

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

Volume 16 Issue 06
February 8, 2008

AU Profile

Legal challenges

Forward Motion

Enjoying life's
journeys

Moral Authority

Pro and ex-con

Plus:

*Music To Eat Lunch To, From Where I Sit,
Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan, and much more...*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@ausu.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston

**Moral Authority**

Every day we trust our lives, health, finances, and myriad other aspects of life to professionals. We visit the doctor; we trust that police, firefighters, and EMTs will be there when needed. In short, we trust these professionals' skills and put our faith in the authority their unique talents bring them.

But should we also hold them to a higher moral standard? On the job, that's a definite yes. Doctors, lawyers, and police (among others) are in positions of trust. Yet what about in their personal lives? Just how moral should we demand these authorities be?

That was the dilemma a Swedish medical school grappled with recently. Stockholm's Karolinska Institute is one of the world's most esteemed medical schools. It selects each year's winners of the Nobel Prize in Medicine, and rejects students even with exceptional grades. So when Karl Helge Hampus Svensson was accepted into the freshman class of 2007 (one of only 180 students), it was quite an achievement. In part, his success was due to the top grades he received in online courses he'd taken during the previous six years.

But shortly after classes started, Karolinska officials learned that Mr. Svensson was a convicted murderer and had spent the past six years in prison. He had been convicted of shooting a man who had cost a friend of his a job (the victim had complained about the man's neo-Nazi affiliations). At the time, according to a *New York Times* [article](#), Mr. Svensson himself was also under surveillance for suspected neo-Nazi activities.

The result? After deliberating for months, the Karolinska Institute expelled Mr. Svensson in January. Although there were no legal grounds to do so, their decision was based on a technicality: after being convicted, Mr. Svensson had changed his last name and, although his high school transcript grades were accurate, he had altered it to match his new surname.

But does a past conviction for a crime necessarily mean that someone is unfit to be in a position of public trust? There are some who would argue no. According to the law, Mr. Svensson has paid the penalty for his crime; he has done his time. Clearly, he has the potential to benefit humanity through medicine, perhaps even repaying his debt to society more fully.

Conversely, should intelligence, and the capacity to make a positive contribution to society, outweigh a person's proven ability to commit violence? Can a position of trust ever be re-earned, and if so, how much time should pass before someone's past no longer overshadows their present? In the case of a doctor, should a hand that has taken life ever again have the right to hold other lives in the balance?

There are no guarantees, but people can and do change. One example is the [case](#) of a young man convicted of illegal weapon possession. He served his time, became a U.S. Army Specialist, and hoped to become a New York City police officer. According to his Army supervisors, he is "reliable, honest and brave." He has served his country in a war zone, and at the end of his 15-month combat tour he is expected to be honourably discharged. Yet because he was arrested for having an unregistered weapon under his seat (his only brush with the law), he is not eligible to join the force.

There is no absolute answer. Each case must be taken separately and weighed carefully. But at the very least, we must be willing to consider the possibility of allowing people to restore the balance (karmic, moral, or otherwise, take your pick). Because to do otherwise denies the potential for progress, and that shortchanges us all.

AU Profiles:

AU Profiles: E. Wayne Benedict

By Christina M. Frey



How did Athabasca University help turn a locomotive engineer into a labour lawyer? In this week's profile, E. Wayne Benedict, a 2006 graduate of AU's Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations (B.HRLR) program, talks about how his initial desire to upgrade his skills eventually turned into a law degree. He explains how distance education changed his life, and discusses why it's so important to make and pursue attainable goals.

"Nothing opens doors, or minds, like education," Wayne says. His seven-year journey toward his degree began when, while working as a locomotive engineer for BC Rail (now CN Rail), he was elected as head of the union local, which acted as a bargaining agent for engineers with BC Rail.

"I wanted to educate myself to perform services for the local that had previously been contracted out to labour lawyers," Wayne says. He enrolled at AU, initially in a certificate program. However, after graduating with a certificate in Industrial Relations and Human Resources in 2003, Wayne enrolled in the B.HRLR program, transferring his certificate credits and beginning work on his degree.

"A degree had always been my goal, but I wanted to obtain the certificate as a shorter-term goal," Wayne says.

He kept his goals flexible, however. "I have had a lifelong policy of taking opportunities that present themselves," he says. Partway through the B.HRLR program, one such opportunity arose: less than two weeks before classes began, the University of Saskatchewan College of Law offered him a spot in that fall's incoming class. While law schools typically require a bachelor's degree for admission, they occasionally make exceptions for mature applicants with practical experience. "It was an opportunity that I couldn't turn down," Wayne says.

Even though it would require leaving the railway industry—"an industry . . . I had worked in for 15 years," he notes—and moving his entire family from British Columbia to Saskatchewan on very short notice, any risk was well worth it in his mind. "I didn't need to think for a second before accepting the offer," he says.

Although he initially intended to continue working on the B.HRLR during law school, he found the law school workload to be too intense, and had to withdraw from the AU courses in which he was enrolled. However, he continued working on his AU courses during summer breaks and after graduating from law school. In December 2006, he completed his B.HRLR degree and was called to the Alberta bar almost a year later. Currently, Wayne practices labour law as an associate at McGown Johnson, a Calgary law firm. "I advocate

for workers and their organizations in such areas of law as labour, employment, human rights, workers compensation, privacy, *Charter of Rights*, and administrative," he says.

Wayne credits AU and distance education with changing his life and bringing him opportunities that wouldn't have otherwise been possible. "I have no doubt that without AU I would not be where I am today," he says. When he began studying with AU, he was working full-time, had a family with two small children, and ran the union local. "Distance education was the only option for me . . . campus-based studies would have been impossible," Wayne says.

"I . . . recommend AU to others all the time," he adds. Besides its flexibility, convenience, and affordability, distance education is also seen as an asset by potential employers. "Employers know that distance learners who persevere to degrees [have] self-discipline," says Wayne. "When I interviewed for a Law Clerk position with the BC Court of Appeal, the three justices on the interview panel were clearly interested in my AU experience."

A further advantage of distance education is the autonomy—but that requires a great deal of self-discipline. "For me, the biggest challenge was procrastination," Wayne says.

To keep focused, he turned reading and studying into a habit. "I never went anywhere without my books and if I had five or 10 minutes here or there, I was reading," he notes. After several years, reading and studying has become such an ingrained habit that "not being in any courses . . . feels very strange," he says. However, that may soon change: Wayne intends to enrol in the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University's part-time, part-distance Master of Laws program in the fall of 2009. "I never get tired of learning," he says.

His experience with independent studying also served him well in law school. Because law school work tends to be autonomous—there is little chance for self-correction and feedback before the final exam—it requires a great deal of self-discipline and motivation. "Distance education had honed these skills in me," Wayne says. "[It] was excellent preparation for the law school experience."

Wayne believes that goal setting is necessary for success. It's important to "[break] big goals into smaller, more manageable goals," he says. "Instead of setting your eye on a degree 30 courses away, decide to read one chapter, or complete one assignment, or finish one course, or a certificate program first."

He's definitely happy he made that initial decision to begin working on his degree. "Time flies by," Wayne says, regardless of whether you are pursuing a goal. "You might as well be working on a course while it does. You will be surprised how soon you have a certificate [or] degree . . . hanging on your wall."

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THE LEARNING CURVE

Christine Purfield



Forward Motion

I'm going to take a diversion in this column to tell you about a friend of ours. His name is Peter. He owned a business called Gabriola Cycle and Kayak; it was one of the original kayak companies in British Columbia.

He ran kayak trips to the Broken Islands, Queen Charlottes, and Baja, Mexico. But his real love was cycling. For many years he organized trips in Baja, Spain, France, Hawaii, and right here on Vancouver Island.

In 2004, Leslie (a.k.a. The Man) and I ventured on the Spain cycling trip. This was the first cycling trip to Spain that Peter had organized. We were to fly to Madrid and Peter, being the helpful bloke that he was, would organize us from there. We were to cycle the Camino de Santiago trail from Burgos to Santiago de Compostela.

This was the first organized cycling trip that The Man and I had been on and the fact that it was in Europe and we were taking our own bikes was a special challenge to us. We had decided to take the car and the bikes to The Man's daughter in Surrey on the mainland, and she would drive us to the airport the next day. We would pack our bikes in boxes, as per Peter's instructions, and we'd fly out to sunny Spain.

We had a series of adventures getting to Vancouver Airport. It rained. The car battery died. The bike boxes got wet. The check-in lady was unsympathetic. We arrived in Madrid and couldn't find a taxi able to take us and two bike boxes. We finally got to the small hotel and they wouldn't let us in. No, we don't take bikes, they said. But Peter told us, we said. Oh, Peter, they said. Okay. We were in.

Once we arrived in Madrid, Peter had told us, he would help us and our bikes find a way to the bus or train to Burgos. In reality, we found the bus and Peter took care of the bikes. He had booked delightful rooms in Burgos. The next morning, he helped put the bikes together. We were off.

We spent ten days bicycling from Burgos to Santiago de Compostela. Each day we would have breakfast with the group—and a diverse group we were: doctors, lawyers, accountants, retired people, lesbians, singles, couples, Australians. You name them, we had them.

After breakfast Peter would give us a map showing how to get to the next place and the next hotel. Some of the group hot-pedalled it and made the trip in a couple of hours. Some dawdled and checked out churches and other places of interest along the way.

Me and The Man? Well, we were always last to arrive. We were slow cyclists anyway, but we'd stop at coffee shops, stores, villages, and just to chat. The best thing about arriving last was that at the hotel the clerk would know our name: "Buenos días, Les and Christine!" they would say. I was impressed until I realized that we were the last of the group to arrive, so who else could we be?

When we cycled into a town, always late, generally the first person we would see would be Ana, Peter's wife. She'd be out looking for us. Everyone else was in the bar. But she'd be concerned that we were missing. After a cheery wave, she'd disappear to her family and the group, and we'd be off for a shower.

One of the amazing sights that the Spanish villagers saw was Peter on his bike with his seven-year-old daughter, Camila—she was cycling on one of those kids' bikes that attaches to the adult's bike. I would guess that this sight was new to the Spaniards. The old women in the villages along the way would come out to stare at the man chatting and singing away with his young daughter as they cycled along. They'd wave and laugh—Peter, Camila, and the villagers.

It was a great trip. There was not a dull moment. We met people from all over the world walking the Camino, horseback riding the Camino, cycling, and just plain enjoying life. It was amazing. It spurred The Man and me to take a cycling trip, just the two of us, to Portugal the next year. Thanks to Peter, we had the confidence to pack, travel, and cycle a new country by ourselves. Thanks to Peter, we've bought a fifth wheel, packed the bikes on the back, and we're off all over North America and Mexico.

Peter died last month. He was 52. He was fit, healthy, trained as a special education teacher, a kayaker, a cyclist, a delightful man, friend, husband, and father to Camila. He will be sadly missed. If there is one thing I learned from Peter it was that things don't count. People count. Family counts. And above all, experiences and life count.

Think of Peter: enjoy university. It's not the end. It's the beginning.

Hair Brain Scheme 2008 Fundraiser!



Circle April 5 on your calendar, and plan to come out and support AU's own Bonnie Nahornick as she shaves her head (for the fourth time!) in aid of two good causes: the event will raise funds for the Alzheimer Society, and Bonnie's hair will be donated to Wigs for Kids. Her co-worker Aretha Smith will be joining in, shaving her head for the first time, and her hair will also be donated to Wigs for Kids!

The event takes place from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at AUPE Calgary, 600 One Executive Place, 1816 Crowchild Trail NW (next to Village Park Inn). Seating is limited, so RSVP to Bonnie at baldster2008@yahoo.com or by phone at (403) 860-6569.

If you can't attend but are willing to volunteer before the event, your time and energy will be appreciated. Donations of prizes will also be gratefully accepted.

All prizes are welcome, including gift certificates to stores and restaurants, and prizes from the arts community: if you're a singer, author, musician, artist, or comedian, donations of artwork, CDs, etc. can help make this the best Hair Brain Scheme yet! All those who volunteer or donate prizes will be mentioned during the event and acknowledged on the Gratitude Website.

For more information or to obtain pledge forms, visit Bonnie's website.

If you won't be in the area but want to donate a door prize, just send it along to Bonnie c/o Athabasca University, # 300, 1040 - 7 Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2P 3G9

Here's a glimpse of past fundraisers from 2002 and 2004, just to give you an idea of the hair-raising time you'll be in for!

MILK-CRATE BANDIT

Erik Ditz



The Internet is Slowly Killing Everyone

Once upon a time, in ancient days gone by, there was no awesome beast called Internet. It was a pretty cool time full of barbarians and wizards and lots of Manowar. There were books instead of blogs, gramophones instead of MP3s, and duels instead of school bombings. People understood things and talked with each other a lot.

Then one day, rising to Earth from its darkest pit, came the ruiner of planets, AI Gore. By inventing the Internet, AI has single-handedly destroyed the process called human thought.

We used to have all of our friends' phone numbers memorized as kids, but now we have to think to remember our own thanks to speed-dial.

We don't know what the weather's like until we check the satellite updated add-on weather bar in our open-source web browsers. We don't remember information, we Wiki it. Who was in that movie? I'll tell you as soon as I can log on to imdb.com, baby!

So, now our brains slow down and we start using phrases like "lol" in daily conversation. We eat McDonald's and slowly stop caring about wars and embargoes and livestock disease statistics, and thereby achieve transcendence into that wicked otherworld known as stupidity.

Anyway, I forgot what I was saying so here are some really short reviews.

Radiohead - *In Rainbows*

After listening to this, I painted Thom Yorke's face on my belly and dove naked off my house screaming "I <3 THOM!" while listening to Radiohead on my Bob Geldof-sponsored iPod Shuffle and holding a picture of Thom Yorke over my heart.

The Mountain Goats - *All Hail West Texas*

John Darnielle is responsible for some of the most simple and beautiful songs ever coaxed out of an acoustic guitar. This is what it feels like to drive through the country in summer with the top down and the wind blowing in your hair.

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark - *OMD*

Kraftwerk and Foetus had a baby with Negativland watching. Pretty neat stuff if you're into black and white photography and wearing goggles all the time.

Amon Amarth - *Sorrow Throughout the Nine Worlds*

A portrait of Amon Amarth's entire career: a fingerpainting of a dragon holding a gigantic penis-shaped sword.

Arthur Brown - *The Crazy World of Arthur Brown*

Arthur Brown is the god of hellfire, and he beat Kiss, Alice Cooper, Immortal, and King Diamond to the best makeup/headaddress ever. Watch.

The Falcon - *Unicornography*

There weren't enough bands that sounded like The Lawrence Arms and Rise Against, so members of The Lawrence Arms and Rise Against started a band like that.

Nash the Slash - *Thrash*

This is wickedly catchy semi-industrial from a bandaged-up, violin-wielding Toronto composer that must be seen live to be believed. The downside is that most of his fans are into black and white photography and wearing goggles all the time.

Rammer - *Cancer*

Super heavy thrash from one of Toronto's tuffest bands. If you've ever found yourself atop an apartment building, James Ready in hand, screaming "STAY WILD!" then this album gives you 10 very good reasons to run around smashing stuff.

Kelly Clarkson - *My December*

In a world where the advertisements featured during the Super Bowl have their own MySpace, this album comes as no surprise. You might like this if you haven't yet found out that Santa Claus was invented by Coca-Cola.

Cat Power - *The Greatest*

Cat Power has a reputation for writing beautiful, minimal songs and never pulling punches, and though I'm usually one to shun greatest hits albums, this is no exception to her rule. If you're not familiar with Cat Power and you've ever liked a song with a guitar in it, this is a great introduction to a very solid body of work. Think Cat Stevens meets Kathleen Hannah, only with less clapping.

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Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

CD: Sam Baker, *Pretty World*

Release date: 2007

Label: BlueLimeStone Publishing

Produced by Walt Wilkins and Tim Lorsch of Bull Creek Productions

In *Pretty World* Sam Baker presents us with a grittily beatific vision of the saints and sinners of Texas, which turns out to be a rich microcosm of the world at large. Kudos to the producers and musicians; this CD is a masterpiece. The music is mesmerizing, and so evocative of the wide open prairie that you can almost hear the wind whistling and the tumbleweed bouncing by.

Baker's lyrics are almost cryptic in their modest handling of weighty subjects. Such simplicity is rare among singer-songwriters; even though economy of language is typical of the best writing, many songwriters can't resist the urge to become self-indulgently rhapsodic and complex. Baker deliberately guards against such excesses.

The title track is a dawn song, part of a lyrical tradition that stretches at least as far back as the Middle Ages; the poet has spent the night with his beloved and is expressing regret at having to leave her. The modern twist that Baker gives his *alba* is that within romantic intimacy a whole new world has sprung up, an oasis in a desert of industry. Eros is the heaven we are forced to leave for our daily vale of tears.

In "Odessa," Stephen Foster's "Hard Times Come Again No More" is a musical backdrop to the tale of a spoiled son of an oil baron. The strong character and intense spirituality of old-time homesteaders is juxtaposed against the modern dilemma of money spouting from the ground with nothing but empty hearts to gather it in; the honest labour of the early settlers is set against a devil's playground of idleness. Oil is king, the individual is a dry blade of grass on a windswept plain, and ego has banished love.

In "Orphan" we see the effects of love's banishment; a young girl who, having been rejected by her mother, is unable to live in relationship. These are lives of quiet despair, and in "Juarez" we see a man who exemplifies Kierkegaard's dictum that being unconscious of one's despair in no way nullifies the despair itself.



"Broken Fingers" seems especially poignant once you learn that it was written in memory of the young German boy who befriended Sam on a train in Peru in 1986, a boy who died with his parents and Sam's friends when a terrorist's bomb blew up their train car. Sam himself emerged with multiple injuries and a low expectation of survival. After many rounds of surgery his shrapnel-damaged left hand still presents him with challenges (he learned to play guitar left-handed because of it) and is an ongoing reminder of his traumatic closeness to the violent and senseless death of an innocent.

*"Before the sun
Before the heat
Before we untangle from our sheets
Before this summer day unfurls
Pretty world"*

Sam Baker from "Pretty World"

A renewal of American culture will not be possible without careful attention to the thoughts and memories of Sam Baker. Carrying in his body the wounds of a country long at war with the unknown, he is processing his experience with a sweet spirit, shunning rage, bitterness, denial, and the temptation to divorce himself from the past.

Unspeakable damage has been done to victims of terror, yet no redemption lies in assigning blame or lashing out against an unseen target. We would all, including our leaders, do well to listen

attentively to such survivors of terrorist acts with a view to building a world in which, as in Sam's dreamscapes, we are all so lovingly aware and accepting of each other in all our beauty and baseness that violence is unimaginable.

Pretty World lives up to seven of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth listening to: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it enhances an awareness of the beauty and sanctity of creation; 3) it reveals an attainment of true self; 4) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; 5) it makes me want to be a better artist; 6) it displays an engagement with and a compassionate response to suffering; and 7) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful endeavour.

The Bard could use some help scouting out new material. If you discover any books, compact disks, or movies which came out in the last twelve months and which you think fit the Bard's criteria, please drop a line to bard@voicemagazine.org. For a list of criteria, go [here](#). If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.

A Great Combination: AUSU Provides Locks at Learning Centres



When students arrive to write their exams at the Calgary or Edmonton Learning Centres, they're often surprised to find that all belongings—including valuables such as laptops—must be left outside the exam area. Until a couple of years ago, this wasn't a problem: AU provided locks for securing valuables. But too often, students never returned the locks, and AU stopped providing the service.

Now, AUSU is providing locks for students to use at both the Calgary and Edmonton Learning Centres' exam units. These mini combination locks will be lent to students while writing exams, and are also available for sale through the AUSU [online store](#).

The locks are just under 4 cm square, feature a metal body and cord, and allow users to set their own combination. At the great price of just \$4 each, they'll come in handy even after your exams are done!



From Where I Sit

Hazel Anaka

This Just In

This just in: Jerry Seinfeld was spotted carrying Suri's diaper bag. Suri is, of course, TomKat's daughter. (And if you don't know who TomKat is, sorry, I just can't help you.)

John Travolta is sporting a new short haircut.

Rumours had been swirling all week that Brad and Angelina would show up at the Super Bowl. They didn't.

Britney Spears is still in hospital for another 14 days. They won't let her use her cellphone so she's forced to use the pay phone on her floor.

Well, I don't know about you, but now my life is complete.

I forced myself to watch an entire episode of *ETalk*—"Canada's #1 source for everything entertainment"—and now I know everything. Well, except how people are going to mark the upcoming first anniversary of Anna Nicole Smith's death. But I'm sure someone will tell us. Stay tuned.

I don't mean to bash *ETalk*, our homegrown Canadian Ben Mulroney launching pad. No, wait, I do. But by no means are they the only perpetrators of this inane, superfluous, useless, titillating, speculative hype. *TMZ* "covers the stories the others won't." *Entertainment Tonight (ET)* bills itself as "the most watched entertainment news program in the world."

People and *US* magazines are the only-slightly-classier versions of the print equivalent of this trash—*National Enquirer*, *Star*, *Globe*. Every major newspaper features regular gossip and entertainment columns in addition to the real front

page stories about celebrity drug charges, rehab relapses, jail sentences, and divorce details.

I never watch this crap or buy these publications. But sometimes when I'm not quick enough with the remote I do hear the snippets of all the exclusive, juicy details to come. I'm sick to death of the hype and the hyperbole. I'm sick of the teaser clips and promised "full details." I don't care about the Daily Dish, Star Sightings, Hit or Miss, bump watch, e-sightings, or any other regular features. I don't care which store, restaurant, or clinic someone walked out of. Or who they were wearing.

My life could have marched along without knowing "the real story behind Matthew and Kate's chemistry on *Fool's Gold*." Spoiler alert: Kate says "I don't know. I wish I knew. Everyone asks."

Or a Victoria's Secret model's answer to the question "What do football and sexy lingerie have in common?" Tights.

Or that the \$800 ticket price for Miley Cyrus's *Hannah Montana* concert is under attack as being too high. Ya think?

God help us. It's a free country. People can do, watch, buy, and download pretty much anything they want. I question the insatiable appetite for this drivel. If magazines and tabloid newspapers weren't selling, publishers would fold. If TV ratings fell, sponsors would leave and shows would be cancelled. But that's not the case. There's a proliferation of this stuff that does nothing to enrich, expand, or enlighten our own lives. If anything, it creates a deficit, from where I sit.

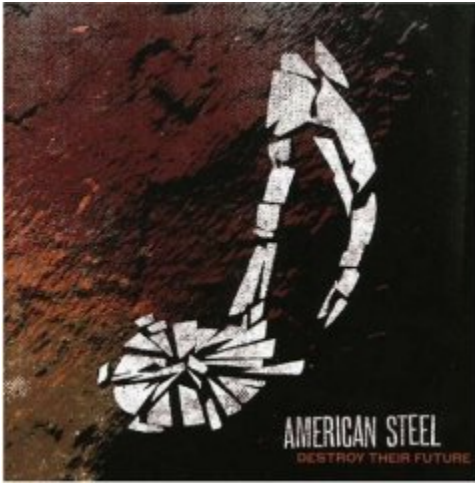
The Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

by
Wanda
Waterman
St. Louis



MUSIC TO EAT LUNCH TO

Mandy Gardner

American Steel – Destroy Their Future

Release date: October 2007

Label: Fat Wreck Chords

Tracks: 12

Rating: 9

This is the first record released by American Steel in six years, after splitting up in 2002 following drawn-out tours of North America that, according to Fat Wreck Chords, included basements as well as decent clubs.

The band began as something of an agglomeration of punk, rock, and Irish folk/punk, and now that they've reconvened for *Destroy Their Future*, Rory Henderson, Ryan Massey, John Peck, and Scott Healy have shown that they really have forged their own way and created a modern sound worthy of CD changers everywhere.

You can hear The Clash and Irish punk throughout the record, particularly in the vocal deliveries of Henderson, Peck, and Massey. The lyrical content coupled with superb guitar, perfectly timed bass solos from Peck, and Healy's energetic but not overwhelming drums makes for amazing modern punk that doesn't lean toward the harder edge of the genre like Rise Against, but stays softer in the style of traditional punkers like the Dead Kennedys (minus the vocals of Jello Biafra, of course).

Songs comparing the modern American state to that of pre-Nazi Germany, and examining the breakdown of a personal relationship in terms of mental scars, give *Destroy Their Future* a very real element that draws you right in and makes you care about what the band is saying:

*It won't be long
'Til we're all dead and gone*

*The world's seeing stars and stripes
And smart bombs*

"Dead and Gone"

*What do you want me to do?
Say the same tender words
And come running back to you?
Don't you remember?
You washed your hands of me*

"Or, Don't You Remember?"

The re-formation of American Steel was a fantastic idea, even if this album is the only good thing to ever come of it. *Destroy Their Future* offers not only great music but some thought-provoking lyrics at the same time; it's enjoyable from every angle. It's not just a look at a unique side of modern punk, but it's a look at the inside of America from dedicated, intelligent Americans themselves. And isn't that the best kind of criticism?

You've got to love bands like this if only for the tendency they have of drawing your attention to important issues that have otherwise gone unnoticed or have been poorly presented by the media. No Use for a Name fans might particularly enjoy the record.

AUSU This Month



AUSU Elections 2008

Nomination Period Closed

Dear AU Students:

My name is Rehan Qureshi and I am pleased to have been appointed your Chief Recruiting Officer (CRO) for the 2008 General Election. It is my position to accept and verify nominations for the election; field questions about election policy and procedures for nominees; and to ensure an accurate and fair vote count at the time of voting. Please feel free to contact me at cro@ausu.org for any of the above.

Elections will be held from March 9 - 12 on the [AUSU website](http://ausu.org).

The nomination period has now closed. You may view your list of candidates [here](#). Nominees may withdraw their name from the list of nominees up until the last day of February 2008.

Good luck to all of the candidates. Hopefully we will see the rest of you at the polls!

Sincerely,

Rehan Qureshi - Chief Returning Officer (CRO)
cro@ausu.org

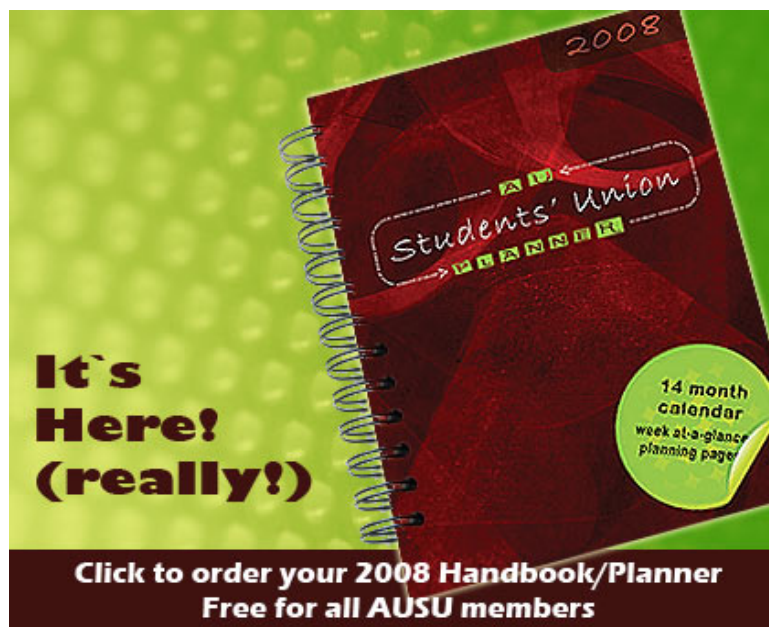
AUSU Merchandise for Sale

Due to a high demand for AUSU merchandise, and delays in setting up our online store, we have put together a quick catalogue with a few items we have in stock now. To download it in pdf, visit our [home page](#). Shipping costs will be calculated per order and we'll let you know by phone or email.

We are only accepting credit card orders at this time, unless you are able to visit our Edmonton office. Please excuse the poor quality of the product photos. These will be improved shortly. More products will be available soon. Suggestions are welcome.

AUSU Handbook/Planner 2008 in stock now!

The wait is over! The 2008 AUSU planner is in stock and on its way to members. We've added a few enhancements this year, including cheat



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Free for AUSU members. Visit www.ausu.org



 **SmartDraw**

sheets for common citation styles, a clip-in page-marker ruler, and a funky fridge magnet to remind you to get your weekly dose of *The Voice*.

Last year we had about 400 pre-orders, but this year we have 1,000! Please be patient. We're working as fast as we can to fill all of the orders and everyone should have their book by the end of January when the 2007 edition calendar pages run out. As always, we're excited to know what you think of the planner and welcome all feedback to ausu@ausu.org

Smart Draw – Benefit for AUSU members

AUSU has purchased a licence agreement to supply the award-winning SmartDraw software to all AUSU members (current undergraduate students). To access this deal and find out more, visit the front page of our [website](http://www.ausu.org).

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo. Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs,

organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts. For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email. Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however.

Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.

AUSU Election

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January 9 through February 6th, 2008



At Home: Release of Montreal filmmaker from Iran comes without assistance from the Canadian government

Mehrnoushe Solouki is a Montreal-based filmmaker with dual citizenship in France and Iran. She gained her Canadian citizenship in 2004, and travelled to Iran in 2006 to work on a documentary about the burial rites of Iranian religious minorities.

Although such an endeavour is notoriously difficult in the Islamic Republic, Solouki not only held an Iranian passport but had the added security of France and Canada should she come to need assistance in any political scandal.

After being arrested and brought to Tehran's Evin prison, however, her French passport was taken away and the filmmaker received no help from the Canadian government in escaping first prison and then Iran itself.

As far as Iranian officials were concerned, Solouki had discovered and filmed something she shouldn't have—the mass graves of political opponents from 1988. Iran has been very quiet about the issue since the 1980s, and although Solouki did indeed discover the graves she had not yet had a chance to film them before her arrest.

It was on the assumption that she had either filmed or was planning to film the graves that Iranian police arrested Solouki and held her in solitary confinement, trying to ascertain whether or not she had Canadian government funding to do so.

After being released from Evin prison, Solouki was unable to leave Iran and was never contacted by the Canadian government for help. Her appeals were directed to the French government instead, while she temporarily sought refuge in the French Embassy. This January, her French passport was finally released by the Iranian government and, now back in Montreal, the filmmaker regrets that the French government did not do enough to help her return home. According to Solouki, it was the pressure of her friends and Reporters Without Borders that finally got her out of the Islamic Republic and eventually back to Montreal.

In Foreign News: British and international community angry after Germany honours the inventor of the notorious V2 rocket

The German town of Bernstadt has renamed its middle school after the rocket engineer primarily responsible for the creation of the V2 rocket—a Nazi invention that killed more than 30,000 Europeans during the Second World War.

Klaus Riedel is not someone that the international community, or most of Germany for that matter, expected to be honoured, because of his direct link to the Nazi Party and thousands of deaths. Bernstadt is a strong supporter of the engineer, however, and before renaming the school the town already had a memorial and a museum dedicated to him. Criticism over this decision has come from all over the world, but Brits in particular are shocked that anyone would commemorate such a man.

Critics within Germany are afraid that this honouring of a great Nazi achievement will call more attention to the right-wing National Democratic Party (NPD), a political party often accused of harbouring leftover Nazi ideals. The NDP had some of its greatest support in the state of Saxony last election; Saxony not only is home to the town of Bernstadt but it gave 9 per cent of its votes to the NPD.

Of the 30,000 Europeans killed by V2 rockets during WWII, 3,000 of them were British citizens. In fact, the rockets were designed with the intent of breaking down the British opposition and winning the war.

The mayor of Bernstadt has responded to international criticism of the school's name by demanding that some mention of the consequences of Riedel's invention be made. On the school website, during a slideshow, the words have now been added to the name Riedel: "These rockets were fired from Peenemunde on England and many innocent people were killed."

Green Party member Astrid Guenther-Schmidt still worries that the NPD will take this as "an open invitation" to hold rallies in Bernstadt.

CLICK ON THIS – Listomania

Lonita Fraser

I like to make lists. It started a long time ago with a little personal game a friend of mine was very fond of, and escalated bizarrely. Here, for your pleasure, are some collections of lists about all manner of things.

30 Things You Can Do With a Dollar

I've often wondered what people did with old army scrip. While some of these are amusing, and some worthy, I must warn you of a little use of strong or foul language. Read with caution.

The Odds

"Odds of getting hemorrhoids: 25 to 1." Well okey-dokey then! (Note: I have no idea of the veracity of this list.)

Listography

Enjoy the lists of others, or submit your own.

The Best Accidental Discoveries

Number one on the list is Viagra. I know; you're racing there to find out what it was someone was looking for when they figured out the miracle of the little blue pill.

The 555-List

It's a collection of all the 555 telephone numbers you hear in films and on television. If you've got some that aren't on the list, send 'em in!

Inappropriate Songs That People Play at Wedding Receptions

Give very careful thought to what your own DJ plays.

EDUCATION NEWS

Ryan Spedding



BC NDP launch affordable education plan

VICTORIA (CUP) - British Columbia's provincial NDP released their plan to make education more affordable on January 24, but the governing Liberals aren't keen to listen.

With the average BC student debt upon graduation of a four-year program at \$27,000, NDP Advanced Education critic Rob Fleming hopes to help students lower their debt upon graduation.

"We would institute programs that actually help people lower their debt, repay their debt in the time of basis, and move on

with their life," Fleming said.

The five-point plan outlines the restoration of need-based student grants; the expansion of graduate student scholarships; the reduction of student loan rates by 50 per cent; make student aid more student-friendly; and establish a student aid ombudsperson.

Fleming believes that student loans should not earn the government money, but should help students achieve their academic goals while being able to pay them back in a reasonable amount of time at a reasonable interest rate.

Fleming pointed to the decision in the U.S. Congress to cut student loan interest rates in half to 3.37 per cent, and to Nova Scotia which recently lowered student loan interest rates by two per cent.

Student loans in B.C. come with an interest rate of prime (usually around six percent) plus 2.5 per cent.

"There are even private credit products that are better than the B.C. student loans," said Fleming.

The current provincial government, however, has a different take on the financial situation that students face, and they also have a different way of dealing with it.

"Last year, the province paid \$38 million in interest on behalf of students, while recovering only \$26 million in interest payments," said Minister of Advanced Education Murray Coell.

"The NDP is not seeing the big picture," continued Coell, "that the post-secondary system has undergone significant change under this government and there are more opportunities for students than ever before in history."

With more opportunities come more students in need of loans. Loans which the government may decide to forgive, he noted.

"Last year the province forgave and reduced \$77 million in loans for 24,000 students," Coell said.

Matthew de Groot, external executive at the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS), said that the NDP's five-point plan is a good first step in addressing the state of the financial aid system and high tuition costs.

"We would encourage the Liberal government to look into these ideas," says de Groot. "We will hear what anybody wants to say about tuition."

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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