A close-up photograph of a grey monkey's face. The monkey is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored crown with intricate patterns. It has a wide, toothy grin, showing its teeth. A thick, brown cigar is held in its mouth. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting with foliage.

A quarterly e-zine
for the
Mississauga
Writers Group

Write ON!
Humour
Autumn 2018

HUMORISTS, the title of the members of a celebrated academy of learned men at *Rome*.

HU'MOUR, is accounted as peculiar to the *English* drama, at least our comick poets have excell'd therein, and carried it beyond those of any other nation; and ours perhaps is the only language that has a name for it.

HUMOUR (in *Dramatick Poetry*) is used for a subordinate or weaker species of what the criticks call *Manners*.

HUMOUR (in *Comedy*) is defined to be a fainter or weaker passion, peculiar to comick characters, as being found in persons of a lower degree than those proper to tragedy; or it is that which is low, ridiculous, &c.

HUMOUR (in *Medicine*) the particular temperament or constitution of a person, considered as arising from the prevalence of this or that *Humour* or *Juice* of the body; as a *choleric Humour*, a *melancholy Humour*, a *sprightly Humour*.

HU'MOUROUSNESS, comicalness, fulness of pleasantry, fantasticalness.

HU'MOURSOMNESS, hardness to be pleased, pcevishness.

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Wicked Wit from Wise Writers

It's splendid to be a great writer, to put men into the frying pan of your imagination and make them pop like chestnuts.

- *Gustave Flaubert*

The Pitfalls of Being a Kept Woman

Susan Lee

After being laid off in my early 50's, I decided it was the right time to become the elusive "kept woman". Yes, that meant going back to the Stone Age and having "THE MAN" support me emotionally and financially. I felt that I had put in my time working since I was 16 years old, and I deserved a break and a little pampering. Another core reason for me dropping out of the rat-race was the inhumane drive that I had on the dreaded 401. I woke up at 5:00 a.m. and left my home at 6:00 a.m, driving to North York from Mississauga. The sight of the moon in the morning gave me an uneasy feeling and, in my mind, I knew that there was something clearly *not right* about this. While on the 401, if you saw an aerial view of my little Scion, it would be boxed in on all sides by tractor trailers. Either that or I would be the car most of the morons chose to cut off because they just didn't get to bully enough kids in high school. I bet if I looked like Arnold Schwarzenegger, they wouldn't be picking on me. So when I was laid off, I felt that I could finally have the career I always dreamed of: being a Kept Woman! However,

circumstances did not turn out as well as I had expected.

A kept woman is expected to do the following:

- 1) Cook breakfast, lunch and dinner, and have it nutritious and delicious every single time. My previous cooking efforts consisted of making a snappy meal out of the almost-dead vegetables in the fridge and the frost-bitten meat in the freezer. The expectations were much lower then. Now, you have to be Martha Stewart's star student if you are not working. I naively thought that I would actually enjoy cooking more if I did not have to work. I spent hours studying cooking shows on TV and thought, "That looks easy." But these shows leave out all the time-consuming parts of shopping, measuring, cutting, and actual cooking time, which also conveniently leaves out all the pots and pans and utensils that need to be washed. So I went back to my tried-and-true recipes which consisted of using garlic, onion, soy sauce and oyster sauce. I recently made some carrot muffins that ended up looking

and tasting like a piece of rock. I officially gave up on the whole baking idea. There is some mystical magic involved which I do not have access to. Besides, nothing can equal a Cobs Bread scone. I don't care if it contains unhealthy things.

- 2) Be very frugal. If you do not work, you can spend your hours scanning the supermarket flyers and coupons so you can save that extra \$1 on your food bill. Also, you must get your food at several supermarkets, wherever there is a sale. Oh, and you can forget about shopping for clothes. There is no need to buy fancy designer clothes if the highlight of your day is going to Freshco. I simply cannot stop having my hair dyed as, without this being done every 3 weeks, I would look 100 years old. But since I am not working, I must do this myself and end up with black spots all over my bathtub and shower walls. I'm suddenly very conscious about eating out. It used to be a celebration on Fridays, and we could eat out as a family. Now, we are lucky if we get to go to McDonald's or have a kiddie cone at Baskin Robbins.
- 3) Make new friends with people who have nothing in common

with you. I attended a health club, and I noticed that it was packed during the day. (Don't these people work?) Most of the women there were stay-at-home moms in their 20's or 30's and/or young single women whose bodies were not yet showing signs of cellulite or stretch marks. So yes, it can be lonely. At work, there is always some juicy gossip and some angry griping going on, which makes for interesting conversation. I also noticed that my working friends are not all that happy of my new status of Kept Woman. One so-called friend actually seemed shocked that I was going to do this and told me to get a job right away! She made it seem like my brain would turn to mush if I spent my days watching the *Young and the Restless* and lounging out by the swimming pool.

- 4) Spend more time pleasing your man. This means being more agreeable and follow his every lead... Not Happening! He should have known that right from the beginning that I was not the stereotypical Asian woman who is quiet and sweet. This could be because I was born in Trinidad and not China. No, scratch that: my sister-in-law is from China and she is nothing

like the stereotype either. I am probably more tired now than before, what with all the cooking and cleaning I have to do. I noticed that when I worked, there was more assistance with chores than when I became Kept. Every morning, I see all the breakfast dishes piled up in the sink. No one cleans the bathrooms or vacuums or mows the lawn. What am I, a live-in maid now? I think that my husband feels a little less happy now as he has the honour of having to "man up" and support me until death does us part. Since we are both

equally uncertain in the realm of budgeting and finances, I think we will be in trouble.

In summary, being a Kept Woman is not it's all cracked up to be. Maybe the rules are different for "Trophy Wife". No, that would mean I'd be with a guy who was twice my age: I'd have to be quiet and subservient, and maintain my stunningly good looks with face lifts, tummy tucks, and Botox.

Going back to work doesn't seem so bad after all.

©Susan Lee 2018

Susan Lee

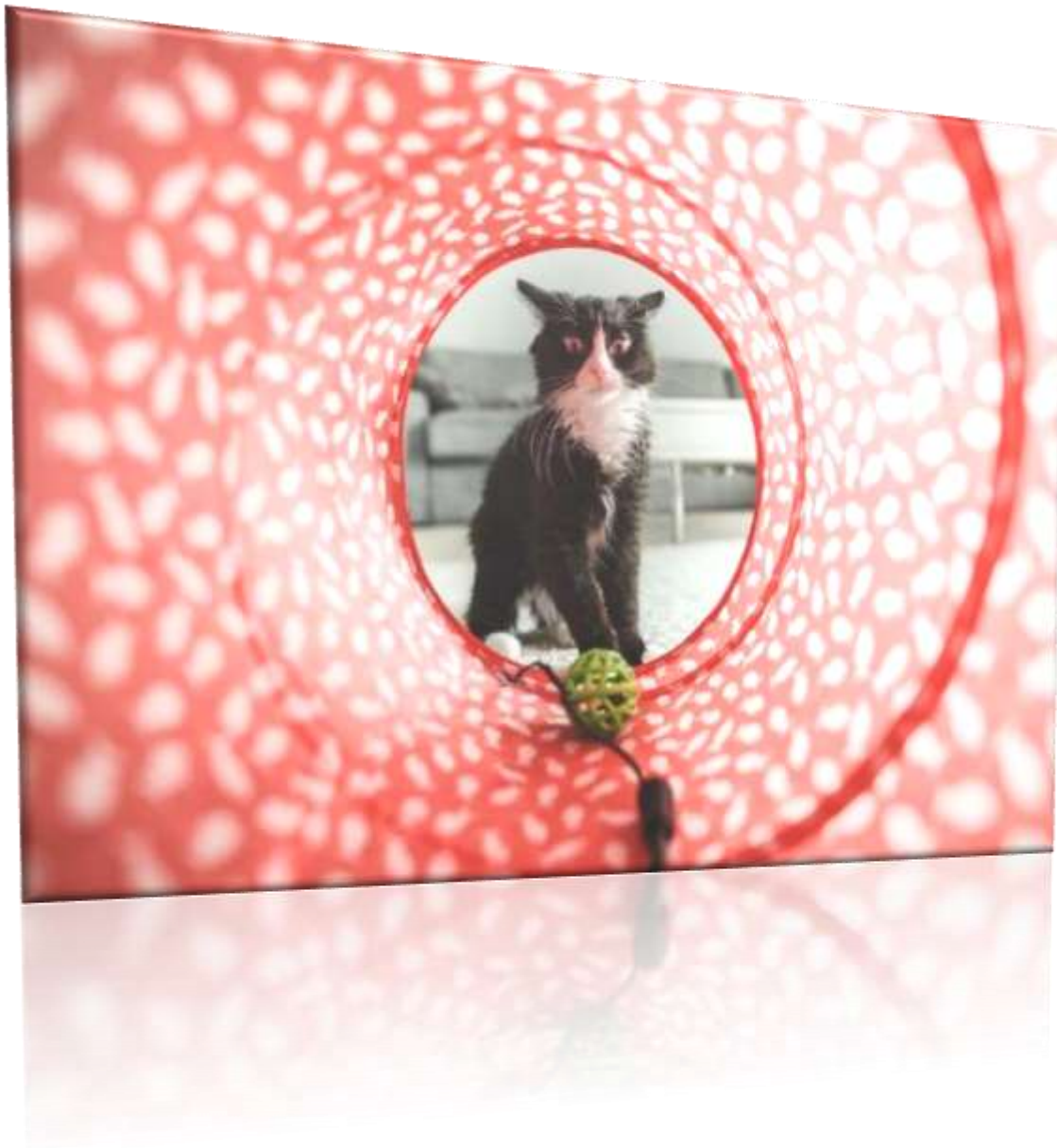
Susan is an aspiring writer and a member of the Mississauga Writers Group. Her writing focuses on using humour to make sense of the world around her. She can be contacted at info@mississaugawritersgroup.com by referencing her name.



Wicked Wit from Wise Writers

I was sorry to hear my name mentioned as one of the great authors, because they have a sad habit of dying off. Chaucer is dead, so is Milton, so is Shakespeare, and I am not feeling very well myself.

- Mark Twain



Funny Is Funny

Brian O'Connor

Though the number of available channels were limited, television was a very influential medium on me, as a preteenager, growing-up during the late 1960s and early 1970s. I enjoyed watching the Montreal Expos play professional baseball against other American teams, and occasionally being able to watch Bobby Orr play hockey for the Boston Bruins, and witnessing the thrill of the Hamilton Tiger Cats becoming the 1972 Grey Cup Champions of the Canadian Football League. Television provided me with a window into the chaotic current events of the day, much of which seemed overly complicated and depressing to me. On the other hand, I remember watching, in awe, the first lunar landing, and the activities of human astronauts traversing the surface of the Moon, as it was somehow being televised back to Earth.

As if that wasn't enough, television also provided me with opportunities to better understand life through the lens of laughter. I had become fascinated by the different types of television comedians, who had more to offer than just telling jokes and being funny. I discovered that humour could act like a mask designed to provide entertainment to those who only

wanted to hear jokes or see someone being funny. Yet, beyond the mask, there was often a deeper level of meaning being offered by the Performer -- if you chose to listen. A message, or an idea to ponder, or different perspective to take into consideration. Reverently, I would plant myself in front of the television to watch the weekly broadcast of The Red Skelton Hour on CBC, every Tuesday evening at 8 p.m. I didn't even know why I had to watch that particular show; I just knew that I did. It had become addictive, and the world shut-down around me, as I watched this seemingly gentle and kind-hearted man, whose name I originally thought was Red Skeleton, performing humour skits in the form of a pair of talking vultures, or the simplistic charm of Clem Kadiddlehopper or the sad humour of Freddie the Freeloader. I learned that humour could have a heart.

Similarly, I enjoyed watching the weekly broadcasts of The Carol Burnett Show. She also demonstrated her own kind of sincerity through her comedy skits. I remember being criticized for watching such light-hearted comedies, but her show had Tim Conway, who regularly tormented his fellow actors with some unscripted

comment or gesture, causing them to struggle to suppress a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

It was Jonathan Winters who unhinged me the most, whenever I was lucky enough to find him on TV. Looking more like a plain and slightly plump salesman in a department store than a comedian, he had a knack for starting an expressionless story, and then adding some facial contortions to deliver a hilarious ending. It's no wonder why he was such a comedic influence for Robin Williams.

Pat Paulson was another master at delivering deadpan humour; in contrast to Paul Lynde, who seemed to enjoy his own clever humour as much as his audience. I enjoyed watching Flip Wilson's weekly television show, as well as the vinegary comedy of Redd Foxx on the Sanford and Son series. It never dawned on me that race or gender could hinder the delivery of comedy. On the contrary, I found it insightful to see life portrayed and expressed from so many different angles, by so many different voices. After all, I believe that funny is funny, regardless of who delivers the quip.

Phyllis Diller was an absolutely hilarious comedienne to me, because she could find humour at her own expense; through self-derogatory

antidotes, her cackling laugh, outrageous hair, and tacky wardrobe. She taught me that you can laugh at yourself, because no one is without flaws -- whether we recognize our own idiosyncrasies or not. Rodney Dangerfield also provided his own unique over-the-top style of self-disparaging humour that countered the delusional importance of the "me" generation.

Through such television shows as the Smothers Brothers, I saw that comedy could also be a team sport. Tom and Dick Smothers bounced comedy off of each other, like tennis players lobbing a ball to score a point. They demonstrated to me that humour could mask certain types of social and political messages, that sometimes got them into trouble. Dan Rowan and Dick Martin's Laugh-In TV series did a better job of humorously showcasing political and social issues, even to the point of attracting then-President Richard Nixon to make his own brief cameo appearance.

Closer to home, Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster were a national treasure as a comic duo whose television specials were as funny as any American offering. They often seemed to demand an appreciation of history in order to better comprehend their style of humour. I was impressed with their success in the

United States but also proud of their ongoing loyalty to Canada.

Early on, I realized that humour could be wielded like a weapon. Strangely, I was attracted to Don Rickles and Joan Rivers, who could inflict razor-sharp humour on their intended targets. I would find myself laughing, in spite of being uncomfortable by their cruel words or exaggerated statements. That aspect of humour has always confused me the most. How can something so disrespectful be so

funny? Maybe it's some kind of personal defence mechanism against biting satire, or an unconscious reaction to appreciating the fact that the joke wasn't aimed at one's self. I don't know. All I do know is that humour has many facets, which makes it more complex and fascinating than just simply being funny. It's an experience that can be delightful, insightful, and sometimes even frightful.

©Brian O'Connor 2018

Brian O'Connor

When he's not teaching at one of the local colleges or working on an IT services contract, Brian enjoys writing.



Wicked Wit from Wise Writers

I am a writer. If I seem cold, it 's because I am surrounded by drafts.
- *(Unknown Author)*



Edgar and the Mouse

by Edgar Frondoza

One summer day, a mouse entered the house through the slightly open door.

"Eek!" Andrea screamed. "Catch it! Kill it!"

"No, it's just trying to survive," Edgar replied. "It will leave as soon as it finds some food."

That night, Edgar left the door ajar and placed some cheese just outside.

In the morning, instead of leaving, the mouse invited family and friends.

Mice were everywhere: under the stairs, behind the bookshelf, inside the piano.

"Maybe, you should open the windows too!" Andrea exclaimed.

Disappointed by the rodent's betrayal, Edgar reluctantly and with heavy heart bought mouse traps and glue pads, and placed them strategically around the house. The first mouse caught was tiny, about twice the size of his thumb, its two front legs stuck on a glue pad.

"Poor little thing!" Edgar said to himself as he carried the glue pad outside. "I will set you free so you can

tell your friends not to come inside the house!"

Edgar poked with a chopstick at the tiny feet to free the mouse. But the more he poked, the more the mouse got stuck—first, the back legs, then, the left side of the body. Determined to free the mouse, Edgar got the garden hose and sprayed a jet stream of water between the mouse and the glue pad. But the mouse was not dislodged. Drenched and drowning, the mouse was now hopelessly stuck.

"I thought you didn't want to hurt the mouse!" Andrea observed. "You are torturing it! Just kill it and end its misery!"

"I can't!" Edgar gazed at the poor mouse.

"Drown it in a bucket of water!" Andrea suggested.

"I can't kill it!" Edgar repeated.

"I'm sorry, Squeaky!" Edgar said to the mouse as he took the glue pad outside and on to the street. He placed the glue pad on the road. He couldn't look as the first car passed and heard the *clack, clack, clack* when the glue pad stuck to the tire.

In the next few days all the mice left,
having heard what happened to
Squeaky.

©Edgar Frondozo 2018



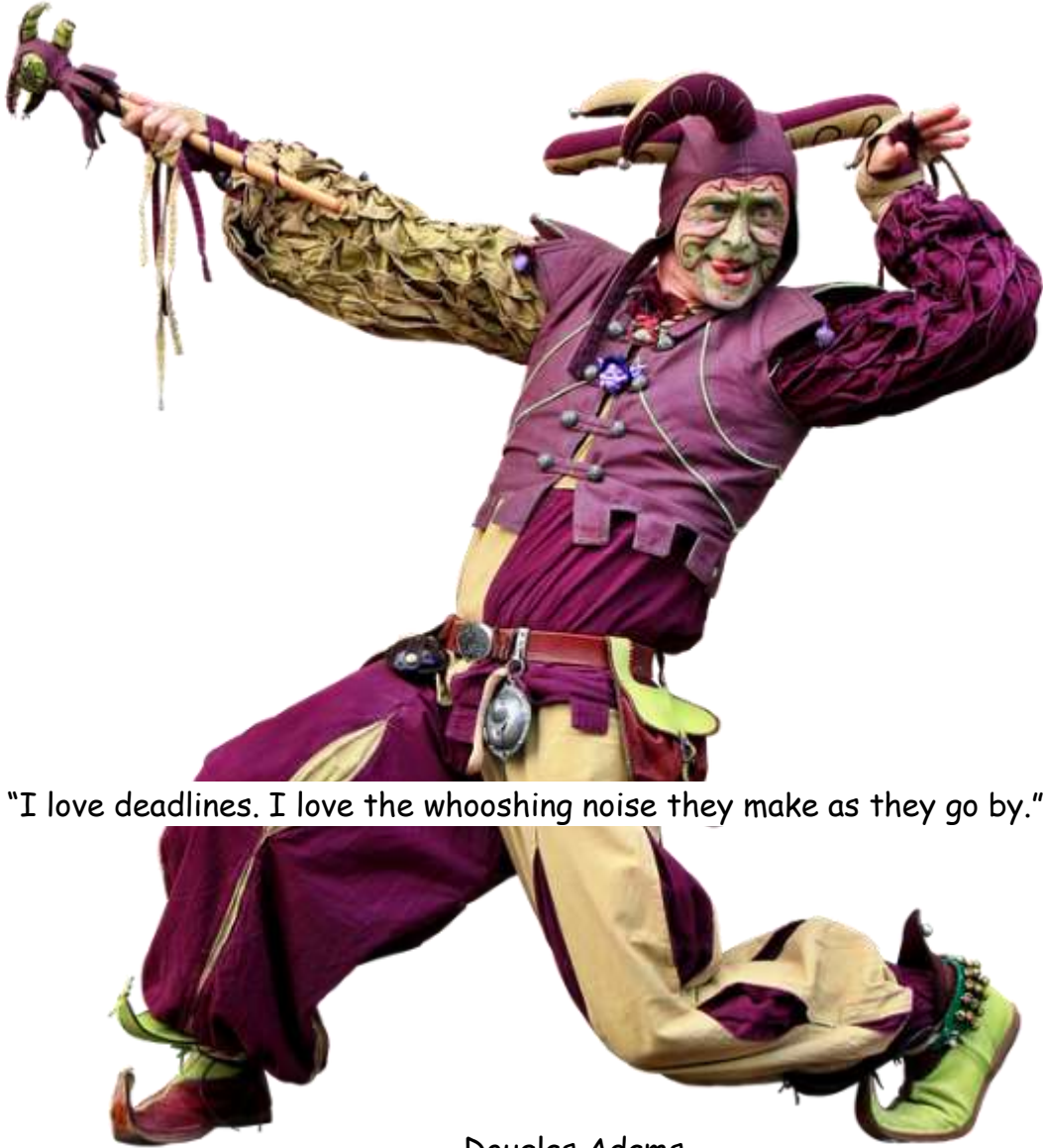
Edgar

Frondozo

Edgar is a retired IT professional. He lives with his wife and a Paperanian named Turon in Mississauga, Ontario. He is currently a consulting partner of Slingshot VoIP, a mobile office communications network. He writes mostly about his experiences with his grandchildren.



Wicked Wit from Wise Writers



"I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by."

- Douglas Adams

Personal Reflections on Humour

Elizabeth Banfalvi

What makes you laugh? Is it a joke? Is it a comedy routine that you have seen? Is it being between great friends and you are having fun? That is the best—when you don't need anything else but companionship to find something humorous to laugh about.

Humour is so amazing for so many reasons. It releases us from our stress and gets us to see things differently. One thing I always did when I was working at my admin jobs was getting my co-workers to laugh - sometimes it worked and sometimes, unfortunately, it didn't. Some people were more stressed out than others and they wanted to stay that way. Work was easier when we laughed together. We always had something to talk or just unconsciously laugh about, about our families or daily happenings. It made the day brighter and shorter. Work shouldn't be just about work: it should be about people who work, and we were that. I retired a few years ago, and what was such a beautiful thing I was told by one of my fellow workers was that she missed my laugh. (I guess she forgave me for everything else I did to her. I was her constant tease about everything, including her kids, but it was done in good humour and mainly to make her ease up from her work stress.)

My children were a great target for my humour—and still are, but they have added my grandchildren now. We have had many a laugh, and they developed great senses of humour. My older grandson played hockey, and I stood and listened to him talking to another player. Every second adjective was the same, and it started with a "f" and contained a "k". It was something I was used to with all the hockey players, so it didn't bother me. It was their way of letting off steam. Any hockey game you watch has the same thing going on. To tease my grandson after the player left, I told him about all the other wonderful adjectives in the English language and, of course, he just shrugged and started walking away. He turned back and said he could add "Mother" to it! I laughed because it sounded too much like me to attempt anything further.

I have gone through many happenings in my life, and humour has saved me so many times. I have dealt with my older son dying, a marriage break-up and cancer all in ten years. I cannot think where I would be if humour wasn't there to brighten my day. At the darkest, something happened and I laughed, and it brightened the time.

I teach stress workshops, and humour is the best thing I can bring to my workshops - I always infuse laughter

into the happenings. It teaches the participants that stress can have humour and it's good to infuse your life with it. Nothing is 100%, and neither should stress be that. Learn to laugh and lighten the load. I teach them by asking them questions about their childhood and what made them happy. It is the most innocent time of their lives, so to recapture that they learn to be able to laugh again. We are so ingrained in what we are doing at the present time, we forget that laughter can be part of that.

Humour doesn't have to be big or overwhelming. It can be the little

things that we do or exchanged glances with someone who does it. Learn to brighten someone else's life and you will be the one who benefits the most from it. Learn to laugh at yourself, because life just isn't as serious as what we think. I have the best life because it gives me the best examples of being totally humorous without trying.

Find the humour in every moment and you will be amazed at how life will be better. Go for it!

©Elizabeth Banfalvi 2018

Elizabeth Banfalvi

Elizabeth Banfalvi is the author of *Meditation* book series, and conducts workshops on stress relief naturally & meditation.



Wicked Wit from Wise Writers

When I was a little boy, they called me a liar, but now that I am a grown up they call me a writer.

- *Isaac Bashevis Singer*



Charlie Chaplin
Sajeda Manzoor

Humor is an interesting topic to write about because life without humor would be boring—just like life without cold cappuccino, pop, smoothies, yummy food, watching a comedy movie, music and visiting the beach. I always like to watch comedy movies and TV episodes. I will write today about the funniest person in the world who made trillions of people laugh with his actions and gestures. He is the superhero of comedy movies: Charlie Chaplin.

When I decided to write about humor, Charlie Chaplin's funny movies flashed into my mind. He was a great actor who made so many generations laugh with his mischievous acting. The sweet little man with a bowler hat, a funny mustache and cane was an iconic figure of the silent-film era. He was one of the most popular actors, writers and directors. Since childhood, I've loved to watch his black and white movies. His acting, actions and gestures made people laugh so much, as if they'd had laughing gas. He was an epic actor with incredible skills. I think it is very difficult to make people laugh without words, only through action.

In my childhood, we had only black and white television. Charlie Chaplin's movies were telecasted on weekends by a special channel. There were no YouTube channels, cellphones, tablets, computers or internet at that time. We are so blessed to have these amenities now. We used to wait for weekends to watch Charlie Chaplin's movies, or sometimes we went to the theatre. His movies were really funny. I enjoyed them with my family and friends. I used to laugh and laugh—sometimes, I could not stop. I will mention one of his movies, *The Kid*. It was released in 1921. This is the great picture upon which the famous comedian worked for a whole year. I have watched more than a thousand episodes of his work. Children and adults have tried to mimic him, and so many other artists and comedians followed him, but they were not successful like the great comedian. His body language and style of walking and laughing were phenomenal.

One more movie I will mention is *The Great Dictator*, which was nominated for five Academy Awards. He was, I think, the most talented British actor and comedian. He was born in London, England on April 16, 1889. His father

was a versatile vocalist and her mother was a beautiful actress and singer. He was a pioneer of the silent film era and the movie industry. He died on December 25, 1977. This

British actor was one of the biggest stars of the 20th century.

I will end my piece with a humorous poem.

A stick is scary
It always scares me
A man with a magic stick
With a sexy smile!
Guess who is he?

The best comedian
With the treasure of humor
Is the Charlie Chaplin

Everyone knows him as a funny guy
Without any words
A bag full of laughing gas
Made us laugh
Is an epic!
A tribute to him
With a bunch of love
Is the shiny star.

©Sajeda Manzoor 2018

Sajeda Manzoor

Sajeda is a writer from Mississauga. Look for her work with Mississauga Writers Group.



Writing Exercise

Anecdote

or

How to Make the People Spray their Tea

An anecdote is a funny little story.

Take a situation you were in and turn it into an anecdote. Remember that you, as a writer, have been gifted with literary license, so embellishment is *de rigueur*—for the benefit of your audience, of course.



Writing Exercise

Telling a Tall Tale or Channelling Your Inner Monty Python



The Baron travels underwater, illustrated by Gottfried Franz.

Gottfried Franz (1846-1905) - *The Miraculous Adventures of Baron Münchhausen*. Translated by O. I. Rogova - 3rd ed. SPb.
Publisher: A. F. Devrien, 1896. 50 pages

Children are absolute masters of the tall tale. It's unfortunate that we lose the skill as we get older.

Write a tall tale or retell one you recall from literature.

Write ON! The Winter Issue

Call for Submissions

The theme for the Winter issue is

Science

The deadline is November 15th, 2018.

Stuck for ideas? Consider some of these words:

*knowledge, technology, information, experiment, theory, practice, hypothesis
medicine, biology, geography, chemistry, archeology, psychology, logic, mathematics
technique, method, approach*



Submission guidelines:

- electronic submissions only
- send submissions to sheilavdhc@gmail.com
and info@mississaugawritersgroup.com
- include submission, a short bio (2-3 sentences) and an author's photo
- ensure your submission is relevant to the theme
- content must be in English or include an English translation

N.B. Content which contains hate speech or images, extreme violence or explicit sexuality will not be published.

Write ON! in the Near Future



Not inspired by the theme for the upcoming issue of Write ON? Perhaps you need a different theme. Here are the upcoming themes for Write ON!:

Winter 2018	Science	deadline November 15th
Spring 2019	Mental Health	deadline February 15th
Summer 2019	Music	deadline May 15th
Autumn 2019	The Global Village	deadline August 15th

A reminder that Write ON! also accepts theme-related drawings, paintings and photos from group members. Please send images in .jpg format.

We Are the Mississauga Writers Group

We are a group of writers who have established this forum to share our experiences and pursue our dreams through creativity, knowledge and mutual respect. We want to learn from our strengths and talents and have enjoyable and stimulating conversations that only writers can relate to!

We would love to have writers from our community join us. All aspiring and established writers are most welcome. We believe we all have something special inside us. Come explore your talent with the Mississauga Writers Group!

Website - mississaugawritersgroup.com

Email - info@mississaugawritersgroup.com

