

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 15 Issue 32
August 31, 2007



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Hurry Up and Wait
Dissecting the Doctor's Outer Sanctum

The Right Stuff
What Real Heroes Are Made Of

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THE VOICE MAGAZINE

August 31, 2007 - Volume 15, Issue 32

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We love to hear from you!
Send your questions and
comments to voice@ausu.org,
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THE VOICE MAGAZINE

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THE VOICE ONLINE:
www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published every
Friday in HTML and PDF
format

Contact *The Voice* at:
VOICE@AUSU.ORG

To subscribe for weekly email
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posted, see the 'subscribe' link
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Special thanks to Athabasca
University's *The Insider* for its
frequent contributions

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Heroes

Hero. The word gets used a lot. There are sports heroes and action heroes, hero sandwiches and superheroes. And now, apparently, there are UFC heroes—but a recent commercial for them only highlighted how far removed they are from what a real hero is.

The UFC is the Ultimate Fighting Championship, an entity that, according to their website, is “the world’s leading mixed martial arts sports association.”¹ Mixed martial arts is a combat sport in which competitors use a variety of fighting techniques: wrestling, jiu-jitsu, karate, kickboxing, judo, and boxing (among others) in supervised matches. On their website, even actor Jason Statham refers to the UFC fighters as “heroes,” and commercials for upcoming matches encourage viewers to watch their heroes at work.

Like ancient Roman wrestlers, modern-day boxers, and all manner of athletes between, the UFC fighters are admired for their physical feats. There’s no doubt that they are dedicated athletes who train hard to excel at their sport. But heroes? Not even close.

It’s true that heroes, like athletes, are noted for their bravery, their courage, their willingness to risk injury—even death—in contests of strength. But that’s where the similarity ends. Because real heroes don’t put themselves at risk for money or glory: real heroes are the people who put their lives on the line for someone else.

People like those who, in June, received Decorations for Bravery in a ceremony at Rideau Hall.

People like 23-year-old Rachel Davis, who was awarded a posthumous Medal of Bravery after she lost her life defending a teenage boy against a gang assault outside a nightclub in Vancouver, B.C.

People like Rocky Hanson and Bradley Patrick Roy Smith, both of Edmonton, who, while visiting relatives in a seniors’ residence, were alerted to a fire and ran back inside the burning, smoke-filled building to evacuate several residents before firefighters arrived.

People like 17-year-old Osman Hersi of Toronto, who rescued a blind man who fell onto the tracks at a busy subway station. On his way to school, the teenager saw the man fall off the edge of the platform and onto the tracks. Putting his own safety aside, Mr. Hersi jumped onto the subway tracks and helped the victim onto the platform just moments before a train sped into the station.

And people like Charles François Pelletier, of Victoria, B.C. In 2004, Mr. Pelletier was volunteering with the United Nations in Bukavu, Congo. When a gun battle broke out between rebels and the Congolese army, Mr. Pelletier helped evacuate 42 civilians from the Orchid Hotel. He guided the group to a safer position within the hotel, protecting them from gunfire and mortar rounds, and then acted as a human shield as he helped the fleeing occupants across an open yard to the safety of armoured personnel carriers.

These are the real heroes; they and the 31 others who received Medals of Bravery (and one Star of Courage) on June 15. For them, there are no multi-million dollar endorsement deals; no TV commercials. But they still stand head and shoulders above the so-called sports heroes and action stars. Miles above.

1 Ultimate Fighting Championship. “The New UFC Factsheet.” Retrieved August 30, 2007, from <http://www.ufc.com/index.cfm?fa=LearnUFC.FactSheet>



Virgo

August 23 - September 22

The glyph for Virgo comprises three straight lines with a horizontal line across. The three vertical lines are said to indicate action, harmony, and inertia.



Virgo is the sixth sign of the zodiac, occurring at the end of summer and the beginning of fall. It is the sign of the hard-working perfectionist. They are anxious to improve everything around them.

The planet Mercury rules Virgo and Gemini, causing nervous energy and constant activity. Virgos are busy organizing their surroundings. At times they become so absorbed in the minute details of a situation that they lose sight of the bigger picture.

Virgos are a negative sign, which causes them to draw inward, keeping their feelings well protected and hidden from others. They are sensitive, perceptive, and caring. Virgo, a feminine earth sign, is forever searching for the deeper meaning in situations.

Virgos are concerned with the health and well-being of others. They are planners who know exactly what their day will be like when they arise in the morning. Virgos' polarity is Pisces, from whom they can learn to relax and go with the flow.

When Virgos become angry they don't explode; rather, their anger smoulders and bubbles under their calm exterior. They carry lists, demonstrating their obsession to finish whatever they start. Virgos are good conversationalists, but have a tendency to put their foot in their mouth from time to time. They love to travel, but prefer that someone else make the arrangements.

Virgos are uncomfortable with their emotions and attempt to keep them under control. Those close to them realize that underneath that cool exterior is a seething mass of sexually charged energy. Virgos are both attracted to and upset by open displays of emotion. They love pets. If you are looking for a good topic to break the ice with a newly acquainted Virgo, talk about your pet dog or cat. Virgos admire intelligence, so be sure to read up on current events.

Virgos are the worriers of the zodiac, always preparing for what might go wrong. They have delicate nervous systems, and worrying causes them anxiety and emotional upset, resulting in physical ailments. Virgos often have well-proportioned bodies and are of average height. They generally have fair complexions, well-defined facial features, and musical voices. Virgos are consumed with their hair, spending an inordinate amount of time finding that perfect hairstyle.

Virgos' analytical minds prepare them for many professions, such as writer, art critic, scientific researcher, accountant, and contractor. Virgos are hard workers who become valuable employees. They strive for success, but have a slow, methodical approach to achieving their goals. Similar to Capricorns, Virgos tend to

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be workaholics. Their desire to be independent drives them to move ahead, although they prefer to work behind the scenes.

Positive Qualities: meticulous, reliable, practical, intelligent, analytical

Negative Qualities: super critical, fussy, worrier, perfectionist

Lucky Day: Wednesday

Birthstone: Sapphire

Most compatible marriage sign: Taurus, Capricorn

Famous Virgos: Mother Teresa, Harry Connick Jr., Lauren Bacall, Hugh Grant, Faith Hill, Keanu Reeves, Jerry Seinfeld

EDUCATION NEWS



Proposed university would be most expensive in Canada

If plans go ahead to split Sir Wilfred Grenfell College from its parent university, Memorial, it would not only create a new university in Newfoundland and Labrador—the move would also create “the most expensive university in Canada.”¹

Along with Memorial’s Grenfell campus, the university also comprises the St. John’s campus, the Harlow Campus (in Old Harlow, Essex, U.K.), and the Marine Institute, also in St. John’s.

The proposed split would see Grenfell College, in Corner Brook on the province’s west coast, become a new university separate from Memorial. (Plans are still in the works, but the new university would operate either with complete independence or in a hybrid form with some administrative ties still remaining with Memorial.)

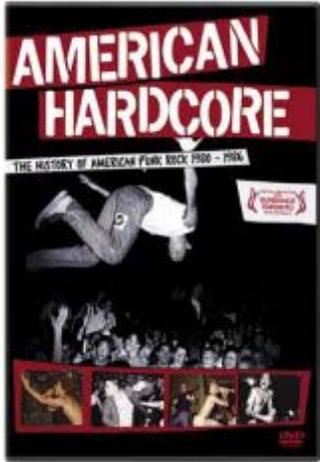
The majority of Grenfell students come from Newfoundland’s west coast—but with a declining population in the west, the campus’s proposed independence may come at too high a cost.

Currently, Grenfell costs nearly \$11,000 per student to operate each year. After the proposed split, Grenfell’s operating costs would jump to between \$12,000 and \$14,000 per student, exceeding those of Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, at present Canada’s most expensive school.

In order to remain viable, an independent Grenfell would need to double their enrolment, yet, with the population decline, the “college is already struggling to attract more than 1,000 students a year.”¹

Many are worried that the increased costs will be passed on to students. As Katherine Giroux-Bougard, with the Canadian Federation of Students, told CBC News, “I don’t want students to suffer in the end with a poorer quality institution, or unnecessary costs that are at the expense of other expenses that should be done.”

¹ CBC News, 2007. “N.L. college plan would create Canada’s most expensive university: report.” Retrieved August 30, 2007, from <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/newfoundland-labrador/story/2007/08/15/grenfell-update.html>

Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

DVD Movie Release: *American Hardcore: The History of American Punk Rock 1980 -1986*

Directed by Paul Rachman

Written by Steven Blush

Inspired by the book *American Hardcore: A Tribal History* by Steven Blush (Feral House 2006)

Remember playing war in grade school? Two teams would line up against each other at opposite ends of the playground, someone would yell "Charge!", and you'd run at each other full tilt and end up pummeling each other with your chubby little fists. For me it was one of the most exhilarating experiences of childhood; a thrilling bacchanalia of mutual fondness. But then the same adults

who wielded the strap and the belt got wind of it and squelched us, insisting that we children must not use violence for our enjoyment.

It was situations like this that made punk necessary.

This documentary shoots holes through a heap of media-fabricated fibs—that punk rock was an exclusively white movement, for example, or that it was solely Malcolm McLaren's fashion brainwave—and serves up a grassroots vision of punk as something a lot broader and deeper than the distinctive leather-and-safety-pin regalia of late '70's London. The Ramones are conspicuously absent, but then this isn't about the stars, even though some of these people did get famous eventually. It's about a countrywide underground rebellion against, among other things, hypocrisy, pretensions, the popular kids, the Reagans, the normal, the manicured, celebrity, conformity, and commercialism. Hardcore punk rock was the battle cry of those American youth who realized they had no significance to the establishment except as acne-ridden consumption zombies to whom all manner of useless goods could be marketed ad infinitum.

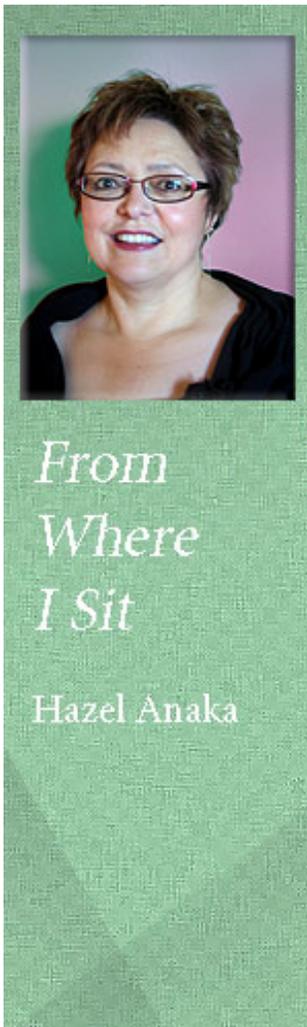
Take a gander at all the wonderful black-and-white photos in this documentary and you'll get a taste of how much fun punk was in its day. When you went to see a punk rock act you were part of the performance and your antics were filmed and photographed at least as often as the band's. You were not only part of the performance, you actually *belonged* to this wonderful tribe that for a brief moment thought and felt as one, who loved darkness, excitement, danger, and excess, who were all literally starving but somehow managing to acquire tattoos, booze, records, and sound equipment, all engaged in acting out the violent bravado of the truly vulnerable.

Like every popular movement, punk contained the seeds of its own demise, notably music that sounded like the howling of souls in perdition, destructive fans (there was no such thing as a return engagement), a complete lack of any structure within which to work toward political goals, an overwhelmingly masculine aesthetic, and ultimately a regression to a feral state which all but removed any initial sense of the movement's integrity (a gruesome story about a butchered sheep is a case in point). A deliberate courting of rejection precluded the long-term financial sustenance of the movement's artists, and an antipathy to rules ended up becoming oppressive in itself.

Present-day interviews with former champions of the movement, filmed against backgrounds of manicured lawns, suburban interiors, fountains, and swimming pools, affirm the final verdict that punk has passed on and that current mimickers are just carrying out historical re-enactment. Zander Schloss of the Circle Jerks makes this cogent remark regarding those who tried to keep the movement alive after the mid-'80s:

"Go home! Your cage is clean."

But is punk ever really dead? As a historical movement, punk's anti-music opened the door for ingenious artists, writers, performers, and composers whose work owes a large share of its visibility to the fact that punk preceded it and woke the world up to a prophetic vision whose accuracy mainstream society is just now coming to take seriously. Punk returned youth culture to the youth at a time when corporations were pouring billions into dictating soporific entertainment choices to the young. Without punk the spectacular range of musical exploration in the '80s might not have been understood, and youth might not have given each other licence to explore the dirty urban landscape of American disenchantment, an exploration still alive and vibrant today in ever-changing artistic forms.



The Waiting Room

Much of our lives are spent waiting. Waiting in traffic, waiting in lineups, waiting for word, waiting for the perpetually late, waiting for service. Some of us are better waiters than others. We people-watch. We read the latest thriller. We eavesdrop. We catch a snooze. We make lists recapping the day or planning for the next.

Others of us fret and fume. Check our watches. Curse the inconsiderate. Pace and plot revenge. Feed our ulcer.

Nowhere is waiting more practiced than in the offices of pros—doctors, lawyers, accountants, hairstylists, auto mechanics. It's routine, commonplace, expected. It's the norm. You may be the first patient of the day and still be kept waiting. Yours may be the first cut and colour, yet you wait. First car on the hoist doesn't mean first one off.

"Okay, just have a seat, it won't be long."

Right.

The waiting room. Have you ever wondered who decorates and furnishes these places? In my experience, they run the gamut from flea-market shabby to ultramodern chic. Bikini-clad babes, limited-edition art prints, Oilers posters, or pictures of hair models may adorn the walls. The best one has to be a poster with a tranquil, babbling brook, lush forest, and clear sky mounted on the ceiling over the gynaecologist's exam table.

Just relax now. This won't take long.

Shabby carpeting and worn furnishings don't speak well for the success of these joints. Cheesy furniture, circa 1960, doesn't inspire confidence that the advice or service dispensed is any fresher or more up-to-date.

And what's up with those nondescript beige chairs? Or those terrible moulded ones welded together in sections, usually with a little table attached? If we're expected to spend the best years of our lives waiting, the least they could do is give us good chairs. Ergonomic chairs. Comfy chairs. Clean chairs. And maybe some chair rails to prevent those unsightly scuff marks where the impatient have rubbed and gouged the paint.

Why not shock us with the latest, greatest paint colors? Give those walls a jolt. If nothing else, it's a sure conversation starter. As is the children's play area, complete with miniature kitchen play set or dreaded wire-and-beads gizmo. The endless whapping of those beads back and forth drives me to distraction. Other times I've been captivated by the innocence of the smallest among us. Unless, of course, they're whiny brats.

Can't forget the waiting room magazines. Though sometimes they're old enough to be museum quality, they also tell us a great deal about the lifestyle and interests of the person for whom we wait. Or perhaps who they believe their waiters are.

Do the countless copies of the old *Alberta Report* mean they loved that stuff, or just couldn't say no to the telemarketer selling subscriptions?

Westworld tells me he's an Alberta Motor Association member. *Canadian Living* tells me someone earned air miles for subscribing. The one-inch-thick *Brides* magazine at the beauty salon appeals to the young and in love. *National Geographic* awakens the visual. *People* and *Us* titillate with the latest dish on stars, superstars, and has-beens.

Cosmo shocks the sheltered. *Good Times* advises boomers on matters of health and finance and fashion. *Reader's Digest* is the waiting room icon. The orthodontist spoils his young patients with *Calvin and Hobbes* or *Far Side Gallery* cartoon books.

Some publications serve to educate. The endless wait can be spent poring over brochures like "Breast-feeding your Baby," "6 Reasons to Continue Chiropractic Care," "Total Person Concept in Healing," or "Care of Your Feet."

Eavesdroppers find waiting room conversations are one of two types.

Loud, obnoxious, self-serving talk slows the clock even further and makes the room oppressively small; enough to make the most gentle among us consider violence. Contrast that with the hushed, often worried tones exchanged between husband and wife, mother and child. Words of comfort and reassurance, words meant to distract.

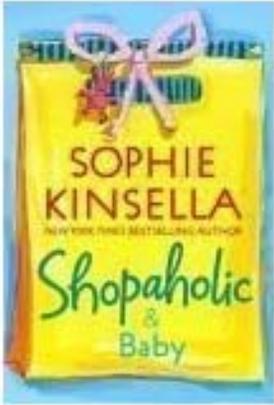
Frankly, I prefer the blandness of muzak over the uncomfortable, privacy-betraying silence. There's nothing worse than overhearing private conversations between doctor and patient or lawyer and client, especially when you're up next. Is it really anyone's business you're being audited by Revenue Canada? Or that you and hubby just updated your wills and left everything to The Centre for Ethical Treatment of Government Senators?

Waiting rooms aren't going away anytime soon, so just make the best of a bad situation. A flask full of relief may be the answer, from where I sit.

The Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

by
Wanda
Waterman
St. Louis



Sophie Kinsella - *Shopaholic & Baby*

Publication date: February 27, 2007

Publisher: The Dial Press

Rating: 8

When the retail-obsessed heroine of the *Shopaholic* series returns—working as a personal shopper in London and expecting her first child—it’s no surprise that she’ll be buying for two. And in *Shopaholic & Baby*, Becky Bloomwood (now Brandon) doesn’t disappoint, and neither does her creator, author Sophie Kinsella.

In this installation, Becky is indeed up to her old tricks, and Kinsella’s writing is as fresh—and funny—as ever. If you’re a fan of the series, you’ll have followed Becky from her first pangs of credit-card angst, through a trip to Manhattan, to marriage to PR wiz Luke Brandon, to finding a long-lost sister. Through all of Becky’s adventures, it’s a tribute to Kinsella’s talents that the pivotal premise of her books (Becky’s shopping addiction) hasn’t turned into a tired device.

In *Shopaholic & Baby*, the author keeps Becky hot on the shopping trail (a designer nursery is a must-have), but she also throws another interesting plotline in her heroine’s way. In Becky’s insatiable desire for the most fashionable designer pregnancy possible, she’s delighted to have landed an obstetrician who caters to the rich and famous. But trouble (what else?) arises when Becky discovers that the gorgeous doctor once dated Luke—and might even still be interested in him.

The usual misadventures and misunderstandings ensue as Becky hires an investigator to find out whether Luke and his glamorous ex-girlfriend are having an affair, and this fifth instalment in the *Shopaholic* series still has all the charm of the first.

In less talented hands, the character of Becky could easily have become an annoying, self-centred woman with nothing but the immediate gratification of shopping on her mind. But Kinsella has maintained the sense of innocence and good intentions that make Becky so likeable, even as the character has matured to face the responsibilities of marriage and motherhood.

In one scene early in the book, Becky is eagerly waiting to catch a glimpse of her baby on a sonogram screen. As the technician asks her to adjust the multitude of necklaces she’s wearing, it’s clear that shopping-obsessed Becky hasn’t changed a bit. Yet as she describes her “special pendants,”—maternity symbols, gestation crystals, and a “chiming ball to soothe the baby”—it’s clear that our somewhat hare-brained heroine is already doing her best to take care of her little one, even if it’s in her own unique *Shopaholic* way.

If you’re a fan of the impulsive Becky, you’ve probably read this latest instalment in her adventures (and have figured out the possibilities for another).

If not, you should definitely check out *Shopaholic & Baby*—but not before you’ve caught up on the earlier titles in this light-hearted series. It’s funny, fast paced, and a perfect antidote to the daily news.

AUSU THIS MONTH



Coalition for Student Loan Fairness

AUSU is currently investigating the Coalition for Student Loan Fairness (CSLF) to determine if participation with this group would be advantageous to our members. The group, a grassroots movement of student loan borrowers from across Canada, supports fairness in the loans repayment process.

The CSLF notes that Canadian students are charged a rate of 2.5 to 4.5% above prime for loan repayment, resulting in interest charges that can amount to as much as 33% of the loan principal over the lifetime of the loan. Borrowers who utilize interest relief during low-income periods may pay considerably more. Given that student loans are offered as a public service and incentive to learning, the high profitability of these loans is of concern to AUSU.

CSLF also notes that students over the age of 30 are not included in government surveys of student loan experiences. This is of particular concern to AUSU as the majority of our membership is 30 years of age or older and we know from our experiences with our members that the current loans program does not adequately serve these members, nor does it serve members who wish to work to support themselves while studying part-time.

CSLF also asks that the government provide an Ombuds office to handle student loan complaints—a change that would help address many of the problems we hear about regarding lost forms, incorrect instructions, and confusing requirements. Additionally, CSLF supports providing for consolidation of multiple student loans into a single loan with a single payment, a change that many students have asked for.

Members are encouraged to check out the CSLF website at <http://www.studentloanfairness.ca/index.php>

AUSU Frappr—Show Us Where You Are

On June 20 AUSU launched a Frappr member map on the front page of AUSU.org. Just three days later, nearly 140 members have added their dot to our map, and a "picture" of the dispersion of our website visitors is taking shape. We're thrilled to see so many of you leaving your little mark on our site, and we love all the great pictures and shoutouts people have uploaded. Members who have left anonymous pins are encouraged to add their name (or alias, if you are shy) so we know you are all different people! If you haven't added your mark, drop by www.ausu.org—and don't forget to read the posting information if you are new to Frappr.



At Home: Harper's Conservatives accused of mishandling \$11 million in campaign funds

Liberal leader Stéphane Dion has announced his anger at the Conservatives during his caucus meeting this Wednesday, calling for Prime Minister Stephen Harper to “open the books”¹ and let Elections Canada watchdogs see exactly where his party's campaign money went.

The accusation came following the employment of William Corbett by Elections Canada to look more closely at the expenditures of the Conservatives during the last federal election.

CBC News Today said that there had been \$11 million “shuffled from Tory ridings to the central campaign.”² The party members are under suspicion of using advertising funds to support the national campaign or to pay for TV and radio ads for the advancement of the federal party.

There is no mention of the financial investigation on the Conservative's website, which is surprising considering how heavy the site is with denunciations of Stéphane Dion, Jack Layton, and Green Party leader Elizabeth May.

The party has spent a great deal of time and effort on making negative statements about its competition: “Layton's Priorities Keep Changing”; “Stéphane Dion: All Negative, All the Time”; “More Conspiracy Theories from the Red-Green Coalition.”³

Given this aggressive attitude, it's odd that no Conservative spokesman has stepped up to defend the party and effectively call someone crazy.

In response to questions about the Liberal party's own track record, particularly the sponsorship scandal, Dion told reporters that “There was a break of trust. We need to recreate that link of trust, and I believe it's strengthening again towards our party.”¹

Harper has yet to retaliate or explain his party's position; however, given his outspokenness on the previous Liberal financial debacle it is to be expected that the Liberals and the other parties will not hesitate to denounce Conservative election spending and call, once again, for a vote of non-confidence in the minority government.

¹ CTV.ca, 2007. “Harper has broken trust of Canadians, says Dion.” Retrieved August 29, 2007, from http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20070829/dion_caucus_070829/20070829?hub=CTVNewsAt11

² CBC News Today (television program). Originally aired August 29, 2007.

³ Conservative Party of Canada website. Retrieved August 31, 2007, from <http://www.conservative.ca/>

In Foreign News: Final 7 South Korean hostages released in Afghanistan

CBC News has reported that the final seven South Korean hostages being held in Afghanistan have been released. The hostages were released in two groups and handed over to the care of officials with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The hostages had been held for more than 40 days in an attempt by the Taliban, a militant Afghan group, to pressure South Korea into removing its peacekeeping troops from Afghanistan and to prevent any more Korean aid workers from entering the country.

The newly released hostages were part of a group of 23 South Korean Christian aid workers who were kidnapped by Taliban militants on July 19.

Two of the original hostages were shot dead; in mid-August, two of the women were released, and another 12 of the hostages were freed on August 29. According to Korea.net, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry in Afghanistan has stated that the hostages have not been harmed; however, they were sent to a medical facility within the country to ensure their health before being sent home.²

The South Koreans entered Afghanistan with the intention of providing medical services to the war-ravaged country; they were subsequently captured with the intention of the Taliban to demand the release of an equal number of Taliban prisoners from Afghani jails.

South Korea's decision to negotiate directly with the Taliban has raised concerns that the militant group will now be seen as possessing enough legitimacy to deal directly with foreign governments.

As if to confirm those fears, a Taliban spokesman confirmed that they are already planning to kidnap more foreigners, since the rebel group gained so much in their negotiations with South Korea.

"We will do the same thing with the other allies in Afghanistan, because we found this way to be successful,"¹ spokesman Qari Yousef Ahmadi told the Associated Press.

While it is clear that South Korea will have no role in Afghanistan in the near future, other nations, including Canada, remain within the country in an attempt to keep peace between Afghanistan and the militant Taliban.

¹ CBC News, 2007. "Last 7 South Korean hostages released." Retrieved August 31, 2007, from <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2007/08/30/hostages-korea.html>

² Korea.net, 2007. "12 Korean hostages freed in Afghanistan, 7 in captivity." Retrieved August 29th, 2007, from http://www.korea.net/news/news/NewsView.asp?serial_no=20070829033&part=103

If variety is the spice of life, then the Internet is the spice rack of the universe. Sometimes it astounds me the things you can find, from the sublime to the ridiculous.

800 Notes

Just one in a growing group of many sites dedicated to the collection of information regarding "junk mail" phone calls and the numbers they come from. If not always precisely useful, it's certainly a good place to go to check that unfamiliar number on your call display.

How to Skin and Clean a Dead Snake

Well, you never know when it might come in handy, right? Please view with caution; this site includes photographs and may be disturbing to some viewers.

Cute Animals Made Out of Food

This is in no way disturbing; it's actually a very sweet collection of exactly what it says it is. Likely an ideal project to keep the little ones occupied.

Bacon and Egg Bandages

And why not food to put on your body—or at least something that looks like food? Even I want a pack of these!

Bacon Salt

I know it's revoltingly unhealthy, and just looking at that site makes my arteries harden, but oh my do I want some of that for my popcorn . . . and baked potatoes . . . and pizza . . .

The Borgesian Cyclopaedia

A wealth of information on Jorge Luis Borges and his writings.

Virtual Absinthe Museum

If Borges didn't confuse you, drinking real absinthe just might! A huge repository of all manner of information on that most unusual of beverages.

Victoria Denied Injunction Against Homeless People

David Koch, *The Martlet* (University of Victoria)



VICTORIA (CUP) - Homeless people in Victoria have won a small victory in their upcoming Charter challenge to have their rights to sleep outside recognized.

A B.C. Supreme Court judge has dismissed an application from the City of Victoria for a permanent injunction that would have restricted homeless people from setting up another tent city in a downtown park.

The application, which was rejected on Aug. 13, is a small victory in an ongoing campaign for homeless people's "right to sleep."

Irene Faulkner and Catherine Boies Parker, two lawyers working on the case, said that bylaws which make it illegal to sleep overnight in parks violate homeless people's rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They plan to challenge the constitutionality of those bylaws in September.

"The way things are standing right now, we'll be looking to move ahead with the trial on Sept. 4," Faulkner said. "This is great news on our side."

In a video posted on HomelessNation.org last month, Boies Parker said, "The underlying issue is the constitutionality of the bylaws that make it illegal to sleep outside."

Boies Parker and Faulkner argue that Victoria's laws deprive homeless people of security by preventing them from sleeping outside while the city that lacks shelter spaces. Section 7 of the Charter guarantees security of the person. They also said that the bylaws have a disproportionate effect on homeless people, violating their Section 15 right to equality before the law.

If the application for an injunction had been successful, the B.C. Supreme Court may have refused to hear their case. The details of the injunction would have banned people from damaging trees and preventing others from enjoying Cridge Park, which is located at Belleville and Blanshard Streets in downtown Victoria.

According to Bruce Jordan, a lawyer for the city, the point of the application was to prevent the park from being "occupied," as it was in October 2005, when a group of about 20 homeless people set up camp there.

The activities targeted by the injunction, though, are already prohibited by local bylaws. But, while the city usually hands out fines for broken bylaws, this isn't as effective with homeless people, Jordan explained.

"They could issue tickets, but many people are saying that they are homeless, so issuing tickets wouldn't achieve the desired end," Jordan said.

Violating an injunction, on the other hand, can result in a contempt of court charge.

The issue is not new. In 2005, the City won a 10-month injunction that banned people at Cridge Park from activities such as sleeping outside, which Victoria's bylaws also prohibit. Although that injunction has expired, the bylaws remain in place and continue to generate controversy.

David Johnston, who has been arrested before for sleeping at St. Ann's Academy, a provincially owned property next to Cridge Park, said that he is willing to be arrested again so that courts will face the issue.

He also said that he will not eat as long as he is in jail. Johnston fasted for 36 consecutive days in prison last year.

"Government has a responsibility not to maliciously attack people who are providing for themselves," Johnston said.

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THE VOICE

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The Voice is published every Friday in html and pdf format

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Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its contributions

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