

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 30 2014-08-01

## Not Tested on Animals!

Can That be True?

## Enliven Your Mind

Choose your Course Wisely

## The Study Dude

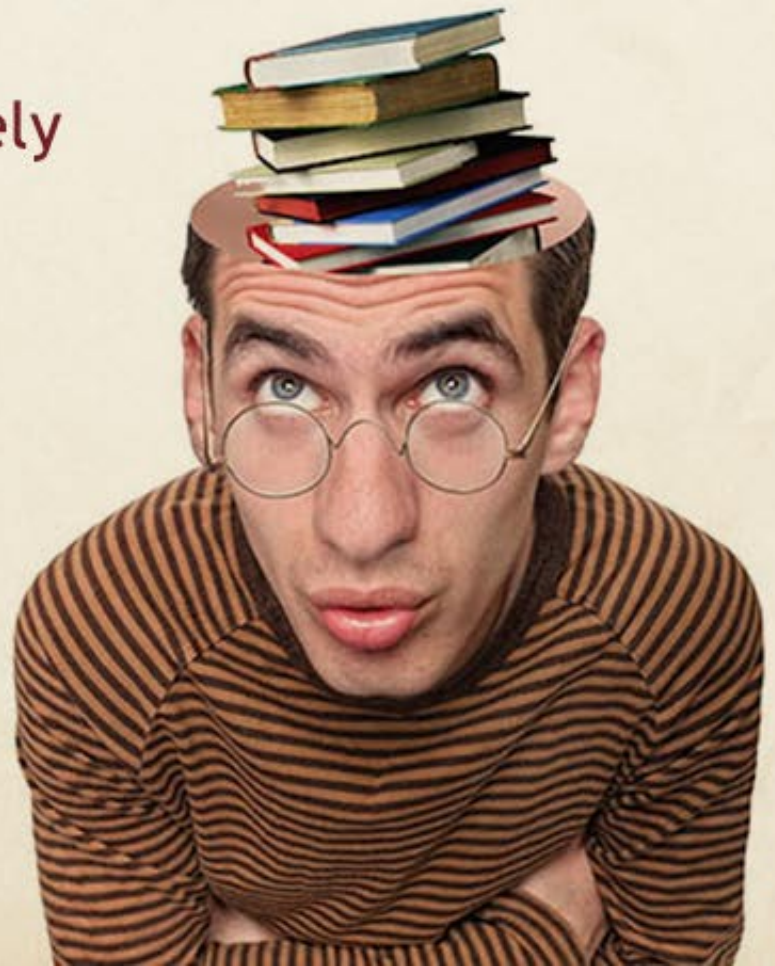
Preparation Preparation

*Plus:*

*From Where I Sit*

*The Writer's Toolbox*

*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](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.**

## EDITORIAL

Karl Low



## Summer Sizzle

I'm trying something a bit different this week in *The Voice Magazine*. Our feature article, by Jason Hazel-Rah Sullivan, is a bit more challenging of a read than I typically publish. His look into the relations between humans and animals touches on philosophy, physiology, and our own psychology, but has done so through an unusual pastiche of personal, academic, and even fiction writing, all within a page and a half. I hope you take some time with it and come to enjoy it as I have.

This week, we also have an article from The Study Dude on methods to help get the information lodged in our brain (at least long enough to make it through the exams), and one from Barb Lehtiniemi points out some of the more interesting courses you might want to consider to fill up the option slots in your degree program.

Alongside the return of Gregor's Bed, we also have our usual slate of columns including Primal Numbers' look at how cars have become the latest target for hackers, The Writer's Toolbox discusses what "Weird AI" Yankovich is bringing to the language debate, Hazel Anaka tries to

deal with a project attempting to take over her home and has to ask herself the unanswerable question.

As if that isn't enough, Wanda Waterman has an interview with the curator of *The Respository of Wonders*, Dear Barb takes on concerns about things that might be hidden or that people would prefer remain that way, and the Dysfunctional Love Languages comic explores how to "win" an argument (but do not try this method at home, folks).

And that's all well and good, but what else is going on at *The Voice Magazine*? August 1 marks, essentially, the start of my third quarter here, and I'm sure some of you are remembering my promise to get a big survey out. Rest assured, that will happen, but it's close enough to September that I thought it would be a good idea to hold off for that big rush of new students AU always gets in September. Also, *The Voice Magazine* will be getting a new picture logo. Our title logo will remain the same, but we've got a new picture that we'll be able to put on all sorts of swag to give out to loyal readers.

This means, of course, that we need to get rid of our old swag, and since part of what I've been asked to do with The Voice is increase the number of people who've signed up for our weekly reminder e-mails, you can probably see where I'm going with this. So if you're a regular reader of *The Voice Magazine*, but you haven't signed up for our reminder e-mails, consider this your call to do so. Our swag supply includes canvas *The Voice Magazine* book bags, flash drives, USB hubs, book-lights (in case your e-reader doesn't light up already), and even a few *Voice* jackets, and we're looking to get rid of all of it over the next few weeks.

With that and the number of inquiries I've been getting lately for people hopeful to bring their thoughts to you through articles in *The Voice Magazine*, this August looks like it will definitely be heating up in terms of the quantity and quality of material you'll be able to find here.

Enjoy the read!



## This Product Not Tested on Animals!

Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan



Standing in the shower reading the label on my hair conditioner, it occurred to me, as I'm sure it has to many other humans, that at some level we are the guinea pigs who hair care products are tested on. At a common sense level the hair conditioner chemicals are harmless, of course, yet there I was in the shower conditioning my hair and wondering if it's the first time an animal's body came into contact with this particular mixture of ingredients. We think of ourselves as outside nature; part of it yet separate from it—like a cloud in a sky, or a wisp of lichen on a tree. Part of the context, yet

somehow foreign; like lichen that breezes in on the wind or clouds that congealed seemingly out of thin air.

At a societal level, the logic of our beliefs about nature and the beings in it implies that non-human animals are of a very different order than we Homo sapiens. Jacques Derrida described what would happen if "through the maw of the untamable beast, a figure of the sovereign were to appear" (Derrida, 2009). The sovereign Derrida describes is we humans who believe ourselves different or superior from all we envision to be natural. Yet, contrary to our elevated sense of self, we often see ourselves as animals capable of 'mindless' deeds that seem out of our control. Derrida adds that "where the animal realm is so often opposed to the human realm, as the realm of the nonpolitical to the realm of the political" is where reside the ideas and themes that guide our interactions with each other, with 'nature', and with aspects of the natural world which we draw into our orbit of omniscience and control.

My kitty, Bella, dug what I was on about as she gazed at me through the foggy mist behind the shower door. Where hair care products are concerned she is the animal in our familial relationship; she's the 'other', the beast, the one who is saved from chemical horrors of animal testing. My Bella is the not-human who at once is also human, all too human, socialized into the indoor realm of treats and cuddles and litterboxes. She knows how to manipulate attention by nuzzling my cheek and face and by double tapping her paw onto my left arm even as I type at my laptop. She is, in some ways, more essentially human than I in that she personifies visceral desires and conditioned responses; not unlike an infant who, lacking language, resorts to its innate cuteness to be satiated with food and affection. At the same time my cat is just like me. She was born as a desiring creature yet the objects of her desire remain to be learned and socialized. In a different setting she would subsist on mice, yet her life involves cat food and treats. Either way, the desire for sustenance is satiated.

How could anyone test chemicals on my Bella? Her animal self is beyond the pale, yet just inside this invisible line of how I perceive her lies the reality that her physiological self is inseparable from her social construction as a pet—a step or two removed from a mindless beast. I recall the movie *Pocahontas* where the native people were ascribed the status 'savage'. Not man and not beast, but certainly not deserving of the same rights and respect as those with the power to name and control the 'new world'. As modern humans we reserve for ourselves the godlike status of non-animal, while tacitly admitting that we are indeed primates, indeed mammals, indeed mortal, and indeed susceptible to chemical toxicity. Chemical weapons represent our testing of the powers we hold over each other and over nature; yet what we term 'nature' still remains separate from ourselves.

Then I think of an entry point to an imaginary film scene based on nature as a trope by which we judge ourselves and possibly others:

*A woman finds her husband splayed across the living room floor across the lap of a random woman. There's beer bottles everywhere and the sun is slowly rising and splashing an ominous tangerine glow across the short living room carpet.*

*She exclaims, "You pig! You beast! You're worse than the dog! I leave you alone for a night and then there you are humping the wall or someone's leg! Sheesh mageesh, why do you hafta be such an animal!"*

She's not asking, she's telling.

At some level our animalistic natures find expression in inverse correlation to the disgust which others levy in our direction. When we mess up we feel ourselves revert to a bestial and antediluvian self, one who knows no pride nor culture nor scruples. Yet between these dichotomies of cultured, civilized human and ravenous, savage beast lies the reality of our socialized-yet-animal selves. Bella is neither a killer/predator nor a plush toy. And neither am I. When companies avoid animal testing they implicitly recognize that to hurt nature is to hurt ourselves; yet paradoxically we humans do not completely accept our natures as fully-animal. We inhabit an in between realm, an intermundia. To understand ourselves and the world around us it seems useful to remember that we are neither completely bestial nor completely human, but in reality something in between. Or, as Pico della Mirandola put it in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century "man's place in the universe is somewhere between the beasts and the angels, but, because of the divine image planted in him, there are no limits to what man can accomplish".

#### References

Derrida, J. *The Beast and the Sovereign*; University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, USA, 2009; Volume 1.

*Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

## Staffing Changes at AU



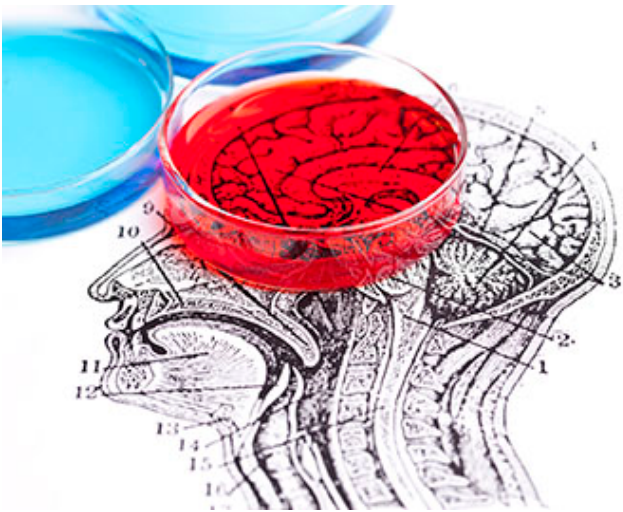
Dr. Cindy Ives has become the new Vice-President Academic of Athabasca University, succeeding Dr. Alex Kondra as the previous Acting Vice-President Academic, as an interim position which will run until June 30, 2016, and is renewable. If the name seems familiar it is because Dr. Ives was fairly active in the etext discussions in the [AU Landing](#). This makes her one of the only AU executives that I have seen engaging in front-line discussion with students.

Dr. Ives Ph.D is in Educational Technology from Concordia University, and previous to this she was the Director for AU's Centre for Learning Design, and has been in the acting positions for the vacant Associate Vice-President Academic (Learning Resources) and Vice-President Academic. She has also been active in student facing technologies within the university, including the University Library and Learner Support Services.

## Primal Numbers

### Car Hacking

S.D. Livingston



For the most part, car problems are predictable. A new set of brakes one month, maybe a new exhaust system the next. But now that our cars are getting more like driveable computers, there's a new headache for drivers to face. It's car hacking, a type of cyber attack in which hackers target the computerized systems and gadgets in our vehicles. And the results could be deadly.

It might sound like something out of *Goldfinger*, but the hacking methods exposed by security experts are very real. As this *Reuters* [article](#) explains, Charlie Miller and Chris Valasek revealed the current state of the problem at a 2013 Def Con

conference. Potential hacks included "manipulating the brakes of the moving [Toyota] Prius and the Ford Escape."

For the record, Toyota and Ford aren't the only carmakers that might be vulnerable. Researchers have highlighted the same potential issue with the computerized systems of other brands.

If you're tempted to dismiss the idea of car hacking as nothing but scaremongering, you should know that security experts take it seriously. One project, [EVITA](#), began work on a "security blueprint" for carmakers back in 2008. As part of their testing, they used a vehicle's cell phone and Bluetooth connections to install malicious software—software that "could have been used to co-opt the car's computer system, including its engine."

So what does this mean for the average driver? Well, your onboard entertainment system probably isn't laying in wait to take over your crossover utility vehicle. And there's no need to start kicking the tires on a '70s-era station wagon. But just like computers and smart phones, our vehicles could soon need to be equipped with antivirus systems—ones that can be updated regularly to stay ahead of the latest malware.

The immediate costs will be seen in the price for new vehicles, but it's not hard to see how car hacking could have a much broader economic effect. Take transport trucks, for example. It could cost fleet owners tens of thousands of dollars to protect their vehicles with software, and those costs are bound to be passed on to consumers in the cost of retail goods.

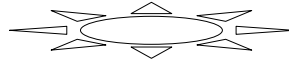
The same goes for rental cars. Installing and upgrading software and other anti-hacking systems will no doubt be cheaper in volume, but that extra business expense will have to be absorbed by someone. Then there's the question of insurance policies. Brokers and underwriters will have to assess the risks and adjust their rates accordingly. Policies could even include a loophole that limits coverage if your car's antivirus software isn't up to date.

The promising news is that, with years of experience under our collective belts, consumers and programmers alike have gotten better at minimizing the risks. We're used to the idea of firewalls and software updates. Many

of the lessons learned with home computers and corporate networks can be applied to car hacking. It's a familiar game that's migrating to a broader field, but we've already got a rule book.

All that's left to do now is decide between Morgan Freeman and Patrick Stewart for the onboard GPS system.

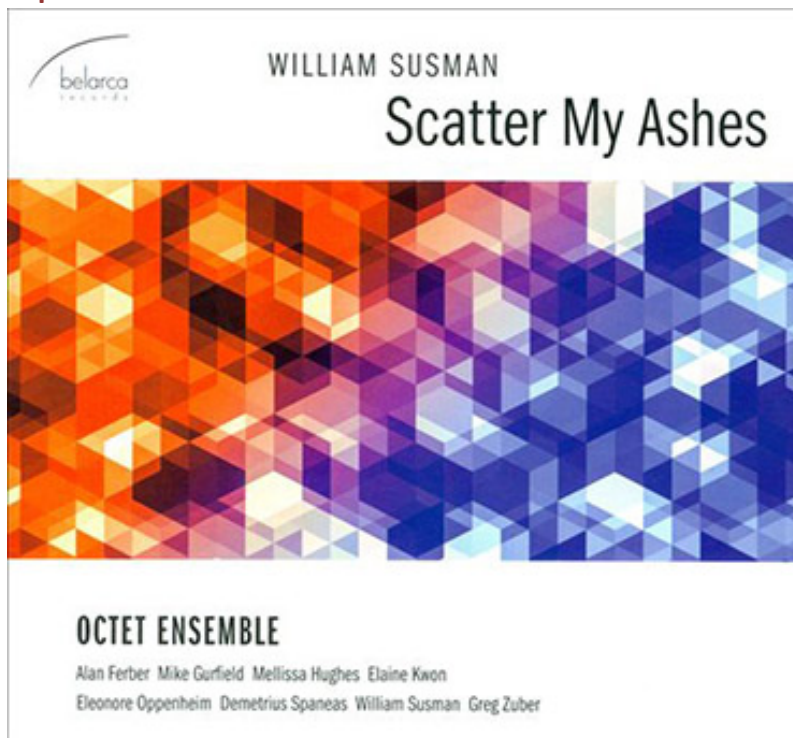
*S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.*



## Gregor's Bed

**Recent Discoveries From the Realms of the Experimental and Avant-Garde**

## Wanda Waterman



**Album:** *Scatter My Ashes*

**Composer:** William Susman

**Where Multiple Streams of Inspiration Joyously Meet and Mingle**

"... Scatter my old bones.  
I am keeping the young ones  
fresh, strong the blood circles  
and weaves me into a whole piece  
with long slender red thread  
buried under my skin."

- from the poem by Sue Susman, forming the lyrics for the title track in *Scatter My Ashes*

Poet Sue Susman was taking some solitary repose in a rural cabin in Illinois where she often

went to write and to take long walks alone. One winter's night, while standing outside in the cold and looking up at the stars, the words came for "Moving in To an Empty Space," a poem whose introspective lines eventually found their way into a composition by her brother—composer and pianist William Susman—along with a number of her other poems. Her poem "Scatter My Ashes" formed the text for the title track of this album.

The poems of his sister seem to arrive, first, from a melancholy soul and, second, from the common unconscious of a culture unnerved by rapid transitions, growing shallowness, and ignorance. A culture cut off from both history and the lessons of the past. In the track "Moving to an Empty Space" we explore the absurdity of postmodern solitude by means of the poem itself, which William couches in elements of circus music, effectively making the listener question her sanity.

But there's light *and* shadow here; there are passages of good cheer on this album that utterly belie its ominous moments and make you wonder if you heard right.

It's an aesthetic formed from a collage of influences. If one were to characterise his music in a metaphor, that



metaphor might be "roundabout." His body of work seems like a swirling junction of rhythms, styles, instrumentation, genres, and colour.

William Susman has always cast a wide net for inspiration, sometimes close to home (as shown by his use of his sister's poetry), and sometimes further away, such as historical events (his 1988 composition "Uprising" was based on the the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943), literature (His "Angels of Light" was based on a Mark Helprin novel), the music of other composers, photographs ("Trailing Vortices" was inspired by photographs found in "An Album of Fluid Motion," by Milton Van Dyke), and current events (as in "Zydeco Madness: To the Forgotten of Hurricane Katrina").

Each track is short for a classical piece—they're more the length of top forty pop songs than chamber music—but they're densely packed with musical victuals. The first track starts out with a computer-perfect piano rhythm overlaid by the syncopated syllables (they sound like drawn-out laughter) of soprano Mellissa Hughes (who sings the texts with the slow, rising pulse typical of much new music), and right away we see the harmonious intertwining of jazz and Western classical, of straight rhythm with swing, of notes rich with sobriety overlaid by cheerfully rippling melodies.

This album, in addition to being delightfully listenable, serves as a short introductory course in new developments in serious music, developments so important I think we should mention them here.

To name a few:

- Fibonacci series: A mathematical series of numbers used to plan gradations and relationships in musical scales
- Minimalism: A pairing-down of music to its most basic elements, using repetition and rhythmic patterns to create a forceful effect, and favoring electronic instruments
- Shepard tones: Sounds generated electronically by superposing sine waves separated by octaves, creating the illusion of tones descending or ascending in pitch when they're really staying the same (sounds a bit like an airraid siren)
- Risset's rhythmic effect: A breakbeat that just keep accelerating (I dare you to listen [here](#))
- Isorhythm: An arrangement of tones in repeated rhythmic patterns (a technique used by John Cage)
- Algorithmic composition: The use of algorithms to generate tunes (nowadays this is done with computers)
- Microtonal composition: Writing music using tone intervals smaller than a semi-tone (think blues notes and the sound of Northumbrian smallpipes)

Elements of Susman's jazz background emerge in "Eternal Light," which is strangely reminiscent of *Porgy and Bess*—it's not bebop jazz but rather closer to the classical jazz interpretations of Gershwin and Bernstein.

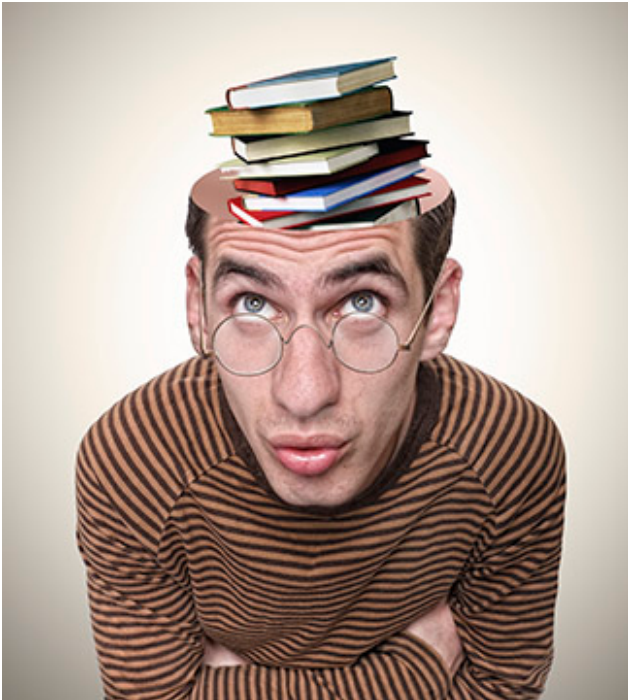
Susman, you simply must write an opera. We're all waiting.

*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.*

## Enliven Your Mind

### Choose Courses that Feed your Brain

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The signs are everywhere. It's getting harder to ignore. Summer is half over. August has begun, the birds are preparing for their fall migration, and the stores are bulging with back-to-school supplies.

The deadline to register for AU courses for September is only days away. Are you ready? It's time to put down the daiquiri, come in from the pool, and decide what courses to take this autumn.

Most AU undergraduate programs list a number of compulsory courses related to your field of study. No decision needed there; you have to either take those courses or have a satisfactory transfer credit from previous study. Other courses are your choice within a designated area of study.

Many programs also have a few optional credits in their program described as "any area of study." Don't overlook this opportunity to broaden your mind and delve into unfamiliar territory. Take some time this summer to check your program requirements, then browse through AU's undergraduate course [list](#).

Here are a few courses from my list of potentials. Some are fun diversions from my program, and others may nudge the limits of my intellectual capacity. Check the AU course [list](#) for full descriptions, or create your own list of brain-stretching potentials.

***The Vikings (Humanities, HIST 383.)*** Get in touch with your inner Norseman. New in 2014, *The Vikings* covers three centuries of trading, colonizing and exploring by the Scandinavians known as "vikings." More fun than the real thing. No prerequisite course required. Most of the course marks come from a research paper (30%) and the final exam (40%).

***East Meets West (Humanities, HUMN 360.)*** Impress your friends! *East Meets West* covers the philosophical influences of India and China on Western thought. Course texts include *Siddhartha* and *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. How cool is that? Most course marks are from an essay (30%) and the final exam (40%).

***Ethics (Humanities, PHIL 350.)*** Food for thought. A worthwhile complement to any field of study, this course covers the history of moral thought and ethics. No prerequisite, though a prior course in philosophy is recommended. Two marked exercises make up the bulk of the marks, with the final exam picking up the final 40%.

***Existentialism and Phenomenology (Humanities, PHIL 367.)*** Crash course on two schools of European philosophical thought. This one appears to be a mind-stretcher, as well as a challenge to pronounce. No

prerequisite, but a previous philosophy credit is recommended. No exam; most of the marks are from two essays of 40% each.

***Goddess Mythology, Women's Spirituality, and Ecofeminism (Social Science, WGST 333.)*** Get in touch with your inner goddess (or seriously impress the goddess you know.) Begins with the goddess mythology from the beginnings of civilization and ends with the new-age-sounding ecofeminism. Shhh! I haven't told my husband about this one yet. No prerequisite and no exam, just a raft of essays.

***Nutrition for Health (Science, NUTR 331.)*** You are what you eat. *Nutrition for Health* covers the basics of nutrition and its relationship to your health. Designed for students taking only one nutrition course, *Nutrition for Health* has no prerequisites (although high-school level chemistry and biology are recommended.) Marks are spread among three assignments and two exams, but we're talking about your health here.

***Civil Liberties and Individual Rights (Applied Studies, CRJS 427; also HSRV 427.)*** A topic of growing concern. "Of relevance to everyone interested in civil liberties and human rights," which means everyone, right? This course covers the basics of democratic law and the rights of the individual, with a focus on the Canadian system. No prerequisites; two assignments and a final exam of 50%.

University studies are supposed to make you well-rounded. The piece of paper you get at the end of the journey cannot compare in value to the knowledge you acquire along the way. Any course that pushes your limits expands your capacity.

Summer's almost over! Browse through AU's undergraduate courses today and find some food—or some fun—for your mind.

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

## Click of the Wrist

**Who needs vacation?** Summer is all about fun and games, and some of those good times may be hidden in your living room right now. This week has some fun (ahem!) with books, games, and toys.

## Fun and Games

### Inside the Toy Chest

Have you ever looked inside a toy? This innovative x-ray photography shows you a few childhood favourites from the inside out.

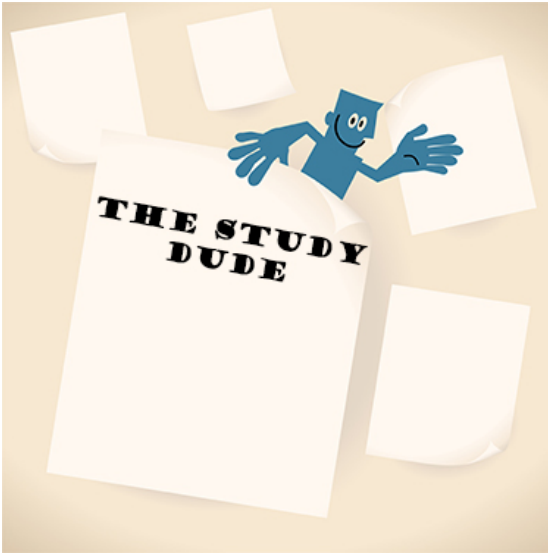
### Game Night

Monopoly may bring out the worst in you, but playing board games can actually help you become smarter. This *Atlantic* article shows how game night can improve your executive function skills.

### Reading Room

Whether you're relaxing at the beach or curled up at home on a rainy day, a good book is hard to beat for summer fun. But there are books, and then there are collectors' items—like these rare first editions.





## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

*There is nothing more that the Study Dude wants than to see you graduate with Honors, win a silver medallion, become CEO of a major international corporation, and write your memoirs.*

*Well, in these articles, as The Study Dude, I'll try to give you the study tips you need to help make your learning easier. I'll also give you straight and honest opinions and personal anecdotes—even the embarrassing ones that you wouldn't ever dare read about from any other study tip guru.*

Today's study tips are based on a reading of Kevin Paul's *Study Smarter, Not Harder* (2009).

### Distance Learning Video/Audio Approach

The Study Dude hasn't yet experienced a course at Athabasca that relies heavily on video or audio lectures, but that time is looming. Kevin Paul outlines a sound approach for video/audio lectures for distance learning that will make me—and my dear friends (none other than you!)—much more productive. The Study Dude wants you to graduate magna cum laude, so here are some of Paul's invaluable tips toward that goal:

- Treat online video/audio lectures like live classes! Try to watch each lecture intensely only one time through so that you don't waste precious time half-heartedly watching the same material over and over again.
- Make it the only task you focus on for its full duration! Give it your 100% focus.
- Take hearty notes while viewing the lecture (notes that mostly paraphrase, see [last week's](#) article for more information). Leave spaces for the parts you miss to fill in later.
- Try to brainstorm a summary outline of everything you remember immediately after the lecture. Spend ten to thirty minutes immediately after the viewing to make an outline of everything you remember (in addition to all the notes you have been taking).
- Before the next video/audio lecture, spend ten minutes writing out a summary of everything you remember from the prior lecture.
- Whatever you do, don't stop the lecture during the video/audio recording playback. This is important. Remember, you are treating this like a live lecture. You just want to watch the lecture one time through—nonstop—while taking copious notes so that you don't waste the valuable time that you would otherwise spend reviewing the video multiple times. Plus, by treating it as a live lecture, your focus will be top notch for the time you do spend on the lecture.
- Okay, so there is a time when you can replay the video/audio. Once—and only once—you have treated the full lecture as a nonstop live class (while taking serious notes), view the video/audio lecture again in a supplementary manner while doing mundane events such as ironing, cooking, cleaning, and jogging. You likely wouldn't be using that time for any serious study anyway, so why not replay your lectures over and over again during these types of activities in order to reinforce the main points.

(Paul, 2009)



After some reflection, The Study Dude would advise students to leave spaces in their notes at the parts of the “live lecture” they miss, noting the time of the play-head in the audio or video, if possible. After the viewing, the student can return to those points in the video and fill in the final tidbits.

### Relaxation Techniques

The Study Dude was once completely relaxed during exams, often finding the state of mind during exams the most relaxing time of all. However, that all changed once I went to grad school while working a full-time job and building a business Website for a colleague—all at the same time. I began to get serious anxiety attacks that inhibited my ability to focus for long bouts of time.

So, what is the Study Dude to do during exam times going forward? I read book after book on strategies for dealing with anxiety. Kevin Paul’s approach to relaxing during exam time particularly appeals to me. Here are some of the more salient points for you to consider in the quest to overcome exam jitters:

- Ongoing positive thoughts about yourself are important to have. Surround yourself with positive affirmations. Write out a list of positive statements about yourself, such as “I can learn anything” and repeat them to yourself often.
- Music can be stimulating. Listen to it for five to ten minutes as your study prep and then shut it off for the rest of the day.
- Visualization techniques can be helpful for relaxation if you create mental imagery of a very tranquil place that you can virtually visit anytime. A sanctuary with a research center, a transportation center (where you can instantly travel anywhere imaginable in an instant), and a living chamber—with all three rooms in the same building, at your disposal-- are outlined in the book as one recommended escape.
- Muscle relaxation by tensing and relaxing all the various parts of the body, one by one, is an excellent means for removing stress.
- Meditation through simply inhaling, holding, and exhaling the breath is a well-documented area of research called “mindfulness” that alleviates stress and anxiety. Meditation can also help improve your overall study performance.

(Paul, 2009)

- For meditation techniques, the Study Dude recommends you read a book by Swami Saradananda called *Power of Breath: The Art of Breathing Well for Harmony, Happiness, and Health*. It is by far the best book available on breathing techniques. Pay special attention to the single nostril breathing technique outlined in the book. Since I’ve learned it, nearly every day for ten to thirty minutes (sometimes longer), I meditate using this technique.
- For visualization strategies, the Study Dude recommends visualizing what heaven might be like (if there was such a thing as heaven for any nonbelievers). Fill it with pure light; unconditional love; out-of-this-world colors, sounds, and scents. Find beautiful spiritual imagery to burn into your memory and place into your heavenly escape; I’d recommend looking at child prodigy Akiame’s [artwork](#). Ensure that in this escape world, the best possible outcome imaginable (however wild and fabricated) is always your outcome—future, present, and past.

### Study Output Strategies

Study output strategies are the tools we use after we have taken in the information in order to further process it to memory. There are a ton of study output strategies that are available, and the more variety you use, the

more different types of intelligences (such as musical or linguistic) and learning styles (such as auditory, visual, or kinesthetic) you activate (Paul, 2009).

The Study Dude's favorite technique for studying (besides using cue cards) is, by far, incorporating mnemonics. I read somewhere that the wilder the memory device imagery, the more able your recall will be. I have a backlog of all kinds of highly unusual—but always positive—mental imagery that aided in memorizing key points for acing exams.

But, there are many additional output strategies available.

I want you to succeed. Plain and simple! So, here is a list of study output strategies that will surely give you an added edge on your next exam:

- Make lots of reading notes by writing keywords in the margins of your book, highlighting main ideas, thinking about the material, and writing summaries of what you've read.
- Write and rewrite notes (most especially main points) from lectures and readings.
- Turn the lesson into a speech that you make, a lecture that you teach to someone, a rhyme—or superimpose and sing the study notes to a melody such as the “Happy Birthday” song or the Canadian national anthem.
- Use memory devices such as chunking related items together, linking ideas with thoughts that evoke strong (positive) emotions, finding something weird to recall about the idea, making acronyms or extending acronyms into words (thereby composing an easy to remember sentence to remember things—like the first letter of each of the planets), and repeating key ideas over and over again.
- Create flash cards that you make on your own (as you learn from them better when you make them yourself). Practice them during mundane activities like while waiting in line, sitting on the bus, or any time that you get a chance to review them. Recording your memory devices (called mnemonics) on cue cards is another great strategy.
- Make mind maps that you either draw yourself or create in free software such as FreeMind. Mind maps use images and branches, where the main idea or main topic is in the center and branches reach out from it in all directions, capturing various subtopics and further subtopics.

(Paul, 2009)

Kevin Paul (2009) recommends writing out notes and using cue cards as the primary two study output tools of those listed above that you should emphasize in your arsenal.

Later on in the Study Dude series, we will explore mnemonic (memory) devices from a number of different author perspectives. Also later in the series, we will explore mind maps from the perspective of the mind map creator himself.

So, there's nothing to fear. The Study Dude is determined to make right for you all the wrongs I made in grad school—one A+ at a time.

#### References

Paul, Kevin. (2009). *Study smarter, not harder*. Vancouver, BC: Self-Counsel Press.

## Writer's Toolbox

### Grammar Police

Christina M. Frey



You might be an editor if at least five people posted Weird Al Yankovic's "Word Crimes" [music video](#) on your Facebook page.

You might be an editor if it made you laugh and cringe all at once.

You might be an editor if the silly satire stayed with you for weeks.

#### Word Crimes

If you haven't yet watched the video, do so. It's a clever parody of Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines," and it takes on grammar snafus, text-speak, and usage errors. It's at once funny and offensive in the style of *South Park*, and most people take it for what it is: satire.

I did. And then I thought about it some more.

#### Describe or Prescribe?

Among editors, educators, and linguists, there are two major schools of thought: descriptivism and prescriptivism. Each looks at language and usage in different ways.

Descriptivists, like the name implies, believe that language is in a state of flux, and that rather than insisting that people follow "correct" grammar and usage, we should fit grammar and usage to the way language is already used. In other words, grammatical and usage rules should describe the current state of language. While descriptivists don't necessarily advocate tossing the dictionary out the window, they also feel that dictionaries and guides need to keep up with common usage to stay current and relevant.

On the other end of the spectrum are prescriptivists, who believe that there is a body of rules that language use should adhere to. They feel that grammatical rules should inform how we speak and write, not the other way around; in fact, without rules, language may become inefficient, inelegant, sloppy, and confusing.

#### Language Changes, But . . .

Both philosophies have merits, and the debates can get quite heated. But while linguists argue about descriptivism vs. prescriptivism, the rest of us are left with another question: how does this affect our own writing? Do we ignore the standards, or do we rigidly stick to the rules?

From a practical point of view, it's probably best to follow a middle road on this. Language is about communication, and consistency and standards in communication—even if standards gradually evolve—minimize the chance your reader will be confused. This will also help keep your message from being lost amid distracting non-standard usage (not to mention tossed aside because of an unconventional or unfamiliar style).

On the other hand, having an open mind will keep your writing fresh and flowing. For example, the rule forbidding ending a sentence with a preposition is generally considered obsolete, and trying to accommodate this rule usually results in stiff, wordy sentences.

So watch Word Crimes, and then give it a little more thought. What does it say about how we use and absorb language? How has language changed, and is that a good thing—or not? Prescriptivism? Descriptivism? Where do you fall on the spectrum?

*Christina M. Frey is a book editor, literary coach, and lover of great writing. For more tips and techniques for your toolbox, follow her on Twitter (@turntopage2) or visit her [blog](#).*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

### At Home and Abroad



#### At Home: Windsor University Faculty Association holding Strike Vote

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the Windsor University Faculty Association (WUFA) will be holding a vote to see if they will proceed with a strike in response to the university's move to implement a new contract that has been rejected by the staff and faculty.

The CBC [reports](#) that the two sides have been at odds for most of the summer, and last week the university President, Alan Wildeman, told the faculty, librarians, sessional lecturers and ancillary academic staff that the offer that was presented on July 15<sup>th</sup> was going to be implemented regardless of whether the association agrees with it or not.

Dr. Wildeman claims that the Ontario Labour Relations Act, the university is allowed to put the contract into effect, and while the school is willing to continue talks with the WUFA, "the university is not prepared to bargain with itself in the face of WUFA's unrealistic monetary expectations."

#### Around the Globe: Teacher Guns Downs London Private School Students

The gun may not be real, but the controversy it stirred up is. Each year, prestigious boarding school Highgate in North London records a video for those graduating, the "leavers." This year, the video stirred controversy as it shows the students rebelling with cricket bats and scooters when a Nerf-gun wielding teacher clears the school-yard. Unfortunately, some viewers have noted that the scene has "uncomfortable echoes of CCTV footage from the Columbine massacre in 1999" according to the [Telegraph](#).

The school's headmaster, Adam Pettitt, downplays the controversy, saying that the video is simply a parody of "cinematic gun crime" rather than "the American actuality" and that his students would be "genuinely upset if survivors of the tragic gun massacres in the US were affected by, or took offence at, this tongue-in-cheek scene modelled on an action film shoot-out."





### Not the Best Diversion

As I write this the countdown clock on our website says it's only twenty-six days, fourteen hours, and three minutes until the start of the second annual Babas and Borshch Ukrainian Festival. As Festival Coordinator the buck ultimately starts and stops with me.

In many ways I have a better grip on things this year having gone through the inaugural one last year. In other ways it's like starting from square one. We've tweaked or eliminated the things that didn't work particularly well last year. We've expanded those that did. We've added entirely new activities.

Running concurrently with that are all the behind-the-scenes organizational processes and systems that keep any active organization going. With not-for-profit status there is the constant need for fundraising. Sourcing sponsors and foundations, grant writing, and post-event reporting can be a fulltime job. And not for the faint of heart.

Taking time to draw accurate floor plans for the venues we use is short-term pain for long-term gain. How will we accommodate the retail vendors and educational exhibits without them? Likewise, the fair grounds. Where is the best place to put the beer garden, the food concessions, the bleachers, the music stage, and the bouncy structures for the kids?

Another area requiring time and attention is the creation of a bona fide volunteer recruitment, training, tracking, and appreciation program. Last year I hand-picked people I knew I could count on and worked non-stop myself. We did it, but this year things will be different.

Advertising and promotion is another area where the work is never done. When is posting or tweeting done? When can you stop sending press releases, schmoozing

the media, doing radio interviews, and making TV appearances? It's worked for us in the past so the strategy is if it ain't broken, don't fix it.

I cannot over-state how many details—large and small—there are to manage. Luckily that sort of challenge turns my crank. In my mind, any problem can be solved with a chart, a form, a spreadsheet, a mind map, a checklist, or a diagram. Oh, and a robust Rolodex of contacts who share the desire for win-win outcomes.

Now I just need to figure out a way to keep my home from turning into a warehouse. At this moment I see boxes of souvenir programs, floral supplies, a floor plan for tracking banquet ticket sales on a whiteboard, borrowed Ukrainian textiles, files, décor items, souvenirs, signage, and more.

This year I've gotten two companies to donate the use of enclosed utility trailers for the weekend. That should allow for more organized storage and transport of all the things we need to take to town.

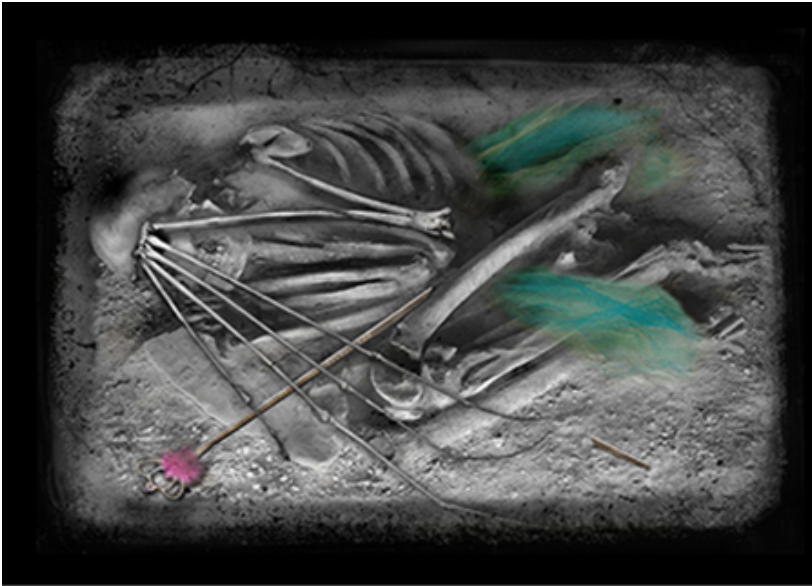
Many things in my home, yard, and life are suffering because of this project. So, with all that on my plate and my mind is it any wonder I unwind at night with marathon watching of *Breaking Bad* and *Orange is the New Black*? Not the best (or worst) diversion out there, from where I sit.

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

## In Conversation

### With Susan Malmstrom, Part I

Wanda Waterman



### Art, History, and Nature in the Tapestry of the Grand Design

*Susan Malmstrom is an artist specialising in digitally produced photography. She grew up and studied in California, received a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts from the University of California at Irvine, and has lived in Canada since 2004. Her life's work manifests a sense of wonder, curiosity, a love of memorabilia, an obsession with strangeness, and a delightfully twisted sense of humour. (Check out her amazing collection of portfolios [here](#).)*

*(Reproduction of) hand-coloured Tintype: Gift of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Scottish, b.1869, d. 1930) to Dr. Mycenae T. Consonant and the original Repository.*

Her current project, *The Repository of Wonders*, is a travelling exhibition built around the fictitious remnants of a 19th museum collection "inherited" from *Dr. Mycenae T.*

*Consonant*, daughter of an Egyptologist and an archaeologist, who earned degrees in archaeology and art history before she embarked on the lifelong adventure of building her own museum collection, and travelled the world to collect artifacts before eventually going down with the *Lusitania*. Susan Malmstrom, now the museum's curator, recently took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about what brought her to such an unusual undertaking.

"Through art, the relics of history, and the detritus of nature, we may glimpse the tapestry of the Grand Design—however fleetingly."

- Dr. Mycenae T. Consonant

### What first piqued your interest in museums of oddities and curiosity cabinets?

It was probably a segue from a youthful interest in "freaks of nature." I was born with a physical deformity that required surgery at age 12, and this fostered an obsession with "freaks" and "freak shows."

### What elements in your childhood and early years pointed you toward art?

Becoming a reader at a very early age, which fostered curiosity. You can't be an artist without a true, bone-deep sense of curiosity and the initiative to follow that curiosity wherever it takes you.

### For your *Repository of Wonders* you take on the persona of a curator of a long-existing collection. Was that your first idea or did it evolve?

It has really evolved. The whole thing started as a bit of a joke. I was given the opportunity to exhibit anything I wanted in an artist-run centre in Nova Scotia in a space that measured exactly 9 feet by 9 feet. The idea came to me in the middle of the night that the perfect thing for that space would be a Victorian-style museum with as much stuff as I could possibly cram into it.

It was so much fun and was so well received that it took on a life of its own; it's had five formal showings (in

larger spaces), and has several sub-series within the overall installation.

**What is it about your character and background that makes this kind of art project possible?**

First and foremost, my inability to get rid of odd objects. Even after I've already used them in an art piece, I can't part with them. So I write stories for them and formally accession them into *The Repository*.

**What was your most beneficial educational experience?**

For this installation it would definitely be the years I spent working as an administrator for an actual museum. I fall back on that constantly and work it to *The Repository's* advantage. This includes how a museum is staffed, how didactic signage is created, and how installations can be interactive and educational.

**What or who in your training had the most—and best—influence on you, as an artist and as a human being?**

I would definitely say that as an artist that that would be my teacher/mentor and now *Repository* collaborator Elizabeth Kenneday. It was so important to have a female photography teacher who served as a role model and who also believed in me and in my work.

**What is the significance of the latest exhibit of the spare eyes of Francine Descartes?**

It was one of the most fun discoveries I've made in a long time. For each of the exhibits, first and foremost, there has to be a good story. And there has to be some element of truth, based in research, for each of the stories.

For the Rene Descartes one, I had this spooky set of glass doll eyes that I used a couple of times in my work and that still sat in a glass jar on my desk. I had always wanted to use them in the museum but never had a good story to go with them.

*For each of the exhibits,  
first and foremost, there  
has to be a good story.  
And there has to be some  
element of truth ...*

One day, during some unrelated research, I was reading about Descartes's obsession with automatons (elaborate dolls with mechanisms that made them move and do things like write or play an instrument). The automaton was part of his overall philosophy of the inner workings of man, which was extremely controversial for his time, as can be imagined.

One of the biographies I was looking through mentioned a story, likely apocryphal, that said that the mechanically inclined Descartes had created a substitute daughter for himself after his real daughter tragically died at the age of five. Pursuing the story, I found it mentioned in a couple of places. At last there was a good base story for my glass eyes.

Note: Dr. Mycenae T. Consonant was a real person who died when the RMS Lusitania went down. Susan Malmstrom is also a real person. *The Repository of Wonders* is real and can be seen at Ross Creek Centre for the Arts in Canning, Nova Scotia, until August 28.

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.



*Dear Barb*

*Barbara Godin*

## Keeping Things Hidden

**Dear Barb:**

*I have been involved in a serious relationship for five years. My fiancé and I mostly get along great. Our problems are related to communication issues. Michael is very quiet and rarely initiates conversation. He becomes very uncomfortable when I try to talk about his past relationships. Because of his reactions, I wonder if he is hiding something. Not sure if I should continue to press the issue or just let it go. If I do let it go, what if there is something in his past that I should know about, something that would change how I view Michael and our relationship, shouldn't I know that? I would hate to marry him and then find out he has some deep dark secret. Am I over-reacting? Angela*

Hi Angela:

I really think if your fiancé had a deep dark secret you would know it by now. Five years is a long time to hide something, but it is possible. The majority of men are not big on communication, especially when it comes to past relationships. A good book about the differences in the way men and women communicate is *Men are like Waffles and Women are like Spaghetti* by Bill and Pam Farrel. It is a bit heavy on the religious aspect, but it is a helpful book. Thanks for writing.

**Dear Barb:**

*My mother is in her late seventies and recently I have noticed a change in her. For example, we had a lunch date last week and when I arrived at her home to pick her up she was still in her pajamas and had totally forgotten about our lunch. Also, mom has always knitted items for the family, but now she can't even remember how to knit. Her behaviour is very disturbing to my brother and me. We have tried to discuss our feelings with her but she becomes angry and says we are just trying to put her away. I'm not sure what to do. I just want to get her to her doctor to find out what's going on, but she refuses to go. I don't want to ruin my relationship with her. Thanks. Laura.*

Hi Laura, thanks for writing.

Getting a loved one to go to the doctor when they don't want to can be very challenging. The person probably senses there is something wrong but doesn't want a confirmation from the doctor. Many of the symptoms you are describing can be attributed to conditions such as a vitamin B12 deficiency or an infection; it isn't necessarily dementia or Alzheimer's. Perhaps you could approach your mother from the angle that it is time for her to go for her yearly physical, just to make sure everything is okay. Have you discussed these symptoms with any other friends or family members? Have they noticed similar changes? If so, perhaps a close friend may be able to convince her to get checked out. If all attempts fail, try writing a letter, or sending an email to her family doctor outlining your concerns. As a result, her physician may contact your mother to come in for a regular check up. Depending on the physician's finding, he may encourage your mother to go for further testing. Caring for our aging parents undoubtedly poses a challenge for everyone.

Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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.



## Comic

Wanda Waterman

~ Dysfunctional Love Languages ~

HOW TO "WIN" AN ARGUMENT



Hey, why didn't you iron my suit for tonight?



You asked me to iron your SHIRT, dear. And here it is!

No! I asked you to iron my SUIT! Oh, I can't argue with you- you're crazy!



Look, honey, here's the text you sent me from work- "I need my shirt ironed for tonight."

Oh, yeah? Well, what about all the times YOU'VE hurt ME?!

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN

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