



# Out of Our Minds...

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## *Out of my mind ...*

*E. Brimacombe, Department Chair*

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### **Halloween Humour** - Aaron Brimacombe

Why *didn't* the skeleton  
cross the road?  
*He didn't have the guts.*

What do you get when  
Godzilla walks through  
your garden?  
*Squash.*

Here we are, halfway through the semester! If a musical score was playing to reflect the current state of affairs, I think we would have the cymbals crashing, drums pounding, the full brass section building to a loud crescendo. My sense is that this is an incredibly busy time. And I acknowledge that rather than trying to slow down, create some breathing room, I instead continue to schedule life with a nod to my deluded belief that I can be in two places at once. It is times like this that I am reminded of a talk I attended a number of years ago – Kurt Vonnegut spoke at a church in Toronto. Vonnegut shared his perspective on the meaning of life. In his view, we are on this planet to “fart around”. He talked about his delight in banging out a manuscript on his ancient typewriter, then taking the walk to the post office to mail it away, standing in the lineup waiting his turn to have his parcel weighed, observing the people ahead of him, exchanging small talk with the person beside him as the queue inched forward. He spoke of how he enjoyed the sense of moving through each step in that mailing the manuscript process, seeing those steps as valuable pieces of his “farting around” mission in life.

To me, the “farting around” that Vonnegut describes is not about wasting time. It is about stepping out of the tightly scheduled fast track of life, taking detours, and finding opportunity to build connections with people into the day – even when those connections come at a cost to efficiency. Sharing a few words with the custodian who comes in to get the recycling at the end of the day, sharing news via phone rather than e-mail, making a purchase from a clerk rather than a vending machine...

Sometimes I linger when I drop my son in his classroom at school. Sometimes taking those few extra moments just ups my stress level, fueling my “I’m late, I’m late, I’m late” thoughts. But sometimes those few extra “farting around” moments present an opportunity for me to get a little fresh perspective on life ... the other day I dawdled and “tarantula man” came to visit to show the kids his collection of spiders, snakes, and other creepy crawlies. And for a few minutes, I was oblivious to the 88 unread messages in my inbox, eerily fascinated by the man with the red and white striped snake wrapped around his arm and the kids’ comments and questions.

My annual “farting around” venture is fast approaching. October 31<sup>st</sup> I will walk through my neighborhood, slowly making my way up and down every driveway on the street. As the kids shout for candy, I will notice the gardens, the carved pumpkins, the hallways visible as the doors open to the shout of “Trick or treat!” I’ll say “hello” to neighbors I last spoke to October 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. I’ll accept candy from strangers.

Happy Halloween Everyone! In a spirit of celebrating the value in ‘farting around’, my parting line is the title of a Supertramp song: *Take the long way home.*

Winter Social in  
Vertigo, November 25!  
Tickets \$5, available in  
COR A175  
A fundraiser for the  
Victoria Head Injury  
Society



visit PsychOS  
on-line at

<http://web.uvic.ca/~psychos/>

## PsychOS Update -Tom Johnson PsychOS President

The PsychOS has been busy this month, as I am sure some of you know from our incessant requests to speak in front of your classes. Friday, October 20th we organized our first pub crawl of the semester, which was a smashing success. In addition, we published our first issue of Psychobabble, our student-oriented newsletter containing interviews with faculty members, health and wellness spotlight articles, a "Dear Jo" advice column, and of course promotion for our upcoming events. While it is published by PsychOS, faculty contributions would be more than welcome, particularly on the subject of study habits or health and wellness. Psychobabble is published monthly on the second Friday of the month.

Coming up on Monday, October 30 is our Bake Sale! We will be selling various baked goodies on the first floor of Cornett to raise money for the Vancouver Island Head Injury Society, PsychOS' designated charity this year. As another fundraising event, PsychOS is throwing an all-ages' Winter Social in Vertigo on November 25, with a Christmas in Mexico theme, including salsa dancing. This event is meant to be an opportunity for students and faculty to meet, as well as a social event for Psychology students who are not "of age." Tickets will be available for \$5 in COR A175 and all proceeds will go towards the VIHIS.

## Kudos to vroom vroom Valerie Gonzales! -Joshua Goldberg reports

Every year tens of thousands of triathletes seek to compete in the Kona Ironman; this year, only 1,700 succeeded. To qualify for Kona you must either win a lottery spot or kick butt at a qualifying race. Dr. Valerie Gonzales scooped a spot by winning her age division at an Ironman in Brazil!

So, Valerie was one of the 1700 lucky/talented/insane people who qualified to smash themselves against the open surf for 2.4 miles, and then bike 112 miles up and down mountains, and finally run 26.2 miles up and down mountains and over lava flows. Valerie did all this in 15 hours 3 min!

Swim: 2 hrs, 12 min; Bike: 7 hrs, 25 min; Run: 5 hrs, 8 min

Previous athletic history prior to starting triathlons at age 50: none.

Amazing eh? Go go Gonzales!!



See Triumphant Valerie cross the finish line... follow the link below ...

<http://ironman.com/events/ironman/worldchampionship?show=tracker&y=2006&race=events/ironman/worldchampionship&bib=299>

**And would you believe .... Mother Nature added extra challenges to the Kona Ironman this year ...**

*“And don't forget the earthquakes (plural intended), flash floods, torrential rain storms all week including race day. Kids literally were swimming across the road that was part of our bike-run route! and the usual howling tradewinds pushing cyclists off the road as they climbed the earthquake-damaged mountain roads. Then there was the dislocated finger and coral reef rash...is this what you mean by insane ??? :)”*

-Valerie Gonzales

## On the trail of fears that creep

By Lisa Worth, *Fearless Dweller of the Cornett Basement*

Halloween is upon us and our thoughts turn to all things spooky. Witches, rubber Ronald Reagan masks, midnight viewings of the Exorcist, pulling on a pleather outfit three months after having given up on bikini season. Contemplation of these seasonal frights turns our attention to what is creepy and crawly in everyday life. My original task for this newsletter was to take a thorough inventory of all of the things that slink and scuttle in Cornett's corridors. I told Liz stories of seeing spiders on the ceiling, under my desk, half in the toilet, rappelling off of the paper towel dispenser. I shared the overheard mumbling of "rats" by jumper-clad men examining cracks near my basement office. I related how I had bravely dodged earwigs, silver fish and one very large furry bodied moth at virtually every turn. "Okay," she said with a laugh and an agenda, "get me some pictures and we will run a photo essay for the October issue".

I was hoping for an offer of some upstairs office space, but this would have to do. "Cornett's Creepy Corridor – an expose," I could see it now. All month I have interspersed programming, scheduling and running Anovas with the hunt for these many-legged beasts. I opened dusty file boxes, sneakily approached dark office doors with my zoom lens poised and ready. Nothing. In desperation, I used a flurried gesture and slammed up the toilet seat. The shiny whiteness was unblemished. Behind the file cabinet? Nope. Except for that one spider handily attended to by a swift RA (thanks Natalie) I have seen not a camera-ready specimen all month.

One might have stopped here to thoughtfully ponder the lesson that may be in finding the object of one's fears elusive once she actively begins to track them. But, oh no - not me, I became *obsessed* if not with the arachnids then with the phobia itself. While the DSM-IV only lists 3 subgroups of phobias under the general heading of anxiety disorders, much late-night frenzied searching on the internet uncovered the website of a lovely man named Fredd who has made it his business to catalogue over 530 different types of phobias. These range from the relevant to us basement dwellers – lygophobia (fear of dark gloomy places) to the downright silly – porphyrophobia (fear of the colour purple). I was amused by imagining the scenarios that an acerophobe (fearer of sourness) or a dextrophobe (fearer of things on the right side of the body) might get themselves into. I was downright puzzled, however, as I tried to grasp how someone with urophobia (fear of urination), genuphobia (fear of knees), or barophobia (fear of gravity) would make it through his or her daily life. Mark a persistent case of that as convincing evidence against the therapeutic value of systematic desensitization!

While many of these phobias surly have a small number of sufferers and tug the corners of the rest of our mouths into wry smiles, there are many on the list that must give us pause. Gerascophobia (fear of getting old), pocrescophobia (fear of gaining weight), katagelophobia (fear of ridicule), atelophobia (fear of imperfection) and peniaphobia (fear of poverty) are accepted as *de rigueur* or even survival instinct by most of us. Entheraphobia (fear of the Mother-in-law) is often toasted with manhattans and philobia (fear of love) is sweet in the company of a cynical friend and a neat glass of Talisker. The point here is that we all have multiple fears. Some of them are unique to us and obvious to ourselves and others. Most others are phytoplankton in the invisible cultural waters we are all bathed in. They unite us and they drive industry.

How many of us are able to walk the line between desire for success and fear of failure with complete grace? In the pie chart of what keeps a relationship together, how much fruit is rationed to fear of ending up alone? To what extent are we driven by fear and to what extent can we accept that as okay? Like shark divers and hang-gliders should we strive to expose fear's grip as illusory? Or like fastidious mothers shall we dole fear the respect it deserves as an ally in a world that *is* treacherous?

The funny thing about fear is that it is a generator of paradox. We fear both being alone with it and being exposed as having it. Often, hearing someone admit their own fear of being a bad parent, taking a wrong turn in life or seeking the help of a counsellor offers us some tiny relief in our own secret struggle with a similar thing. But who will be the first to expose themselves as a bearer? This Tuesday, we will parade, celebrate and invoke some socially-sanctioned fears but what will we do during the rest of the year?

In closing, I leave you with my favourite phobia from Fredd's list:

Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia (fear of long words).

Happy Halloween! (...unless, of course, you have samhainophobia).



**Read Lisa's spooky confession on p. 6!**



## Introducing Dr. Marty Wall

*By Janet Stepaniuk*

Dr. Marty Wall concluded his undergraduate education at Harvard where he majored in mathematics. A job as a research assistant for a visiting professor from the University of Pennsylvania spurred his interest in psychology and he applied for graduate school to the University of Pennsylvania where he studied mathematical models of behaviour.

In the year of the assassination of John F. Kennedy (1963 for those of you who don't quite recall) he took a job at the University of Toronto. Roots were planted, family and friends made the thought of leaving difficult, and so he remained but took advantage of many new opportunities which came his way.

Dr. Wall went on to Chair the department of Psychology but it was the development of a new program which really caught his interest. Aimed at giving motivated but disadvantaged adult learners a chance for a university education, his direction in Psychology was altered. Five courses were designed to help bring these adult learners to a level that would put them on par with mainstream students. At the end of the year, they would be given some credit and they would enter into the regular program. Watching Dr. Wall's eyes light up as he talked about these students showcased his enthusiasm and passion for this endeavor. He went on to explain how these adult learners differed from the average student and brought to the classroom a unique set of skills. Some had overcome horrific life experience but what set them apart was that they were strongly motivated to learn and find a better way of life for themselves, despite what they had overcome. Dr. Wall also feels that they taught him to look at life from an entirely new perspective, one which he had never experienced in the classroom previously. This work, which included designing one of the five courses himself, culminated in receiving the 3M Teaching Award of Excellence in 2003.

However, Dr. Wall has now taken a new path. When his wife, Teresa Dawson, took on the role as the Director of the University of Victoria's Learning and Teaching Centre, a move to the West Coast ensued. Arriving two months ago, the couple bought a home in Oak Bay and now has the undeniable pleasure/pain of renovating their new residence. This project has kept exploring to a minimum although a stroll down Oak Bay Avenue affords him a much deserved cup of coffee.

When asked what he looked forward to the most in the coming months, Dr. Wall replied with a glint in his eye, "I look forward in December to calling friends and family in Ontario and telling them I am just about to go out, yet one more time, and "mow my lawn"".

The University of Toronto's loss is the University of Victoria's gain. This semester, Dr. Wall is once again in front of an Introductory Psychology class. We welcome Dr. Wall and look forward to his added presence in our halls of psychology.

### Dr. Marty Wall at the Psi Chi Fall 2006 Induction Ceremony



*Coming Next Month – Swimming with the Dolphins...Dr. Jason Cressey*

**PSI CHI News**

*-Janet Stepaniuk, Psi Chi President*

With the membership drive over and applications processed, the University of Victoria chapter of Psi Chi welcomed 28 new members, both at the undergraduate and the graduate level. The induction ceremony, which took place at the University Club Fireside Lounge on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> was a wonderful opportunity for new members to become acquaintance with each other. We were honoured to have Dr. Marty Wall as our guest speaker and his words of encouragement to our members in regards to mentoring others spoke volumes of his own dedication to post-secondary education and his commitment in delivering quality teaching to students.

I would like to say a few personal words at this time. My term as president has come to an end and I would like to thank the people and the department for helping make the past year and a half so memorable. The support that faculty and staff has given me during this time has been invaluable and my job would not have been possible without you. I would like to say a special thank you to Cheryl, Paul, and Wendy. I can't begin to count how many times I interrupted their work with yet another request, and still they were so helpful, so cheerful, and so very accommodating. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I would also like to point out that Psi Chi has been very much a group effort. To Lisa, Lara, Katie, Erin, Kyoko, Katie, Sandra, Myta, Atlantis, and to all of the others who baked, organized, and were always willing to lend a helping hand. Thank you Dr. Elizabeth Brimacombe for taking on yet another role and supporting Psi Chi as a faculty advisor and for all those wonderful goodies you always brought for the bake sales. Finally, I thank and applaud Dr. Stephen Lindsay, creator and organizer of the UVic chapter, for his commitment and dedication. Without him we would not exist and have the distinctive honour of being the first chapter in Canada.

And so a new era begins. On Friday, November 3, a new executive will be formed. I know that this new group of students will bring with them a wealth of wonderful qualities and vibrant energy. Please join me in welcoming and thanking them for being so willing to provided leadership to other students and to their commitment to promoting an excellence within our department of Psychology. May the University of Victoria chapter of Psi Chi continue to grow in our department and foster a pride and professionalism for tomorrow's psychologists. <http://web.uvic.ca/~psichi/>



*“My term as president has come to an end and I would like to thank the people and the department for helping make the past year and a half so memorable”*

**Dr. Robert Gifford** was elected President of the Environmental Division of the (IAAP) International Association of Applied Psychology (4-year term, 2006-10) and is the recipient of the Environmental Design Research Association's Career Award (to be presented in May 2007 at their next convention).

**Applause! Applause!**



As with every final Saturday in October, the Taylor/Lindsay cabal threw its annual party celebrating the change back to Standard Time.

For some reason, people keep showing up in costume. After 15 years, they still don't know why.



[Party photos coming soon to dept website!](#)

## “I’ll Never Make Pumpkin Pie Again” Squares *-from the recipe files of Katherine Gauthier*

This month’s recipe comes from Katherine Gauthier (Administrative Assistant, Dean’s office). The recipe she shares earned her first prize in a recent bake-off in geography!

**Pre-heat oven to 350° F**

### Ingredients:

28 oz can pumpkin  
 13 oz can evaporated milk  
 3 eggs  
 1 cup white sugar  
 ¼ tsp salt  
 2 tsp pumpkin pie spice (or ¼ tsp ginger, ¼ tsp nutmeg, 1 tsp cinnamon, 1/3 tsp cloves)  
 1 yellow Duncan Hines cake mix  
 1 cup melted butter  
 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts



### Method:

Mix the pumpkin, eggs, evaporated milk and spices together and beat well. Pour into an ungreased 9 x 13” pan. Cover with dry cake mix. Drizzle melted butter over the top until completely covered – you may have to use a little more butter. Sprinkle with chopped nuts. Bake at 350 degrees F for 50 – 60 minutes (until a knife inserted in the centre comes out clean. Chill, and serve with whipped cream. Delicious!

## Halloween Trivia



Q. What was your favorite Halloween costume?

A. My best friend and I dressed up as twin unicorns

*Marisha Nozdryn-Plotnicki*

*4<sup>th</sup> year psychology student/Work Study for Dr. Julie Rodgers*



### Spooky Confessions from Meagan Newton-Taylor and Lisa Worth

*Research Assistants for Dr. Mike Masson*

Q. What are you most scared of?

Meagan – I am Claustrophobic

Lisa - 1) When I am was little, I was scared of the roar of the MGM lion.  
 2) Now, I fear living a life in absence of statistical anomalies.



**Arachibutyrophobia** – Fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth. Really!

*From Zoë Brimacombe*