



### Quote of The Week:

**"My play was a complete success. The audience was a failure."**

**--Ashleigh Brilliant**



### **A Bug In Your Ear...**

**By Tammy Lee Moore**

### **THE AU PROFILES: Getting to Know One Another**

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The student/staff profile of those whose lives are involved with AU is a new column in The Voice. It is our hope that reading about those who are part of the make-up of what makes AU unique will draw our students closer together although we span countries and continents. We are a part of AU, and as such, we carry a common bond.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the students and staff at AU – and be inspired to participate in our new PROFILES column!

# AU Profiles:

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## **STUDENT: ANDREA GUMMOW**

Voice: What province and city/town do you live in?

**Andrea: I live in Edmonton, Alberta.**

Voice: Do you have a family/ kids/ pets ?

**Andrea: My family consists of myself and my brother, our two cats Max and Shadow, and our pet bird, Lucky.**

Voice: What are your hobbies / interests/ activities/ etc.

**Andrea: I love to read, write, scrapbook, walk, and be with friends and children.**

Voice: Can you tell us about the AU Courses you are taking at the moment, or a favourite course?

**Andrea: I'm taking Psych 290, Math 215, English 301, and Biology 204. I absolutely LOVE taking the psych courses, and my favourite course right now is English. I'm studying children's literature, and it's so much fun, like a blast from the past. It's the most enjoyable course I've taken so far.**

Voice: How long have you been a student? (And where)

**Andrea: This is my second year at Athabasca University. I study at home full time.**

Voice: What do you think of your courses/ the AU experience/ distance education?

**Andrea: I think AU is a great alternative for people who really want to get somewhere in life, but need an unconventional method of studying. The courses are really extensive, and cover a lot of material. They are easy to follow, easy to learn, and fun. Athabasca**

**University has been a great experience for me. It has allowed me to follow my dream of getting a university education when I otherwise would have been unable to do so, due to the demands of my life.**

Voice: Do you work? What do you do?

**Andrea: Well, studying is a job in itself! But, I also have a job outside of school, doing childcare, and house cleaning.**

Voice: How (or) Is AU helping you towards a goal?

**Andrea: AU is helping me toward my goal of getting an education, and toward bettering my life by giving me a flexible schedule, and one on one help whenever I need it.**

Voice: What are your future goals?

**Andrea: I plan to complete my BA, and then graduate studies in Psychology. My final goal is to become a developmental psychologist, working with troubled children via play therapy.**

Voice: Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for other students?

**Andrea: Follow the study plans, and don't ever be afraid or reluctant about asking for help from your tutors. They really know their material, and are human just like us! Put aside time each day to work on your studies, and don't work only on one course at a time. That gets really boring. And have fun! University is a great experience, whatever method you choose. And don't take all the required courses at once. Spread them out, and take something fun!**

Voice: Anything else we should know? Funny stories about the dog eating your laptop/ praise for your favourite tutor/ recommendations for a course....

**Andrea: All the tutors I've had so far are great. Psych 228, an introduction to child development, is a must do course for anyone interested in child development. I learned so much, and had so much fun in the courses.**

**AU is great!**

Thanks, Andrea, for taking the time to share your experiences with all of our Voice readers! All the best in the future!

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**Anyone interested in being featured in AU Profiles should email Tammy Moore, Editor of The Voice at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) My thanks for your participation and readership!**

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## **Christmas Shopping Online Save Time But Be Careful By Tamra Ross Low**

Christmas shopping can be a lot of fun, but it can also be incredibly time consuming and stressful if you have a busy schedule. The closer it gets to Christmas, the more stressed shoppers become, and it is difficult not to feed off of that negative energy when you are in the stores.

Part of what makes Christmas shopping so difficult is that we all want to find that 'perfect' gift for everyone on our list. Unfortunately, there are fewer and fewer stores to choose from. Many of the mall stores are now part of larger corporations, and you'll notice that the products that they sell are more or less the same from store to store. There are fewer department stores now - thanks to the demise of Eaton's, Woodward's, Woolco, and K-mart - and the mega stores are not all they are cracked up to be.

I remember when there were half a dozen chain bookstores to choose from, but now there is really only Chapters. The stores are huge, but surprisingly, they carry little more than the small stores did. In fact, they buy books from only a small number of publishers, and their overall selection is rather poor. They make it look like they have a lot of books to choose from by having a ton of copies of each volume. Anyway, due to their policy of encouraging people to sit and read in the store, a lot of their books look decidedly used.

That is just one example, but many of the megastores are like this. It is a common policy of the mega-stores to only deal with large suppliers, and with the smallest number of suppliers possible. With a smaller pool of stores to choose from, there are also a much smaller number of items to choose from, and the task of finding something unique just gets harder.

Online shopping can help alleviate the stress of Christmas shopping by giving shoppers access to an entire world full of stores. It also means that you do not have to brave the stores. Just this year I've found two extremely unique and beautiful gift items online that are not available in any stores in Calgary. Also, shopping online means that I can locate an item at many stores in just a few minutes, then choose the one with the best price, reputation, and shipping options.

One of the greatest benefits of online shopping is store-specific wish lists. If you have not yet tried these out, I urge you to do so. Amazon.ca has a fantastic wish list, but many other stores are getting them. Basically, how it works is that you browse around the site and locate items that you would like to receive. When you find something you like, you add it to your wish list file on the site. Then, you can send a link for this file to your friends and family, and they can access

your list and see what you want. Not only does this allow you to share your list, but it also really simplifies shopping.

Often it can be difficult to shop for people who have very different interests from yourself. For example, you might get a list from someone containing some books, games, DVDs and music CDs, all of which you have little knowledge of. Shopping can be hard, because you might not know how to select the correct item, especially if there are several versions of a particular title. For a person who collects books, movies or music, it can be especially hard because they may be very specific about the version that they want. Online wish lists make it easy because the recipient has already picked out the correct item, and you can select it off the list and have it sent to you or have the store wrap it and send it directly to your family member directly.

If you shop for people out of town, online shopping can be a boon. Shipping rates for parcels are getting outrageous! A couple of years ago, I sent a Christmas parcel to my parents in Quebec, and the shipping cost me \$29. I could have bought an extra gift for that much money. Plus there is the hassle of trying to find a box to fit it all, locating proper packing materials for breakable things, getting it insured, and then standing in line at the post office. So, for my mom's birthday last year, I instead found an item for her from Sears. The store wrapped it for me, packed it in a box, and shipped it to her. I could have had it sent to her door for \$7, but she lived very close to a Sears depot, so I sent it there and the shipping was free.

Stores can more easily ship items than you can because they have packing materials, and boxes to fit all of their items. If an item is broken in shipping, it is the responsibility of the store or to arrange for a replacement, assuming they have a good customer satisfaction policy.

This year, I'll be sending some baked goodies from the PEI Preserve Co. directly to my aunts and uncles in Quebec. I've dealt with the store before, so I know they have good products, and I'm happy to know that I won't have to pack up a parcel for each of my recipients. Shipping rates might be high, but they are invariably lower than what you would pay to send a parcel yourself.

In fact, lots of stores offer free shipping during Christmas season. Sometimes you have to order a minimum amount to get this deal, but often during December they offer it on all orders.

The important things to remember when shopping online are:

Make sure that the store is reputable. If you do not have the tools or knowledge to research a store, then choose one that is not just online, but that has brick-and-mortar stores with a good reputation. If you are comfortable dealing with stores like Canadian Tire, Sears, Future Shop, and Zellers in person, then their online counterparts will probably have comparable customer service policies.

Find out about shipping costs and customer satisfaction and return policies before you order. Some stores will even refund your shipping cost if you have to return an item, but others will make you pay for the original shipping and the return. Beware, and ask questions.

Do a quick web search on a store or brand before you buy, to make sure that there are no well-known problems. Also, use a site like Epinions [<http://www.epinions.com>], Bizrate [<http://www.bizrate.com>], or Amazon [<http://www.amazon.com>] to check customer reviews on the product that you want to buy.

Finally, leave enough time for your products to arrive. A store might guarantee Christmas delivery if you shop late, but don't count on it. They can't control the postal service. What might take 4 -6 days to ship in slow times, might take 2 weeks or more around Christmas. Don't order anything after the first week of December unless you are quite sure it will arrive on time.

Happy Shopping!

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*Tamra lives in Calgary with her husband and two cats. A fulltime AU student, she splits her free time between her duties as an AUSU councillor, writing her first novel, and editing written work by other students and friends.*

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## **From my Perspective: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Peer Support Conference, Part One**

**By Debbie Jabbour**

Last week I attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Peer Support Conference, hosted by the University of Alberta Students' Union and the Grant McEwan Community College Students' Union. Peer support groups from universities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia were

in attendance. These groups provide campus peer counselling on topics ranging from course & career counselling, to date rape, addictions, suicide and stress. Some are operated through their student unions, others through the university counselling department. Student volunteers come from every academic area, receive several weeks of intensive training, and are required to devote a minimum number of hours each week. The U of A Student Distress Centre offers students "a chance to talk to a fellow student with empathy, someone who knows what it is like to face all the pressures of University" (SDC brochure); and the GMCC Distress Centre expands on this, stating, "I am a student like YOU, Not a psychologist or a professional counsellor. I am here to listen and I have been well trained to help you explore some options for dealing with your concerns." (GMCC brochure)

The conference was extremely well organized and informative, and the information prevented was invaluable for anyone working in, or considering working in, a counselling or helping field.

I attended the conference together with the Athabasca University Psychology Students' Society President Sandra Moore, since we are looking into setting up an online peer support service for AU students. I'd like to share some highlights of the conference, beginning this week with the Saturday sessions.

### ***Eating Disorders - Dr. Joan Johnston***

Joan opened her discourse with a quote from Francis Bacon, "by far the best proof is experience." This quote underlies her theoretical framework for treatment of eating disorders based on the Alcoholics Anonymous 12-step program, treatment that relies on achieving a sense of spirituality along with peer support through shared experience. Joan's battle with anorexia began when she was a medical student during the 1960's. It escalated to the point where her weight had dropped to 78 lbs and she was hospitalized. Although she eventually recovered from the eating disorder, this was soon replaced by addictions to alcohol and work. As she says, "you can be sober from the disorder, but the disease is still in the mind."

Anorexia has been a recognized disease for hundreds of years, but it is now becoming an epidemic. It has been categorized variably: as a hysterical disease, compulsive disorder, manic-depressive, an addictive disease, a variant of sexual perversion, or borderline personality disorder. It is most commonly found in women, with some 10-20% of university-aged women affected. Depression, secrecy and isolation are common, and a good number commit suicide or die from starvation. Anorexia is marked by addiction to food rituals, starvation, and an obsession with maintaining control. Sufferers have a distorted body image and an intense fear of being fat that leads them to obsessions with diet and weight loss. Bulimia is a related eating disorder, marked by an addiction to a binge/purge cycle; and weight control with laxatives, vomiting, fasting, diuretics and exercise. Both are compulsive eating disorders marked by an obsession with food.

Causal factors are relatively unknown, but it is considered an addiction, and has been successfully treated using the addiction model. Joan used a definition of addiction from Anne Wilson Schaef's "When Society Becomes an Addict":

- sense of powerlessness
- need to lie, cover over the behaviour
- progressive self-destruction
- doing things inconsistent with one's value system
- driven to act in certain ways
- tolerance developed, withdrawal symptoms experienced
- chronic disease that will eventually kill you

In her own recovery, Joan surrendered control to a higher power, the vital spiritual experience of the AA 12-step model. This is not a religious thing, as Joan said, "religion is for people scared of going to hell – spirituality is for those who have been there." This spiritual experience is a mental rearrangement of thinking patterns and ideas that allows a person to give up the addiction. The real drug of eating disorders is the illusion of control over painful feelings. By giving over that control to a higher power and receiving the support of Eating Disorder Anonymous meetings, Joan has been able to heal, and she uses her personal knowledge and experience to help clients.

What I found most compelling about this discourse was the connection between eating disorders and addictions, and the inability of sufferers to control their behaviour. The security found in a single binge event, or in an obsessive control of quantities of food consumed, reduces the level of emotional and mental pain. The illusion of control is a powerful drug that eases the pain. Anorexia is a chronic disease that kills, and it is on the rise among young women. Further research into cause and treatment needs to be done.

### ***Suicide Bereavement – The Support Network: Theresa King***

Theresa presented a passionate and empathetic look at the aftermath of suicide, and I found this session profoundly moving. “Suicide is a thief,” that steals people and damages families, and suicide bereavement is very different from other deaths. One of the most difficult aspects of a loss by suicide is that there is no place to focus anger – it is difficult to love and hate at the same time. In addition, suicide is shrouded in secrecy, and this often hampers the grieving process.

In Alberta, suicide is the #1 injury-related cause of death (33%). Last year some 400 suicides were completed in Alberta. Of these 40% were male, and the majority were men over 30, rather than teenagers. Actual rates may be somewhat higher, since the medical examiner is often extremely cautious to identify a death as suicide due to the extreme secrecy and stigma. Car crashes or high-risk behaviour resulting in death are often deliberate acts intended to kill, yet not identified as suicides.

The impact on survivors is profound. Grief is physically exhausting – one hour of intense grief is equivalent to eight hours intense labour. Behaviour patterns are disrupted, sleep and appetite problems, nightmares, acting out, and substance abuse are common. Feelings range from guilt to blame, sad to angry, hopelessness, helplessness, frustration, fear and apathy. Self-loathing and blame often occurs; the survivor questions why they were not good enough to prevent the suicide and feels they are an inadequate parent or partner. Suicide notes are rarely left, and friends and family are generally left asking, “why?”, a question they will never know the answer to. There may even be a guilty feeling of relief, particularly in cases where the person had been suffering mental illness or addictions, perhaps creating disruption and stress on the family, or even harming others with their behaviour.

Secrecy isolates survivors, and families are torn apart by blame, stigma and shame. Memories of the deceased lack perspective – they may be alternately glorified or vilified, and mourners are stuck in their anger. Sadly, access to stepchildren and grandchildren is often lost when families blame parents or spouses for the suicide.

The grieving process is hampered by secrecy, and often we do not know how to help someone cope with the trauma. It is important to be able to listen without judging, and talk about the deceased, using their name. Remember good and bad times, and encourage talking about all aspects of the loss if the bereaved person wishes to do so. Ask about their own suicidal feelings, and remember that there is no right way to grieve – each person must work through it their own way and at their own pace.

Theresa spoke of risk factors for suicide, including:

- lots of losses
- feeling alone



- unwilling to change
- substance abuse
- feeling of having no access to resources or help
- mental illness
- history of suicide attempts
- recent suicide or attempt
- stress
- abuse (sexual, physical, emotional)
- sexual orientation issues

There are often clues to suicide, but most of the time these are only seen in hindsight. Verbal cues may exist, both direct (everyone would be better off if I were dead) or indirect (giving away possessions); behavioural cues, such as a drastic change in normal behaviour; or situational cues, such as having experienced significant stress or recent loss.

How to help someone who is suicidal? Ask direct questions, such as “have you thought about suicide?” Stay calm and listen without judging. Don’t try to talk them out of it, but try and help them find positives. Take them seriously and do not agree to keep it secret. Make a contract with them – they agree not to harm themselves without talking to someone first.

One of the most important things I had reinforced for me at this session was the need to lift the silence surrounding suicide. People who commit suicide see no other way out, and their pain is so great that they may sincerely believe that their loved ones would be better off without them. Survivors need to speak out and be recognized. We need to remove the stigma of death by suicide, stop hiding it as a shameful secret, and treat both deceased and bereaved with greater understanding and compassion.

### ***Addictions - Blayne Blackburn, AADAC***

This was a session I had recently attended when starting my new job, so most of what Blayne discussed was familiar. I’ve addressed the addictions topic in detail in Voice issues August 28, September 4, and September 11, so I won’t provide any details of this session here. Blayne’s presentation, and the discussion that followed, brought home the serious problem of addictions among on-campus university students, a problem which may well exist among AU students as well. The audience had many questions about date rape drugs, since on many campuses this is a significant problem. I recently came across a news article about specially treated coasters that many universities are handing out to students, coasters that can “tell if a drink is spiked.” The article also mentioned that females are not the only ones at risk - males are often robbed or assaulted after being drugged (Payne, 2002).

By the end of the day I was exhausted and overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information received, but eagerly looking forward to the next day’s sessions. In particular I was keen to hear keynote speaker, Darrin Hagen. Darrin is a local TV host (Access TV), actor and author - who also happens to be a gay drag “queen.” Having seen Darrin on Help TV, I expected an extremely interesting session, and I was not disappointed!

***Next Week: Sunday Peer Support conference sessions - Coping with volunteer burnout, Darrin Hagen (Sexuality & Gender), and Schizophrenia.***

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<http://www.drinksafecoaster.com/>

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Debbie is a native Edmontonian, and a single parent with four daughters. She has worked as a professional musician for most of her life, and has enjoyed a rich variety of life experiences - with many more to come! Debbie is working towards an eventual doctorate in psychology, and currently serves as the president of the Athabasca University

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## Canadian Fed Watch!

***News Across The Nation... Nova Scotia Conference on Adult Learning, Controlling Canadian Calls, National Summit on Innovation and ...Commercialisation?***

*November 27, 2002*

**By Karl Low**

### Controlling Canadian Calls

The Honourable Allan Rock, Minister of Industry, has [announced a review](#) toward changing the regulatory structure of telecommunication companies. What this means in plain English is that he is looking at allowing foreign companies to acquire Canadian telephone companies.

Doing this would mean that we would probably have to deal with the likes of Verizon in the very near future. A company that [recently petitioned](#) the federal government in the United States to allow them to take all call data and sell it to other companies without the caller's permission. By all call data, I mean how often you make phone calls, when you place those calls, who you are calling, and even who is calling you.

In the background report, it is suggested that by relaxing investment restrictions it would allow the telecommunication companies more money so that they could expand their broadband at a quicker pace. Considering that Canada is already far ahead of the United States in the percentage of our population that accesses or is able to access broadband and the Internet, this seems like just a red herring to me.

It concerning as well to realize that until recently, a major player in global communication networks was a company called WorldCom. A company that is now filing for bankruptcy protection in the United States after suffering some of the same accounting troubles as a little company known as Enron suffered. Do we really want to allow these types of players unfettered access to the Canadian market?

It also means that the money we pay for our phone service would be getting shipped out of Canada into American pockets. The pay off for the average Canadian? Well... nothing really. Supposedly it would allow increased competition in the Canadian market, but we've all seen how well that actually works with de-regulating electricity haven't we? No, the pay off would be to

those few people that actually own the lion's share of Canadian phone companies now. They'd make millions as the American companies bought them out, so a little thing like the price of basic phone or DSL service going up means little to them.

As distance education students, we have a particular stake in this matter, after all, if the cost of making telephone calls goes up in the Canadian market, that has a direct effect on what kind of costs Athabasca University has to pay. Every call every one of us makes to our tutor is an expense for AU, if that expense goes up, you can expect to see one of two things happen. Tutor support gets cut back or AU tuitions go up. Since AU tuitions are already rising by the maximum the provincial government will allow, that leads to the unpleasant conclusion that tutor support would have to be cut back.

Personally, I'd rather see things remain the way they are then give million dollar payouts to telecommunication leaders so that my phone rates can go up and my tutor support go down.

## **Nova Scotia Conference on Adult Learning**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, over 90 adult educators, government, and community representatives met in Truro, Nova Scotia for a conference on Adult Learning. While concentrating mostly on upgrading adults to a basic high-school education, the increased recognition of Adult Learning as a valuable experience can only be a good thing.

The Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning has seen over 3,700 adult students participate in the program last year, with this years enrolment numbers not yet tallied. As more adults in Nova Scotia are educated, there will obviously be an increased demand for further education beyond the basics of high school. Athabasca University is well positioned to meet these potential students' needs, providing that the information is available.

Over the past few months, there has been increasing awareness throughout the Maritimes of the possibilities that adult education can bring. Perhaps it is time that AU considered establishing a campus location at the other end of the nation. This would not only allow AU to increase its presence in new markets, but could also be beneficial cost-wise as it would cost less for our Eastern students to phone AU if they could get redirected to a Maritimes location.

## **National Summit on Innovation and ... Commercialisation?**

At the National Summit on Innovation and Learning, the Government of Canada and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada [agreed to a framework](#) whereby universities will double the amount of research they are doing, and triple the amount of commercialisation of that research.

While this certainly sounds like a great boost for our economy, it is concerning because it means that universities will be forced to curtail research into areas where the commercialisation may not be immediately apparent. Sometimes however, it is just these areas of research that lead to our

greatest gains. Following such a policy in an earlier time would have prevented us from ever trying to travel to the moon and the scientific benefits that we are just starting to gain from low-gravity experiments, or from developing some of the mathematics that are now used throughout the computing industry.

Should we be promoting universities as tax-funded laboratories for private companies? Or should we be promoting universities as places where research is done simply to expand the boundaries of human knowledge? If commercialisation should come from that expansion, so much the better, but why does that have to be our goal?

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*A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.*

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## **The Dubious Privatization of BC Rail**

### **The History of BC Rail's Privatization**

**By Wayne Benedict**

We've spent the last two weeks examining the political perspectives surrounding BC Rail from opposing political factions, the Liberals and the NDP's. Today, we continue our discussion by delving deeper into the history of BC Rail itself.

Let us examine how BC Rail has been, and continues to be, privatized over the past decade right under the noses of British Columbia's public. First, as mentioned in the last issues article, the railway was split into numerous divisions residing under the common umbrella BCR Group of Companies. Once arranged thus, the sales and divestitures could begin without actually "privatizing" BC Rail *per se*. In other words, politicians can claim that "the government hasn't actually sold BC Rail"—merely everything that made it worth anything. The first to go was BC Rail's restructured communications system, Westel Telecommunications Ltd. "Its estimated revenues [in 1997] were close to \$50 million. BC Tel, which ha[d] long viewed Westel as a small but irritating thorn in its side, applauded the [government's decision to sell Westel] and

said it [would] consider bidding for the assets” (Boei, 1998). As is the case with the vast majority of privatizations, Westel was not sold to a local, regional, or national interest; it went for \$55 million to New York-based RSL Communications. Was the money garnered from the sale returned to BC Rail from whence the communications division originated. Of course not, “Money from the sale [was] used to pay for capital projects within the provincially owned BCR Group and to return a dividend to the government” (Wilson, 1998). Not only were the assets and money from their sale removed from BC Rail, but its formerly in-house supplied communications needs would thereafter have to be purchased from a private communications supplier—a foreign one at that.

The next portion to go was BC Rail’s truck and intermodal service. Although it was known that “the trucks [were] necessary to help BC Rail remain ‘competitive’” (Landry *et al*, 2000), the company divested itself of its truck and intermodal services in a move that was “more of a political decision than a business decision” (Hogben, 2001). Some might say that closing down a business is not the same as moving it from the public to the private sector—privatizing it. But the fact is that the shippers who were utilizing BC Rail’s trucking and intermodal service had been doing so because it had provided the service at the most competitive pricing. Those shippers still needed to move their products after BC Rail was forced politically to close down those portions of its operations. And whom do you think ended up with all of that business? Why, the private-sector member-companies of the BC Trucking Association, of course. Did the move increase private-sector competition, as privatization proponents claim should have occurred? One need only inquire of BC Rail’s former intermodal customers for the answer to that question. In any case, from BC Rail’s perspective, it had now had its communications arm severed and its trucking business, which was purportedly necessary to help it remain competitive, removed. It wouldn’t take a business genius to predict an impending decline, not for the BCR Group, but certainly for BC Rail. The government told the railway to “sink or swim” without government subsidy, while simultaneously abrogating its means of staying afloat.

Next to go was the Royal Hudson, world-famous tourist attraction and the biggest draw to BC Rail’s other passenger services. “The 60-year-old patient needs a new boiler and fire box at a cost estimated at \$1 million” (Spencer, 2000). And yet, “The B.C. government, which owns the 1940-vintage Royal Hudson, revered by train buffs around the world, but out of service since 1997, has said it will not offer the money—estimated at \$8 million to \$10 million—to fund the restoration” (Daniels, October, 2001). And so there sits BC Rail’s greatest tourist attraction, in mothballs, cover by a sheet. The divestitures, unbeknownst to the general public, had only just begun. The employee unions were being provided with numerous notices of material change by the company. Months before the general public was aware of BC Rail’s plans to cease operation of its North Vancouver-Prince George passenger service—the Cariboo Prospector—the company had already made the decision. In a letter dated April 15, 2002, the unions representing conductors and locomotive engineers were instructed to “be advised that the Company will cease operation of the Cariboo Prospector on or about October 31, 2002” (D. A. Lypka, personal communication, April 15, 2002). This cessation of service is planned in the face of the fact that the government’s own Transport Minister Judith Reid has stated that: “We [the Liberals] have made our promise that we are not going to privatize or sell BC Rail... ***The passenger service is really important to the lives of people in northern communities***” (emphasis added) (Daniels, July, 2001). In June, the unions were informed that “the company proposes to transfer the Fort Nelson Subdivision to a third party (shortline company)...It is expected that a commercial

agreement with a shortline company will be completed by September, 2002” (D. A. Lypka, personal communication, June 17, 2002). Carefully missing from any of the communications was the word “privatization”, a fact not at all surprising since the government’s own web site still carries the promise that “a BC Liberal Government will: not sell or privatize BC Rail” (Campbell & BC Liberals, n.d.). The most recent notice to the unions came in September 2002, it stated that “The company has now decided that it will not reinstitute the operation of its Northwinds and Starlight Dinner Trains following the completion of their normal seasonal operation this year” (D. A. Lypka, personal communication, September 12, 2002).

Meanwhile, the BCR Group of Companies, which had arisen out of, and divided up the profits and assets of, BC Rail, had been dissolved and BCR Marine put up for sale. Would it be sold to another government? Of course not, it would be sold to the private sector—privatized. However, nowhere in the mass media would the word be used to describe the sale of assets formerly held by BC Rail. The dissolution of the group was touted to the employees as a purportedly positive business move:

Today’s announcement that the Board has decided to sell BCR Marine is the first step in implementing a new direction for the two major companies in this Group; a direction that will allow them to pursue their goals and objectives free from the restrictions imposed on them by the BCR Group structure. This decision is consistent with my earlier messages to you about the need to consider BCR Marine and BC Rail, as two separate, disparate businesses requiring unique solutions to the business challenges facing them (Phillips, B., personal communication, March 28, 2002).

Hindsight is always 20/20, so they say. It appears clear that a profitable crown corporation, *regarded as a Crown jewel by politicians*, has been systematically dismantled over the last decade; its profitable divisions having been sold off to the private sector, or profitable business opportunities abandoned to the private sector. Today, with the empty shell of BC Rail wallowing in a \$600 million debt, it is an easy thing for politicians, who promised the British Columbian public that they would not sell the “people’s railway”, to make glib statements such as that recently made by Walt Cobb, Liberal MLA for Cariboo South:

Tell me how I can be best representing my constituents (sic) by spending everyone’s (sic) hard earned money on a Rail line that has such a poor record of managing, promoting or operating a financially viable service. I believe we need the infrastructure (sic) to get our goods to market but we need to find a way to at least break even in that operation. Trucking companies seem to be doing fine so the rail service better clean up its act if it wishes to stay competitive (sic) (W. Cobb, personal communication, August 29, 2002).

To those who truly believe in the doctrine of privatization, nothing will get in the way of their plans—not even a public which does not ascribe to it. The BC public has clearly and consistently rebuffed the notion of a privatized BC Rail, and yet, that state has practically come to pass. Only a few strings are left to tie up. In 1987, Briton Madsen Pirie Ph.D. traveled to Canada to deliver a speech on behalf of the right-wing think-tank The Fraser Institute on the *Principles of Privatization*. Not surprisingly, his speech did not touch on a single issue of

concern expressed by opponents of privatization, of which there are many. Presumably, everyone in the audience already believed that privatization is a good thing and that no debate was necessary. The speech was not a rebuttal of the many challenges against privatization, but rather a “how to privatize” guide for those already motivated to promote governmental divestiture of public assets—the private sector business community. Pirie proposed numerous rules that politicians undertaking privatization should follow: “the public does not take kindly to governments which cancel their human rights. So, never cancel a benefit especially if you can buy it instead; determine who could become your enemies and make them your friends, whether it’s the management, the workforce, customers or the general public; identify all possible objections to privatization...disarm the opposition. Find out every single objection and deal with it in advance; spread share ownership very widely, it’s going to be very difficult for subsequent [governments] to come along and reverse the process; don’t do the difficult and unpopular [privatizations] first. Do the easy ones first and use the success and popularity of those to gain support for the other ones; privatization is easy...because it’s about politics as well as economics” (Pirie, 1988, pp. 109-113 & 115-116). Entirely devoid of social commentary on the subject of state divestiture of public holdings, Pirie’s speech was narrowly geared toward methods of manipulating public opinion into the support of privatization. It would be interesting to know how many members of the present BC Liberal government sat in the audience that day.

After Pirie’s speech had concluded, a question and answer session ensued. The following question was raised:

When privatization occurs, has management changed; i.e., have civil servants remained or has new management come in?

And Pirie’s response:

The basic answer is, no. When we privatize, management stays right through, normally. That said, we often change the management in order to prepare for privatization. It’s very important that you put someone at the top who believes in it. If you have management that has long been tied to the traditions of state ownership and control and locked into bureaucratic ways, then it’s a good idea to change to someone who’s given the brief, “go in and privatize, you’ve got four years”. It concentrates the mind wonderfully, and you’d be quite amazed at the amount of restructuring and reorganization that can be packed into a couple of years. So, you might want to change management if the thing needs to be prepared for privatization (Pirie, 1987, pp. 123-124).

The fact that BC Rail’s entire upper management was changed out several years ago *could* be mere coincidence. However; the evidence seems to indicate otherwise. Whether one believes in private capital accumulation, shared public ownership, or a combination of the two, there is no denying that 1) the BC government promised the electorate that it would not sell or privatize BC Rail; and, 2) BC Rail has and is undergoing privatization in spite of that fact. Evidence would indicate that the plans for its privatization were laid before the Liberals even came to power. Anyone who is surprised, in this day and age, that politicians would lie in order to achieve power, is naive at best. But even the most ardent opponent of privatization must give



those who orchestrated BC Rail's obscure privatization credit for the plan's sophistication and the insidious manner in which the public has been fooled for over a decade.

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## Acronym Nightmares!

**By Laura Seymour**

My hubby is fawnnnyy! He's always saying things that trigger ideas for articles. He's a computer and math type so I'm the one who bashes out the words...or as his PCA says, "Put together some more of those pretty words!" And here is the latest focus.

What's the main common denominator below?

- I'm in AU and you?
- What's your SIN? I need to check your PIN, and leave you an Email.
- Don't forget to RSVP ASAP.
- You can buy this APR with OAC.
- My RV or the SUV?
- I'll put you in my PDA.
- Do you have a B.Sc?
- My group is ASET
- Is it plugged in LPT1?
- We're on MST; what time is it there?
- On MSN you say ☒ ☺
- Larry's funny. He makes me LOL and ROFL
- FYI, Here's my LAN and WAN
- My LED is broken on my LCD
- I'm with the AMTWP how about you?
- OMG really?!

For those of us who have graduated to the modern world, the above is an example of our most common English based acronyms. I have no idea if the Chinese are doing this! We use acronyms for everything. Do you understand them all? I admit I had to ask the hubby about some of them.

"The more items we have to communicate with the less communicating we do!" says the hubby and I must agree.

When exactly do we communicate with long, full sentences? Is this a computer world version of shorthand? My girlfriend, Amity, is the ONLY person I know who actually likes to write real, honest to goodness letters. And get them. Ok. Let me clue you in. These are written by hand, on paper, by a pen and are sent through the Canada Post system! They have handwritten return addresses (although she gets everything sent to a P.O.) and knows all the codes as a died-in-the-wool HAM radio user. (Amateur radio for you picky types) She does email but she likes those “real letters” more. It takes time to write, to think, to draw little smiley faces by hand. And so *few* of us appreciate that effort. I know I do.

I had a client in for a Craniosacral Therapy treatment tell me she wanted to try to do her Christmas cards this year. She admitted it had been three years since she’s done them. I seem to be odd man out. I send them out and get maybe a handful back. I find myself wondering if I’d ever have a use for the Christmas card “trees” I find in the giant seasonal section every year. I’m afraid it would be a waste of money. Or maybe I’d just be embarrassed about the six cards sitting on a giant card tree!

Is all this short form stuff getting to be too much? Are we causing people to translate everything? Are we creating a new language, like all those, like kids, like talking, like you know, like... well you get the point.

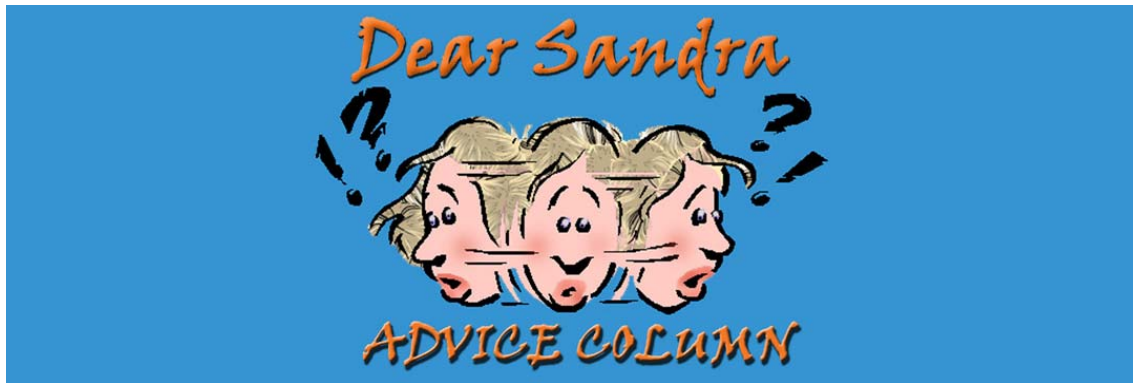
Where did this start? Each of the wars used Morse code to translate secret messages. There were codes that were easy to crack and codes that were not. Most of these methods of communication are gone. Even modern day ships often use email, and satellite communications! But in this day and age of private cell phone conversations being tapped, and satellites being used for every transmission possible maybe, just maybe, it’s time to consider the safety of the old Morse code.

**DIT DIT DASH DIT ...  
TRANSLATION: I’ll TTYL**

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Laura Seymour first published herself, at age 8. She has since gone on to publish a cookbook for the medical condition of Candida. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).

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THE VOICE – November 27, 2002

Dear Sandra,

**I need your help with my academic situation. To put it bluntly, I'm not doing as well as I thought I would. I study regularly, I spend a lot of time on my assignments and I maintain contact with my tutors, yet I can never get a mark over 80%. I have never failed a course, but I would really like to be an honours student. Can you please tell me how to become a better student?**

**Academically Challenged in PEI**

Dear Academically Challenged,

If I knew how to be a better student, don't you think I would be studying with some of the most intelligent people in the world on an Ivy League campus? No, I am sad to report that there are no Ivy League recruiters knocking down my door.

You, like every other university student in the world, are very concerned about your marks. You are not failing, you study hard and you seem like a regular student. In fact, you sound like about 80% of all university students. The honour role is a very difficult list to get your name added to. It takes an intense amount of hard work and dedication, but for some students perfect marks do come naturally. Some students are better at expressing their thoughts and absorbing large amounts of information than others. For most students it's hard to achieve this idealistic level of perfectionism. If you are satisfied that you are learning the material and feel that you have dedicated yourself to your school work, don't stress yourself out over the marks you get. School marks are not the only criteria for getting a job, in fact employers rarely look at your transcripts, they just want to be reassured that you have a degree and relevant experience. If you really feel you need to improve then I would recommend a speed-reading or memory retention course. Also make sure you comprehend your tutor's remarks; they are there not only to mark your assignments but to give you feedback on them as well.

Just like we are not all artistic or athletic we are also not all geniuses. Do your best and dedicate yourself to your schoolwork, but don't obsess over the marks you get: you still have a life to live. Don't go on the assumption that getting your degree relies on constant perfect marks: most of the

degrees hanging on the walls of successful and proud graduates today do not have the words “With Great Distinction” printed on them.

**Sandra**

*Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.*  
-Erica Jong

**Thanks to everyone for your letters and encouragement. Keep those letters coming, no question is unanswerable and confidentiality is assured.**

**Sandra**

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*This column is for entertainment only. Sandra is not a professional counsellor, but is an AU student who would like to give personal advice about school and life to her peers. Please forward your questions to Sandra care of [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)*

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## Play With Words

**By b.e. hydromako**

While letters form the basic elements of our language, they are, of themselves, without meaning. Typically, we don't attach any sense to letters, and if someone was to utter "A, H, P, Z, N," we would not have any means to understand what this person might be trying to say—indeed, we would likely think that he or she was not saying anything at all. It is words that provide the basic units of sense in our language; however, words uttered alone have only a vague sense, and even that sense depends upon the relations of the

word with the rest of the words in our language. For example, if someone utters only the word "monkey," we can understand that they have uttered something meaningful—there is something present in the utterance that invokes in us a sense of the word and a corresponding reference. We might think of a monkey that we've seen at the zoo, in a book, on television, or maybe, if we have had the opportunity, a monkey that we've seen in the wild. However we have attached or

understood a sense of “monkey,” we can see that it is not derived from knowing the word ‘monkey’ alone, but occurs as a result of our knowledge of other words, perhaps including: hairy, primate, tail, banana, legs, feet, arms, teeth, eyes, trees, book, television, zoo, etc. Some might suggest that the isolation of the meaning of ‘monkey’ is impossible; that is, we might think that there is no way to give an exact definition of monkey that does not include our knowledge of the rest of our language, or at least the parts of it that we know. It is in this sense that some post-modern theorists claim that the meanings of words are always deferred, which is to say, the meaning of a specific word is put off to the meanings of other words, which in turn can be put off to the meanings of other words, and so on.

We all play with words, and the philosopher Wittgenstein suggested the notion of Language Games. It was his opinion that the meaning of a word existed in its use. In our use of language we can recognize some aspects of our play with words. In one sense, we all play the game of communication with words. We habitually formulate ideas into linguistic structures that can be conveyed to others by using the rules and codes of a language. In fact, we might think that without language—without a language game to play—we would not be able to think or formulate ideas at all. It is the existence of a language game, which allows to play with words in the first place. However, this also gives us another sense of playing with words, which is that we, through the fact that the words of our language have several meanings, have the opportunity to create interesting and novel constructions to convey strange and wonderful intents and ideas. In this sense of playing with words, we might often violate the rules and consensus of our language game to create utterances which some might decry as nonsense, while others might find some meaning in such utterances, however strange or difficult that meaning might be.

For some simplistic instances, I might wonder why I cannot spread traffic jam on toast, or I might want to know how short a person on the bus or train might have to be to qualify as a low rider. I might ask about when the coronation of the king of the road occurred, and if there are monster trucks, then do children think that they are hiding under their beds or in their closets? Speaking of kids, having a fire drill at school seems to be dangerous, especially if the kids are allowed to use it unsupervised. And of course, there is always the classic, “I’ve just flown in from (insert the name of a place here), and boy are my arms tired.”

Leaving these attempts above aside, we can note that certain types of play with words result in humour. We can generate fun and laughs by forcing our language to do unusual things, or by placing words in unexpected contexts. It is in this respect that we are able to create jokes and puns by playing with language; however, such play requires that we break free from our habitual uses of language, and step outside the rules that govern the particular language game that we might be playing. In other words, some types of play with words require that we refuse to play with words in a standard manner.

A further sense of playing with words comes when we interpret the linguistic structures that we interact with. For instance, when we interpret a sentence such as, “She fought hard not to give up her baby,” we get a chance to play with words due to an ambiguity in the statement. Is there one woman involved or is there two? Habitually, we don’t give such a sentence any play, but jump straight to the assumption that there is only one woman involved, but we can see that the sentence, “Susan fought hard not to give up Jackie’s baby,” could indeed be conveying the same



information as the former sentence, but now there is no ambiguity embedded in the statement—we know for sure that there are two women.

Consider the title of this article: is it a statement that reflects the content of this piece of writing, is it a command for the reader to act in a certain way, is it a request and call for certain linguistic behaviour, or is it a question inquiring into whether there really is play with words? How much of the linguistic structures sent and received by people everywhere each and every day are clouded by ambiguity, and yet, how often do we interpret them in only one sense, habitually, conditioned, and without any play?

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*b.e. hydromako is a grouchy old crank trapped in the body of a wet behind the ears goldfish in a tank that is full of too many piranhas (which is, well, any number of them really). The tank is also quite dirty, and getting more so everyday, but no one seems willing or able to clean the tank, or at least clean it in a way that is really effective. He would like to understand more about the relations that make up the existence of himself, the other fish, the tank, and what is beyond, but knows that this is a most difficult task—he is, after all, only a goldfish!*

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## Designer Genes By Lonita Fraser

In the last century, the human race has made stunning scientific advances. One of the newest, most controversial of these is genetic engineering. It is an awesome power, but one that humanity is not mature enough to possess. Morally and medically, human cloning is too risky, and the human race too prone to selfishness, for us to use this power without understanding its implications.

One of the key moral implications of genetic engineering is the idea of the 'designer baby'. The existence of cloning would make the application of human genetic engineering possible. Such engineering might begin with the removal of

inherited disease, to the elimination of predisposition to conditions like alcoholism and obesity, and even move to the augmentation of normal traits (Nash, 1998). The moral questions here are obvious ones - where do we draw the line with what is acceptable and what is not? Where will our selfishness begin to outweigh actual need and necessity? While the idea of the designer baby is an extreme one as yet, it is an issue that has to be addressed before mankind has the ability.



Even before we ask ourselves these moral questions, there is the issue of the "number of clinical failures [that] lead to miscarriage, the necessity of dozens or even hundreds of abortions, or births of massively deformed offspring" (McGee, 2001). It is feared that the "early cloning experiments will breach a natural barrier that is moral in character", (McGee, 2001) taking the human race into an area that exceeds any prior reproductive experimentation and technology.

Scientists are already experimenting on human foetuses, and seemingly dancing around semantics in order to excuse it. Dr. Antonori, an Italian doctor and president of the Italian Society of Reproductive Medicine, has been attributed as saying that the word cloning is inappropriate to describe his work. He has, instead, referred to it as "genetic reprogramming" (Lorenzi, 2002). "Mammalian embryos are scientifically defined in part by how they come into being" (McGee, 2001), which again raises the question of how far we would excuse ourselves because of semantic issues. The idea of difference between a cloned embryo and one which is fertilised and grows to term in a mother's womb, might remove emotional attachment to what is being experimented upon in a lab in much the same way that animal experimentation became commonplace. Will we excuse inexcusable testing with the idea that what's in the petri-dish "isn't really human anyhow"?

The benefits of genetic engineering are many, and are not limited to the removal of flawed genes in an unborn foetus, the cultivation of healthy tissue from a person's own body to be used in treatment of disease later on, or, even more specifically, blocking a gene currently known as muscarinic-5 which has been tied to drug and alcohol addiction (Susman, 2002). Many feel the benefits of human genetic engineering far outweigh the risks inherent in early testing, and the moral implications raised by detractors of that engineering.

Proponents - and some detractors - of genetic engineering fear that lawmakers will focus on a "nightmarish vision in which billionaires and celebrities flood the world with genetic copies of themselves." (Nash, 1998). They feel that laws will be brought into being by medically uninformed people without due consideration to the benefits of such experimentation. Laws recently passed in Italy promise stiff fines, prison terms and loss of career for "anyone who realises a project which aims to obtain a human being from one starting cell, genetically identical to another human being, alive or dead." (Lorenzi, 2002) Dr. Ermanno Greco of the Centre for Reproductive Medicine of Rome's European Hospital feels that law is "a misdeed law, scientifically wrong. [And] doesn't protect anyone." (Lorenzi, 2002)

Dr. Antonori's desire to clone a human despite the views of most scientists world-wide that using the cloning procedure to do so is not only unsafe but also morally repugnant, points directly to the human tendency to abuse the power and privilege it has. History shows that when left to its own devices, scientific advancement continues regardless of morality. Consequently, we must enforce restrictions on the experimentation that is allowed to occur.

While the benefits of genetic engineering are many, humanity itself - at least some of it - is still too tempted by overstepping the bounds of sense in order to make use of something it is clearly not ready to be 'playing' with. Until the day we can make an informed choice that satisfies the medical and moral sides of the fence, human genetic engineering is an issue we should treat delicately and with great caution.

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Rosella Lorenzi

2002 06 19, Reuters Health

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Ed Susman

UPI Science News

From the Science & Technology Desk

Published 11/4/2002

<http://www.upi.com/view.cfm?StoryID=20021104-064103-3528r>

## Further Reading

The American Journal of Bioethics

<http://www.bioethics.net>

<http://www.ajobonline.com/cloning.php>

ReasonOnline

<http://reason.com/biclone.shtml>

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*Lonita has been an AU student since early 2002, and is studying towards a Bachelor of General Studies in Arts & Science. She enjoys writing, creating websites, drinks far too much tea, and lives in hopes of one day owning a plaid Cthulhu doll. The most exciting thing she's done so far in her lifetime is driven an F2000 race car, and she's still trying to figure out how to top that experience. Her personal website can be found at <http://www.lonita.net> and what you can't find out about her through that, you can ask her via email: [lonita\\_anne@yahoo.ca](mailto:lonita_anne@yahoo.ca)*

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## **Is Our Policy of Multiculturalism Too Lenient?**

**By Amanda Lyn Baldwin**

Canada is known for its multicultural heritage and the freedom that it offers refugees and immigrants from other countries. In high school we all learnt how important it is to remain open to things such as new cultures and religions. Since we live in a democratically free country all residents have rights such as the freedom of speech

and the protection of law enforcement. But some of our Canadian customs and laws have been challenged and changed to accommodate for other cultures.

For example about a decade ago East Indian Cultures attained the right to wear their turbans with Royal Canadian Mounted Police uniforms. In order to understand why this was argued for we have to understand the meaning and use of the Turban. Sikh men do not cut their hair because it would offend God to alter his creation, and thus cover and control their hair by using their turbans. Some Muslim, and Islamic Cultures wear turbans as a sign of social status or symbol of religion, whereas Men from Indian Cultures wear turbans as a distinct demonstration of wealth and power. The most practical use of a turban is that of the Desert people from North Africa who wear them to keep sand out of their faces and is an obvious indicator of tribal affiliations. As indicated, there are a variety of reasons for these people's headgear.

But, just as the turban is a symbol of their culture, religion, or position, the hat belonging to the RCMP uniform is an equally important tradition of our culture. Many people did not believe that it was "right" that another culture should dominate of the Canadian culture, within Canada. They argued that if we let them wear what they want in this specific situation that these "minority cultures" would eventually turn Canada into another India or Pakistan. Is there a boundary between Multiculturalism and Canadianism?

Turban like headgear has also initiated a problem directly with Calgary's safety driven bylaws. Recently Calgary's leaders have advocated the bylaw that all people under the age of 18 are required to wear a helmet while bicycling. This law includes the stipulation that parent's will be fined if their children don't comply. Not only does this bylaw force parents to become more involved in their children's lives, but also it relieves the City of the task of dealing with injured children and angry parents. Thus the introduction of this bylaw meant that only good could come from compliance.

However, it is a logical deduction that turbans cannot fit underneath a regular sized bicycle helmet and for reasons mentioned before people were not about to remove their turbans

just to ride a bicycle. The city's response was to build a different form of cranial protection to accommodate for the turbans, but this idea was outright refused because of the ridiculousness of the inventions that would be put forward to protect the lives and health of our children. People of these cultures have requested that the bylaw be waved in their favour. In my eyes it should be compulsory for all children under the age of 18 to remove any other headgear and put on a helmet before they ride a bike. Don't get me wrong, the problem isn't in the issue of Multiculturalism, I'm all for it. The problem is that the system doesn't stand firm on issues such as safety.

It is a part of Canadian patriotism that we should not challenge the customs and traditions that Canada symbolizes. Some may feel as though they shouldn't have to conform to the majority, but if we look at the big picture, it is not feasible for the majority to conform to the minority? Safety is an important issue in any culture, but the bicycle helmet issue is not really about helmets. The issue lies in the government's multicultural policies. If laws are made to protect the good of the people, then there should be NO EXCEPTIONS. And, traditions being well known indicators of what Canada stands for, since we have too few traditions and symbols as compared to other countries, they should not be compromised, especially by Canadian citizens. After all, we *are* Canadians.

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## Martin's Eye on the Sky

### Contributed by The Insider

*(photo provided by The Insider)*

Martin Connors has good reason to smile. AU's own mathematician, physicist, and astronomer has been awarded a Canada Research Chair in Space Science. His research in the measurement of the Northern Lights and their magnetic fields has led to an improved understanding of space weather.

The Government of Canada announced the prestigious \$900 million program in 2000 to support the establishment of 2000 Canada Research Chairs in Canadian universities between 2000 and 2005. AU's first recipient of a Research Chair was Terry Anderson.

Not only has Martin been making the news because of the CRC appointment, but he and his colleagues have found that an asteroid discovered earlier this year follows Earth's orbit around the Sun and will, in nearly 600 years, appear to orbit the Earth. In the October issue of the journal *Meteoritics and Planetary Science*, the astronomers announce that the asteroid, named **2002 AA29**, follows a "horseshoe orbit" that makes it come near the Earth every 95 years.

It will next come close on January 8, 2003, although even then it will be much further away than the Moon and only detectable using large telescopes. The combination of Earth's and Sun's gravity works so that even as Earth pulls in the asteroid, it speeds up and moves away from the Earth. In this way Earth is protected from impact, despite the similarity of the asteroid's orbit to Earth's.

Besides finding that the object would come close to Earth next year and then move around Earth's orbit to come back in 2098, the team found that in about 600 years, the asteroid will become a "quasi-satellite" of the Earth. While Earth has only one natural satellite, the Moon, for about 50 years this small asteroid will move near the Earth and appear to be in orbit, going around once a year.

Martin and his colleagues hope to use **2002 AA29** as an example showing that asteroids moving along Earth's orbit do exist, so that they can search for other asteroids with orbits even more similar to ours. Such asteroids could be good targets for space missions and could even be sources of raw materials in space. These special asteroids will likely be hard to find but fascinating.

For more information about the team's findings:

<http://www.astro.queensu.ca/~wiegert/AA29/AA29.html>

Congratulations, Martin!



## **New scholarship program awards \$165,000 to apprentices**

**Contributed By Sylvia Schubert,  
Alberta Learning**

**Edmonton...** Apprentices in Alberta are reaping the benefits of a new \$3.3 million scholarship created by industry, the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board, and Alberta Learning. In its inaugural year, 165 scholarships of \$1,000 each have been awarded from the endowment to encourage registered Alberta

apprentices to complete their training.

"The collaboration of industry and government has been vital in maintaining a successful apprenticeship system," said Minister of Learning, Dr. Lyle Oberg. "These new scholarships recognize apprentices who continue to demonstrate excellence in their training and their trade."

The annual scholarships are open to all registered Alberta apprentices, and trainees in designated occupations. Some of the scholarships are designated for a specific trade, occupation or group of trades.

"The generosity and leadership of industry has made the new Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Scholarships possible," said Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board Chair, Cliff Williams. "It is important that industry and government continue to work together to recognize apprentices' hard work and dedication to their trades. By enhancing Alberta's skilled workforce, we are contributing to the Alberta Advantage."

Application forms for the scholarships will be posted in the Spring 2003, on the Apprenticeship and Industry Training website at [www.tradesecrets.org](http://www.tradesecrets.org). They will also be available at Alberta Scholarship Programs and Apprenticeship and Industry Training offices.



## **Free Health Benefits for Children in Low-income Families**

**From information provided by Alberta Human Resources and Employment**

**THE VOICE November 27, 2002**

The Alberta Child Health Benefit (ACHB) provides children in low-income families with free:

- Dental care
- Prescription drugs
- Eyewear
- Emergency ambulance services
- Essential diabetic supplies

More families are now eligible for coverage through the ACHB because of increased income eligibility levels, which took effect July 1, 2002. These income levels are associated with the number of children in the family:

- 1 child for family net income of \$ 22,397
- 2 children, \$ 24,397
- 3 children, \$ 26,397
- 4 children, \$ 28,397
- more than 4 children, add \$ 2,000 for each additional child

Enrolment in the ACHB is free. Eligibility for the program is based on the family's net income from their previous year's Income Tax Notice of Assessment (line 236). Once their applications are approved, qualifying families receive ACHB benefit cards that allow them to access approved services and products directly from service providers at no cost.

### **To get an application form:**

1-877-4MY-KIDS

1-877-469-5437

[www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb](http://www.gov.ab.ca/hre/achb)

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## **Notice to AU graduate students and those considering entering graduate studies at AU:**

Athabasca University Students' Union is in the process of establishing an AU Graduate Students' Association.

Here's a sampling of benefits of belonging to a Graduate Students' Association:

- **Graduate student representation on University Committees**
- **University and government advocacy and lobbying**
- **Affiliation with provincial and national graduate students' organizations**
- **Assistance with university/student dispute resolution**
- **Information source**
- **Networking**

For more information contact:

**Shirley Barg, Vice-President**

**Athabasca University Students' Union**

**Email: [sbarg@ausu.org](mailto:sbarg@ausu.org) or call 1-800-9041 ext. 3413**

**Edmonton local number: 497-7000**

**Calgary local number: 298-2905**

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## **AUSU SPEAKS: Fall Session Provided By AUSU**

AUSU met on the evening of September 16th for the last regular council meeting of the 2001/2002 fiscal year. Finances and our preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year were the main topics of discussion, and we laid the groundwork for some exciting new scholarships and student awards. Also under discussion was the possibility of selling AUSU promotional items in the future.

The most important topic of the evening was our upcoming AGM. For those who do not already know, the 2002 AGM will take place on September 28, 2002 at 1:00 PM MST, and all students are welcome. You may attend in person at the Edmonton AUSU offices, located at #306, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB, or you may attend via teleconference from any location, worldwide. Call our office at 1-800-788-9041, extension 3413, or email [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) for more information. Please reserve your spot as soon as possible, so that we know how many attendees to plan for. We'd love to see you there.

Also on the table this week was a proposal for new scholarships and student awards, which was approved by all councillors. Information about these awards will be available on our website as soon as we hammer out the last of the fine details. The details will be posted on the AUSU Services page.

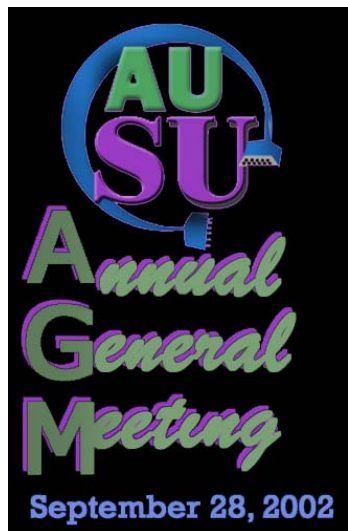
The fate of the AUSU Handbook/Planner is still up in the air. We want to be able to give students items that will be useful to them in their studies, but we need to be certain that the handbook is the best choice before we commit to having more printed. Student input so far has indicated that a smaller planner might be more useful, while other suggestions have included wall calendars, desk calendars, and other items. So far, however, we have had only a few responses to our survey, and we require more.

Please check out the [AUSU discussion forums](#) on our website and select the Handbook/Planner Survey topic to download the survey file or to comment in the open forum. Alternatively, you may mail your comments to [dkereluk@ausu.org](mailto:dkereluk@ausu.org). We'd like to know what might be useful to you, what items you have received from other students' unions that you have used and enjoyed, and if you have any opinions on the old format of the AUSU Handbook.

Speaking of student input, we are pleased to say that since the first issue of the AUSU newsletter started arriving in students' mailboxes, we have had many entries for the contest, and a significant increase in Voice readers and users of the AUSU forums. For all of you who just checked out AUSU for the first time this month - welcome!

Finally, back to business matters, AUSU council has approved the proposed preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and we are very pleased to announce that our expenditures for the 2001/2002 fiscal year will remain within budget for that period.

Many new projects have been initiated since the new council took over in March, and we're very excited about the coming year. Expect a summary of our work so far to appear in the Voice or on the AUSU website very soon.



## **NEWS FROM THE AGM Provided By AUSU Council**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of AUSU was held this past Saturday, September 28 at 1:00 P.M. Eleven students were in attendance, nine in person and two via teleconference. Quorum was satisfied and the meeting could proceed. In the President's welcome, Debbie Jabbour commented that the low attendance should not be taken as an indicator of apathy, but rather one that speaks to the reality of the lives of Athabasca University Students. Many may be interested in participating in student affairs, but few can manage to find the time to do so. Debbie also spoke of the uniqueness of AU students, and the importance of having a good relationship with the

university administration.

Judith Hughes, Athabasca University Vice President External and Student Affairs, brought a welcome from AU and seconded Debbie's words about the importance of collaboration and cooperation between the university and the students' union. Many changes are occurring within our university, and development of strong alumni is a first step towards strengthening the image of AU and finding alternate forms of fundraising to benefit the university. By working collaboratively, AU and AUSU can also have a more effective voice in lobbying the government for policy changes that recognize that AU is different and should not be considered under the same funding policies as other universities. Current policies do not recognize our technological infrastructure and open entrance policy, and the result is that AU must rely for the main part on tuition fees rather than government funding to maintain operations.

Activity reports were presented. It was recognized that most of the current group of Council members were not part of the 2000/2001 fiscal year, and did not have input into the financial statements presented. However, Council wanted members to know a bit more about us, and let everyone know what we've been up to recently and what is being planned for the future, so each Councillor submitted an activity report.

The financial statements were presented. Treasurer Gurpreet Dulai explained that an operational deficit had been incurred due to the reprint of the student diaries. Steps have been taken to ensure this type of problem won't re-occur, and during the 2001-2002 fiscal year, the deficit will be recovered. He also explained that increased convocation costs were a deliberate move intended to raise AUSU profile and provide greater graduation support during the most important event of the year. Overall AUSU began the 2001/2002 fiscal year in a financially healthy position.

Once those in attendance approved the financial statements, and an auditor appointed for the upcoming fiscal year, the floor was opened to general discussion and questions. Several Council members spoke about their experience of being on Council during this past year, and how positive and educational it has been. Darren Kereluk, who along with Gurpreet Dulai, are the only Council members who had any significant presence during 2000/2001; Derek spoke of how different the experience has been this past year from the one he had when on Council previously. Even though disagreements occasionally occur, this group has been able to resolve things without entering into the type of conflict that tore the previous Council apart. Others on Council agreed that the atmosphere among this group has been always positive. Even when there is disagreement on how to proceed, the attitude is to discuss it and move on - move forward whether or not there is 100% consensus on issues.

Debbie Jabbour brought the meeting to a conclusion by thanking everyone on Council, volunteers and staff for their participation in making this last year such an enjoyable venture. She noted that in future years, other Council groups may look back at what we do and wonder “what were they thinking?”, and that although we may make mistakes, we are all working with good intentions to improve the student experience for all AU students. The upcoming spring AGM will be a celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AUSU, and plans are already underway to make it a very special meeting.

The 2001 Annual Report is available to any AU student who wishes to obtain a copy, and we encourage you to do so. You can request one by calling 1-800-788-9041, extension 3413 (local to Edmonton 497-7000); or by email to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org). Please include your full name and AU student ID, as well as a mailing address. Indicate whether you prefer a hard copy mailout or a pdf copy by email (include your email address).

Thank you to everyone who showed an interest in the 2000/2001 AGM. We look forward to seeing you next spring for our tenth anniversary AGM!



## Conference Connections

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **CASE District VIII** - March 8-11, 2003 - Coeur d'Alene, Idaho - "Connect in Coeur d'Alene." Details: <http://www.connectincda.com>
- **ICDE World Conference** - 21st annual - June 1-5, 2003 - Hong Kong. Deadline for abstract submission is Aug. 1, 2002. Details: <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/HK2003>
- **CADE** - June 7-11, 2003 - St. John's NF
- **International Studies Association and the Central and East European International Studies Association (ISA/CEEISA)** - June 26-28, 2003 - "The Global Tensions and Their Challenges to Governance of the International Community" conference at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

## SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

# ESSAY CONTEST 2003

## The Elie Wiesel PRIZE IN ETHICS

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### SUGGESTED TOPICS:

Reflect on the most profound, moral dilemma you have ever encountered and analyze what it taught you about ethics.

How can human beings move beyond hate toward reconciliation?

Explore ethical responses to fanaticism, hate and violence.

What ethical issue concerns you most and what concrete proposals would you make to deal with it?

## DEADLINE: DECEMBER 2, 2002

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- **ELIGIBILITY:** Full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors during the fall 2002 semester.

**Students must complete an Entry Form along with their Faculty Sponsor.** Any interested professor may act as a Faculty Sponsor and endorse the quality and authenticity of the student's essay. In addition, students are asked to include a letter from their registrar verifying eligibility.

FIRST PRIZE: \$5000.00

SECOND PRIZE: \$2500.00

THIRD PRIZE: \$ 1500.00

HONOURABLE MENTIONS: \$ 500.00 EACH

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Entry forms, detailed guidelines and further information are available online at [www.eliewiesel.foundation.org](http://www.eliewiesel.foundation.org), or by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

The Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics  
The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity  
529 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1802  
New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.490.7777

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## **Kinsmen and Kinettes Bursary - Hal Rogers Endowment Fund**

**Value:** \$1000

### **Application Deadline: February 1**

#### **Description:**

- Canadian citizens or permanent residents
- Must be full-time students in the upcoming school year at a recognized post-secondary institution
- Selection is based on demonstrated high ideals and qualities of citizenship
- Recipients must not have previously received a bursary from the Hal Rogers Endowment Fund
- Applicants WILL NOT be eligible for consideration if the application form is mailed directly to the Kinsmen & Kinette Clubs of Canada without receiving prior endorsement from a Kinsmen, Kinette or Kin club

#### **Instructions:**

- Application forms must be submitted to a Kinsmen, Kinette, or Kin Club closest to the applicant's permanent residence
- For further information about application procedures, please contact the administrator listed below or visit [www.kinclubs.ca](http://www.kinclubs.ca)

#### **Contact Information:**

Kinsmen and Kinettes Bursary Program  
Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs of Canada  
1920 Hal Rogers Drive, P.O. Box KIN

Cambridge, Ontario  
Canada  
N3H 5C6  
Phone: 519-653-1920  
Phone 2: 1-800-742-5546 ext.215  
Fax: 1-800-742-5546  
**Web Site:** [www.carville.com/kinclubstest/href1.htm](http://www.carville.com/kinclubstest/href1.htm)  
**Email Address:** [bzak@kinclubs.ca](mailto:bzak@kinclubs.ca)

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## **Michael Luchkovich Scholarships for Career Development**

**Value:** Not specified

**Application Deadline: December 1, April 1 and August 1**

### **Description:**

- Residents of Alberta
- Present full-time employee pursuing further training
- Minimum full-time work history of 3 years
- Program of study may be up to six months of full-time study or up to one year of part-time study

A semester of study towards an undergraduate degree or diploma program will normally not be considered

### **Instructions:**

- Application deadlines are December 1, April 1 and August 1
- For further information please visit

### **Contact Information:**

Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund  
9940-106 Street, 9th Floor, Box 28000, Stn. Main,  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Canada  
T5J 4R4  
**Web Site:** [www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships/info.asp](http://www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships/info.asp)



## COMMENTARY AND FEEDBACK!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Letter To The Editor:

#### People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE)

Human Rights are the greatest gift of contemporary thought to humanity. It is not only a vision for a better world, but also a tool for achieving it. Yet somehow, as we enter the new millennium, it is a term that has come to represent in the public mind not the hope of the future, but rather legal processes, charges and counter charges, and at times even, a certain empty rhetorical self-righteousness.

Since 1989, the People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE), an international NGO, instrumental in UN launching a Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, has been developing, enhancing and facilitating worldwide training in human rights education at all levels of society.

#### Human Rights Cities: A Historic Innovation

PDHRE, drawing on its rich experience and perception of needs and capacities, with the enthusiasm of local communities, is facilitating the development of Human Rights Cities around the world. Inhabitants, local authorities, community agencies and institutions, NGO's, non-profit human development societies, labour, professional associations, and neighbourhoods learn, reflect and act, joining to participate in the development plans of their city - guided by the commitments made and obligations undertaken by their governments having ratified numerous human rights Covenants and conventions **'to assure that all laws, policies, resources and relationships in the community, maintain the dignity and serve the well being of all women, men, youth and children in the city' ...**



Seven self-selected cities are presently implementing a Human Rights Cities Program. These are: Abra Indigenous Municipality (Philippines); Dinajur (Bangladesh); Graz (Austria); Kati (Mali); Nagpur (India); Rosario (Argentina); Thies (Senegal); and several more are in development in Ghana, Spain and Samoa.

**In Edmonton**, the John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights ([www.johnhumphreycentre.org](http://www.johnhumphreycentre.org)) has invited Ms Shulamith Koenig, Executive Director of PDHRE for a 3 days visit at the end of November (27,28,29), 2002 and she will be meeting with various community sectors and civic officials to explore the idea of working towards making Edmonton a **Human Rights City!**

Should you have an interest in this innovative initiative, daytime interviews can be arranged -- **kindly let us know in advance.**

Warmest regards,

Leo Campos A.

**Media & Community Outreach**

The John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights

Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058

Cell: (780) 995-6819

PS. To learn more about the John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights, please visit:

[www.johnhumphreycentre.org](http://www.johnhumphreycentre.org)

## **LETTER TO THE EDITOR:**

Hello,

I was under the impression you may be interested in a new initiative that we are starting here on Parliament Hill. It concerns the website [www.ingenuitycanada.com](http://www.ingenuitycanada.com) I'll provide a little information about the website and the initiative, any other questions you have feel free to contact me personally. This initiative allows the common Canadian, who otherwise might continue to feel disconnected from Federal policy making, to get involved.

It allows individuals to post their ingenious or creative ideas to the website, and if these ideas are deemed legitimate they will be brought before the corresponding minister. As well, ministers will be asked for a prompt response and held accountable, as their response will be posted to the site. Finally, two of the best ideas will be rewarded a 10,000 internship on Parliament Hill (If the individual is over a certain age then they can send an intern in their place.) We would greatly appreciate your help in getting the message out, particularly in involving the students at your

university. We feel it is of the utmost importance to involve young Canadians, as they are undoubtedly a source for fresh ideas that will shape our future. Any help you could give us would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Mendel  
(613) 992-7771  
mendel747@hotmail.com

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**Dear Readers,**

**I have received a number of email asking for printable editions of the current Voice. The current issue is always included in the list of PDF Archives (link from the cover page) or they can be found on the internal pages under “Download PDF Version of The Voice” at the bottom of the right hand index list.**

**Thank-you for your readership and support!**

**Tammy Moore**

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**Thanks to all of you who have been providing us with such great feedback on The Voice. Please continue providing your opinions, comments and support; any submissions can be sent to [tmoore@ausu.org](mailto:tmoore@ausu.org)**

**\*\*PLEASE REMEMBER ALL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION MUST BE MARKED “FOR PUBLICATION”.**

**Accepted letters to the editor have not been edited, nor do they necessarily reflect the opinions of The Voice staff, AUSU, or Athabasca University.**

**Tammy Moore**



## ENLIGHTENING INFORMATION!

### WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

Contact Tammy Moore at [tmoore@ausu.org](mailto:tmoore@ausu.org) for details on writing for The Voice, providing a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.

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### 'Vibrant Communities Initiative' [www.vibrantcommunities.ca](http://www.vibrantcommunities.ca)

#### Contributed by The Community Networks Group

Canada is a country of countless opportunities. We have exceptional health, education and social programs, a robust economy and a quality of life that is envied around the world. It's hard to think of Canada as a "poor" country. And yet more than 16% of us live in poverty. It's a grim fact that

has cast a shadow over Canadian life for more than two decades. But we believe all Canadians can and should share our good fortune.

**The Vibrant Communities Initiative** is a community-driven effort to reduce poverty in Canada by creating partnerships that make use of our most valuable assets: people, organizations, businesses and governments. It's a unique approach to poverty reduction that will allow communities to learn from, and help, each other.

Vibrant Communities will link up to 15 communities from British Columbia to Newfoundland in a collective effort to test the most effective ways to reduce poverty at the grassroots level. Vibrant Communities will share its lessons learned with communities across the country so that others can build on what we know does and does not work in community-based poverty reduction.

The **Edmonton Metropolitan** area, Canada's Gateway to the North, has over 940,000 residents. The city's economy is strengthened through its role as service centre to Alberta's oil industry, commercial services to agriculture, government, and post secondary institutions. Approximately 21.3% of Edmontonians had incomes under Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-Off rate in 1995...

For more information about Vibrant Communities, please visit our web site:  
**www.vibrantcommunities.ca**, (or) in Edmonton contact:

City of Edmonton Innovative Services  
Jenny Kain @ 944-5512

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## **Introducing Human Rights Cities & Shulamith Koenig The People's Movement for Human Rights Education**

### **Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

Nov. 29, 2002 10-noon @ City Hall - **Heritage Room**  
Infoline: 474-6058 / 995-6819 / e-mail:  
leocamposa@aol.com

Since 1989, the People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE), an international NGO, instrumental the launching a UN Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, has been developing, enhancing and facilitating worldwide training in human rights education around the world.

The *John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights* and the *Edmonton Interfaith Centre* is pleased to sponsor this talk by Ms. Koenig and explore the idea of working towards making Edmonton a Human Rights City...

For further information, please contact:

**Leo Campos A.**, Media & Community Outreach  
The John Humphrey Centre for Peace & Human Rights  
Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058 Cell: (780) 995-6819

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***Boreal Majesty, an Evening for  
Canada's Northern Forests***  
**November 30, 2002 7:00 p.m. @ the  
Provincial Museum of Alberta**

Infoline: 432-0967 (or) e-mail: [jill-sturdy@cpaws-edmonton.org](mailto:jill-sturdy@cpaws-edmonton.org)

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society proudly presents *Boreal Majesty, an Evening for Canada's Northern Forests*. This event features two eminent science

writers, Dr. Wayne Lynch and Dr. David Henry. Both have volunteered their time to share with Canadians their unique experiences in the world's most northern forests and both are well-published natural historians. As Canadians we take pride in our wild places and creatures and have an intense yearning to explore our wilderness areas. For practical reasons most of us enjoy exploration vicariously. Wayne Lynch and David Henry are giving Canadians an opportunity to explore Canada's northern forests through their eyes. We are delighted to welcome you and your family, friends and colleagues to attend *Boreal Majesty, an Evening for Canada's Northern Forests*.

Saturday, November 30 - 7 p.m. at the Provincial Museum of Alberta

Tickets are \$10 in advance (\$12 at the door) and can be purchased at the following locations:

Federation of Alberta Naturalists: 11759 Groat Rd.

Earth's General Store: 10832 82 Ave.

WildBird General Store: 4712 99 St.

Mountain Equipment Co-op: 12328 102 Ave.

Audrey's Books: 10702 Jasper Ave.

McBain Camera: 10159 101St.

For more information, please contact Jill Sturdy at 432 0967 or

e-mail: [jill-sturdy@cpaws-edmonton.org](mailto:jill-sturdy@cpaws-edmonton.org)

(or) visit our website:

<http://www.cpaws.org/boreal/boreal-majesty-book-tour.html>

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# HONOURARY DEGREES! – The Call for Nominations



## Contributed By AU

Athabasca University Governing Council invites nominations for Honourary Degrees to be presented at Convocation ceremonies on June 13 and 14, 2003 in Athabasca, Alberta.

Candidates will have distinguished themselves in education, science, the arts, public service, or other areas, and have made significant life-long contributions to endeavours consistent with the mandate and purpose of Athabasca University.

A letter including the rationale for the nomination, résumé of the nominee, and any supporting documents must be received by Monday, December 2, 2002. The nominator must include his/her address and signature. All nominations should be marked “Personal and Confidential” and should be addressed to:

Carol Lund  
Office of the Governing Council  
Athabasca University  
1 University Drive  
Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3

For further information, contact Ms. Lund at the above address, by phone (780-675-6271), by fax (780-675-6450), or by email ([caroll@athabascau.ca](mailto:caroll@athabascau.ca)).

Specializing in distance online education, Athabasca University delivers university education to approximately 26,000 students per year. Athabasca University is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to, and success in, university studies, and to increasing the equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide.

For information about Athabasca University, visit [www.athabascau.ca](http://www.athabascau.ca)

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## **AU News From Academic Council**

### **Contributed by The Insider**

**Academic Council passed the following Action Items at its Nov. 6th meeting:**

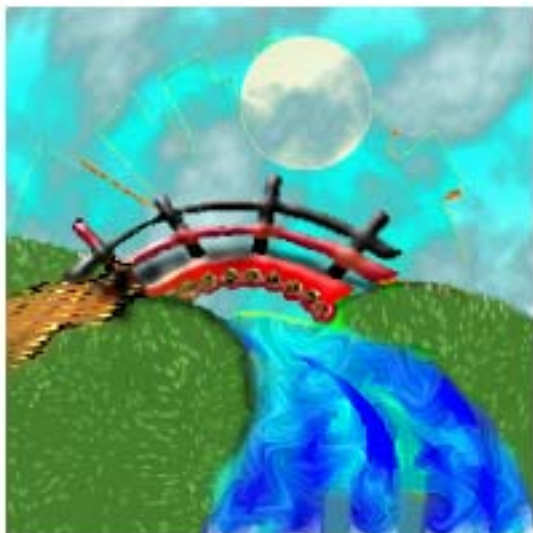
- Step II & III approval of a Master of Nursing program (open for applications on April 1, 2003 with courses beginning Sept. 1, 2003)
- Regulation changes to the Master of Health

Studies program (effective Sept. 1, 2003)

- Step II approval for the Environmental Studies program (includes a concentration within the BA and a University Certificate program)
- Credentials awarded to the graduands in the Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management

Approval given for the three new centres with the School of Business: Centre for Accounting and Taxation; Centre for Finance, Management, and the Economy; and Centre for Marketing and Organization

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## **Diverse Voices: Bridging Troubled Waters**

### **Annual Family Violence Conference**

November 28-29, 2002

Infoline: 437-8013 / Fax: 439-6819

- E-mail: [dorothy@icdr.com](mailto:dorothy@icdr.com)

At the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre  
11050 - 90 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

Join outstanding speakers & colleagues to:

- Learn how to develop educational initiatives
- Explore how to reach people with varying needs
- Share success stories and best practices with colleagues working in different areas of social development & healthy communities

Expand your knowledge of family violence issues and programs.  
Learn about & understand the services & tools available to deal with it ...

Some of our guest speakers include: Dr. Baukje Miedema, Sue & David Languedoc, Manjeet Kent, Judi Fairholm to name just a few ... This conference is hosted by a coalition of social & human development agencies working on family violence issues.

For conference program & registration, please visit: [www.icdr.ab.ca/conference](http://www.icdr.ab.ca/conference)  
or contact Intercultural & Community Development Resources Inc. at:  
**Telephone: 437-8013 / Fax: 439-6819 / E-mail: [dorothy@icdr.com](mailto:dorothy@icdr.com)**

*Masters & Scribes Bookshoppe: specializing in crossing cultures & conference and meeting planners. Visit us @ 9938-81 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 1W6  
Tel: 780.437.8013, Fax: 780.439.6879 / website: [www.mastersandscribes.com](http://www.mastersandscribes.com)*

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## **CHANGES TO THE UNDERGRAD GRADING POLICY AT AU!**

This is to advise you of an important change in the undergraduate Grading Policy at Athabasca University.

Athabasca University has approved a new Alpha/4.0 grading scale for undergraduate studies effective January 1, 2003. The grades that students achieve will be stated, on transcripts and in student records, as alpha grades on a scale from A to F. Grade averages will be expressed as Grade Point Averages using the 4.0 grading scale.

These changes in grading scale are part of a province-wide initiative in Alberta.

Undergraduate courses that began before January 2003 will be graded using the percentage grading scale.

For a complete statement of this Athabasca University policy please go to:  
<http://www.athabascau.ca/policy/registry/gradingpolicy2002.htm>

**If you have questions please contact me.**



**Bruce Dawson**  
**Assistant Registrar, Registration Services**  
**Athabasca University**  
**1 University Drive**  
**Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3**  
**Phone 780-675-6147, Fax 780-675-6174**

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**From: Action on Smoking & Health (ASH)**  
**Re: Support a Smoking Ban in Restaurants, Bars and Lounges**

Edmonton City Council is now considering amendments to the smoking bylaw to ban smoking in public places, including restaurants, bars and lounges.

Last year, City Council amended the existing bylaw to protect children from second hand smoke by banning smoking in public places where children are allowed, such as restaurants.

Unfortunately the amendment that passed was not clear, and many restaurants took advantage by trying to have one part of their restaurant a smoking section for adults, and the other for families and non-smokers - without any separation between the two areas! Smoke drift remains a problem. Children are not being protected, and the Councillors are now revising the bylaw to close the loopholes.

There is another group of people living in our community who need protection. These people include the many who work in "smoking" restaurants, as well as bars and lounges. These people often work in smoke filled rooms for as long as eight hours a day - some even longer! These workers deserve protection. No one should have to work in a place that puts their health at risk. Many of these people are our young people - old enough to be working in a place filled with smoke, but too old to be protected by a bylaw focused on protecting the health of children.

The recent landmark decision by WCB to award Heather Crowe, a non-smoking Ottawa waitress diagnosed with terminal lung cancer, compensation for her work-related illness is a wake-up call

to take measures to protect hospitality workers from the hazards of second-hand smoke. **Please contact City Hall** and tell them that you support a smoking ban in restaurants, bars and lounges to protect the health of hospitality workers - and all citizens - from the hazards of second hand smoke.

Call: The Citizen's Action Centre at 496-8200  
Or: e-mail all City Councillors at [council2@edmonton.ca](mailto:council2@edmonton.ca)

E-mail your city councillor individually by using their first and last name (e.g. [jane.batty@edmonton.ca](mailto:jane.batty@edmonton.ca)) or call 496-8110 to speak to your councillor directly)

For further information contact:  
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)  
[www.ash.ca](http://www.ash.ca)  
Tel: **407-6819**

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## Just Christmas 2002

Infoline: 474-6058 (or) 995-6819  
*An early Announcement*

**Just Christmas** (from 'justice at Christmas') is an alternative global marketplace for quality fair trade crafts and other goods. Marketplace participants are not-for-profit organizations whose mandate is to foster global awareness and to support international development projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

This year the event takes place on Nov. 29-30 at the Prince of Wales Armouries, 10440 - 108 A Avenue, and will feature a special international fashion show highlighting the work of 10.000 Villages ... Please see details below.

**Just Christmas 2002** is a Global Craft Marketplace featuring fair trade crafts and other worldly goods, live entertainment, delicious finger foods and refreshments.

The Prince of Wales Armouries  
10440 - 108 A Avenue

Friday November 29  
6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Saturday November 30  
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Wheelchair Accessible. Admission is free but **donations are welcomed**.  
e-mail: [leocamposa@aol.com](mailto:leocamposa@aol.com)

**Just Christmas 2002 is:** CEBES, Change for Children, Guatemala Support Group, Latin Crafts, Romero House, Sombrilla Refugee Society, 10.000 Villages, UNICEF, 10 Days for Global Justice, Amnesty International, HumanServe International, Awareness Programs, Changing Together, P.E.T. Project, Ghana Friendship Association, Filipino Canadian Women's Association, Peruvian Rett Syndrome Society, WUSC, Habitat for Humanity, CSS - Host Program, Canada-Tibet Committee, Guatemalan Canadian Society, Doctors Without Borders, Lingap Institute, Canadian Crossroads International ...



## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Contributed By The Community  
Networks Group**

**AWARENESS PROGRAMS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA**

**Volunteers Needed and Invited to Help**

**Infoline: 924-3432**

We are a volunteer, registered non-profit society which has been serving the work of Wanjiku Kironyo in Kenya for seventeen years. Wanjiku works in the slum communities with the women and street kids, handicapped children and youth groups. Our chairperson, Rosalind Shepherd, is leaving for Africa and we need someone to help us to hold the work together while she is gone. Our Board consists of ten people, who work on various aspects of the work. We need someone who has space for a small office, and the skills to be hub of the wheel for a meaningful and satisfying international project for AIDS orphans. If you are a people-person who enjoys office work, has a little spare time and spare room, phone us at 924-3432, or e-mail us at [rozshep@oanet.com](mailto:rozshep@oanet.com).



**ATTENTION: PLEASE INFORM  
YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS  
UNIQUE VOLUNTEER  
OPPORTUNITY - Be part of the  
Global Picture with Canada World  
Youth**

**Contributed By The Community  
Networks Group**

How BIG is your world? How big would you like it to be? Next year you could be living, working and

learning in Bénin, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Kaliningrad, Poland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ukraine, Uruguay, or Vietnam! (Countries and exact dates are subject to change).

Discover other countries and other regions of Canada. Learn about social justice and development issues. Live and work with people from other cultures. Acquire practical work experience and other skills. Gain academic credit in some post-secondary courses.

The Youth Exchange programs are for 17 to 20 year olds and for up to seven months. You spend half of the program in Canada and half in the exchange country. During the program you live with a host family and take part in a volunteer work placement at a local community organization, farm or small business. These programs focus on social and community development issues.

Programs start summer 2003. Also, ask us about our customized programs (these programs have a special focus, and are up to age 29 in some cases), or our joint initiatives/school programs.

**How to reach us:**

CANADA WORLD YOUTH, Western Canada Regional Office  
#205 10816 A - 82 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2B3  
Tel: 432-1877 (or) 1-877-929-6884 -- e-mail: [west-ouest@cwj-jcm.org](mailto:west-ouest@cwj-jcm.org)

Want to apply? You can get more information by contacting our regional office or apply on-line at [www.cwy-jcm.org](http://www.cwy-jcm.org)

**Deadline for applications is December 6, 2002.**

**About Canada World Youth**

Canada World Youth is a national, non-profit, non-governmental organization that has been coordinating international programs for youth since 1971. Our programs promote intercultural understanding, increased awareness of development issues, and personal and professional skills development. Canada World Youth receives funding support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Industry Canada, and thousands of individual, institutional and corporate donors from across the country.

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## [The Barcelona Forum 2004](#)

### **Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

The first **Universal Forum of Cultures** is a new international event which will bring thousands of people to **Barcelona** from all over the world in 2004. The Forum's principal aim is to contribute to a renewal of thought and attitudes, providing a new platform for moving towards a new coexistence without conflict and in a world fit for living in.

The first Universal Forum of Cultures will take place in 2004 in **Barcelona**. It opens on the **9<sup>th</sup> of May**, Europe Day, and closes on the **26<sup>th</sup> of September**, coinciding with the local festivities of La Mercè, the city's patron saint. The Forum will last 141 days!

The [Barcelona Forum 2004](#) is co-organized by the Barcelona City Council, the Catalan autonomous Government and the Spanish Government, with **UNESCO** as the main partner. The Agenda for this major gathering is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the working principles of the United Nations.

In agreement with Unesco, the **Barcelona Forum 2004** is structured around three core themes: **cultural diversity, sustainable development and conditions for peace**. Join us at the Barcelona Forum 2004 as move forward towards a world that is sustainable and more humane.

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## **Breaking Bread... For Women In Afghanistan**

**Contributed By The Community Networks Group**

*Breaking Bread... For Women in Afghanistan* is a volunteer fundraising project to support much needed education projects for Afghan women and girls. You can participate in this unique cross-Canada fundraising initiative by **Hosting a Pot Luck Dinner** with nine of your friends.

As Host you are asked to invite your friends to your home, request that they bring a dish to share for dinner and ask each participant to donate \$75 towards education in Afghanistan. Each Pot Luck Dinner will raise \$750 (tax receipts available) and will pay the salary of a teacher for one year in Afghanistan.

Do some good... Become a host for "Breaking Bread" -- enjoy the company of your friends, some excellent food and share the opportunities to participate in facilitating REAL CHANGE for Afghan women and girls...

For more information on **How to Host the Pot Luck Dinner**, please call: 1-416-366-2516 or e-mail: [info@breakingbreadforwomen.com](mailto:info@breakingbreadforwomen.com) (or) visit: <http://www.breakingbreadforwomen.com>

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**when  
People  
need an ally ...**

**Your donation  
of reuseable  
clothing helps  
support the  
Association's  
efforts**

 **CANADIAN  
DIABETES  
ASSOCIATION** | **ASSOCIATION  
CANADIENNE  
DU DIABÈTE**

[www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)

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## **What We Do**

Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) is a non-profit, charitable organization with over 150 branches across Canada. CDA volunteers and staff work directly with people with diabetes and their families at the grass roots level. The CDA Collections Program collects clothing and reusable household items as an entrepreneurial fundraising venture. The funds raised from this program assist in promoting diabetes research, education, service and advocacy.

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## **What We Accept**

We gladly accept donations of:

- Clothing
- Linens
- Toys
- Small Appliances
- Jewellery
- Shoes
- Luggage
- Sporting Goods

Canadian Diabetes  
Association

403.509.0070

403.509-0072 (fax)

1.866.811.0070 (outside of  
Calgary)

[Email Us!](#)



## **Are you an Artist? AUSU supports the arts!**

AUSU is interested in purchasing original works of art from students for use in promotional purposes. These promotions may include: gifts from AUSU to graduates at convocation, tokens of appreciation for volunteers, special presentations, etc.

The works of art must:

- be created by an AU Student
- be within a value range \$0-\$500.
- be accessible or easily transportable to Alberta

If you are an artist of any kind who creates a product you feel we would be able to use for such a purpose, please contact [djabbour@ausu.org](mailto:djabbour@ausu.org). Supply a brief description of the art object, a picture if you have it, and its market value.



## **WRITE FOR THE VOICE!**

Contact Tammy Moore at [tmoore@ausu.org](mailto:tmoore@ausu.org) for details on writing for The Voice, providing a sample selection of writing and preferred genre.





## **‘Learning is Learning’:**

### **Challenge for Credit Option Exists for AU Students**

Many students may not be aware that AU recognizes prior learning and encourages

students to use the challenge for credit process if they feel they have knowledge or expertise in a particular subject area.

The process is not easy, but it is not insurmountable, and it can save the cost and time of taking a course if prior knowledge exists.

“We want to raise students’ awareness about the option and let them know that they don’t need to re-learn material or spend money on a course they don’t really need to take,” said Joan Fraser, director of the Centre for Learning Accreditation.

“Learning is learning and a student shouldn’t be penalized if that learning was not done within the confines of bricks and mortar,” she said, adding that those students with significant life or work force experience are typically those who pursue the challenge option.

Challenge for Credit is handled by the Registrar’s Office. Students are encouraged to check the course description to see if a challenge is permitted for the course they are interested in. If so, then the student must investigate a number of things prior to deciding whether to proceed.

First, and most important, the student should discuss the matter with the course coordinator. The coordinator will be able to give a better idea of the depth of the materials covered in the course, and the student’s chance for success should he/she opt to challenge.

The AU calendar outlines the challenge steps, notably completing the Challenge for Credit Application and accessing the course materials, which further allows the student to review the materials and determine if the challenge is viable. There is a non-refundable challenge for credit fee (check the web site for the current fee), but it should be noted that no withdrawal is allowed once the application has been completed.

“It (the challenge for credit) is something that’s there for you – use it,” Fraser said.

Anyone with questions about the process is encouraged to call Joan Fraser at (780) 675-6481 or check AU’s website at [www.athabascau.ca](http://www.athabascau.ca).



## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

**PUBLISHED IN THE VOICE November 27, 2002**

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## **CLASSIFIED SPACE:**

**Students of AU may print classifieds in The Voice free of charge (maximum three per issue) as long as they are not representing a company or product.**

**Classified ads must follow the direct guidelines and ethics stated in the Voice Policy and should be submitted to the editor at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.**

**The Editor reserves the right to refuse any classified information at her discretion. Thank-you.**

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## **FOR SALE**

**Ghetto blaster: CD player, duo tape deck, AF/FM radio, removable AC plug, or battery power (needs 6 C). \$ 70.00  
Call (403) 201- 4299 between 9 am - 9 pm only.**

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