

# THE VOICE MAGAZINE

Volume 16 Issue 08  
February 22, 2008

## Bridal Boot Camp

A perfect fit

## EDUC 401

The purposes of  
adult education

## Setting the Scene

Location, location,  
location

*Plus:*

*From Where I Sit,  
Milk-Crate Bandit,  
The Mindful Bard,  
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](mailto:voice@ausu.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



## EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston



## Simply the Best

That old truism about everybody wanting his or her 15 minutes of fame has reached new heights. And it's not just the occasional person who wants to be known for sitting on the flagpole the longest, or eating the most bugs on a reality-television show. Now, the desire to qualify, to put that extra shiny spin on things, is everywhere.

It seems that nothing and no one wants to be plain, ordinary, or average. The only problem is, if *everything* is special, eventually *nothing* is special.

This phenomenon has been hovering in the back of my brain for a while now (apparently, not special enough to warrant much notice). But then I caught a hockey announcer raving about a goal. I have no clue who the team was, but they had swept the puck into the net just 10 seconds into the game. The announcer was in paroxysms of excitement. In the annals of sports, it was the quickest goal ever. Well, maybe not ever: it was the quickest goal ever by *that team*. In the playoffs. On home ice.

If they manage the feat again, I can hear the play-by-play already: the quickest goal by that team. In the playoffs. On home ice. On a Tuesday.

The trend has spread faster than Triffids. The sheer number of categories in which one can be the "best" boggles the senses. On a website devoted to the best in blogs, it seems that everyone walks away a winner: best blog about, best blog about stuff (and the difference is?), best celebrity blog, entertainment, gossip, health . . . The categories are dizzying, 36 in all. Don't rate as the best in any of them? Add a couple of qualifiers and you can take home the prize. Best political blog. In English. By a left-handed writer. Living in Alberta. Wearing Blackspots. You're a shoo-in.

Another example is the awards handed out by a Canadian home builders' association. They're enough to make me want to slip on some safety boots and start practising my acceptance speech. Nominees no longer have to be the best, period. Now, they can win for the best single-family detached home. Under 2,000 square feet. Or between 2,000 and 3,000 square feet. Or 3,000 and 4,000 square feet. *Ad infinitum*, with nearly 50 ways to be the "best."

It's kind of like those community picnics where every kid gets a ribbon. Everyone's happy, everyone's the best. That's great for building Billy's and Susie's self-esteem, but when it comes to recognizing and rewarding genuine talent and hard work, it can dilute the honour so much as to make it hollow.

Sure, it's necessary to differentiate between types and levels of accomplishment. It makes perfect sense for Olympic pole vaulters to compete against a field of other pole vaulters. To choose the best by comparing their abilities to wrestlers or speed skaters is impossible; it's a different set of skills, and there's no logical way to evaluate them.

But when so many sets of conditions are introduced that everyone can be the "best," the term loses all meaning. By keeping the parameters simple, it keeps the standards high. And isn't that what being the best is really all about?

## SLICE OF LIFE

**AU Student survives bridal boot camp**

Besides graduation, a wedding is one of the few times in life when all eyes are on you. The pressure for everything—including the bride—to be perfect can be intense. So when bride-to-be and AU student Sarah Whaley (now Kertcher) realized that both her wedding dress and time were running tight, it was time to get serious.

Luckily, the Slice network had a new show in the works, and it turned out to be a perfect fit. *Bulging Brides* pairs a nutritionist and trainer with a series of brides-to-be, helping them reach their weight-loss goals for the big day through exercise and healthy eating. Sarah's segment, "Wedding in White," first aired in January.

Now that the adventure of filming the show (and planning a wedding) are over, *The Voice* caught up with Sarah as she reflected on the experience.

*How close was it to your wedding day before you decided you might need a helping hand for that perfect wedding-dress fit?*

It was about two months before my wedding that I realized my dress wasn't going to fit!

*Did you have a regular fitness routine before you met with the trainer on Bulging Brides?*

Although I have always been a very active person, I didn't have a regular fitness routine. I had a gym membership that I paid my monthly dues on, but rarely went. Other than that it was mostly recreational sports (that often involved beers during or after!) that I participated in.

*What made you think of using the television show to reach your weight-loss goals?*

Well, I was watching TV one day when I saw a similar show and thought to myself that something like that could really work for me. Plus, I thought it might be fun to be on TV, and have my whole pre-wedding buildup on tape as a memory for me!

*Have you ever had any previous experience on a television or radio program?*

None. This whole process was new for me.

*Were your friends and relatives surprised when you told them?*

Yes and no. I'm pretty well known for doing crazy things like this, so in that sense my friends and family weren't surprised. They were surprised, however, when I told them it was a weight loss-based show as many of them said that I didn't need to lose weight.



*What was the most surprising or unexpected experience you had while filming the show?*

Well, much of the show was a surprise and unexpected. My show was actually the premiere episode of the series, so not only was it new for me, it was new for the crew and producers as well. There were a few instances where I didn't know what I was going to be doing (the pole dancing after my stagette) and where I didn't know there was going to be a camera there (my stagette).

There was also a time at the very beginning of the show where the trainers busted in on me during a dress fitting. I had no idea they were going to do that, nor had I met them in person yet, so that was quite the shocker!

*During the weeks of filming, did you ever think of throwing in the towel?*

I am a Taurus, so I'm naturally very strong willed and stubborn, so throwing in the towel never even crossed my mind! Aside from the fact that I had a dress that HAD to fit, I'm not a quitter, so although there were very difficult times I always made sure to persevere.

*What was the toughest habit to change: exercise or nutrition?*

Nutrition. By far nutrition! If I wasn't so busy I'd exercise every day. However, sometimes life gets in the way. I am a junk food addict [and] so is my husband so it's very hard to break that habit. I also have issues with portion control and stopping eating when I'm satisfied, opposed to completely stuffed, so definitely the nutrition was the hard part for me!

*For readers who may not have seen the program, did you achieve your goal?*

Not only did I reach my goal, I surpassed it! I lost 12 pounds and I think seven or eight inches in total.

*Do you plan to incorporate any exercise and nutrition know-how you learned on the program into your daily routine?*

Absolutely! Filming has now been over for nearly six months and I have been following the meal plan that they gave me. Although I don't follow it to a T like I did during filming, I definitely use it as a guideline, and I think it's definitely helped me to maintain my weight loss since the show.

*What advice would you give to other soon-to-be brides who are trying to lose those last few pounds before the big day?*

I would say by far the most important thing is to make sure that you're eating healthfully. Planning a wedding is a stressful time in your life, and it's very easy to put your health and nutrition on the back burner. Make sure that you're eating according to the Canada Food Guide and you should be good. Also, take any time you can to fit in some exercise. Even if it's just 10 minutes, not only will it help you be healthier physically, it will help you mentally as well. And, if all else fails . . . call the show!



## LEARNING PERSPECTIVES

Behdin Nowrouzi



### EDUC 401: The Purposes of Adult Education

Adult education courses bring to mind a syllabus filled with techniques and approaches for teachers to use in the classroom. According to Dr. Michael Welton, a tutor in AU's Centre for Distance Education, "Like so many other Canadians, [students] think of adult education as night school classes, or literacy programs for immigrants." However, a closer examination reveals a much different story.

EDUC 401: The Purposes of Adult Education is offered through AU's Centre for Work and Community Studies (a collection of Humanities and Social Science disciplines). This specialized reading course provides an introduction to the foundations and purposes of adult education.

Dr. Welton began tutoring the course two years ago after teaching adult education courses in graduate programs at Dalhousie and Mount St. Vincent Universities in Nova Scotia. Dr. Welton provides guidance to students as they explore the dynamic and often controversial field of adult education.

Refuting the notion of adult education as simply night school classes, Dr. Welton argues that "adult learning theory has challenged this narrow idea. In fact, some adult education theorists argue that 'all of society' is a vast school, and that we can understand that formal education is really just the tip of the learning iceberg."

EDUC 401 is structured into five units: education for adults, education for economy, education for transformation, education for diversity, and education for the 21st century. The readings support the units and offer numerous opportunities for discussion. The order is complementary: it allows students to begin with an exploration of the history of adult education and how it is distinguished from traditional pedagogy. The readings illustrate the centrality of adult education purposes to society, work, citizenship, and self-development.

A central tenet of adult education is that adult learners come to the learning environment with a wealth of life experience, and adult education should therefore reflect and build upon that experience. In EDUC 401, andragogy is summarized and reviewed in terms of its characteristics, principles, and recommended practices. Readings distinguish andragogy from pedagogy on the crucial assumptions of the differences between child and adult learners.

The course situates the debates of adult education within a Canadian context, highlighting the vibrant role that Canadian scholars have played in utilizing the principles of adult education for social transformation. Dr. Welton articulates this through the well-known Antigonish Movement and its leader, Rev. Dr. Moses Coady, as being ahead of his time with his provocative take on transforming the economy of the Maritimes.

Further, Dr. Welton says, "Once my tutorial students sense that adult learning and education is about the stuff of life—social movements, work, civil society, transforming self and world, responding to climate

change, raising kids, loving a partner, learning to live in an open, pluralistic world, and many more—they are pretty excited.”

Course texts for EDUC 401 include *Father Jimmy: The life and times of Jimmy Tompkins*, a text that highlights a Canadian example of how Coady and Father Jimmy Tompkins used adult education principles to address the economic needs of local people.

EDUC 401 is a senior-level three-credit social science course with no prerequisites. However, it is recommended that students possess high proficiency in their writing skills. Assignment 1 is worth 25%, while assignments 2 and 3 are each worth 20%. The final assignment, worth 30%, is a 2,000-word essay that asks students to discuss the purposes of adult education in the 21st century. There is also 5% participation grade involving student communication with their tutor.

## AROUND AU



Plans for AU's new course numbering system are moving ahead. The current system is being updated to reflect the growing popularity of four-year undergrad degree programs.

Course numbers were originally designed so that 200 numbers designated first-year courses and 300 numbers signified second-year ones. When four-year undergraduate programs became common, 300 numbers were used to designate both second- and third-year courses.

To eliminate confusion, the new numbering system will add a 1, 2, 3 or 4 to the existing three-digit course numbers. This will clearly designate the academic level of a course (e.g., HIST 328 would become HIST 2328 or HIST 3328), and make it simple to distinguish introductory courses from advanced ones.

Approvals are underway on the committee's recommendations for the new numbering system, and the next phase of the project will begin in April.

In other news, the International Review of Research on Open and Distance Learning (IRRODL) has received two honours. The IRRODL is a peer-reviewed journal supported by AU.

One of these honours was a \$25,000 award from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council's (SSHRC) Aid to Scholarly Publication Program. The award is the maximum allowed within the program.

To achieve this, the editorial board of IRRODL had to demonstrate the journal's accomplishments and influence. As part of the process, the board provided details of the peer review process, as well as recent download statistics. Along with receiving the award, another result of the process was that the editorial committee expanded to encompass a wider group of scholars, both national and international.

The journal's processes and results were also evaluated by external assessors, along with the editorial committee of AU Press. The journal made such an impression on the external reviewers that it received a recommendation for official publication by AU Press.

*With special thanks to Athabasca University's The Insider.*



## MILK-CRATE BANDIT

Erik Ditz



## The Basics of Music Time

I'd like to start with an apology for the somewhat misleading title of this article, which seems to suggest a lengthy pontification on the practical uses of time signatures. However, since time signatures were invented and patented by Ornette Coleman over a century ago, there is really very little left to be said on the subject and so today I will be tackling the complexities of the musical life span, which I call Music Time™.

For the most part this life span is purely subjective, like how some people still consider John Lydon to be fresh and relevant and yet to most of the world he is approximately 3,000 years old. More recently, bands tend to fizzle out as quickly as they appear, and

not going to concerts for three months means missing half a dozen new scenes hatching and dying like little artful June bug colonies.

A good way to stay abreast of new developments in music is to use Music Time, a musical evolution chart that gauges musical shelf life as eras of life on Earth. All that fruity wig-wearing classical crap sits comfortably in the Precambrian period, alongside single-celled organisms and deadly sea scorpions.

Later on we have the jazz and blues era, where life begins emigrating from sea to land, the first freely adapting conquerors. Then of course trundle along the Kim Mitchellsaurus and Eric Claptonodon, ruling alongside other enormous pea-brained monsters like the DiplodoKISS and AC/DC Rex.

Eventually, when the monkeys finally got down out of the trees and started kicking evolutionary butt, people started listening to metal and punk and hardcore and other awesome stuff and that's when the human race finally came into its own.

Now, some of you out there in InternetLand are probably wondering if we have the technology to impose a forced musical evolution on people in the hopes of bringing them out of the medieval age of Evanescence and Kylie Minogue and barrelling straight into the future of hard-rock music, and the short answer is "yes." The long answer is "yes, read this article."

Black Mountain - *In the Future*

It's tempting while listening to this record to imagine a bunch of vest-wearing longhairs with tie-dyed posters playing in a San Francisco room full of shag carpet, but this BC five-piece is in the here and now and rocking up a storm. Amazing new music reminiscent of crappy old music doesn't come along very often, and even though they have to share their initials with 'bowel movement,' BM definitely does not belong in the toilet.

Malefaction - *Where There is Power, There is Always Resistance*

If you thought Winnipeg was a frozen, faceless, flatland devoid of entertainment, with about as much to offer new music as a toddler with a ukulele, you'd be mostly right. However, when a band like Malefaction rips grindcore out of the money-filled claws of Relapse and slams it right back into the garage where it came

from, it's worth pointing your ears to this desolate place and listening hard for the sounds of a revolution called G7 Welcoming Committee.

### **Boris - *Pink***

Japan's Boris makes some of the most intricately intense music ever. This is what it would sound like if Sonic Youth started an Electric Wizard cover band.

### **The Blatz - *The Shit Split E.P. (with Filth)***

With songs like "Homemade Speed" and the ingenious "Berkeley Is My Baby" this is ideal music for tearing hubcaps off parked cars and using them as projectiles while getting drunk on battery acid.

### **Artep - *Fires of Mortal Deception***

Vancouver's metal scene is absolutely enormous; maybe it's all the forests and snowy mountains, but something out there just seems to make people play ultra-heavy music. In any case, as some British person once said, "Ours not to question why, ours but to raise our horns to the sky!" If you've found yourself looking for the Canadian equivalent of Bathory, Bethlehem, Borknagar or Burzum, don't waste another Satan-loving moment not picking up this record.

### **Mastodon - *Blood Mountain***

Dear everyone who isn't Mastodon: you suck.

### **XOURXWARX - *If You're Not Now . . .***

This is everything good hardcore should ever be, namely: unbelievably stupid, painfully serious, and severely straight edge. With the opening lines, "We are straight edge/Go ahead and judge/On our views/We will not budge!" we've already established that these Toronto-dwelling fun haters are way beyond reason and good songwriting. This is the perfect soundtrack to ironic fake mosh parties.

### **Iron Maiden - *A Matter of Life and Death***

When I inevitably die of Acute Being a Snobby Jerk, I want to be buried under the Hammersmith Odeon wrapped in an Eddie flag inside a coffin with built-in Sirius radio playing the all-Powerslave channel, and that's how Maiden should've died, too, instead of prancing around in their adult diapers and playing nu-metal. This album reminds me of the first time I saw my grandma wearing a fanny pack.

### **Fantômas - *Delirivm Córdia***

Mike Patton is either the saviour of modern music or a lunatic with a tape recorder. If you're like me and it doesn't matter which end of the sanity spectrum this eccentric composer resides in, then this hour-long trip through Frank Zappa's worst nightmare will make you giggle and squeal and hop around with delight, but that doesn't stop it from pretty much just being a bunch of weird noises.

### **Deicide - *Amon: Feasting the Beast***

Carve this band's name into your face. Trust me, you won't regret it.

# The Chronicles of Cruiscin Lan

by

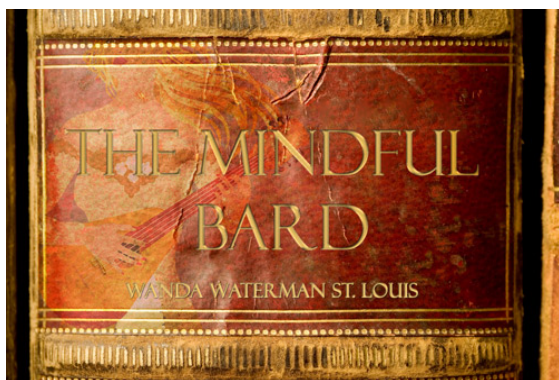
Wanda

Waterman

St. Louis







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

**Book:** Clive James, *Cultural Amnesia: Necessary Memories from History and the Arts*

**Publication date:** 2007

**Publisher:** W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York, NY

If you've ever been blessed with access to a good library and the freedom to choose your next tome based on names mentioned in whatever book is setting you on fire at the moment, you will have experienced the thrill of trekking new territory with a map you are drawing as you go along. An added benefit is that the themes and arguments you discover will probably stick in your head for a lifetime.

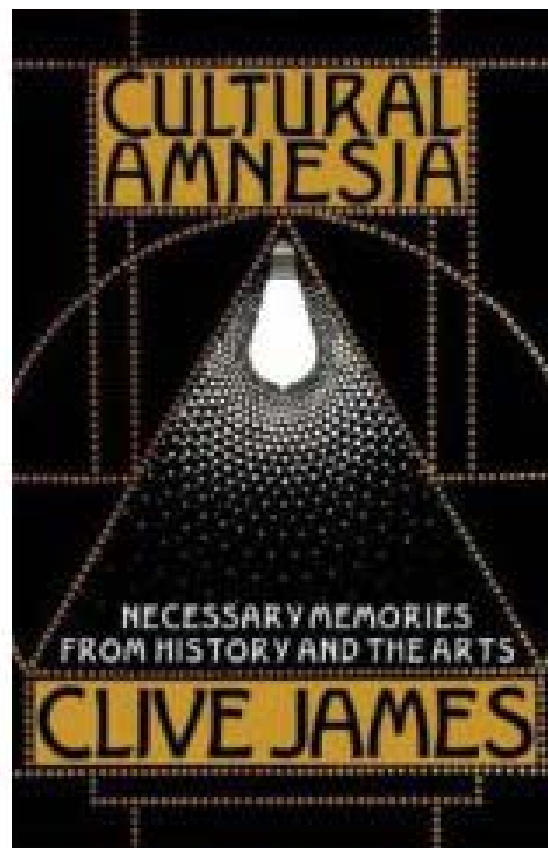
This is how I suggest you read *Cultural Amnesia*. Open it to the luminary about whom you happen to be the most curious, read the essay, look up the names of those who appear in that essay, check to see if James has done a write-up on any of them, and just keep going.

*Cultural Amnesia* is a highly personalized set of reflections on the heroes and villains who helped shape the 20th century and the saints who pointed the way out of the miasma. It is probably more insightful and informative than most survey courses on 20<sup>th</sup>-century culture, and certainly more pleasant reading. Many of the ideas in this book are based on the marginalia of one of the most unbelievably well-read humans (unless he's faking it, he's one of those rare birds who not only reads quickly but processes deeply) alive today.

James is an apologist for humanism and liberal democracy. Don't look here for biographies; the notables are not so much summarized as used as touchstones for James's digressions into the causes and repercussions of modern events.

In his discussion of Hitler, for example, he claims that nationalist anti-Semitism constitutes a dangerous trend for any society, a trend which knows itself threatened by liberalism (hence the violence of attacks on liberal thought during dictatorships). Totalitarian regimes begin by selling a culture's soul straight off the bat. James implies that a liberal state, by contrast, has the potential to harbour the full spectrum of human evil without selling its own soul.

His defence is as flawed as the thing he defends. He comes dangerously close to excusing Chesterton's anti-Semitism on the grounds that Chesterton supported liberal democracy and would never have stooped to a compromise with fascism. But this just illustrates the point; the kind of political order James lauds is one in which human ignorance and vice can be



accommodated without destroying the order itself, much in the way that James's occasional bouts of intellectual self-indulgence do not seriously detract from the relevance of his argument.

*"If liberal democracy had come closer to fulfilling the longings it engendered and nurtured in the hearts of human beings then it might never have spawned the profound discontent that formed the medium for explosions of tyranny."*

Some of what is written here galls; it goes against what intellectuals have been chirping to each other like whippoorwills for years by way of establishing commonality, most of the chirping having to do with the decadence of western culture.

But is liberalism really so great? Let's leave death camp casualties out of the equation for a moment and recount a few of liberal democracy's historical problems: racism, inadequate medical care for the poor, oppression of women long after even the pretence of defensibility has died, cover-ups aimed at protecting institutions to the detriment of those they are pledged to serve, destruction of the natural environment, an ever-growing wealth gap . . . Yet every one of these things has been a feature of totalitarian regimes. As have death camps.

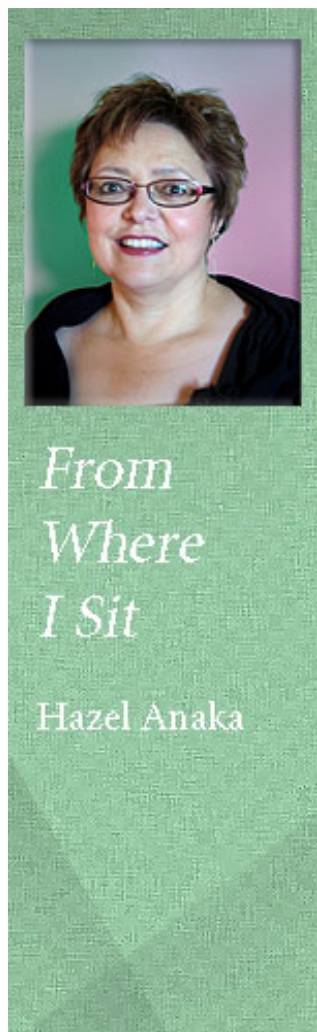
Is *Cultural Amnesia* a wake-up call or the swan song of a dying civilization? James himself leaves it wide open. One problem with the modern world may be that even if liberal democracy is the best kind of political order we have come up with so far it is simply not enough.

Perhaps this condition of not being enough is dangerous. If liberal democracy had come closer to fulfilling the longings it engendered and nurtured in the hearts of human beings then it might never have spawned the profound discontent that formed the medium for explosions of tyranny. Perhaps James intends for us to consider the examples set by people like Heda Margolius Kovaly and Louis Armstrong as a means of strengthening the liberal tradition by bringing it closer to its own ideals.

*Cultural Amnesia* lives up to seven of the Mindful Bard's criteria for books well worth reading: 1) It is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts existing injustice; 3) it makes me want to be a better artist; 4) it gives me tools which help me be a better artist; 5) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; 6) it displays an engagement with and a compassionate response to suffering; and 7) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both the ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda.

*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](mailto:bard@voicemagazine.org). For a list of criteria, go [here](#). If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.*





## All That Glitters

Some days I feel really choked that I can't wear costume jewellery. I know it's hardly a national (or even local) disaster. But before you dismiss my complaint as selfish whining, think about it.

Because of a nickel sensitivity that appeared in my early 20s I've been forced to wear only gold jewellery. What's so bad about that, you ask? I've got fewer pieces, though admittedly they're worth more. There is both white and yellow gold, depending on what colour was hot in which decade. There are earrings, rings, bracelets, and chains.

I've got a pair of yellow gold earrings and matching bangle in a Greek key design bought in Athens several years ago. There is my charm bracelet loaded with miniature symbols of life events and special interests: a baby buggy, pair of dice, wedding ring set, airplane, thimble, and more.

Some stuff is too much for everyday wear but just right when I officiate marriages and want some extra bling. Years ago, when Roy was buying me earrings without the help of pointed suggestions or advice from Hilary, everything had a leaf or flower motif. Finally I had to speak up and say enough already with the nature theme. Sheesh.

When big, colourful plastic earrings were the rage I had oodles of pairs because they also had plastic posts and backs. Hell, I used to buy cheap costume earrings, break off the metal posts, and then use special glue to attach the plastic pieces. All for the sake of fashion.

Of course, the metal clasps on slacks and bras also cause itchy patches. Cortisone cream to the rescue. Most bra parts are now plastic.

For years I wore only watches with plastic cases. If a metal watch was especially nice I covered the back with surgical tape just so I could wear it for a few hours. Quite the look if I do say so myself. One day at Sears I took a chance on a Fossil watch because the clerk assured me those watches are pure stainless steel. That was 10 watches ago. Even strangers admire them. There's nothing quite like getting a Fossil as a gift, knowing it was purchased at a fraction of the price from an outlet store. Roots watches also work for me.

With so many gorgeous pieces of costume jewellery out there now and more than a few creative bones in my body I've started making my own fun pieces. Of course, I can't use any metal clasps or findings so most of my pieces are either long necklaces that easily slip over my head or shorter pieces on elastic. Memory wire is another tool that works for me.

Metal beads and charms are out. I use natural stone, plastic, or wooden beads. I love the colours, textures, infinite possibilities and combinations. I recycle old jewellery and shop sales. I seriously need to revisit an Edmonton gem shop and try some more precious stones. The process of creation and one of a kind results make up for the tacky stuff of long ago. All that glitters isn't gold, from where I sit.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:cro@ausu.org)

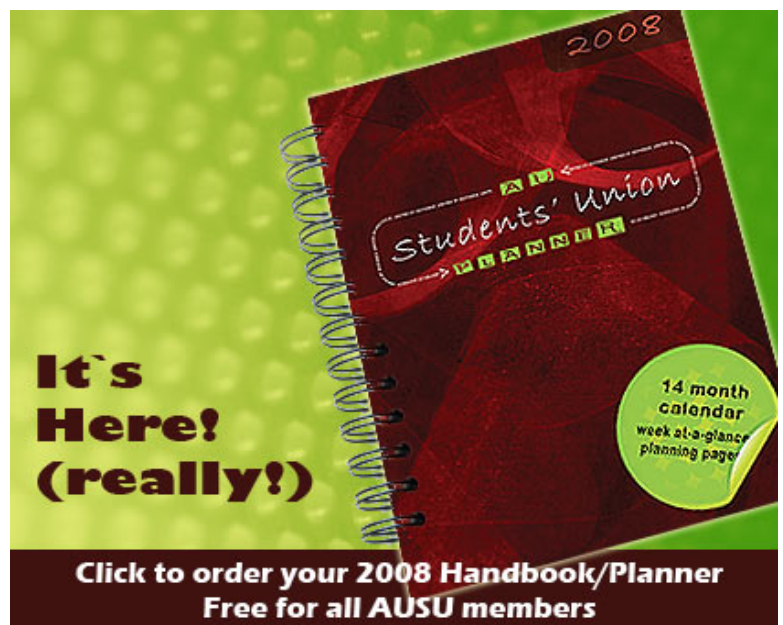
### AUSU Merchandise for Sale

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



## GO HOME EARLY.



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 **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](mailto: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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## At Home: Harsh winter but global warming continues nonetheless

Many Canadians have been wondering exactly what happened to global warming with some of the brutally cold temperatures that have been a part of the winter of 2007/2008. The nation has been hit with winter storms that have dumped snow in amounts not seen in years. Environment Canada did go on record early in the season predicting the worst winter in 15 years, and in most places people are quick to agree that this has indeed been the case.

A La Niña is believed to be at least partially responsible for the harsh winter weather in Canada this year. The change in normal strength of the trade winds that are part of the La Niña pattern is thought to have a major effect on winter weather here.

Whilst Canadians have encountered more snow, wind, and sub-zero temperatures this winter than they have seen or felt for

some time, it does not reduce the overall concern for global warming and environmental change.

Despite Canadians from coast to coast to coast having been slapped with a real reminder of harsh winters past, the fact remains that we're unlikely to see a recurrence of these conditions any time soon. The records still show the trend is toward a warming climate. This winter may have been harsher than those in recent memory but temperatures are still breaking records for their warmth.

For example, Winnipeg weather records dating back to 1872 show that the "normal" average winter daytime temperature for January is -13 C. This year, however, the average high has been up at -4 C. Record hail on the prairies for 2007, record flooding in BC, and record high temperatures in many places across the country and entire continent indicate that the climatic changes will continue to bring unpredictable weather.

Chances are that Canadians won't be in for another harsh winter any time soon and that in itself is surely a mixed blessing.

## In Foreign News: U.S. South is perilously close to running out of water

Deep in the Southern U.S., Atlanta, Georgia is scrambling to find a solution to their imminent water shortage. A record-breaking drought plagued the southeastern United States in 2007 and left water reserves depleted. Officials of Atlanta, the capital city of Georgia, have admitted that as little as 90 days' worth of drinking water is now in reserve for the city.

The two lakes near Atlanta that normally fulfill all water needs are drastically low as a result of the current drought. Normally a lush and humid part of the South, Georgia is reeling from these unexpected conditions. Weather experts predict that it will take many months of good rainfall to restore the normal water levels of the Georgia lakes.

Because of the water shortage, Georgia is embroiled in battles with its neighbours Alabama and Florida over the little water they do have. A case was heard in U.S. federal court this month in which Alabama and

Florida sought to stop Georgia from taking more than their allotment of water from the lakes that flow out of that State.

The city of Atlanta is home to over five million people. City officials have urged residents to cut back on their water consumption and all outside watering has been banned. While no contingency plan exists at this time, the mayor of Atlanta has suggested that desalination of sea water may be a possible future endeavour. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in charge of Georgia's water reserves and is insisting that a contingency plan is unnecessary at this time.

In the meantime, the rainy winter season is almost over in the South and the blazing summer temperatures that soak up water are just around the corner.

## CLICK ON THIS – Cover Up

Lonita Fraser

I think one of the best things ever as a youth, was actually flipping through the racks of vinyl at a record store, a feeling that cannot be duplicated with bins of CDs. It was a large canvas, the album cover; home to colour, imagination, semi-naked humans, shaved fish (anyone who gets that reference without looking it up gets my unswerving respect—email me and let me know if you do!), and all manner of brash or subtle art. Today is an adventure in the good, the bad, and the terribly unfortunate in the world of album art.

Warning: It does take some of these pages a while to load, given how image heavy they are. Please be patient. Grab a drink. Get a snack. Weave a basket.

Recreate Your Favourite Album Cover in MS Paint - A program so bad it's blocked from the memories of all right-thinking individuals, but when you need a little fun in your life . . .

MUSIC - MS Paint is not the only simplistic tool one can use to recreate the humble album cover. There is also LEGO.

Katastrofala Omslag - Believe me, you will not need the English language to appreciate the horrific cheesiness of these album covers. Oh baby, please, more exposed hairy 70s chest framed with scooped white collars. It's so MASCULINE!

LP Cover Lover - So, just on the off chance that you get sent to the pokey, there's an entire album of songs sung at San Quentin!

Sleevage - A compendium of the terrible and the terrific. There are some real beauties here—and in this case I mean that in a good way. Honest. No fakin'.

The Knockoff Project - Someone once said that imitation was the sincerest form of flattery. I do not think that person was fully caffeinated when they uttered that phrase.

Dodgy Albums - Some of them are a little offensive; some make me think that if I were on meds, I'd be upping my dosage. Warning: There are one or two here that may offend the more delicate amongst us. Please surf with caution.

Museum of Bad Album Covers - A truly mammoth collection of the worst album covers in the world . . . oh good lord, they're right.



## EDUCATION NEWS

Adrian Ma

**Free tuition comes with a price: think tank**

WATERLOO, Ont. (CUP) -- McMaster University student Meena Bhardwaj says she's looking for a part-time job to help her pay for school next year. Her parents were able to cover the bulk of her tuition and residence fees this past year, but Bhardwaj knows the cost of a university education in Ontario is climbing.

And like the thousands of students that took part in the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) National Day of Action on February 7, Bhardwaj is not happy.

"I really don't see where the money is going," she said, who paid five per cent more for her tuition this year than she would have in 2005-06. "It's a public system, but they're making it very hard for

the average person to go to university. Only middle class students will be able to afford it."

As tuition fees jumped at universities in Ontario this past year, so has student protest. Back in October 2006, the CFS staged a mock funeral outside of Queen's Park in Toronto to "mourn the death of affordable post-secondary education." Last week, students at the York, Toronto, and Laurentian campuses camped out in the sub-freezing winter temperatures in a campaign dubbed "Freeze for the Fees."

Maria Rodrigues, a Toronto-area school board trustee, fears high tuition rates will discourage more people from attending college or university.

"Many high school students actually chose to drop out because high tuition fees have already put the dream of college or university out of their minds," Rodrigues said in a statement released by the CFS.

When compared to other post-secondary school systems in Europe, the United States, Japan, and Australia, the evidence suggests Canada is among the more expensive places to get an education.

According to the Global Higher Education Report, a study released by the Educational Policy Institute (EPI)—an international education think tank—in 2005, Canada ranked 11th out of the 16 jurisdictions that were analyzed in regards to overall affordability.

The report examined total education costs and factored in cost-of-living expenses and tax expenditures. Coming ahead of Canada were Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Austria, Germany, France, and Italy. The U.S., U.K., New Zealand, and Japan were the only countries with less affordable post-secondary education.

Heavy government subsidization is the key reason why these countries outperformed Canada in affordability. Most of the countries do not charge tuition fees and if they do, the rates are low.

The education costs in Finland in 2005, for example, were slightly less than C\$400. In Belgium, education costs were a little over C\$2,000. In Canada, those same costs were tallied at over \$5,000.

However, Alex Usher, vice-president of EPI Canada, says while European countries may provide more affordable post-secondary education, the accessibility is compromised.

"Yeah, free tuition looks good, but only if you can get into a system that's smaller," he said.

Many European countries, according to Usher, invest so much money into subsidizing tuition fees that the money gets spread among far fewer people. Only the best and the brightest are accepted, which excludes large numbers of "B and B-minus level students."

Usher argues that since wealthy students have more resources (private schools, tutoring) at their disposal to help them get the top grades, the free education system actually benefits well-off families more than lower-income ones.

While Canada performed poorly in the affordability rankings, the country did well in factors of accessibility, such as participation rate and educational equity. The flip side of higher tuition fees, according to Usher, is being able to create room for more students.

"British Columbia is your best example of this," said Usher. "Tuition is way, way up [since the end of the freeze in 2002] but enrolment is up higher than it was during the tuition freeze."

Making things tuition-free, he says, would cost \$3 billion to \$5 billion a year, or the equivalent of a national day-care program. "And I think, given the choice, Canadians wouldn't give up the national day-care program."

For cash-strapped students looking enviously at their European counterparts, Usher says there is a misconception that lower tuition rates increase accessibility, especially for those coming from lower-income families.

"For low-income students, their rise in tuition has been zero," Usher said. "You have to remember that your first year of university, if your family's income is under \$35,000, your tuition is free [through the Canada Access Grants and the Canada-Ontario Student Loan program]. Ontario actually pays part of the second year's tuition as well."

Usher says that too much attention is focused on limiting tuition fees when the more efficient solution would be to target student grants and non-repayable aid like tax credits to low-income students.

Ontario's high enrolment numbers are also an indication that students are not being scared away by the higher sticker price of a undergraduate degree.

"Even if we had free tuition, it wouldn't really shift the social proportion [to be more inclusive]," said Usher. "It's the same argument people make when they don't like tax increases. Just because it makes some people worse off, and higher tuition does make some students worse off, it's not going to influence behaviour."

# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) for more information.

## THE VOICE

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