

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 18 Issue 17
April 30, 2010

Getting Real

Melinda Tankard Reist

Meditation

Peace between
pages

Heartland

Homegrown success

Plus:

*Sister Aurora, From Where I Sit,
The Mindful Bard, and much more ...*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



PEACE BETWEEN PAGES

Gaurang B. McIntyre



I came to Athabasca University via South Korea and a teaching job at an after-school educational facility. Leaving this job and returning to University was a shock, on top of returning to Canada to find a new place to live and work. At times it all seemed too much to handle, especially knowing that my girlfriend was waiting for my return to Korea.

As time went on the course load grew. I had committed to four courses that were to be finished in six months, and a nervous breakdown ensued. It was all I could do to keep going—until I remembered a valuable practice from my past: meditation.

Meditation was something I had done since the age of 16. Then, at 25 and back at university, the concept had not registered as I became absorbed in my work, focusing entirely on getting my degree from AU.

When I took the time to stop, relax, and sit, all the things that needed to be accomplished just happened in their right time. There was no forcing deadlines, no what if's—just the knowledge that the goal was to finish a degree and that is what I would do.

Once I had returned to my meditation practice of old the peace between the pages began to emerge. It started when I began reading case studies and developing a plan to answer the questions on an assignment. I would begin to find those moments where I could sit still, mind completely still, and just breathe. My heart would envelop my anxiety and the breath would soothe me.

What I learned and have since incorporated into my life is a simple meditation practice that anyone can use. It is non-denominational and brings a peace between pages that is all too needed in the stress of wanting to accomplish a task as difficult as self-directed education.

So here you are:

If you must, sit exactly where you study, with everything open as it would be if you were working on your studies. It doesn't have to be a proper seat (*asana*) or at the exact time or exact place every time. These are all guidelines that can be adjusted as you see the benefits of this practice, so for now don't worry where you are.

If you are sitting on the floor, cross your legs and make sure that your knees and hip crease (hip joint) are parallel, meaning that the upper portion of your legs should be running parallel to the floor; otherwise you will develop pain in your joints and lend unnecessary stress to your body. If you are sitting in a chair, straighten your back but not in a contrived way.

Before we begin, the art of breathing is important. Oftentimes in the Western world we are prone to taking shallow breaths from the chest only. A real breath is one that has your chest rise first as the air enters and, as it fills your chest, it fills your stomach as well. The exhale happens when the air leaves your stomach *first* and then your chest. This is a full yogic breath. Do a few breaths like this to get into a rhythm.

Now close your eyes. If you have a mala or rosary then use the beads to follow your breath (inhale one side of the bead and exhale the other). As you inhale say “hum” and as you exhale say “sa.” This is the sound that is naturally made by our bodies as we inhale and exhale, and this practice is to remind us of the sound that already exists.

Find the place within yourself where the inhale rises out of and the place where the exhale falls into. Some people call it the “spiritual heart” because it is not a physical place that one could pinpoint but emotionally and spiritually you can become in tune with this spiritual heart.

Focus on the space between the inhale and exhale, paying attention to where this is (your spiritual heart). As you begin this focus, your inhale and exhale will naturally become longer.

Continue, and as thoughts arise let them play out but focus on the breath alone. As the thoughts play out they will disappear—as long as you don’t add to them! For example, “Huh, I wonder what time it is? Maybe I should make something to eat. I like those new pizzas they have at the store. Last time they were on special; that store hardly ever has good specials . . .” And there you go, off to the races.

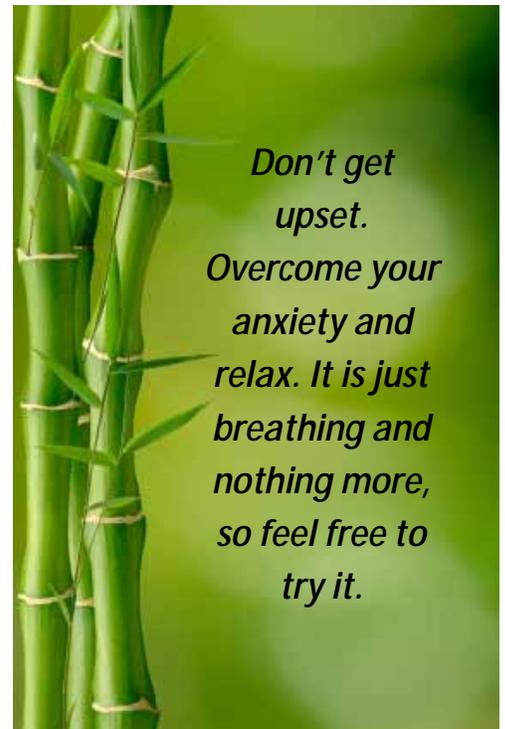
The thoughts will arise but you can decide if you want to entertain them. As you start to disengage from adding to the drama of the mind then it becomes relaxed and eventually it too sides with the meditation because even the mind realizes that it is a better way to live: relaxed and peaceful.

There is no timeline. If you have a mala or rosary then you might want to breathe 27 times or 108 times. If you don’t, then just go with it.

Don’t stop at the first thought of “What the heck am I doing? I have so much work to do, I should be studying.” Just continue a little further before you stop the meditation and in the future you will be able to sit even longer with a calm mind.

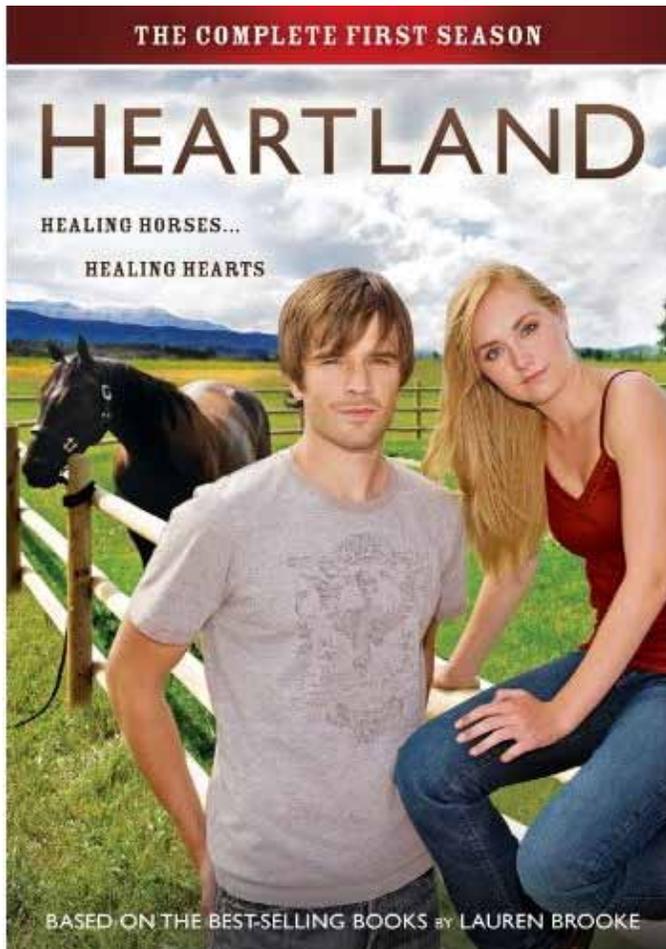
The place that you will find serves to be the basis of your peace of mind. Eventually, in *any* circumstance you can go to this place within and communicate from there, work from there, study from there, and live from there! It is a place that has no time, where nothing can be defined, and where you can find the peace between pages that is all too needed when doing all you have decided to do, including studying at AU and getting the education you deserve.

Don’t get upset. Overcome your anxiety and relax. It is just breathing and nothing more, so feel free to try it. Hope it serves you as it has me. Blessings.



HEARTLAND

Diane Gadoua



Homegrown Success Story

Sometimes, when it seems the glut of extreme reality shows and contrived sitcoms has lowered TV fare beyond rescue, there comes a show to remind the entertainment execs that simpler is often better. And not just better, but popular as well.

That show is *Heartland*, and even though some may be surprised at the success of this low-key Canadian hit, they shouldn't be.

The premise is straightforward. Jack Bartlett (played by Shaun Johnston) is the patriarch of the family ranch, Heartland. When his daughter Marion dies suddenly, Jack is left to run Heartland—and to care for Marion's daughters, Amy (Amber Marshall) and Lou Fleming (Michelle Morgan).

Complicating matters are the arrival of Ty Borden (Graham Wardle), a new ranch hand with a troubled past; the loss of Lou's job in New York; and the efforts of the girls' estranged father Tim (Chris Potter) to work his way back into their lives.

If the storylines seem closer to reality than most "reality" shows, that's because they are. You won't

find car chases, shootouts, or shrieking celebrities—and that's the key to *Heartland's* charm.

That, and solid performances from the ensemble cast. All the lead actors hail from Canada, and all have spent time training, studying, and working their way up in the business. And it shows. There's an understated quality to *Heartland* that sometimes makes it seem as though the viewer is eavesdropping on real situations. There are no histrionics or overly theatrical gestures. Characters express emotions, sure, but the production is refreshingly free of the exaggerated self-awareness that plagues so many shows (think *Private Practice*).

In a recent interview, actor Graham Wardle explained that one of the first things that attracted him to the show was that same sense of restraint.

"It was actually during the audition for the pilot," Wardle says. "The director who did the pilot, who continues to direct the episodes, Dean Bennett, he gave me a direction. He said 'I want you to try and not show us as much. This character has a sort of a dark past, a hidden past, and I want you to sort of mask it and then slowly reveal it.'" That process of "getting to know someone, to dig deeper, is part of life," Wardle adds, "and I found that was a great aspect of Ty's character."

As the show has evolved over its first two seasons, and embarks on the third season, Wardle has found Ty's character changing in unexpected ways.

"I never thought he would become a vet," Wardle says. "But now that his direction is becoming a vet, it makes complete sense to me." There are several aspects of Ty's character that have grown, Wardle explains, and he says that Heather Conkie, the show's head writer and executive producer, "is really great at keeping me up to date on why [Ty is] doing things and what's going on in his mind."

Wardle notes that being part of the show is a truly collaborative effort, and Conkie and the other writers "are really great with everyone, listening to their ideas and their thoughts."

Working with an ensemble over several years means that cast and crew can also become as close as their onscreen personas.

"I call them my second family," Wardle says, "because you see them every day, all day, and it's another family. It's a group of people that I've become really close with and we're all really good friends. It's really fun to be a part of that."

Along with acting, Wardle has a strong interest in photography but he says that isn't always a plus when he steps on set.

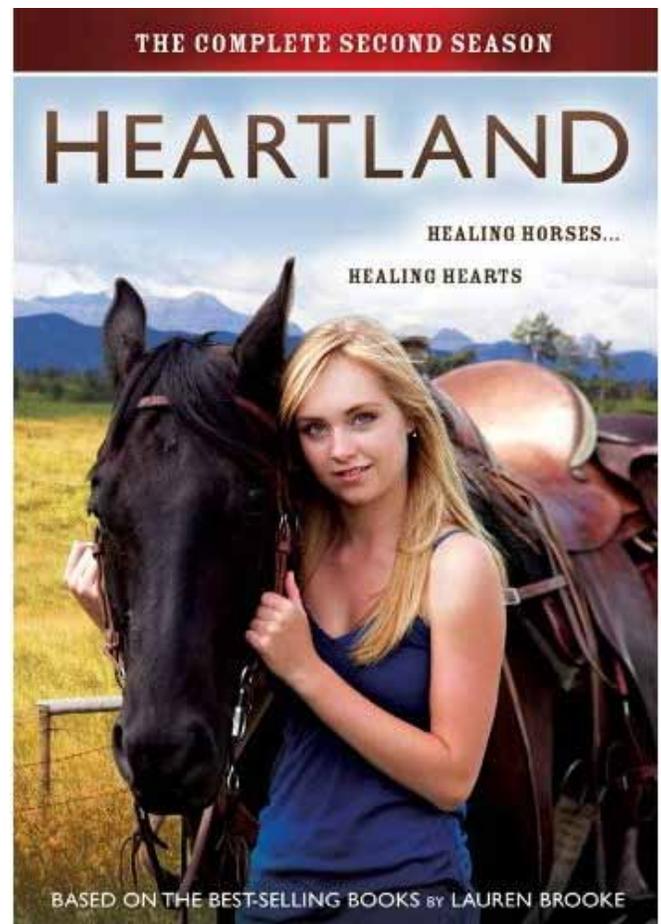
It can be helpful, but sometimes "you have to shut that mind off. If your mind is thinking about what the camera is seeing while you're in the scene you'll lose focus. So what I like to do is, when we're blocking the scene or we're talking about how it's going to work, I'll have that mind running a bit when we're rehearsing . . . And then when the cameras start rolling and we start to do the take, I have to turn that mind off and focus on being in the moment of what's going on in the scene."

While three years of film school gave Wardle an understanding of the technical aspects of the craft, the Vancouver native had to do some prep to get ready for *Heartland's* rural setting.

"All my roles before, and pretty much my whole life, has been in the city," Wardle says, "so coming out to Heartland and going out on the farm . . . was a completely different experience. And because my character had never done it, I paid close attention to how I was feeling and what was different about Heartland compared to the city."

Heartland's approach is paying off. At the Writers Guild of Canada's recent WGC Screenwriting Awards in Toronto, Heather Conkie was presented with the 4th Annual WGC Showrunner Award "to honour her exceptional leadership and creative vision." The show has also received 13 nominations for the 36th Annual Alberta Film and Television Awards (to be presented May 15), including Best Dramatic Series, Best Performance by an Alberta Actor (both Shaun Johnston and Nathaniel Arcand are nominated), and Best Production Designer.

If you're already a fan of the show, you'll know that seasons one and two are available on DVD. If not, you owe it to yourself to check out this homegrown success story.



IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis



Melinda Tankard Reist, Part I

*Melinda Tankard Reist is an Australian feminist writer, activist, and international speaker. Go [here](#) to read the Voice review of *Getting Real: Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls*, a book of essays edited by Reist. Lately she's been challenging corporations who objectify women and girls to sell their products. Recently Reist took the time to talk to Wanda Waterman St. Louis about advocacy, awakenings, and awareness.*

Advocacy Born of Compassion

Looking around and seeing the reality of women's lives in so many countries contributed to me becoming an advocate for women and girls. I've travelled a lot; I've seen the second-class status of women in so many places and the way women are exploited, misused, and oppressed.

I suppose I came to see that much of this oppression and violence began with an attitude and that if we were to make a difference in the lives of women and girls we needed to address the thinking that makes abuse possible. Much of this thinking stems from the objectification of women and the sexualisation of girls, so a lot of my work now is focused on addressing this. Also I have three daughters and I see how they're affected by negative messages from media and popular culture. I have a personal interest in wanting to bring about cultural change for their sakes.

I saw a lot of things I thought were unfair, especially in the way the older women in my life were treated. I witnessed the mistreatment of migrant women by their husbands and other males. I saw an indigenous woman beaten around. But I didn't really join the dots until many years later. Again, I think it was just looking around and seeing some realities and feeling I should try to do something about them.

Projects

My blog, which I've only been writing since December, takes a lot of time. I do a lot of travelling and speaking (I have 25 speaking engagements in May alone). A new organization I helped start—Collective Shout: for a world free of sexploitation—also takes time.



I'm about to start work on a new book on the harms of pornography, and this will demand a fair chunk of time, understandably. I'm not sure where my family fits into all this, but then perhaps I shouldn't see them as a project!

Eye-Openers

Travelling overseas in my early twenties (which I've done many times since) gave me a global perspective, opened my mind, and engaged me in mind-altering experiences. I was inspired by women who were living in the most atrocious conditions yet who somehow rose above their circumstances to make a life for themselves and for their children.

Meeting Dalit (untouchable) women in India. Handing graduation certificates to girls who, before being offered the gift of education, had spent their days picking rags out of stinking piles of refuse. Visiting a shelter in Hyderabad in India that had three levels, the first for abandoned baby girls (many rescued from rubbish dumps), the second for abandoned pregnant girls, and the third for abandoned. Three layers: discarded babies, teen girls, and elderly women.

Being exposed to good writing and good writers also influenced me. Learning how to put words together, to shape a story, to give space for others to share their experiences. I wanted to use my writing to open up forbidden places, to tell stories that had been silenced or ignored. I felt drawn toward that genre of writing described as "writing as resistance." I didn't see myself as a "populist" writer, probably more as unpopulist! Collecting stories for my first book, *Giving Sorrow Words: Women's stories of grief after abortion*, was educational, as well as profoundly moving and affecting. It took some time to recover from the depth of grief and loss women shared so intimately with me.

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Expo

These days, you can see just about any place (or anything) in the world from your computer screen. But not so long ago, the only way for most people to experience the latest marvel was to visit an exhibition. This week, we take a look at the enduring world of pomp and pavilions: the exposition.

2010 Shanghai World Expo - On May 1, the World Expo in Shanghai will open. It follows the long tradition of world fairs that "began with London's Great Exhibition in 1851, gave Paris the Eiffel Tower and drew 44 million Americans to New York to see 'The World of Tomorrow' in 1939."

Expo 67 - Montreal hosted the World's Fair of 1967, better known as Expo '67, after almost 10 years of planning and lobbying. This site from Archives Canada offers a great behind-the-scenes look at the event that featured 62 countries, live animal shows, and a list of special guests from Queen Elizabeth II to Bing Crosby.

Great Exhibition of 1851 - This is the place where it all started: the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition of 1851. It was a marvel of its time, focusing on the latest inventions of the Industrial Revolution. And when the exhibition finally closed, the building was moved and reconstructed to become the world's first theme park.

Exposition Universelle de 1889 - France's Exposition Universelle of 1889 coincided with the centennial of the French Revolution, and one suggestion was to build a 300-meter-tall guillotine. Fortunately, organizers went with a design by Gustave Eiffel—the Eiffel Tower. These archival photos are an astonishing look back in time.

HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza



Melatonin: Is It The Answer?

Jet lag. We've probably all experienced this less-than-pleasant phenomenon before: the insomnia, fatigue, and lack of coordination and focus. And although jet lag might be temporarily suspended for some by flight hold-ups due to Eyjafjallajökull's activity, what can we do to alleviate jet lag when it does get a hold on us?

Why It Happens

Why does jet lag occur? In a normal situation, our bodies are conditioned via

complex patterns referred to as circadian rhythms. These rhythms match our current time zones; that's why we (usually) feel hungry at lunch time, and feel ready for bed at night.

But when we cross time zones via west-east or east-west travel (north-south and south-north travel is not usually associated with jet lag), these circadian patterns are disturbed. Then, we're hungry when everyone else in that time zone is sleepy. Or we're sleepy when everyone else in that time zone is hungry. In short, you can think of your brain as being confused! And it takes time to recover that confusion, depending on the distance you've travelled. Usually, the jet lag recovery rule is one day per time zone in eastward travel, and 1.5 days per time zone in westward travel. (This is the standard for jet lag recovery without the use of pharmaceuticals or natural supplements.)

What is Melatonin?

The pineal gland, a rice-sized gland recessed deep in the brain, has a strong influence on the body's sleep-wake cycle through its secretion of the hormone melatonin. Melatonin levels rise at night when you're tired, and fall in the morning. Hence the theory, or idea, of using oral doses of melatonin to "trick" the brain into the sleep-wake patterns associated with a new time zone and thus reduce jet lag. But does it work?

The Controversy!

As with many things in life, there is controversy associated with the results of using melatonin to reduce jet lag symptoms. A 2002 Cochrane Review (a review looks at available studies related to a topic, and then discusses the results) checked out the melatonin-jet lag controversy, and concluded that oral supplementation of melatonin appears to start being effective when crossing two or more time zones, with optimal efficacy when five or more time zones are crossed.

Additionally, eastward travel was found to be the most responsive to melatonin supplementation, with westward travel showing little effect on jet lag symptoms. However, counteracting this are the results from a study published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* (1999), which found little, if any, promising results for melatonin reducing jet lag symptoms. And so the controversy has raged back and forth—there is research

that speaks about the positive results of melatonin on reducing jet lag symptoms; and there is research that denotes little, if any, effectiveness of this.

What really is the answer? It's hard to determine from a scientific standpoint, since so many factors are at play and the results, at this point, are still relatively controversial. For instance, several studies showing no effect of melatonin on jet lag mentioned that dose might have an impact in their results, and also the timing of the dose. On the other hand, other studies claiming benefit may have had too few participants for the study results to be noteworthy.

And of course there's the fact that we humans are all individuals. Although our bodies function in similar physiological fashion, we respond to different things differently, depending on our unique genetic makeup and our emotional state at the time. This means that if you're a jet lag sufferer, you might have to try melatonin for yourself to see if your body responds to it.

If You're Taking It . . .

If you do decide to experiment with oral melatonin supplementation for your jet lag symptoms, the majority of the studies available seem to point to using up to five milligrams (mg) of oral melatonin per night. Doses above this do not seem to have any effect. Doses below this may still have an effect, although taking the full five milligrams results in falling asleep quicker. Also, the recommendation to take your melatonin dose at the "bedtime" of your target location (i.e., between 10 p.m. to midnight) seems universal. "Timed release" melatonin does *not* seem effective for jet lag, and sublingual (under the tongue, let the tablet dissolve) administration of "regular" melatonin appears to be the fastest acting.

Although more research is needed to effectively determine the safety of melatonin supplementation for jet lag, there are several cautions that exist.

Safety Concerns

Although more research is needed to effectively determine the safety of melatonin supplementation for jet lag, there are several cautions that exist. If you are an epileptic patient, or are taking blood thinners (e.g., Warfarin), it's not recommended to use melatonin. As well, it's important to note that melatonin for jet lag should be used only at bedtime, since supplementation of the hormone when you plan to be awake (i.e., during the day) can result in sleepiness or impaired functioning.



And the Conclusion is . . .

In this instance, it's hard to tell! If you are a healthy individual and don't fit into the "safety concerns" paragraph above, taking melatonin to reduce jet lag symptoms can be a personal judgment call. For myself, on my next cross-zone flight, I'm going to try melatonin supplementation. I'll let you know how it works out!



*From
Where
I Sit*
Hazel Anaka

Work, Gossip, Laugh

On Saturday six women gathered in my mother's kitchen for a work bee. We were there for a few reasons. With Roy's milestone birthday party now only two weeks away, we wanted to make a batch of pereshke. For those who have never tasted this Ukrainian treat, you have no idea what you're missing. With nutritional and diet advice echoing in our heads, even most Ukrainians enjoy them just once or twice a year. If you scare easily, you may not want to read the next paragraph.

Pereshke are tiny (about an inch and three quarters long by an inch wide and high) bread buns with a cottage cheese filling. This light egg dough was rolled out and cut into small squares. In the centre of each square we put a tiny bit of farm cottage cheese that's been seasoned. Being careful not to get any filling on the edges, the packet is sealed and then rolled slightly to form tiny torpedo-shaped buns. My sister then rolled each one in her oil-soaked hands and arranged them on baking sheets lined with parchment paper.

These tasty little bundles are baked for 20 minutes until light, golden brown. At this point, they are brushed with melted butter to give them shine and to soften them. After they were thoroughly cooled, I packed them in plastic bags so they could be frozen until party time.

In case you were thinking there isn't quite enough oil/fat content in them yet, rest assured. They will be heated in an oven and then served covered in a boiled farm cream, green onion, and fresh dill mixture. I cannot tell you how good these things taste. All together now, can we say coronary heart disease?

Several years ago as we were discussing plans for Greg and Carrie's wedding, Greg's single request for the whole shebang was that there be served to the head table pyrogies and pereshke for the midnight lunch. (Pyrogies are a cousin to pereshke. They are boiled, triangular pouches with a cottage cheese and mashed potato filling. Poppy seed, prune, and even sauerkraut fillings are often prepared for the traditional Ukrainian Christmas Eve meal on January 6.) That work bee, eight years ago, involved many more women and was done in the hall kitchen.

In Saturday's operation, my mom made the dough and rolled and cut the squares. My aunt was already there when I arrived, adding the filling. Soon, my sister and our friend came along and got busy. Hilary, who was honoured at a party the night before, arrived at the crack of 11. There is something quaint, organic, and pioneer-like in having a multi-generational group of women gather to work and gossip and laugh. To prepare special food for special gatherings. To rise to the occasion and help someone in the group. It's also a great training ground for younger people, lest all these recipes and traditions die with the matriarchs of the family. All in all, a very agreeable way to spend a few hours, from where I sit.

Sister Aurora

There's a rainbow dancing in the sky tonight, and I think I'm gonna go outside



#38

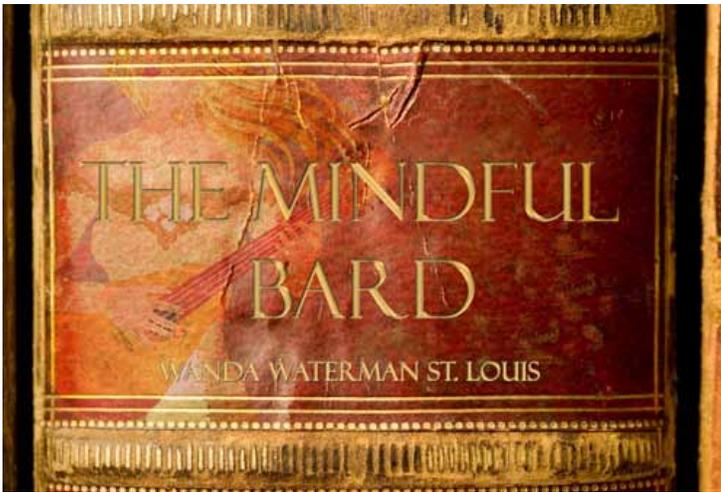
BRRINNGG!

It's Shane.

You dumb bitch, who the hell do you think you are? Who are you with? Tell me before I come down there an' beatcha to death!

You gettin' all this, Jodi?

Come on, talk to me, slut! You have enough to say behind my back! I know why you don't wanna go out with me tonight, it's 'cause yer cheatin' on me! I'm going for my gun right now.



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

DVD: *Defendor*

Starring: Woody Harrelson, Kat Dennings, Elias Koteas, Sandra Oh, Lisa Ray

Director and screenwriter: Peter Stebbings

Sony Pictures Entertainment

Tilting at Windmills, Crooked Cops, and Drug Barons

" . . . he so immersed himself in those romances that he spent whole days and nights over his books; and thus with little sleeping and much reading his brains dried up to such a degree that he lost the use of his reason . . . "

"The most difficult character in comedy is that of the fool, and he must be no simpleton that plays that part."

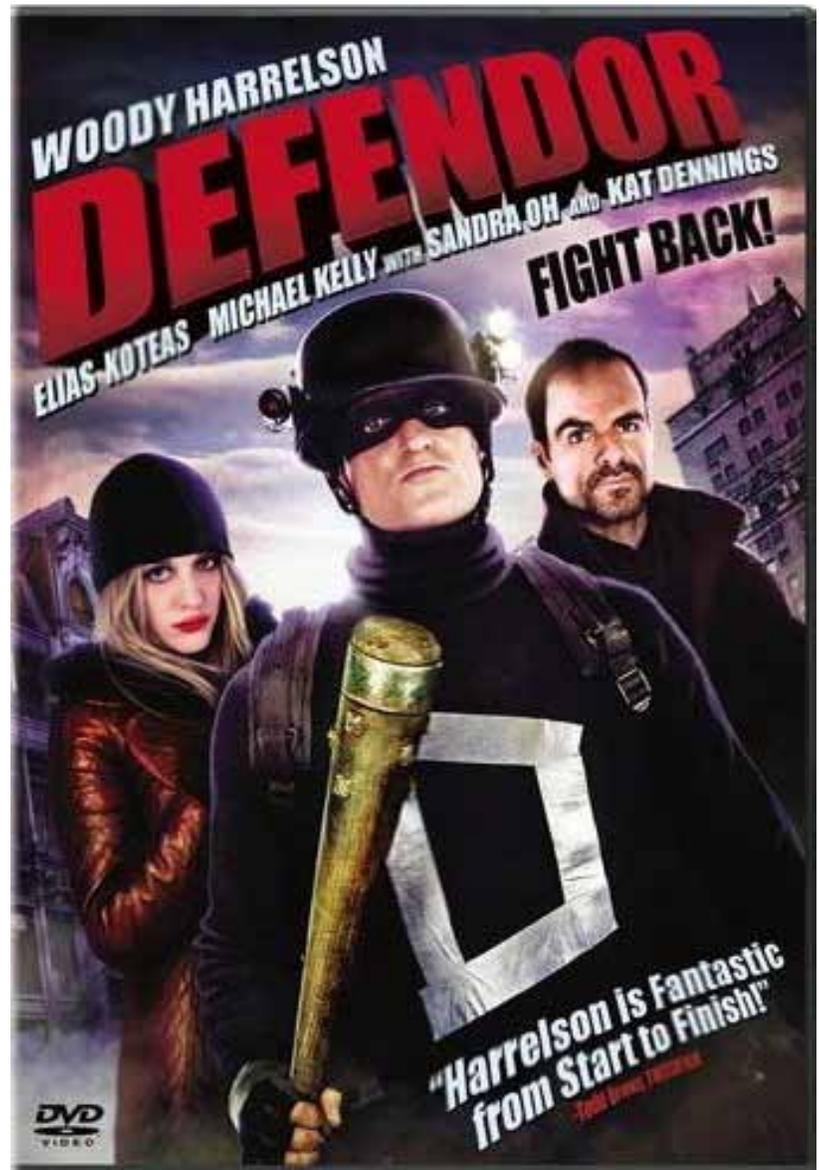
Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

"Superheroes aren't stupid, they're not afraid. When I'm Defendor I'm not Arthur anymore; I'm a million times better than Arthur."

Woody Harrelson in *Defendor*

One of the most meaningful features of Book I of *Don Quixote* is the fact that Quixote as protagonist never changes. He is every bit as barking mad at the end of the book as he was at the beginning. He hasn't yet abandoned his self-constructed ego defence. He hasn't matured as a human being. His ideals aren't in the least tarnished after the ludicrous failure of his feats of heroism.

As with Arthur Poppington, a.k.a. Defendor, it's the people around him who change. Abuse victims start believing in themselves and in the possibility of a just world. The depraved give up their vices. Evil masterminds get their comeuppance. And



underdogs feel affirmed and uplifted as human beings by the very fact of his existence. His peculiar pathology appears to have the effect of drawing goodness from others.

Arthur has had one bitch of a life. The son of a prostitute whose drug habit forced her to abandon him to the care of his soul-crushing grandfather, his imagination empowers him to create oases of peace that enable him to withstand excruciating pain, both psychic and physical.

In one scene from childhood Arthur is standing before a comics rack and trying to read the cover of an issue of *GI Joe*. His grandfather ridicules him for his poor reading skills, and walks away to leave Arthur staring longingly at the comic.

Tellingly, the hymn "Amazing Grace" is playing in the background of this scene. Because Arthur chooses love and goodness and not the life of vice and debauchery that the circumstances of his birth have dictated, he has invited grace to pour into his life; thus his life action, however pitiable, has been miraculously transformed into a means of generating grace in the world.

Great casting in this movie. You couldn't ask for more apt choices for actors, and excellent performances were pulled from every one of them. Woody Harrelson's portrayal of this complex lead is both probing and compassionate, and Kat Dennings's timing and intonation render a stylized but highly engaging addition to the film canon of goodhearted, smart-talking hookers.

Defendor manifests seven of *The Mindful Bard's* criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it's authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it stimulates my mind; 3) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; 4) it's about attainment of the true self; 5) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 6) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; and 7) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.

The Bard could use some help scouting out new material. If you discover any books, compact disks, or movies which came out in the last twelve months and which you think fit the Bard's criteria, please drop a line to bard@voicemagazine.org. If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.

DID YOU KNOW?



Get Social with AU's Centre for Nursing and Health Studies

If you can't get enough of your favourite Nursing and Health Studies topics by studying, now you can connect with others and keep the conversation going on Facebook and Twitter.

The Centre for Nursing and Health Studies (CNHS) homepage has links so you can sign up, stay connected, and keep up to date on all the latest news.

The Centre for Psychology is on Facebook and Twitter as well, and there's also a general Facebook group for AU students, where you can search for people you know and take part in discussions.

So if you're a fan of social networking, why not join the CNHS conversation online?

AUSU UPDATE



AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors - specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

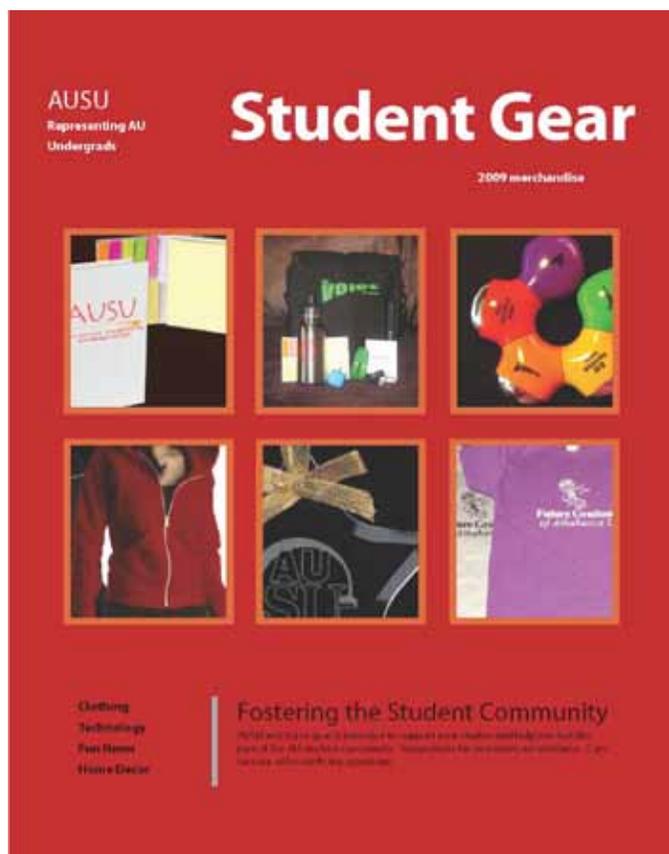
SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

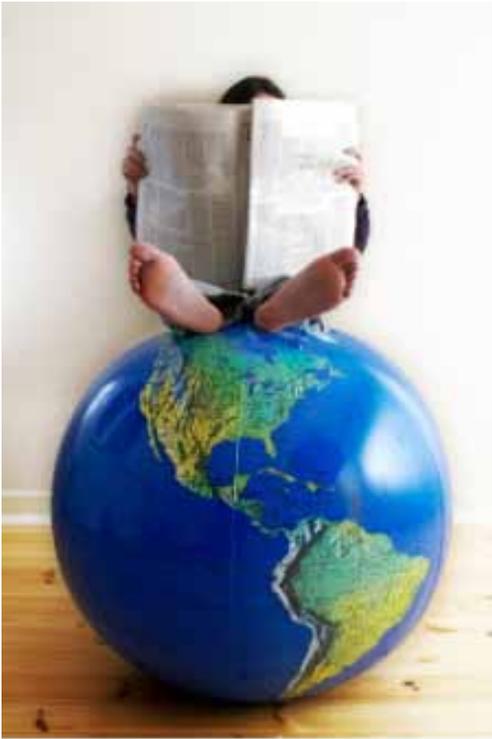
SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.

For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email.

Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however. Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Retailers' hard drives could expose customer data to thieves

If you use credit or debit cards, you probably know you should protect your data. But what about the stores you swipe those cards at? As this CBC *Marketplace* video reveals, many of them aren't doing as good a job as you think.

The report, "Who's Minding the Store?," explains a rising trend in data theft: stealing the hard drives from debit and credit card point-of-sale terminals. Thieves can access hundreds of names, credit and debit card numbers, and expiry dates from a single hard drive. The info can be sold, used to make new cards, or even used to make purchases directly by the thieves.

Although customer data is supposed to be erased from the terminals each day, that often doesn't happen and the hard drives are a windfall of valuable information. The stores that the CBC investigated did not want to be identified, but it's worth noting that hard-drive thefts target a wide variety of services, including restaurants, gas stations, and major retailers. So even if you avoid

one store that doesn't properly delete your data, there's no guarantee your debit and credit info won't be at risk somewhere else.

The banks may cover your losses, but those costs eventually get passed right back on to consumers. If there's a debit or credit card in your wallet, this *Marketplace* video may be a real eye-opener.

In Foreign News: Germany fights Google over recording of private wireless routers

Germany dropped a legal challenge over Google's Street View last year when the search giant agreed to several measures, including giving people the option to remove their property from Street View archives. However, a new controversy surfaced recently when German regulators discovered that, besides taking pictures, Google's Street View technology also collects and stores data about wireless networks in private homes.

As *The New York Times* reports, Google has been "recording the location of wireless routers with its roving cameras and antennas." Wireless networks are increasingly common in homes and businesses. A network's router is identified by a name chosen by its owner and also "broadcasts a unique identification number."

Peter Schaar, Germany's data protection administrator, requested that Google immediately stop collecting the data, but the company continues to do so, saying the information is in the public domain. In defending the company's actions, a Google spokesman noted that many other companies around the world collect such information and store it in databases.

Still, some officials aren't confident about Google's intentions, including Johannes Caspar, the head of data protection in Hamburg. As he told reporters, "The question is what will Google do with this information? How are they going to use it?"

CLASSIFIEDS

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THE VOICE

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