

Us Ordinary Folk

Previous Books:

Exposed to Winds
[Selected poems]

Construction Delay Claims
[Performance measurements]

Anecdotes of Would-be Experts
[Business experiences]

Thoughts in a Maze
[Various mysteries]

Trials and Errors
[Life experiences]

Characters

Oddities

Connections

Conclusions Volumes I & II

My Best Dog Days

Investment Fundamentals

Our Support Systems

About My Books

Human Traits & Follies

Honesty's Travesty

Critical Reflections

Us Ordinary Folk

by

Arthur D.R. Thormann

Specfab Industries Ltd.

Edmonton, Alberta

2018

Thormann, Arthur O. R. (Arthur Otto Rudolf), 1934-, author
Us Ordinary Folk

ISBN 978-0-9916849-7-7

Copyright © Arthur O.R. Thormann, 2018

Publisher: Specfab Industries Ltd.
13559 - 123A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5L 2Z1
Telephone: 780-454-6396

Printer: PageMaster Publication Services Inc.
11340 - 120 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5G 0W5
Telephone: 780-425-9303

Cover Designs: Front: Figure of a relaxing hobo
Back: Text by author; sunflower seeds depict us
ordinary folk, and the petals depict our celebrities

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotes, any use or reproduction
requires the written consent of the publisher or the author.

*We can't help everyone, but everyone can help
someone.*

Ronald Reagan

*The purpose of human life is to serve, and to
show compassion and the will to help others.*

Albert Schweitzer

*I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in
the ordinary harmony of what exists, not a God
who concerns himself with the fates and actions of
human beings.*

Albert Einstein

I dedicate this book to all us ordinary folk in life!

Preface

Ordinary folk often fail to understand what's happening on the world scene and even closer to home. We ordinary folk depend for our understanding on what bigwigs decide we should know and on the media, even though the media may put their own spin on the so-called news. This leads to speculations and misunderstandings. The reluctance of bigwigs to be open is often understandable, and the dramatization of the news by the media is also understandable, but it forces us to make up our own minds to know what is happening and what is true.

Regardless how twisted the media may present us with the news, I for one value our media. The reason is that I experienced a state-controlled media in my early life, and with that sort of media we are often purposely misled. Our free-world media may put their own spin on the news, but they seldom purposely tell us lies!

We are well aware of what famous people have done to become famous, and my aim for this book was to interview some of us ordinary folk to find out what they do and believe, and how they fulfill their purpose in life.

Also, I wanted to explore a bit about the purpose of human life. Let me start by telling you my belief: I

think the purpose of human life is to advance the human race. Whether you have attained fame or are just one of us ordinary folk, the purpose is the same, although we may not realize it.

Let me illustrate this point by a brick building: The bricks, akin to famous people, are very visible, but the mortars, akin to us ordinary folk, are very necessary to hold the bricks together. Both, the bricks and the mortars form a strong building, akin to an advanced human race.

The advancement of the human race aims at a more harmonious life, as our fellow on the front cover of this book has already attained.

The fellow on the front cover is obviously oblivious to what's happening around him, especially world events, not because he doesn't care about them, but because he gave up speculating on them. So, since he is one of us ordinary folk, perhaps we can try to inspire him to take notice with a few of our own speculations.

All of the chapters aim to address aspects of human life that are everyday concerns of us ordinary folk, and the appendix aims to inspire millionaires to do their part to advance the human race.

Arthur O.R. Thormann
May 2018

Contents

Introduction: A Born Critic	1
The Interests of Juniors.....	5
The Interests of Seniors	13
The Wisdom of Ordinary Folk	21
Identifying with Celebrities	27
What is Life's Meaning?	35
Everyday Cheats.....	43
Acts of Treason	49
Leaders Tainting Nations.....	59
All's Well that Ends Well.....	63
Creation vs. Evolution	67
God Willing.....	71
The End is Near.....	75
Appendix: The Millionaires' Club.....	79
Acknowledgements	81
About the Author.....	83

Introduction: A Born Critic

If anyone can be born anything, I think I am a born critic. Even during my babyhood I was a critic of my parents. I still remember my parents discussing what to do with me while they were out going to see a movie – no TVs in those days, and they didn't have a baby sitter. They finally decided I would probably fall asleep, and, in any case, I could not be able to climb out of my crib. Two hours later, when they came back, I was standing up in the crib with my hands on the top rail and cried out “ha,” criticizing them for leaving me alone. That was my earliest experience as a critic. A few years later, when my parents sent me to Sunday school, I criticized the Bible stories the Sunday school teacher told us. I thought the Brothers Grimm's stories made more sense.

Then, as a teenager, I criticized my math teacher for failing to give me an algebraic equation for a straight line sloping down to the X line and then up again away from it. The math teacher challenged me to work out an equation for it, and I came up with an answer by multiplying the equation of the line sloping down by the equation of the line sloping up. The

Us Ordinary Folk
≈

teacher was amazed after testing my answer on the blackboard, but did not seem happy. The teacher had the typical adult attitude despising smart aleck teenagers. I was only happy that I had stumbled upon the answer to a difficult problem. Upstaging the teacher had not even entered my mind.

Do I dare criticize God? The answer is no if we mean by God the Supreme Existence in the Universe, namely our Universal Laws. But I do not hesitate to criticize the creators of the Biblical God, who, to me, is nothing more than an emotional Being who was given special powers by his creators – powers which are nevertheless questionable. To be sure, I'm not an atheist, but I do not believe in an emotional God, as created by the writers of the Bible. However, I firmly believe in the Supreme Existence that governs our Universe. I believe a simultaneous belief in the Supreme Existence and the Biblical God is a good example of doublethink, since only one concept can be supreme.

I have always steered clear of groups that would box in my thinking and rob me of my independence. I have never joined a church or a religious group, nor have I ever joined a political party, or groups like the Free Masons, Odd Fellows, and Technocrats. Thus, I remained free to criticize them all. Of course I'm a born German, but that never stopped me from

Introduction: A Born Critic

≈

criticizing the Germans if I felt justified to do so. On November 22, 1957, I became a Canadian citizen, because I felt the Canadians were the freest thinkers I had come across, and I still think that is true. Prior to becoming a Canadian citizen, I had also spent some time with the Americans in the U.S.A., but I concluded the Canadians were freer thinkers.

Another objection I've had to joining groups is groupthink. Groupthink is a pattern of thoughts characterized by self-deception, forced manufacture of consent, and conformity to group values and ethics. That's the definition; in other words, one has to be like the group to be liked by the group. Even though I have been part of a group of trustees for many years, the group always encouraged individual-think, and groupthink never became a problem, although the group also encouraged a consensus on decisions, but a consensus based on individual-think and not groupthink. To accomplish this, the group discussed ideas until objections were resolved to everyone's satisfaction. In fact, in this group the criterion is not to be liked but to have one's ideas liked. Nevertheless, in a group of trustees unanimity is important because of potential legal consequences for mistakes.

All my life, when facing confusing issues, I quickly found some fault with them and didn't mind mentioning my criticisms to others. I now realize that

Us Ordinary Folk
≈

this trait of mine did not make me too many loving friends. Who wants to get to the bottom of things if it often causes unhappiness? Just recently, my friend Bob Lynn ran an idea of his past me, and I criticized it. He was not happy about this and said it was unjustified. Perhaps it was, and I realized that I just acted from my natural habit of being a critic. Bob and I are both born critics, so, sometimes he will critique A while I critique B. Nevertheless, Bob is more diplomatic.

Recently, as I thought about the seventeen books I had written, I realized that all of them were full of criticism – even my poem book, *Exposed to Winds*. The title was taken from a poem about a stone in the middle of nowhere. Even such a simple poem describing the loneliness of a stone has criticism in it. So, why have I never written a book without criticism? The answer is simple: because I'm a born critic – I just can't help myself.

Here is a critique of myself: There are three things in my life I constantly have to watch: one is, when I get a brief brainwave, I must write it down before it disappears on me; the second is, when I'm up against stupidity, I must remind myself to be more tolerant; and the third is simply to be more diplomatic in my born criticism of others.

The Interests of Juniors

For this chapter, I decided to interview our grandchildren, starting with twelve-year old Jordan. My aim for this interview was that I wanted the input of fairly young folk for this book, to give us an idea of their activities and thinking. Jordan lives in Vancouver, BC. His ancestry is German and Filipino. He's a fast learner, presently in grade seven, and a member of the groups "Destination Imagination" and "Maple Grove Math Club." To regain his strength, Jordan sleeps six to ten hours a day, depending on his level of activity.

Jordan dislikes art and finds it boring; he says he has no religion, and his philosophy is: always be humble. He believes the present school system is too easy. He loves his mother most, and his best friend is Rob, his mother's friend. His worst enemy is hesitation, and he hates an annoying girl he's met. He finds insects disgusting and spiders scare him.

Jordan's favorite pastime is eating, and his favorite food is Beef Wellington. He likes drinking Shirley Temples. His hobbies are reading and computer games, and his favorite sport is baseball, but he also likes watching basketball. His favorite movie

Us Ordinary Folk
≈

is *Interstellar*. He finds roller coasting exciting and his teacher's stories amusing. Jordan would like to travel to Japan, and says the most memorable event in his life was a cruise to the Caribbean Islands.

Jordan says his best accomplishment was achieving the highest score in an academic test, and his worst mistake is thinking he is not being taught in school. Rude and uneducated children depress him the most, and his worst concern is North Korea starting a nuclear war. He is also concerned that men are better off than women, and that whites are better off than blacks. He has no health concerns, and does not detest any nation, but he likes Canada the most.

Jordan does not want to become a celebrity; his ambition is to run his mother's company and take it to the highest level of competence. He aspires to build his dream home one day, and he believes his life's meaning is to spend as much time with his loved ones while he is still there to see them.

Well! What do you think? Is this what you would expect to get from an interview with a twelve-year old youngster? Interesting, isn't it? And remember, he is one of us ordinary folk! How many celebrities in the world would equal his ambitions, activities, tastes, and philosophical outlook?

I also interviewed our twenty-year old granddaughter Samantha. Samantha lives in Vancouver,

The Interests of Juniors

≈

BC. Her ancestry is German and Filipino. She's bright and understands different perspectives well. She is presently in her fourth year of college, and a member of a Spanish Learning Group. To regain her strength, Samantha sleeps an average of seven hours a day.

Samantha dislikes being late, which happens too often. Being too comfortable she thinks is boring. She has no religion but believes in reincarnation, and her philosophy is looking for bliss. She loves her mother most, and she thinks her best friend, as well as her worst enemy, is herself. She hates nobody and loves her family most. Losing a loved one scares her the most, and she finds murder disgusting.

Samantha's favorite pastime is cooking healthful food for family and friends. Italian food is her favorite, and she likes drinking water. Her hobby is art, and running is her favorite sport, but she also likes watching figure skating. Her favorite movie is *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. She finds scary experiences exciting and thinks her brother Jordan is amusing. The most memorable event in her life was when her brother Jordan was born. To expand her horizon, she would like to travel to Asia.

Samantha says her best accomplishment was creating her own business in 2017, and her worst mistake was not learning enough in high school. What depresses her most is when she is mean to herself, and

Us Ordinary Folk

≈

her worst concern is not being fulfilled and dying alone. She thinks that men are better off than women, and that whites are better off systematically than blacks. Her health concerns are being too frail.

Samantha does not dislike any nation, but she likes Canada the most. She does not want to become a celebrity, but her ambition is to inspire many people. She aspires to eventually become more like her mother, her brother Garrett, her sister Megan, and her maternal grandfather. Her most cherished desire is to always be courageous, and she believes that life's meaning is for humans to love each other and to improve things.

Well, here you have a young woman's concerns, interests, and outlook on life! What do you think? Her take is somewhat different from her brother Jordan's. Does her femininity have something to do with this?

Next, I interviewed our twenty-six-year old granddaughter Megan. Megan lives in Vancouver, BC. Her ancestry is German and Filipino. She's bright and understands different perspectives well. She has a Bachelor of Commerce degree, and is a member of The Prosperous Coach Salon with Rich Litvin. She works diligently as a professional coach, and what she does best is understand different perspectives. To regain her strength, Megan sleeps an average of seven-and-a-half hours a day.

The Interests of Juniors

≈

Megan dislikes doing complex mathematical calculations. She thinks TV news is boring, especially when it gets opinionated. She has no religion but believes the universe works for us. She also believes that every human being is worthy of love, and that we create our own reality. Her philosophy is to contribute to society her natural gifts. She hates nobody and loves her boyfriend Javeed most. Of her parents, she loves her mother most. Her best girlfriend is a woman named Nazlee. Losing a loved one scares her the most, and she finds black speckles that look like baby spiders disgusting. Her worst enemy is her ego.

Megan's favorite pastime is spending time with family and friends. Sushi is her favorite food, and she likes drinking mango juice. Her hobbies are dancing, card games, reading, and yin yoga, and biking is her favorite sport, but she also likes watching figure skating. Her favorite movie is *Hunger Games*. She finds helping someone improve his or her relationship exciting, and she finds cute animals and babies amusing. The most memorable event in her life was yelling at her father for putting them in danger. She likes travelling worldwide, especially to nice beaches.

Megan says her best accomplishment was graduating from university at age nineteen, and her worst mistake was when she said a terrible thing to her boyfriend Javeed that deeply hurt him. What depresses

Us Ordinary Folk
≈

her most is when things are not working out for her, and her worst concern is not having enough money. She thinks that women and men are equal, but that women have many unrecognized influential gifts. As far as blacks and whites are concerned, she says that black people have faced many more challenges historically than white people. Her health concerns are back pain and indigestion.

Megan disapproves of North Korea, but only because of Kim Yong-un, their leader. She likes Canada the most as a nation. She does not want to become a celebrity, and her ambition is to lead a happy and prosperous life. She aspires to build a well-known coaching business, and her most cherished desire is to make a meaningful impact on the world. She believes that life's meaning is to find one's true self and to help others.

Again, here we have a young woman's concerns, interests, and outlook on life! What do you think? Her interests are somewhat different from her sister Samantha's. Does her additional education and experience have something to do with this?

I finished with our thirty-year old grandson Garrett. Garrett lives in Vancouver, BC. His ancestry is German and Filipino. He's bright and understands different perspectives well. He has a first-year college education, and is a member of The Whisky Tasting

The Interests of Juniors

≈

Club. He works diligently as a business consultant, and what he does best is solving problems. To regain his strength, Garrett sleeps eight to ten hours a day.

Garrett dislikes paper work, and finds the status quo boring. His religion is Christian. He believes that anything is possible, and that there is more knowledge out there than a person can obtain in a lifetime. His philosophy is to be better today than he was yesterday. He hates computerized call centers, and loves his mother most, who is also his best friend. Accidental death scares him the most, and he finds arrogance and ignorance disgusting. His worst enemy is himself.

Garrett's favorite pastime is spending time with family and friends. Japanese is his favorite food, and Scotch whisky is his favorite drink. His hobbies include reading, computer games, and personal development, and pool and basketball are his favorite sports. He also likes watching basketball. His favorite movie is *Kung Fu Panda*. He finds progression exciting, and nothing amusing. The most memorable event in his life was swimming with dolphins. He likes travelling, and his future travel plans include Japan, Germany, and Italy.

Garrett says his best accomplishment was a presentation he gave to five hundred people, and his worst mistake was accidentally deleting some important computer data. What depresses him most is

Us Ordinary Folk
≈

getting old, and his worst concern is not having enough time for the things he wants to do. He thinks that men are better off than women, because men approach things more logically, and that whites are better off than blacks in North America as well as elsewhere. He has no health concerns.

Garett detests no nation, but he likes Canada best. He does not want to become a celebrity, and his ambition is to build a family compound and open a restaurant. He aspires to lead a fulfilling life with no regrets, and his most cherished desire is to pass along his knowledge to the world. He believes that life's meaning consists of self-betterment and leaving things better than he found them.

Again, here we have a young man's concerns, interests, and outlook on life! His interests are somewhat different from his siblings, perhaps because he is the oldest and they had to depend on him a lot.

You have reached the end of this sample

Want to keep reading?

You can buy this book at **PageMasterPublishing.ca/Shop**

To find more books by Canadian authors or inquire about publishing your own book, contact PageMaster at:

PageMaster Publication Services Inc.

11340 - 120 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5G 0W5

books@pagemaster.ca

780-425-9303