



### Quote of The Week:

"One machine can do the work of fifty ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man."

--Elbert  
Hubbard



### **A Bug In Your Ear...** By Tammy Lee Moore

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### **White Ribbon Campaign 2002** Contributed by The Community Networks Group

Thousands of supporters around the country and around the world are busy organizing educational and awareness activities with the goal of ending

men's violence against women. Most people co-ordinate their activities around White Ribbon Days which runs from November 25th to December 06.

Schools, community centres, businesses, unions and faith groups participate by spreading the word through ribbon and flyer distribution, poster signings and fundraising events to help local women's anti-violence organizations. Men wearing the white ribbon make the pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

**White Ribbon Days** is a time for men to reflect on their attitudes about and behaviours towards women. It's a time for men to become role-models to the boys in their life and show the importance of working for equality between men & women, and for leading a life free of violence. It's a time to remember all the women who have lost their lives or who have suffered harms at the hands of men. It's also a time for men to show their support for the women in their lives by taking a stand against violence against women.

To all our men friends, colleagues, acquaintances, neighbours, we encourage you to put on a white ribbon during **White Ribbon Days** and act as a catalyst for change in your community. Violence against women will never end as long as men condone it with their silence. To find out what you can do, please visit our website at: [www.whiteribbon.com](http://www.whiteribbon.com) (or) contact us at 1-800-328-2228. Join us!

# AU Profiles:

## AU PROFILES

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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!

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## **STUDENT:** **Taleathahh-Rae Livingstone**

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Voice: Gee, how do you pronounce your name?

**Taleathahh-Rae: My name is really simple if you get to hear it first without seeing it. Simply say Ta-lee-tha.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: Medicine Hat, AB. I have been here since 1980 having moved to Alberta from Ontario to be closer to family.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: I have a GREAT husband who provides constant encouragement and support. My two daughters were both high school dropouts who have now completely turned their lives around. One is graduating U of L with Honours this spring and going on to article for her CA. The other studies while working full-time in England with behaviourally challenged clients. I also have 2 grandchildren (a boy and a girl – both geniuses).**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: I have performed in /directed / and choreographed theatre productions since 1986, musicals, pantomimes, and one-acts. I enjoy walking and travel. My main activity now is studying and research.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: I am enrolled in a full-course (4) load which, when complete, will put me about ½ way through my B. Admin degree. I am really enjoying the Sociology 287 course. I am fascinated by behaviour and how it all interacts.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: I began very slowly with Athabasca in 1996 taking a course here and there, and switching credentials twice! I was testing the waters to see if I could learn, if I would enjoy learning, and if I could stick with learning.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: It is very tough! I find the most difficult part is the isolation. Some of my tutors have been warm and embracing and others have been strictly business. It is difficult to stay motivated when I don't really feel connected to AU. I have a separate office in my home where I study, but I am in my home 24/7. I can't imagine too many people who would enjoy staying at their jobsite 24/7.**

Voice: Do you work? What do you do?

**Taleathahh-Rae: I have resigned and am studying full-time. I believe the lack of paperwork to support experience has been holding me back. I was self-employed for 5 years teaching computers and new business start-up. I worked for a semester at the Med Hat College as a Life Skills Coach and Career Development Instructor. It was wonderful and I enjoyed tremendous success with the students, but it was a dead-end career and I want more.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: Once I have a degree, I am hoping to open some doors into areas where I want to work. My only concern is that I am 50 years old – although most people think I am 35 when they meet me. I realize that my comment about my age might sound more conceited than the way I intended. My concern is regarding getting hired at my age – and that if they don't ask – I can usually get away with it!**

Voice: What are your future goals?

**Taleathahh-Rae: To work with motivated people who need help getting focussed and finding their direction – whether in business, life, or school.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: Keep going – especially when it gets tough! Mark every achievement by doing something. When you finish an assignment – celebrate – go to a movie. When you write an exam – go out for dinner with someone special. Set up a progress chart and as you finish each unit, assignment, quiz, and milestone – check it off. If you need help focussing, buy an empty diploma frame and put it on the wall. Every time you feel discouraged – look at it and remember why you are doing this.**

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

**Taleathahh-Rae: Just to offer an old English proverb, “A smooth sea never made a skilled mariner.”**

Good Luck to you in the future, Taleathahh-Rae – And thank-you for taking the time to be among the first to volunteer to be a part of AU Profiles!

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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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## **Can The English Language Survive E-Speak?**

**By Tamra Ross Low**

Most people use email now, and those of us in distance universities probably use it more than most. It was once thought that Email would come to replace regular postal mail, and to a large extent it has, but it differs from regular mail in sheer volume. Most people today receive far more emails than they ever received postal mail. Answering all of these mails has prompted the evolution of a new form of the English language - one that makes liberal use of abbreviated words, acronyms, truncated sentences, and other time saving techniques.

This writing style, which I call 'e-speak', is generally sufficient to convey a simple message, and appropriate for use in mails that are intended for friends and casual associates, but unacceptable for messages intended for a formal audience. Unfortunately, a lot of people seem to have become so entrenched in email-speak that they can no longer remember how to write effectively without it.

What is worse, e-speak is beginning to infect written documents other than emails. Teachers across the continent have already begun to notice its slang-ridden roots taking hold in the literature produced in schools.

Florida teacher [Tina Deamicis](#) notes that since the advent of instant messaging, "students are prone to use bizarre abbreviations and spellings... they don't seem to make the distinction between casual and academic language."

E-speak is becoming so entrenched in the language of teens, that some have unthinkingly begun to use 'abbreviated' forms that are as long as the original word. Jacqueline Harding, an Illinois teacher, is [puzzled](#) by this. She sees a lot of Instant Messaging shortcuts in her class work, and deducts marks when it occurs. Some abbreviations make more sense than others: "I understand `cuz," says Harding, "but what's with the `wuz'? It's the same amount of letters as `was,' so what's the point?"

K12 students are not the only ones guilty of using e-speak in totally inappropriate forums, however. University papers are also becoming riddled with it, and lately I've noticed a preponderance of it in our own Voice newspaper. It's difficult to read, and sometimes the meaning of a very thoughtful article is obscured beneath a bunch of amateurish Internet jargon.

The rules for writing well have not changed significantly in the past few decades. Grammar rules are a little looser, but most conventions remain intact.

There is no place for words with all capital letters in formal writing. In fact, this is even less acceptable now than it was prior to email. In Internet jargon, all-caps signify that the writer is 'yelling', and it appears aggressive to the reader. Also, reading large portions of text in upper case is difficult on the eyes.

These days, people use capital letter, italics, underlines, quotation marks, boldface and dashes in order to signify that a particular word in a sentence is emphasized:

i.e. "Well, what do you think?"

But, any good writing manual will tell you that such emphasis should be rarely used, if at all, and it certainly should not appear several times on a page. The emphasis should come from well-constructed sentences. When artificial emphasis is used, it is usually as a shortcut or to clarify a sentence that is not very clear in the first place. Once in a while every writer uses emphasis but email has prompted people to begin using it everywhere.

Another, similar tactic is to use smiley or frown faces to make certain the reader knows your mood: a useful shortcut in a quick email, but in formal writing, sentences should not be ambiguous to begin with and certainly should not be 'patched' with an explanatory smiley.

The many punctuation marks in the English language have well defined uses, and to use them differently from how they are intended only confuses the reader. Especially confusing is the tendency to use multiple punctuation marks to convey extra emotion. I guess the theory is that a single exclamation mark cannot be sufficient to convey the levels of excitement attainable by modern people, so several must be used at once. Questions, too, must now be properly emphasized with a number of question marks proportional to the level of incredulity the writer is experiencing. When all else fails, there is always the excessive "?!?!?" ending - often accompanied with the italic emphasis - to convey a state of bafflement heretofore unheard of in the experience of human existence. That has to be the reason people do this, right? Writers in the past only used one punctuation mark at a time, but clearly they could

not have been signifying any emotion that is commensurate with those that modern readers might experience.

That was some pretty hefty sarcasm, by the way, but you might not have noticed due to my lack of artificial emphasis ☺.

Anyway.

It is difficult to understand why e-speak has had some such a detrimental effect on the written language. It is not like slang is new. I recall that when I was in high school, letters written to friends were loaded with the slang of the day: kinda; sorta; dunno; gonna; ain't; U for you; 2 for two or to; like this, like that, like, like, like (we found a way to inject 'like' into every sentence, it seemed); but I don't recall ever using language like this in my school work, letters to older relatives, or any other formal writing.

Kids have always had their slang, but up until now most understood which words and spellings were best reserved for use with peers, and which constituted 'proper' written English. Clearly it is not difficult to learn and distinguish between two different forms of writing, so I am baffled as to why email lingo seems to be posing such a threat to our language. Its impact has indeed been significant, however, and things are only getting worse.

Those who use e-speak in formal writing should beware: schools and universities are beginning to identify this writing style as a significant problem, and teachers and professors are starting to deduct very high percentages from papers that contain it. Write appropriately for each forum. Use e-speak in emails to friend and peers, but not to teachers, employers, and customer service departments. If you have a silly email handle like 'leather\_baebe' or 'thrilla\_in\_manilla', set up a second email account for use in formal settings. And for goodness sake, remove your .sig file from formal messages if it contains anything other than your contact information. You can't expect your professor, boss, editor or customer to take you seriously if you end your formal business mail with humorous quotations, links to beanie-baby collector's sites, cute ASCII pictures, or other extraneous data of interest only to you and your closest friends. Colorful stationery also makes a poor impression: trust me on this one.

Just because communications are electronic, does not mean that they are necessarily informal. Only the content and the intent of the document can determine the level of formality, so format appropriately and you will help ensure an appropriate response.

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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 Two By Debbie Jabbour**

I recently attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Peer Support Conference hosted by the student unions from the University of Alberta and Grant McEwan Community College, and this week I continue with some of the highlights from that conference.

### **Burnout: coping with it & keeping empathy – Angela Gour, Edmonton Distress Line**

People who choose to work with clients in mental or emotional distress are generally highly motivated and committed people who are sensitive and compassionate. Such workers, however, are at high risk of burnout and compassion fatigue. Not only do they experience physical and emotional exhaustion, they may lose their spirit and start to decline in the ability to feel empathy and care for others.

This is caused by a variety of factors. As sensitive, compassionate and giving personalities, they have high expectations of themselves and feel the need to be strong while giving repeatedly to others. The work itself is emotionally exhausting, always dealing with negative topics. It is hard to value oneself, since outcomes and successes are generally not seen. You do your best to help a client in distress, but you generally have no way of knowing what happens once you hang up the phone or they leave your office. In many non-profit agencies there are insufficient resources to provide adequate support for volunteers, and they often are expected to deal with crisis after crisis with little respite or opportunity to debrief. In some organizations employees and volunteers are afraid to show weakness in front of their peers - too much debriefing can be taken as an indicator of weakness and an inability to do the job.

Signs of burnout are often noticed by others first, and each person has different manifestations. There are physical reactions; headache, sleep disturbance, loss of concentration, feeling drained, are common - as mentioned last week, one hour of intense grief equals eight hours of hard labour, and both clients and helpers can become exhausted. Interpersonal relationships suffer; the person under stress may take it out on family and friends, or withdraw and isolate themselves. Boundaries blur as you become over-involved with work and the problems of others. Emotional responses include helplessness, sadness, depression, anger, becoming desensitized, and a loss of empathy.

The best cure for burnout is prevention. It is very important to put yourself first – you can't take care of others if you don't take care of yourself! Caregivers need to find a balance, learn to delegate, reassess values, let go of things, and never hesitate to take time off when needed.



Focus on the positives, rather than the negatives – what good things did you do on a call? People come to distress centres or call distress/help lines because no one else in their life is listening. You have provided something important for them even if you don't see the result. Have clear boundaries; burnout occurs when you accept responsibility for others, so it is essential to understand the limits of your responsibility - you are not responsible for the actions of others. One of the most important preventative factors is being able to debrief with a manager or co-worker.

Preventing burnout requires reliance on internal resources (doing things for yourself), and external resources (family and friends). Constant giving is exhausting, and volunteers and workers need to have a portion of their life where they are receiving, not giving. One of the most important ways to cope with negative stress is to be happy.

Figley's Compassion Fatigue Self-Test for Helpers is a useful tool to help determine whether one is at risk for burnout and compassion fatigue.

### **Sexuality and Gender Issues - Darrin Hagen**

Darrin is a charismatic storyteller, a consummate actor who holds the stage compellingly whether he is doing an interview on Access Help TV or dressed as his alter-ego Gloria (Edmonton Queen: Not a Riverboat Story). He began his discussion by reading a personal essay, using highly effective wordplay to set the mood. The essay described how it felt to walk down a school hallway past bullies who were ready to beat him up for being "different."

Darrin gave a brief description of what it was like growing up in small town Alberta – as an outsider who recognized that he was gay early on; a subject to verbal abuse from peers. Right after high school graduation Darrin caught the bus to Edmonton and immersed himself in the drag scene at Flashbacks (a former gay bar). Soon he had used his talent and confidence to become head drag queen, and within a short time had forged himself an unusual and successful acting career.

After speaking for a short time, Darrin opened the floor to questions and discussion. Each question from the audience gave him a chance to share his outspoken viewpoint of gender issues, and tell yet another fascinating story of his experiences as a gay man and cross-dresser. According to Darrin, gender constructs are flawed and should be removed. He made a convincing argument that homophobia affects straight men more than gay men – since straight men tend to get very upset at any inference that they may not be completely heterosexual. He also made the observation that school is the only time you are in forced association with a peer group. Young people struggling with gender identity issues or bullying would be more likely to make it successfully through those difficult years if they could realize that the school years represent a relatively short segment of one's life span.

For many, university is the first time they are away from home, and it is an environment that is often conducive to "coming out," adding to the stress many university students are under.

Peer support can be very effective for students struggling with gender issues. Darrin also addressed the topic of women who dress as men, referring to Joan of Arc, who was burned at the stake not for leading a rebellion, but because she “tried to be a man.” According to Darrin, there is evidence that Joan of Arc may have been a hermaphrodite. He added a commentary on children born with ambiguous sex organs who are forced into a male or female gender role that may not fit with who they are (further support for the idea of removing gender constructs).

The audience was quite happy to continue asking questions and listen to much more of Darrin’s fascinating discourse, but the conference organizers finally decided it was long past time to break for lunch and brought the session to an end. Darrin left us with one important thought, “don’t let other people dictate who you are.”

### **Schizophrenia - Florence Miller**

Florence acknowledged that Darrin was a hard act to follow. However she, and her companion Bruce, did an admirable job of raising our consciousness regarding both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Bruce is disabled by schizophrenia, but manages to function almost normally with the help of medication. Florence suffers bipolar disorder (her father had schizophrenia), and considers herself fortunate to have her disease completely under control with the help of medication as well. It was not always that way for either of them. Both were misdiagnosed for years, self-medicating through alcohol and drug abuse, repeatedly hospitalized and institutionalized. Florence recounted some of her manic episodes, episodes that were bizarre and frightening both to her and observers. Yet she is able to look back now with a sense of humour, and she uses her own experience as a tool to educate others.

Schizophrenia, according to Bruce, affects one out of every one hundred people. It strikes between the ages of 16-30, with men experiencing earlier onset (18-25 yrs) than women (26-45 yrs). There may be a genetic predisposition for the disease, but it usually requires a stressor to bring on active symptoms. These symptoms may be positive: hallucinations, hearing voices, delusions, paranoia; or negative: alogia (speech poverty), affective flattening, loss of pleasure, apathy.

Schizophrenia is not caused by poor parenting, childhood trauma, drug use, or a domineering mother, yet at some point in the history of the disease it has been associated with each of these causal factors. Much is still unknown about what causes the disease, although a genetic component seems likely. It is theorized to be related to a biochemical imbalance in the brain, and has been successfully treated with antipsychotics/neuroleptics.

Outcomes are improving for those with the disease, but the prognosis is still not great. Twenty-five percent recover after an episode and can live a normal life. Another twenty-five percent are functional on medication and can lead reasonably normal lives, with some restrictions. A third twenty-five percent are improved with medication, but need to live in group-homes or under supervision. Of the final twenty-five percent, fifteen percent are confined to a hospital, unimproved or catatonic, and the last ten percent are dead – usually as

a result of suicide. The risk of suicide is disproportionately high among those with schizophrenia, with a 40% attempt rate. Although the prognosis for schizophrenia is poor, it is important to diagnose it early, since earlier intervention to stabilize has a better outcome rate.

Listening to Bruce and Florence gave me a new perspective on how it feels to deal with mental illness. Both have had huge struggles in their lives, yet both have managed to find a measure of contentment and peace. Rather than being angry at their illness and using it as an excuse to manipulate others, complain or be miserable, both have worked hard to improve their lives. They have managed to turn their fight with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder into a positive experience that educates others and helps remove the stigma of mental illness.

The conference was an excellent learning experience, and I was left with much to think about. Athabasca University students also face issues of gender identity, mental illness and addictions, and we are more isolated than campus-based students. Many of us are under extreme stress, in difficult family situations, dealing with loss or having suicidal feelings, and may be experiencing emotional, mental or financial distress. There are excellent support services available through the AU's counselling department, and I would encourage any student in need to take advantage of their compassionate expertise. Hopefully at some point in the near future we will be able to supplement this with a peer support network as well!

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Schizophrenia Society of Canada  
<http://www.schizophrenia.ca/>

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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 Students' Union.*

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## **Canadian Fed Watch!**

### ***News Across The Nation...***

*December 4, 2002*

**By Karl Low**

### **31 Million Dollars to University of Victoria - 0 to Students.**

The British Columbia government, following the lead set by Ontario, is [investing](#) a sizable amount of money in making a new building for the University of Victoria. 22 million dollars will be spent in creating a 7,800 square metre building for the University of Victoria's Computing Science and Engineering departments. An additional 9 million dollars will go toward supporting various research projects.

It still seems that very few governments understand that what they actually want is graduates, not buildings. Even if they had taken half of the building money and put it instead toward funding interested students, they would still have had the money to build a 30,000 square

foot building to house their research projects, and 11 million dollars of actual education value for BC citizens.

In an age where distance education is developing more sophisticated techniques, becoming better established to service students all across the globe, and where we know that the key to success is to educate the population as quickly and effectively as possible, these building expansion projects for the universities are really little more than government employment projects. It's just that the governments have learned to house them in guises more acceptable to the general public. Instead of giving a brick-layer the means to gain a post-secondary education, the government is more concerned with giving him a job building a facility he may never be able to use.

## **The Romanow Report**

Romanow has released his report on the changes required to prepare the Public Health system for the future. In essence, it calls for a massive increase in money provided to the provinces for Health Care, and the establishment of watchdog groups to ensure that the care Canadian's receive is of the same high quality no matter where in Canada they might be.

The report has come under fire from various provincial Premiers as being another attempt by the Federal government to control what the provinces do. Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta is particularly distressed because if the recommendations of the report are followed, his attempts to create a privatised health-care system will be seriously undermined. The insanity of privatising the delivery of an absolutely required service while attempting to fund it through a public system is something I will not delve into particularly, other than to say that the basic laws of economics suggest it will eventually wind up in disaster. Simply consider that in order to increase profits any company has to either increase its fees or lower its costs. Since Premier Klein has repeatedly stated that the health care system will remain publicly funded, that puts an upper limit on fees, which means that the private health companies must concentrate on reducing costs. Because one of the easiest and fastest ways to reduce costs is to reduce quality, how Premier Klein expects this system to give us the best possible health care is beyond me.

Aside from this tangent however, the Romanow Report actually seems to be a well-thought out document that lays out a coherent plan of action to help improve health care across the country. One of the key points in the report can be found in [Chapter 5](#) where Romanow lays out what is required for a Primary Care system in Canada. Part of the foundation for this Primary Care system is an emphasis on preventative measures, and encouraging Canadians to make better lifestyle choices to increase their health. Sadly, Romanow does not acknowledge what Statistics Canada has [found](#) -- that higher education correlates to better health. It is unfortunate that nobody seems to be telling our governments that one of the best possible ways to lower their largest single expenditure is also the same way that holds the promise of the greatest economic benefit for the nation -- affordable, accessible higher education.

## Remember December 6<sup>th</sup>.

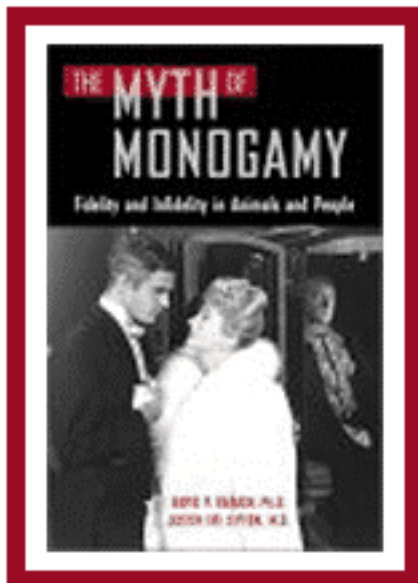
December the 6<sup>th</sup> is the day that 14 engineering students were murdered in 1989 at the L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. The BC government is [calling](#) on Canadians to remember these women, and what their tragedy did to bring awareness of violence against women to us all.

So pause a moment this Friday, and perhaps think of some way we can work to put a stop to this kind of senseless attack.

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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 Myth of Monogamy: Fidelity and Infidelity in Animals and People**

**By Authors David P. Barash, Ph.D. & Judith Eve Lipton, M.D.**

### **Review by Wayne E. Benedict**

One of my interests is science and I have, for years, subscribed to *Scientific American* magazine. One of its ongoing sections is dedicated to reviewing newly released science-related books and a couple of years ago (it takes me a while to get through my yet-to-read list) I bought a book on the magazine's recommendation with the abovementioned title.

Although not everyone shares my penchant for things scientific, I will venture to assert that the vast majority of *homo sapiens* share my interest in examining human sexuality and, as such, this book would appeal to many readers. The authors, one a zoologist and the other a psychiatrist, combine their scientific knowledge and superb writing abilities to take the reader on a journey of sexual discovery from an extremely novel perspective.

As the title suggests, the work examines monogamy, or the lack thereof, across species in an attempt to better understand human sexual and social practices. Monogamy can be divided

into two types: sexual monogamy, or mating exclusivity; & social monogamy, or a social system in which the reproductive arrangement *appears* to involve one male and one female. The reader will also be introduced to numerous other sexual and social arrangements; such as: polygamy which is a mating pattern wherein a single individual mates with more than one individual of the opposite sex; polygyny which is a mating pattern wherein a single male mates with more than one female; polyandry which is a mating pattern wherein a single female mates with more than one male. Much of the book examines the sexual practices and characteristics of different species of animals, birds and insects; teaching the reader about sexual bimaturism, sexual cannibalism, sexual dimorphism, sexual jealousy and many other fascinating topics.

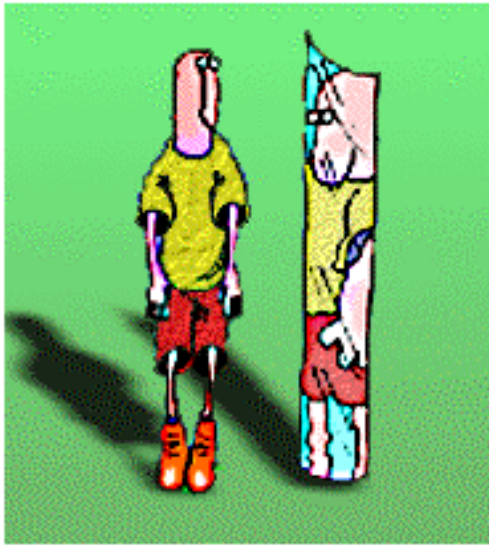
I consider myself to be fairly well-read, however, I must admit that many of the examples of insect and animal sexuality had me shaking my head in incredulity. Take, for example, traumatic insemination used by the bedbug: “the males simply pierce the body of their mate/victim [with their penis], injecting sperm that then travel through the blood, collecting in the gonads and achieving fertilization”. A more incredible version of traumatic insemination occurs amongst the males of the cave bat bug: “...males attack other males, injecting sperm as well as seminal fluid directly into the victim’s body cavity, which is pierced by the attacker’s sharp penis. The male recipients metabolize the seminal fluid, thereby gaining some calories from the transaction. But some surviving sperm also migrate to the recipient’s testes. If and when the victim copulates with a female cave bat bug, he will therefore transfer some of the sperm of his attacker, who gets paternity by proxy”. More widely known are cases of females literally eating their male sexual partners immediately after (or even sometimes during) copulation—some species of spider and the praying mantis are examples.

The book is full of strange and wondrous sexual properties and tactics and it reads more like a fascinating literary novel than a scientific treatise. Being a book based in science, the *Myth of Monogamy* is written from the perspective of evolutionary biology, genetics and the like. For one such as me, who needs proof as opposed to faith, the scientific standards used by the authors, and those of the studies they quote, give their theories credibility. Of course, the question that automatically came to my mind was “are human beings *naturally* monogamous”? The answer is in the book (according to the authors’ observations) but I won’t ruin the ending of a good story for you—to find out, you’ll have to acquire and read the *Myth of Monogamy*.

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*Wayne E. Benedict is a Locomotive Engineer at BC Rail and President of the Canadian Union of Transportation Employees Local 1. He is working toward his Bachelor of Administration in Industrial Relations and Human Resources at Athabasca University.*

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## **A COUNTRY OF FAT FOLKS...And I'm One of Them!**

**By Laura Seymour**

My husband's adoptive parents refer to him constantly by the nickname Skinny. He's one of those people who are naturally slim, just as I was. But no more. I've joined the world of those who whine at the mirror, or avoid it. I'm right there along with others who keep "several sizes ago" of clothes sitting in my closet and pray someday I'll fit them again. I like the clothes I had and don't like the idea of having to start again in the Plus Size stores.

And I just threw out my bathroom scale. No, I didn't break it. I got down to brass tacks. That @(\$%! thing was getting me depressed...and it's not even the most accurate measure of your body...how your clothes fit is! In a world of clothing companies lowering sizes to make us feel better about ourselves haven't we learned that 2 is just as good as 20? Now, I'm still one of those people who are desperately trying to lose ten pounds or more ... and when it doesn't happen I reach for chocolate, but I'm looking at the causes and a solid way to really live again without reaching for the latest diet.

This article took a long time to put together...and a lot of courage. So many people look at anyone even mildly overweight and ask themselves or their friends, "How can they let themselves GET that way!" They reason that you should just DO something and get a hold of yourself. But it's not that simple. I've found out that food is my drug of choice and I'm addicted. I get numb when I eat my favourite goodies. I don't have to feel unaccomplished, question my personal worth or wonder if I'm going to be attacked by a man again if I look good. I just eat and all my worries go into Numb Heaven. Let me share what I've uncovered and how things have changed.

I've been exhausted for more than a year and I'm just starting to come out of the cycle that's hit me umpteen times before. Every time this happens I gain a good 30 to 60 pounds. I'm at the 40-pound range again. That's why I chucked the scale. Its reflection is making me stress out..."oh no, 30...oh lord!! 40!" That's no good.

Thankfully I'm not alone. Oprah's lost and gained more weight than I ever care to ask the total of.

Our own *Voice* editor, Tammy, has walked the same route with me through the land of "broken" thyroid – what a frustrating condition to deal with. My own condition isn't



diagnosable with traditional medicine, at least hers was. To understand this peculiar problem I read an excellent book: Thyroid Power: Ten Steps To Total Health, by Richard L. Shames, M.D. and his wife Karilee Halo Shames, R.N., Ph.D. This medical doctor in California is a member of the American Holistic Medical Association. This is something we haven't got in Canada. More than one newspaper article has been published about MDs in Canada who tried to use an "alternative therapy" and were ousted from practice by the Canadian Medical Association and its need to keep alternatives out of their medicine.

Dr. Shames and his wife have dealt with patients for years who aren't diagnosable and face the same symptoms I do... and the list of symptoms from thyroid problems is seemingly endless. The problem is that *not* a lot of people test abnormally. Dr. Shames cites many physicians and studies that have confirmed this belief of theirs. Basically, you really *do* have to be broken to be abnormal in standard blood and urine testing. So what do you do?

Well I think you can see it coming...diet, exercise and a few possible additions to your pills.

Diet should be higher in protein and lower in poor quality carbs. My rule: If it doesn't sound exotic...don't buy it!

I recently bumped into an article in a favourite magazine. They were lauding the wonderful weight loss of a woman grinning at me from the cover. So I picked it up. I brought it home and finally read about – ahem...guggul. I know, it has a hilarious sounding name but this herb is ancient and fires up your system. I found it at my favourite health food store under the name Guggu-lipid. I bought a bottle. Okay, that's as far as I got, but I want to make sure you see where I'm going. I'm going to the skinny farm at my house. And I'm NOT going to give up chocolate!! As a matter of fact the diet in the magazine suggests a cup of toasty, hot chocolate BUT they suggest spicing it up. You see the diet they suggest to add with the guggu-lipid is spicy foods. They say spicing up your diet burns your system at a higher rate, makes you warmer and therefore operates the thyroid more efficiently. Works for me!

Now here's what I'm suggesting...JOIN ME! Had it with trying to dump five pounds or fifty?? One hundred or more? Why not get together with me in email and we'll dump it together?! I'm not that nuts for exercise, and I'd like to look slim and pretty at the husband's Christmas party at the end of the month...but I don't like being hungry, or being bitchy, or feeling frightened about attacks. So maybe you feel the same way, or know someone who does and might like to read this article, or get some of the magazine recipes. I'm game.

Please – I ask only that you don't try to sell me your products, or tell me you'll coach me on exercise: I've been there. I want to find people who want to help each other, not a messiah trying to lead us to skinny-dom, thanks.

Pass the cinnamon and nutmeg please, Tammy! I have a thyroid to fix.

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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 – December 4, 2002

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Dear Sandra,

**I am about 50 lbs overweight and I feel that every man ignores me because of this. I am becoming very lonely and desperate for a male companion. Everywhere I look I see couples together and my heart yearns for that companionship. I know that I am pretty and I have many other admirable qualities that men seem to want in a woman, but I'm overweight. Why can't men see past my weight? I know I need to lose weight, but I don't want to wait until I am skinny to be in a relationship. I am a beautiful girl and I deserve to be loved just as much as the skinny girls. What's your advice?**

**Overweight in Brandon**

Dear Overweight;

First of all I would like to clarify that not all skinny girls get men, there are just as many lonely skinny girls as there are lonely overweight girls. One size woman does not fit all men.

If you are comfortable with your weight someone else will be too. The shape of a woman's body does not carry much weight (excuse the pun) when it comes to a man deciding if he will spend the rest of his life with her. Telling yourself that men are not swarming towards you because of your weight is not a logical idea. Maybe your ideals are too high in men. Are you keeping yourself open to all shapes, sizes, and personalities of men? In this huge world filled with people it is unrealistic to lead yourself to believe that no one wants to be in a relationship with you. Keep your mind open when looking at potential partners, many people feel that they need to be with a certain type of person and completely neglect all other types of people.

If you want to lose weight, that's great. The most important thing is that you feel good about yourself. Don't use your weight as an excuse for being lonely; take action. Go out and circulate yourself. Expand your horizons, use every option available to get out there and meet new people. Join a group or a club, let friends and relatives know that you are actively looking for "dating possibilities". Keep in mind that in every barrel of apples there are always a few bad ones, and we may have to throw a few away before we get one suitable for eating. Same thing goes with relationships, finding a suitable mate rarely happens on the first try. That's the fun part of dating though, in a few years when you are with the man of your dreams you can look back on some of your dating experiences and laugh.

*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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## **The Importance of Owning a Cell Phone**

**By b.e. hydromako**

Technology has supplied the human race with a plethora of useless devices. It has given us the escalator, a device that exists for those of us who are too lazy to carry our own weight up a flight of stairs. Another product of science is the nuclear bomb. It efficiently kills a large number of people, but leaves an uninhabitable radioactive wasteland in its wake. Speaking of radiation, we must thank

technology for the glow-in-the-dark condom. Now that sex has finally come out of the dark, we are free to illuminate our libidos like never before. These are only a pittance of the waste that has been created, but lo, there is light at the end of the tunnel which technology has mercilessly walled around us. This light calls us from the dark as a necessity of continued human existence. One invention, which is diverse in its applications, stands alone to guide us into the future. This marvellous device, known as the cellular telephone, is the single product that every one of us needs to own.

The cell(ular) phone has the ability to turn menial tasks into stimulating experiences. Take, for instance, Sally and her monotonous drive to work. Everyday, she has to drive the same road, see the same scenery, and listen to the same radio personality babbling inane trivia. Now that she has a cell phone, she can use this wasted time constructively. On the way to work, she calls her secretary for an update on the day's schedule; Sally is organizing her time, picturing the day ahead. Then, she calls her spouse for a reminder of the errands she should complete during the drive home.

Whether Sally has to confirm an appointment, reserve theatre tickets, or talk to her lover just a little longer, the cell phone has effectively turned her mind from the boring drive, and focused her attention elsewhere. Some would argue that this would cause accidents, but we all know that accidents happen, regardless of how well we pay attention. If Sally should cause an accident by missing a stop sign or running down a child in a school zone, at least she has her cell phone handy. It enables her to contact the police, an ambulance, and/or her lawyer (for the impending manslaughter charge) immediately; this quick response might even save the child's life. We cannot ignore the convenience of the cell phone.

Fred also appreciates the convenience of the cellular phone. On occasion, Fred runs into an acquaintance while out and about. If he spots the person in time, he pulls out his cell phone and quickly places a call; Fred doesn't have to stop to chat, or even acknowledge him or her. If some undesirable should get the drop on him and start a conversation, Fred simply says, "Excuse me, but I have an important call to make." The cell phone saves the day again.

One evening, Fred has an engagement with a potential mate at a romantic restaurant. Sitting together in the cozy, quiet atmosphere, Fred and his date have finished a fine dinner and are thinking about ordering some dessert. Fred's phone rings, attracting the attention of nearby patrons. As the caller is an important client, Fred talks loudly enough so that the people around understand what a big shot he is. His date's eyes glaze over with admiration as the call continues for several minutes. When the deal is done, Fred feels quite confident that he has made an impression on everyone nearby. His date is so impressed that she had the waiter call her a taxi and has left without dessert. As he pays the bill and leaves, the other patrons settle back into the once again cozy ambience. We cannot judge Fred's behaviour as anti-social; it is simply, in the words of The King, Elvis, "T.C.B., baby (taking care of business)." Obviously, Fred's date and acquaintances feel inferior to his amplified importance. They are unable to confront their insecurities about not owning a cellular phone.

No company is so unethical as to manufacture a product that harms the user. The blame for products that seem to harm us (i.e.: Thalidomide and birth defects, tobacco and cancer, etc.) is not to be placed on the innocent manufacturers. It is solely our fault; as consumers we are responsible not to misuse or abuse the products offered.

We've all heard the rumours that cell phones cause brain tumours; this is hearsay. The makers of cell phones have conducted studies, and their research shows no ill side effects. In fact, if everyone had a cell phone, the low-level radiation emitted might actually benefit us. Radiation is used in chemotherapy; therefore, being constantly surrounded by similar

electromagnetic frequencies could be the cure for cancer. These stray microwaves may even irradiate airborne viruses and bacteria. Cell phone use on a global scale could cure the common cold, and many other ailments. The potential to have a disease free planet is just a “Send” away.

Cellular phones are a great benefit to mankind, and a necessity that we cannot afford to do without. All of us should purchase one; after all, we don’t want the line on our future to be disconnected.

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*b.e. hydomako 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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## **The Measure of a Man**

### **By Lonita Fraser**

My somewhat socialistic sensibilities, and my sensibilities as a human being, become easily offended by those who would measure the worth of a person by the amount of money that person makes, by what university a person got their degree from, and by the number we label the intelligence quotient.

Man cannot be measured by these things, though he may measure things by them.

A degree from MIT makes of you no better a person, no worthier a soul, than someone who has no degree at all. It does signify one thing, and that is the thing that you can use when you attempt to qualify a person's value. It measures hard work and dedication. It signifies that you have made a great deal of effort in achieving a goal. That is the important thing; not the piece of sheepskin you will frame and save for display.

"Better" is a dangerous word to use when discussing the larger aggregate of what a makes a person. You can easily, and with impunity, say a person is better educated, has a better job, or is better at cooking a meal. But saying better to qualify a person... it smacks of a certain repugnant elitism; a kind of elitism that will tell you that you are worthless if you don't measure up to some surface standard that others determine has worth.

A man who, with full knowledge, enlists in the army in hopes of defending his home, his family and friends, and some cause he believes in, is not a man to be scorned. That man is not expendable. He is not to be viewed with the same grotesque superiority with which we often view those in the service industry. The superiority that tells us service is something to be ashamed of; as if service were somehow lowly, making of a man's life the same things and thoughts we apply to kitchen utensils and floor sweepers.

A person who, despite what others around him may meanly deem his "station" in life, continues to do his work, continues to participate in what others view as work fit only for pack mules, is a person to be admired, not denigrated.

There is a needed division of labour, certainly, but I never could take a bite out of class structure without feeling nauseated at the flavour I got from it; or nauseated at the taste of the taint others give it. Don't get me wrong, there is a little bit of truth to the Orwellian axiom that "All animals are created equal, but some animals are more equal than others." But only in the sense that some are born with abilities that are clearly different to others, and which are either more or less valued in our social structure: the talent to paint, to understand mathematics, to be a mechanic, to walk a straight line even, are examples of these.

What of IQ? It is an arbitrary thing. It measures nothing. It measures - or so they tell us - a person's aptitudes. I don't buy it. How can questions of popular culture, for example, test aptitude? Particularly when those questions might be on a piece of paper in front of someone who is merely uninformed. If you want to tell me that IQ makes a person better, I'll argue that into the dirt as well. Consider the following two people.

Person 1: Giving, loving, generous, a talented artist, a parent of five talented children, a physiotherapist, and a homemaker.

Person 2: Talented computer programmer, but socially inept, major control issues, arrogant, domineering, and derisive of anything he does not count within his own sphere of interests.

Which of those two would you consider "better" as a human? Better as a member of society? Now, does it matter which one has the higher IQ?

"As we pause to reflect the legacy of this remarkable man who was in our midst, it might be useful to consider that it was his accomplishments that made him impressive — but it was his character that made him great." Paul Lauren. [Read more.](#)

"If the measure of a man is what he has done for his family, colleagues, countrymen, and fellow sojourners in this life, I have been blessed indeed, for real success is marked by what we give in return for what we have been given."  
Rodrigue Mortel M. D. The Measure Of A Man, *Penn State Medicine*, Fall 1998.

"I saw a very important and very great man the other day. What made this man great wasn't the car he was driving. He had a beat up old pick up truck. What made this man great wasn't the clothes he was wearing. He had on a torn tee shirt and blue jeans. What made this man great wasn't his money or his job. His worn out work boots and the hard hat in his truck were evidence that he worked hard for what little he had. What made this man great and important in my eyes was that he had stopped along the side of the road to give an old lady with a stalled car a jump start."

Joseph J. Mazzella. [Living a Happy and Joyous Life.](#)

I quote these things not in reference to the people they are about, but because of the intent of why they were said, the qualities they detail.

One can also not truly measure a person's value by whatever pain or strife they may have suffered in their lifetime. Although this may sound very cruel and cold, having suffered some tragedy does not increase nor decrease how "worthy" someone is simply by the act of having suffered said tragedy. Suffering does not make a person better; what makes a person better is how they deal with that suffering and what they do with it afterwards. When Buddha said that the only truth in life was suffering, he did not mean suffering for its own sake. Buddha meant that without suffering we would not strive to better ourselves, because there would be no need for us to do so. We cannot, in one sense, become better without it; but we also must not become slaves to it.

You can't truly take the measure of another. You can compare and contrast a person to others, but that is all. If you absolutely cannot do without measuring someone up, measure them by these things, for it is by these things that a man truly proves himself: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honour, integrity, personal courage, and dignity.

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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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## Library 101

### Contributed By The Insider

*Librarian Elaine Magusin continues the series "Things You Should Know About the Library."*

#### **Q: What is the difference between a keyword and a subject search in AUCAT?**

A: Keyword searching is a simple way to look up information on a particular topic. Instead of using very specialized vocabulary (as you would in a subject heading search) you can simply search on key terms that describe your topic. For example, if you were searching for information on teenage suicide, you might construct your search like this: teenage and suicide. This search would find all the records in the catalogue that include the words teenage and suicide in either the TITLE, SUBJECT, CONTENTS OR NOTES fields. The item records list the subject headings assigned to the topic and you can expand your search by using these headings in a subject search.

In order to start out with a subject-heading search in AUCAT, you would need to know the actual subject heading ahead of time (in this case, youth-suicidal behaviour). Subject headings are lists of controlled vocabulary used to describe topics. They are designed as a way to "find and gather" all the information on a particular subject so that instead of searching for teenager or youth or adolescent or young adult etc., you can just search on one term.

#### **Q: I'm interested in seeing a list of recent acquisitions at AU Library. Where can I find this information?**

A: Every month we put a list of our recently catalogued items on our website. To access it, go to our [library catalogue](#) and click on New Materials.

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## Library 101

*Librarian Elaine Magusin continues the series "Things You Should Know About the Library."*

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## Myths & Challenges of Online Education

### Contributed by The Insider

*Photo provided by The Inside*

*AU's Pierre Wilhelm in the company of Maestra Diana Bosco Hernandez, organizer of the "Primer Encuentro Iberoamericano de Educacion Superior en Linea" in Mexico*

Pierre Wilhelm from the School of Business reports that he was fortunate to attend the first meeting of online Latin American universities organized by the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM) to mark 30 years of distance education in Mexico. This meeting was held from November 4 to 8 at UNAM's "Coordinacion de Universidad Abierta y Educacion a Distancia." Many guests who could not attend in person participated from Mexico, Latin America, and Europe via the [Internet](#) and by way of satellite and cable communications.

The "Primer Encuentro Iberoamericano de Educacion Superior en Linea" featured speakers from Spain and the Americas who discussed the theme of ***myths and challenges in online education*** for over three days. Pierre experienced presenting a conference paper online and answered questions by way of a "listserver" and "chat room." He says he was quite pleased with this novel and informal approach to "conferencing."

Athabasca University featured prominently in several workshops coordinated by Peter Cookson, Director of the "Centro de Tecnologias para la Educacion e Informacion" at the University for Peace in Costa Rica. "Pedro" left Athabasca University this year for Central America to establish distance education programs designed for international and Costa Rican students.

Many conference members expressed keen interest in collaborating with Athabasca University in the near future in order to further research and development in distance education. Amongst these, Dr. Juan José Sánchez Sosa, General Secretary of the [Union de Universidades de America Latina](#), which represents over 160 Latin-American universities.



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

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

**THE VOICE December 4, 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)



## **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**



## **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 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.
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## SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



**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)

## **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**

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**

**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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## **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

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](http://www.vibrantcommunities.ca)**, (or) in Edmonton contact:

City of Edmonton Innovative Services  
Jenny Kain @ 944-5512

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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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## **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**



## **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

Want to apply? You can get more information by contacting our regional office or apply online 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 co-ordinating 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.



### **The Barcelona Forum 2004**

**Contributed By The Community  
Networks Group**

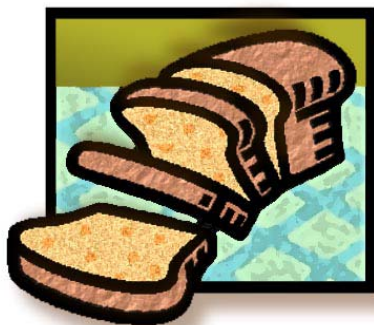
The first **Universal Forum of Cultures** is a new international event which will bring

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.



## **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**

## **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!](mailto:info@diabetes.ca)  
[www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)

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## **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).



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## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

**PUBLISHED IN THE VOICE December 4, 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.**

