

Journal of

Imaginary

Research

Volume Two | 2016

Journal of Imaginary Research

Volume Two

2016

Edited by Matthew Cheeseman

Series Editor, Kay Guccione

This is the second collection of academic fantasies produced by students and staff of the University of Sheffield during its annual festival of research writing. All the abstracts and biographies were made-up during two WriteFest workshops. Some are absurd, some satirical, a few appear to be real research projects fantasised on the spot. All are connected to existing research projects as all began life as images that the workshop attendees brought along to represent their research. We redistributed these images and used them to begin the writing process. So in a way, they are all fantasies of another person's research project. You can find some of these images in the centre of this pamphlet. By taking a creative approach to academic writing, Kay Guiccone and myself hoped to ease some of the anxiety that sometimes comes with writing and open up the scope of the writing itself.

—**Dr Matthew Cheeseman**

Beating agoraphobia: integration is in the eye of the beholder

by G. Valeria Nájera

This study investigated the camera as an aid to overcome stressful situations by those with anxiety disorders. All of the participants were provided with a new Nikon® p900 and instructed to see through the lens before seeing the situation with their own eyes, taking pictures if necessary. The therapy was based on O'Hara's (2012) previous work on living through the lens of a camera or cell phone, which completely changes our perceptions of surroundings, creating a distraction in focusing our minds only in what we see on the screens. Comparable studies have followed on from this theory to prove that cell phones and cameras keep us absent during our meals (Jewels et al, 2013), prevent us from enjoying a concert or a trip (Kim et al, 2013; Liam et al, 2014) or impede integration to a social group (Rouster et al, 2015). The aim of the present study was to take advantage of this distraction from the current situation in order to forget the anxiety arising from it. Results were more than satisfactory for the participants and the outcome pictures even took part in an exhibition.

Dr Marcus Bonus (b. Naples, 1971) is a psychiatrist from the University of Nottingham and a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He was always an outgoing and charismatic boy, but during his childhood suffered deeply from his mother's agoraphobic disorder, staying indoors most of the day. His passion for photography and curiosity took him to sneak into other families' gatherings, picnics and adventure trips. He could not bear the idea of someone being not able to enjoy the outdoors and has dedicated much of his practice to the development of therapies for anxiety disorders.

A scientific investigation into the microanimology of circular pools

by Natalie Lamb

The study of microanimology has been in constant debate since the discovery of the animoloscope thirty years ago. This study was designed to push the debate further, by fully delving into this mysterious world hidden to the naked human eye. This investigation has shown that microanimoles are unable to survive in circular pools of water. As their tentacled flagellum scramble to adhere to the surface of the pool, they become knotted. Without a means of moving in the water body, the microanimoles slide down to the bottom of the pool, where they are unable to survive. The implications of this study are huge. It is recommended that swimming pools will have to have their shapes altered to prevent the build up of microanimoles. Square pools are the root of the problem. The Corner Cutting Collaboration will begin work immediately, or within the next few years, whichever is most agreeable to them. From this day forth, protractor sales are likely to soar, as pools with angles will be no more.

Prof Euky Aryotic has been described as the nucleus of all biologists working in microanimology. It is impossible to say his contribution is small, even as a microanimologist. His work has influenced many, with scientists travelling miles to see him, his conference and film showings in over thirty countries. He is a man of many cultures. It could be said that Prof Aryotic has much in common with *Staphylococcus aureus*, since they both produce excellent biofilms. This wonderful man is reaching the right time to be put out to Pasteur and continue his adventures outside microanimology.

Pleasure, exercise and endorphins: a literary substitute *by Kate Gath*

Current research suggests that the endorphins released by the human body during a period of moderate to intense exercise replicate the effects of opiates, inducing a state of tangible pleasure. This paper examines the ability of mid-seventeenth-century literature to imitate these effects and produce a type of pleasure measurable in a similar way to that generated by exercise, specifically exercise involving weight-training which incorporates a high number of repetitions using a light weight. The research suggests a link between drama which considers the plurality within English civil war royalist factions and higher levels of endorphin release, with research participants in the 24–26 age group being particularly susceptible to the pleasurable effects of the reading. Previous work in this field (Pleser, 1987; Plaisir, 2003; Vergnügen, 2012; Voluptatem, 2013) suggests that the pleasurable effects produced by literary consumption may help combat obesity levels, but this study is the first to successfully compare the pleasure experienced when completing a highly specific exercise routine to that felt when reading a narrow range of seventeenth-century royalist literature.

Dr Hed O Nist is a Senior Lecturer in Pleasure Studies at the University of Thought. After gaining his PhD, he worked as a researcher at the government Ministry of Pleasure Regulation, before becoming a university lecturer. His recent publications include his second monograph *The joys of mindless internet browsing* (2010) and his article for *The 25th Century*, 'The pleasures of time travel' (2496). Currently he is part of an interdisciplinary team investigating the happiness levels of small rodents exposed to cultural materialist literary theory prior to hibernation, funded by the Centre for Fashionable Nonsense.

Actual versus assumed elevation—effects on the written word

by Mari Herigstad

Words exhibit degrees of loftiness and gravitas. The Bard's 'Let slip the dogs of war' holds greater weight than Baha Men's 'Who let the dogs out? Woof Woof Woof!' (although the Baha Men do present an intriguing question). This study aims to clarify the mechanisms by which words accrue such weight. Sixty phrases of various degrees of eloquence were placed in boxes with windows for visual inspection and randomised to three altitudes (corrected for cardinal direction). Weight and (visual) clarity were measured using scales and a magnifying glass. All phrases were successfully elevated and no further altitude change observed, demonstrating that phrases did not lift/lower themselves. Elevated phrases showed no change in clarity, however a significant reduction in weight correlated with altitude ($p=0.04999$) was observed. We conclude that words do not alter their elevation of their own volition, indicating that loftiness requires human input. Contrary to our hypothesis, artificial elevation does not lend gravitas but follows, rather disappointingly, physical laws of gravity. Assuming similar rules for spoken phrases, this suggests that (1) physical laws do not obey words, no matter how articulate and (2) the weight and clarity of words are not increased with the elevation of the speaker.

Prof Jemima Kaftan-Poncho is a literary physiologist working at the University of Underfunding in the Department for Pomp and Circumstance. She is best known for her theory of tide control via commands and shouting, though has also published on the Ostrich method. This explores how putting one's head in sand makes the world vanish in the short-term, with prolonged effects if sand gets stuck in ocular/auditory organs. She is Editor-in-Chief for the *Journal of Last Resort* and sits on the board of the Academic Association of Academic Academics. Chair of the Haughty Future Novelist Society, she organises their annual Mer-lot And Melancholy (MAM) event.

Storing stories

by Stefania Marcotti

The storage of stories is a long-standing issue that has previously been addressed by building libraries, writing encyclopediae and binding anthologies. Some of these methods are not always practical, require very large spaces and are often unsuitable for more targeted applications such as paper clipping repositories or family recipe collections. This study presents an innovative, space-restricted methodology. The procedure involves the use of specifically tailored fireproof cardboard boxes for the ordered sorting of written pieces. Different cases have been designed to store poems, prose, novels, recipes, and essays. Colours, dimensions, stacking options and decoration are customized for each category to take into consideration a visually pleasant display. The use of alphabetical listing and Dewey Decimal Classification is integrated into a novel systematic index (denominated the 'Shoebox Index') implemented in different variations depending on the purpose of the storage. This new classification method introduces harmony and clarity to any sort of story storage and will allow for cost- and space-effective applications, both personal and industrial, short- and long-term.

Dr Andy Shoebox works at Alaska Happy Ending University. His research interests include document sorting and storytelling structuring, on which he made his name. He is currently working on the experimental evaluation of boxes and cases to order press clipping in alphabetical order. Outside academia he is interested in origami, paper airplanes, and paper in general, not to mention shopping lists, to-do lists, and lists. He has a strong aversion to fire and entropy and he is well-known for loving Oxford commas. He is the author of the popular bestseller *Paper and lists, lists and paper* (Square Envelope Publishing, 2010).

Ancient trees, forgotten health

by Simone Lindo

In Taoism trees are understood as being in constant meditation (Up-lift, 2016). Researcher Bernie Bone has developed an environmentalist community dedicated to understanding the emotional benefits of tree hugging. Upon the discovery of an ancient forest located north of the Mississippi Woodall mountain range, Professor Bone and his team of experts isolated themselves from society and modern technology in order to understand just why tree hugging is good for you. Over a six-week period, the daily activities for the team include meditating alongside the trees for a minimum of 30 minutes per day, hugging trees for a minimum of one hour per day and emotional and mental health screening conducted by teams from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The first research aim of the study was to understand how forgotten green spaces can awaken the emotional need for nature. The second aim was to examine the mental health effects of isolation from society and modern life whilst reconnecting with nature. The results displayed a sharp increase in emotional and mental well-being after a two-week period in the forgotten forest. However, an unanticipated result was the decline in physical health due to poor nutrition. Despite this, 80 per cent of the team agreed that tree hugging was a worthwhile and beneficial experience.

Prof Bernie Bone is an environmental historian who received his PhD from Wisconsin State University. His search for forgotten forests began in 2013. In September 2015 he has discovered the blue lap forest north of the Woodall mountain range in Mississippi. The blue lap forest was so named because of the blue creeks trailing through the forest. The 543 square mile forest is estimated to be 3,125 years old and Professor Bone is currently campaigning for protected status. In his free time, he works as a freelance photographer and actively works to support environmental agencies around the world.

Ethnic minority voices: waterfront dwellers

by Siti Soraya Lin binti Abdullah Kamal

Small waterfront huts have been an abode for approximately 500 Malyst since their last, unknown migration to this newly discovered land in the Southeast Asia. This ethnographic study investigates the identity of these small inhabitants. The findings reveal four components that constitute their sense of group belonging: physical features, language, food intake and exercise routine. All of them are lean, have round faces, hooked nose and narrow eyes. Malyst primarily use Austronesian languages and speak very fast in a monotonous way. In terms of food, Malyst have coconut with most of their meals whether in the form of water, cream or milk and they eat twice a day: brunch and dinner. Malyst, regardless of age and gender perform a daily 'workout' in the morning for two hours. When Malyst were asked about contact with other populations, they insisted on their own cultural practices and declined 'others'. Their ethnocentric views are interpreted using cultural identity theory (Collier, 2009) as a basis to 'describe, explain and predict' (Unrau and Alvermann, 2013, 48) their behavioural norms.

Dr Khalid bin Muhamad Yazid was born and raised in Malaysia. He arrived in the UK at the age of eighteen on the Malaysian Prime Minister Scholarship and obtained BA (Hons) and a PhD in Sociology from University College London. He is a founding Director at the Cultural and Ethnicity Centre in Putrajaya and devotes himself to helping the underprivileged. He is an expert in social and ethnic identity, nationality and migrants and writes prolifically in these fields. He has received awards for exceptional research contributions to ethnic minority identification and for his work on diaspora, migration and transnationalism.

An abstract abstract

by Julian Gosliga

Typically, the abstract is the only part of the paper freely available on online databases. As such, it should be written to entice people into accessing the full work and consequently disseminate the knowledge or argument contained within. It is therefore necessary to summarise the motivation, problem statement, approach, primary results and main conclusion in a concise and persuasive fashion. An abstract should be self-contained; however, many are vague or contain jargon, requiring prior reading of the paper to be fully understood. In addition, some abstracts fall foul of discussing the paper rather than the research itself. Even worse, many abstracts are guilty of being incredibly tedious, immediately extinguishing a reader's interest. To discover what makes a successful abstract, a meta-analysis was conducted, examining the abstracts of award-winning papers across a range of academic fields. Several experts were consulted, although it was noted that there was some discrepancy between what makes an effective abstraction and an abstract effective. The primary result is evident in this text and reading through this abstract will provide the reader with an overview of what to include, and some of the pitfalls to avoid. In future, better abstracts will make it easier for researchers to find relevant papers.

Prof Edward Volatilis (Eddy to his friends) was renowned for his research on energy transfer between authors and their work. He noted that writers would often expend vast amounts of energy on endeavours that failed to kindle their interest, burning themselves out in the process. Owing to highly attractive abstracts, his papers were seized upon. His research (and fame) peaked with the discovery of 'recursive resonance,' where both work and author excite each other into an unstable state. Unfortunately, he failed to predict the turbulent times ahead: as his non-linear prose came under heavy criticism, his academic career grew steadily more unstable. Constant transitions from one institution to the next caused Eddy to become ever more erratic. One afternoon, while conducting repeat experiments on work-life balance, he hit his limit—broke down—and was eventually sectioned. He spent his final days collecting butterflies.

Play in emerging sub-Saharan Africa

by Katrina Mayson

This paper investigates the availability of, and opportunity for, structured play amongst preschool children in sub-Saharan Africa. My intention is to establish whether the availability of western style playgrounds, with structured swing, slide and protected fall areas, encourages or inhibits the acquisition of non-native ethical responses. I measure this by examining the children's response to issues such as turn taking, queuing, or playground bullying. I bring an interdisciplinary approach to the study of public play programs in sub-Saharan Africa, extending and questioning the work of seminal cultural anthropologists such as Gaylord Smith and his *Playing in the dust* (1999) or Levine Simon's *The effect of aid; inter and intra racial corruption in hearts of darkness* (2013). Using a combination of photography, participant studies and literature review, I have, over twelve months, carried out an extensive observational study of five playgrounds. I use the statistical standards established by Simon in Tipperary for purposes of comparison. Preliminary results show that play is inversely proportional to time; metrics further demonstrate that wealth correlates with lunar movements and thus impacts family dynamics. Nonetheless, further investigation needs to be done before finalising any conclusion, particularly with regard to the need to avoid all aspects of categorisation.

Dr Joana Foxglove has been a Research Associate at the University of Wellbeing since 2015. She completed her PhD on inter/intra-cultural communication at the University of Zaphod, having previously completed Masters in English and Anthropology at the University of Alphaville, where she was also responsible for establishing a working partnership with the University of Beachy. Her research interests lie in the development of children through play, ranging from psychological interaction to markers of academic achievement as measured by standardised testing. She is fluent in French, Afrikaans and English and has a good working knowledge of Universal and Territorial languages. She is convening the 'Play or Die' conference, a networked gathering taking place 'wherever you are in the autumn of 2017'.





Lost in space: identity, meaning and where

by Nurul Anida Mohamad

Not much has been written on the identity of spaces. It is a new field where only the lack of understanding amongst space users contributes to a loss in space. It is believed that designers, clients and users have forgotten the value of space in relation to their place in society and culture. Political ideals of building and creating meaningful spaces have disappeared. Modern society is too busy with the mundane and as a result blocks of meaninglessness have been generated, to the extent that life amounts to an empty illusion of moving from one undesirable state to the next. Capitalism encourages competition so few care about others or the environment and no one contemplates what constitutes good, breathing space. Therefore, experiments, studies, research and analysis on negative and positive spaces are essential to develop a field study of space. It is important to know how to fully utilise and put meaning to newly encountered spaces. The end result from this research eventually will give space an identity, a place where it should be.

Angkasa LePas graduated with a Diploma in Place Making from the University of Placefield. During her studies, she has developed a passion for the meaning of places and spaces. After several years of industry experience she switched her career to teaching at a few private institutions (University of Areazona, GAP University and Open University). In 2009, she obtained her Masters in Space Management from the University of Distancesin. While lecturing in design, she developed an inclination towards studies of space identification. Following eight years of teaching, she is now pursuing her doctoral studies at School of Spaceshire.

Typha—to assess the health of the Hazelwood marshes *by Pragya Chaube*

Marshes are extremely important ecological areas known for their rich biodiversity. Pollution from unsustainable agricultural practices, industry, sewage disposal and landfill leachate, which may be derived from adjacent lands or the water courses, is a major threat to species in marsh areas. One of the key strategies in the conservation and management of marshes is to identify biomarkers that can give clues about the presence and extent of pollution and in turn provide information about the health of the marshland area. This study was carried out at Hazelwood marshes, Suffolk, UK, in collaboration with Suffolk Wildlife Trust. It established Typha, a flowering plant, as the appropriate biomarker for the region. The extensive studies carried out to determine the water quality of the region revealed a high level of zinc as the main pollutant, derived from fertilizers on the adjoining agricultural lands. Typha, which is found in abundance in the region, has shown extreme sensitivity to zinc. We subjected Typha to different doses of zinc and found that at high levels, the plant has a deformed leaf and flower structure. The colour of the flowers show a gradient from red to maroon in response to different doses of zinc. Our studies has found this plant to be very responsive to different zinc levels.

Abril Moreau is a PhD student at the University of Cambridge. She is from Lille in the north of France. Having finished her Bachelor's degree in biology at University of Lille, she started working as an intern at WWF Paris on the conservation of the European water vole. This got her interested in the ecology and the conservation of the wetland areas. Followed by an MSc in Conservation Ecology and Management from the University of Paris, she joined the Conservation Science group at Cambridge under the supervision of Dr Smith. After her PhD she would like to continue working towards the conservation of wetlands.

The lost mysterious inheritance

by Karla Robles Lopez

For many years researchers have been trying to understand that which connects humans with the future, present and past, without coinciding in time or space. Currently, favoured explanations are 'coincidence', 'mystery' or 'miracle'. Evidence on a hidden inheritance arose when a family of medics developed the same talents as Da Vinci. They lived in a small community, without exposure to the outside world. They were all themselves medics of the community; architects, musicians, scientists and botanists. Their paintings and sculptures shared an astonishing resemblance with Da Vinci's artistic work. This led geneticists to the hidden world of transgenerational inheritance: *deja vú*, *jamaís vú* and 'past lives'. Memories, talents and feelings from our ancestors are passed through several generations with no mutations or changes in our DNA. A hidden gene is responsible for this, disguised in a manner in which it can remain dormant. This gene appears to be endangered under conditions of modernity. This paper discusses new evidence that it has been under attack of a deadly virus which works by encouraging laziness.

Dr Robles Lopez graduated from the University of Sheffield and currently works with different hospitals in the UK, Germany and Mexico, attempting to locate the 'ingenious genes' shared by three different cultures. She also works (carefully) with people who have not been exposed to modern life. Her current work is focused on developing a vaccine, thanks to those populations with innate immunisation, to be administered during pregnancy. With this she hopes to recover latent ancient knowledge and uncover the past within the present.

Social interactionism and the ethics of duty

by Victor Chidi Wolemonwu

The status of human beings as social entities is a fact philosophical rhetoric and disputations are yet to repudiate. In *Being and nothingness*, Sartre, describes the human person as being-for-itself, translated from *être-pour-soi*. *Pour soi* gives human beings an ascriptive status of possessors of consciousness. Human beings are aware of their individuality and also design ways in which this individuality could be fulfilled through the creation of its essences. Besides this, a human person is also conscious of other persons, and so, he is described as being-with-others (*être-pour-autrui*). There is an ontological web that connects the individuality of all human beings, making it impossible for an individual to operate outside the social network of other individuals. Social interaction creates a moral tension between fulfilling ones sensual proclivities and being altruistic. Taking an ethical constructivist posture, this study argues that the ontological social connectedness of human beings ascribes moral obligatory roles to all human entities. All human beings, therefore, owe one another a moral duty of beneficence. The implication of this is a creation of a community of mutually co-existing individuals, ordered by the consciousness that the unity of individualities gives meaning to a more authentic social existence.

Brumen Manda, PhD, is the Director of the Institute of Bioethics and Moral Existentialism, Nigeria. Prior to this appointment, he was the Head of Department of Philosophy, University of Mingham, United Kingdom; Dean, Institute of Medical Ethics, Haiti and the Director, Arsen Chair of Global Bioethics, Institute of Bioethics and Neuroscience, India. He has authored several books in the field of bioethics and Sartre's moral philosophy, one of which is *Freedom, obligation and the medical practice*, a best seller in Europe and America.

Beyond balloons: sweeping you off your feet

by Charlotte Graham

People's perception of balloons, orbs, spheroids and zeppelins is divided; whilst many associate them with celebrations, some recall terrifying clowns, like Stephen's Kings Pennywise. This paper focuses on the effect of balloons and party bags on the mood of commuters. It is based on doctoral work (Saucer, 2009) which measured the mood of commuters on their way to work on a gloomy Monday morning. The results showed that 11 out of the 15 (approx. 73%) suffered from a low mood on a daily basis. The present study repeats the same questionnaire. This time the researcher gave each of the participants an inflated balloon and a party bag (containing one joke, a party blower and popper) before they completed the questionnaire. Only 2 (out of 20) said they felt in a low mood on a daily basis. This tells us that the act of kindness or humour can change someone's mood. It also suggests that someone referring to being 'depressed' can simply mean a common level of feeling 'fed up' and this can be changed by one inexpensive small gesture. Basic party novelties evoked laughter, cheer and were likely to be the topic of discussion amongst many commuters.

Professor Saucer read Chemistry at the University of Tokyo. Whilst studying, she worked at a local store selling party equipment which led to her initial fascination with helium in balloons. Shortly after graduating, she started working as a hypnotherapist and ran her own laughing classes. This progressed her career researching hormones and mental health and led to a number of pioneering new techniques in changing the way we think about our own minds.

Data-hater? Media collusion in spreading confusion

by Kay Guccione

This short report documents testing of a new review method for measuring displeasure and public rubrics for the understanding of ranked and rated metadata in free media. It demonstrates for the first time that if we implement an 'anticipated diligent participant instrument', the equivalent 'rage-gauge' can be applied to aid understanding of the types of data that induce profuse unsavoury fury. In order to break a keen routine of high eyebrows and screams in response to pie charts in teen magazines, we screened all publication perturbations for specific statistical gimmicks. Base, paraphrased, nonsense data is commonplace nowadays, most prolific as a catalytic, cathartic, bar chart of hypocritical political data. Least frequent formats were wi-fi hot spot one shot dot plots. Critical citizen outrage flared in response to one craven data collection occasion. In order to save face it became necessary to put in place a phased engagement. Quick sifting of the lifted data insultingly showed no result of note, so we repacked and stacked the data to reframe that same and outcomes spouted out. However issues of user threshold were two-fold, so this idea fast crashed and was faster trashed. The sole irritating indication was that the media are interminable vermin. This conclusion could be of use in reducing confusion.

Dr Nora Ryman-Reesen is, appropriately, a post-Soviet Research Associate specialising in matters arising in methodical methodological design. She is also the impressive successor to Professor Leicester on the 'Overseas Guarantees for the Citrine Displeased' project which seeks, over several weeks, to examine a multitude of elusive attitudes to foreign oranges. She is on the regular secular panellist list for the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Tight Insight', invited, quite rightly, for her conclusive report on horse-based sports' remorse. In 2015 she was the winner of the \$10,000 White Collar Scholar award.

Managing chthonic space

by Matthew Cheeseman

This study sets out a rationale for establishing a space that captures the chthonic and allows it to be utilised in the workplace. It begins by describing both the chthonic and the workplace and explaining how they have traditionally been kept separate and have consequently developed as distinct. The chthonic is defined as a deep, forbidden zone, a boundless space of subterranean death, decomposition and muddy, bloody fertility. The study understands the workplace as an area servicing the development of capitalism, evolving from meeting basic needs in local economies to our international world of networked consumerism. It notes the synergies between the global market and the digital and argues that the subterranean should not be ignored or thought of as irrelevant, especially in a time characterised by cloud-based data storage. Entropy is seen as classically fertile ground that needs to be captured and utilised. The paper sets forth best practice for establishing the virtual chthonic and proposes a series of guidelines for managing it. For example, we advise foregrounding the primacy of dead labour at all opportunities. Accepting the inevitable decay of both our bodies and the falling rate of profit leads to, ultimately, a reconceptualisation of the digital as the endless void.

Dr Simon Frontier is an anthropologist and work psychologist. His interest in repurposing mythic and religious frameworks has led to successful consultancy work and a popular series of podcasts. He has repeatedly issued warnings that capitalism—and our world order—is progressively dying, and that for us to evolve we need to recognise and welcome this inevitable end: ‘Only by celebrating our damnation will we learn to recognise the final opportunities which lie in the crumbling face of ruin’.

With thanks to Kay Guccione, Jordan Tetley,
Liam Hardman and Chris Key.

Copyright of individual items, including images, remains
with the authors. The moral rights of the authors have been
asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Design and
Patents Act 1988.

This collection © University of Sheffield 2017.

ISBN: 978-0-907426-48-6

WRITE*fest*2016

SOLENTPRESS
Digital and print solutions

Series editors

**Matthew Cheeseman
& Kay Guccione**