

Women's History Month | Summer Melton

March 21, 2022

Media Contact

Powers Tanis

Director of Strategic Marketing and
Communications 803.221.4907

email@mgclaw.com

Checkout our third Women's History Month feature, written by MGC Nashville attorney [Summer Melton](#).

A woman holds the record for the highest recorded IQ in history.^[1] Marilyn vos Savant, born August 11, 1946, is an American magazine columnist, author, lecturer and playwright. ^[2] Her astounding IQ score of 228 is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the highest IQ score ever recorded.^[3] To put her score in perspective, someone with a "normal" intelligence will score somewhere around 100 on an IQ test.^[4]

Ms. Savant also holds the highest IQ score ever recorded of a child.^[5] By the age of ten, Savant had the intelligence of a 23 year-old.^[6] Her parents did their best to hide her intelligence, to avoid publicity and fame.^[7] That ended in 1985 when the Guinness Book of World Records obtained her IQ score from the Mega Society, a group whose membership is restricted to those with only the highest of the high IQ scores.^[8] Once her status as the "world's smartest woman" became public, Ms. Savant moved to New York and sought out a career as a writer.^[9]

Since 1986, she has written a column called "Ask Marilyn," which is published in Parade magazine—an American nationwide Sunday newspaper.^[10] In her articles, Ms. Savant solves puzzles and answers questions on various subjects.^[11] Most notably, in 1990, Ms. Savant published the answer to the famous Monty Hall problem, then involving a chance to win a beautiful car or two smelly goats.^[12] Her answer was correct.^[13] Regardless, she was immediately publicly criticized by over 10,000 male legal scholars across the country, including a pair from the Deputy Director of the Center for Defense Information, and a Research Mathematical Statistician from the National Institutes of Health.^[14] These men called her wrong and incompetent, using sexist, derogatory and vicious name-calling.^[15] Below are some of the messages she received:

You blew it, and you blew it big! Since you seem to have difficulty grasping the basic principle at work here, I'll explain. After the host reveals a goat, you now have a one-in-two chance of being correct. Whether you change your selection or not, the odds are the same. There is enough mathematical illiteracy in this country, and we don't need the world's highest IQ propagating more. Shame!

Scott Smith, Ph.D. | University of Florida

Maybe women look at math problems differently than men.

Don Edwards | Sunriver, Oregon

May I suggest that you obtain and refer to a standard textbook on probability before you try to answer a question of this type again?

Charles Reid, Ph.D. | University of Florida

I am sure you will receive many letters on this topic from high school and college students. Perhaps you should keep a few addresses for help with future columns.

W. Robert Smith, Ph.D. | Georgia State University

You are utterly incorrect about the game show question, and I hope this controversy will call some public attention to the serious national crisis in mathematical education. If you can admit your error, you will have contributed constructively towards the solution of a deplorable situation. How many irate mathematicians are needed to get you to change your mind?

E. Ray Bobo, Ph.D. | Georgetown University

You made a mistake, but look at the positive side. If all those Ph.D.'s were wrong, the country would be in some very serious trouble.

Everett Harman, Ph.D. | U.S. Army Research Institute

You are the goat!

Glenn Calkins | Western State College

After Ms. Savant's conclusion was confirmed to be accurate, Dr. Scott Smith, quoted above—shockingly—made the following remark: "After removing my foot from my mouth, I'm now eating humble pie."^[16]

Ms. Savant is truly an inspiration to women all over the world and helps to show that women are not inferior to men—something we've said all along!

^[1] <https://www.mastersdegree.net/50-fascinating-facts-womens-history-month/>

^[2] <https://biography.yourdictionary.com/marilyn-vos-savant>

^[3] Id.

^[4] Id.

^[5] Id.

^[6] <https://priceconomics.com/the-time-everyone-corrected-the-worlds-smartest/>

[7] <https://biography.yourdictionary.com/marilyn-vos-savant>

[8] Id.

[9] Id.

[10] See <https://parade.com/tag/ask-marilyn/>

[11] Id.

[12] <https://priceconomics.com/the-time-everyone-corrected-the-worlds-smartest/>

[13] Id.

[14] <https://priceconomics.com/the-time-everyone-corrected-the-worlds-smartest/>

[15] Id.

[16] Id.