

Laws of Life via Art

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The *Laws of Life* are a collection of principles that help determine our individual moral value systems where in contrast to scientific laws, a law of life does not exist in 100 percentages of the cases. There are many definitions in Google to the *Laws of Life* among which are the following: collections of principles that help determine our individual moral value systems; the character traits that are always with us helping us make good choices. And most important *Laws of Life*, in contrast to scientific laws, do not exist in 100 percentages of the cases. *Laws of Life* are strongly related to Edward A Murphy born in 1917 who was a captain in the United States Air Force and one of the engineers working on Project MX981 designed to test the resistance of a rocket to a sudden deceleration. One experiment involved a set of 16 accelerometers mounted at different parts of the subject's body. There were two ways each sensor could be glued to its mount. Of course the technician responsible for the job installed all 16 the wrong way around. Murphy then made the original form of his law: "If there are two or more ways to do something, and one of those ways can result a catastrophe, then someone will do it". Murphy's Law acquired in the course of time a tremendous publicity in all cultures and all areas of life such as love, household, commerce, technology, music, teaching, military, computers etc. It motivated many people to formulate additional laws, which may be considered as *Laws of Life*. The latter are fundamental facts dictating our life where each day provides new facts substantiating the laws; however, as indicated they do not happen in 100% of the cases. Murphy's laws may be considered as an attempt of mankind to find some order and logic in the non-physical world existing parallel to our physical world, consisting of laws such as Newton's Laws etc. The laws, the number of which increases from day to day, appear in books and in one version of the Internet, which is brought up-to-date very often. In the latter, one can find about 1400 laws among which about 160 are named Murphy's Law. A few examples are as follows: "Nothing is as easy as it looks", "Everything takes longer than you think", "New systems generate new problems", "Brain*Beauty = Constant", "Beauty is skin deep; ugliness goes right to the bone." Murphy's Law related to Thermodynamics states that "Things get worse under pressure", or "When entropy reaches a maximum, man will die".

In the following, a few of Murphy and other *Laws of Life* are demonstrated by artworks. On top-left is "The Railway Bridge" by Sandro Del-Prete (1937), Swiss (Figure 1). At first glance, the painting supports Murphy's Law, that whatever can happen will happen and in the worst way since the trains will collide. However, at second glance one notes that the trains will never collide so that there is always some hope! The picture on top-right by Poggi is a convincing demonstration of Firth's Law created by continuous adding hands to fingers so that five fingers may approach infinity (Figure 2). The Presidents of the USA, illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt, demonstrate Murphy's philosophy that when a politician is smiling, it is a sign that something bad is going to happen (Figure 3). The picture of Albert Einstein, in addition to the text underneath, may demonstrate also Walder's observation that "A mathematician is one who is willing to assume everything except responsibility" (Figure 4). The artworks on bottom-left and bottom-right are by Jacek Yerka (1952), Polish, entitled, respectively, "To Each His Own" (1988) and "Back to Nature" (1983) (Figures 5 and 6). The latter artwork may also demonstrate Wallace's Observation:

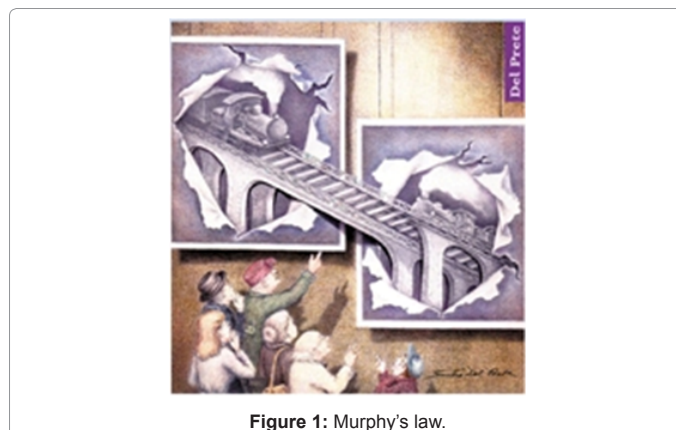


Figure 1: Murphy's law.



Figure 2: Firth's Law.

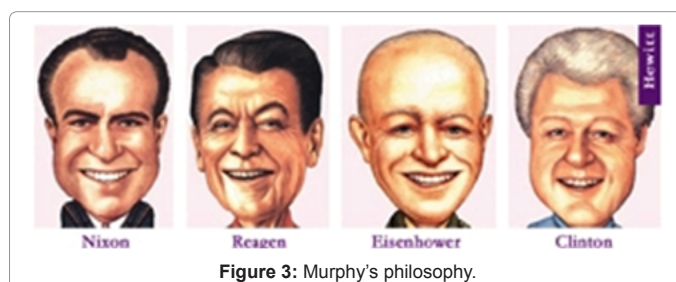


Figure 3: Murphy's philosophy.

"Everything is in a state of absolute disorder." The artwork on the bottom-center, "The Son of Man" (1964), was painted by Rene Magritte

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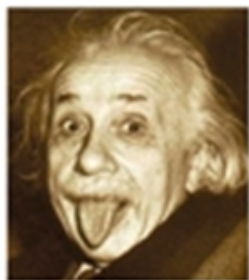


Figure 4: The picture of Albert Einstein.



Figure 6: Back to Nature.



Figure 5: To Each His Own.



Figure 7: Calvin Coolidge's comment.

(1898-1967), Belgian. In addition to the statement on the back cover, it also demonstrates Calvin Coolidge's comment: "You don't have to explain something you never said" or Syrus's Axiom: "Not every question deserves an answer" (Figure 7).

We conclude this article in Murphy's style: "*The difference between Laws of Nature and Murphy's Law is that one can trust Laws of Nature*

to go wrong the same way each time", known as the Reliability Principle. In addition, if one does not forget Murphy's Law, he might have good chances to avoid wrong things from happening.