

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE
Vol 21 Issue 44 2013-11-22

Tunisian Days

Traditional Home Health II

Essay Avoidance

An Art Form

Did You Know?

Then Tell Us!

Plus:

In Conversation

The Writer's Toolbox

and much more!



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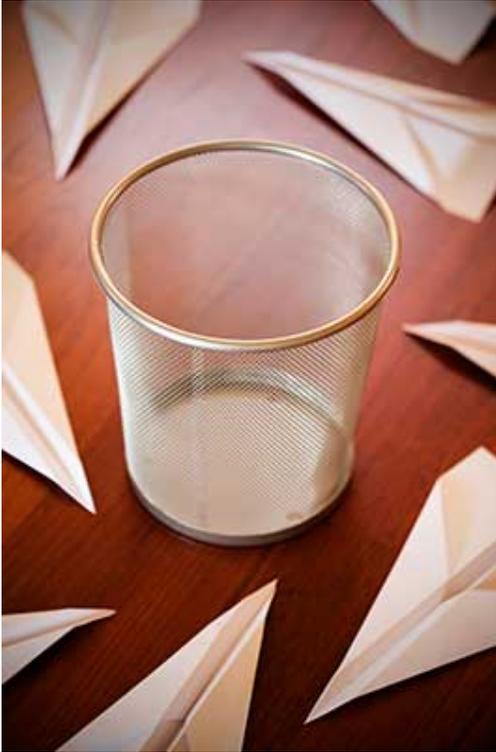
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

EDITORIAL

Karl Low



Focus

One of my favorite albums when I was a kid was Harry Nilsson's *The Point*. It's a tale of a child who lives in a land where everybody has a point growing on the top of their head, except him. In the end, it's a story about diversity, tolerance, friendship, and finding self-confidence in being an individual.

But that's not what I liked about it.

For me, the high point of *The Point* was the pointless man. Or rather, the pointed man. Unlike the regular inhabitants of the Land of Point, the pointed man didn't have a single point on the top of his head, rather many points all in different directions. He was living in the "pointless forest" because, as he says, "A point in every direction is the same as no point at all."

Procrastination is a little bit like having a point in every direction. Your mind keeps finding other things to occupy itself with aside from the one thing you know you should be doing. It's a common affliction, I

think, especially for many students at AU, where the lack of deadlines and structure make it easy to procrastinate on far too much for far too long. I struggle with procrastination myself, and it doesn't help that I'm a Canadian political news junkie, so these past few weeks have presented countless opportunities to find other things to occupy my time.

With that in mind, I'm quite happy to be bringing you an article about the art of procrastination from a new writer, Barbara Lehtiniemi. We also have, in this issue, Hazel Anaka giving us first-hand impressions of New York City and how expectations never quite match the real thing, then Christina M. Frey explains in *The Writer's Toolbox* how a style guide is more than a hoop to jump through for your essays, and S.D. Livingston's *Primal Numbers* asks questions about those who ask questions about our science. This issue also sees the completion of *In Conversation's* interview with Manteca's Matt Zimbel, and our continuing feature about Tunisia from Wanda Waterman. This week, her *Maghreb's Voices* explores home health remedies a little further, and looks at how healing comes from the community.

One other thing that you will find somewhere in this issue is the link to our Voice Reader's Survey. Despite what I said about procrastination above, sometimes things get done anyway. This survey is just for you who already read the Voice. It asks mostly about what we have, not what we should have. Those questions I'm saving for the large survey—the one that I hope will also draw more AU students in to reading *The Voice*.

This means it's quite short, but the prize for both surveys is the same. Each will award one Samsung Galaxy Tab 3 (8" version) to one lucky respondent. This small tablet is somewhere between a smart-phone and a full size tablet. Good for on-the-go, and more importantly, fully compatible with the new system for e-texts that AU will soon be rolling out. So find the link, do the survey, and hopefully you can win the tablet.



New York City, Part I

This spring Hilary gave me a store gift card for my birthday. Nothing out of the ordinary, it happens to millions of people every day on a variety of occasions. But the cheekiness of the store location made this one different. Century 21 is a New York City based store.

It was a not-so-subtle attempt to get the big mother-daughter trip to New York off the drawing board and into the real world of plane tickets and a hotel reservation. She also offered to take the gift card off my hands if I wasn't ever going to use it. What a sport.

Once I agreed that this was the year, she included her dad in the plans. His first answer was no way. Then, with harvest and the local municipal election off his plate, he agreed. We left the search for the best flights and a decent, affordable hotel room to Hilary. She's been there several times, alone or with others, so we trusted her judgment and experience.

As the reigning queen of rationalization I didn't need much justification for the trip. First, in August we celebrated our fortieth wedding anniversary and intended to take a trip—somewhere. Second, we had worked incredibly hard, without respite, for nearly a year and sorely needed the break. Third, this was a "bucket list" type of adventure.

So, off we went for seven days. Never before had I done so little planning, preparation, or research. We trusted Hilary to tell us what to do and when to do it. Mostly, that's exactly what happened. And we're grateful.

And while a week is merely a blink of an eye, it was long enough to dispel some of the myths about the city I've carried for a lifetime. Are my newfound impressions any truer than my misconceptions? Not likely. Truth is an elusive beast taking a lifetime to ascertain, and even then, it's filtered (and flawed) by our biases and life experiences.

Here's what I know:

1. I felt safer on the streets of Manhattan than I have in parts of Edmonton. Safety in numbers, perhaps? I saw more panhandlers last Friday in Edmonton than I did all week in the Big Apple.
2. The subway is the only smart and affordable way to move that many people around efficiently. I just needed to mentally delete all the scary subway scenes I watched in movies or read about in novels.
3. The city is not overrun with rats. I missed my family's one sighting of them along the subway tracks, thank God.

4. People are no ruder or more impatient there than anywhere else. Nor is their driving worse. Though, I must say, the honking is as portrayed in the movies—cacophonous. Jaywalking is an art form and we mastered it on day one.
5. You need a level of stamina for the miles you walk and the flights of stairs you climb.
6. One visit isn't enough, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

Writer's Toolbox



Christina M. Frey

A Matter Of Style

Struggling to properly format the citations in your paper is bad enough. But what if you're unsure which style guide to use in the first place?

Which is which?

The various citation style guides were developed in response to the needs of different academic disciplines. Although it can feel overwhelming, looking at the purpose of each style will help you understand them a little better.

The APA (American Psychological Association) citation style, developed for use in the social sciences, focuses on the date of the source material. It is still used in the social sciences in academia, but is also the style favoured by many publications, both academic and otherwise (including *The Voice Magazine*).

In the MLA (Modern Languages Association) citation style, the emphasis is on the author of the source material. For this reason it is commonly used in the humanities, like English literature. The *Chicago* style, which focuses on the actual source material, is popular in disciplines like history.

While the manuals themselves are an invaluable resource, Purdue University's Online Writing Lab has a user-friendly guide <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> to the APA, *Chicago*, and MLA citation styles. This e-book on documentation is also helpful: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/resdoc5e/index.htm>

There are other, less commonly used styles. Turabian is a modification of *Chicago*; it was created to suit the unique needs of students. CSE (Council of Science Editors) is popular in many scientific disciplines. And many universities, presses, publications, and other entities have their own in-house styles that contain elements of several of the "big three" guides.

Which style guide to use?

Nearly every professor has a preference, so the first step is to check the instructions on your assignment or the standards outlined in your course handbook. If the information isn't there, check for department standards (for example, the English department for your Women's Literature class). You might also contact your tutor or professor for clarification.

If you're working furiously at three o'clock in the morning and your paper's due in six hours, choose the citation style that seems the best fit for your academic discipline. For example, English classes commonly use the MLA style, so the Women's Literature paper should probably follow the MLA recommendations.

If the citation guide is not specified or is ambivalent, include a note indicating which style you've chosen, and why. And whichever citation style you follow, ensure you do it consistently throughout your paper.

Beyond citations

Some may find it surprising that the style manuals cover a lot more than citations. In fact, of the *Chicago Manual of Style's* 1025 pages, only 151 deal with citation documentation; the rest of the manual discusses grammar, punctuation, and usage conventions. There's even extensive coverage on the publication process, including how to lay out elements like the copyright page of a book.

For authors

Because of the breadth of their language coverage, style guides are useful outside the academic world as well. For example, it's a consideration if you're writing a book, particularly if you're self-publishing.

While most publishing houses or smaller presses have both a preferred (or in-house) style and a host of copyeditors, independent authors are responsible for choosing and maintaining a style on their own. While there are exceptions, the general preference is to follow *Chicago* for literary fiction and the APA for nonfiction and some forms of genre fiction. Either way, the most important thing is to stay consistent within the manuscript. Conforming a manuscript to the appropriate style can be a laborious and difficult task, so if you are not intimately familiar with the appropriate guide, hire a copyeditor who is. Your readers will thank you.

An opportunity

Although it can feel as though style guides were created to torture students or writers, they actually present a great learning opportunity. The purpose of style guides is to ensure consistency and fairness. Even if you never use MLA or *Chicago* again in your life, conforming your documentation, paper, or novel to the appropriate style is a great way to organize your thoughts, change the way you view your source material, and create an internally consistent product. And that's a lesson you'll carry with you long after you've handed in your work.

Christina M. Frey is a book editor and a lover of great writing. Chat with her on Twitter about all things literary @turntopage2.

MAGHREB VOICES

Wanda Waterman

Tunisian Days: Traditional Home Health, Part II



"Ethnobotany, as a research field of science, has been widely used for the documentation of indigenous knowledge on the use of plants and for providing an inventory of useful plants from local flora . . . Plants that are used for traditional herbal medicine in different countries are an important part of these studies. However, in some countries in recent years, ethnobotanical studies have been used for the discovery of new drugs and new drug development."

Pei Sheng-ji

Healing from the Hills

There are a number of wild herbs found in the mountains of Tunisia, known for centuries to have remarkable medicinal properties. While further research is pending, many of these show promise of being useful against a number of common maladies in the world at large.

Value of Folk Medicines to Medical Research

There's a complementary relationship between allopathic and folk medicines. Many of the drugs we use today were first synthesized from plant sources after scientists tested folk wisdom in the lab.

As is often found in the west, Tunisian home cures can bring more positive results and fewer side effects than cures prescribed by allopathic doctors. For this reason the Tunisian scientific community has been conducting research to gauge the medicinal and health benefits of folk medicines.

Also, as in the west, Tunisian scientists lack the resources to test the efficacy of every known folk medicine in a controlled environment. However, some excellent research has been documented by the University of Monastir in the Faculty of Pharmacy's Laboratory of Pharmacognosy. They have given solid evidence of the efficacy of the roots, stems, fruit, and seeds of *Citrullus colocynthis* (a Southern Tunisian vine bearing small, bitter, watermelon-like fruit) used as a home remedy to treat many inflammatory diseases, infections, and candida.

The same laboratory has found in the common myrtle (*Myrtus communis*) a capacity to hunt out and remove free radicals, rendering it a suitable candidate for further research in cancer prevention. In other studies, tree germander (*Teucrium ramosissimum*) was found to have some effect in treating infectious diseases, which is how it was traditionally used in Tunisia.



A mock orange. All but inedible, but its tree produces blossoms which are distilled into water used in most homes for flavourings and medicines

But the greatest antibacterial activity was found in leaf and flower extracts of the rockrose (*Cistus monspeliensis*), yellow fleabane (*Inula viscosa*), St. John's Wort (*Hypericum crispum*), the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), and Phoenician juniper (*Juniperus phoenicea*). Each of these plants was shown to be effective in targeting specific bacteria, which indicates that each has distinct chemical properties that can be isolated and put to use in treating a wide range of infections.

For a traditional medicine with a broader range of treatment, look to African sumac (*Rhus tripartitum*). It's been used mostly to treat stomach ailments like diarrhoea and dysentery, and a recent study has shown it effective against a wide variety of bacteria. Against certain bacteria it has been proven to have an even greater impact than typical antibiotics.

Everyday Healing

It's always good to have external validation for the medicinal knowledge that Baba Mustafa (the Tunisian Everyman) has handed down to you. But one of the best healers in evidence is conversation.

How? Well, let's imagine you're suffering from a migraine. When you get up in the morning you'll mention this to someone and they'll either suggest you take something or they'll make you a drink (often a combination of herbs, spices, grains, lemon juice, olive oil, or all of the above) and urge you to drink it. Then, if you go out and your neighbors ask you how you are, you can say "Alhamdulillah" (all praise and thanks to Allah) and then mention that you've been suffering from a bad headache. They'll no doubt give you advice or even bring you something that they swear will fix you up in no time.

When you return home, they'll again ask you how you are. They'll have discussed your problem while you were gone. They may have prayed for you. They'll sprinkle scented water on your head. Someone comes up with another solution and insist you try that, too. Soon your headache will be gone. You may not even know which solution worked; you're just grateful that the pain is over.



A traditional still used to make flavoured waters from blossoms

Don't believe me? All I can say is what I've witnessed. Nobody here stays sick for long. And even if nothing works but a visit to the pharmacy, the fragrance of the ubiquitous mock-orange scented water is a sweet consolation.

"But what," you ask, "if I get hit by a car?" The same process that found you the migraine cure will also find you the doctor with the best reputation. And if you need it—and if they can—they'll chip in to help you pay for your hospital stay. When you get home you'll be visited by well-wishers all day.

Now that's real healing.

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Informal interviews with Tunisians

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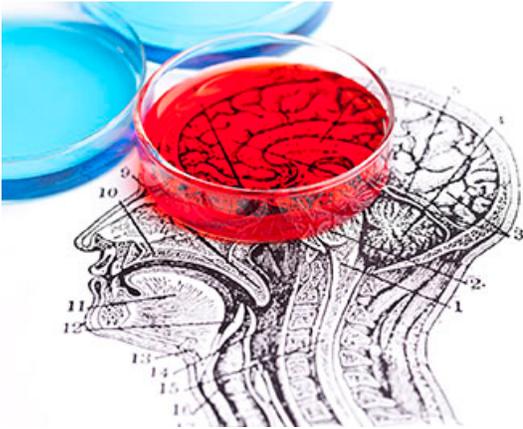
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PRIMAL NUMBERS

S.D. Livingston



Junk Science

There's a saying that if you carry a clipboard and walk quickly, it lends an air of authority that people won't question. The same often goes for science. Use the words "researchers discovered" or "studies show," and we're inclined to believe even the most far-fetched theories. Sites like Junk Science and the Skeptic's Dictionary aim to debunk the junk—but should we really believe the skeptics any more so?

Naturally, there are plenty of facts to dispute, even in the supposedly empirical world of science. It's tempting, of course, to assume that it's all very black and white. Scientists perform an experiment, the results can be verified (or not), and that's the end of it. But things aren't quite that simple, especially when you take into account human error and the difficulty of replicating results.

It's a bigger problem than you might think, and even the data we consider tried and true isn't always reliable. As a recent [article](#) in *The Economist* notes, the American drug firm Amgen "tried to replicate 53 studies that they considered landmarks in the basic science of cancer, often co-operating closely with the original researchers to ensure that their experimental technique matched the one used first time round." Surprisingly, they were only able to replicate the original results in six out of the 53 studies. That news should give us all pause for thought.

That's where the skeptics and debunkers come in. They aim to demystify and expose the "facts" we tend to believe when they're cloaked in the language of science. But don't put on your rose-coloured glasses just yet.

One of the most popular sites out there is [The Skeptic's Dictionary](#). Robert T. Carroll, Ph.D., who was a full-time philosophy teacher at Sacramento City College for 30 years (you can find more details about him on his [FAQ and Interviews page](#)) created the site. It bills itself as "a collection of strange beliefs, amusing deceptions, and dangerous delusions." And what a collection it is. Not only does it debunk everything from ear candling to Scientology, it also tackles the very real science behind natural phenomena like ball lightning.

Some of the dubious scientific theories the Dictionary examines will come as no surprise to most people; things like doomsday cults and craniometry. Others are more complex, like electrohypersensitivity. The Dictionary also puts philosophical and scientific terms into layman's language, like the ad hoc hypothesis and Occam's razor.

For the most part, it takes a balanced approach. In the article on acupuncture, for instance, Carroll weighs the pros and cons well. Although he writes “evidence from both personal testimony and from scientific studies clearly shows that acupuncture works and is an effective medical treatment for many ailments,” he also takes a thorough look at the placebo effect and discusses the very real dangers of acupuncture.

So far, so good. But it’s key to remember that no one is truly unbiased. Whether we’re writing a history text or debunking the Bermuda Triangle, we all bring our ingrained beliefs and biases to the table. It’s worth bearing in mind as you surf other articles on the Dictionary.

One good example of undisguised bias is the Junk Science site, run by Steve Milloy. He is, as his site says, a biostatistician and securities lawyer, “a recognized leader in the fight against junk science with more than 20 years of experience,” and the author or co-author of five books.

Does Milloy know whereof he speaks when he challenges belief in global warming and the evils of trans fats? I don’t know, since many of the posts I checked were brief intros to external articles. What I do know, though, is that when anyone of any political or ideological stripe relies on prejudicial language to make a point, alarm bells start going off.

For instance, in this [post](#) on fossil fuels versus wind and solar energy, the author states that the link leads to “a good summary of real world energy issues, *sans* the foaming hysteria of the enviros.” Apparently, it’s also important “to stop the goofies that are trying to destroy dams.” The term “enviro fanatics” gets used too, as in this [post](#) on an article about a rare cancer.

On the one hand, the endorsements on the Junk Science site come from some reputable names, such as Frederick Seitz, the first president of the National Academy of Sciences. On the other hand, Milloy’s site uses insults and name calling to undermine opinions that disagree with him. Which raises this question: if the science really does prove someone’s point, why would he need insults to bolster his view?

So yes, it’s good to have a healthy dose of skepticism when it comes to horoscopes or trying to improve your golf swing with that nifty Q-Ray. But in our search for the scientific truth on more serious matters, like global warming or cancer research, we can’t assume the naysayers have any more credibility than the “science” they claim to be debunking.

The most useful approach to combatting bad science? Ignore the partisan rhetoric and get your info from sources that take a balanced look at both sides of the facts. You won’t even need to wear your tinfoil hat.

S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.

DID YOU KNOW?**Voice Readers Help Direct *The Voice Magazine***

A survey has been created for all of you who read the Voice regularly. In it, you will find questions about how you use *The Voice Magazine*, what brings you to it, and what in *The Voice Magazine* you like and don't like.

One lucky student respondent to the survey will win a Samsung Galaxy Tab 3 (8" version) which is a small tablet device, compatible with the new e-text platform that Athabasca University is rolling out across all of its courses. Unfortunately, only current AU students will be eligible for the draw, as *The Voice Magazine* has a mandate to serve them, but even if you can't win, you can use the survey as a way to make *The Voice Magazine* something that serves you better each week.

This is the first of two surveys that will be presented, and it concentrates on what current readers think about *The Voice Magazine* as it stands. The second, larger survey, will be for the wider AU student audience, and seek to capture what they would like to see in the future for their student magazine. To fill out the survey and enter, go to this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VoiceReader>

CLICK OF THE WRIST**Drive-By (Camera) Shootings****Google Street View Sightings**

The Google Street View cars are once again out and updating Google's map service. Having a car whiz by taking photos of everything around it can lead to some interesting sights, however. This page gives you 28 photos of things that you don't normally see when driving—including some you'd probably not want to.

Google Earth Oddities

If street level is too up-close and personal, you can always look at some strange pictures caught by satellite and placed into the Google Earth Application. This site will give you the places you need to search to see things you probably didn't expect you'd ever see by satellite.

More Google Earth Oddities

Here's some more of the strange things that satellites find. The photos of the Google Escher Effect are particularly interesting, and a good reminder that we can't always trust what we see—especially if it's a picture taken from over 600 kilometres in the air.

Think you can put together an interesting set of links with a theme like this one?

If so, let us see it at voice@voicemagazine.org. We pay \$20 for short submissions like these.

Essay Avoidance

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The Fine Art of Procrastination

Of all the tools in my student toolkit, the ability to procrastinate effectively is undoubtedly the most valuable. It is certainly the most finely honed. As a mature student, I can claim to have raised procrastination to a fine art. And seldom is this art more in evidence than when I set out to write an essay.

My primary task when confronted with an essay is to establish when to begin preparing it. Not today, certainly, oh no! I must have a block of uninterrupted time, with no other commitments or deadlines. It will not do to peck at it an hour here, four hours there. I want days. Having established a suitable span of days (consecutive, of course), I can avoid doing much about the essay until the appointed time.

Oh, I'll make a show of preparatory progress. I'll select a topic and arrange for research materials to arrive well in advance. I may even think about it from time to time (especially about how grand it's going to be.) But I'll resist any temptation to begin working on it until the allotted time.

My resolve may weaken when, finding myself with unexpected free time, I feel compelled to engage in some productive activity. I can usually overcome those weak moments by substituting another occupation of great import, such as sifting through my digital photos, or adding dozens of books I'll never read to my Amazon wish list. The important thing is not to commence work on the essay a moment before I said I would. A procrastinator must exercise tremendous self-control.

Eventually, that glorious day arrives when I begin the essay. I have set aside ample time. I have all the materials I need. I am ready to research, and then to write. "It will be so easy," I think, "I'm so well organized!"

This is where technique separates the novice from the pro. A novice, finding the research and outlining stages tedious, may decide that there is an urgent need to houseclean. I have heard that there are no homes so clean as those in which reside a student at essay time. A pro, however, is as skilled at procrastinating around the house as at school. I've been keeping house for decades and I know there is simply no need to raise domestic standards above the established minimum just because an essay is waiting. No, instead, I find myself called away by an abundance of accumulated five-minute jobs that have suddenly assumed an unnatural urgency.

All those tedious to-do tasks which I've been avoiding since, well, the last essay, now magically appear more compelling than the essay itself. It is for just such occasions that I've found it pays to keep a handy list of all the chores I've been putting off. Now that I'm essay-writing (or essay-avoiding, which is confusingly similar), I have the opportunity to update my vehicle maintenance log, empty the compost bucket, recharge the camera batteries, trim

my nails, and check the online real estate listings to see what my neighbour's house is going for. In fact, with an internet connection, procrastination opportunities are virtually limitless.

Despite the precious time I've frittered away, the first draft of my essay is written, rough though it may be. And it really is rough. I'm unconcerned though, because I'm right on schedule. There's still plenty of time to finesse those random citations and not-quite relevant facts into a cohesive piece.

Inevitably, that's the moment that the external factor kicks in. The urgent phone call. The forgotten appointment. The power outage. Somehow, it's all gone off the rails. The essay deadline looms and I'm hundreds of words and a bibliography away from a final draft. I'm almost tempted to regret the time spent in procrastination—almost. Now it's nose-to-the-grindstone, pull-a-rabbit-out-of-the-hat time! The energy formerly devoted to putting off writing the essay is now focused on getting the dratted thing done in time.

Like a late-riser skidding triumphantly into his parking space at work with moments to spare, my essay, still smoking, screeches into the drop-box. For a few moments, I feel chastened. I really could have prepared the essay in less time and it certainly could have been more polished. But, by the time I finish my post-essay glass of wine, I am over such destructive sentiments. After all, procrastination is an art. And you should never mess with art.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Tax Credits for Post-Secondary Benefit the Rich.

A new research report by the C.D. Howe institute has found that the bulk of the tax credits that are given for post-secondary education are not benefitting the low income students that they are purportedly for.

The problem occurs, of course, because the tax-credits are non-refundable. This means that if you don't make enough money to pay the full amount of the tax-credit, you simply cannot claim it. While they can be carried forward until a student graduates and can start making enough money to use the full credit, this does little to help students who could use the assistance to complete their education.

All of this is well known by students in the system already, but this external report may help to encourage the government to make changes to the system.

Around the World: Post-secondary Becoming Increasingly Global.

The number of foreign students attending American universities and colleges has reached a record high, with nearly 820,000 of them attending during the 2012-2013 school year, reports the New York Times. The largest growth was seen from China, with a 26% increase meaning that America now has 235,000 Chinese students taking courses there.

GREGOR'S BED

Wanda Waterman



Recent Discoveries from the Realm of the Experimental and the Avant Garde

Film: *Various Shorts*, [Get Animated](#)

Producer: National Film Board of Canada

"What I love most about animation is, it's a team sport, and everything we do is about pure imagination." ~Jeffrey Katzenberg

"My respect for animators and animation directors has gone way, way up and it is just not something you can phone in."

~Gore Verbinski

Get ready to relive the joy of Saturday morning cartoons long after you've grown bored having seen them all. The dear people at Canada's National Film Board are celebrating International Animation Day (October 28) by presenting us with a whole month of new, ingenious, mind-spinning animation shorts.

It's the first year that the cartoon bonanza will be available exclusively online. The great news is that it's free until November 30. I'm not overstating when I say it's all good, but there are some specific high points.

True or not, it's an interesting premise that our society is mentally ill and deems mad those who are the most sound-minded. Frack Dion's *Edmond was a Donkey*, the tale of a loser's hero couched in urban gothic twilight, is a very engaging depiction of this premise.

Edmond's particular heroism is his solitude and the phenomenal goodness of his character. He's gentle, sensitive, intelligent, works hard, keeps to himself, is a wonderful husband to an adoring wife, and harms no one. But an episode of bullying by some crass colleagues at work places him face to face with his shadow self— a donkey— and instead of recoiling in horror Edmond embraces this self and finds solace in it.

But this isn't supposed to happen. Our lives are supposed to distract us from our ugly, existential reality, and so Edmond is punished for loving this reality and finding it beautiful.

Another short, *Gloria Victoria*, is a stream-of consciousness meditation on the experience of living in a country that's been war-torn for years. The beginning is very much like the description of the night sky in Stratis Myrivilis' *Life in the Tomb* as given by a soldier in a trench—an amazing light show created by a spectrum of explosives. We see Picasso-esque souls falling into the ground, fists rising, and blood streaming from the ground, babies rendered grotesque, and peasants ground into the earth they plough.

Oedipus, by Paul Driessen is a relatively painless way of taking a hard look at a universal psychological conflict, painless because it's so funny and so familiar at the same time. The light tone and delightfully crude drawings belie what is an extremely effective psychoanalytical strategy—retracing the steps that brought you to your current malaise.

Petra's Poem by Shira Avni is a stirringly beautiful cinematographic meditation on a simple poem on self by Petra, a young woman with Down's syndrome.

Reflection, by Sylvie Trouvé is an exquisite rendition of the world through its reflections in windows, puddles, and water droplets. The procession of images alone is breathtaking, but it's also a potent reminder of how seeing a thing reflected—whether in water or art—adds a whole new dimension to its appearance.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book [They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good](#), a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.



IN CONVERSATION

Wanda Waterman



For Geniuses Who Like to Dance

"Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically and people will like it more."

Chris Martin

Manteca is a nine-piece Toronto-based jazz ensemble whose music is notable for its buoyant enthusiasm, broad spectrum of influences, smarts, and incredible listening appeal.

Monday Night at the Mensa Disco was released in September. It was fan-funded via [Indiegogo](#), and

fans helped *Manteca* exceed its financial goal. Recently composer, drummer, and founding member Matt Zimbel took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about the golden rule, genius clubs, and how they came up with that great album title. (See Part I of this article [here](#).)

That Clever Album Title

"Monday Night at the Mensa Disco" was the result of a fascination with the famous international [genius club](#) that you have to ace a test to join. Their website's description of upcoming events sparked a stream of mental associations: *Mensa has many events for members including leadership workshops and dances . . .*

Hey! Why not write music for geniuses who like to dance? Nobody else is doing it, so the market is open, right? So Manteca got inspired to write music that had both weird time signatures and boogie appeal. After all that, the album title was a no-brainer (though it was also influenced slightly by Sheryl Crow's debut album title, "Tuesday Night Music Club").

Rehearsing Monday Night Mensa Music

"We work very hard," says percussionist, Matt Zimbel, "and we loop sections so we can play them over again without playing a lot of stuff around them, so we just practice the difficult and then we move on. It's very collective, very polite, and very funny."

Personal Beliefs

"There is one belief that I hold very close to my heart," says Matt. "It's so simple and would frankly solve the world's problems: *Do unto others as you wish they do unto you*. Granted that's hard to do— it's hard to forgive, I know, but if we could all move closer to that . . . well, 'nuff said."

What's next on the horizon for Manteca?

"Touring, touring, touring," says Matt. "Oh, yeah!"



AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. *The Voice* does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

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