

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday this week, I thought I would tell you about three Americans who were geniuses but who all threw away their very special talents in some way. The first American I will tell you about is one of the greatest CHESS players in history, BOBBY FISCHER (pronounced 'Fisher'). Bobby Fischer was born in Chicago in 1943, but to understand Bobby Fischer's story you have to go back to 1917, when the RUSSIAN REVOLUTION happened. Like the French Revolution in 1789, the Russian Revolution involved the people in overthrowing and executing their king (TSAR NICHOLAS II - 'Tsar' is pronounced 'Sar' and the word 'Tsar' comes from 'Caesar').



From 1917, Russia was ruled by a COMMUNIST government, which renamed Russia, calling it the SOVIET UNION (or 'USSR' - which is where we get The Beatles' song 'BACK IN THE USSR' from). The communist government abolished private property (so you couldn't say that anything belonged to YOU - everything belonged to the STATE) and all businesses were told how much to produce and how much to sell it for. This is a very different way of running a country than the CAPITALIST way countries like the United States were run, where people got to own their own property and run their own businesses and sell their goods and services for whatever they could get for them. After the end of WORLD WAR II, when the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain combined to defeat Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union were the two biggest



SUPERPOWERS in the world, and they faced off against each other in a COLD WAR (as opposed to a shooting war) where the Americans tried to convince the rest of the world that CAPITALISM was the best way of running a country, and the Soviet Union tried to convince the rest of the world that COMMUNISM was better.

In scratching around for ways to show people that COMMUNISM was better, the Soviet Union found two areas where they thought that they could do better than the United States. The first was in SPACE, where the Soviet Union sent the first man into space (YURI GAGARIN) in 1961, but was beaten by the United States in the race to land a man on the moon with the American astronaut NEIL ARMSTRONG becoming the first man to walk on

the moon in 1969. The second was in CHESS, where the Soviet Union tried to ensure that the chess world champion would always be Russian, to show how the Soviet Union was much better at producing clever people than any other country. And the Soviet Union was really successful at doing this - the chess world champion when World War II ended in 1945 was a Russian, ALEXANDER ALEKHINE

(pronounced 'Alek - keen'), and when he died in 1946, he was succeeded by lots of Russian champions. The first was MIKHAIL BOTVINNIK, who held the title from 1948 to 1963, except between 1957-1958 when he lost the title to VASILY SMYSLOV but then won it back again, and between 1960-1961 when he lost the title to MIKHAIL TAL but won it back again. Then came TIGRAN PETROSIAN who beat Botvinnik to win the title in 1963, and stayed world chess champion to 1969, when he lost his title to BORIS SPASSKY. All of these champions were Russian, and no one seemed able to stop the Russian domination of chess.



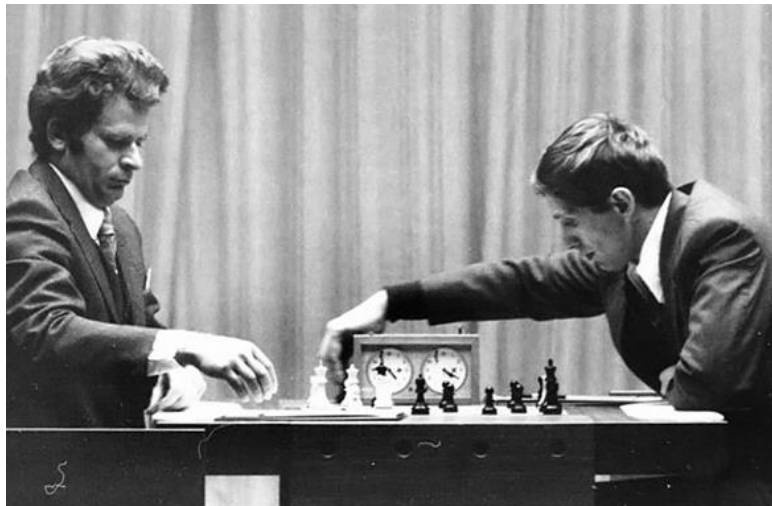
But in 1943, Bobby Fischer was born in the United States and from a very young age showed that he was an amazing chess player. When he was only 13 years old, in 1956, he played and beat Donald Byrne, one of the strongest American players, in a game which was so amazing it was called 'The Game of the Century'. The best YouTuber who goes through chess games goes under the name AGADMATOR, and he plays through this amazing game here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A82NI_42kgY

After this game, people started wondering - could Bobby Fischer take on the Russians and become the world chess champion? Fischer first tried to become world champion in 1962, when he was only 19 - but the Russians ganged up on him in the tournament to qualify to play for the world chess championship. When they played each other, they agreed to very quick draws so that they would be fresh as a daisy when playing Fischer, who was worn out playing very long and difficult games against his opponents. Fischer was so disgusted by this that he refused to try to become world chess champion, but in 1970, he was persuaded to try again and this time he succeeded, beating really strong players 6-0 (six wins, no defeats) along the way. So he qualified to play the Russian Boris Spassky for the world chess championship in 1972, in REYKJAVIK (pronounced 'Ray-kya-vik'), which is the capital of ICELAND. Fischer made loads of complaints about the match, like about how much the winner would make, and it seemed uncertain whether it would go ahead. But Fischer eventually turned up to play.

Now - Fischer had never beaten Spassky before, and the only time he had played Spassky, he had lost. And he made a terrible start to the 1972 match. He lost the first game by allowing his bishop to be trapped and taken, and then simply didn't turn up for the second match and so he lost that one as well. He was 2-0 down, and with one point for a win and half a point for a draw, with the first 12 points winning the match, Spassky seemed well on his way to

victory - all he had to do was draw 20 more games (and most chess games at this level end in a draw) he would be the winner. Fischer was still moaning about the conditions under which the match was played and it again looked like Fischer would forfeit (pronounced 'For-fit') the entire game by refusing to carry on. But Spassky bent over backwards to meet Fischer's demands because he wanted to beat Fischer not win by forfeit, and the game resumed. In the 3rd match, Fischer won - the first time he had ever beaten Spassky. The 4th match was a draw, and then in the 5th match, Fischer won again. He had clawed his way back into the game and they were now level 2.5 - 2.5. The 6th game was an amazing game which Fischer won, dominating Spassky so much that at the end of the game Spassky simply got up and applauded Fischer's win. Here is Agadmator going through that sixth game:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dv52uwNfFZg>

Fischer was now ahead, 3.5 - 2.5, and he would never lose the lead. He won the 8th game and the 10th game to take a three point lead 6.5 - 3.5, and while Spassky won the eleventh game to bring the lead down to two points (6.5 - 4.5), that was the last game Spassky would win. Fischer won the 13th game to reestablish his three point lead, and after a long series of draws took the score to 11.5 - 8.5, Fischer then won the 21st game to make the score 12.5 - 8.5, and having become the first player to get to 12 points, he was the chess world champion, at the age of only 29. The Americans were overjoyed - not only had they beaten the Russians in space, they had now beaten them at chess. Fischer came home to a hero's welcome, and became world famous.

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FISCHER IS KING

Stocks Jump

NEW YORK (U.P.)—The stock market rose 100.23 points today on a sharp rally after a week of losses. The Dow Jones industrial average closed at 8,822.41.

Details in Part 6, Page 11

Spassky Quits by Telephone in 21st Game

NEW YORK (U.P.)—Bobby Fischer, whose bold style and aggressive temperament forced the world to take a new look at the ancient game of chess, today became world chess champion in an anticlimactic telephoned resignation from Russia's Boris Spassky in the 21st game. In typical fashion, the new champion was late for his own coronation. Spassky called arbiter Leifur Skoldur to resign less than two hours before the scheduled resumption of the 21st game which was adjourned to Fischer's favor after 47 moves Thursday.

The Russian grandmaster had spent the night analyzing the game to find a way to win a draw and his title.

The title was worth \$100,000 in prize money to Fischer. Spassky's share was to be \$50,000.

But still to be settled.

Still to be resolved, however, was the \$1.5 million bonus of contract awarded last by Soviet producer Chertok for Fischer, whose previous (previous) match from

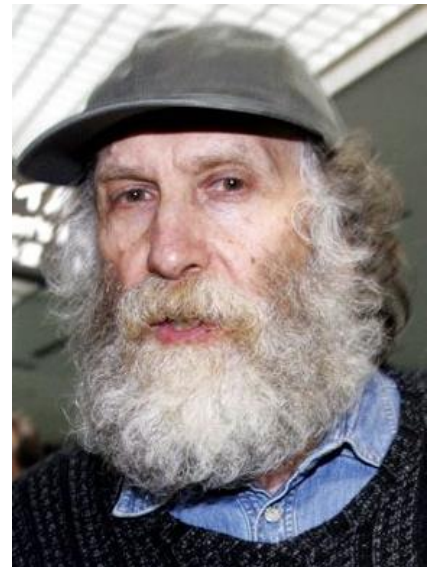
\$1 Billion U.S. Sales Accord Reached by Nixon, Tanaka

HONOLULU (U.P.)—President Nixon and Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka today reached a landmark accord on being under between the two countries after a long session. In a formal announcement, the government disclosed Japanese plans to purchase \$1 billion of U.S. goods and services to help ease pressure on the dollar.

In the semi-official statement, Tanaka and Mr. Nixon also were reported as saying that the policy makers' back-to-back visit to Hawaii would serve to further the need for relaxation of tensions in Asia.

And then... he threw it all away. He stopped playing chess, not participating in any tournaments, when it came to defending his title in 1975, he simply refused to play the match under the rules set by FIDE (pronounced 'Feed-ay'), the international chess federation. As a result he was stripped of his title and it was awarded to his challenger ANATOLY KARPOV - another Russian. And the title would remain with the Russians until 2007, with GARRY KASPAROV winning the title from Karpov in 1985, and VLADIMIR KRAMNIK winning the title from Kasparov in 2000. The title of world chess champion was finally wrestled away from the Russians by the brilliant Indian chess player VISHY ANAND in 2007, with the current world chess champion, MAGNUS CARLSEN, who is Norwegian, winning the title from Anand in 2013.

And Fischer was just left in the wilderness - when he should have been playing chess at his absolute peak, he was virtually homeless and unrecognisable, going on and on about how FIDE had cheated him when in fact he had thrown away everything he had worked so hard to achieve. He briefly came out of retirement in 1992, to play a match against Boris Spassky, which Fischer easily won 10 - 5. People were amazed that after 20 years out of the game that Fischer was still able to play so strongly, but he only showed flashes of his old brilliance. And then he disappeared again, wandering the world until his death in 2008, at the very appropriate age of 64 - appropriate because there are 64 squares on a chessboard. But before he died, it was rumoured that he was playing chess online and had played some very strange and weirdly brilliant games against the British grandmaster NIGEL SHORT. Here is Agadmator going through one of those games:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7B9p2PrsKWY>

So why did Fischer throw away his world title, so that he ended up spending 35 years of his life away from the chess world that he had spent the first 29 years of his life conquering? I think the answer is very simple: fear. Having become world chess champion, he was simply scared of losing to someone like Karpov. So never be scared! Playing and losing is way better than not playing at all.