

## Esther "Pop" Quiz #0104:

**"Beginner: Are You Familiar With the Common Bridge Conventions With Which When Bidding Suit Contracts (1) Responder or (2) Opener Can Publish to Partner His Specific Card Counts?"**

**Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen<sup>1</sup>**

To return to the "Esther Bridge Lessons," CLICK:

<https://esther-bridge.com/index.html>

To return to the "Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quizzes", CLICK:

<https://esther-bridge.com/quiz.html>

Perhaps the *most important bridge book of all time* is Larry Cohen's 1992 book, To Bid or Not to Bid: The LAW of Total Tricks, which won the American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) "Best Bridge Book of the Year Award". And Cohen's compatriot Marty Bergen, in Bergen's ABTA 1996 award-winning book, Points Schmoints!, also teaches the all-important philosophy underlying the "**Law of Total Tricks**". The "**Law of Total Tricks**" says:

**When you are bidding a Suit contract, assuming both you and Partner are bidding rationally, you will *almost always* (about 85% of the time in Esther's estimation) make a Suit contract if your contract is set at, or lower than, the number of Trump cards you hold minus 6!**

To read a summary of *empirical bridge research* about how well the "**Law of Total Tricks**" works, see the "**Esther Bridge Lesson**": "**Lagniappe: Esther Discusses '(1) Does the 'Law of Total Tricks' ('LOTT') Really Work, and (2) Is the 'LOTT' Magic?'**"<sup>2</sup>

As one might surmise, because the "**Law of Total Tricks**" is driven by Partners *both* knowing exact Trump card counts when setting Suit contracts, bridge players who believe in the "**Law of Total Tricks**" in the past several decades have put an

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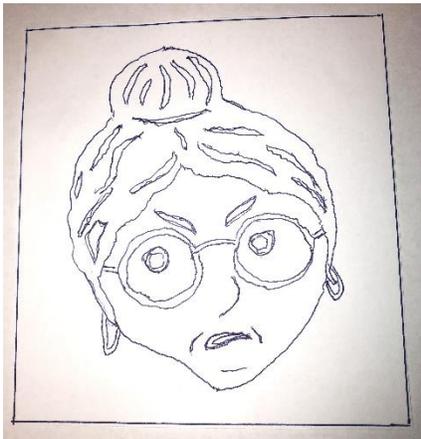
<sup>1</sup> As noted in an article in the Winter/Spring, 2024 article in The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Journal, [https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA\\_1\\_24.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA_1_24.pdf), Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So this article was really, really written by Bruce Thompson.

<sup>2</sup> Within the "Esther Bridge Lessons", go to:

[https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/LOTT\\_bad.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/LOTT_bad.pdf)

*increasingly strong premium* on those bridge conventions that communicate specific Trump card counts or other side-Suit card counts.

And Esther has become increasingly adamant about bidding at least Game in a Major *whenever* you know your Partnership holds **10+** Trump cards pretty much independent of your HCPs, although both you and Partner have some HCPs or you wouldn't both be bidding. But it is *entirely possible* that you can make a **4H** or **4S** contract with quite a bit *fewer* than **25** or **26** HCPs if you have a sufficient number of Trump cards! If your Partnership holds **10+** Trump cards, **BID GAME!!! BID GAME, promptly!!!**



**Esther Says:**

**Don't be like that idiot bridge-playing horse from the early 1900s, *Clever Hans*. *Clever Hans* could do math and count HCPs with his hoof, but that *dumb* bridge-playing horse did not have the smarts to realize that counting Trump cards when bidding Suit contracts may be *much more important* than counting HCPs!**

**That horse was simply not "clever" enough to understand what I *always* emphasis to my bridge students:**

***"Points are for No Trump!!!"*<sup>3</sup>**

Note. Information about and pictures of *Clever Hans* can be found at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clever\\_Hans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clever_Hans)

1. Please list some commonly-used bridge conventions by which **Responder** during an auction seeking a Suit contract can publish his specific card counts?
2. Please list some commonly-used bridge conventions by which **Opener** during an auction seeking a Suit contract can publish his specific card counts?

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<sup>3</sup> This is the bridge *incantation* taught *repeatedly, empathically* and *relentlessly* by the Savannah Bridge Club (SBC) LifeMaster who taught Bruce, and whom some SBC members affectionately call, "Yoda."

To see Esther's **suggested answers**, CLICK:  
[https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0104\\_a1.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/quiz/q0104_a1.pdf)