

My Mind Has Become A Recycled Compost Heap

BY TOBIN BARNES

I've been turning things over in my mind lately—uh huh, trying to think.

It's oftentimes painful. But unlike turning over garden soil in the spring so it's less compacted and ready for planting, turning things over in my mind doesn't accomplish much other than inspiring me to turn things over again.

That's right. My mind has become a recycled compost heap.

Nevertheless, things have occurred to me, though admittedly of dubious value.

For example, I recently turned over the idea that human beings are going to be blobs some day. And, heck, it seems more than likely since we are already halfway there. But now that they've come out with the Apple iPad, it's pretty much a done deal.

Blobdom is now cemented into our future kinda like the cornerstone of a new Chucky Cheese franchise.

Heck, you've got to know that touch computer technology is the way things are going. That's right, touch. It's not even press or pull, which would indicate some little effort. You just touch the screen. You can't even call it contact.

We're not going to get exercise sitting upright, moving a mouse, and tapping keys anymore. And already for some that was the extent of their aerobic exercise—that is, except perhaps for moving a hand down to food and drink and then moving it back to mouth.

Now with the iPad and its ilk and kith and kin that will soon be barraging us in infinite product lines, all we will have to do is touch what we want. And even if we touch one thousand desires a day—music, videos, friends, reports, etcetera—what's that, about ten calories?

After all, you can use an iPad in nearly any muscleless position of relaxation you can



Barnes

think of, including totally bean bagged in bed in a state of effortless suspension.

Gees, maybe even touch will be outmoded. It will merely be a matter of looking at icons and stuff will pop up

on a screen. How many calories a day do you think it takes to run your eyeballs?

Of course, we won't ever have to type anything again; instead, we'll just input stuff by saying it, like we're in Star Trek. That technology is already well on its way.

Speaking of Star Trek, I remember one old classic episode where the people of a planet had evolved into nothing but brains in these things like glass terrariums. They just thought and their desires were fulfilled through brainwaves.

It threw Captain Kirk for a loop. Couldn't even shake hands with these guys, let alone exchange cigars.

Maybe that's going to be some day—pickled brains in bottles sitting in carrot juice.

But first, I think humans are inevitably going to go through a blob phase to get there. Our bodies will become slack, pudgy, useless appendages that we'll eventually decide to discard.

Fat bodies, after all, just divert energy from enriching brain cells.

Yeah, so I've been turning this compost heap over and over in my mind, and I think that's where we're headed.

We'll all just be brains with no need for lipstick or even styling mousse.

That's right. Mark it down. It all began with the iPad.

Tobin Barnes, a high school English teacher, gets his skewed viewpoints of life from staring too much at Crow Peak, which looms above his home a few miles outside Spearfish.

If In Doubt, Do An Emissions Test

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:
When I was a kid doing my own tune-ups, I understood that the color of the deposits in the very end of the tailpipe was an indicator of how well-tuned the car was. Tan-colored deposits were good; black and sooty deposits were bad. My new car doesn't get the 24 mpg highway that it should, and the tailpipe has a black sooty deposit. I told the dealer the black soot means that the mixture is too rich, and that causes the poor mileage. He disagrees. Am I right, or is the dealer?

TOM: Well, in the old days, a black, sooty tailpipe WAS an indication that your mixture was too rich (too much gasoline, not enough air and, therefore, lots of excess carbon).

RAY: But nowadays, with computer-controlled engine-management systems, your "check engine" light would come on long before your tailpipe turned black.

TOM: Modern cars all have at least two oxygen sensors that check the mixture by



CLICK & CLACK

measuring how much oxygen is in the exhaust. And they check the mixture continually - every moment the engine is running.

RAY: So whatever caused the inside of your exhaust pipe to turn black, unless your check engine light is on, is unlikely to be a fuel-air mixture that's too rich.

TOM: And besides, what are you doing looking up the inside of your tailpipe, Jerry?

RAY: If you're still not convinced, Jerry (and I can tell you're not), the easiest way to answer your question definitively is to get an emissions test. An emissions test will tell you immediately whether the mixture is off.

TOM: I'm guessing it's fine, and that there's some other explanation for your mileage (like cold weather, a stuck thermostat, underinflated tires, a heavy driver's foot, a nonaerodynamic roof rack or an overly optimistic EPA highway number), but an emissions test will tell all.

RAY: Ask the dealer if he'd be willing to test the emissions for you, and then you guys can continue the mileage discussion from there. Good luck, Jerry.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk Web site at www.cartalk.com.

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Math Success Adds Up For 2010 Goldwater Scholar

VERMILLION — What happens when you combine inspirational faculty with a student's love of math? For Doug Dailey, a student at The University of South Dakota, it all adds up to a 2010 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship.

Dailey, a 2007 graduate of Elk Point-Jefferson High School, is one of only a handful of mathematics majors to receive the Goldwater Scholarship this spring. In fact, Dailey became USD's 11th winner of the prestigious scholarship but his road to academic success wasn't always paved with math, especially when he came to campus as a freshman.

"I knew that the Business School was one of the best around," said Dailey, the son of Michael and Cathy Dailey of Jefferson. "But, as a freshman, I found that business wasn't for me."

In the back of his mind, though, was math. His high school mathematics teacher, Rita Ahmann, served as an inspiration when it came to numbers and calculations.

"She really inspired me to study math," he said with a smile. "It was something I could do well and it seemed like a natural fit."



Dailey

But it wasn't just help at the high school level that fueled Dailey's passion for math. He credits Catalin Georgescu, an assistant professor in the department of mathematical sciences at USD, as both helpful and energizing when it comes to studying and researching math.

"Probably the driving force behind all these comes from his genuine excitement and curiosity for everything that is new," Georgescu pointed out. "He has a perfect GPA, but he also found time to be part of the Math Team for Mathematical Association of America contest in the fall and to do research with me all year long."

Susan Hackemer, Nationally Competitive Scholarships Coordinator, said students are often "in awe of Dailey's mathematical abilities, yet he remains both helpful and humble."

"It strengthened my resolve to study math," Dailey described the experience of working with Georgescu. "At the time I was excited about doing math

research, but he got me even more excited about it."

Excitement was also a new addition to his personal life. In July 2009, Dailey married his high school sweetheart, Genevieve, who is also a student at USD. He was more than happy to share the good news of his Goldwater Scholarship with her.

"The Goldwater (Web) site said, 'late March' but I kept checking my e-mail every day," he said with a shrug. "Then I got an e-mail from (USD) Provost (Chuck) Staben at home on March 31 saying 'Congratulations on receiving the Goldwater Scholarship,' so we got to share it with each other. That was pretty special."

Special is how Dailey describes the math department at The U. Calling it one of the "treasures of campus," he wants to use his experiences at USD as well as funding from the Goldwater to be a college professor and researcher to "influence students" in the same way professors at USD influenced him.

"Doug is a model student in that he is an initiator and looks for opportunities," explained Dan Van Peurse, associate professor

and chair of the department of mathematical sciences at USD. "He does not wait for them to come knocking on his door. He is the type of student that is continuously striving to do his best and get the most of his education."

Education is obviously important to Dailey, who is taking 16 credits this semester. Since his freshman year on campus, Dailey has been a member of the Student Technology Fellowship program assisting faculty in the Beacom School of Business in the use of technology for instruction. He is also a member of the Math Club and German Club. He's also assisted with research in the physics department and he recently presented math research, "Dynamics of a Cubic Map" at USD's IdeaFest. But Dailey has also found time to stay busy outside the classroom. In addition to being a husband, he is also a member of the USD Concert Choir and last year he was part of the Chamber Singers.

"The Goldwater has opened some doors," admitted Dailey, who will graduate next May. "My goal is to pursue a Ph.D. in math and, hopefully, be a college professor someday."

Online MBA Program At USD Scores In Top 5 Percent Nationally

VERMILLION — According to statistics released by a national testing service, graduate students in the online MBA program at The University of South Dakota Beacom School of Business are in good company nationally.

In an exam designed for business school MBA students produced by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, N.J., 38 students from USD's online MBA program scored in the top 5 percent overall and in two of five Major Field Test categories tested by the ETS.

Students in the online MBA program at The U took the exam during April and scored in the top 5 percent in Marketing and Management, and finished in the top 10 percent in the three additional categories, Finance, Managerial Accounting and Strategic Integration.

According to Angeline Lavin, Ph.D., CFA, director of the MBA and MPA programs at USD, the test is a measure of basic skills across all business disciplines asking questions every MBA student should know.

"We use this test as an assessment of how well we are

teaching basic skills in several business disciplines as well as strategic integration, which graduate business students must understand to be an effective manager once they leave our program," explained Lavin.

"This is the first large sample of online MBA students we have who have taken the ETS, and the results show that we are achieving our MBA program learning goals consistently in both online as well as face-to-face courses. We are pleased to report that the on campus MBA students scored in the top 5 percent when they took the ETS exam last summer, and the Sioux Falls Cohort MBA students also achieved a top 5 percent score on the same exam last fall."

Designed to assess student understanding in key areas as they finish their master's degree in business administration, hundreds of colleges and universities administer this exam to their MBA students in the United States. More information about the USD online MBA program is available at www.usd.edu/continuing-and-distance-education/online-master-of-business-administration.cfm.

Yankton School District Libraries Part Of We The People Bookshelf Grant

Yankton School District's six school libraries (Beadle, Lincoln, Stewart, Webster Elementary School, Yankton Middle School, and Yankton High School) are part of 4,000 libraries across the country selected by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the American Library Association (ALA) to receive free hardcover editions of 17 classic books as part of the We the People Bookshelf grant program. The theme of this year's Bookshelf is "A More Perfect Union."

The We the People Bookshelf on "A More Perfect Union" contains the following books:

- Kindergarten-Grade 3 — "Tico and the Golden Wings" by Leo Lionni; "When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson" by Pam Muñoz Ryan; "A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution" by Betsy and Giulio Maestro

- Grades 4-6 — "César: ¡Sí, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!" by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand; "Darby" by Jonathan Scott Fuqua; "Eagle Song" by Joseph Bruchac; "The Great Little Madison" by Jean Fritz

- Grades 7-8 — "Chains" by Laurie Halse Anderson; "Hitch" by Jeanette Ingold; "Lincoln Shot: A President's Life Remembered" by Barry Denenberg; "Warriors Don't Cry" by Melba Beals

- Grades 9-12 — "American Creation: Triumphs and Tragedies at the Founding of the Republic" by Joseph Ellis; "Carver: A Life in Poems" by Marilyn Nelson; "Killer Angels" by Michael Shaara; "Lincoln in His Own Words" by Milton Melzer; "Twelve Angry Men" by Reginald Rose; "The Souls of Black Folk" by W. E. B. DuBois
- Bonus — "The Civil War: A Film by Ken Burns"; "The Civil War: An Illustrated History" by Geoffrey Ward, Ric Burns, Ken

Burns; "Declaring Independence: The Origin and Influence of America's Founding Document" edited by Christian Y. Dupont

The award is part of the NEH's We the People initiative, which supports projects that strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture. Selected public and school libraries in all 50 states each will receive a set of the 17 books, bonus materials including a DVD edition of "The Civil War," the award-winning documentary by Ken Burns, posters, bookmarks, bookplates from the NEH and the ALA, and access to online

planning and promotional materials. Since 2003, NEH and ALA have distributed 17,000 We the People Bookshelf grants to school and public libraries across the country.

Participating libraries will present programs on the theme of "A More Perfect Union" for their students or library patrons.

For more information about We the People Bookshelf programs contact Becky Tasa at Yankton High School. For more information about the We the People Bookshelf project, visit <http://publicprograms.ala.org/bookshelf>.

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