



#2 "HOW MANY GRAINS OF SAND ON THE EARTH?"

Mathematician Marcus du Sautoy, author of *The Number Mysteries* (Fourth Estate), says that sand is rock with a diameter of between 0.625mm and 0.2mm.

Assuming a grain of sand is roughly spherical, the average volume of a grain is $\frac{4}{3} \times \pi \times r^3 = 0.00947\text{mm}^3$, where r is the radius.

So how many grains of sand are there in **a metre cube box**?

It has 10^9 cubes inside (10N is how mathematicians write a 1 followed by N zeros), and if they are arranged randomly, about 65% of the box will be sand and the rest air.

So we can estimate that the number of grains of sand in a metre cube box is $10^9 \times 0.65 / 0.00947$, or **roughly 70bn grains**.

Now, let's go for an **average of 5% of the surface of the Earth being covered in sand with a depth of 100m**.

The surface area of the Earth is $4 \times \pi \times r^2$ where r is the radius of the Earth, which is 6,378,000 metres.

So the volume of sand comes out at: $2.5 \times 10^{15}\text{m}^3$.

So the rough estimate is that the number of grains of sand on the Earth is a number with **27 digits** ... that is ...

1, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000, 000

Now let's suppose you could place a **number on each grain** and had a **lottery for picking the winning grain**.

"And now ... Ladies and Gentlemen ... **the winning number is 973, 251, 684, 342, 701**"

Dear Reader would you be having a bet in this lottery? **HARDLY!**

But you're betting your soul ... an eternity in hell ... against the odds of a **DNA strand by evolution with a number of 40,000 digits!**

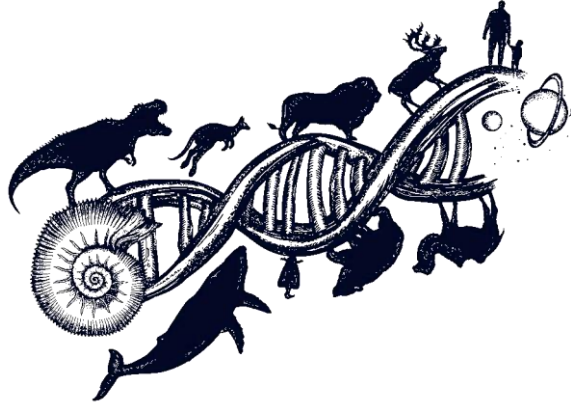
Methinks only the certified insane would take these odds ... **WHAT SAY YE?**

"Look Preacher, you're just trying to scare me about burning in hell!"

"Yes I am ... you're absolutely correct!"

Harley Hitchcock
June 2023

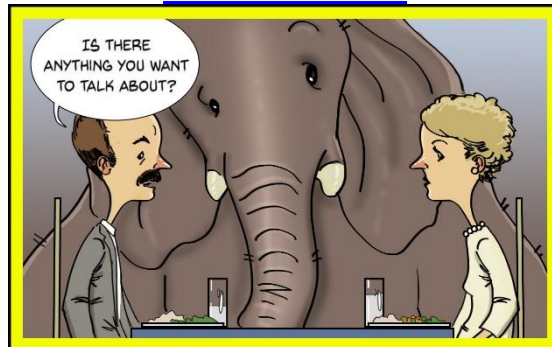
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