

Ask The Professor

Episode # 2041

TRANSCRIPT

Announcer: The University of Detroit Mercy presents another brand new episode of Ask The Professor! Today's program was recorded using Zoom video conferencing technology.

Matt: The University Tower chime ring in another session of Ask The Professor, the show in which you match wits with University of Detroit Mercy professors in an unrehearsed session of questions and answers. I'm your host Matt Mio, and let me introduce to you our panel for today. To the bottom of my square, it's Professor Stephen Manning, My brother in beardedness.

Stephen: Afternoon Matt.

Matt: Good afternoon! So you're being bothered by people who need answers to tough questions huh?

Stephen: A little bit, yes.

Matt: It's nice to be needed Stephen.

Stephen: Yes my relish being needed. Very important these days.

Dave: Like Al Capone.

Matt: Continuing around our cycle of squares here, Professor Heather Hill is with us today.

Heather: Hello!

Matt: Thanks for coming Heather and how are you?

Heather: A pleasure! I'm good. I'm good. You know, the weather has been kind of up and down and backwards and forwards but good.

Matt: I can handle a little bit less humidity and a lot of sun, I think this weekend might be nice.

Heather: Yeah, I think we're in for a good stretch of weather.

Matt: That would be nice. Professor Kendra Evans is here with us today.

Kendra: Hello.

Matt: So, your daughters, they're actually done with school for today?

Kendra: They're done with school for today.

Matt: They go to three o'clock?

Kendra: Well, no, we normally have to do it until it's done. And so if we have a bunch of meetings, then they might not even be getting started till the afternoon so it sort of just depends. But Autumn finished early this week, but Juliana in third grade is really rigorous.

Matt: Yes it is.

Kendra: Yeah. But it is your children's last day!

Matt: Today is my kids' last day. And I am not exaggerating. They were doing real work, like, even at 2:45.

Kendra: I totally believe it! You know, normally, in a real school year, the last four weeks is like party, field trip, field day, party, field trip. I don't know, seemed like nothing happens the last four weeks but this year, there's real instruction to the very last minute.

Matt: Oh yes. Very much.

Matt: Jim Tubbs is here with us today from Religious Studies! Hey, Jim!

Jim: Hello, hello! How are you?

Matt: I'm doing pretty good! It's, uh, I basically been frozen in the Mio family basement because this whole thing started with winter, and it was cold, and then it got really hot this week so we turn the air on, and now it's really cold down here again so.

Jim: Well, I live in a single story house with no basement so I'm in the living room.

Matt: That's nice. I bet you turned the air on this week though.

Jim: I've had it on until today, in fact. The last two days I've had it on.

Matt: Yep.

Jim: Diane told me yesterday or the day before that it was 106 degrees in Mesa, but it was 9% humidity.

Matt: So everything was just spontaneously combusting?

Jim: Nobody's gonna sweat a lot there!

Dave: Get a hydrator!

Jim: Yep.

Matt: We will have a visit from guest panelist previous panelists Professor Diane Manica again sometime later this summer. We should have her back sometime soon. It'll be tons of fun. Speaking of tons of fun, Dave Chow is here with us today.

Dave: Pleasure to be here, as always.

Matt: What was that thing that you flashed up a few minutes ago? Was some sort of a rat with very very big teeth? Is that what it was? Five inch teeth. Yikes.

Dave: Yes.

Matt: I can tell that the rat is from Berkley Michigan.

Dave: Yes. Right about now we got gardens going right about now. So I'm like okay, what do we do, do I build a moat or electrify the yard or something? I don't know yet.

Matt: Yeah they're, they're coming out man.

Dave: Food is abundant right about now so we'll see what happens.

Matt: Yeah. Hey Dan Maggio is here with us today too

Dan: Hey Matt!

Matt: What's shakin'?

Dan: Not much, ending a busy week, looking forward to the weekend.

Matt: Yeah, yeah. So what's on tap for the week?

Dan: The same for the last 10 weekends. New restaurant to get carry out from and then spending five hours figuring out what movie we should watch. So, actually I think we're gonna watch - What's the one with George Clooney and Anne Hathaway? Gravity?

Matt: Oh yeah.

Dave: Yeah, that's Sandra Bullock isn't it?

Dan: Sandra Bullock. Uh, close enough. And then the other one was Interstellar, is that right? Yeah. So they're on my, so I know where this kind of space thing. So, kind of, we binge watch everything we want to watch on Netflix.

Matt: Reaching the end of the list.

Dan: That's the plan.

Matt: We also have Professor Mara Livezey with us today.

Mara: Hello.

Matt: Hello. Hello. When you left the panel during our break, your cat was perfectly melded with the black and white blanket behind you. It was all just sort of flowed together. There you go.

Mara: I heard Dan call her a dust bunny.

laughter

Mara: Oh that was Dave?!

Dan: That was Dave actually, haha!

Mara: That seems more likely.

Dave: We're also not going to tell you that your cat also ordered about \$400 worth of stuff on chewy.com too when you were gone.

Mara: As long as she pays, I don't mind.

Matt: Yeah! As long as it's the cat's credit card, oh my gosh. You know we're being favored again today on the panel by our friend, Richard Wagoner, we're very happy to have you back, Richard. We hope that you have some fun being a part of the panel and we can't thank you enough for writing about us about a year ago.

Richard: This is really fun. I would like to point out that while I'm not officially a professor, I do have a PhD, graduating from San Pedro High School, so it's a Pedro High diploma.

Matt: Oh, very nice!

Jim: Excellent!

Matt: Oh, that's awesome. Perfect.

Dave: Wait we have graduates here!?

Matt: Well folks, this is a program you can send us questions regarding anything. If you stump our awesome panel you win a prize, and if you stump our not-so-awesome panel, you also win a prize. You can send the questions to us in a number of ways you can email us at atp@udmercy.edu. You can reach us on the web at udmercy.edu/atp. You can find us on Facebook, or listen to us

on your favorite smart speaker by asking it to play Ask the Professor at University of Detroit Mercy. Here are some questions pertaining to weird stuff that can be found in the 2020 Farmer's Almanac.

Dave: Uh oh.

Matt: You may determine your own grading scale. So, I usually look in Dan's direction or something like that. It looks like we have about eight questions here, Dan so help me out. So 75% when you answer six of them correctly.

Matt: Let's see what happens. "The word 'distaff' can mean of or concerning women. What does this definition have to do with distaff day, being the seventh of January, annually?"

Mara: Was that when women got suffrage, or something?

Matt: You know it's not celebrating anything necessarily historical.

Heather: Could you...I am so sorry. What was all of that about the distaff?

Matt: So, the word distaff can mean of or concerning women. What does this definition have to do with distaff day seventh of January, celebrated seventh of January annually?

Heather: Oh. Okay. Do tell.

Matt: Let's see if we can get a good solid yes in here.

Heather: Oh I'm sorry, people have not responded yet. I'm telling you my internet connection is really wacky.

Matt: That's all right! Mara had a good guess about it commemorating suffrage, but it does not have to do with suffrage.

Dan: Is it farm related?

Matt: Ish

Dan: Ish...

Kendra: Is it about Mother Nature.

Matt: It sort of is!

Dan: Doesn't have to necessarily deal with human females? Could it be an animal female?

Matt: Definitely. Um, this is about as far as I'll go with with hints here. It has to do in particular with Christian females. Look at the date.

Dave: One seven

Kendra: This is close to the epiphany.

Mara: Yeah.

Matt: That's right. It's the day after the epiphany. What do you think that refers to?

Jim: Mary cleaning up with all the gifts and gifts.

Matt: Um, it's pretty close Jim. Distaff day refers to the day that you would return to work for women's work. Distaff is also the name of the spindle that works on a spinning wheel and so that was the day like, okay you're done partying. Get back to work.

Jim: Oh!

Dave: The opposite of dad's there.

Dan: So it's not a holiday.

Matt: Definitely not.

Jim: Yeah, a non-holiday.

Mara: The beginning of a holiday.

Matt: Remember these are from the 2020 Farmers Almanac. The mirror image of this day was for men would have been what was called plow day because that was the day you had to get back to tilling the earth. "What do the three chilly saints of Mamardisp, Pancras and Jervis being celebrated on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of May, refer to?"

Dave: Three Stooges week?

Matt: I figured something like that was going to be uttered. We had it really hardcore this year if you could think back to what the weather was like in 12th and 13th.

Dan: Is it snow or frost?

Matt: It's sort of referred to as a spring slide back to cooler weather after you have your first warm up. And they basically back in the day would blame the Saints for bringing it that weather on those days so. The truth is that around that time we're always having a little bit of a chill, and they blamed it on these very interestingly named saints.

Steven: He did.

Matt: So, this one is one that is a personal interest to me because I could never figure it out after reading Shakespeare, so maybe I've looked at a little bit in Heather's direction here. "What specific date is midsummer?"

Dan: So...

Heather: Is it in May?

Matt: In June is when it says.

Dan: So midsummer would be more like beginning of August

Mara: Yeah

Steven: The beginning of summer right? June 21?

Dan: Well mid summer.

Steven: Mid summer would be...

Dan: Like August 10th?

Matt: So the reason this is a personal interest to me is I remember reading 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' , and having to refer to this date, which is in late June, but not June 21, and going, I don't understand why mid summer wouldn't be the way that Dan is interpreting it. It's June 24. Not because it's halfway through the season, because it's halfway through the growing season and its great climate.

Dan: That's right, because it's the Farmers Almanac.

Matt: There you go.

Jim: What's the date again Matt?

Matt: June 24 is midsummer. And by that, of course, I do not mean a very successful Swedish horror film from last summer that had to do with mid summer. This one is a pretty interesting one too. I gotta be very careful the way I present or pronounce this word. "What does cornsacious air in July refer to?"

Dan: A I R?

Dave: Could you use it in a sentence?

laughter

Dan: He just did.

Matt: The question is about cornsacious air!

Dan: So would it be whether that's favorable for growing corn?

Matt: That is exactly what it refers to. Yes, the hot humid weather that corn goes best in, and there is an ongoing challenge from the Farmers Almanac which I think is kind of fascinating, considering I was at my dad's property in Port Huron over the weekend and across the street is a gigantic cornfield because the outer film of corn leaves and stocks is covered with sort of a waxy substance. There are people who swear that you can hear the corn squeaking as it grows, and Farmers Almanac has had this multi hundred year, essentially like if you can ever actually hear that and like record it, you know send it to us and we'll publish it. But no one's really been able to hear the corn grow even though some people swear by it.

Dan: They don't like to speak when they're being recorded.

Matt: Yeah.

Dave: I mean, is it like a Sasquatch sighting kind of thing.

Matt: It's sort of like that. One thing is for sure. In our part of the Midwest Richard - and watch me demonstrate - everybody at least from Michigan knows that corn has a very specific height by the Fourth of July.

Jim and Mara: Knee high.

Matt: So, cornsacious air would be, I'll tell you right now Farmers Almanac calls for pretty sticky July, so it's gonna be good to grow.

Announcer: You're listening to a special edition of Ask The Professor, in which each of the nine professors participating in this recording session, were connecting to each other from different locations, thanks to zoom video conferencing technology. We're grateful to those listeners who submitted questions for today's show, and we welcome your questions at atp@udmercy.edu. Now, let's return to our host Matt Mio with more questions for the panel.

Matt: Okay, how about the dog days of summer, loosely interpreted as three of July through 11th of August, what do they refer to?

Mara: One of the hottest days?

Dave: When there's no sports!

Matt: Uh oh, we lost Heather. Oh, nope, she's back.

Dan: We lost her again.

Matt: That's all right. A few of you said that it has to do with the hottest days of summer. There's no question about that. Those are some of the hottest days of summer. But do you know how

they got the name, 'the dog days', that's the question which I think Heather was going to respond to

Dan: The dog doesn't want to stay in the house, wants to be outside?

Matt: No, that's actually not it. Although that's a good guess

Mara: Highest number of dogs birthed during that time?

Matt: Heather did you have an explanation for why it was called the dog days?

Heather: Am I back.

Dan: Yes. You're back.

Matt: Oh no. I feel so bad. So, it has to...

Dan: She's going to call Comcast, just give her a few minutes.

Steven: Constellation.

Matt: Yeah yeah, so it has to do with the star called 'Sirius', which is almost always known as the dog star. And because we were pseudo scientific just 100 years ago, people thought, "Oh no! This other star is working with the sun to make things twice as hot, even though there's a gajillion other stars in the sky and we could make that judgment call whenever we want to!" They were worried that Sirius, the dog star was working with the sun. "What are the halcyon (NS) days of early December?"

Jim: Few days before the blizzards set in.

Matt: That is exactly correct but do you know where that Greek word 'Halcyon' actually comes from? I'll give you a hint that might

lead us there. The Greeks referred to a certain kind of bird, as a Halcyon. We call that bird something different, and I'm not exactly sure if we have these birds in Michigan now that I think about it, but it's an interesting bird that builds its nest in the water.

Dan: Not the dodo.

Matt: Not the dodo.

Jim: An egret?

Matt: Not an egret.

Mara: Loon?

Matt: Not a loon, although that's a good guess. What was that Dave?

Dave: Flamingo?

Matt: Not flamingo.

Dan: I don't know...Ostrich?

Matt: Not an ostrich.

Jim: In the water.

Matt: Yeah. It's the Kingfisher bird. And from the Greek myth, Halcyon was the person in the myth was turned into the Kingfisher bird that builds its nest upon the waves of the sea. Aeolus, god of wind, calmed the waves after the tumult of late autumn, we all know in Michigan, that we have some pretty crazy weather right at the end of November. And the waves would be called in early December so that the bird could build its nest, and they became known as the halcyon days. It says here, think about

these, because most people from the Great Lakes region, know that because the weather freaks out a little bit in November, and we often refer to that crazy weather as what?

Dave: The day I pull out my snow shovel.

Mara: Lake effect?

Matt: We refer to it as the witch of November.

Dave: Oh.

Matt: Gendered language there but it's in the song "Wreck of the Edmund"

Jim: Edmund Fitzgerald. Yes.

Steven: Gordon Lightfoot.

Matt: You know, it's kind of ironic that we got this question on the day when Professor Beth Oljar couldn't join us, but. "Why did the first peoples of the Pacific Northwest tell the people in the winter to beware the pogonip?"

Dave: Because it gets so cold you're - oh no no no I'm not gonna go there.

laughter

Dave: Family Show!

Matt: Family show. Has anybody ever heard of a pogonip before?

Jim, Dan, and Mara: No.

Matt: We're learning a new word today. There is a phenomena. Dear God, thank you for not occurring in the state of Michigan.

The fog will freeze and you breathe in the ice needles. And I would guess that the first peoples with their pretty good knowledge of weather, but maybe not so good knowledge of science, we're pretty freaked out by breathing in ice needles.

Dave: That would nip your pogo!

Matt: Yeah that's exactly it. 100% Dave 100%. Okay, so our last question for our show today is going to be a little bit of matching, and we'll see it might get a little bit interesting here, but it'll still be fun. You know, "The Native Americans in North America mark the passage of time by naming the 12 full moons of the year realizing that a certain passage of time went by after 12 of those moons went by. Can you match the theme of the moon to the Gregorian calendar month?" So let me give you one that's kind of a giveaway. The September full moon is almost always referred to as the Harvest Moon, or the corn moon. But all the moons have names in Native American parlance, so I'll give them to you in a random order and see if you can guess what month it is.

Dave: I was hoping this will be like '12 Lords of Leaping', that way Jim Tubbs can nail all this stuff. That's all.

Matt: He's our master of Christmas carols that's right. So which Moon is called the 'flower moon?'

Jim: May.

Matt: Yep, it's definitely May. So I'm going to give you... The first one is done for you, so we've already got two out of 12.

Dave: Hooray!

Matt: Which one is the wolf moon?

Heather: November.

Matt: That sounds actually good but you know the November moon is named after another classic North American creature, Heather.

Dan: Bear moon?

Dave: The Kingfisher moon!

Matt: Not gonna get credit for that. What would you say Heather is the unofficial animal mascot of the great country of Canada.

Heather: The whistle pig!

Dan: The moose.

Matt: It's not a moose!

Dave: The beaver moon!

Matt: The beaver moon! The wolf moon is actually January.

Dave: Okay.

Matt: Which one do you think is the worm moon?

Dan: March.

Matt: It's March, yeah!

Mara: Wow!

Dave: Oh, this is actually worse than like those weird anniversary gifts!

Matt: What is the diamond moon - no that's not available!

Dave: No no Matt Come on. Do you remember the one question that we got that one time. The third anniversary gift?

Matt: I remember there's one where you're supposed to buy people clocks and I just don't understand it. You don't need an occasion to buy a clock! Just go buy it!

Dave: Yeah, the Amazon moon!

Matt: How about the strawberry moon?

Stephen and Mara: June.

Matt: August fruit is actually named after a popular Great Lakes fish.

Dave: Trout?

Dan: Walleye?

Dave: Zebra mussel!

Dan: Not a perch.

Mara: The invasive carp?

Matt: So again to repeat: the strawberry moon is June, the August moon is a sturgeon.

Jim: I would think that'd be a cold month.

Matt: Well we're getting there.

Dave: No that's the caviar month Jim. Caviar.

Matt: It seems obvious, but maybe you know based on the ones we've eliminated here which Moon is the snow moon?

Stephen: December.

Matt: It's not!

Kendra, Dan, and Mara: February.

Matt: December is also, obviously named cold moon. All we have left is April and October and I'm pretty sure we're going to be able to line them up. Which one?

Dave: The tax moon in April!

Matt: April is the pink moon because that has to do with the coming out of little buds. In October, surprisingly is the hunters moon, as people moved into hunting mode.

Richard: When the wolves come out of hibernation.

Matt: There you go.

Jim: I'm surprised we don't have a pumpkin moon.

Matt: You know, Pumpkins grow a lot in the Midwest, but maybe not so much in the Southwest so.

Dave: I'm gonna start a petition - October should now be called the Mio moon.

Matt: Oh, thanks! Especially after my poor moon decoration got destroyed. So let's appoint it someone other than Dan, that's pretty obvious. The time has come on our show to talk about ATP favorites so we need someone to come up with a favorite category. I was gonna throw something out there to be funny but realized it would be really depressing to say, 'hey what's your favorite thing to do, when all that's left on your calendar after

school ends, is to get ready for the next time school starts?' But we're not going to talk about that right now.

Stephen: How about a favorite new show you've discovered?

Matt: Okay. What was your answer, Stephen?

Steven: My answer to that?

Matt: Yes!

Steven: Oh, "Person of Interest".

Matt: Ooohhh! Talk to me!

Steven: It's Christopher Nolan, does it. He created it. It's a guy who invents a surveillance computer system for the government to track and discover and stop terrorists. It collects evidence on everyone, even people who are not relevant to stopping terrorism. So he turns this into a thing to, it's almost like a minority report idea where they know they get a social security number of a person, and they don't know if that person is going to be the perpetrator or the victim of an upcoming crime. And he's got this ex-CIA guy who does the actual work. And it's interesting.

Matt: Very cool!

Steven: Kind of surveillance a little dystopian but interesting. And the guy who plays the ex-CIA a guy, the muscle, is Jim...Uh who's the guy who played Jesus Christ?

Jim: Jim Caviezel.

Steven: Yeah, he's the guy. He does does an interesting job.

Matt: I think you had me at Christopher Nolan, I'm kind of a big fan.

Stephen: Yeah, yeah.

Matt: Kendra, after school is over. Do you get a chance to watch entertaining things?

Kendra: We are like in between shows, like we finished all the shows of the old shows. And then we started watching Bosh, which is fairly entertaining. But like 12 steps too violent for me? In my old days, I can no longer handle violence. And then we started watching Aliens, which is very, like 2001, and it's a little bit hard to deal with that. It's also very Jennifer Garner.

Jim: Richard what is our west coaster watching now with the coronavirus shut down?

Richard: What's funny is my wife really likes watching those home shows. The flipping shows and the remodel shows. So we ended up watching a lot of those. By my advice that I need to get back to, this will sound so corny. But I love watching the old Get Smart episodes with Don Adams. I have the DVD set so I need to start watching those.

Matt: I'm afraid we've reached the end of our episode for today so the time has come to say goodbye. Mara.

Mara: See you next time.

Matt: Dan.

Dan: Goodbye!

Matt: Stephen!

Dave: See ya!

Matt: Kendra.

Kendra: It was so good to be here!

Matt: Jim.

Jim: Sayonara!

Matt: Heather.

Heather: Everybody take care. Buh-bye!

Matt: And Richard!

Richard: Goodbye and have a good weekend!

Matt: And now these words,

Announcer: You can email Ask the Professor at atp@udmercy.edu, or visit the Ask the Professor Facebook page!

Matt: Ask the professor is transcribed from the facilities of all of our personal spaces, but it's out of the Department of Communications Studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Education at University of Detroit Mercy. Ask the Professor is produced and directed by Michael Jayson and Brian Maisonville and our executive producer is Professor Jason Roche. Till next week! I'm your host Matt Mio.