



UPEI STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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### Editorial 3: The Dog Whisperer

**It's fall suddenly. Cool, but not cold. I pretend leaves aren't falling. I'm walking down the street at 4:00am in the morning. That's what time it is when it gets this late. Sidewalks all but empty; just me and the early walkers who rustle by in ugly jogging suits.**

Growing up, my mother vigilantly protected my brother, sister and I from undue and excessive televised influence of all kinds. Mr. Dressup was on the approved list, but even he was to be watched in moderation - certainly not every day. Even so, the show loomed large in my life. While I didn't understand the abstract concept of a "half-hour," (confusion persists) "the length of Mr. Dressup" was a unit of measurement that meant something, and was used often.

Mr. Dressup is leaned against the tree house, a hand cupped to his ear, listening to Finnegan whisper excitedly, ears flapping. Casey looks on knowingly.

**I'm remembering that fog disappears when you get close enough. An early walker decked out in a white and teal jogging suit and a professional hermit's bushy black beard walks past. He swings his arms and legs quickly and efficiently, covering ground with a frightening persistence for 4:20am. "Morning," he says smiling.**

I never even once entertained the idea that I would try and draw with Mr. Dressup, following his lead. I knew I couldn't draw a plane to approximate the one he drew in twenty seconds, with four simple lines and a few details. The man was a precise artist.

Mr. Dressup was one of the finest children's television shows ever made, alone in a category that also encompasses the equally excellent *The Friendly Giant*, and not much else. Mr. Dressup had bad teeth and an unfortunate haircut - no Regis Philbin teeth, suits, or attitude. Mr. Dressup was not an *act*. He is a real person to more than three decades of children.

**"Morning," he says smiling, living a day ahead of me, who hasn't slept yet and is still stuck at the end of yesterday. One block from home I pass another walker - red jogging suit, blue scarf and blue tinted hair permed into a nearly perfect sphere. I can't tell if she looks nervous or not. I step aside in case. "It's cool," she observes smiling, tugging on her scarf and shivering for emphasis as she shuffles past.**

Mr. Dressup, speaking off-camera to the studio audience:

"Today, boys and girls, since it's my last day, I'm going to paint my face in clown makeup, and it's going to stay on forever."

Matthew Dorrell,  
Editor-In-Chief