

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

March 24, 2006
Volume 14 Issue 11



VOICE WRITING CONTEST

Non-Fiction Winner

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Barb tells where you can find help

Straight From The Heart

Busby rants

Plus:

Lost & Found

From Where I Sit

The Good Life

Dear Barb

Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

AUSU This Month

and much more...

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March 24, 2006 - Volume 14, Issue 11

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We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@ausu.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.

I just wanted to say, how much I really enjoy Hazel Anaka's *From Where I Sit* weekly column. She is so witty and insightful, I look forward to reading her latest rave every week. Thanks Hazel, keep it coming!!

Andrea in Grande Prairie

Bushwoman Bonnie grows her hair and donates to Wigs for Kids for the third time! A three-peat endeavour! Funds this year go to the Canadian Diabetes Association !

Bonnie (aka "Bushwoman" Nahornick is hosting the Canadian Diabetes Association Fundraiser) on April 1, 2006. Proceeds from this event will be donated to the Canadian Diabetes Association and her hair will be donated to Wigs for Kids. Bonnie works in the Calgary Learning Center of Athabasca University as a student advisor.

Date: April 1, 2006
Location: c/o AUPE Calgary,
#600, One Executive Place,
1816 Crowchild Trail NW
Time: 2:00 to 4:00 pm

The Master Cutting will be performed by Robert Lawrence and then he'll shave Bonnie's head after the locks have been cut. The hair will be donated to Wigs for Kids, a not-for-profit organization providing hair replacement for children affected by hair loss due to chemotherapy, alopecia, burns and other medical conditions.

If you wish to sponsor Bonnie (funds are being collected for the **Canadian Diabetes Association**), note that cheques, made out to the CDA, can be post-dated for April 1, 2006. It is possible to donate by cheque, cash and/or charge card (Visa, Mastercard or American Express). Income tax receipts will be issued on donations over \$15. For more information, please contact Bonnie (aka "Bushwoman") at 860-6569 or email baldster2006@yahoo.ca

The 2006 Hair Event Canadian Diabetes Fund Raiser - April 1, 2006
For further information, please contact Bonnie Nahornick @ 860-6569

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Recently, I placed a sizeable wager with Wayne Gretzky against the Men's hockey team in Turin. One thing that my recent financial good fortune taught me is that in this crazy, mixed-up world in which we live, our priorities can sometimes become quite screwed-up. Caught-up like mindless automatons in the race for shallow material rewards, there is a tendency for us, I think, to overlook the fact that it is really the simple things (e.g., the feel of sunlight on your face, the smell of night-blooming jasmine in the springtime, doing a line of high-end Peruvian blow through a rolled-up hundred dollar bill out of the ass-crack of a spokes-model) that give life its meaning and integrity. I think a good thing for each and every one of us to do would be to take a good long look at ourselves in the mirror and ask ourselves a few basic questions. Do you truly need to own a wall-mounted plasma television set? Does it make you any happier to drive a Lexus SUV? Must you gorge yourself on prime rib and Alaska king crab four or five times a week? In my case, of course, the answers are I do, it does, and I must, respectively. But, of course, there is no one simple answer to this. It's all-relative or whatever.

Clearly, the point I am trying to make is that my wife should stop asking so many questions and sign that damn retroactive pre-nuptial agreement that my lawyers have drawn-up. Granted, like the majority of legal documents, most of it is written in a combination of Middle English and Latin. That does not mean that there is anything to hide. Nor does it mean that we should start playing Little Miss Got to Have All the Answers every time the subject comes up.

Personally, I blame the news media for the level of cynicism and mistrust that pervades every level of our society. Day and night, we are bombarded with reports of hijinks and corruption in politics, business, religion, you name it. If it weren't for the fact that I like the word hijinks so much, this would be even more aggravating. Far better all this nastiness should be covered up, say I. Why accentuate the negative? Better to concentrate on uplifting public interest items, such as the many success stories coming out of my own Busby's Discount Hair Replacement and Penis Enlargement Clinic. And surely, the listening and reading public would rather hear that Athabasca University students are entitled to a three per cent discount on all orders for pre-owned marital aids placed by credit card through my website before March 31st, than have to worry their heads over the latest scandal involving U.S. military brutality. Did I mention that that's three per cent off of my already deeply discounted prices?

In summary, it is only through opening our hearts to our fellow brothers and sisters, as well as all the furred and feathered creatures that surround us, that we can truly make a difference in this crazy old world of ours. As we enter into the Chinese Age of Aquarius, then, each of us should make an extra special effort to learn about and understand other cultures, and to embrace the *spiritus mundi* in all its forms. Like Alanis Morissette, we should contemplate the ironies of life. We should fling open the doors of our homes, unbatten the hatches of our hearts, throw wide the transoms of our souls, lubricate the orifices of our...well, you get the point. Above all, we should sign whatever documents come our way without it being made into such a federal case. Peace out.

VOICE WRITING CONTEST - 2006

NON FICTION CATEGORY FIRST PLACE WINNER!

Reinventing Who We Are: Human Beings and Our Place in the World

Bill Pollett

Here are some things that my daughter has taught me so far during this school year: ants never sleep; flamingos turn from white to pink because of the beta carotene content of the shrimp that make up most of their diet; the songs of whales are as structured, as lyrical, as complex as a piece of chamber music; the bumblebee bat, smallest of its species, weighs less than a single penny; the spider plant sitting covered in dust on our kitchen table eats the warm yellow sunlight that spills through the window over its leaves. All around us, in other words, the natural universe is thick with miracle and intrigue.

Of all the wonders that exist, though, the human brain - capable of inventing the wheel and the cloud chamber, the astrolabe and the harpsichord - must surely be one of the most remarkable. Try to imagine something else subtle enough to devise symphonies and separate sub-atomic particles. If (as quantum physics and religion tend to suggest) everything that exists is not just some spontaneous combustion of chance and happenstance, and there is in fact some all-encompassing intelligence underlying the workings of the universe, the human consciousness surely must be one of its more elegant manifestations.

However, at this time and place in the development of our species, it seems we're putting our minds to pretty shabby use. A case in point: the debates leading up to the recent federal election. As most of us know, the world we live in is fast approaching the brink of ecological collapse. Toxic air and fouled water; contaminated food supplies; depleted ozone and global warming; famine, war and disease: go ahead and put your money on which of the riders of the apocalypse will be the first to come thundering overhead. Oblivious to these hoof beats, though, our political leaders were content to chatter on about relatively minor issues of public policy and fiscal accountability, and we were pretty content to let them. Nary a word was said about how we are going to maintain our water supplies or cut back on our greenhouse gas emissions. By media consensus, the Green Party - the only political party to approach vital environmental issues with any degree of determination - was barred from the televised national debates, and effectively elbowed out the public spotlight. This happened with little public outcry. At the end of the election day, we voted into power a conservative minority government that will almost certainly further the corporate agenda of globalization and resource privatization. With the iceberg looming off our starboard prow, we were content to let our leaders quibble over how best to balance the Titanic's books, and which colours would most suitably for re-upholstering the deck chairs.

Napoleon famously dismissed the English as "une nation de boutiquiers". In a sense, it seems that all of us have become a nation, a species, of shopkeepers. Or perhaps this is too optimistic. To be a successful shopkeeper requires some pragmatism and a modicum of planning for future survival. It requires, too, integrity and a commitment to the community. To be honest, we in the western world are more like the anonymous and bored minimum wage employees of a corporate shopping mall. At best, we are a drab and sorry species of financial analysts and marketing shills, eager to flog our souls and our resources to the highest bidder.

Nor was the environment the only important issue to be ignored. Throughout the campaign, there was a lot of glib and patronizing gibberish about gun control and getting tough on crime (the rate of which has incidentally been decreasing every decade since the 1950s), but little was said about such important issues as Canada's role on the world stage, or public policy with respect to the ethical implications of scientific research - issues that have a direct bearing on the likelihood of our survival as a nation and as a species. Nor, of course, was there much discussion about increased funding for the arts, or improved access to post-secondary education - two of the ways in which we might expand our dwindling souls and sharpen our ever-diminishing vision.

It seems to me the loss of the wild places outside of ourselves is directly attributable to the loss of greatness inside of our own skulls. If the voices coming out of the last election are a true indication of our

concerns, then it is clear that we are no longer willing to think big, or to open ourselves to inspiration. For every melting ice shelf and every hectare of devastated rainforest, there is a corresponding loss of some fragile archipelago of human imagination, some preserve of wonder within us. Perhaps we are hypnotized by horror or overwhelmed by helplessness. Maybe we're just lazy and greedy. Whatever the case, we apparently can no longer see beyond the steering wheels of our Ford Explorers, or plan anything beyond the time it takes to microwave our frozen dinners. We are simply unable to see the enormous problems that are surrounding us, never mind making any real progress on finding a solution to them.

An argument could be made, of course, that this ignorance and narrowness of vision is nothing new; the ways of human beings have always been thus. The average medieval villager, exhausted from the labours of the day, probably had very little inclination to ponder the design of the constellations or to wonder about the steady stream of sparks pouring upward from the alchemist's chimney. It has always been a relatively small portion of the species that has been able to see past the day-to-day realities.

The difference, though, between this generation and those of the past is the extent to which nearly all of us have become profoundly cut off from the realities of the natural world. We eat anonymous, prepackaged foods that travel to us from hundreds or thousands of miles away, and we know little and care less about the conditions under which they were produced. We spend our leisure hours cocooned inside temperature-controlled homes, watching Friends reruns, rarely even bothering anymore to step into the darkness of our own backyards to gaze up into the night sky or listen to the scraping and singing of insects. Superior as we may feel to the peasants of old, their connection to the world beyond themselves would at least have given them the ability to understand that something is going very, very wrong with the patterns of the world.

In his essay "The End of the Wild", ethnobotanist Wade Davis argues that, at this point in the development of humanity, "[a]ll memory is convulsed in an upheaval of violence. There is a fire burning over the Earth, taking with it plants and animals, cultures, languages, ancient skills and visionary wisdom" (231). He goes on to assert that "[q]uelling this flame and reinventing the poetry of diversity is the most important challenge of our time" (231). The survival of our planet requires that we use all of the gifts of our rich human consciousness in order to devise and create a better and more sustainable mode of existence. Being all we can be must become more than a catchy military recruitment slogan. We need to snap out of our global-corporate approved magical thinking, and realize that the way we live is simply not feasible, not conscionable. We must feel with our physical bodies a sense of connectedness to the foods we eat, the air we breathe, the woods we walk through, the waters we swim in. We must learn to be less childish, and more child-like. We must open our eyes and sharpen our sense of wonder. Above all, we need to wake up to our own true natures, to understand that we are far more than simply producers and consumers living our lives in some vast department store. We are, in fact, walking miracles, alive in a universe seething with delight. We alone, out of all creation, have the power to change the destiny of worlds. And with that power comes the breathtaking responsibility of expecting more from ourselves.

Reference

Davis, Wade. The Clouded Leopard: Travels to Landscapes of Spirit and Desire. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd., 1998.

WRITING CONTEST RESULTS

The results of the fiction category of the contest are not yet available, but watch the Voice for the announcement, coming soon. Bill Pollett won the Non-Fiction category of the contest, for the above story: Reinventing Who We Are. The judges also elected to award two honourable mentions awarded to Corrina Cockins for *Where Have My Blue Skies Gone?*, and Sandra Livingston for *Undone*. *The Voice* would like to thank the judges of the non-fiction category, AU tutors Karen Davison, Lara Apps, and Veronica Baig.

Please Don't Let The Fugitive in Me Die, Dr. Livingstone

by Carole E. Trainor



I told you I would write you something someday about how the black crows study the world from my home province of Nova Scotia. How genuinely convinced I was that you would have some intellectual interest in this kind of thing -- knowing you the way I thought I knew you, then, that is. But I was wrong. You were appropriate in your response to me. I suppose I can find my way to see this now. You ignored what I said all together.

I can only assume then, that in the face of all this, you really do believe it is your job to do something more extraordinary for me than to use your mind to find your way into the mind of the female subject that is me. Well, then. Very well, then.

Yes, you are my professor and my graduate advisor and that's the role you signed-up for. That's the role you intend to keep and memorize 'til death tears us apart. And yes, I suppose, I too will come in time to accept this as just another banal, un-negotiable detail in my everyday academic existence.

Still, I thought you should know that your stony silence brought a measure of sadness and suffering. For three days, I worked to make meaning of your unapologetic response. I worked at understanding only this much of it, that perhaps it was meant to emphasize something that needed emphasizing. In this regard then, I am glad we were able to come to some kind of mutual understanding about the role each of us is to play inside this academic arena.

Already, I understand this much Dr. Livingstone. You are a serious academic with a job to do, and I am an individual in training. It is not your job to know me. And it is not my job to know anything of the person that is inside you. Well, then, so it is. In time, I too, perhaps, shall write of the material world in long drawn out, endlessly exhausting phrases that make little to no sense to most of the world's women (never mind the poorest of the poor). And you shall be among those who stand to applaud me when I no longer make sense to them or myself.

But enough of them. What of me, Dr. Livingstone?" In the meantime, what of me? In what small, dark corner are they bound to find me before I fossilize, flesh and bones shrivelled up from this petty, bourgeois treatment you deem my necessary education?

Will it be you to assign me a grade, any grade at all? For having the scruples to take my thesis proposal to the floor before I forget there are others who can't even spell the word "thesis"? Or would you prefer that I perform such illicit acts in the privacy of my own home? Look at me, Dr. Livingstone. I am a fugitive on fire confined to the walls of this concrete tomb, hoping, in time, to fill my plate with my share of red meat in the name of education. Well, do you concede or do you not? Eat or be eaten. Is this not the nature of the beast of education today? Eat or be eaten?

If you knew anything about my female kind, you would know at least this: they will gossip of my drop-dead dramatics for the next ten years the minute that I succeed in making my escape from the confines of their boring, academic notions of what constitutes women's motivations. Even as I lay shrivelled to the size of a small pathetic lizard in the corners of their academic rooms, they will hate that I was able to find my way out and through.

There'll be a few tears of empathy. Even less heartfelt compassion expressed. They'll come to my dead flesh with the eyes of their judgment. Only now, it will be hidden under the guise of their scientific inquiry! See them scorch my skin with the fire of their fierce scrutiny. "Why did she die in this manner? What kind of radical statement was she trying to make? Was she in need of therapeutic intervention? A self-

proclaimed introvert? Let us get to the root of her now! Why in God's name would she wear those pants and running shoes that colour to die in?"

Do you hear what they'll be saying behind my back? Yet, they will be so wrong about me, Dr. Livingstone. I know that you have great patience for polite people who eat wholesome grains and savour the texture of milk pudding. I, on the other hand, don't. I only have patience for those whose minds are on fire with the flame of an idea so wild and strong that even the winds of March must bow to the force of it. This is what I have patience for. Please don't let the fugitive in me die, Dr. Livingstone. I beg this of you.

AUSU THIS MONTH



ELECTION 2006 - NEW COUNCIL ELECTED

AUSU election 2006, is over! The new council has begun a 30 day orientation period, after which it will become the new representative board for AU undergraduate students.

Five incumbents will be returning for another term, and four new members have joined the AUSU ranks.

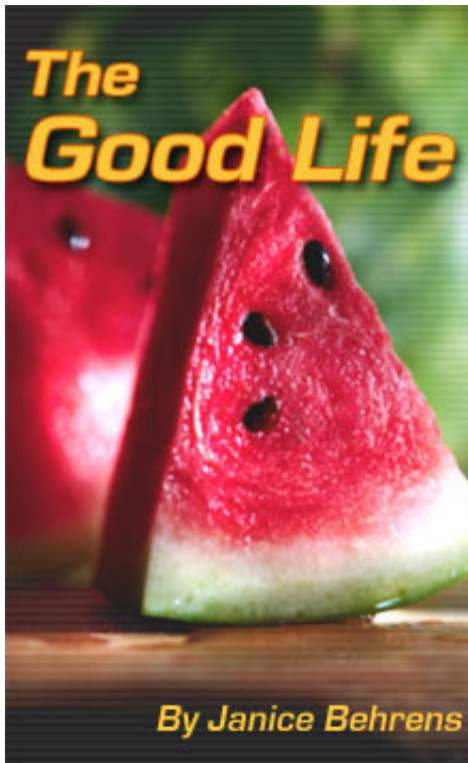
This new council is the most representative of AUSU demographics ever. 40% of the membership resides in Alberta, 28% in Ontario, 10% in British Columbia and 5% in Saskatchewan, with the rest in other parts of Canada or in other countries. Of the nine new council members, four are in Alberta, four in Ontario, and one in British Columbia. This matches quite closely to our distribution of members. Additionally, the AUSU membership is 66% female, as is our new council, whereas the last council, when elected, was 77% female.

The council executive positions will be elected by a vote of council at the end of the orientation period. While council will serve for two years, AUSU is considering bylaw changes that would see the executive re-elected each year by an internal mid-term election. This would ensure that executives are still able to devote the time required to their positions, and allow council members who have served for a year and become well versed in council's governance model and ongoing projects to have a chance at an executive position.

Unfortunately, voter turnout for the election was poor (105 ballots returned), despite nearly five months of advertising and an unusually high level of interest in the election. However, this election did boast the highest number of candidates of any previous election on record, and many more students inquired about running but decided not to, primarily because many felt they did not have the extra time to devote to council at this point in their studies. This high number of inquiries about council positions shows a high level of interest in council overall, though this did not translate into a significant voter turnout.

Nevertheless, AUSU members will continue to have an ongoing opportunity to shape the mandate of their council by providing feedback and suggestions over the coming term. AUSU members have provided an exceptionally high level of input to council over the past year, helping to ensure that AUSU continues to provide services relevant to its members. We believe that this ongoing feedback is more important in shaping the services that AUSU provides than any single event such as an election. Members are reminded that they may write our office with any concerns, or just to comment on their Athabasca experience. AUSU tracks all types of student concerns, even if students do not wish to have their names or contact information recorded. When areas of ongoing problems are identified, AUSU is able to approach the university with statistical data and seek change. This approach has been effective in the past, and we hope members will continue to let us know what they do and do not like.

Thank you to everyone who voted and supported their council in this election.



Taking a Step

As all of us who have said goodbye to our early-thirties are aware, it truly does become more and more difficult to stay in shape, as you get older. Gone are the days when all that was required to stay lean and healthy were a couple of hours every weekend of dancing at the discotheque or choosing chicken instead of beef every once in awhile. As the body's metabolism inevitably slows down for each of us, it requires more and more activity to stay on top of our health and weight goals.

In one of life's little ironies, however, the vast majority of us tend to become quite a bit less active as we age, right at the time when our well being demands that we ramp up our exercise. Let's face it, exercising becomes more difficult the older we get. Our joints stiffen, our muscles tighten, and we lose some of our range of flexibility. Injuries (and the time spent recovering from them) become a common reality. And then, of course, there is the psychological weariness factor. It is that feeling that we just have too much on our plates already. It gives rise to the temptation to settle down right after dinner with a cup of tea and a book.

On the other hand, all of those nagging symptoms of aging can be dramatically reduced by a regimen of physical exercise and adherence to a health-conscious diet. When we commit ourselves to a healthier and more active lifestyle, we are able to slowly, bit-by-bit, gain momentum for ourselves. The more we exercise and stretch, the stronger and more flexible we become. The more small victories and accomplishments we achieve, the more we are psychologically motivated to keep going. As we know, healthy choices can be just as addicting as unhealthy ones.

The question is, of course, how and where to get started. Like most seemingly daunting problems that confront us, the answers are really quite simple. A good place to begin is to change the relationship we have with our food. Too often, when we think of shaping up, we think of dieting. Since very few of us want to spend the rest of our lives on a diet, we tend to get ourselves involved in the latest fad diet that will help us quickly lose pounds so that we can get back to our "normal" lives. It's the typical approach that we have to our health, that being if something is broken, it needs to be fixed. This is just like a car with faulty brakes that needs to go the repair shop. You've heard it before, but the truth is worth repeating. Diets and especially crash diets simply do not work.

The only thing that does work in this regard is to pay more attention to the things that we are eating. Eating good food is one of the great joys of life, and it needs to be treated as such. Every meal should, in some way or another, be a special occasion for us. We need to slow down and enjoy the process of preparing the food, as well as the distinct pleasures that each of the flavours and aromas gives us.

Exercise, the other half of the physical well-being equation, should also be treated as a source of pleasure, rather than a chore to be grimaced through and gotten out of the way as quickly as possible. It's all subjective of course, but personally I can't think of a worse way to spend time after work than to sit myself on a stationary bicycle in a gym and grind away in futility for forty-five minutes. If you're like me, perhaps an hour of kicking a soccer ball around with your husband and children is a better option. I also thoroughly enjoy walking, which, when done four or five times a week for an hour or so at a brisk pace, is more than enough to give you the added boost of energy you need to get through the week.

There is a Chinese aphorism that states that ten thousand steps each day is the road to good health. Why not take that first one?



From Where I Sit

Hazel Anaka

Airport Adventures

My flight to Salt Lake City was not my first one since 9/11. I knew what to expect. Allow 2 to 2 ½ hours time for check-in and customs on international flights. Have a passport to make the security checks go easier. Don't pack your handgun, heroin or nail file. No ignorant remarks about explosives or hijackings. Don't be a visible minority male with a beard and a name of Mohamed.

How did I get lucky? Zahir searched my purse and carry-on bag. Shirley did my above-waist pat-down and chemical check of my purse contents and cell phone. Remove my shoes and be checked with the metal detection wand (front and back, up and down, and back and forth).

"How'd you guys pick me?" I asked. "It's random, your number came up." "If my number was going to come up couldn't it have been a lottery number?" Zahir points at the flight number, date, seat number that are on my boarding pass and says, "Look here are some numbers you can play." I may have to try those.

Shirley offers to do the search in private or do it right there. I ask her if this is her favourite part of her job. "No, I hate it," she admits, "but I have to do it." With a mid-section roll and shall we say, an ample bosom, it is easy to see why someone would think it is possible to hide something in a bra.

I got lucky with these people. They were respectful and somewhat reluctant to do what they had to do. They thanked me for my co-operation. They revealed a tiny bit of humanity with the distinct possibility of a sense of humour. They weren't over-zealous, heavy-handed or arrogant. They didn't flaunt their authority or bully me with tone or action. It was a forced social transaction between human beings. They need to do their job. I need to get on the plane. If we each 'play nice' this part will be over sooner and we can all get on with what we need to do. No sweat.

My flight was an hour late departing. Roy and I had had to do our tearful good-bye at the point of check-in, so I had a lot of time to kill before the flight. My book wasn't much comfort. I kept getting distracted by a new species of creature, that being male business passengers wearing headsets and carrying cell phones. Instead of just ticking off the people around them

with loud, oh-so-important conversations, they pace and cover a lot of ground spreading their rudeness over larger and larger areas of the lounge, seemingly talking to themselves.

On the flight home, I met a woman who had left Edmonton that morning at about 5:00 a.m., gotten as far as Salt Lake, missed her connection by 12 minutes, waited for nine hours in the airport, and then returned to Edmonton later the same day. Apparently, Delta over-books each flight and couldn't have gotten her to Baton Rouge until Tuesday. By then, her training session would already be over. I have nothing to complain about, from where I sit.



Dear Barb:

I think I may have a problem. About a year ago, a casino opened in my city. Prior to that, I was not exposed to much gambling. My husband and I started going weekly for entertainment. We had a lot of fun and were able to gamble only a certain amount of money. However, I've had a couple of big wins and now I can't seem to stop gambling. When my husband is at work during the day, I go to the casino. I am starting to lie to my family and friends about where I am. If I tell them I was at the casino, they tell me I have a problem. I'm starting to believe them, because I'm doing things I wouldn't normally do, like lying and using household money to gamble. I know I need some help, but I don't know where to go.

Brenda - Ottawa

Hi Brenda, admitting you have a problem is a huge step on the way to recovery.

The following is a description of problem gambling, as provided by the National Council on Problem Gambling.

Problem gambling includes all gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits. The essential features are increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to bet more money more frequently, restlessness or irritability when attempting to stop, "chasing" losses, and loss of control manifested by continuation of the gambling behavior in spite of mounting, serious, negative consequences. In extreme cases, problem gambling can result in financial ruin, legal problems, loss of career and family, or even suicide.

You obviously have some of the behaviours included in this definition. Do not think of yourself as weak as anyone who gambles has the potential to develop a gambling problem. Many factors contribute to an individual developing a gambling problem. These may include genetics, upbringing, values and an individual's ability to handle stress.

The following are ten questions prepared by the National Council on Problem Gambling. If you answer yes to any of these questions, they suggest you seek professional help.

1. Have there ever been periods lasting 2 weeks or longer when you spent a lot of time thinking about your gambling experiences, planning out future gambling ventures or bets, or thinking about ways of getting money to gamble with?
2. Have there ever been periods when you needed to gamble with increasing amounts of money or with larger bets than before in order to get the same feeling of excitement?
3. Have you ever felt restless or irritable when trying to stop, cut down, or control your gambling?
4. Have you tried and not succeeded in stopping, cutting down, or controlling your gambling three or more times in your life?
5. Have you ever gambled to escape from personal problems, or to relieve uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, anxiety, helplessness, or depression?

6. Has there ever been a period when, if you lost money gambling one day, you would often return another day to get even?

7. Have you lied to family members, friends, or others about how much you gamble, and/or about how much money you lost on gambling, on at least three occasions?

8. Have you ever written a bad check or taken money that didn't belong to you from family members, friends, or anyone else in order to pay for your gambling?

9. Has your gambling ever caused serious or repeated problems in your relationships with any of your family members or friends? Or, has your gambling ever caused you problems at work or at school?

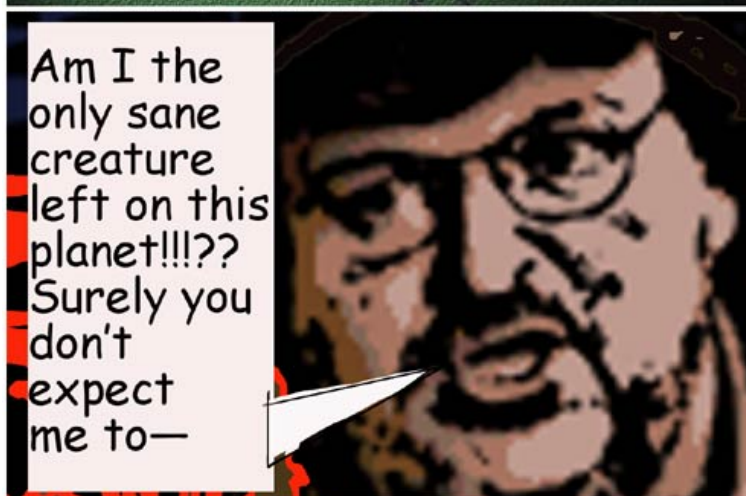
10. Have you ever needed to ask family members, friends, a lending institution, or anyone else to loan you money or otherwise bail you out of a desperate money situation that was largely caused by your gambling?

There are various sources offering help to the problem gambler. Begin by checking out Gambler's Anonymous. Their website is located at <http://www.gamblersanonymous.org/mtgdirCAN.html> and lists where and when meetings will be held throughout Canada.

The 12-Step Program has been very successful in treating a variety of addictions. Your local library will have books on this form of therapy, as well you can check out the website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/12-step_program for more information about the 12-Step Program.

Good luck Brenda. I hope I have been able to direct you to the resources you need.

E-mail your questions to advice.voice@ausu.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality: your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.





Some Good Ways to Spend Your Time

Take a six-inch by six-inch square cutting from the black coat of a scarecrow at midnight during the dark of the moon when the corn is high. (For this, you will need to sneak out of your bedroom window with your son's Swiss Army knife tucked into the pocket of your jeans.)

For one month, no matter where you go, take an alternate route.

Write the name of your lover on a slip of paper. Place it inside the hollow of a sun-bleached coyote skull. Hang it by a cello string from the highest limb of a sycamore tree.

For one week, eat nothing but vegetables and fruits that you've never tasted before.

Burn a mixed CD of songs with the words "jelly roll" in the lyrics.

Contrive a way to make love in a greenhouse or a vegetable patch, with naked legs and arms all mixed up with the roots of plants.

Bury your arms up to your elbows in the clay of a river delta. Yell out "Hallelujah!" and really mean it.

Get in your car and start driving. Sing along with Louis Armstrong. Keep driving until you reach the ocean. Take the time to lift up rocks.

For at least one day, really listen to everything your family and friends are saying to you, instead of just pretending to while you think of what to say next.

Make new friends by taking up curling or joining a coven of witches.

Invite some friends over for French fries and caviar. Let there be accordions.

Devote your life to learning the art of swallowing fire or making the perfect crepe.

Find more time in your life for Russian novels, horse races, metaphysics and foosball.

Spend several days and nights wandering about town with a tape recorder, capturing the sounds of: feral cats walking on brittle snow, the creaking floorboards of a church, a candle puffed out by a single breath, the whistle of a passenger train, a snatch of opera from an opened window, the crackling of a bonfire on a beach, and a couple laughing on a black iron balcony.

Write up instructions for your New Orleans-style jazz funeral.

Try not to say, "I love you too." If the reason you love somebody is because they have no fear, they have freckles on the nape of their neck, and they can peel an apple in one long piece, then tell them so. Right now. Before it's too late.



Boycott Canada

Mandy Gardner

Allegations of mass animal cruelty in Atlantic Canada have been flooding in from around the world. Pressure groups in the US, Britain, Japan and several European countries are introducing a blanket boycott on Canadian imports, such as salmon, cheese and maple syrup.

The public outcry has arisen over Canada's annual seal cull, which takes place largely in Newfoundland. The cull targets over 300 000 animals (killed with guns and often clubs) so that fish populations may be preserved for the maritime fishermen and native populations who depend on marine life for food and livelihood.

Following massive worldwide protests in the 1970s, Canadian law was changed to make the slaughter of baby seals illegal, something that most modern-day protestors are not satisfied with. Whether the seals

are young or old, the fact remains that, according to a 2001 veterinarian report, half of the seals are conscious while being skinned.

The *Independent on Sunday* has just run a story entitled, "Canada defends seal cull while world calls for a trade boycott." The article features a large colour photo of a man, club poised in an intimidating way over the head of a small and obviously distressed seal. Is this what the world thinks of when you say, "I am Canadian"? It sure is now! So much for wearing the flag and feeling secure in the knowledge that nobody will mistake you for an American and hate you.

Naturally, to put on the defensive for my homeland, I first moved to defend native's rights in this debacle. I have stated clearly that this cull is merely part of an Arctic cultural tradition. It has been happening for centuries, if not a thousand years. The seal hunt is and always has been important to the Arctic people who may have little access to fresh food throughout the year. As well, it is important to maritime fishermen who have latched onto the seal cull as a way to maintain fishery stocks from depletion.

On second thought, however, why should I defend such a barbaric custom? People need to eat. I cannot fathom turning our whole country into vegetarians with one protest. But, there is just no good reason to club any animal to death. Nor is there reason to kill an animal and leave the carcass to rot. I am therefore joining the boycott, but I do so reluctantly. Canada needs to listen to the world, just as every other controversial nation should do. How can we judge others if we cannot take criticism constructively? The Canadian economy stands to jeopardize over \$3.5 billion in seafood trade to the United States only if a compromise cannot be reached.

Reference

Lean, G.; Owen, J.; and Woolf, M. (2006, March 19). Canada defends seal cull while world calls for a trade boycott. *The Independent on Sunday*. Retrieved from <http://news.independent.co.uk/environment/article352201.ece>

IFAW (March 2001). *Veterinary Report Canadian Commercial Seal Hunt Prince Edward Island*. http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/dfiles/file_95.pdf (requires Acrobat free pdf reader)

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Contributed by Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

LEARNING MATTERS BURSARY

Administrator: C.S.T. Education Charity

Award Amount: \$2,500.00

Notes: For students with financial need who are Canadian citizens.

Contact Information:

Peter Lewis - VP Operations

Address: 600-240 Duncan Mill Rd.

Toronto, Ontario M3B 3P1

Phone: (416) 445-7377 Fax: (416) 445-1708

Toll Free: 1-877-333-7377

Web Site: <http://www.cst.org>; E-mail: info@cst.org

Lilly - MDAO Moving Lives Forward Scholarship 2006

Administrator: Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

Award Deadline: Friday, April 28, 2006

Notes: The "Lilly-MDAO Moving lives Forward Scholarship" will help 6 scholarship recipients from across Ontario with mood disorders resume their studies and achieve their goals by providing them with financial assistance. Application forms for the 2006 Scholarships can be downloaded here:

<http://www.moooddisorders.on.ca/news.html>

Contact Information:

Phone: 416-486-8046

Fax: 416-486-8127

Toll Free: 1-888-486-8236

Web Site: <http://www.moooddisorders.on.ca>

E-mail: info@moooddisorders.on.ca

Application Address: <http://www.moooddisorders.on.ca/news.html>

APEGGA MILLENNIUM SCHOLARSHIP (2)

Administrator: APEGGA Education Foundation, The

Award Amount: \$2,000.00

Award Deadline: Saturday, July 15, 2006

Scholarship Criteria: Alberta resident. Intended to assist the children of APEGGA members to pursue a post-secondary education. Based on academic achievement with significant weight placed on accomplishments in other areas. Must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. Contact for more information.

Contact Information: 1500 Scotia One, 10060 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 4A2

Phone: (780) 426-3990

Fax: (780) 426-1877

Toll Free: (800) 661-7020

Web Site: <http://www.apegga.org/Members/ScholarshipsAwards/schlist.html>

Voice Events Listings

On and off campus events worldwide

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with the word "events" in the subject line.

british columbia

SPRING THEATRE CLASSES

Feburary 06 to May 01, 2006 - Kelowna, BC
Kelowna Actors Studio - Ticket Prices very reasonable
Kelowna Actors Studio - 250-862-2867
info@kelownaactorsstudio.com
<http://www.KelownaActorsStudio.com>

SEINENDAN THEATRE COMPANY OF JAPAN

March 10 to August 11 - 8:00 PM - Victoria, BC
Metro Studio - Ticket Prices - All seats \$18
(250) 383-2663 - info@intrepidtheatre.com
<http://www.intrepidtheatre.com>

ontario

It's A Family Affair - March Break

March 11 to 19 - 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Hamilton, ON - Dundurn Castle
\$10.00 - Adults; \$ 8.00 - Seniors/Students
\$ 5.00 - Children; \$25.00 - Family
FREE - 5 yrs and under
905-546-2872 - dundurn@hamilton.ca
Price includes admission to Dundurn Castle and the Hamilton Military Museum. You are invited to Dundurn Castle to discover what it was like to live and play above stairs and work and live below stairs. Enjoy an eye spy at the Hamilton Military Museum and crafts and dress up at the activity centre.

CHEKHOV LONGS...IN THE RAVINE

March 08 to March 26, 2006
Toronto, ON - Factory Studio Theatre
Tues-Thurs \$20 (\$15 students & seniors)
Fri \$25; Sat \$28; Sun Pay-What-You-Can
416-504-9971 - <http://www.factorytheatre.ca>
Adapted by the original company from the novella by Anton Chekhov, Russia's peasant village society in 1900 is brilliantly captured in this bittersweet tale of the affluent Tsybukin merchant family as it falls apart.

EXHIBITION

On now to June 17, 2006 - 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Hamilton, ON Museum of Steam and Technology
\$6.00 - Adults; \$4.00 - Seniors/Students
\$3.00 - Children; \$15.00 - Family
905-546-4797; steammuseum@hamilton.ca
When Push Comes to Shove: Structure and Design in Buildings and Technology An interactive look at how things stand up and why they fall down, with a special emphasis on buildings, bridges and working machines.

ARNAUD MAGGS NOMENCLATURE

On now to March 26, 2006
Oshawa, ON - The Robert McLaughlin Gallery
Ticket Prices - By donation - Free refreshments
905.576.3000
communications@rmg.on.ca - <http://www.rmg.on.ca>
Arnaud Maggs will be in attendance at the Closing Reception Sunday, 26 March 1-3 p.m.

SCIENCE SATURDAYS WITH MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

January 22 to May 28, 2006 - Hamilton, ON
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM - Hamilton Children's Museum
Adults - \$1.00 - Children - \$3.00
905-546-4848 - childrensmuseum@hamilton.ca
McMaster University science students provide hands-on science activities for children and families. Venture Physics and Let's Talk Science Team bring along "the phunky physics roller coaster" and other creative science demonstrations and activities. DATES: Saturdays, March 12, 19 & 26; April 16 & 30; May 21 & 28. 6 yrs and up

quebec

INTERNATIONAL EDGY WOMEN FESTIVAL

March 06 to March 30, 2006 - Montreal, QC
Studio 303, Sala Rossa - <http://www.edgywomen.ca>
Featuring innovative work by women artists from all disciplines, the festival includes several in-theatre showings of multidisciplinary performances, music and videos, a site-specific intervention in retail stores downtown, a zine fair, artist talks and workshops.

maritimes

ST. JOHN'S CIRCUS: GROUP PRACTICE

St Johns, NF - Tuesdays - Mun Athletics building - FREE
<http://nick.wirelesszero.net/cgi-bin/juggling/YaBB.cgi>
Everyone's a Star! Juggling, Unicycling, Magic, Clowning, Poi, Diabolo, Fire, and whatever YOUR skill(s) is!
Tues At 7:00 PM - Thurs At 7:00 PM - Sat At 2:00 PM
Sessions usually run about 3 hrs...

123 SENSE

St Johns, NF - Saturdays - 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Eastern Edge Gallery, 72 Harbour Drive
free - 709-739-1882 - <http://www.easternedge.ca>
Jean Klimack (Winnipeg); Dave Yonge (B.C); Tania Lewis (NY/Newfoundland)
These three artists present in different mediums (video, drawing and photography) odd senses of the everyday, urban myths and gentrification.

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with "events" in the subject line.



Contributed by Lonita Fraser

ON-LINE METHODS IN CHILDRENS' LANGUAGE PROCESSING

March 21 - 22, 2006 - New York, NY, USA

<http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/~efernand/childlang/>

This workshop is the first scientific gathering specifically dedicated to a new field of research that explores such issues, experimental developmental psycholinguistics. This workshop provides a forum in which scholars from different areas of expertise (psycholinguistics, language acquisition, and cognitive neuroscience), particularly those interested in applying on-line methods to study children's language processing, will discuss how current and developing empirical approaches can inform about language processing mechanisms in children.

26TH ANNUAL ANXIETY DISORDERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

March 23 - 26, 2006 - Miami, Florida, USA

<http://www.adaa.org/conference&events/AnnualConference.asp>

Our conference provides education to health care professionals, individuals with anxiety disorders and their families, and the media about the nature and management of anxiety disorders. It also provides a unique forum for clinicians, researchers and anyone affiliated with mental health care to learn about scientific advances and current practices in the diagnosis and treatment of anxiety disorders.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR SUPERVISORS (WEEKEND VERSION) - CALGARY

March 18 - 25, 2006 - Calgary, Alberta - Fee: \$1195 CAD

<http://www.peice.com/eventdetails.aspx?event=102514&ref=Allconferences&frfi=16734>

This 2-day course (offered over 2 consecutive weekends in Calgary only) presents practical principles to assist supervisors and managers in their efforts to motivate and mobilize team members toward the fulfillment of team and corporate objectives. A complete set of course materials (including a customized 22 page "DISC Behavioral Style" report for each participant) and lunch are included. Due to the highly interactive nature of this course, the session is limited to a maximum of 20 participants.

ON-LINE METHODS IN CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE PROCESSING

March 21, 2006 - March 22, 2006 - New York

Understanding how children process language, in real time, is necessary for building comprehensive theories about language acquisition. This workshop is the first scientific gathering specifically dedicated to a new field of research that explores such issues, experimental developmental psycholinguistics. This workshop provides a forum in which scholars from different areas of expertise (psycholinguistics, language acquisition, and cognitive neuroscience), particularly those interested in applying on-line methods to study children's language processing, will discuss how current and developing empirical approaches can inform about language processing mechanisms in children.

RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2006

March 24, 2006 - March 26, 2006 - Mont Tremblant, Quebec

<http://www.mfrc.mcgill.ca/?section=Conferences>

A conference fee will be charged to cover expenses (C\$250 for academics, C\$500 for practitioners and C\$100 for students). Presenters, discussants and chairs will be provided with free accommodation. Conference participants are responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses. Conference participants are eligible to pay discounted hotel rates starting at C\$199 per night, for arrival on Thursday March 23rd and departure Sunday March 26th. The conference will be held at the Fairmont Resort Hotel situated at the foot of Mont Tremblant in Quebec's Laurentians.

Know of a conference that is not on this list? Contact voice@ausu.org with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.

classifieds

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