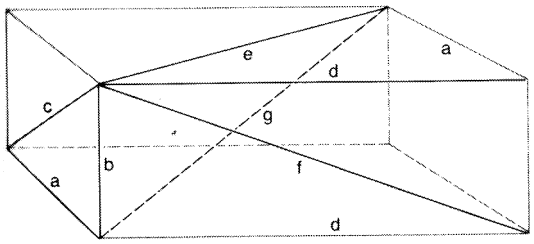

Many, many years ago, so long ago that it's a real stretch to find anyone else who can remember this, on the old Oprah show, she did a feature on individuals who had left society and, in the process, had eliminated every trace of themselves. She had like three or four guests up on stage, if I recall correctly, and they had all gone back and diligently destroyed every little bit of information previously known about them. Burning birth certificates and ID cards, canceling bank accounts. Stealing photos out of family member's albums and destroying them. They had hired hackers to break into schools and erase their records. In fact, each of these persons had done such a bang-up job that all that was known about each of them was their social security numbers. (Although Oprah's researchers were unable to say which social belonged to which person; these numbers were only known because of the noticeable gaps that were left in the government's records.) On the program, these people sat in the dark; nameless and unsorted. No one knew who they were.