

CAMPUS

Egypt: Hesham Ezzat

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THE BRUNSWICKAN

The country in focus this week is Egypt and the student is Hesham Ezzat. Hesham comes to us from the land of pyramids and pharaohs. Specifically, he's from Cairo, which is the capital of Egypt. Hesham, 20, is a Computer Science student. And this is his second year of braving the cold Canadian winter.

Okay now picture this, you wake up in the morning and you get ready for school. You have your breakfast, kiss your mom bye and head out the door. Wait, what is that, that you notice in the not too far off distance? Oh, it's nothing really, it's just the pyramids of Giza. Yes, that's right the same pyramids that are one of the seven wonders of the world (this is of course excluding the thing that has been growing in my bath tub drain for the last four months). "I live about four miles away from the pyramids. You can see them from house. It's actually a very good view from my house because the pyramids are situated on top of a hill with the residences situated at the bottom. I myself have been there a number of times but I've never actually gone inside them. They're a huge tourist trap. You can take a camel out to the pyramids which are surrounded totally by desert. I have never been on a camel myself, they scare me. I hate the way they get up and sit down. It looks like someone could fall right off them in any given second," laughs Hesham.

Over ninety percent of Egypt is covered by desert. Ever hear of the Sahara desert? Well it's part of Egypt. You are probably thinking that with all the desert coverage there can't be that much rain. Guess what? There are heavy rainfalls during the winter months. "It's really hot over there. The temperature won't fall below fifteen degrees Celsius



year round. During the summer months, like June to September it can get as hot as fifty degrees Celsius." Ugh, can you say 'AHH, I'M MELTING!' There's a big difference between fifty degrees and minus thirty degrees, wind chill factor being taken into consideration. So, how is Hesham handling the snow anyway? "The first snowfall was quite amazing. It was a lot of fun. I like to skate and slide. I've had enough of this winter though. It's too cold." The spring is generally mild but plagued by the khamsin, a hot and bitter wind which brings blinding sand and dust storms.

Cairo is the capital city of Egypt and has a population of twenty-six million. Egypt's total population is around seventy-five million. Let's figure this out together, shall we. Canada's population is around the same as Cairo's. So, in all actuality you could fit the entire population of Canada into Cairo, which is just one city in Egypt.

There is a good system of public transportation within Cairo despite its size. You have many options. You could take a cab, the bus, the metro (subway), a camel or a donkey. Camels and donkeys are hired out by visitors to see Egypt's historical sites. Cairo has all the necessities of life, McDonalds, clubs and malls are all present. The only difference between walking in Montreal and walking in Cairo is that you probably won't leave puddles of sweat wherever you walk in Montreal. Cairo's night life exists in its malls. Yes, finally somewhere I can shop and party at the same time. "Malls in Cairo are huge. They have more than one floor. The clubs and bars are in these complexes because liquor licenses are not available to street stores or shops. There are also restaurants in the clubs." So, I could grab a pair of jeans, then grab a Flet-o-fish and then jump on the dance floor and boogie the night away. Cool.

So, you've kissed your mom good-

bye and you can see the pyramids in the not too far off distance, now it's time to go to school. Where exactly will you be going? "In Egypt we don't have separate schools for elementary, junior high and high school. They're all in one school. However there are different types of schools. There are English, British, American and Dutch schools among others. It's hard to find a public school in Egypt because it's such a big



AARON MACEACHERN PHOTO

country. There are so many different types of people that have to be catered to." The schools in Egypt go to grade twelve. Alas, I was at the point where I thought we were the only country (besides our friendly neighbours south of the border) that went to grade twelve. "I spent the first eight grades in an English school and then from grade nine to grade twelve I was in a British school."

Hesham is not the first in his family to attend university. Actually he's not even the first to attend UNB. Hesham's

older brother is a student here. Hesham's older brother isn't even the first member of the Ezzat family to come to UNB. Hesham's uncle did his Masters in Business here four years ago. "I didn't want to stay in Egypt after I was done school. I wanted to travel and see some of the world. I got my chance when my uncle called me up and said, 'Why don't you come here? The education is better.' When I moved here, I lived with my uncle for six months and then moved out and got a place with my brother."

Besides the difference in education there's a couple of more important differences between Canada and Egypt. One of those differences is the political system, in Egypt they vote on a President. That President will be in office till he dies and is succeeded by another. "The President we have now has been in office for sixteen years. Each term is eight years long. When the President's term is up the people always vote him back into office because they figure who else to better run the country than someone who already has the experience."

The other important difference is that Egypt is a Muslim country. "When you talk about your weekends here you talk about Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In Egypt our weekends are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, because Egypt is a Muslim country we go to mosque on Friday. There are open discussions at the mosques, for instance, we could talk about what is right and what is wrong. After that we would start to pray to God. In the Islamic religion we pray and worship only God. We believe in Mohammed, he's our prophet, Jesus Christ and Moses." In following Islam one is not allowed to eat pork at certain times, drink (liquor) or smoke. Also women are held with the utmost respect. In the last nine thousand years there have been seven reported rapes. "If your confused about the whole Muslim and Islam situation, don't worry so was I. The Islamic religion is to Muslim as Catholicism is to Christianity."

I hope you have enjoyed this week's Cultures column. I really must be off now, though. I've got in my possession ten million videos of Frosty the Snowman that I have to ship off to Egypt. It's the only way the children there will see a snowman and I don't think the children there will be seeing a snowman walking around town in fifty degree weather anytime soon.

body spirit

Coping With Anxiety

Anxiety/fear refers to an unpleasant emotional state that all of us experience in our everyday lives. It often consists of an awareness or anticipation of danger, i.e., worry; a variety of bodily reactions such as increased heart rate, muscle tension, sweaty hands and cold feet; and avoidance behavior. The intensity of the experience varies with the circumstance.

For example, at the beginning of the term, a test anxious student who hears a professor mention in passing that the course will include a mid-term and a final exam will probably feel only mildly anxious and experience only some of the above symptoms. However, during the final exam itself, that student would most likely feel very uncomfortable and have thoughts of failure and panic that might well interfere with writing a good exam. Similarly, a student with a fear of public speaking could choose to avoid all courses requiring presentations in class.

Sometimes students experience a sudden "panic attack" of greatly increased arousal that may occur "out of the blue" and usually lasts for a few minutes. Typically, bodily symptoms of panic involve shortness of breath, rapid breathing, trembling or shaking and the pounding of the heart in one's chest. Most often, these changes are given a catastrophic interpretation, "I'm dying. I'm losing control. I'm going crazy." This usually makes matters worse. On the other hand, sometimes students are just generally anxious, they are usually worried and tense about most things in their lives.

Anxiety appears to involve a "fight or flight" reaction that is often inappropriate for demands of everyday student life. At the same time, lower levels of anxiety may help to motivate students to study for exams, not smoke cigarettes, drive only when sober, be polite towards others, etc. It appears that many of our fears are learned either directly because of the occurrence of some nasty event, e.g., failing a calculus exam, or indirectly via observing others who are scared, parents, siblings, friends or obtaining information about something that has the potential of danger or harm, such as AIDS.

Students may cope with anxiety by improving their time-management skills, taking well-earned breaks contingent on completion of assignments, learning and practicing relaxation techniques, engaging in regular aerobic exercise or sports, improving nutritional intake. Attempts could be made to lessen catastrophic thinking associated with both worry and panic—by challenging their validity—and replacing them with positive, more reasonable, self-supportive thinking. An appointment may always be made with a counsellor for help in overcoming all forms of anxiety. For UNB and STU students, information and help are available at Counselling Services (453-4820) and Health Services (453-4837).

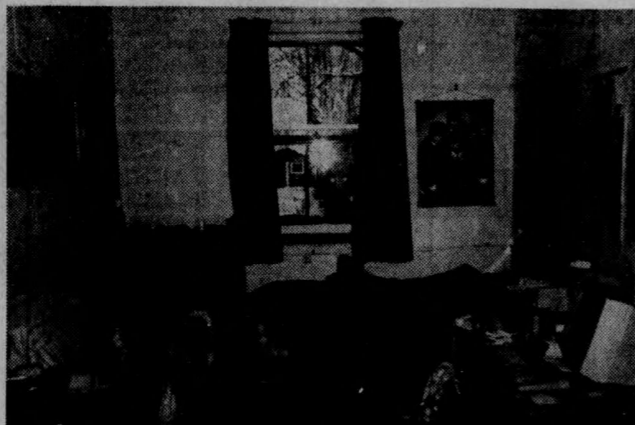
Mary Louise Luck is a counsellor with Counselling Services

in Residence



A residence is a house in which many students stay for the school year. It is that for me as well, but it is not my home. I, like many other people around this time, am getting tired, I am finding it harder to wake up in the morning and go to class. I don't know how they can move buildings so easily. The walk in the morning is now a million times longer than the one I made last term.

Now, the March break is rapidly approaching, but not fast enough for many of us. After about six months of working, sleeping and hanging out in the same room, another break is



needed. I need a break. You probably do too. I didn't realize it until I was making a long distance phone call. I got really pissed because I had to dial

the number nine every time I wanted to call out. I got a headache, and so I decided to play on my computer, which gave me an even bigger headache. And then I tried to do my laundry. Now, that just plain stinks. I

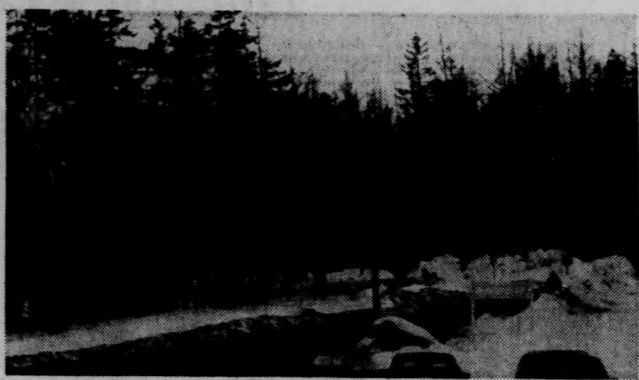
can't stand having those greedy machines suck up my quarters, and then I need more to dry my clothes. Who cares! I would rather wear them

wet (incidentally, I think that this may have something to do with getting sick - this philosophy is much more effective in the summer). This made me think: I have to get out of here! I was sick of my room, plain and simple. It was not something a simple cosmetic change could fix, I just needed out.

So, I went for a walk. It was fantastic. Fresh air, the harsh crinkle of winter's tears that have frozen and are crushed by my stumbling feet. This great routine I have come to live over the past few months is completely shattered by a simple walk. A routine I once thought was perfect, was instead driving me crazy.

It is interesting how reliant one can become on a room. The room is life and life is that room. Expand. It feels amazing. It is truly wonderful to go for a walk in the Great Canadian Winter and glide through the woods.

Fredericton has so much to do; if you are in a bad mood working in your room, throw on a jacket and wander out into the woods. Or, if you have come to treasure urban life, walk down one of Fredericton's wonderful streets. The path that runs along the



St. John River is a great spot to relax. Pack a lunch. You deserve a break.

If you feel the need for an athletic workout, head down to the Lady Beaverbrook gymnasium, where you can work yourself into a sweat in no time, and have a lot of fun doing it. With a pool, squash courts, a weight room, and so much more, it is really a great place to spend some time.

Another option is to go skating; on Church street there is a classic symbol

of Canada, the outdoor hockey rink. A tennis court by summer, through some magical conversion it becomes an ice palace by winter, a testament to the love Canadians have for hockey. Students, families, teens and tots all sharing an ice surface together for that one word: Fun.

So, I found a way not to go crazy. Silly me, it was right in front of me the whole time. A simple walk. You should try it.

with special guest **ginger**

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