

THE

# VOICE

MAGAZINE

Volume 16 Issue 40

October 17, 2008

## Moonlight Dream

The Waking

## This World

WEM or bust

## In Conversation With . . .

The Arkells



*Plus:*

*From Where I Sit, The Mindful Bard,  
The Interviewer, and much more...*

# CONTENTS

## WELCOME TO THE VOICE PDF

*The Voice* interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom-right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

## Features

This World: Across the Continent in 22 Days, Part III .....	3
On the Hill .....	8

## Articles

In Conversation With: The Arkells.....	9
Graduate Studies: Writing a Letter of Intent .....	11
<i>The Voice</i> Writing Contest is Here! .....	13

## Columns

Porkpie Hat .....	16
The Mindful Bard.....	17
From Where I Sit .....	19
The Interviewer .....	20
AUSU This Month .....	21

## News and Events

Click of the Wrist .....	12
Did You Know?: Convocation Photo Album Online .....	15
AU Press Publication Nominated for International Prize.....	18
International News Desk .....	23
Education News .....	24

## From the Readers

Letters to the Editor .....	2
-----------------------------	---

**The Voice  
Magazine**

[www.voicemagazine.org](http://www.voicemagazine.org)

1213, 10011 109th  
Street NW  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 3S8

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org)

**Publisher**

AU Students' Union

**Editor-In-Chief**

Tamra Ross

**Managing Editor**

Sandra Livingston

**Regular Contributors**

Hazel Anaka  
Christina M. Frey  
Mandy Gardner  
Barbara Godin  
Behdin Nowrouzi  
Wanda Waterman St.  
Louis

*The Voice* is published  
every Friday in HTML  
and PDF format

To subscribe for weekly  
email reminders as  
each issue is posted,  
see the 'subscribe' link  
on *The Voice* front  
page

*The Voice* does not  
share its subscriber list  
with anyone

Special thanks to  
Athabasca University's  
*The Insider* for its  
frequent contributions

© 2008 by *The Voice*

# 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.





**THIS WORLD****Christina M. Frey****Across the Continent in 22 Days****Part III: Whitehorse, Yukon Territories to Edmonton, Alberta**

*This is the third instalment in a series chronicling the adventures of the author; her husband, Adam; and two-year-old daughter, Kiersten, as they travelled by car from Alaska to Louisiana in summer 2008.*



*Buffalo at Watson Lake, YT*

**Day 6: Whitehorse, YT to Watson Lake, YT**

Since today's drive is much shorter than normal—less than five hours—we're not in a hurry to leave early. This gives us the chance to take in a local museum recommended by several guidebooks: the Yukon-Beringia Interpretive Centre, which showcases Ice Age-era Alaska and the Yukon.

There we learn, to our surprise, that the Alaska-Yukon area was largely free of the ice sheets that covered much of North America during the Ice Age. The climate at the time was so dry that ice was unable to form. It was here that woolly mammoths and other giant beasts roamed the steppe-like grasslands, and it was here, archaeologists believe, that human beings crossed the Bering Strait, thought to then be dry because so much of the earth's water was tied up in ice.

The museum is fantastic, with many interpretive displays and activities for children. Unfortunately, Kiersten is too young to appreciate them, although she does like the full-size woolly mammoth skeleton that dominates the main hall. We can't spend as long as we'd like, though, since we need to get on the road and Kiersten desperately needs a nap.

This afternoon's drive seems to take longer than it should. We're all fairly tired, my hair is still orange, and there's no wildlife anywhere. We're also so desperately sick of those kiddie CDs that after hearing "Mickey Mouse Club" for the 17th time in a row, Adam barely stops himself from flinging the CD in front of the car and driving over it with a resounding crunch.

Fortunately, we arrive in Watson Lake without any musical mishaps. It's a very small town, largely known for its signpost forest: a sprawling collection of hometown signs from locations worldwide. We'd like to place our own sign, but at this point we aren't quite sure where our hometown even is. Alaska? Louisiana? We're essentially hoboes right now, no home of record!

***We'd like to place our own  
sign, but at this point we  
aren't quite sure where our  
hometown even is. Alaska?  
Louisiana? We're  
essentially hoboes right  
now, no home of record!***

## **Day 7: Watson Lake, YT to Fort Nelson, British Columbia**

### **Wildlife!**

Finally, this morning, the animals come out of their hiding places. We see a buffalo, then another, and a few miles later, a whole herd! We also see bighorn sheep, a moose, and what we think is a deer. No bears, but right now, we're not complaining. We're thrilled to know wildlife still exists on the Alaska Highway.

I'm less thrilled that afternoon when I have a wildlife encounter that's much too close for comfort. While at a rest stop, I glance at my purse hanging on the door. There, on the strap I was holding not five seconds earlier, is an enormous winged beetle that looks like it belongs in *Jurassic Park*. I scream for help and cower against the wall, hyperventilating, while a lodge clerk calmly removes the giant insect. I'm amazed by her nonchalance. My experience with huge bugs generally involves half a bottle of industrial-strength bug spray and a stack of encyclopaedias to make sure they're really, really dead.

Give me a ferocious grizzly any day.

Much of today's drive is spent passing in and out of British Columbia and the Yukon. The highway weaves back and forth over the border, so we're often not quite sure where we are. The terrain is very mountainous here. The Rockies truly are wild, rocky, and beautiful, but the driving conditions—dangerous curves and steep drop-offs with no shoulder—mean I can't enjoy the scenery as much as I'd like. I do keep a close lookout for wildlife, as sheep and goats tend to congregate on the side of the highway. Kiersten is thrilled



when we spot a group of three goats—big, medium, and small—which we tell her are her beloved Three Billy Goats Gruff.

Maybe seeing her fairy-tale heroes has overexcited her, but for whatever reason, this afternoon Kiersten decides she doesn't want to nap. That complicates things, as Adam, exhausted, is having a nap himself, and

I can't entertain her on this stretch of the highway.



Then something amazing happens. She suddenly snaps out of her crankiness and begins playing happily and independently. She's well-behaved all the way to our destination, Fort Nelson, British Columbia.

Tonight, our hotel comes with a microwave, and for the first time since we left Alaska we have a hot, "homemade" meal. It's wonderful, and no one is happier than Kiersten.

She spends the evening playing just like she did before we began travelling. Could she finally be getting used to life on the road? Tomorrow, our last day on the Alaska Highway, is a short drive, and we hope for a repeat.

Travelling with an often-unhappy toddler has made for many miserable hours in the car, but a more pleasant driving experience seems attainable now.



## Day 8: Fort Nelson, British Columbia to Dawson Creek, British Columbia

And we make it happen. Today is a good day. Kiersten seems to have hit a turning point. She's amiable, polite, and plays independently as well as with us. After seven sometimes very, very long days, she finally seems to have adjusted to the life of a world traveller.

The drive is pleasant, too—and short, only about four and a half hours. We leave the earliest yet, around 9:30 in the morning, and that means we arrive in Dawson Creek mid-afternoon. In fact, we're early enough that for the first time since we left Alaska, Kiersten can take her afternoon nap in a real bed instead of a car seat. We eat a hot dinner at a normal hour, and in general spend a relaxed evening.

*A mountain goat checks out the view in northern B.C.*



Dawson Creek—which I keep calling Dawson City by mistake—seems larger than I remember it. The town's claim to fame is its location at Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway, which stretches 1,522 miles northwest to Delta Junction, Alaska. I can remember the feeling of adventure two years ago when we arrived at Mile 0 on our way up to Alaska.

Now, the feeling is bittersweet; it's like a chapter of our lives has closed. But we're sure there will be more adventures ahead. Tomorrow, we're headed for the first major city since Anchorage: Edmonton, Alberta!

## Day 9: Dawson Creek, British Columbia to Edmonton, Alberta

We head out very early this morning. Eight in the morning is definitely a record for us, but it's especially important for today, as we're going to lose an hour at the Alberta border. Actually, we become confused when we read in the *Milepost* that Dawson Creek doesn't follow daylight savings time (its far-north location gives enough daylight hours), and we spend a while trying to figure out exactly what time it is. After some time we realize that our hotel must have used daylight savings time so as not to confuse travellers.

Unfortunately, it had the opposite effect on us!

***... after several hours I begin to think that all the wilderness travel has dampened my former shopaholic tendencies.***

The terrain grows much flatter as we head east through Alberta. It's raining steadily, but despite this being one of our longer drives, we're making excellent time thanks to our early start. Kiersten refuses to nap, but aside from that she's doing well again today.

All day we've been promising Kiersten a trip to the hotel pool, and after dinner we finally make good on it. Although the pool room is a little chilly for our tastes—seriously, 22 degrees Celsius?—it doesn't affect her enjoyment, and she has a blast. After being strapped into a car for so long, she's relishing the freedom.

After Kiersten's in bed, I meet up with an old friend who lives outside the city. We haven't seen each other in 10 years. Back then, we were both newly in college, but now we're married with kids and we have a lot to catch up on. In fact, we talk so long that before we realize it, it's two in the morning! By the time we say goodbye and go off on five different tangents (necessitating more goodbyes), it's past three.

It's a wonderful visit. But am I ever going to be tired tomorrow!

## Day 10: Edmonton, Alberta

Today is the day I have been waiting for and saving up for ever since we found out we were moving south. It is the day that I will shop 'til I literally drop, at the West Edmonton Mall—the largest mall in North America.

The WEM, as it's called, is enormous: it boasts an amusement park with a roller coaster, a water park, sea life displays, and other attractions. I'm more interested in the 800-some stores. Adam and Kiersten are going to have a Daddy-daughter outing while I get some shopping done.

However, after several hours I begin to think that all the wilderness travel has dampened my former shopaholic tendencies. To my surprise, I'm not really enjoying myself as much as I expected. In fact, I'm secretly a little bored.

Adam and Kiersten have a so-so trip to the sea life shows, but after a while Kiersten becomes cranky and doesn't enjoy it much. Now that she's used to car travel, maybe being out and about is too unfamiliar for her.

It's an unsatisfactory day all around. But tomorrow we have a short drive to Calgary, and we're hoping to arrive early enough to have a little fun sightseeing. We want to erase the disappointing results of our lovingly planned mall excursion!



## ON THE HILL

Sandra Livingston



## Oh, Danny Boy

Love him or hate him, you've got to admit that Premier Danny Williams has a certain self-confidence; the apparent conviction that his means always justify the end because he's standing up for the little guy (in this case, Newfoundland and Labrador).

And when the Conservatives won another minority in this latest federal election, Williams was quick to promote that oppressed-but-noble image.

He'll co-operate with Stephen Harper's minority, he says, but only if there's no payback. As the CBC

reports, Williams hopes that Harper won't try to "punish Newfoundland and Labrador for not delivering any Conservative seats."

To Williams's credit, he's done it again. He's grabbed our attention with a line that takes the prize among even the most ridiculous political banter of recent weeks. Because if there's one thing Danny knows a lot about, it's payback.

To start with, there was that little campaign Williams concocted called ABC (Anything But Conservative). It was an upshot of his battle with Harper over a written election promise to exclude non-renewable energy revenues from the equalization formula. Harper reneged and Williams saw red.

Fair enough, but Williams took the battle beyond a dispute with an opponent. His retaliation reached out not only against every Conservative candidate in his province, but across the country. As early as January 2008 Williams indicated that he was prepared to take his ABC message to other provinces, and a month before the election he addressed all Canadians, saying "If you believe the country deserves better, you know what to do."

Never mind whether Conservative policies might be of benefit to voters in other provinces. Williams was mad and he wasn't going to take it.

He went from rhetoric to retaliation in 2004 as well, when he dragged the Canadian flag into a dispute with then-Prime Minister Paul Martin. Or more accurately, dragged it down from provincial flag poles. At the time, Newfoundland and Labrador (and Nova Scotia) were pushing to keep 100 per cent of offshore energy revenues.

When the federal finance minister's offer didn't meet Williams's approval, the premier's reaction resembled that of a spoiled kid on the playground: if you won't give me what I want, I'll take your ball so nobody can play. Petty payback at its worst, and a particular affront to the generations of Canadians (including those from Williams's own province) who have fought for what that flag represents.

It will be interesting to see where the dispute over those non-renewable energy revenues goes, but one thing's for sure. Danny Williams suddenly taking the high road on payback is a little like trying to save Washington Mutual: a day late and a dollar short.

## IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis



## The Arkells

*The Arkells are five guys who met at McMaster University and recorded their first EP, *Deadlines*, in 2006. The band is noted for its passion and energy in live performances and their clever and socially relevant song lyrics.*

*Jackson Square, the band's first full-length album, will be released October 28, 2008 by Toronto indie label Dine Alone Records. The following are notes from an interview with the band's lead vocalist, Max Kerman.*

## Conditions of Creativity

If I knew what I needed in order to be creative I might have a more consistent creative output! Creativity comes at different times for me. It often comes when I have a lot going on in my life. Having a lot of free time does not always equal writing more music or lyrics.

I think many songwriters can agree that creativity often occurs when there is some kind of conflict in your life, as it motivates you to address issues that you might put on the back burner.

## On "Hugo Chavez"

I am interested in telling interesting stories about people and Chavez has an interesting story. The song is specifically about the time Chavez spent in prison after a failed coup in the early 1990s, before he became the president of Venezuela. It's a story that



many revolutionary leaders have experienced: being exiled or jailed and using that time away to grow personally, learning more about the cause you're fighting for.



## Books, Music, and Film

There are many records which have had a profound effect on the way we think about music, and the way we think about creating an entire album: e.g., The Weakerthans' *Reconstruction Site*; The Band's *Brown Album*; Ben Folds Five, *Whatever and Ever Amen*; Bruce Springsteen's first record, *Greetings from Asbury Park*; Spoon's most recent album, *Ga Ga Ga Ga Ga*; and The National's *Boxer*. This week I've been listening to ELO's greatest hits and the new Kings of Leon record.

Everyone has different tastes in books. I really enjoyed Dave Eggers's *What is the What*.

Last tour we enjoyed watching the Woody Allen movie *Match Point*.

## On Being Political

On *Jackson Square* a handful of the songs have themes that might be considered socially conscious. I wouldn't consider ourselves a political band but we are interested in writing songs and telling stories that deeply resonate with us in some way and some of those songs happen to be songs about social issues.



As far as political ideologies or religious beliefs go we believe in tolerance, neighbourliness, and the golden rule. We are still not sure which religion those things fall under.

## Song-making

I generally come up with chord/melody ideas with some lyrics and bring them to the rest of the band. Then there's a lot of arranging, practice, and discussion. As a

band we are pretty good at telling when the song is "there" and when it needs more work.

Tim and Dan are the most technically sound musicians in the band. They spent most of their childhood and teenaged years getting good at their instruments and they are fantastic players now. Mike, Nick, and I all played in bands in high school and have learned a lot from Tim and Dan.

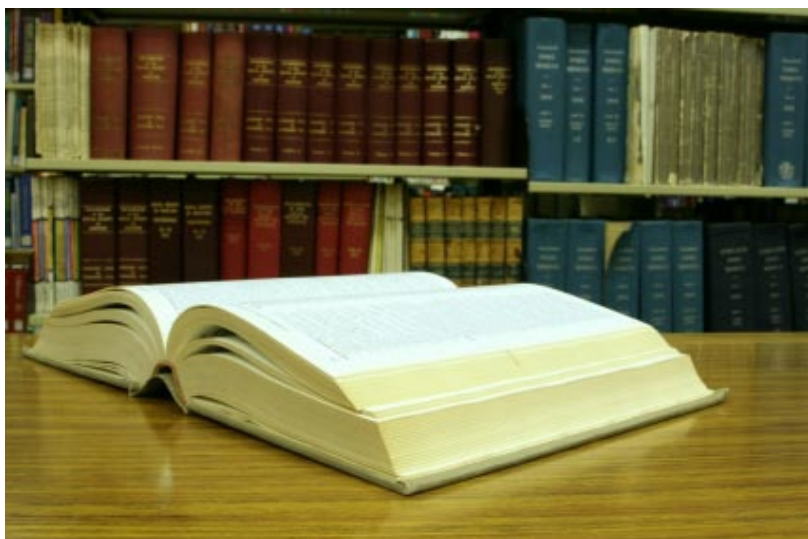
For a typical rehearsal we show up to Dan's house about twenty minutes later than we agreed. Then Dan's parents leave to go out for dinner. We set up and rehearse the tunes. Then Dan's mum comes home and tells us to wrap it up.

## What's Next?

Tour, tour, tour. With Matt Mays and El Torpedo.

## GRADUATE STUDIES

Behdin Nowrouzi



### Writing a Letter of Intent

So you're interested in applying to graduate school. When students are considering applying to graduate schools, there is an application that often takes weeks, if not months, to prepare.

Part of this process may include writing a letter of intent, or purpose letter. The following is an introductory guide to writing this crucial letter, the admission committee's window into your achievements, experiences, and personality.

In fact, some schools state that this is the most important part of the application process, so you should place a considerable amount of effort into perfecting your letter.

First, as a potential graduate student in the program, be sure to indicate your goals, purpose, or career plans. This indicates to the selection committee and your supervisor that you have thought about this thoroughly and extensively.

Once you have an idea of what you'd like to do, you should specify your area of interest. For example, if you are applying for graduate work in psychology, it's a good idea to state your preferences using the language of the field.

Next, you might like to take the opportunity to explain how your experiences (i.e., school, work, extracurricular activities) demonstrate your preparation to enter a specific program. For instance, a student applying for a doctoral studies program in molecular biology may wish to highlight their previous academic courses, theses, as well as their relevant work experience.

Similar to vetting applicants for a job, committee members want students who demonstrate a genuine interest in their school and can describe how their particular skills are mutually inclusive.

Overall, it's very important to stress how your experiences have helped you prepare for graduate school because, unlike undergraduate studies where students are trained to take in information, graduate students contribute original research.

Conclude your letter with why you want to attend a particular school and why it fits well with your research and professional goals as a graduate student and beyond. Program directors and admission personnel want to hear about your goals for after you're done your studies, and this gives you an excellent opportunity to illustrate that you have been thinking seriously about your future career.

***Having a well-prepared  
and coherent letter  
exhibits not only your  
serious commitment to  
the program, but also to  
your future career.***



Equally important is that you frame a research question, or at the very least have an idea of the type of research you are interested in pursuing. To help with this, you could look at faculty profiles or even meet with those interested in graduate supervision. Such mentorship can provide great insight and feedback for your letter and strengthen your overall application.

Once you have a draft completed, have a friend read it and provide you with some comments. It's important that your letter is organized and chronological. Using creative language is appropriate and can help you stand out; however, exercise caution if you are going to use humour, or use it very sparingly.

Overall, the letter of intent is your tool to show potential schools of your relevant experiences and interest in starting graduate school. Having a well-prepared and coherent letter exhibits not only your serious commitment to the program, but also to your future career.

There are numerous websites and professional services that provide students with feedback regarding their letter, and two guides you may find useful are from the universities of [Concordia](#) and [Waterloo](#).

For more information on graduate programs at AU, check out the online calendar [here](#).

## **CLICK OF THE WRIST - Futurama**

**These days, it seems like everyone's predicting the future: the political pundits before the Canadian election; those trying to call the upcoming US election; and the analysts trying to foretell the economic tide. But at the rate that political polls and spreadsheets change, these methods may work just as well.**

### **Tarot History**

This colourful site offers a look at 500 years of Tarot history, along with links to other sites explaining the cards. Even if you don't believe in them, the artwork alone is worth taking a look.

### **Magic 8 Ball**

Straight from Mattel, this online Magic 8 Ball will answer all your questions. Nobody said anything about accuracy, but it *will* answer them.

### **Web Ouija**

Learn the history of the Ouija board and check out the photo gallery of boards dating all the way back to 1891. There's even an online version you can try. Just type your question and see what the Ouija reveals.

### **Online Crystal Ball**

Think of a question and click on the crystal ball. The answers are cryptic enough to let you interpret them just about any way you want, but the site does get points for cool sound effects.

### **Runes**

This Nova site gives a brief history of these ancient Viking symbols, used for everything from communication to divination. You can even spell your name in Runes.

## THE 2008 VOICE MAGAZINE WRITING CONTEST!



Write for *The Voice* and win money for your education!

*The Voice* is launching its 2008 writing contest, with categories for both fiction and non-fiction.

We've got over \$1,000 in prizes to give away: one winner in each category will receive a scholarship of one Athabasca University undergraduate course.

Please read the contest rules and regulations and submission guidelines carefully to ensure you are not disqualified.

It's free to enter, but the length limits are firm and all entries that go beyond these limits will be disqualified. Good luck!

### Categories

#### Non-Fiction:

In 1,500 words or less, write about any issue affecting freedom of speech. You may write about issues in the press, in politics, or on a personal scale. You may focus on current issues of free speech, or take a historical approach. Feel free to use research or statistics in your article (with proper citations), or write a creative opinion piece.

#### Fiction:

This category is open to your imagination! Write a 1,500 word or less fiction submission in any genre or format. Short stories, poetry, a scene from a play, even a comic. Be creative!

### Rules and Regulations

- The *Voice* writing contest is open to anyone 16 years of age or older, with the following exceptions: AU, AUSU, and *Voice* staff and AUSU councillors are not eligible to enter the contest.
- Winning entries will be published in *The Voice*. *The Voice* reserves the right to print non-winning entries at a rate of remuneration in accordance with current *Voice* freelance submission rates. *The Voice* may use portions of non-winning non-fiction entries in a composite about perspectives on free speech. No remuneration will be provided for such use.
- All decisions regarding this contest and the selection of winners remain with the judging panel and are final.
- Entries will be judged by a panel to be selected by the *Voice* editors, and this panel may include: AU students, AU tutors, and/or AUSU councillors. The panel will include at least 3 members.
- *The Voice* editors will collect articles and oversee the judging, but will not be judges.



- Entries must be original works that have not been printed or published elsewhere (including online), and must not be course assignment papers or derivatives of.
- Entries must not contain any information that would make the identity of the author evident to judges. To ensure fairness, all entries will be forwarded to the judging panel with a reference number attached, but no personally identifying information. *The Voice* editors will keep the identity of the authors private until the contest closes. *The Voice* editors will keep a record of the authors of submissions, and will be the sole owner of this list.
- Entries will not be edited for grammar, spelling, or content, although *The Voice* editors may black out any personally identifying information contained within the submission. Otherwise, entries will be forwarded to the judging panel as is, with the exception that all entries will be converted to use the same file format, margins, font size, and font style to ensure that all entries are equally readable.
- The deadline for submissions in both categories will be December 31, 2008. The winners will be announced by February 28, 2009. *The Voice* reserves the right to extend either deadline if necessary.
- One grand prize winner will be selected in both the fiction and non-fiction categories. If no entries are received in one of the categories, the prize money will be returned to the *Voice* scholarship budget. Prizes will be awarded in the form of a certificate for one free Athabasca University undergraduate course. Prize certificates have no cash value.
- *The Voice* reserves the right to add additional, secondary prizes.
- *The Voice* is not responsible for lost emails. *The Voice* editors will confirm receipt of all entries by email. Please follow up if you do not receive a reply in two business days.
- All entrants agree to allow their name and city of residence to be printed, along with their submission, should it be selected as a winning entry. No further remuneration—beyond the contest prize—will be paid to the contest winner when their entry is printed.
- Winners will be asked to sign a standard Release and Indemnity form; each prize winner agrees to release the sponsor and its agents from any liability in connection with the prizes awarded in this contest.
- Any entrant found to be tampering with the contest results, or attempting to influence any of the judging members, or using any forums or other public communications media to advise others of which entry is theirs will be disqualified; or if *The Voice* editors determine, at their sole discretion, that any other form of tampering has been attempted, that entrant will be disqualified.
- No preference will be given to regular *Voice* writers. Entries will not identify the writer as a regular *Voice* contributor when sent to the judging panel.
- Where applicable, this contest is subject to all federal, provincial, and municipal laws. Contest void where prohibited.

***The deadline for submissions  
in both categories will be  
December 31, 2008. The  
winners will be announced by  
February 28, 2009. The Voice  
reserves the right to extend  
either deadline if necessary.***

### Submission Guidelines

- Your submission must be an electronic file attached to an email and submitted to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org). Submissions sent as the body of an email will not be accepted. Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) if you require instructions on how to attach a file to an email.
- Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format [.doc or .docx], rich text format [.rtf] or plain text format [.txt].

- If you use footnotes or endnotes, type them in at the end of the document, rather than using the endnote feature of your word processor.
- If you use a word processor other than Word or work on a Mac computer, you can save a file in one of these alternate formats using the 'save as' function and selecting the desired format on the save menu. Contact *The Voice* editors if you require assistance in formatting your submission. Users of older Macs may have to send entries in HTML format.
- Each entrant may submit one entry in each of the two categories.
- All entries must be under 1,500 words due to judging time constraints. Length will be determined by the word count feature in Microsoft Word. Your references and citations section will not be included in the word count.
- References should be formatted consistently according to a standardized publishing style guide, such as the American Psychological Association (APA) or the MLA press style.
- Entries should not include unnecessary formatting such as drop caps, graphics (unless the graphic is integral to the work), or unusual fonts. Entries must be text; scans of handwritten or typed documents will not be accepted.
- The email should include the following information: Your full name, AU student ID number (if applicable), email address, telephone number, mailing address, the title of your entry, and whether you are submitting to the fiction or non-fiction category.
- Make sure non-fiction entries are based on the topic question detailed above. Fiction entries can be on any topic you like. Do not include your contact information within your article but be sure to include a title.

Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- Non-Fiction entries will be judged on originality, creativity, accuracy, and how well your support your assertions with data or argument. You will also be judged on the presentation of your article, including professionalism, proper spelling, grammar and syntax, and readability. You may write in journalistic style or essay format.
- Fiction entries will be judged on creativity, entertainment value, and the originality of your writing style.
- Regardless of the genre you choose, you will be judged on the effectiveness of your piece and your technical writing skills.

Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) if you have any questions.

## DID YOU KNOW?

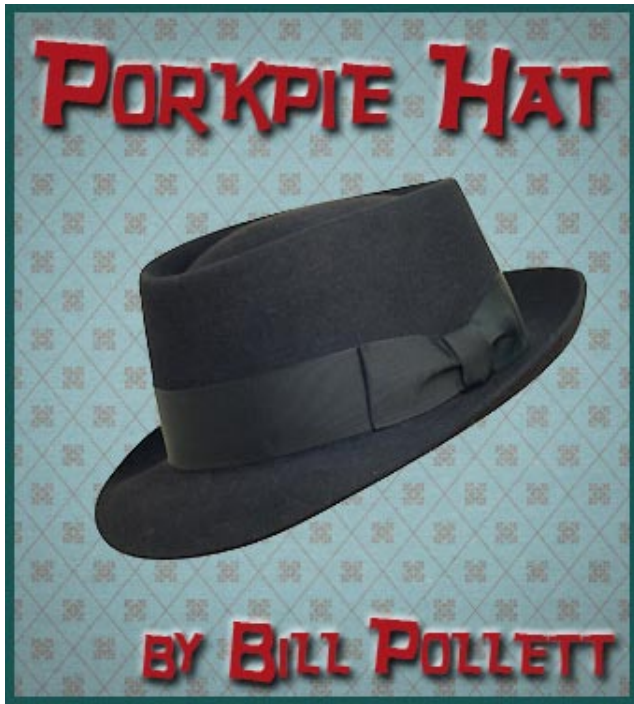


### Convocation Photo Album Online!

If you're in the mood for something bright and colourful before the leaves begin to turn, you don't need to look any further than AU's Convocation 2008 [photo album](#).

There are more than 70 photos of AU grads, along with their reflections of what made their education journeys special. You'll also find photos of honorary degree recipients and other special guests who attended the ceremony at the AU campus from June 12 to 14, and links to more detailed write-ups about them.

There's also a link to [previous convocation photo albums](#) (all the way back to 2002), so you never know who you might catch a glimpse of!



## The Waking

So there you are, waking up in the middle of the night. There is moonlight leaking in through the curtains, and ghosts grumbling inside the pipes. You lie there for a while, and think that something is different.

Gradually, you become aware of what it is: you have no pain in your back or in your legs. Your joints are not aching the way they usually do. You feel as though you are a much younger, much lighter version of yourself—nearly weightless.

Slowly, you become aware of other changes, too. For one thing, you are no longer afraid. You are no longer afraid of murderers lurking outside your back door. You are no longer afraid of faulty furnaces or Looming World Financial Crises, of blood clots in your cerebellum or mercury in your tuna. You feel as though you might live forever, but if you happened to die in

the next five minutes, that would probably be okay, too.

The feeling of being without fear or pain is so strange. For a moment, you wonder if your fear of faulty furnaces was not irrational after all. You wonder if your old bogeyman, Carbon Monoxide, has crept in on Ninja-soft feet, carried you off in your sleep.

But, surely, ghosts don't have an appetite. You feel as though you could eat French Toast and Black Cherry jam. You could eat beets and carrots pulled straight from the garden, their roots still covered in soil. You could eat Hot Buttered Clouds washed down with a glass of Ice Cold Rain.

And, surely, dead people don't have hearing. You can hear the whirr of a leaf spiralling through the air. You can hear the heartbeat of your cat asleep on the back of the living room couch. You can hear the engines of an icebreaker on the edge of the Arctic Circle. You can hear an old musician playing "Clair de Lune" on his clarinet in a New Orleans tenement.

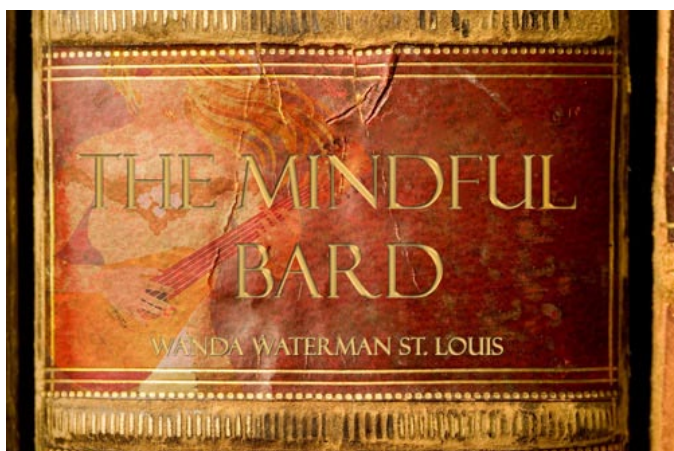
"I have never," you think, "been so alive."

And it occurs to you that, if you leave this bed right now to walk abroad in the night, you will be inundated with wonders. If you walk out through your front door, there will be Comets and Violins. There will be Woodsmoke on the Breeze, and Laughter in the Woods, and All Manner of Unimaginable Coincidences.

"I should get up," you think. "I should get up, I should get up, I should get up."

But you don't. You don't, because if you get up right now, then you will be tired in the morning. You don't, because there is so much to be done today; you need your rest. Maybe some other time.





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

CD: T@b, *Thugs at Bay*

Release date: December 2007

Mad Geniuses of the New Millennium

*I'm almost on the brink of being  
On the verge of being  
Very nearly close  
To bordering on the edge  
Of doing what I really wanna do.*

T@b, from "On the Verge," *Thugs at Bay*

The first time I heard T@b was at a live performance at the Sister Fair in Bridgetown, Nova Scotia. Their music hit me like a surprise party. There was the serenely self-assured Ariana in her Olive Oyl stockings, singing in that pure, pitch-perfect voice, marathons of brilliant lyrics tripping lightly off her tongue, switching effortlessly between soprano sax and fiddle like it was music period at nursery school.

There beside her stood the jester Andy, simultaneously singing backup, playing guitar, and drumming (he plays the drums backwards, his feet working the pedals as his body sways in a canny, weaving two-step).

They describe their music as polymetric folk jazz, and yes, their music is polymetric; just try counting the different rhythms in one song. You'll see.

There's just something about a folk duo. Once there was Nina and Frederick, to whom I listened as a child after walking home from town, sliding down off a sugar high and wondering in despair why the world was such a vile, dim place. Nina and Frederick helped me decide that from then on music, not candy, would be my drug of choice.

Then along came Ian and Sylvia, exemplifying the true union of like-minded culture makers. I was similarly captivated by Makem and Clancy, Richard and Mimi Farina, and Simon and Garfunkel.

Then there were those flash-in-the-pan collaborations between Bob Dylan and Joan Baez, and Joni Mitchell and James Taylor to show just how fragile musical collaborations can be.

Even the recent mockumentary *A Mighty Wind* has the virtue of featuring "Kiss at the End of the Rainbow," one of the most romantic love songs I've ever heard, somehow all the more moving because it is the tongue-in-cheek juncture between the fictitious Mitch and Mickey. (Moral: even a hokey folk duo is something worth rhapsodizing about.)

Like the equally necessary folk trio, the folk duo is a structure that dare not die. In the world at large the number of folk duos is at this moment burgeoning with a vengeance. With T@b it has been not propped up and resuscitated but ingeniously recreated.

***Calling their music  
polymetric folk-jazz, as  
unwieldy as that sounds, is  
still the tip of the iceberg  
lettuce leaf; try polymetric-  
folk-jazz-gypsy-klezmer-  
torch-lounge-noir-cabaret-  
children's.***

Why would, say, a poet listen to T@b? Because this music is substantial and radically playful, simple and ripe with associations, intellectual and unpretentious, deep and light. Such music can help the poet get over the false sense of the weightiness of life while kindling her own creativity.

Then there are the atmospheres created by each song, atmospheres sometimes delightfully at odds with the song subjects. When Andy sings “Bungee” in his Swiss German accent you feel like you’re at a 1920s Berlin burlesque show even though he is giving a riveting play-by-play of a terrifying bungee jump.

“The Market Song” has a cabaret feel despite being a hymn to the local farmers’ market. “The Moon and the Tide” is a corny lounge ditty with the deceptively simple lyrics of the best jazz songs. I could go on and on.

Calling their music polymetric folk-jazz, as unwieldy as that sounds, is still the tip of the iceberg lettuce leaf; try polymetric-folk-jazz-gypsy-klezmer-torch-lounge-noir-cabaret-children’s. But I’m probably leaving something out.

*Thugs at Bay* manifests seven of The Mindful Bard’s criteria for music well worth a listen: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it makes me want to be a better artist; 3) it confronts, rebukes, and mocks existing injustices; 4) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 5) it is about attainment of true self; 6) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; and 7) it stimulates my mind.

### AU Press Publication Nominated for International Prize



AU Press may only have been launched a mere five months ago, but this fledgling open-access press is already making its mark. Its first offering, *The Importance of Being Monogamous* by Sarah Carter, has been named to the long list for the Cundill International Prize in History.

This prestigious international prize was established at McGill University by renowned investment manager Peter Cundill. It is the world’s largest prize for historical non-fiction literature. The winner will be announced on November 25 and will receive the Canadian equivalent of \$75,000 USD.

The long list of 15 titles was selected from 171 entries. The books represent 75 publishing houses worldwide, and *The Importance of Being Monogamous* (a co-publication of AU Press and the University of Alberta Press) is the only title that deals with a Canadian subject.

Author Sarah Carter is the H.M. Tory Chair and Professor in the Department of History and Classics, and the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

“I would say it’s stunningly amazing that a press like ours can make a list for an international prize as big and prestigious as this one,” said Walter Hildebrandt, Director of Athabasca University Press. “To be on the same list with the likes of Yale, Harvard and Oxford is really quite gratifying and speaks well to the importance of Sarah’s book.”

All AU Press electronic publications are available free on the Internet. To find out more about this unique initiative, Canada’s only open-access scholarly press, visit their [website](#) today.



From  
Where  
I Sit  
Hazel Anaka

## Say No to Chicken Little

Two days before the federal election, the world was in a state of disbelief. Few could have imagined the global political and financial storm that has unfolded with a vengeance in the last few weeks.

Pundits and pollsters spent the early days of the campaign predicting the size of the Conservative majority. Then, the prospect of a Tory loss and the emergence of Stéphane Dion as prime minister brought some drama, urgency, and excitement (not to mention outright horror) to the election, much like the Sarah Palin phenom in the States.

Of course, the election is over and our leadership remains essentially unchanged, but I for one would have been horrified to go to bed that night with the Liberals and Stéphane Dion at the helm.

No one person on the planet could have prevented the economic “correction” that is now occurring, so why on God’s green earth should Stephen Harper have been painted as the fall guy? The International Monetary Fund predicts Canada will lead all G8 countries in economic growth next year. Will that growth be less than we’ve experienced until now? Without a doubt.

Yet the World Economic Forum identifies Canada as having the *strongest banking system* in the world, a full 39 positions above the US. To an ordinary gal like me that means that, relatively speaking, we are doing better than others. Is everything perfect? Hell no. Could it have become far, far worse with someone else running the place? Hell yes.

So tell me, are we well positioned to ride out the coming hell? Will all of us feel the pain? Yes. Will some families be hurt more than others? Undoubtedly. But could quivering Dion or loudmouth Layton have prevented that? No.

Leading up to the election, I watched the televised English debate. I regularly read two newspapers and follow political columnists. I became sick to death of Layton’s cracks about Harper’s sweater. I grew tired of his single-minded, simple-minded bashing of big corporations and automaton-like answers to all questions. As some pundit pointed out, neither Layton nor Dion has ever run so much as a lemonade stand, so how on earth could they have run a country?

Dion has fumbled and stumbled. Isn’t it something that for the first three-quarters of the campaign Dion looked *persona non grata* . . . where were the likes of Chrétien, Martin, Rae, Ignatieff? Were they afraid of being seen aligned with a lame duck? Can a guy who couldn’t or wouldn’t understand a reporter’s question not once but three times have been able to represent us well on the national or international stage?

God help us.

In every election, we need Canadians to get off the couch, switch from *So You Think You Can Dance* to the news, read a newspaper or three, talk to each other, volunteer on a campaign, give a damn. Just like the response to the economic trouble, use your head and don’t panic. Don’t swallow the inflammatory language (crisis, meltdown, plummeting, worst since the Depression, recession, depression . . .) and take a deep breath. There’s no telling what choices future campaigns will bring, but the last thing we need is a Chicken Little prime minister running around saying the sky is falling, from where I sit.



# The Interviewer

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

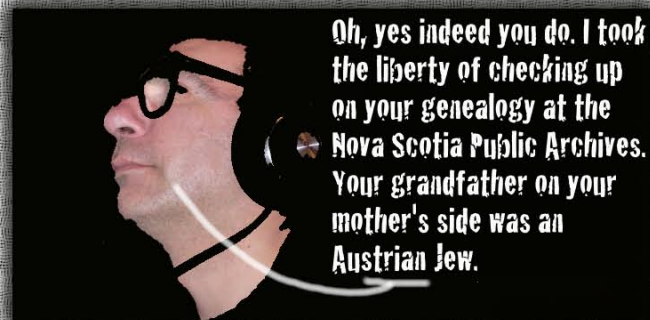
*written and illustrated by Wanda Waterman St. Louis*

## Caramel Baby #14: Truth Smarts



That's a bit of a puzzle to me, Mr. Case, considering that you yourself have Jewish ancestry.

**What?!!  
I do not!!!**



Oh, yes indeed you do. I took the liberty of checking up on your genealogy at the Nova Scotia Public Archives. Your grandfather on your mother's side was an Austrian Jew.

**Off the record-  
THE H&##  
HE WAS!!!**



**It's hard when they get their feelings hurt and act like he's sodomising them, but Reuben barrels on...**

Your great, great, great grandfather was a black slave. Your great, great grandmother was Micmac.



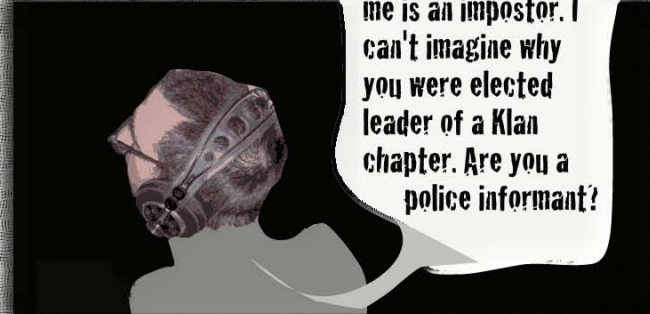
**Do I LOOK  
like a  
spade?! Or  
a wagon  
burner?!**



*Mummy's high on diet pills again!*



What you look like to me is an impostor. I can't imagine why you were elected leader of a Klan chapter. Are you a police informant?



Why would any of those people trust you? Any of them could have found everything I found in less than a day. But it's not just you, is it? Leonard French, your secretary? He's a card-carrying communist! And Bob Anderson secretly accepts the theory of evolution--

**Reuben could have gone on but for Wayne Casey's hands clenched around his throat.**

*Next: Winning Their Trust*



## AUSU This Month



### Merchandise Still for Sale

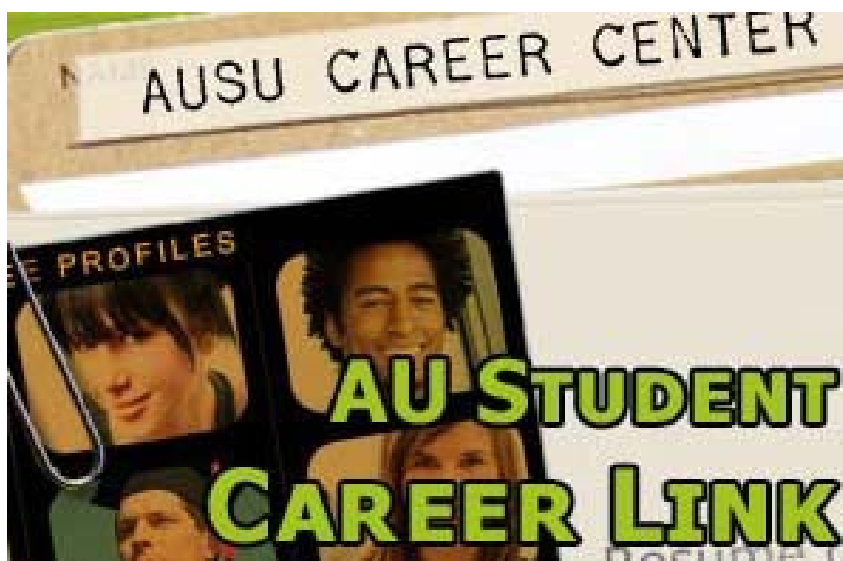
We still have some locks and memory keys available for sale. Both of these were designed with ease of mailing in mind, which means they're small enough to be easily stored pretty much anywhere. The wristband USB key is a unique way to carry around your assignments, online materials, and even emails while 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](http://www.ausu.org)



 **SmartDraw**



## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: Liberals deny Dion to step down

Stephen Harper may have just won another minority government, but it's the Liberal Party that seems to be attracting the most attention in the post-election fallout.

The buzz around Ottawa is that Liberal leader Stéphane Dion, who led the party to a loss of 19 seats in the October 14 election, will quickly announce his resignation as party leader. However, it's an assumption the Liberal camp is roundly denying.

While Dion has avoided questions on the topic, a series of emails from other Liberals have denied rumours about the possibility of his immediate departure.

That's not to say that Liberals want Dion to remain as party leader for the long-term. As *The Globe and Mail* reports, "MPs and party stalwarts are all saying that he must go but that he should be given some time to think about it. He must not be pushed."

This is a key point if the Liberals are to present a united front, to appear as a viable counterpoint to the Conservatives instead of a party preoccupied with internal squabbles. One way to accomplish this is to let the speculation fade away and make the leadership changeover on their own terms.

With a policy convention already scheduled for May 2009, at which Dion would "automatically face a leadership review," taking a measured approach may prove the Liberals' best bet for regaining momentum.

### In Foreign News: Famed Lipizzaner riding school finally allows females

The old-boys' club may still be alive and well in politics, but it's taking a long-overdue departure from the equine world. After 436 years, Austria's famed Spanish Riding School—home of the Lipizzaner Stallions—is finally open to women.

On October 15, officials at the school presented its first female riders-in-training. Founded in 1572, the Spanish Riding School is part of Vienna's former imperial Hofburg Palace complex, and is known worldwide for its "elegant white Lipizzaner stallions that enchant young and old alike."

Competition to be admitted to the school is fierce, and the last time it accepted a rider-in-training was five years ago. The two young women marking this historic first are Sojourner Morrell, 17, from Britain and Hannah Zeitlhofer, 21, of Austria.

According to the school's director, Elisabeth Guertler, allowing females into the elite club is simply a reflection of modern attitudes.

"What speaks against it?" she asked reporters. "Today, ladies and gentlemen both have to earn their keep and prove themselves."

## EDUCATION NEWS

Michael Hancharyk



### Profs, students weigh benefits of online textbooks

WINNIPEG (CUP) - While the astronomical prices of textbooks put a strain on most students, many post-secondary institutions in the U.S. are offering textbooks online.

Using a form of the Creative Commons license, certain textbooks can be accessed through various Internet sites. This Creative Commons license allows people to put up the material found in books and edit it accordingly, as long as the author or licensor is credited.

E-textbook websites have been growing in popularity. Connexions (CNX.org) is a free system that capitalizes on this idea. A user ID and an Internet connection allow anyone to access all the information it has to offer.

It's similar to Wikipedia in that information is edited and added to a certain topic; it differs because all the information is accompanied by a credited source.

Online textbook sources like Connexions could provide professors with an alternative to self-printed course-packs. Neil Funk-Unrau, a professor of conflict resolution at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg, Manitoba is responsible for putting together packages of reading materials for different department courses.

"It's certainly a viable option," Funk-Unrau said of Connexions. "I'm taken aback by the prices students pay."

The University of Winnipeg already offers some course material online through the library's e-reserve. Other websites, like CourseSmart.com, charge a user fee for accessing their online textbook database. Course Smart claims to save students 50 per cent off the price of store-bought textbooks.

Yet this website is sponsored by the textbook publishers themselves, which means they still get revenue.

Gabrielle Antaya, a third-year philosophy student at the U of Winnipeg, would like to see the e-textbook option utilized at the university more often.

"If you're tight on money, it would definitely be nice to have a less expensive version available. Usually they have a nice little website that makes end-of-chapter reviews and questions super accessible."

Melissa Mitchell, a third-year science student, spent around \$450 on textbooks for her first semester. Despite the expense, she is still hesitant about e-textbooks.

"It seems like a good idea, but I wouldn't want to stare at my computer for hours and my Internet is fairly unreliable," she said.

The websites might also pose a problem for in-class textbook assignments. "It would be a challenge for teachers to use. One concern would be open-book tests," said Funk-Unrau. "You would have to make sure students are reading the right material."

---

# CLASSIFIEDS

---

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

## THE VOICE

---

1213, 10011 109th Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8 -- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

**Publisher** Athabasca University Students' Union  
**Editor-In-Chief** Tamra Ross  
**Managing Editor** Sandra Livingston

**Regular Columnists** Hazel Anaka, Christina M. Frey, Mandy Gardner, Barbara Godin, Behdin Nowrouzi, Wanda Waterman St. Louis

---

[www.voicemagazine.org](http://www.voicemagazine.org)

---

*The Voice* is published every Friday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org)

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page. *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.  
Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its contributions