

DIVERGENT/ CONVERGENT
ДИВЕРГЕНТ\ КОНВЕРГЕНТ

Journal of the University 101 Students
Fall 2012

DIVERGENT/CONVERGENT

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University 101 is a course in the humanities. It is part of a program that offers free, non-credit, academic courses at UVic to students who have faced barriers to post-secondary education. Respect and value for the students' knowledge, experiences, and differences are the foundations of the program. The program strives to foster collaborative learning.



University
of Victoria

University 101

thoughtful
intentional
expressive

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**Stretch your
Imagination
to a future
of endless
possibilities**

- Patricia Alexa

A Note From The Dean:

Dr. John Archibald, Dean, Faculty of Humanities

A university exists as part of a community. The University of Victoria delights in welcoming students from our own community onto campus. There are many wonderful aspects to working here, but watching students grow is certainly one of the highlights. Since the Faculty of Humanities has been offering University 101, we have had the opportunity to witness the blossoming of many students who have been on diverse journeys which have led them to our door.

The study of the Humanities is not a frill in today's society. It provides an essential part of the knowledge our citizens need to function in today's world. Studying the Humanities will determine the person you become. The person you become will determine the world you live in.

I hope that this collection of writing will give you pleasure and help you to understand part of the journey that the University 101 students are on. It gives us a glimpse of the people they are becoming.

A note from the Dean

On the Development of a Sardonic Sense of Humour as a Means of Dealing with the Curveballs Life Throws

by Kim Willette

There's a hole in my head
That no one can see.
I'm different now
But I'm still me!

The Goal

by Kim Willette

I loved learning
from early on,
exploring life,
eating my fill,
but life bit back.
I'm not angry.
Remembering
is harder now.
Concentration
not so easy.
Distractible?
Let me tell you.
But school is still
my shining goal,
a siren's song
that pulls me on.
Perhaps someday
the goal I'll reach.
In the meantime,
exploring life,
I'll eat my fill
of what's to know.

Sasquatchology 101

by John O'Carroll

It isn't easy being a Sasquatchologist. There is so little value-free science in the study of Sasquatches; it's difficult to consider the subject objectively. A Sasquatchologist has to have faith, and faith is to science what water is to electricity. I searched for a scientific study of the Sasquatch and found only one that actually matched my search parameters. The most obvious source of scientific proof, experiment and categorical fact is missing: The Sasquatch itself. Where is the body? Where are the bones? What is the evidence?

Unfortunately these questions cannot be answered with any degree of absolute certainty because thus far all Sasquatchologists have to go on is anecdotal stories, grainy photographs and plaster casts of large feet, any one of which could be completely fabricated. However, this is not to say there is no science at all on the subject because there is; unfortunately, it all points to a believable situation where the Sasquatch did indeed exist, but back in time and is not believed to be an extant species today by the scientific community. In fact, most serious Sasquatchologists have been relegated to the fringes of pseudo-science along with lovers of the Loch Ness Monster, ESP, alien visitations and Elvis sightings. This is a good thing for the Sasquatch—but bad for its scientific consideration.

Such science as has been done regarding the Sasquatch hypothesizes it would be a descendant of two species believed to be extinct: *Gigantopithecus blacki* and *Homo*

sapiens neanderthalensis. These species are also, incidentally, believed to be the forerunners of modern Homo sapiens like you and me. The science of Sasquatchology has its roots in Anthropology and Cryptozoology. The evidence in these fields of study has been analyzed in a scientific fashion, such as over-large skulls and fossilized remains of extinct, large ape-like creatures. This has provided all sorts of interesting facts to support eyewitness accounts of Sasquatch sightings reporting the creature being between 7.5 and 8 feet tall and weighing about 500 to 600 pounds. The science, such as it is, adds credibility to such sightings, but does not provide confirmation.

For evidence to become truly credible scientifically, it has to be repeatable and verified by independent investigation. Unfortunately for Sasquatchology, this is nearly impossible. There is so little physical evidence of an extant or fossilized Sasquatch that any information cannot be quantified in a scientifically satisfactory manner.

A Sasquatchologist has to have faith, and faith is to science what water is to electricity.

Contrasted to this is the sheer quantity of anecdotal evidence as given by more than four thousand recorded eyewitness accounts, most of these in the Northwestern United States and British Columbia, Canada. This area of the Pacific Northwest is known geographically for its wet and acidic soil composition, which makes the discovery of fresh or fossilized Sasquatch remains a fruitless search. Also to be considered is the vast mountain ranges and valleys, forests, rivers and trees as yet mostly untouched by the hand of Man. The Sasquatch population is estimated to be fewer than two thousand. What is known of the Sasquatch is that it is a solitary creature for the most part, with less than four per cent of recorded sightings involving more than one creature. With such a massive potential for a small population of Sasquatches to roam unhindered over their daily range, it is no wonder physical evidence has never been found to satisfy scientific belief and acceptance.

What would be surprising is that a Sasquatch, a moderately intelligent ape, would reveal itself to a human being, when its instincts are clearly not to do so. It is those instincts provided by nature that protect the Sasquatch from discovery by Man.

Looking around the world, it is obvious how the science of the marketplace has resulted in heinous abuses of apes by modern man, himself a Homo Sapien ape. Any true Sasquatchologist has to determine whether the world would be a better place for the sake of a Sasquatch in captivity to be specified in scientific fact. If one thinks the answer is “Yes”, then clearly one is not a Sasquatchologist. Even the discovery of a fresh dead body of a Sasquatch would not be good news for the average Sasquatchologist, as it would signify the reduction of an already small number of living remnants of a by-gone epoch.

For evidence to become truly credible scientifically, it has to be repeatable and verified by independent investigation.

The institution of value-free science into the study of Sasquatches would be a negative thing for the Sasquatch population, limited as it is. A Sasquatchologist first and foremost has to value the privacy of the Sasquatch and respect its right to live unexamined by scientific dissection and uncorrupted by the science of men. It is the value we place on freedom that makes us Sasquatchologists who we are. There's no doubt science has given us Homo sapiens the freedom to pursue knowledge that supports whether we believe or not that the Sasquatch still exists on our planet. What is unknown is the effect our science would have upon the Sasquatch. It's a risk we don't need to take to keep our faith in Sasquatchology alive.

**Poetry reminds
us of how
Humanity twists.**

- Kerri Garland

View from the Porch

by D. B. Macbeth

when my mind
disengages
from the scrivening hours of the day
my reflections turn to you

might have beens
are such a waste
the taste
flat metallic and slowly
fading

the changing wind reminds
you are at the noontide rise
and I
on the ebb of dusk

Solstice is the Sun's Return 3

by D. B. Macbeth

wind drifted leaves
 and spume collecting
on naked trees
diamond brilliant light
lengthening shadows at noon
mid-season descent toward
 winter
brick and concrete caves don't defend
against damp and chill
nor hide the fading light

passing through a door
a wave of good company and warmth
coffee and a meal
honest talk and foolish chatter
some small spark against the dark
a welcome refuge
 until the sun's return

Uncertainty Principle

by D. B. Macbeth

Still waters

A glassy sea

I throw pebbles

and watch the ripples fade

Thinking

Someday

there will be a tidal wave

With you

I say words

Thinking

Someday...

I throw pebbles
and watch the ripples fade

"Hi De Hi, Hi De Ho, Gonna Get Me A Piece of Sky" by Blood, Sweat and Tears

by Joy May Woodhams

I was taught to love books and spoken language as an infant. Another language I learned from a young age was music; being of Welsh and English background, this seemed natural. Being read to, attending libraries and seeing the books from Steinbeck, Joyce, Faulkner, Hemingway and others in the beautiful Chippendale desk that held my Father's university books were all part of my identity. Piano lessons, band participation, Theatre Under the Stars in Stanley Park and the Vancouver Symphony attendance are fond memories of my growing years and fueled my "second language."

Speaking in grammatically correct ways was stressed at home and in school. As a result I appreciated well-written literature and have been easily able to recognize this. As a bonus, my adult children thank me for encouraging well-spoken English.

Being a 'lefty' has supported divergent thinking (at the risk of being seen as rebellious!) throughout my life. As an aside, but probably relevant, was the fact that my finger pattern – ring finger being longer than the index finger, is a more typical male pattern. This was a result of there being more testosterone in my mother's womb in my beginnings.

Growing up in Trail, my father was a newspaper owner. He was outspoken in his championing of justice to the point of being sued for libel and slander and jailed. The graveyard

Joy May Woodhams

shift from the Cominco Smelter bailed him out at 2 A.M. and he was subsequently exonerated.

In WASP North Vancouver I never heard negative words towards any different ethnicities. We regularly obtained 'slag' lumber from the East Indian lumberyards on Burrard Inlet for our heating needs. There was a large First Nations population in North Vancouver as well.

kindness and sharing with others was second nature

Speaking well was part of our family dynamic; kindness and sharing with others was second nature to my parents. We were lower middle class, yet sailed the Gulf Islands in a homemade 26 foot 'sloop', where the young men who were my father's charges as a probation officer, often accompanied us. We took meals to a lonely neighbor every Sunday.

American Bandstand and Seattle radio stations brought me "black music," (as it was called at the time) a love of mine to this day, along with the classical and popular music I grew up with as well as dance and theatre.

Even though life threw a major curve to our family (my Dad was 42 when he died), healthy lifestyle, education and good manners were all a base from which to spring for the challenges to come. Circumstances of living in the country in Alberta prevented me from being able to have my children learn French in school. We were fortunate, however, to have no television and there

were always books, in addition to horses, ponies, cows, dogs and cats. Music, on 8 track tapes as well as vinyl, was ever present, in our home and in the car.

Majoring in English in high school and then 25 years later, taking English at the College of New Caledonia in Prince George with a 3.8 GPA was a great victory and validation for me.

The pleasure I have had in University 101 is immeasurable. After “falling through the cracks” and years of a job, I can learn, listen, share and expand my brain – a good one! Even better, my children have embraced the love of language, learning and expanding themselves to new heights. They also enjoy and appreciate the great music of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's and dance every chance they have. My youngest son, at Concordia College in Montreal, is in his second year of Contemporary Dance and is learning French (of course!) and German.

Since patience or tolerance comes from an ability to remain firm and steadfast and not be overwhelmed by the adverse situations or conditions that one faces, one should not see tolerance or patience as a kind of weakness, or giving in, but rather as a sign of strength, coming from a deep ability to remain firm.

- The 14th Dalai Lama

The Uni Hallway Walk

by Judyrose Johnston

2011

That year I walked the hall to – catch my breath

I gulped in the winter air with trepidation
This second class left me with frustration
Asking us to retain so much of a “new concept.”

Nervous about the hard questions that we
must explore with strangers in “small groups”
where:

Noise levels are high

Don’t relate to the T.A.’s statements

Confusion is pressing in on me –

Not able to concentrate, thus not able to contribute...

I really wish to and do really want to understand.

Last year I walked the hall for an evening break

Viewing younger and some older students,
staring back at my grey hair and my cane
I smile a little – no returns.

My perspective as I stretch out my kinked hip, just
What are the views?

Are the judgments mine?

Breathe, “let it roll off you,” woman!

Clear and stretch your mind now.

2012

This year, ah! Relief and a change
Walk the hall with a fellow student
Chat, smirk, laugh; just rearrange.

What has differed, what has shifted?
A worldly group, fun, really alive
They – insightful; me –non-judging
with an intent to thrive.

I do like the classes and love the Uni
Thank you Becky et al. and even me.

Nervous about the hard
questions that we must explore

My Life

by Michael James Cameron

I've seen my fair share
of struggle and strife
Throughout these past
few decades of my life.

Life is tough but so am I
you'll never accomplish anything
if you never really try.

Anything is possible
in the world today
you just have to work at it
eventually you'll find a way.

Light in the Dark

by Michael James Cameron



Uni 101 Education

by Bill Cawker

new group

new class

new relationships

new knowledge

new future

moving forward, not backwards

Encouraging Words of Uni 101

Informative

Educational

Welcoming

Thoughtful

Positive

Inclusive

My Perspective: Learning in a Hearing World

by Bill Cawker

Day in, day out, learning happens.

How does this change when you cannot
hear or have learning challenges?

This has been a challenge in the Uni 101 course.

What do I miss, what difference is there?

The support and encouragement keeps
me coming back and trying.

As a class, we all learn, different ways, different paces.

The main goal is to keep trying and striving for success.

It is one day at a time.

The key is to keep going!

The Blank Slate

by Bill Cawker

Everyday we get a clean slate to start, with activities and things to do, life gets busy. We must not forget how blessed we are compared to some people, those that live with daily challenges. To wake up day after day with the same problems that never seem to go away. Oh, how much easier life could be with a little less.

Oh, how much easier life could
be with a little less

Being Human 101

by Patricia Alexa

Release

old myths and perceived notions
of fears and finance

Grasp

the courage to step past yourself

Stretch

your Imagination to a future
of endless possibilities

Open

your eyes to a world unknown

Encounter

a community of unique
individuals with voices of
their own

Engage

in self-expression flowing with
ideas

Respond

to a collection of inner truths
a story untold

Share

your inner voice and gathered
reactions

Journal

an overall memory of
topics

Embrace

New Hope for New Beginnings
elsewhere and move on.

Patricia Alexa

Why I Believe Poetry Persists

*I “found” this poem in my notes from
the poetry class by Jamie Dopp.*

by Kerri Garland

Poetry allows us to speak of more than one thing.
Whether we say it, shout it, or when we sing.

Way back when, way before writing,
stories were told using poem.
Stories about love and pain and how we
always find our way home.

Poetry, a language that is heightened
and gives dignity to words.
Proving that “pens are mightier than swords.”

Poetry conveys how we all feel.
Writing it down makes it all real.

Poetry teaches and delights,
giving our souls strength and the will to fight.

Poetry’s music put the words to play, moving us,
and hearing words in a whole new way.

Poetry’s words added to melody and art, often
carrying messages from a creative heart.

Poetry reminds us of how Humanity twists.

And this is why I believe poetry persists.

A Return to School

by Andrea Lee Williams

Can you try
university
again
my friend
amend

This is 101
a lifesaver
of sorts
amend

I sat alone
in a crowd
before
this end

But now
a chance
a change
a lend
a mend
amen

Andrea Lee Williams

Thread the Needle

by Mitch Palubeski

I'd like to thread the needle but it's like wandering
in the desert without a camel.
I'd like to smoke my mind but there are no jobs today.
I need someplace to go and someone to love.
I want to thread the needle like my Papa did.
You see my shoes got holes in them.
And my clothes are torn.
But my Papa rides in big, black Caddies.
I want to thread the needle like my Papa did.

Free to Learn

by Mitch Palubeski

When I go to 101 I feel free to learn.
101 helps me to understand and be understood.
It's always a good chance to learn and be heard.
Never thought I needed education.
But now I know education is key. A chance
to have a meeting of minds.
You see rock and roll meant more to me than school.
Tuning in, dropping out.
I wonder how I got by.

**As a class, we all learn,
different ways,
different paces.**

- Bill Cawker

Carol's Song (Or How I Lost My Mind)

by Peter Howard

Still tears in my eyes day after day
My life, your agony in the worst kind of way
Your son is gone and not coming back
Nor do you want me to know where you're at
Adam is dead and so is my mind
I wish I had gone for him, most of the time.
You needed a price that money can't buy
Can't bring him back from his terminal high.
And you think you have found love
In yet another new guy
You were so recklessly careless with all my love
I'll never believe there is something above
There is no end in my passion for you
When I lay still for the last time
I won't know that we're through

*Thanks to those who participated
Those who facilitated
And especially those who
who did both.*

Peter Howard

Black and White

by Paul Coderre

What is black and white? Is it a division of opposites or a point of view? Order vs. Chaos or Good vs. Evil or Right vs. Wrong.

Questions asked since the dawn of the human race: are we alone? Were we engineered or was it evolution, destiny, or fate?

Truth or lies, magic or science, submission or defiance, master or slave, we all have a choice. Friend and foe, when it's our turn to go, will it be yes or will it be no?

Leave Your Ego at the Door

by Blake Smith

University 101 is a place where almost everyone leaves their collective egos at the door. It is a resource where you can take a chance that your opinion will be taken seriously.

Debate and active discussion brought out the best in me. My lack of academic accomplishment has always been a roadblock. I would like to develop systems for food storage in the developing nations. I think that UVic is a great place to start.

I have had many adventures hiking in the great outdoors right across Canada.

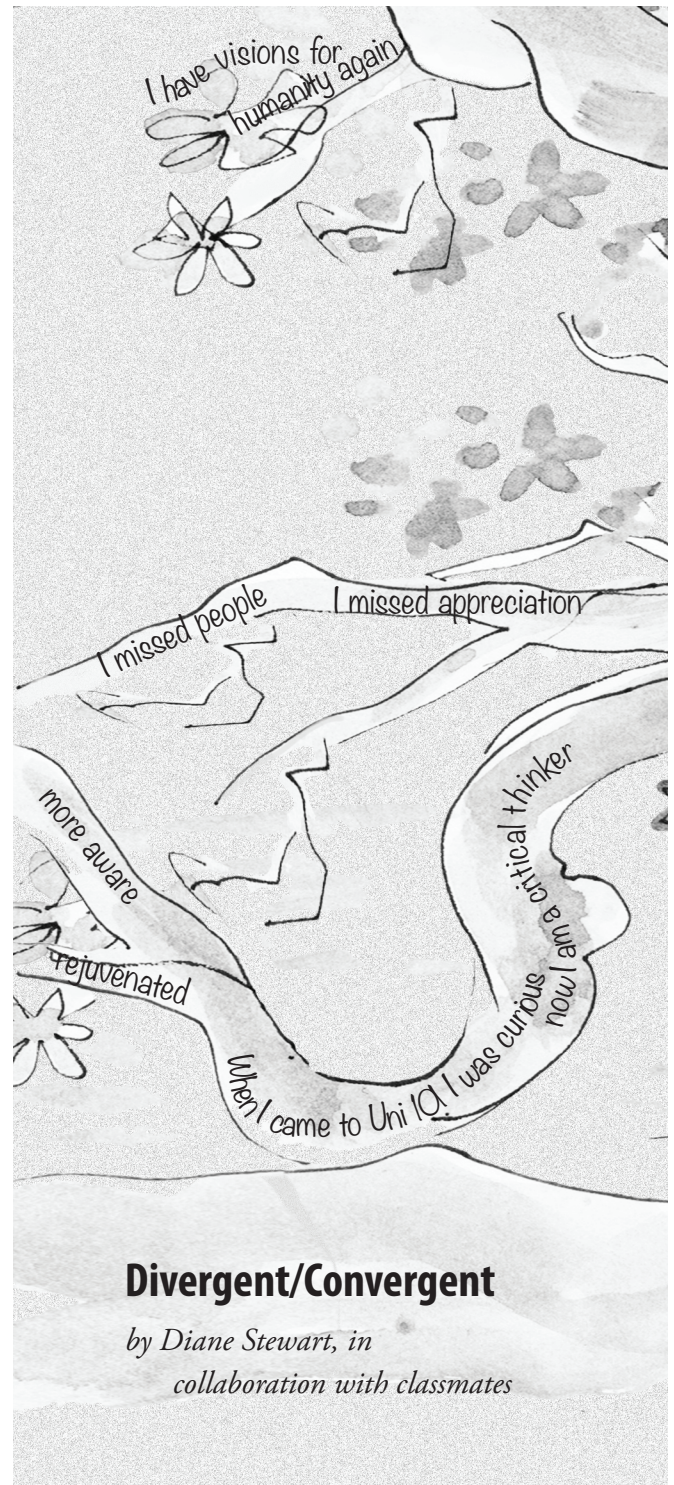
I have been in the middle of more than a few bar-room fights.

If I can translate the spirit of my youth into meaningful dialogue the possibilities are endless.

Thank you, Becky and Crew!

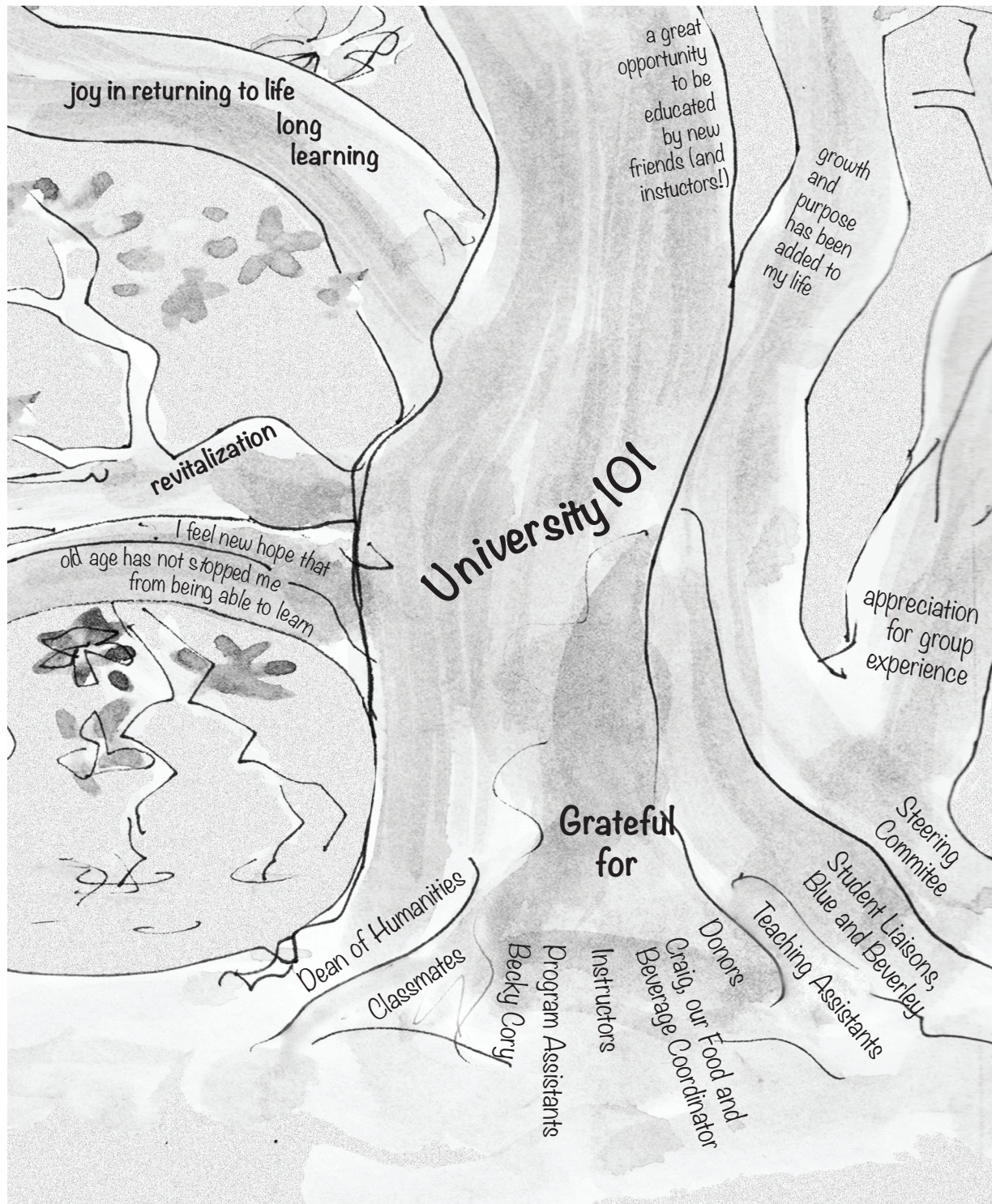
Blake Smith

Diane Stewart



Divergent/Convergent

by Diane Stewart, in
collaboration with classmates



Loving Song of Friends

by Diane Stewart

not enough time
not enough space
to erase
the
D
E
P
T
H
of Sorrow
of Anguish

I feel
for betraying the trust
for hurting the heart
of one who loves
so
D
E
E
P
L
Y

Faithful friend
gentle in your loving
generous in your giving
your life
expressing
truly expressing

the
Heart
of
The One Who Loves
Beyond our faults and failures
Beyond our understanding

brewing brewing brewing
in the cauldron of darkness
lies hatred mistrust

I LISTENED

I came wreaking vengeance

I came in anger

I came in pride

forgetting forgiveness

forgetting kindness

the heartfelt depths we shared

I bit I chewed

I hit I hammered

my friend my true friend

left him broken and bleeding

slashed with sword-filled words

battered with anvilled anger

leaving the wreckage

of the

Loving Song of Friends

What If and Why Not

by Ruth Johnson

First, the commencement of this course meant a new beginning in critical thinking.

What is critical thinking? It is a way to see and analyze life or situations or readings differently.

Being a part of this course has shown me a different way or style of learning, opportunity for acceptance and value of oneself.

Non-conventional learning has provided a sense of safety and acceptance. Encouraging growth and expansion and an increased desire for continuing growth and learning.

If I were to sum up what University 101 has meant to me, it would be: possibilities, exploration and to never give up. It starts as a new adventure.

Minding Your Own Business

by Dennis Palubeski

Hello, police?

Yes, madam, what's the problem?

There's a derelict sitting on the bench
outside my establishment.

OK... What's he up to?

Seems to be enjoying the early night,
sitting quietly.

Um, he's sipping at a can;
Must be a beer!

Oh my, it looks like he's reading a book.

Hurry, he seems dangerous!

I was given a three hundred dollar fine.

Best Bukowski
I've ever
read.

Dennis Palubeski

Uni 101 or This Vale of Tears

"Hell is other people." Jean-Paul Sartre

by Dennis Palubeski

I believe
we are the sum
of our choices

this
has led me
to an abyss
& a paradise

homeless during a Victorian winter
yet
sheltered
in a university
classroom

learning of Plato's cave
his disdain for the poets
Hume's passion & desire
the pessimistic will of Schopenhauer
Nietzsche proclaiming
"Gott ist tot"

discovering the teeming streets
no tent nor tarp
no windmills to tilt
while there is Rock Bottom Landing
Sour Place & Over the Rainbow

a dichotomy of worlds
on this island

the eager young academics & the downtrodden
I do not seem to fit
into either
society
& yet
somehow

both are home

Homelessness On the Rise

In October, Canada celebrated

Homelessness Awareness Week

by Salman Ansari Javid

On an international level, where Canada is a dream country for many to immigrate to, the existence of homelessness is unbelievable.

For Canadians I have observed two totally different reactions. “We don’t need evolution, we need a revolution,” says my friend Stan while discussing the root causes and solutions to homelessness in the city of Victoria.

In Stan’s reaction there is a total distrust for the government and even voting for an alternative party is out of the question. The other is a total disbelief that homelessness is a significant problem. In both cases, raising awareness is pivotal.

Poverty on a global scale has been the catalyst for many movements and protests today. The Arab Spring, Occupy movement in North America, austerity protests in Europe, all have started due to the social and economic inequalities in the society.

In Canada there are an estimated 65,000 homeless youth between the ages of 16 and 24. In larger cities this problem is more amplified, e.g. in Toronto there are between 1,500 and 2,000 homeless youth at any given night. Charity Intelligence Canada website estimates that 157,000 people are homeless each year in Canada.

Among other cities with rampant poverty and growing number of homeless shelters are Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver. When considering the proportion of the homeless to the overall general population, Victoria is one of the top few cities with high rates of occupancy in shelters.

Rock Bay Landing

This shelter on Ellice Street is one of Victoria's largest. RBL opened its doors in November of 2011 due to the high demand and record number of homeless in the city. The shelter has 90 beds, where residents can stay a maximum of 30 days before transitioning into a home or in most cases returning back on the streets. There are also 26 transitional suites for longer term stays at this shelter.

Poverty on a global scale has been the catalyst
for many movements and protests today.

"Homelessness is not by choice. People come here because there's no other place to go," says Cheryl, a counselor at the shelter. Quoting a Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness survey, Cheryl points out that at any given night there are over 1,000 homeless people seeking shelter in the city.

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, which is co-ordinating the region's efforts to eliminate homelessness by 2018, has three other housing projects in the pipeline to come on stream. The projects will make use of funding from donors, three levels of government and their sponsor organizations.

The chronic homeless

The legal definition of a chronic homeless person is one who has slept in a shelter or on the streets for a period of three consecutive months.

Studies indicate that disability, addiction and deteriorating mental health can be avoided and are a direct result of chronic homelessness.

“Chronic homelessness is deadly, resulting in an estimated 1,350 people dying each year (half the number of Canadians killed in car accidents),” points the website of the Charity Intelligence Canada’s website, adding that the average life expectancy of a homeless person with mental health problems in Canada is 39 years.

“Homelessness is not by choice. People come here because there’s no other place to go”

A survey published by Canadian Medical Association Journal reports that out of the 601 men and 303 women at homeless shelter and meals programs more than half were suffering from traumatic brain injury. This is evidence that homelessness is deeply linked to health care in Canada.

Prevention a better approach

York University professor Stephen Gaetz has released a report this in October on The Real Cost of Homelessness in Canada, collecting data from scores of research projects. According to this report emergency shelter beds cost \$13,000 to \$42,000 per person and it is cheaper to buy homeless people their own place than to deal with the situation as a last resort.

In August the Canadian Homeless Research Network (CHRN) released a report on the overall cost of homelessness to the Canadian provincial governments. According to this study, which takes into account peripheral costs such as health care and judicial, the provincial governments spend over four billion dollars a year on homelessness.

Bill C-400 was introduced by NDP MP Marie-Claude Morin to ensure secure, adequate and affordable housing in February.

According to the Parliament of Canada website the purpose for this bill is to require the Housing and Labour Minister to establish a national housing strategy, in consultation with housing providers and civil society organizations.

Canada is the only industrialized nation with no national housing strategy. If adopted this bill can help eradicate this disease of homelessness, providing the marginalized people in our society with hope and dignity. In addition to the moral rationale this is a fiscally responsible strategy. It will lower provincial and federal budget deficits in this age of austerity.

Opening My Mind and Heart

by Shelley Steele

When I first began University 101 (only 2 1/2 short months ago), I felt somewhat intimidated, nervous, and unsure of what exactly I expected of myself and the class itself. Let's just say that the years leading up to my participation in Uni 101 had not been spent enhancing my mind with an education of the academic variety! (At this time I will gladly spare anyone reading the gory details!)

As days passed by, I attended class (unfortunately missing some along the way), listened to lectures, participated in discussions, (as much as my comfort level and confidence would allow!), jotted down material which was important to me, shared some laughter and meals, actually read some of the readings and began to really enjoy learning. The encouraging, supportive, and non-judgmental environment in which Uni 101 is set made it easy for me to relax a bit and allow myself to settle in and enjoy not only the learning, but the company of others.

In the class, with the help from Becky, our fearless leader; the teaching assistants, who were always available and ready to lend a hand; Craig, who faithfully provided yummy cookies, pretzelly snack "thingies," and deliciously welcoming coffee; our wonderfully unique array of professors and teachers who helped bring the pages of the binder to life; and last but certainly not least, my fellow classmates, who shared their knowledge, wisdom, thoughts, hardships, and some

friendships with me, I felt not only my mind beginning to open, but also my heart.

My mind has not only been expanded by being introduced to techniques such as critical thinking and concept mapping, teachings on the Mexican Revolution, Plato, and Islam and the Qur'an, but to my own confirmation that I enjoy learning and most definitely, without a doubt, wish to continue my educational journey. Don't even get me started on all of the amazingly, brilliant ways there are to play with words and the English language!! Truly inspiring.

I felt not only my mind beginning to open,
but also my heart

In conclusion, I can't say enough about how grateful I am to not only have had this opportunity to learn about fantastically interesting teachings and subjects, but to also learn about myself. I wish to strongly encourage anybody out there who may be thinking of embarking on the journey of Uni 101...give yourself a chance.

**The puppet
masters were
exposed
and, by the
People, they
were deposed**

-Nelson Guedes

Transformation

by Marian Webb

Yearning for learning

But

Too ancient, too old, too antique

Along came Uni 101

An opportunity taken

A dunce

Not

Marian Webb

Language and Intelligence Outside the Box

by Geneva Hagen

I'm often taken aback when scientists who should know better casually begin a chain of reasoning with an unsupported statement to affirm the specialness of *Homo sapiens sapiens* – or “Man.” Sometimes this literally means adult males, who believed not so long ago that women had weaker powers of reason and that infants (as well as animals and slaves) couldn't feel pain. But usually it's just a species-centric bias, expressed in the kind of sexist language that feminist editors have been taking red pencils to for half a century.

Cui bono? Obviously, those in power benefit. Doctors didn't have to anaesthetize newborns before circumcision, or other surgical procedures, when their howls were believed to be just an automatic reflex. Men could deny women and Blacks equal education and exploit them for menial labour since they weren't capable of higher thought anyway. Scientists could perform painful experiments on animals with a clear conscience. And the rest of us can continue to feast on animals bred into stupidity and physical debility, who lead tormented lives on factory farms and are then inhumanely slaughtered.

Many tribal cultures divided living things into kin and non-kin instead of human and non-human. “All My Relations” included the two-footed, the four-footed, those with fins and those with wings. Since all life is based on variations of the same DNA, this vision is closer to the truth. But with that understanding comes a measure of guilt, the “original

sin,” for taking any life entails doing wrong to another sentient being, even if the killing is necessary for our own survival. All we can hope for is damage control, to tread as lightly on the Earth as possible. But we won’t do even this much so long as we continue to believe in human exceptionalism.

By a linguist’s definition, language consists of WORDS spoken by HUMAN BEINGS. But why should language be only that? Sign Language is versatile and highly nuanced, but it is based on concepts, not words.

Some scientists blithely state that only “Man” is capable of conceptual thought, a notion for which they offer no supporting evidence whatsoever. To the contrary, evidence is accumulating that all life-forms are in constant communication.

Sheep have better facial recognition skills than people do. Crows cannot only count, but can describe people to other crows that haven’t seen them, as people who have offended a crow have learned to their sorrow. Even the humble slime-mold, when drought triggers it to morph from single cells to a multicellular slug-like creature, is apparently capable of forming intent and learning from experience.

evidence is accumulating that all life-forms are
in constant communication

Dr. John Lilly, and many other dolphin researchers, are convinced that cetaceans, with their larger brains, are more intelligent than human beings and have their own language. It may consist of sonographic images instead of words, but one thing is certain: they can understand our language a lot better than we understand theirs! Whales travel the globe, communicate across hundreds of miles, and can live for 200 years or more. As they go extinct,

we may be losing not only a remarkable species, or even its language, but the narratives of our global historians.

Elephants also communicate across hundreds of miles, probably by subsonics transmitted through the ground. They tend to their sick and elderly and will travel great distances to congregate for funeral rites for elephants and respected humans alike.

Cephalopods, like the octopus and squid, communicate by colour changes of their skin.

People sometimes describe a dog or cat's attempt to "talk" to them. My dog used to get more and more frustrated when I failed to understand the sounds she was so earnestly making. Much canine communication is by scent and completely outside our ability to detect, let alone comprehend, but their midnight serenades are unmistakably cooperative efforts.

In *Never Cry Wolf*, Farley Mowatt tells of an Inuit man who had learned to understand the wolf language by spending time in their den as an infant. Wolves would not only alert other packs to human travelers, but would also identify how many there were. The Inuit considered wolves and caribou to be a single symbiotic species. Caribou could tell the difference between a real hunt, which would strengthen the herd by culling the weak and sickly, and a mere practice training session for the cubs. Human trophy hunters do the opposite – they weaken the herd by taking the finest.

Cephalopods, like the octopus and squid, communicate by colour changes of the skin. They have conscious control over these wondrous configurations, and can brilliantly match patterns, as well as signal emotion. They can use their tentacles as fingers to manipulate tools and solve challenging puzzles, but their lifespans are tragically short.

Chimpanzees and bonobos, our closest primate relatives – so close that they’d probably be classified as human if we weren’t in denial about our own nature – have been taught to communicate via Sign Language as well as computer icons. Primate tribal culture is passed on from one generation to the next, so a band may become more compassionate or more bullying, depending on what happened to their grandparents. Orangutans – called by locals the “red men of the forest” – were used as house servants by British colonists, and monkeys now assist quadriplegics to live independently.

Even in our own kind, we often fail to recognize intelligence in an unfamiliar form. Some autistic people once considered “retarded” have been shown to be only dyspraxic, having poor vocalization or auditory processing abilities, but able to express themselves eloquently with Sign Language or a computer.

Naturalist Konrad Lorenz, who wrote so lovingly of the greylag geese, saw the Australian Aborigines as having only the most rudimentary culture and intelligence! Now, of course, we know that they had an intricate and subtle culture designed to maintain equilibrium over a wide expanse of harsh environment over thousands of years. Other colonists similarly misjudged the !Kung San (“Bushmen”) of Africa’s Kalahari Desert. Again, who benefits? The people who steal their land, of course!

We are in danger of losing the skills necessary for survival

With habitat rapidly shrinking for both wildlife and human hunter-gatherers, we’d better listen up soon. We are in danger of losing the skills necessary for survival after our own ephemeral, fragile high-tech society, so utterly dependent on petroleum and electronics, inevitably collapses.

Introduction to Universal Interaction Theory

by Nelson Guedes

The universe is perceived as a complex place that defines everything that exists. The universe's complexity, however, is only an apparent complexity, created by our lack of knowledge and our inability to see the universe's fundamental interconnections that hold it together. While our brains likely do not have the capacity to store every bit of information contained within the universe, our brains do have the capacity to perceive the underlining patterns that govern the universe, thus enabling us to infer how the universe functions and predict its various manifestations. The purpose of Universal Interaction Theory is to determine how the universe functions as a whole in its most simple fundamental form.

Before universal patterns can be found, it is important to find a single concept that underlines the whole universe. It is difficult to define a single concept due to the universe's various manifestations. We can certainly define ourselves as the observers, but defining the universe in such a way is strictly subjective and leaves too much room for interpretation. It is important to find an objective point of view that is true regardless of an observer. It is difficult to define a constant in a very dynamic universe, but if the constant concept we seek is, itself, dynamic in nature, we are then able to define this single constant concept. A few dynamic underlining concepts come to mind. Of these, the concept of Interaction is likely the most fundamental, but it is not the single one because Interaction infers there are Interconnections between various distinct variables which

we observe. Therefore, we can accurately perceive the universe as a series of Interactions that create Change through Interconnections between its various Variables.

“The goal of Universal Interaction Theory is to describe the universe in its most simple and fundamental way.”

The Principle of Non-Exclusion

There are countless variables in the universe, many of which are similar and related. It may be tempting to dismiss certain variables due to similarities, or to assume that such variables are not connected and, thus, understanding them within the same context is unnecessary. That, however, is a dangerous assumption to make, as it can create irregularities in our understanding of the universe and lead us to erroneous information. Therefore, the major principle underlining Universal Interaction Theory is that where two distinct variables

It is difficult to define a single concept due to the universe's various manifestations.

exist within the same universe, then it follows that the universe must allow for the existence of both variables and, as such, both variables are equally significant and true within this universe. Therefore understanding how they co-exist in the universe, particularly if they appear to be mutually exclusive, is key to understanding the universe itself. One of the best examples of this principle is our current understanding of physics. On one hand, we have subatomic particle physics, which studies the smallest variables in the universe, and, on the other, we have quantum physics, which studies the biggest variables in the universe. We have proven both theories correct, but

we have not been able to connect them – they appear to be mutually exclusive. Given that both theories describe interactions within the same universe, it follows that both theories must be true and, thus, their disconnection lies on our lack of understanding of the interactions between both sets of variables. There must be some way in which the universe allows for the co-existence of both sets of variables, but we just haven't found that connection yet.

There must be some way in which the universe allows for the co-existence of both sets of variables, but we just haven't found that connection yet.

One important conclusion to make from this principle is that the more you research different aspects of the universe, the more complicated and mutually-exclusive it may seem at first, but as you expand your research, the more you discover about the universe the clearer patterns emerge and the clearer your understanding of the universe becomes. This is simply due to the fact that as you learn more about opposing variables in the universe, the more underlining connections which could not be inferred before can be found, and thus a larger and more interconnected picture of the universe emerges.

Defining Variables

A “variable,” in Universal Interaction Theory, is simply anything that can be observed as a whole concept within the universe. The variable is not defined by itself, but rather, it is defined by its complete exclusion from the rest of the universe. A pen, for instance, is perceived as a “pen” not because of the existence of the “pen” itself, but rather, it is defined as a “pen” as opposed

to everything that surrounds it. In addition, a variable may be composed of other variables, or may be a part of a different variable. For instance, the variable “pen” contains the variable “spring”, amongst many others, and the variable “spring” is contained within the variable “pen”, though it can also be contained within other variables such as “beds”. Thus, it follows that there can be certain hierarchies of variables, where one variable is composed of another or many others. All these variables are complete within themselves, despite creating larger variables when put together in a certain way. In this sense, Universal Interaction Theory is organized very much in the same way as Object-Oriented Programming is organized.

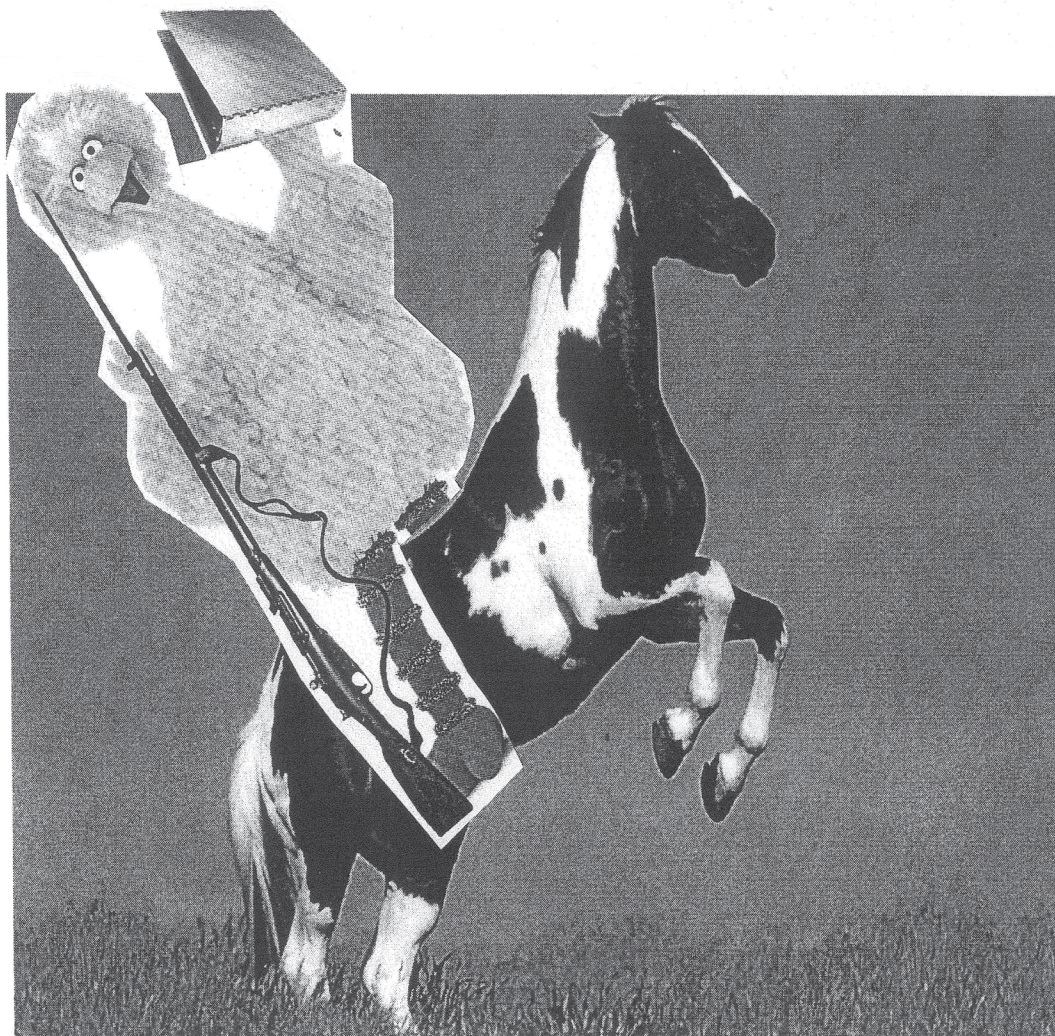
The Contextual Principle

It is difficult to understand the whole universe only in terms of variables. Variables alone can't uncover patterns between their interactions. Therefore, it becomes important to understand the connections between those variables and the common context where they are found. As we discover similarities between variables, we may discover their common context and thus understand them in the context of systems. A system is no more than a recurring pattern of interaction between closely connected variables. From, this principle, it follows that the universe can be described as a single system composed of many systems which allows for all possible interactions. The universe is then described as a series of interactions between its variables within the context of its systems.

In conclusion, though the universe may appear to be complex and chaotic, clear patterns and systems emerge once one is able to understand the universe in terms of interactions within its various contexts. The simplicity and universal application of this theory can help us understand any subject we wish to study, and uncover patterns that we have missed or misunderstood.

The Election of 2012 Remembered

by Nelson Guedes



Of Big Birds, Horses and Bayonets

by Nelson Guedes

'Twas the year
of another election
with horses and bayonets
a race without contestation

The two sides were rigged
the plutocrats, never questioned
The media played the game
Greens and independents, never mentioned

But real change was coming
not through politicians and polls
For the people was awakening
the game is rigged, they were told

Real change, from the
grassroots, it would come
For there,
their power lies
to dance to a new beat
and prose without a rhyme

The people, the madness discovered
of big birds, horses and bayonets
binders full of women
the puppets, the marionettes

The puppet masters were exposed
and, by the People, they were deposed
not through their systems, for that is their game
but through assemblies and co-operatives, change finally came

Because the People hold the key
for the power is in their hands
through their choices and concerted actions
they, once again, took over their lands

Now the world is in peace
the plutocrats gone
the evolution is never complete
but now we know that real change can be done

**Even in our own
kind, we often
fail to recognize
intelligence in an
unfamiliar form.**

-Geneva Hagen

Value-Free Science?

by Greg Lamb

This essay on “value free science” will be written with the assumption that science will be atheist, if value free, because religion is always about values. Rohan (2000) stated “Values are conceptions of the desirable that guide the way persons select actions, evaluate people and events and explains their actions and evaluations.”

I am going to use my Christian view of God because Christ is the God-man. God’s existence cannot be proven or disproven to exist using the scientific method. God is spirit, and so of necessity is in a realm of things unseen and immeasurable (at least so far). God gave us laws to live by and so that we can be in harmony with Him and with each other. “Thou shalt not kill” is one of the Ten Commandments given to Moses by God. It is also a moral. Hume stated in our first reading “All truths are of two kinds – truth of reason or truths of fact.” Moral claims fall into neither. I know “thou shalt not kill” is a truth. Science has been used to develop many theories for political systems and social systems that do not include God or the morals that he has given us to live by. The U.S.S.R., C.C.C.P. and Nazi Germany come to mind as recent historical examples. All three of these states used a science based on social and political systems that outlawed any other religion other than the state being the absolute (Man is God). Science seems to me to have become more than just a tool to explain the way things are. I think the assumption that man can explain

all with science or with any other tool has an arrogance attached to it that assumes that man is God or at least God-like.

I find that there is great truth in the following passage from the New Testament, Romans 7:18-20: “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but the sin which dwells in me.”

The U.S.S.R., C.C.C.P., and Nazi Germany were trying to explain and control the world using their human minds only, using science as their tool. I feel that these three states, plus many more, doomed themselves to what the apostle Paul called their “Human Nature.”

Science seems to me to have become more than just a tool to explain the way things are.

Wars, gulags, mass murders, genocide and many other human miseries were the result. Examples of products of a value-free, moral-free science are: the hydrogen bomb, the gas chambers for the Jews, the drug recently developed in China that kills the subject (mainly Falun Gong adherents) without damaging the internal organs for organ harvesting. When I look at history, I believe that the question should not be can there be value free science (which I believe is impossible) but should we even try? The value of stating

what values and beliefs are incorporated in science, in a transparent way are undoubtedly essential for seeking the truth through science.

In the New Testament, John 13:34, Jesus says, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

This is the truth I see: God wishes us to love Him and to love one another. God will never be proven by value-free science. Do you see the folly in not taking this into consideration? (God is real.)

Science has been used to develop many theories for political systems and social systems

What I Like About the Course

by Jeff Ross

I had the opportunity to go back to school after being away for over eighteen years.

I feel I learned a lot from the different subjects presented; for example, I enjoyed learning about the Athenians and Spartans. I am also looking forward to learning about Islam and the Middle East.

All the professors were knowledgeable and supportive. The T.A.s were also very helpful and supportive.

I am looking forward, hopefully, to taking 102 or 201 in the future.

Jeff Ross

What I've Learned in University 101

by Carlie McKenzie

Being in University 101 has changed how I view a lot of things. My family, and people in my life, have encouraged me to challenge myself by taking this course.

Mostly I've learned that everyone has something important to say. I enjoy that my views are different from others because I like hearing what people choose to say.

I've learned that when I want to be, I can be stronger than I think. Before Uni 101, I saw myself as the kitten; scared, unsure of my decisions in taking this class, but most of all skittish. Now, being in the last two weeks of my course, I see myself as the lion; confident, happy with my choices because I know I am making the right one for me, and most of all, brave.

Thank you Uni 101 for showing me a different side of myself.

**If I can translate
the spirit of
my youth into
meaningful
dialogue the
possibilities
are endless.**

-Blake Smith

DIVERGENT/ CONVERGENT
DIVERGENT/ CONVERGENT

Journal of the University 101 Students