

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 15 2014-04-11

Meeting the Minds!

Dr. Jim Brophy

Bleeding Hearts

Voice Vulnerability

Thinking in Colour

Making notes worth notice.

Plus:

*From Where I Sit
Primal Numbers
and much more!*



CONTENTS

The Voice's 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.

Feature

Meeting the Minds: *Dr. Jim Brophy* 8

Articles

Editorial: *Bleeding Hearts and The Voice Magazine* 3

Thinking in Colour 12

Columns

Writer's Toolbox: *Whither That Word?* 15

Primal Numbers: *Suspended Animation?* 4

From Where I Sit: *That's a Good Reason* 14

Dear Barb 18

Mindful Bard: *Overqualified* 6

In Conversation: *With Patrick Woodcock, Part I* 16

News and Events

International News Desk 17

Did You Know? 13

Click of the Wrist 5

AUSU Update 20

Comics

Weird Canada: *Beer Fridge* 19

***The Voice
Magazine***

www.voicemagazine.org

500 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Tamra Ross

Managing Editor

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka
Barbara Lehtiniemi
S.D. Livingston
Wanda Waterman

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

For weekly email
reminders as each issue is
posted, fill out the
subscription form [here](#).

The Voice does not share
its subscriber list with
anyone.

© 2014 by *The Voice*

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

Karl Low

**Bleeding Hearts and *The Voice Magazine***

Right before tax day and news of a new security vulnerability has taken down many public government websites. The Heartbleed vulnerability, if you haven't heard about it, allows a snooper to hack in and view unencrypted traffic on a server that's supposed to be encrypted. With a bit of luck, the hacker could even get the keys to the encryption, which would open up pretty much everything else.

Web security guys across the world had a bit of a heart attack when the news came out, but that's not why it's called the Heartbleed vulnerability. That has something to do with the way the encryption protocol pumps out its data. Regardless, it's caused numerous sites to go down as security experts take steps to stop the bleeding. Unfortunately, those upgrades can cause some harm to older sites. Like *The Voice Magazine*. If you're one of the people who

use the website to read the Voice Magazine, you'll quickly find that no articles display. That's because the security we used to make sure hackers can't inject stuff into the database is quite old, and the upgrades that Heartbleed prompted our service provider to put in place broke our old scripts. All the old articles are still there, so don't worry that we've lost our entire archive, it's just we can't see them through the web.

We're working on it now, but currently have absolutely no ETA on when the fixes will be done. *[edit: Article display is now fixed on the website, but not article entry]* Until then, please enjoy the PDF version of the Voice. It has a few graphical flourishes which you won't find on our website, is fully linked, and if you haven't used it before, you can get back to the table of contents by clicking in the bottom right corner of any page, and every article in *The Voice Magazine* pdf is linked in the table of contents. So it's pretty darn close to browsing the web anyway.

Speaking of those articles, this week we have an interview with Dr. Jim Brophy, tutor of Sociology 348, Environmental Justice issues. Having been interviewed on CTV's 16x9 investigative journalism program, and with over 25000 downloads of an article on environmental/occupational causes of breast cancer, he's a tutor who's actively engaged both in his teaching and in the environment that he teaches.

Also, if you haven't already sent in your taxes, you also may want to check out this week's Did You Know—it could save you a few extra bucks. In addition, we have pieces on suspended animation, the origin of words, the destiny of human connections, helpful exam and note-taking tips, and of course reviews, news, interviews, advice, and even a comic to view.

So, welcome to The Voice Magazine's pdf, sit back and scroll through.

Primal Numbers



NBC News [article](#) explains, doctors in five US medical centres will use a cold saline solution to replace blood in “patients who've sustained gunshot or knife wounds that were so severe their hearts stopped.”

Researchers hope that the method will buy doctors an hour or two, enough time to save patients whose hearts have stopped due to blood loss. After the injuries are repaired, blood is pumped back into the patient, replacing the cold saline. Trials with pigs have been promising, with animals being “brought back from a suspended state undamaged.”

The most interesting part, though, is the potential to extend that window of suspended animation from hours to days—or even longer. Dr. Peter Rhee is a professor of surgery and the chief of trauma and critical care at the University of Arizona. As he told NBC News, “These are just baby steps, this idea of putting a person in a state where they are not really alive or dead. How long can that period be? We don't know.”

And that's where things could get tricky. Suppose that, in the next decade, the saline method is perfected to the point where you can be kept in suspended animation for months. Maybe even a year. Doctors heal your body, and you wake up in a world where things have changed. Perhaps a loved one has died. Maybe your job is gone, or global warming has levelled your town with a tsunami.

You never asked to be kept alive in a suspended state, and you'd much rather be floating happily in the afterlife of your choice.

Have we gone too far in our medical meddling? No, and here's why.

Suspended animation, for all that it sounds like something out of *Futurama*, isn't an ethical leap from many procedures we already use. One example is medically induced comas, many of them months long, like the one described in this [CNN piece](#). Or the emergency medical care that might save a patient's life but leave them unable to survive without relying on things like breathing tubes or other devices.

In many of those cases, patients are unconscious and unable to consent to a specific procedure, much as they would be in the case of suspended animation. But there are established protocols in place to deal with those scenarios, and they can apply to new medical treatments as well as old.

S.D. Livingston

Suspended Animation?

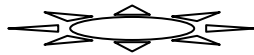
Death and taxes, as they say, are the only sure things in life. But death just got a little less certain, thanks to trials that will put seriously wounded patients in suspended animation. It could prove to be an incredible leap forward in medicine. The only question is what if you don't want to wake up in the future?

To be clear, this kind of suspended animation isn't the same as in science fiction movies, where astronauts wake up after hundreds of years in a pod on a spaceship. Instead, as this

And if suspended animation does become a procedure that could keep you alive for years, it would be a simple thing to add such consent (or refusal) to a medical database or organ donor card. Individuals could even set a time limit—say, a few months but no longer than a year.

Will suspended animation, even for an hour, really work or is it just so much science fiction? Only real-life medical trials will tell, but I'm willing to suspend disbelief.

S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.



Click of the Wrist

It's the last weekend before taxes are due—and amidst all the tax calculations and number crunching, it's easy to forget that April is also National Poetry month. But the two don't have to be separate. As Thoreau wrote, "The most distinct and beautiful statement of any truth must take at last the mathematical form." This week, combine both areas and explore the unique literary science of mathematical poetry:

The Past

Mathematical poetry has been around since the days of the ancients, and some of the world's most famous poets (Coleridge and St. Vincent Millay, for example) have pointed to mathematics as a high form of poetic expression. This *Slate* article provides a good background of the history of mathematical poetry—and where it might be headed in the future.

The Present

Poet JoAnne Grownney's blog "Intersections – Poetry with Mathematics" explores the use of mathematical language and structure to "heighten the imagery of a poem . . . [and] deepen its effect." It also hosts a fantastic collection of "poems made rich by mathematical ingredients."

The Future

If you want to dig a little deeper, spend some time scrolling through this fascinating mathematical poetry blog. Written by artist-engineer Kaz Maslanka, it covers current thought on the poetry of mathematics, particularly as expressed in equations. Start out with the post "What Is Mathematical Poetry?" and read on to gain a better understanding of how numbers may be also used as "language for connotation."

What's In A Poem?



Mindful Bard

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

Wanda Waterman

Joey Comeau
March 20

Dear Goodyear,

I'm like a job. I mean, the probably don't like strangers, I used to climb mountains of your tips in my grandfather's salvage yard. My name's Joey Comeau. There. Now we aren't strangers anymore.

It's Joey, not Joe or Joseph. My grandfather was Joe Comeau, and Joseph is my mother's name for me. But I have always been Joey. I worry sometimes that it's a childish name. Would a "Joe" tell Joie in bed, perform puppet shows after sex, and give every body part a different high-pitched voice? It seems unlikely. The names we choose for ourselves aren't meaningless. They're self-fulfilling prophecies.

Yes, I'm Joey and I will never be Joe. When my grandfather died, I lost my chance to know him as anything more than a boss on the street and a drink to the video store. I remember his oxygen tank and his chair in the living room. Every night at seven or eight o'clock my grandmother would come to the kitchen and pour herself a glass of wine from a box, because it was time for wrestling and the TV was his for hours. Their furniture was old and dark brown, and it hid dimes and nickels. My grandfather lives in another city now, with new furniture, and I wonder if every night at seven or eight o'clock, she still finds something else to do. She hated wrestling.

I remember how soon after he sold the salvage yard, he ran an alternative recycling shop out of the garage. He got busy, and I think it worried my grandmother, but he always had something to do. When we did talk, it was as if I could talk him with his part database on the computer. I remember how excited he was with the features, the index and photographs, and how he never seemed frustrated when something went wrong with the program. He would call me and tell me the error message to see if I could help. I was always confused by the text.

My brother Adrian lived with them for a while, after he was kicked out of our house. He was in Vermont, he came from the market bus stop. Every day he would get a piece into my car or at least to the ferry, and my grandfather. When he was living there I'm sure that things weren't perfect, but Adrian formed a close relationship with my grandmother. That's what I was jealous of at the time. He told me once that he said he was the favorite grandson. I understand that now, how nice would it be, after your children are gone, to have your grandson living with you?

My grandfather was driving Adrian into Halifax a few years ago, and it was either rainy or snowy. I can't remember. A man staggered into the street, drunk, and they hit him. I remember Adrian telling me about sitting quietly in the car, my grandfather crying, while they waited for the ambulance.

What a strange thing to be a father of.

Joey Comeau

Book: *Overqualified*

Author: Joey Comeau

Publisher: ECW Press

"The closest to perfection a person ever comes is when he fills out a job application form."

-Stanley J. Randall

There's something so captivating about stories told through a series of missives. Just hark back to *Up the Down Staircase*, an utterly engaging novel manifested in a series of inter-office memos, notes, and teacher's reports in an inner-city high school. And who could forget *Griffin and Sabine*, an enchanting lonely-hearts-club love story told in a series of letters and handmade postcards?

But it's not an easy feat to pull off because letters, at least on the surface, are a dull literary vehicle. And which kind of letter is the dullest you can imagine?

Overqualified, of all things, is a series of cover letters for job applications.

It isn't exactly a novel so much as a character study. By the end of the book we know Joey's life story, at least the most salient bits, and in the process of reading his stack of letters to every iconic corporation in North America, his true self slowly comes to the fore.

Why is Joey applying for all these high-end jobs? He isn't qualified for a single one of them, even remotely. But with utter *sangfroid* he writes to the *New York Times* that if a background check shows his credentials to be false, they should take this as a sign of his editing ability.

He's not lying about his editing ability. Joey revises his own past in a very stream-of-consciousness way, deciding to share, *apropos* nothing, a memory of a pretty lesbian he once knew. He ends the letter with the dark hint that he'll make a very good *New York Times* editor whether they hire him or not.

He writes to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Halifax, detailing his inner urge to trade his current career as a systems analyst for Ford for the warmer and more satisfying position of systems analyst in their transplantation services department.

He explains that the efficiency he's developed on the assembly line should be a great asset in transplantation, adding that he's discovered that trial and error is a much faster way to get things done than research. He's also learned that it's simply a waste of money to find replacement parts for some vehicles and suggests that the medical field should be ready to embrace this reality.

The morbid wit carries over into childhood recollections. He often talks about his youthful misadventures with his kid brother Adrian, his brother in real life, fitting the anecdote to the addressee. For example, for General Electric he tells of how he and Adrian once stole all the light-bulbs going up the stairs in a local apartment building and then threw them all off the upper balcony, relishing the poof and tinkle of each bulb hitting the pavement below.

It's not all belly laughs. He's a conflicted soul, our humble narrator; he loves his girlfriend and is racked with lust for others. The job application cover letters are a vehicle for the expression of a troubled mind; to Apple he describes late night angst and despair that lead to talking dirty on the internet while his beloved sleeps.

He often veers off into a fantasy world, like describing to Samsonite how he once opened an old suitcase in his grandma's house and found a ladder down into the past where the dear ones he's lost can be found again.

What resonates with the reader is how Comeau uses the job search, an ordeal which in most of us provokes a rich stew of undesirable emotions—dread, fear, timid hope, guarded optimism, humiliation, shame, inadequacy, etc.—and makes an utter mockery of it all, allowing the reader to let off the pent-up anxiety that's normally associated with any endeavor requiring one to put oneself on the market. Joey Comeau has apparently experienced enough pain to make him ready to help us not to take our fears of loss, rejection, and failure so seriously.

Having grown up near an Acadian community in Nova Scotia, I've known many Joey Comeaus. I once had a neighbor named Joe Comeau who had twelve children, three of whom were named, Joe, Joey, and Joseph. I remember the father—we always called him "Old Joe"—coming into the local restaurant when a fire alarm was going off in the station nearby. The waitress asked him if he knew where the fire was. "Yes," he said calmly. "It's at my house." And it was.

I'm pretty sure these two are related.

Overqualified manifests four of the Mindful Bard's criteria for books well worth reading.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It's about attainment of the true self
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.

MEETING THE MINDS

A NEW VOICE COLUMN



For 35 years, Dr. Jim Brophy has been involved in environmental and occupational health. He was the executive director of the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers in Windsor and Sarnia and has been working with Athabasca University for the past four years. He currently is tutoring Sociology 348 – Environmental Justice Issues, and responsible for approximately 30 students. He and his partner, Dr. Margaret Keith, were recently awarded this past November with the Scientific Award by the Occupational Health Section of the American Public Health Association. The Award recognized the significance of their breast cancer and work studies that drew international attention.

In the near future, Sociology 331 – Environmental Influences on Development and Aging Across the Life Course will be coming to AU. The course was authored by Dr.s Brophy and Keith in conjunction with Dr. Ella Haley. He expects he'll also be tutoring students in that course.

Dr. Brophy kindly consented to be interviewed by The Voice Magazine, and here is the gist of what was said:

What brought you to start in your field and tutoring for AU?

I became involved in cancer research while working in for the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers in Windsor. I received my Ph.D from the University of Sterling, in Scotland, looking at work related causes of breast cancer in conjunction with Dr. Margaret Keith.

We also helped to uncover the largest asbestos related disease cohort in Canada among chemical workers employed in what's known as the Chemical Valley in Sarnia, Ontario. The chemical complex is one of the largest in Canada and it is estimated that approximately 40% of our chemicals are produced there. It is also, as I mentioned, the location of one of our worst occupational health tragedies.

We also started working on pollution related issues with the First Nations, where we helped to document one of the first examples of a human skewed sex ratio in a community. We'd found that over a 5 year period, 35% less boys than anticipated were born.

All of these interests and discoveries have combine to fuel my concern and writings about environmental health issues, and in 2008 I left working for the clinics while completing the study on breast cancer. Margaret and I are part of an international multidisciplinary research team that was studying the possible occupational causes of breast cancer. It was during this period where I was approached by Dr. Ella Haley to see if I might be

interested in teaching. As Margaret and I had already written a course designed to be taken long-distance and online for the University of Windsor, it sounded like an interesting opportunity.

What are the common pitfalls you see students running into?

As you know, AU draws from a wide population across country. We have the normal student demographic who get really engaged in the material of Soci 348. We start teaching about the Tar Ponds in Cape Breton, NS, or the computer chip industry in Silicon Valley, and people become interested and even sometimes angry about the tolerated injustices. We also have a lot of older people returning to University. They of course bring a life history and insight to these issues.

Because the students are from across Canada I learn quite a lot from them about their points of view and experiences. It's very engaging. The quality of the students, and what they write is usually well beyond my expectations. And there's really such a variety of life experiences that I find so interesting. Maybe it's something to do with the students who choose to take this course, but I keep finding myself being amazed by them.

What is interesting to you currently in your academic field?

Well, we've just finished writing this new course, and have applied through York University to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation for a grant to further our breast cancer studies

Breast cancer remains the most prevalent cancer among Canadian women. Canada has some of the highest rates in the world. It should be treated as a major public health issue especially given that the majority of women diagnosed with the disease don't have the known or suspected risk factors.

Now in the US there's been pressure on the government to discuss the effects the environment might be having on the incidence of breast cancer. A recent Presidential report came out stating that environmental causes have been "grossly underestimated". There is similar concern in Europe and yet Canada continues to lag behind giving scant attention to the role that the environment plays in cancer causation.

I think that that's one of the reasons our recently published breast cancer studies received such wide spread media attention. Our findings were quite provocative. For instance we found over 400% higher rates in pre-menopausal women who worked in food canning and automotive plastics factories. The study's findings have been featured in an investigative reporting series on Global TV, [16x9](#). Recently we discovered from the journal that published the study—Environmental Health—that there have been over 25000 downloads of the article.

I think I can understand why automotive plastics might be an issue, but why food canning plants?

We think it comes down to two major issues in the food canning plants. When they cook off the food, a lot of steam is generated, steam which may contain pesticide residues. We know the food had pesticides when it comes in, and health testing shows those levels are reduced a lot by the time it goes into the can, so where do they go? Also, there is the issue of the epoxy lining of the cans. That epoxy contains BPA, which is a known endocrine disrupting chemical that has been associated with increased breast cancer risk.

But for the workers, many of whom are women, there is ongoing exposure to a host of toxic chemicals that has been characterized to us by some of the women we interviewed as a "toxic soup". Something as simple as ventilation fans in these canning or automotive plastics factories might significantly reduce exposure, but there are no regulations requiring that in Canada.

Yes, you've pointed out that other countries are getting quite concerned about these issues, so why don't you think Canada is?

We have very corporate friendly governments in Canada, corporate friendly or corporate fearing perhaps. We have more focus on making sure employers aren't challenged because it's easy for them to move to other more "corporately friendly" countries, and it's just as easy for them to build or move a factory to the US as it is to run one here. But the consequences of this "open for business" posture for people who live here and raise their families are pretty onerous. There are consequences to this type of policy. You see it so often in environmental issues.

More needs to be done to stop this exposure, but governments are not responding, and they're not really taking women's occupational health concerns seriously. I think that there's going to be increasing pressure to do something. In the US, the unions and some of the Breast Cancer organizations have launched a campaign called "Putting Breast Cancer Out of Work", the United Autoworkers (UAW) have joined the campaign, using Rosy the Riveter as their logo. I think that a new consciousness is going to come here, so hopefully we won't be lagging behind, after all, Canada used to be a leading voice for protecting the environment and health.

Canadians, I believe, want to make environmental health, climate change and other such issues priorities. They take pride in where they live and do care about threats to our ecology, but the people with power don't necessarily share these values especially if it diminishes their power and wealth.

How about outside the field, what are your interests there?

We do a lot of running. Last year at 66 years of age, I ran the Detroit-Windsor half-marathon with my partner Margaret Keith. We're just signed up to run the half marathon again this coming October. We got into it because of our kids, we have four of them some of whom run full marathons.

We are also very connected to our family. We camp and hike with them during the summer including some, or all of, our ten grandkids. As you can imagine, between that and research, things are pretty full.

What is your opinion on AU's move to e-texts so far?

Our course is still lagging behind on all of that. When I started tutoring this course they sent me a box with all the articles, all the books in it. The students lately are looking for this stuff in the reading rooms and, as far as I understand, our stuff isn't there yet.

How about the shift to a call-centre model?

Unfortunately, in a lot of our institutions, not just education, but health care, social services, etc., are being forced to function as if they are a business.



I think there's something wrong with that model. Our education system shouldn't be running on a business model. There's something really lost here. From what I understand about call centre idea, I think it'll could lower the quality of the educational experience. What I'm doing in my course means I have a lot of contact from students, I build a relationship with them, and they're going to get something from me in this area that they won't get from a random person they're assigned to if the call centre approach were to be adopted.

But AU's not alone in this problem. The University of Windsor's head of the Faculty Association is on contract. Most positions are no longer tenured because it's cheaper. But a trade-off is being made. We've introduced business practices into institutions without thinking about what these changes really mean.

The quality of the human experience should be our real goal. We keep trying to bring down education costs, but maybe education can't be fixed by cutting services or lowering standards. It's the same in health care. Somebody pays the price for that.

In a real classroom setting people learn from each other ... Everybody in the room has a point of view ... it's tough to do this at AU, so more needs to be done to build that type of community

What do you think of social media use?

There are pros and cons to whole thing. There's some idea that it's making us unable to write, but as I said I haven't found that in the papers submitted for the course. I don't think you can ignore it, but the biggest problem is for people to have some sort of critical understanding of what you're reading. I think you have to have some context to understand what's there.

One thing social media definitely shows us is that science is not monolithic.

What do you think AU needs to do to improve?

I think it needs to be supportive and focused on the students that are a part of its community, what the students need, want, and deserve should be on top of everybody's mind. If you have a place that is focussed on the people that live, work, and study there, you'll build something that has real value.

In AU there's a lot of activity for online learning and lifetime learning. It's really an important thing and as the years go on, people will be more engaged in learning. Given the complexities of our lives, and how that's increasing, distance learning will be required. So AU can do a lot with this type of program.

But it may need to rethink how to bring more shared learning into the process. In a real classroom setting people learn from each other, they have all kinds of insights. Everybody in the room has a point of view and experience and ideas and we learn from each other, it's not just up-down learning. We learn from those we study with when we discuss these issues and share these passions, and it's tough to do this at AU, so more needs to be done to build that type of community.

I've felt it might be interesting to use Skype and set up small group-work so that these various students that I get to talk to, with all their widely different experiences and lives could meet each other in class and learn from each other's point of view.

Thinking In Colour

Barbara Lehtiniemi



If you wrote 50 items on your grocery list but then forgot to bring the list with you, how many items would you remember? What if you had 200 items? Or thousands?

Students' study notes sometimes resemble grocery lists—bulleted lists of jotted words and phrases. Students pore over pages of such notes, willing their mind to remember every word. Yet on exam day, you won't have your notes with you. If your brain can't recall what you put in your notes, you will be as aimless and confused as when you wander the supermarket without your grocery list.

If you could "see" your notes in your mind, you could recall more. But it's difficult to visualize your notes when they're just boring black words on white paper.

How much of your brain is engaged when you make study notes? Many students use only the left-brain for note taking while the right-brain dozes off. Your left-brain oversees words, numbers, and lists. That's perfect for getting linear, monotone notes on paper or screen, but it won't help transfer those notes into your memory. Your right-brain is in charge of colour, rhythm, and imagination. To visualize your notes, you're going to need your right-brain's help.

To get your whole mind working together, spice up your notes with colour and texture. Here are some ideas:

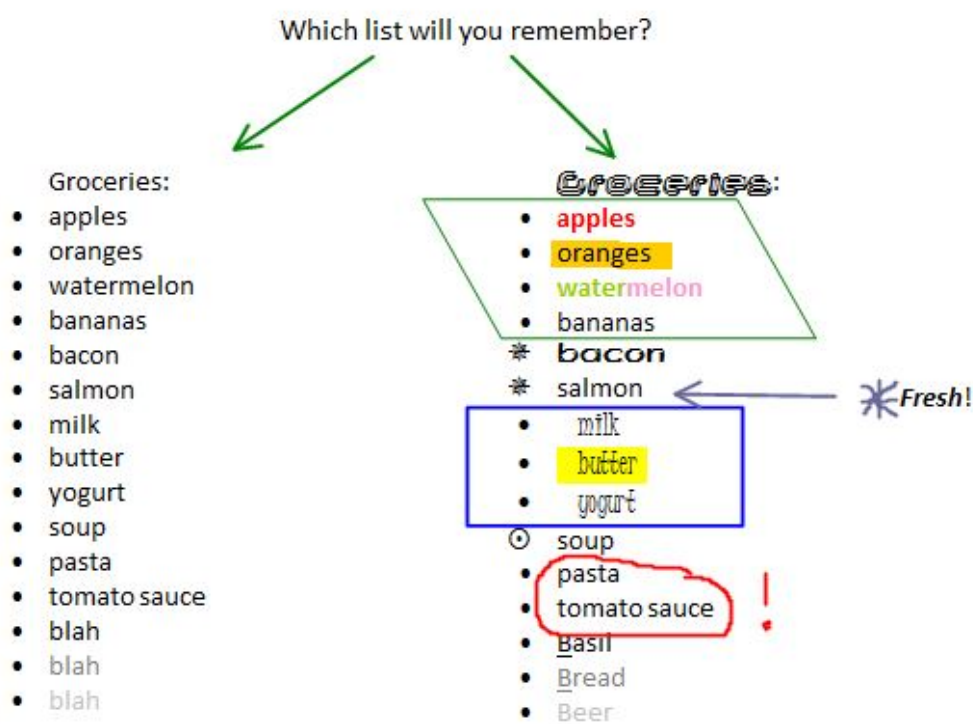
- **Use colour for key terms.** By setting off key words and concepts with colour, they'll stand out in your mind as well as in your notes. Use a variety of font and highlight colours for memorable impact.
- **Experiment with different fonts.** If every word of your notes is in Arial or Times New Roman, you'll put your mind to sleep. Try some unusual fonts to make critical words pop out.
- **Add shapes and arrows.** Set off important word groups with circles, arrows, or other shapes. When you need to recall that information later the mental picture of the shape will help your mind recall the info. You'll find a stock of ready-made shapes, lines, and arrows in most software. Don't forget to use colour!
- **Be messy.** Orderly notes look very neat but you're not usually being marked on your notes. Arrange your study notes in an eye-pleasing way that will help you to remember. Radiate groups of words from a central point. Display process steps like the steps of a staircase. Link related concepts with arrows or dotted lines. Have fun. Engage your brain—all of it.

Adding colour and texture to your notes does take a bit longer, but if it helps you retain and recall information it will be worth it. For those times you need to take notes quickly, at a lecture for example,

you might need to add colour later. Going through your quick notes to spice them up with colour and zest serves as a valuable review of the material, too.

With visually engaging notes, studying will be easier. You'll be able to scan your notes often and more quickly without your mind zoning out. Exams are never going to be easy, but you'll do much better if you're thinking in colour.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario



DID YOU KNOW?

Invigilations and Taxes



Did you pay exam invigilation fees for AU courses in 2013? If you have receipts for those fees, you can include them on your 2013 Canadian income tax return.

Add the amounts from your exam invigilation receipts to the amounts from your T2202A tuition receipts and include them on your return. For the federal tax calculation, enter the total of the two amounts on line 2 (box 320) "Eligible tuition fees paid for 2013" on Schedule 11 "Tuition, Education, and Textbook Amounts."

Tuition from other universities includes the cost of exam invigilation.

Because AU students pay their exam invigilator directly, the fees are not included in the AU-issued T2202A. Canada Revenue Agency considers such fees as part of tuition and therefore students should include exam invigilation fees on their return.

Exam invigilation receipts should include the following information: the name of the institution that provided invigilation services, the name of the student, the date, and the course the exam was for, and, of course, the cost. No other costs can be claimed (for example, parking,) even if the student has a receipt.



That's a Good Reason

Do you believe people come into our lives for a reason? And that the timing is not accidental or random? I do. I also know we can be so tightly wound, so busy, so pre-occupied we don't notice their arrival. Or the significance of their presence.

Nearly thirty years ago I sought the help of a support group for sufferers of alopecia areata (patchy baldness). It's a common condition afflicting about one in a hundred people and is less severe than alopecia totalis and alopecia universalis. It's believed to be an auto-immune condition with no known cause and no known cure. The fact that our son was diagnosed with this life altering condition drove me to look for help anywhere and everywhere.

I totally get that in the grand scheme of life there are many, many worse things that could have happened to him or our family. But in a world of snap judgments made based on external appearance this can be a debilitating thing to deal with. The last thing any mother wants is to see her child suffer so the hunt for a cure was on.

Trouble is, there is no cure. So he, we needed to learn to live with this mystery that turns lives upside down. I became involved with the Edmonton branch of a national organization devoted to making life easier. I wrote a newsletter for years offering information and hope because when a cure eludes you that's all you've got.

At one of the support group meetings psychologist Dr. Rona Jevne spoke about hope. Her message was comforting and her name unusual enough that it stuck with me. Every so often I'd read about what she was doing in the world of helping people.

This past week she was interviewed on TV in the lead-up to her appearance at the Edmonton Women's Show. Three decades disappeared in moments. This day she was talking about the benefits of journaling. I *know* the benefits of silence, introspection and writing. Unfortunately just because I know something is good for me doesn't mean I do it.

In many things I talk the talk but don't walk the walk—at least not consistently. But life keeps giving us chances for do-overs and second tries. This day Dr. Jevne reminded us that we don't need to just write when we're in pain or going through something terrible.

She suggested answering these four questions:

- What are my talents?
- Who am I hanging out with?
- What have I locked myself into or out of?
- What delights me?

Maybe writing from a more positive perspective is less daunting than from an angst filled heart. Maybe it's more revelatory. Maybe I won't do a damn thing about *this* info other than tell you. I do know that another visit (even if it was virtual) from Dr. Jevne got me thinking again about hope and promise. If that's why she came into my life, then that's a good reason, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

Writer's Toolbox

Whither That Word?

Christina M. Frey



What's in a name—or a word? Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet? To what extent does language influence our perception, and vice versa?

The answer can be found in etymology, the study of the history and origin of words.

“Language is fossil poetry,” wrote Emerson, but etymology's more than just a dry history lesson. Language is a living, breathing thing that influences the way we think as well as the way we speak and write. If studying history offers us an understanding of where we've come from and where we're headed as human beings, then etymology helps us examine how the words we use and choose paint a picture of society—and how changing these words can change our future.

For example, the French conquest of Britain a millennium ago transformed the English language, peppering it with French-derived words highlighting the “higher” culture of the conquerors (who can forget the *Ivanhoe* discussion of how *cow* turned into *beef*—similar to the French *boeuf*—when it hit the tables of the nobility?). As Britain expanded its trade outside Europe, words from Southeast Asia and North Africa became embedded in the English language. Even the rise of highbrow-lowbrow culture—as epitomized by William Shakespeare's plays—is reflected in the language; Shakespeare himself invented dozens of words and expressions that we use every day without a thought.

Moving to more modern times, it's not even necessary to look at major cultural shifts—like those surrounding racist and sexist language. Look, for example, at 2013's word of the year, *selfie*. What does this say about current society? Values? How we communicate?

If you want to dig deeper, a fantastic resource is the online [Etymology Dictionary](#), which provides origin information for words (including words with multiple meanings). It's a captivating glimpse of a language that's truly one from many. And if you're a historical fiction writer or enthusiast, take note: besides its ability to help us understand language, the etymology dictionary is also an invaluable resource when you're trying to create authentic settings and dialogue.

For those who are curious about tracking cultural usage shifts, Google's N-gram [viewer](#) can generate usage graphs and charts. It's helpful for comparing changes in popular or prevalent usage, particularly if you fall into the descriptivist grammar camp (the philosophy argues that grammar should describe usage rather than dictate it).

The way we communicate reflects our values and affects the way we act, so etymology provides a particularly interesting glimpse into who we are and what we'll become. Study the past to fix the present to save the future—and think before you speak or write.

Christina M. Frey is a book editor and a lover of great writing. Chat with her on Twitter about all things literary @turntopage2.

In Conversation

With Patrick Woodcock, Part I

Wanda Waterman



Patrick Woodcock is a Canadian poet who employs poetry to document the suffering of humanity in war-torn countries— a kind of poetic nonfiction. (See The Voice Magazine's review of Echo Gods and Silent Mountains: Poems, his book of poems based on his time in Iraqi Kurdistan.) Recently he took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about poetry schools, his childhood, and what pointed him towards poetry.

The Surrealist Influence

Patrick doesn't place himself within any specific school of poetry, which is not to say that he feels all poetry schools are one or that he remains uninfluenced by the styles of other poets. In his early youth he developed an attachment to surrealist, romantic, and metaphysical poetry, which resonated so much with the weirdness of his personal life as to eventually throw him a little off-balance.

"When I was in high school I loved surrealism—from 'Where's the fish?' to Philippe Soupault. But as I began to travel and explore—*truly* explore—my daily life became far more odd and surreal than my dreams. I was living within a fog of surrealism during the day and then dreaming of nothing more than sitting in a chair beneath a tree at night (I still have this one a lot), so I had to abandon my initial fascination with surrealism and look elsewhere."

In keeping with the romantic direction in which he's observed the arts heading these days, Woodcock has been delving into metaphysical and romantic poets, but he says he doesn't see their influence in his latest book of poems. (Some of us would beg to differ).

"Remote" Poetry

"Overall the symbolists have influenced me the most—Mallarmé continues to astound me every time I read him. I have referred to my writing as 'remote' poetry, 'remote' because of my geographical locations, 'remote' because I have chosen to write the least-read form of literature, and lastly and most importantly, 'remote' as in the channel changer.

"The television remote had just come out when I was young, and so we no longer had to sit and watch unbearable television. It pains me to hear lazy journalists make sweeping generalizations about the vulgar hordes with short attention spans. Look at the television programmes we were given in the 70's and 80's; most of it was complete rubbish. We had every right to say 'f-k you' and change the channel.

"In a way, the television remote was my first artistic tool. If I only had 30 minutes to watch TV I would use it to create an enjoyable mosaic of sounds, colours, and visuals from the subpar programming we were given.

"This has carried over into my writing. If I begin a poem as a folk narrative or choose to write in iambic tetrameter only to find out that my subject requires another approach, I change it. I don't feel obligated to adhere to one form throughout a piece. So I am quite comfortable in changing the channel midway through a poem or even a line. My subjects demand this flexibility from me.

Ascerbic Irish Wit

"I was born on July 12th, which is William of Orange Day in Ireland. It is a wonderful day when the Irish get together and kick the crap out of each other. So my first name is actually William. not Patrick. As a child named Willy Woodcock I had two choices: pursue comedy or develop a nifty little heroin addiction.

"From what I can remember I have always been a funny person and so is my father, but in that warped, acerbic Irish way. When most people were watching *The Love Boat* and *Fantasy Island*, my father and I were watching *Benny Hill*, *Dave Allen At Large*, *The Two Ronnies*, and *Monty Python*.

From Comedy to Music

Music was right up there with comedy for Patrick. He and his brother both studied violin ("I was horrible at it while he was brilliant"). He eventually satisfied the musical urge by learning basic guitar chords and then joining a choir. Singing in the choir, he says, "... helped me cultivate my morbid fascination with funerals, cemeteries, and the pageantry of mourning."

From Music to Literature

"In my teens I began to listen to bands like The Smiths, The Church, The Cure, Momus, etc., who all had wonderful lyrics—I had rarely paid attention to a song's lyrics before— and this led me to a new respect for literature and inevitably poetry. Once I began to read and explore poetry I knew that this was the avenue I wanted to pursue.

"Comedy always came too easily to me. There was no challenge; I never had to force it. Writing poetry is so bloody difficult, such a daunting task and struggle – and that's why I'm so passionate about it. In the end *The Life of Brian* and Robert Lowell's "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket" have moved me equally, and the only difference between them is that Lowell's lines are much harder to reinvent and re-create.

(Patrick Woodcock's Tumblr page: <http://patrickwoodcock.tumblr.com>. *Echo Gods and Silent Mountains* can also be found here on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Echo-Gods-and-Silent-Mountains/248778701905472>)

(to be continued)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

At Home and Abroad



At Home: First Nations Education Bill Tabled

CBC is reporting on the First Nations Education Bill that has been tabled by the federal government. While the bill contains some steps toward addressing First Nations' concerns, some critics of the bill still say that it leaves ultimate power for First Nations education in the hands of the Federal Government, not with the First Nations as they say federal treaties require.

Around the Globe: International Student STEM Enrolments Down in UK

A House of Lords report has called it an "unwelcoming UK", according to *The Guardian*, with international student enrolments into STEM courses having dropped by more than 10% in the past ten years. The report cites

complicated immigration rules, expensive visas, and insufficient time to seek work after study. The UK Home Office disputes the report, saying that there is no clear evidence to support their argument as to why enrolments have dropped. Regardless of the reasons, the drop in international STEM course enrolments has not stopped the overall number of STEM students in the UK from being at an all time high.



Dear Barb:

My daughter has two children and is in her twenties. She had her children when she was young and wasn't able to finish school. Recently Sylvia began taking courses at AU as she finally realized she needs an education. She chose AU so she would be able to spend time with her children and do her studies in the evening, or when they are napping. The problem is Sylvia brings the kids over to my house most days and she says she has to study. I love my grandchildren, but I do have a life. My daughter and I have had a tumultuous relationship and I'm scared if I say something she will get angry and not bring the kids around at all. Not sure what to do?

Sue

Hi Sue:

I hope your daughter would not be that vindictive as to not let grandma see her grandchildren! You must be happy that your daughter has made the decision to return to school. That is a positive move for a young woman with her whole future ahead of her. AU is a good choice because of the flexibility. You do need to support your daughter during this transitional stage in her life, but as you say you do have a life. Perhaps you can sit down with your daughter and work out a schedule as to when you will watch the children, consequently giving her time to do her studies. Remind her that the advantage to AU is that she can do her school work in the evening or while the children are napping. Choose a day or two during the week that you agree to watch the children. Plan these days

around your schedule. This will prevent your daughter from just showing up at your door and dropping the kids off when you may have other plans. Ultimately this could be advantageous for everyone, as you will get to spend precious time with your grandchildren and your daughter will have time to spend on her studies. Enjoy your grandchildren, as they will be teenagers before you know it!

Dear Barb:

I would just like to give you an update. I wrote to you January 10, 2014. At that time I was interested in dating my best friend's sister but he wasn't too keen on the idea. Well we took your advice and John, Melissa, Kara, and myself sat down together and talked things through. I know John was apprehensive at first about Kara and I dating, but now everything is fine. The four of us go out together and John and I have continued our close relationship. Kara just may be the love of my life. Thanks for your advice!

Pete

Hey there Pete, so happy to hear things worked out for you guys. Open, honest discussions are generally the best road to take.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.

Weird Canada

THE MAGICAL BEER FRIDGE THAT WENT 'ROUND THE WORLD

THE CANADA HOUSE AT THE 2014 SOCHI WINTER GAMES HAD A BEER FRIDGE THAT COULD ONLY OPEN BY SCANNING A CANADIAN PASSPORT.

MOLSON CANADIAN, THE COMPANY THAT CREATED THE FRIDGE, TOOK IT ALL OVER THE WORLD, PARKING IT IN PLACES WHERE CANADIANS COULD USE THEIR PASSPORTS TO GET BEER. THE LOCALS WOULD STAND AROUND WAITING FOR A CANADIAN TOURIST TO COME ALONG AND OPEN IT.

[HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=8GPER34KZMG](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GPER34KZMG)

Hey, sweet thing, come on over to my bunkhouse! We've got a magical refrigerator that dispenses free beer! All I need is my passport to open it!

You'll have to get me drunk before I'll fall for that one, cowboy!



WANDA WATERMAN

AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. *The Voice* does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

500 Energy Square - 10109 - 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
Ph: 855.497.7003 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Karl Low

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Barbara Lehtiniemi, S.D. Livingston, Wanda Waterman

www.voicemagazine.org

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

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, subscribe [here](#). *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.

© 2014 by *The Voice Magazine*