

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

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August 22, 2008

Solitudes

Loneliness of the long-distance learner

In Conversation With Reginald Shepherd

Careers

Respiratory
therapist

Plus:

*From Where I Sit,
Music To Eat Lunch To,
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, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston



Free At Last?

On a sweltering August night in 1791, the floodgates of repression burst open in the French colony of Saint-Domingue (known today as Haiti).

It was the beginning of one of the most successful anti-slavery uprisings in history, although the violence of the revolt pales beside the systematic atrocities committed by the colony's slave owners, both black and white.

August 23 now marks the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, but that hopeful title can't eradicate a disturbing truth: modern-day slavery is alive and well, and as many as 4 million people around the world still endure life as

slaves.

We're not talking about smuggled migrants, or people who work at menial jobs for low pay, in their own country or elsewhere. As Canada's Department of Justice [website](#) explains, "smuggled migrants are usually free once they arrive at their destination." As the word implies, slaves are not.

Often, they are people trying to make a better life for themselves. They may be lured by promises of good jobs or decent housing, or they may be threatened unless they agree to leave home and take on "work" in a foreign country. Others are women or children forcibly pulled from their homes and imprisoned in the global sex trade.

They might be white or black, European or South American, men or women. Yet they are all slaves, and part of a growing trade in human bondage that, according to the Canadian website [Human Trafficking](#), is "the third largest illegal market after drugs and arms."

In South Asia, slavery is often the only way to repay loans, and "bonded labourers" are sold into servitude in agriculture, domestic work, tanneries, and other industries. The Latin American and Caribbean region is a hub for the transit of slaves, and there are cases of children in Haiti "being sold into domestic slavery."

And modern-day slavery isn't limited to developing countries. It's also an ugly reality in places like Great Britain, Canada, and the United States—affluent countries that are often held up as bastions of human rights and democracy.

Examples aren't hard to find. One source says the RCMP "believes that some 800 of these victims end up on Canadian streets annually"; a [CNN](#) report details the active slave trade in Florida; the UK's Home Office estimates that as many as 4,000 women were trafficked into the country in 2003 alone; and the list goes on.

Although August 23 probably isn't significant for the average person, it's a critical date to remember. It marks a pivotal turning point in the struggle against one of humanity's darkest qualities—our willingness to enslave fellow human beings. And it's a reminder that for millions of people, maybe even someone in your own city, freedom is still very far away.

The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Learner

Adam Thackeray



The time on the computer screen reads 11:18 p.m., and the loneliness sets in. (In truth, the accuracy of this time is questionable as my computer is often many hours ahead, and the date setting is often many years behind; 1982, to be exact.)

Regardless of chronological inaccuracies, there is still the slightest twinge of melancholy that this distance student feels tonight.

Were it actually 1982, the closest approximation of academically related gloom would be the depressingly unreciprocated love for my fifth-grade classmates, Amy Carter and

Cara Bell. Needless to say, these adolescent lamentations have long since passed, but this evening there is an undeniable sense of isolation within me.

The feeling doesn't come often, but at such times I must remind myself why I have been hunching over this battered laptop and countless textbooks for the past five years: I have persevered in order to redeem the mediocrity of my educational past, to improve myself intellectually in the present moment, and more importantly, to broaden the future for myself and for my family.

As I begin to dwell on the embarrassing scholastic ineptitude of my youth, our family's ancient tabby, Boo, begins her long, drawn-out, ritualistic caterwauling from the basement. Her intermittent howls break the silence of the house for the next few minutes, and under my breath I curse her seeming immortality. My disdain for the cat is only temporary, of course, and I must remind myself to sympathize with her apparent dementia.

While I am attempting to put myself in the emotional mindset of an aged, slightly overweight feline, it suddenly occurs to me that Boo has been in my life almost as long as I've been pursuing some form or other of post-secondary education. With this reflection, it also occurs to me that for all the good my lacklustre intellectual pursuits had done me, I may as well have let the cat do my homework all along.

Hyperbole aside, I am so very thankful for the second chance that distance education has now given me. If not for AU, I would still be stuck in a professional rut, most likely involving a polyester uniform and a plastic name tag.

If not for AU, I would not currently be surprising myself with my own studious achievements. If not for AU, I would not have the opportunity to be both a student and a stay-at-home dad, rewarding myself with knowledge both academic and precious.

At the thought of my children, I shut down my computer for the evening and quietly ascend the stairwell leading to their rooms. (With ninja-like precision, I manage to avoid the numerous squeaks, pops, and moans so characteristic of slipshod, builder-grade construction.)

I enter my daughter's room at the top of the stairs and, in the pink glow of the night light, I see her stretched out like a starfish, snoring softly into the worn belly of her favourite stuffed bunny (dubbed "Bunny," appropriately).

I draw near and kiss her between her eyes, where faint blue veins suggest the shape of a butterfly taking flight. It is at this moment that I am reminded of my purpose. Indeed, whenever I begin to wonder why I fight to keep myself awake into the wee, lonely hours, chipping away at a degree with no apparent end in sight, all I have to do is watch her sleep and I am reminded.

I visit my son's room next. By this time, my eyes have become accustomed to the darkness, and I can distinguish his long, scrawny limbs positioned at the oddest of angles. As I brush the bangs from his uncharacteristically calm brow, I smile to myself and am reminded once again of my purpose; he fills me with such pride, and it is this same feeling that I wish him to have of me.

I kiss his small nose and, in return, my son smacks his lips, turns to the wall, and farts loudly into the small, still room—a blast of surprising amplitude for such small buttocks. It is a poignant moment, to be sure.

At this point in the evening/morning, I long only to be horizontal, preferably in a bed of some sort. After a drowsy, negligent display of dental hygiene technique, I lumber through the darkness toward the sweet release that only my pillow has to offer. As I hit the mattress, every spring and coil groans in protest of my collapsing weight, and I momentarily disrupt the sleep of my beautiful wife.

She soon drifts back to unconsciousness, and my final waking thoughts are of her: she, who has sacrificed much so that I may continue my education; she, who works tirelessly to earn our single income; she, who reminds me that I am not alone in my struggle.

The burning, red LED of the clock radio reads 1:32 a.m. The loneliness has passed, and all is well.

DID YOU KNOW?

2008 Convocation Video Online!



If you want to relive those special moments from convocation this year (or if you're planning to graduate next year and want to see what it's like!), video of all three days of convocation 2008 is now available on the [AU website](#).

From the opening ceremonies on June 12 to the final procession of new alumni on June 14, you can choose to watch streamed video of the entire event, listen to the grad addresses, or just see that special graduate cross the stage—whatever you like.

And if you plan to be part of Convocation 2009, don't forget to check the AU convocation page closer to the date.

You'll find all the information you need to make it a memorable event!



IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

**Reginald Shepherd: More Than a Product of Circumstance**

Reginald Shepherd is an American writer and academic. He has published five books of poetry.

*His latest work, *Orpheus in the Bronx*, a group of essays proposing a new understanding of—and direction for—modern poetry, was published by the University of Michigan Press as part of its *Poets on Poetry* series.*

The Voice *recently* reviewed *Orpheus in the Bronx*.

Building a Verbal Structure

I don't need any particular physical environment to be able to read and write, though a modicum of privacy and quiet is always helpful. I've been able to write on buses, planes, trains, and even in nightclubs. Whenever the opportunity presents itself I try to take advantage of it.

I have a couple of different processes when I write a poem. Sometimes (this is the more rare occurrence) a poem presents itself to me more or less whole. It will often undergo extensive revision, but most of the poem is there in draft form.

More usually, I collect lines, images, phrases, and even words—I carry a notebook around with me to jot down things I notice or things that come to me—until at some point I have a critical mass of lines and phrases that seem to go together. Part of the process of writing the poem is figuring out how they go together, building a verbal structure that will contain them.

On *Orpheus in the Bronx*

I wanted a title that would link the mundane circumstances in which I grew up, and of which I am largely the product, with the realm of art, which offered an alternative to those circumstances and the possibility of a self that was more than just the product of those circumstances.

I've always thought that the importance of literature, and of art in general, is that it offers possibilities and potentials besides those of the world as it is, that it offers alternatives—that's what has always appealed to me about literature.

Through the course of my education and my writing career I've felt the need to articulate and develop my ideas and convictions, to present good arguments for my positions and my viewpoints in order to make them more than just personal opinions. Many times the occasion to do so was an invitation to write something—I've often been prodded to explore my ideas by what one might call required writing.

Solace in Solitude

I've felt socially isolated in some way and to some degree pretty much all my life. But I've been lucky in always having a few friends who have at least tried to understand me. And literature, reading it and writing it, has been a strong source of sustenance all my life, as has listening to music.

The Danger of Losing Poetry

I think that the abandonment of poetry as an aesthetic form is a real danger. People too often look to poetry, and to art in general, for confirmation of their sense of personal and especially of group identity, treating it as a means rather than an end, and limiting the range of possibilities it can offer.

They just want to see themselves, or rather some idealized image of themselves, reflected back at them, rather than taking the opportunity to really explore identity and the world that art offers, not just through its content but through its nature as an aesthetic form.

Something called poetry might well continue after people have given up a sense of poetry as art.

I don't see the world in black-and-white, either/or terms, and I think that one of the many possibilities literature offers is of linking different worlds, of bringing different kinds of things together and finding out how they relate to one another.

The title of my fourth book of poems, *Otherhood*, embodies this attempt, bringing together otherness and brotherhood in a single word. Poetry, and art in general, is a social product, but it is also something that takes on a life of its own and speaks back to society. Much of its power resides in that dialectical relationship.

Poetry, and art in general, is a social product, but it is also something that takes on a life of its own and speaks back to society.

On Pissing People Off

I've come to realise that even things I write that I think are wholly innocuous will offend someone or another. If I spent all my time worrying about how people might respond, I would never write anything. On a practical level, I've been very lucky to have a steady publisher of my books of poetry: my editor at the University of Pittsburgh Press, Ed Ochester, is very loyal and supportive of my work. And I've also been lucky to have various forums in which to voice my viewpoints even when they're considered controversial.

The Poet in a TiVo World

I think that the explosion of communications technology has both expanded and contracted the possibilities for poets to find an audience. On the one hand, the Internet makes both finding and buying books and disseminating work in non-traditional ways (e-books, blogs, podcasts, web sites) much easier, making work accessible to a much larger audience than ever before possible, and also making it possible for a much larger number and variety of people to participate in literary culture.

On the other hand, the proliferation of blogs and web sites, etc., makes it much harder for any given work or writer to stand out, makes it much easier for things to get lost in the flood of data. And of course the larger world of mass media provides many distractions from the merely literary that simply didn't exist in the 19th century. People are too busy voting for the next American Idol and TiVo-ing episodes of *24* to pick up a book.

I hope that the benefits communication technology provides will outweigh the downsides, but I wouldn't try to predict the future.

CAREERS

Behdin Nowrouzi



Consider a Career as a Respiratory Therapist

What is a Respiratory Therapist?

Respiratory therapists (RTs) are allied health professionals providing individuals with cardio-respiratory and respiratory care.

RTs assess and provide therapeutic treatment to those suffering from respiratory problems, in collaboration with other health care workers.

Some of the diseases treated by RTs include asthma, cystic fibrosis, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, pneumonia, and pulmonary fibrosis.

Education and training

RTs are regulated health professionals in some provinces and completing an approved program in one province may not be sufficient to become a registered RT in another. For example, RTs are regulated health professionals in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, and Nova Scotia. Therefore, candidates interested in practicing in those provinces must meet additional requirements.

The Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists advises that applicants contact the regulatory board in the province where they are interested in practicing. In provinces where the profession is not regulated, standards are established and governed by individual employers. Regulation ensures that all members meet a basic standard of practice and competency, especially where the public's safety and interests are paramount.

Students who graduate from the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists recognized and approved programs are eligible to sit for the national registration examinations provided by the Canadian Board for Respiratory Care. Upon successful completion of these examinations, candidates are awarded the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) designation.

Admission requirements

College Program

Accredited respiratory therapy programs in Canada are found in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia. For a complete list, please visit the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists website. In Alberta, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary offer three-year diploma programs in respiratory therapy.

College/University partnership programs

Applicants interested in applying to a degree program should examine the college/university partnerships at the University of New Brunswick/New Brunswick Community College; Dalhousie University/Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre; Queen's University/Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences collaborative degree program; and the University of Manitoba.

Respiratory therapy students take anatomy and other health sciences courses as well as engage in clinical placements throughout different health care settings. The majority of RTs have graduated from a three-year diploma or four-year joint diploma/degree program. Some therapists have entered the profession holding a previous degree.

Where do RTs work?

The majority of RTs work in an acute or primary care setting. They may also work in neonatal nurseries, operating rooms, or in the emergency department.

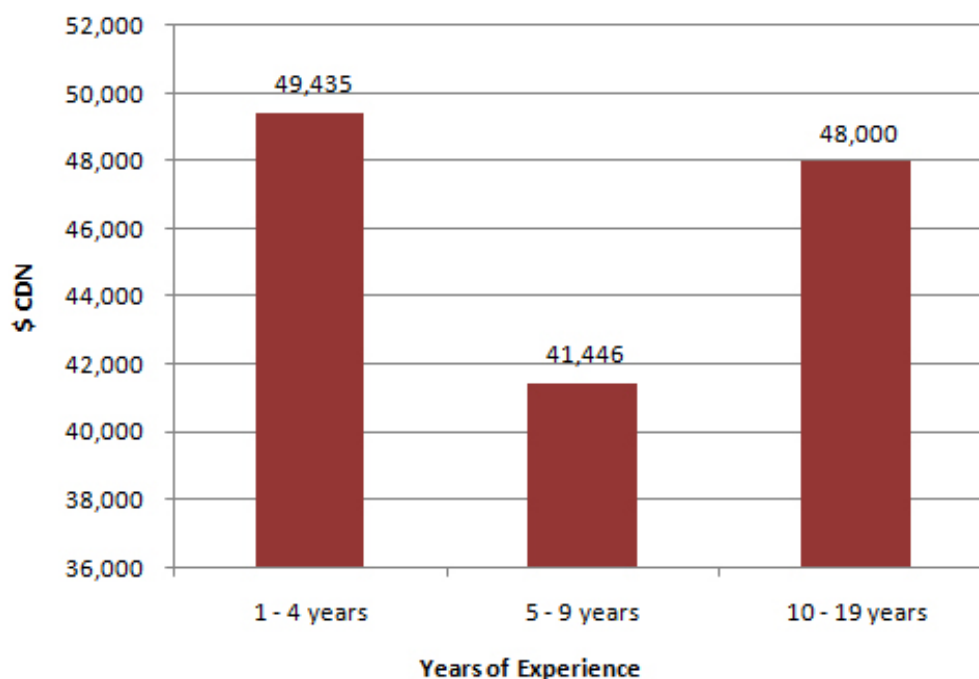
RTs may also work in long-term care facilities, diagnostic centres, as part of rehabilitation centres, in medical sales, or be involved in teaching, research, or patient education. In addition to their treatment and assessment responsibilities, RTs are also accountable for the safe mechanical and manual ventilation of ill patients (acute and chronically ill).

Salaries and demographic information

RTs earn an average of \$21.87 per hour in Canada (classified as Medical Technologists and Technicians, according to the National Occupational Classification), which is above the national average of \$18.07.

The employment outlook in this field is considered good. In Alberta, RTs earn between \$25 to \$40 an hour but there is variability depending on years of experience and place of employment.

Median annual salary for respiratory therapists in Canada (2007)



Source: Adapted from www.payscale.com

For more information regarding respiratory therapists, please visit The Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists [website](#).



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

CD: Corb Lund, *Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier!*

Release date: 2007

Label: Stony Plain Records

One night my sleep was troubled by a name that kept dinging away repeatedly in my dreams. That name was Corbin Lund.

While I was lying there trying to figure out who that was, I consoled myself with a promise to Google the name as soon as I got up.

In the morning I didn't find anyone by the name of Corbin Lund, but I did find plenty of links to a Corb Lund, and when I saw that he had written and sung "Truck Got Stuck," I said, "Oh, *that* guy!" So I checked out his latest and sent to the company for a review copy.

Not long after that, while I was out for the afternoon, my husband phoned from home to say, "This new CD you got in the mail is *incredible!*" So I gave it a spin. And I agreed. (It's all *true!* And it hasn't happened before or since.)

One thing that makes *Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier!* so valuable to culture makers is that it provides such a striking example of narrative cohesiveness.

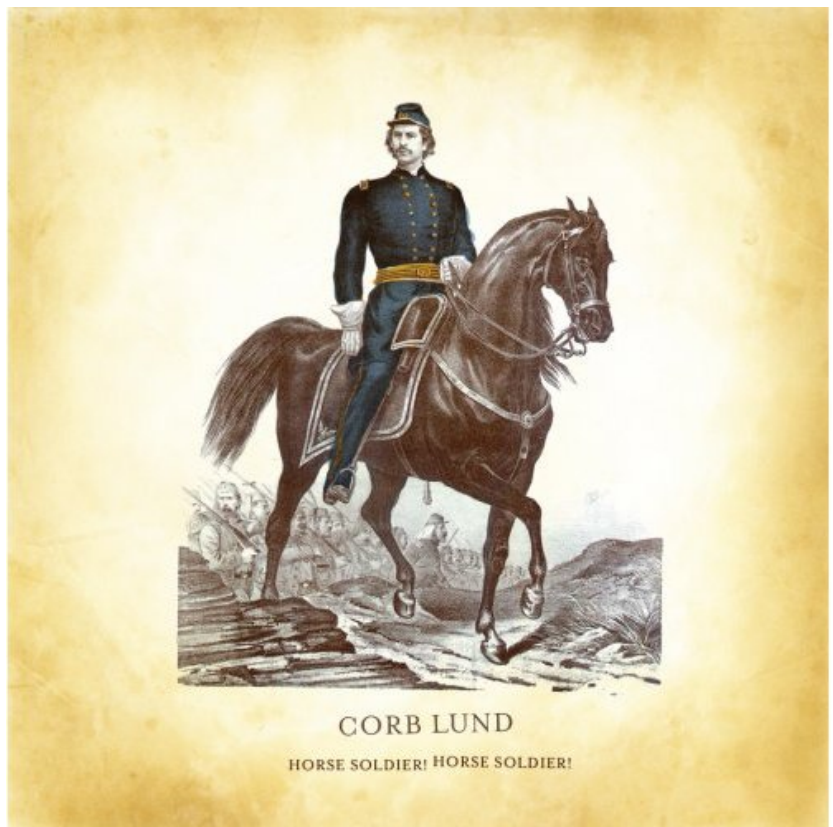
The concept album is generally a tight-wire, producing albums from tame commercial widgets to masterpieces and everything in between.

The songs in *Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier!* are held together by a metaphor that is full of beauty and significance in itself and yet opens the door to whatever the listener's experience might bring to it.

The use of the image of the horse soldier—to tie together unjust wars, the exploitation of ordinary folk by reigning powers, and humanity's undying attraction to the equine species—is ingenious.

Maybe Lund just had too much coffee to drink; I don't know, but my hat is off.

Lund puts the western back into country and western; recalling the thematic material of Peter LaFarge songs, his lyrics have more to do with cowboys, horses, rodeos, battles, and prairies than with the more oft-



cited moonshiners, mountains, and wildwood churches of the Appalachian reservoir of trad country song themes.

This is necessary, for the mythology of the cowboy is foundational to North American self-awareness regardless of the loss—in real time, not dream time—of the old-style cowboy way of life. Lund has amazingly managed to use this mythology to illuminate the experience of the universal soldier.

My favourite song on the CD, “Especially a Paint,” is a moving tribute to the mysterious, almost mystical bond between riders and horses. Horses having long been more luxury than necessity, the country folk who once depended on them are left with a wistful longing, expressed thus by Lund: “Whenever I see horses I see a sadness in their face.”

It’s as if his own sadness at having lost a loyal and beloved companion is projected onto horses themselves. It’s a sadness that includes a longing for a way of life in which war is a last resort and the open range a paradise you can “keep a loop on.”

Horse Soldier! Horse Soldier! manifests four of *The Mindful Bard’s* criteria for music well worth a listen: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts existing injustices; 3) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; and 4) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful endeavour.

MUSIC TO EAT LUNCH TO

Mandy Gardner



Anti-Flag – *The Bright Lights of America*

Release Date: April 1, 2008

Label: RCA

Tracks: 12 plus 1 bonus

Rating: 9

It seems like a mere few months since the whole Anti-Flag controversy over the switch from independent record labels, like Fat Wreck Chords and A-F Records, to major label RCA (Radio Corporation of America).

As it turns out though, *For Blood and Empire* was released an entire two years ago and now I feel it’s time to move on from the issue, step back, and look at what’s happening with the music of one of the most

important modern punk bands.

To be fair, the last two album releases with RCA have seen Anti-Flag hit the US sales charts, where in past years they haven’t had the pleasure (although 2003’s *The Terror State* has *Bright Lights* beat by a decent margin, peaking at number 91).

While the band's 2006 record had fans and critics focusing on musical integrity, *The Bright Lights of America* has us all looking past the superficiality of so-called sell-outs and looking for intensely personal messages from the songs since the murder of bassist Chris #2's sister and boyfriend.

Neither the music nor any of the four band members have lost their focus on politics, humanitarianism, or what Hunter S. would have called "Freak Power" . . .

The band had admittedly put a great deal of emotion and new direction into this record because of the tragedy, which caused them to pull out of several tour dates last year when they were scheduled with Billy Talent and Rise Against. Arguably, Anti-Flag's music has taken a small turn from the outright angry classic-esque punk rock to a more polished sound, and this has never been more apparent than on this particular album.

Neither the music nor any of the four band members have lost their focus on politics, humanitarianism, or what Hunter S. would have called "Freak Power," and *Bright Lights* is a truly subliminal, creative, and inspiring piece of work.

Chris Barker (a.k.a. #2) has spoken out about the incident concerning his sister and her boyfriend, and other members of the band have added a few comments to the slim profile of the killing that led the public to believe this has been a very stressful time for all the band members, not only in the obvious sense of the murder, but also in terms of their belief system.

Anti-Flag has always been a very vocal, grassroots humanitarian band and this is clear in all their music, no matter what year you pinpoint. As staunch humanitarians, the trial and entire process of American justice has threatened to shatter what the band members have stood up for their entire careers: understanding and forgiveness.

These 13 tracks (and several more bonus songs depending on which version of the album you buy or download) are a little more pointed than the last record, more specific in their storytelling, and overall completely enthralling.

Of *course*, the entire record must be heard in my opinion, but the star tracks of the album are the title track, "Good and Ready," "The Modern Rome Burning," "If You Wanna Steal (You Better Learn How to Lie," and "Go West."

Forget the RCA major-label bullshit. Appreciate these four amazing musicians and, to satisfy your curiosity, listen to what kind of music can be produced with a lot of talent, passion, and being on the edge of a major life tragedy that shakes your beliefs to the very core.



From Where I Sit

Hazel Anaka

Shop 'Til You Drop

Last Friday was a busy, busy day. I found the perfect diamond ring to complement the band I already own.

"Be careful when you're driving," they warned at the jewellery store. When a person has a glittery new ring on a hand clutching the steering wheel it's easy to be distracted by its shiny glory—and who knows what could happen?

Hey, give me some credit; I'm a grown woman, not a magpie drawn to sparkle. Sheesh. Though it *does* look damn fine clutching a wheel, typing, pointing—you get the idea.

Getting it appraised and insured is the next step, because I do have first-hand experience losing the centre diamond. It happened a couple of years ago to my original wedding ring. No coverage, no recourse. Funny how the life lessons just keep on coming.

As if that wasn't enough excitement for one day, I also bought a new laptop. My six-year-old Toshiba was hanging on by a thread: the power switch was broken and temperamental to boot; it was a crapshoot as to whether or not it would actually turn on at any given time. I had increased the RAM a few years ago, the computer had an external wireless card, the USB ports were all in the back, and I was ticked a lot of the time.

Knowing that its days were numbered I had been visiting electronics stores and researching websites for the past month or so. As long as my old computer remained on life-support I could afford to wait for the back-to-school sales. Luckily, we both made it.

I'm now the proud owner of a 17-inch HP with built-in wireless, webcam, and CD burner. The sale included bundling Microsoft Office, Windows Live OneCare, a new printer, set-up, and a partridge in a pear tree!

It's also got Vista. I'm trying to be open-minded and accepting, mostly because I don't have any other choice. I spent much of Sunday transferring files, setting things up, and groping my way around the new system.

Believe it or not, I didn't swear, throw things, or drink—but of course, that was just day one. I'm impressed with the speed and I like the bigger screen, keyboard, and potential. It's also kind of nice starting with a blank slate and using this chance to purge stuff that no longer serves me.

Roy wanted the USB turntable Costco was selling. Considering he's totally computer illiterate, guess who'll be expected to burn old 33 1/3 LPs onto disk?

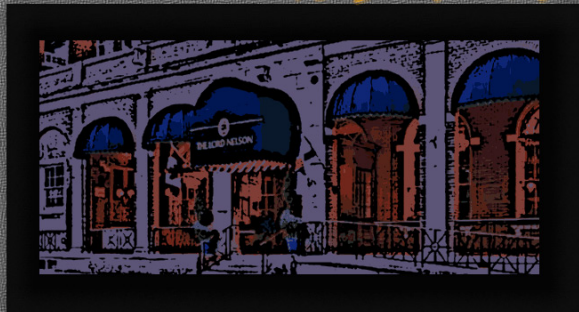
All this in good time. First I need to learn the basic programs I use every day and try to tap into the potential of this new technology. Spider Solitaire looks decidedly odd but I'll get used to it. At least my new ring and first-time gel nails will look great as I learn the nuances of this new machine. What more could a girl want, from where I sit?

The Interviewer

It is the ninth decade of the twentieth century...

written and illustrated by Wanda Waferman St. Louis

Caramel Baby #7: Booze 'n' Schmooze



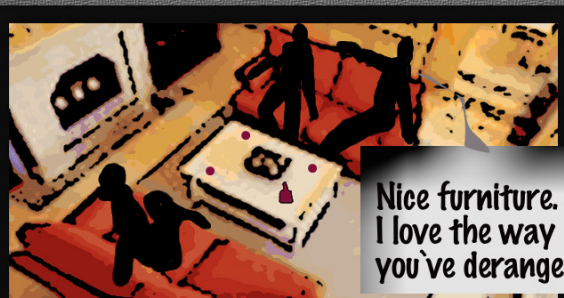
Kush has to stop by the Lord Nelson.



She points out the three guys and Reuben goes over to chat them up.



Welcome to my little shack.



Nice furniture. And I love the way you've deranged it.

Later, Reuben and Kush get invited out to South Park Street to the home of Wayne Casey...

Finally! A bar with no jungle music!



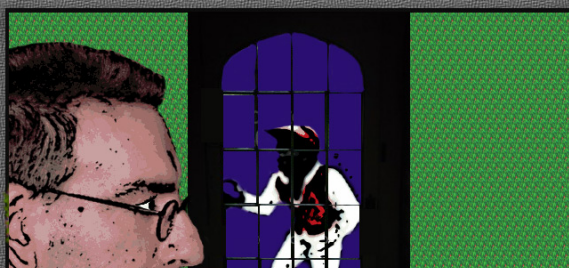
They have a laugh. The men look like braying asses.



..who claims to be the president or grand poobah or something.



My title is Exalted Cyclops. Actually.



There's one of those lawn jockeys outside. Somebody's been using it for pellet gun practice.

Next: Simple White Pleasures

AUSU This Month



Merchandise Still for Sale

We still have some locks and memory keys available for sale. Both of these were designed with ease of mailing in mind, which means they're small enough to be easily stored pretty much anywhere. The wristband USB key is a unique way to carry around your assignments, online materials, and even emails while you're on the go. With a 1 gigabyte capacity, it can even handle a good chunk of your music collection, and the design means you no longer have to worry about losing it. *The Voice* memory key has less capacity (512 MB) but the dark, flip-top design is classy enough to accompany you anywhere.

AUSU Lock Loan Program

Still running, and still popular, the lock loan program can allow you to rest easy knowing your valuables are safe if you're taking an exam at the Calgary or Edmonton campus. The locks can be set to any combination, and are loaned to people without any deposit, but we ask that you please remember to reset them to 0-0-0 before returning them so that we can continue this program.

Employment Site is here!

Many of you will already have seen the link to our new employment site on the front page, and while there are not a lot of employers in evidence yet, it's a great opportunity to get your resume, skills, and talents in there. The Personnel Department is busily working on finding employers who could use your unique abilities as a distance education student. Be sure yours are available to get the early opportunities!



Appointments

AUSU VP External, Barb Rielly, has stepped down from her position as chair of the AUSU Awards Committee, and new Councillor Bethany Porter has taken on the role. Council wishes Bethany good luck in this position, which can involve making some hard decisions.

Increasing AUSU's representation within AU, VP Finance and Administration, Sarah Kertcher, has been appointed to AU's integrated learning centre steering committee. This committee will examine the possibility of integrating all AU sites in the Edmonton Area into one building. Sarah will ensure that the committee keeps concerns of our members with respect to ease of access and exam conditions as well as AUSU's own special needs for storage and physical office space well in mind.

The MyAU steering committee sees two new AUSU representatives, President Karl Low, and VP External Barb Rielly, joining to provide their input on how MyAU could be better structured to meet your needs. If there's something that's been bugging you about the MyAU system, now is a great time to call or email our office and let them know. We'll be sure to bring your concerns forward.

SmartDraw Program Continues

If you haven't yet, you might want to download a copy of SmartDraw. 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.

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 Handbook/Planner 2008 has a few copies left!

We still have a number of copies of the 2008 AUSU planner available. We're getting closer to the end of the year, however, so our supplies are steadily decreasing. We've added a few enhancements this year, including cheat 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*.

As always, we're excited to know what you think of the planner, and especially want to hear of any improvements you think could be made.

Chat with a Councillor

Have a beef? Want to know where your \$8 per course goes or who's trying to make it work for you? Check out the AUSU chat times on our front page. Every Councillor has agreed to spend an hour each week making themselves available to you for your questions, concerns, or just to shoot the breeze while you take a break from your studying. It's not only a great way for you to learn more about what AUSU can do for you, but for us to learn what you want from AUSU. We hope to see you there!



Create professional-looking flowcharts, timelines, graphs, and more, in minutes, all by yourself. Then go spend some quality time with your family.

Free for AUSU members. Visit www.ausu.org



SmartDraw

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

Mandy Gardner

**At Home: Science helps define Arctic border of Canada**

While most Canadians probably aren't familiar with the area called the Lomonosov Ridge (an underwater shelf), it is nonetheless the most important piece of Canadian land in the matter of our Arctic sovereignty as of late.

While our neighbours to the south have often disputed our northernmost borders, the Russians are currently the most insistent that our version of the border is inaccurate.

The Russians made their ownership ideas clear last year when they put their flag up under the sea at the North Pole.

The Lomonosov Ridge is currently being studied in a combined effort between Canadian and Danish scientists in an effort to prove that the land is in fact a continuation of North American soil and thus belongs, in part, to Canada.

Many nations see the Northwest Passage as an international route that is free for all to access. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was signed by Canada in 2003 and

states that countries that own coastal land have a 22.2 kilometre outline around that land and are free to control access to that water.

At the present time, the Canadians and the Danes are getting ready to submit their evidence to UNCLOS in hopes of securing power over Arctic areas. Russia is also preparing submissions to the UN body, arguing that such power should be theirs. Canada will be presenting their scientific evidence that undersea lands in question are indeed a continuation of currently recognized Canadian territory.

Canada's Defence Minister, Peter MacKay, was in Iqaluit this week for Operation Nanook, the annual military exercises there. MacKay stated that Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic was one of the main purposes of the yearly event.

The ownership of such remote northern lands (and seas) is seen as an important matter for the future mining and drilling of natural resources there.

In Foreign News: American house foreclosure and house arson numbers both soaring

While the US mortgage crisis continues full bore, there are more and more interesting statistics being released that have a direct link to the home financing problems south of our border.

First, the number of home foreclosures in the United States increased by 55 per cent last month over the same time last year. That number represents 272,000 Americans who received a foreclosure notice in July 2008, according to the BBC. So far, more than a million Americans have lost their homes in this current housing crisis, the highest number since the Depression.

Besides the number of home repossessions being up, so are the numbers of homes that are going up in flames. According to fire officials in the US the number of arson cases always increases shortly after a swell in foreclosure numbers.

While it is not usually the homeowners who set fire to the repossessed properties, these homes are at a high risk for firebugs. According to John Hall, head of research at the National Fire Protection Association in the US, approximately two-thirds of the fires in vacant buildings are due to arsonists, and higher numbers of home foreclosures mean higher numbers of vacant buildings.

The US government has responded to calls for help by passing a bill that will allow struggling homeowners to remortgage their homes with less expensive loans rather than face repossession.

This bill will also provide a tax break for homeowners who are buying for the first time, and government could see a total price tag of \$25 billion for the measure.

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Exercise in Curiosity

The Olympics are chock full of finely conditioned athletes, a remarkable display of the feats that can be achieved when the human form is at its peak. We can't guarantee you a gold-medal physique, but this week's list of unusual exercise equipment is definitely high on the curiosity scale.

Hawaii Chair

As the video says, this interesting little chair with a hula motor can "increase your heart rate by over 200 per cent." Guess it's a good thing you'll be sitting down when your cardio spikes through the roof, then.

GyroGym

Apparently, you can get a full-body workout while gripping the handles and spinning yourself sideways, backwards, and upside down. The bonus? Nausea is a great appetite suppressant.

ThighMaster

What list of quirky exercise equipment would be complete without the ThighMaster? Hmm . . . she looks fit, but are the black leotard and high heels required workout gear?

Abs Surdity

Late-night TV is full of cheesy infomercials for equally cheesy equipment that promises rippling abdominal muscles. If you're thinking of buying one of those electric ab belts, think again: as this tester sums up, "It hurt—a lot."

Jack Lalanne Face Workout

Okay, so there's no equipment required, but this face workout by Jack Lalanne is sure to provide a chuckle. Just make sure nobody's on the other end of your webcam before you start scrunching your face at the screen.

EDUCATION NEWS

Stacy Cardigan Smith

Young people more likely to quit their jobs than 20 years ago**Winnipeg companies go out on a limb to retain new employees**

WINNIPEG (CUP) - During the lazy days of summer, it's easy to ponder quitting your job in favour of floating around for a few months. For past generations this daydream would have been just that—a dream. But for those born in Generation X and Generation Y, it's often a reality.

(Gen Y is defined as those born in 1980 and after, and Gen X comprises those born between 1962 and 1979.)

Young people today rarely stay with the same job for more than 10 years, and it's common to see a five- or seven-year itch, said Mark Shayna, vice president of David Aplin Recruiting's Winnipeg region.

"It's just a different mindset than there was 20 years ago," said Aplin.



Employees are even willing to leave a job without having another one lined up, he says. So is there anything that employers can do to counter this trend?

According to a recent study by Aplin Recruiting, 90 per cent of Gen Xers and 96 per cent Gen Yers named advancement opportunities as their number one incentive when looking for a job. Almost 3,000 people responded to the national poll in April and May.

Other incentives that ranked highly include performance-based bonuses and salary increases, excellent benefits packages, new challenges and a variety of interesting projects, pensions or retirement savings plans, high salaries, opportunities to do meaningful work and make a difference, recognition and feedback, flexible work hours and telecommuting, and the opportunity to receive mentoring or coaching.

Conrad Wiebe, 25, works as a software developer in the research and development department of Winnipeg-based Frantic Films. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in Computer Science in 2007 from the University of Manitoba. Many of the reasons he enjoys his work correspond with those identified in the study.

"I get to work on very challenging problems on a daily basis," he said. "The artists and directors are always trying to push the limits of what we can do. This gives us a lot of freedom to do innovative work. I really like the collaborative work environment and my co-workers. I also really enjoy the flexible working hours."

However, Wiebe is willing to sacrifice job security in order to enjoy some of these other freedoms.

"Job security is nice, but by the nature of the business I work in, this is never guaranteed," Wiebe said. "These types of concerns are somewhat secondary to the main things I look for in a job—the work environment and the nature of the work."

But this is not the case for all younger employees. Warren Charlton recently completed Aerospace Manufacturing at Red River College in Winnipeg and hopes to attain a job at Boeing or another local company. He's looking for job security.

"That's probably where I'd stay until I retired," he said.

This is both comforting and daunting for the 21-year-old. "There's job security and I'll build up a lot of seniority by the time I'm 40. I'm not going to get laid off . . . But then you're stuck in there and you don't really know what's out there."

So while some companies are appealing because of the non-traditional incentives they offer, others are attractive for the opposite reason.

At Standard Aero, for example, the average length of service is 11 years, says Florence Ticzon, manager of staffing and employee relations. Standard has about 1,300 employees at an average age of 40.

"They come here for a career and that's what we like to promote," said Ticzon.

This differs slightly from Shayna's statement of a five- to seven-year itch. But does that mean the criticism Generation Yers often face for being disloyal slackers that are constantly in need of praise is unwarranted?

Perhaps. But companies like Standard are still working to appeal to the job incentives identified by younger generations just in case.

For example, the company implemented the Self-Funded Leave of Absence program, wherein a small portion of an employee's salary is saved in order to cover for an extra week of paid time off.

When an employee does leave Standard, common reasons include relocation (often to Alberta), family needs, or just a desire for a change of pace.

According to Shayna, the area that sees the most movement is that of middle management, who generally make around \$55,000 annually.

"In the City of Winnipeg, there is definitely a lot more movement in that area across the board," he said.

Those that fall into this demographic are the most at risk when companies downsize, but are also more willing to leave, he notes. And in general, most of the movement occurs for those aged 45 and under.

However, there is also a lot of opportunity for movement for recent graduates, Shayna says.

"If you come out with a good education, I think you can still market yourself," said Shayna.

Regardless of what companies offer, life experience often seems to be the ultimate incentive for younger employees.

Although the type of work that Frantic and other new media companies do is generally appealing to Gen X and Gen Yers, Wiebe says this is only half the battle.

"I'd say that Frantic has to work just as hard as any other company to retain their employees," said Wiebe. "I see many cases where co-workers will leave in favour of higher education or new work opportunities. Not that this shows lack of job dedication; I would just say that ultimately all of us have our own interests in mind."

CLASSIFIEDS

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THE VOICE

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