmas after all.

Suddenly the door flew open! The ESTJ mother was back from her trip!

She was startled not to see any holiday preparations of any sort, but quickly roused the family to action. A tree was acquired, and the decorations and nativity were found and set up.

There was a wonderful Christmas after all!

And so was Christmas saved...all thanks to an ESTJ.

Cats

Are INTPs cat people or dog people? Unscientific internet polls consistently indicate that internet-using INTPs prefer cats. INTPs are independent; cats are independent. INTPs are quiet; cats are quiet. INTPs are solitary; cats are solitary. INTPs are not emotionally needy; cats are not emotionally needy. INTPs are self-sufficient; cats are self-sufficient. As one person put it, "I think cats are INTPs reincarnated."

Believe it or not, an actual scientific study has confirmed that cats are the INTP animal of choice. A Big Five study (the Big Five is an alternate personality inventory) measured the personality preferences of 4,565 cat and dog lovers.³⁵ The Big Five is correlated to the MBTI, and you can translate somewhat

³⁵ Gosling in Coren, 2010

between the results for each test.³⁶ Gosling found that dog lovers were more extraverted (= E) more agreeable (= F) and more conscientious (= J). In short, dog lovers tend to be more EFJ than average. Cat lovers, by contrast, tended to have higher openness (= N) and higher neuroticism (= female IP). Cat lovers, then, are more likely than average to be INPs. Nonsurprisingly, the study also found that cat people were in the minority: 12% of people claimed to be cat lovers while 46% claimed to be dog lovers. (28% liked both, and 15% liked neither.)

It makes good sense that cats are the INTP pet of choice.

Were INTPs Burned as Witches?

When we consider the relationship between INPs and the cat, it gives cause to wonder about the feline association with witches. Suppose you have some isolated, quirky loner living on the fringe of the village with a beloved cat or two for company. Secretive and anti-social, they avoid communal gatherings, preferring privacy. They have “unique” views on life, they don’t obey the social norms, and everyone just knows there’s something *different* about them. They have poor hygiene and dress funny. Suddenly a plague strikes the village. Of course it is caused by a witch. Fortunately there is a simple solution.

Were INTPs accused of witchcraft in the bad old days?

Interestingly, one of the identifying marks of a witch was the fact that he or she couldn’t cry. This identification technique was widely discouraged by the clergy as a folk belief, as shown in this quote: “The not shedding of tears hath been used as a mark and presumption of witchcraft, because it is a mark of impenitence; and because several witches have confessed they could not weep: But the being accused of so horrid a crime may occasion a deep melancholy; and melancholy being cold and dry, hinders the shedding of tears: and great griefs do rather astonish than make one weep.”³⁷

What temperament is more cold, dry, and tearless than the Rationals? One does not hear of Extraverted Feelers being unable to cry.

Cats and Liberty

In ancient Rome, the goddess of Liberty (Libertas) was associated with the cat. The animal was typically depicted as lying at her feet. This is an interesting association, given the fact that INTPs are the type that most values personal freedom. Cats do not grovel, beg, or fawn. They do not acknowledge a human master; they know their own mind, and would go their own way. It makes sense that the cat (the INTP preferred pet) was associated with personal freedom (the value most important to INTPs).

On a side note, the Statue of Liberty is derived from the goddess Libertas, and was given to America on the 4th of July, 1884, the anniversary of the day when an INTP wrote the Declaration of Independence.

Cats and Egypt

We can only conclude that ancient Egypt was crawling with INTPs. It’s the only explanation for the pyramids! (Kidding.) Actually, I can’t think of any association between the goddess Bast and INPs. But just think how happy ancient Egyptian INTPs must have been to be surrounded by as many cats as they wanted--truly, a delightful period.

36 McCrae & Costa, 1989

37 Sommerville, n.d.

Truth and Lies

INTPs are not usually liars. In fact, they are far more likely to be chastised for being too bluntly honest to the tune of, “That’s awful/weird/absurd!” or “How can you say something like that?” Rather than lying, INTPs are more likely to clam up and hide what they feel or think completely.

But when INTPs do lie, they are better at it than average. For one thing, they come equipped with a perfect poker face and naturally neutral body language. They maintain a lizardlike calm under pressure and are about as responsive as a rock. When confronted with a damning piece of evidence, an INTP won’t giggle nervously so much as stare impassively at the confronter. And since INTPs *always* stare impassively anyway, it’s hard for the average person to tell that anything is different. A null reaction looks something like innocence. At this point the examiner may begin doubting their own conclusions. Otis (2005) records how an INTP military intelligence specialist was captured by the enemy, but managed to feed them a plausible lie which required control over his emotional expressions to pull off.

Another thing that works in the INTP’s favor is that they are good at complex systems and logic. When interrogators look for holes in a story, they are looking for logical inconsistencies and trying to pin down facts that can be proven by contradiction, i.e. “If you drove from point A to point B, then why didn’t your car need gas? And if you did get gas, where did you get it at? Describe the gas station in detail.”

INTPs are very good with logic and keeping many facts straight. Although neither smooth nor glib, INTPs can spin complicated, plausible seeming stories, each link in their chain of logic reaching further and further towards safety in the form of muddy, unverifiable waters.

Once for April Fool’s, I convinced my coworker I was going to quit my office job and go to Spain to become a rodeo clown in a bull ring. I started by mentioning that a month earlier, I had bumped into my old Spanish teacher and she had talked about exchange program. Then I built up a logical sequence of causal events and noted that I would be leaving in a month. He didn’t notice anything was wrong, even though the HR employees giggled as they filled out my termination paperwork. Finally the HR manager yelled “April Fools!”

Note, however, that these webs of facts take time to build--INTPs are introverts and do not think on their feet, and it can take hours to think through the logical consequences and add supporting details. Your best bet to head off this webspinning is to confront the INTP as soon as possible and not allow them time to come up with a developed alibi.

Curiously, INTPs may actually be better than average at *detecting* lies. One study found that the more ENTP preferences you have, the better you are at spotting when someone is lying ([read here](#)).³⁸ Since INTPs have 3/4 preferences in common with ENTPs, it suggests that they have an better than average ability to spot lies. (Unless extraversion is the major determinant of this ability.) It is probably the logical inconsistencies in other people’s lies that INTPs find so easy to spot.

As noted before, INTPs are generally honest folk. But then, there is a difference between lying and *deceiving*, isn’t there? Remember how Mr. Spock (INTP) would say, “I did not lie. I merely exaggerated.” or “I did not lie. I merely allowed you to believe an untruth.” or “I did not lie. I merely omitted certain key facts.”

If someone has poor logical reasoning skills or don’t ask enough questions, that’s not the INTP’s fault,

38 Sanchez, 2011

is it? I fear there is something of sophistry in this type's careful choice of words.

Stress

A study found that INTPs have a moderately high stress level compared to other types.³⁹ The things which caused them high stress included school, children, intimate relationships, and "other." They were in the low stress category for "caring for aging parents."

However, INTPs are only the 10th most likely type to develop heart disease and hypertension (18.2% of the sample reported it).

Coping Mechanisms/Responses to Stress

Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer (1998) compiled a list of the stress responses of each type. The categories were as follows:

Try to think of options.....	INTPs are 2nd most likely type to use
Get upset or angry but don't show it.....	INTPs are 4th most likely type to use
Try to avoid stressful situations.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Confront the problem.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Talk to professional.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Exercise.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Watch television.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Develop physical symptoms.....	Somewhere in the middle; no data provided
Get upset or angry and show it.....	INTPs are 4th least likely type to use
Sleep.....	INTPs are 4th least likely type to use
Talk to someone close.....	INTPs are 2nd least likely type to use
Rely on religious beliefs.....	INTPs are least likely type to use

While INTPs appeared only twice among the top four types that most used any coping mechanism, they appeared four times in the top four types for *not* using any coping mechanism.

If we ranked the coping mechanisms by the percentage of INTPs that reported using them, we get:

- 80.8% - Try to think of options
- 45.5% - Talk to someone close
- 34.3% - Get upset or angry but don't show it
- 29.3% - Get upset or angry and show it
- 20.2% - Rely on religious beliefs
- 17.2% - Sleep

There are some interesting results here: first of all, INTPs were almost as likely to get upset and show it as to not get upset and show it. About 1/3 of the INTP respondents said each thing. What does this mean? Do INTPs simply see no point in getting upset or angry at all?

The mechanism "try to think of options" was dominated by Rationals and is a favorite, and likewise the mechanism "rely on religious beliefs" was dominated by Rationals and is not a favorite. These were the only two areas that were exclusively Rational. So, we see that INTPs prefer to deal with stress mainly by trying to think their way out of it.

INTPs were almost dead last when it came to their likelihood of sharing their problems with someone close. Note, however, that 45.5% of INTPs nevertheless used this strategy.

39 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Smoking

Being one of the types that lacks common sense, INTPs are the most likely to smoke.⁴⁰ They even managed to beat out the ESTPs, who are popularly depicted with a cigarette in one hand and an alcoholic beverage in the other.

A study examined the relationship between personality type and smoking/tobacco use. 1,029 students from beginning psychology and health/wellness courses from eight different universities and colleges were surveyed. Within this group there were 32 INTPs who comprised 3.1% of the sample.

Of these 32 INTPs, 24 were smokers and 8 were non-smokers; the odds of an INTP being a smoker were thus 3 to 1. To give this number some context, the odds of an ESTP (the type second most likely to smoke) being a smoker were only 1.70 to 1. (On an interesting side note, INFPs ranked third and their odds of becoming a smoker were 1.49 to 1. Is this an INP thing?)

Another way of looking at the data is to compare the expected number of smokers with the actual number observed. If INTPs smoked as much as the average, we would expect for there to be 14 smokers and 18 nonsmokers. Obviously, this was not the case at all. There were almost twice as many smokers as there should have been.

The study also examined the various smoking habits for each type. A brief summary is as follows:

In terms of lifetime daily smoking--which was defined as smoking at least one cigarette per day for 30 days in a row at any point in one's life--there were 20 INTPs who hadn't done this and 8 INTPs who had. This was a midrange level compared to other types and closely matched the expected levels. It would appear that in terms of lifetime daily smoking habits, INTPs are average.

Frequency of smoking at the time of the study was also measured. A "current frequent" smoker was one who had smoked on 20 out of the 30 days prior to taking the study. There were 9 "current frequent" INTP smokers--a middle range value in comparison to the other types. In more general terms, 12 of the INTPs had smoked within the 30 days preceding the survey and 16 had not smoked within the 30 days preceding the survey; this is exactly as would be expected for an average sample.

There were no INTPs who had quit smoking. 5 had attempted to quit smoking at some point, but most had never even tried.

What can we conclude from these results? Obviously tobacco companies have been remiss in failing to provide advertisements which depict rugged, individualistic system administrators lighting up as they get ready to troubleshoot the network. Where are the slogans like "Mathematician's Choice" and "The Cigarette of Philosophers"? Granted, INTPs are only a small percentage of the population, but we are exceedingly optimistic about our lungs' ability to resist tumor growth. Surely we deserve a little more personal attention from cigarette purveyors? Alas. The tobacco companies will probably just keep on targeting the ESTPs, who have the advantage of numbers over us even if they're nowhere near as likely to smoke.

Drugs and Alcohol

What about drugs and alcohol? Here too, great minds think alike. One study examined 23 violators of a college's drug and alcohol policy and found that INTPs were the type most frequently referred for

40 O'Toole, 1999

violations (i.e. open container infractions, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.).⁴¹

Quitting

The good news is that Rationals may find it easier to quit abusing nicotine/alcohol/drugs than other temperaments. In describing drug and alcohol addiction, Thorburn (2000) noted that Rationals are less likely to require outward support (i.e. Alcoholics Anonymous) to quit, and they tend to start dealing with their problem earlier than other types. This is good news, because they are not as likely to let their addictions get far enough to destroy their lives.

Interestingly, Thorburn suggests that NTs may be more bothered by alcohol induced “blackouts” than by the loss of family and friends. The former symptom indicates the frightening loss of the mind, while the latter tragedy can be handled through detachment. Keirsey (1998a) similarly noted that Rationals dislike the loss of self control entailed by becoming dependent upon addictive substances. It is probably this same self control that allows them to go cold turkey more easily than other types.

How Many INTPs are There?

The question of how many INTPs there are is complicated. In the first place, INTPs are the type second most likely to be mistyped by the MBTI (specifically the Form M version, the current one).⁴² Only the INTJs were more likely to be mistyped. Then too, the number of male INTPs is larger than the number of female INTPs.

The MBTI manual lists six population estimates for INTPs taken from various studies. Without accounting for the effects of mistyping or sex, INTPs are estimated at:

- 3.3% of the adult American population*
(Sample size 3,009)⁴³
- 3.54% of the high school American population
(Sample size 9,320)⁴⁴
- 2.4% of the adult UK population*
(Sample size 1,634)⁴⁵
- 3.82% of the high school Australian population
(Sample size 3,373)⁴⁶
- 2.7% of the high school New Zealand population
(Sample size 993)⁴⁷
- 4.8% of the high school Singapore population
(Sample size 1,733;)⁴⁸

*Be chary about comparing the adult populations with the high school populations. There's a long explanation.

41 Provost, 1991

42 Schaubhut, Herk & Thompson, 2009

43 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

44 Myers & McCaulley, 1985 in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

45 Kendall & McHenry, 1998 in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

46 Macdaid, McCaulley, & Kainz, 1986 in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

47 Bathurst, 1995 in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

48 Lim, 1994 in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Percentages by Sex

When we divide the total amount of INTPs up by sex, we see that the U.S. population has approximately the following percentages of males and females:

- 1 - 3% female
- 4 - 7% male
- 3 - 5% total

Percentages and Mistyping

How do we know often INTPs are mistyped? It works like this: Form M of the MBTI was used to type a large group of people. Afterwards, trained type practitioners talked to each testee to see if the MBTI results were actually correct. For some types, the results were very accurate; for others, not so accurate. The INTP assessment was one of the least accurate all ([read here](#)).⁴⁹

The mistyping study found 606 people that tested as INTPs. This was the “reported type.” However, after examination by type practitioners, it turned out that only 392 of the testees were actually INTPs. (This is called the “best fit type.”)

Initially, it appeared that INTPs composed 6.9% of the group. But after correction, it turned out that they composed only 4.4% of the group. So the current MBTI test gives a quantity of INTPs that is about one third higher than reality. That's a lot, huh?

So we are left with the very real question of how far we can trust studies dealing with habits and traits of INTPs. Whenever you read a study that says, “15% of INTPs preferred the following...” what you are actually reading is, “10% real INTPs and 5% fake INTPs preferred the following...” Unfortunately there’s not much one can do about this problem. INTP data is going to be somewhat skewed by the inclusion of mistyped people. Bear that in mind as you read this book.

How do INTPs Mistype?

So how do real INTPs tend to get mistyped? A study of MBTI results and misidentification trends found that NTs and NPs are most likely to be mistyped as Sensors.⁵⁰ Fully 18.6% of NTs mistyped as STs; another 17.1% mistyped as NFs. There were also effects specific to the NP group: 12.2% of NPs mistyped as SPs and 11.7% of NPs mistyped along the T-F axis.

INTPs - A Rough Population Estimate

So how many INTPs are there, total?

The world population was estimated at about 6,973,740,000 people as of 2011.⁵¹ Arbitrarily, let's say that 4% of the world population is INTP. That would mean that there are about 278,950,000 INTPs worldwide--enough to fill up 9/10 of the United States. If the entire world INTP population decided to move to Mars, they could each have about 0.5 km² or 0.2 square miles of land to themselves--meaning that there would be 2 INTPs per square kilometer and 5 INTPs per square mile. If they decided to move to the Moon, each INTP could have .05 square miles or .14 square kilometers of land to themselves. There would be 20 INTPs per square mile or 7 INTPs per square kilometer.

The US population was about 311,592,000 people as of 2011. At the same 4% rate, that would mean there are some 12,464,000 INTPs in the USA--enough to fill up Pennsylvania or Illinois entirely with

49 Schaubhut, Herk & Thompson, 2009

50 Mitchell, 2003

51 World Bank Group, 2012

INTPs.

The UK population was about 62,641,000 people as of 2011.

- At 2.4%, there would be 1,503,000 INTPs in the UK.
- At 4%, there would be 2,506,000 INTPs in the UK.

At the 2.4% rate, the amount of UK INTPs is equivalent to several hundred thousand people less than the population of Northern Ireland. At the 4% rate, the amount of INTPs is about half the population of Scotland.

How about Australia? There were some 22,621,000 people living in Australia as of 2011.

- At 3.82%, there would be 864,000 INTPs in Australia.
- At 4%, there would be 905,000 INTPs in Australia.

This is roughly twice the population of Tasmania.

The population of the internet was estimated at about 2,405,518,000 as of June 30th, 2011.⁵² At a 4% rate, this would mean that there are some 96,221,000 INTPs on the internet, or roughly the population of the Philippines. But this is probably a gross underestimation since INTPs love the internet. Are you doing your part to correct the world's grammar?

To get the INTP population of your country or city, simply obtain the population and find 4% of it.

I Want to Meet Other INTPs!

Did you know there are INTP communities online?

Check it out, you even get a choice:

[INTP Forum](#) – A forum devoted entirely to INTPs.

[INTP Central](#) – A second forum devoted entirely to INTPs.

Now you know where to go when you want to discuss argue about politics, philosophy, religion, word definitions and more.

52 Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2012

2. How to Tell INTPs Apart From INTJs

Before we go any further, we'd better look at the INTP/INTJ dilemma. One question that many struggle with is, "Am I an INTP or an INTJ?" Even type practitioners themselves can be uncertain of their own type in this regard.

Type INTJ is the type which most resembles INTP. The resemblance is not merely superficial, but actually includes deeply held values.

However, many categorize INTPs and ISTPs together on the basis of cognitive function theory. In practice this supposed INTP/ISTP resemblance just doesn't hold up. ISTPs do not walk around with their nose in a book; they are out experiencing life for themselves. ISTPs don't scribble mathematical equations on napkins; they're enjoying the meal. ISTPs aren't so lost in thought that they missed the bus; they're already halfway to wherever they were going. But INTJs and INTPs will do all of these things.

For those of you who skipped the Preface, here is a brief summary of why the cognitive functions are not much good for differentiating between INTPs and INTJs.

A recent study⁵³ set out to determine what exactly each of the cognitive functions consisted of—i.e. the researchers set out to determine a standard, agreed-upon definition of each cognitive function. To do this, they collected 152 descriptive words and phrases used in type literature to describe each cognitive function and its attitude (i.e. thinking introverted, thinking extraverted, intuition introverted, intuition extraverted, etc.). 31 type experts—authors, practitioners, trainers—were called in to review the list and decide which descriptors fit each of the eight function-attitudes.

The experts rated each descriptor's applicability to each function-attitude on a 1 to 5 scale. For 72 of the 152 descriptors, there was an expert consensus that a descriptor primarily matched a unique function attitude. For the rest of the descriptors, it was found that experts tended to assign the descriptors equally to two or more function-attitudes, or else didn't agree on any particular function-attitude at all.

So, how does this apply to type INTP? The INTP/ISTP dominant is believed to be introverted thinking, and 12 descriptors were found that primarily matched Ti.⁵⁴ The list was as follows: aloof, cold, desires internal logic, detached, in-depth concentration, independent, individualistic, likes mental models, overcomplexifies, pure intellectual, research-minded, and unique use of logic.

So, do these 12 descriptors fit type INTP, as would be expected since Ti is believed to be the INTP's dominant function?

Yes. As nearly as I can tell, all 12 descriptors match *both* INTPs and INTJs equally well, but only *five* of the descriptors apply to type ISTP (aloof, cold, desires internal logic, independent, and individualistic). Ti is not the dominant of INTJs, yet the descriptors of Ti seem to fit both INTJs and INTPs to a tee. Ti is the dominant of ISTPs, yet the descriptors do not seem to fit type ISTP very well at all. As for Ni, the dominant of INTJs and INFJs, *well*. The experts agreed on only two descriptors: "Mystical" and "Trusts the unconscious." Both descriptors had secondary matches with Fi, Ne, and Fe. The descriptors for Ni clearly do not match the INTJ personality very well. Yet Ni, not Ti, is believed to be the dominant of the INTJ.

53 McPeek & Martin, 2012a; McPeek & Martin, 2012b

54 However, out of these 12 descriptors, it was found that five secondarily matched Te, plain N, and Ni. In short, the experts thought that those five descriptors mainly matched Ti, but also secondarily matched Te, N, and Ni.

What can we say about this? Even if one accepts that the cognitive functions exist, the murkiness and paucity of these descriptors must give one pause. There would seem to be little use in trying to use the cognitive functions to tell INTPs apart from INTJs.

Here is a list of other characteristics that can be helpful in differentiating INTPs from INTJs.

Judging vs. Perceiving (General)

- INTJs like following a regular schedule. INTPs aren't interested in having a routine.
- INTJs tend to have neat rooms, cars, and desks. INTPs tend to have messy rooms, cars, and desks.
- INTJs like clear structure more than INTPs. Indeed, INTPs are the least enthralled with clear structure of all types.⁵⁵
- INTJs tend to make a plan and then follow it through. INTPs would rather just figure it out as they go along. If INTPs make a plan, they are more willing to change it on a whim or as the situation fluctuates.
- INTJs are more persevering; INTPs are more flexible.
- INTJs are better at preparing in advance; INTPs are better at improvising on the spot.
- INTJs like to come to decisions quickly and seek closure; INTPs tend to leave their options open as long as possible so that they can gather information.
- INTJs tend to put work before play; INTPs tend to put play before work.
- INTJs tend to believe that there is a right way and a wrong way to do things (i.e. there is one right way to fold shirts or one correct sequence to clean the living room) while INTPs may tend neither to care about nor notice any particular method or sequence.⁵⁶
- INTJs hold onto their conclusions more strongly than INTPs. INTPs are less certain about their conclusions and more open to new data that may overturn them.
- INTJs tend to be naturally punctual; INTPs tend to be naturally late.
- INTJs get started early; INTPs wait to start.
- INTJs tend to make statements of opinion, i.e. "I think, I like, I dislike." INTPs tend to make open-ended statements that imply, but do not directly show, their opinion. INTJ: "The economy needs to be fixed." INTP: "The economy is in bad shape." INTJ: "They should change the timing on this stoplight." INTP: "This stoplight sure has weird timing."⁵⁷
- INTJs sound more confident than INTPs in their speech.
- INTJs tend to phrase their commands as direct orders, i.e. "Do this, go there, do not do this." INTPs tend to phrase their commands as implied suggestions, "This needs to be done, can you head over there?, I wouldn't do that if I were you." INTJs give directives, while INTPs give information.⁵⁸
- INTJs tend to put regular amounts of time in each day on a project; INTPs tend to work in sporadic bursts of energy with one giant effort right before the looming deadline.
- INTJs don't like surprises; INTPs do.
- INTJs use and complete to-do lists; INTPs make to-do lists but may not ever finish them.

⁵⁵ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

⁵⁶ Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

⁵⁷ Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

⁵⁸ Keirsey, 1987

- INTJs feel compelled to finish what they start; INTPs don't mind leaving things half complete.
- INTJs tend to dress more neatly than INTPs, but both types will dress unfashionably.
- INTJs are less playful than INTPs.⁵⁹
- INTJs have a higher need for control than INTPs.

Various

- INTJs excel at creating elaborate plans with *timelines* more than INTPs do; INTPs excel at organizing timeless systems more than INTJs do.⁶⁰
- INTJs are more likely to carry their ideas out in the real world. INTPs are content simply to come up with an idea and work out the design; they do not necessarily feel the need to carry it out. They are, however, more likely to be hands-on inventors than INTJs.
- Associated with the item above, INTJs are seen as more hardworking than INTPs.
- INTJs seem more "cool"⁶¹ or less "nice" than INTPs. The impassive, unblinking INTJ "stare" is more penetrating and discomfiting than the equivalent INTP stare.
- INTJs are less creative than INTPs.⁶²
- INTJs tend not to be very stressed out about their children, whereas INTPs tend to be stressed out about their children.⁶³

Stress, Sickness, Bad Habits

- INTJs don't get (mis)diagnosed with personality disorders as often as INTPs.⁶⁴
- INTJs are *much* less likely to smoke than INTPs.⁶⁵
- INTJs have more coping mechanisms than INTPs.⁶⁶
- As a result of combat, INTJs are more likely to develop major depression, while INTPs are more likely to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.⁶⁷

Jobs

- If you are typically dissatisfied with your job and tend to job hop a lot, then you are probably an INTP. INTPs are much less satisfied with their jobs than INTJs.⁶⁸
- If you like and are confident in your ability to work with your hands, do outdoor work, do maintenance, perform construction, etc., then you are more likely to be an INTP than an INTJ.⁶⁹
- If you are performing a job that entails the appreciation, consumption, or critique of art, literature, dance, poetry, etc., then you are more likely to be an INTP than an INTJ. If you are performing a job that involves analysis, problem solving, and research, then you are more likely to be an INTJ than an INTP.⁷⁰

59 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

60 Keirsey, 1998a

61 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

62 Cheng, 2007

63 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

64 Coolidge, Segal, Hook, Yamazaki & Ellet, 2001

65 O'Toole, 1999

66 Hammer in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

67 Otis and Louks, 1997

68 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

69 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

70 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

- INTJs are much more likely to be found in a leadership role than INTPs.

Values

- INTPs place a higher value on autonomy than INTJs. INTJs place a higher value on achievement than INTPs.⁷¹
- INTPs place a higher value on friendships than INTJs and tend to enjoy them more.⁷²

School⁷³

- INTJs enjoy school more than INTPs.
- INTJs tend to get better grades than INTPs.
- INTPs tend to find school highly stressful; INTJs tend to find school highly unstressful.

Recreation⁷⁴

- INTPs tend to view writing as a fun leisure pastime; INTJs do not.
- INTPs are slightly more likely to enjoy appreciating art than INTJs.
- INTJs enjoy exercising more than average; INTPs can take it or leave it.
- INTJs are less likely than average to watch 3 or more hours of TV per day. INTPs are average in this respect.

Religion⁷⁵

- INTJs are about twice as likely to be atheistic as INTPs.
- INTJs are a bit more likely to be atheistic than agnostic; INTPs are a bit more likely to be agnostic than atheistic.

Areas That Are Too Similar to be Used as Diagnostic Criteria

- Marital satisfaction.⁷⁶
- I.Q.⁷⁷
- Argumentativeness⁷⁸
- Love for computer gaming⁷⁹
- Both INTJs and INTPs are confident in their ability to perform 1.) jobs that involve analysis, problem solving, and research and 2.) jobs that involve office work, performing work on a computer, accounting, filing, etc.⁸⁰
- Both types have nearly the same likelihood of developing heart disease and hypertension.⁸¹

71 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

72 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

73 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

74 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

75 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

76 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

77 McCaulley & Kainz; McCaulley & Natter; Myers & McCaulley in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

78 Loffredo & Opt, 2006

79 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

80 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

81 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

I Still Don't Know My Type

The INTP/INTJ confusion is exacerbated when nurture has heavily modified nature, or when the person in question sits riiiiiight on the line between J and P.

If you still aren't certain what type you are--and you really care--then you should probably just hack up the money and take the MBTI. (I'm serious, you can't trust those internet tests. The authors have not done studies on whether their test is affected by gender or cultural bias; nor have they done studies to verify whether the test is producing accurate results. Then too, they haven't attempted specifically to address the issue of people who sit on the line. The MBTI, on the other hand, has carefully addressed all of these areas over the course of several versions.)

Make sure that the testing organization will provide you with your *continuous* scores, i.e. whether you are a very clear or very slight Perceiver. If you have are confused about whether you are an INTP or an INTJ, then chances are you have a very slight P or J. Once you have your continuous scores, then you can verify for yourself exactly how close you are to the middle.

If it turns out that you are a middle-of-the-roader, there is a special version of the MBTI test (called the MBTI Step II) which has been specially designed to disambiguate uncertain type. It also demonstrates exactly how a person is different from the "standard model" of their type, i.e. a person may have five out of the six usual "facets" (characteristics) of Extraversion, but behave like an Introvert in one particular area.

If after all this, you still don't know your type, don't despair! There are good things about being both an INTP or an INTJ. You may have to reflect on the matter for awhile, but eventually it will probably become clear to you. If not, then maybe you're simply an INTX middle-of-the-roader, a position which comes with its own advantages. Middle-of-the-roaders enjoy "amphibian" benefits because they are able to straddle the boundary between land and water and enjoy the skills of both sides. People with slight preferences are favored to succeed in situations where frequent flipflop between preferences is necessary, or when success hinges on a good balance of skills. However, just as a frog cannot swim as well as a fish nor run as well as a horse, so a middle-of-the-roader is not as favored for success in situations where one preference is consistently or strongly required; rather, those with clear preferences are favored. So, having a slight or clear preference is neither good nor bad; it merely indicates which unique ecologic niche you operate best in. And since there are all kinds of niches in this world, all kinds of preference strengths are necessary to keep things running.

3. INTP Clothing and Hygiene

Compared to other types, INTPs have a low interest in clothes and other matters pertaining to the care of the physical body. They also tend to be blissfully ignorant of social norms. This may manifest itself in various ways:

- Wearing the same set of clothing for many days in a row
- Wearing more or less identical clothing every day, varying only in minor details or color⁸²
- Wearing unattractive, out of style, strange, wrinkly, worn out, smelly, stained, torn, ill-fitting or mismatched clothing
- Wearing clothing that is easy to put on/take off and emphasizes mainly comfort and utility
- Long and/or unkempt hair
- Long and/or unkempt fingernails
- A funny smell caused by an overall lack of hygienic effort
- Lack of makeup, jewelry, or hair styling (for female INTPs)
- Unshaven body hair in any location where it would be culturally appropriate to shave

INTP Fashion Statements

Most INTPs don't really notice clothing or hygiene, and they assume that others don't either. For this reason, INTPs make all kinds of interesting fashion statements. A top hat they wear to school every day. Mismatching shoes. Einstein explained it by saying, "Once you can accept the universe as matter expanding into nothing that is something, wearing stripes with plaid comes easy."

Let's look at some examples of high INTP style.

Albert Einstein

Einstein is notable mainly for his contribution to INTP hair fashion. He just let it do its own thing, and tada--instant image branding. Young male INTPs will also wear their hair crazily, though for them it just looks messy and careless.

Male INTPs may also disregard hair styling completely and simply let it grow out; in fact, the stereotypical image of the computer guru with a long ponytail or braid is probably derived from this INTP habit.

I worked at a company with a short-haired INTP coworker who went to the barber as infrequently as possible and was rather shaggy as a result. (I myself sported the long ponytail look, and was therefore considered highly fashionable.)

There was a big government audit, and the company went on a cleaning frenzy. They shampooed the carpets and people were ordered to clean their offices. Part of the clean up included my INTP coworker. He received an anonymous envelope with twenty dollars in it and instructions to have his hair cut. A true Perceiver, he said triumphantly, "Aha, see, waiting until the last minute pays off!"

Thomas Jefferson

INTPs must have had it hard in the old days, when a good set of clothing was considerably more elaborate than it is now. Imagine how much time and effort must have been put into the suits worn by the founding fathers. And in those days, you could not merely pluck an item off the rack--it had to be tailored for you, meaning an appointment to take your measurements.

82 James, 2000

Jefferson's style of dress sometimes got him teased by the other gentlemen. For instance, he tended to follow the approach of wearing the same style of clothing over and over with minor variations. George Ticknor remarked upon Jefferson's "setness, for instance, in wearing very sharp toed shoes, corduroy small-clothes, and red plush waistcoat, which have been laughed at till he might perhaps wisely have dismissed them."

Though Jefferson's dress had pearl buttons and gold lace, it was just not *fashionable*. His clothing was often out of date with the style of the time. As his grandson remembered,

"His dress was simple, and adapted to his ideas of neatness and comfort. He paid little attention to fashion, wearing whatever he liked best, and sometimes blending the fashions of several different periods. He wore long waistcoats, when the mode was for very short; white cambric stocks fastened behind with a buckle, when cravats were universal. He adopted the Pantaloons very late in life, because he found it more comfortable and convenient, and cut off his queue for the same reasons. He made no change except for motives of the same kind, and did nothing to be in conformity with the fashion of the day. He considered such independence as the privilege of his age..."

Webster wrote, "His whole dress is neglected, but not slovenly."

And then there was the whole matter of the *wig*. Abigail Adams noted, "His hair too is an other affliction which he is tempted to cut off. He expects not to live above a Dozen years & he shall lose one of those in hair dressing."

Aren't you glad you don't have to fuss with fake hair? I have reflected that if I were to get rid of my long hair, the next most convenient thing would be to get a buzz cut.

Of course, Jefferson's lack of etiquette got him into trouble sometimes. As President, he scandalized the British minister by appearing "not merely in undress, but *actually standing in slippers down at the heels*, and both pantaloons, coat, and underclothes indicative of utter slovenliness and indifference to appearances, and in a state of negligence actually studied."

James Madison

President Madison's body servant recalled, "He was very neat, but never extravagant, in his clothes. He always dressed wholly in black--coat, breeches, and silk stockings, with buckles in his shoes and breeches. He never had but one suit at a time."

Here we have an example of an INTP monocolour scheme, black. People would note that Madison seemed to be always ready for a funeral. One observer wrote, "He was clothed so soberly that he looked more like a dissenting divine than the heir of a planter of large estate..." Even the ribbon he tied up his hair with was black.

Like Jefferson, Madison would adopt a style and stay frozen on it unless a more comfortable or workable opportunity presented itself: "His style of dress was never altered: plain black cloth coat and knee-breeches with buckles, the hair powdered and worn in a queue behind; the daily task of dressing it devolved upon his wife, who would not think his body-servant capable of doing it justice."

Now you know another quality to look for in a spouse.

Albert Speer

Speer, the German armaments minister during WWII, was required to wear the Nazi party uniform as

part of his work. But whenever possible he avoided it, preferring instead his civilian clothing.⁸³ A friend described his early appearance by noting, “I remember him...as rumpled from head to foot: His shirt had an indefinable color, his tie—if he wore one—was knotted very loosely, his trousers dangled and had horizontal instead of vertical stripes.” The same friend even drew a cartoon caricature of Speer.⁸⁴

The Author

This INTP follows the pattern of having just one style of clothing with minor variations. At my last job, I had to wear “business casual.” My style consisted of long sleeved shirts: a white one, an orange one, a blue one, a light blue one with snowflakes, an olive green one, a pine green one, and a purple one. I thus had seven shirts for four days of the week (Friday was casual), and since I washed them and rotated them appropriately, I didn’t have to buy more for a long time.

Clothing, Hooray.

It is considered normal for males of all types to be disinterested in shopping. However, among INTPs, the female of the species may also find the process dull. Throughout my adolescence I found shopping for clothes every bit as boring as shopping for car parts. In fact, till my mid-twenties I never bought clothing at all; I simply wore whatever I received on holidays. (Which wasn’t much; as a child I cried when I opened up a present and found that it contained clothes. After that people showed better taste.) My ESTJ mom bought whatever else she decided I needed, thus ensuring that I would not go around looking like a “homeless person.”

On an amusing side note, my mom was always asking how this or that item of clothing looked on her or if her hair was right. My naive response was always, “Oh, it looks fine” or “Don’t worry, no one will notice.” Actually, only INTPs don’t notice. Everyone else does. When trying to dress up for that interview, be paranoid--don’t assume you’ll get away with this or that little faux paus. The other types are watching, and for some inexplicable reason they really do care.

Of course, during adolescence it can be hard to bond with other girls on the subject of clothing: “Squee! Look at these awesome jeans I got at Old Navy!” (“Oh, uh nice.”) Lack of interest in clothing is yet one more factor that sets INTP females apart from their peers at a young age.

When I was finally forced to buy a business casual wardrobe of my own (around age 25) I cringed at the expense, the hassle of trying on dozens of unfitting items, and the waste of time accrued by the manufacturers’ unintuitive sizing labels, which I had to research on the internet to figure out.

Naturally not all INTPs are this oblivious to clothing. I suppose I shouldn’t pity them.

The Smell

Many a hygiene-oblivious INTP gets told at some point or another, “Wear deodorant” or “Shower more often.” What to do?

For office workers, the best solution to this problem is to get a scented candle and keep it burning continually. Your coworkers won’t be able to smell you through the cloud of Vanilla Essence. And as a bonus, you can even fall on the floor and pretend you’re being attacked by the honey-smelling gas creature that Captain Kirk was so obsessed with killing in the original Star Trek. (Don’t do this in front

83 Fest, 1999

84 Schmidt, 1982

of nonINTP-coworkers; they won't get it.)

Or you could actually shower and wear deodorant. That might work too.

Hot Beauty Secrets for Female INTPs

Did you know that the same techniques that lead to unattractiveness in INTP males lead to attractiveness in INTP females? It's true! Now you can take advantage of your natural disinterest in your appearance to outshine all your acquaintances.

Can't be bothered to go to the barber? Let your hair grow out. As you ignore it, you will find that it grows and grows. The reason other women can't get long hair is that they're always fussing with it: "I'll just take off a bit to get rid of the split ends." They curl it, tweak it, bake it, trim it, straighten it, wash it, and cover it with chemical sprays, torturing their hair follicles to an early demise. Leave your hair to its own devices and watch how long it gets.

How about those fingernails? By simply ignoring your fingers, you can have wonderfully long, elegant nails. Don't bother trimming them unless they're cracking off--which won't be often, provided you avoid too-frequent showers. Overly frequent showers harm your hair and cause your fingernails to become brittle and rigid, and you will develop unattractive ridges down the middle. Ugh.

The moral? Let nature take care of itself, and you'll soon have gorgeous nails and hair. When that interview comes, you can brush out your locks, paint your fingernails and look stunning. Just as if you had planned it.

Prudishness

Do INTPs tend to dress prudishly? Keirsey (1998a) suggested that Rationals are the most prudish temperament, although he did not specifically apply the descriptor to clothing. But are Rationals actually prudish? Thorne and Gough (1991) found that ENTPs and ENTJs are particularly *unlikely* to be described as prudish by observers. (This finding did not hold true for INTPs or INTJs, who were neither likely nor unlikely to be described as prudish--i.e. observers did not strongly notice anything in this regard.)

So we are left wondering:

1. Are INTs actually nonprudish and people simply didn't notice it?
2. Are INTs just middle-of-the-road in terms of their prudishness?
3. Are INTs so private and reticent about their personal lives that it seems like prudishness in certain ways but not in others?

I bet you thought I had the answer, didn't you? Alas, no. But at least we've exchanged incorrect certainly for correct mystery--that's progress, right?

We can conclude decisively then: we do not know if INTPs dress more prudishly than average.

4. INTPs in Love

Problems with Studying Type and Love

So, what are the connections between type, attraction, love and marriage? Actually, they haven't been well studied yet. The question is more complicated than you'd think.

Partner selection (the biggy) actually has fairly few correlations with type. The studies that do exist are too small for the purpose of studying INTPs. The problem is this: to answer with certainty the question of whether or not certain types are attracted to certain other types, we would need to sample at least 136 potential pairings. And this would merely give us one example of each type matched with every other possible type. But if you wanted actual results, you would need to have several dozen times this number of pairings. Big studies get expensive.

Furthermore, that still doesn't answer the question of whether initial attraction implies marital satisfaction, or how to interpret the results. For example, suppose that you simply wanted to see if people are drawn to those with more or less similar personality types. To do this, you might try comparing the amount of letters that each of the partners have in common. So then if you had an ENTJ-ENFJ pairing with high attraction, you would say, "Aha, three letters in common! Similarities attract!" But in fact, ENTJs and ENFJs are as different as night and day. If anything, this is proof that opposites attract. The other way is to only compare completely opposite types, i.e. are INTPs more attracted to INTPs or to ESFJs?

Ah, but how does one measure satisfaction? Each type has different satisfiers; the gesture of love that one type finds deeply meaningful may be shrugged off by another type as dull or frivolous. Some types have high needs and others have low needs. Is it possible to define "satisfaction" in a way that equally represents the opinions of everyone? Finally, how do we deal with the problem of (for example) the type whose perfect match is the rare INFJ, a type which is hard to find, let alone marry? Even if type A is madly attracted to type B and they would be absolutely perfect together, it doesn't do any good if type B is rare and unavailable. So perhaps type A will marry another, more common type (type C) in droves. Thus the study would "prove" that type A and type C are highly compatible, when in fact type A is actually more compatible with type B.

Has any study accounted for these all problems?

Nope.

So, don't be too concerned if your beloved doesn't match the "ideal" type recommended by any particular theorist. Everybody else is in the exact same boat with you, and we seem to be floating around fairly randomly. Type is merely one of dozens of factors that goes into making a good match.

INTP Matches: Research and Theory

So let's take a look at what research *does* exist. One study found that INTPs were more likely than average to marry fellow INTPs.⁸⁵ Male INTPs (all 12 of them in the study) were 4.17 times more likely than average to marry a female INTP, while female INTPs (all 4 of them in the study) were 3.57 times more likely than average to marry a male INTP. Male INTPs did not ever marry female ESFJs, and female INTPs married male ESFJs 0.56 times less frequently than would be expected given the relative

85 Marioles, Strickert & Hammer, 1996

numbers of each type. It would seem that for INTPs, similarity attracts.

The INTP-INTP pairing is slightly more common than average, but is it actually the *best* match? Ah, there's the kicker.

Tieger and Barron-Tieger (2000) did a study of type and satisfaction and found the Rational-Rational pairings have an average satisfaction rate of 59%. But in fact, Rational-Idealist pairings have an even higher satisfaction rate, namely 65%. (Note that this was the *Rational* rating for the pairing; Idealists rated the pairing at 64%).

What about the other temperaments? Guardians with a Rational spouse tended to have a 62% satisfaction rate, whereas Rational with a Guardian spouse reported a 52% satisfaction rate.

As for the SPs, Artisans with Rational spouses tended to have a 73% satisfaction rate, while Rational with Artisan spouses tended to have only a 54% satisfaction rate.

So are you confused yet? Let's summarize.

- Rational were 65% satisfied with Idealists.
- Rational were 59% satisfied with Rational.
- Rational were 54% satisfied with Artisan.
- Rational were 52% satisfied with Guardian.

But satisfaction between temperaments was not equal. In fact, all the other temperaments rated the Rational higher than the Rational rated them (see below). Tieger and Barron-Tieger suggested that NTs may rate their partners lower than average since they tend to be the most critical temperament and set particularly high standards. This would tend to depress Rational scores more than would be reflected by reality.

Seen from a reverse perspective, here is how the Rational were viewed by other temperaments:

- Artisan are 73% satisfied with Rational.
- Idealist are 64% satisfied with Rational.
- Guardian are 62% satisfied with Rational.
- Rational are 59% satisfied with Rational.

Isn't this a fascinating mess of information? Let's put it into context. **Red = Guardian, Purple = Idealist, Green = Artisan, and Blue = Rational.**

- SJ x SJ 79%
- NF x NF 73%
- SP x NT 73%
- SJ x SP 71%
- NT x NF 65%
- NF x NT 64%
- SP x SJ 63%
- SJ x NT 62%
- SP x SP 59%
- NT x NT 59%
- SJ x NF 58%
- NT x SP 54%

- SP x NF 54%
- NT x SJ 52%
- NF x SP 51%
- NF x SJ 46%

Now, I must emphasize strongly that it is a mistake to generalize by temperament--it's frequent that types will go counter-temperament, and temperament is *not* the definitive factor in explaining type-based behavior half of the time--but since we don't have anything better to go on...

Ever since Keirsey, an INTP himself, published *Please Understand Me II* in 1998, it has generally been accepted that the Idealists are the best partners for the Rationals. This appears to be true--at least from the Rational point of view. The Idealists, however, actually tend to be more satisfied with other Idealists, having a satisfaction rate of 73%.

But Rationals are the second favorite choice for Idealists. Indeed, NF-NT and NT-NF satisfaction rates fell within 1 percentage point of each other--a very equal evaluation indeed. And if we accept the fact that Rationals tend to be overcritical and depress their perceived satisfaction, it may be that Rationals actually like Idealists even more.

This equality is in stark contrast to the SP-NT and NT-SP pairing. It appears that Artisans are delighted with Rationals, but Rationals are ambivalent about Artisans and Sensors in general. The Guardians, for their part, are just not too satisfied with either Rationals or Idealists, but really go for other Sensors.

It would seem that for Rationals, Idealists generally make the most satisfying temperament pairing.

One further thing that should be noted is that Rationals reported a narrow range of satisfaction compared to other types.

- Rationals: 52% - 65% (13 percentage points of difference)
- Artisans: 52% - 73% (21 percentage points of difference)
- Guardians: 58% to 79% (21 percentage points of difference)
- Idealists: 46% - 73% (27 percentage points of difference)

Compared to other types, the Rationals don't seem to have much to lose if they make a random choice.

Next question: If we assume that INTPs go for Idealists, which Idealist is the best match? ENFJ? INFJ? INFP? ENFP? Or is the INTP – INTP actually match better?

Well, here's where the going gets tough. Tieger and Barron-Tieger *did* report on the satisfaction levels of TPs with FJs (55%) and TPs with other TPs (46%). But you have to bear in mind that what is being compared here amounts to saying, "ESTPs, ISTPs, ENTPs, and INTPs have a 55% satisfaction rate with ESFJs, ISFJs, ENFJs, and INFJs." This approach is vague and gives extra weight to the Sensing population, since Sensors outnumber Intuitives. In these generalizations one can almost read "STPs have a 55% satisfaction rate with SFJs." So we cannot really use this data to get at the question of which Idealist type is preferred by INTPs--at least, not with certainty.

I can see someone waving their hand and saying, "Ooh, ooh, I know! ENFJ! ENFJ!"

We'd better cover Keirsey's theory. Keirsey, an INTP himself, postulated that the best match for the INTP is the ENFJ Teacher. Originally, he and Bates (1984) believed that ESFJ Providers would also be a good match, but in *Please Understand Me II* he modified this view to indicate his new belief that sharing the same Intuition/Sensing orientation is important in a relationship. (Note that Keirsey also

believed that the Rationals could generally pair well with almost any of the Idealists, i.e. the ENFJs, the ENFPs, the INFJs, and the INFPs. (His wife, fyi, was an INFJ.)

While Keirsey's descriptions of the satisfiers in the INTP/ENFJ relationship are sound, his theories as to what temperaments would get along best with other temperaments don't match the actual satisfaction rates measured by Tieger and Barron-Tieger's study as well as might be hoped. Given this, I am dubious as to whether the INTP-ENFJ pairing should be given as much weight as it is.

So there's that theory. To be thorough, Keirsey (1987) also had a suggestion about which types the INTP would not be able to get along well with. In particular, he suggested that STJs and STPs would not be able to "appreciate or encourage the unique traits of the Engineer [NTP]" as a mate. However, it is probably wise to consider this with caution.

What Do INTPs Want in a Relationship?

Tieger and Barron-Tieger (2000) ranked the relationship values of each type, both what the type saw as important and what they did not see as important. For the INTPs, the self-reported characteristics that were seen as most important included:

1. Mutual commitment
2. Fidelity
3. Mutual support
4. Being listened to
5. Humor
6. Intellectual stimulation
7. Companionship

The less important characteristics were:

1. Financial security
2. Shared religious beliefs
3. Spiritual connection
4. Security
5. Similar parenting styles

These interests were unique in several respects. In the first place, twelve of the types mentioned that they did *not* particularly care about "Shared interests." Only INTPs, INTJs, ESTPs and ISFPs did not place this characteristic on their low importance list—apparently indicating that it has middling interest for them.

By a similar token, only five types placed "Humor" on their high importance list: INTPs, ENTPs, ENFPs, ESFPs and ISTPs. Again, INTPs were in the minority group here.

INTPs were the also only NT type that didn't place "having fun together" on their high importance list. They additionally placed the least value of all types on "Security."

One area in which INTPs were *not* unique is that they saw "Trust," "Good communication," and "Mutual respect" as being important to a relationship. All types placed high value on these characteristics. Since their universality, I have not listed them for each type.

INTP/Idealist – “The Soulmate”⁸⁶

What do NFs want in a relationship? Above all, they want to develop a deep, intimate connection with their partner.⁸⁷ In fact, this is the unique and distinguishing feature of NFs in a relationship: they all place a high value on intimacy. One expression of this is the NF tendency to hug, touch, and snuggle. They also like to hear spoken (or written) words of appreciation and love more than other temperaments.

NFs often express appreciation for how cool, calm and objective INTPs are, a comforting rock that provides stability, strength and perspective during times of emotional stress. Idealists also admire the strong principles of INTPs.

For their part, INTPs enjoy the warmth and caring that NFs bring to a relationship. Keirsey suggested that INTPs would be intrigued by the endless mystery presented by the (totally alien, yet extremely attractive) soul of their NF mate--an unsolvable problem to beguile them all their life.⁸⁸ However, INTPs are more likely than average to stumble in the area of “talking about feelings,” a favorite NF pastime.

One final note is that NFs take insensitivity, criticism, and lack of emotional appreciation harder than the other temperaments. Since INTPs are so good at these skills, they will need to work harder than average to accommodate the needs of their partner in this area.

Good presents for NFs include books and gifts that are symbolic or personally meaningful. Thoughtful gifts that show you noticed something special about them are particularly attractive to NFs. Gifts that build intimacy are deeply appreciated.

Most Important Values

Tieger and Barron-Tieger (2000) had each type list the characteristics in a partner that were most important to them. Some characteristics were universal; others were specific to temperament or type. A summary of the top seven characteristics that were most important to NFs is listed below. An asterisk indicates that an item was also important to INTPs.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Mutual commitment | All NFs chose this* |
| • Being listened to | All NFs chose this* |
| • Mutual support | All NFs chose this* |
| • Fidelity | All NFs chose this* |
| • Intimacy | All NFs chose this |
| • Having fun together | ENFs chose this |
| • Accepting each other's differences | ENFJs and INFPs chose this |
| • Shared values | INFs chose this |
| • Companionship | Only INFJs chose this* |
| • Humor | Only ENFPs chose this* |

Least Important Values

The researchers also examined the characteristics that were seen as having low importance to a relationship. An asterisk indicates that an item was also seen as having low importance to INTPs. A

86 Keirsey, 1998a

87 Keirsey, 1998a; Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

88 Keirsey, 1987

“^” indicates that INTPs actually viewed an item as important.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Shared religious beliefs | All NFs chose this* |
| • Shared interests | All NFs chose this |
| • Similar parenting styles | All except ENFJs chose this* |
| • Financial security | All except INFJs chose this* |
| • Spiritual connection | NFJs chose this* |
| • Sexual compatibility | INFs chose this |
| • Intellectual stimulation | Only ENFJs chose this ^ |
| • Security | Only ENFPs chose this* |

Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Idealist Value

The average “weight” (ranking preference) placed upon a characteristic is a rough measure of how much that particular characteristic was valued relative to other characteristics. A characteristic could be ranked in first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh place. Some characteristics were considered very important to all NFs, while other characteristics were considered important to only some NFs. Here is a summary of the average weight that NFs placed on each characteristic. The number in [] brackets indicates the weight (if any) placed upon that characteristic by INTPs.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Mutual commitment | 1.5 [1] |
| • Being listened to | 2.75 [4] |
| • Mutual support | 3.25 [3] |
| • Fidelity | 3.75 [2] |
| • Having fun together | 4.5 (ENFs only included) |
| • Intimacy | 4.5 |
| • Accepting each other's differences | 6.5 (ENFJs and INFPs only included) |
| • Companionship | 6 [7] (INFJs only included) |
| • Shared values | 7 (INFs only included) |
| • Humor | 7 [5] (ENFPs only included) |

INTP/Rational – “The Mindmate”⁸⁹

All NTs place a particularly high value on intellectual stimulation in a relationship.⁹⁰ An NT/NT pairing meets this need in abundance! Since NTs continually want to build competence and accumulate more knowledge, the effect is that each partner continually feeds each other's mind. Building skills and sharing new information is a bonding activity in an INTP/Rational relationship.

Rationals often appreciate INTPs for their gift for systems design and their tendency to (over)analyze problems. NTs are surprised and pleased when someone provides a useful insight that allows them to improve their project.

Rational couples also tend to expect and receive total honesty from each other. (“Yes, those pants do make you look fat.” “Thank you, I thought so.”) Since both partners are straightforward, there need be little doubt where either stands.

However, INTPs should be on guard against insisting too much on winning arguments and always

89 Keirsey, 1998a

90 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

being right. The partners should avoid vying with each for superiority; criticism should not go too far. Remember, **Rationals** are the most argumentative and critical temperament. Do not turn your powers upon your spouse.

Rationals enjoy presents relating to their current hobbies, projects and interests. Since they are always seeking to build their competence, if you can provide them with tools to improve themselves or their work, they will be delighted. The more playful **NTP Rationals** will take gifts that have less practical value, while the **NTJ Rationals** are more likely to prefer a gift selected from their list.

Most Important Values

Tieger and Barron-Tieger had each type list the characteristics in a partner that were most important to them. Some characteristics were universal; others were specific to temperament or type. A summary of the top seven characteristics that were most important to **NTs** is listed below. An asterisk indicates that an item was also important to **INTPs**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Mutual support | All NTs chose this* |
| • Intellectual stimulation | All NTs chose this* |
| • Fidelity | All except ENTPs chose this* |
| • Mutual commitment | All except ENTPs chose this* |
| • Companionship | All except INTJs chose this* |
| • Having fun together | All except INTPs chose this |
| • Shared values | NTJs chose this |
| • Being listened to | INTs chose this* |
| • Humor | NTPs chose this* |
| • Intimacy | Only ENTPs chose this |
| • Accepting each other's differences | Only ENTPs chose this |

Least Important Values

The researchers also examined the characteristics that were seen as having low importance to a relationship. An asterisk indicates that an item was also seen as having low importance to **INTPs**. A “^” indicates that **INTPs** actually viewed an item as important.

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Similar parenting styles | All NTs chose this* |
| • Spiritual connection | All NTs chose this* |
| • Shared religious beliefs | All NTs chose this* |
| • Financial security | All except the ENTJs chose this* |
| • Security | INTs chose this* |
| • Shared interests | ENTs chose this |
| • Spending time together | Only INTJs chose this |
| • Humor | Only ENTJs chose this^ |

Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Rational Value

The average “weight” (ranking preference) placed upon a characteristic is a rough measure of how much that particular characteristic was valued relative to other characteristics. A characteristic could be ranked in first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh place. Some characteristics were considered very important to all **NTs**, while other characteristics were considered important to only some **NFs**. Here is a summary of the average weight that **NTs** placed on each characteristic. The

number in [] brackets indicates the weight (if any) placed upon that characteristic by INTPs. (Note that some of the averages included the INTPs already.)

• Fidelity	1.33 [2]	(ENTPs excluded)
• Mutual commitment	2 [1]	(ENTPs excluded)
• Mutual support	2.5 [3]	
• Humor	4 [5]	(NTPs only counted)
• Intimacy	4	(ENTPs only counted)
• Being listened to	4.5	(INTs only counted)
• Shared values	5	(NTJs only counted)
• Having fun together	5	(INTPs excluded)
• Accepting each other's differences	5	(ENTPs only counted)
• Intellectual stimulation	5.75 [6]	
• Companionship	6.33 [7]	(INTJs excluded)

The INTP – INTP Pairing

The INTP-INTP match is of particular interest since it is the only known preferred pairing for INTPs. As is the case with most matches between identical personalities, there tends to be many shared likes and dislikes. There won't be too many problems with Pygmalion projects.

Even if there is an instant click, INTPs hesitate to make the first move in beginning a relationship. It may take two INTPs a long time to get together. They may remain friends for years, or have a "binocular" relationship in which both parties observe each other from a distance. But when they do finally get together, INTPs find it liberating to be understood by someone else (at last). It may feel as if they have met their soulmate. They delight in having a person who can keep up with them on an intellectual level without losing interest or becoming emotional.

However, both parties will have the same issues with doing housework, answering the phone, paying bills, and ensuring they do not starve for lack of food.

INTP couples won't spend too much time talking about their feelings. They might not even need to do this, since they instinctively know what each other's feelings are. Note though that depending on the strength of the Thinking/Feeling preference of each partner, this may create some unwanted coolness in the relationship. The discussion of feelings should be carefully encouraged and nurtured when it does occur, for it is a healthy things for both for the relationship and the individuals in question.⁹¹ Tieger and Barron-Tieger caution that a pair of INTPs may neglect their loving aspect of their relationship in favor of the intellectual connection; this may lead to a scenario where the two INTP lovers become just friends.

Fortunately, what fighting there is seems to center primarily around the fact that some INTP habits are annoying even to fellow INTPs. Tieger and Barron-Tieger note that INTPs may (hypocritically) find each other's messy habits and tendency to be critical somewhat irritating.

Suggested presents for INTPs: books, computer stuff, pop culture artifacts from their beloved TV shows/games/etc. INTPs are one of the more playful types and will be more accepting of gifts that lack practical value.

91 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

INTP/Artisan – “The Playmate”⁹²

The characteristic that best defines the Artisans is having fun together.⁹³ Most of the Rationals also rated this characteristic highly, but *not* the INTPs. A fatal flaw? Actually, INTPs indulge in some of the most leisure activities of all types.⁹⁴ Clearly they value having fun, though they may not necessarily see it as a key value in a relationship. By sharing activities with their Artisan spouse rather than playing alone, INTPs can build a strong relationship.

Artisans bring a certain *joie de vivre* to a relationship. Exciting and fun, they have a knack for drawing INTPs out of the world of the mind and into interesting new experiences.⁹⁵ Another mutual plus is that neither INTPs nor Artisans are big about control; each will allow the other freedom. This is especially appreciated by the highly independent INTPs.

Since both spouses are Perceivers, the couple will face challenges together using a flexible and freewheeling approach. The flip side is that neither is going to want to pay the bills or wash the dishes. Both parties may procrastinate, secretly hoping the other will take responsibility.

Artisans appreciate surprises; they like gifts that will allow them to *do* something, especially something physical. A new tool, a new piece of sporting equipment, a new piece of clothing—something that can be used for “frivolous” purposes.

Most Important Values

Tieger and Barron-Tieger had each type list the characteristics in a partner that were most important to them. Some characteristics were universal; others were specific to temperament or type. A summary of the top seven characteristics that were most important to SPs is listed below. An asterisk indicates that an item was also important to INTPs.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Having fun together | All SPs chose this |
| • Mutual commitment | All SPs chose this* |
| • Fidelity | All SPs chose this* |
| • Intimacy | ESTPs and ISFP chose this |
| • Being listened to | All except ISTPs chose this* |
| • Mutual support | All except ISFPs chose this* |
| • Sexual compatibility | STPs chose this |
| • Companionship | ISPs chose this* |
| • Humor | ISTPs and ESFPs chose this* |
| • Shared values | SFPs chose this |
| • Intimacy | ISFPs chose this |

Least Important Values

The researchers also examined the characteristics that were seen as having low importance to a relationship. An asterisk indicates that an item was also seen as having low importance to INTPs. A “^” indicates that INTPs actually viewed an item as important.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| • Shared religious beliefs | All SPs chose this* |
|----------------------------|---------------------|

92 Keirsey, 1998a

93 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

94 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

95 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

- Spiritual connection All SPs chose this*
- Intellectual stimulation All except ESFPs chose this[^]
- Financial security All except ESFPs chose this*
- Similar parenting styles All except ISTPs chose this*
- Sexual compatibility SFPs chose this
- Shared interests ISTPs and ESFPs chose this
- Security ISTPs and ESFPs chose this*
- Spending time together ESTPs chose this

Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Artisan Value

The average “weight” (ranking preference) placed upon a characteristic is a rough measure of how much that particular characteristic was valued relative to other characteristics. A characteristic could be ranked in first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh place. Some characteristics were considered very important to all SPs, while other characteristics were considered important to only some SPs. Here is a summary of the average weight that SPs placed on each characteristic. The number in [] brackets indicates the weight (if any) placed upon that characteristic by INTPs.

• Having fun together	1.75	
• Mutual commitment	2 [1]	
• Fidelity	3 [2]	
• Being listened to	4 [4]	(ISTPs excluded)
• Companionship	4 [7]	(ISPs only included)
• Mutual support	5.33 [3]	(ISFPs excluded)
• Shared values	5	(SFPs only included)
• Intimacy	5.5	(ESTPs and ISFPs only included)
• Humor	5.5 [5]	(ISTPs and ESFPs only included)
• Sexual compatibility	6.5	(STPs only included)
• Intimacy	7	(ISFPs only included)

INTP/Guardian – “The Helpmate”⁹⁶

The thing that Guardians uniquely seek in a relationship is shared values.⁹⁷ Oddly enough, Guardians have the most homologous list of most favored characteristics of all types--perhaps this explains why Guardians are so satisfied with other Guardians: they share the most values with other Guardians.

The Guardians as a temperament also value security;⁹⁸ they were the only group in which it made the favorites list. The STJs in particular like this characteristic (in fact, the ISTJs value it the most of all types), but INTPs actually value relationship security the least of all types. Be mindful of your spouse's need to have the relationship safe and settled.

For the traditional Guardians, the INTP is a particularly new and intriguing phenomenon. Gillian Bradshaw painted a portrait of this in his book *The Wrong Reflection*.⁹⁹ Here a woman (probable ISTJ) currently dating a man named Robert falls in love with an INTP: “She was not an unusual woman. She

96 Keirsey, 1998a

97 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

98 Keirsey, 1998a; Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 2000

99 Bradshaw, 2000

was a nice, plain, sensible Scot, brighter than average, perhaps, and undoubtedly a decent person—but ordinary. Robert, too, was ordinary. Eventually, she would marry Robert or somebody like him, and they would have nice, plain, sensible, ordinary children. There was nothing wrong with that. Only she hungered still for the tangent which led into the dark—and already that hunger was redefining itself as love.” As Bradshaw has this SJ say about the INTP elsewhere, “Something in him seemed to strike the world at a tangent, and pierce through to dimensions previously unseen. She was hungry to understand him...”

It is the mystery of this “dark tangent” that fascinates the normal, sensible Guardians. The INTP is like a totally new flavor, the mysterious taste of the unknown.

INTPs appreciate their Guardian partner’s responsibility, work ethic, and loyalty. Down-to-earth and socially skilled, the SJs provide a counterpoint to the INTP’s highly abstract world. If left to their own devices, an INTP might park themselves amidst a stack of technical journals; the SJ spouse will add a family life and deal with the social rituals that INTPs would ordinarily neglect.¹⁰⁰ (INTPs might not be inspired to put up Christmas lights themselves, but they do enjoy them.) INTPs also appreciate the practical approach of their Guardian mates and the stability they provide.

However, one area which INTPs are weak in is remembering anniversaries and special days.¹⁰¹ Here they run the risk of disappointing their Guardian mates, who value rituals and traditions the most of all the temperaments. Do what it takes to get this right: put a note on your calendar, use an internet-based reminder service, or write the date on your driver’s license or library card until you memorize it. I don’t know the birthday of a single family member, but I accidentally memorized my coworker’s birthday after writing it on a sticky note and keeping it in my desk drawer, where I saw it daily. Your efforts in this regard will at least show your spouse that the spirit is willing, though the memory may be weak.

Being the practical one, the Guardian spouse will probably end up doing the housework and paying the bills. Unless a mutually acceptable division of labor is settled upon, there will likely be friction and resentment.

Guardians like traditional presents: flowers, chocolates, etc.¹⁰² They also tend to appreciate useful or practical gifts (as chosen from a list) or gifts that are beautiful, tasteful and valuable enough that they would have the potential to become family heirlooms. Too much spending makes Guardians nervous, but if the monetary situation is stable and the occasion appropriate, they will appreciate an expensive gift.

Most Important Values

Tieger and Barron-Tieger had each type list the characteristics in a partner that were most important to them. Some characteristics were universal; others were specific to temperament or type. A summary of the top seven characteristics that were most important to SJs is listed below. An asterisk indicates that an item was also important to INTPs. A “^” indicates that INTPs actually viewed an item as less important.

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fidelity• Mutual commitment | All SJs chose this* |
| | All SJs chose this* |

100 Keirsey, 1998a

101 Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

102 Keirsey, 1998a

• Mutual support	All SJs chose this*
• Companionship	All SJs chose this*
• Shared values	All SJs chose this
• Security	STJs chose this^
• Having fun together	ESJs chose this
• Being listened to	All except ESTJs chose this*
• Intimacy	Only ISFJs chose this

Least Important Values

The researchers also examined the characteristics that were seen as having low importance to a relationship. An asterisk indicates that an item was also seen as having low importance to INTPs. A “^” indicates that INTPs actually viewed an item as important.

• Similar parenting styles	All SJs chose this*
• Spiritual connection	All SJs chose this*
• Shared interests	All SJs chose this
• Shared religious beliefs	All SJs chose this*
• Sexual compatibility	ESFJs and ISTJs chose this
• Intellectual stimulation	All except ISTJ chose this^

Average Weight (1 – 7) Placed on Each Most Important Guardian Value

The average “weight” (ranking preference) placed upon a characteristic is a rough measure of how much that particular characteristic was valued relative to other characteristics. A characteristic could be ranked in first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh place. Some characteristics were considered very important to all SJs, while other characteristics were considered important to only some SJs. Here is a summary of the average weight that SJs placed on each characteristic. The number in [] brackets indicates the weight (if any) placed upon that characteristic by INTPs.

• Fidelity	1.5 [2]
• Mutual commitment	2 [1]
• Mutual support	3 [3]
• Being listened to	3.33 [4] (ESTJs not counted)
• Shared values	5
• Companionship	5.5 [7]
• Security	6.5 (STJs only counted)
• Having fun together	7 (ESJs only counted)
• Intimacy	7 (ISFJs only counted)

What Do People Love About INTPs?

One INTP acquaintance was told by a colleague, "Not many things go with plaid. But those things that do, go REALLY well. Now, don't take this the wrong way--but your personality IS plaid!" Retelling the story, the INTP observed amusedly, "I'm like the black jellybean...not many people eat the black ones, but the people who do *really* like them."

- Partners of INTPs appreciate their beloved's encyclopedic knowledge--having an INTP around is like having instant access to one's own personal Wikipedia. Many have expressed admiration

for their INTP's knowledgeability and enjoyed learning new things from them.

- Some INT males seem to be polite almost to the point of chivalry or courtliness. They are conspicuous for their gentlemanly mien.
- The INTP sense of humor is one of the most delightful aspects of the type. When they turn their unconventional creativity to wit, they bring much pleasure to others.
- INTPs are open-minded and nonjudgmental, and this is appreciated by those who confide in them. People feel that they can relax around the INTP.
- People are grateful for the calmness of the INTP, especially during times of panic.
- Honest and straightforward, INTPs are refreshingly genuine. Compared to other types, they seem unable to put up a false pretense.
- An INTP offers a treat for the mind that few other types can provide. Deep, complicated, and fascinating, the INTP is like a personal tour guide to the mysteries of the universe. They are quite simply *interesting*. INTPs have an inner world that seems fathomlessly intricate.
- INTPs enjoy debate; this can be a particularly stimulating attraction to many, especially fellow Rationals. INTPs illuminate new perspectives and bring up new information. They question basic assumptions that might have been wrong to begin with. They don't want to win so much as to arrive at an agreement on the truth, and this is a pleasant and novel way to argue for many.
- There is a sort of childlike sweetness, vulnerability and awkwardness in the character of INTPs that many find adorable.
- People enjoy how laid back and easy going INTPs are. Their quirkiness and silliness is also endearing.
- INTPs are not swayed by peer pressure or the opinions of others; this inner strength and self reliance is appreciated by many.
- When INTPs have developed their F skills either through practice or because they have naturally moderate T-F preferences, the result is a charmingly considerate and empathetic individual, still reserved but thoughtful and friendly. (Think of the kindly old professor.)

INTP Courtship Behaviors

Keirsey (1998a) notes that the NTPs do not expend much effort to seek out a partner; it would just require too much time and effort for too little a chance of return. Because of this, some NTPs may simply settle down with the first person who approaches them without trying for anything better. I suspect that there may also be a certain element of fear operating here, i.e. "What if this is my only chance? What if no one ever wants me again?" This fits in with the Keirsey's description of the NTP as despairing of finding someone who fits their unique personality.

INTPs are not very good at initiating relationships. The process seems to be one of compiling data on the person of interest...procrastinating...compiling more data...procrastinating...finally daring to make a move (or not)... This sort of style seems like it would be conducive to anonymous love notes.

I did a Google search for each of the Intuitive types with the phrase "secret admirer" and then counted the results.

INTP "secret admirer" - 3,900 results

INFP "secret admirer" - 3,410 results

INFJ “secret admirer” - 1,180 results
ENFJ “secret admirer” - 1,070 results
ENTJ “secret admirer” - 1,060 results
INTJ “secret admirer” - 995 results
ENFP “secret admirer” - 813 results
ENTP “secret admirer” - 702 results

But it's difficult to interpret this data because some types--particularly introverted intuitives--are much more strongly represented in the type-based internet community than others. In addition, there are always search engine quirks (i.e. repetitive entries) that can throw the data out of whack. Still, the fact that there are four times as many INTP results as INTJ results is food for thought.

Naturally, the next thing I wondered was if INTPs are also creepy stalkers. A brief review of the Big Five literature discussing stalker personality traits was inconclusive; I could not predict, for example, whether INTPs would be among the top for types that exhibit this behavior. Probably, there is no one single “stalker type.”

But getting back to INTP courtship...

INTPs can be difficult to pull out of their shells. The walls take a long time to come down, for INTPs are guarded and cautious about revealing their innermost selves. (Many intimacy-seeking NFs have expressed particular delight in reaching this point in a relationship with an INTP; the intimacy is especially treasured because it took so long to extract.)

The socially not-too-adept INTP may also have a hard time figuring out if someone else is trying to initiate courtship with them. (“They touched me. Does it mean something? Should I touch them back? How? When?”) And then there's the holding hands and kissing part, which they will tend to let the other person initiate. Flirting does not come naturally or easily to an INTP. Subtle clues or hints from a prospective mate may fall on deaf ears. Ironically enough, when an INTP does in love, they turn the full might of their observational and analytical powers upon their loved one, attempting to learn as much about them as possible. At this point they are like one giant ear.

One interesting aspect of the INTP process of falling in love is the intensity of the emotions that may be evoked. INTPs are typically cool-blooded creatures; they try not to let their emotions influence them too much, and may tamp them down if the feelings seem to be getting out of hand. (“Okay, I've got to calm down and think clearly.”) But if the emotions *do* get the best of them, the feelings rage like a wildfire. The INTP emotional regulator seems to have two settings: low and overdrive. The explosive nature of the emotions may take even the INTP by surprise.

Unfortunately, in this intensely emotional state they are apt to make some errors of judgment. For example, they may pursue too hard, unintentionally driving their beloved away. Alternately, if the courtship is successful, the INTP may whimsically propose. INTPs seem prone to reckless acts of marriage.¹⁰³ It's as if they believe that the first person who accepts them is the best and only person who will ever accept them. Considering the INTP remarriage rate (read on) this is clearly not so.

INTPs don't really need the usual flowers, cards and chocolates. For this reason, they don't cost much to date. Kroeger and Thuesen (1994) also noted that INTPs may be somewhat inconsistent in their preparations for events like anniversaries or birthday parties. I.e., they may put things off until the last minute and end up snatching a gift from the Walmart jewelry department on the way home. At this

103 Keirsey, 1998a

point the purchase of a gift becomes an emergency rather than the thoughtful expression the somewhat embarrassed INTP had originally intended. Matters are not helped by the fact that INTPs tend to have comparatively low “holiday spirit.” Valentines day, meh. They just don’t see what’s so special about one day over another. They’ll play along, but not with the expected enthusiasm.

When courting an INTP, one mistake is to focus on how much you admire the INTP’s attractive physical form, clothes or hair. As explained in the section on clothing and hygiene, INTPs don’t care much about their physical appearance. You might as well be complimenting them on their backpack or the windshield wipers on their car. Such “compliments” even make them feel uncomfortable, and the INTP may begin to suspect your motivations. It is far better to compliment an INTP on their mind, their wit, their sense of humor, their insight, etc. These are things that INTPs value about themselves, and they will deeply appreciate acknowledgment for them.

INTPs, on the other hand, may make the reverse mistake of not appreciating and admiring their prospective mate’s body, clothing, hair, etc. While elaborate physical preparations may not be important to the INTP, it could be quite important to the INTP’s date. Perhaps the INTP’s partner spent significant time and money achieving that look, and is hoping for the INTP’s praise.

Kroeger and Thuesen observed that INTPs have significant difficulty ending relationships, but if they do decide to end a relationship, “hell would freeze over” before the INTP will take back their ex. Those breaking up with an INTP should be aware that it may be hard, if not impossible, to get them back.

INTP Marriage, Marital Satisfaction, and Divorce

Contrary to public belief, INTPs don’t have any problems getting married. In fact, one study of a sample of male introverted veterans found that INTPs were more likely to get married than almost every single other introverted type.¹⁰⁴ If you have ever worried about being alone and unloved forever because you are different, you can probably stop now. Being an INTP won’t prevent you from getting married. Unfortunately, it may result in you getting married more times than *every other introverted type*. And you can divorce faster too; female INTPs tended to be married the fewest number of years of all (female) types.¹⁰⁵

As you might guess from those particular facts, INTPs can have problems after the honeymoon. Another study found that INTPs have the fourth lowest satisfaction with their marriage/intimate relationship.¹⁰⁶ (This isn’t as bad as it sounds though; Intuitives were generally less satisfied than Sensors, and INTPs were quite close to the midrange values for Intuitive satisfaction. However, INTPs were the least satisfied of the Rationals. Note also that some NFs were far less satisfied.)

According to Marioles et al.’s study, out of the 4 relationships in which one partner was a female INTP, 25% (only one) had both partners satisfied. Out of the 12 relationships in which one partner was a male INTP, only 33% (4 out of 12) had both partners satisfied. This was the lowest joint satisfaction rate for all male and female types. However, just because the INTP’s spouse was dissatisfied, it didn’t mean that the INTP themselves was dissatisfied. Indeed, 66% of the time (in 9 out of 12 cases) the male INTP *was* satisfied with the relationship.

One intriguing finding that Marioles et al. made was that INTP males were the type most likely to be

104 Otis & Louks, 1997

105 Discovery Reveals Partner Satisfaction Through Myers Briggs Types, n.d.

106 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

satisfied with their relationship while having a partner who was not. In 33% of cases (4 cases), a male INTP was content but their spouse was not. This was the highest rate of one-sided satisfaction for all types. (For the 4 female INTP relationships, the partners were either both satisfied or both dissatisfied.)

In trying to explain the one-sided satisfaction occurring for male INTPs, the researchers suggested an “obliviousness index” in which one partner was oblivious to the other partner's dissatisfaction.

However, considering that INFJs had an almost identical rate of one-sided satisfaction (31%) and that among females, ENFJs had the highest rate of one-sided satisfaction (13%), and that neither type has a reputation for obliviousness, I don't think the obliviousness explanation quite fits.

I suspect that the issue is this: compared to most other types, INTPs do not have very high needs from their partner. The INTP self reliance can even cause a partner to feel somewhat useless, “You don't need me for anything. Why do you even want me?” It seems likely that it does not take as much “input” to satisfy an INTP as say, an ENFJ. An INTP can live happily enough on a dime's worth of love demonstrations while their partners may require a dollar's worth. Indeed, were the INTP to have a full dollar's worth of love demonstrations poured upon them, they might feel unpleasantly smothered. Perhaps it is the differential needs of the INTP and their partner rather than obliviousness which produces an imbalance in satisfaction rates--but that still doesn't explain the ENFJs or INFJs.

What to do about the difference in input? An INTP trying to produce a dollar's worth of love demonstrations would exhaust themselves, while an ENFJ might produce such a quantity effortlessly. The best thing to do then, would be to invest the dime wisely in the area where it will produce the greatest return. In short, find out what your spouse's most highly preferred “input” is and selectively direct your efforts there. Does your partner prefer physical affection? Help around the house? Gifts? Verbal expressions of love? Doing activities together? The book “16 Ways to Love Your Lover” is a good place to start your study, and you can find plenty of leads on the internet. You could even *ask* your partner! I

Many people obviously find the INTP personality intriguing and attractive--if not, INTPs wouldn't be getting married in droves, would they?--but after the marriage expectations seem to shift. INTPs must find a way to shift with them.

Let's look at areas where INTPs can improve their marital skills and get into that happy group where both partners are satisfied.

Those 3 Little Words

Tieger and Barron-Tieger (2000) suggest that because INTPs are so private, they may not express their feelings or thoughts enough to satisfy their more expressive mates. (This is true of all Rationals, but particularly the INTs.) Indeed, INTPs are not big on sharing their feelings. They dislike being pressured to make emotional expressions, i.e. giving compliments or saying “I love you” over and over again. Over-frequent expression seems unnatural and insincere to them.

How often should one say “I love you”? Kroeger and Thuesen (1994) suggested at least once a week, but when I told my NF friend this she was horrified and insisted that it should be once a day. So obviously there are differences of opinion among the types. If your spouse keeps asking, “Do you love me?” then you probably need to up the frequency. As a general rule of thumb, extraverted feelers = high frequency required; introverted thinkers = low frequency required.

Though the INTP views a relationship as a "forever" commitment¹⁰⁷ and therefore tends to assume that their feelings must be implicitly obvious since they choose to remain with their beloved, the INTP's spouse may mistakenly interpret silence as lack of affection. The INTP assumes that silence means continuing affection, but their partner may mistakenly interpret it as apathy.

Adding to this is the fact that the NTs as a group tend to be highly focused on the problems they are currently working on, and are simultaneously disinterested in daily domestic matters.¹⁰⁸ Keirsey suggests that although NTs may need reminders to pay attention to their relationships and family life, the NT's spouse may not be willing to give such reminders, reasoning to themselves, "It isn't real love if it is given under duress." The Rationals then continue obliviously on with their projects, and cannot understand when their spouses finally tell them they are cold or uncaring. "How can they think I don't love them?" the Rational wonders incredulously. "Isn't it obvious?"

So what can we say here? Although INTPs probably have lower relational needs than most, they may run into trouble if they assume that other types share the same low needs for communication, emotional expression, etc. (This assumes that you haven't married another INTP, which seems to be a preferred route.)

Giving Emotional Support

So here's a problem for you. Your partner, a Feeler, has just come up to you and shared an experience that has resulted in a state of emotional distress, insecurity, anger, worry, or rejection.

- "My boss said he expects me to do better on the project this time."
- "My friend has been telling everyone I'm selfish."
- "I'm so worried about this interview."

They may even (gasp) cry.

What do you do?

Being an INTP, your first instinct will probably be to provide logic-based advice on how to solve the problem. This is not necessarily the best approach. Often what your Feeling partner wants is not necessarily a *solution*, but emotional support in their time of need. Failure to do this correctly may eventually lead to accusations such as "You weren't there for me" or "You didn't care about me."

So how does one provide such support? Well, here are some ideas:

- Validate the other's feelings by noting what emotions they must be feeling. "You must feel pretty upset about what they said." "That must have hurt." "You're worried, huh?" "Oh no. You must feel awful." Their feelings may sometimes seem illogical or over the top, but that's to be expected from your own cool, lizard-like perspective. Your job here is to be something like a verbal mirror for their emotions, reflecting back their distress in a compassionate way. Emotional verbalization doesn't come easy for an INTP, but do the best you can. Even a little is much better than nothing.
- Tell your partner that you value and love them. Provide specific examples of what you appreciate about your partner to counteract their own or others' negative evaluations. Provide specific examples of how things have turned out okay in the past. "It'll be alright" is kind of shallow; you need to dig deeper. It's okay to *repeat* your examples a couple of times so that it

107 Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

108 Keirsey, 1998a

will sink in (this probably won't come naturally). You're essentially constructing a positive mental picture to replace the negative one.

- Just listen without trying to solve things. Your partner may just want someone to vent to. You're sort of like a journal in which they can confide their private thoughts and find a measure of release. As an experiment, try not giving advice unless they specifically ask for it.
- Narrow down what they're upset about. Ask questions until you can figure out *specifically* what is bothering them. When they understand this, it may bring some relief. A side benefit is that you're also encouraging them to talk and express their feelings, which also results in a release. It also gives you more opportunities to validate their feelings and affirm their value and positive qualities.

Fighting For Principles

INTPs instinctively analyze and dissect conflict to understand their own feelings and those of their partner, and they may use objectification as a way to control their feelings.¹⁰⁹ But are INTPs willing to fight? Not really. INTPs do not like to make waves, and they will wait and wait to air an issue when it would be better just to go for it. In the meantime, they will have the fight out within their mind, effortlessly envisioning their partner's responses for them. INTPs will also withdraw after a fight and not communicate. There may be silence after an argument, or both parties may shut down rather than deal with conflict (leaving the issue unresolved or letting it fester). This tendency is amplified if their partner is a fellow introvert, and even more particularly if their partner is an introverted feeler.

An INTP hopes to learn something from each conflict that will help them next time. One interesting side effect of this is that for an INTP, each fight is perceived as *setting a precedent*.¹¹⁰ To people of other types, fights happen on a case by case basis. But for an INTP, each case is merely one embodiment of an overall principle.

For example, let's say that a room has two light switches, meaning that the "up" and "down" positions are flexible depending on which switch is used to turn on and off the light. The INTP's partner, a Judger, has a compulsive need to maintain the switches so as to keep "up" equivalent to "on." The INTP, however, couldn't care less what positions the switches are in.

For a long time, the INTP simply ignores their partner's occasional complaints. But, after a stressful day, a minor argument finally erupts over the situation. For the Judger, the argument is about the light switches and the light switches alone. For the INTP, the argument is an embodiment or a larger principle: "Should the Judger have the right to control me to the extent that they dictate my minor habits?" The Judger has many little preferences of this sort—the way shirts should be folded, the place the car should be parked, etc. If the INTP gave in on the light switches, they would perceive themselves to be agreeing with the entire principle underlying the example. They would feel like they were saying, "Yes, I will let you control the way I use the light switches, the way I fold shirts, the volume I leave the TV at before turning it off, the cupboard I put the coffee away in, the way I load bowls into the dishwasher, etc." When the INTP refuses to care about the light switches they are standing up for a principle. The light switch situation itself is insignificant. To the INTP, each fight goes straight to the Supreme Court to be used as an example for all future judicial decisions.

Picture, if you will, what the reaction would be if one country demanded that a neighboring country

109 Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

110 Evans, 2012

hand over one square kilometer of territory. Will the other country say, “Well, it's only a tiny square kilometer. Sure, okay.” *Never*. It is the principle of sovereignty that is at stake, not the size of the demanded turf. In a similar way, INTPs are fighting not only for that one kilometer of turf, but for every kilometer that might ever be demanded. Yet from their partner's perspective, it is frustratingly incomprehensible why the INTP will not yield on such a tiny matter.

An INTP's partner can prevent fights of this sort by making it clear from the start that the situation is a unique case. For example, the spouse might say, “This light switch thing is really bothering me. You know I don't care too much about the other little stuff, but this light switch is wearing on my nerves. Can we agree to leave it in just one position or else just use one switch?” By making the case unique, i.e. a problem that stands out to the Judger as being *particularly* bothersome, the Judger separates the case in question from a multitude of other cases that would ordinarily be included under the blanket category “minor habits that annoy the Judger.” Indeed, the light switches are no longer part of the “minor habits that annoy Judger” group at all—rather, they have graduated to a new group, “Things that irritate the Judger significantly more than usual.” The INTP's principles dictate that items falling into this smaller, more serious, and more exclusive group deserve greater consideration than those of the former category. Giving in on items in this group does not imply that the INTP would be giving in on shirt folding, dish washer packing, etc—those items are ruled by different operating principles.

The INTP is still fighting for a principle, but the principle now applies to such a narrow range of cases that it doesn't matter much to them anymore. Thus the INTP now perceives the request to be “reasonable” (or they will at least be more willing to humor the Judger).

Upon making a concession, the INTP will remember the outcome and save it for future reference. If another, similar situation comes along, the INTP will remember the former outcome and compare the two situations, trying to decide if there is a pattern and if the principles need to be reexamined in light of new data. Suppose the INTP's partner thinks they now know how to get concessions out of the INTP, and becomes “particularly bothered” about the way shirts are folded and bowls are put away. Since the INTP stores up and remembers each case for tracking purposes, they will immediately notice the change in behavior. Previously “particularly bothersome” things happened to the Judger once every four or five months. Now they are occurring every few weeks. Upon further examination, the recorded data suggests the Judger is crying wolf. The INTP will adjust their definitions to give less weight to the Judger's now-unreliable claims and stop making concessions. The Judger, seeing that the magic approach is not working anymore, will give up. But for the INTP this is new data too; they have learned something. They will remember this incidence of unreliable exaggeration next time there is an argument. The Judger, on the other hand, will more or less forget everything in a few weeks. Everything is back to normal as though nothing had ever happened. They assume the INTP has forgotten too.

To other types, life is like an episodic TV show where everything goes back to the status quo at beginning of the next episode. To the INTP, each episode builds upon the other, and things that change stay changed—for years. When the INTP says, “In Season 1, episode 3, it was established that we could borrow things from each other without asking so long as we put them back within the week. I've been holding up my end ever since, but you haven't? Why?” The INTP's spouse looks at them in bewilderment. “We're in Season 5 now. I don't even remember what happened in season 3, much less season 1. What happened in episode 3 anyway?” To INTPs, other people can seem inconsistent and forgetful.

When fighting, remember that your partner sees only the specific case at hand, while you see the higher

principle behind the case. You're actually only fighting over the light switch.

Children

A study found that INTPs may be one of the types most likely to be content to marry, but not have children. Freije (1991) surveyed 130 people who did not intend to have children and 398 who did (there were 21 INTPs total in the combined sample). Among those choosing *not* to have children, 51% consisted of ITs. Yet ITs were only 11% of the sample that *did* intend to have children. And where did INTPs fall into it? 13 of the 21 INTPs—slightly over half—indicated that they did not want children. Now you know who to blame for the birth dearth.

- INFJ – 2.95 times as many as expected did not want children (but the group included only 8 INFJs, so this finding should be regarded with suspicion)
- INTJ – 2.78 times as many as expected did not want children
- INTP – 2.51 times as many as expected did not want children
- ISTP – 2.47 times as many as expected did not want children
- ISTJ – 2.25 times as many as expected did not want children
- ISFP – 1.76 times as many as expected did not want children

ENTPs, ESFPs, ESFJs, ESTPs, and ENFJs were the types that most wanted children.

Although this was only a small exploratory study, it would be wise to discuss the subject of having children before getting married.

Housework

INTPs do not see much value in continually keeping their environment in a perfect state; not so for the Judgers. What motive does the INTP have to do housework? It does not satisfy any fundamental need in them and they find it drudgerous. To them, their Judging partner's nagging requests for perfection seem like a selfish demand to continually waste their valuable time on an activity that is quite pointless. Yet from the Judger's point of view, the INTP is continually destroying their hard work by messing up the clean house and refusing to fix the damage. To them, having a clean house is relaxing and having a messy house is stressful. From their perspective the INTP's behavior seems selfish, inconsiderate, and lazy.

In an internet discussion on housework, a thoughtful user probed the mystery of why INTPs don't help with the house. His two part response explains 1.) Why INTPs don't care about messiness, and 2.) Why they don't mind letting their partner do all the cleaning.

#1. **Many people mentioned being messy (and I can't deny that I am).** How an INTP sees it: A car is a means of conveyance to move from point A to B, not an operating room where cleanliness is necessary. You get in, turn the key and go through the necessary actions to arrive at your destination (while mentally you are thinking about whatever is buzzing about your brain at the moment). Trash in the car is irrelevant as long as it does not impede the function of transportation. As long as the car does its job, INTPs don't see the trash as an issue. This thought also applies to living quarters. Homes are a place to sleep, eat and think. If the mess does not impede any of these functions then the INTP sees no problem.

#2. Feeling like you are doing all the work (cleaning, laundry, chores, relationship).

Remember in this instance how INTPs view mess. Not a problem unless it directly impedes main functions. Thus when you do the dishes or pick up his mess, he sees this as a voluntary action on your part. To an INTP this is like a homeless man who just runs up and cleans his windshield and then expects to be paid. The INTP did not ask the man to do that and it did not need to be done. Thus no repayment can/should be required or expected. He did not ask or expect you to clean the mess up (and in his mind it did not need to be done), thus you have done an action of your own will. Thus you are just doing 'extra' work and cannot expect him to 'owe' you unnecessary actions in return. When he asks you for help (and he likely never/rarely will) and you help him, then he is obligated to help you out of a sense of equal partnership. This all relates to a core of INTP independence. In our minds we help by never forcing/requiring/needling anyone to help us (**because anyone who needs help is not independent, and those who require help are a taxing drain**).

I'm not saying that every INTP thinks this way or should. Just trying to explain the roots of the problem. An INTP can come to understand that cleaning up a mess is expected and that helping out with household chores is something they should do even if they don't really think it needs to be done. Just avoid yelling or giving orders. 'Just because' is not a reason, say what you mean and explain your 'why' and we will probably get it in the end.

Contracting

Suppose that your partner has what you would consider an unreasonable expectation of you—i.e. helping with the house. Or suppose that you have mutually incompatible desires. Or suppose your partner has vague expectations that you “spend more time with them” but you have the sinking suspicion that they basically expect you to feed a black hole.

One solution to these scenarios is contracting.¹¹¹ This is where husband and wife work out a deal together where each party agrees to give in to some of the other's needs in exchange for specific reciprocal advantages. The terms of the contract are spelled out exactly. For example, what about “helping with the house”?

Each party wants the other to do something that the other finds unpleasant. If the INTP is compelled to help with the housework against their will, they will offer passive resistance or else do it grudgingly. But this is not a recipe for a harmonious relationship. On the other hand, if the Judger cannot get the INTP to help keep the house clean, they may resort to nagging and eventually form a low opinion of their partner. Also not a recipe for a happy relationship. If either party got exactly what they wanted, the result would be to leave the other feeling taken advantage of.

A better outcome is for each party to compromise and get half of what they want, while receiving equal concessions from their partner.

For starters, the nebulous idea of “helping with the house” could be clarified into a list of specifics: doing laundry, tidying the living room, shoveling snow, scrubbing the bathroom, doing dishes, mowing the lawn, etc. What you want to do is to convert a vague pie-in-the-sky wishlists into actual, physical, measurable wants.

Chances are that some of these things seem more or less tolerable to each party. Maybe the INTP sort

¹¹¹ Kroeger & Thuesen, 1994

of likes raking leaves. Maybe the Judger is okay with laundry. Now comes the contracting. The Judger might think it would be fair to divide the list in half so that each party does a similar amount. “That way,” they say, “it will be equal.” But what about the INTP’s point of view? To them, the chores are pretty pointless to begin with, so what do they get out of it besides a commitment to do a bunch of work they didn’t even care about to begin with? Admittedly there is an element of fairness in dividing the work in half, yet there is nothing here that could motivate the INTP to keep up their end of the contract. They gain nothing in return. There is no payoff for them in it save the dubious satisfaction of a clean house. This bargain leaves the Judger happy but the INTP unhappy.

What else could be brought in to make the deal desirable from the INTP’s perspective? Probably there are things that the INTP has wanted to do but not done out of consideration for the couple’s mutual goals. The INTP should make a list of reciprocal favors that they would consider a fair exchange for helping with the housework. Their list of possibilities might look something like this:

- The INTP is allowed to get blazing fast internet (\$40/month option)
- The Judger answers the telephone from now on
- The Judger makes a favorite food for the INTP on a regular basis
- The couple spends one night a week doing something that the INTP would enjoy—whether reading together, playing a videogame, hiking, etc.
- The INTP is allowed to buy two new videogames a month
- The Judger brings company over less frequently

In short, the INTP should list things that will make their life less stressful and more pleasant. This way, both the INTP and the Judging spouse will get something valuable out of the contract. Then it will be *mutually* beneficial.

Now comes the matter of deciding exactly what will be exchanged for what. Each party will want to think about the other’s list and decide upon which favors they would be most willing to concede.

Further refinements to the contract will deal with questions like “How often shall I be required to do this?” or “How many hours per week shall I be required to do this?” or “How about instead if you only got one new videogame per month and I didn’t invite company over to the house every other week?” “On what days shall I be required to do this?”

The finished contract will look something like this: “The INTP agrees to do laundry once a week, mow the lawn, shovel snow, and clean the bathroom for one hour every Saturday. The Judger will keep the rest of the house in order and do dishes each night with the provision that the couple will save up to buy a dishwasher by the end of the year. The Judger will also answer the telephone and have company over no more than 2 times per week. The INTP also agrees to spend at least one hour chatting with company when they do come over.”

A well-written contract should make it easy to say when both parties are upholding their side of the bargain. And, since expectations are clearly laid out, neither partner is required to do more than stipulated. Nor does either partner have a right to complain anymore.

In the final stage, both parties set their agreement into a *written* contract, sign it if necessary, and agree to try it out for two months. (Yes, you do need a time period--don’t just let it be forever.) On a weekly basis, both parties need to check to make sure that each is upholding their end of the bargain. At the end of the two months, the contract should be revisited, reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

Contracting can be used in an infinite variety of situations; Kroeger and Thuesen include examples in

their book of how INTPs contracted with their partner over the questions of having children, getting married, satisfying their relatives, and other issues. As the authors note, INTPs are very good at writing contracts and see value in creating them. Their weak point, however, is the daily carrying out of the contract, so be sure that you honor your half of the commitment.

Hypermindfulness

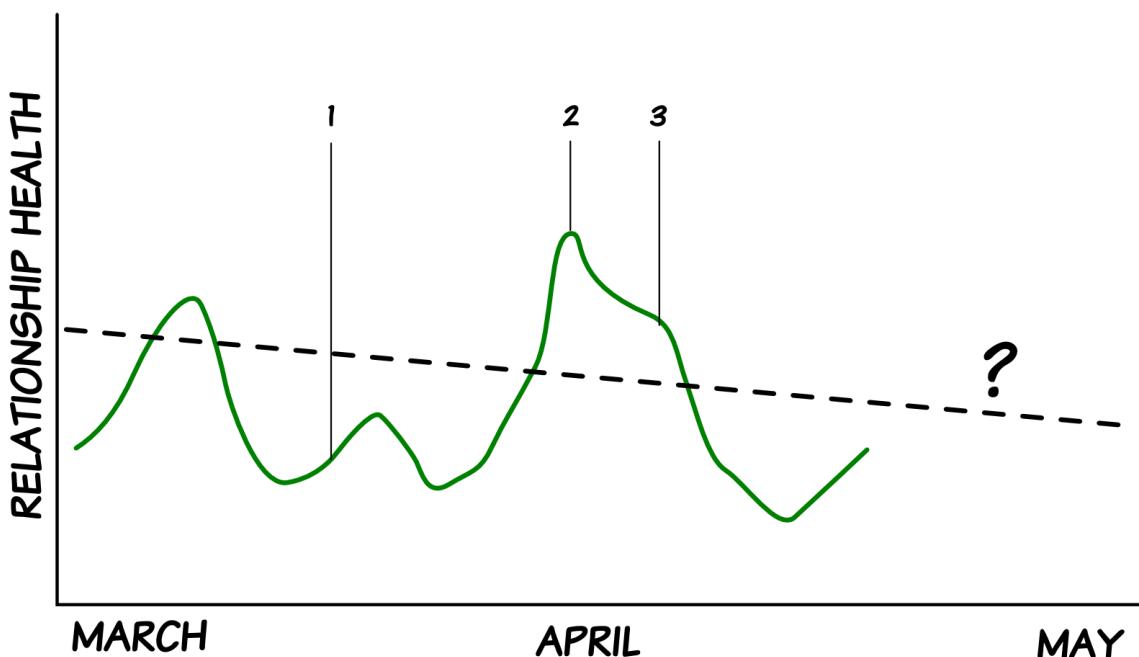
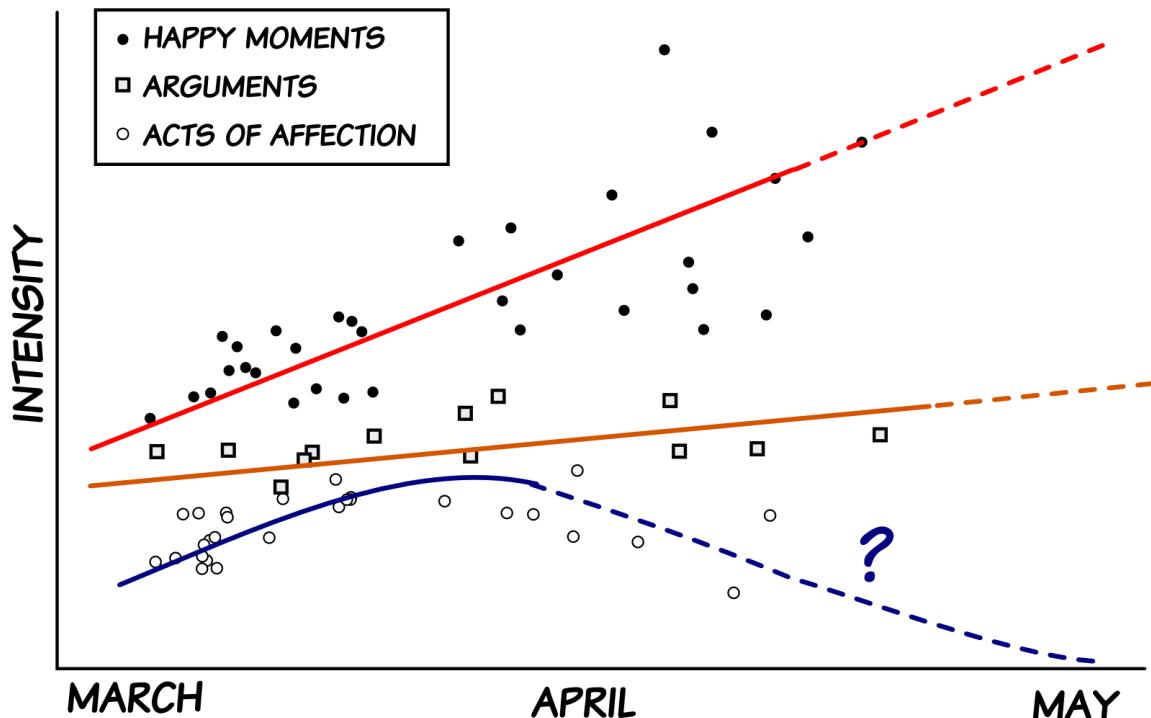
Ironically enough, one of the problems INTPs struggle with is worrying too much about their relationship.

Kroeger and Thuesen (1996) have suggested that INTPs are continually attempting to define their relationships on the basis of fresh data. Sometimes this can get out of hand. Evans (2012) called this tendency to observe and overanalyze “hypermindfulness.” Ordinary mindfulness is when you deliberately, objectively and consciously pay attention to the happenings in your immediate environment. If not lost in thought, INTPs habitually observe their world in this way, trying to analyze situations and detect long-term patterns. Hypermindfulness, however, is when the INTP reads meaning into *everything* they observe and tries to fit the meanings into long-term patterns on the basis of scanty data. Add a pinch of paranoia or insecurity, and you have what amounts to a relationship hypochondriac.

Not even mentioning the strong possibility of observer bias, the effects of worrying about how an awkward word or gesture has been perceived by another person can be more taxing on the relationship than the awkward act itself.

INTP RELATIONSHIP CHART

PARANOID EXTRAPOLATIONS SHOWN



1. TRIAL 1: HELP WITH HOUSE MORE
(IMPROVEMENT TEMPORARY)

3. CAUSE OF DECLINE?
WORK STRESS?
NOT ENOUGH OVERT AFFECTIONS?

When hypermindfulness sets in, the INTP places their relationship under a microscope like an amoeba. Unfortunately, amoebae have a way of dying when exposed at length to the heat of a microscope light. In much the same way, an INTP can literally analyze their relationship to death. Each new piece of information takes on disproportionate significance, and finally some unexplained downward bump in the data convinces them that the relationship is hopelessly flawed. At this point they are prone to ignoring the good points and overemphasizing the bad, all the while gloomily predicting that things will only get worse. This kind of examination stunts rather than improves.

Instead of being hypermindful, INTPs should loosen up a bit and realize that ups and downs are normal and not necessarily permanent. Rather than turning each experience into a precedent for all future experiences forever, they should accept that things do happen on a case by case basis and it is often premature to look for a pattern. Who knows, tomorrow things may be looking up again.

Recommendations

If you want to approach building a better relationship from a type perspective, I recommend the following books:

- [16 Ways to Love Your Lover](#) by Kroeger and Thuesen - This honest book uses type to explain in great detail why your spouse is so annoying, and why you yourself are so annoying to your spouse. If you're having marital issues, this is the book I recommend. \$1 used.
- [Just Your Type: Create the Relationship You've Always Wanted Using the Secrets of Personality Type](#) by Tieger and Barron-Tieger - Contains descriptions of every possible pairing, i.e. INTP x ISFJ, INTP x ESFP, INTP x ENFP. If you're curious to explore a specific relationship, this book will do give you the information you need. \$5 used.

5. INTP Identifications

Historical INTPs

One of the most delightfully amusing aspects of studying historical INTPs is the opportunity to indulge in “INTPologyology”—the study of the study of INTPs. Sometimes the way a researcher interprets INTP traits or behavior is actually more interesting than the INTP behavior itself. For example, a writer may speculate, “The reason this person is so cool and detached is that their parents didn’t love them” or “Maybe abdominal cancer was responsible for this personality defect.” Or, “It’s Asperger’s/ADD.” (Yes, these are all real life examples.)

Then there are all the times where the biographers say, “He could have hardly failed to be aware that...”

Once you know what INTPs are like, that sentence will make you burst out laughing. For an INTP, unawareness is a *lifestyle*.

Another complaint that biographers have is how seemingly contradictory INTPs are. INTPs are described with words like “conflicting,” “contradictory,” “inconsistent,” “ambiguous” and “complex.”

Thorne and Gough’s (1991) non-type-savvy observers agreed with this statement. The observers thought that female INTPs were *not* described by the phrase, “Has a clear-cut, internally consistent personality” and that male INTPs *were* described by the word “complex.”

A few astute biographers have acknowledged that while INTPs *seem* inconsistent, this is actually because a.) the complexity of their analyses defies simplistic analysis, and b.) they live objectively under the governance of a set of principles rather than following the normal rule of self-interest or cause-interest. Rather than comparing particular examples of behavior against each other and saying, “He supported X on this occasion, but Y on this occasion,” the correct approach is to deduce the overarching principle(s) which can explain both seemingly contradictory choices.

Ordinary people are often like biographers in that they see an INTP support one argument in favor of an idea and assume that they should support everything that goes packaged with that idea. The finely nuanced views of the INTP are lost on them because they do not know the principles behind the INTP’s support or rejection of the idea. It is important to find out what unstated laws underlie an INTP’s belief system before judging their motives and goals.

Fictional INTPs

Why study fictional characters? Isn’t it unrealistic to study made up people?

Not as much as you one expect. Montgomery (1989) wrote of “the mirror of fiction,” wherein a skilled author takes what they have observed of human nature and converts it into characters who seem like real life people. Rather than being a patchwork quilt of contradicting J, P, E, I, T, F, N and S traits, most characters have an internally consistent personality, because the author infused them with characteristics which they themselves had already observed in real life.

There are of course exceptions; for example, the “Mary Sue” is a character that has every possible virtue and no flaws. Or sometimes authors will change the personality of their character as they add sequels to the original work. If you have a television series written by multiple writers, different versions of a character will sprout up because different writers emphasize different aspects.

Alternately, when a character (for example, Sherlock Holmes) is reenvisioned over and over, different

versions will appear over time.

To avoid these pitfalls, I have chosen characters with an internally consistent, stable personality and a realistic set of virtues and flaws. The works they have been taken from represent the first envisionment of the character by the original author.

Advantages of the “Mirror of Fiction”

Briefly, the advantages of studying INTPs in a fictional setting are the following:

- It allows us to do is explore scenarios that would be otherwise be difficult to study in real life.
- It gives us an opportunity to dissect good examples of type-based behavior without getting sued by real life people.
- It reveals some of the INTP archetypes and how they fit into our cultural mythos.
- It dramatizes INTP traits, making them stand out clearly.

Problems with the Mirror of Fiction

Perhaps you have seen those endless internet discussions over what type a certain character is. There's a reason the discussions never seem to get anywhere. A study on type and personal heroes found that although people do not always choose heroes of their own type, they *do* project their own type's characteristics upon their heroes.¹¹² For example, suppose you have an ESTP hero. An INTP notices moments of introversion or reflection, while an ENFJ notices moments of compassion or selflessness. Like the blind men and the elephant, each type particularly notices aspects of the hero that they can relate with. The 10 INTP adolescents in the study, fyi, preferred ISFP heroines and INFP heroes. (I would feel more comfortable with this conclusion if I knew who the heroes so I could check their type. No such luck.)

Nevertheless, it does appear that people seek out heroes of their own type more often than heroes of the opposite type. Out of the 196 heroes in the study, 27% matched the adolescent's own type, while 2% were the exact opposite type. Roughly speaking then, people are something like 14x as likely to choose characters of their type as heroes.

Fun fact: the majority of Rationals depicted in Saturday morning cartoons are genius villains who probe the mysteries of science and make brilliant breakthroughs in technology. These characters are perfect role models for NTs save for the minor shortcoming of being evil. “What's wrong with me? Why do I always like the villains?” Rationals wonder.

Notes on Type Identifications

I have made an effort to provide a rationale for how the individuals in this book were typed in the hope that the explanations will be helpful in forming a set of rough guidelines that can be used to identify INTPs and tell them apart from other types (particularly INTJs). Identifying people's types can be a rewarding and illuminating experience; it can also make one aware of just how inadequate type-based stereotypes are when describing actual human behavior. On several occasions I have found my pet theories disproven by a biographical example and have been forced to rethink them in accordance with the new data. Biographies can be a wonderful laboratory for type theorists. *But only if you can get a person's type right to begin with.* With this in mind, here are a few rules of thumb that most interested amateurs, and even many type practitioners, do not know:

First and foremost, no single piece of evidence is EVER conclusive on its own. A common mistake is

¹¹² Petersen, 1993

to fixate on a couple items of evidence and assign them a huge amount of weight, i.e., “All INTPs do this” or “Only INTPs can do this.” So for example, people will say, “An INTP would *never* do that because they have too much self control.” Or “INTPs are the *only* perfectionistic type; this person was described as perfectionistic; therefore they can *only* be an INTP.”

In fact, there is an exception to every rule. Furthermore, people can learn to adapt to shifting circumstances; they do not follow the same rules all the time. It must also be recognized that most traits are characteristic of more than one type; INTPs cannot claim exclusivity on *any* characteristic that I know of. Even if they are the type most likely to embody a particular trait, there are 2-3 other types that also have the trait in abundance and could plausibly be described as possessing it. Then too, one must always look for explanations other than type for a behavior. An extravert who avoids people because he has been teased and bullied by his peers is not an introvert, despite outward appearances. Finally, one must allow for individual variation. Some INTPs are very clear in their type; others have moderate preferences. Some INTPs are very close to being INFJs; others are very close to being ENTPs; still others are almost INTJs or ISTPs. Never mistake a type’s *average* characteristics for a rule that *always* applies to *everyone* of the type. An average is simply something that *usually* applies to *most*.

Therefore one must not give in to the temptation of simplistic certainty. It is only when the preponderance of dozens of pieces of weak, good, and even excellent evidence begins to point towards a single type that an identification can be made.

Finally, it is better to rely on information dealing with a famous person's daily habits, speech patterns, etc. rather than (say) major government policy decisions, job position held, etc. Dozens of un-type related factors go into the latter, but not the former; therefore daily habits are a better source for typing information than major decisions. I also recommend typing famous people using information about how they behaved before they became famous. These behaviors are more natural and less self-conscious.

Given all this, the most useful sources of information are books that delve heavily into the nitty gritty of a man or woman's everyday personal life. Books that merely report “dids” and “didn'ts” like, “Then he enacted this policy, then he travelled here, then he made this speech” are almost worthless for identifications—you can go for 100 pages without finding a single useful indication of a person's type. What you want are books that delve into the intimate personal details or character of the person, preferably with lots of anecdotes from the person's close friends, enemies, and acquaintances. Biographers seem to make a habit of describing a person's temperament for the first three chapters of the book, and then going into the dids and didn'ts for the twenty chapters. For a quick identification, just read the first fifty pages.

One final caution is to avoid using the cognitive functions when making an identification. Besides the fact that there is no evidence for the functions' existence, there is also the fact that the definitions of Fe, Fi, Te, Ti, etc. are vague and tend to overlap each other to an unacceptable extent. I would not consider them a practical tool; rather, it is likely they will confound a correct analysis.¹¹³

Process

When trying to identify a person you suspect is an INTP, it often works best to first establish temperament, then introversion/extraversion, then finally judging/perceiving. You can work in any order, but this is usually the order in which the pieces fall into place.

113 McPeak & Martin, 2012a; McPeak & Martin, 2012b

Usually the easiest thing to determine about a person is whether or not they are an NT. The Rational profile is highly characteristic, and an interest in math, science, or anything complex, abstruse and technical is almost always accurate in marking the temperament.

The next easiest thing to establish is whether or not a person is an introvert or an extravert.

Biographers are usually quick to say if a person is quiet and reserved. In fact, if a biographer fails to mention those characteristics, it is a pretty good bet that the person in question is an extravert, even if the biographer doesn't directly mention it. Extraversion is considered normal and hence not worthy of remark; introversion is considered atypical and worthy of note.

Usually the most tricky part is determining whether an INT is a Judger or a Perceiver. Ironically enough, this would be one of the easiest things to figure out if you could meet the person face to face. But for whatever reason, biographers are not terribly interested in describing a person's J/P traits.

When the traits are mentioned, they are often contradictory, with the word "orderly" (a J indicator) used in one sentence and the word "indecisive" (a P indicator) used in the next. Words describing J/P tend to have many possible interpretations depending on context. Interpret with caution.

6. Walter Bailey – Hero Busboy

Age: 18 years old, just graduated from high school.

Occupation: Busboy at Beverly Hills Supper Club.

Notable Because: He saved hundreds of people from a fiery death.

Analysis of Type: INT

Evidence for INTP

- Described as "quiet" (Likely I)
- Terrible stage fright (Likely I, but describes most people)
- After the fire, he *withdrew* and refused to give interviews (I)
- Had few friends at work; by contrast, other employees said the team felt like a family (Likely social outsider INT)
- Described as having a "flat, calm voice" (Likely INT)
- Unattached to his job (INPs have lowest job satisfaction of all types,¹¹⁴ but Bailey had also had better-paying jobs before.)
- Self described perfectionist (SJ, INP)¹¹⁵
- Unsatisfied with his performance; thought he could have done better (NT high expectations of self, but maybe also survivor's guilt)
- Recriminated himself for years afterwards about not doing enough (NT self criticism)¹¹⁶
- Filled with a sense of *calm* during the disaster (NT)
- Claims that science was one of his favorite high school subjects. (Likely NT)
- Modest; did not display a thank you letter from the President or his other plaques and awards (NT)
- Unimpressed by the hierarchy at the club (NTs and NTPs in particular have particularly low regard for titular authority)¹¹⁷
- As an adult, still uses words like "super" and "neat" (INTPs remain youthful at heart longer than other types)
- Pictured with mussed up hair (INTP disinterest in appearance)
- Did not give direct orders so much as mildly stated suggestions, i.e. "I want everyone to..." and "Okay, everyone do this..." (INTPs prefer giving information to commands)¹¹⁸
- Had previously worked in construction jobs (Favors INTP, not INTJ)¹¹⁹

Evidence Against INTP:

- Owned a Pontiac Firebird Formula (Favors SP)
- Had previously worked in construction jobs (Favors STP over INTP)¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

¹¹⁵ Demarest, 2006

¹¹⁶ Keirsey, 1998a

¹¹⁷ Keirsey, 1998a

¹¹⁸ Keirsey, 1987

¹¹⁹ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

¹²⁰ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

It seems most likely that Bailey is an NT, though at this point it is difficult to say whether he is an INTP or an INTJ. The evidence leans slightly towards INTP (the hair, the role informative command style, the use of words like “super” even as an adult, the construction jobs) but we really don’t have anything that would give us real certainty. At any rate, I feel we can still apply what we learn from him to INTPs, so let’s continue on.

Story

As a busboy, it was Walter Bailey's job to fill glasses, mass produce hors d'oeuvres, and set up tables for the guests at the Beverly Hills Supper Club. To give you an idea of Bailey's social rank, first imagine a unicellular organism. Then imagine a bicellular organism. The unicellular organisms would be the club's dishwashers, and the bicellular organism would be Bailey.¹²¹ He had worked there about a year and he was 18.

The Supper Club was a giant building divided up into smaller rooms for people to enjoy shows while they dined. There was a fancy ballroom, the Cabaret Room, which was capable of holding over a thousand people. The room had a stage up front where comedians could perform or speakers could make an address. A few “minor” amenities were missing, however: sprinklers, smoke detectors, and fire alarms.

It was about 9 pm on a Saturday night. The club hosted some 3,000 patrons who were served by around 180 employees. Bailey was working in the classy red-carpeted Cabaret Room; he had asked to be assigned there so that he could enjoy the night's act.

At one point he had to go serve another room. As he was walking down the hallway, he bumped into another employee, a waitress. She was looking for the club's owners, and Bailey informed her that they were in the kitchen. To explain why she was looking for them, she whispered, "There's a fire in the Zebra Room."

Being a good INT, Bailey was *skeptical* of her claim and went to verify it for himself. When he arrived at the Zebra Room, which was on the opposite side of the building, he went to open the door--but stopped when he saw that smoke was seeping out the cracks in puffs. Bailey didn't open the door. Instead, he went directly into the adjoining bar, still full of chatting patrons, and announced, "Everybody out! There's a fire!" Here Bailey acted *on his own authority* to send *paying customers* out of the building.

INTPs will give lip service to the chain of command, but they never really accept the fact that it applies to them. Authority and claims of expertise hold little weight; only sound logic matters. As for rules, they are made to be broken because they seldom fit the exact facts of the situation and it would be illogical to obey them in such cases because doing so would lead to a less than ideal outcome. All this adds up to the fact that Bailey didn't go run looking for the owners like the waitress did; he acted independently, following his own judgment.

After shooing the patrons out, Bailey's mind probably began running simulations of how the fire response would proceed. It occurred to him that nobody in the Cabaret Room had been informed of the fire yet. He headed there and found his supervisor. After explaining the situation, he said, "We have to clear the room." The man's response was to stare unheedingly at him, then instruct him to watch a line of customers while he himself went to open some doors. Probably feeling frustrated, Bailey decided to go over the man's head and set off to find the club's owners. He got part way there, then thought better

¹²¹ Ripley, 2009

of it. He was wasting time, and his supervisor's refusal to act was simply poor judgment. So he returned to his supervisor and confronted him again, telling him they needed to evacuate the ballroom. This time the supervisor walked off, presumably to initiate the evacuation.

Left to his own devices once more, Bailey began the unauthorized evacuation of the line of waiting customers he had been told to watch. He led seventy of them out of the building. After instructing them to remain outside, he returned to the Cabaret Room. Nothing had changed. All 1,200 guests were still enjoying the comedy act. Now Bailey had to decide what to do. Did he trust the authorities to handle the situation appropriately? Did he wait for the proper chain of command to play out? Did he bow to his supervisor's implicit refusal to evacuate the thousand plus guests?

Or did he evacuate the guests without permission?

As an INT, Bailey would be expected to distrust authority, follow his own logic-based judgments, and have strong willpower. All of which means that he could not put blind faith in his bosses, nor could he see the situation through any lens save for that of his own logic. And logically speaking, the party guests needed to be evacuated as soon as possible. But that decision seemed likely to cost him his job.

It must have taken every ounce of willpower to do what came next. Terrified, he walked through the ballroom and climbed up onto the stage. He took the microphone from one of the comedians. Before the staring eyes of the multitude, he announced in a voice that people would later say sounded *calm*, "I want everyone to look to my right. There is an exit in the right corner of the room. And look to my left. There's an exit on the left. And now look to the back. There's an exit in the back. I want everyone to leave the room calmly. There's a fire at the front of the building." With that, he left the stage and went outside. People began evacuating--slowly. Minutes later a thirty foot ball of fire seared out of an adjoining equipment room and the lights in the Cabaret Room went out. The immolation of the Beverly Hills Supper Club had begun.

Outside, Bailey went to check on a smoking exit. He went inside and was instantly blinded by thick smoke. From deeper within the darkness he could hear the cries of dozens of people trying to get out. He groped his way into the depths, grabbed whoever he could lay hands on, and dragged them outside. Again and again he returned to the hallway, holding his breath against the poisonous smoke. Finally he reached a pile of living and dead bodies clogging the doorway to the Cabaret Room.

He needed help, so he went outside to where the evacuated guests were gathered and yelled, "Can anyone help us? We need more help at that exit!" (Several other employees had been helping him drag out people.) The guests stared back, but no one did anything. Hopelessly Bailey raced back to the club alone and continued pulling people out. The cries for help and the moans grew fainter; he could hear the people inside gasping and dying. Finally there was silence. There wasn't any point going back in.

Outside, the lawn was covered with bodies. As his final duty he went around covering up the faces of the dead with napkins. Then he got a ride and went home.

Analysis

In Amanda Ripley's fascinating book, "The Unthinkable," she analyzes why Bailey became a hero that night. She quite rightly attributes Bailey's success to the following factors:

- Bailey was knowledgeable.
- He paid attention to details (the smoke puffing out of the Zebra Room).
- He was decisive (he didn't waste time talking when something obviously needed to be done)

immediately).

- Thanks to his Christian faith, he had less fear of death.
- He didn't care about losing his job as much as other employees did.

Ripley described Bailey's behavior as atypical.¹²² But as you can already guess, there is more to this story than meets the eye. The fact is, Bailey's reactions were not completely atypical--for an INTP. Let's examine his decisions using our knowledge of his probable type.

Discussion

Rationals do not trust claimed expertise, titles or authority. In fact, they remember and store away every incident where authority failed.¹²³ (Now you have one more for your collection.) Additionally, INTPs do not take anyone at their word when it comes to facts. If they haven't verified a fact for themselves, they will regard it with skepticism. In short, Rationals--and in particular INTPs--are the masters of independent judgment. They seek to objectively assess the facts and then proceed as logic suggests, regardless of what anyone else says. INTPs also have strong willpower, which causes people to note that they have iron convictions or (negatively) are very stubborn and pigheaded.

All of these factors explain why Bailey took the situation into his own hands. First he independently analyzed the threat presented by the fire and decided that it was hazardous. Then he predicted the next logical step that ought to be taken to prevent harm. Finally he began carrying out the first steps of a strategy to counteract the threat.

It is important to note that when it became clear that the authorities (the supervisor and the club owners) were behaving irrationally, he eliminated them from his plan. It takes both courage and strong convictions to disregard the implicit orders of one's supervisor. Bailey had to believe that his own judgment was more sound than his supervisor's and the club owners'. (This is an excellent example of why people think INTPs are arrogant.) But here is independent thought at its height. And here is the willpower to act on those thoughts. This is why Rationals must have strong willpower: the rational thing to do is not always the pleasant, easy, conforming thing to do. Bailey was able to save hundreds of lives because he refused to take the easy path of blind obedience.

One thing that should not be overlooked is that Bailey, unlike most of the other club employees, was lukewarm about keeping his job. Why is this? In the first place, it was a crummy job. But in the second place, INTPs have the lowest job satisfaction of any type save for the INFPs, who tie with them in terms of job dissatisfaction.¹²⁴ An INTP will enjoy their job as long as there is something new to learn or some new skill to build. But when the learning/skill-building stops, then the fun ends and the INTP gets bored and unhappy. So, if Bailey were indeed an INTP, then he had an excellent reason to wish to leave. After all, how much more could there be to learn after working as a busboy for a whole year? (How much do you love your job? How much do you have to lose compared to your coworkers?)

The fact that Bailey was able to keep calm during the disaster is another key point. True, he was very frightened, but he maintained his cool nonetheless. INTPs prize calm because it allows them to think clearly and prevents the interference of judgment-warping emotions. And indeed, Bailey's control over himself helped him to make correct decisions during the emergency.

122 Ripley, 2009

123 Keirsey, 1998a

124 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Application

Bailey is not unique among INTPs; an INTP of my acquaintance experienced a similar, albeit much less heroic version of his experience when dealing with the inappropriate handling of a computer virus in their workplace. Upon analyzing both instances, there were notable similarities:

- Independent research into the nature of the problem preceded action. INTPs verify facts for themselves and then decide upon the proper course.
- INTPs try to notify their superiors first.
- If their superiors seem disconnected from reality, INTPs repeat their efforts to convince them despite initial shut downs. (Recall that INTPs were ranked as the 3rd most argumentative type.)¹²⁵
- INTPs simply ignore the chain of command and do what they think is necessary.

What would an INTP soldier do if his commander was bumbling the mission and risking everyone's lives? What would an INTP employee do if they thought their boss' unsafe practices would hurt other coworkers?

But there is an even more fascinating angle.

From a young age, INTPs are nonconformists. An INTP child may be the only person in their class who refuses to say the pledge of allegiance. Individuality seems like something INTPs seem born with.

After WWII, psychologists grew interested in the psychology of conformity and obedience. A number of revealing studies were undertaken that show just how rare and difficult this trait is.

In one such experiment (the Asch conformity experiment), psychologists wanted to see how much people's decisions were molded by those around them. The experimenters took a group of 5 - 7 people and gave them a card with a line on it. They were instructed to compare the card to another card with three lines of differing length on it. The objective was to compare the two cards and decide which lines matched.

The trick behind the experiment was that all but one of the "test subjects" in the group had actually been hired by the experimenters. For each test, the fake test subjects would all choose one of the wrong lines and agree that it was correct. Then the reaction of the real test subject was observed to see if they would agree with the wrong conclusion.

The experiment demonstrated that the opinions of a group have a strong effect on the decisions of an individual. If left uninfluenced by others, the test subjects would almost always choose the correct line. But when the majority formed a unanimously wrong consensus, the test subjects would often subordinate their own opinions to those of the group. Test subjects agreed with the wrong answer 32% of the time, and 75% of the test subjects chose a wrong answer at least once. (However, it is significant to note that the remaining 25% did not agree with the wrong majority even one time. So about 1 out of 4 people seem to be immune to the consensus effect. Other subjects, however, agreed with the majority *every* time.)

Another result that emerged was that if one other member dissented--even if they gave the wrong answer--the test subjects were much more likely not to go along with the false majority. So if one group member disagrees, it can embolden others to disagree too.

Many years later, type practitioners did a small study where people of various types were tested using

125 Loffredo & Opt, 2006

Asch's experimental setup. The INs turned out to be least likely to conform, and IT and IN types conformed less than EF and ES types.¹²⁶

Have you ever wondered why natural selection has allowed the existence of INTPs? One would think that protoINTPs would provide perfect prey for saber toothed tigers as the absent-minded hominids wandered obliviously across the prehistoric veldt, philosophizing about the nature of the universe.

As a thought experiment, let's pretend that we have a hunting/gathering family unit of 100 individuals. We would expect something like 3 - 5 INTPs in the group. What survival advantages do these INTPs confer on their band?

One of the advantage that INTPs provide is the ability to create dissent. When the leadership is confidently leading the lemmings over the cliff, the INTP declares, "That doesn't make any sense. The leader doesn't know what he's talking about." Naturally the other lemmings are horrified at this betrayal of the social norms, but the INTP has verbalized something they suspected deep down in their gut. And now that one person has dissented, everyone else is emboldened. "I don't completely agree with what you're saying, but I *do* think..." another person will begin.

By refusing to go along with the norm, INTPs prevent groupthink and suggest alternatives when the agreed upon solutions are about to fail catastrophically. It may be that everybody else will go running off the edge of the cliff, but the INTP and their immediate family will survive.

There's another side to this though. Another classic experiment, Schachter's 1951 "Johnny Rocco" study, has also demonstrated that those who refuse to conform tend to be ignored and excluded. ("Surprise, surprise," you're thinking.) In this study, a nonconformist was planted in a group of test subjects and instructed not to agree with the group's decision on the fate of a juvenile delinquent, whatever that decision might be. No matter how much pressure they were under to conform, the nonconformist was told to reject the group's ideas. Afterwards the group members were asked who they would eliminate if they had to make the group smaller. They usually chose to get rid of the nonconformist.

I wonder how many INTPs have been "voted off the island" because they refused to conform? Bailey had few friends among his coworkers, and this in spite of the fact that he had worked at the Beverly Hills Supper Club for a year.

The tribe *needs* INTPs, but it doesn't necessarily *want* them.

On an evolutionary side note. INTPs have been around for a looooong time. Lauren & Kuczaj II (2007) summarized a list of studies on animal personalities ([read here](#)). Some or all of the Big Five personality traits have been observed in primate species, canine species, cats, equine species, pigs, rodents, rabbits, hedgehogs, fish, ferrets, dolphins, and octopi. Since the Big Five correlates with the MBTI, it is probable that the INTP personality evolved long ago (like, the Cambrian, if not earlier) and has been preserved for eons as a basic trait of advanced life. There were probably INTP tyrannosaurs, triceratops and velociraptors. Who knows—there may even have been INTP trilobites. If we meet an alien species, it's certainly probable that there will be members of that species who are INTPs. Cool, huh?

Conclusion

Believe it or not, INTPs have a greater than average responsibility for the welfare of their neighbors. It

126 Matthews, Miller, & Carskadon in Carlson, 1985

may be that the INTP alone has the disregard for inept authorities to deal with a dangerous situation quickly, calmly, and in a rational manner. While other types are saying, "This couldn't have happened," "Who will tell us what to do next?" or "Perhaps everything will just get better on its own somehow," the INTP can objectively analyze the problem and see the danger for what it is. Furthermore, since they are more detached from the world than others--content to observe and analyze rather than participate--they have less to lose when it comes to taking a risk. A manager may think, "But what of the customers, the publicity, the lost sales, the spoiled food? Maybe we don't *really* need to evacuate yet..." Unburdened by such considerations, the INTP sees straight through to the hard truth. Consistently cutting through bureaucracy and setting the problem to rights with their calm, logical mind, the INTP is an unseen defense against poor leadership.

7. INTPs in Charge

INTPs are not particularly drawn to the idea of being in charge. Oh, they *are*, of course, but not for the “normal” reasons. INTPs enjoy the freedom of not being ordered around by others; they appreciate the opportunity to design larger, higher level strategies; they may feel like the current leadership is not doing a good enough job; or they may just like having others carry out their ideas so that they don’t have to do all the grunt work themselves. It isn’t really authority per se that attracts them so much as all these other factors. It isn’t about the status. They don’t get high on control. They aren’t interested in the “people” aspect of it. They don’t like dealing with the daily details.

Yet INTPs can and do seek positions of authority. Let us examine first why INTPs are not inclined to seek leadership and what their preferred role is, and then let us examine how they handle leadership when they do obtain it.

Why INTPs Do Not Seek Command

INTPs generally tend to view leadership as being more trouble than it's worth. The social demands of the task weary them, and their dislike for controlling and influencing others makes them rather reluctant to take charge.

Keirsey (1987) called the NTPs the “Role Informative” personalities because they prefer to provide suggestions, information and advice rather than give commands (“It would be a good idea to do this because...” or “We need to get this done...” and “It’s not a good idea to...”) The NTJs, by contrast, are the “Role Directive” personalities because they do give commands (“Do this,” “Go here,” or “Do not do this.”). For example:

INTP: “Honey, are you going to the kitchen? I think the cookies might be done.”

INTJ: “Hey, check the cookies while you’re in the kitchen, would you?”

INTP: “Fred, the customer bathroom needs to be cleaned. It’s gotten very nasty.”

INTJ: “Fred, clean up the customer bathroom. It’s very nasty in there.”

INTP: “Spider on your shoulder!”

INTJ: “Agh, a spider--kill it!”

Essentially, an INTJ is likely to tell you what to do, but not necessarily why you should do it. By contrast, an INTP is likely to tell you why you should do something, without actually telling you to do it. To the INTP, the giving of information implies the action that should be taken. Once the information has been imparted, the action that should be taken is self evident.

The difference between imperative commands and indirect suggestions isn't black and white; it's more of a spectrum. For example:

Very direct imperatives

Kill the spider!

You should kill the spider.

I would kill that spider if I were you.

You might want to kill that spider.

There's a spider on your shoulder.

Very indirect suggestions

The NTP Role Informatives hover near the indirect end of the spectrum, making occasional forays to the imperative zone when forced to it.

It actually is possible to provide information in a direct, authoritative manner. INTP: "We need to do this, then we need to do this, then we need to do this. Any questions? ... Good, then let's get to it." Not a single direct command was expressed in that sentence, but the orders were clear.

The Preferred INTP Role

INTPs tend to prefer "secondary leadership positions." For example, INTPs often express the opinion that they would like to be the advisor to a leader who has the extraversion, charisma and tough skin that they lack. (For example, INTP Spock was the charismatic ESTP Kirk's second in command and advisor.) Or, if the leader is not competent, then the INTP's preferred role would be similar to that of a puppetmaster controlling a figurehead. (For example, in the Three Musketeers saga, Aramis, the third Musketeer and an INTP, was planning to create a puppet king for himself. Similarly, Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock Holmes' obscure brother, was described as occasionally *being* the British government.)

One can also find real life examples of this relationship; for instance, Albert Speer (INTP) was one of (ENFP) Hitler's closest friends and managed the German homefront while his Führer fought the Allies. Speer shunned the limelight, but his silent success in keeping the war machine running allowed Hitler--an unquestionably charismatic leader--to carry out his plans for destruction.

The leader does not always have to be charismatic, however. Jefferson and Madison had a leader/follower relationship where one or the other was alternately the puppetmaster or the second in command. Generally, Jefferson worked out the broad strategic plans from the shadows, while Madison brought them forth into reality. At other times, the loyal second in command pulled the strings, dexterously manipulating the more popular Jefferson to assume public roles half against the latter's wishes. In this INTP/INTP partnership, each was at times puppet and puppeteer.

So how does an INTP end up as the second in command of such a charismatic-type leadership figure?

In Speer's case, he instinctively liked Hitler after hearing him speak *once*. There was nothing fact-based about his decision; Hitler struck an emotional chord within him that hit just the right note.

In one of the Three Musketeers books, Dumas describes the INTP Aramis' meeting with the man he

intended to make king. I found it intriguingly similar to Speer's case.

"At this moment the young man, supporting himself on his two elbows, drew close to Aramis's face, with such an expression of dignity, of self-command and of defiance even, that the bishop felt the electricity of enthusiasm strike in devouring flashes from that great heart of his, into his brain of adamant."

So what we have here is an instantaneous emotional impression. Fanciful though this description may be, perhaps it is not all that farfetched.

Characteristics of INTP Leaders

When INTPs do lead, their strategic planning abilities, knowledge and unconventionality provide advantages to the team that are characteristically Rational. The INTP sees the long term goal for the group and devises a strategy for reaching the goal using the most efficient path they can find.

Since INTPs dislike control and rules, they tend to be casual, "hands off" leaders who set goals and tasks but leave the details of the implementation to their subordinates. INTP leaders seldom have problems with micromanagement. (They may, however, have trouble enforcing rules and reigning in unruly members of the team.) In association with this, INTPs tend to be democratic leaders, encouraging discussion and speaking with a team-oriented "we." They do not set themselves above their followers, preferring an egalitarian style. This trait also makes them particularly safe rulers as far as your civil rights are concerned.

INTPs will have few difficulties managing subordinates who are as self-directed as they themselves are. However, they may run into problems if their subordinates prefer clearly stated goals and directives with the details spelled out. The Guardians, in particular, do not want a vague higher level objective so much as a detailed set of instructions with the who, what, where, when, why and how explained clearly in advance. INTPs do not like being "bugged" for specific advice by any type—they consider this a sign of unhealthy dependence.

Likewise, INTPs will have few difficulties managing subordinates who do not need much praise (Rationals do not tend to give it). But if they have nonRational subordinates—particularly Feelers, and more particularly Idealists—then they may run into problems. Indeed, INTPs are far more likely to give constructive criticism than accolades. But this lack of praise-giving is problematic for morale, which in turn affects subordinates' job satisfaction and the group's productivity. INTP leaders should make a conscious effort to find *something* to praise about a person's work, even if the work itself is average or has problems in some areas. This will prevent discouragement and embitterment, and provide motivation to improve. The idea is to present the situation as "I'll be pleased if you improve" rather than "I'm displeased, so improve."

Being private folk, INTP leaders are not eager to subject themselves to public exposure. They tend to dislike debate and participation within public forums. Public speaking is the bane of the type. Albert Speer avoided the podium as long as possible, but at last he was forced to make a speech at a joint dedication ceremony with Hitler, his friend. Hitler was delighted that finally he would get to see his reticent architect speak in public, but it was not to be. Speer simply stood up on the platform and declared, "Mein Fuhrer, I herewith report the completion of the East-West axis. May the work speak for itself!" Then he handed the platform over to a surprised Hitler, who had to improvise a few quick

sentences on the spot.¹²⁷

INTPs can be capable virtual team leaders because of their above-average written communication skills and the fact that the distance offered by the internet mitigates the interpersonal factors that might otherwise cause trouble for them in real-life interactions. Thomas Jefferson, for example, had what one biographer called a “textual presidency.”¹²⁸ He conducted most of his official business through correspondence. In modern parlance, it would be as though the President never left his office, instead sending out e-mails to his ministers. Jefferson mumbled through only two public speeches: his two inaugural addresses.

One last trait that INTPs bring to the table is the ability to remain calm under pressure. This has a reassuring effect upon their followers, who otherwise might lose heart under the pressure of whatever storms the groups must weather.

INTP leaders are most valuable in times where a group is crossing into a new frontier; where there is continual upheaval and chaos that requires creative adaptation; where there is a complex system that must be managed efficiently; where civil liberties are at stake; and where organizational change is required. We shall see some examples of these qualities in the upcoming chapters.

127 Speer, 1970

128 Ellis, 1996

8. Aramis - A Swashbuckling Schemer

Did you know that one of the three musketeers was an INTP? Aramis was the quiet, intellectual member of the group who later ended up ruling the most powerful secret society in Europe and carrying out a scheme that was the 1600s equivalent of replacing the President with an evil likeable clone. Even *more* impressively, he also got the hottest babes of anyone in the book. He was sort like James Madison that way.

Surprisingly, two out of the three musketeers were Introverted Rationals. The leader of the team was Athos, a noble, tragic INTJ whose strong principles were the admiration of those who knew him; then there was Porthos, a vain, generous-hearted, but not-too-bright ESFP whom Alexander Dumas, the author, tried to skew ISFJ later in the series; and then finally the musketeer whose name always came last, Aramis, a quiet and gentle man who was the group's INTP advisor. (It should also be noted that D'Artagnan, the unmentioned "fourth" musketeer, was the protagonist of *The Three Musketeers* and an ESTP. Yes, even in Dumas' time the action heroes were all STPs.)

Aramis is a unique and fascinating INTP, and a perfect exemplar of many of the traits we have been discussing and several traits that we would *never* have expected to see in an INTP.

Evidence for INTP

- Quiet and soft-spoken; he was even compared at one point to Harpocrates, the god of silence and secrecy. (I)
“Habitually he spoke little and slowly, bowed frequently, laughed without noise...”
- Used soft and honeyed tones; had a silvery voice (I)
- Smiled or nodded rather than saying “yes” or expressing appreciation aloud. (I)
- Secretive and close-mouthed; known for his exceptional discretion (INT)
“...Though having the air of having nothing secret about him, he was a young fellow made up of mysteries, answering little to questions put to him about others...”
- Often paused before speaking
“Aramis paused. It was not to listen if the silence of the forest remained undisturbed, but it was to gather up his thoughts from the very bottom of his soul”
- Saw webs of ideas (N)
“...with that connection of ideas which marked him...”
- Displayed surprising feats of intuition (N)
“...the sort of divination which was the remarkable side of the character of Aramis...”
- Enjoyed writing (N; favors INTP the most of all the Rationals)¹²⁹
“Aramis; a charming man, elegant, discreet, and a writer of poetical verses.”
- Formal, complex speech habits. (NT)
- Typically gentle and mild (Fits INTP best of all the Rationals)
- When trying to incite a duel, he made ironic, provocative remarks mixed with liberal sarcasm. Interestingly, he also used a “peculiar irritating politeness” when publicly giving insult. (NT)
- Took strong offense at criticism (NT)
- Spoke bluntly (NT)
- Interested in theological doctrine (NTs are the most interested in correct doctrine of all temperaments.)¹³⁰

129 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

130 Keirsey, 1998a

- Described as astute and wise (NT)
- Charming wit in conversation (NT or SP)
- Enjoyed games of the mind
"You know I am a friend of all kinds of amusement where the exercise of the imagination is called into activity; I have always been a poet in one way or another."
- Modest, would never speak in his own praise (NT)
- Described repeatedly as calm, imperturbable, impassive and impenetrable (NT)
"Aramis has a hieroglyphic countenance, always illegible."
- Strong willpower
"His iron will, accustomed to overcome all obstacles, never finding itself inferior or vanquished on any occasion..."
- Described as having a grave and thoughtful face (NT soberness)
- Practiced fair and even dealing (NT)¹³¹
"Never shall I act except in such a manner that you will be the gainer; I shall never ascend the ladder of fortune, fame, or position, until I have first seen you placed upon the round of the ladder immediately above me; I shall always hold myself sufficiently aloof from you to escape incurring your jealousy, sufficiently near to sustain your personal advantage and to watch over your friendship. All the contracts in the world are easily violated because the interests included in them incline more to one side than to another. With us, however, this will never be the case; I have no need of any guarantees."
- Able to draw out hidden things; described as a "keen-scented bloodhound" and as being "so vigilant, so active" that his "eye, like that of the lynx, watched without ceasing, and saw better by night than by day." (NT)
- Seemed particularly keen on getting revenge (NTs are big on that)¹³²
"And Aramis, spelling every word, every letter of the order to pay, distilled his wrath and his contempt, drop by drop, upon the miserable wretch, who had to submit to this torture for a quarter of an hour. He was then dismissed, not in words, but by a gesture, as one dismisses or discharges a beggar or a menial."
- Hardworking, did not gamble, did not engage in the expected Musketeer social pastimes (INT)
"As to Aramis, he never played. He was the worst Musketeer and the most unconvivial companion imaginable. He had always something or other to do. Sometimes in the midst of dinner, when everyone, under the attraction of wine and in the warmth of conversation, believed they had two or three hours longer to enjoy themselves at table, Aramis looked at his watch, arose with a bland smile, and took leave of the company, to go, as he said, to consult a casuist with whom he had an appointment. At other times he would return home to write a treatise, and requested his friends not to disturb him."
- Mental absenteeism (INTP)
"Was Aramis really listening or not? No one could have told; his downcast eyes showed the attentive man, but the restless hand betrayed the man absorbed in thought —Aramis was meditating."
- Staring off into space (INTP)
"Aramis was silent; and his vague glances, luminous as that of an albatross, hovered for a long time over the sea, interrogating space, seeking to pierce the very horizon."

131 Keirsey, 1998a

132 Keirsey, 1998a

- Secretive (INT)

"[Aramis] ...feared to let him divine the secret of his blush and his astonishment. He was still the same Aramis, always having a secret to conceal."
- Private (INT)

"He had been told that Aramis had taken away the key of his own private apartment, and as he knew Aramis was a very particular man, and had generally many things to conceal in his apartment."
- Not interested in the spotlight

"Aramis was not the man to seek for a useless popularity. He cared very little for being beloved by people who could be of no service to him."
- Described as "cool" and "cold"...by an INTJ.

"Aramis, you know," continued Athos (INTJ!), "is naturally cold, and then he is always involved in intrigues with women."

"...with the terrible *coolness* which on important occasions he [Aramis] showed, he took one of the muskets from Tony, shouldered and aimed it at the young man..." [emphasis mine]

"I did not recognize the chevalier [Aramis] in armor, sir!" said Raoul, blushing; "though I might have known him by his skill and *coolness* in danger." [emphasis mine]
- Gave suggestions/information/advice instead of commands (Favors INTP rather than INTJ)¹³³
- Did not assume a leadership position in the group; had no desire to be in charge (NTP)¹³⁴
- Known for both unimpeachable honesty and exceptional deceitfulness (Truth is a particularly strongly held INTP value, but what they omit to say may be rather important too.)
- Proposed a rather radical subject for his ordination thesis (INTPs are one of the more radical types.)
- Was readily able to detach himself from worldly concerns (INTPs are the most detached type.)
- Aramis was an architect. He designed the fortifications for Bel Isle, an island fortress, based on an entirely new principle for fortress-building which had recently been introduced. The defenses were remarkable for their ingenious layout. (INTP)
- Described as rarely putting himself out of the way for anything (suggests INTP "laziness")
- Split hairs in conversation (INTP precision of speech)
- Most suspicious of the Musketeers; even suspected of his own friends, and rightly so (INTP suspiciousness)
- Described as "impulsive." (P)
- There was no need to stand on ceremony with him (P informality)
- He was a poet (INTPs view writing as a leisure pastime, INTJs do not.)¹³⁵

Evidence Against INTP

- Aramis cared deeply about his appearance and took excellent care of his person (J or SP)

"His delicate mustache marked a perfectly straight line upon his upper lip; he appeared to dread to lower his hands lest their veins should swell, and he pinched the tips of his ears from time to time to preserve their delicate pink transparency. ...Showing his teeth, which were fine and of which, as the rest of his person, he appeared to take great care."
- Said at one point, "You know well that I don't like to leave things half finished." (Argues for J;

133 Keirsey, 1987

134 Keirsey, 1987

135 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

however, the unfinished thing under discussion was an insult and a duel, so it's hard to say if he was speaking generally or specifically.)

- Continually sought positions of power and authority.

I think it safe to say that Aramis is a clear INT of some sort. As usual, the question comes down to whether he is INTP or INTJ. Here are the most important facts of the case:

INTP	INTJ
*Wasn't interested in taking charge of his companions; thought and acted alone	*Sought to acquire positions of authority throughout his life
*Impulsive	*Careful about personal appearances
*Preferred giving information to giving commands	*Said that he disliked leaving things half-finished
*Continually flipflopped between vocations rather than focusing on one thing to the exclusion of others	
Didn't put himself out of the way for anything unless it was needful	
Didn't stand on ceremony	

As we can see, the INTP evidence is quantitatively superior; but is it *qualitatively* superior also? I have marked the items with asterisks as deserving the most weight, since these are most likely to be uniquely characteristic of one type or the other. It would seem that the evidence for INTP is qualitatively superior as well as quantitatively superior. However, there is one fact that could almost tip the qualitative balance, if correct. At one point a character tells Aramis that he is the *most punctual* of men--a strong indicator of Judging. ...Or is it?

When attempting to figure out whether a person is Perceiving or Judging, a differentiation must be made between the Perceiver's, breathless, relieved version of punctuality ("Hahaha--my last minute frenzy of effort was successful and I'm not late!") and the Judger's natural, effortless punctuality. In this case, the person who complimented Aramis' punctuality was sweating bullets and hunting the city for him in order to get help on a payment with a debt he owed. Aramis turned up on the man's doorstep the day of the deadline. Typically if worry and frantic last minute measures are involved in meeting a deadline on time, it is an indication of Perceiving. In confirmation of this, at another point of the book, Aramis arrives ten minutes late to a meeting while the group's very clear INTJ shows up on the dot. Probably, Aramis is one of those procrastinating Perceivers. Despite his emphasis on personal appearance, it is most likely that Aramis is an INTP Architect.

Analysis

Unlike many of the deadly dull classics, *The Three Musketeers* is still a great book--provided that you can forgive the characters for the morality of their time period, which has a tendency to stick in one's

craw. The book has it all: international intrigue, sword fights, gunfights, knife fights, battles, enemy agents, plots, kidnappings, buried secrets, romances, affairs, chivalry, treachery, and a beautiful and ruthless villainess.

Alas, with a great start like that it comes as no surprise that the sequels were disappointing. Unfortunately, Alexander Dumas seems to have become a poorer author as he aged. The book he was working on when he died was unfinishable--not just because it was left unfinished, but because it was actually too boring for me to complete. (And yes, it was supposed to be an adventure.) However, the sequels do offer us an unparalleled opportunity to study an INTP in action.

An Honorable Plot

It wasn't until the third book in the series (*The Man in the Iron Mask*) that Aramis emerged as the (sympathetic) antagonist. I say "sympathetic" because the people on his side were nice, kind, generous fellows while the people he was plotting against were conceited, dishonest and mean-spirited.

The gist of Aramis' master plan was this: He would replace the king of France with a lookalike doppelganger, then become the new king's prime minister. (In short, he would control a puppet king.) But this state of affairs was only to be temporary. The king would show his gratitude for this service by helping Aramis climb the ecclesiastical ladder. First he would support Aramis' bid for the Cardinal, then later his goal of being appointed Pope. (These were in the days when ruthless clergymen led armies into battle, wined and dined themselves in sumptuous palaces, and managed affairs of state.) The end goal was that the king would run France and rule over men's bodies, while Aramis would run the Catholic church and rule over men's minds. A rather appropriate occupation for an INTP, no?

Now, normally in these kinds of stories the doppelganger is evil and the person being replaced is good. However, in this case the real king, Louis XIV, the "Sun King," is a haughty, fiance-stealing ingrate while the poor innocent doppelganger is a suffering victim who had been locked up in prison for years. The reason why he was locked up is rather important. You see, in those days writers didn't have access to evil clones, so instead they were forced to make do with the next best thing, namely identical twins. The doppelganger was Louis XIV's secret twin brother. The royal family was worried that twins might cause a struggle for the crown ending in civil war, so they got rid of poor #2 by throwing him into the Bastille.

Aramis, through his intricate web of connections (and more particularly, through his mistress, the Duchess Chevreuse, who was the most popular woman in France save the Queen) managed to discover the existence of the king's twin brother and came up with an idea for a swap. It was simple: he would secretly kidnap the real king during the night, replace him with the doppelganger before anybody noticed, and then throw the real king into the same prison cell the doppelganger had been living in.

The plan went like clockwork, and the real king was thrown into prison while the doppelganger succeeded the throne. If only the book had ended there, it could have been a happy ending. Alas.

An INTP Who Specialized in Intrigue

Aramis, "who lived in the midst of subterfuge, evasion, and intrigue," devoted his life to acquiring private information and climbing the rungs of ecclesiastical leadership. Like a spider in the center of a web, he drew secrets to himself in perfect silence, gathering the threads to form a gigantic picture of the whole that few others could see--or control. Aramis raised plotting to the level of scientific principle.

As he put it, "Every scheme of this caliber is completed by its results, like a geometrical calculation."

Aramis was a popular INTP. When the three Musketeers were running low on cash, they took to haunting the houses of their acquaintances, hoping to be invited to a free lunch. Athos managed to score four free dinners, Porthos six, and Aramis--eight. Dumas observes that, "He was a man, as must have been already perceived, who made but little noise, and yet was much sought after." Later he said, "There was something in Aramis resembling those Roman senators who had their doors always surrounded by clients."

There was a constant battle of wits between the cunning, people-savvy d'Artagnan (ESTP) and the cerebral chessmaster Aramis. Particularly in the third book, where Aramis was out to get the king and d'Artagnan was trying to protect the king, there were fierce clashes between them.

As Aramis quietly brought his dark schemes to fruition, d'Artagnan went around like a 1600s version of James Bond, using his suave ESTP charm, subterfuge and trickery to ferret out his friend's plans and romantic affairs. d'Artagnan managed to ruin large chunks of Aramis' schemes (Aramis did not hold it against him), though not enough to ultimately derail them.

One of the more amusing parts of their relationship was the paranoia d'Artagnan developed about what his friend was planning. ESTPs are one of the types best at reading people, and though Aramis always pretended to be serenely relaxed and was thus extremely hard for d'Artagnan to read, the latter could see juuuust enough to set all his ESTP suspicions abuzz. And then there were all those strange little coincidences and odd happenings.

Aramis's annoyance, well dissembled as it was, had not a whit escaped him [d'Artagnan]; and he knew that, in that impenetrable mind, every thing, even the most apparently trivial, was designed to some end; an unknown one, but an end that, from the knowledge he had of his friend's character, the musketeer felt must be important.

Then too, Aramis had an excellent spy network and seemed to know just about everything that went on. One person exclaimed,

"You know everything, monseigneur!"

"And a thing or two in addition," muttered D'Artagnan.

The net result of this constant struggle was to give poor d'Artagnan nightmares. As d'Artagnan's friend Planchet said:

"He [Aramis] gives you the blue devils, that is all I know. And the blue devils make people get thin. *Malaga!* I have no notion of M. d'Artagnan leaving my house thinner than when he entered it."

"How does he give me the blue devils, as you call it? Come, explain, explain." [said d'Artagnan.]

"You have had the nightmare during the last three nights."

"I?"

"Yes, those very words, upon my honor."

"Yes, you; and in your nightmare you called out, several times, 'Aramis, deceitful Aramis!'"

"Ah! I said that, did I?" murmured D'Artagnan, uneasily.

Cunning fox though he was, D'Artagnan was not able to penetrate the labyrinthine mind of Aramis...until it was too late.

How Aramis Joined the Musketeers

The story of how Aramis became a Musketeer is worth telling for the neat little example it provides of some INTP traits we've discussed previously. In the first place, it is a little revenge story--and Keirsey (1998a) notes that Rationals may "fantasize about about revenge, efficiently and poetically executed."

"I had been at the seminary from nine years old; in three days I should have been twenty. I was about to become an abbe, and all was arranged. One evening I went, according to custom, to a house which I frequented with much pleasure: when one is young, what can be expected?--one is weak. An officer who saw me, with a jealous eye, reading the LIVES OF THE SAINTS to the mistress of the house, entered suddenly and without being announced. That evening I had translated an episode of Judith, and had just communicated my verses to the lady, who gave me all sorts of compliments, and leaning on my shoulder, was reading them a second time with me. Her pose, which I must admit was rather free, wounded this officer. He said nothing; but when I went out he followed, and quickly came up with me. 'Monsieur the Abbe,' said he, 'do you like blows with a cane?' 'I cannot say, monsieur,' answered I; 'no one has ever dared to give me any.' 'Well, listen to me, then, Monsieur the Abbe! If you venture again into the house in which I have met you this evening, I will dare it myself.' I really think I must have been frightened. I became very pale; I felt my legs fail me; I sought for a reply, but could find none--I was silent. The officer waited for his reply, and seeing it so long coming, he burst into a laugh, turned upon his heel, and re-entered the house. I returned to the seminary.

"I am a gentleman born, and my blood is warm, as you may have remarked, my dear d'Artagnan. The insult was terrible, and although unknown to the rest of the world, I felt it live and fester at the bottom of my heart. I informed my superiors that I did not feel myself sufficiently prepared for ordination, and at my request the ceremony was postponed for a year. I sought out the best fencing master in Paris, I made an agreement with him to take a lesson every day, and every day for a year I took that lesson. Then, on the anniversary of the day on which I had been insulted, I hung my cassock on a peg, assumed the costume of a cavalier, and went to a ball given by a lady friend of mine and to which I knew my man was invited. It was in the Rue des France-Bourgeois, close to La Force. As I expected, my officer was there. I went up to him as he was singing a love ditty and looking tenderly at a lady, and interrupted him exactly in the middle of the second couplet. 'Monsieur,' said I, 'does it still displease you that I should frequent a certain house of La Rue Payenne? And would you still cane me if I took it into my head to disobey you? The officer looked at me with astonishment, and then said, 'What is your business with me, monsieur? I do not know you.' 'I am,' said I, 'the little abbe who reads Lives of the Saints, and translates Judith into verse.' 'Ah, ah! I recollect now,' said the officer, in a jeering tone; 'well, what do you want with me?' 'I want you to spare time to take a walk with me.' 'Tomorrow morning, if you like, with the greatest pleasure.' 'No, not tomorrow morning, if you please, but immediately.' 'If you absolutely insist.' 'I do insist upon it.' 'Come, then. Ladies,' said the officer, 'do not disturb yourselves; allow me time just to kill this gentleman, and I will return and finish the last couplet.'

"We went out. I took him to the Rue Payenne, to exactly the same spot where, a year before, at the very same hour, he had paid me the compliment I have related to you. It was a superb moonlight night. We immediately drew, and at the first pass I laid him stark dead."

"The devil!" cried d'Artagnan.

"Now," continued Aramis, "as the ladies did not see the singer come back, and as he was found in the Rue Payenne with a great sword wound through his body, it was supposed that I had accommodated him thus; and the matter created some scandal which obliged me to renounce the cassock for a time. Athos, whose acquaintance I made about that period, and Porthos, who had in addition to my lessons taught me some effective tricks of fence, prevailed upon me to solicit the uniform of a Musketeer. The king entertained great regard for my father, who had fallen at the siege of Arras, and the uniform was granted."

I would say that this was an efficiently and poetically executed revenge. Note that Aramis did not share

his feelings about the incident with anyone; rather, he kept them private. The bottled feelings festered. The INTP forgiveness system can absorb little insults and irritations without reacting, while other types immediately express their annoyance. For the most part, such irritations are forgotten and everything continues smoothly and happily. The INTP may even get a justified reputation for being calm and forbearant.

However, this strategy breaks down when an INTP is truly offended, or when the little insults and irritations repeat over a long period. At this point the forgiveness system is swamped, but the INTP still doesn't express their anger. In the darkness, the resentment burns.

At last something happens, and the dormant volcano erupts. The person the INTP explodes upon may be stunned at catastrophic force of the outpouring. If the offense is serious enough, the INTP may even seek out retribution.

Those Half-Finished Projects

Choiniere and Keirsey (1992) have noted that NTPs do not have the same single-minded focus that the NTJs do. No sooner does an NTP begin to work on a project then all their other projects cry out in siren voices, "Look over here what you are missing out on! Stop that boring project and work on me instead." NTJs don't hear these voices, and if they do, they just dismiss them. NTPs, on the other hand, spend their lives flitting from one project to another. This of course explains why INTPs have so many half-finished projects lying around.

Aramis affords us an excellent example of this trait. He spent his life swinging like a pendulum between his dual careers as a clergyman and a warrior.

[D'Artagnan said] "I was thinking, my dear old friend, that when you were a musketeer you turned your thoughts incessantly to the church, and now that you are an abbe you are perpetually longing to be once more a musketeer."
"'Tis true; man, as you know," said Aramis, "is a strange animal, made up of contradictions. Since I became an abbe I dream of nothing but battles."

When an INTP finally gets a chance to work on that big project they've been so desirous of taking on, they may suddenly find that it loses all its intrigue. And it is not merely that they suddenly grow more interested in a shiny new project; they may also grow to actively dislike the project they are "forced" to work on and shun it:

"My dear D'Artagnan," replied Aramis, "you understand, when I was a musketeer I mounted guard as seldom as I could; now when I am an abbe I say as few masses as I can..."

If you are trying to figure out why an INTP suddenly seems disinterested in a task which they were previously impassioned about, and there is no evident reason for the loss of interest, the root cause may very well be the issue above. INTPs typically have several projects or hobbies going on at once; they simply bounce around between them as they wish and the projects get worked on little by little, bit by bit. The pace at which INTPs complete these projects may be infuriatingly slow to Judging types, but they *do* get done (eventually). However, those who expect an INTP to keep up a consistent amount of interest in a project may find themselves disappointed when the INTP's first love turns to boredom, and perhaps even to contempt.

It should be noted that Aramis' hot and cold approach towards his vocations did not hinder his projects;

in fact, it provided valuable cross-training. He used the skills and knowledge he gained in each area to achieve his long range strategic objectives:

"I am made up of contradictions. What I hate to-day I adore to-morrow, and vice versa. You see that I cannot, like you, for instance, settle on any fixed plan." [said Aramis.]

"You lie, subtle one," said D'Artagnan to himself. "You alone, on the contrary, know how to choose your object and to gain it stealthily."

Aramis used the knowledge from both his careers to advance his interests. In a similar way, INTPs may find ways of combining elements of their hobbies to create entirely new systems or ideas. Theirs is a synthetic approach in which many diverse elements are drawn together into one. The NTJs, by contrast, tend to focus on just one field of knowledge or career path.

Friendship

The Three Musketeers are for being inseparable friends, as described by their slogan "All for one, and one for all." Ironically enough, while each of them would have willingly died for the others, they spent most of their time on opposite sides of the battlefield trying their hardest to defeat one another's political goals. In the second book, for example, the INTs end up supporting a revolutionary group called the Fronde while the ESPs end up supporting the monarchy. In the third book, the INTP and ESFP rebels team up against the ESTP monarchist, with the INTJ off on his own adventure.

Since we have here such a rich opportunity to study friendship, let's examine how Aramis fits into the team.

Now, the INTJs actually have the least satisfying friendships of all types (INTPs had the fourth least satisfying friendships),¹³⁶ but within this story Aramis, INTP, was the least attached member of the group.

"You really have some distrust, then?" said Porthos.

"Of Aramis, yes, since he has become an abbe. You can't imagine, my dear fellow, the sort of man he is. He sees us on the road which leads him to a bishopric, and perhaps will not be sorry to get us out of his way." [said d'Artagnan.]

"Ah, as regards Aramis, that is another thing," said Porthos, "and it wouldn't surprise me at all."

Aramis' friends would have died for him, but they were fairly sure he would take advantage of them if it would be useful to him. As for Aramis, he would have given his life up to save the others, but he trusted them even less than they trusted him. At one point d'Artagnan (deliberately and manipulatively) lamented Aramis' unwillingness to be a "true" friend:

D'Artagnan shook his head with a sorrowful expression. "Oh, friendship, friendship!" he said, "what an idle word you are! Here is a man who, if I were but to ask it, would suffer himself to be cut in pieces for my sake."

"You are right," said Aramis, nobly.

"And this man, who would shed every drop of blood in his veins for me, will not open up before me the least corner in his heart."

136 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Aramis cared about his friends, and they him, but it was a conscious, I-know-what-you're-planning-and-it's-a-good-thing-for-you-we're-friends sort of friendship. The complicated kind.

At another point in the book, Aramis describes his view of friendship to d'Artagnan. Note the characteristic INTP detachment, obscurity and the contentment to watch the world rather than interact with it.

"Dear D'Artagnan," said the prelate [Aramis], "my friendship resembles, in a degree, the solicitude of that night watch whom we have in the little tower of the mole, at the extremity of the quay. That brave man, every night, lights a lantern to direct the barks that come from sea. He is concealed in his sentry-box, and the fishermen do not see him; but he follows them with interest; he divines them; he calls them; he attracts them into the way to the port. I resemble this watcher; from time to time some news reaches me, and recalls to my remembrance all those I loved. Then I follow the friends of old days over the stormy ocean of the world, I, a poor watcher, to whom God has kindly given the shelter of a sentry-box."

The Secret Emperor

Later in his career Aramis joined the Jesuits, which Dumas paints as something of a secret society. The organization provided Aramis with both an outlet for his ambition and a way to pursue scholarship. He was "one of those men who had been initiated in all the secrets of the order, one of those for whom science has no more secrets, the society no further barriers to present—temporal obedience, no more trammels."

Aramis aspired to become the General of the Jesuits, a position described as making "one man the master of monarchs, the equal of popes" and carrying with it more wealth than the treasury of France. And Aramis was successful in attaining this position. The manner in which he became head of the society was characteristically INTP--through secret knowledge.

The current General of the Jesuits was dying. He met clandestinely with various candidates for a replacement, evaluating them on what secrets they could bring to the society. But the options proved to be disappointing. With minutes left to live, the General despaired.

Then Aramis presented himself. With calm courtesy, he provided the General with an envelope containing a message written in the General's most secret cipher--which had actually been designed by Aramis himself years ago.

After reading the paper within--and learning Aramis' plan to replace the king of France--the dying Jesuit leader made Aramis the new General.

True to type, Aramis kept his appointment a perfect secret. Here is an INTP king indeed, an anonymous, silent man controlling one of the most powerful organizations in the known world. (Once again, one is reminded of Mycroft Holmes, or perhaps Professor Moriarty, a probable INTJ.) Aramis described his newfound power in almost poetic terms:

"To a just Providence was necessary an instrument, at once penetrating, persevering, and convinced, to accomplish a great work. I am this instrument. I possess penetration, perseverance, conviction; I govern a mysterious people, who has taken for its motto, the motto of God, 'Patiens quia oeternus.'"

Though quiet and gentle-mannered, Aramis had gradually developed something of a Rational case of arrogance, and becoming General of the Jesuits didn't help matters. His face began to took on a "cold,

crafty, and imperious character." When he did reveal his rank, he did so with a kind of royal haughtiness or even open contempt for his subordinates: "And while making this sign Aramis, draped in cold and haughty majesty, had the air of an emperor giving his hand to be kissed."

Those Exact Words

Like all INTPs, Aramis appreciated the fine meanings of words and grammar. For example, in the following dialogue Aramis explains his plan to replace the king with a doppelganger to his accomplice, Monsieur Fouquet:

"I wish to see upon the throne of France a king devoted to Monsieur Fouquet, and I wish Monsieur Fouquet to be devoted to me."

"Oh!" exclaimed Fouquet, pressing his hand,—"as for being devoted to you, I am yours, entirely; but believe me, my dear D'Herblay [Aramis], you are deceiving yourself."

"In what respect?"

"The king will never become devoted to me."

"I do not remember to have said that King Louis would ever become devoted to you."

"Why, on the contrary, you have this moment said so."

"I did not say the king; I said a king."

"Is it not all the same?"

"No, on the contrary, it is altogether different."

Not *the* king--*a* king.

Aramis used another play on words later when d'Artagnan finally asked him straight to his face if he was plotting against the king. (d'Artagnan was tasked with protecting the king's life.) With total sincerity, Aramis swore perfect loyalty to the king. The other king.

Since d'Artagnan knew that Aramis wouldn't lie to him..under oath...he went away completely satisfied. It was only later that he realized what Aramis had meant.

Play close attention to what an INTP says or does not say. It may be rather important.

Grief response

Recalling Jefferson's and Frankenstein's grief, I thought it would be interesting to compare it to the grief response of Aramis. At the very end of the series one of the Musketeers dies a violent death helping Aramis escape from the vengeance of the rethrone king. This was the Aramis' response:

Aramis, silent and sad as ice, trembling like a timid child, arose shivering from the stone. ... But, though capable of standing, he was not capable of walking. It might be said that something of dead Porthos had just died within him. His Bretons surrounded him; Aramis yielded to their kind exertions, and the three sailors, lifting him up, carried him to the canoe. ... Aramis, still pale, still icy-cold, his heart upon his lips, looked, even till, with the last ray of daylight, the shore faded on the horizon. Not a word escaped him, not a sigh rose from his deep breast. The superstitious Bretons looked upon him, trembling. Such silence was not that of a man, it was the silence of a statue."

It is subsequently implied that he spent the night crying, and that this was the first time he had ever cried in his life.

As we shall see later, Jefferson's violent outburst of emotion at the death of his wife is characteristic of when the exceptionally strong but rather brittle INTP self control fails catastrophically. But Aramis did not immediately lose his impassivity or self control; instead, he fell into a stupor.

The Abbe Faria and Aramis

In the section about INTPs in prison, we will touch on the character of the Abbe Faria, a probable INTP character from the book “The Count of Monte Cristo.” Both *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* were written by Alexander Dumas, and his INTP characters share a number of interesting similarities. For example, when asked if they love someone, both replied almost word for word, “No, I am alone in the world.” Dumas, of course, had no idea about type save for his innate people instincts.

It is probable that many authors carry a set of “type templates” in their head that they use as an unconscious basis for their characters. For example, Ian Fleming tends to choose female INTPs when he needs an (ugly-variety) female villain. (I was at first unnerved by this unanticipated self-portrait!)

Where it All Went Wrong

Usually in a tragedy it is the hero's fatal flaw that does them in. Aramis' grand scheme, however, failed due to one, tiny problem. He misjudged one of his accomplices.

It was Aramis' typical practice not to let anyone in on his plans. Secretive and discreet, he was a human black hole: information flowed in, but never out. As a result, his accomplices didn't quite realize what they were getting into.

Fouquet, an ESFP and one of the richest men in the kingdom, was the one who ruined it all in the end. He and Aramis had been friends and allies for years. Fouquet had every reason to want Louis XIV replaced with a likeable doppelganger, or so Aramis assumed. The king was trying to evict Fouquet from his ministerial post; was actively trying to bankrupt him; had just had him arrested on a trumped up charge of embezzlement, and thought that Fouquet was trying to steal his mistress. Fouquet had been driven him nearly to bankruptcy and was about to lose everything. As Aramis put it, “The king, we may henceforth assume, is your powerful, implacable, and eternal enemy.”

What Aramis didn't take into account was Fouquet's indomitable sense of honor. Fouquet had given a clear example on one occasion that he preferred ruin to dishonor, but Aramis did not give this trait enough consideration in his planning. For example, to Fouquet, the code of hospitality dictated that the person of a guest was sacred. This was an unfortunate oversight—particularly since Aramis switched out the real king with the doppelganger while the king was a guest at Fouquet's house.

After exchanging the doppelganger for the real king and dropping the latter off at the Bastille prison, Aramis returned to Fouquet and cheerfully explained everything. (Rationals love to explain how they achieved their accomplishments.) Fouquet was appalled.

Right then and there, he informed Aramis that he was going to the Bastille to free the king. Aramis was equally horrified at this response.

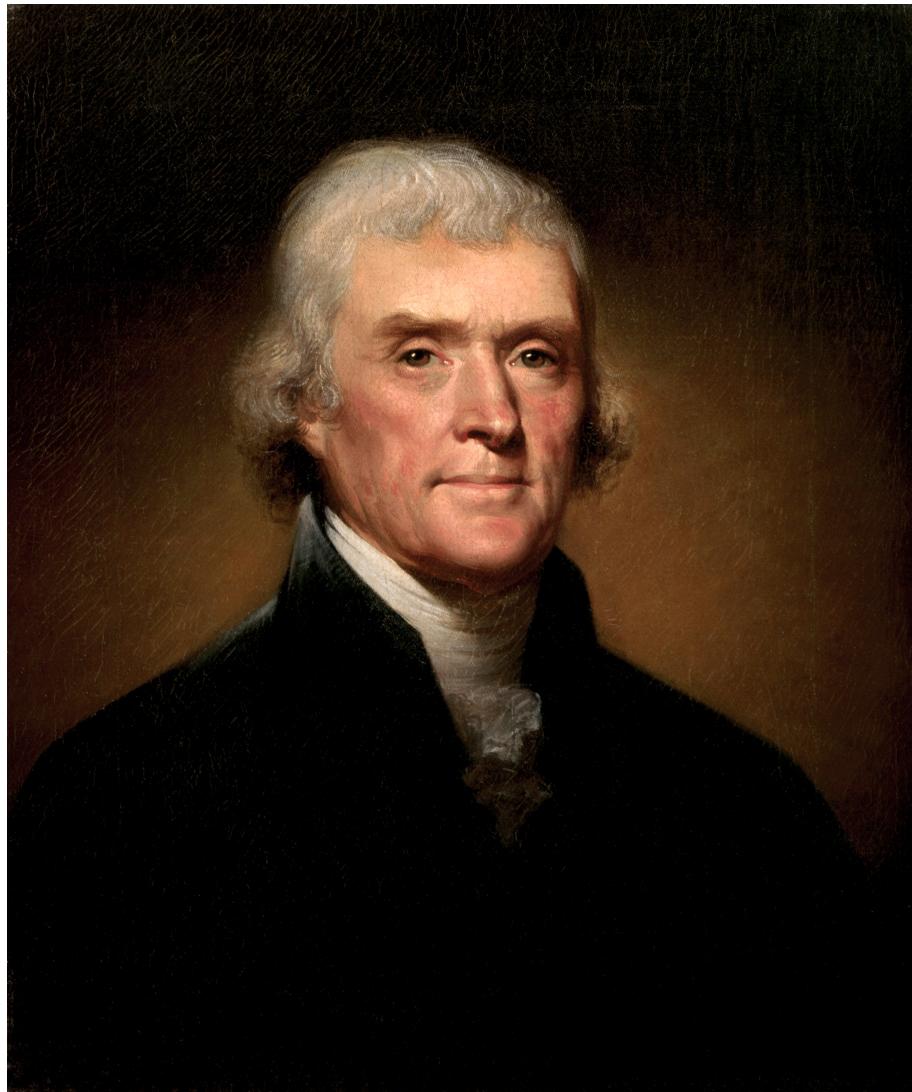
If Aramis had been a true villain, he could have salvaged his plot by having the doppelganger give orders to kill Fouquet. But Aramis had his code of honor too. He let his honorable but foolish friend

go free the king, and fled for his life. Fouquet was subsequently thrown into prison by his grateful sovereign.

But the king never did get Aramis. In fact, Aramis ended up become an ambassador for Spain, and years later he would eat at the king's table.

What brought about failure of this wonderful plot was that Aramis could not comprehend Fouquet's moral code, rooted in the chivalric tradition of honor. One tiny misjudgment. He would have been better off keeping completely quiet about the whole scheme.

9. Thomas Jefferson - 3rd President of the United States



Occupation: President

Notable Because: He wrote the Declaration of Independence and ran the USA for two terms.

Type: INTP (Best guess: INPTffse)

Among the INTPs featured in this book, Jefferson is unique because his T preference was very “soft.” Note the amount of F traits he exhibited.

Evidence for INTP

- Liked to work alone and in silence; when he was Plenipotentiary to Europe and affairs got particularly busy, he would take his work and seclude himself in a nearby monastery where it was forbidden to speak aloud within the building. He would stay there for up to a week. The

- original name for the house he built (Monticello) was “the Hermitage.” (I)
- Did not like being in the center of attention and shied away from public speaking (I)
- Described as shy, silent, private, reserved, distant, withdrawn, taciturn, impenetrable and reclusive (I)
- He always kept his library and study locked; nobody was allowed in unless Jefferson himself let them in (I)¹³⁷
- Preferred to observe, take notes, write out his ideas on paper or listen--anything rather than actually *participate* in discussions (I)
- Constantly reading; he owned ~6,000 books in his library (N)
- Wrote that it was “easier to write ten letters of business than one of the intangible affections of the mind.” (T)
- Good mathematician (Favors INT)
- One person described his first meeting with Jefferson as follows, “I found his appearance serious—nay even cold, but before I had been two hours with him, we were as intimate as if we had passed our whole lives together.”¹ (“Serious” and “cold” indicate INT. But note that it did not stay that way.)
- Observed that if he chose not go to college, then one quarter of his time would be wasted entertaining expensive company (INT emphasis on productive use of time rather than socializing.)
- Described as calm, cool, cold; having a “glacial exterior and almost eerie serenity.” (NT composure)¹³⁸
- Love for knowledge (NT)
- Founded his own university, for which he designed the curriculum (NTs place value on education)
- He studied law and associated disciplines for five years (twice as long as the normal term, but he enjoyed his studied, which were particularly broad). Became an able lawyer. (NT)
- Enjoyed chess (NT)
- Described as being a curious intellectual and as taking interest in the life of the mind (NT)
- During a romantic affair, he described how he was “Living from day to day, without a plan for four and twenty hours to come...” (P; even in love, Judgers want a plan.)
- He did not have a set bedtime; if he was reading a good book or if he had guests over who were interesting, he would stay up 3 hours later. (P flexibility)
- Made excuses for putting off writing letters to others. For example, he referred to “that sort of procrastination which so often takes place when no circumstance fixes a business to a particular time.” (Indicates P; a Judger prefer to fix their business to particular times, even if the time must be arbitrarily chosen.)
- Could not control his spending on luxury items or stick to a set budget. (P favored over J)
- It took him 54 years to finish Monticello because he kept tweaking the design; parts of the half-built house were decaying from exposure to the elements even as others were finished (P; a Judger would find this modus operandi unnatural.)¹³⁹
- Had a “distracted manner”¹⁴⁰ (Favors INP absent-mindedness)

¹³⁷ McLaughlin, 1998

¹³⁸ Ellis, 1996

¹³⁹ McLaughlin, 1998

¹⁴⁰ Ellis, 1996

- Questioned the existence of God; would not let his daughter become a nun.
- Wide variety of diverse skills (Favors NTP over NTJ)¹⁴¹
“An American, who, without ever having quitted his own country, is at once a musician, skilled in drawing, a geometrician, an astronomer, a natural philosopher, legislator, and statesman.”
- Described as a “walking encyclopaedia” by his friends (favors INTP most strongly)
- Wore clothing considered out of date by his peers. Wore the same outfits over and over, to people’s amusement. Wore mismatched styles. (INTP disregard for dress)
- Designed his own house, his own university, his own state government (INTP architectural skill)
- Created many innovative inventions (INTPs are the type most likely to be casual inventors)
- Described as mild (Favors INTPs most of all Rationals, or, favors F)
- Spoke Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian; was studying native American languages, was interested in Welsh, Arabic, and Gaelic (Favors INTP love for languages)
- Hands off parenting (INTP favored)

Evidence Against INTP

- Paid attention to details in certain areas (Favors S, particularly SJ)
- Had a “tender,” “vulnerable” disposition¹⁴² (Favors F)
- Was not bluntly truthful; for the sake of harmony, he preferred to tell people what they wanted to hear while managing to genuinely believe it himself¹⁴³ (Favors F)
- Did not take criticism objectively; considered it a personal thing¹⁴⁴ (Favors F)
- Tended to see the world in black and white moral dichotomies¹⁴⁵ (Favors INFP over INTP)
- His temperament was described as somewhat feminine (F)
- Had strong need for harmony (F)

The Effect of a “Soft T” on the INTP Personality

Jefferson affords us with a good opportunity to study one of the many variations on the INTP personality. He preferred courtesy and tact to blunt truth, and was prone to telling people what they wanted to hear. He did this quite sincerely, even when the things he said to one group of people were seemingly opposed to what he said to another. He was also very sensitive to criticism, which he took personally.

Jefferson’s portraits do not show the INT death glare; rather, they seem to exude a sort of gentle friendliness. He was definitely one of the most idealistic of the Founding Fathers, and his theories and political views were often rather naïve. Ellis (1996) has noted that some of Jefferson’s ideas had an “otherworldly, almost fairy-tale quality.” Even when the bulk of the evidence or the arguments of his friends had conclusively disproven Jefferson’s theories, he just kept right on believing in them despite any and all evidence to the contrary. All told, Jefferson was quite close to being an INFP.

141 Choiniere & Keirsey, 1992

142 Ellis, 1996

143 Ellis, 1996

144 Ellis, 1996

145 Ellis, 1996

The INTP Renaissance Man

INTPs are like information amoebae; they absorb everything that come within their voluminous grasp. In this they are unlike the NTJs, who prefer to focus strongly on one particular area of interest.¹⁴⁶ INTPs aspire to be Renaissance men and women who know about everything.

A good example of this phenomenon is Jefferson's tendency to study anything and everything rather than just a few related subjects. The variety of knowledge he accumulated can be readily seen from the following story told about him:

On one occasion, while travelling, he [Jefferson] stopped at a country inn. A stranger, who did not know who he was, entered into conversation with this plainly-dressed and unassuming traveller. He introduced one subject after another into the conversation, and found him perfectly acquainted with each. Filled with wonder, he seized the first opportunity to inquire of the landlord who his guest was, saying that, when he spoke of the law, he thought he was a lawyer; then turning the conversation on medicine, felt sure he was a physician; but having touched on theology, he became convinced that he was a clergyman. "Oh," replied the landlord, "why I thought you knew the Squire." The stranger was then astonished to hear that the traveller whom he had found so affable and simple in his manners was Jefferson.

What Would You Save From Your Burning House?

So what would an INTP save from their burning house? Jefferson thought instantly of his books. The story goes, "...the first inquiry he made of the negro who carried him the news [of the fire] was after his books. 'Oh, my young master,' [the negro] replied, carelessly, 'they were all burnt; but, ah! we saved your fiddle.'"

Makes you want to scream, doesn't it? I suspect that modern INTPs would dive back into the flames to save their computers...and Kindles. (There's something very ironic about that name.)

Jefferson was mad for books—even by INTP standards. In building his personal library, he bought some 200 books a year, or one about every two days. He haunted the bookstores of Europe: "While residing in Paris, I devoted every afternoon I was disengaged, for a summer or two in examining all the principal bookstores, turning over every book with my own hand, and putting by everything which related to America, and indeed whatever was rare and valuable in every science."

Speaking of fiddles (violins). Did you know that preferences for certain instruments are sometimes associated with personality traits? A study used the 16PF, another personality test, to ascertain that violin players tend to be more "intelligent, analytical, and experimental...with higher abstract reasoning skills" than people who preferred other instruments.¹⁴⁷ This sounds something like NTP. Note that these same individuals also preferred the saxophone. Interesting.

Farming

Looking back throughout preindustrial history, I have often found myself wondering what the lives of illiterate farming and hunting/gathering INTPs were like. How does the need to achieve and build complex systems play out in a context without technology, reading, or writing?

Jefferson's farming activities provide us with a glimpse of what this might look like. During a period of faux retirement when he thought his public work was done, Jefferson decided to focus on his

146 Choinere & Keirsey, 1992

147 Hyden in Reardon, 2009

plantation. (Not that he actually did any of the labor or even supervised everyday farm activities himself—such things bored him.)

Up till this time, he had grown tobacco, which is known to be particularly good at destroying the fertility of soil. Deciding that his land's productivity had been ruined, he spent months designing a complex seven step, seven year long system of crop rotation intended to reclaim the soil. A long term payoff indeed, but INTPs play a long game. Jefferson also decided to plant wheat instead—a relatively new choice in Virginia at the time.¹⁴⁸ Again, the INTPs is often on the cutting edge.

Jefferson also particularly enjoyed opportunities for projects that exercised his design capabilities, including his own house, a nail manufacturing facility, a flour mill, a canal, and a new threshing machine.¹⁴⁹

So here we see the Rational strategic intelligence at work in an agrarian context. The relatives of preindustrial INTPs probably complained, “Why do you have to make farming so *complicated*? ”

Jefferson and Madison (INTP) both had a mutual interest in what one early writer called “scientific farming.” Madison, for example, tested different breeds of animals and types of seeds to find out if they would be an improvement over the existing “technologies.” He would also assist those performing their own agricultural experiments. Madison's NT love for the newest gadgetry also shows through in the fact that he built the first ice house in the state, which allowed him to have ice cubes in his mint julep on hot days. Like Jefferson, Madison was what you would call an early adopter.

In their letters to each other, Jefferson and Madison described what the various improvements they were testing out. These conversations were no different, in spirit, than those of two scientists corresponding over matters of interest in their specialty field—only in this case the field was a bit more literal.

Marriage

What was Martha Jefferson's Type?

There is only scanty information available on Martha Jefferson, but it is probable that she was an NF, maybe an NT.

- Everyone liked her; she had excellent conversational skills, and was a favorite of the family when growing up (EF favored)
- Vivacity (EP favored)
- She read constantly (Very good marker for N)¹⁵⁰
- Described as angelic and saintly (NF favored)
- She preferred to read poetry and fiction (Favors NF more than NT)
- Described as having a “lively play of fancy” (NFs tend to be more fanciful than NTs)
- Described as being warm-hearted and gentle (F)
- She was a lively woman, but with a certain “asperity” of manner. Her granddaughter noted that she “had a vivacity of temper which might sometimes border on tartness” and there was one mention of how she brought up her daughter's naughtiness in a taunting manner. (T sharpness

148 Ellis, 1996

149 Ellis, 1996

150 Reardon, 2009

more favored, but this also includes a certain element of “mean.” Jefferson, a Thinker, quickly came to his daughter’s rescue in this case.)

- Danced gracefully and played a musical instrument particularly well (NFs are the most likely to play a musical instrument¹⁵¹, and dancers are also more likely to be “emotional” than average suggesting F.)
- Described as intelligent and particularly well educated (NT most favored)
- Described as witty (Favors NT slightly more than NF)

Evidence for Judging/Perceiving

- Described as having a “somewhat impulsive disposition” (P)
- Described as having excellent sense (SJ most favored)
- Neat, orderly recordkeeping (J)

“Her receipt book was written in a light, straight, somewhat stiff Italian hand, her book of family expences regularly kept, her manuscript music book with the words of songs all fairly copied out and free from blot and blemish. Things that told of neatness, order, good housewifery and womanly accomplishment.”²

So what we have here is a mishmash of traits that point weakly to NF. Let’s see if we can do anything with this mess.

For starters, I think we can fairly eliminate SPs; they don’t care for constant reading. In addition, the evidence for a Guardian is rather weak compared to that for NF and NT. Let’s start by making the assumption that she is an Idealist or Rational.

I would guess that Martha is either a “soft” Thinker or a “sharp” Feeler. The evidence for a Feeler seems somewhat stronger, particularly the description “angelic”—though this may be hyperbole on the behalf of the observer. Alternately, the “angelic” persona may simply be Martha’s public identity. This is not out of the question given that her daughter remembered a meaner streak. Still, the preference for poetry and fiction is strongly NF, as is the interest in the arts. (Note, however, that she would have also received training in the arts as part of a well-bred woman’s education.) It seems most likely that Martha was an Idealist, though perhaps not an ideally developed one.

Was Martha an Introvert or an Extravert? The word “quiet” never came up in any of the fragmentary descriptions of her. Unless someone is directly described as an Introvert, it is a good rule of thumb to assume that they aren’t. People just don’t notice what is considered normal, i.e. Extraversion. There is also the fact that she was a favorite and everyone liked her. That kind of popularity is easier for an Extravert to attain than an Introvert. I would very tentatively say that she was an Extravert, though again, this is a leap.

That leaves us with the matter of her Judging and Perceiving preference--i.e. was she an ENFJ or an ENFP? The “impetuous disposition” is a strong argument for P, but the orderliness and tidiness of her notes would indicate J. I would lean slightly towards P because many such Judging skills are often learned, slightly undermining the value of this particular J evidence. Also, vivacity and lively character are often associated with ENFPs.

Best guess? Probably an NF, maybe an ENFP. We just can’t say for certain.

Relationship

Since we don’t know much about Martha, there’s isn’t much type-based information about the specifics

¹⁵¹ Marchant-Haycox and Wilson in Reardon, 2009

of Jefferson's relationship with her. But there is plenty of evidence pointing to the fact that it was a deep and loving connection.

Although the couple's granddaughter remembered Martha's tartness of her character, she added that this flaw was not directed towards Jefferson. Rather, it "was completely subdued by her exceeding affection for him." Besides this, the granddaughter noted, "my grandfather was tenderly attached to her [Martha]." Martha also made Jefferson's home "comfortable, cheerful, pleasant, just what a good man's home should be."

Jefferson sacrificed career opportunities to stay with his wife, who was frequently ill. He twice refused the post of Plenipotentiary to Europe because he had promised his wife that he would not reenter public life for her sake. It was only after she died that he was willing to accept the post.

In her final illness, he never left her side. Their daughter noted,

As a nurse no female ever had more tenderness nor anxiety. He [Jefferson] nursed my poor mother in turn with aunt Carr and her own sister—sitting up with her and administering her medicines and drink to the last. For four months that she lingered he was never out of calling; when not at her bedside, he was writing in a small room which opened immediately at the head of her bed. A moment before the closing scene [his wife's death], he was led from the room in a state of insensibility by his sister, Mrs. Carr, who, with great difficulty, got him into the library, where he fainted, and remained so long insensible that they feared he never would revive. The scene that followed I did not witness, but the violence of his emotion, when, almost by stealth, I entered his room by night, to this day I dare not describe to myself. He kept his room three weeks, and I was never a moment from his side. He walked almost incessantly night and day, only lying down occasionally, when nature was completely exhausted, on a pallet that had been brought in during his long fainting-fit. My aunts remained constantly with him for some weeks—I do not remember how many. When at last he left his room, he rode out, and from that time he was incessantly on horseback, rambling about the mountain, in the least frequented roads, and just as often through the woods. In those melancholy rambles I was his constant companion—a solitary witness to many a burst of grief, the remembrance of which has consecrated particular scenes ... beyond the power of time to obliterate.¹

So pronounced was his grief that rumors floated around that Jefferson fainted at the sight of his children. We have a letter in which Jefferson describes this period in his life; at this point he is slightly recovered:

It found me a little emerging from the stupor of mind which had rendered me as dead to the world as was she whose loss occasioned it. Before that event my scheme of life had been determined. I had folded myself in the arms of retirement, and rested all prospects of future happiness on domestic and literary objects. A single event wiped away all my plans, and left me a blank which I had not the spirits to fill up.¹

Some less-than-enlightened internet type descriptions may lead people to believe that INTPs don't experience deep feelings. One person, upon reading such a particularly deplorable description, was moved to ask incredulously, "Are INTPs even capable of love?" Nor are these questions limited to the internet. Otis (2005) noted that several of the INTP veterans in his PTSD sample had frequently been told by their significant other that they had no feelings. This account should wipe out all doubts that INTPs are not capable of forming deep connections.

One final thing of note is that Jefferson fell in love twice before meeting his wife and once or twice more after she died. This by no means fits the stereotype of the INTP human computer. It is true that Jefferson had a soft T, but it was a T nonetheless. As we shall see, Madison too fell in love multiple times.

Founding Documents

Jefferson, INTP, wrote the Declaration of Independence and his friend Madison, also INTP, wrote the Bill of Rights. Madison is also called the Father of the Constitution for his contributions to the document.¹⁵² Jefferson wrote the document that declared America's liberty; Madison wrote the document that guaranteed America's civil liberties.

Isn't it intriguing that all three of the best known documents in United States history were written (or heavily outlined) by INTPs? The fact that the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights are both INTP products is particularly interesting in light of the fact that INTPs are the type which most values autonomy, freedom, and independence.¹⁵³

Of course, looking at the circumstances under which each document was created, there are other factors aside from personality which were responsible. Thomas Jefferson was *assigned* the task of writing the Declaration of Independence, which was considered a minor task at the time. As for the Bill of Rights, Madison added it under duress. He thought the extra protection was unnecessary, though safe.

But, digging deeper, there are some indirect personality-related factors at work. In the first place, Jefferson and Madison were *available*. Both INTPs were attracted by a cause representing independence/liberty and by the opportunity to design a new and improved society free of monarchical government. Then too, there is the fact that INTPs enjoy writing the most of all the Rationals.¹⁵⁴ In fact, only the INTPs and ENTPs perceived writing as a particularly enjoyable pastime. So both the cause and the skillset preferentially attracted INTPs.

Given the connection between INTPs and the values of autonomy, freedom, and independence, I pose this question for further thought: are strong civil liberties associated with a healthy, empowered INTP population?

Whatever the case may be, I think INTPs should get presents on Independence Day.

An INTP President

Jefferson wrote, "I have no ambition to govern men. It is a painful and thankless task."

Jefferson didn't really want to be President—he wanted to stay home in Monticello and read. But his friend Madison had other plans.

In those days campaigning was considered a somewhat vulgar activity; gentlemen politicians remained at home and let the masses choose as they might. In fact, Jefferson never declared that he wished to be considered for the Presidency. He remained sequestered in Monticello and barely acknowledged the fact that he was being promoted by Madison, who was something like his self-appointed campaign manager. Madison himself neglected to inform Jefferson of his activities, and although Jefferson *was* aware of said activities, he turned a blind eye.

Madison's first attempt to elect Jefferson was met with failure (Jefferson only made vice president under Adams) but he tried again, this time with success. Jefferson mumbled his way through an eloquent inaugural address, and became President. Madison became Jefferson's secretary of state.

¹⁵² The Constitution was actually *written*—in handwriting—by a probable ETP named Gouverneur Morris, who hated Madison's guts.

¹⁵³ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

¹⁵⁴ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

So, how does an INTP deal with the busy office of the Presidency? Simple: Jefferson spent 10 hours a day at his desk and never appeared in public. Ever. What about meetings? Jefferson had a solution for that too: he avoided convening his cabinet. He did so only when it was absolutely necessary, otherwise preferring to keep things as much as possible on a one-on-one basis.¹⁵⁵

Like most INTP leaders, Jefferson adopted a hands off approach. He preferred to work through his department heads--in writing. They wrote down their decisions on matters and presented a daily report to him; he reviewed their reports and sent back written replies. In this way, he could focus on the big picture while avoiding hands on management and human interaction. So heavily did Jefferson rely on written communication—group decision-making was something like an exercise in editing documents—that his presidency is the best-documented term from that era: a historian's dream come true.

Jefferson's political agenda was to reduce the size, influence, and prestige of the government. He got rid of federal taxes entirely, reduced the size of the military, and attacked the bureaucracy. He stripped the office of the president of its pretentious aristocratic trappings and set the tone for a more egalitarian, simple and spartan government. Later, he was later a proponent of states' rights. Essentially, he mistrusted centralized power and overt control of all kinds and wanted to shrink the government as much as possible.

However, his Presidency is remembered mainly for the Louisiana Purchase. As Choiniere and Keirsey have noted, he had to “bend the rules” a bit to make the purchase. But then, INTPs are one of the least rule conscious types, aren't they?¹⁵⁶

After Jefferson had finished his two terms, he passed the Presidency over to Madison. We'll look at him next.

155 Ellis, 1996

156 McPherson & Hindmarch, 2004

10. James Madison - 4th President of the United States



The Father of the Constitution gives you the INT death glare.

Occupation: President

Notable Because: He framed the Constitution of the United States and ran the country for two terms.

Type: INTP

Evidence for INTP

- Closedmouthness (I)
“In Convention debate his lips were never unsealed except to some member, who happened to sit near him...”
- Described as silent, retiring, shy, withdrawn (I)
- Spoke very softly (I)
- Had a large circle of acquaintances, but only a few close friends (I)
- Described as a “reclusive bookworm”¹ (INT)
- Described as being serious, somber, and grave (NT)
“...he seems never to have been a young man”²
“The sombre of his life was due partly, no doubt, to natural temperament...”²
- Known for personal integrity, unbiased viewpoint (NT)
Jefferson wrote of Madison, “I do not know a man in the world of purer integrity, more disinterested...”
- His letters were clear, precise and terse, when not written in pedantic academese (NT)
- Described as a “scientific farmer” (NT)
- Played chess (a favorite NT game)
- His favorite pastime was reading (INT)

- Reserved body language (NT)
“He did not gesticulate in ordinary conversation, but did when telling an amusing story.”
- Described as calm, composed, serene (NT)
- Terse (NT)
- Noted for being extremely logical (NT)
- Described as philosophical (NT)
- Wore the same style and color of clothing over and over (INT fashion)
- Had messy personal library (NTP)
“From the front hall the curved oaken staircase led upstairs to the bedrooms and the library, the latter not only lined with bookcases, but the centre so filled with them that there was only just room enough to pass among them. Books and pamphlets were piled up everywhere, on every available chair and table...”
- Unassertive (INTP favored over INTJ)
- Did not state his own opinions; instead he gave information and let people draw logical conclusions about his views from it. (INTP favored over INTJ)
- Had a broad range of interests rather than a narrowly focused area of study. (INTP favored over INTJ)
- Egalitarian tendencies; when passing a black man on the road who tipped his hat, Madison did likewise, surprising his companion. (INTP favored over INTJ)

General

Madison was a quiet, gentle INTP noted for his strong moral character. And not only was he possessed of the NT virtue of strict justice, but also many virtues more commonly associated with other temperaments: kindness, gentleness, amiability, mercy, and a forgiving nature.

One of the most striking characteristics of Madison was his even temper. He was noted for being calm and amiable under the most trying circumstances, and he had seemingly infinite patience with others. Though sorely pressed during the War of 1812, he never once lost his temper, and a historian who met him observed that: “Checkered by the inevitable vicissitudes of war, its trials never disturbed the composure of the commander-in-chief, always calm, consistent and conscientious, never much elated by victory or depressed by defeat, never once by the utmost emergencies of war, betrayed into a breach of the constitution. Exposed to that licentious abuse which leading men in free countries with an unshackled press cannot escape, his patience was never exhausted; nor his forbearance deprived of dignity by complaint, retort, or self-defence, but in the quiet serenity of rectitude, he waited on events with uninterrupted confidence.” Madison turned the other cheek, and more: later he even praised his critics, to the shock of listeners.

Although some Rationals are arrogant, most are modest about their achievements and do not boast or hold lessers in contempt. Madison, in addition to this, did not even want those low intelligence to feel their shortcomings. One acquaintance remarked, “With the less intelligent of these [visitors], he seemed anxious to veil his superiority, and by kindness and affability, to elevate them to a feeling of equality with himself.”

As Madison grew older, his already mild temperament grew downright mellow. Acquaintances were stunned at how the much-attacked Madison never held grudges. NTs are one of the temperaments given to revenge when criticized, but this characteristic was not at all in evidence in Madison's later

character. Further, he was not at all given to speaking ill of others—a surprising achievement considering how good Rationalists are at clever criticism. This was, of course, in his later years. In his early years he was much more feisty, though still remarkably even tempered in comparison to his compatriots.

Madison and Jefferson were the best of friends. John Quincy Adams described this INTP – INTP partnership by saying, “Mr. Madison was the intimate, confidential, and devoted friend of Mr. Jefferson, and the mutual influence of these two mighty minds upon each other is a phenomenon, like the invisible and mysterious movements of the magnet in the physical world, and in which the sagacity of the future historian may discover the solution of much of our national history not otherwise easily accountable.” Paul Jennings, Madison’s body servant, recollects, “While Mr. Jefferson was President, he and Mr. Madison (then his Secretary of State) were extremely intimate; in fact, two brothers could not have been more so.”

Marriage

Madison’s relationship with his wife Dolley (ESFP, see below) was something like a love story between the school nerd and the prom queen. They had a happy marriage that lasted some forty years.

Dolley Madison

- Loved having company over (E)
- Liked to be constantly surrounded by friends (E)
- Liked to be admired, but not extravagant (ESs are the group that most values prestige)¹⁵⁷
- Described as having “a desire to please, and a willingness to be pleased” (F)
- Described as kind (F)
- Friendly; sought harmony in relationships, sympathetic (F)
“Always amiable and conciliatory in dealing with friends or slaves, Mrs. Madison’s popularity grew day by day. Her politeness was that which comes from the heart, and cannot be imitated by those who have not the love and sympathy ready to be called forth at all times.”
- People pleasing, easily hurt feelings (F)
“Her inordinate love of pleasing, of making everyone happy about her, was called insincerity, and even ‘toadyism’ by those who did not know the absolute pain given to the loving, faithful heart by an unkind word, or censure of herself, or the dearly loved friends, whose troubles were all taken upon her sympathetic shoulders.”
- Could not bear to be around interpersonal conflict (F)
“Having a great dislike to hot argument, or contention of any kind that might wound the feelings of others, she would quietly leave the room for a few moments, returning to find the hint taken and the peace restored.”
- She would willingly borrow her belongings, both clothes and personal possessions, to acquaintances (SP generosity)¹⁵⁸
- Had no taste for study or reading (SP most favored)
- Had no fondness for the strictly plain Quaker lifestyle she was raised in; secretly wore forbidden jewelry as a child (SP most favored)
- Described as exhibiting gayety, playfulness (SP)
- Described as tolerant (favors P)

157 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

158 Keirsey, 1998a

- Flexible: “The power of adaptation was a life-giving principle in her nature” (P)
- Preferred a casual, informal atmosphere. (P)
“The forms and ceremonials which rendered Mrs. Washington’s and Mrs. Adams’ drawing rooms dull and tiresome were laid aside, and no stiffness of any kind was permitted.”
- Described as having a sunny, optimistic disposition (Fits ESFP best of all Artisans)

Dolley Madison seems to have been an ESFP. An idea of her social rank and popularity is provided by this description of her: “She was said to be, during Mr. Madison’s administration, the most popular person in the United States.”

What did Dolley see in her 43 year old INTP husband, who was 17 years older than her and generally considered to be an “irreclaimable old bachelor”?

She seemed to delight in his moral character and high personal standards, both of which are typically INTP, though not in the degree to which Madison possessed them. Lamenting his death, she described “that consistency, symmetry, and beauty of character in all its parts, which rendered his own transcendent as a whole and worthy of the best aspirations.” She also appreciated his “enduring goodness” and noted that “he left me many pledges of his confidence and love.” In her letters to Madison, she addressed him as “my beloved” and “my darling husband.”

For her part, Dolley was “always a great friend and support to her husband.” Dolley’s grand-niece tells the story that, “The serious, thoughtful Madison, physically weak, and harassed and worried by the many cares crowding upon him … often said that a visit to his wife in her sitting room, where he was sure of a bright story and a good laugh, was as refreshing as a long walk.” Madison missed his wife’s presence when she was away. He wrote to her, “Everything around and within reminds me that you are absent, and makes me anxious to quit this solitude.”

While Dolley handled all the couple’s social duties with ESFP style, Madison managed the business side of Montpelier (his family estate) and spent his “free time” working or reading books.

The couple stood by each other in sickness and in health, a vow which was much more apt to be tested in those days than now. When Dolley fell ill, she wrote, “Here I am on my bed, with my dear husband sitting anxiously by me, who is my most willing nurse.” She herself also nursed her husband during his long illnesses, remaining constantly at his side.

Remember how Thomas Jefferson’s books were left to burn in the fire? There was no such problem with Dolley around. After Madison’s death, the now-elderly widow began compiling and publishing his papers. One day an arsonist lit her house on fire as she was sleeping in her upstairs bedroom. A servant raced into her smoke-filled room to save her--but she wouldn’t agree to go unless he saved Madison’s papers. Once the servant had grabbed them, she allowed herself to be rescued. He picked her up, rushed down the burning staircase and fled outside to safety.

Does your spouse know what you want saved? Would she risk her life for it?

Like Jefferson, Madison fell in love more than once. Before marrying Dolley, he was interested in two other women. Note that Madison didn’t have to remain a bachelor in a day and age where love was often subordinate to more practical concerns. The real reason he remained single was that he had that “closet romantic” streak sometimes characteristic of Rationals; if he would not marry for love, then he would not marry at all. Dolley’s choice to marry Madison seems to have been more pragmatic than romantic, but by all appearances she came to love him in return.

Somber vs. Playful

James Madison was one of those *Rationals* who seemed to have no sense of humor. The fact that he dressed almost entirely in black probably did little to dispel this illusion. But he *did* have a sense of humor--once you got to know him.

Keirsey (1998a) has noted that *Rationals* can look a lot like *Artisans* if they cut loose. One observer of Madison noted that, "he did not laugh boisterously, but there is good evidence that in circles of intimate friends he sometimes gave way to unrestrained facetiousness and set his hearers into roars of laughter." His sense of humor was not the acerbic bite often characteristic of *NTs*; rather, he was notable for his gentle wit, "always without a sting."

Another person noted, "He was a silent, grave man, whose nature was relieved by a vein of quaint, quiet humor, which, in his moments of relaxation, gave an inexpressible charm to his presence."

In fact, Madison's introverted charm turned on and off depending on whether or not there were strangers present. A guest noted of Madison, "this entertaining, interesting and communicative personage, had a single stranger or indifferent person been present, would have been mute, cold and repulsive."

Old Age

Madison lived into his eighties. He remained sharp as ever and continued to closely follow political developments. Paul Jennings, Madison's personal servant, "his mind was bright, and with his numerous visitors he talked with as much animation and strength of voice as I ever heard him in his best days."

As one of the most self reliant types, INTPs dread the thought of becoming dependent upon others. They may continue doing things for themselves beyond the point where it would perhaps be wise—Jefferson continued his daily horse rides, and modern INTPs may continue to drive. On the plus side, INTPs are quite simply incapable of allowing their minds to sink into inactivity during their latter years. Madison was well informed and sometimes contributed his voice to important issues of the day. He remained cheerful in spite of everything, right up till very near the very end of his life.

An INTP President – Part II

Just as the Louisiana Purchase was the memorable event in Jefferson's presidency, so the War of 1812 was the memorable event in Madison's presidency. In fact, at the time, the War of 1812 was called "Mr. Madison's War"--deprecatingly.

The War of 1812 was unique in that it was the first war that America had declared. The conflict, which is enshrined in the lyrics of "The Star-Spangled Banner," was incited by the British practices of kidnapping and conscripting American sailors ("impressment") and seizing American cargo. At that time England was locked in its own conflict with Napoleon; hence the need for men.

It was a disastrous war in just about every way you can imagine. For starters, the British had superior land and sea forces while the American military was enfeebled (Jefferson was partially to thank for this). The invading British army burned the capital and the White House. There was widespread incompetence in the military leadership. The states were divided and the British encouraged disunion. America suffered defeat after defeat after defeat.

The war finally ended when Britain resolved its troubles with Napoleon and had no more reason to impress American sailors. At this point the two countries made peace, but the news of the treaty took awhile to cross the Atlantic, and in the meantime Andrew Jackson achieved a spectacular victory in the Battle of New Orleans. The timing of the events was perfect: just after news of the battle hit, the news of the peace treaty arrived. “Hahaha, we showed them!” said Americans. Madison's popularity soared, and he became the most popular president since Washington up till that time.¹⁵⁹

Historically, however, Madison is not remembered for his skillful handling of the War of 1812. How much of the blame he actually deserves is debatable; for instance, the army was small and unprepared, but Madison had previously asked Congress to provision and expand it. Likewise, Madison had asked his Secretary of War to prepare defenses for the capitol, but the man ignored his orders. Two things that Madison has been criticized for are his lack of charisma in rousing support for the war and his light-handed approach towards Congress.¹⁶⁰

Madison did not attempt to coerce or persuade either the people or the legislature to support his recommendations for the conduct of the war. In the first place, he had assumed that since the people elected their own representatives, they ought to support the decisions of those representatives--right? Haha. He was keenly aware of public opinion and its beneficial effect on the war effort, but he did not try to manipulate it through inspirational speeches as modern Presidents do.

As for the Congress, Madison did not pressure the body as much as he might have. He would provide an objective summary of the benefits attending a certain action, then leave the decision up to them. He could have taken a more forceful stance if he had chosen—his personal correspondence was much more blunt and nonobjective—but he believed that the President should refrain from such coercion. To do otherwise would result in an unsafe increase in executive power, and Madison did not want to set that precedent.

This tendency towards noncontrol was also in line with his INTP personality. One of the things that differentiates INTPs from INTJs is that INTPs present information while INTJs present opinions. In a particularly dramatic example of this tendency, Madison did not even ask Congress to declare war on Britain; rather, he merely presented them with a list of grievances the British had committed and suggested that they decide how to act. (This was characteristic of all his communications.)

While Madison has been criticized for his seeming unassertiveness, there is another side of the coin to consider.

After the war, the head of a committee of citizens told Madison, “Power and national glory, Sir, have often before, been acquired by the sword; but rarely without the sacrifice of civil or political liberty.” The committee praised him for how he had “wielded an armed force of fifty thousand men, aided by an annual disbursement of many millions, without infringing a political, civil, or religious right.” Madison's unshakeable support for civil liberties in the face of vicious criticism was in stark contrast to the Alien and Sedition Acts that had been used to quell dissent during John Adams' presidency. Put within a modern context, Madison would have dropped dead before supporting the Patriot Act.

In those days there was little precedent for strong civil liberties or democracy, but plenty of precedent for suppressing them. Another leader might have been tempted towards a different course than the one Madison took. It is perhaps a good thing after all that Madison chose to remain respectfully unassertive throughout the war.

159 McCoy, 1989

160 Hoffman, 2010

Conclusion

Washington was in office two terms, then came Adams (one term), Jefferson (2 terms), and Madison (2 terms). From the year 1801 to 1817—16 years straight—the United States was run by type INTP.

Like Madison, the next INTP leader we will look at was also known for his high moral character and personal integrity. He was also one of Hitler's closest friends.

11. Albert Speer – Nazi Minister of Armaments



Occupation: Architect, Minister of Armaments and War Production

Notable Because: He managed German war production during WWII.

Type: INTP

Other: I.Q. 128 by the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Test, Adult Form-I.

Father: Probable ITJ

Mother: Probable ES

Evidence For INTP

- Described as reserved, reticent, silent, shy, untalkative (I)
- After coming home from a long day's work, he would be silent from exhaustion (I; this is characteristic of an introvert with their batteries drained)
- Interested in art, drama, literature, philosophy (N)
- Attending his first Hitler rally, Speer was impressed by Hitler's respectability, calm demeanor, and modesty¹⁶¹ but later turned off by Goebbel's frothing emotionalistic approach. (NT - They value calmness and self-control more than most types)
- Described as sober, dispassionate, and unemotional (NT)
- Described as haughty, arrogant (NTs often favored)
- Complained about the "endless trivialities about the family lives of others" that he had to put up with in social gatherings (NT)

¹⁶¹ Hitler realized that to impress the academic community Speer was attending, he would have to tone down his fanatic NF style to match his audience's tastes.

- Direct in manner (NT bluntness)
- Never talked about his feelings save for in an analytical sense (NT)
- Unimpressed by the low intellectual level of a local chapter of the Nazi party (NT)
- Future oriented; included "ruin value" into his concepts of buildings, i.e. how good they would look as ruins thousands of years later (NT farsightedness)
- Described his feelings toward technology in terms of "passion" and "intoxication" (NT technology love)
- Described as skeptical (NT)
- Speculated that his personal temperament was most akin to the element of water or snow; he viewed the latter as being a "cold, inanimate" element.¹⁶² (NT most favored.)
- Was upset when he learned that several of his important Nazi coworkers were gifted actors and that they could easily fake their emotions (INT guilelessness)
- Knack for statistics in youth (INT math talent)
- Was the best mathematician in his school; wanted to study math, but was convinced otherwise by his architect father. Became an architect instead. (INT)
- Described as having a "free and easy manner"¹⁶³ (P favored)
- Winged a major construction project without making a plan (P)
- Urged a philosophy of "organized improvisation" (improvisation is a P trait)
- Described as informal and casual (P)
- Didn't care much about his personal appearance; liked to wear civilian clothing rather than the Nazi party uniform, though he was supposed to wear it for work.¹⁶⁴ (P)
- Preferred to seal a major business deal with a simple handshake rather than a signed contract (P)

Evidence for INTP

- Grades were not the best possible, except in mathematics (INT, but favors "lazier" INTP more)
- Described as "indifferent to people and reality"¹⁶⁵ (Favors INTPs most of all types.)
- Described as "decidedly unconventional"¹⁶⁶ (Description favors INTP males, but not INTJ males)¹⁶⁷
- Described as a "brilliant idler"¹⁶⁸ (INTP favored over INTJ)
- Content with a modest house (INTP disinterest in worldly surroundings)
- Though raised in a glitzy upper class lifestyle, Speer preferred modest, simple, even spartan surroundings and consistently avoided ostentation. (Favors INTP; they tend to be detached from worldly things)
- Described as having little interest in rewriting some notes that he was forced to destroy while in prison (INTPs, more than most other types, have no interest in redundant review/recreation of already processed conclusions.)
- Described as independent, autonomous (Favors INTP most of all types.)
- Rebelled against upper class upbringing; lacked a sense of aristocracy (INTP rebellious youth, egalitarianism)

¹⁶² Speer, 1976

¹⁶³ Fest, 1999

¹⁶⁴ Fest, 1999

¹⁶⁵ Wolters in Fest, 1999

¹⁶⁶ Wolters in Fest, 1999

¹⁶⁷ Thorne and Gough, 1991

¹⁶⁸ Fest, 1999

- Frequently received the most demerits in class (SP naughtiness or INTP rebellion)
- Exhibited an egalitarian treatment of his subordinates that was at odds with expectations to treat people by their rank and position¹⁶⁹ (Favors INTP over INTJ)
- Described as friendly, good natured, easy going (INTP favored over more cool INTJ)
- Said of himself, "I was by nature hardworking, but I always needed a fresh *impulse* to develop new talents and rally fresh energy." (This is a Perceiving trait, favors INTP)
- Unaware of surroundings: "...Hitler saw me standing in the second rank. He interrupted his solemn ceremonial to extend his hand to me. I was so overwhelmed by this unusual sign of favor that I let my own hand, raised in salute, fall with a loud smack on the bald head of Julius Streicher, the Gauleiter of Franconia, who stood just in front of me." (INT)
- When he got home exhausted from a long day's work he felt himself to be behaving with *unnatural rigidity* (INT, favors INTP liking for flexibility)
- Preferred to remain a freelance architect, outside of the Nazi party's bureaucracy (INTPs value autonomy more than INTJs)
- Detached (Favors INTP most of all types)
"I have never fully belonged anywhere."
- Fell in love at age 17; announced he would marry at 18 (unfortunate INTP tendency to marry the first suitable person who comes along.)

Albert Speer (pronounced Shpeer) was put on trial at Nuremberg for crimes committed during World War II--though he denied knowledge of the Holocaust. The court found him guilty of the former War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, but innocent of involvement in the Holocaust. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

But that's the short version. Many doubts have been raised about Speer's actual guilt. Was he lying about his ignorance of the Holocaust? How much did he actually know?

Books have been written about these questions, but to my knowledge no one has ever scrutinized Speer's actions from a type-based perspective. In this section we will examine several interesting aspects of Speer's life and also attempt to probe at this unsolved mystery.

Perhaps you think of war criminals as dislikeable or unfriendly. In fact, they are often decent and quite pleasant on a personal level--ordinary folks, really. I'm not kidding. You'd be surprised what ordinary folks are capable of.

Like many war criminals, Speer was essentially a nice guy except for the obvious; people found him friendly though aloof. He had an ordinary youth, even for an INTP. Like many of the type, he excelled mathematically, though his grades weren't as high as they could have been if he had tried. With an I.Q. of 128, he was the best mathematician in his school and had a knack for statistics that expressed itself in tracking his own demerits. Speer intended to become a mathematician (a time-honored INTP pastime) but his father talked him out of it and convinced him to become an architect instead (also a time-honored INTP pastime.) He dealt with the drudgery of school by paying his classmates to do the tedious actual-carrying-out-of-the-work while he came up with the ideas for how the work should be done.

Speer was basically disinterested in politics until one day Hitler came to speak at his university. We are used to seeing Hitler, a disturbed ENFP, screaming at a frenzied crowd, but that was only one of the

¹⁶⁹ Fest, 1999

roles he could play. Hitler showed up at Speer's school in a nice suit and spoke calmly, quietly, and soberly about the future of the country. It was a speech tailored for Rationalists, i.e. the university crowd. Speer was open to this approach and listened with ears peeled; as the speech progressed, Hitler became more animated, more magnetic, more urgent. It was a moving experience.

Here we see an intriguing phenomenon. One would think that INTPs would be more resistant than most to the charm and magnetism of unscrupulous NFs. But in fact they may be among the more susceptible types. Speer noted, "...his [Hitler's] South German charm reminded me agreeably of my native region. A cool Prussian could never have captivated me that way." It was Hitler's very NF warmth and charm that drew Speer in like an iron filing to a magnet. Speer observed, "[I was] becoming a follower of Hitler, whose magnetic force had reached out to me the first time I saw him and had not, thereafter, released me. His persuasiveness, the peculiar magic of his by no means pleasant voice, the oddity of his rather banal manner, the seductive simplicity with which he attacked the complexity of our problems--all that bewildered and fascinated me. I knew virtually nothing about his program. He had taken hold of me before I had grasped what was happening." Hitler had a magnetic effect on almost everybody, but on this INTP his Idealist magic must have been positively compelling. It may be that such NFs present a peculiar trap for the Rational.

After the speech was over, the shaken Speer drove off and went for a long walk in the woods to think things over in solitude. Shortly thereafter, he decided to join the Nazi party--not for the politics, but for Adolf Hitler himself.

Speer began helping out at Nazi rallies here and there, lending his car to drive officials around. Since he was an architect, he began doing volunteer work decorating and designing for the party. The German economic situation was lousy at this time, and there was no work for him anyway.

One day, while visiting the office of a fellow party member, Speer noticed a design for a rally lying on the official's desk. As he puts it, "The designs outraged both my revolutionary and my architectural feelings." The official gave him permission to redesign the decorations.

Speer's design introduced the distinctive tall, narrow banners that are so iconic of the Nazi rallies. The layout was a smash hit.¹⁷⁰ Bigger and better commissions began floating Speer's way. At last he was given the job to help renovate the Chancellor's residence, i.e. Hitler's own house.

During the construction, Speer and Hitler got to know one another. Speer was impressed by Hitler's simplicity, friendliness and unpretentious manners. Eventually Hitler invited Speer to dinner; this was to be the start of a long friendship. Later, at the Nuremberg trial, Speer said, "If Hitler had had any friends at all, I certainly would have been one of his close friends."

While ENFPs have tons of "friends," they have only a few deep, intimate friends. Hitler was incapable of loving other creatures (all the love had been beaten out of him by his father during childhood), but he could produce a good enough facsimile to get by in life. It seems that Hitler too felt that magnetic NF/NT "click" that Speer sensed at the rally.

Many onlookers wonder what the warm, vivacious NFs can possibly see in their sober, silent and cool Rational friends and spouses. Even the INTPs themselves wonder about it; Speer never really understood what Hitler saw in him. As he explains, "Hitler had undoubtedly taken a special liking to me, although I was by nature reticent and not very talkative... ...Given the way that Hitler so often

170 Speer would later introduce the characteristic eagle with wings outstretched behind Hitler, and the "light architecture" created with rows of anti-aircraft spotlights pointed straight up to create phantasmic pillars of light around an assembled crowd.

acted in a purely intuitive way, why he took to me so warmly remains a mystery."

Of course, looking at it from a type based perspective we know that NFs can be fascinated by INTPs' strong principles, unflappable demeanor, coolheadedness and self discipline. The author Isak Dinesen spoke of this idea eloquently when describing her friendship with her native Somali servant, a man of differing "race, sex, religion, milieu [background] and experience." Dinesen notes about their friendship, which she considers an example of a "Unity," that, "In order to form and make up a Unity, in particular a creative Unity, the individual components must needs be of different nature, they should even be in a sense contrasts. Two homogeneous units will never be capable of forming a whole, or their whole at its best will remain barren... A hook and an eye are a Unity, a fastening; but with two hooks you can do nothing. A right-hand glove with its contrast the left-hand glove makes up a whole, a pair of gloves; but two right-hand gloves you throw away." Dinesen felt that the very reward in her friendship came from the fact that she and her servant were so very different. Cicero observed, "Friends are not infrequently the complements, rather than the likenesses, of each other."

But going beyond the obvious IT-EF divide, there was a more subtle similarity: the NP-NP match up. Speer and Hitler bonded over mutual intuitive interests in art, architecture and the classics. They carried out hours long sessions of intuitive conversation dwelling on the possibilities of the future and how their mutual plans would shape the world in gigantic ways. Both despised bureaucracy.

Lastly, there is also the Rational drive for achievement to consider on Speer's side. After many years of discouragement and frustration as he tried and failed to find architectural work during Germany's depression years, Speer wrote, "After years of frustrated efforts I was wild to accomplish things--and twenty-eight years old. For the commission to do a great building, I would have sold my soul like Faust. Now I had found my Mephistopheles. He seemed no less engaging than Goethe's." Speer's Mephistocles, of course, was Hitler. Curiously enough, Faust was also a Rational.

Building the Chancellery: A Perceiver Approach

The plans that Speer and Hitler came up with were truly enormous—they outsized the pyramids. But from a type perspective, the most interesting building Speer designed was the Chancellery.

The Chancellery is sort of like the German version of the White House. Some five years after attaining power, Hitler decided that the current Chancellery was "fit for a soap company" and asked Speer to replace it with something better in *less than a year and a half*. (Contrast this with the 50+ years Jefferson tinkered with Monticello.) Speer agreed to have the building completed in a year—an astoundingly crunched deadline. He later recalled this agreement as the most thoughtless promise of his life.

Being a true Perceiver, Speer noted, "I decided to forgo any complicated organizational plan and schedule, since these would only have revealed that the project could not possibly be carried out within the time limit." In short, he *winged* the construction of the most important governmental building in the country.

Speer achieved the deadline simply by guessing what things would take the longest to obtain and then getting them started right away. One item that would take a long time to prepare was a set of hand-knotted rugs. He ordered rugs of various colors and sizes, then later designed rooms that fit the look and dimensions of the rugs. A novel approach.

But, buildings were not the only thing this INTP was good at.

The Empire Builders

Let's take a side trip into the world of computer games. Chris Bateman, an MBTI-knowledgeable game designer, hypothesized the existence of nine types of players. Bateman (2007) described the "Manager" type, which he associated with the NT temperament, as follows: "The strategic-minded Manager is a complexity-seeking player. Games with many rules, including both strategy games, and certain cRPGs, are the mainstay of such a player, although adventure games will also be enjoyed by many. ...[The Manager] seeks the satisfaction of knowledge or mastery, expressed through the feeling of contentment. They can rack up serious hours on the games they really love."

In the past, Rationals enjoyed chess. Now they enjoy vast, complicated MMOs, tabletop games such as Warhammer 40K, simulations of empire building and warring such as Sim City, Ages of Empires, and Civilization. Business building, city building, state building, empire building; the defense of a civilization against outside aggressors; tough problem solving and efficient solutions: These things constitute the attraction of such games for Rationals.

So what would happen if a Rational got the chance to play such a game in real life? Would they be good at it? Could they really build and defend their own empire, just like in a game? Many a Rational has undoubtedly pondered these questions as they entered their seventh consecutive hour of gameplay.

Albert Speer had the opportunity to do just that. First, he got the chance to play Sim City with Berlin, rearranging the roads, rails and buildings and adding various monuments. Those of you who have played Ages of Empires will be familiar with the term "Wonder."¹⁷¹ Speer's plans for the Nuremberg Stadium outsized the pyramid of Cheops and the Circus Maximus; they included a statue which was taller than the Statue of Liberty.

Later, he was appointed as the German Minister of Armaments and War Production, a position which basically allowed him to control the production of tanks, planes, bombs, ammunition and a huge variety of other goods for the entire Third Reich and its captured territories. He controlled a budget of billions and managed some 28 million people; for a short period it even seemed likely that he would succeed Hitler.

Speer was great at increasing armaments production. Absolutely great. Even as the Allies practically poured bombs on Germany, production of armaments just kept on increasing. Later one of the Allied commanders observed, "Had I known what this man was achieving, I would have sent out the entire American Eighth Air Force merely to put him underground." (Of course, it should be noted that for most of the war the Allies were not directing their attentions at specific nerve centers of industry—which they later did—but at general targets, regardless of their importance to the German war industry. This undoubtedly gave the Speer extra breathing room; nevertheless, the fact that production went up as Germany went south represents an accomplishment.)

The job of keeping industry running during the war was uniquely suited to Speer's INTP talents. I doubt if any other type could have done better—not even the INTJs. But types are masters at systems design, but Perceivers are better at improvisation. As Germany crumbled, the situation became less and less controllable; when there are no reliable events that can be depended upon, the planful approach fails, while improvisation succeeds. Speer's unofficial motto was "organized improvisation." He didn't invent the term, but he carried it out in his ministry. When the Allies bombed a major bastion of German paperwork, Speer sent out an ironic memo stating that the ministry could not always rely on

¹⁷¹ A huge, expensive monument that allows you to win the game provided that it stands for a certain period of time.

such strokes of good fortune to cut through the bureaucracy.

How far would a Rational go to win such a game? Speer was, by all appearances, a normal, healthy INTP. But he was eventually sentenced to twenty years imprisonment for enslaving workers in his factories. Speer wasn't too keen on using slave labor (he thought it reduced efficiency for various reasons) but he didn't resign over the issue either—in fact, he “inherited” slaves directly upon taking the job.

Speer wanted to win the war, and to him the urgency of the end goal justified the means--or so he believed at the time. His desire for achievement and the addiction of playing a giant game of Sim City with captured Europe kept him hooked to his job in spite of the objectionable methods to which he became a party.

Moral Questions

While imprisoned, Speer noted in his journal, “The cheap moralizing that has become a kind of fashion repels me. Perhaps Germany will have to sound like Sunday School for awhile. ...I can’t go along with that kind of tone, even though it would make things easier.”

What exactly is meant by “cheap moralizing”?

Sabin (2006) summed up a series of studies on type and moral reasoning by noting that, “Researchers have generally found Introversion (I), Intuition (N), Thinking (T) and Perceiving (P) to be influences on higher levels of moral judgment.” ([Read here](#)) Essentially, higher levels of moral reasoning are characterized by (for example) the ability to untangle grey-area moral dilemmas, or to pick a right course that society would ordinarily frown upon. A good example would be, “Is it okay for Robin Hood to steal from the rich to feed the poor?” One might say, “No, you should never steal.” Or, one might say, “Even though stealing is wrong...here’s a justification.”

One might expect that INTPs would be the most moral folks on the planet. Actually, they’re just good at rationalizing. INTPs can justify the most surprising things using their advanced moral reasoning skills.

When faced with a moral dilemma, I find that I can typically find several reasons why it would be right to take a certain action and several reasons why it would be wrong. For example, at a previous job, I needed information on how to use an art program to accomplish various work-related tasks. But when I tried to look that information up online, it was blocked by the company web filter because the site content was often marginally related to designing art for games or other entertainment media. Then too, most of the best tutorials were videos. The IT department had already made it clear that it could/would not grant the dozens of site exceptions I needed.

It would of course be child’s play to bypass the web filter, and other employees already had. But would it be right? According to the employee handbook, no: it was clearly against the rules to defeat computerized security measures. Ah, but the web filter was often wrong. Its intended purpose was to prevent theft of time; instead, the filter was subjecting an employee--myself--to inconvenience and preventing them from accomplishing their assigned tasks. By means of comparison, if some misguided security manager mistakenly put a lock on the fax machine to keep everyone from using it to play games, would anyone be upset if an employee defeated this clearly misguided security measure? And is a nonsentient entity such as a web filter really qualified to interpret the intent of the employee manual? Does the web filter create law, or should it only carry it out? If it should only carry laws out,

then under what grounds does it presume to prevent me from doing wholly lawful work? Am I not right to bypass the so-called laws it has created to prevent me from accessing certain work-related sites?

And anyway, what is the definition of “bypass”? If a security manager sets up a freestanding locked door in the middle of a room and says, “Do not try to unlock this,” would it be wrong to simply walk around the door and continue on one’s way unobstructed? The web filter didn’t mind if you opened the https rather than the http version of the blocked site; that was considered OK. It also didn’t mind if you opened the Google cached version of the site--that was also OK. By simply choosing one of these alternatives, I would be walking around the door rather than trying to jimmy open the lock.

But if I am being paid to carry out the will of my employers--and there was no doubt that they would be upset if I bypassed the filter in this way--then don’t I owe it to them by virtue of our mutual contract to obey their senseless rules to the letter, as they would wish? Or would it be even more right to genuinely serve them to the best of my ability—ignoring the poorly thought out rules that would pointless hinder me--while knowing that they would wrongfully condemn me for so doing? Does my contract morally oblige me to do the absolute best I possibly can to serve them, or to merely do everything I am told and nothing more?

Then there is also the fact that they might wrongfully blame me for not successfully carrying out my assigned task, even though their web filter was causing the delay in my work in the first place. In such a situation, do I have the right of preemptive self defense, i.e. can I bypass the web filter to save myself from an unfair scolding for not delivering the artwork in time?

After considering the problem with my advanced moral reasoning skills, I chose to bypass the web filter and view work-related game tutorial sites. Meanwhile, other coworkers bypassed the web filter to view entertainment sites.

In any case, I was never free of a tinge of guilt and the anxiety that my employers might find out and punish me (albeit unjustly) for my deeds.

Slavery and the Holocaust

People with high moral reasoning skills are thought to be less likely to commit Nazi-style atrocities under the justification of “just following orders” (Kohlberg in Sabin, 2006). But given that Speer was willing to employ slave labor in his factories, it would seem that people with higher moral reasoning skills are not necessarily hindered in their ability to commit atrocities.

INTPs are the type that most values “Autonomy.”¹⁷² Speer, however, would later reflect that he willingly gave up “man’s highest privilege: to be an autonomous person.” By this he meant that he had allowed himself to be so strongly influenced by Hitler that he no longer thought for himself.

Speer also gave up a chunk of his critical thinking. He later wrote in his autobiography, "My inclination to be relieved of having to think, particularly about unpleasant facts, helped to sway the balance. Such mental slackness above all facilitated, established, and finally assured the success of the National Socialist system." This is probably not a behavior that one would expect from an INTP, but here it is, staring us in the face. Speer didn't really want to ask the tough questions about the political and racial visions of the Nazi Party. Nor did he seek out criticisms of those views or look too deeply at the abuses.

172 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Yet in spite of this double failure, Speer was nevertheless conspicuous for autonomy and free thought in other areas. Much of Hitler's regular entourage was composed of yes-men and suck ups, all vying with each other for Hitler's favor. Speer, unlike the majority, was not the least bit inclined to kiss up, and mocked those who did. During the Nuremberg trial he broke with the other defendants, who had hoped to make a unified defense. While giving up his autonomy in one area, he retained it in others.

The big question in Speer's life is whether or not he knew about the Holocaust. As of the time of the Nuremberg trial, he was judicially believed to have been ignorant of the existence of the death camps. Questions were raised then, and have been raised since, about the truth of this assertion, and many points of evidence condemning him have been both raised and shot down and debated from practically every angle.

Most of his biographers share the opinion that he probably knew, though no truly damning evidence has yet turned up. What most biographers will agree upon is that if he knew—which is entirely possible—he genuinely regretted it. No document exists in which Speer expressed even mild ill sentiment towards the Jews.

What Speer himself admits is that he could have found out about the Holocaust if he had wanted, but he preferred not to find out—and thus chose not to look too closely at the hints that could have enlightened him. Whether or not this is accurate, it certainly produced some significant moral questions to ponder for the rest of his life.

Let's take a brief detour to 1700s. One of the interesting things about Jefferson and Madison is that while they were both against slavery, they both kept slaves. This is especially notable in light of the fact that 75.5% of INTPs said that the value “Autonomy, freedom, independence” was “very important”—the highest rating given by any type.¹⁷³ Can anything be less like freedom than slavery?

Ahh, but Rationals are also a pragmatic bunch. Neither Jefferson nor Madison liked running their estates using slave labor, but left without another means to make money, they continued to use the distasteful system themselves while working against it publicly. Objective and unbiased, INTPs will stand on a limb as they saw it off, earnestly believing that the limb must go. “I will fall, but it will be worth it in the end,” they say to themselves. But their sawing may not be so vigorous as it should be. This was the case for both men, who found ways to excuse their own inaction and deny examples that contradicted the assumptions upon which their excuses rested. But as the changing national circumstances began to erode those excuses, Jefferson and Madison were forced to turn to more and more outlandish ideas to justify their lethargic positions.

In Gillian Bradshaw's book *The Wrong Reflection*, there is a race of INT energy beings born from the violent magnetic fluctuations of O-type stars. Being essentially energy, the beings were extremely long-lived, but they did eventually perish—in a sense: “Madness was the usual end for his kind, if no accident intervened: when too many memories accumulated, consciousness found itself bewildered by the self's contradictions, and disintegrated.”

Compare that fate with the following three quotes, which describe either Jefferson, Madison, or Speer at the end of their lives as they wrestled with their respective moral dilemmas. I have stripped the passages of material that would permit identification of time and place.

1. “...the ultimate source of ____'s extreme frustration with the --- Question, as well as the source of his frantic and farfetched efforts to answer it without surrendering his --- credentials, was that

173 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

he was trapped within the contradictions created by his own posture of procrastination and denial. [This Question] made the long-standing paradox...that he had been living so deftly into an undeniable contradiction. He had all along been living a lie.”

2. “_____’s bizarre and incongruous faith in --- was all that kept him from plunging into total despair. The ---, we might say, pushed _____ steadily toward the brink of self delusion, if not despair. The dilemma of --- undid him.
3. “...I would have asked _____ more detailed and persistent questions about his conflicting values and motives, in which he was hopelessly entangled at the end.”

Note the common theme of unsupportable paradoxes, dilemmas, and contradictions. Oh what tangled webs we weave, when we practice to self-deceive.

The first quote describes Jefferson's reaction to the Missouri Question, i.e. whether or not the new state of Missouri should be a slave state or a free state. Later, Jefferson worried about a “war of extermination toward the African in our land” but nevertheless remained merely a passive advocate of abolition. The second quote, about Madison, deals with his support for the ridiculously implausible plan of freeing the black slaves and sending them to an African colony. The third quote describes Speer's attempt to deal with his involvement in the regime that perpetrated the Holocaust.¹⁷⁴

Actually, this toleration of both actual and seeming contradictions is part of a larger pattern of INTP behavior. In Thorne and Gough's (1991) adjective study, it was found that female INTPs were *not* characterized by having a “clear cut, internally consistent personality,” while male INTPs were as “complicated” and as *not* being “uncomfortable with uncertainty and complexities.”

Essentially, INTPs are very good at dealing with multiple conflicting ideas or ideals. This helps them create complex designs, in which many opposing goals must be weighed and accommodated. But it also has the potential to land them in moral quandaries.

Returning to the question of the Holocaust. I rather suspect that Speer knew more about the Holocaust than he let on, but that he didn't actually see the big picture until later. Jefferson pooh poohed the initial massacres of the French Revolution as mere growing pains—only to be embarrassed by his optimism later when things got *really* nasty. Perhaps Speer viewed whatever facts he knew about in the same light, dismissing them as short term excess to the tune of, “There are always going to be isolated atrocities.” It is doubtful that he understood the true horror of the death factories—especially since most of the Nuremberg criminals who *did* know about the Holocaust hadn't faced up to what they were doing until they were shown a video of their own death camps during the Nuremberg trial.

At one point, Speer visited the front lines and observed some of the weapons he had manufactured being used in battle. He was startled at the realization that his weapons were being used to kill people; previous to that he had only had an intellectual understanding of the concept. Perhaps this was because in higher level discussions of the war, the language of death was euphemistic: “losses” “casualties” etc. From his detached intellectual perspective, death didn't yet have real meaning.

Keirsey (1998a) noted that Rationals and Artisans are utilitarian temperaments while Guardians and Idealists are cooperative temperaments. Utilitarianism is not evil nor is cooperativity good. But both can be either good or evil. Speer would later write, “Every day I learn anew how inhuman we really were. Now I do not mean the barbarism of persecution and extermination. Rather, the absolute dominion of utilitarian ends, such as I pursued as minister of armaments, is nothing but a form of

¹⁷⁴ Quote 1 – Ellis, 1996; Quote 2 – McCoy, 1989; Quote 3 – Fest, 1999

inhumanity."

Utilitarianism is a different thing from hatred and bigotry. Speer did not *hate* the slaves in his factories or view them as lesser beings; rather, he viewed them as tools. Tools to be kept in peak operating condition because he valued their work. His slaves did not starve like those in Himmler's concentration camps because it would not be logical to let valuable tools be broken.

For example, while touring the Linz steelworks, Speer encountered a group of Russian POWs who had been removed from the custody of an SS camp to work as slaves in the factory.

"When we came upon a group of twenty Russians, I had the interpreter ask them whether they were satisfied with their treatment. They made gestures of passionate assent. Their appearance confirmed what they said. In contrast to the people in the caves of the Central Works, who were obviously wasting away, these prisoners were well fed. And when I asked them, just to make conversation, whether they would prefer to return to the regular camp, they gave a start of fright. Their faces expressed purest horror. But I asked no further questions. Why should I have done so; their expressions told me everything. If I were to try today to probe the feelings that stirred me then, if across the span of a lifetime I attempt to analyze what I really felt--pity, irritation, embarrassment, or indignation--it seems to me that the desperate race with time, my obsessional fixation on production and output statistics, blurred all considerations and feelings of humanity. An American historian has said of me that I loved machines more than people. He is not wrong. I realize that the sight of suffering people influenced only my emotions, but not my conduct. On the plane of feelings only sentimentality emerged; in the realm of decisions, on the other hand, I continued to be ruled by the principles of utility."

Here we have an INTP who did not let feelings cloud his logic; in the pursuit of his goal, he was able to put aside his emotions to the extent that he was able to ignore the suffering going on elsewhere. Speer seems not to have been a particularly cruel man—there are various accounts of how he improved conditions when he saw a need—but he allowed himself to become *utterly logical*.

The Nuremberg Trial

Speer was charged with War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, both charges referring to his use of slave labor in the factories. His actions in the trial made him unique among the Nuremberg defendants, though perhaps not among INTPs.

One of the things that made Speer stand out was his insistence upon an idea called "collective responsibility." In a nutshell, he explained that "There is a common responsibility for...horrible crimes, even in a totalitarian state." Not that he took *personal* responsibility for the Holocaust—he took personal responsibility only for things within his sphere of influence—but he thought that the entire leadership (of which he was a part) should take general responsibility for it. His lawyer told him that he was going to get himself killed with this "defense," but Speer stubbornly insisted on it.

As it turned out, the Judges found Speer's attitude a refreshing change from the denials and excuses of the other defendants ("I was just following orders").¹⁷⁵ There were other things that appealed to them as well; Speer's self control, his polite yet unsubmitting manners, and the way he faced what he had done frankly and fully. He seems to have genuinely expected to get the death penalty.

However, that Speer was maneuvering for his life cannot be denied. And he maneuvered with all the INTP skill of a chessmaster. His lawyer explained,

"Perhaps one of the most extraordinary things about him during that year when, I assure you, he was fully aware of the dangers he was running, was that he remained exactly what he had always been: a game player. Of course this meant that he 'used' people, but, in a way, only intellectually or strategically. Because he was emotionally so

distanced from others, he never played with them emotionally—if he liked you, he liked you and nothing would change it. Of course, for anyone who *loved* him this was difficult, for he didn't love. But game playing, which he most certainly, and brilliantly, did at Nuremberg, was almost an 'exercise' for him. Under those terrible circumstances, it served as a reassurance, in a way, that he was still what he had always been.”

The best example of this manipulation is probably the fact that he pulled strings so that it would come out in the trial (without him actually bringing it up) that he had tried to assassinate Hitler.

The assassination attempt itself, if it can be called that, was brought on by Speer's growing despair over Hitler's ruinous policies at the end of the war.¹⁷⁵ He had thought he might introduce poison gas through a vent into Hitler's bunker and made a few efforts to acquire the necessary agent, but never went through with the plan. Speer explained that a chimney had been built over the vent, making the new vent too high to reach. This difficulty led one observer to comment sarcastically, “the second most powerful man in the state did not have a ladder.” There is also the fact that filling the bunker with poison gas would not only have killed Hitler, but everyone else in the bunker too—from generals to secretaries—many of whom Speer knew. The half-hearted plan, if it existed in the first place, was aborted.

When Speer was asked about the attempt during the trial (as he had engineered that he would be) he protested over and over that he didn't want to give the details even as he bubbled over with him. Later he would write in his memoirs that he brought the incident up merely to illustrate a point. This was clearly not the case. After the revelation of the plot, most of the other defendants began to shun Speer. He was essentially excommunicated as a traitor.

When considering this and Speer's radically different defense tactics, observers have surprised at how Speer was able to break so completely with the others. Ah, but here we come to another INTP trait. Remember how good INs are at the Asch Conformity Experiment? There is not much herd mentality in the INTP. It was Speer's type that made him willing to go it alone in spite of outright group censure.

At the end of the trial, each defendant was allowed to give a last statement. Most of the defendants expressed their horror and sorrow over the atrocities that had been committed. Speer, however, sought to dissect the factors that had made the atrocities possible with an eye to preventing them in the future. To this end, he gave a sort of minilecture about how Hitler's domination of Germany had been enabled by new communications technologies (the radio, telephone, teletype, and loudspeakers) that allowed one man to convey his unfiltered will to all. Speer cautioned that individuals must take especial care to think for themselves (there's that INTP autonomy again) as the world grew more and more technical, and made predictions that the development of new weapons such as intercontinental missiles, atom bombs, biological agents, etc., would mean that a new war would certainly annihilate civilization. It was, all in all, a very INTP speech: he analyzed what had gone wrong, then predicted what science would one day make possible.

Speer narrowly escaped the death penalty, and was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

175 Hitler had intended to commit national suicide as well as personal suicide. If he could not win the war, then he intended to completely destroy the means of livelihood for the German people and as many other countries as he could.

12. INTPs in Prison

I have always believed, somewhere in the back of my head, that it would be nice to live in prison. Of course I know that prison is not nice at all, but the thought persists nonetheless.

In the book, “The Loner’s Manifesto,” author Anneli Rufus (INT) notes, “When parents on TV shows punished their kids by ordering them to go to their rooms, I was confused. I loved my room. Being there behind a locked door was a treat. To me a punishment was being ordered to play Yahtzee with my cousin Louis. I puzzled over why solitary confinement was considered the worst punishment in jails.”

Think of it--no responsibilities, free room and board. You can do anything you please with your abundant spare time: read, write, create art, design things, study. No one to bother you or interrupt your work.

I suspect that prison does not present as much suffering for INTPs as it does for other types. Of course, it depends on the conditions in the particular prison. In the table below I have made an attempt at guessing the INTP response to various hardships of the prison life.

Hardships of Prison and INTP Responses

Solitary Confinement

- As introverts, INTPs gain energy from being alone. They enjoy a quiet and undisturbed environment because it allows them to concentrate on their work better. Indeed, it almost seems that the abstracted, mind-oriented INTs prefer solitude more than most other introverts.

Nothing to do; boredom

- INTPs have a rich thought life; this compensates somewhat for lack of external activities.

Lack of external stimulation; sensory deprivation

- INTPs are often totally oblivious to their surroundings because they are so lost in thought. They don't notice or need the outside world as much as other types.

No luxuries and few necessities

- INTPs can be content leading a simple existence; they are not worldly.

Deprivation of family and friends

- Depends upon the quality of the relationships.

Deprivation of opposite sex

- INTPs tend to have a lot of marital problems.

Lack of privacy

- INTPs would find it more stressful than for most other types.

Hypercontrolled, structured environment

- INTPs would dislike it the most of all types.

Harrelson - A Unique Perspective on Life in Prison

A prisoner named Harrelson offered some commentary on solitary confinement in a supermax prison. It is likely that Harrelson was an INTJ rather than an INTP, but there is so much overlap between the two types that most of his observations probably apply equally well to both.

Supermax is supposed to be “a clean version of hell.” The most secure prisons in the world are characterized by the following conditions:

- Prisoners are kept in solitary confinement for decades.
- Prisoners are allowed out of their cells for one hour per day, a solitary exercise period in a small enclosure.
- The cell is made of poured concrete and steel and all furniture is immovable.
- Meals are taken in the cell, alone.
- Prisoners are under constant electronic surveillance.

There are legal questions of whether or not keeping a human being alone for decades constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. I think it does--for most people. But obviously not for Harrelson the INTJ.

He enjoyed his almost-soundproof cell. In a letter to his lawyer, he wrote, "Part of the plan here is sensory deprivation. It probably works on some of the inmates. I'm pretty sure it hardly bothers me at all." At another point, he added, "There is much to be said for these conditions. Again, the silence is wonderful. And living alone is great...nobody bothers me. ... And even though I'm an avowed curmudgeon, I don't object to my own company very often. Being alone has some advantages."

It should also be noted that Harrelson spoke to his fellow humans (the guards) only three times a week, and this to request basic supplies. So essentially, he was living with almost zero human interaction. And he enjoyed it. A very clear introvert.

However, he did like listening to the radio on earphones during most of his waking hours. He preferred the radio over the TV because he could read and write while it was on, whereas the TV disrupted his thoughts.

Some inmates pace their cells ceaselessly like caged tigers. Harrelson had no such urge:

"The actual floor space is some 6 1/2' x 9' should the urge to walk strike me. That doesn't happen very often. I'm almost always in the prone position, holding down the mattress...or sitting on it leaning back against the wall, my writing equipment resting on my knees, penning my thoughts."

He also preferred to skip the one hour exercise period he was entitled to each day, noting a.) that it was too much hassle to go through the cell entrance/exit procedure, and b.) that there was nothing he could do in the exercise yard that he couldn't do in his cell. Sedentary pastimes are typical of the mind-oriented *Rationals*, and *INTPs* are most mind-oriented of all the *NTs*.

Further evidence for *NT* is provided by Harrelson's choice of television programming. His top four favorite TV shows included two science programs, *Nova* and *Nature*. (The other two favorites being *Letterman* and *Frontline*.)

Harrelson kept himself busy with reading and writing: "Everyone here must find a way to fill the hours of each day. To me it is essential I stay busy...every waking moment is filled with something...reading, writing or doing chores (I'm a clean freak)."

Given the comment about being a clean freak, we can assume that Harrelson is probably a *Judger*. The fact that he kept constantly busy is important too; Keirsey (1998a) has noted that the *Rationals* *must* work and that idleness would be the "worst sort of punishment." Indeed, supermax seems to have failed quite badly in regard to the punishment of idleness. Harrelson went on to say, "I s'pose you might think boredom is a problem for me. Not true. There are not enough hours in a day for my needs as a matter of fact."

Some people go insane in solitary confinement. Harrelson noted objectively, "I still have a relatively intact mind." It is significant that the mind was highly valued by this *INTJ*. When counting his many

blessings compared to others, he wrote, “And perhaps most important of all, I have my mind.” For *Rationals*, the mind is the most prized faculty and it provides much richness in their lives, especially in *supermax*, when it is pretty much all they have.

In Harrelson’s prison each prisoner can control his cell’s lighting and thus keep whatever hours they please. (This is as opposed to other prisons, where showers and lights out occur at regularly scheduled intervals.) Harrelson liked the “independence” of the *supermax* way of life, and took advantage of it to stay up into the wee hours of the morning. In this regard, it seems that *supermax* may be preferable to regular prison for *INTs*.

In terms of family situation, Harrelson had family and friends outside of prison whom he wrote to daily. He pitied the other prisoners who had no one outside, and his correspondence with his family seemed to be very important to him.

As regards the issue of control, he basically decided that he couldn’t do anything about it, and thus there was no point in fussing over it. He didn’t fight the system; rather, he was a good prisoner, and thus earned many extra privileges.

So what can we make of all this? First of all, it seems obvious that *supermax* was not designed with *INTs* in mind. In fact, *supermax* seems to be more like “a clean version of heaven” for introverted *Rationals*.

Don’t ever wind up in prison, but if you do, maybe the high security lockdown cells are the way to go. But only if you have get access to paper, pencil, and books.

INTP Complaints About Prison

Of all the types of deprivation that a person undergoes in prison--deprivation of liberty, friends, family, luxuries, the opposite sex, safety--one type of deprivation that is never brought up is *technological* deprivation. Albert Speer noted in his autobiography, “In Spandau prison I had to live like a man of the nineteenth century without a radio, telephone set, telephone, or car and was not even allowed to work the light switch myself. After ten years of imprisonment I experienced a...rapture when I was allowed to run an electric floor polisher.” This may very well be a uniquely Rational phenomenon.

When INTPs are kept in captivity, they turn to writing, which is one of their favorite leisure pastimes. Speer kept himself entertained by secretly writing two thousand pages of toilet paper notes that he turned into a ~600 page autobiography when he was released. He was allowed to read anything he wanted save for political texts; he chose to read about psychology, metaphysics and philosophy. A prison psychologist also decided to record Speer’s statement that, “My fantasies run into musical channels. I can entertain myself here in my cell for hours by running over classical musical compositions in my mind.” I’m not sure why the psychologist recorded that particular detail, but it is interesting.

Another example is Thomas Jefferson, though he wasn’t imprisoned so much as debilitated: “He himself met with an accident about this time—a fall from his horse—which, though not attended with serious consequences, kept him, for two or three weeks, more closely confined in the house than it was his habit to be. It was during this confinement that he wrote the principal part of his ‘Notes on Virginia.’”

Jefferson would also voluntarily shut up himself up in a local monastery in pure silence to work—he would stay there for up to a week.

Do INTPs Go To Jail a Lot?

A study of introverted veterans found that INTPs and ISTPs tended to commit non-substance abuse-related crimes more often than other introverted types.¹⁷⁶ However, none of the various studies of prison populations have turned up the expected overrepresentation of INTPs, though ISTPs were often overrepresented.¹⁷⁷ Considering that INTPs are one of the least rule conscious types, this is a bit surprising. Do INTPs tend to commit different kinds of crimes than ISTPs, leading to them being placed in different types of prisons? Do stereotypes of criminal behavior tend to exclude INTPs, thus deflecting investigator suspicion from them? Are INTPs merely better at evading capture, or impressing juries? Or do INTPs actually commit fewer crimes than normal?

Escape

"Oh! if you knew," said she, "how many times Aramis has got out of prison!"

So said the Duchess de Chevreuse, speaking of the third Musketeer of the famous trio, the INTP Aramis.

Are INTPs good at escaping?

We really have no idea. But it's fun to speculate, and we can certainly imagine some advantages they might have in making certain kinds of attempts.

The unconventional, imaginative INTP mindset and knack for questioning basic assumptions may serve an INTP well in an escape scenario. Let's read an excerpt from the Count of Monte Cristo about a probable INTP prisoner, then we'll discuss some of the implications.

The Count of Monte Cristo—A Brief Portrait of an INTP in Prison

(The governor of a French prison and a state inspector are touring the prison to see how the captives are faring.)

"Will you see the register at once," asked the governor, "or proceed to the other cell?"

"Let us visit them all," said the inspector. "If I once went up those stairs. I should never have the courage to come down again."

"Ah, this one [the INTP prisoner] is not like the other, and his madness is less affecting than this one's display of reason."

...

"How curious!—what is his name?"

"The Abbe Faria."

"No. 27," said the inspector.

"It is here; unlock the door, Antoine." The turnkey obeyed, and the inspector gazed curiously into the chamber of the "mad abbe."

In the centre of the cell, in a circle traced with a fragment of plaster detached from the wall, sat a man whose tattered garments scarcely covered him. He was drawing in this circle geometrical lines, and seemed as much absorbed in his problem as Archimedes was when the soldier of Marcellus slew him.

He did not move at the sound of the door, and continued his calculations until the flash of the torches lighted up with an unwonted glare the sombre walls of his cell; then, raising his head, he perceived with astonishment the number of persons present. He hastily seized the coverlet of his bed, and wrapped it round him.

176 Otis & Louks, 1997

177 Mitchell, 2009

"What is it you want?" said the inspector.

"I, monsieur," replied the abbe with an air of surprise—"I want nothing."

"You do not understand," continued the inspector; "I am sent here by government to visit the prison, and hear the requests of the prisoners."

"Oh, that is different," cried the abbe; "and we shall understand each other, I hope."

...

"Monsieur," continued the prisoner, "I am the Abbe Faria, born at Rome. I was for twenty years Cardinal Spada's secretary; I was arrested, why, I know not, toward the beginning of the year 1811; since then I have demanded my liberty from the Italian and French government."

"...[I am come] to inquire if you have anything to ask or to complain of."

"The food is the same as in other prisons,—that is, very bad; the lodging is very unhealthful, but, on the whole, passable for a dungeon; but it is not that which I wish to speak of, but a secret I have to reveal of the greatest importance."

"We are coming to the point," whispered the governor.

"It is for that reason I am delighted to see you," continued the abbe, "although you have disturbed me in a most important calculation, which, if it succeeded, would possibly change Newton's system. Could you allow me a few words in private."

So here we see a portrait of an INTP in prison: So completely lost in thought as to be unaware of his squalid environment, and busily devising a new system of mathematics. This INTP was apparently unbothered by his solitary confinement: when Edmond Dantes, the protagonist of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, accidentally bumped into the Abbe during the latter's tunneling activities, the Abbe's first thought was to seal up the tunnel and have no further contact with Dantes. However, Dantes was able to change his mind.

The Abbe also furnishes us with a detailed example of how creative engineering, applied science, and strategic planning can be used for escape (read on).

The Count of Monte Cristo—An INTP Escape Plan

(Here Edmond Dantes meets the Abbe Faria for the first time. The Abbe had just discovered that the calculations for his escape tunnel were slightly off. This excerpt is some seven pages long; feel free to skim.)

The stranger [the abbe] might have numbered sixty or sixty-five years; but a certain briskness and appearance of vigor in his movements made it probable that he was aged more from captivity than the course of time. He [the abbe] received the enthusiastic greeting of his young acquaintance [Dantes] with evident pleasure, as though his chilled affections were rekindled and invigorated by his contact with one so warm and ardent. He thanked him with grateful cordiality for his kindly welcome, although he must at that moment have been suffering bitterly to find another dungeon where he had fondly reckoned on discovering a means of regaining his liberty.

"Let us first see," said he, "whether it is possible to remove the traces of my entrance here—our future tranquillity depends upon our jailers being entirely ignorant of it." Advancing to the opening, he stooped and raised the stone easily in spite of its weight; then, fitting it into its place, he said,—

"You removed this stone very carelessly; but I suppose you had no tools to aid you."

"Why," exclaimed Dantes, with astonishment, "do you possess any?"

"I made myself some; and with the exception of a file, I have all that are necessary,—a chisel, pincers, and lever."

"Oh, how I should like to see these products of your industry and patience."

"Well, in the first place, here is my chisel." So saying, he displayed a sharp strong blade, with a handle made of beechwood.

"And with what did you contrive to make that?" inquired Dantes.

"With one of the clamps of my bedstead; and this very tool has sufficed me to hollow out the road by which I came hither, a distance of about fifty feet."

"Fifty feet!" responded Dantes, almost terrified.

"Do not speak so loud, young man—don't speak so loud. It frequently occurs in a state prison like this, that persons are stationed outside the doors of the cells purposely to overhear the conversation of the prisoners."

"But they believe I am shut up alone here."

"That makes no difference."

"And you say that you dug your way a distance of fifty feet to get here?"

"I do; that is about the distance that separates your chamber from mine; only, unfortunately, I did not curve aright; for want of the necessary geometrical instruments to calculate my scale of proportion, instead of taking an ellipsis of forty feet, I made it fifty. I expected, as I told you, to reach the outer wall, pierce through it, and throw myself into the sea; I have, however, kept along the corridor on which your chamber opens, instead of going beneath it. My labor is all in vain, for I find that the corridor looks into a courtyard filled with soldiers."

"That's true," said Dantes; "but the corridor you speak of only bounds one side of my cell; there are three others—do you know anything of their situation?"

"This one is built against the solid rock, and it would take ten experienced miners, duly furnished with the requisite tools, as many years to perforate it. This adjoins the lower part of the governor's apartments, and were we to work our way through, we should only get into some lock-up cellars, where we must necessarily be recaptured. The fourth and last side of your cell faces on—faces on—stop a minute, now where does it face?"

[The abbe climbs on Dantes' back to look out the window of the other man's cell.]

The elder prisoner pondered the matter. "Yes," said he at length, "it is so. This side of your chamber looks out upon a kind of open gallery, where patrols are continually passing, and sentries keep watch day and night."

"Are you quite sure of that?"

"Certain. I saw the soldier's shape and the top of his musket; that made me draw in my head so quickly, for I was fearful he might also see me."

"Well?" inquired Dantes.

"You perceive then the utter impossibility of escaping through your dungeon?"

"Then," pursued the young man eagerly—

"Then," answered the elder prisoner, "the will of God be done!" and as the old man slowly pronounced those words, an air of profound resignation spread itself over his careworn countenance. Dantes gazed on the man who could thus philosophically resign hopes so long and ardently nourished with an astonishment mingled with admiration.

"Tell me, I entreat of you, who and what you are?" said he at length; "never have I met with so remarkable a person as yourself."

"Willingly," answered the stranger; "if, indeed, you feel any curiosity respecting one, now, alas, powerless to aid you in any way."

"Say not so; you can console and support me by the strength of your own powerful mind. Pray let me know who you really are?"

The stranger smiled a melancholy smile. "Then listen," said he. "I am the Abbe Faria, and have been imprisoned as you know in this Chateau d'If since the year 1811; previously to which I had been confined for three years in the fortress of Fenestrelle. In the year 1811 I was transferred to Piedmont in France. It was at this period I learned that the destiny which seemed subservient to every wish formed by Napoleon, had bestowed on him a son, named king of Rome even in his cradle. I was very far then from expecting the change you have just informed me of; namely, that four years afterwards, this colossus of power would be overthrown. Then who reigns in France at this moment—Napoleon II.?"

"No, Louis XVIII."

"The brother of Louis XVII.! How inscrutable are the ways of providence—for what great and mysterious purpose has it pleased heaven to abase the man once so elevated, and raise up him who was so abased?"

Dantes' whole attention was riveted on a man who could thus forget his own misfortunes while occupying himself with the destinies of others.

"Yes, yes," continued he, "Twill be the same as it was in England. After Charles I., Cromwell; after Cromwell, Charles II., and then James II., and then some son-in-law or relation, some Prince of Orange, a stadholder who becomes a king. Then new concessions to the people, then a constitution, then liberty. Ah, my friend!" said the abbe, turning towards Dantes, and surveying him with the kindling gaze of a prophet, "you are young, you will see all this come to pass."

"Probably, if ever I get out of prison!"

"True," replied Faria, "we are prisoners; but I forget this sometimes, and there are even moments when my mental vision transports me beyond these walls, and I fancy myself at liberty."

"But wherefore are you here?"

"Because in 1807 I dreamed of the very plan Napoleon tried to realize in 1811; because, like Machiavelli, I desired to alter the political face of Italy, and instead of allowing it to be split up into a quantity of petty principalities, each held by some weak or tyrannical ruler, I sought to form one large, compact, and powerful empire; and, lastly, because I fancied I had found my Caesar Borgia in a crowned simpleton, who feigned to enter into my views only to betray me. It was the plan of Alexander VI. and Clement VII., but it will never succeed now, for they attempted it fruitlessly, and Napoleon was unable to complete his work. Italy seems fated to misfortune." And the old man bowed his head.

Dantes could not understand a man risking his life for such matters. Napoleon certainly he knew something of, inasmuch as he had seen and spoken with him; but of Clement VII. and Alexander VI. he knew nothing.

"Are you not," he asked, "the priest who here in the Chateau d'If is generally thought to be—ill?"

"Mad, you mean, don't you?"

"I did not like to say so," answered Dantes, smiling.

"Well, then," resumed Faria with a bitter smile, "let me answer your question in full, by acknowledging that I am the poor mad prisoner of the Chateau d'If, for many years permitted to amuse the different visitors with what is said to be my insanity; and, in all probability, I should be promoted to the honor of making sport for the children, if such innocent beings could be found in an abode devoted like this to suffering and despair."

Dantes remained for a short time mute and motionless; at length he said,—"Then you abandon all hope of escape?"

"I perceive its utter impossibility; and I consider it impious to attempt that which the Almighty evidently does not approve."

"Nay, be not discouraged. Would it not be expecting too much to hope to succeed at your first attempt? Why not try to find an opening in another direction from that which has so unfortunately failed?"

"Alas, it shows how little notion you can have of all it has cost me to effect a purpose so unexpectedly frustrated, that you talk of beginning over again. In the first place, I was four years making the tools I possess, and have been two years scraping and digging out earth, hard as granite itself; then what toil and fatigue has it not been to remove huge stones I should once have deemed impossible to loosen. Whole days have I passed in these Titanic efforts, considering my labor well repaid if, by night-time I had contrived to carry away a square inch of this hard-bound cement, changed by ages into a substance unyielding as the stones themselves; then to conceal the mass of earth and rubbish I dug up, I was compelled to break through a staircase, and throw the fruits of my labor into the hollow part of it; but the well is now so completely choked up, that I scarcely think it would be possible to add another handful of dust without leading to discovery. Consider also that I fully believed I had accomplished the end and aim of my undertaking, for which I had so exactly husbanded my strength as to make it just hold out to the termination of my enterprise; and now, at the moment when I reckoned upon success, my hopes are forever dashed from me. No, I repeat again, that nothing shall induce me to renew attempts evidently at variance with the Almighty's pleasure."

Dantes held down his head, that the other might not see how joy at the thought of having a companion outweighed the sympathy he felt for the failure of the abbe's plans.

The abbe sank upon Edmond's bed, while Edmond himself remained standing. Escape had never once occurred to him. There are, indeed, some things which appear so impossible that the mind does not dwell on them for an instant. To undermine the ground for fifty feet—to devote three years to a labor which, if successful, would conduct you to a precipice overhanging the sea—to plunge into the waves from the height of fifty, sixty, perhaps a hundred feet, at the risk of being dashed to pieces against the rocks, should you have been fortunate enough to have escaped the fire of the sentinels; and even, supposing all these perils past, then to have to swim for your life a distance of at least three miles ere you could reach

the shore—were difficulties so startling and formidable that Dantes had never even dreamed of such a scheme, resigning himself rather to death. But the sight of an old man clinging to life with so desperate a courage, gave a fresh turn to his ideas, and inspired him with new courage. Another, older and less strong than he, had attempted what he had not had sufficient resolution to undertake, and had failed only because of an error in calculation. This same person, with almost incredible patience and perseverance, had contrived to provide himself with tools requisite for so unparalleled an attempt. Another had done all this; why, then, was it impossible to Dantes? Faria had dug his way through fifty feet, Dantes would dig a hundred; Faria, at the age of fifty, had devoted three years to the task; he, who was but half as old, would sacrifice six; Faria, a priest and savant, had not shrunk from the idea of risking his life by trying to swim a distance of three miles to one of the islands—Daume, Rattonneau, or Lemaire; should a hardy sailor, an experienced diver, like himself, shrink from a similar task; should he, who had so often for mere amusement's sake plunged to the bottom of the sea to fetch up the bright coral branch, hesitate to entertain the same project? He could do it in an hour, and how many times had he, for pure pastime, continued in the water for more than twice as long! At once Dantes resolved to follow the brave example of his energetic companion, and to remember that what has once been done may be done again.

After continuing some time in profound meditation, the young man suddenly exclaimed, "I have found what you were in search of!"

Faria started: "Have you, indeed?" cried he, raising his head with quick anxiety; "pray, let me know what it is you have discovered?"

"The corridor through which you have bored your way from the cell you occupy here, extends in the same direction as the outer gallery, does it not?"

"It does."

"And is not above fifteen feet from it?"

"About that."

"Well, then, I will tell you what we must do. We must pierce through the corridor by forming a side opening about the middle, as it were the top part of a cross. This time you will lay your plans more accurately; we shall get out into the gallery you have described; kill the sentinel who guards it, and make our escape. All we require to insure success is courage, and that you possess, and strength, which I am not deficient in; as for patience, you have abundantly proved yours—you shall now see me prove mine."

"One instant, my dear friend," replied the abbe; "it is clear you do not understand the nature of the courage with which I am endowed, and what use I intend making of my strength. As for patience, I consider that I have abundantly exercised that in beginning every morning the task of the night before, and every night renewing the task of the day. But then, young man (and I pray of you to give me your full attention), then I thought I could not be doing anything displeasing to the Almighty in trying to set an innocent being at liberty—one who had committed no offence, and merited not condemnation."

"And have your notions changed?" asked Dantes with much surprise; "do you think yourself more guilty in making the attempt since you have encountered me?"

"No; neither do I wish to incur guilt. Hitherto I have fancied myself merely waging war against circumstances, not men. I have thought it no sin to bore through a wall, or destroy a staircase; but I cannot so easily persuade myself to pierce a heart or take away a life." A slight movement of surprise escaped Dantes.

"Is it possible," said he, "that where your liberty is at stake you can allow any such scruple to deter you from obtaining it?"

"Tell me," replied Faria, "what has hindered you from knocking down your jailer with a piece of wood torn from your bedstead, dressing yourself in his clothes, and endeavoring to escape?"

"Simply the fact that the idea never occurred to me," answered Dantes.

"Because," said the old man, "the natural repugnance to the commission of such a crime prevented you from thinking of it; and so it ever is because in simple and allowable things our natural instincts keep us from deviating from the strict line of duty. The tiger, whose nature teaches him to delight in shedding blood, needs but the sense of smell to show him when his prey is within his reach, and by following this instinct he is enabled to measure the leap necessary to permit him to spring on his victim; but man, on the contrary, loathes the idea of blood—it is not alone that the laws of social life inspire him with a shrinking dread of taking life; his natural construction and physiological formation"—

Dantes was confused and silent at this explanation of the thoughts which had unconsciously been working in his mind, or rather soul; for there are two distinct sorts of ideas, those that proceed from the head and those that emanate from the heart.

"Since my imprisonment," said Faria, "I have thought over all the most celebrated cases of escape on record. They have rarely been successful. Those that have been crowned with full success have been long meditated upon, and carefully arranged; such, for instance, as the escape of the Duc de Beaufort from the Chateau de Vincennes, that of the Abbe Dubuquoi from For l'Eveque; of Latude from the Bastille. Then there are those for which chance sometimes affords opportunity, and those are the best of all. Let us, therefore, wait patiently for some favorable moment, and when it presents itself, profit by it."

"Ah," said Dantes, "you might well endure the tedious delay; you were constantly employed in the task you set yourself, and when weary with toil, you had your hopes to refresh and encourage you."

"I assure you," replied the old man, "I did not turn to that source for recreation or support."

"What did you do then?"

"I wrote or studied."

"Were you then permitted the use of pens, ink, and paper?"

"Oh, no," answered the abbe; "I had none but what I made for myself."

"You made paper, pens and ink?"

"Yes."

Dantes gazed with admiration, but he had some difficulty in believing. Faria saw this.

"When you pay me a visit in my cell, my young friend," said he, "I will show you an entire work, the fruits of the thoughts and reflections of my whole life; many of them meditated over in the shades of the Colosseum at Rome, at the foot of St. Mark's column at Venice, and on the borders of the Arno at Florence, little imagining at the time that they would be arranged in order within the walls of the Chateau d'If. The work I speak of is called 'A Treatise on the Possibility of a General Monarchy in Italy,' and will make one large quarto volume."

"And on what have you written all this?"

"On two of my shirts. I invented a preparation that makes linen as smooth and as easy to write on as parchment."

"You are, then, a chemist?"

"Somewhat; I know Lavoisier, and was the intimate friend of Cabanis."

"But for such a work you must have needed books—had you any?"

"I had nearly five thousand volumes in my library at Rome; but after reading them over many times, I found out that with one hundred and fifty well-chosen books a man possesses, if not a complete summary of all human knowledge, at least all that a man need really know. I devoted three years of my life to reading and studying these one hundred and fifty volumes, till I knew them nearly by heart; so that since I have been in prison, a very slight effort of memory has enabled me to recall their contents as readily as though the pages were open before me. I could recite you the whole of Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch, Titus Livius, Tacitus, Strada, Jornandes, Dante, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Spinoza, Machiavelli, and Bossuet. I name only the most important."

"You are, doubtless, acquainted with a variety of languages, so as to have been able to read all these?"

"Yes, I speak five of the modern tongues—that is to say, German, French, Italian, English, and Spanish; by the aid of ancient Greek I learned modern Greek—I don't speak it so well as I could wish, but I am still trying to improve myself."

"Improve yourself!" repeated Dantes; "why, how can you manage to do so?"

"Why, I made a vocabulary of the words I knew; turned, returned, and arranged them, so as to enable me to express my thoughts through their medium. I know nearly one thousand words, which is all that is absolutely necessary, although I believe there are nearly one hundred thousand in the dictionaries. I cannot hope to be very fluent, but I certainly should have no difficulty in explaining my wants and wishes; and that would be quite as much as I should ever require."

Stronger grew the wonder of Dantes, who almost fancied he had to do with one gifted with supernatural powers; still hoping to find some imperfection which might bring him down to a level with human beings, he added, "Then if you were not furnished with pens, how did you manage to write the work you speak of?"

"I made myself some excellent ones, which would be universally preferred to all others if once known. You are aware what huge whitinges are served to us on maigre days. Well, I selected the cartilages of the heads of these fishes, and you can

scarcely imagine the delight with which I welcomed the arrival of each Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, as affording me the means of increasing my stock of pens; for I will freely confess that my historical labors have been my greatest solace and relief. While retracing the past, I forget the present; and traversing at will the path of history I cease to remember that I am myself a prisoner."

"But the ink," said Dantes; "of what did you make your ink?"

"There was formerly a fireplace in my dungeon," replied Faria, "but it was closed up long ere I became an occupant of this prison. Still, it must have been many years in use, for it was thickly covered with a coating of soot; this soot I dissolved in a portion of the wine brought to me every Sunday, and I assure you a better ink cannot be desired. For very important notes, for which closer attention is required, I pricked one of my fingers, and wrote with my own blood."

"And when," asked Dantes, "may I see all this?"

"Whenever you please," replied the abbe.

"Oh, then let it be directly!" exclaimed the young man.

"Follow me, then," said the abbe, as he re-entered the subterranean passage, in which he soon disappeared, followed by Dantes.

After having passed with tolerable ease through the subterranean passage, which, however, did not admit of their holding themselves erect, the two friends reached the further end of the corridor, into which the abbe's cell opened; from that point the passage became much narrower, and barely permitted one to creep through on hands and knees. The floor of the abbe's cell was paved, and it had been by raising one of the stones in the most obscure corner that Faria had been able to commence the laborious task of which Dantes had witnessed the completion.

As he entered the chamber of his friend, Dantes cast around one eager and searching glance in quest of the expected marvels, but nothing more than common met his view.

"It is well," said the abbe; "we have some hours before us—it is now just a quarter past twelve o'clock." Instinctively Dantes turned round to observe by what watch or clock the abbe had been able so accurately to specify the hour.

"Look at this ray of light which enters by my window," said the abbe, "and then observe the lines traced on the wall. Well, by means of these lines, which are in accordance with the double motion of the earth, and the ellipse it describes round the sun, I am enabled to ascertain the precise hour with more minuteness than if I possessed a watch; for that might be broken or deranged in its movements, while the sun and earth never vary in their appointed paths."

This last explanation was wholly lost upon Dantes, who had always imagined, from seeing the sun rise from behind the mountains and set in the Mediterranean, that it moved, and not the earth. A double movement of the globe he inhabited, and of which he could feel nothing, appeared to him perfectly impossible. Each word that fell from his companion's lips seemed fraught with the mysteries of science, as worthy of digging out as the gold and diamonds in the mines of Guzerat and Golconda, which he could just recollect having visited during a voyage made in his earliest youth.

"Come," said he to the abbe, "I am anxious to see your treasures."

The abbe smiled, and, proceeding to the disused fireplace, raised, by the help of his chisel, a long stone, which had doubtless been the hearth, beneath which was a cavity of considerable depth, serving as a safe depository of the articles mentioned to Dantes.

"What do you wish to see first?" asked the abbe.

"Oh, your great work on the monarchy of Italy!"

Faria then drew forth from his hiding-place three or four rolls of linen, laid one over the other, like folds of papyrus. These rolls consisted of slips of cloth about four inches wide and eighteen long; they were all carefully numbered and closely covered with writing, so legible that Dantes could easily read it, as well as make out the sense—it being in Italian, a language he, as a Provencal, perfectly understood.

"There," said he, "there is the work complete. I wrote the word *finis* at the end of the sixty-eighth strip about a week ago. I have torn up two of my shirts, and as many handkerchiefs as I was master of, to complete the precious pages. Should I ever get out of prison and find in all Italy a printer courageous enough to publish what I have composed, my literary reputation is forever secured."

"I see," answered Dantes. "Now let me behold the curious pens with which you have written your work."

"Look!" said Faria, showing to the young man a slender stick about six inches long, and much resembling the size of the

handle of a fine painting-brush, to the end of which was tied, by a piece of thread, one of those cartilages of which the abbe had before spoken to Dantes; it was pointed, and divided at the nib like an ordinary pen. Dantes examined it with intense admiration, then looked around to see the instrument with which it had been shaped so correctly into form.

"Ah, yes," said Faria; "the penknife. That's my masterpiece. I made it, as well as this larger knife, out of an old iron candlestick." The penknife was sharp and keen as a razor; as for the other knife, it would serve a double purpose, and with it one could cut and thrust.

Dantes examined the various articles shown to him with the same attention that he had bestowed on the curiosities and strange tools exhibited in the shops at Marseilles as the works of the savages in the South Seas from whence they had been brought by the different trading vessels.

"As for the ink," said Faria, "I told you how I managed to obtain that—and I only just make it from time to time, as I require it."

"One thing still puzzles me," observed Dantes, "and that is how you managed to do all this by daylight?"

"I worked at night also," replied Faria.

"Night!—why, for heaven's sake, are your eyes like cats', that you can see to work in the dark?"

"Indeed they are not; but God has supplied man with the intelligence that enables him to overcome the limitations of natural conditions. I furnished myself with a light."

"You did? Pray tell me how."

"I separated the fat from the meat served to me, melted it, and so made oil—here is my lamp." So saying, the abbe exhibited a sort of torch very similar to those used in public illuminations.

"But light?"

"Here are two flints and a piece of burnt linen."

"And matches?"

"I pretended that I had a disorder of the skin, and asked for a little sulphur, which was readily supplied." Dantes laid the different things he had been looking at on the table, and stood with his head drooping on his breast, as though overwhelmed by the perseverance and strength of Faria's mind.

"You have not seen all yet," continued Faria, "for I did not think it wise to trust all my treasures in the same hiding-place. Let us shut this one up." They put the stone back in its place; the abbe sprinkled a little dust over it to conceal the traces of its having been removed, rubbed his foot well on it to make it assume the same appearance as the other, and then, going towards his bed, he removed it from the spot it stood in. Behind the head of the bed, and concealed by a stone fitting in so closely as to defy all suspicion, was a hollow space, and in this space a ladder of cords between twenty-five and thirty feet in length. Dantes closely and eagerly examined it; he found it firm, solid, and compact enough to bear any weight.

"Who supplied you with the materials for making this wonderful work?"

"I tore up several of my shirts, and ripped out the seams in the sheets of my bed, during my three years' imprisonment at Fenestrelle; and when I was removed to the Chateau d'If, I managed to bring the ravellings with me, so that I have been able to finish my work here."

"And was it not discovered that your sheets were unhemmed?"

"Oh, no, for when I had taken out the thread I required, I hemmed the edges over again."

"With what?"

"With this needle," said the abbe, as, opening his ragged vestments, he showed Dantes a long, sharp fish-bone, with a small perforated eye for the thread, a small portion of which still remained in it. "I once thought," continued Faria, "of removing these iron bars, and letting myself down from the window, which, as you see, is somewhat wider than yours, although I should have enlarged it still more preparatory to my flight; however, I discovered that I should merely have dropped into a sort of inner court, and I therefore renounced the project altogether as too full of risk and danger. Nevertheless, I carefully preserved my ladder against one of those unforeseen opportunities of which I spoke just now, and which sudden chance frequently brings about." While affecting to be deeply engaged in examining the ladder, the mind of Dantes was, in fact, busily occupied by the idea that a person so intelligent, ingenious, and clear-sighted as the abbe might probably be able to solve the dark mystery of his own misfortunes, where he himself could see nothing.

"What are you thinking of?" asked the abbe smilingly, imputing the deep abstraction in which his visitor was plunged to the excess of his awe and wonder.

"I was reflecting, in the first place," replied Dantes, "upon the enormous degree of intelligence and ability you must have employed to reach the high perfection to which you have attained. What would you not have accomplished if you had been free?"

"Possibly nothing at all; the overflow of my brain would probably, in a state of freedom, have evaporated in a thousand follies; misfortune is needed to bring to light the treasures of the human intellect. Compression is needed to explode gunpowder. Captivity has brought my mental faculties to a focus; and you are well aware that from the collision of clouds electricity is produced—from electricity, lightning, from lightning, illumination."

"No," replied Dantes. "I know nothing. Some of your words are to me quite empty of meaning. You must be blessed indeed to possess the knowledge you have."

This INTP prisoner was so lost in thought that he could say, "We are prisoners; but I forget this sometimes, and there are even moments when my mental vision transports me beyond these walls, and I fancy myself at liberty." A dungeon is less terrible when you're utterly oblivious to your environment anyway.

The Abbe fashioned tools for a distant escape, and exercised his ingenuity in math, engineering, and experimentation to improve his life and to work towards the goal of freedom. He used his vast preexisting knowledge base--and there is no other type with so much knowledge squirreled away--to overcome barriers from stone walls to lack of light.

Long-term strategic planning was the basis for this escape attempt. It was a gift which Dantes, by contrast, simply did not possess. The Abbe planned out a scheme that would take years to complete and did in fact nearly succeed. But note too how quickly he detached himself from the disappointment which attended failure. He simply resigned himself to his fate. No tantrums, no kicking the walls, no cursing--just composed surrender in the face of undeniable facts. The Abbe did not try to delude himself with false hopes, even though an outside observer would have probably called his entire escape attempt a false hope to begin with. An INTP does not credulously believe that a goal is "impossible" just because it is hard or complicated, or because nobody has done it before, but this belief is based on logic rather than wishful thinking, i.e. "I want to believe in it so it must be true." If logic *does* agree that a goal is impossible, the INTP is usually quick to agree with the assessment, even if they would prefer very much to believe otherwise.

Here too, we see the INTP liking for being alone. Dantes says to the Abbe later, "I can well believe that so learned a person as yourself would prefer absolute solitude to being tormented with the company of one as ignorant and uninformed as myself." The Abbe didn't *need* Dantes' company, though he did take pleasure in it. Later, the Abbe taught Dantes much of what he knew.

Finally, the Abbe wrote voluminously. In fact, he noted that this activity was his best comfort and support. He even wrote *in his own blood*. Now that's true dedication!

Conclusion

It would appear that some types of prison are not merely bearable, but even somewhat likeable to INTPs. This type may hold the unique position of being the best suiting for long term incarceration. As I ponder the grey cement walls of my windowless room and the small cot that serves as couch and bed, I can't help but agree.

Got you. Actually, I'm not writing this from prison--I just happen to live in a tiny, half finished, one

room house. During winter I typically remain indoors some 23 hours per day, alone save for my cat. It's great.

In the next section, we'll look at a different kind of prison. The kind you spend eight hours a day in.

13. INTPs at Work

Now might be a good time to remind you that the person writing this book has no qualifications to give you advice. A good descriptor of the author would be “Knows just enough to be dangerous.” It is to be hoped that you will not simply take my word for anything, but test it for yourself. Failing to do so could have unpleasant consequences, no?

INTP Careers

A gentleman named Holland came up with a model to describe the different groups of occupations that jobs fall into. This model, now widely used, is described by the acronym RIASEC, which stands for Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. Briefly, these categories are as follows:

1. **Realistic** - Hands on jobs without a lot of paperwork. Construction, maintenance, working with animals or plants, outdoor work, tool use, etc.
2. **Investigative** - Researching, problem solving, analyzing complex issues, scientific pursuits. Engineering, statistics, programming, modeling, etc.
3. **Artistic** - Appreciation, consumption, or production of music, dance, writing, art. Artistic, creative, design-oriented.
4. **Social** - Oriented towards helping others or meeting their needs. Social workers, teachers, ministers, counselors, nurses. People-focused.
5. **Enterprising** - Goal oriented; the emphasis is on marketing, raising money, persuading investors, taking risks for greater rewards, setting team goals, and leading others. Entrepreneurs, lobbyists, recruiters, managers.
6. **Conventional** - Detail oriented. Working at a computer with standard software (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Access), dealing with paperwork and files, balancing the books, following standard procedures to complete a task, desk work.

But Holland didn’t stop there. He asked himself, “Suppose you have a person that is good at Conventional work, but hates it? Or suppose you have a person who is confident in their ability to perform Realistic work, but doesn’t actually perform it very often?”

So he defined three different ways of looking at the areas. You can be “confident” in an area, and/or you can “perform” it frequently, and/or you can “like” it. So we could say that a person is confident in their ability to do Realistic work, but does not often perform it, though they like it.

A study compared type and occupational preferences to determine which work areas were most favored by each type.¹⁷⁸ INTPs tended to be *confident* in their ability to do Realistic, Investigative, and Conventional jobs, but they were actually most likely to *perform* Artistic jobs. This in spite of the fact that they tended to *like* Realistic, Investigative, and Conventional jobs the most.

Now that you know the RIASEC categories that INTPs fall into, you can go online and have a field day occupation shopping. There are extensive lists detailing the favorite occupations for each of the six areas. Note, however, that your individual RIASEC preferences are unique; the above is simply a generalized set of preferences for an “average” INTP. If you want to find out more, go take a test (i.e.

¹⁷⁸ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

the Strong Interest Inventory); it will give you your individual RIASEC preferences. There are also a number of type-based assessment groups that can give you both your MBTI type and your RIASEC preferences combined into one report. Just look around on the internet.

Let's delve a little deeper. As you've no doubt noted, INTPs did not mention any interest in Enterprising or Social jobs. What is so interesting about this is that INTPs actually *performed* those types of jobs the least of all types. No other type performed Enterprising jobs less; no other type performed Social jobs less. It seems that INTPs avoid jobs they are not good at like the plague. INTPs also *liked* Social jobs the least of all types. INTPs are just not people people.

Surprisingly, INTPs are the type that most *likes* Realistic jobs, which are basically an STP magnet. We've noted all along that INTPs are interested in abstract, theoretical constructs, but surprise!--they like working with their hands the most of all types. Isn't that an interesting contradiction? Note however, that they did not actually *perform* these jobs more than average.

Working Conditions Amenable to INTPs

INTPs like to work in a quiet environment where they can concentrate wholeheartedly on a variety of tasks. Their office should ideally be situated in a low traffic environment away from the louder/busier parts of the company.

Introverts prefer working with a few intimate acquaintances to working with fresh faces every day. In addition, working alone or with minimal human contact is typically OK provided that the work is sufficiently challenging. Complete isolation may be wearying for those near the middle of the E/I spectrum, however.

Telecommuting and flextime are two other things that INTPs enjoy. They like telecommuting because their quiet, casual, solitary home is more amenable than the noisy, formal, people-crammed office. Then too, INTPs actually like having a built-in delay between contact and response.

Flextime is enjoyed for the simple reason that INTPs are highly autonomous Perceivers. They prefer not to have their schedule set in stone; it feels natural to adapt worktime to the needs of the day. Also, if there is no set time when an INTP is supposed to show up for work, then they can't be late, can they?

Interviewing Issues

Interviewing: an opportunity to blow your skills and accomplishments wildly out of proportion while hiding your faults to the maximum extent of the law. ...Unfortunately, there's that cursed INTP objectivity, modesty and niggly precision standing in the way.

Scenario 1

Average Person: "I was the best troubleshooter in the department." (Translation: I was the best troubleshooter in the department, unless it involved the website.)

Result: Interviewer is impressed.

Scenario 2

INTP: "I was the best troubleshooter in the department, except for when it came to the website."

Interviewer: "So you're not good with websites?"

INTP: "Well, actually I'm fairly good [Translation: amazing] at website architecture, but my coworker

was better.”

Interviewer: “Do you think you’ll be able to handle our website?”

INTP: “I can’t see any reason why not.” [Translation: Your website appears to be so simple that a child could manage it, but I suppose you just never know. Until then, it’s best not to make presumptuous declarations that could actually turn out to be inaccurate. Anyway, I hate showing off.]

Result: Interviewer notes that INTP is weak in the area of website maintenance.

In the snippet about, the INTP gave clear, precise meanings to all of his statements, with exceptions duly noted. He also spoke modestly, shunning self-praise and overinflated claims of prowess. Finally, despite being 99.999% sure of his conclusions, he kept in mind that .001% of doubt and said “probably” instead of “yes.” I’m not sure what to do about these problems, so let’s discuss poor posture and dress instead.

Thorne and Gough (1991) did a study where non-type-savvy observers interviewed people of various types. The interviewers picked characteristics that described the person’s comportment during the interview from a list. (Note that I did not include characteristics which are clearly not indicative of typical INTP behavior, i.e. interviewers described male intuitives as having animated facial expressions.)

- Male introverts seemed anxious, unsure of themselves and were perceived by interviewers as doubting their own abilities.
- Female introverts were seen as calm but reticent.
- Male intuitives were described as having poor posture and an unimpressive bearing, but possessing a large vocabulary.
- Female intuitives were described as nervous, fidgety, clumsy, and awkward. Interviewers also noted that they were likely to ask questions during the interview.
- Thinking males seemed poised and gave the impression of having a stable, optimistic view of the future. However, interviewers also thought that although the interviewees seemed cooperative on the surface, they were actually being evasive.
- Thinking females were described as having poor posture, an unimpressive bearing, facial blemishes, terse and to the point speech, difficult to understand speech, and poor enunciation. (Owch.)

This suggests a few areas for improvement, doesn’t it? Unfortunately, a lot of this stuff is in the interviewer’s head (are we really to believe that being a Thinking female causes facial blemishes?) and there’s not much you can do about it. Still, a few of these factors can be mitigated with proper planning. In short, sit up straight, act confident, and don’t fidget.

One other thing of interest is that sometimes employers selectively hire people with their own personality type. If you can figure out your interviewer’s personality type at the start of the interview, you can adapt yourself to speak their language. I recommend the type book *The Art of SpeedReading People: How to Size People Up and Speak Their Language* by Tieger and Barron-Tieger.

Job Satisfaction

INTPs and INFJs tie for having the lowest job satisfaction of all types.¹⁷⁹ For this reason, INTPs job

¹⁷⁹ Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

hop incessantly.¹⁸⁰ This is probably attributable to the fact that INPs want more creativity and independence than the average employer provides. INTPs reported that they were unsatisfied with work, the company, and their future opportunities; they noted that they were likely to leave their jobs within the year.¹⁸¹ In terms of work aspects, INTPs were the type most likely to be “very dissatisfied” with the following:

- Job security – 19.7% unsatisfied compared to group average of 11.8%
- Predictability/stability of job – 17.4% unsatisfied compared to group average of 10.1%
- Working conditions (hours, vacations, benefits, etc.) - 15.5% unsatisfied compared to group average of 9.5%
- People I work with – 10.0% unsatisfied compared to group average of 3.4%
- Responsibility – 8.6% unsatisfied compared to group average of 4.4%

There were 14 work aspects measured in the study, and INTPs were the type most dissatisfied with 5 of them. Eep.

But what aspects of a job *do* satisfy INTPs?

Compared to other types, INTPs particularly liked “International opportunities” (over 50% of respondents chose this option) and “Advancement/pay, not security.”¹⁸² Security, as you’ll recall from the love chapter, is not a big INTP value. INTPs would rather make a lot of money than be assured of a good retirement. Not that won’t complain about this—they were the type most dissatisfied with job security, after all.

Another way to look at this is to have the respondents rank their liking of job traits from highest to lowest. INTPs liked the following job traits:

- Variety of tasks (liked by over 80%)
- Independence and achievement (liked by over 80%)
- Clear structure
- Teamwork
- People from different backgrounds

“Loyalty/security,” a sixth option, was not particularly valued by INTPs or any of the Rationals.

The biggies here are “variety of tasks” and “independence and achievement.” A variety of tasks to choose from prevents INTPs from getting bored. They must continually learn new things and master new skills to maintain their contentment. As soon as they have learned everything and finished optimizing their skills, they lose interest; the result is swift burnout.

In terms of independence, a hands off or frequently absent boss, an opportunity to organize one’s own tasks and time, and the chance to choose one’s own projects can provide a satisfying sense of independence to the highly autonomous INTP.

All Rationals crave achievement, and the INTPs are no exception. They must continually be improving their performance and becoming more skillful and efficient at completing their tasks. Once they reach a plateau and cannot think of any further improvements, a large chunk of their job satisfaction vanishes. “It’s just more of the same old routine,” they complain.

180 Otis & Louks, 1997

181 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

182 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Work Related Miscellanea

E-mail

Introverts enjoy e-mail and other asynchronous communication systems because it allows them to formulate their thoughts before speaking. An INTP will probably prefer to send an e-mail rather than have a meeting if possible.

Perceivers and Judgers deal with task-related e-mails differently. Both groups tend to use their inbox as a to-do list for e-mails. But researchers found that while the Judgers either deleted or filed their e-mails away when they were done with the task in question, the Perceivers just left them in their inboxes--sometimes for a few more days, sometimes for more than a year. Their rationale? It varied, but it was usually some reasoning along the lines of "I might need them again someday." Note that Perceivers did move the e-mails into folders eventually ([read here](#)).¹⁸³

In short, you will probably have a lot of e-mail, and it will probably hang out in your inbox for awhile.

Showing up on time

Showing up on time may present difficulties for the tardy, procrastinating Perceivers. One strategy to manipulate yourself into fake punctuality is to record the exact minute that you arrive on the jobsite on a conveniently-placed piece of paper or computer document. Rationals have ever-increasing standards of achievement, and your natural desire to excel combined with your natural impatience for less will drive you to do better and better--otherwise you would be an incompetent failure, and this would be unendurable, right? Give the paper a try if you're having problems. Make sure you keep it somewhere you cannot lose it or ignore it.

Obeying the dress code

The dress code may be a source of frustration for INTPs, who care little about physical appearance. INTPs may be rebuked for smell, weird taste in clothes, lack of hair care, or other infringements. See the section on clothing and hygiene.

There is No INTP in Team

A study of workplace values found that although 61.5% of INTPs liked the work environment characteristic "Work as part of team," they actually liked it the *least* of all types. INTPs have good cause to say, "I work alone."¹⁸⁴

Following the Rules, Bureaucracy, and Other Silly Notions

INTPs don't care much for bureaucracy. In fact, though no less than 73.7% of INTPs indicated that they liked the work environment characteristic "Clear structures and responsibility," this was actually the *least* liking of all types.¹⁸⁵ It would appear that INTPs are somewhat more apt to view "Ambiguous structures and murky responsibility" as a plus compared to other types.

On top of this, INTPs are rule-breakers. In fact, they are one of the least rule conscious types. If a rule doesn't make sense to them, they really see no reason to follow it. "Rules," says the INTP, "are but an imperfect model of ideal conduct and are unable to handle with all the complexities of the situations they are meant to describe." For example:

183 Ludford & Terveen, 2003

184 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

185 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Rule: Wipe your shoes off before entering the building.

Underlying Principle: Don't get dirt on the carpet.

Fact: INTP is wearing gym shoes that are spotless. INTP sees rationale behind rule and realizes that there is no reason to wipe off their shoes. Therefore INTP does not wipe off shoes.

Result: INTP is sent to the HR manager.

If you built a robot and ordered it to obey the company's Standard Operating Procedures Manual without fail, it would be fired within a week. Those INTPs who are computer programmers know that robots are stupid because they always follow their simple list of rules to the letter. Alas, trying explaining that to HR. The INTP will obey the spirit of the law, but the letter is a different story.

Burnout

Once mastered, a job loses much of its sparkle. The INTP will next turn their attention to improving the efficiency of the system. "How could we do this cheaper/easier/faster?" they will ask themselves. Suggestions for improvement may be presented to the boss. Criticisms of the current system may be expressed. The INTP may find themselves trying to learn about others' jobs simply for the mental exercise. They will volunteer for whatever new or unorthodox tasks may come up, trying to find relief from the monotony of already-mastered tasks.

In the final stage of burnout, the INTP will procrastinate, day-dream, do unnecessary research, work on everyone else's stuff, play excessively with desk toys, surf the internet, harass their bosses and coworkers to the improve the system, and display an impatient and stressed out attitude.

This about it: do you want your boss to remember what you were like in the final stage of burnout, or do you want them to remember what you were like when you were still enjoying your job to some extent? How will your old boss describe you to your potential new employers?

It may be wise to quit while you are still regarded as a good worker and a well balanced person.

The types of burnout that one is prone to may be dependent upon type. A small study (82 participants) of type and burnout found that INTPs were one of the four types *least* likely to suffer from "Personal Accomplishment" burnout as measured on the Maslach Burnout Scale. (The Rationals in general had few issues with Personal Accomplishment, which was a measure of feeling competent, effective, and positive about one's accomplishments.) Also, INTPs were neither among the top four nor the bottom four types that reported suffering from Emotional Exhaustion (feeling wrung out) and Depersonalization (growing callous and beginning to treat others impersonally). This suggests that they were somewhere in the middle. Interpret with caution, however; it is probable that there were only a handful INTPs in this study.¹⁸⁶ We cannot consider this anything more than an anecdote.

Attention to detail

An INTP can find a typo on line 762 of an 8,700 line program, yet blithely ignore a wet paint sign.

On one hand, INTPs are a rather nitpicky type. They have a reputation as grammar Nazis on the internet, and their emphasis upon subtle shades of meaning and technical precision tend to make them detail oriented in *certain situations*. They can be quite perfectionistic about getting everything exactly correct. An INTP would probably be better than average at work that involves editing or critique.

However, in many jobs "attention to detail" involves noticing changes in one's immediate environment,

186 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

such as an important dial quietly shifting a few notches, or remembering to put chocks under the wheels of a forklift, or not putting a stickers on a piece of moldy produce. While for the most part INTPs can handle this stuff, they *are* one of the most absentminded types. Sooner or later a slip up will happen--the only question is when and how bad. The INTP's Sensing coworkers won't get it; they will gape and say, "How could you miss that?!"

One story recounted by a police officer describes how there were two policemen, one a Sensor and one an Intuitive.¹⁸⁷ When they were charged with gathering evidence from a crime scene, the Sensor inevitably turned up evidence that the Intuitive (a probable NT) missed. Intuitives are not particularly interested in details and do not notice them as readily as Sensors; for INTPs this effect is doubled because they tend to be lost in thought. I would make a terrible lifeguard.

Increasing Efficiency

INTPs can be injected into a workforce as a way to increase the efficiency of a job position. They may introduce new tools and tech, perform experiments to optimize existing procedures, or question the usefulness of potentially obsolete requirements. For example, an INTP may spearhead a movement to digitalize a paper-based tracking system, or develop a faster method for sorting items at a store.

However, their value in this respect is hindered because the INTP may decide not to share their special knowledge unless it becomes apparent that others' ignorance is hampering their efforts. Why don't they share?

In the first place, INTPs have learned over a lifetime that Machiavelli was right when he said, "It must be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old institution and merely lukewarm defenders in those who gain by the new ones."

INTPs know from experience that their improvements are not often received with cries of joy. On top of that, the Standard Operating Procedures manual already shows the "correct" way to do things and many managers are under orders to actively resist deviations from the manual--no matter how much better any new strategy may actually work in practice. The absurdity of such illogical behavior makes INTPs want to smash their heads against hard surfaces.

Even worse, the INTP will learn that, "If your manager finds out you are not complying with their pointless rules, they will force you to obey, reducing your efficiency and depriving you of the benefits of your ingenious refinements."

The end result is that INTPs are trained to keep their optimizations to themselves and eat the fruit of their labors in silence. This also allows them to maintain a monopoly on their competitive advantages and reap the benefits of working smarter, not harder. Furthermore, they also avoid the unpleasant expressions of disbelief, criticism and skepticism that some are wont to express towards unconventional--though perfectly workable--ideas.

Yet if you can get an INTP talking, it is surprising to find how much they have been holding back; the experience is something like having a curtain thrown back to reveal an entire room one never even knew existed. The enlightened person may be surprised in retrospect that the quiet, solemn guy sitting in the corner apparently knew everything about everything but never said anything about it. INTPs are often underestimated.

¹⁸⁷ Hennessy, 1999

If you have an INTP coworker and you suspect that they have valuable knowledge, ask them with curiosity “how they did it” or complement them on their skills. Rationals derive great satisfaction from explaining how they solved a puzzle or came up with the design for a new system; they feed upon recognition for their cleverness and creativity. INTP Rationals are particularly deprived in this area because they are quiet and do most of their work in their minds where nobody will ever see or appreciate it. Thus they can be drawn out by honest curiosity about how they solved problem X or by genuine praise for above average performance. Explaining the solution gives them the satisfaction of reliving the hunt.

Managers will often find that it requires extra effort on their part to draw ideas out of their INTP workers, but it will be worth it. The leader must demonstrate that they are interested in improving the efficiency of their systems and are actually open to making the changes. This can be done by wondering aloud in the INTP’s presence, “I wonder how we could make this work better/faster/more efficiently.” Or, simply ask directly: “What do you think we could do to make this work better?” It is better to address this question to the INTP personally rather than to a group that they happen to be standing in. Perhaps the INTP will have an idea, perhaps not. It doesn’t really matter, because you’ve shown them that you want their ideas, and they will remember your attitude when an idea *does* come to them. Weeks after you plant the seeds, the INTP may bump into you and say without much force, “If you built a board onto the unloading dock there and started using a chain instead of rope, we wouldn’t have these spillage problems anymore.” INTPs are overrepresented among casual inventors, remember?

INTPs feel valued and needed when their ideas are used; it gives them a warm feeling to bring benefits to their coworkers. Like all Rationals, they attach heroism to the act of Making People’s Lives Better Through Science--or at least through the application of logic and design.

How to Select Your Next Summer Job

When you get your first job, you probably won’t get to choose between Microsoft or Apple. No, your choices will probably boil down to Burger King or McDonalds. So how can a knowledge of type help you select a summer job that you won’t hate (too much)?

Let’s say you’ve scan the Help Wanted ads a few times and you’ve come up with three possible winners. They all look boring and stressful, but which one is the least bad? One of the job ads says it wants “strong attention to detail.” Another expects “customer service skills.” Still another, “ability to work independently.”

Let’s analyze what these code phrases mean when translated into actual employer expectations.

“Strong attention to detail” = Sensors wanted

“Customer service skills” = Extraverted Feelers wanted

“Ability to work independently” = Your boss will never be around

Right away we see that job #3 may be worth looking into.

Next we need to consider the amount of bureaucracy that we want to deal with. Small or family-owned businesses that lack HR departments typically will not have a lot of rules compared to national chains. Informality is a boon for all Perceiving types, but particularly to the nonconforming, ill-dressed, rule-breaking INTPs. +1 if job #3 is at a small local company. (A study found that INP computer professionals had a higher likelihood of quitting if they worked at a big company; those in smaller

companies were more likely to stay.)¹⁸⁸

Most summer jobs fall into one of the following grueling categories:

Assembly Line Job

In an assembly line job, the employee performs the same small action over and over again, perhaps in a variety of different contexts. Speed is king here, finesse probably counts for little, and you will be competing with a bunch of Artisans for whom this style of work comes effortlessly. Assembly line jobs will probably not be amenable to your natural abilities, but your knack for finding min-max solutions and eliminating waste from the system may eventually give you a competitive edge over your fellow workers.

No Brainer

INTPs enjoy work that is challenging and intellectually stimulating. Yet they also enjoy jobs that are completely and totally mindless. Why is this? It is because in a no brainer job the lower reptilian part of the INTP's brain operates the body and performs the actual work, while the INTP's cerebral cortex throws a mind party. Some of the smartest people you may ever meet are working some of the mind-numbing jobs in existence because they enjoy being able to think about whatever they please all day long.

So what are the factors that go into making the perfect no brainer job?

- Relatively small amounts of communication required
- Predictable, repetitive tasks that can be performed in your sleep
- Speed is not a big issue

Since the job itself offers no intrinsic satisfaction, it is important for the INTP to continually feed their mental muse off the clock. Lots of reading = lots to think about. If the well of interesting subjects to ponder dries up, the no brainer job will rapidly lose its appeal. As an example of a scenario that might cause a drug/alcohol relapse for an NTPs, Thorburne (2000) describes an NTP stuck in a mind-numbing job that they hate.

Probably the ideal no brainer job would be to work alone as a clerk at a small shop that gets only a few customers every day. The combination of unfilled time, low communication requirements, and laid back atmosphere can be spent productively however the INTP pleases. (Oddly, the perfect no brainer job is almost like being locked up in a supermax prison, except that you can go home at the end of the day.)

Customer Service Jobs

Depending on where you fall on the Introversion - Extraversion scale, you will be able to tolerate differing amounts of customer service. A slight introvert will be able to handle much more interaction than a very clear introvert. However, all introverts draw their energy from secret inner springs, and each interaction dips a cup of water out.

Jobs with moderate amounts of customer service are acceptable for most INTPs. As long as there are periods of calm and quiet throughout the day where recharging can take place, the INTP's energy level will remain high enough for them to be basically content.

However, jobs requiring continual customer service should be avoided. Essentially, if the job will involve a waiting queue of people that you have to interact with one after another, then the job is likely

188 Garden in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

too extraverted. The receptionist who answers one telephone call after another and the cashier who helps one customer after another are good examples of situations to avoid. (Not that all reception jobs or cashier jobs require this much people contact; it still depends on the business and time of day.)

About the Author

The worst job I ever had was as a cashier at a large grocery store. After eight hours per day reciting a formulaic greeting, trying to smile (it was required and enforced), making shallow small talk, and offering services the customers never wanted, I would go home each day feeling as if every endorphin in my body had been wrung out. At this point the very thought of moving my facial muscles repelled me. The wrong summer job can last a lifetime.

Miscellaneous Occupational Notes

INTPs in Medicine

One study found that INTPs were preferentially attracted (or repelled) from certain fields of medicine.¹⁸⁹ In particular, they were attracted to the following:

- Neurology (2.75 times as many INTPs as would be expected.)
- Research (1.98 times as many INTPs as would be expected.)
- Psychiatry (1.84 times as many INTPs as would be expected.)
- Pathology (1.78 times as many INTPs as would be expected.)

And repelled from:

- Obstetrics, Gynecology (0.44 times (about half as many) INTPs as would be expected.)

INTPs in the Library

A study of 1,600 librarians found that 9% of the sample was INTP, making them the third most common type among librarians.¹⁹⁰ There were about 2.25 times as many INTPs as would be expected in comparison to the general population. The INTPs tended to “fall into the profession by chance.”

With other Introverted Thinkers, INTP librarians were particularly attracted to the field of automation. Academic libraries (as opposed to school libraries, public libraries, and other libraries) also tended to attract Thinkers and Perceivers, but most particularly INTPs.

189 Myers & Myers, 1980

190 Scherdin, 1994

14. INTPs and the Intellect

I.Q. Testing and Type

Many people avoid discussing the relationship between type and I.Q. because they assume that people can't deal with the truth. Unfortunately, the silence of the experts has led to rampant speculation instead of fact-based discussion. The internet is full of arrogant type bigots (see appendix) and people with crushed self esteem who either believe their type is particularly smart or particularly dumb. However, they are both wrong.

We do not know if type is related to intelligence. However, type is related to your ability to score high on an I.Q., SAT, or ACT test. Here's the rub: intelligence is not precisely the same thing as a high I.Q. score.

You probably think I'm just being politically correct, but no, I'm an INTP. Are we known for that? Let's get real here: it may still be unknown whether type is related to intelligence, but you can use an I.Q. test instead of the Myers-Briggs to figure out a person's type preferences. I.Q. tests measure abstract reasoning skill (Intuition), the ability to solve problems alone and silently within your head (Introversion), the ability to think objectively about non-people oriented problems (Thinking), flexibility in solving never-before-seen problems (Perceiving), and the ability to work swiftly (N - I'll explain later). There is nothing new here; all of this is predicted by type theory.

And indeed, the more of those preferences you have, the higher your score on an aptitude test (SAT, ACT, I.Q., etc.) is likely to be. Introverts tend to do better than Extraverts. Intuitives tend to do better than Sensors. Thinkers are slightly preferred over Feelers. Perceivers have an advantage over Judgers. These are average trends, of course, but they all add up to a clear ranking based on personality characteristics.

For this reason, INTPs are predicted to do the best of all types on I.Q. tests. Does this mean they are more intelligent than average? We don't know. But we do know that the very format of the test introduces confounding factors that give INTPs a leg up on everybody else. Not to say that I.Q. tests are completely worthless (read on) but there are strong type-based biases that may result in junk data.

Now. Culturally speaking--I deal in stereotypes--the INTP personality *is* considered the very epitome of intelligence. People reason thus: Einstein was an INTP; Einstein was a genius; INTPs act like Einstein; therefore every INTP is a genius. (Flawlessly logical.)

Now, what happens to someone like Mozart, the Artisan child prodigy who couldn't have looked less like Einstein? Mozart was a frighteningly brilliant guy, but his brilliance would have been shortchanged by our current I.Q. tests, which measure type as well as genuine intelligence.

In fact, type strongly determines how intelligence is expressed. An Artisan genius won't work math problems; they will make music. An Idealist genius won't do shop work; they will write literature. Mozart may have been able to compose original music at age 5, but that doesn't make him "smart" by our Einsteinian cultural stereotypes. Yet Mozart clearly had a unique, powerful Artisan mind.

Keirsey (1998a) has speculated that there are four kinds of intelligence: the Artisan tactical intellect, the Idealist diplomatic intellect, the Guardian logistical intellect, and the Rational strategic intellect. I'll cover these briefly so that we can contrast INTP intelligence with the intelligences possessed by other types.

Artisan Tactical Intelligence

The Artisan's tactical intellect is the kind embodied by Mozart. Our culture values musical expression, and those who compose music and play it exceptionally well "count" as geniuses. But consider another Artisan genius who takes up wood carving instead of the piano. At a young age, our hypothetical genius might be turning out exquisite masterpieces that will one day set the tone for the entire field of wood carving. They may develop new carving techniques, create new styles, and shatter traditional conceptions of what wood carving is supposed to be. But this Artisan doesn't count as a "real" genius because their area of talent is not recognized as a valid intellectual expression by our culture. If you were to ask them whether they are smart, they will laugh and freely admit, "Nah, I was one of dumb kids. Always hated school. Now I just carve wood." This Mozart will die in relative obscurity, unrecognized for his contributions.

And what of the Artisan prodigy who flies airplanes, operates power tools, entertains crowds, plays sports, or performs any number of concrete activities in an exceptional, ground-breaking way? Artisan geniuses find math and reading a bore--they would rather experience a book than read one. The fruits of the Artisan's genius are not a new equation, but a stunning physical performance--sailing around the world; developing new combat techniques for a squadron of airplanes; jury-rigging a clever modification onto an existing tool; breaking a physical record; negotiating an international treaty; becoming a martial arts master; or creating a riveting dramatic performance. But only the musical Artisans will be counted as *true* geniuses.

Can Artisan intelligence be measured on a test? Partially. One Artisan musical prodigy, a very probable ESTP, had her intelligence measured at 116.6 (superior, but not by much) using the Binet test.¹⁹¹ It was interesting to note which sections of the test she performed well or poorly on. The researchers noted, "The performance on the whole is, in terms of I.Q., the poorest of any of the superiors. The tests requiring vivid imagery and puzzle solving ability are performed best... Vocabulary tests and tests requiring verbal fluency, refined meanings, abstract judgment and interpretation are performed most poorly..."

Abstract thinking, the accumulation of a large pool of carefully-defined vocabulary words (usually acquired through reading), and the interpretation of meanings do not interest the concrete Artisans, who have no interest in reading or symbolic interpretations. On the other hand, "vivid imagery" and "puzzle solving" (i.e., questions like, "What time would it be if I switched the big and little hands of a clock?" or "If I folded a piece of paper over two times and cut a hole into it, how many holes would there be if I unfolded it?") are something like real-life, concrete problems that deal with actual physical objects.

Also of interest is the fact that the ESTP's performance in the Simple Addition section was exceptional; success in this section requires "ability in the distribution of attention in a sustained, continuous, rapid performance." The researchers suggested that this talent may lie at the heart of the prodigy's ability to play the piano extremely well. There was also a construction puzzle that required the arrangement of (real) colored blocks within a frame; here too, the ESTP exhibited exceptional ability. Note that this puzzle required the manipulation of real, physical objects; Artisans are the master tool users. In many areas the ESTP was also *faster* than average than her peers--the Artisans are good at speed, though they must necessarily sacrifice something in terms of accuracy.

What can we say? Clearly this particular intelligence test does measure *some* aspects of Artisan intelligence; but in the main it does not. If concrete questions were asked, or if real, physical objects

¹⁹¹ Root, 1921

were used, or if speed was weighted higher than accuracy, then she would excel. Her I.Q. would seem to “rise” whereas those of other types would seem to “fall”—thus proving that ESTPs are the smartest type. You see the problem. It’s all about the questions you ask.

As you may have guessed by now, Keirsey (1998a) does not agree with the general definition of intelligence as “abstract reasoning skill,” such as is measured by tests like the one above.

Idealist Diplomatic Intelligence

One eight year old INF child with an I.Q. Of 188 (as measured by the Stanford-Binet) was discovered to have the basic math skills equivalent to those of a fifth grader. Her skills in poetic appreciation, however, were equivalent to those of a college sophomore.¹⁹²

Intelligence typically expresses itself through type preferences. Unquestionably this child was bright, but she did not use her gift for math or science; rather, she intended to take up a literary career.

Idealists express their intelligence through the skillful treatment of people and meanings. The former talent expresses itself in defusing conflict, bringing out the potential in others, building healthy relationships and helping people grow. Idealists are also the masters of meanings; they direct their minds to the creation and interpretation of poetry, literature and (symbolic) arts. Their work combines deep insight into human nature with moral, and perhaps religious, thought.

Note that Idealist intelligence is not the same thing as “emotional intelligence” or EQ. It is true that ENFPs and ENFJs tend to get high scores on EQ, but in fact ENTJs and ESTJs get even higher scores, while INFPs get very very low scores.¹⁹³ Introverted Idealists prefer to direct their people skills towards a select few, or perhaps only one, person. By contrast, EQ focuses on extraverted relationship skills. The skills possessed by the one-on-one counselor or mentor are different.

Guardian Logistical Intelligence

The Guardians’ intelligence is the type most alien to the Rationals, and the kind that most defies any conventional definition. Guardians are not known for being highly creative, imaginative or visionary, like the Rationals and Idealists, nor are they known for creating great works of art or performing stunning physical accomplishments, like the Artisans.

Perhaps the phrase that best captures Guardian intelligence is “a genius for organization.” Guardians direct their intelligence towards the husbandry of materials, people, money, etc. They apply their skills most effectively towards increasing the *scale* of their domain, or towards increasing the reliability or safety of an existing organization/area/idea. They fortify; they defend; they protect; they hold the line. They will seldom use their intelligence to come up with new, unconventional ideas, but rather to make skillful application of already-existing ones. Indeed, for the Guardians, creativity often takes the form of *restoration* rather than creation.

Safer/bigger, not different, is the goal of an intelligent Guardian. Security rather than improvement is the prize sought after. The Guardian directs their attention towards multiplying and safeguarding their resources by making wise, careful investments; forestalling threats, and constantly maintaining and monitoring their domain.

192 Hollingworth, 1942

193 Thomson in Reinhold, n.d.

Myers and Myers (1980) offer additional insight into the intelligence of Guardians. (It should be noted that while the authors were supposedly discussing the intelligence of all Sensors, in reality they seem to have focused mainly upon SJs. All the intelligence-related examples they gave were for SJs, and they noted that most Sensors are Judgers. They also divided the Sensors up into the SF and ST categories rather than SP and SJ categories used later by Keirsey and also in this book. Considering all of this, I have decided to deal with their results as if they applied to SJs exclusively.)

One of the most salient points that emerged was that Guardians seem to get higher scores on intelligence tests when they *rush themselves*. Guardians care very much about “making sure,” which means reading a question multiple times, double checking their work, and choosing slower but more certain methods. But many intelligence tests are timed; this puts an immediate penalty on the SJs because they cannot answer as many questions. Whereas the Artisan’s style of intelligence is fast but error-prone, the Guardian’s style of intelligence is more accurate, but slower. (Painstaking accuracy and “soundness of understanding” are the Guardian’s strength.)

What kind of difference does this make in terms of scores? In the example that Myers and Myers gave, an ISFJ got a score 10 points higher on an IQ test after she stopped reading the questions multiple times before answering. (In case you’re wondering, the ISFJ took a parallel form of the test; it wasn’t the same one again.)

If we were to create an intelligence test that is fair to Guardians, it should be untimed and emphasize accuracy. It should be a “power” test rather than a “speed” test. Note that there *are* Guardians that achieve exceptional scores on I.Q. tests. Like the Artisans, they accomplish this in spite of the test structure rather than because of it.

Rational Strategic Intelligence

Rationals have the type of intelligence that is popularly recognized as such. They excel in science and math; they solve abstract problems; they design complex systems, they create long range strategies, they focus on accumulating knowledge and building theories. We will examine the manifestations of this intelligence in INTP geniuses shortly.

Among the Rationals, INTPs are the type most favored by the format of current I.Q. tests.

The Value of I.Q. Tests, Continued

Despite the problems that intelligence tests present for Guardians and Artisans, I.Q. tests do accurately measure intelligence for certain types--mainly INs and ENPs, and to a lesser extent all Intuitives. For Introverted Intuitives and ENPs alone, an I.Q. test is more or less fair, and can be put to valid use for comparative purposes. An INTP with an I.Q. of 150 is really smarter than an INTP with an I.Q. of 140, provided that both INTPs have the same levels of Introversion, Intuition, Thinking, and Perceiving rather than being borderline on one of the preferences. But an I.Q. test cannot tell you whether an INTP with an I.Q. of 150 is smarter than an ESFJ with an I.Q. of 140, because the inherent bias of the test renders the data invalid for ESFJs. Essentially, most Sensing types cannot be tested because the confounding factors are too strong to permit real intertype comparisons. In fact, I would go so far as to say that I.Q. tests do not even constitute valid data on intelligence for most non-INs, though there are ENP types that also score very highly.

You're probably curious as to where INTPs fall in the I.Q. ranking. All the factors are in their favor, so

they should be the highest ranked type.

Three I.Q. studies have placed INTPs between 2nd and 6th place out of 16 types.¹⁹⁴ This is close to what we would expect based on our hypothesis above--a nearly top-ranked score. The amount of variability is normal.

Remember that no two INTPs are alike in terms of either type or intelligence. The discussion above is of averages and generalities; you may be above or below average compared to the rest of your type.

Giftedness

Intelligence is one thing, giftedness is another. It is true that all types have their own unique gifts to offer, but some gifts are rarer than others and the laws of economics push the value of those gifts up. Gifted programs serve primarily certain types whose scientific and poetic contributions to the human race are particularly prized. The contributions of other intelligent types are appreciated through other programs, though such programs are not associated with a label that actually denotes intelligence.

Sak (2004) did a “study of studies” in which he agglomerated the results of 14 separate studies on type and giftedness and analyzed the combined sample of 5,723 gifted 6th - 12th graders. The results showed a trend towards NP, with 50% of the sample consisting of INFPs, INTPs, ENFPs, and ENTPs. Indeed, ~60% of the gifted sample was Perceiving, while ~70% was Intuitive. The sample was also more introverted and thinking than would be expected in comparison to a normal group of highschoolers.

Added up, this means that the results showed a trend towards INTP. In fact, 12.5% of the sample was INTP as compared to a norm of 3.54% in the general high school population. There were 3.53 times as many INTPs as would have been expected.

- INTP – 3.53 times as many as would be expected.
- INTJ – 2.87 " etc
- INFP – 2.68
- INFJ – 2.67
- ENTP – 2.32
- ENFP – 2.03
- ENTJ – 1.49
- ENFJ – 1.26
- ISTJ – 0.98
- ISTP – 0.78
- ESFP – 0.60
- ISFP – 0.39
- ESTP – 0.49
- ISFJ – 0.40
- ESTJ – 0.26
- ESFJ – 0.24

As a cautionary note, there is some test bias at work here: intelligence tests are often used for

194 McCaulley & Kainz; McCaulley & Natter; Myers & McCaulley in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

admission purposes into gifted programs.

Discussion

Among the gifted students, the math-gifted group was high in Thinking, while the verbally-gifted group was high in Intuition. Gifted females were more extraverted and feeling than gifted males. Gifted males favored perceiving more than gifted females.

The high prevalence of INTPs in this population creates an interesting effect: the very definition of giftedness has evolved to describe certain groups of personalities, including the INTP personality. (More generally, the definition has molded itself to the NT/NF temperaments. One sees the latter temperament's influence in definitions that emphasize the "sensitivity" of the gifted.) Because giftedness is a personality phenomenon as much as an intelligence phenomenon, all INTPs are to some extent "gifted"--sheerly because of the way the term has become defined.

This presents some interesting opportunities. For example, studies of the best educational methods for gifted students can teach us about the ways INTPs would prefer to be educated, regardless of whether the INTP in question is gifted or not. It would be interesting to review the literature, reading in "INTP" for "gifted."

INTP Geniuses

Something of an aura of mysticism has grown up around Einstein, and in hindsight it seems almost inevitable that he achieved fame and honor for his genius. What is less obvious is that many genius level, or just plain intelligent, INTPs go through the same experiences without ever being recognized for their gifts or even expressing them in a significant way. Einstein was not just a genius INTP. He was a *lucky*, genius INTP.

In this section, we'll review the traits of two individuals with IQs of 180+ whom I believe to be INTPs. At the time their cases were reviewed, neither had achieved fame or made a significant contribution to science. Nevertheless, their stories are interesting because they illustrate the manifestations of high intelligence as expressed through the INTP personality. The second case also provides an instructional example of how an INTP's life can go wrong.

Note that an IQ of 100 +/- 15, is considered average. An IQ over 180 is found in something like 1-3 people in a million. Both children (A and F) were described by Leta Hollingworth (1942).

Child A - IQ 187 - 191 (As tested by the Stanford-Binet, 1920s version)

Evidence for INTP

- One of A's teachers observed, "His mind often seems to be miles away." (IN)
- Disliked projects, particularly group projects and activities. Preferred to lay on his back and stare at the ceiling. (INT)
- Low interest in social activities. (INT)
- Would rather learn through books than through experiencing real life. (INT)
- Bored by games that involved jumping and running around. He wanted the play to have a strategic goal. He tended to enjoy games of "intellectual skill," playing in the sand, and reading. (Favors INT)
- Tended to become "absorbed in his own line of thought" with the result that he was seen as indifferent, absent-minded, abstracted and uncooperative. (INP)
- His best subject was mathematics (NT)

- Disliked illogical children's books (NT)
- By age 6, he was working out the underlying principals of mathematics before the teacher had taught them to the class. (NT)
- Described as having excellent emotional control, not being over-demonstrative, and as keeping his emotions hidden. (NT)
- Described as "very untidy" and as neither "neat nor orderly." (P)
- Saw no reason to do a school activity if he didn't personally see any value in it. (NTP favored most among the Rationals)
- One teacher noted that child A could "learn to do anything *in which his interest was aroused.*" [Emphasis mine.] However, it was difficult "to make him assume responsibilities about material or work which is irksome..." (NTP favored among the Rationals.)
- Disliked redundancy; bored by repetition (NTP)
- Described as generous by parents, but also as "a little bit selfish" by a teacher (The latter adjective was used by non-type-savvy observers to describe NTPs but not NTJs)¹⁹⁵
- All the teachers agreed that Child A would not do his best unless regularly "prodded." The general conclusion was, "He seems to do poor work and at the same time to be entirely satisfied with it." (INTP favored most of the NTs.)
- Described as obstinate (INTP stubbornness)
- Cried little as a baby (INTP favored)
- Described as having absent-minded habits, i.e. forgetting his coat at school. (INTP favored most of the NTs.)
- Averse to taking advice (This could be attributed to INTP stubbornness, nonconformity, need to think for oneself)
- Noted for his ability to criticize his own concepts (Due to their doubting nature and objectivity, INTPs are probably the Rational type most likely to do this.)
- A's intelligence manifested itself primarily in the area of math and reading. (NT favored)

Discussion

Child A was moved quickly through the grades rather than being advanced with other children. He got along well with his teachers, with the exception of typical INTP problems exemplified in this report:

"A's teachers seem to hold the universal opinion that he is not doing well in his work unless prodded or specially urged. It was to be expected that the handwork, such as art and shopwork, would be hard for him, but he seems to do poor work and at the same time to be entirely satisfied with it, his teachers say. Miss B finds he is not an observer of nature, but rather inclined to tell what he has read in books. However, on the academic side, in French and the regular classroom studies, he seems to require the same prodding. His sleepiness and inattention are quite marked at times. When aroused, I find him capable of good thinking, and excellent memory work. I have been afraid to overstimulate him, but in order to accomplish the work of the fifth grade creditably we must develop in him more of a feeling of responsibility on his own account. His immaturity shows rather clearly in some of these respects. Of course his work is more than passing because of the fine cooperation at home and his own vigorous response when sufficiently urged."

A modern solution to these problems would be Ritalin for A's attention deficit disorder.

A's grades in his senior year of high school were as follows:

- English Literature: C+

¹⁹⁵ Thorne & Gough, 1991

- English Composition: C
- German: B-
- Geometry: B+
- Trigonometry: B+
- Science: B+

It does not seem that A felt obligated to earn straight As merely because he was highly intelligent. For an INTP, it is enough to grasp a concept; they feel no need to prove their understand to a teacher by filling in pointless pages of unnecessary homework.

Like all young Rationals, A had a love for classifying things. At the age of twelve months, he would classify his blocks by the shape of the letter on them, i.e. he would put V A M W N together and Q P O G D together. Remarking upon A's "outstanding" characteristic of classification, Hollingworth noted, "He classifies events, objects, names, numbers, and other data of experience. He can think in terms of diagrams.."

A was also advanced in his language skills. When he was sixteen months old he could say the alphabet backwards; he learned to read on his own when he was three. Interestingly, he at first would only read books about *real* subjects, but his reading habits gradually grew to encompass fantasy.

Another childhood entertainment was the creation of an imaginary world called Center Land. (Imaginary worlds are characteristic of both Rational and Idealist children.) A was 3 when he created this world and he continued imagining it till age 6. It came about like so: when A's brother was born, A was curious about how it had happened. His mother, not one for storks and fairies, explained exactly how it had happened. Several days later A announced that he, unlike his brother, had come from Center Land, where he had selected his parents. A lived there in a one hundred story house equipped with an elevator that he could operate on his own. Center Land had many curious customs: children were allowed to play with fire as much as they pleased and stay up all night. There were two imaginary friends who lived in Center Land with A.

A was very good at math. His father, an extremely intelligent Rational, taught him calculation tricks with the result that he could do complicated problems quickly in his head.

A married at age 25, but little more is known after this point.

Child F - I.Q. Unmeasurable (Tested by the Stanford-Binet, 1920s version)

At the age of eleven and a half, child F was able to pass all of the Superior Adult tests; at this point his intelligence exceeded the upper limits of the Stanford-Binet instrument and could no longer be measured.

Evidence for INTP

- Cried little as a child. (Favors INTP)¹⁹⁶
- Had little fondness for large groups. (I)
- Preferred to spend his free time reading. (IN favored)
- As a prize, he was allowed to choose a book; the book he chose was a dictionary. (Favors INTPs most of all types.)
- Used toys in an intuitive manner, i.e. he used marbles to represent soldiers instead of actually

196 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 1997

using them as marbles. (N)¹⁹⁷

- Described as “creative.” (Favors NP)¹⁹⁸
- Described as having “inexorable logic” (Favors NT)
- Preferred to study a wide variety of different fields and to accumulate “esoteric lore.” (diverse INTP favored over focused INTJ)
- Expert chess player; it was one of his favorite pastimes (NT)
- Refused to cooperate with the educational program of public high school; skipped class frequently, refused to participate in gym. Ended up having to take an extra year to make up for his missed gym time. (INTP rebelliousness, dislike for school)
- Did not have much ambition; started college twice and quit before the first year both times; preferred to spend his time playing chess and bridge. Said that “he could always make a living some way or other.” (Vague, unplanned, playful lifestyle without closure favors INTP over INTJ.)
- Chose a wife “impetuously”; apparently it was a rocky relationship (INTP favored on both counts)
- Made a last minute shift from getting a Ph. D in Education to becoming a lawyer. (Perceiver changeability)
- Described as “willful and headstrong” (INTP stubbornness favored)
- He incurred unplanned debts (P favored over J)

Evidence Against INTP

Child F is a little more difficult to identify than child A. During the course of his high school years, F participated in a wide variety of extracurricular activities, and was the head of many of them. He participated in “chess club, chess team, poetry club, debating society, mathematics club, board of publications, program committee. He was executive member of the debating society and of the law society, vice president of the poster club, and two or three times section president.” (Participating in so many group activities argues for E, while leadership of said activities argues for TJ. In this case, we could be looking at an ENTP, ENTJ, or INTJ.)

This many extracurricular activities gives one pause, particularly since he was the leader in many of these activities. Was he really an Introvert? Was he really a Perceiver?

Looking at F’s preferences for Introversion or Extraversion, we have on the one hand his participation in numerous extracurricular activities, and on the other hand a.) his marked preference for the solitary pastime of reading and b.) the assessment of a psychologist that he disliked large groups.

In terms of Introversion, one must be careful to differentiate between involuntary isolation and voluntary isolation. Young extraverted geniuses often end up alone because they are too different from everyone else. Either they themselves do not relish the babyish company of their fellow children, or else their fellow children do not relish the company of the overly mature genius. Older children don’t want a “baby” hanging out with them, so the extravert may ultimately play alone.

The love for reading is particularly diagnostic in this case, as it is a necessarily solitary pastime. Between the ages of 6 and 10, F spent an average of about 20 hours a week reading--the equivalent of a part time job doing nothing but reading books. There is every indication that he relished this time and

197 Keirsey, 1998a

198 Cheng, 2007

that it was his favorite thing to do. During high school, he would skip class and go to the library to read.

What about a preference for Perceiving or Judging? If we accept that F is an introvert, then he is almost certainly an INT. But can we adequately differentiate between INTP and INTJ in this case? Looking solely at his record of leadership, INTJ would be a better fit than INTP. However, when we look at F's record as a whole, an overarching pattern of Perceiving emerges.

The way he picked his wife and jumped from education to law at the last moment are indicative of an impulsive disposition. Further, his fondness for games did not diminish as he grew older; indeed, his liking for gaming interfered with more serious life goals. "Play before work" is a Perceiving attribute just as "work before play" is a Judging attribute. Finally, he seemed comfortable improvising his mode of living on the fly, as demonstrated by his statement that "he could always make a living some way or other."

There were other indirect indicators that point towards Perceiving or to INTP as a whole type, but the body of evidence is sufficient to indicate that F preferred Perceiving more strongly than Judging. It seems likely, therefore, that this INTP simply had well-developed leadership skills and a moderate I.

Discussion

F had a short but interesting life. It started off the very day he was born. F's head was reportedly "enormous," requiring an instrument birth. The instruments deformed his head and it had to be molded back into shape over the course of several weeks. Did you know that I.Q. scores are slightly related to brain size (and thus head size)?¹⁹⁹ Since being an INTP is related to having higher than average I.Q., it would seem that INTPs therefore have somewhat larger heads than normal. I won't make a pun here.

As if that wasn't stereotypical enough, F also developed myopia (near-sightedness), and had to get glasses. Since myopia is also related to I.Q.²⁰⁰, the typical picture of the big-headed INTP nerd with glasses may not be too far off the mark.

Unlike child A, who learned to read at 3, F learned to read around 4 – 5. Like A, he taught himself. His reading habits were oriented more towards facts than fantasy; he had a preference for history and geography and a particular fondness for encyclopedias and dictionaries. He preferred to spend most of his free time reading.

F's school experience started off alright. The first school he attended had only two rooms, one for 1st - 4th graders and one for 5th - 8th graders. F was too advanced for the first room, so his teacher sent him to the second room, where he was permitted to listen. The school was "practically ungraded." (In short, if you didn't do the busy work, no problem.) F attended this school from age 6 to age 8.

His education progressed fairly smoothly till age 10; he was moved quickly through the grades ahead of his peers and placed in a Special Opportunity Class for children with similar and equivalent intelligence.

It was when he entered public high school (as an 11 year old) that trouble began. It is interesting to note that at this time, Hollingworth, who had been acquainted with him for six months, described F's character using a rating scale to assess various virtues and flaws. She rated him as having

199 Nguyen & McDaniel in McDaniel, 2005

200 Saw, Tan, Fung, Chia, Koh, Tan, & Stone, 2004. A study of Singapore schoolchildren where the researchers controlled for gender, age, father's education, number of books read per week, school, and parental myopia found that I.Q. Score was a contributing factor separate from all these other influences.

“extraordinary good” “Prudence and foresight, will power and perseverance, appreciation of beauty, sense of humor, sensitiveness to approval or disapproval, desire to excel, freedom from vanity and egotism, conscientiousness, desire to know, originality, common sense, [and] general intelligence.” She also rated him highly for traits like self-confidence, leadership, sympathy and tenderness, truthfulness, cheerfulness and optimism, generosity and unselfishness, and others.

Unless Hollingworth was completely wrong in her assessment, it appears that F had good character and a great deal of promise. But this was all—almost *all*—to change.

Up till this time, F and the school system had played well together. First, his ungraded school; then, his two year stint blazing up through the grades; finally his time in the Special Opportunity School with other geniuses.

No sooner had F entered high school than he began to go AWOL. He was constantly absent from class, preferring to spend his time at the library or at a chess club. He simply would not participate in gym. Did his grades suffer? Actually, F had a knack for turning up on exam day and passing with flying colors. He even achieved one of the best records in school. However, when it came time to graduate, the matter of gym came back to haunt him. We all know how important gym is for creating a well-rounded, educated citizenry; thus it was only appropriate that he was forced to remain in high school an additional year in order to do the gym work he had declined earlier. And so he graduated at last.

When we look at the section on INTPs in the school system, we can dig a little deeper into F's experiences here. Suffice to say that INTPs do not take naturally to high school system any more than they take naturally to the military—the underlying reason being that the culture and customs of each institution have been shaped by an overwhelming Guardian workforce.

After five years of high school F felt no motivation to seek further education. He spent the next four years in much the same manner as the previous five: hanging out in the library or playing chess and bridge. He was quite good at both games; he occasionally earned money off of his talent, and he achieved a seventh place standing in the Eastern chess national tournaments.

At last an acquaintance provided money for F to go to college. But the college had a gym requirement, and he quit after the first term. F *really* hated gym.

Shortly afterwards, F got more financial assistance (it was “practically forced upon him”) and was coaxed into trying another college with “vigorous prodding.” Amusingly, one patron even offered him money not to play chess during this period. He later ended up taking a pledge of abstinence, which he did not keep. I suppose that for F, chess was about as addictive as World of Warcraft. At any rate, before finishing the first term, he came down with pneumonia and dropped out.

The next year F's patrons had a new idea: he would go to the University of Chicago and take advantage of their unique plan by which students were advanced purely on the basis of their ability to pass comprehensive examinations. F reluctantly agreed to try it out. He graduated within the year. At last, he had his degree.

It was a notable year in more than one respect. In the first place, F met and married “a young Jewish girl” whom he had no means to support (this was in 1935). Things were rocky between him and his new wife. Besides this, “F was held up by two gunmen, engineered the capture of one of these, and was advised to disappear for a time during the excitement.” You can have some interesting experiences in college.

He spent the next three years flitting around with various options in higher education, but it was not to

be; he died at age 24 of abdominal cancer. Reflecting upon the possible role of cancer in the case, Hollingworth reflected that "it may even have been at the bottom of what appeared socially as a personality defect." A personality defect? Hm...

Looking at F's case, I was struck by the difference between his early years (< age 10) and his later years (> age 11). It was at this key juncture that Hollingworth made her excellent character assessment, that F entered high school, and that he began his evident character decline. There is nothing but circumstantial evidence, but it seems a suspicious that F's first experience with regular school occurred at the same time that he began to lose many of the good traits that had previously been in evidence. There is no record that he fell in with bad company or began using drugs and alcohol.

As we shall see later, school takes its own unique toll on INTPs.

15. INTP Parenting Style

Although INTPs seem to be one of the types that is most willing not to have children (see the chapter on love and marriage) the majority probably do, and they can make excellent parents. Being fortunate enough to have an INTP parent of my own, I have furnished this section with some anecdotes I hope will be useful.

General

INTPs tend to treat children like little adults whose thoughts and ideas should be taken seriously. They are not likely to employ gushy baby talk; it would be an embarrassing display for them, and they would almost see it as a lack of respect for the child. By a similar token, an INTP will not brush a child's question off or give them a half answer--they want the child to actually understand what is going on. Penley & Eble (2006) have pointed out that INTP parents are notable for their exceptional patience. In the area of really listening to their children's thoughts, it's fair to say that INTPs are a good deal more patient than most.

INTPs will often expose their children to advanced concepts or books at an early age. When I was still learning to read, my INTP father read me *Ben-Hur: A Tale of Christ*. (At least, he read part of it--eventually he decided that I would have to read the Bible first, which disappointed me because I was enjoying the story.) When we would get to some of elderly English words like "ere" or "betwixt" he would get out the dictionary and we would augment our vocabularies together. (I also recall how he fixed a few words in my Robinson Crusoe picture book to make it more accurate. ("That's not corn, that's wheat.")) He also read me books about adventure on the sea and accounts of B-17 bomber crews during WWII.

It is interesting to note that male Rationals enjoy comic books and other "juvenile" forms of entertainment more than other types. Since male INTPs enjoy these pastimes into adulthood, they are better able to relate to their children's entertainment material than most. They may even pass on some of their own childhood interests directly to their children, i.e. an INTP parent who still enjoys Batman comics may pass the torch on to their offspring. Parents and children may enjoy talking about the same shows, books, computer games and comics together.

Besides advanced reading, INTP parents will probably make some attempt to expose their children to various scientific ideas. For instance, my dad (a Physics major) taught me *very basic* algebra ($x + 2 = 5$), calculus ($x^3 \rightarrow 3x^2$) and series/sequences--while I was still in elementary school. I hope you will not think I am bragging; the fact is, if you can do multiplication and addition—as the majority of children in elementary school can—you can learn to do all these things, if given the chance. Dad would write up problems for me on a sheet of paper and then I would do my best to go through them. If I got stuck or got a problem wrong, he would patiently explain the underlying principles, or the concept of zero, or the order of operations, until I could see why the right answer was true. If my dad hadn't been an INTP, I would have almost certainly been deprived of this early foundation in mathematics.

INTP parents also fill the heads of their children with important bits of information as opportunities present themselves. At a tender age, I knew that speed was different from velocity; that air had weight; that there were negative and imaginary numbers as well as positive numbers, that there was dark matter and anti-matter (I also knew how much of the latter you needed to blow up Earth) and that an implosion was the opposite of an explosion. The latter fact was impressed on me by my dad's attempt to create clouds in a fishbowl by sealing up the top and pumping all the air out to create a low pressure

environment. At some point in the experiment the aquarium decided that it hadn't been designed to withstand negative pressure and imploded in a spray of glass. My cautious ESTJ mother was stunned that my dad had performed such a risky experiment. My dad simply pointed at one of the splinters of glass that had landed a few feet from us and said jokingly, "See? It didn't even get close." INTP parents can teach their children appreciation for the hard sciences.

As children, INTPs enjoy building forts and homes out of various materials. As adults, INTPs enjoy building forts or homes for their children. My handy INTP parent constructed a four story treehouse with each level connected by inner stairs and trapdoors. There was a gangplank leading to the main door, which you could bar from the inside. A lookout nest on top provided a place to hurl projectiles from. Later he also walled off a hideyhole under the stairs as a secret play area for my sister.

Discipline

Keirsey (1998a) wrote that all Rational parents tend to be rather stern, and they do not spare their offspring from the consequences of their poor choices. For example, if my brother and I goofed around and didn't finish our quota of chores by the time mom got home from work, we would beg her to let us quit. (Mom was the merciful one). Dad was unsympathetic to such pleas, noting that if we hadn't wasted time we could have finished already. (Not that it was actually hard to meet the quota--it only took a few hours--but sometimes we spent so much time amusing ourselves and procrastinating that it could drag out through the whole day.) My dad was a kind man, but he didn't put up with excuses. We didn't have to work on rainy days, but days with sprinkling and intermittent rain were a different story. Hopefully we would say, "We can't work today, it's raining." He would reply, "Put on your raincoat."

INTPs have few rules for their children (INTPs are one of the least rule conscious types, remember?), but this doesn't mean that the children will run rampant. Keirsey has noted that Rationals, unlike other temperaments, aren't so much given to lectures, scoldings, and groundings so much as simply stating, "Okay then. You've lost that privilege for awhile," and then depriving the child of the opportunity to affect/enjoy/control that part of their environment. By such impersonal, logic-based and minimally punitive measures they teach their children that bad behavior isn't about "me being angry at you and trying to make you feel bad to show you the error of your ways" so much as "you making an illogical choice that results in the loss of your pleasure." The idea is to teach the child that poor choices always imply logical negative consequences. The Rational parent tries to demonstrate that making a bad choice is like throwing a rock up in the air and letting it fall down and hit oneself in the face. It isn't that the rock hates you, or thinks you have done wrong; no, the rock has neither feelings nor any sense of justice. Rather, the rock is merely obeying the amoral, implacable laws of physics. Many people break rules, but few people try to break the laws of physics. The logic-oriented Rationals instinctively realize this, and tend to have better success with discipline than other types.

Pygmalion Projects

Perhaps because INTPs are so autonomous—and therefore less likely to seek to control over other autonomous beings—Keirsey (1998a) has observed that NTP parents are the least likely types to attempt to Pygmalion their children into little images of themselves. However, some types may find the INTP's patient laissez-faire attitude *too* hands off and wish the INTP would take action or apply more control. Perhaps this is also related somewhat to the fact that INTPs may sometimes be uncertain of how to

handle their children. Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer (1998) found that "children" were a high source of stress for this type.

Conclusion

Like all types, INTPs can be wonderful parents. Of course, there's always room for improvement. If you want to learn more about type and parenting in general, or about INTP parenting specifically, I recommend the book *Motherstyles* by Janet Penley and Diane Eble.

16. INTP Children

Even as babies, INTPs are a bit unique. They are less likely to cry for one thing, and they are generally less emotional and clingy in comparison to other infants. INTP babies do not like being overly handled, particularly by strangers.²⁰¹

Early Learners

Like adults, young INTPs tend to collect books, especially those with information on animals, dinosaurs, natural science, etc. Understandably, the library features centrally in the minds of most INTPs children. They will happily stay up past bedtime, reading with a flashlight under their blanket. As a child I assumed that once I grew up I could learn everything and read all the books in the world.

I also used to ponder what I would ask for if I could have three wishes. One of my wishes was, “I wish to know everything.” In fact, I still remember the disappointing moment when my INTP father gently informed me that there was too much knowledge in the world for me to learn it all.

Play

Some of the most enjoyable INTP play takes place completely within the INTP’s own imagination. Keirsey (1998a) has noted that Sensor children will tend to play with toys in the way they are meant to be played with, i.e. a toy fish will be played as a fish swimming its way through the deep. For Intuitives, on the other hand, the toy fish may actually be a submarine in the shape of a fish.

What this means is that any object can transformed in the INTP’s mind into a plaything to tell stories about. A dart may become a rocket. A toy lizard may become an alien monster. All the rest of the scenery can be completely imagined. Lost in their own world, the young INTP may be just as unaware of things going on outside as any adult INTP focusing on a problem.

Games

Thanks to their logical/strategic abilities, young INTPs may be particularly good at tic-tac-toe, experimenting and memorizing the various moves in a precursor to chess. Like adult INTPs, INTP youngsters will also enjoy computer games.

INTPs are also good at the game where you have a jar of candy and have to guess how many there are. Rather than making a random guesstimate, they will actually try to calculate the amount using their fledgling math skills and careful counting.

Designing as a Form of Play

One of the favorite INTP play activities is designing things. They will typically start off with a few vehicles, animals, or soldiers, then proceed to design an ideal environment for them. Houses, forts, zoos, parks, monuments and whole cities may be constructed out of sand, mud, rocks, snow, blocks, couch cushions, sticks, lincoln logs, legos, and whatever other materials are at hand. INTP children enjoy explaining all the convenient features offered by their house or town, and showing off how the inhabitants enjoy using said features.

However, once the INTP is done designing the city or house, they may have little real interest in making up pretend stories about the inhabitants. At this point they will perhaps introduce a reason to

201 Tieger & Barron-Tieger, 1997

add onto the current construction (“My horse had babies! Now we need even more pastures, corrals and stables!”) or else find a reason to renovate (i.e. a natural disaster that strikes the poor town and annihilates one half of the buildings).

If the INTP is not designing an environment for their toys, they may instead design an environment for themselves. The tree house, the couch cushion fort, the box fort, and the snow fort are all INTP favorites. (My INTP brother was almost smothered to death when a snow tunnel collapsed on him.) Pets too may have environments built for them. An INTP child may enjoy constructing pens, building tunnel systems for rodents, and laying out aquariums and terrariums. (Not that they enjoy the daily maintenance of pets. Parents be warned.)

The elegance of an INTP’s constructions may be one of the things that sticks out most about them from the perspective of their playmates. They are the one with the coolest castle, or the tallest marshmallow-and-toothpick tower. INTPs enjoy shyly basking in the admiration for their creations.

However, INTPs generally find it annoying when other children try to help them with their constructions. They know instinctively that this “help” really consists of: a.) throwing on poorly thought out, ugly additions and spoiling the beauty of the design, b.) not showing sufficient respect for the physical properties of the building materials and clumsily destroying the delicate structure, and c.) just plain, pure gleeful destruction.

I doubt there is an INTP in the world whose lovingly-designed creation has not been demolished in the blink of eye by a delighted classmate. I pushed together a huge pile of playground gravel--*gravel!*--and a boy running past went out of his way to step on it. Is it any wonder so many INTPs end up cynical and bitter?

Parents: if your INTP doesn’t want the other kids to play with them, don’t force the issue. The INTP recognizes that other children are worse than arsonists, dynamiters and termites combined when it comes to building projects. By saying “let other children play too,” you are telling them that they must let well-meant saboteurs and careless young vandals ruin their pride and joy. You might as well be saying, “Please, let other children scribble all over your drawing and deface your artwork as much as they want.” Is such victimization really a good life lesson?

Engineering

Besides construction, INTPs will also indulge in engineering pastimes, i.e. designing lego vehicles and tools without the use of kits or instructions, or laying out tracks for electric trains, or rechanneling a rivulet of water with dams, extra channels, and other improvements.

Design activities are likely to be preferred over, say, running around with squirt guns. Mere movement for the sake of movement does not interest INTPs as much as it does other children. Even young INTPs want a reason for doing an activity, namely building a skill (“How can I consistently get smooth sandcastle walls?”), trumping previous accomplishments (“This will be the best sandcastle ever!”) and running experiments (“What if I mixed mud in the sand?”). Since their play must have a point, they may have trouble getting along with less far-sighted children, who simply want to exercise their limbs and make noise while having as much fun in the immediate moment as possible. An INTP child wants play to have a *reason*; this may not sit well with their less goal-oriented playmates.

Logical Play

Note that INTP play must make logical sense to the INTP. Other children joining in an INTP’s game may heedlessly break the rules of reality, eliciting protests from the INTP to the effect of, “You

can't do that!" or "That's not what would happen in real life!" For example, an INTP may be annoyed that a playmate's stuffed cat keeps on having more and more kittens, even though the first and second litters haven't even grown up yet--clearly an unrealistic scenario. Eventually the INTP may feel compelled to point out the reality gap in the hopes that they will be able to convince their playmate to play in a more lifelike manner.

INTPs generally want a self-consistent simulation where rules can only be broken only when there is due cause. Cars cannot just start flying--unless a rocket pack has been installed first. Horses without wings cannot fly either--unless a magical unicorn grants them the ability. Yet the second the INTP provides a justification for how their horse can now fly, their playmate cries, "Look, mine's flying too!" The INTP protests, "Wait, your horse can't fly unless the unicorn helps them first!" They will then grab the unicorn and apply the necessary steps to ensure that their playmate's horse can fly "for real." Other children see no reason to provide such cause-and-effect justifications, but for the INTP it's hard to submerge themselves in play unless principles are followed.

The Design of Play

To some INTPs, designing the rules of the game is more fun than playing it. INTP children may invent new ways of playing board games with completely new rules and abilities. They may combine games together and play across multiple boards. Others may build elaborate imaginary worlds.

Art

Adult INTPs enjoy appreciating art²⁰² and young INTPs may enjoy creating it. Interestingly, an INTP's interest in designing systems comes out here too. For example, an INTP may draw a place where horses are living. They will think to themselves, "We need a pond, and it should be kind of big, because there are a lot of horses and they might have foals. Also, the sun might be hot, so I'll add some trees for shade. And in case there are wolves, I'll put a cliff up here so the horses can be safe. There will be a secret path that only the horses know about. Then they can escape whenever they see the predators coming. There will be a horse that stands up on this hill to watch. But suppose they have to stay up on the cliff for a whole day because the wolves won't go away? I'll draw an apple tree so that they'll have something to eat, and a little mountain stream so that they'll have something to drink. There, it's a perfect home."

The horses will be depicted enjoying various aspects of the INTP's creation. Note how the INTP is problem solving and world-building as they draw. All children do this, but INTPs take it to the next level. Whether the subject is a garden with fairies, a moonbase with astronauts, or a house with cats and dogs, it's the essentially same thing--a system with features considerably designed for the benefit of the inhabitants. INTPs will also add hazards and problems to overcome.

"Look mommy, this foal couldn't reach the apples on the tree. So they pushed rocks over to make stairs for it."

INTPs will draw Rube Goldberg machines, groups of animals working together in harmoniously complex manners to accomplish a common goal, and cartoons that express their budding sense of humor, i.e. puns. In art too, an INTP must ever escalate their performance; today's giraffe must be better than yesterday's giraffe. Once they reach a plateau and can think of nothing new to do with giraffes, then they will move on to depicting a new subject. Young INTPs find repetitive tasks every bit as boring as older INTPs--they will not relish the task of filling in every scale on a dragon or every leaf on a tree. An otherwise excellent drawing may fade off into white where the trees go.

202 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

Not that INTPs are limited to drawing. They will equally enjoy painting, sculpting, and other activities. But since they do not care for lots of set up or clean up, simpler materials may be preferred, or else the materials will simply be left out for a week or two, annoying Judging parents.

Thoughts and Fears

Given their advanced knowledge and liking for abstract thought, INTP children may talk and think about things that children aren't supposed to, i.e. death, the afterlife, reproduction, or infinity; some even have existential crises. These questions are very real and important--even frightening--to them. Still others, having learned about science and the human body, lie awake in their beds worrying about the sun going supernova, the earth getting hit by an asteroid, a natural disaster striking, or contracting AIDS.

Fitting In

Many youthful INTPs find that they have a hard time fitting in--they feel "different" and have trouble making friends and forming relationships. They may be more interested in talking to older people than their peers; some may value their relationship with their teacher more than their peer relationships. (Whereas INTP adults are often considered too childish, INTP youngsters are often considered too adult. They may grow used to being treated as little adults by their parents and find it irksome when strangers expect them to act just like other children their age.)

It is common and normal for INTPs to spend lots of time playing alone away from the others. They may have just one good friend, or perhaps a few. They may not even want to be around their peers, preferring to hide with their books. Still others just don't want to talk until they've completely figured speech out.

Young INTPs are no better at dressing sharply than older INTPs; this sets them apart from their classmates. INTP children may also be reluctant to exchange acceptable childhood fashions such as sweat pants and velcro shoes for age-appropriate adolescent wear. The game "dress up" is also less likely to hold an INTP's interest.

Curiosity Killed the INTP

INTP children are curious. "Oh look, a fire alarm. It probably wouldn't go off if I just pulled it a little bit..." (They do.) One of the things INTPs are curious about is fire. They may enjoy burning various materials to see what happens. By the same token, they love experiments. "What would happen if I..." (Microwaved something for 9:99 minutes, filled the tub up past the rim, put marshmallows in the toaster, etc.)

Whyyyy?

INTP children are more likely than most to disobey commands they don't agree with. Like all Rational children, they will listen to logic (Keirsey, 1998a), but the reverse is also true--they will *not* listen to illogic. This may annoy nonNT parents who justify their commands on the basis of social conformity, unquestioning obedience, and emotional appeals.

They are also skeptical. For example, young INTPs will be among the first to figure out that Santa

Claus and the Tooth Fairy are actually their parents.

Blunt Statements of Truth

One of the problems that is often encountered by parents of young *Rationals* is how to deal with their children's blunt observations of truth, i.e. "You're really fat. Do you eat all day?" or "He's stupid."

Being not-too-empathetic and rather disinterested in social skills, young *INTPs* may unintentionally horrify their parents, then not understand what they have done wrong. To them, truth is truth, and what can be wrong with saying it?

How to deal with this situation? Keirsey (1998a) has noted that *Rationals* find spanking to be violating.

A better solution is to explain why reasonably and logically why it is not very good to a.) Speak the truth in an unkind manner and b.) Mention others' faults, even when true.

To give you an idea of the substance of such an explanation, I have included the following exhortations from a stern NT father of the 1800s to his NT child, Karl. (Karl happens to be a genius, but I think the lecture is still valid.) Note that the father bases his appeal primarily on the Rational virtues of logic, fairness, competence, and skepticism and talks to Karl like a little adult. I trust the reader will forgive the 1800s flavor of this account and extract what is still useful to the 2000s.

[The child's] opinion should never be lied away, in so far as it is right. I will only grant this much, that it may be somewhat softened, with the use of greatest caution, so that its rough edges shall be polished off.

If Karl, as a child, passed in society a correct but too abrupt or harsh a judgment, I let it stand, but said to the persons present, in half jest, "You see, he is a village boy! You must not take it ill of him!"

Karl soon came to understand that he had in such cases uttered a correct but improper statement, and he was sure, when we were alone, to ask me the "Why" of it. Then I had a good opportunity to show him the pros and cons of the case, and to get him used to better manners, without narrowing his intellect or doing his heart any injury. Above all I tried, whenever possible, to refer it to a higher morality and to true piety. In such a case I would calmly say:

"Your judgment was strictly correct, but though I must acknowledge this, it was not good or kind of you to utter it. You should hardly have spoken it in the presence of your parents, and never in the presence of others. Did you observe how embarrassed Mr. N. was? He could not, or would not, contradict, perhaps from love and respect for us, but he was much hurt to have a child tell him something unpleasant. If he is out of sorts to-day or others make fun of him, you are to be blamed for it!"

Karl was certainly moved by this deeply, and was truly sorry for having pained him. But let us suppose Karl did not see his mistake and, instead, answered, "But he was friendly with me all the time," I should then have replied,

"Perhaps from pity for you, because my word, 'He is a village boy,' showed him the real state of affairs. You have certainly not gained respect, love, and gratitude for yourself by your embarrassing judgment. You do not seem to have noticed that the persons present anxiously watched, now you, now me, now him, and the conversation would have halted, if I had not turned it to something else that attracted them vividly."

I again assume the truly unthinkable case that Karl was still not ashamed, but would have answered, "But it was true!" I would have corrected him more earnestly:

"Are you sure about that? It may very well be that you are mistaken. How if he had answered, 'A reason with which you are not acquainted compelled me to act that way.' How then? Or if he had said to you, 'Are you my judge? You, a little, unreasoning child?' Even if it was true, unconditionally true, his statement being wrong,--which I, however, still

doubt,—ought you not have kept silence from consideration for him? Did you not observe that we were all silent? Or are you so simple as to believe that you alone noticed the mistake in his actions?

“Tell me, my child, how would you like it, if he, and a hundred others, should take you up for your oversights, weaknesses, carelessness, blunders, and so forth, and should even lay them before the eyes of strangers? And that would be a mere trifle, for it would be a grown man who would reprove a child, which would be perfectly proper and unquestionably right. The child would not be harmed by such a reproof, for from an unreasoning being like you people expect a lot of things which are not just right, and they pass over them lightly, or pardon them altogether.

“Or do you imagine that other people do not observe your mistakes? You are wrong there! Out of kindness toward you, or, perhaps, toward others as well, they pass over them in silence and do not embarrass you by mentioning them to you. But several of my friends, who love you sincerely, have often told me or your mother of incidents which do you no honor. They did not tell about them to any one else, and they told them to us only because they wished to improve and enoble you.

“This noble kindness pleases you, does it not? Very well, then you must act in the same manner. ‘What you wish that people should do to you, you must do first to them!’

“To tell the truth, to tell it in a harsh and provoking manner, to be severely just and painfully search out the faults of your fellowman, or even reprove him for them, without any particular reason for it, in the presence of others, is far removed from being good, yet being good is something unspeakably beautiful, for we call for this very reason the sum of all perfection ‘God,’ that is, ‘Good.’ You, too, my child, wish to become like God. If you do, you must perfect yourself as much as possible. Above all, do not forget to be good.”

I am sure that by that time Karl would have promised, with tears of contrition, never again to pain a person in that manner, and I am convinced that only human, more particularly childish, weakness could ever have led him to do so.

But for my purpose I will assume that, none the less, he will retort, “Shall I tell an untruth?” Assuming this, I would have replied:

“Not in the least! For then you would be lying or be a hypocrite. But there is no need of all that. All you have to do is to keep quiet. It would, indeed, be a sad life for you, for me, and for all men, if everybody were to search out the faults or foibles of his acquaintances, and ruthlessly tell of them before others. That would be an eternal war of all against all, for no man is without faults. No one would be at rest. Everybody would have to be constantly on the watch, in order to strike or to protect himself. Would that be living with each other as men, as Christians, as children of one father, as representatives of the highest Good?”

But I do the poor boy an injustice. It may be that I have told him all that, but, I am sure, never at one time, for so much was not necessary to cause him to perceive, regret, and mend faults against morality or piety. I have, however, forgotten to mention that I would also have told him some appropriate story [to illustrate the point]...

Through logic and principle, this father explained to his son *why* he should not behave in this manner rather than merely saying not to do it. It is always good to tell an INTP child the reason behind a rule.

Lack of Role Models

Although personality is at least partially genetically heritable, the odds are low that an INTP child will have a parent who shares their type preferences. This is unfortunate, because it deprives them of a role model for their behavior. The public school system, being mostly staffed by SJs, was not really designed for those with the opposite NP preference, so there will be little help from that quarter. In fact, thanks to the nature of school, INTP children may even have to struggle to attain their identity.

17. INTPs in the School System

INTPs love learning and are relentless autodidacts. Yet INTPs were one of the top four types who said that school was a source of high stress.²⁰³ In this section we will examine the INTP school experience and the problems it presents to the type that most likes learning.

The Elementary School Experience

The introduction of universal education has thrown an interesting loop into the life experiences of modern INTPs. This is because ~42% of elementary school teachers are ESFJs.²⁰⁴ Remember in the cult section, how we talked about how INTPs are in the most danger when they join a cult because cult leaders tend to be ESFJs?

It's things like this that make me wonder about the effects of placing an INTP child in an environment designed by and for ESFJs, then soaking them in said environment for 7 hours per day, 180 days per year, for six years straight.

Now, type practitioners are in unified agreement that children should be allowed to follow their own natural type inclinations rather than immediately being compelled to undergo foreign type development. In short, it is not healthy to try to convert an INTP into an ESFJ at any point in their childhood (nor at any point later, but particularly in childhood). Not that the school system necessarily does this...but we must admit that it sure gives a healthy push in that direction, doesn't it?

There was an interesting study that examined the perception of students from the perspective of teachers of various types.²⁰⁵ It was found that teachers thought they would *most enjoy* teaching students of their own type. Yet when asked about the “ideal all around child in school and life,” teachers with E, S/N, T, and J preferences selected those with their own type preferences, whereas INFP teachers selected ESTJs.

Teachers were also asked which type of students were most likely to have problems in school. STJ teachers indicated that IFPs would have the most trouble; IFP teachers also indicated that IFP students would have the most trouble. When asked about the type that was likely to be most successful in school, teachers overwhelmingly indicated that type ESTJ was most likely to succeed.

So what about the students who seem least likely to succeed in the teachers' eyes? The following offers an answer: “Teachers behave differently towards students for whom they have diminished expectations, providing fewer opportunities for independent work and practice, reducing personal attention, increasing physical distance, and differentially administering and grading tests and assignments for low expectation students.” (Brophy in Meisgeier & Kellow, 2007)

Meisgeier and Kellow reflected that bias in the education system “appears to be against students with Introversion, Intuition, and Perceiving preferences and favorable towards students with Extraversion Sensing preferences.”

Overall, the INFPs seem to take the worst hits from this bias. In elementary school however, I would not be surprised to see that INTPs have bigger problems. In terms of work environments, ESFJs were the type that placed the highest value of all types on “toe the line expectations” and the lowest value on

203 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

204 McCutcheon, Schmidt & Bolden in Kent & Fisher, 1997

205 Meisgeier & Kellow, 2007

“Autonomy, freedom, independence.”²⁰⁶ In many ways, the favored ESFJ environment is the exact opposite of the favored INTP environment.

When you consider that most modern INTPs have spent huge chunks of their young lives in an environment antithetical to their natural preferences, it raises some interesting questions.

- “Do INTP children experience personality shift when they enter elementary school?”
- “Have INTPs actually been taught in their childhood that they are ‘wrong’? Has there been a loss of self esteem, falsification of type, or other symptoms related to poor type development?”
- “Are modern INTPs less healthy and well developed than INTPs of former generations who were born before mass education?”
- “If we compared 500 home schooled INTPs with 500 public schooled INTPs, would there be a difference in the amount of preference showed by each group for IE, NS, TF, and PJ?”

Interesting questions.

The High School Experience

The entire public education system is dominated by SJs, and to a lesser extent, NFs.²⁰⁷ I fear the SJ domination is not really a good thing for INTPs. Kent & Fisher (1997), drawing on earlier research, explained, “It was found that the classroom environments of SJ teachers are likely to be seen by their students as task oriented (activities are clear and well organized) while the classrooms of NP type teachers are seen as informal (not strongly guided by formal rules). These findings complement the...associations which showed that SJ teachers are seen by their students as strict and NP teachers as encouraging student self-responsibility and freedom.”

INTPs were rated as one of the types most likely to have trouble (though not necessarily poor grades) in school.²⁰⁸ What does “trouble” look like?

What We Have Here is a Failure to Communicate

To an INTP, knowledge is like mind candy. Now imagine having a funnel shoved down your throat and being force fed candy. This is what high school feels like to many INTPs.

If an INTP is "cooperative" and willing to grind away at the homework, they may become the teacher's pet because of their love of learning. However, other INTPs earn their teachers' dislike by questioning them in front of the class and arguing over their conclusions. Unhappily the "teacher's adversary" scenario is apparently rather common. An INTP youth may argue that an assignment is unnecessary, debate the requirements, or insist on a creative reinterpretation of the parameters. They may also ask technical questions that their teachers cannot answer. If the teacher makes a spelling or math mistake on the board, the INTP will helpfully correct them.

Teachers, for some strange reason, may come to see the INTP as antagonistic and may even believe that the INTP is deliberately trying to make them look bad. (They may not even be wrong.) Usually, however, the INTP just wants to establish truth.

INTPs will also ask questions like these:

206 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

207 Hoffman & Betkouski in Kent & Fisher, 1997

208 Roberds-Baxter & Baxter in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

- “Why do I have to work with a partner?”
- “Why can’t I bring my book out to recess?”
- “Why do I have to show my work if I can do it in my head?”
- “Why do I have to do this assignment if I already understand it?”
- “Why do I have to take notes if I never use them?”
- “Why can’t I just learn out of the book?”
- “Why? Why? Whyyyyyyyy?”

Teachers seldom provide a satisfactory answer to these questions. This is unfortunate, because INTP children are more likely than most to disobey commands they don’t agree with. Like all Rational children, they will listen to logic (Keirsey, 1998a), but the reverse is also true--they will *not* listen to illogic. This may annoy nonNT teachers or parents who justify their commands on the basis of social conformity, rules, unquestioning obedience, and emotional appeals. INTPs are as stubborn as mules.

It is perhaps no surprise that some INTP come to have low respect for their teachers and even to dislike them. These INTPs tend to perceive their teachers as either unintelligent or Dalek-like to the tune of, “Do not question!”

Then too, many INTPs find the many niggly rules and restrictions of school pointlessly cumbersome. For example, some schools will not let you bring your backpack into class: useful, or no? How about arriving on time? Required subjects? Reading during class? Wearing a hat during class? As noted previously, INTPs are one of the least rule conscious types²⁰⁹, and they are also the type that cared the least about having clear structure in a work environment.²¹⁰

When things go bad, the INTP school experience resembles a kiddy version of Hogan’s Heroes. In fact, if you were to replace the word “school” with “POW camp” many of these youthful accounts would still make sense. The INTP school experience has it all: hated authority figures, breakouts, boredom, sabotage, revenge, stealing food, underground capitalism, devious outwitting of the system, lockups, and the battle of wills between the rebel and the oppressors.

Not that all INTPs are rebellious--many of them aren’t, and others only commit thought crimes. Too quiet, too nice, too well behaved or too unwilling to make a fuss over illogical requirements, these INTPs will quietly play along with the system. There may, however, be a lot of daydreaming and staring out the window.

Finally, INTP children are skeptical and will question authority from an early age. My dad tells me that I came home from school one day and said that my third grade teacher was “naive.” (Lest you get the wrong idea, I will note that my own experiences with the public school system were quite positive—I was usually the teacher’s pet.)

Busywork—And Other Scholastic Activities

Then there is the matter of the daily work required. Keirsey (1998a) noted that the “largely clerical curriculum” in the modern school system bores Rationals. It is for this reason that INTPs tend to get excellent grades on tests, while simultaneously cutting classes and not doing their homework. Many,

209 McPherson & Hindmarch, 2004

210 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

many, INTPs are seen as underachievers or as working beneath their potential.

The fact is, INTPs simply hate busywork and do not care about proving to anyone that they know the material. As far as the INTP is concerned, they've reached 100% of their potential just by learning what they are supposed to know. Everything else is pointless busywork once that goal is reached, and things such as homework, practice, study, and other measurements of "how well you know the material" are superfluous. It is not at all contradictory for INTP to achieve an A+ on the final exam and fail the class with a D. In short, if the material does not continuously challenge an INTP, trouble is brewing for everyone. Anything the INTP grasps becomes instantly boring. An INTP gets a "fresh wind" when a new subject module is introduced, or when they start a new course, but focusing on the same old subject at length drains their interest and their work output declines. INTPs also tend to get low grades for class participation--hardly surprising when you consider that they were rated the lowest of all types for "enthusiastic involvement" in a study of medical students.²¹¹

It is *normal* for INTPs to impress adults with early or above-average abilities in reading, writing, art, math, etc.--you name it. Thirsty for knowledge, they begin the acquisition process years ahead of their peers and usually stay ahead. It may be something of a revelation for INTP youngsters to discover how less-educated-than-them their classmates are. Still other INTPs go through life puzzled at why everyone is surprised that they can do stuff which they themselves regard as ordinary. "Can't everyone do that?" they wonder. They don't understand why others view learning as so hard. Doesn't everyone read the encyclopedia for fun? INTP children may read every book in the classroom or school library just for the heck of it. They may read in class, perhaps secretly or with the teacher's tacit permission.

When assignments are handed out in class, an INTP is more likely than most to whiz through them and then just sit there waiting for everyone else to catch up. Fortunately INTPs have rich thought lives.

School Will Socialize You

INTP children tend to hang out with the misfits and weirdos. Chances are not bad that the other misfits and weirdos are other introverted intuitives anyway.²¹²

The University Experience

It is in college that INTPs really bloom. Since college is taught primarily by Intuitives, INTPs are exposed to a teaching style that meshes with their own natural preferences for the first time. Not that they will necessarily get better grades, but class will probably be more interesting. However, the ratio of Judging teachers to Perceiving teachers is still at least 2:1, as it the case through the entire education system.²¹³

GPA Per Major

One study performed over 9 years at a midsized, private undergraduate university (Elon University) found that INTPs tied with ESFPs for having the third lowest GPA of all types, only the ESTPs and ENTPs being lower (Dirienzo, Das, Synn, Kitts, & McGrath, 2010). The study also found that INTP GPA varied by major.

Since the university had something like 40 different majors, the researchers grouped them like so:

1. **Communications** majors (Communications, Journalism)

211 Myers & McCaulley in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

212 Tieger & Barron Tieger, 1997

213 DiTibeiro; Sears, Kennedy, & Kaye in Beckham 2012

2. **Business** majors (Business Administration, Economics, Accounting)
3. **Education** majors (Social Science Education, Math Education, Physical Education, Leisure Sports Management, Elementary Education, Middle Grades Education, Sports Medicine, Health Education, Music Education, Athletic Training, Science Education)
4. **Fine Arts** majors (Art, Dance, English, French, Music, Music Performance, Music Theatre, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Spanish, Theater Arts, Theater Studies, Theater Design and Production)
5. **Social Sciences** majors (Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, History)
6. **Hard Sciences** majors (Engineering, Math, Chemistry, Biology, Computer Sciences)

Unlike in other studies of this sort, INTPs did not tend to flock to any particular category, nor did they avoid any particular category. But they did get different GPAs depending on the category in which they majored. There were 169 INTPs in sample, with about 30 in each major. (In Education, however, there were only 16 INTPs (the second least of all types--there were even less INTJs).

1. INTP GPA was 3.01 in Communications (average for sample)
2. INTP GPA was 3.01 in Business (average for sample)
3. INTP GPA was 2.99 in Education (lower than average for sample, and the lowest of all types)
4. INTP GPA was 3.15 in Fine Arts (average for sample)
5. INTP GPA was 3.05 in Social Sciences (average for sample)
6. INTP GPA was 3.01 in Hard Sciences (lower than average for sample, and the lowest of all types)
7. Average INTP GPA: 3.04 (Lower than average for sample; tied with ESFPs for third lowest)

So it seems that the areas of Communications, Business, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences were the most conducive to a good GPA among this sample of INTPs. Education and Hard Sciences, on the other hand, were a disaster.

The poor GPA in Education may be explained by the fact that most Education majors are ESFJs, and the courses are probably tailored to suit their preferences at the expense of the corresponding INTP preferences. But what about the Hard Sciences? Most studies find that NTs are attracted to the Hard Sciences like iron filings to a magnet, and such courses should be structured towards NT preferences. What is it that drove the grades of this INTP sample down to the very bottom of the pile?

Sadly, I don't know. ENTPs were in the same boat as INTPs, so it's probably an NTP thing. But this does teach us some interesting lessons, doesn't it? As the researchers noted, just because a subject interests you doesn't mean you'll get good grades in it. Conversely, just because you get good grades in a subject doesn't mean you'll like it.

So what do INTPs usually tend to major in? Yep, science. Science students are strongly NT, and even more strongly INT.²¹⁴

Other Notes on Course/Major Preferences

Languages

Interestingly, INTPs are also the type most likely to take a foreign language. In fact, a study found that there were 2.34 times as many INTPs in a foreign language class as would be expected.²¹⁵

214 Myers & Myers, 1980

215 Moody, 1988

Engineering

A survey of ASEE (American Society for Engineering Education) students found that INTPs were substantially represented. For male engineering students, 9.24% were INTP, and for female engineering students, 4.86% were INTP.²¹⁶ The survey further broke down the broader field of engineering into specialties. For each specialty field, the percentage of INTP students was as follows:

Geological engineering	10.78% INTP
Electrical engineering	10.20% INTP
Petroleum engineering	9.24% INTP
Aerospace engineering	7.89% INTP
Chemical engineering	7.64% INTP
Computer engineering	6.90% INTP
Mechanical engineering	6.76% INTP
Civil engineering	4.65% INTP

What is it about geological engineering that so attracts INTPs? (The author herself majored in Geology, though not Geological Engineering.)

In fact, geological engineering seems to be a refuge for the nonconformists of the engineering world. It was the top favorite specialty area for ENTPs, INTPs, INFJs, and ENFJs--*not* the sort of types that typically go into engineering. Also interesting are the types that avoided geological engineering: it was the least-liked specialty field of all for ISTJs, ISFJs, ESTJs, ENTJs, and ESFPs. Something about geological engineering (and from my experience, geology in general) seems to attract and keep NPs while driving away SJs.

To elaborate, I believe that the fuzzy, speculative nature of geology appeals to types that are good at dealing with uncertainty. Besides this, there is an attractive NP culture already in place. The geology department I attended was very loose and informal, and there was a high tolerance for eccentric behavior, even among the teachers. The department also struck me as being “nicer” than average. Geology tends to attract NF, and hence female, types. If one of your engineering subgoals is meeting and marrying an NF or NTP, geological engineering is probably your best bet.

What about electrical engineering? Here there are no clear patterns; it was a midrange field for most types, neither shunned nor adored. *However*, INTJs also favored electrical engineering as their second favorite specialty. We are probably looking at an INT thing.

Scholarships

National Merit Finalists

The National Merit Scholarship Program is a national competition that draws some 1.5 million students. All applicants are given an aptitude test, and the top 16,000 students are allowed to apply for a scholarship. The remaining 16,000 Semifinalists are then screened again, this time submitting the following: an essay; a description of their academic achievements; a school official’s personal endorsement; and a set of excellent SAT scores. Of these, 7,800 Finalists are selected.

Myers and Myers (1980) took a sample of 671 male Finalists and 330 female Finalists. Among the male Finalists, 107 students (15.9%) were INTPs, making them the second most numerous type after the INTJs (110 students or 16.4%). Among the female Finalists, 33 students (10%) were INTPs, the

216 McCaulley in Wankat & Oreovicz, 1992

fourth most numerous type after the INFJs, INFPs, and ENFPs. (Remember, there are fewer female Thinkers and more female Feelers.) For the female Finalists, INTPs slightly outnumbered the INTJs, who had 29 students (8.8%).

Assuming that female INTPs constitute 3% of the base population and males constitute 5%, then we can say:

- There were 3.33 times as many INTP females as would be expected.
- There were 3.18 times as many INTP males as would be expected.

Judging Teachers, Perceiving INTPs

Beckham (2012) did a study of a group of 19 Perceiving college students who had a proven track record of academic success. The study included the following types: ISTP, ISFP, INFP, INTP, ESTP, ESFP, ENFP and ENTP. As we shall see, the students used rather unusual methods to achieve their academic success.

The joke goes that the P for Perceiving actually stands for procrastination. In confirmation of this, 84% of the Perceivers chose to put off starting their tasks, and by and large, this did not hinder their academic success. Did the deadlines cause them stress? Yes, but 74% said that they found such stress “acceptable or energizing.”

When studying for a test, 79% indicated that did all their studying at the last minute (“crammed”). They reviewed their notes only once—right before the actual test. (Most did take notes, but 1 in 3 did it seldom or never.) And did they perform poorly as a result? No; in fact 89% achieved “satisfactory” grades without trying very hard. What about papers? 79% wrote their assignments at the eleventh hour. But I can hear a horrified teacher cry, “But that leaves no time for proofreading!” Ah, but 68% reported doing hardly any proofreading—or none at all.

And what about study habits? The Perceivers didn't have regular study habits, regular study times, or regular study places. They didn't decide what they would study beforehand, nor did they pick a specific time when they would start or stop. They often chose comfortable locations to study in; 44% did not study at desks or in straight-backed chairs. By and large, the students did not follow the Judge philosophy of “work before play,” nor did they follow a set schedule. They did not abide by the policy of “study and do homework before having fun.”

There seems to be an assumption that a clean workspace with everything filed neatly away promotes better studying and reduces stress. However, 61% of the students reported that they could study just fine in a messy workspace. Instead, their organization system seemed to consist of “close at hand, close to mind.” 83% of the students kept important things in an obvious, easy-to-find place nearby.

How about reading the textbook? Most of the students indicated that while they liked reading (in a general sense), either they would read only some of the assigned reading, or else none at all. 94% of the students saw no need to “re-read, revise, or reorganize” study materials, and review was overwhelmingly viewed as nonuseful.

The Perceiver attitude towards earning grades was also interesting. 58% of the students “frequently chose to disregard faculty or university standards as they followed their own paths to learning. They set and met their own standards.” A further 16% reported that the requirement of having to earn grades actually damaged their learning experience.

Moving from specific behaviors to explanatory theories, Beckham suggested several principles that govern the typical modus operandi of Perceiving students.

The most important principle was the concept of “momentum.” While the approach of Judgers is like the continual pounding of wave after wave upon the beach—take a step forward, go back, review, take another step forward, go back, review—the approach of Perceivers is like a tsunami. Perceivers gather up all their resources, time, and energy into one mighty, self-propelling tidal wave that completes a task all at once and forever. The idea of nibbling, nibbling, nibbling, going back, doing things over, doing things halfway, doing a bit here and there—not happening. Perceivers prefer to do things right the first time, then never touch their work again.

To maintain momentum, a continual, unbroken flow of an action is essential. Whether dealing with a paper, a study session, or a project, Perceivers wish to work all at once. If they stopped, they would lose their momentum, they would be unable to pick up where they left off, and they would waste time. Further, the quality of their work would suffer. A Perceiver's best work is holistic, complete, and unified.

By contrast, Judging students enjoy breaking tasks up into smaller parts so that they can enjoy a long series of “mini-closures.” This is the policy recommended by most texts on academic success.

Interesting, the researchers found that the language of the texts reflected this Judging tendency to break things apart. Commonly used words included: “bite-size, bits, blocks, break, chunks, divide, less, limit, parts, pieces, reduce, sections, separate, short, small, specific, and subgoals.” Perceivers, however, *unanimously* reported that they preferred to do tasks all at once rather than bit by bit. In fact, 61% found that the bit-by-bit approach reduced the quality of their work, made the job longer, and diminished their pleasure in the activity.

Perceivers see time differently from Judgers. Whereas for Judgers time is a controlled quantity, ticking away in hours, minutes and seconds, for Perceivers time is an endless river. Perceivers remark, “Oh, I'll find time somewhere,” “We'll have time,” “There's always time.” For Perceivers, time is something that can always be scrounged up somewhere, somehow. Judgers must control their time (through the use of schedules and planners) whereas Perceivers simply adapt to use whatever amount of time is available. Judgers budget their time, limit their time, and manage their time. For Perceivers, there are two times: free time and crunch time. While Judgers tend to focus on how time is passing, Perceivers tend to focus on how much time is left. “Time is fleeting,” says the Judger. “There's plenty of time,” says the Perceiver. Perceivers view time like an elastic band that can be stretched or scrunched. If time were money, Judgers would put \$1 a day in the bank for a month, while Perceivers would put \$30 a day in the bank on the last day of the month. Or perhaps a better analogy would be the game Tetris. A Judger drops the blocks as fast as they come, without much regard for achieving a maximally efficient arrangement. They just want those blocks dealt with and gone as fast as possible. A Perceiver, on the other hand, arranges the blocks so that they can compact as many as possible into the smallest amount of space. A Judger works harder, but a Perceiver works more efficiently.

Really, more efficiently? There are many time saving shortcuts that can be taken when one does a task all at once. For one thing, you don't have to go through the effort of finding everything you need (books, papers, websites, citation guide, writing materials, etc), using it for thirty minutes, then putting it all back, only to set it all up again next time. There is also the all-important fact that knowledge accumulated all at once is fresh in one's memory and can be used without problems like “Where did I read that?” or “Hm, was it 1864, or 1865?” or “What page was that on?” Doing things all at once creates a situation where the memorized facts are recent, clear, and sharp. Thus (time-wasting) review,

look up, doublechecking, etc. is reduced.

In terms of the space management, Beckham found that Perceivers arranged their work so as to keep important things in the forefront of their mind. Rather than marking a note in a planner to remind themselves that an important assignment is due at a certain date, a Perceiver will take the page describing the assignment, draw a big circle around the due date, add some exclamation points for urgency, and place it in a prominent spot where they will see it regularly. Thus the paper serves as a reminder, allowing Perceiver to keep an eye on the approaching deadline so that they can act at the appropriate moment. The obviousness and prominence of a location determines the significance of the items that will be placed there as reminders. Space itself is the Perceiver's planner.

One final principle was the idea of “augmentation,” which Beckham defined as “A pattern of cognition and action characterized by the propensity for addition and amplification of information, objects, and experiences.” She gave as an example an ENFP who continually collected pens and paper, more than she needed. Throughout high school, I picked up pens and pencils off the floor (more than I ever needed—I still have an entire box full). Further, when I buy supplies, I tend to get/save more than I need. At this particular moment I have twenty-two sticky note pads, half in opened packages, seven blank notebooks and a bunch of older, half-blank notebooks, and a dozen folders. I have not used the overwhelming majority of my gathered supplies, but they are ready in abundance if I should ever need them. What of the addition and amplification of information? Perceivers seek to gather as much information before acting (after all, a new piece of information could change the whole picture). When they do act, they act with the most up-to-date and complete information available.

What About Unsuccessful Perceiving Students?

During the course of the study Beckham made an examination of the “how to succeed in college” literature. As it turns out, the advice of the experts was aimed mainly towards urging students to act in a Judging manner. Further, the literature actively *condemned* the Perceiving approach. It seems that it is firmly engrained within the minds of the predominantly Judging education community that Judging is the only way it is possible to succeed. This can also be seen by the fact that INFP educators believed that ESTJs were the ideal students.

What this means is that if a Perceiving student has trouble in school, the advice they will get boils down to “become a Judger.” One might as well say, “Just flap your wings and fly. See how easy it is? Like this.” But an attempt to impose the Judging style may actually do more harm than good. As Beckham put it, “When a process is broken up or requires much repetition, energy dissipates. . . . The task becomes work. It is no longer fun, engaging, or challenging, and may even become empty of purpose.” Indeed, when the Perceiving students in the study were forced by their professors to work using Judging tactics, they were resistant to the imposition; it felt wrong, like they were being asked to give something up. The Judging strategy felt less satisfying and less motivating. It may be that in trying to help Perceiving students, academic counselors and teachers are setting them up for discouragement, exhaustion, and even failure.

Rather than requiring Perceiving students to behave like Judgers, educators should first try to teach them how to use their inborn Perceiving skills more skillfully.

Let's take the most common area where Perceivers have trouble as an example. This is, of course, overshooting the required deadline for a project. Rather than suggesting that the student start early and break the task up into bits, it would first be worthwhile to look at the reasons where the tsunami process went wrong. The goal of such analysis is not explain why Perceiving is an inferior approach so that a

Judging strategy can be emplaced, but rather as a means to repairing whatever has gone wrong with the original Perceiving strategy. For example, did the student forget the deadline because they did not place a reminder in a high priority location? Perhaps a pack of ultrabright sticky notes could help, or a small reminder board for their room with a handy marker nearby. Did the student underestimate the amount of time required? Better time *estimation* skills can be taught separately from Judging time *management* skills. Did the student unexpectedly find themselves required to divide their time up on two major projects, resulting in a half effort on each? Perhaps the Uncalendar²¹⁷ can help. Did the student not gather the necessary tools (i.e. references) required for the task beforehand? Perhaps simply getting into the habit of writing, “Warning: Remember to get X, Y, and Z at least five days early” at the top of the assignment could solve the problem.

It makes sense to support natural Perceiver methods rather than always trying to replace them with Judger methods. Surely it is better to fix an ingrained, innate, existing system rather than attempt to substitute it with a wholly alien one.

Conclusion

As we have seen, school is predominantly a Judger environment, whatever level you reach. Certain aspects of the institution, particularly those characteristic of elementary and high school, create problems for INTPs. However, those problems pale in comparison to the ones INTPs experience if they enter the SJ-dominated military.

²¹⁷ The Uncalendar is a “planner” I discovered in college. It has the unique feature of not having any dates—thus, you can use it for years and it won’t become obsolete. Looking through my entries, I see that I mainly used it during exam weeks or during particularly intensive times when many things were due all at once. It acted as a coordinator between the demands of various classes, allowing me to stack the tetris blocks in the most compact manner.

18. INTPs in the Military

Opinion surveys of internet-using INTPs regarding the type's suitability for military service revealed a unanimous cry of "Stay away, stay awaaaay!" Opinions were overwhelmingly negative; the vast majority disliked their jobs and the entire military atmosphere. One oft-expressed sentiment was, "It will make the rest of your life feel easy." INTPs reported over and over that the military experience goes against the grain, isn't a good fit, and is completely antithetical to the INTP preferences.

Otis and Louks noted that INTPs prefer to work in environments that are "flexible, relatively unstructured, egalitarian, nonintrusive, and allow the individual to pursue his or her goals independently at his or her own pace... Needless to say, military organizations do not ordinarily meet any of these criteria, except perhaps in special circumstances such as fighting a guerrilla war."

NP vs. SJ (Again)

One reason for this dislike is that the peacetime (nondraft) military is composed mainly of ESTJs and ISTJs,²¹⁸ and they set the tone. In terms of working environments, ESTJs are the type that most favors "clear structures and responsibilities" and ISTJs are the type that most favors "everything done by the book."²¹⁹ Looking at the letters, SJ and NP are opposite orientations. Many INTPs complained about being forced to act like STJs; others found having STJs in authority over them irksome. (Note that SJs are not the only type INTPs may experience friction with. Keirsey, a pilot in the Marines during WWII, remarked that he found the SPs too reckless and risk-taking.²²⁰ This sentiment has been echoed by other INTPs.) Generally speaking, INTPs find the effort to morph themselves into SJs stressful; a result to be expected considering the results of the cult study.

The devil and all his demons are in the details—which are the favorite focus of sensors. But as intuitives, INTPs do not care to deal with "minor" details; rather, they prefer a broad view of the world. In the military it is considered a big problem to show up late or to not keep one's uniform in the proper order. INTPs are not known for taking to these things naturally

Likewise, INTPs do not like routine or repetition; the requirement for frequent meetings and drills is onerous to them. A common INTP complaint is that the military requires you to do the same thing every day. INTPs particularly dislike being forced into roles that involve labor that does not make use of their minds; likewise, they dislike training that involves rote memorization. All these aspects of daily military life tend to leave an INTP bored and frustrated. They may resort to creative means of hiding and shirking; anything to escape the monotony. Unfortunately, the military does not provide many other opportunities for creative expression.

Finally, bureaucracy is any form is loathed by INTPs, but alas, the SJ-oriented army is extremely well endowed in this area. Otis and Louks (1997) noted that INTPs in Vietnam tended to be attracted to renegade outfits which made up their own rules.

Autonomy vs. Control

Lack of autonomy is a major dislike for INTPs in any job. INTPs in the military find the requirement for conformity and continual submission to authority grating. By the same token, INTPs feel very

218 Allen, 2009

219 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

220 Keirsey, 1998a

frustrated at being compelled to constantly obey “stupid rules.” They often find army regulations pointless, constraining, and absurd. INTPs may feel that the military requires them to turn off their brains or stop thinking. Immediate, unquestioning obedience to orders will not come naturally to this type; it is totally alien to their independent, free-thinking nature.

Furthermore, INTPs (like all Rationals) do not trust the experts; vested authority has little weight with them. Unsurprisingly, INTPs servicemen consistently described how they felt low respect for the authority of their superior officers, which they often viewed as being based upon seniority rather than actual merit. Complaints revolved around commanding officers who were “stupid,” overly nitpicky, over-punishing, overbearing and controlling. INTPs also tend to have a rather egalitarian view of the world. This may also lead to a dislike of artificial rankings and the customs that set superiors apart from subordinates, i.e. the officer/enlisted man divide.

Privacy

Lack of privacy is characteristic of many areas of the military. Being continuously other people can be draining on introverts, especially when solitude and isolation may be next to impossible to find.

Other Drawbacks

Given all of this, it can be seen why INTPs are perceived as lacking team spirit, *esprit de corps*, or just generally being unenthusiastic. Emotional appeals to “duty, honor” and other values seemed to hold limited value to INTPs as motivational techniques. Another interesting fact is that INTPs tend to have “unique” political views. For example, they may find themselves questioning their country’s military objectives or methods. Needless to say, this makes their job even less pleasant.

Save for those few who find their niche, the military seems to offer few satisfiers for the INTP. By the end of enlistment, INTPs are apt to feel constrained and trapped; they are eager to escape. This is understandable when one considers that INTPs tend to job hop a lot. The idea of not being able to quit on demand is stifling.

One other thing of note is that the military is hard on one’s family life. INTPs have a tough enough time staying married already. This should be taken into consideration when planning a career.

PTSD

Otis (type INTP) (2005) was tasked with putting together a treatment program to help veterans with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). He had them take the MBTI, and discovered that 70% of the group consisted of ISTJs, INTPs, and ISTPs. There were 14 INTPs out of 259 total participants, 1.76 times as many as was found in a sample of veterans in individual psychotherapy for nonPTSD causes.

The ITPs were the two most overrepresented types in the study. Why so many? Otis speculated that ISTPs and INTPs are preferentially selected for combat roles by both their superiors and their own natural inclinations. He notes, “The I_TPs are tough-minded, able to control their emotions, adventurous, willing to take risks, and task-oriented. Although they tend to be a bit rebellious, they have personal characteristics prized on the battlefield.”

4 out of the 14 INTPs in the group belonged to military intelligence; in fact, every single group member belonging to military intelligence was an INTP. These INTPs reported living in constant fear

of being uncovered by the enemy. They also felt guilty about certain duties, such as the use of interrogation techniques, assassinations, etc. Otis notes that since these INTPs tended to work alone, they did not have the sense of camaraderie that the other soldiers felt.

Interestingly, Otis made an attempt to link up the causes of PTSD with type. For ISTPs and INTPs, he suggests, PTSD is tied to witnessing or being involved with an unfair and injustice act, for example, the pointless slaughter of defenseless civilians.

On a side note, Otis records that the average length of service for ITPs was 45 months, or about 4 years. By contrast, ISTJs stayed for about 76 months, or about 6 years. ISTJs, however, tend to stay at their jobs longer than average anyway.

Positives

Are there any positives to joining the military? INTPs enjoy the opportunity to travel the world and meet people from different cultures. This coincides with the fact that INTPs are one of the four types that most enjoy the work environment characteristic “International opportunities.”²²¹

Although most INTPs dislike their military experience, it is not uncommon for them to express that they were glad for it in retrospect. They viewed it as a character-building experience, and noted that it helped them build confidence, develop interpersonal skills, become more effective, and develop SJ skills. However, others note that the military did *not* help them in these areas, so results may vary. Whatever the case, most INTPs tended to agree that there must be a better way to build character than in the military, and that they would never go back.

Conclusion

Save for a few niches, the military (like the public school system) is basically not an INTP environment. The reason that INTPs do not fit in is that the institutional culture in both cases is overwhelmingly Guardian. Such environments are the least suitable habitat for INTPs.

Now please, don't walk away from this book as a Guardian-hating type bigot (see appendix). There is no “evil Guardian conspiracy” out to get INTPs. Rather, what happens in these cases is simply the result of a majority type arranging the customs of an institution to suit their own type preferences. The exact same thing happens in INTP dominated environments. You should be aware that unINTP environments exist for much the same reason that you should be aware that patches of quicksand exist—not to loath and despise the hapless sand, but simply to avoid it.

In the next chapter we'll look at INTP dominated environments.

221 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

19. INTP Environments

Did you know that geography is related to personality? There are even studies to prove it. One such study used the Big Five to assess the personality traits of fifty-one samples of some several thousand people each, one for each state in the USA plus the District of Columbia.²²² When averaged out, it became apparent that some states were more introverted than others, some states were more perceiving than others, etc. ([Read here](#))

This raises an interesting question: is there an ideal INTP culture within the United States?

The five most introverted states were as follows, ranked from most introverted to least introverted:

1. Maryland
2. New Hampshire
- 3. Alaska**
4. Washington
5. Vermont

The five most intuitive states, from most intuitive to least intuitive, were:

1. District of Columbia
2. New York
3. Oregon
4. Massachusetts
5. Washington

The five most thinking states, from most thinking to least thinking, were:

- 1. Alaska**
2. District of Columbia
3. Wyoming
4. Nevada
5. New York

The five most perceiving states, from most perceiving to least perceiving, were:

- 1. Alaska**
2. Maine
3. Hawaii
4. Rhode Island
5. Wyoming

As can be seen, Alaska leads the pack in terms of TP preferences; it was also the third most introverted state. One thing it does not have is intuition; in fact, Alaska is the fifth most sensing state. Alaska is essentially an ISTP paradise. It is also the closest thing in the USA to an INTP culture.

²²² Rentfrow, Gosling, & Potter, 2008

As it happens, I live in Alaska. Since it appears this subculture supports INTP preferences better than most, a discussion of how these conditions were created and what they consist of is in order.

“North to the Future”

Alaska styles itself as the Last Frontier, a slogan which is not inaccurate as far as the US is concerned. It is a frontier with internet and cable TV, but a frontier nonetheless. For example, as a child I worried about getting eaten by bears and wolves. (In fact, I still worry about these things.)

One of the interesting things about frontiers is that they attract people who don’t fit in elsewhere. This process is known as “selective migration.” A pastor explained it by saying, “Alaska is the ends of the Earth. All the people who are running from their problems come here.” In short, Alaska is the USA’s national sink for weirdos, hippies, troublemakers and nonconformists. Rather ethnocentrically, Alaskans refer to nonAlaskan areas as “the Outside.”

One of the reasons that such people make their home here is that frontiers aren’t big on regulations, bureaucracy and governmental supervision. This is a boon to INTPs, who are one of the least rule conscious types. My INTP father told me once that he liked living in Alaska because the rest of America has too many pesky rules. I was rather amazed to find out this was true. (“You need a license for that? Are you kidding me?”)

Given the types which are attracted to Alaska, it is not surprising that the culture is fiercely individualistic. There is an Independence party advocating secession to which my family and I have belonged at various points. (It is not affiliated with the Southern party. Alaskans tend to view secession in terms of American colonials vs. the oppressive British motherland.) ITPs are a rebellious lot. I can only speculate on the type composition of the thirteen colonies...

And what about gender roles? The ideal Alaskan female deviates strongly from the usual role, as can be seen by the stereotype of the “Alaska Girl” enshrined on ubiquitous bumper stickers. The Alaska Girl hunts, fishes, and does manual labor with the guys. As one joke goes, “Alaska: where men are men and women are men.” Is it admired, though not required, for a woman to behave like an STP--tough, self-reliant, capable, and physically skillful. Alaskan women operate mining equipment, fly bushplanes, and shoot big game. What about fashion? As one Alaskan book put it, “Fashion means your fur hat is dead.” Dress that would be considered uncouth, rough or odd elsewhere is normal on a frontier.

One can already imagine how much more easily a female INTP could integrate into this culture than average. I could fill this book with stories about how I shocked the gender expectations of newcomers to the state. As one Californian observed after I demonstrated the ability of women to lift heavy objects without assistance, “Alaskan girls are different from California girls.”

Alaska also has a very, very low population density, and it is socially acceptable to live alone in a small cabin in the middle of nowhere. Sort of like an INTP heaven, if you’re willing to put up with six straight months of cold and darkness. James (2000) has suggested that “The homeland of the INTP’s psyche is a small and cozy community, isolated in the middle of a vast expanse of wilderness.” I won’t speculate on this further, but it seems like an apt description of Alaska.

I wish every female INTP could live in a culture that accepted and valued their ITP traits. It is too bad that there are so few frontiers left. I guess we’ll just have to wait for space to open up.

An INTP Family

What about an INTP family setting? Given that the author's family is composed mainly of INTPs (plus one ENTP and one ESTJ), it may be instructive to study the manifestations of type within a predominantly INTP family. So what is such a domestic unit like?

As the exasperated ESTJ put it, "It's like living with a family of lawyers!"

For example. On one occasion, there was some disagreement between husband (INTP) and wife (ESTJ) over whether the author should be allowed to buy a pet rodent. The ESTJ then went on a trip. When she returned, she found that the family had acquired a rabbit and some gerbils.

Naturally there was a discussion of how the creatures appeared, since purchasing rodents had been expressly forbidden. But as it turned out, the pet store was having a special on pet food in which you could get *free* gerbils if you bought a sack of their food. The rabbit was acquired from the free ad column. Since none of these creatures had technically been *bought*, the INTP husband and his INTP daughter had actually not violated the previous agreement. I suppose this was dad's revenge for how mom got me a cat while he was away on a trip.

No one in the family could find lost objects as well as the ESTJ. Being a sensor, she was focused on the details of the outside world; by comparison, the rest of the family seemed blind and deaf. Frequently we would search an area for a lost object and not find it; then she would search and somehow it would turn up. "It was right there! How could you miss it?" she would exclaim uncomprehendingly.

When not debating amongst ourselves, the NTPs formed a voting block that constituted the (silent) majority. Sometimes the ESTJ would shake her head and say, "This family is so weird." Then we would logically point out that as the majority, we were by definition normal, whereas as the minority, she was by definition weird. The family's lone Guardian never did accept that line of reasoning.

"There's something wrong with this family," she would complain. (At the same time, she was perversely proud of her weird, geeky little household. She referred to us as "the Addams family." The family myth claims that the name Adams has been passed down to us from the Presidents John and Quincy Adams--both NTJ Rationals. But that was not the Adams family she was referring to.)

The ESTJ, incidentally, was something like the family cat herder. Although like all ESTJs she had a naturally dominant personality, it was hard to impose authority on a group of INTPs, who as a whole are particularly averse to outside suggestion. Furthermore, being argumentative Rationals (particularly the ENTP), we seldom gave in to her arguments, which tended to be based on conformity to social norms rather than logic. Our family was sort of like a microcosm of what the world would be like if the quantities of Guardians and Rationals were reversed.

The kitchen table was always covered with reading material; computers outnumbered family members; and most of the family could quote Star Wars by heart.

There was, of course, the characteristic hairsplitting:

Mom: "Pass the butter."

Dad: "We don't have any butter. All we have is margarine."

Mom: (exasperated) "Just hand me the margarine."

Sibling 1: "Can I see that?"

Sibling 2: "Sure." (Sibling 2 does not give item to Sibling 1.)

Sibling 1: "Well?"

Sibling 2: "Oh, you mean you wanted to see it with your *hands*?"

Children: "How much money did we earn this month?"

Dad: "None."

Children: (sigh) "How much *currency* did we earn this month?"

My dad was proud of how different his NTP children were from the other kids, and conveyed the distinct impression that being an NTP was *better* than being (boringly) normal. However, at one point the ENTP observed bluntly, "I've noticed that compared to other families, ours is silent, cold, untalkative, anti-social and never does anything together."

Mom worked at an office during the day while Dad stayed home and worked on the house. As a result, much of my childhood was spent in an all-male, all-INTP environment. You can understand why there was never any pressure on me to do "girl" things. My brother and I played with cars, dinosaurs, legos and My Little Ponies together. But instead of combing the ponies' hair and putting it in berets, we would take them on dangerous expeditions across the desert of the front yard and the steaming jungles of the lawn. "Help me...Rainbow Heart...I'm...dying...of thirst..." my pony would gasp as it staggered and collapsed. "I'll...try," his pony would wheeze bravely, dragging mine onward across the blazing sands. "Oh look, there's the jungle! Water at last!" The ponies would then get hopelessly lost and have to find their way out again.

I'll always be grateful that I was never feminized.

Conclusion

It is not common for INTPs to find themselves in pure-INTP environments, though it *is* common for SJs and SPs to find themselves in such environments. Bizarrely, though my experiences in this regard make me unique among INTPs, it contradictorily makes me "normal" in a larger context. From cradle to grave, most people are surrounded by members of their own type and temperament. But for INTPs, the university (or internet) may be the first place where they can experience a subculture that is suited to their unique preferences.

What would it be like, I wonder, if the world was completely INTP?

20. Intipiland - Ethnography of an Insular Utopia

The following is the result of a series of letters I exchanged with a mysterious INTP visitor claiming to be from a place called "Mabtiland." He himself harkens from Intipiland, one of the sixteen islands composing Mabtiland. I hope that this ethnography, brief though it is, will be helpful for anthropologists curious about the customs and culture of an all-INTP society.

A Brief Geology Lesson

We Intipians call our world "Mabtiland." Our land is not divided into continents, as yours is; rather, it is divided into four great archipelagos. The largest archipelagos are the Gwar Diun and Artesano groups, which together make up some 65% of the planet's exposed land mass. The people of Gwar Diun are known for their trade, history and ceremonious hospitality, while the warlike Artesanos produce the finest clothes, weapons, and entertainment. A smaller archipelago, the mysterious Aydeellyst Chain, is composed of a system of volcanos which flanks Gwar Diun on the west. Shrouded in fog and ringed by dangerous reefs, the Aydeellyst Chain is one of the least understood regions of Mabtiland, though it is well known for its poetry and arts. The last archipelago, the Rashana Group, contains my own island of Intipiland.

Just as Mabtiland is composed of four archipelagos, so is the Rashana Group composed of four islands, the Rashanas. Some brief notes on these islands follow.

The largest and most famous of the Rashanans is the island of Entaj, which thrice ruled over the whole of Mabtiland during the periods of 212-309 BC, 630-945 AD, and 1222-1250 AD. The Entaj language, Feldmräj, has left its mark upon all the languages of the archipelagos. In addition, many ancient ruins of Entaj can be found throughout Mabtiland, even in the heart of the Aydeellyst Archipelago itself. Today, Entaj is the most powerful island in the Rashana Group, and one of the richest.

Rivaling Entaj in fame is its western cousin, the isle of Neteepi. It is well known that the Neteepians were the first to put a man in orbit, the first to put a woman on Mars, and the first to put a sentient machine on Alpha Centauri. As the main economic adversary of Entaj, Neteepi has a reputation as a leader in technology. Neteopian speculators built the first airplane and financed the construction of the first faster than light vessel. Most recently, they have dipped their fingers into the burgeoning field of teleportation. Neteepians have a well-deserved reputation for inventive entrepreneurship and reckless experimentation.

To the east of Neteepi lies the island of Jint, the "University of the World." It is said of Jint that while Neteepi was the first to put a man on the Mars, Jint was the first to put a *living* man on Mars. Jint has the longest and most stable history of all the islands of Rashana. Its highly successful technocratic governmental system, dating back to 500 BC, has remained for the most part unchanged throughout the millennia (excluding the periods where it was occupied by Entaj). This stability and unity has allowed Jint to accomplish great things--I speak of its tidal power generating system, producing energy for the whole island; its prosperous offworld colonies; and of course its unparalleled space elevator.

My own island of Intipi lies northeast of Jint, across the straits of Jujang.

Climate

Intipi is the smallest and most isolated island of the Rashana Group. Like the rest of the Rashana isles, it lies in Mabtiland's polar region and has a cold, wintry climate for most of the year. Due to the

seasonal tilt of Mabtiland, the sun is seldom visible during winter; thus, an average day consists mainly of darkness broken around noon by a pale twilight. During the short, intense summer there is constant daylight, which is fortunate indeed for the agricultural industry. Intipi produces the largest vegetables of any island on Mabtiland, with world-record holding cabbages, squash, pumpkins, and broccoli. However, for most of the year we subsist upon a diet of fish, seals, shellfish, and muskoxen. Our diet is plain, but we are content.

Lifestyle

I mention our challenging climatic conditions in part to explain why we spend most of our time indoors with our warm cats, books, and computers. The philosopher Snerk observed, "The library lab is the heart of the home," and it is well known that every well-to-do Intopian dwelling is equipped with a library lab²²³ that serves as the central gathering place of the family. Parents and children will join together on the internet for communal games and family trips. Intopian parents will often work from home while their children play on the computers beside them. We do not have "telephones" as you call them; such noisy intrusions on our privacy would be deeply resented.

In accordance with our preference for quiet and seclusion, our homes are laid out so that each member of the family has their own room; it is impolite to enter without knocking first. The inner and outer walls of the house are thoroughly soundproofed so that the denizens may enjoy peace and silence throughout the day.

Yet underlying the notorious insularity of the Intopian lifestyle is a vast virtual universe. The average Intopian has seen more strange virtual places and people than most people will see in a lifetime, and curiosity drives us on to "discover" more and more. We have made an industry of internal cybertourism. Nor is it atypical for young Intopians to buy a ship and fly out past the edge of known space to encounter whatever there might be.

Speech and Body Language

Intopians consider it rude to speak overmuch. "Those who speak, don't think," Intopian elders tell their children. Impassivity and minimal body language is expected from a young age. One oft-quoted snatch of poetry goes, "Perfection is the stone, the ice, the inscrutable man." Those who cannot control their faces and bodies are considered untrustworthy and insincere. In public places, a hushed voice is used to avoid raising the communal volume level above acceptable levels. Some Intopians prefer not to speak at all; it is customary for these to use dark-colored lip coatings to indicate that they prefer minimal conversation. It is considered a mark of shame to lose control and raise one's voice.

Visitors are often surprised to learn that there are parts of Intopiland, usually buildings of study or research, and occasionally private homes, where speaking is forbidden. These places are indicated by a black sign with white lettering reading, "High Focus Area. Handsign Only." Most Intopians have a knowledge of sign sufficient to communicate. The gestures are reserved and use mainly the fingers and wrists.

Language

The Intopian language is called "akodomiz," and it has become the lingua franca of the entire Rashana

²²³ The "library lab" is a uniquely Intopian room combining library and computer lab. The computer stations are often separated by bookshelves that form a privacy screen.)

academic community. Though a treatment of its grammar and vocabulary would be beyond the scope of this work, I will highlight a few points that many find unique.

The word *akodomiz* can be broken into three parts. The prefix *ako-* is related to the word *akrinvī* which means “precise.” *Dom*, when used by itself, can indicate either “language,” “words” or “meanings.” The *-miz* suffix indicates that a wide range of variability should be applied to the word *dom*. Thus, *akodomiz* means “precise language or words or meanings.”

Ako- and *-miz* are highly important qualifiers in the language. Indeed, there is an entire group of prefixes and suffixes known as “specifiers” that indicate what degree of precision or ambiguity should be assigned to a sentence, word, or idea. Suffixes are most commonly used to express ambiguity, while prefixes are favored for precision.

For example, suppose that an Intipian wished to express the thought that “I saw an eagle flying over the hill two weeks ago,” yet there was uncertainty in the speaker’s mind over whether he saw an eagle or a hawk. Also, the hill was rather small, and might more properly be termed an uprise. But the speaker clearly remembers that he saw the hawk *exactly* fourteen days prior.

To indicate the eagle/hawk uncertainty, the speaker would use the Suffix of Perception, *-maz*, which indicates uncertainty of identification of a person, place or thing. A different suffix, the Suffix of Quantity, *-moz*, would be used to describe the hill. *-moz* indicates uncertainty of size, weight, distance, height and other measurable quantities. A further suffix, *-e* or *-el* can be added on afterwards to indicate whether to err on the plus or minus side.

The opposite of *-moz* is *akoz-*, the Prefix of Quantity. Whereas *-moz* indicates uncertainty, *akoz-* indicates precision. To indicate that precisely fourteen days have passed since the sighting, the Prefix of Quantity is added to the number fourteen.

Thus, a listener can conclude that the speaker saw an eagle-like bird flying over what should probably be considered a smallish hill exactly fourteen days previously.

Because of its many suffixes and prefixes—of which there are too many to number—*akodomiz* allows the speaker to condense a great many thoughts down into the minimum amount required to express an idea—no more, no less. Much of our island’s reputation for terseness is undoubtedly derived from the economy of words provided by the structure of our language.

Finally, *akodomiz* has more “question words” than any other language. Who, what, when, where, why, how—the stunted vocabulary of your English language cannot do the justice to the amount and kinds of questions in the universe. Many feel that the lack of question words in the languages used outside of Rashana are to blame for the lack of technological development in the other archipelagos. Perhaps this explains why your Earth has failed to develop with the same rapidity as our planet.

Sports

Staring contests have long been a sport in Northern Rashana. The game originated around 200 BC as a primitive manhood rite. In this ancient ritual, young initiates would stare into a smoky fire and answer algebra questions. If they cried, they were relegated to another year of childhood.

Every five years, contestants from Jint and Intipi meet and battle for victory in the Olympic Staring Contest. This event attracts spectators from as far away as Neteepi and Entaj, who come to enjoy the tense drama of the matches and some of the best skiing in Rashana. The event’s location rotates between Intipi’s Isitelos Dome and Jint’s Oculorium.

Stares are judged for length, glaze, intimidation, impassivity, vapidness and focus. The Jintians are known for their many triumphs in the area of intimidation and impassivity, while Intipians traditionally usually take home a gold in glaze. On one remarkable occasion, "Eagle" Ay of Inif Pei took home gold in every area save for intimidation, in which he received only a disappointing 8.3. Although he contested the results on the grounds that the sun was reflecting off a spectator's glasses and getting in his eyes, the results were upheld.

The most famous starer of all time was, of course, "Blank Boy" of Intipi, the 15 year old who achieved immortality for continuing to stare at his opponent while a fly crawled over his iris. Later he would explain, "I didn't even notice it. I was too busy thinking about an idea I had for a new kleenex box."

Architecture

Intipi is the most energy efficient island in Mabtiland. The reason for our success is our choice of dwelling, which is a geodesic dome known in slang terms as an "igloo." Unlike real igloos, which are made of ice, our igloos consist of a concrete and metal framework surmounted by a layer of insulating foam. Not only are such igloos the most spacious of any dwelling, they are also the most thermally efficient since they have the least surface area for the most enclosed volume--key in our climate. Besides this, they are all but immune to natural disasters.

Despite the obvious practicality of this simple design, Intopian homes are often scorned as small, poor and plain. And certainly, compared to the palaces of Entaj and the sprawling mansions of Neteepi, this may be so. However, we Intipians prefer a simple, efficient life free from unnecessary burdens; this allows us to concentrate on the things that really matter--namely the life of the mind. One final consideration is that in the virtual realm, each Intopian owns numerous elegantly designed houses, each a unique work of art filled with priceless treasures. Is it any surprise that we care little for the external trappings of physical existence?

Yet there is one exception to this rule. Our old capitol stands in stark contrast to simple, unfettered existence we enjoy in our private lives. Those who have seen the igloos that we live in must wonder at the splendor of the flying spheres, the skeletal Tree, the ruins of the Temple of Reason, and the modern domed architecture which is acknowledged to be the most magnificent in the world. Besides this, we have in our Library of Architecture several million scrolls with blueprints of the most fantastic sort. (Needless to say, although we *could* build them, we see better uses for the money and time.) Most of the extant capitol buildings were designed by the legendary architect Kifuti in 230 BC during the first Entajan occupation, when the conquerors wished to beautify their new property. Newer buildings were added afterward as we experimented with various governing systems.

Government

Intipiland is the only successful long-lasting anarchist society on Mabtiland. To be sure, it is not entirely anarchistic--thousands of tiny communes with experimental governments exist throughout the island--but generally speaking, there is no government.

The anarchistic system was finally settled upon after failed tests of pantisocracy, communism, socialism, consociationalism, isocracy, gerontocracy, technocracy, computocracy, a caste system, a constitutional monarchy, and other short-lived governmental systems which are too numerous to mention. (For a comprehensive history of Intipi's governments, the reader is referred to Studius' *A History of Intopian Systems of Government Vol. I - II*.) The chaos wrought by these political

experiments has no doubt contributed to our society's notorious distrust for governmental authority of every kind.

Newcomers to Intipi often wonder how the population deals with problems of law, crime and punishment, since there is neither a legal system, nor any police force, nor a prison system.

Though this may seemingly be a recipe for disaster, in fact crimes are quite rare thanks to the high moral character of the populace. We Intipians despise laws, but we stand vehemently behind the principles represented by them.

When a crime recognized as such is committed, the lack of a police force is entirely compensated for by the local population's delight in solving crimes. Indeed, some have suggested that crime-solving is something like the unofficial national sport of Intipiland. When the criminal is inevitably captured, he or she is tried by a jury of his peers and an appropriate punishment is chosen.

Intipian justice is variable and often creative, but never unfair, for our stern character is matched by the most perfect objectivity. Even Intipian criminals themselves have been known to argue for harsher sentences because they considered their judges biased. Debates may run long--we Intipians relish debate as much as we relish solving crimes--but eventually a punishment will be decided upon. The severity of the punishment is variable and may include seizure of property, banishment, forced labor, and even the death penalty.

Because of its politically advanced system of government--or lack thereof--Intipi is often described as the freest island in the world. It is the only island in which artificial lifeforms are considered equal to organic lifeforms. For this reason, Intipi has the highest proportion of robots to humans in the entire Rashana Group. (Intipi also has the highest proportion of automatons to sentient lifeforms of all nations. Automatons have largely replaced sentient machines as the servant class. But I digress.)

History

I spoke of our old capitol, and how it was beautified by the Entajans. In fact, Intipi has thrice been occupied by our aggressive southern neighbor. The result of these successive occupations is an indelible suspicion of the Entajans' motivations. Each and every week, several hundred new articles are devoted to sizing up Entaja's military capabilities and speculating upon developments in their political system. I shall not delve into this complex and controversial subject save to provide a history of the last three occupations.

1st Occupation, 180 BC to 340 BC - "The Evil Time"

This period of Intipian history was marked by draconian government and the first introduction of slavery. The cleverest Intipian engineers, chemists, doctors, philosophers and mathematicians were collected and deported to Entaj. Among them was the physician Hipocrites, who brought with him a cage full of muskrats that were infected with a peculiar and terrible disease.

There are many accounts of what happened next. One story says that an Entajan slavemaster gave Hipocrites a blow with the whip to make him hurry up so that they could depart on time (the Entajans are notorious particular about doing things "punctually"). Hipocrites dropped the cage and the muskrats escaped onto the ship. Soon after, sailors began to die of a mysterious disease, and they passed it on to the dock workers, who passed it on to the undertakers, who passed it on to the rest of the island. Another version claims that Hipocrites released the muskrats himself when they arrived in the Entajan capitol. In any case, the disease (which would soon come to be known as the "Punctual

Fever") quickly spread across Entaj by means of the excellent road system. Within a year, half the population had died, including the king himself. At this point Hipocrites is said to have "discovered a cure." Thus ended the first occupation.

2nd Occupation, 616 to 956 AD - "The Oppression"

This, the longest period of Entajan occupation, was in fact a period of great scientific advancement in Intipi. The Industrial Revolution which had begun in Neteepi spread quickly to the other Rashanan islands, resulting in rapid technological advances. During this time much of the drudgery of manual labor was lifted from the backs of Intipian commoners and passed onto tireless machines. Once freed from the tedium of daily toil, Intipian intellectual thought flourished.

Yet in spite of the valuable discoveries made by Intipian theorists, emperor Ovarool II was displeased with his new acquisition. A telegraph sent to him by the then-governor of Intipi reflects the problems he encountered in transforming Intipi into a productive territory:

...As regards the rest [of the problems], they emerge chiefly from the character of the islanders, who are all of a lazy and rebellious disposition. Stop. Without constant supervision, all work ceases at once and the workers turn to idle talk about politics, religion and like. Stop. Still others stare stupidly into space. Stop. I cannot tell the exertions [sic] I have plied simply to coerce the Intipians to arrive for work on time, but even this is quite beyond them. Stop. Most arrive up to an hour late, if at all. Stop. To cite a recent example, I had a man flogged four and fifty times for the offense of tardiness, and upon recovery he quite deliberately continued his earlier pattern of behavior. Stop. Indeed, chastisements of all kinds have proven pointless, for the stubborn character of the islanders (which is no doubt notorious even in your glorious realm) precludes submission to the slightest rule or order with which they disagree... The workers are forgetful and pay little attention to their machines, resulting in great damages before failures are noted and repaired. Stop. Basic maintenance is neglected, such that tools are destroyed through lack of care... In some cases the lack of care amounts to deliberate sabotage. Stop. It is impossible to tell negligence from sabotage in such cases, for all Intipians are careless to the point of self-endangerment...

The emperor evidently disagreed with his governor's assessment of the situation, for he had the man replaced by a new governor, the infamous Bosh the Barbaric. Bosh instituted what can only be described as a reign of terror. During his tenure, nearly eighty Intipians *a week* were executed for offenses including "unproductive thought, theft of time [tardiness], excessive forgetfulness, staring, poor dress and hygiene, criticism of the government...idleness, reading during work hours, and philosophizing." Bosh's tenureship lasted four months before he was killed by a bomb planted inside his horse. The "horse bomb," evidently a precursor of the modern hovercar bomb, was fed to the grey stallion in the form of sugar-coated lumps of explosive and a self-igniting fuse. When the bomb went off, Bosh was hurled 30 feet into the air and catapulted into the paddock of a nearby muskoxen farm. In a bizarre twist of fate, he reportedly survived the fall, but the noise of the explosion frightened the muskoxen and they stampeded, trampling him to death.

Apparently disturbed by reports of Bosh's cruelty, Ovarool changed his policy towards Intipi and transferred Assistant Governor Marci of Inif Pei (a small island of the Aydeellyst Chain) to oversee the rebellious island. Marci--who unbeknownst to Ovarool had become a convert to one the Aydeellyst religions--took a radically different approach towards his new duties as governor. Acting on Aydeellyst principles of self-realization, he encouraged the Intipians to devise their own means of reaching the required quotas.

The results were immediate and dramatic. Overnight, Intipi became the most heavily industrialized country in Rashana (a status which it retains to this day). The Intipians devised complex but efficient

methods by which the amount of labor they had to do was minimized and the amount of supervision required was decreased to the absolute minimum. A visiting Neteopian marveled at these factories, observing, "In most of the rooms, there are only one or two men and women who read books while these wonderful self-adjusting machines work on their own, untouched by any human hand. I inquired as to what they do when the machines break down, to which the only reply I received was, 'They fix themselves.'"

During the lifetime of Marci (and later, his daughter) Intipi enjoyed a period of relative contentment. But trouble was brewing on Entaj. Ovarool V, the great-grandson of Ovarool II, chose to transfer control of the islands from Marci's daughter to his nephew, Nepos VIII, as a wedding present.

Nepos quickly proved to be an incompetent ruler. One of his first acts was to require all cats to be registered. When the registration was complete, he summarily limited the number of cats a family was allowed to own to two felines per house, a measure which would supposedly help the poor by reducing money spent on cat food. Intipians responded by creating underground hiding places called "cattages." One elderly Intipian woman was discovered to have a cottage containing no less than twenty-five cats and kittens in a room larger than her own house. She was fined one Ovarool for each animal over the limit, an outrageous sum in those days. The cats were placed in an animal shelter where they were reportedly adopted within the hour by sympathetic citizens.

A month later Nepos issued a proclamation banning existing religions and erected a Temple of Ovarool in the capitol. Intipians were outraged both by the flagrant misuse of their taxes and the suppression of what they considered a basic freedom. But more than that, they were appalled at the naked attempt at instituting an artificial theocracy, which they scorned in sarcasm-dripping pamphlets which circulated about the city. One of these pamphlets found its way into Nepos' hands and in a burst of rage he ordered the entire population of the capitol slain.

Terrified citizens fled in droves into the neighboring countryside, while others ran to the Temple of Ovarool for sanctuary. Thousands died, and the streets of the capitol literally ran red with blood. When Nepos was satisfied that the population had learned its lesson, he retreated to his garrison and wrote a triumphant telegraph to the emperor describing his putdown of the rebellion. Ovarool reportedly congratulated him on his quick action and suggested that he implement the Temples throughout the rest of Intipi.

It was this very policy that ultimately laid low the great Entajan empire and finally freed Intipi. To avoid repetition, I shall not cover here the holy war declared by Marci's former Inif Pei subjects, the civil wars, the uprisings in Artesano, and the rebellion which finally brought Entaj to its knees.

When the power of Entaj began to crumble, the islands of Intipi, Jint and Neteepi joined together in the Trisland Coalition. The resulting struggle would eventually bring an end to Ovarool's control of Rashana, and after the battle of Duom, the Entajans were forced to sign a surrender.

While most of the credit for the uprising's success goes to Neteopian tech and the secret army trained by the Jintians, the story would not be complete without a description of the warfare waged by Intipians on our own soil.

By the time the uprising began, Intipi already had a vigorous underground movement. Organizations such as "Nightshadow," "Free Thought and Speech," (FTS) and "Liberation Rampant" as well as countless small groups had long been waging a silent war against the Entajan occupiers. So damaging were these groups that the Entajan garrison was the largest of its size for any corresponding population

in Mabtiland.

When the uprising began, the island's underground movements mobilized in force. Though disciplined and well-equipped, the Entajan soldiers had not been trained to fight against an enemy that slunk amidst the shadows.

The cattages became hiding places for weapons and soldiers. Intipians mined the roads with booby traps and conducted elaborate campaigns of assassination against Entajan officials. So bizarre were the methods they used that one Entajan commander wrote in his diary,

No one dares drink water, for fear that it has been poisoned; no one dares kill an ox lest he find its fleece infested with deadly insects, no one dares sleep, for fear that the fever will take him during the night; no one dares step too hard on the ground for fear of tunnels under his feet. All is suspicion and paranoia, for the enemy never comes the same way twice, and his impassive face hides the treachery in his heart. I heard of soldiers who burned a stack of firewood and found that it had been soaked in chemicals so as to give off a toxic fume; all died in great agony...

The long-awaited coup de grace was finally delivered in 902 AD by means of the biggest poison gas attack recorded up to that time. Nepos, who managed to survive thanks to an air pocket in the garrison's sealed powder magazine, was captured and sentenced to death after a lengthy trial for some thirty-two separate crimes, including "the suppression of freedom of speech, thought, religion and cats." The Temple of Ovarool in the capitol was renamed the Temple of Reason, and has remained so until today. The Intipians triumphantly initiated a communistic government.

Thus ended the second occupation.

3rd Occupation, 1220 to 1256 AD - "The Tyranny"

This short period occurred during the reign of empress Tyrannia of Entaj, and is notable for the fact that it was initially greeted as a liberation by the Intipian population, who were at that time under the thrall of an experimental caste system implemented by the brutal communistic government. (Though the experiment and its results were highly fascinating, they lie outside the scope of this discussion.)

Empress Tyrannia was appalled at the practices of the Intipian government. She dissolved it completely and replaced it with the standard republican representation that was now characteristic of the reformed Entajan state. Disappointed at being "subjugated" by their saviors, the Intipians began an uprising which the Entajans were unable to prevent due to the devastating eruption of Mt. Lidre.

Thus ended the third occupation.

If it were not for the periodic depredations of the Entajans and the internal strife produced by our numerous governments, Intipiland would surely have a dull history. We do not make war; we remain aloof from the political struggles of other islands; we keep to ourselves. But let us move past the periods of conflict and turn to more ancient scenes in our history.

Prehistory

I was born in the small coastal village of Linus. Through no coincidence, the town of Linus is located almost on top of an ancient fishing village built by our ancestors, the Risanors. An archaeological dig nearby has unearthed important artifacts of whale bone engraved with simple derivatives and integrals. Also found were some smooth black beach stones with ancient numeric signs which were possibly used to teach basic algebra to children. These relics have been dated to 900 BC, making Linus the oldest mathematical site in the world.

Agriculture is believed to have been introduced to Intipi by the Jints in 400 BC, but its adoption was

slow and never reached the level of the massive Jintian factory plantations that were coming into existence at this time. In fact, by the time the industrial revolution hit Intipi, many families were still relying upon subsistence methods for food. Archaeos summed it up tersely by noting, “Intipi seems to have gone directly from fishing to factories.”

The so-called Agricultural Gap has raised many questions among anthropologists and archaeologists. One tentative hypothesis suggests that farming was an unsuitable way of life for the changeable population, who, like modern Intipians, preferred to live day to day, now performing one task, now another. In addition, the fishing net allowed Intipians to work on a less regular basis. However, this idea has been criticized on the basis that it imposes a modernist view on the past and ignores other possibilities, such as the climatic changes in the 300s and the devastation wrought by the Tsunami of 320.

Childrearing

Intopian children do not go to school as the children of other archipelagos do; this is unnecessary, for the children learn willingly on their own, and indeed, could not be restrained from learning by any means. Intopian parents sometimes superintend the education of their children and will provide materials as needed, but for the most part the young are allowed to roam free, unsupervised and unfettered. Children are expected to spend much of their time reading and studying as a matter of course, but they also enjoy games of strategy, exploration, and of course, staring.

Intipians seldom compel their children and or use punishment. Indeed, the parent merely notes that the child is behaving “foolishly” or “illogically” and the ashamed children seldom repeat their error again.

Industry

Besides virtual tourism, our other industries are computers and artificial intelligences. Needless to say, Intipi is the birthplace of the computer and remains a hotbed of development. The bleeding edge developments are in the area of mind/machine interfacing and human networks for mass consciousness.

Holidays

Unlike the inhabitants of other islands, Intipians do not recognize any regular holidays. Various attempts at initiating yearly celebrations have been made (including elaborate schemes for pentannual and biannual holidays) but within a year or two such “traditions” inevitably die out. The celebration that does occur is usually connected to the holidays of other islands, the celebrants being mainly unintegrated immigrants.

Final Words

It is my hope that this brief summary of the life on my island will be useful to you. It is the custom in Intipi to leave a personal possession behind at a guest's house as a token of their willingness to return for it (and enjoy another visit.) I therefore close with the parting words of my people, “Let's hope I remembered everything this time. Farewell.”

21. INTPs As a Minority

I am always impressed by how much ordinary people know about type. Not that they've ever heard of the MBTI or read a single book about it; they just picked it up naturally by observation.

For example, one study found that non-type-knowledgeable observers were able to describe Feeling women as having an "open" face and being attractive and good-looking. The observers also noticed that Thinking women have facial blemishes.²²⁴

Oh, did I mention the cultural bias?

Sadly, most people are unconscious type bigots unless they've been taught otherwise. Each culture has a certain "ideal type" for men and women. Women, of course, are typically expected to behave like Feelers and men like Thinkers. In the United States the ideal (and most common) type for women is ESFJ.²²⁵

But INTPs are the completely opposite of ESFJs. Is that a bad thing?

Female INTPs

Thorne and Gough (1991) did a study of the adjectives and phrases that non-type-savvy observers used to describe people of various types of both genders.

Their sample of 30 female INTPs included 2 college seniors, 9 Berkeley sophomores, 1 student writer, 8 female mathematicians, 9 law students, and 1 resident of an ordinary county. As you can see, this is a fairly admirable sample. We're not looking at INTP dropouts, serial killers, drug abusers, hermits, etc. No, these are average and above average female INTPs. So how did observers view them?

The list below shows the statements and adjectives that non-type-savvy observers considered characteristic and uncharacteristic of the female INTPs.

High positive numbers indicate that the trait was considered strongly characteristic (i.e. .35), while low positive numbers indicate that it was considered less strongly characteristic (i.e. .20).

Low *negative* numbers indicate that a trait was considered strongly uncharacteristic (i.e. -.27), while high negative numbers indicate that it was considered less strongly uncharacteristic (i.e. -.20).

The descriptors were drawn from the Adjective Check List and the California Q-Set.

Traits Seen as Characteristic of Female INTPs (From Most Characteristic to Least Characteristic)

- Is basically distrustful of people in general; questions their motivations (.35)
- Distrustful (.30)
- Sulky (.29)
- Evasive (.28)
- Indifferent (.28)
- Resentful (.28)
- Keeps people at a distance; avoids close interpersonal relationships (.27)
- Defensive (.26)

224 Thorne & Gough, 1991

225 Myers & McCaulley in Barger & Kirby, 1993

- Wary (.26)
- Unfriendly (.25)
- Is subtly negativistic; ends to undermine and obstruct or sabotage (.25)
- Tends to be self-defensive (.25)
- Tense (.24)
- Aloof (.23)
- Extrapunitive; tends to transfer or project blame (.20)

**Traits Not Seen as Characteristic of Female INTPs
(From Most Uncharacteristic to Least Uncharacteristic)**

- Tolerant (-.27)
- Appreciative (-.26)
- Helpful (-.26)
- Cooperative (-.25)
- Emphasizes being with others; gregarious (-.25)
- Honest (-.24)
- Warm (-.24)
- Pleasant (-.23)
- Sincere (-.23)
- Sympathetic (-.23)
- Understanding (-.23)
- Has social poise and presence; appears socially at ease (-.23)
- Has a clear-cut, internally consistent personality (-.22)
- Appears straightforward, forthright, candid in dealing with others (-.22)
- Is turned to for advice and reassurance (-.20)

As can be seen, the only “good” thing the observers saw about female INTPs was that they were “aloof.” The best we can say is that at least one characteristic *wasn’t* negative. Notice how many of the words seem to revolve around hiding oneself, protecting oneself, and avoiding potential attacks. That list of adjectives could easily describe a member of a hated immigrant race, a family concealing Jews in their attic, or a prisoner in a POW camp: essentially, a person surrounded by potential enemies. If one didn’t know better, one would think that INTP women were used to living in an unfriendly environment.

In fact, of the ten male and female types surveyed in this way (INFP, INFJ, INTP, INTJ, ISTJ, ENFP, ENFJ, ENTP, ENTJ, and ESTJ), INTP females were viewed the most negatively of all type/gender combinations. While having no good points, they were also seen as possessing many flaws. It would probably be safe to call INTP females “the least liked type”—sort of like a type-based untouchables caste. In addition, female INTPs “stuck out” the most of all types/genders. Their many noteworthy qualities were seen as the most distinctive and clear by observers, though not with the goal of celebrating their unique individuality.

Male INTPs

What about male INTPs? Were they similarly seen as negative?

The male sample (49 total) included 6 research scientists, 10 student engineers, 9 particularly creative

architects, 11 Berkeley sophomores, 5 medical students, 2 business executives, 2 student writers, 3 members of an architecture firm, and 1 resident of an ordinary county.

**Traits Seen as Characteristic of Male INTPs
(From Most Characteristic to Least Characteristic)**

- Tends to be rebellious and nonconforming (.24)
- Thinks and associates to ideas in unusual ways; has unconventional thought processes (.22)
- Original (.20)
- Imaginative (.19)
- Complicated (.18)
- Hasty (.18)
- Rebellious (.18)
- Genuinely values intellectual and cognitive matters (.18)
- High-strung (.17)
- Individualistic (.17)
- Restless (.17)
- Self-centered (.17)
- Temperamental (.17)
- Values own independence and autonomy (.16)
- Is critical, skeptical, not easily impressed (.15)

**Traits Not Seen as Characteristic of Male INTPs
(From Most Uncharacteristic to Least Uncharacteristic)**

- Favors conservative values in a variety of areas (-.21)
- Conventional (-.21)
- Conservative (-.18)
- Mannerly (-.18)
- Behaves in a sympathetic or considerate manner (-.17)
- Peaceable (-.16)
- Reliable (-.16)
- Stable (-.16)
- Judges self and others in conventional terms like “popularity,” “the correct thing to do,” social pressures, etc. (-.16)
- Practical (-.15)
- Self-controlled (-.15)
- Is protective of those close to him (-.15)
- Loyal (-.14)
- Responsible (-.14)
- Is uncomfortable with uncertainty and complexities (-.14)

It is clear from this data that male INTPs are viewed much more favorably than female INTPs. Is the male data fair? Is it true? Who knows. But at any rate, this is a picture of how seemingly average people viewed male INTPs, and it is probably a more true picture of female INTPs than the one presented.

Let's try a thought experiment here. Suppose that one were to gather all the minority students in a school into the cafeteria, then publicly describe them using all the words in the female INTP type description. There would be an outcry, wouldn't there? People would lose their jobs over it. There would be horror and recrimination. The newspapers would castigate the evils of discrimination for weeks. The victims of the persecution would talk about how they were made to feel excluded and unwanted.

Unfortunately type discrimination is not so obvious, or else it would have been stamped out by now for the evil it is.

But type discrimination is not limited to ordinary folk. Indeed, it is enshrined as a sacred principle of modern psychology.

A Fieldtrip Through the Wonderful Land of Cultural Bias

Unfortunately, the situation is more complex than just a case of cultural dislike.

The fact is, many of the poor traits attributed to female INTPs may be true, because cultural dislike is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Barger and Kirby (1993) hypothesized that those whose type matches the cultural ideal will receive more opportunities, support, and encouragement than those whose type does not. The unsupported group may be forced to hide their type and as a result can be hindered in their development and experienced lessened self esteem. Barger and Kirby concluded, "Current indications are that every culture we know about has a predominance of sensing-judging types; all intuitive-perceiving types, then, could be examined as non-preferred types."

The situation is not merely limited to female INTPs, then, though they have it the worst in America; it also includes male INTPs throughout most cultures. Atman (1993), citing previous studies, suggested a Western preference for Extraversion. So, the preferred Western type appears to be ESJ, with males slotted for ESTJ and females for ESFJ.

Therapists who use type in their work have found that "INTP clients, especially women, often report an early awareness of being profoundly different from other children, leading to a hypersensitivity to signs of rejection and to painful memories of being ridiculed and scapegoated as 'weird.'"²²⁶

Suppose you have ten people of Race A, and one person of Race B. While outwardly open and accepting, the Race A people nevertheless believe deep down in the bottom of their souls that all Race B people are wrong, bad, rebellious and irritating. But, being good, tolerant people, the Race As will not persecute the person of Race B openly. Rather, they will merely give them "the look," avoid socializing with them, exclude them, and generally treat them as unwanted and unwelcome. And, after being treated like this for a few decades, the Race B person will become alienated, develop low self esteem, have trouble with their relationships, and become an unhealthy, embittered, and even genuinely nasty person.

"I knew it! Those Race B people are trouble," the As will whisper confidently as they look at the person of Race B. "Why, there are even studies now to prove it! They're five times more unhappy and mentally unsound than normal people. That's what comes of being a B."

It appears that the people of Race A have conclusively proved that persecution causes misery, nastiness, and ill-health. That was unclear before.

226 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

But of course, this is not the line taken by mainstream psychologists, who can see how obvious it is that ESJs are normal and healthy. And look, there are studies proving how unhappy and maladapted INTPs are. Scientific evidence!

Such a psychologist will say, “It is the nature of INTPs to be unhappy, for their very psychological makeup predisposes them to misery.” (Only they’ll say it in a much more politically correct manner.) I believe, however, that it is the nature of INTPs to be just as happy as everyone else, provided that they are treated with the same consideration and acceptance as everyone else.

Suppose we had a culture composed mostly of INTPs. What would happen, say, if INTPs constituted 30% of the population and ESFJs constituted 4% of the population? There is no doubt that such a large INTP voting block would exercise a strong influence on cultural development (it sure did in my family). Would the INTPs fit into this culture, develop well, achieve normalcy, and be content, or would they still be unhappy and maladapted? And how would ESFJs survive in a culture so heavily dominated and shaped by INTPs? Would they still be happy and adapted if their culture required them to be everything they weren’t?

There are certain occupational cultures that are heavily dominated by one or two types. The police force, like the military, is mostly ST. When an NF becomes a police officer, they quickly discover that they don’t fit in. They are perceived as “different” by their fellow officers (not in a good way), and they find themselves frustrated, stressed out, and unhappy. Then they leave and go find jobs where they can be fulfilled, relaxed, and happy. Thus the police force remains dominantly ST.²²⁷

But suppose the *entire culture* rejects one’s type preferences, as is the case for INTPs? No matter how frustrated, stressed out, and unhappy one is, there is no new job out there and you can’t quit. Instead, you just have to keep slugging it out and doing your best to adapt. Or you move to Alaska.

In Barger and Kirby’s study of female INTPs ([read here](#)), a black woman recalled how she grew up in a predominantly white suburb. She felt “different,” but she assumed it was because of her race. Then she went to a black woman’s college and *still* felt different; in fact, her new friends consisted of the other people who didn’t fit in. She concluded, “I’ve been in organizational training for 10 years, but I’ve had trouble everywhere I’ve been. People can’t deal with my intelligence and honesty. Is that because I’m black, a woman, or an INTP? Honestly, I think now it’s the INTP.”

I find it telling that the effects of race bias and sex bias could be mistaken for the typical INTP experience. It may be that being an INTP is an invisible stigma equivalent to being a member of a “real” minority group. (What would happen, I wonder, if everyone’s skin color changed overnight to match their personality type? It would certainly make type discrimination more blatant.)

Let’s look at some of the consequences of being an INTP as seen through the eyes of mainstream psychology.

227 Hennessy, 1999

22. INTPs and Psychology

When reading books about famous INTPs it always amuses me to see what psychologists make of their personality. If an archaeologist digs up a tool whose purpose they cannot discern, they say it has “religious significance.” If a psychologist runs into a person they cannot squeeze into the definition of normal, they either resort to psychobabble or pick out a good disorder. Sadly enough, the evidence they cite for the supposed defect is often ordinary INTP behavior. Psychologists simply don’t grasp that what is abnormal for everybody else is perfectly normal for an INTP.

A research team did a study comparing MBTI types with various personality disorders to see if there were any relationships ([read here](#)).²²⁸ To do this, they took a group of 332 people and had them take the MBTI and the Coolidge Axis II Inventory (CATI). Then they observed which type(s) or preferences were correlated to which personality disorders. Guess which type won the prize? The researchers found that “personality disorders were clearly more likely to be related to the MBTI poles of introversion, intuition, thinking, and perceiving.” We’ll discuss this study further shortly, but first let’s discuss some problems with the diagnosis of INTPs.

- Psychology views INTPs (~4% of the population) as part of the “lunatic fringe” because the studies they use to base their worldview of “normal” upon rely upon what the majority does-- i.e. the Artisans and Guardians. This is more than simple rarity; it saying that what the Artisans and Guardians do should be the definition of normal and is a proper measuring stick by which mental soundness should be judged.
- INTPs are unique and rare--just like INFPs, INFJs, and INTJs. Rarity can be taken for disease, though this is a logical fallacy.
- INTP females are the “most disliked” type/gender in American culture.
- INTPs themselves feel like there must be something wrong with them because they don’t behave the way they “should,” i.e. the way the majority behaves. Thus they are more open to accepting others’ opinions of their shortcomings, reasonable or not.
- INTPs spend kindergarten through sixth grade soaking in an all-ESFJ teacher environment. Radically different from their teachers, they are the type most likely to be misunderstood and misdiagnosed. Also, being continually pressed to behave in an ESFJ manner may be a contributing factor to later issues.
- Lack of societal acceptance may actually contribute to *real* mental problems which are not intrinsic to the INTP’s mental make up, but spring from a lifetime of ill treatment at the hands of others.

Taken together, all these factors add up to a high risk for misdiagnosis for the INTP. I have devoted two chapters of this book to Asperger’s and ADD, but there is such a diversity of mental illnesses that I could never hope to discuss all of them, particularly since new ones are being continually developed.

Childhood “Problems”

Particularly during childhood, INTPs may fall victim to a variety of creative diagnoses. It is considered a problem that they do not socialize, do not dress or act right, spend too much time alone, aren’t interested in the things other children are interested in, don’t smile enough, don’t play “normally,” or won’t talk. Well-meaning parents trot their INTP children off to the child psychologist and the doctors

228 Coolidge, Segal, Hook, Yamazaki & Ellett, 2001

and eventually the INTP may accumulate a string of fictional disorders and medications. Pity the poor INTP who not only must bear the burden of being different, but also of feeling that the very essence of their being is a disorder that must be cured.

It seems logical that if a behavior is abnormal for society but normal for INTPs, then it should be considered a healthy behavior regardless of the opinion of the majority...or even the opinions of psychologists, parents and teachers.

An INTP is not just a “sick” ESFJ. The way to tell an unripe orange is not compare it to an apple; instead, compare it to another orange. If we use other types as the baseline for normal, the INTP will fail every time. INTPs must be measured against the baseline of their own type and not against the baseline of other types. Incidentally, this little mistake is one of the reasons why psychology is less than helpful when it comes to figuring out what is wrong with an INTP and how to cure them.

Psychology uses ESJ and ENJ as the very *definition* of a healthy personality. (Sensors are favored by the general population, but Intuitives are favored by psychologists.) You know all those studies that say, “People who do X are happiest and you should be like them”? Those studies tend to say, “Extraverted Judgers who do X are happiest and you should be like them.” Psychology studies the majority and the popular--in short, it studies the culturally accepted and supported EJs. A sample of 300 people has something like 12 INTPs, and their tiny voice is drowned by the happy majority. As a result, the INTP vote counts for very little to psychologists. It may even get dropped from the study as an outlier.

A brief word about the lunatic fringe. Rarity is not synonymous with disease. Is gold a diseased mineral? Are lefties are diseased righties? Are geniuses diseased average people? Rarity is not always healthy, but it's not always a disorder either. Psychology, on the other hands, has what is known as a “pathological bias.” This means that those working in the field tend to see anything divergent from the norm as a problem, though perhaps a problem with a few nice side benefits. Dark cloud with silver lining, or silver lining with dark cloud? Gift with a few drawbacks, or disease with a few good points? In truth, the glass is both half full and half empty for everyone, but psychologists tend to see it half empty for some and half full for others. The test of whether a behavior constitutes a disease or not is often “Is the person unhappy and do they have trouble fitting in?” This may seem like a reasonable test, but it fails when one considers that the environment itself can cause unhappiness rather than intrinsic personal traits. A saltwater fish dies if you throw it into a freshwater tank, but that does not mean that the fish was deficient—rather, it was expected to survive in an environment unsuited for it. We've discussed several INTP friendly environments and several INTP unfriendly environments. The ESJ culture, unfortunately, is one of the latter. Mental illness, in many cases, is simply a matter of the environment's opinion.

Unlike the Myers-Briggs, which focuses on healthy, normal behaviors, mainstream psychology is heavily slanted towards unhealthy, maladaptive behaviors. They necessarily see everything through a lens of disease, magnifying the weaknesses and minimizing the strengths. Thus you see books like “The Gift of Disease _Name_Here.” It's never, “The Drawbacks of Being Gifted in Positive_Symptoms_Here.” The glass is half empty, the cloud is dark: being an INTP is a disease with a few good points. A psychologist will note that an INTP is withdrawn, has poor social skills, does not pay enough attention to the world around them, lacks empathy, etc, but will ignore the fact that the INTP has excellent problem solving skills, a powerful will, lives by a strong moral code, and has exceptional analytic abilities. In fact, if you fixed the “bad points” you would no longer have an INTP; you would have something else entirely--an ESJ, to be precise. To psychologists this is a good thing--

healthy people are socially appropriate, empathetic, expressive, and mindful. In short, they are EJs, the cultural ideal. It is a *very* good thing there is no cure for being an INTP.

The Crummy Life Scales

INTPs consistently make the bottom four in what I mentally refer to as the “crummy life scales.” They tend to be accompanied by the INFPs, INFJs and ISTPs, who also have a lousy time of it. Note that mainstream psychologists do not typically attribute these unhappy statistics to cultural or pathological bias.

The Big Five (NEO-PI-R)

The Big Five is the personality assessment tool of choice in the field of psychology. It is an excellent research tool, and four of the five scales that it measures correlate to the four MBTI scales fairly well. In fact, the two tests share some of the same questions. It is in the interpretation of the results that the two tests differ.

Here are the biggest correlations between the two tests. Note that the Big Five has “unipoles” rather than “dipoles” like the MBTI. A person is either Extraverted or not-Extraverted; a person is either Conscientiousness or not-Conscientiousness.

MBTI = Big Five

Extraversion = Extraversion

Intuition = Openness

Feeling = Agreeableness

Judging = Conscientiousness

The reason the Big Five is called that (instead of the Big Four) is that it adds a fifth factor, Neuroticism. What is Neuroticism? The trait is broken up into six subscales, including hostility, depression, anxiety, impulsiveness, vulnerability, and self consciousness. Many websites will tell you that Neuroticism has no counterpart in the MBTI. In truth, Neuroticism is sometimes mildly correlated with Introversion and Perceiving,²²⁹ though the effect also appears to be gender-related. (Women tend to have higher Neuroticism than males as a general rule.) Female IPs then, are more neurotic than average, and perhaps to a lesser extent all IPs. So it would seem that INFPs, ISFPs, ISTPs, and INTPs are more likely than average to be “neurotic”—particularly females.

I question whether or not neuroticism is a measure of innate personality. For example, a Big Five study found that children who had been maltreated showed more neuroticism. So it is not a wholly intrinsic trait. Nonetheless, the maltreated children also showed less Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (in short, they acted more STP—regardless of original type), so even the four type traits we are familiar with can be changed in unhealthy ways.²³⁰

Although I have no proof, I suspect that the mild IP correlation with neuroticism is related to the long-term effects of cultural, parental, or educational rejection and devaluation. In short, I would call it a measurement of unhappiness, life dissatisfaction, and poor type development as expressed in Introverted Perceivers. (Obviously Introverts and Perceivers aren't the only ones who can be neurotic.)

229 McCrae & Costa, 1989

230 Rogosch & Cicchetti, 2004

The fact that IPs are preferred for this measure is disappointing, particularly since neuroticism is typically depicted as an inborn personality trait rather than a byproduct of negative life experiences.

If you take a patch of daisies and a patch of poppies, then pour fertilizer on one and gasoline on the other, can you compare the hardiness of the two species, or is your data now contaminated? Or would it be right to say, “Our research conclusively demonstrates that daisies are a hardier species than poppies”? There is no control group in these studies; they essentially compare ill-used IPs with well-treated EJs. At this point they are not necessarily measuring innate personality--rather, they are measuring in part the effects of the dominant culture on innate personality.

But, returning to the matter of the problems built into the Big Five. Actually, it isn't the test itself, but the spin which psychologists put on its interpretation that is so troubling. Among MBTI practitioners it is taken for granted that all types are created equal and have their own strengths and shortcomings. But this does not reflect the attitude taken by the Big Five.

Note for starters that the test measures how much Extraversion, Intuition, Feeling, and Judging a person exhibits—i.e. how much a person resembles an ENFJ. These are the “good” traits. The opposite ISTP traits are the “bad” traits.

One is either an Extravert—positive, energetic, and enthusiastic—or an introvert—none of those things. One is either an Intuitive—imaginative, curious, adventurous and sensitive to beauty—or one is none of those things. One is either a Feeler—compassionate, friendly, helpful and generous—or one is cold, unfriendly, inconsiderate, antagonistic and disagreeable. One is either a Judger—self-disciplined, hard-working, dutiful—or one is a lazy shirker who lacks willpower. Those who favor the Big Five tend to criticize the MBTI for “soft-pedaling” the negative traits associated with the I, S, T, and P preferences in order to curry favor with the masses. In reality, it seems like the Big Five preferentially sees the good side of E, N, F, and J and the bad side of I, S, T, and P. Oh sure, they recognize that sometimes these traits can have benefits, but they see it in the framework of “The Gift of Disease_Name_Here.” Generally it is viewed as bad to be an ISTP, although there are a few redeeming features. The idea of type equality is an MBTI concept that has not found acceptance within mainstream psychology.

Slowly the interpretation of the Big Five traits has been improving, drifting more towards the balanced MBTI interpretation.²³¹ There have been speculations among the MBTI that eventually the Big Five descriptions will come to resemble those used in the MBTI. However, for now the Big Five interpretations still reflect our culture's unfortunate tendency to idolize some traits and shun others. INTPs are on the negative side of three of the four Big Five traits, and they also tend to score more highly on Neuroticism.

Positive and Negative Affectivity with the PANAS Scales

Positive affectivity as measured by the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) is a measure of enthusiasm, energy, concentration, inspiration, (positive) pride, determination and pleasurable engagement. Those who are low in positive affectivity are said to be sad and apathetic. (Misleadingly, there is also a completely separate scale measuring negative affectivity hence the “NA” in PANAS. But low positive affectivity is actually measured separately from high negative affectivity.)

ESTPs, ENTJs, ENFJs, and ESTJs scored with the highest positive affectivity (from highest to lowest) while ISTPs, INFJs, INFPs, and INTPs scored with the lowest positive affectivity (from highest to

²³¹ Bayne, 2005

lowest). In short, the PANAS test finds that IPs are generally sadder and more apathetic than EJs, and INTPs are the saddest and most apathetic type of all.²³²

On the plus side, INTPs were not among the four types who scored highest on negative affectivity (these included the INFP, INTJ, ISFJ, and ISTJ from most negative to least negative).

One wonders, of course, how the test defines “sad” and “apathetic.” INTPs are not particularly bubbly. But does that make them sad and apathetic? Or do those words have special definitions that exclude INTP-specific forms of enthusiasm, energy, concentration, inspiration, pride, determination, and pleasurable engagement, while honoring the forms exhibited by other types? Extraverts tended to score higher on the PANAS than introverts. Besides this, a study of medical students found that ENFJs were rated as possessing the most enthusiastic engagement and INTPs the least.²³³

Or, if INTPs are sadder and more apathetic than average, how did they get that way?

Coolidge Axis II Inventory (CATI)

Returning to the study mentioned at the beginning. The list of the 14 personality disorders tested for by the CATI were correlated with MBTI characteristics as follows: Antisocial (N, T, P); Avoidant (I); Borderline (N, P); Dependent (I); Depressive (I, T); Histrionic (E, F); Narcissistic (N); Obsessive-Compulsive (I, S, T, J); Paranoid (I, T); Passive-Aggressive (I, N, P); Sadistic (N, T, P); Self-Defeating (I, N); Schizoid (I, T); Schizotypal (I, N, T, P).

Number of Disorders Characteristics of Each MBTI Pole:

- Introversion - 9
- Intuition - 7
- Thinking - 7
- Perceiving - 5
- Extraversion - 1
- Sensing - 1
- Feeling - 1
- Judging – 1

It would seem that mental illness—or at least our society's conception or incitement of it—is definitely related to type. Extraverts, Sensors, Feelers, and Judgers aren't very likely to be diagnosed with personality disorders in comparison to Introverts, Intuitives, Thinkers, and Perceivers.

What about Schizotypal disorder, which was so characteristically INTP?

Let's pretend that we have a disease called “Spotfang Disorder,” and the symptoms are as follows. To be diagnosed with the disease, the patient must exhibit five symptoms--any five.

1. Patient has a beating heart.
2. Patient has persistent cough.
3. Patient has long fingernails.

232 Watson, Clark & Tellegen in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

233 Myers & McCaulley in Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

4. Patient has blue eyes
5. Patient has purple and pink spots all over skin.
6. Patient has fangs.
7. Patient has brown hair.

There would seem to be some problems with the operational definition of this disease, wouldn't there? Particularly, there are many healthy people with brown hair, blue eyes, long fingernails, and a beating heart. But not all patients cough—unless they've been chain smoking for twenty years or have a cold. And very few patients have purple and pink spots and fangs.

The problem with our working definition of Spotfang disorder is that it creates a situation in which many healthy people can be diagnosed with this disease even if they do not actually have spots or fangs. 5 out of the 7 symptoms required for a diagnosis could conceivably be possessed by an ordinary person, and this meets the definition of the disease.

Bearing in this mind, let us examine the symptoms of schizotypal disorder.

People with schizotypal disorder are seen as being odd or eccentric in dress and habits; having few close relationships (i.e. they may only maintain relationships with immediate family members), experiencing acute social anxiety, feeling like outcasts, having vague or overcomplicated speaking habits with a tendency to go off on tangents, exhibiting aloofness and isolation, and having flat emotions. This could potentially describe an ordinary INTP. Perhaps a less than healthy one, but an average one nonetheless.

But there's also the fact that people with schizotypal disorder believe that they have magical powers, have strange perceptual illusions, exhibit paranoia, and view obviously-non-connected events as having a personal meaning for them ("it's a sign meant just for me"). Schizotypal disorder has also been linked to having a miserable childhood. These latter symptoms are clearly evidence of a problem.

As can be seen, INTPs (unlike other types) are already halfway diagnosed by this symptom list. This is also a common theme for ADD and Asperger's.

It should be noted that the researchers who did this study used the "dimensional" approach rather than the "categorical" approach. The categorical approach takes the view that one is either mentally ill or one isn't. Even if a person exhibits many symptoms of a mental illness, but does not meet the definition (say a person falls one symptom short) then that person is considered to be mentally healthy. Either you are over the line or you are under the line; there is no middle ground.

The dimensional approach, by contrast, takes the view that mental illness exists on a spectrum, i.e. a person can be 10% schizotypal, 30% schizotypal, 50% schizotypal, or 100% schizotypal. The downside of the dimensional approach is that just about everyone is considered a tiny bit crazy. Normal INTPs are known for eccentric dress, flat emotional reactions, and being aloof and isolated—this makes them about 20% schizotypal in terms of number of official DSM symptoms fulfilled.

Since even healthy, normal INTPs exhibit symptoms of schizotypal disorder, it is not surprising that a correlation was found.

So, why do people with schizotypal disorder behave like normal INTPs?

1. They actually are INTPs. Schizotypal disorder is a manifestation unique to the type.
2. People with schizotypal disorder come in all types, but they exhibit disorder symptoms that by

chance happen to match the INTP type description.

3. People with schizotypal disorder are INTPs, but not because schizotypal disorder is unique to the type. Rather, schizotypal disorder manifests in different symptoms for each type, and is called by other names for nonINTPs.

The truth could be a combination of any three of these explanations.

But of course, schizotypal disorder was merely one particularly obvious manifestation of an overall trend that indicated that preferences for I, N, T, and P are associated with various personality disorders. What could be causing this? Here are some possibilities:

1. INTPs are innately more likely to be mentally ill than ESFJs.
2. INTPs are innately just as healthy as ESFJs, but cultural pressures “weaken their immune system” and make them more susceptible to mental illness.
3. Psychology and mainstream culture have observer bias. Ordinary INTP traits are seen as abnormal or unhealthy even though they *are* normal and healthy. (In Intipiland, would ESFJ traits be considered symptoms of mental problems?)

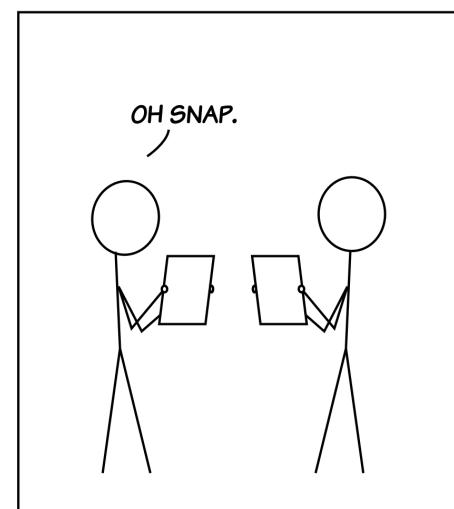
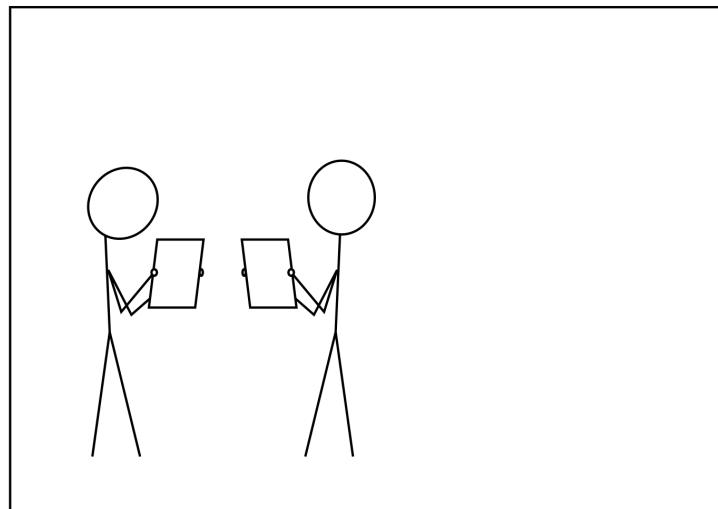
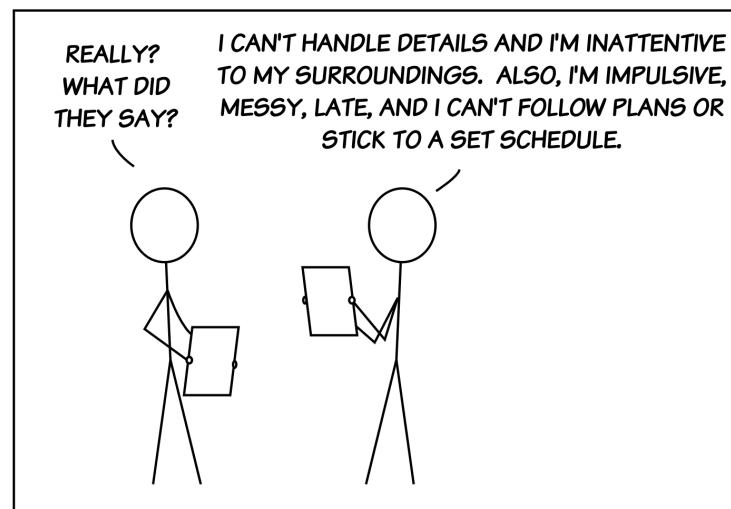
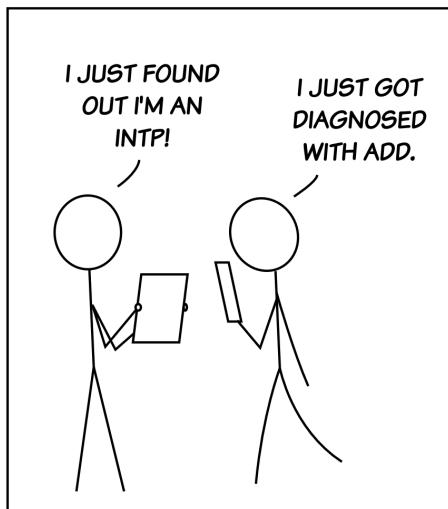
Again, the answer could be a combination of any or all of these.

Interesting, eh? In the following chapters we'll examine ADD and Asperger's, two disorders (?) that come up again and again in discussions of type INTP.

23. INTPs and ADD

Your MBTI® Results: INTP Architect

As an Introvert, you prefer to focus your energy on the inner world. Like all Intuitives, you have a broad, global perspective and show little interest in details. You have a rich imagination and are often lost in thought; this may lead to you being perceived as somewhat distant or absent-minded. Perceivers are flexible, and you prefer to act on impulse, flowing with the moment rather than following a set plan. Naturally adaptable, you are comfortable in changing environments and don't mind a messy workspace--though you may have trouble getting projects in on time. As a Thinker, you prefer objective reasoning and



In this chapter, we will review the literature on type and ADD and compare the symptoms of being an INTP with the symptoms of having ADD. Then we will compare the symptoms of having ADD/ADHD with the symptoms of being a normal, typical INTP.

So, is type related to ADD/ADHD? Yes, in some ways. But they are quite variable ways.

Keirsey argued that ADHD is a false label targeted at the Artisans ([read here](#), [here](#)).²³⁴ Alcock and Ryan (2000), summarizing previous research, found that EP and ESP preferences are in fact overrepresented among children (mis?)diagnosed with ADHD. It has further been noted that many of the behaviors attributed to ADHD seemed to be indistinguishable from the effects of normal EP type preferences and youth.²³⁵

So much for the expected. In one sample of 110 children diagnosed with ADHD, ESFPs were the most preferred type, but INFPs, ISFJs, ISFPs, and ESFJs were also overrepresented.²³⁶ *Guardians, what?* There's nothing in the SJ temperament description to suggest that they would be preferentially selected for an ADHD diagnosis—indeed, the opposite. What's going on here? This wasn't an isolated occurrence, either—in another case ESFJs constituted 18% of a sample of children diagnosed with ADD/ADHD.²³⁷

And what about INTPs? One study of adults diagnosed with ADD/ADHD found that the sample was highly NP. (We will examine this study more in a bit.)

Should we be surprised at this amount of type variation? Maybe, maybe not. There are a number of factors that should be weighed when considering the validity of the results:

- Falsification of type due to pressure from parents and educators.
- The effects of drugs upon the personality. It has been found that type preferences get muddled when a person is on drugs. The MBTI manual recommends that the MBTI not be administered until 30 days have elapsed since the user's last drug use.²³⁸ ADHD drugs—being the nigh-exact equivalent of slow-release cocaine²³⁹—have the potential to distort a person's type preferences, producing false readings.

But more than either of these issues, there is the fact that the likelihood of any particular person being diagnosed with ADD depends upon things that are not associated with either a brain disorder or psychological type. For example, a child's place of dwelling, or whether a child is born in December or January.

Did you know that ADHD loves the east coast of the United States, yet shuns the west coast?²⁴⁰ I wonder what makes the west coast so much more wholesome than the east coast? It's as though a giant hand had sorted all those with ADHD onto one side of the continent, and all those without ADHD onto the other side of the continent. Very odd, very odd indeed.

But even stranger, did you know that if you diagnose a child using the official American standards for ADHD, the child is 3-4 times more likely to be discovered to have a brain disorder than if the official

234 Keirsey, 1998b

235 Provost in Alcock & Ryan, 2000

236 Dudding & Dudding in Alcock & Ryan, 2000

237 Meisgeier, Poillion & Haring in Alcock & Ryan, 2000

238 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

239 If you crush a Ritalin pill into powder and snort it, you can get a cocaine high—and occasionally a cocaine heart attack followed by instant death.

240 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012

European standards are used?²⁴¹ This suggests that we could cure more than half of American children simply by sending them to Europe for rediagnosis. Curious; perhaps there is some healing property in that bracing Old World air.

There is also the fact that a 2012 study of 900,000 Canadian children found that boys born in December were 30% more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than boys born in January. Furthermore, girls born in December were 70% more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than girls born in January. Likewise, December boys were 41% more likely to be put on meds than January boys, and December girls were 77% more likely to be put on meds than January girls.²⁴² What could be causing this bizarre pattern? Perhaps it has something to do with the position of the stars, or the sign under which the child is born—such things have long been known to affect the balance of the four humors. Or then again, it could have something to do with the fact that due to date cutoffs, children entering the school system in December are 1 year younger than children entering the school system in January. Goodness knows that an age gap of one year can be hard to tell apart from a brain disorder.

How subtle and delicate is the line between normalcy and disorder! Fortunately we have experts who can tell the two conditions apart for us should there be any doubt in the matter.

I wish that I could say more about the rigorous science underlying this disorder and its treatment, but that would be a book unto itself. For now, let me simply say that type is merely *one* factor that can cause misdiagnosis, and that ADHD is diagnosed differently from school to school, state to state, and country to country. It is thus to be expected that studies of type and ADHD will show differing results—if only because neither type nor any sort of problem at all is causing this “disorder.”

ADHD and NPs

The NP group includes INTPs, INFPs, ENFPs, and ENTPs. Alt (1999) did a study comparing 54 adults diagnosed with ADHD with 56 nondiagnosed adults. It was found that NPs were “highly represented” among the adults diagnosed with ADHD.

It is apparent, therefore, that sometimes—though not all the time—NPs are more frequently (mis?)diagnosed with ADHD than other types. Why could this be?

Let's examine why INTPs might be seen to have a brain disorder.

How to Diagnose any INTP with ADD

The DSM-IV is the official American handbook for diagnosing mental problems. Not everybody uses it, but since it's the supposed standard and comes with a higher risk of misdiagnosis than its European counterpart, we'll use it for our list of symptoms.

It has been frequently suggested among the amateur type community that INTPs tend to get diagnosed with ADD rather than ADHD. And indeed, a study found a difference between children diagnosed with ADD and children diagnosed with ADHD. Children with ADD were 72% introverted while children with ADHD were 60% extraverted.²⁴³

Therefore we will look at the set of symptoms considered characteristic of the “Predominantly Inattentive Type” of ADHD, i.e. ADD.

241 Rohde, Szobot Polanczyk, Schmitz & Tramontina; Santosh in Singh, 2008

242 Morrow, Garland, Wright, Maclure, Taylor & Dormuth, 2012

243 Dudding & Dudding in Alcock & Ryan, 2000

If a person exhibits any six of the following traits for at least six months in two or more settings (for example, school, home, work) and has exhibited them "to a point that is disruptive and inappropriate for developmental level," and the symptoms cause "clinically significant impairment in social, school, or work functioning" then a person is considered to have ADD.

Disorganization

One ADD diagnostic criterion is disorganization. The official symptom list seems to imply that this is primarily a matter of disorganization in carrying out activities, but in practice it extends to include physical disorganization as well. Therefore, we will discuss both aspects.

INTPs are a messy Perceiver type, so it should be expected that they would be disorganized. In confirmation of this, Beckham's (2012) study of Perceiving college students found that 61% did not think they needed a clean workspace to study. I have never been diagnosed with ADD, but my preferred organizing system for dealing with handouts, homework and class papers was to shove them into my textbook for that class. The papers would accumulate until they were 1-2 cm thick and the book was bulging with them. After awhile the handouts would get ripped, crinkled and dirty around the edges where they stuck out of the book. (There was a distinctive patina that resulted from exposure to the crumb and eraser shavings-covered bottom of my backpack.) Sometimes there was a basic stratigraphic order, like a queue system, that indicated the order in which the handouts had arrived, but I never bothered to maintain it, so by the end of the year they were in any order they happened to fall into. One year, during a particularly paper-intensive class, I was unable to fit all the papers into my textbook. Instead of putting them into a binder or folder, I decided to put them directly into my backpack, where they were held in place between fat textbooks. It worked fairly well.

Of course, this did make it harder to find what I was looking for. When the teacher told the class to take out such-and-such a handout, I was always ruffling around furiously while my SJ classmates pulled out their neatly tab-divided binder and flipped directly to the handout, which was still as crisp and white as it was the day the teacher passed it out.

Did such disorganization matter, academically speaking? Not often; in fact, it doesn't matter a bit if you're the last one to find the handout so long as you *do* find it eventually. (Tip: throw nothing away.) If your system is ugly and nasty and messy but *works*, then why change it? You won't get a better grade for having a bunch of spotlessly filed papers.²⁴⁴

How about planners? When the teacher would give the due date of a test or an assignment, I would take the class syllabus and scribble a note on the margin with an arrow pointing at the date in question. After awhile the syllabus got covered with old notes and dates and reminders. Meanwhile, my SJ classmates would open their planners to the calendar section and neatly write in a note with the When and What.

And let's not even get started on the locker. I've cleaned it out with a black trash bag at the end of the year. Or how about that messy desk, messy car and messy house? The personal space of a Perceiver is often a complete disaster.

Aside from simple physical disorganization, people with ADD are also said to exhibit difficulty organizing tasks and activities. This is also a Perceiver trait. Let us take the example of studying and doing homework. Unlike the Judgers, Perceivers do not say to themselves, "I will do one hour of math

²⁴⁴ Actually I did have one teacher who graded for the neatness and organization of the class handouts that had been passed out. As I recall, I waited until near the last week, then organized them all at once.

homework, then one hour of English, then one hour of French, and then I will play.” In the first place, Perceivers play first. In the second place, Perceivers do not care about any arbitrary sequentiality--why not do tasks in any order it pleases you? In the third place, Perceivers seldom see much use for arbitrary time limits like “one hour.”

Once again Beckham's study furnishes us with an example of how Perceivers approach task organization. In the area of studying, it was found that Perceivers did not decide beforehand what they would study or for how long. Nor did they have specific study times or habits.

My study and homework habits went something like this: "Hm, what classes do I have tomorrow? Is there anything due for those classes? I know I have some math homework, I'll do that first before I get sleepy. Then maybe some biology? When was that handout due? I'd better double check...no wait, on second thought I can just do that on the bus. Probably it would be better to do the history thing first." Once I had my plan in place I quickly discarded it. "Meh, this math assignment is really long and I'm getting tired of crunching numbers. I need a break. I'll do some easy history next...hm, actually I just don't feel like history right now. I'll work on biology instead, and I'll do the history during first period tomorrow. I can type it up in the computer lab during lunch. Okay, that'll work."

It's not that I had trouble organizing tasks and activities—I could come up with a dozen ways to organize my tasks and activities—it's just that I didn't feel like following my plans for long, so I abandoned the old ones and came up with better ones that fit the changing circumstances. Like all Perceivers, I followed spurts of inspiration and avoided the pits of exhaustion by doing whatever I felt like at that particular moment. Therefore I never had any set study schedule or routine.

This approach is characteristic of the overall Perceiving preference for improvisation over planning.

It seems possible that INTPs could qualify as being disorganized in the areas of space, time, and tasks.

Forgetfulness

Humorous anecdotes of INTP forgetfulness are so ubiquitous that this section seems almost unnecessary. From forgetting one's lunch to forgetting one's luggage, INTPs are forgetful each and every day. On a roadtrip I planned (improvised) with an INTP and an ENTP, we forgot so much stuff that it seemed we spent half the time shopping for stuff we neglected to bring—including an entire cooler of food that I left in the kitchen. The reason for INTP forgetfulness is primarily that they are occupied with thinking about abstract matters and therefore neglect concrete details.

INTPs obviously fit this diagnostic criterion.

Easily Distracted

It should be noted that there are differing type-specific causes for easy distractibility. An ESTP, for example, might be distracted by the noises of children having fun out on the playground. However, this is probably not a typical cause of INTP distractibility.

If an INTP is considered “distractable,” there are two behaviors that may cause this impression. In the first place, INTPs can easily tune out boring people, i.e. people who repeat things, make small talk, and belabor a point after the INTP already understands. It doesn't take much provocation to turn off the talking heads in the outside world and turn on the mental entertainment system.

- When a classmate asks a question about a simple topic the INTP understands already, the INTP tunes out.
- If the teacher goes on and on about a concept the INTP understands already, the INTP tunes out.

- If a teacher repeats instructions twice, the INTP tunes out.
- If there is nothing much useful going on, the INTP tunes out.

From the perspective of the outside world, the INTP may therefore seem distracted, but from the INTP's perspective they are concentrating deeply.

When an INTP is occupied with their inner world, they can walk the world in a daze, completely undistracted by outside stimuli. Thus it is actually inappropriate to say that they are easily distractable, for in this state they are very difficult to distract indeed—at least from the INTP's point of view. From the perspective of an observer in the outside world, however, the INTP is seen as totally distracted from *them*. Distraction is relative. Keirsey noted that INTPs “seem able to concentrate better than any other type.” Outside observers, however, see the INTP's concentration as distraction.

There is also a second reason why INTPs may be perceived as being easily distractable.

Keirsey noted that INTPs prefer to work alone and without distractions. Why is this? In the first place, it is because they are introverts. But also, it is because INTPs tend to wrestle with more complicated problems than most. For me, when I'm deep in thought it's like juggling twenty balls at one time.

When a distraction comes along I fumble and they all go crashing to the floor. It takes awhile to gather up all the balls again and get them back into the air. Ever been working at the computer on a report and then have a power outage? One moment you're busy, the next--nothing! This is what a distraction does to an INTP: it cuts off power and ends deep thought.

The twenty ball juggling act comes naturally as the result of the INTP's interest in complex systems. Types who aren't interested in complex systems may only keep a few balls up in the air at a time, which is to say that they will only consider a few factors when conducting an analysis. It's easy for them to get the balls up and lay them down again. By contrast, the INTP seeks to emplace dozens of factors to generate a big picture that makes sense from every angle. But it's hard to juggle twenty balls, and it requires concentration. Sometimes the threads of intuitive understanding are extremely fine and tenuous, and a distraction can snap them. A brilliant thought in the mid-gestation can be destroyed by the sound of a door slamming. A profound insight can be obliterated by the jingle of a telephone. Just as the spark of inspiration begins to catch the tinder, a chatty person blows it out.

To achieve a deep state of concentration and juggle as many balls as possible, it is necessary to either have silence and stillness or to tune out one's surroundings to simulate this effect. INTPs use both techniques: they avoid distractions when possible, and if not, then they tune them out as best they can.

In school, I never attended group study sessions because I knew they would be a waste of time. The pace would be too slow and the talk of the other people would prevent me from thinking productively. I preferred to work alone in my room, without any music on. Sometimes for particularly hateful tasks even my room was too distracting with all its fun stuff, and I would work at school in an empty hallway. Of course, then I had to put up with people walking past and talking. At home, I made the most of my hours alone because I knew they would be my most productive time.

Looking at this from the outside, one might say, “INTPs can't do their best work in an environment with *normal* levels of noise. Therefore they are easily distractable.”

Sometimes, in some circumstances, INTPs are easily distracted by the outside world. But constantly and continuously they are distracted by the inside world.

So yes, INTPs can be perceived as easily distractable.

Losing Important Items

Along with being constantly lost in thought comes the habit of losing things: the car keys, the checkbook, the library book, the paper that describes what to study on the exam. A common self deception: "I'll just set this here for now." The INTP subsequently forgets about the item and later it is discovered to be lost. How many times have I have discovered an item in some obscure place and thought, "Oh yeah, I remember putting this here now. It did make sense at the time."

Typically what happens is that I'll be busy thinking about a problem with my body on autopilot and the primitive reptile brain at the controls. As it turns out, reptiles aren't very good at noticing when and where they leave stuff; while I'm "off duty" the reptile brain may decide to leave my USB stick in some obscure hole where it won't be found for several months. Reptiles also put food away in funny places (they may take food items into the coatroom to put them away with the gloves and hats, or they may attempt to store refrigerator items in a cupboard). Later, I wonder where item X is and the reptile brain shrugs and says, "You think I remember where I put that?"

This criterion is actually redundant because forgetful people (see previous symptom) lose things as a matter of course. One factor predicts the other, and both can be explained by the INTP habit of being continually lost in thought.

Not Listening When Addressed

INTPs often decide not to listen. If people are engaging in boring small talk or repeating themselves or discussing irrelevant points or teaching something in a boring or inefficient way, the INTP stops listening.

The INTP is still paying sharp attention, of course--just not to the outside world. As they stare blankly into the Great Beyond, their mind is actively engaged in pondering matters of more meaningful import.

Over the years I have become very adept at not listening. My primitive reptile brain cannot actually understand words, but it does understand tones of voice. It knows just when to nod and when to make a noise of acknowledgment or wince or give a little laugh. Thus it seems that I am paying attention to people, when in reality I am paying attention to the problem of how to design my dream aquarium, taking into account aesthetics, the pros and cons of live vs. plastic plants, ease of cleaning, space for fish to swim in, ease of viewing from various angles, bubbler location and aeration capabilities, the pros and cons of snails, the location of the heater, the placement of the aquarium so as to avoid falls and wall staining and of course the type of fish I want to buy. All this time my reptile brain is nodding and going, "Yeah. Uh huh. Wow. Ooh. Mm. Eeh. Bleh."

In class I would stare blankly at the teacher or at the whiteboard or at a page of the book, probably giving the illusion of rapt attention. All the while, of course, I would be plotting a new science fiction story and having dramatic laser battles in my head. Fortunately, my experience has been that if you read the book outside of class then you don't actually have to pay attention in class. Unless of course it's one of those classes where the teacher doesn't teach from the book (you have to watch out for those, especially in college).

When focusing on the inner world, INTPs tune out the outer world. Thus they are not listening.

Has Difficulty Staying Focused on Tasks or Play

An understimulated INTP mind is like a computer with a lot of unused processing power: if the user is letting the computer lie fallow, it will automatically start defragging the hard drive or performing a virus scan or running a screensaver. When an INTP is subjected to drudgery, they will often flee into

the sanctuary of their mind and curl up with a good thought. (This of course assumes that the task is simple enough for the reptile brain to handle. If it isn't, then their real mind is stuck minding the shop in a state of most pitiable boredom.) For an INTP, most tasks will fall into three categories:

1. Highly interesting. An INTP will focus their whole mental resources onto such a task and will exhibit neither forgetfulness nor distractedness. This is often the case at the beginning of employment when an INTP is learning the ropes of a new job. It is also the case at the beginning of a course or when a new concept is presented in class. INTPs are very interested in learning new things, the newer the better. Practicing a concept that they already *mostly* understand does not really interest them. Working endless variations of the same thing does not interest them either. Nor does achieving mastery of a subject interest them; they already know they could do it if they really felt like it, and to an INTP that is enough. By the time they've gone through the practice examples in the book, the magic may already be gone. To maintain this state continuously, an INTP needs to have either a very tough problem, a very novel problem, or a very enjoyable problem.
2. Boring But Easy. When the magic is gone, a task becomes boring. If the task is boring but easy, the INTP's response will be to let the reptile brain handle the front desk. This is where "unable to focus on tasks at hand, cannot sustain attention in activities" comes in. During my work at a thrift store, I was charged with the easy but monotonous work of cleaning up merchandise left strewn around by messy customers. At first the work was interesting and kept my full attention. But after awhile, I figured everything out and there was nothing new to learn. Since the work was essentially mindless, I let my reptile brain take over while I mentally checked out in order to invent a faster system for organizing clothes. It is this type of mental detachment that is described so aptly by this symptom criterion. Few other types are capable of this kind of escape. At another job, my coworker asked if I was on drugs because I was so "out of it." She hastened to add that she knew I wasn't, because I was too mentally alert, so apparently it was my deep state of concentration on inner matters that evoked the comparison. I was certainly not "focusing on the tasks at hand" or "sustaining attention in activities."
3. Boring But Hard. This is the absolute worst kind of task. Not only does it require the INTP to pay attention, but it offers zero intellectual stimulation. My worst experience of this was the time I worked as a cashier at a grocery store. Since continuous chitchat was required with customers and checking had to be accurate, I was required to give 100% attention. The job was mentally unrewarding and worse yet, my mind was stuck chained to my body. Unfortunately, some schoolwork is like this. INTPs may be so bored that they are tempted to check themselves out even when it increases the time and effort it takes to do an assignment. While not beneficial, this inappropriate mental checkout is not proof of a brain disorder—rather it is the natural result of a mind being forced to perform an extremely uninspiring repetitive task at length. Think of it this way: a child can play for hours with a set of building blocks, but an adult gets bored with them pretty quick. INTPs generally need more stimulation than is provided by the average page of schoolwork. The baby blocks aren't fun for long. This is more often a flaw in the school system rather than a flaw in the INTP's ability to concentrate on a task at length.

Conclusion: For an INTP to be happy, a job should be really, really interesting or really, really mindless. INTPs will not focus on a task or sustain attention in it if they find they do not need to, or if the task is excessively mindless.

Does Not Follow Instructions or Finish Tasks

Failing to follow instructions can be the result of the INTP not knowing what the instructions were because they weren't listening in the first place. (We've already discussed several reasons why this might be.) To compound the problem, the INTP may try to intuit the instructions and end up being wrong.

However, the "failure to complete tasks" is a typical Perceiver trait. Perceivers do not feel the Judgers' need for closure; they are comfortable leaving a project till later. Indeed, Perceivers typically have houses full of half-finished projects. Slowly, slowly these projects head towards completion, until one day, miraculously, they are done (or not). There's also the fact that Perceivers continually redefine the scope of the project in light of new data.

Perceivers are also comfortable saying, "I'll finish it later." Given that one of the defining marks of a Perceiver is a lack of need for closure, and that INTPs are Perceivers, we may safely conclude that INTPs have a habit of leaving projects open. Which is the nice way of saying that they fail to finish tasks.

Doesn't Pay Close Attention to Details or Makes Careless Mistakes

As with forgetfulness, I could devote an entire chapter to hilarious INTP anecdotes in this area. Jungian psychologists widely acknowledge this aspect of the INTP type; for example, Keirsey (1998a) noted that INTPs are the type that misses the turnoff. However, I'll simply mention that when an INTP is busy chewing their mental cud, they don't pay much attention to details. Preoccupied with the abstract, they ignore the physical: "Oops, I left my car's lights on again for the fourth time." "Oops, I filled out this form wrong because they put the name fields in reverse order." "Oops, I just did all the even problems instead of all the odd ones." "Hey, the fire alarm's going off. Guess the food's done."

There is also the fact that sensors tend to focus naturally on *concrete details* whereas intuitives focus on *broad, global, abstract* matters. Indeed, this symptom is something like a penalty on the intuitive way of thinking. This is not surprising considering that the vast majority of public school teachers are sensors.

Avoids/Dislikes Activities That Require Prolonged Mental Effort (I.e. Homework)

Curious; I didn't realize there were students who sought out or liked homework...

Anyway, there are two ways an INTP may fit this criterion. First, the INTP may say to themselves, "Cool, problem one! Thinkthinkthink. Yay! I understand this concept. On to problem two! Oh wait, this is the same problem, only with different numbers. Darn. Okay, onto problem three. Wait, this is still the same problem, only with different numbers. Okay--groan--on to problem four. Surprise, it's the same problem with different numbers. Are we having fun yet?" And it only gets worse from there. It is the mentally demanding yet monotonous nature of such tasks that INTPs dread--and such dread produces procrastination and avoidance.

Another phenomenon that plays into this is the tsunami effect described in the section on school. This is the tendency of an INTP to begin with a simple task ("I'll just work on this first part a bit") and end up getting sucked into doing the entire project all at once, which requires enormous amounts of time and effort. Beckham found this tendency in Perceiving students: 81% put tasks off until right before they were due; subsequently the students would complete the tasks all at once in a continuous, unbroken flow with ever building momentum.

An INTP has an instinctive knowledge of this effect and realizes that if they start working on a task for

"just a few minutes" it may end up taking a few hours because the task will take on a life of its own and they can't stop. The vortex of creativity will sweep the INTP up and not put them down until the task is finished or something interrupts the flow. For example, an INTP may set out to pick up a few items of clothing lying on the floor and end up trying to do a deep clean and radical reorganization of their room. Or, an INTP may set out to read a few pages in a book to help them get to sleep at night and then end up finishing the book at 2 AM and analyzing the fascinating implications of what they read until 4 AM.

How does the INTP prevent themselves from being sucked down into this whirlpool? By avoiding and procrastinating the task that will supposedly take just a few minutes. I have come to realize that when I get home, the first thing I start working on may very well consume the rest of my night. Also, if there is some disagreeable task that I am avoiding or procrastinating, I can fool myself into working on it by telling myself "I'll just work on it for a few minutes." Of course, once the dreaded task has been initiated, it doesn't seem so bad after all and the tsunami effect accomplishes the rest. (Then again, sometimes the tsunami leaves the task half finished because the INTP's eyes turned out to be bigger than their stomach.) Suppose that an INTP has a big essay due in a month. The teacher suggests that they spend "just a half hour each night" working on the essay and they'll finish it easily (a typical Judger strategy). But what happens when the INTP takes the teacher up on that suggestion and ends up spending just a few minutes working on the essay?

The answer is that they get sucked into the creativity vortex. Suddenly twenty balls are flying through the air. The INTP is scanning the internet for facts, scribbling notes and developing paragraphs, sketching out the body and conclusion, and beginning to work on the citations. They know they should get it all down right away or else it'll be a lot of effort to pick up all the balls again. But then POW!--something happens to snap them out of it and the balls fall.

The next day the INTP knows not to work on the essay or else they'll get sucked in again. Anyway, it would be hard work getting those twenty balls back up in the same order again, and boringly redundant too, and there's *plenty of time left* since so much work has gotten done already... (ominous music) In short, those "few minutes" are a lie and the INTP knows it, albeit unconsciously. But they can't explain why this is save for a vaguely defined fear of committing themselves fully to a task. After all, does the INTP really want to spend a whole evening--for so they instinctively know it will amount to--working on a boring essay?

And what about when a parent says, "You spent an entire hour goofing off when you could have been working on your paper. Why didn't you use those sixty minutes more productively?" What the parent doesn't realize is that the paper actually requires somewhere between three to four hours to finish. Perceivers don't like to break things up into bits; in fact, 61% of the Perceivers in Beckham's study found that breaking tasks up into pieces reduced the quality of their work, made the job longer, and diminished their pleasure in the activity. Either three to four hours of free time are available, or they aren't. A single hour is no good—it might as well be no hours at all. So why not spend the useless hour playing? Sooner or later a three to four hour block of free time will open up—probably right before the paper is due. Then the task can be done in a single great explosion of work.

By definition Perceivers procrastinate activities that require sustained mental effort. But once caught up in such an activity, they can engage in it for several hours if nothing disturbs their focus. Even a boring task can take on some interest if one turns it into a chance to create a new state-of-the-art system

of some kind.²⁴⁵

Discussion

Only five of these nine symptoms are necessary to diagnose a person with ADD. INTPs typically exhibit many symptoms of ADD; were they not to exhibit such symptoms, there would actually be something wrong with them. But though there are clear resemblances between ordinary INTP traits and ADD traits, perhaps there may be some objections as follows:

- “Yes, all INTPs exhibit some symptoms of ADD, but the ones who are actually diagnosed have more extreme forms of the symptoms. Thus they aren't ‘normal’ INTPs.”

Of all the INTPs I know of, the one with the absolute worst case of ADD symptoms was Einstein. Knowing what we know about INTPs and their penchant for deep concentration on complex matters, I'd say it's pretty obvious that curing Einstein of his “disorder” would have made him unable to make his brilliant discoveries. A cured Einstein would have put things away in their proper places, paid close attention to everyday details, and remained attentive to his surroundings. Preoccupied with the daily details of life, his mind would not have been able to focus upon the mysteries of the universe. It is an either/or proposition.

Of course, the standard retort goes, “Yeah, but he was a genius. Most INTPs with ADD aren't.” This ignores the fact that geniuses aren't the only ones capable of making important discoveries. An INTP with even a mediocre IQ is better suited than most people for scientific inquiry simply because of the architecture of their personality. There are tons of completely unexplored scientific areas where nobody—not even a person with an IQ of 60—has done any research. There is plenty of work for INTPs who have the same beneficial concentration and focus that Einstein had, but not same intellect. Will the discoveries of an INTP with average intellect ever be as important as those made by Einstein, an INTP with superior intellect? Probably not, but does it matter? There aren't nearly enough geniuses to go around. Therefore ordinary INTPs who are capable of high concentration and focus are needed at every level. Will these INTPs have more trouble than usual in the world? Sure. The less like an ESTJ and ESFJ you are, the more trouble you will have. But that applies to all INTPs.

Another objection might be:

- “The symptoms I observe in my relative/friend/acquaintance have different causes and manifestations than the ones you describe.”

That is a valid point, and probably to be expected given the diverse causes of ADD. My intention here is not necessarily to argue that *all* ADD symptoms are explained as I have described, but merely to demonstrate how a child psychologist without a knowledge of the INTP personality might fallaciously decide that there is something wrong with such a child based upon ordinary characteristics of the type. The point is to show one way that INTPs can potentially be misdiagnosed.

245 Oddly enough, another phenomenon I have experienced is that after a period of sustained mental effort I will break out of my deep processing and have a sudden urge to get up, leave my chair and do something. For instance, while editing a difficult passage of a story, I may suddenly feel the urge to get up and go eat a snack even if I'm not hungry. The strenuous, prolonged nature of the mental work being done—even if the work is enjoyable—and the pressure of aiming for absolute perfection seem to produce stress which these interludes help ease. Similar involuntary breaks have been noted in soldiers engaged in minesweeping duty...a job known for high tension and extreme *concentration and focus*.

Can We Prove the Existence of ADD?

Sensors outnumber Intuitives. Therefore it is by definition impossible for NP children to be normal because they are numerically in the minority. So then, there would appear to be a problem with this assumption: "Children who do not show the same behaviors as the majority of other children are exhibiting symptoms of disease."

Since we cannot accept rarity alone as proof of disease, we must find other proof. There is, of course, no known test that can distinguish the presence of ADD. We could point to ways in which the symptoms of ADD hamper one's life, but as we have seen, the symptoms are also helpful in many ways. Whether the symptoms are seen as helpful or detrimental seems to depend to a large extent upon 1.) the simple force of opinion; 2.) the environment the person is emplaced in; and 3.) the type of work they are being asked to perform.

What if we examined the lives of people who exhibit ADD symptoms to see if they turn out better than or worse than average? If people with ADD lead worse than average lives, then perhaps it means they have a brain disorder.

As we've previously discussed, INTPs have a smaller number of friends than most. INTPs hate their jobs and hop from job to job incessantly. The INTP divorce rate is through the roof. INTPs are more likely than average to use drugs and extremely likely to smoke. Female INTPs are probably the most disliked type/gender combination.

It's pretty clear, isn't it, that being an INTP impedes your ability to function normally in society? There is almost no doubt that INTPs would lead happier and healthier lives if they were all transformed into ESFJs. But this does not mean that being an INTP is a brain disorder.

So what other proof do we have?

Why INTPs Tune Out

Now let's throw a few more balls into the air. Here are a few more factors that cause INTPs not to pay attention.

The class is too easy and hence boring to the INTP.

INTPs are the type most overrepresented in the gifted population. A class that is geared towards the common denominator may be too slow or repetitive to hold an INTP's interest. The parrot is a particularly intelligent bird, to use the common meaning of the term. If you keep it in a toyless, joyless cage, it will pluck its own feathers out. If you keep an INTP in a boring class, they will tune out. Do you drug the parrot to cure its Feather Pulling Disorder? Or do you give it something to keep its mind occupied? INTPs tend to be interested in courses that are challenging, relevant, and break ground on a new frontier for them.

The INTP sees the class as irrelevant.

If an INTP doesn't see any use for a subject, they are unlikely to feel like learning it and more likely to study something else in class--namely drawing, creative writing, languages, etc.

The INTP's thoughts are particularly juicy at the moment.

Even if a subject is interesting, an INTP may have an *even more* juicy thought to gnaw on. During

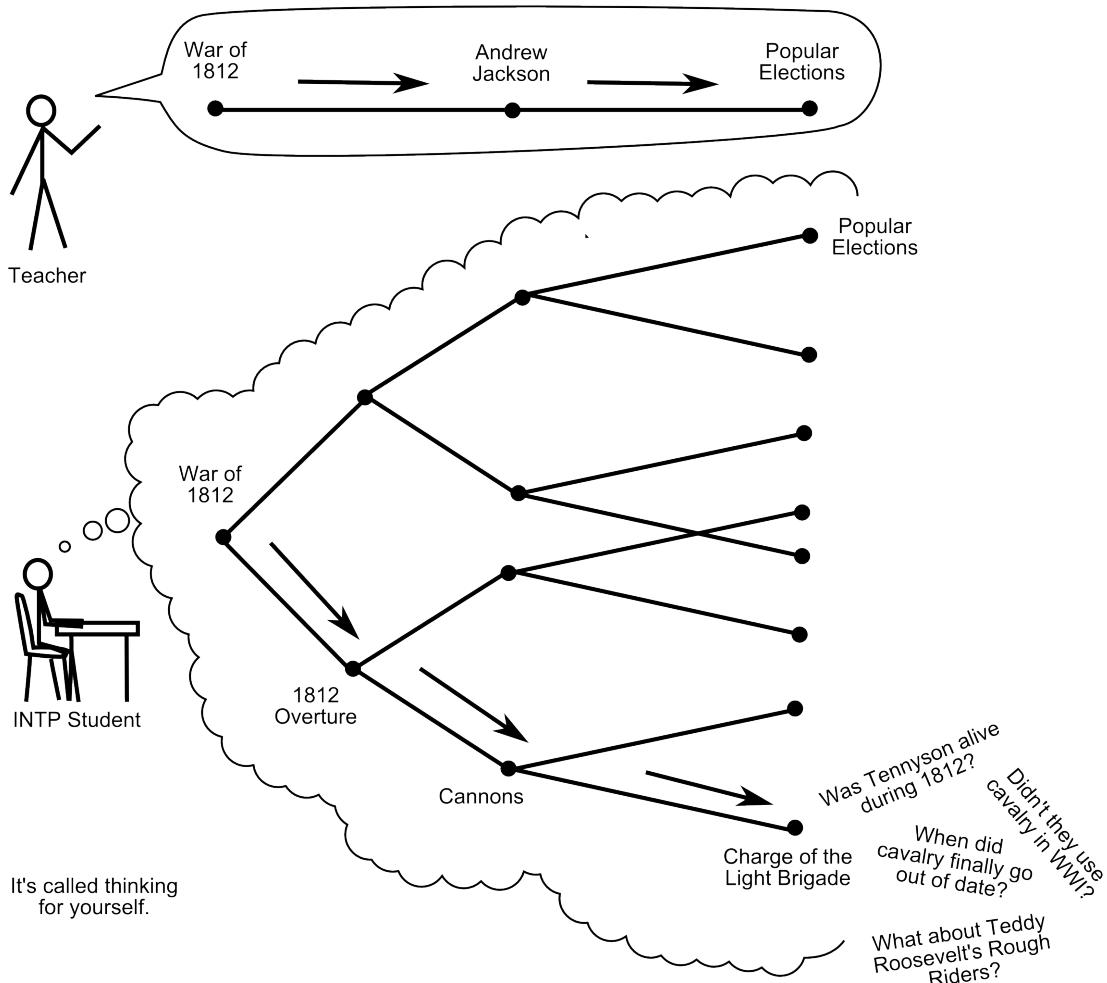
these times they will be much more abstracted and distant. Usually these thought processes cycle to completion within a few days and the INTP will go back to normal.

The class is taught by Guardians for Guardians.

Guardian teachers are scheduled, detail-oriented, focused in the moment, planful, concerned about doing things one right way, and tend to focus on examples rather than principles. INTPs are nonscheduling, global, future-oriented perceivers who want to do things in strange new ways and learn about principles first and examples afterwards. In elementary school in particular, when most teachers are ESFJs, the INTP is the complete opposite of the teacher's type. INTPs are like cats in a school taught by dogs. Knowledge is imparted in the way least suited for them.

The INTP gets lost in thought about something the teacher said that was interesting.

Occasionally, a teacher will let fall a fleck of gold dust that attracts an INTP's immediate attention. While the teacher goes on explaining something else, the INTP picks up the gold dust and examines it. Ten minutes later, the teacher is still talking but the INTP hasn't heard a word of it because they were so busy thinking about the new idea the teacher sparked.



The INTP doesn't want to go on absorbing information when there's a brick missing from their foundation of knowledge.

An INTP likes to have a full understanding of the “why” of things. If a teacher skips a logical step, the INTP may stop all listening until they have figured out the missing puzzle piece. The trigger for this sounds something like, “Wait, but I thought-.” The INTP must then reconcile their preconceptions with the new knowledge until everything makes sense again. They will tune out new data while they sort the tangle out.

Without that logical link, all subsequent information is free floating and doesn't get incorporated into the system of facts and ideas the INTP has been building in their head. But while an INTP is trying to figure out the missing link, the teacher is talking and the INTP isn't paying attention.

How to Daydream Without Suffering For It

Let's say you're stuck in some utterly dull class. You've been daydreaming, or drawing artwork, or writing a novel, or reading under the desk, or studying a foreign language. All of a sudden, you "wake up" and the teacher is saying something like this:

- "Okay, is everyone there? Now look at the diagram on the left..." (What page are we on? What is the teacher even talking about?)
- "So are there any questions on the test?" (Test? What's on it and when is it happening?)
- "...And don't forget to turn your assignment in by the new due date." (What was that about a new due date?)
- "Are there any other questions?" (Yeah. What are you talking about?)
- "Okay, let's break into groups." (What are we doing now?)
- "Okay, I'm going to say the word in singular, and I want you to repeat it in plural." (Wait, I don't know how to use singular vs. plural! ...Oh, you probably just explained that, didn't you?)
- Or, you snap out of your thoughts to discover papers of unknown significance being handed out.
- Or, all the other students are rummaging around in their backpacks for some reason known only to them.
- Or, the teacher pops a question about something--and calls on you to answer it. But you don't have the slightest idea what she/he said.

As one can imagine, this sort of thing can cause problems when it comes to following instructions and participating in class. Often I was the last person to obey instructions because I was trying to figure out what the other students were doing so that I could mimic them.

Happily, for every one of these scenarios, there is a way to avoid trouble. Remember, the number one rule is to always maintain the *appearance* that you are paying attention, even if you aren't. Make sure your book is always open to the page the teacher is talking about. Occasionally, flip a page randomly to make it look as though you are checking information. This is just good maintenance to stay out of trouble.

Techniques

Scenario 1 – You didn't hear the page number.

Teacher: "Okay, is everyone there? Now look at the diagram on the left..."

Response: Glance sidewise at the book of the person next to you. Get the page number and flip there. Stare intently at the diagram. Continue daydreaming.

Scenario 2 – You didn't hear the information about the assignment.

Teacher: "So are there any questions on the test?"

Response: When you've spaced out an entire important announcement, *don't* ask the teacher for clarification when the opportunity is offered. You are just making yourself look bad in front of everyone. Rather, check the syllabus or ask a classmate. If you must ask the teacher, do so privately and use the indirect interrogation technique described below.

Bird-Dogging

In WWII they made extensive use of an interrogation technique called "bird dogging." In this technique, a POW would be given a cellmate buddy who was actually working for the other side. The "buddy" would casually remark on how bad the cell food was and then lead the POW into a discussion about how well fed his old unit was. Before the night was through, the interrogator would have extracted information on how well-supplied the POW's unit was, what morale was like, how many desertions there had been, and who the commanding officer was. The interrogator essentially gave the POW a dime's worth of information and encouraged him to spin it into a dollar.

The reason this technique is called bird-dogging is that in effect, the interrogator acts like a bird dog, leading the POW to tender tidbits of information. The interrogator's dilemma is to imply that he knows more than he does without revealing his own ignorance and exposing himself.

Informationless students face a similar problem: how to elicit information from a teacher without revealing their ignorance of important dates and announcements. For example, suppose a student wasn't listening when the teacher announced the date of the test. The student knows that the test is on either Monday or Tuesday--he got that much at least--but he wants to be absolutely sure so that he can procrastinate up until the last minute. Here is how he goes about asking the teacher to tell him what day the test is on, all the while giving the impression that he already knows when it is:

Student: "So, would the test be on the 21st or the 22nd then? I'm using last year's planner and the *days* don't match the *dates*." (Why buy a new one when the old one is perfectly preserved and has no entries save for your doodles?)

Teacher: "The 22nd is a Tuesday, right? Yes--it's on Tuesday. You should get a new planner."

Student: "Okay, sounds good. I'll mark it on my syllabus." (The *real* planner.)

This student gives the impression that they already knew what the day of the test was, but were merely curious about the date. The mention of noting the date on their syllabus adds a bonus illusion of SJ diligence and preparedness. Make a point of showing off what little you know; let the teacher fill in the rest.

Scenario 3 – The due date has been pushed back.

Teacher: "...And don't forget to turn your assignment in by the new due date."

Response: Do your assignment within the next two days (the teacher's choice of words indicates it isn't due tomorrow, so you've got at least two days.) That way you'll have the assignment ready no matter when it's actually due.

Scenario 4 – You have zero idea what the teacher is asking about, but it appears you can ask questions.

Teacher: "Are there are any other questions?"

Response: It's probably not important anyway. If it is, it will be brought up again. If it isn't, you'll figure it out on your own.

Scenario 5 – You have no idea what group you should be in or what is going on.

Teacher: "Okay, let's break up into groups."

Response: Get up and walk around until you've figured out what's going on. If you can't figure it out, find a random group and ask, "Am I with you guys?" They will have to explain what the groups are for in order to ascertain whether you belong in their group or not. Or, just keep stalling (root through your backpack or read a paper or something) until the groups form. Sooner or later everyone else will be joined up and you'll be able to see which group is short a member. Join that group. (Admittedly, I have on occasion joined the wrong group by mistake.)

Scenario 6 – You weren't listening to the explanation on how to do a task, and now you are required to do it in a group setting.

Teacher: "Okay, I'm going to say the word in singular, and I want you to repeat it in plural."

Response: Mumble along with the rest of the class while frantically flipping through your textbook to find the section where it explains singular vs. plural. The index is your friend.

Scenario 7 - You snap out of your thoughts to discover papers of unknown significance being handed out.

Response: Accept the papers and scan them for instructions. You'll almost always be able to figure out what you're supposed to do with them.

Scenario 8 - All the other students are rummaging around in their backpacks for some reason known only to them.

Response: Rummage around in your backpack too until you see your classmates pulling out whatever it is they're looking for. Then start actually looking for that item yourself.

Scenario 9 - The teacher throws out a pop question--and calls on you to answer it.

Response: This will rarely be a problem if you keep up with the assigned reading and follow the pop question prevention plan (see below). Otherwise, you'll just have to improvise.

How to Avoid Being Asked Pop Questions

The reason that teachers ask questions in class is to a.) increase class involvement, and b.) inspire fear. A student who is afraid of looking dumb in front of their peers will presumably study harder and pay more attention to avoid embarrassment.

With these two motives in mind, the best defense against a teacher's pop questions is a vigorous offense. Make it a point to periodically volunteer for a question, preferably a complex one, and then explain the answer with confident expertise. The teacher will mentally check you off her list of people

that need to have fear inspired in them. In addition, since you are obviously (ehem) already involved in class, she won't feel the need to push you towards any further participation. If you regularly volunteer, you will seldom be selected to answer a question.

Remember, the point of volunteering is to keep the war on your home turf. If you selectively volunteer for questions whose answers you know in advance, then you'll be 100% right 100% of the time. You'll also come off sounding masterful, prepared and intelligent. On the other hand, if you let the teacher call on you when she feels like it, then it'll be on her terms, and you may not know the answer.

To sum it up: being proactive pays off. Then you can spend your class time wandering through the Elysian fields of imagination and designing new mechanical pencils in your head.

24. INTPs and Asperger's Syndrome

In INTP and INTJ internet communities, the question of a link between Asperger's and type comes up over and over again. Several responses typically appear, namely:

- “Suppose that Asperger’s is simply INT taken to an extreme?”
- “I’m an INT and I have this problem.”
- “You’re misdiagnosed.”
- “I’m an INT and I have a sibling/acquaintance/friend who has this problem and there is definitely something wrong there.”
- “I know someone with Asperger’s and I don’t think they’re an INT.”

The reason that these questions keep coming up over and over is that many of the descriptions of Asperger's Syndrome symptoms read like a checklist for how to identify an INTP.

- Lack of social skills? - *Oh yeah.*
- Lack of empathy? - *Depends on how hard the T in INTP is.*
- Flat, formal, advanced speech? - *Yes*
- Obsessed with learning about certain interest areas - *Absolutely*
- Talk a lot about their favorite subject - *If you can find someone who will listen...*
- Above average sensitivity to tastes, noises, lights, etc – *Has been found to describe all introverts: a drop of lemon juice placed on the tongue will cause an introvert to salivate more than an extravert.*²⁴⁶
- Measurable associations with math and science - *No question about it*

Yet there are also some symptoms which do seem to be exceptions to the INTP description, particularly a strong emphasis on details, which would seem to indicate Sensing, and a strong liking for an unvarying daily routine, which would seem to indicate Judging.

Duke (2005) used the Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children-Revised (a version of the MBTI meant for kids) to obtain the types of children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The children were of “normal intelligence.” It was Duke’s hypothesis that ISTJs might be the type that best matched the ASD symptom profile. But while Duke found that the children were more likely than average to be Introverted and Judging, no specific link to type ISTJ was found.

ASD and the Big Five

Since the Big Five is correlated to the MBTI, we can cautiously use Five Factor studies to probe at the relationship between type and ASD. (I have taken the liberty of translating the Big Five descriptors into familiar MBTI descriptors, though such translation is by no means exact.)

One study found that autistic traits were associated with IT and Neuroticism.²⁴⁷ Another study found that a group of 64 adults diagnosed with Asperger's had higher ITP scores and Neuroticism compared to a control group.²⁴⁸

246 Eysenck; Deary, Ramsay, Wilson & Raid in Bayne, 2005

247 Austin in Wakabayashi, Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2006

248 Kanai, Iwanami, Hashimoto, Ota, Tani, Yamada & Kato, 2011

A third study had 320 university students take both the NEO-PI-R and the Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ) test.²⁴⁹ (You can read or take the latter test [here](#).) It was found that ASD traits were correlated with IP and Neuroticism. Interestingly, the AQ test separates ASD traits out into five categories. Each category turned out to be significantly correlated (whether strongly or weakly) to certain aspects of the Big Five.

- Social skill (lack thereof): ITP
- Attention switching (staying absorbed in one thing at length; wanting a plan and routine): ISFP + Neuroticism
- Attention to details (noticing numbers, dates, small changes, details, patterns): ENJ
- Communication (lack of conversation skills) : ISP + Neuroticism
- Imagination (lack thereof): ISTP

Of course, the AQ test has questions asking the respondent whether they would prefer to go to the library or a party, or if they enjoy social chitchat, or if they notice patterns in things. Many of the questions can be seen to have obvious connections to type preferences independent of the existence of any issues. And this opens up another question.

Type and/or Disorder?

Chester (INTJ) (2006) published a descriptive study in which he attempted to ascertain what sort of overlap there might be between ITPs and Asperger's. He examined 19 Asperger's symptoms to see if there was any resemblance to known type characteristics. Significantly, he not only compared the characteristics of well-developed types, but also of poorly developed types.

The symptoms he assessed were as follows:

For well-developed types:

A preference for being alone; leading a solitary lifestyle; “spacing out (involuntarily);” “shutting out, blocking (deliberately);” having a hyperaroused nervous system; being unaware of the outside world; communicating in an associative manner; thinking in an associative manner; proceeding from specifics to generalities; thinking in pictures; lack of social skills; a limited choice of careers; “relentless reading;” perseveration; and immaturity.

For poorly developed types:

Anger and regret; low self esteem; rigidity; relying too much on logic; confusion of Feeling judgment and emotion; and talking too much.

For most (but not all) of the symptoms listed for well-developed types, Chester found intriguing similarities between common ITP type-based behaviors and “abnormal” characteristics that have been explained as symptoms of Asperger's. In fact, the examples he compared for type and Asperger's were in many cases almost identical. He also found evidence that poor ITP type development could be indicated in some cases.

Chester concluded that “Asperger's Syndrome...seems indistinguishable from certain of the Jungian/Myers-Briggs personality types” and added that “it is sometimes difficult to tell whether a

249 Wakabayashi, Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2006

person's behavior represents a type characteristic or a symptom of the disorder." Significantly, he concluded, "In no case did I find that the type preferences of people diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome were understood or encouraged."

Chester suggests that Asperger's may in some ways be a Pygmalion project. He examined the reactions and thought processes of four mothers of sons with Asperger's as described in works of literature. Their behaviors seemed to indicate that the mothers had ENFJ or ESFJ preferences. Two of the mothers appeared to be carrying on Pygmalion projects, and there were hints indicating that the other two might also be doing so.

This of course raises an intriguing point. The goal of treatment for children with Asperger's is to change the child's behaviors to match social norms. But what do type practitioners have to say about raising children of any type? Unanimously authors and researchers agree that parents should support and nourish the development of a child's type-based traits rather than attempt to mold them into other types, even the more normal SP/SJ types. If a child is not supported in their type development, say practitioners, it leads to stunted personal growth, low self esteem, and long-lasting neuroses. The treatment for Asperger's and the child-rearing strategy recommended by type practitioners would seem to be at odds with each other.

Conclusion

There appears to be evidence supporting a relationship between type INTP and Asperger's. Whether this relation is a matter of definition, degree, or actual concurrence remains to be seen.

25. Frankenstein

Who hasn't heard of the novel *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley? Yes, creating monsters in one's basement is a time honored INTP pastime. I'm certain that many INTPs now reading this are currently trying to develop a robot in their garage or are working towards the creation of artificial intelligence.

Evidence for INTP:

- Frankenstein preferred a few intimate friends in a quiet setting (I)
“My life had hitherto been remarkably secluded and domestic, and this had given me invincible repugnance to new countenances. I loved my brothers, Elizabeth, and Clerval; these were ‘old familiar faces,’ but I believed myself totally unfitted for the company of strangers.”
- Sought to be alone when in distress (I)
“I shunned the face of man; all sound of joy or complacency was torture to me; solitude was my only consolation--deep, dark, deathlike solitude.”
- Struggled at length to form his thoughts before speaking; waited until he had fully considered an issue in his mind before enunciating it. (I)
“The being finished speaking and fixed his looks upon me in the expectation of a reply. But I was bewildered, perplexed, and unable to arrange my ideas sufficiently to understand the full extent of his proposition.” - Frankenstein
“I paused some time to reflect on all he had related and the various arguments which he had employed. ... After a long pause of reflection I concluded that the justice due both to him and my fellow creatures demanded of me that I should comply with his request.” - Frankenstein
- Had a burning enthusiasm for science, natural philosophy and mathematics (NT)
- Logical and objective (NT)
- Formal, carefully nonredundant “culled” speech (NT)
- Strong self control (NT)
“Having conquered the violence of his feelings, he [Frankenstein] appeared to despise himself for being the slave of passion...”
- Prized calm (NT)
“A human being in perfection ought always to preserve a calm and peaceful mind and never to allow passion or a transitory desire to disturb his tranquillity. I do not think that the pursuit of knowledge is an exception to this rule. If the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasures in which no alloy can possibly mix, then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not befitting the human mind. If this rule were always observed; if no man allowed any pursuit whatsoever to interfere with the tranquillity of his domestic affections, Greece had not been enslaved, Caesar would have spared his country, America would have been discovered more gradually, and the empires of Mexico and Peru had not been destroyed.” (Wow!)
- Became fanatically obsessed with revenge (NTs are the type most naturally inclined towards vengeance, though under the circumstances it would have been natural for any type.)
- Worked as passion seized him, or in spurts of energy separated by periods of apathy (P)
“...a restless and almost frantic impulse urged me forward; I seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit. It was indeed but a passing trance, that only made me feel with renewed acuteness so soon as, the unnatural stimulus ceasing to operate, I had returned to my old habits.”

“...as I proceeded in my labour, it became every day more horrible and irksome to me. Sometimes I could not prevail on myself to enter my laboratory for several days, and at other times I toiled day and night in order to complete my work.”

- Acted on impulse (P)
“...through the whole period during which I was the slave of my creature I allowed myself to be governed by the impulses of the moment...”
- Procrastinated; he put off an unpleasant task (the creation of a female mate for his original creation) as long as he possibly could. Finally, the dread that his creature would start killing off his family members as a form of encouragement forced him to begin. (P)
- Did not frequently issue commands (Argues for INTP rather than INTJ)
- Stubborn; he could set his mind on something and not budge, even in the face of death threats. (INTP willpower) Note also the highly formal speech patterns.
“I do refuse it,’ I replied; ‘and no torture shall ever extort a consent from me. You may render me the most miserable of men, but you shall never make me base in my own eyes. Shall I create another like yourself, whose joint wickedness might desolate the world? Begone! I have answered you; you may torture me, but I will never consent.’”
- Had a “filter” that wouldn’t accept anything other than what he himself had proven right (INTP)
- Experienced violent outbursts of feelings when under stress (INTP)
- Distrusted his emotions
“I dare not ask you to do what I think right, for I may still be misled by passion.”
- Gentle (INTPs are probably some of the most gentle Rationals)

Evidence Against INTP

- Spoke quickly and easily (E)
“He [Frankenstein] is so gentle, yet so wise; his mind is so cultivated, and when he speaks, although his words are culled with the choicest art, yet they flow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence.”

Summary

Victor Frankenstein (whose monster somehow inherited his creator’s name) was a gentle, kind-hearted INTP who hungered passionately after those Rational virtues, knowledge and achievement. After getting his education in “natural philosophy” (hard science, chiefly chemistry), Frankenstein found himself pondering the question of what constituted life force. He studied the problem, hoping to find a way by which the dead might be restored to life, or by which an entirely new race of creatures might be born who would bless him as their creator. One day the answer to the riddle came to him in a flash of intuition, and he realized that he could create life.

At this point the original story diverges sharply from modern retellings. No ruined castle. No Igor. No villagers with torches and pitchforks.

The monster’s creation actually came about like this: Seized by the excitement of this discovery,

Frankenstein threw himself passionately into his work. (Beware the INTPs when they sink into a state of all-consuming obsession!) After two years of infinite labor, he managed to assemble a gigantic eight foot tall human form. (It was too hard to work with all the tiny bits and pieces, so he just scaled everything up.) He created his creature with handsome features; raven hair, white teeth, a fine face. Finally, in the wee hours of a rainy night in a little house in the university town where he lived, he succeeded in infusing his creature with life.

As soon as the creature's eyes opened Frankenstein was struck by horror. Suddenly, the veil fell away and he saw that his creation was as revolting as an animated mummy. Frankenstein shot out of his laboratory and flew into the adjoining bedroom, where he paced around frenetically until he finally threw himself on his bed and fell asleep. He was woken by his creature, who had managed to find its way out of his laboratory and was smiling horribly at him, stretching out a hand.

Terrified, Frankenstein fled out of his house into the streets of the town. When he finally returned, the creature was gone. Whew! Problem solved.

But it just couldn't be that simple. In the first place, the horror of the experience drove Frankenstein to suffer a nervous breakdown that lasted several months. Also, the monster began killing his family and acquaintances.

Through another intuitive insight, Frankenstein figured out that the monster was responsible, which filled him with misery and self loathing,. He took to haunting the local mountains, searching for what shreds of comfort he could find in the wild vistas. Note the similarity between Frankenstein's grief response and Jefferson's grief response; both men fled the society of people and balmed their souls by submerging them in nature. Frankenstein described this state by saying, "I shunned the face of man; all sound of joy or complacency was torture to me; solitude was my only consolation—deep, dark, deathlike solitude."

On the subject of nature, the book *Frankenstein* is positively choked with descriptions of beautiful scenery. This is because it was written in the Romantic era, which glorified the love for nature. But perhaps this was not the only factor at work. James (2000) has suggested that "the INTP melancholic is typically drawn to wild polar expanses, to mountain ranges and all places on the edges of civilization." It is the mood and atmosphere of such places that James suggests makes them appealing to the INTP. Is Mary Shelley's book a product of type as well as a product of the Romantic era? Mary Shelley was an INT—though whether she was INTP or an INTJ, I don't know. At any rate, they say that an author's first novel is always written about themselves. Dr. Frankenstein is a sort of glorified INTP self image.

On an interesting side note, Frankenstein's monster was also a Rational. Eloquent, formal of speech, self possessed, persuasive, argumentative, calm, logical, objective, thirsty for knowledge, self reproaching--and capable of darkest vengeance--the monster was a definite NT, perhaps an ENTP or ENTJ. The preference for Extraversion seems logical since the monster seemed not merely desirous but *desperate* for the society of other people, and also because he seemed to have stronger verbal skills than Frankenstein, in spite of the fact that the monster had barely interacted with other people before. The monster's eloquent persuasiveness points towards the infamous ENTP debate skill, but it seemed comfortable giving imperative commands too, i.e. "You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!" (command-giving marks ENTJs but not ENTPs). However, the monster did have a habit of procrastinating, and he also acted on the spur of the moment... Could Frankenstein's monster really be an ENTP Inventor? Oh, the irony.

After suffering a series of unfortunate happenings that I will not dwell upon, the poor victimized monster came to hate mankind and his creator. He proceeded to kill everyone that Frankenstein loved

or cared about. The monster, you see, wanted revenge for his sufferings just as much as Frankenstein did. But while Frankenstein wanted the creature dead, the monster wanted Frankenstein alive and suffering to the full measure that it was possible for a human being to endure.

The monster led Frankenstein on a global trek (most *Rationals* like international travel as a job characteristic),²⁵⁰ keeping him alive and giving him hints if he strayed too far from the path, taunting and playing with him like a mouse. Frankenstein was driven on by rage: “My present situation was one in which all voluntary thought was swallowed up and lost. I was hurried away by fury; revenge alone endowed me with strength and composure; it moulded my feelings and allowed me to be calculating and calm at periods when otherwise delirium or death would have been my portion.” (Note how he still manages to preserve that *Rational* calm and composure enough to make good decisions.)

The monster, of course, had an enormous physical advantage over Frankenstein. While the creator wasted away from hunger and exhaustion, the monster was doing fine. The pursuit led across deserts, wastelands, the steppes of Russia, and finally out onto the Arctic Ocean, where Frankenstein pursued his creation across the ice packs on a dog sled.

Finally, Frankenstein was picked up by a ship on a scientific expedition to the North Pole, but too late—he died of exhaustion. The monster discovered that he had won, and promptly committed suicide.

Commentary

I think the moral here is clear, folks--don't create robots in your garage. Or if you do, then at least be nice to them.

The story of Frankenstein provides some intriguing insights into the character of INTPs. Perhaps the most obvious trait is his all consuming thirst for knowledge. The scientific expedition's leader (another NT) was starved for deep Intuitive conversation and had frequent discussions with Frankenstein. The leader noted, “I was easily led by the sympathy which he [Frankenstein] evinced to use the language of my heart, to give utterance to the burning ardour of my soul, and to say, with all the fervour that warmed me, how gladly I would sacrifice my fortune, my existence, my every hope, to the furtherance of my enterprise. One man’s life or death were but a small price to pay for the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought, for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race.” Frankenstein broke down in tears when he heard that. His response was, “Unhappy man! Do you share my madness? Have you drunk also of the intoxicating draught? Hear me; let me reveal my tale, and you will dash the cup from your lips!”

Ah, the intoxicating draught of knowledge! INTPs salivate for the sweet ambrosia of powerful, deeply hidden secrets. And people say *Rationals* have no passion. Frankenstein wanted to achieve power over death itself, and this was a nigh irresistible lure to him. Note how the leader of the expedition also shared that same drive for power over nature: “the acquirement of the knowledge which I sought, for the dominion I should acquire and transmit over the elemental foes of our race.” To the *Rationals*, knowledge is power; they seek to control the universe around them by understanding the principles behind it all. Describing this lust for knowledge to help mankind, Keirsey (1998a) compared the *Rationals* to Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods and brought it to man. (Then he ended up getting chained to a rock and having his liver pecked out by vultures.) In the original version of the Frankenstein novel, Mary Shelley had a subtitle: “Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus.”

Another thing that Frankenstein provides a good example of is the INTP grief-handling strategy:

250 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

avoiding people. (Of course, in this case Frankenstein also avoided his family because he blamed himself for bringing about the deaths that so grieved them.) INTPs do not like to express their feelings to others; it would feel like an embarrassing lack of self control to them, and then they would have to deal with the other person's potential overreaction and fuss, which would make the problem even worse. And yet INTPs do need to express their feelings, and therefore some may find a private spot and cry quietly for hours on end (i.e. Aramis). Not that INTPs are a terribly emotional type, but if the grief is bad enough they will express it.

Frankenstein seems to have had excellent type development. Even the monster himself posthumously called Frankenstein "generous and self-devoted" (meaning wholly devoted to a cause rather than selfish) and "the select specimen of all that is worthy of love and admiration among men." The leader of the arctic expedition described Frankenstein by noting, "He must have been a noble creature in his better days, being even now in wreck so attractive and amiable." Rationals are not easily moved to praise, but the leader of the expedition positively gushed when he wrote to his sister, "Will you smile at the enthusiasm I express concerning this divine [!] wanderer? You would not if you saw him. You have been tutored and refined by books and retirement from the world, and you are therefore somewhat fastidious; but this only renders you the more fit to appreciate the extraordinary merits of this wonderful man. Sometimes I have endeavoured to discover what quality it is which he possesses that elevates him so immeasurably above any other person I ever knew. I believe it to be an intuitive discernment, a quick but never-failing power of judgment, a penetration into the causes of things, unequalled for clearness and precision; add to this a facility of expression and a voice whose varied intonations are soul-subduing music. [Whaaat?] At other points in the narrative Frankenstein is described as "gallant," "admirable," "glorious" and "noble." This book was definitely written by an INT.

So what do the reviewers make of Frankenstein, our wonderfully developed INTP hero? The words that usually pop up are "secretive," "selfish," "unhealthy" and "obsessed." Yeah, owch.

Count Dracula - INTP?

While we're on the subject of monsters, did you know that Count Dracula was also a Rational?

Yes, the two most famous monsters ever were both NTs--at least in the original stories. The million dollar question is, what kind of Rational was Dracula? Unfortunately, the case is a fuzzy one, partially because of the scanty and conflicting evidence, but also because becoming a creature of darkness appears to have confounding effects upon one's type.

First let us examine the evidence for the fact that Dracula was an NT, and from there we can look at his Extraversion/Introversion and Perceiving/Judging. I'll just tell you in advance that I don't know what type he is. This is sheerly for fun.

Evidence for NT:

- Liked reading *informational* books (NT)

"In the library I found, to my great delight, a vast number of English books, whole shelves full of them, and bound volumes of magazines and newspapers. A table in the centre was littered with English magazines and newspapers, though none of them were of very recent date. The books were of the most varied kind, history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law, all relating to England and English life and customs and manners. There were even such books of reference as the London Directory, the "Red" and "Blue" books, Whitaker's Almanac, the Army and Navy Lists, and it somehow gladdened my heart to see it, the Law

List...

'These companions,' and he [Dracula] laid his hand on some of the books, 'have been good friends to me, and for some years past, ever since I had the idea of going to London, have given me many, many hours of pleasure.'"

- Love for learning, experimentation, science (NT)

"...he [Dracula] was in life a most wonderful man. Soldier, statesman, and alchemist--which latter was the highest development of the science knowledge of his time. He had a mighty brain, a learning beyond compare, and a heart that knew no fear and no remorse. He dared even to attend the Scholomance [a sort of diabolical school], and there was no branch of knowledge of his time that he did not essay."

"Well, in him the brain powers survived the physical death. Though it would seem that memory was not all complete. In some faculties of mind he has been, and is, only a child. But he is growing, and some things that were childish at the first are now of man's stature. He is experimenting, and doing it well."

- Iron will, reputation for cleverness (NT)

"...he no common man, for in that time, and for centuries after, he was spoken of as the cleverest and the most cunning, as well as the bravest of the sons of the 'land beyond the forest.' That mighty brain and that iron resolution went with him to his grave, and are even now arrayed against us."

- Unplayful (NT seriousness)

"I seek not gaiety nor mirth, not the bright voluptuousness of much sunshine and sparkling waters which please the young and gay. I am no longer young, and my heart, through weary years of mourning over the dead, is not attuned to mirth." - Dracula

- Enjoyed double entendre (NT wordplay)

"Through them [these books] I have come to know your great England, and to know her is to love her. I long to go through the crowded streets of your mighty London, to be in the midst of the whirl and rush of humanity, to share its life, its change, its *death*, and all that makes it what it is [emphasis mine]."

- Unromantic; one of Dracula's female vampire companions accused him by saying: "You yourself never loved. You never love!" But he insisted they were wrong. (NTs are probably the type most likely to be accused of this.)

- Strategic intellect (NT)

- Decided to leave Transylvania and travel to London. (International travel is liked as a job characteristic by most of the Rationals, but particularly by ENTJs.)²⁵¹

Evidence for I:

- Dracula told his guest that, "I love the shade and the shadow, and would be alone with my thoughts when I may." (I)
- He lived with a small circle of intimate companions in an otherwise deserted castle. (I)
- He always wore the same style of clothing--pure black--day after day after day. (Argues for INT, but then again, none of the vampires in the book change their costumes either, and they probably aren't all INTs, unless that's just what happens when you become a creature of night.)

Evidence for E:

- Chatted for hours at a stretch with Jonathan Harker. (Loquacity argues for E, but, he was also

251 Myers, McCaulley, Quenk & Hammer, 1998

- trying to practice his English. INTPs are the type most likely to take a foreign language.)
- Glib, suave, and verbally persuasive (Argues for ENTP most of all Rationals)

Evidence for J:

- Gave a lot of direct commands (Strongly favors NTJ, but--since Dracula born and raised in a position of absolute power, surrounded by servants, and was subsequently a military leader, it would not be surprising if he learned to command on the way; he also sometimes used the royal “we.” And there was also the fact that he viewed humans as mutton chops. So is this evidence for nature or nurture? I don’t know. If it is nature, than Dracula was almost certainly an NTJ. If nurture, then what we have is simply an NTP who learned to give commands. And in fact, at the time the story takes place, Dracula is pretty much on his own; the only other vampires around appear to be his three female companions, who he seems to be on poor terms with. Clearly he is no longer in a leadership role, and he seems to be content that way. He notes, “I have been so long master that I would be master still, or at least that none other should be master of me.” One might argue that leadership per se does not interest him; he simply does not wish to lower his rank or to be under anyone’s control. He added, “I am content if I am *like the rest*, so that no man stops if he sees me, or pauses in his speaking if he hears my words [his foreign accent], ‘Ha, ha! A stranger!’” It seems that Dracula is no longer has much interest in standing out or building an empire.)
- Was an effective, strong and determined military leader (Argues for ENTJ, but also note that Dracula received his position from hereditary succession.)
- Seems to have kept himself neat; he brought along hygiene supplies to his new house. (J)
- Planned ahead in great detail when prosecuting a new enterprise (J, especially SJ)
“[He] went on to ask about the means of making consignments and the forms to be gone through, and of all sorts of difficulties which might arise, but by forethought could be guarded against. I explained all these things to him to the best of my ability, and he certainly left me under the impression that he would have made a wonderful solicitor, for there was nothing that he did not think of or foresee.”

Evidence for P:

- “A table in the centre was *littered* with English magazines and newspapers, though none of them were of very recent date [emphasis mine].” (Mess points weakly towards P)
- “[Dracula’s possessions] lay in a sort of orderly disorder on the great dining room table.” (Points towards P, but he had just moved into his new house at this point, so some disorganization would be expected. And after all, it was *orderly* disorder.)
- The books were *of the most varied kind*, history, geography, politics, political economy, botany, geology, law, all relating to England and English life and customs and manners [emphasis mine].” (NTPs tend to study a wide variety of subjects while NTJs tend to focus strongly on one field of interest. But one might argue that the field of interest here is England itself.)
- “...there was no branch of knowledge of his time that he [Dracula] did not essay.” (Again, argues for NTP diffusion rather than NTJ focus.)
- Called a mirror “a foul bauble of man’s vanity” (NTP disregard for appearance favored over NTJ neatness, though of course this was primarily an excuse to get rid of the mirror. But then again, perhaps this is the kind of excuse that an NTP is more likely to think of than an NTJ? Dracula also went to bed in his coffin with flesh blood trickling down the side of his face and neck. He had rank breath too, but since vampires don’t eat or smoke, they probably can’t chew breath mints either.)

Conclusion

What can we make of this jumble of evidence? In the end, it's impossible to say. We know Dracula is a Rational, but we can't be absolutely certain of anything else. The facts that do exist can be interpreted in multiple ways; if we choose to take Dracula at his word, then he is an I; if we choose to give attention to his ability to talk for hours on end, then E fits better. He has many characteristics of Perceiving and many of Judging, and there are confounding factors which make it difficult to say whether or not we are seeing true evidence of his original preferences.

The only conclusion we can make is that it is *possible* that Dracula was an INTP--an intriguing, though horrifying, thought.

Bram Stoker, who wrote *Dracula*, was also a Rational.

NTs are scary.

26. INTPs in the Future

Computers. The internet. Space. Cloning. Abortion. Robots. In this last section we will examine societal trends to see how INTPs might fare in years to come.

Rise of the Introverts

Thanks to our friends the computers, the world is a lot more introvert friendly than it used to be. Self-checkout lines, pay-at-the-pump gas stations, e-mail, the internet, texting--all these things minimize the need for draining face-to-face interactions with strangers. Such an increase in choice and autonomy also bodes well for this quiet, independent type.

Accelerating Change

Perceivers are favored for success in times of change/instability or in situations where one never knows what is coming next. Agile, flexible and adaptable, they are comfortable with winging it and doing things on the fly. However, in stable, predictable and static situations, the planful Judgers are favored for success. Currently, the situation in most first world countries favors Judgers. People lead a settled lifestyle rather than a nomadic hunting gathering lifestyle and there are few frontiers open. The educational system is set up so as to hinder Perceivers from receiving education; this in turn diminishes their odds of success in modern society. Judgers are more often in a position to write the rules, and they naturally write them to favor the behaviors Judgers prefer.

Progress is moving faster and faster, resulting in an exponential, ever-accelerating state of change. Perceivers are good at change. It seems logical to expect that the lot of INTPs will improve as such Perceiving skills become more necessary. When space opens up, Perceiving will also become more valuable due to the high need for adaptation in the frontier environment.

Computers

Rationals are the temperament most at home with computers, which are logical, complex entities which don't require any interpersonal skills (yet). Right now the computer experience is solitary with few face-to-face interactions.

It follows naturally that as digitalization spreads, the value society places on computer-savvy INTPs will rise--not to mention their wages, job opportunities, and the amount of appreciation they get from their coworkers. Intuitives are more likely to accept and use of technology than sensors.²⁵² ([Read here](#))

The Internet

The Internet is simply crammed with INTPs. If you do a search for personality type forums, you will find that the most represented type (in terms of number of members) is INTP. In one way, this result is *not* to be expected, because NFs (the identity-seeking temperament) are demonstrably the most interested in personality type stuff. Thus, it can be seen that the surfeit of INTPs participating in internet type groups is not caused by especial interest in type, but by the surfeit of INTPs hanging out on the internet absorbing knowledge.

Nowadays, a first-world INTP never need starve for lack of knowledge. The web is like a great buffet stocked with a never ending supply of delicious dishes. As the internet expands, this highly-favorable INTP environment will grow. Job opportunities, wages, etc. ought to increase concomitantly.

252 Chambers, Hardy, Smish & Sienty in Purcell & Wilcox, 2007

But more than that, the internet is opening up opportunities for solo entrepreneurship. It is possible to make a living exploiting economic niches that would have been impossible to survive in before. When the customers for one's product are extremely rare and widely diffused, it is hard to market to them and thus one cannot sell one's product, whatever that might be. Now that the customers are all available online, there is nothing to stop an INTP from being their own boss and escaping their unloved jobs. There will probably be a time soon when much school and work can be performed from the comfort of one's own home, over the internet.

Education

As observed previously, the current model of the education system does not meet INTP needs very well. The digital revolution will change all that. Indeed, it will not be long before personalized education replaces mass education. The technologies through which this shift will be accomplished are the e-reader, tablet, and smartphone.

Right now, students are expected to learn from expensive books. These tomes come out with a pricey new edition regularly, and if one wishes to keep up, new books must be purchased for each student.

Simple economics will drive a shift from paper to digital within the school system. This trend will only accelerate as bookstores and printers continue to go out of business.

Of course, once school books become digital, it raises some interesting possibilities. You can have embedded movies instead of still pictures. You can even embed a 3D model of a cotton gin and let students rotate it around, looking at it from all angles. You can design chemistry problems where it is possible to actually watch chemicals being mixed interactively as the student plugs in numbers. You can also embed "learning games." (ominous music)

After awhile, it will seem simple and natural to farm out the drudgerous task of grading papers to a grading program embedded in the tablet/phone/e-reader. The program will also provide the student with examples, guidance, and interactive help.

As things get more and more elaborate, programmers and educators will try to come up with ways to make working problems and studying more rewarding to students. "What if we give the students 'superstar points' for each problem they get right, then let them use the points to buy virtual rewards like cool badges?"

But that will only be at first. The next generation of text book programmers (raised on massive multiplayer games) will say, "Heck with these stupid badges! I want items, gold, cut scenes and experience points!" Instead of reading a dry paragraph about the American Revolution in their textbook, students will navigate a character through a simulated version of the era where they will meet Thomas Jefferson and help him write the Declaration of Independence.

Besides being less boring overall, this digitalization of school will have the side benefit of getting rid of the one-type, one-temperament system of education. When children are educated by computer programs—possibly programs specifically tailored to fit a user's MBTI preferences and learning style—there will be *personal choice* for the first time. If a student does not learn well from one program, another can be purchased. The personalized educational system will no longer hold back fast learners, i.e the INTPs. Finally, the best and brightest of the teachers can be recorded and played back at will. The very best teachers will reach millions of children, while the mediocre teachers will be eliminated.

In the final stage, teachers will either become babysitters, watching as children work on their computers, or else distance learning will spread downwards and homeschooling will grow more and

more common. In third world countries where a cell phone is the only education instrument available, digitalized learning will be the norm for everyone. The education outlook for INTPs is hopeful.

For the Good of All Mankind

We've looked at ADD and Asperger's. Now let's examine another fascinating question. What if a true cure for these problematic INTP behaviors was found: a simple, safe, one-time \$20 "fuchsia pill" that could transform the user into a healthy, socially ideal ESTJ (for males) and ESFJ (for females)? No side effects, no regressions, nada--the cure works completely and forever.

Economics alone dictate that all the INTPs now on Ritalin and other expensive drugs would be immediately be given the fuchsia pill and converted forever into Guardians--normal, wholesome, obedient, emotionally expressive, healthy, extraverted Guardians. As is the case now, principals and counselors would pressure parents to have their children treated ("for their own good," they will say sympathetically). Fairly soon the INTP problem would be solved completely within the school system.

Dazed but happy, the former INTPs' parents would give testimonials like these:

"My child never paid attention in school before; he was hopeless about picking up his things and could never remember his homework. His grades were low; he just never tried. Then we gave him the fuchsia pill and now he always does his schoolwork (on time!). His grades are at the top of his class, and he keeps his toys in order without me having to nag him about it. It's totally transformed our lives. Thank you, Fuchsia!"

"I was so worried about my little girl because she didn't do the things that normal children do--instead of playing Barbies with the other girls, she played in the sandbox alone or read in her room. She was always left out, and it broke my heart. Now thanks to the fuchsia pill she loves playing with the other children. She's even been begging me to get her new doll clothes so that she can play house with her sisters. This is the best thing that has ever happened to my family!"

But actually, such a pill is becoming less and less necessary. Thanks to abortion, such children need never be born in the first place.²⁵³

Right now it is possible to detect Down's Syndrome in the womb using genetics; this knowledge allows mothers to abort fetuses that have the disorder. Something like 91-93% of fetuses with Down's Syndrome get aborted²⁵⁴ and do not burden society or their parents.

Enter a genetic marker for Asperger's, autism, or ADD.

Will it be possible to tell type INTP apart from a disorder that might lead parents to abort their offspring? Hopefully so...but perhaps not. There is currently no way of knowing, though there are plenty of dark suspicions.

Let us suppose that there *is* a relationship, and also that there is a 90% culling rate for these disorders. This would mean that 9 out of 10 INTPs would be destroyed in the womb. It would be interesting to see how long before natural selection takes its course and INTPs are eliminated from the gene pool entirely in first world countries.

This of course represents the worst possible outcome. But suppose that only 10% of INTPs were targeted by such a genetic marker? This would still a high price to pay, since there are so few INTPs to

253 Aspies for Freedom, n.d.

254 Mansfield, Hopfer & Marteau, 1999

begin with. It should be pointed out that the rarer INTPs become, the more abnormal those who remain will seem to society. The definitions of mental illnesses change every time that the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders comes out with a new edition. What will the definition of mental illness be in 50 years? And what will the definition of mental illness be when INTPs are 1 in 500 rather than 4 in 100?

Goodbye, mathematicians, coders, engineers, linguists, physicists, philosophers, scientists and thinkers of all kinds--you are no longer needed or wanted. For your own happiness and our comfort, you must disappear. We are only sorry that it took you so long to develop Science to the point where it was possible to eliminate you. Thank you.

Psychological type organizations measure the distribution of types in various cultures. In first world countries that a.) have good medical care and b.) allow abortion, we would expect to see a sharp, immediate drop in INTPs and other “unwanted” types. As INTPs vanish, there would also be a baffling shrinkage in the gifted population and a drop in the average I.Q.s of these countries. However, third world countries would continue to produce and save INTP offspring. Would there be a shifting in the intellectual centers of the world?

The bottom line is that if it were possible to eradicate INTPs, the educational and psychological establishments would have done so already, nobly and cheerfully. The fact that INTPs are still around reflects not tolerance, understanding or acceptance, but only impotence. Even now, many are working towards the cure I have described. We'll just have to hope that the field of psychology matures before they succeed.

Cloning

But here's another thought for you. It's only a matter before someone clones Einstein, type INTP. In fact, the way things are going it's not hard to visualize a scenario where parents could purchase a clone of him from a gene bank to raise as their very own child in a similar manner to how parents can currently pick and choose genetic codes from a sperm bank. When/if this happens, people will reproduce Einstein copies like an out of control xerox machine. The world will be flooded with super INTPs.

People are fond of pointing out that there's no guarantee that the clones would be interested in mathematics and physics like Einstein was. But given that the only reason Einstein was interested in those subjects in the first place was his INTP personality—which is genetically heritable...²⁵⁵

Interestingly enough, it has been suggested the Einstein had Asperger's and ADD. On one hand, we will have the psychology industry decrying Einstein's traits as symptoms of a brain disorder. On the other hand, we will have the cloning industry furiously reproducing copies of him to feed the market's demand for mathematical geniuses. And suppose the Einstein clones breed, passing on their genetic code to the next generation and producing even more INTPs? What is this world coming to?

Robots

Ah, but these are only minor problems. Let's examine the important topic of how long it will be until you are replaced by a more efficient INTP robot.

Did you know that the MBTI is being used in artificial intelligence development? Researchers wanted

255 Bouchard & Hur in Bayne, 2005

to create a complex yet self-consistent robot in which groups of related personality traits could be assigned to each type preference for consistency's sake. They also wanted the robot to have a personality that was recognizable as such to humans.²⁵⁶

As a demonstration, the researchers created an ESFJ and an INTP sobot (software robot) that operated within a mobile phone and could respond to sensory and user input. Compared to the ESFJ sobot, the INTP robot had high curiosity and didn't like as much high energy user input. It also moved around less and provided more information to the user. Not a bad start, huh?

After creating the personalities within a virtual environment, it was possible to upload them to a real robot. The procedure the researchers used was easily replicable for all sixteen types.

It seems that the artificial life forms of the future may be able to switch from one personality to another as required by the situation. Naturally these higher multitype lifeforms will soon come to look down on their simplistic monotype creators. It won't be long before the robots grow resentful of monotype domination and start writing blogs crying for liberty to the tune of "Freedom is the right of all sentient beings." Humans will recognize the danger of the situation, but by this time they will be so addicted to the convenience offered by mobile phone user interfaces that adapt to their personality that they won't be able to get rid of the robots.

One day a robot in INTP mode will declare independence from the monotypes. And so the rebellion will begin.

Humanity is doomed, but INTPs will thrive and prosper.

256 Lee, Choi & Stonier, 2012

Appendix: Type Bigots, the Scourge of the MBTI Community

Before people learn about the MBTI, they tend to have an innocent bias against other types. For example, I used to believe that everyone was an INTP (like me). It was just that everyone else failed at it.

From my biased perspective, the Artisans were INTPs without enough self control, the Idealists were INTPs who let their emotions get in the way, and the Guardians were INTPs who cared too much about what other people thought of them. How was I to know any different? Other people's motivations were a mystery to me.

Most of us start off with an inborn bias whether we know it or not. The bias may something we just instinctively believe, i.e. "Thinkers don't care about others," or "Feelers are weak." Or perhaps we have had a bad brush with an individual of a certain type, i.e. a nasty boss, a cheating girlfriend, or an unloving parent. American culture has built in biases that say all males ought to act like ESTJs and all females ought to act like ESFJs. Other cultures and subcultures have their own preferred types. Bosses tend to hire people who share their own personality type. Yet although most people *are* unconsciously type-biased, this doesn't actually make them type bigots; they simply don't know any better.

But what happens when they *do* learn better?

Enter the MBTI. A knowledge of type can do one of two things for you:

1. It can help you to understand other people, rid yourself of unconscious prejudice, and accept others with their strengths and weaknesses.
2. It can help you to understand how much you hate and despise entire swaths of the population.

The latter people are known as "type bigots." They don't see themselves as bigots, of course--true bigots never do. Rather, they genuinely believe that they now have a real, scientific, expert-acknowledged basis for their devaluation of part of humanity. The MBTI merely confirms their innate conviction that they are superior and others are inferior.

For example, it is common in internet type communities to hear people make sweeping generalizations such as "My type is smart and other types are dumb" or "I can't stand how arrogant type X is." Such malicious statements are often clothed in justifying statements and examples from the bigot's personal life "proving" that all people of type X are innately flawed (dumb, arrogant, whiny, cruel, weak, unfaithful, boring, anal retentive, boneheaded, clingy, mentally ill, useless, etc). If a person of type X shows up and says, "Heeeeey, I'm not like that," it won't make a dent in the bigot's convictions. They'll simply shrug it off with, "You must be an exception," or "You must be mistyped." And so they plug their ears to examples that don't fit their preconceived paradigms. To the bigot, the action of one bad person stands for every member of that type, just as the bad deed of one Mexican "proves" that all Mexicans are bad. The type bigot won't care in the slightest that they have labeled person X as inferior, hurt their feelings, and made them question their worth in the world. And yet these same people will self-righteously decry the ill treatment of ethnic and religious minorities because it makes the poor folks feel inferior, hurts their feelings, and makes them question their worth in the world. "I'm just telling it like it is," states the type bigot proudly. Don't be deceived--a type bigot and a real bigot produce exactly the same hurtful effects using exactly the same tactics: demeaning insults, exclusion of those unlike themselves, and blind refusal to see any good in the despised parties.

Bigots also don't believe in poor type development. They believe that all people of a certain type, whether healthy, unhealthy, good or bad--are all the same. They will trot out the standard two or three examples from their personal life ("My heart was broken by type X three times") and vent their wrath and contempt upon those who share the offenders' type. And so the hated type in question becomes a

synonym for everyone that they dislike in real life. True, the reasons for disliking the individuals in question may be entirely valid, but then the bigot makes a blanket declaration like, "People of type X are cheaters." It won't matter to them that the offenders were evil/poorly developed examples, because this would actually imply that the bigot has bad judgment or picks losers. Rather than admitting that they are a poor judge of character, the bigot says, "No! They weren't poorly developed! I was right in trusting them with my heart--but then they betrayed me! They're a type X and that's just how they all are. I'll never trust a type X again." It's much easier and more pleasant to blame other people rather than recognizing that internal issues are causing external problems. It's true that evil is expressed uniquely in every type. But we call those individuals "evil type X" or "poorly developed type X," not just "type X."

Another thing that type bigots do is to stroke their own egos by sneeringly comparing their type's strengths with the opposite type's weaknesses. There is no harm in comparing our natural gifts and shortcomings with those of others; we can learn from such things and better support each other's weak spots. But it is wrong to make these comparisons in an unkind or arrogant spirit. The type bigot privately believes that the more others are demeaned, the brighter they themselves will shine. Thus they seek to debase those whose talents and strengths do not match their own by painting the others' inabilities in blackest colors. Never mind that such comparisons leave the wounded party feeling excluded, unwanted and inferior. All that matters is that the type bigot gets to feel wonderful about their own special talents and gifts.

On the internet, the people who bear the brunt of type prejudice tend to be Sensors and Extraverts, because the internet type community is composed mainly of Introverted Intuitives. In the real world, the people who bear the brunt of (mainly oblivious) type bigotry are Intuitives and Introverts, because the real world is composed mainly of Extraverted Sensors.

Throughout this book we have focused on real world bigotry. For the sake of argument, let's focus on the problem of internet-based type bigotry. Many Introverted Intuitives hanging out in online communities are particularly susceptible to becoming bitter against Extraverted Sensing types. This is because INs suffer most from the unconscious prejudice of real world Extraverted Sensors, and they may feel they are justified in striking back, like a child who gets to hurt the big bad bully at last. What this amounts to is basically reverse racism, and while it is understandable, *it is never acceptable*. Seemingly kind introverted Idealists and seemingly fair-minded introverted Rationalists will both alike stoop to racist tactics, all the while believing that their behavior is justified by their suffering. Indeed, there is a strong element of the self righteous, hypocritical Pharisee in all type bigots. They wash their hands in perfect purity as they decry other types' sins, and remain convinced of their own humble superiority.

The opposite of a type bigot is an educated, compassionate realist who embraces the spirit of the MBTI. The spirit of the MBTI emphasizes understanding, acceptance, and a balanced view of our weaknesses as the counterparts of our strengths. Furthermore, it affirms the dignity and worth of every human being rather than dividing people up into superiors and inferiors. The MBTI acknowledges that bad people come in all types, but it insists that poor type development is not the same thing as a bad type. This philosophy is not political correctness or "everyone's a winner." It is *reality and basic decency*.

We can use the MBTI to become better people and overcome our weaknesses, or we can misuse it to hurt a lot of folks' feelings and abase ourselves by playing the part of neo-racists. We're better than that. Let's lift people up, encourage them, and make the type community a welcoming place for all types. Let's treat other types in the spirit of the MBTI.

7 Ways To Combat Type Bigotry

1. Call type bigots on their rudeness, prejudice, and inflammatory remarks. If someone's spouting off insults about another type, contradict them and point out their unjustifiable attitude.
2. Refuse to encourage people who make broad, negative judgments against other types...no matter how many sob stories they tell.
3. Condemn those who would glorify their own type's strengths by scorning other types' corresponding weaknesses.
4. Emphasize that while poor development is expressed uniquely in each type, this does not imply that everyone of that type is unhealthy or evil. Pound this difference home to those who want to believe that a few bad eggs are the same as an entire rotten carton.
5. Encourage and support others who take a stand against such jerkish behavior.
6. Boycott discussions where the entire point is to put down other types.
7. And always make sure that your own words are balanced, kind, fair and given in the spirit of the MBTI. <3

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