

THE VOICE MAGAZINE

Volume 18 Issue 18
May 7, 2010

Time and Texts

Learning on the clock

Christos Hatzis

Sights and sounds

Going Cash-Free

A penny for your
thoughts



*Plus: From Where I Sit, In Conversation With,
Sister Aurora, and much more ...*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston



A Penny for Your Thoughts

A couple of interesting stories popped up recently that, even though fairly innocuous in themselves, highlight a much more interesting trend: our move to a cashless society, and just how much it could cost you.

The first item was about renewed calls to get rid of the lowly penny. Last month, the standing Senate committee on national finance “announced it would begin a study on the costs and benefits of the penny, including the possibility of eliminating it.” The second story came as a bit more of a surprise. With no public announcement, Air Canada has made the move to credit-card only cabins. As of May 1, your cash, debit cards, and traveller’s cheques can’t be used for on-board purchases (though there are still some exceptions).

So what’s the big deal? After all, Australia and New Zealand removed their one- and two-cent coins more than 10 ten years ago and the sky hasn’t fallen. New Zealand even got rid of its five-cent coins in 2006 and Australia will probably follow. Hurrah for going cash free, you might think. While everyone’s at it, let’s eliminate annoying, bulky coins altogether and eventually do away with paper currency. Debit, credit, and gift cards are fast and convenient to use, and Canadians already pay for 31 per cent of transactions with credit cards (cash is used 29 per cent of the time).

But will we feel the same when our payment options are limited to two or three major companies that can raise fees knowing consumers have no options left?

Just for fun, let’s look at how much credit cards already increase prices. First there are the annual fees that you pay directly, plus interest charges. On top of that, merchants pay “two to four per cent of the sale price in various transaction fees,” like the merchant discount rate and interchange fees. Got a “premium” card? The credit card companies charge merchants even more when you use it. Then there’s the cost of renting the terminals you swipe your card in.

Paying with cash costs merchants time and money too, but you might be surprised at the difference. Buy a \$36.50 item using cash and it will cost the store 25 cents to process the sale. Using a credit card? The store just got hit with 82 cents in fees. Which means *you* just did too—on the price tag. (Debit card costs are only 19 cents for the same sale amount.)

Right now, consumers have a choice, and a growing number of merchants are pushing for standardized discounts to customers who pay cash. In a cash-free society, what would that choice be limited to? In Canada, Visa and MasterCard currently dominate the industry with a combined 80 per cent share. In the US, card-issuing banks rake in more than \$40 billion each year in “swipe fees” alone. The fees are set by credit card companies—and they’re fighting hard against consumer protection bills to limit them. You have to wonder how high those fees would get if consumers had no alternative ways to pay (you can choose lower-cost debit cards now, but that will change with the credit companies’ push into the market.)

Is it time to bid farewell to the one-cent coin? Probably. But as we slowly move closer to a cash-free society, we’d be smart not to mistake all that shiny plastic for pennies from heaven.

IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis



Melinda Tankard Reist, Part II

*Melinda Tankard Reist is an Australian feminist writer, activist, and international speaker. Go [here](#) to read the Voice review of *Getting Real: Challenging the Sexualisation of Girls*, a book of essays edited by Reist. Recently Reist took the time to talk to Wanda Waterman St. Louis about work, hope, and inspiration.*

Right Working Conditions

I find that the more I engage in this work the more I need to look after myself in order to be able to do it. I need conditions that encourage balance and well-being. I need time out. I need to walk on a beach as often as I can. I need to relax with friends and family. I need to laugh at every opportunity. I need quiet. I need sources of inspiration and energy. I need—and am truly blessed by—the support of my family and some very close girlfriends who help keep me sane.

Favourite Inspirational Fodder

Books: *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo.

Music: *Shot of Love* by Bob Dylan, Handel's *Messiah*, *Capricornia* by Midnight Oil.

Films: *Silkwood*, *The Simple-Minded Murderer*, Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta's Elements Trilogy, *Fire* (1996), *Earth* (1998) and *Water* (2005), *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, *This is It* (the life of Michael Jackson, because of the emphasis on perfection and dedication to one's craft).

Belief and Ideology

I have no political ideology; I address issues on their merits. I don't believe that labels like "left" or "right" are adequate. Someone recently said that my politics were "undefinable." I liked that. I do have a faith, though I live it out very inadequately.

On *Getting Real*

I began writing about this topic because so much research was emerging on the harms of sexualizing girls and there was growing concern about the issue globally. Some seminal works had been published



including *Corporate Paedophilia* (The Australia Institute) and The American Psychological Association's Taskforce on the Sexualization of Girls. I thought it was time to bring together some of the key voices in the field (mostly in Australia) in the one book. The contributors—academics, researchers, activists, psychologists, and counsellors—came from diverse backgrounds and had differing political views, but all agreed that the pornification of culture needed to be stopped. They saw the potential for harm, especially to children, if it wasn't.

The response has been great, the reviews excellent. The book was published in September but continues to be written about and discussed. There were a couple of (predictably) negative responses by those with vested interests but so minor and inconsequential they made no impact. The book went into its second printing only eight weeks after it was released. Especially heartening was the number of young women who contacted me to say what a difference the book had made for them and how it had empowered and equipped them both to resist negative influences from the media and popular culture and to take up the call to work for resistance more broadly.

The task before us is massive and I don't underestimate the work involved to try to turn things around. But I have to believe a difference is possible or I'd probably give up! I do receive affirming correspondence from many, including young women, which helps me believe change is possible.

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Dam It

Dams can prevent flooding, generate thousands of megawatts of hydroelectric power, and form lakes that people enjoy year round. But they also have a destructive side, from environmental destruction to catastrophic collapses. This week, we take a look at the mighty power of dams.

Biggest Beaver Dam

The beavers that built this dam were definitely busy. Located on the southern edge of Wood Buffalo National Park in northern Alberta, the structure is an incredible 2,790 feet, a size that makes it "more than twice the length of the Hoover dam"—and visible from space.

Three Gorges Dam

China's massive Three Gorges project is the largest dam in the world, and one of the most controversial. As this video explains, the dam is a marvel of engineering, wider than the Golden Gate Bridge is long. But it's also displaced some two million people and obliterated priceless ancient artifacts.

Baldwin Hills Dam Disaster

On December 14, 1963, the Baldwin Hills dam broke and flooded the hills near Los Angeles. It wasn't the biggest dam disaster in history, but this footage is interesting because it marked the first time in US history that aerial pictures of a disaster were broadcast live to audiences.

Teton Dam

Idaho's Teton Dam demonstrates how nature can so easily undermine human technology. The dam was pushed through to completion in the early 1970s, an ambitious project that planners hoped would "change the scenery forever." It did—collapsing dramatically and flooding over three hundred square miles.

ERAS IN EDUCATION

Jason Sullivan



Time and Its Discontents: Industrialized Education at the Dawning of Modern Schooling

In my elementary school the seventh grade was the last before entering high school. This was a fact our teachers ceaselessly reminded us of. One of the sternest warnings we received was about what a sociology text might call “the rigidity of bell structures.” In other words, tardiness was not tolerated.

I still recall my teacher telling stories of how the bell for first class would toll at precisely 8:01 a.m. and at 8:02 a.m. the door would slam shut like a coffin or prison gate. It was

not without a degree of wry humour that I say this; we as students tended to feel that the real inmates were the ones who made it to class on time! As it turns out, meticulous timekeeping and rigid enforcement of learning styles were ideals that found root in the Industrial Revolution some 150 years before our time.

The first mandatory public schools existed in a social environment in which time was heavily guarded, highly valued, and constantly commodified. In a study of the rise of clocks in England during the 1600s to 1900s, E.F. Thompson described how capitalists sought to maximize productivity and preachers sought to minimize idleness. Indolence (laziness) became far more discernible under the menacing gaze of a town’s parish clock. An early clockmaker complained that “Virtuous matrons . . . are consigning their clocks to lumber rooms as ‘exciting to acts of carnality.’”

Similarly, an English anthropologist in Fiji noted that people there kept time according to shadows on the floor from whichever door was open in their cottage. He then proceeded to speak with some disdain of the fact that when the wind shifted and a different door was left open the result was that the woman providing him with sustenance “often makes my tea at three o’clock instead of six.”

The theme of the 1800s was a heightened sense of time, which created “a severe restructuring of working habits—new disciplines, new incentives, and a new human nature . . .” For young people, youth was now seen as a time to accomplish specific tasks besides those of the home, farm, or shop.

Schooling for “the masses” began during the 1800s in England. It was organized along the lines of a factory, with time being of the essence. The writer Charles Dickens, who never spared illustrative expense in describing deplorable life conditions, spoke of clocks “which measured every second with a beat like a rap upon a coffin-lid.” In describing pupils of his day Dickens wrote of “children with the countenances of old men . . . There was childhood with the light of its eyes quenched, its beauty gone, and its helplessness alone remaining.” Well-meaning “academic clocksmiths, anxious to patent new keys” came up with various education models designed to maximize student potential. Perhaps the most extreme of these was a school proposed by Thomas Wedgwood.

Wedgwood argues that young people were not getting the most out of their education. Or, perhaps more truthfully, that society was not getting the most out of its youth, and in particular what he called those who would grow up to be its “superior characters.” He lamented “How many hours, days, months have been prodigally wasted in unproductive occupations! What a host of half formed impressions and abortive conceptions blended into a mass of confusion . . . hours every day passed in reverie, thought ungoverned, undirected.” Wedgwood was clearly not a fan of daydreaming!

Wedgwood wished to create a “rigorous, rational, closeted system of education.” His goal was to maximize the prevalent belief of the science of his time, which was that the mind was essentially a blank slate at birth. This perspective stemmed from the philosopher John Locke and his concept of “tabula rasa.”

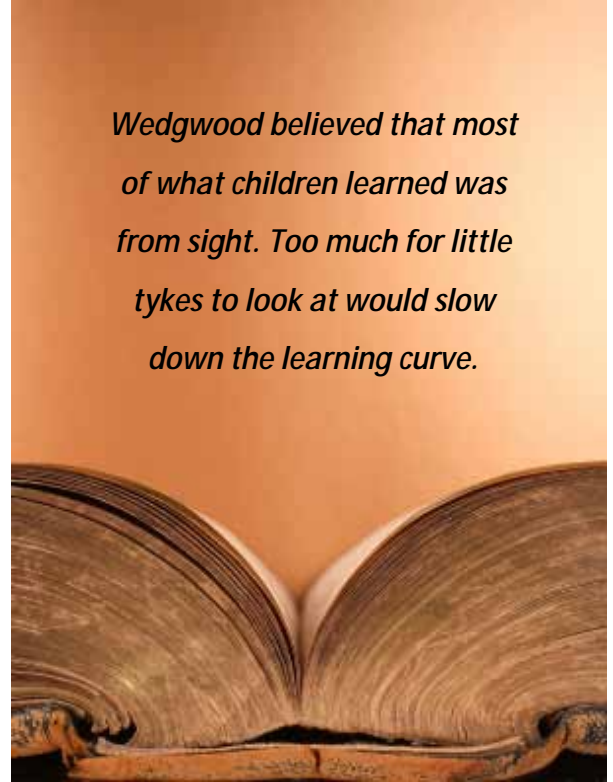
As a “white paper, void of all characters,” the pupil’s brain seemed logically to need “a careful management of perceptual input” in order to maximize the efficiency of later intellectual output. The mathematics seemed perfect and, in an industrializing society, the optics were also good. The efficient production of little geniuses seemed like a superb idea!

Wedgwood believed that most of what children learned was from sight. Too much for little tykes to look at would slow down the learning curve. He believed that pupils should be taught “in laboratory conditions so that the infant’s sensory development would not be overloaded by random and meaningless data.” Wedgwood wrote that “plain grey walls” would minimize distractions and that on account of nature’s abundance of stimulation, “the child must never go out of doors.”

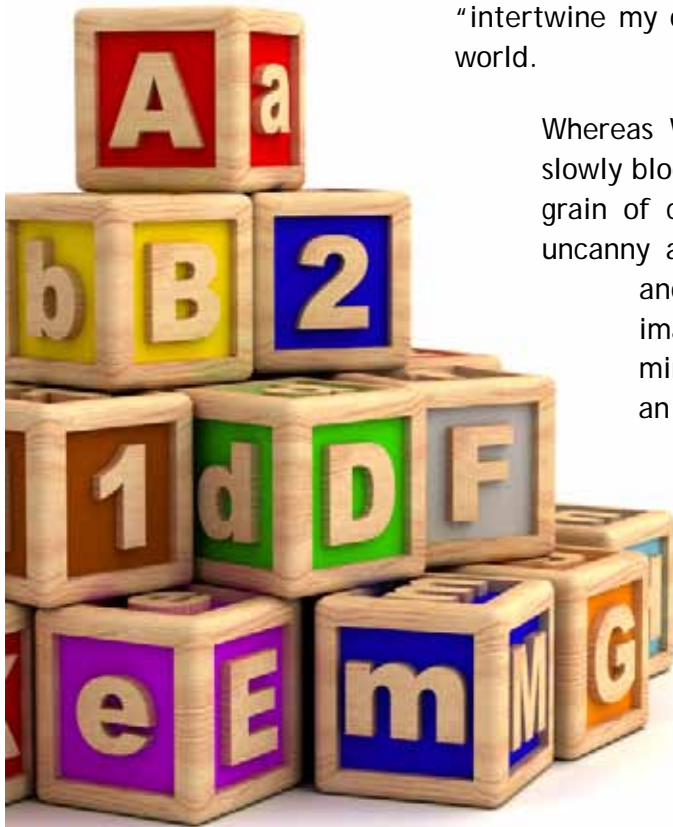
Today Wedgwood’s rationalized schooling sounds so preposterous. Even back in the 1800s a poet named Wordsworth, who Wedgwood had hoped would manage his new facility, was horrified by the prospect of pupils being kept in isolation chambers. In strong language for the 19th century, Wordsworth responded that “The Guides, the Wardens of our faculties / . . . Sages, who in their prescience would control / All accidents, and to the very road / Which they have fashion’d would confine us down / Like engines.” An effective paraphrase might be provided by the rocker Marilyn Manson, who sings “Isolation is the oxygen mask you make your children breathe in to survive!”

Wedgwood and Wordsworth each had very different perspectives on cognition. For Wedgwood the senses produce maps of the world and “every perception of the object leaves behind it an idea which instantly coalesces with the subsequent perception.” In other words, we build an image of the world according to what we see. Wedgwood was very visual-oriented and even invented an early prototype for photography. His view of perception was simplistic, however, and contrasts sharply with how young people actually experience the world.

Wedgwood believed that most of what children learned was from sight. Too much for little tykes to look at would slow down the learning curve.



Wordsworth probably better expresses the way it feels to be a child and to learn. His poems, rather than producing what Wedgwood called “a chaos of perceptions,” create what theorists Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner call “blended space.” Wordsworth’s ability to write of a river as a living being who can “blend his murmurs with my nurse’s song” and “intertwine my dreams” reflects the way young students experience the world.



Whereas Wedgwood thought that we build our consciousness up slowly block by block, Wordsworth knew intuitively (and against the grain of common sense of his time) that young people have an uncanny ability to merge “inputs from two perceptual domains” and understand the world as a mixture of reality types. The imagination itself, seen as a decoupling of reality from the mind, serves to increase understanding of the world and, in an irony that Wedgwood did not anticipate, leads to all kinds of scientific breakthroughs otherwise known as epiphanies.

Had we in the seventh grade known what type of classroom we might have experienced had Wedgwood been in charge, we probably would have been grateful that only our minute of arrival was scheduled, and not every moment of our waking lives. Along with the Industrial Revolution came a revolution of world view that, thankfully, did not totally win out in the

field of education. Although, to ask many students today, school does at times seem like an overly mechanized, even dehumanizing, experience!

DID YOU KNOW?



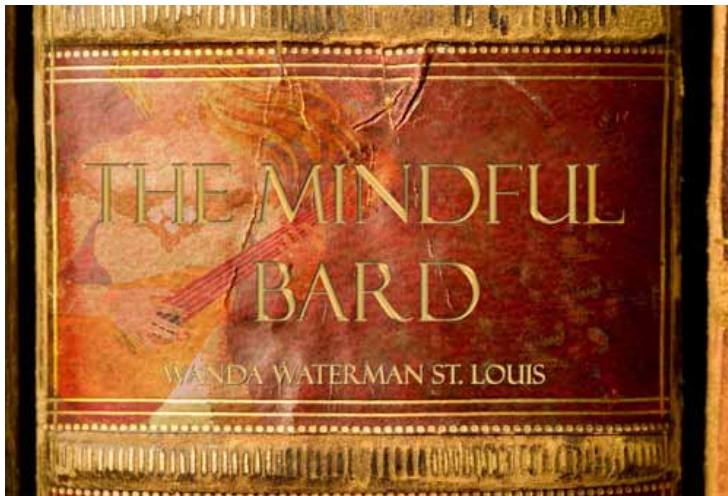
Get Social with AU’s Centre for Nursing and Health Studies

If you can’t get enough of your favourite Nursing and Health Studies topics by studying, now you can connect with others and keep the conversation going on Facebook and Twitter.

The Centre for Nursing and Health Studies (CNHS) homepage has links so you can sign up, stay connected, and keep up to date on all the latest news.

The Centre for Psychology is on Facebook and Twitter as well, and there’s also a general Facebook group for AU students, where you can search for people you know and take part in discussions.

So if you’re a fan of social networking, why not join the CNHS conversation online?



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

Christos Hatzis: A Mystical Treasure Trove at the Vanguard of Contemporary Serious Music

Hatzis's music [online](#)

The Middle Ages had Dante and Hildegard von Bingen, the baroque era had Handel, and the 19th century had Leo Tolstoy, but these days finding artists who are intensely religious and at the same time ahead of their peers in skill and intellectual substance is like trying to find an atheist in a

foxhole. Faith and intellectual rigour may often be seen together in theologians but the two qualities don't often coexist in modern artists. Even rarer are those artists who use their religious roots as a primary inspiration for their work.

Enter Canadian composer Christos Hatzis, winner of numerous awards internationally including Junos in both 2006 and 2008 for "Classical Composition of the Year" and very much in demand the world over for performance and collaborative projects.

Not only is his sound engaging and profound, it's *exciting*. If you're feeling creatively blocked, Christos Hatzis's music is so multi-hued and multi-faceted that you can't help but be stimulated by it.

Christos teaches composition at the University of Toronto. He also writes about music and is penning an autobiography in which he promises to reveal not only the many details of his life but also an account of his sometimes difficult relationship with teacher (and himself an important composer) Morton Feldman of SUNY, Buffalo.

Born in the port town of Volos, Greece (perhaps better known as Iolkus, home of Jason and the Argonauts), Hatzis's memories from early childhood foretell his later enthrallment with sights and sounds.

"My father was a locomotive train engineer," says Hatzis, "and there was a miniature train puffing its way up Mt. Pelion which my father drove very often. Some of my most awesome childhood memories were of watching my father feed coal into the fiery mouth of the smoky monster as it slithered its way up Mt. Pelion—one of the most beautiful sights in all of Greece."

While still quite young he began studying accordion along with music theory at the local branch of the Hellenic Conservatory. After high school he came to the United States to study music.

When he entered the Eastman School of Music he was so advanced in theory and harmony that he was permitted to skip ahead to the junior year. But he was behind in repertory and the history of Western music and so had to work very hard to get caught up.

When asked what conditions he considers necessary to creative production Christos says: "Chaos, but not too much. I think that our most profound creativity springs from the need to balance an imbalanced environment. At least this is how it was in the beginning. Later, when spirituality became an important ingredient of who I am and what kind of music I write, my music became a kind of 'prayer in sound,' so it is now only possible to compose in a prayerful state of mind.

"The things that stimulate me nowadays are my family, my students, and the fact that I live outside of Uxbridge (literally 'in the woods'), and that I can take walks in the Durham forest, look at God's majestic creation, and think about ways to express my gratitude musically. At the same time I am aware that God is everywhere, in everyone and everything, so I'm also interested in His or Her manifestations in moments of chaos and human tragedy. One of my recent works, called 'In the Fire of Conflict,' uses rap music as its central element and is inspired by inner-city conflict and the search for the divine in the most unlikely places."

As influences on his thought and development Hatzis lists first the Bible and then the works of American mystic Edgar Cayce. Also moving for him were films *King of Kings*, *Ben Hur*, and Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

"This was the first time I'd heard the opening of Richard Strauss's famous sound byte (the opening of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*), and it has become for me a sonic metaphor for humanity's fall and redemption (the modulations from major to minor and back to major again).



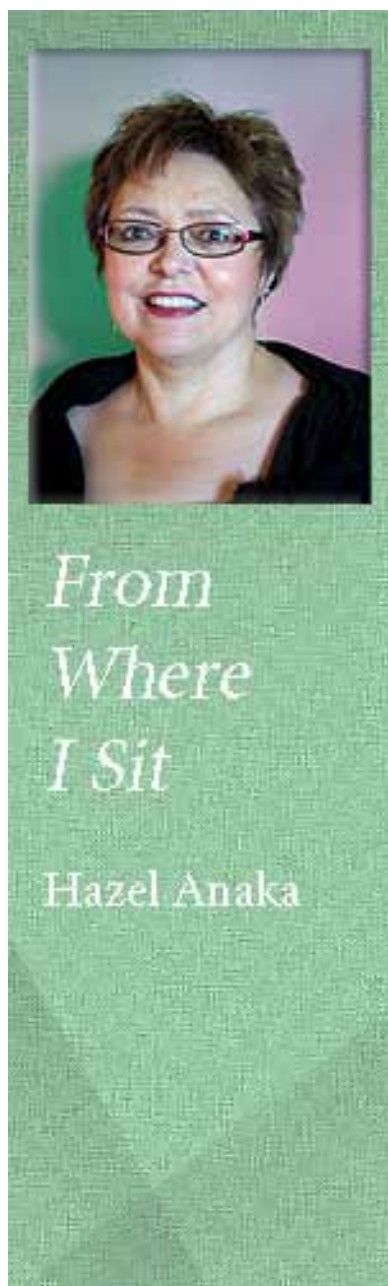
"In my youth I owned only a few albums which I listened to over and over. The things that come to mind are Béla Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* and Claude Debussy's "La MÉR," "Afternoon of a Faun" and "Nocturnes." My pop albums included *Abbey Road* by the Beatles, *Double Fantasy* (the album John Lennon released just before he was assassinated) and "In the Air Tonight" by Phil Collins, which when I first heard it blew me away.

"It was a revelation for me that it was possible to write mystical-sounding music in the pop genre. I still love the title song of that album. Since then I've listened to a lot of music but it's hard to pick anything that can stand out like these early experiences."

To be continued . . .

The music of Christos Hatzis manifests six of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth hearing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it stimulates my mind; 3) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda; 4) it provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; 5) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; and 6) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.

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



What Were They Thinking?

Anyone who is a regular news junkie has no doubt stopped, scratched her head, or laughed out loud at some of our fellow *Homo sapiens* foibles. During Jay Leno's Headlines segment he regularly anguishes over the dumb criminal stories that come his way. Often Roy and I just turn and look at each other when we see something on TV that baffles us. Silent communication and similar beliefs about what's dumb or funny or unbelievable become second nature when you've been married as long as we have.

So, in case you missed them, I've assembled a potpourri of snippets from the news. The *National Post* was my source. I believe they all qualify for the "what were they thinking" award. Read 'em and weep.

Jay would like this one. In mid-April a 19-year-old Windsor man led police on a foot chase after leaving the stolen car he was driving. Nothing unusual in that; police come, criminals run. The fun in this story is how the waist-down paralysis he claimed from a jailhouse beating in January was miraculously healed and allowed him to run several blocks and climb a seven-and-a-half foot fence!

Students from a university in Nepal haven't received their year-end marks because the exams, kept under lock and key in a police station, were eaten by an infestation of rats. Eww. Just a slight PR problem, from my vantage point.

Like so many before him, Britain's Prime Minister Brown forgot he was wearing a live microphone when he climbed back into his car following an encounter with a woman who expressed concerns to him during a campaign stop. We've all been there in some sense, sans mic. To his credit and with the election just days away, he's apologized and bent over backwards to atone for his exasperated comments. Will it affect the election outcome? Pundits will debate this for days.

A lot of people seemed baffled by the swooning, screaming, and fainting of Justin Bieber's pre-pubescent fans. While most of us wonder what they're thinking, we also remember *exactly* the same reaction to Elvis, the Beatles, Michael Jackson, and others. Girls will be girls, especially if in the presence of their idol and that's not likely to change anytime soon.

The Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA) reports that Canadians send 122 million texts *each day*. Marc Choma, director of communications, says, "texting is great for quick hits of sharing information, but it doesn't replace our innate desire for live voice interaction with others." Canadians still spend an average of four hundred minutes on cell phones per month. How about this radical concept? Put down the damn phone, look up and talk to the person next to you. Make eye contact. Read body language. Learn the give and take of conversation.

Convicted killer Colin Thatcher won't go quietly. The only thing to his credit is his agreement to give the profits from his memoir back to the Saskatchewan government. Profiting from his crime would be the last insult.

That's my current crop of "what were they thinking," from where I sit.

Sister Aurora

There's a rainbow dancing in the sky tonight, and I think I'm gonna go outside . . .

#39

(blip!)

How can this be happening?

How did I get here?

*How do you get out.
You mean.*

AUSU UPDATE



AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors - specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

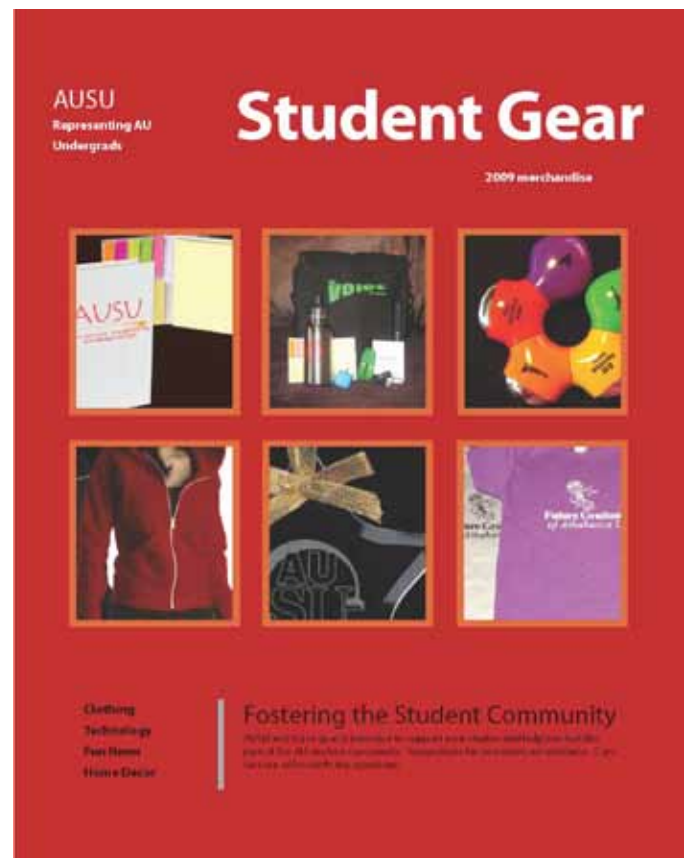
SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

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.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: CRTC to allow usage-based Internet billing

As more and more people turn to downloads to buy popular items like films and software, it's no surprise that Bell Canada wants to start billing customers based on usage.

They got their wish this week when the CRTC approved their request, but that permission came with one important condition. As the [CBC](#) reports, Bell must start per-usage billing for its own retail customers before it can impose the new rules on its wholesale customers.

While Bell currently offers its retail customers plans with unlimited downloading, it also rents lines to smaller service providers such as Acanac and Teksavvy. Under the CRTC ruling, Bell cannot force those smaller providers into charging per-usage billing unless it first eliminates its own unlimited-download plans.

Although the ruling seems to level the playing the field, many smaller providers opposed the decision, arguing that "it will make them indistinguishable from Bell." However, Bell has defended its

move by saying that it "needs to implement usage-based billing to curtail the congestion caused on its network by heavy downloaders."

If Bell accepts the ruling and goes ahead with per-usage billing, it will also be required to offer smaller ISPs the same "usage insurance plans" it gives its own retail customers. Those plans provide customers "extra monthly usage for a small fee" if they exceed their download limit.

In Foreign News: Left-handed students struggling in school

There have always been prejudices and urban myths surrounding left-handedness, but a recent report details the very real struggles that many left-handed children experience in school. As [The Telegraph](#) reports, "thousands of left-handed schoolchildren are struggling in the classroom because of a failure to meet their needs, according to experts."

Some of the issues students face are purely mechanical, due to a lack of left-handed equipment for subjects like cookery, science, computing, and technology. In other cases, according to the author of a book on left-handed children, those students "were also more likely to be diagnosed with conditions such as dyslexia as schools misinterpreted common writing difficulties."

Lauren Milsom, author of the book *Your Left-handed Child*, told a conference that "there is still a lot of ignorance about this issue. Many teachers think it is enough to just tell left-handed children to rest the paper on the left of the desk and give them some ambidextrous scissors." Although an estimated 10 to 15 per cent of the population is left-handed, most tools and utensils are still made for right-handed use, including scissors, scientific instruments with controls on the right, and "heavy machinery and power tools" that have safety overrides on the right.

"This isn't a special needs issue," Milsom told conference attendees, "it is about equal opportunities."

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THE VOICE

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