

Published LifeStyle, 2019-03-07 - excerpt

Is philosophy the mental king with no pants? Is anyone really wearing the intellectual pants in the humankind family?

Since time immemorial every culture of humankind has had their wise man, sage, shaman, or oracle, which they relied on for wise societal direction. Who wears that hat today?

How has the politician worked out for you? The judge sticks a nose in when something goes wrong, but by then it's already gone wrong, often horribly. Some say it's now the scientist, or the professor, or maybe it's still the priest?

Well, the philosopher is the direct descendant of the wise man, and they're supposed to think better, more profound thoughts than everybody else, right? But then where are they in the active scheme of society at large? Who can name the great living philosophers? What are they doing? Who's running the intellectual show around here? Please don't tell me that no one is wearing that hat, that we're intellectually leaderless!

If philosophy had a Facebook account, its relationship status would be "it's complicated." Not because philosophers are particularly known for romantic intrigues, but because of their relationships with scientists.

The philosophic man today has a tension concerning science. Philosophy delivers the beautiful complications of mystery, and science demolishes ignorance – so science is seen, by some, as a despoiler of philosophy's game.