

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

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The Scary Harper Government

The proof comes out

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Assistive Technology

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Life in Germany:Part 7
An AU student, abroad
By John Buhler



Angeles and I are getting to know Hamburg very well. We are really enjoying our time here. The city has so much to offer and we are learning a little about the local history. For instance, in the Middle Ages, Hamburg was a walled city, surrounded by water. Although the walls are no longer standing, the legacy of the fortified city is reflected in Hamburg's place names. Everyday, I take the S-Bahn through Sternschanze, which was once a star-shaped outer fortress on the approach to Medieval Hamburg. Everyday, I get out of the train at Dammtor station, named for an entrance into the old walled city. And everyday, I walk past a park called Planten un Blomen where the park's lakes are the only sign that a channel of water had encircled the city's

outer defences.

Anyone who visits Hamburg immediately learns that it is a "free and Hanseatic city." The Hansa League was a medieval union of cities that traded among themselves and provided mutual protection to each other. Member cities were run by councils of merchants, rather than by the church or a monarchy. Through trade, Hamburg became a prosperous city.

The Speicher Stadt (literally "storage city") reflects Hamburg's long involvement in international trade. This old warehouse quarter now features office space and museums overlooking the district's bridges and canals. Though the fortunes of many other Hanseatic cities may have declined in the modern era, Hamburg can boast that it has more millionaires than any other city in Europe. Along the north bank of the Elbe River large mansions attest to the prosperity that trade has brought to the city.





Not all of Hamburg's residents have been so fortunate, however. In 1898, cholera swept through the poorer districts, due to the inadequate sewage system of the time. During the Second World War, Allied bombers concentrated their attacks on the districts where workers and their families lived. These were the people employed in the munitions factories. The newer architecture found here reflects the area's destruction during the last world war.

Sixties' pop music fans would know that Hamburg was also the place where the Beatles got their start. They regularly performed in a club in the Reeperbahn (the city's historic "red-light district") before becoming international stars.

The district where we are living, Altona, was incorporated into Hamburg in 1937. It has had a long history of Socialism. It was here that Hamburg experienced its Bloody Sunday, when Communists and Nazis violently clashed in the streets. Hamburg had not been a Nazi stronghold, which is the reason why the historian Christopher Browning bases his work, *Ordinary Men* (reprinted in 1993), on members of Hamburg's auxiliary police force.

Today, Altona is home to the ethnically diverse area of Ottensen where one can find Turkish shops, Indian restaurants, and so-called counter-cultural types. Altona also includes affluent neighbourhoods like Gross Flottbek, where large houses are set back from tree-lined streets. Here you can also see quaint thatched roofed cottages that appear as if they were taken straight out of a painting. A little further south, one discovers Othmarschen, an idyllic European neighbourhood that features a collection of shops, restaurants, and boutiques.

In a short time, we have become very comfortable in Hamburg. Although it is a city of almost two million people, it is a very safe city. With its parks, the Elbe River, Lake Alster, its fine old buildings, and numerous museums, it is also a very beautiful city. Before long, we got to know some wonderful people who live in our building. Angeles meets many friendly and warm people in Hamburg's various archives. The city is home to us. We know that we will be sad to leave Hamburg and the new friends that we have made here.

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Assistive Technology for Students with Special Needs (PSYC 476)

A brand-new AU psychology course, Assistive Technology for Students with Special Needs (PSYC 476), just opened two weeks ago! This course is a must for anyone interested in learning about technology available for individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology is defined as "equipment that improves the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities"; this course will empower you with knowledge about assistive technology, and give you concrete knowledge about maximizing available technology to aid those with special needs. It is a 3-credit course in the Social Sciences, with no pre-requisites. It is divided into 4 main sections, each of which explores a unique topic related to assistive technology.

The first part consists of 5 units introducing you to the basic concepts in assistive technology. Not only will you become familiar with current issues related to assistive technology, but you will also learn how to assess various technologies for their usefulness to disabled people using 2 types of assessment: SETT (Student, Environment, Tasks, Tools) and WATI (Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative). Other units in the first part of PSYC 476 include learning about working with families of disabled individuals, in addition to developing "technology plans."

PSYC 476's second part explores the assistive technology that can be used for students with disabilities. This includes not only discussing technology for those with reading disabilities, but also for students with writing, manipulation, and math disabilities.

The third part which consists of 4 units, discusses in detail various types of disabilities and the assistive technology available to complement these. Not only will you explore the needs of students with learning disabilities, but also you will have the opportunity to discuss the needs of other disabled individuals including communication needs, as well as physical disabilities.

PSYC 476 concludes its final part with several in-depth units on recent technological advances and how those with disabilities can use these to their advantage. For instance, you will discuss computer access, which "refers to a group of devices that allow students with disabilities to operate computers, who would normally not be able to do so in a standard way." These include alternatives for mouse and keyboard (including touch screens), as well as other aid devices. You will also focus on internet options, as well as special requirements for the very young.

Your assessment in PSYC 476 consists of 4 items. Twenty-two percent of the final course mark results from participation in online discussions with peers, monitored by tutors. These discussions are easily accessible through PSYC 476's webpage. Two essay-based reports total 48% of the final mark: the first, worth 22%, consists of a review of assistive technology, and the second, worth 26%, summarizes your personal strengths. Lastly, the remaining 30% of the course mark is derived from a 15-page course project that enables students to transform their recently acquired assistive technology knowledge into the practical by discussing "a case where assistive technology could support a child with learning difficulties."

In addition to the above assessment Assistive Technology for Students with Special Needs also offers a Digital Reading Room with articles for students to peruse, video clips related to the subject, discussion forums and online discussions, and an online assignment drop-box!

For more information on Assistive Technology for Students with Special Needs (PSYC 476), visit the course syllabus at: www.athabascau.ca/html/syllabi/pysc/psyc476.htm. The course website can also be visited at: <http://psych.athabascau.ca/html/Psych476>

In his article about Stephen Harper and the "Calgary school," Gregory Ryan (2006) tries to present Harper and his political associates as fairly harmless by using "the straw man" technique. Ryan proposes that his neighbour's view of the Harper government as scary is simply due to a misconceived view of the Straussian philosophy that supposedly underlies the Conservatives' political agenda. Ryan does this by drawing heavily from an *Ottawa Citizen* editorial written by Robert Sibley (2006) that uses a similar technique (although at much greater length) purporting to show that critics of Harper and the Calgary school are misguided and misinformed.

However, Ryan's and Sibley's arguments do little to allay my scary impressions of the Harper government, since my fears are far more solidly based on what Harper and his cohorts say and do, as well as the philosophy underlying their actions. In the House of Commons on Oct. 28, 2002 Harper said, "A government monopoly is not the only way to deliver health care to Canadians. Monopolies in the public sector are just as objectionable as monopolies in the private sector. It should not matter who delivers health care, whether it is private, profit, not-for-profit or public, as long as Canadians have access to those services through the public insurance system regardless of their financial needs" (Barrett, 2004). Also, in a speech delivered to Toronto-area Conservative candidates on May 10, 2004, Harper said, "It does not matter who delivers health care -- it matters that everyone can receive it" (CTV news staff, 2004).

This really scares me because of the implication that Harper either does not know of (or worse, knows of and is ignoring) a wide-ranging study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* entitled "A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Studies Comparing Mortality Rates of Private For-Profit and Private Not-For-Profit Hospitals" (Devereaux et al, 2002). In this peer-reviewed analysis of data involving 26 thousand U.S. hospitals and 38 million patients, Dr. P. J. Devereux et al come to exactly the opposite conclusion to that stated by Stephen Harper above. Dr. Devereaux (2002) states, "The higher death rate at for-profit hospitals occurs for two reasons. Shareholders expect a 10% to 15% return and the hospitals have to pay taxes. Funding is fixed [from Medicare and other schemes in the United States and from national health insurance in Canada], so they cut corners on skills. It would be no different in Canada or Britain. If Canada opened its doors to private, for-profit hospitals, they would be the same US chains that generated the data included in our study."

In the conclusion of an editorial comment on the research cited above, Dr. C. David Naylor, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, wrote, "Does anyone still want to contract out large segments of our publicly financed health care system to for-profit US hospital chains after reading this article? I hope not" (Naylor, 2002). However, Harper, nearly two years later (Barrett, 2004), is expressing the opinion that providers don't really matter, and I find this very scary indeed.

Another scary aspect of Mr. Harper's recent behaviour would be his support and collusion in the defection of David Emerson from the Liberal opposition to a Conservative cabinet post, only a few days after the election. Mr. Harper, who actually claims all the credit and says that it was his idea to have Mr. Emerson defect, has never said that Emerson should run in a by-election to justify his actions to the electorate. (This is probably because the Conservative candidate in Vancouver Kingsway ran third with only 18% of the vote!). Emerson, who said on election night that he would be "Stephen Harper's worst enemy" (Bryden, 2006) also has ruled out the by-election possibility, and admits he changed sides in order to remain in cabinet.

This contempt for the wishes of the vulgar electorate shown by both Harper and Emerson impresses me with their shared attitude that they know better what is best for the country, better than do the voters of Vancouver Kingsway. The actions of these two seem ethically reprehensible to me, and very scary in terms of the future of democracy in a Harper-led government. Their attitudes also seem very Straussian, at least as defined by Robert Locke, a follower of Strauss. In an article entitled, "Leo Strauss, Conservative Mastermind," Locke outlines a central concept of Straussian philosophy:

"The key Straussian concept is the Straussian text, which is a piece of philosophical writing that is deliberately written so that the average reader will understand it as saying one ("exoteric") thing but the special few for whom it is intended will grasp its real ("esoteric") meaning. The reason for this is

that philosophy is dangerous. Philosophy calls into question the conventional morality upon which civil order in society depends; it also reveals ugly truths that weaken men's attachment to their societies. Ideally, it then offers an alternative based on reason, but understanding the reasoning is difficult and many people who read it will only understand the "calling into question" part and not the latter part that reconstructs ethics" (Locke, 2002).

Possibly, Harper and Emerson regard themselves as the elite leaders who understand the "esoteric" context of their words and actions as part of the ruling class, while the voters of Vancouver Kingsway are only able to understand on the "exoteric" level. If we are offended at such an assumption, Locke provides some further explanation,

"Admittedly, the concept of the Straussian text is one susceptible to intellectual mischief in the form of wild claims about the esoteric meaning of texts, not to mention rather off-putting for anyone who doesn't like know-it-all elites. But before getting too huffy about this elitist view of the good society, it is best to remind oneself that it is strikingly similar to the view cultivated for centuries by the Catholic and Orthodox churches and by Orthodox Judaism, not to mention other religions: there is a small number of men who know the detailed truth; the masses are told what they need to know and no more. Free inquiry outside the bounds of revelation is dangerous. And yet Strauss practiced free inquiry and taught anyone who could afford the tuition at the University of Chicago how to do so. Clearly he is not just an elitist trying to return to the past that he claims existed; he strongly hints this is impossible anyway" (Ibid.).

The above seems far more scary than the innocent sounding "pedagogical methodology" that Gregory Ryan (2006) would have us believe is underlying the distrust of Harper and the Calgary school. In fact, it almost seems that what Locke (2002) is saying could be used to justify (politically) withholding the truth, or even lying to the electorate, if justified by noble goals.

Finally, I am scared by the fact that Harper has still not rescinded the infamous "firewall letter" to Ralph Klein (Harper et al, n.d.). Since this letter basically recommends actions that, by some interpretations, could lead to the break-up of Canada in the same style as that is supported by Quebec sovereigntists, I find it very scary that one of the co-signers is now sitting in the Prime Minister's Office.

There are many more concrete reasons to find Harper and the "Calgary school" scary, rather than the vague philosophic misconceptions Gregory Ryan (2006) suggests, and the actions that Harper has taken so far haven't been reassuring. I, and the majority of Canadians who did not vote for Harper, will be waiting to see if our fears were justified.

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UPDATE TO *The Scary Harper Government*

"Harper 'loath' to co-operate with ethics commissioner

On March 3, 2006, CBC News published an article entitled "Harper 'loath' to co-operate with ethics commissioner." The news article includes the following text,

The Prime Minister's Office attacked the credibility of the ethics commissioner Friday night after he announced an investigation into conflict of interest allegations against Stephen Harper. Ethics commissioner Bernard Shapiro said he will look into what influence Harper wielded to convince former Liberal cabinet minister David Emerson to cross the House of Commons floor. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's conduct in the Emerson affair will be reviewed. "The Prime Minister is loath to co-operate with an individual whose decision-making ability has been questioned, moreover who has been found in contempt of the House," said Sandra Buckler, the prime minister's director of communications."

As this situation was one of the ethical concerns in the *Voice* article I recently wrote, I did a quick search to determine how serious this issue is. Apparently, some lawyers (Burrows, 2006; Dimitrov, 2006) feel that Harper and Emerson may have violated the constitutional rights of the Liberal voters in Vancouver Kingsway, specifically rights set out in Section 3 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Dimitrov suggests "that it is incumbent upon the Attorney-General of Canada to act to resolve this matter. Action might take the form of the appointment of a Special Prosecutor to investigate, a judicial inquiry, a reference question to the Supreme Court."

Also, Emerson has been asked by the president of the Liberal riding association to return more than \$90,000 in Liberal campaign contributions (Bailey, 2006). It appears that his acceptance (and Harper's offering) of "\$70,000 in annual ministerial compensation (bringing his total taxpayer-financed salary to about \$215,000 per annum, not including benefits), the chauffeur-driven limousine, the executive office suite and the army of public servants and political staffers anxious to do his bidding" (McMartin, 2006) may be a violation of the law administered by Elections Canada. Emerson has vowed to resign if found guilty (Globe and Mail, 2006), but it is not clear what the repercussions will be for Stephen Harper. Harper, his party, and Emerson will lose considerable credibility as crusaders to re-establish ethical government if they continue to stay silent (Ermisch, 2006).

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What's in a Name?

By Pam Pelmous

"What's in a name?

That which we call a rose

By any other word would smell as sweet."

-- from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (II, ii, 1-2)



Juliet makes this observation in *Romeo and Juliet*, wondering aloud what intrinsic value a name truly holds. Shakespeare therefore, through Juliet, brings up an interesting point. Does a name truly mean anything? It is one of the first forms of identification we learn. It is one of the first questions we learn to answer. "Who are you?" "What's your name?" Does the answer, "I'm Pam," hold any fundamental information?

Interestingly, scores of individuals in our society are still preoccupied with the meaning of names. For example, "Paul" means "small." "Mallory" means "bad omen." "Olivier" (literally "olive tree") means "peace." While names like Paul might not be particularly representative (I'm talking about overall size here), naming a child Mallory suddenly seems cruel and Olivier, hopeful. While the Pauls I know are not small, the Mallory I know, sweet, and the Olivier, far from peaceful, traditional names may not have a direct link to their roots. Perhaps the traditional meaning of names is more a sign of hopefulness on the side of the parents that their children will be somehow blessed by their name.

This brings up the point of external influences. While parents consciously choose a name, with or without hope of the child growing into the name's meaning, a parent does affect how a child will grow into their name. An immigrant parent who lives in Canada and gives a child a foreign name, such as, Ojibwa, may increase the child's potential as a more cultural and on-the-fringe individual. Children are very much preoccupied with fitting in, and at ages in which children long to be accepted, a name like Ojibwa can easily set the child apart. For this reason, many children choose an alternate name. A friend of mine went by "Jason" for years, while his birth name is "Chi Shing." Now, even his family calls him Jason, and appropriately, out of all the members of the family, he seems the most "Canadianized." Such examples are pervasive in our society. In fact, *Becoming Emma* by Caterina Edwards (1992) is a novella centered on names and identity. A Latvian girl named Aida decides to change her identity to be more Americanized. Throughout the story, she strives to become "Emma."

Parents who give their children non-traditional names (separate from cultural names), names such as Thorax, often set-up their children for being considered "different." However, part of this choice of name is a reflection of the parents themselves, the ones who directly influence a maturing child. I have a friend named Athena who has a brother named Palladin. They certainly grew up to be a little different from the mainstream, although their parents were very non-traditional to begin with. Perhaps this is why parents who are partial to the name Patrick end-up raising children named Patrick in a similar way. The name itself is a reflection of the desired qualities cultivated by common characteristics in the parents, characteristics that are most influential to the child's upbringing. This is likely also the reason that names have diminutives, especially for children (e.g., little Jennifers are often referred to as simply "Jen").

To reiterate, talking to teachers, I've repeatedly heard the claim that Matthews, Kevins, Therasas, and so on tend to have similar characteristics. Being a parent, I remember how difficult it was to choose my daughter's name; I ended up deciding on Elizabeth because I've adored all the Elizabeths in my life and admired their common characteristics. Perhaps because these are characteristics I value, I will attempt, consciously and subconsciously to cultivate them in my little girl. If this is the case, names truly are reflections of personalities, but perhaps for other reasons than would be expected.

Historically, and even presently, people change their names to be viewed in different lights. Throughout history, female authors chose male pen names (e.g., George Eliot is a pen name for Marian Evans) so that their writing would be accepted in a male-dominated society. Today, performers often have stage names, effectively establishing a dualism of character. A perfect example would be my friend "Pat Bastarde" who, on stage, is one of the hardest rockers you'll ever see in every respect of hard rocker -- crazy hair-do, head-banging, stage antics, etc. In person, Patrick is a shy, modest, sweet man, dedicated to his wife and his work in neuropharmacology. The one Patrick is totally unlike the Pat, and so the name change is highly suitable.

A final look at name change and significance are the people who change their names legally, establishing themselves socially and professionally as entirely different individuals. In many cultures, the woman taking on the man's last name after marriage signifies a transfer of ownership from her father (or brothers) to her new husband. The name change occurs at a period of major change in the female's life. Such a pattern is still present in those who choose to change their names legally for other reasons. The people I know who have legally changed their names did so upon major changes in their lives, often involving changes in outlook. The name change was literally the signature at the end of a document of changes in perspective, circumstance, and beliefs.

In short, our names are not necessarily the determinants of who we essentially are, but they are representative of who we are. Whether this correlation is due to cosmic predetermination or to parental influence, our names reflect our basic personalities and often even our social status. That is why I can say, today, I *am* Pam.

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Busby's Science and Nature Column: In Training for Planet Status

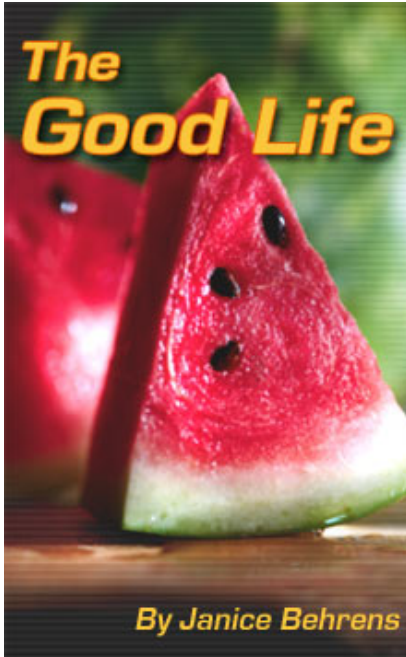
Busby LeClair



Most of you have no doubt heard of the predicament of the planet Pluto, which many scientists are now saying should be stripped of its planet status. Apparently, Pluto is really just a piece of icy space debris, part of something called the Kuiper Belt. According to the latest reports on the Cable News Network (CNN), a new orbiting object within the Belt, dubbed by scientists with the catchy name of UB313, has been located in the same general area of our frosty little friend, begging the question of whether it would make more sense to add one more planet to the solar crown jewels, or strip The Artist Formerly Known as Pluto of its questionable credentials.

For what it's worth (and I know my voice in this debate will be welcomed by both the scientific and the hip hop communities), I believe that we should just keep expanding the solar system like the waistband of a pair of cheap velour track pants. I mean, what the hell, it's not like we have to pay increased wages or royalties or something to a bunch of goggle-eyed, nine-limbed Plutonians or whatever they are up there. It's not like, if we let this one go, every little piece of space junk will be demanding official this and official that. And it does seem more than a little cruel to deprive Pluto of its standing at this point. It would be like going back to Ross Rebagliati, re-opening that whole marijuana-as-a-performance-enhancing-drug debate, and then ripping his Olympic gold medal off his chest. Besides, without its planet status, Pluto is nothing. Washed up. Finished. It's not like it can start a whole new career as a dental hygienist or something. No, planet is pretty much all it's got going for it. Without that, it's just a miserable, remote, frozen, and generally uninhabitable wasteland. It's sort of like Prince George, but without the shopping malls. Even Starbucks would be reluctant to set up shop there.

Admittedly, I do have something of a vested interest in this whole planet / not-a-planet brouhaha. I've checked the rules, and the fact is, if I continue ordering in-home meal delivery from Honest Joe's Jumbo Burrito House, specifically the Meat Lover's Chimichanga with Mexi Fries and Super-Sized Vanilla Coke, then in about six months time I myself will be of sufficient circumference to apply for official planet status. Although the egghead astrologists or astronomers or whatever they call themselves at NASA have so far been too busy to return my calls, I'm pretty confident that it won't be long before Planet Busby makes the cover of scientific journals and swimwear magazines around the world. Just remember that you read it here first, sky watchers.



A Few Small Things

Sometimes in our lives, there are days when the world threatens to overwhelm us. The new supervisor at the office seems to be harboring some sort of grudge against you. You've just had a fight with your husband about whose turn it is to take your daughter to soccer practice. The cheque that you wrote for your son's swimming lessons has bounced, because you forgot to transfer the funds. The dress that you bought just last year does not fit you any longer. The history midterm exam is scheduled for Monday morning, and there is not enough time or energy left over at the end of the day to study for it. You can't find your car keys when you're heading out the door, late for an appointment. As we all know, the small but nagging stresses and tragedies of the day can mount up around us to the point where we feel that we just can't cope.

At these times, it is only human to begin to question the larger circumstances of our lives. The self-defeating questions spin around and around inside our heads, like dogs chasing their own tails. What am I doing in this lousy job, where I'm not appreciated? What has gone wrong with my marriage? Why am I so disorganized? Why is everything so difficult for me?

It is truly amazing at times how a few minor, but key, frustrations can swiftly turn into a crescendo of anger, despair and self-recrimination. By the same token, though, it is also surprising how a number of small pleasures and seemingly unsubstantial accomplishments can add up to balance the scales. I suggest that when it feels as though your world is crumbling down around your ears, simply take fifteen minutes and walk around the block. It can really lighten your spirits. Putting on some uplifting music, lighting some incense or a few candles, cooking a healthy nourishing meal, going for a bike ride -- these are all activities that can potentially turn the emotional tide for us. This is particularly true when we do them on a regular basis, heaping one slight luxury upon another.

When you feel overwhelmed by all the things that should have been attended to yesterday, last week, last month (and all the things that are looming ahead), the best thing you can do is find one small, easily-completed task and do that. The sense of accomplishment feeds off of itself and spurs you on to do more. As a very wise friend once told me, there are many times in our lives when we have so much to do that it seems impossible to get it all finished. But, we can always think of one, small thing that we can take care of right now.



From
Where
I Sit

Hazel Anaka

To Give or Not to Give

When it was disclosed that a young bookkeeper had (allegedly) bilked Salvation Army of more than one million dollars, I didn't call to cancel the donation debited from my bank account each month. I don't think the illegal actions of one individual take away from the good work the organization as a whole is doing. I'm prepared to continue to support the cause. I hope restitution comes when the large house and luxury cars are seized and sold.

We've all heard about and experienced donor fatigue. From catastrophic natural disasters like the tsunami, earthquakes and hurricanes to the growing day-in and day-out need for food banks, women's shelters and disease research -- we're feeling tapped-out.

Having a daughter working as a special events coordinator with the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation has given me insight into just how hard some of these agencies and foundations work to finance their causes. The need to come up with creative fundraising projects that engage the public and actually raise some money is an ongoing challenge. Silent auctions, celebrity golf tournaments, galas, radiothons, relays, and runs are just some of the annual events that we're asked to participate in and/or sponsor.

Ann Marie Owens, in a February 4th story in the *National Post*, wrote about the increasingly common approach some retailers are taking to squeeze a few more dollars out of their customers. We've all been approached at the cash register for what she terms "point-of-sale philanthropy" to donate a couple of dollars to some cause or another. Owens' article talks about how creative and successful an approach this is. It also allows companies the prestige and tax advantages of being perceived as generous corporate citizens when in fact it's their customers' money. I, for one, hate it. I don't like being held hostage in front of strangers and being guilted into coughing-up a few more dollars. I support the causes I choose to support and do it on my terms and not because someone's got me in a compromising situation. With the rampant problem of credit card debt, consumers would be wise to consider what the two-dollar donation is really costing them when they make their minimum monthly payments into perpetuity.

This week I got a look at a new strategy. The Bible League is using the fear of terrorism including beheading to draw attention to religious persecution in Indonesia and of course wanting my help to eradicate this as I "read this letter in the comfort of my home in Andrew." Number one, where'd you get my name and number two, I'm not impressed with fear mongering. Maybe this strategy works with some people, but not this kid. The highlighting of passages, photocopies of supposed stories, handwritten notes and prepaid envelope don't impress me. Maybe it's true, maybe they're legit. I just don't have to give to causes because they try to scare or shame me into it. It's still my choice from where I sit.

AUSU THIS MONTH



AUSU Election, DATES EXTENDED

THE DATES OF THE AUSU ELECTION HAVE BEEN EXTENDED - VOTING WILL BE OPEN FROM MARCH 13 THROUGH MARCH 20TH, TO ALLOW VOTERS TO VOTE OVER A WEEKEND. The 2006 AUSU election is now open, and members can expect to see campaign materials from candidates on this website and in our forums. Below is the candidate sheet, as approved by our Chief Returning Officer, Bevan Iwaskow. Visit the candidate sheet at <http://www.ausu.org/election/candidates.php> for more info on all of the candidates. We hope you all turn out to vote this year, for the council that will provide student services through March 2008!

This year's candidates are:

MacDonald McInnis - Calgary, AB
Joy Krys - Edmonton, AB
Jamie Czerwinski - Sherwood Park, AB
Sarah Whaley - Surrey, BC
Lisa Priebe - Calgary, AB
Karl Low - Calgary, AB
Tania Davies - Carlsbad, CA
Alica Robichaud - Saint John, NB
Zil-E-Huma Lodhi - Waterloo, ON
Barbara Rielly - Westport, ON
Megan McIntyre - Niagara Falls, ON
Angele Gaudette - Sudbury, ON
Real Beaulieu - Nepean, ON
Peter Tretter - Greely, ON
Lonita Fraser - Hamilton, ON

AUSU Course Evaluations

Would you like to know what students have thought of an AU course? If so, you are not alone. Many students find the input of their peers invaluable when selecting courses or a program of study. AU students may not have cafeterias and hallways in which to share this knowledge, but AUSU has provided an alternative: AUSU Course and Program Evaluation surveys. Accessible through the "Course Evaluations" link on the right side of the top bar of AUSU.org, these surveys ask a series of questions about AUSU courses and programs. Students may rate each course or program only once, to ensure the validity of the results, so you must be logged in to access a survey form. Anyone, however, may view the results. If you haven't already, please rate some courses you have taken so that others may benefit from your experience. Note: these surveys are not the ones that AU distributes with their course manuals. No AU staff or faculty member has access to the AUSU website, nor can they determine who has filled out a survey. Your anonymity is assured.

AUSU 2005/06
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Dear Barb:

My 75-year-old mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's two years ago. My father is 82 and not in good health. He has been taking care of my mother for the most part, but I don't believe he will be able to continue this. This disease is taking a toll on my family members. I'm not sure if we should put my mother into a long-term care facility or continue to care for her at home. We are an independent family and my father is reluctant to go outside for help. I'm not sure if there is somewhere we could get additional help, so that we would be able to care for mom at home. My father would be grateful for any information you can provide us.

Monica - Cochrane AB

How unfortunate for your family to have received this diagnosis.

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia among older individuals. The risk for contracting this disease increases with age. About 5% of men and women aged 65 to 74 have Alzheimer's disease. And almost half of adults over the age of 85 may have it. Individuals usually live 8 to 10 years after receiving a diagnosis of Alzheimer's.

The Alzheimer Society of Canada has a series of brochures which are available online at www.alzheimer.ca. As well, you can obtain these brochures through the local chapter of The Alzheimer Society.

When caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease, a caregiver must be sensitive to the individual's basic needs:

- to feel stimulation,
- to enjoy companionship,
- to feel secure,
- to feel self esteem,
- to feel valued, and
- to be treated with dignity and respect.

This is a disease that demands a lot from caregivers, as your family is realizing Monica. Therefore, it is important for caregivers to have breaks, where they take the time to care for their own needs. There are services to help you care for your mother at home for as long as possible. Some services you may be able to receive are homemakers and medical personnel, such as nurses, that will come into your home. In addition, day care services can be arranged for your mother.

The best way to find out if these services are available is to contact your local Alzheimer Society, which will be listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book.

You have a difficult road ahead of you Monica, but it is manageable. Remember to pace yourself and try to remain calm, as your mother will no longer be the person you remember.

E-mail your questions to advice.voice@ausu.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality: your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



At the End of the Day

In the middle of the night, when he's trying to sleep, he hears the binnners in the alley below the bedroom window of his townhouse. They're yelling and laughing. They're sorting their bottles and cans, spreading them out on the ground in a corner of the gravel lane just beyond the security fence.

When he was a child, and the spooks and goblins would scratch their fingernails up and down the glass of his nursery window, he would lay awake and think about all

the terrors wandering around outside. Forty years later, he lays there in bed unable to go back to sleep. He thinks about work, about how badly he screwed up the Anderson account. He thinks about his back-biting co-workers, the upcoming audit by head office, and about all the credit card bills that keep showing up on the mat beneath his mailbox, washing up like dead fish beneath his feet. He thinks about his ex-wife, the way she peeled an apple and tied back her hair. He considers the poor choices he's made in his life. He gets up out of bed and pours himself a stiff drink.

In the morning he drinks three cups of coffee. He drives to work, occasionally checking out his bloodshot eyes in the rearview mirror.

When he reads his e-mails, he sees that the new v.p. of operations - smug little prick - has contracted a so-called efficiency expert to "find new ways to outperform the competition," which translates - absofuckinglutely no doubt about it - as a witch hunt in the making. After lunch (side salad and a double vodka soda) he comes back to his desk and finds a note that his manager wants to talk to him about last month's expense account.

After work, he goes to collect his car from the parking lot. Somebody has keyed it, a three foot scratch along the driver's side doors. He gets into the car and sits in the dark for a long time. He thinks about the teenage son he hasn't seen for two years. He thinks about his last visit to the doctor, about the blood pressure cuff tightening on his arm.

In the rearview, he can see some more binnners gathered together at the end of the parking lot. They've got their shopping carts circled like pioneer wagons. They're drinking from bottles hidden inside paper bags. They're dark and scrawny as urban coyotes. They throw back their heads and howl at the moon. *They're filthy*, he thinks. *They're repulsive and diseased*, he thinks. *They're bodies are crawling with lice*, he thinks. They laugh with the kind of reckless abandon he hasn't felt since he was a little child. He thinks.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

What's new here and around the world

Mandy Gardner

**International News Desk***Gardner**The Sparkle of Student Loans**Mandy*

Several things come to mind when I think of my prolonged stay in Britain - mainly I recall the differences between England and Canada. I've seen the centuries of history and prehistory in London and Avebury, the royal palace and the birthplace of English Canadian culture. Through it all I have managed to remain homesick for Canada despite the wickedly savage winter, the poorly rated loonie and a political canvas that is often distressing. Why? Because for all its troubles, Canada is a good and strong place to live in and to invest in.

This does not hold true for students, however. I began my degree like most Canadian students: on a Canada Student Loan, coupled with an Alberta Student Loan (a whopping \$100). These loans have continued to support me as I work while attending university, whether I am in Alberta, Canada or

Wiltshire, United Kingdom. I have been happy in this situation, and confident that the continued support of the Canadian government will get me that all-important degree, my passport out of the fast food industry. I still believe that this is the case. The only problem is that the shining light at the end of this four-to-infinity year tunnel is obscured by the Big Bad Bill at the end. A bill that wants paying six months after graduation. Is that really fair?

I question this fact solely because of what I have learned from British students, who are not required to pay back their student loans until such a time as they are earning enough money to substantiate their degrees. A British student can graduate safe in the knowledge that he or she need only pay for post-secondary education *if it has been financially worthwhile!* And me? I have to pay anyway. It's not that I don't want to pay. Of course I think my education is worth money, whether or not it helps me get a professional career. But the fact remains that six months is a very small window of opportunity to make the change from university student to full-time, degree-educated contributor to the economy. I doubt very much that I, and many graduates, will find degree-based employment with a salary worth the education in six months. [editor's note: students who are not earning a sufficient income six months after their graduate can apply for up to two years of interest relief, during which time no payments are required and the government pays the interest on loans. The government does not, however, pay interest during the initial grade period].

Am I headed for a ditch after I finally complete this degree? What if I'm still serving french fries after all this work - how will I make payments until I make it as a writer/scientist? Maybe I am being paranoid, but I want to know that I'm not being led down a shiny and expensive hole. I miss Canada and I want to come home to work, but there are some things I am not homesick for. My vote is for Canada to adopt the British system -- hopefully before I'm wearing a cap and gown.

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Contributed by Zil-E-Huma Lodhi

LEA ROBACK FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Value: \$500 - \$3,000

Application Deadline: May 15

Description: For Canadian citizens, permanent residents or convention refugees who reside in Quebec, and women pursuing studies at any level from literacy up to the completion of an undergraduate degree. Must not have a university degree acknowledged in Quebec, and must be socially committed and require financial assistance.

Instructions: Submit resume, letters of reference, letter or audiocassette describing choice of programme and description of financial situation.

Contact Information: Lea Roback Foundation / Fondation Léa-Roback

Web Site: www.fondationlearoback.org/bourse.htm

SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF DISCOVERIES PRIZE ESSAY CONTEST

Value: \$600

Application Deadline: June 15

Description: Open to students of all nations, college or university students who have not received a doctoral degree. Submit unpublished essay of a maximum of 6,000 words on voyages, travels, biography, history, cartography, techniques and technology, or other aspects of discovery.

Contact Information: Society for the History of Discoveries (SHD)

Web Site: www.sochistdisc.org

APEGGA MILLENNIUM SCHOLARSHIP (2)

Administrator: APEGGA Education Foundation, The

Award Amount: \$2,000.00

Award Deadline: Saturday, July 15, 2006

Scholarship Criteria: Alberta resident. Intended to assist the children of APEGGA members to pursue a post-secondary education. Based on academic achievement with significant weight placed on accomplishments in other areas. Must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. Contact for more information.

Contact Information: 1500 Scotia One, 10060 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 4A2

Phone: (780) 426-3990

Fax: (780) 426-1877

Toll Free: (800) 661-7020

Web Site: <http://www.apegga.org/Members/ScholarshipsAwards/schlist.html>



Voice Events Listings

On and off campus events worldwide

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with the word "events" in the subject line.

british columbia

SPRING THEATRE CLASSES

February 06 to May 01, 2006 - Kelowna, BC
Kelowna Actors Studio

Ticket Prices very reasonable

Kelowna Actors Studio - 250-862-2867

info@kelownaactorsstudio.com

<http://www.KelownaActorsStudio.com>

Ticket Prices - \$27-\$49

1-800-434-5092

info@capitoltheatre.com

<http://www.capitoltheatre.com>

SCIENCE SATURDAYS WITH MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

January 22 to May 28, 2006 - Hamilton, ON

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM - Hamilton Children's Museum

Adults - \$1.00 - Children - \$3.00

905-546-4848 - childrensmuseum@hamilton.ca

McMaster University science students provide hands-on science activities for children and families. Venture Physics and Let's Talk Science Team bring along "the punky physics roller coaster" and other creative science demonstrations and activities. DATES: Saturdays, March 12, 19 & 26; April 16 & 30; May 21 & 28. 6 yrs and up

ontario

JESSE STEWART: WATERWORKS

On now to March 12, 2006

Oshawa, ON - The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

Ticket Prices - By donation - Free refreshments

905.576.3000

communications@rmg.on.ca

<http://www.rmg.on.ca>

Waterworks examines the elements of water, wood, earth and metal. The exhibition draws on Stewart's background in the sonic and visual arts. Stewart is well known as a percussionist.

ARNAUD MAGGS NOMENCLATURE

On now to March 26, 2006

Oshawa, ON - The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

Ticket Prices - By donation - Free refreshments

905.576.3000

communications@rmg.on.ca

<http://www.rmg.on.ca>

Arnaud Maggs will be in attendance at the Closing Reception Sunday, 26 March 1-3 p.m.

maritimes

ST. JOHN'S CIRCUS: GROUP PRACTICE

St Johns, NF - Tuesdays - Mun Athletics building - FREE

<http://nick.wirelesszero.net/cgi-bin/juggling/YaBB.cgi>

Everyone's a Star! Juggling, Unicycling, Magic, Clowning, Poi, Diabolo, Fire, and whatever YOUR skill(s) is!

Tues At 7:00 PM - Thurs At 7:00 PM - Sat At 2:00 PM

Sessions usually run about 3 hrs...

123 SENSE

St Johns, NF - Saturdays - 12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Eastern Edge Gallery, 72 Harbour Drive

free - 709-739-1882 - <http://www.easternedge.ca>

Jean Klimack (Winnipeg); Dave Yonge (B.C); Tania Lewis (NY/Newfoundland)

These three artists present in different mediums (video, drawing and photography) odd senses of the everyday, urban myths and gentrification.

CAPITOL SPRING SERIES 2006

On now to May 20, 2006

8:00 PM - Port Hope, ON - Capitol Theatre

To list events in your area, e-mail voice@ausu.org with "events" in the subject line.



Contributed by Lonita Fraser

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INFORMATION WARFARE AND SECURITY

March 15 - 16, 2006 - Princess Anne, Maryland, USA

<http://www.academic-conferences.org/iciw/iciw2006/iciw06-home.htm>

The International Conference on Information Warfare and Security (ICIW) is an opportunity for academics, practitioners and consultants from the US, North America and elsewhere who are involved in the study, management, development and implementation of systems and concepts to combat information warfare or to improve information systems security to come together and exchange ideas. In addition to multiple streams of papers, the conference committee are inviting proposals for workshops and tutorials on topics related to Information Warfare and research methods applicable to this field.

ON-LINE METHODS IN CHILDRENS' LANGUAGE PROCESSING

March 21 - 22, 2006 - New York, NY, USA

<http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/~efernand/childlang/>

This workshop is the first scientific gathering specifically dedicated to a new field of research that explores such issues, experimental developmental psycholinguistics. This workshop provides a forum in which scholars from different areas of expertise (psycholinguistics, language acquisition, and cognitive neuroscience), particularly those interested in applying on-line methods to study children's language processing, will discuss how current and developing empirical approaches can inform about language processing mechanisms in children.

26TH ANNUAL ANXIETY DISORDERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

March 23 - 26, 2006 - Miami, Florida, USA

<http://www.adaa.org/conference&events/AnnualConference.asp>

Our conference provides education to health care professionals, individuals with anxiety disorders and their families, and the media about the nature and management of anxiety disorders. It also provides a unique forum for clinicians, researchers and anyone affiliated with mental health care to learn about scientific advances and current practices in the diagnosis and treatment of anxiety disorders.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR SUPERVISORS (WEEKEND VERSION) - CALGARY

March 18 - 25, 2006 - Calgary, Alberta - Fee: \$1195 CAD

<http://www.peice.com/eventdetails.aspx?event=102514&ref=Allconferences&frfi=16734>

This 2-day course (offered over 2 consecutive weekends in Calgary only) presents practical principles to assist supervisors and managers in their efforts to motivate and mobilize team members toward the fulfillment of team and corporate objectives. A complete set of course materials (including a customized 22 page "DISC Behavioral Style" report for each participant) and lunch are included. Due to the highly interactive nature of this course, the session is limited to a maximum of 20 participants.

ON-LINE METHODS IN CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE PROCESSING

March 21, 2006 - March 22, 2006 - New York

Understanding how children process language, in real time, is necessary for building comprehensive theories about language acquisition. This workshop is the first scientific gathering specifically dedicated to a new field of research that explores such issues, experimental developmental psycholinguistics. This workshop provides a forum in which scholars from different areas of expertise (psycholinguistics, language acquisition, and cognitive neuroscience), particularly those interested in applying on-line methods to study children's language processing, will discuss how current and developing empirical approaches can inform about language processing mechanisms in children.

RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2006

March 24, 2006 - March 26, 2006 - Mont Tremblant, Quebec

<http://www.mfrc.mcgill.ca/?section=Conferences>

A conference fee will be charged to cover expenses (C\$250 for academics, C\$500 for practitioners and C\$100 for students). Presenters, discussants and chairs will be provided with free accommodation. Conference participants are responsible for their own travel and accommodation expenses. Conference participants are eligible to pay discounted hotel rates starting at C\$199 per night, for arrival on Thursday March 23rd and departure Sunday March 26th. The conference will be held at the Fairmont Resort Hotel situated at the foot of Mont Tremblant in Quebec's Laurentians.

Know of a conference that is not on this list? Contact voice@ausu.org with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.

classifieds

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@ausu.org for more information.

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