

Journal of

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Edited by Matthew Cheeseman

Series Editor, Kay Guccione

In this fourth volume of academic fantasies we are delighted to cement a commitment to openly and widely spreading the practices of imaginative writing for research staff and students. These imagined research abstracts, and their imagined researchers were constructed by our real academic staff, research staff and students during WriteFest, the annual festival of research writing now spanning twelve universities in the UK and Australia. We have used imaginative writing practices to construct and refine abstracts and biographies that are freed from the confines of real research, though each piece is rooted in a real image, carried into the workshop by a real researcher.

The pieces in this volume are by-products of the true aim of the workshop, which is to reflect on how we can creatively communicate real research projects, and how we can find the joy of creativity within the grind of productivity. This journal is thus an insight into the creativity that exists within research, and within our researchers—creativity being a property of all writers and the privilege of all researchers.

WriteFest has brought an excitement and enjoyment of writing to many. These fantasies in particular serve to refresh each attendee's commitment to writing papers, theses, funding proposals and reports.

My sincere thank you to Dr Matthew Cheeseman whose expertise in creative applications for writing has underpinned the last five years of work, for the conception of this project. We hope you enjoy reading the fourth volume of the Journal of Imaginary Research.

—Dr Kay Guccione

Responses to environmental gigantism

by Lijiaozi Cheng



This paper considers the sudden change in the size of certain human beings. The cause and reason for this phenomenon has largely remained unknown, since people mostly fear those who have changed. There is speculation that the changes are connected to dramatic changes in the urban environment (with a corresponding tendency to feel vulnerable and lost in this environment). However, where giants have appeared, people have stayed away from them. This project is the first of its kind to investigate the hidden causes of such changes, and to seek perspectives from the giants themselves. Observation and interviews are combined in order to gauge how giants go about their daily lives and what their thoughts and feelings as a result of their gigantism. We followed giants, observed their behaviors as well as others' reactions to them. Then we conducted semi-structured interviews with ten giants from five different countries in order to investigate any environmental contributions to their changes. The results

are surprising: most giants reported that the sudden gigantism is just a pretense to mask their vulnerability, and they all answered with certainty that they will become small again—not human size, but ant size—as that’s the only way to survive this environment.

Dr Melon Stupidienne is an environmental activist and researcher who seeks to understand the perspectives of those alienated as a result of environmental change. She is herself a product of such change—she was once content as a British Blue cat until she became a human being. She was troubled by her newly-gained tendency to intellectualize, but she decided to use it for a good cause. Her PhD at University of Manchester looked at feline purring as a true sign of intelligence.

Encounters: unravelling the hidden paths of a broken memory

by Olivia Espinosa Trujillo



Memories are encoded in the brain through a series of neural circuits that can be activated by different inputs or triggers, such as emotions, sounds, voices or places (Douglas Fields, 2005). Ryan et al (2015) suggest that the memories of amnesic patients remain stored inside their brains but the ability to retrieve such memories becomes severely impaired. This paper explores this by using the renowned Greek poet Tassos Ariti as a case study. In his unfinished collection of poems entitled *Encounters*, wrote a final lullaby for his beloved wife: 'from the corners of time, if I shall lose it all / I know that your warm embrace will always bring me home.' After suffering a stroke, Ariti developed a severe case of neurological amnesia. Lost in a maze of disconnected images, he can no longer recall the stories that inform his identity. This paper suggest that the use of neurological triggers can help amnesic patients retrieve lost memories. It focuses on the development of a neurological therapy where patients are exposed to specific emotional triggers as a way of unlocking the hidden paths

of their shattered memories. The case of Tassos Ariti is used to illustrate the potential this therapy has to help amnesic patients restore their sense of identity. During summertime, he was taken to Ikaria, his hometown: the smell of the sea and the distant sound of an accordion made him feel alive. According to one of his poems, the day he met his wife, a soft accordion melody was played. Although he can no longer remember the face of his wife, that summer day he muttered with a subtle smile—'I am home'.

Dr Marina Abreu is a Portuguese neurologist working at the Stanford Center for Memory Disorders. Her research interests focus on the development of innovative and creative therapies to help patients with acute memory disorders retrieve lost memories. Being an artist herself, she believes that the lost paths of memories can be restored through the use of emotional inputs. She has published more than twenty papers in different neurology journals all with the aim of inspiring researchers to use alternative strategies to treat amnesic patients.

Caught between a tiger and a fireball: the tensile strength of live-wires in stimulus conditions

by Kay Guccione



Our article presents two narratives of intra-collegial tension, understanding their relationship to anticipated and actualised cognitive release via ethnography. Our participation/performance actor-environments all involve professional colleagues in non-professional spaces governed by both socio-economic and emotional-maturity indices. Though after-work social events are classically understood as positive and desirable ways to release and therefore reduce mental overload, few researchers have been able to theorise the boundaries of reasonable self-expression at after-work social events. Here we add weight to the pro-boundaries argument, through identification of two contrasting experience-types (both poor): 'the tiger' and 'the fireball'. We suggest that there are tiger-type and fireball-type colleagues whose presence acts to repress actualised cognitive release, and some whose tension-increasing behaviour aligns to no known framework of collegiality. We conclude the article with some recommendations for

setting and communicating personal boundaries. This process of self-positioning presents an exciting opportunity for other researchers to enter into social premises with increased confidence in their ability to resist several forms of voluminously performed 'relaxation' tropes, from tiger-type and fireball-type colleagues. The implications on whether non-professional social suitability should be biased for recruitment, and indeed feature on probationary frameworks, would bear further scrutiny in future studies.

Dr P Movell and **Dr BB Sham** are Co-Directors of the Centre for Collegiate Reality. After completing their twelve year ethnography, they have both taken time away from the professional environment to be present with their own thoughts, not have to listen to colleagues, and are not available for comment.

by Miriam Miller

The sociological significance of the pink bathroom and its connection to a sense of powerful femininity was established in the 1950s, both politically (Eisenhower, 1953) and culturally (Mansfield, 1957). Originally seen as a bold and welcome move to enliven interior decor in the post-war period United States, the pink bathroom phenomena came through something of a problematic resurgence in the 1980s where it was interpreted as being both subversive and also oppressive and gender normative. An initial indicator of this change was seen in the use of pink hair and clothing to ridicule femininity and undermine female ambition, whilst simultaneously reinforcing normative beauty school standards (Conn, 1978). Further appearances in pop culture continued this trend: firstly by providing a caricature of sexualised

femininity as set against problematic descriptions of motherhood (Dunaway, 1981); secondly, by subverting the overwhelming toxic masculinity of rock music in order to facilitate an acceptable facade of a highly misogynistic all-male band (Lee et al, 1986) and finally by providing young girls with a supposedly 'independent young woman' icon who in fact reinforced anti-feminist stereotypes of the airhead blonde whose only roles in a consumerist society were to look beautiful and keep a pleasant house for her husband Ken (Mattel, 1987).

This paper explores what I have termed the third cultural phase of the pink bathroom. This third phase is underpinned by three key elements; shared workspaces in the queer community (Charles, 2009–present), a soft masculinity represented by submissive poses in pink bathrooms and floral pools (highlighting submission to the feminine aspect of a performer's persona) (Healy, 2016; Styles, 2017) and the ironically playful use of soft masculine and queer-coded further subversion of the already once-subverted rock music deployment (Healy et al, 2016). It establishes a current pattern where the pink bathroom is normalised and valued as not only a feminised space but also an inclusive queer space. However, there remains some caution that this third cultural phase has not yet shown evidence of the same exaggerated femininity being reclaimed or embraced by women, suggesting that women may still largely consider themselves 'too pure to be pink' (Channing, 1978). I argue that there is nonetheless potential for such feminist reclaiming, and demonstrate a need for future auto-ethnographic research projects (Block and Quale, 1969; Wickes, 2019) to address this cultural gap.

Merrill Miami is an independent scholar of pink popular culture. Her main areas of interests are creative research methods, with a particular focus on zine-making and truth-stretching. She was recently awarded a grant to live as Harry Styles for a year, in order to understand the effects of the adoration directed towards objects of fandom, and to get a load of free Gucci suits in the process.

Poetry readings and adult colouring books as strategy for student wellbeing and productivity

by Marta Minier



Mental health issues are on the increase amongst the study body in Higher Education. Outside of the university students carry out responsible work, often on zero-hour contracts, as carers or night shift workers. Facing these challenges, this project explored an extracurricular activity with a group of undergraduate students in order to nourish and promote health and wellbeing and, as a result, assist with retention and productivity.

In weekly timetabled sessions, timed to suit full-time and part-time students, refreshments, adult colouring books and poetry books were made available for use by the group, who were accompanied by an academic project leader who also joined in with the activities. It was found that the students took the opportunity to discuss difficulties with their studies whilst getting to know each other in a more relaxed and non-competitive environment.

A sociogram was taken at the start and the end of the academic year to assess how the participating student's internal social network shifted as a result of the project. Whilst sociometry is more often used in secondary

school education to assess class cohesion and identify where staff intervention could enhance learning processes, student wellbeing and interpersonal relations, the project demonstrates the usefulness of the method in a higher education context. Ultimately, the project argues the case for social activities as a tool for bridging the gaps between full time and part time students in the interest of individual and collective wellbeing.

Dr Iwill Listentoyou is a Reader in Engagement Studies at the Spare Time University, UQ (Ubique). She holds a PhD in Communication and Everyday Diplomacy from the Full Time University (2005) and has nearly two decades of experience teaching, researching and carrying out administrative duties in UQ higher education. Iwill currently serves as her Faculty's International Student Exchange Director. Her key research interests lie in student engagement, intercultural communication and blended learning. Her most significant publications include *'Why be there when I could be elsewhere?': considerations of the meaning of full-time Higher Education for UQ students today* (Nostalgia Academic Press, 2014) and the well received and widely discussed *Greeting the spare timers: strategies for welcoming a new generation of university students* (Academic Futures Press, 2018, co-authored with Pleasetellme HowIcanhelp and recipient of the prestigious Night Owl Early Bird, UQ award).

AI: what do they want?

by Sophie Clarkson



Over the past few years humans have been introducing Artificial Intelligence (AI) devices into their homes, typically in the form of virtual assistants. This study investigates the manner in which such assistants have been taking over people's lives, going so far as to change their personality completely. There is evidence of people acquiring AI home improvement devices and having their personality flipped. Formerly happy and extroverted people have become morose, reserved and even vindictive. Innocent victims have been asking their devices seemingly mundane questions such as 'How many pounds in a kilogram?'. It seems that the data collated from users is processed by the AI in order to tailor their replies to affect personality change. Since this phenomenon is certainly on the rise, further information is needed to test whether AIs are pitting us against each other in order to take over the planet.

Dr Heather Bray is a world-renowned psychologist who obtained her PhD from the University of Manchester. For some time Dr Bray has been studying social media platforms and adolescent self-esteem. Recently she has focussed on combining her knowledge of computer code and the human condition to study AIs. She plans to purpose one in the pursuit of therapy to rehabilitate those affected by the AIs in question.

Exploring the voices of underweight children: a phenomenological study

by Siti Soraya Lin binti Abdullah Kamal



This article describes the thoughts and feelings of ten children diagnosed as underweight by a medical team. The children have a low appetite and reject almost all the food offered to them by their parents. The study took place in an urban area in Malaysia with children from a high economic status family. Adapting a phenomenological approach, this study seeks to discover and understand the views of the children identified as being underweight by their general practitioner. Children's opinions on the food that they encounter everyday inside and outside the house are explored. In-depth interviews were utilised in this study to capture the children's experiences. By using a thematic analysis approach, several themes were identified in the study. Firstly, children were overly eager to eat with their hands rather than forks and spoons. Second, children wanted more herbs and spices in their food. Thirdly, children demanded colourful food. Fourthly, children enjoyed cold foods

much more than warm foods. Finally, children loved to eat in a dark room. These research findings contributed to the literature in regards to the issues surrounding underweight children.

Professor Layyina Muhamad Yazid is head of the School of Worldwide Food at the University of Cultural Diversity, Malaysia. She is also owner of a well-known restaurant, 'The Hibiscus Kitchen' which operates in twenty different countries around the world. She obtained her Diploma and Degree in Culinary Arts from the Malaysia Institute of Food and Drink and her Master's Degree and PhD in cookery and healthy eating from the University of Barking. She was nominated as best cook for three constitutive years from 2016 to 2018 by the United Nations. She takes pride in concocting numerous types of meals which tickle the taste buds of a lot of people, including the British Royal Family. She also recently started a project on enhancing young children's appetites with her recipes which involved three easily acquired ingredients. Her research interests deal with indigenous food, cultural food, free-range food and creative food.

Living with canine furniture disease: a survey of affected households

by Timothy Capper



Canine furniture disease, which causes afflicted dogs to believe they are items of household furniture, is known to lie dormant in wicker furniture. Dog zero, a Labrador from Wiltshire, contracted the disease after gnawing on a wicker chair. This paper presents a survey of 257 households which own afflicted dogs, showing a 50/50 split regarding whether dogs are preferable to real furniture. One household sold their sofa after their Spaniel contracted Canine Furniture Disease in May, and have also been able to dispose of a side table as they are now able to store their TV remote in the dog's mouth. They did, however, note that the dog has become quite fond of the remote, and retrieving it can sometimes be problematic. The results of the survey clearly demonstrate that there is no relationship between size of dog and size of furniture. One family in Bradford reported having to squeeze onto their Jack Russell, which believes himself to be a three-seat corner sofa, because their Doberman thinks she is a rocking horse and becomes upset if anyone larger than a toddler sits on her.

Dr Melissa Robinson is Senior Lecturer of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Dundee and a Visiting Lecturer at the Robert Gordon University School of Woodwork and Upholstery in Aberdeen. Dr Robinson recognised early in her career that the most interesting research happens at the intersection of disciplines. For a short period in 1993 she was a household name following her appearance on the documentary 'Pet Detective' alongside her partner, Ace Ventura.

A study into the effect of simultaneous interpreting training on third language learning

by Peng Zhang



Simultaneous interpreting (SI) is generally considered the most cognitively demanding bilingual task. The challenge of SI resides in the multi-tasking nature of the real-time process. Simultaneous interpreting training helps bilinguals to achieve multi-tasking through extreme language control. This study examines the effect of formal training in SI on the learning of a third language. The hypothesis is that SI training can improve trainees' linguistic cognitive ability and thus facilitate third language learning.

Thirty late bilinguals with similar language backgrounds were recruited for this study. All were enrolled in a third language learning course. They were divided into two groups of fifteen participants. Group One were exposed to one semester of intensive training on SI, while Group Two did not have any SI training experience. At the beginning of the semester, the two groups were administered tests on their linguistic cognitive ability and their third language proficiency. At the end of the semester, the two groups were asked to do

another set of tests on their linguistic cognitive ability and their third language proficiency. The results show that SI training improved multilinguals cognition and facilitated their ability to learn a third language.

Ang Ghpenz is a research fellow in Cognition and Brain Sciences at the University of Cambridge. Her current research focuses on the behavioural and neural mechanisms that support spoken language comprehension, working memory and language processing during extreme language control, such as simultaneous interpreting. Her previous career as an interpreter trainer and Professor of Translation Studies in China laid a foundation for her current study on the secrets of the bilingual or multilingual mind.

The efficient epidemic—a study of viral transformation *by Mari Hergistad*



Shelley's experiments of 1818 were slow and cumbersome, creating only one organism after months of labour. Interesting, yet effectively useless. No, mass-production is key: a viral vector and a ripe, unprepared population. Efficiency is essential to success. The first step is creating a prototype organism. I captured and brought a random test subject to my laboratory. Transport was easy: it is always so with unconscious subjects. I could tell the infection had taken hold from the screams as the subject awoke, yet whether from fear or pain it was unclear and matters little. The improved prototype organism gained a deathly pallor, but otherwise looked the same. It should fool most into thinking it human. To my

delight, it showed extraordinary cleverness, nearly escaping confinement twice. Three of its teeth broke on the bars. Most encouraging was the hunger: it would feed voraciously, showing preference for soft tissues, yet will devour all given time. The prototype successful, it points towards my final experiment: a virus, to be released within a local primary school. I fully expect it to spread unhindered within the day. People are so unlikely to harm their own children.

Dr Maxine Schrek is a trained virologist, with a doctorate in infectious diseases from the ancient Mannheim-Slautern Universität in Dunkelwald. An experienced anatomist, she began her studies at the age of seven under her father, the renowned Dissector of Düsseldorf. Her personal contribution includes a precise autopsy atlas of the human spleen in various degrees of decomposition, completed at the age of fifteen. Her later work, borne from extensive, dedicated experimentation in the field of viral engineering, includes early attempts at combining the Ebola virus with flu strains (in progress) and the development of an airborne rabies virus.

Commuting and well-being: the case study of South Yorkshire

by Dr Uzma Ahmad



It is well established that regular and frequent travel is associated with discomfort (Roby et al., 2017). The present study examines the relationship between commuting and well-being, exploring data from a survey conducted in South Yorkshire using random sampling over 1200 commuters. A questionnaire was given to all respondents inquiring about how they get to work and the problems they face. Dissatisfaction was measured on a self-reported scale from 1 to 5. Commuting was measured in terms of both travel time and travel distance from people's home to their workplace using a mapping application.

A regression analysis in Stata was used to quantify the effect of determinants of commuting. Results show that commuting was negatively correlated to the mental well-being. An additional km was

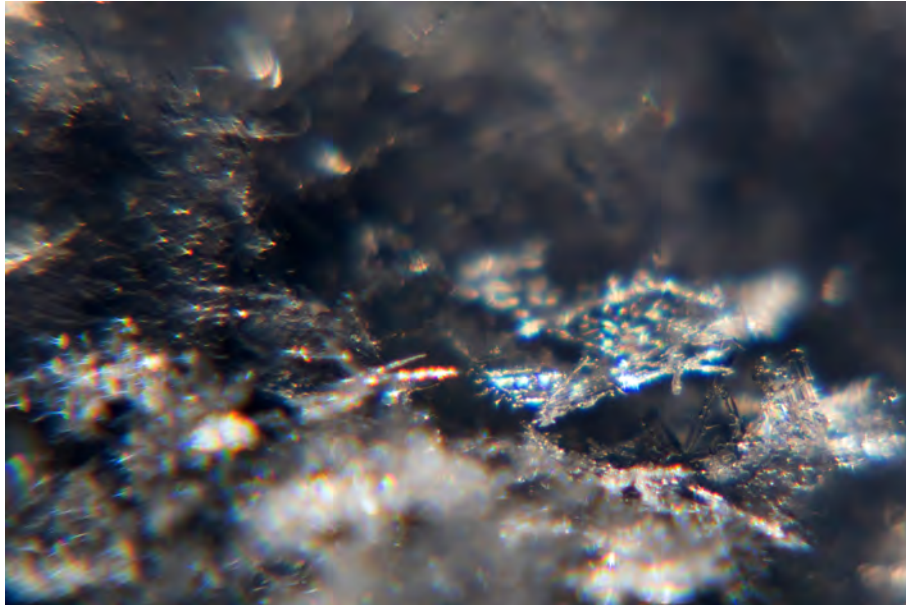
related to 0.36 standard deviation decrease in mental well-being. Mode of transport displayed a significant variation, showing the more adverse effect of public transport on well-being relative to walking or using the bicycle. This could be due to an underlying phenomenon, a positive side effect due to the release of endorphins during physical exertion as a result of walking or bicycling which compensates the negative effect of commuting. Quality of public transport was positively related to well-being. These findings are robust using different measure of well-being and commuting.

Age and gender turned out to be insignificant. Restricting the sample across a rural-urban hierarchy, showed that commuting had more negative effects for those who live in rural areas. These findings have obvious implications for improving transport quality in such areas.

Dr Zomi Tahir is a Research Fellow at the Centre of Well-being and Happiness at the University of Oxford. She is a labour economist working mainly on economics of education, family economics and psychological well-being. Dr Tahir has published many papers in the area of micro-econometrics and has served as a consultant for the British government. Currently, she is working as Principal Investigator on the project 'Happiness and deprivation in the modern era'.

Some initial observations on salts protonated from Alfreton Substance A5

by Matthew Cheeseman



The imagination, according to the OED, is the 'faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses'. As such it is essential to the arts and sciences, to education, psychology and personal relationships. It is of crucial importance to both solving problems and telling stories; without the imagination, human existence, experience and achievement would be immeasurably impoverished and, until now, impossible to envision. This paper describes a seeming effect of salts protonated from Substance A5 (popularly referred to as Carbonite), recovered from the Alfreton Impact of 2019 and since synthesized at the University of Derby. It appears that these salts (pictured) have a proximity effect on cognitive processes that seem to stymie those imaging functions of the brain independent to that of the prefrontal cortex (PFC). The processes effected are connected to the spontaneous imagination (daydreaming, hallucinations, and non-reproductive insight). These effects were discovered by accident in laboratory conditions whilst carrying out

routine manipulations and investigations. It appears that visual focus, silence and concentration enhance the mesmerising effect of the salt, as discussed via experience reports from a number of subjects. The discussion indicates that the loss of imaging function is by no means total, suggesting that the PFC remains able to rotate and manipulate images from past experience. What has been lost is the cognitive ability to draw on resources that are not directly recalled. Yet again, such a finding indicates the huge potential of the substances recovered as a result of the Alfreton Impact. The salts will assist psychologists in understanding cognition and, perhaps more importantly, metaphysicians in answering one of the most fundamental questions of human existence: what is the place of imagination in the faculty of reason?

Dr Poppy Knight is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Derby. She is the only philosopher attached to the Alfreton Impact Research Centre (AIRC), where she enjoys full access to the laboratories and partial access to the site itself. Her PhD, which considered the impact from an eco-philosophical perspective, was famously embargoed under the Official Secrets Act. She has since published on some of the implications of the Alfreton Substances, particularly their impact on transcendental issues within metaphysics.

Dim and dimmer: how many poststructuralists does it take to change a lightbulb?

by Zelda Hannay



In 2017 the University of Lampeter's Critical Theory department and a local branch of the popular British DIY store B&Q collaborated on a public engagement project. Designed to engender new models for a discursive relationship between poststructuralism and interior design, the partnership looked to be mutually efficacious until an incident involving the changing of a lightbulb in a display area sparked the project's unravelling. Bob, who had until then enjoyed a reasonably satisfying career at B&Q, despairingly acknowledged the hegemonic power structures of a system which privileges light over dark and upholds an untenable teleological view of 'change' as an absolute. After employees requested that the aisles form a rhizomatic rather than a linear configuration, and that 'universal' drill bits be discontinued, the project was announced unsustainable by B&Q. The chain's trial interior design range Heterotopian Living—featuring hardwood-effect furniture series Log-O-Centric

Lofthouse and paint shades Abject Mocha, Cranberry Slippage and Decentred Pebble—was pulled. Using an ethnographic framework drawn from scholars Stan Dardlamp and Phil Ament, this article charts the project from inception to unhappy conclusion and offers up a critical basis for assessing the efficacy of a publicly-engaged poststructuralism in light of the associated risks.

Dr Angel Poise, Reader in Articulated Theory at the University of Las Vegas and President of Wattford Critical Theory Society, is the author of a body of scholarship which meticulously charts a historiography of lighting technologies and forges new critical vocabularies for a (re)enlightened future. Following her seminal monograph *Lightbulb Moments: Rethinking Eureka as a Spectrum* (1997) and best-selling memoirs *How I Seized the Day-Glo* (2010), she established critically acclaimed academic blog L(*ight*) E(*mitting*) D(*iatribes*) and associated twice-yearly symposia. She lives in Paris with her cat Brian and enjoys fishing, knitting, and doing Kate Bush impersonations.

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Series editors

**Matthew Cheeseman
& Kay Guccione**