

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 35 2014-09-05

Minds We Meet

Interviewing John MacPherson

Like Those Apples?

On Falling from the Tree

Gregor's Bed

Jazz and the Avant Garde

Plus:

Weird Canada

From Where I Sit

and much more!



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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
Christina M. Frey
Barb Godin
Barbara Lehtiniemi
S.D. Livingston
Wanda Waterman

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

EDITORIAL

Karl Low

**Switching Things Up**

In many ways, this job is a bit of a trial by fire. I try things, make mistakes, and end up burning through content, or sometimes even writers when I push things too fast. If you've been reading *The Voice Magazine* for a while, you may remember a column last spring called Meeting The Minds, where we profiled tutors and educators from across AU. Unfortunately, after the initial rush of interviewees, it's been difficult to get my schedule working well enough to get another batch. I didn't foresee this at the time, and so happily plowed through those interviews with a new one each week—until I ran out. And I've been unable to get a new set just yet.

I do hope to bring the column back, as I think knowing exactly who's teaching you will be invaluable (although I wonder how the ~~call-centre~~ Student Success Centre model will end up affecting that). But I won't be making the same mistake of using the material as fast as I get it.

However, this week, *The Voice Magazine* will be starting a column that looks at the flip side of that relationship: our fellow AU students. In a take-off from Meeting the Minds, Minds We Meet will be a series of interviews, one every couple of weeks, with your fellow undergrad (and perhaps some graduate) students. Too often it seems as we work at a distance, we really don't get a sense of who we are as a university community. And when you think of how we're one of the largest university communities in Canada, with over 40,000 students across this country and around the globe, that seems a shame. So my hope is that by showing off just who we are, we'll all get a better sense of, well, who we are.

However, to do this well, *The Voice Magazine* is going to need your help. Take some time to read the interview in this issue. Then consider letting us interview you next. You'll get some nifty *Voice* merchandise as our way of saying thank-you, we'll get some good reading material for your fellow students, and we'll all get a better idea of just who we, AU students, are and what things matter to us. With your help, more interviews will follow, one every couple of weeks or so (I'm not making the same mistake twice), and you'll be a little more connected to this thing that is AU and your role in it.

Of course, that's not all we have this week. We also have a number of articles to help you with your distance education with advice on everything from financing it to how to get the time and space to complete it, as well as more useful advice from The Writer's Toolbox so that your essays and writing are all they should be.

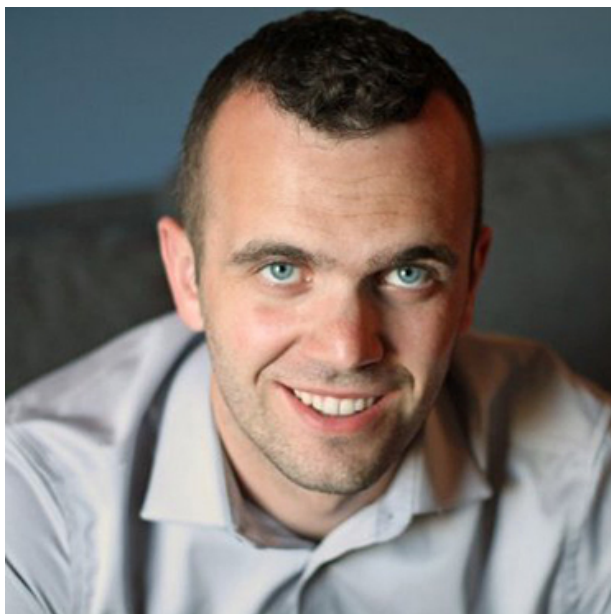
We also have you covered if you're looking for a bit of a break from your studies, with a challenging article examining the formation of our selves in society, a return of Weird Canada to make you realize just how unique our country really is, and, of course, a selection of interviews and examination of the arts that you just won't find anywhere else.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karl". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'K' and a simple 'L'.

MINDS WE MEET

A NEW VOICE COLUMN



John MacPherson is an AU student from Newmarket, Ontario. He's in his final year of the Bachelor of Management Program at AU. In addition to his studies, John works full-time in the hospitality and entertainment industry as an online marketer.

John was recently interviewed by The Voice Magazine about school, work, and life in general. Here's the gist of that interview:

Describe the path that led you to AU. What was it that made you realize you wanted to go back to school, and what pushed you into the program you've signed up for?

I originally started at the University of Guelph in the Bachelor of Chemistry program. After a year and a half I realized that program wasn't for me. I switched to marketing at Guelph for the next two years. After four years of university, a job

opportunity came up and money was getting a bit tight anyway. My mother was taking courses at Athabasca University in pursuit of her masters, so she suggested I continue my education there. Athabasca allowed me to both work and continue my education.

What do you do like to do when you're not studying?

Mostly I'm working full-time at byPeterandPauls.com, a hospitality and entertainment company, doing online marketing. I'm also managing some of the event venues during the busy wedding season.

What are your plans for this education once you finish? How does it fit in with where you want to go?

Once I finish my BMgmt, I intend to pursue a Masters in Business Administration. But first I plan to enjoy a bit of time off from school. Eventually I'm working toward creating my own business in online marketing.

Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?

Both my mother and father have influenced me. Both went to university: my mother got her BSc in Nursing, and my father got his BSc in Botany. My father worked in his career for 35 years. My mother continued her education throughout her life, eventually getting her masters. Both my parents have been supportive of my education, offering advice and encouragement.

What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?

I think Carl Sagan. Even though I left the science program, I'm still keenly interested in science. I find it fascinating. Carl Sagan was one of my father's role models, too.

Describe your experience with online learning so far. What do you like? Dislike?

It was a strange transition going from the lecture hall to completely online. At first it was a bit of a struggle staying on top of it. No professors to push; it was all up to me. On one hand it was a bit freeing being able to work at my own pace. After a day's work if I just didn't have it in me, I could put off studying. But it takes a lot of self-motivation. I had to apply for course extensions a couple of times in the early days, but not so much now.

When was the point where you wavered the most about whether it was worth it to continue your schooling, and what made you decide to keep going?

It was difficult. After leaving University of Guelph, I was working full-time in the career of my choice. I asked myself if there was any point in continuing my studies. It could have gone either way. In the end, it was worth it to continue my education. In many cases, I can apply concepts from my classes to my work, so I really am getting something out of this. I'm committed to finishing my degree and hope to do so in the next year or so.

What's your most memorable AU course so far, and why?

I would have to say *Personal Finance*, FNCE 322. I really think I learned personal financial management late in life; it would have been beneficial to learn this in high school. I found the information in this course both practical and enlightening. This was an elective and I'm glad I chose it.

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

There are two that come to mind. The first was in my 3rd year at the University of Guelph. I was on the Interhall Council Central Executive, part of the team looking after student orientation week for 5000 new students. The whole orientation came off without a hitch and I recall sitting with my fellow central executive members, letting it sink in that we had done it.

The second moment was at work. I was working at an event venue, and it had been one of those nights full of challenging moments. After the event, I sent most of the staff home while I waited for the decorator to pick up the chairs. Quite late, the decorator called to say she couldn't pick up the chairs until the next morning. I began the arduous task of stacking around 450 to 500 chairs. One of my staff came back in for a moment and, seeing what I was doing, offered to help. I said, no, don't worry about it, I've sent everyone home, I'll just look after it. The staff member left after a minute, then returned with 15 other staff members who had been outside. They got to work helping me stack the chairs, turning a 2-hour job into a 15-minute job. I felt appreciative of their help, and honoured that they volunteered to help out. It felt really good to know my staff would do that for me.

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What have you given up to go to AU that you regret the most? Was it worth it?

Free time! It really cuts into my personal life, but ultimately it's worth it. AU studies really help me in my work, and the flexibility of online learning makes it work for me.

If you were the new president of AU, what would be your first project?

Free t-shirts for all students! As president, I'd focus on student inclusiveness. I'd work on fostering a sense of student community. I'd send each new student an AU t-shirt so that each student would feel that they belonged. I'd also facilitate some student gatherings in each province. Right now, it's up to students to find each other—I think AU could do more to bring students together where they live.

Describe your earliest memory.

It was at a Santa Claus parade. I wasn't quite 3 years old. A parade participant dressed as Batman came up to me and signed a comic book for me. It made an enduring impression.

If you were trapped on an island, what three things would you bring?

First of all, I'd bring a long book: *A Catskill Eagle* by Robert B. Parker. Second, I'd bring a camp hammock—may as well be comfortable. And third, a Swiss army knife. If I could bring a fourth item, it would be a roll of duct tape. That should cover all eventualities.

Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people. What is unique or remarkable about you?

I think most people would say it's my outgoing, optimistic attitude. My sister says I'm a bit of a schmoozer. If I go into a room of 50 new people, I'll come out with 50 new friends. I guess that's why I'm suited for the hospitality industry.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?

My father taught me to stay calm. He quotes Corrie ten Boom: "Worry does not rob tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its strength." It helps to remember that.

What do you think about e-texts or the plans to make the university follow a call-centre model?

I'm adaptable, so I just deal with whatever comes. I haven't had any e-texts yet, but I don't find that I rely heavily on textbooks. I'll just adapt; I'm pretty easygoing.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

I've found my tutors to be reasonable. Communication has been good. They always seem to post when they will be away and I've had no problems getting in touch with them.

Where has life taken you so far?

So far, I've made my way to Scotland and England, visiting Edinburgh, Liverpool, and London. I've gone to Cuba, New York City—which is huge and crazy—and Chicago. I'd like to return to Scotland for an extended visit. I don't have immediate family there but it's the land of my heritage. I'd also like to experience some uniquely different places like Singapore, Tokyo, Beijing, Australia. Ideally I like to get away somewhere every year.

What (non-AU) book are you reading now?

I'm reading *A Game of Thrones*, the first book in the series by George R. R. Martin. I haven't watched the TV series yet, so I'm getting a preview before I begin watching.

Editor's Note: Hey John, can I just advise you to do Game of Thrones the other way around? The surprises in the TV show are a lot more visceral if you haven't read them first, and that way it still leaves some surprises in the book -Karl

How Do You Like Those Apples?

Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan



Like a shadow, a Biblical feeling passes over me as I thin apples in my orchard on a bright summer afternoon. I think back to Sunday school and the book of Matthew where it says "every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew, 7:19, New International Version). Apples which emit dusty castings from a small crater on their surface take on an added significance: these are the proverbial 'bad apples', wherein lives a worm. Thinning out the crop puts me in the godlike position of deciding which apple is worthy enough to develop to maturity and which shall meet an ignoble ending as a mouse's lunch among the leaf litter of the orchard floor.

Invariably I think of how sometimes we speak of a person as a 'bad apple'. Yet, compared to us, fruit lives latched into position with no free will whatsoever. We humans inhabit an intermediary realm between our treed selves and our winged selves.

Lucky for me, the apples don't put up much protest as I decide their fates. In human society they'd have lawyers.

Here in the tourist-mecca of a valley I live in, a recent music festival called Boonstock sold 8 000 tickets for a collective celebration of live music. The festivities claimed the life of one woman and sent about 90 others to hospital for issue ranging from dehydration to drug overdose. ("Lynne Tolocka Identified", 2014). Many people in the community have considered the victim to blame for her tragic outcome. At first I was taken aback by what seemed like a lot of folks blaming her. Then I figured I'd write about it and ask 'what about the context?' Social circumstances must have played a role; reality exists in shades of grey, be they an innumerable number or only fifty. If apples could, they'd scream for justice.

We humans often think in black and white terms about our free will and our culturally-determined context. When things go wrong we often blame our environment; when they go right we are self-congratulatory. Most of our decisions are made taking into account our inner desires as well as our external circumstances. Often in decisive moments of uncertainty our friends and fellow-travellers fill in blank spots in our reasoning. Our better judgement can 'black out' as we are carried away in the flow of a fun time. Rare indeed are the moments when we are so isolated that we make choices without social pressures. Yet, unlike apples, we can walk away at any time.

From a sociological perspective, ideology often shows up wherever the concept of an individual is found. Individuality is created through discipline and self-discipline. The more we are watched, or watch ourselves, the more our selves are placed under a microscope and the more we congeal as definable entities. The incisive social theorist Michel Foucault reminds us that "in a system of discipline, the child is more individualized than the adult, the patient more than the healthy man, the madman and the delinquent more than the normal and the non-delinquent" (Foucault, 1977). In the case of the Boonstock tragedy, the

victim's individuality is thrust alone into a spotlight, as though her final hours were a Shakespearean soliloquy. However she envisioned herself as a person, the irony is that those who posthumously define her as the sole cause of her death are proving the degree to which our social selves are often constructed without our intent or consent. Her individuality is proven by the shadow cast over her by her social tree. Just like an apple.

Our selves adjust and are altered by our circumstances, yet we often imagine we are like isolated atoms floating in a social soup. In an idealistic example of individualism a social theorist named Herbert Spencer followed the founder of 'sociologie', August Comte, and prescribed "cerebral hygiene" which involved abstinence from reading other people's ideas and work. Spencer and others of his ilk sought to "free their minds from the 'pollutions' of other writers" (Ritzer in Kendall and Wickham, 1999, see also: Ritzer, 2001). Immurement with one's own ideas purportedly led to alchemical success based on previously-absorbed data and concepts. Interestingly, Spencer coined the term 'survival of the fittest' which Charles Darwin later adopted. It takes quite the ego to wish away social surroundings. This may be at play when my peers critique the events at Boonstock.

The elegant simplicity of Spencer's idea of splendid isolation from the vicissitudes of society came clear to me the other night. We made a glass terrarium out of an old homebrew carboy and filled it with moss, some that looked Dr. Seussian and some that looked like Astroturf, as well as some small slugs and Isopods (pill bugs).

Creating a living-yet-enclosed environment was like playing god. And yet, even within this contained ecosystem, the results are unpredictable. Some organisms thrive better than others do and the magic exists in watching things unfold. As humans we are always faced with choices and opportunities yet we have to remember that even amidst a panoply of options there are limits. Forces tug us in various directions and threaten to dash our hopes. Meanwhile there are potentials which we haven't even imagined yet. Unlike an Isopod in a glass terrarium, our translucent walls are mostly imagined. It makes me appreciate the simplicity of an apple's fate, yet also feel fortunate to be a human with choices I can call my own. The victim of Boonstock, like so many young people before and to come, however, will not be able to pass on her lessons learned to future generations.

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?

AUSU Council Meeting



The second Wednesday of every month, AUSU holds its public Council Meeting. If you have any questions about what AUSU is doing for you, such as with the recently approved health plan, or what's going on at the university with things like the call-center, e-texts, research opportunities, or pretty much anything else, these meetings are a great chance to find out.

Meetings are held by teleconference, and all members are invited, so if you have a phone and the time, you can participate. Contact ausu@ausu.org for the exact times and details on how you can attend this meeting.



Tally Up the Wins

In the hazy, crazy days following the big event I coordinated, between trying to re-enter my own life and trying to catch up on some sleep, there have been a few minutes to think.

There really hasn't been much time to talk to my cohort at the County for a real detailed analysis of the event; that's still to come. But each of us, in between life going back to what we, laughingly, call normal, is thinking.

Last year, the first year, was almost fairytale-like in how it unfolded. It wasn't perfect, but it was extraordinary for a first time effort. We studied and incorporated all reasonable, do-able suggestions for improvements. We streamlined internal processes and learned the lessons that only experience can bring.

We made huge strides in how we approached things, got a wee bit more comfortable doing the media shtick, and tried like hell to avoid making the same mistakes twice.

But there is a curious thing that happens. Doing something successfully once creates expectations. Totally understandable because we too had expectations of how things would look in 2014.

Never once did we suspect that a man's word is worth nothing. We worked like hell to avoid the long lineups for food by bringing in a second concession operator specializing in Ukrainian food. He would be located outside and open longer than the indoor guy who was also catering the dinner Saturday night. He never showed up. To my way of thinking, only a body cast would have been an acceptable excuse. He's offered none and is avoiding calls. So, for the second year in a row, people had to wait an unacceptable length of time to get the food they desired. The concession offering western food wasn't what most wanted. We've since been told to get a contract signed or charge a hefty non-refundable deposit. Maybe that would offer

recourse but it does nothing in the moment of betrayal.

In 2013 people complained there wasn't enough signage. So we remedied that by ordering several more directional signs. Imagine the kick in the gut when every single one was stolen sometime Saturday night. We all have a suspect in mind but proof is elusive. So, here we are, having to pay for something that was used less than twenty-four hours. Not only is that hard on the budget, but demoralizing as well.

The event was not without its champions, successes, and highlights. And maybe one needs some distance from this thing to assess it accurately. Before we have that talk I intend to create a "Hits and Misses" list. With my personality it's easy to self-flagellate and see only what could, or should, have been better. It's also easy to get sucked into the small town drama instead of seeing what the out-of-town visitor enjoyed. It's time to tally up the wins and remember this is an event in its infancy, from where I sit.

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

On Your Own Time

Setting the Stage for Study

Barbara Lehtiniemi



You've got your AU course materials. You've got a plan. Now if you could just teleport everyone else off your planet, you could get some studying done!

Your roommate is gabbing on the phone; your kids are fighting—again—over who started it; your spouse has decided that now is a good time to talk about household expenditures. How can you study with all these distractions?

You can't, and that's why it's important to set the stage to make—and protect—space and time for your studies.

Designate space. First of all, you need room. A whole room, if possible. Having a designated study space—that is used for your studies and nothing else—is ideal. By having a dedicated space, at the end of each study session you can leave your books and papers where they are and continue on next session. If you have to share your space, get a bag, box, or bin in which to store your study materials. That will keep your stuff organized, and reduce the chance of someone else tidying up your carefully organized notes.

Designate time. Last week's [article](#) talked about setting up a study schedule. It's not enough for *you* to know the schedule—you need to keep others in the loop. By telling

other household members your study plans, they'll learn when you need quiet study time. Having a regular schedule makes it easier for everyone to remember. Post a calendar or whiteboard with your study times noted to serve as a reminder to them and motivation to you. However, realize that your studies may not be a priority to other household members and be generous—and tactful—with reminders about your study schedule.

Deal with kids on their level. If you have young kids, you're probably going to encounter study challenges. There's no universal strategy for dealing with kids at home while you study—teleportation is not yet an option. The simplest solution may be to plan your study time late in the evening after kiddie bedtimes, or early in the morning. If you're not a night owl or an early bird, however, you may need more inventive strategies. Young children can't be expected to grasp the importance of your studies. One method to make your study time meaningful for them is to arrange to have a toy, game, or activity book that can only be used while you study—those scholastic-type activity books, for example, or a video game that can be played on low volume. If they can only play the game while you're studying, you may get more cooperation in pursuit of quiet study time.

Escape your place. If home is just too chaotic or crowded, you may need to find alternate study space. Public libraries are ideal, having seating areas, wifi, and—usually—quiet. Are there other places in your community where you could study in peace? Coffee shops, while not quiet, often offer wifi and seating space. You may need earphones to tune out the chatter from other customers. If there is a college or university nearby, check out their study areas. In some institutions, you can access these areas even if you're not a registered student.

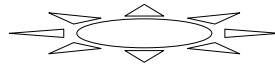
Escape to or from the cubicle. Sometimes the quietest study place is at work. If you work in an office, you'll enjoy access to all the tools you need, including desk space. Be sure to get permission from your boss, though, even if you plan to study before or after work, or at breaks. A potential drawback is interruptions; if you're at your desk, co-workers may assume you are available. If you can't keep people from popping their head around the cubicle wall while you're studying, try finding an empty desk or meeting room to use during your study time.

You don't have to limit your study setting to one location. Your ideal study space one day might be the library. The next day, your mother-in-law's place (while she's out playing euchre with friends) and the day after that, the local coffee grind. Next week, you might house-sit at your neighbours' place while they're on vacation. What works for one person might not work for another, but you may find other people have ideas you haven't considered.

The ideal study setting may be a sound-proof room with a spacious desk and a comfy chair. There would be no chance of interruption or opportunity for distraction. The reality for many online students, however, is make-do space and conflicting schedules and priorities. Experiment to find out what works for you and your situation.

Have you discovered a creative study space solution that works for you? Share your idea with other AU students by e-mailing voice@voicemagazine.org.

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



Gregor's Bed

Wanda Waterman



The Fruitful Marriage of American Jazz and the Avant Garde, Part I

"Late one evening, outside the Open Door in Greenwich Village, [Charlie] Parker, shuffling along in a pair of old carpet slippers, bumped into Jackie McLean. . . 'I want you to kick me in the ass, Jackie McLean, for letting me get myself in this position,' Bird commanded, bending over ... A few days later Parker borrowed McLean's sax to make an out-of-town gig, a sax McLean had himself borrowed from a friend; Parker pawned it."

- from *Birth of the Cool: Beat, Bebop, and the American Avant Garde*, by Lewis MacAdams

The above is one of the sadder moments from the decadent stage of one of the most important periods in American cultural history, an era whose phenomenal gifts could never have been handed out to the world

were it not for certain peculiarities of the African-American saga and the intertwining of these peculiarities with the development of European *avant garde* art .

But first, let's define our terms.

What's "Cool" and What's Not?

Here of course we're not talking about "cool" as the now rarely-heard adjective for all things good, happy, amazing, or fun. Serious American jazz artists invented the original "cool" as a way of *being*, a state characterized by a kind of social abdication; a disengagement from, and perhaps even a defiance toward, American conventions, racism, the cold war, atom bomb hysteria, a constrictive art world, and a narrow, commercial entertainment industry.

The original cool didn't make a distinction between high and low art—all things were one in cool. Cool embraced a sense of freedom, newness, openness, and a special membership within a highly desirable elite. Cool emerged from the American jazz culture that sprouted up during and after World War II and was quickly embraced the world over—along with the jazz that spawned and carried it—by youth who saw cool as the way they were and ought to be.

Cool was an inconspicuously rebellious stance that, on the surface, looked like an unflappable calm, such as you might see in Humphrey Bogart in his early films, a demeanor that steadfastly refused to be humiliated, embarrassed, flustered, demeaned, controlled, or fooled. It was an impossible ideal, within the reach mostly of a race that had suffered so much that almost nothing could hurt or scare it anymore, but when the youth in the rest of the world saw it they knew that was what they wanted to be.

Communism was not cool, but talking about it while wearing a black turtleneck and smoking in a café certainly was.

Off the bat, bebop jazz and the free jazz it lead to were cool; classical, folk, and pop music were not. Being a musician was cool, selling out was not (Cab Calloway, though marketed as an early mascot of cool, wasn't truly cool because he stood in the way of musical innovation; Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker were the cool ones). Communism was not cool, but talking about it while wearing a black turtleneck and smoking in a café certainly was. Realist art was cool if it was unsentimental and carried a dissident message. *Avant garde* art was cool almost by definition.

What is the "Avant Garde," Really?

Avant garde art, whose most common manifestations in America emerged in the form of Dadaism, Abstract Expressionism, Minimalism, and Pop Art, broke boundaries in terms of tools, methods, rules, expressed beliefs and values, methods of distribution, and products. It also blurred the distinction between high and low culture, allowing "lower" art forms to rise and fulfill their potential within the echelons of high art.

(For a more in-depth explanation of the *avant garde*, see this [Voice article](#) from 2011.)

(To be continued.)

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MacAdams, Lewis. (2001) *Birth of the Cool: Beat, Bebop, and the American Avant Garde.*, New York: The Free Press
Garlitz, Dustin. (2004, October) [Outstanding Avant-Garde Tenor Saxophonists](#)

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.

Writer's Toolbox

It's All Right, Part II

Christina M. Frey



Last week we started our mini-series on the confusing words and phrases using *all*. We discovered the difference between *alright* and *all right* (hint: the former's not a real word!) and *altogether* (totally) and *all together* (a grouping). Now it's time to move on to these often-confused pairs: *already* and *all ready* and *all* and *all of*.

Already vs. all ready

If you keep this sentence in mind, the difference between the two is very easy to see:

Example A: I was all ready to go, but then I realized it was already dinnertime.

Already is an adverb that expresses time; use it if you can answer the question "When?" When was it dinnertime? *Already*.

All ready is a descriptive phrase that explains the level of preparedness. If you can answer the question "How prepared?" use *all ready*. How prepared were you? I was all ready.

Using these questions is usually straightforward, but sometimes things can get tricky. When in doubt, ask "When?" before asking "How prepared?"

Example B: We were already prepared. This is correct. Although the sentence is about preparedness, the question you need to ask is "When?" rather than "How prepared?" If you can answer "When" don't go any further.

All vs. all of

While *all of* isn't grammatically wrong, it's considered wordy. The general rule for concise writing is to use *all* instead of *all of*.

Original Example C: I want to read all of the books in the library.

Corrected Example C: I want to read all the books in the library. This version is preferable because it is more concise.

There are some limited exceptions to the general rule. First, *all of* is appropriate before a nonpossessive pronoun like *us* or *you*. We see this construction all the time:

Example D: I was looking forward to meeting all of you.

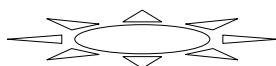
The second exception: use *all of* before a possessive-form noun that's describing another noun (as in *Sarah's kids* or *my roommate's photos*). This is frequently done incorrectly, which means that the right way often ends up looking wrong.

*Incorrect Example E: I want to sign up for all Athabasca University's new fall classes. Because Athabasca University's is a possessive-form noun that describes another noun (classes), use *all of*.*

Corrected Example E: I want to sign up for all of Athabasca University's new fall classes.

Are you all (sorry!) sorted now? Next week we'll leave usage behind and spend a couple weeks on tricky punctuation, including the dreaded comma. If there are any specific grammar or usage issues you'd like to see covered in the near future, let us know.

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](#).



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants than for you to have loads of cash and endless resources at your disposal while in your studies.

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 Kyle Prevost and Justin Bouchard's book *More Money for Beer and Textbooks: A Financial Guide for Today's Canadian Student*.

In spite of the book title and content, in no way does The Study Dude endorse alcohol consumption (it's not at all the world you see in the media), but in every way does The Study Dude encourage having more spare change to spend.

Reconsidering the Degree Route: Arts and Humanities and the Working World

Prevost and Bouchard (2014) seem to think that business, mathematics, and engineering degrees earn more than the humanities and arts programs, but when The Study Dude was one of the top performers in the university math department, the job prospects were so dismal that an arts degree looked much more promising. The last thing I wanted to be career-wise was a music software programmer or an actuary, which were two of the nine major paths onto which the math degree promised to lead.

With that said, The Study Dude cannot deny the stats. Here are some things to consider concerning job prospects when choosing your degree:

- "The Canadian Department of Finance has released statistics showing that, in fields such as business, mathematics, and engineering, graduates earn twelve to seventeen percent of the upfront cost of their education every year, meaning it takes only about six to eight years to earn back all the money you spent on school" (Prevost & Bouchard, 2014, p. 164).
- Comparatively, "the social sciences and humanities came in at four to six percent: it takes about twenty years to earn back the money you spent on school" (Prevost & Bouchard, 2014, pp. 164-165). It takes roughly three to four times longer to pay off a social sciences and humanities degree compared to a business, math, or engineering degree.
- Although many people with bachelor degrees are underemployed ("24.6% of youth with university degrees who were employed full-time throughout 2005 were doing jobs that didn't require university education" (Prevost & Bouchard, 2014, p. 165)), the stats for PhD graduates in liberal arts programs is not much better (as competition for teaching/professorial staff positions is exorbitant).

(Prevost & Bouchard, 2014)

But do not worry about these dismal results, as The Study Dude is planning on starting an additional bi-weekly article to help you get a head start with a career, regardless of your program of study.

Scholarship Realities and Sources

When the well ran dry for the Master's funding, The Study Dude spent weeks before and weeks during the semester applying for scholarships. I won two that covered the majority of my expenses. The Study Dude believes you are entitled to some free money to aid in your pursuits, too. Here are some pieces of advice:

- \$7 million in Canadian scholarships, grants, and the like go unclaimed a year. You deserve a piece of that pie.
- Use your extracurricular activities to leverage which scholarships you can apply for
- enter essay contests (as they have less competition, typically)
- see if your bank has a scholarship
- Go to the following sites for scouting out scholarships (in addition to approaching student awards office and the Student Union reps): AUCC.ca, GlobeCampus.ca, OnCampus.Macleans.ca, ScholarshipsCanada.com, SchoolFinder.com, and StudentAwards.com.

(Prevost & Bouchard, 2014)

Trouble Repaying Loan: Do This Before the Trouble Starts

The Study Dude, abashedly, never had to get a student loan, especially as the graduate degree was covered by two hefty scholarships and lots of employment income. Yet here are some tips for paying back student loans that may help you in a crunch:

- Unless interest rates are very, very low, it is wise to get a student loan at variable rates rather than fixed. This is because "if you choose the reliability of a fixed rate, you pay extra for the guarantee; that's why it is prime plus 5 percent instead of prime plus 2.5 percent" (p. 82)
- You can apply for a federal tax credit (and possibly a provincial credit, too) on the interest (p. 84).

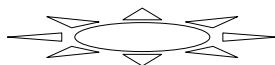
- Well before you end up having trouble repaying the loan, apply for the Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP) before the crisis hits. "Interest relief and debt reduction" are two positive potential outcomes that you could be eligible for if having trouble repaying your loan (p. 83).

(Prevost & Bouchard, 2014)

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

Prevost, Kyle & Bouchard, Justin. (2014). *More money for beer and textbooks: A financial guide for today's Canadian student*. La Vergne, Tennessee: Young and Thrifty Publications.



In Conversation With Fierce Bad Rabbit, Part II

Wanda Waterman



The Thing That Makes You Pick Up Your Guitar

Fierce Bad Rabbit is an indie folk-rock quartet comprised of Chris Anderson (lead vocals, guitar), Alana Rolfe (viola, vocals), Max Barcelow (drums/percussion/vocals), and Dayton Hicks (bass guitar), who've been playing together since 2009. Their latest album, Living Asleep (out September 23), is a spirited call-to-arms, the soundtrack for an examined young life ripe with initiative. Recently lead vocalist and guitarist Chris Anderson took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about the new album.

"The universe seems to be holding the cards these days, and for us that feels like the most efficient way to go."
- Chris Anderson, lead vocalist and guitarist for Fierce Bad Rabbit

How is *Living Asleep* different from your other albums?

It has the most soul of anything we've done to date. I think the songs really came from all of us, and working on it together for the two weeks we stayed together at the studio really drew out a lot of dormant emotions and ideas we all had individually.

I think the fact that we don't all live in the same town or see each other all the time kind of gave it a fresh "go with the flow" vibe, and we tend to work best with a lack of structure. There was very little to no pre-production; we just set up and hit record. Danny Kalb, our producer, really knew us well at that point and was able to guide us seamlessly along the line of progress without it feeling like work. We had a great time, and I feel it shows.

Stories Behind the Songs

Well, "Crystal Ball" was pretty much written on the spot. I wrote the guitar line while sound-checking that first day and had the first two lines I kept singing. I went into the control room and wrote them down and then Alana just scribbled out the rest of the verse lyrics.

I think she and I wrote very collectively without knowing we were doing that. I sing those verses she wrote and feel she was kind of telling this story about this character of a failing musician, dying to his own ideas. Max, Alana, and I all wrote the chorus sitting around drinking wine one night— singing about this character drowning in his own confused, deluded, self-absorbed character.

God, I hope she wasn't writing it about me—but maybe she was?

Recent Listening

I've been listening to a lot of classical music; it is very calming and so different from what I'm around all day. Of things mainstream I always seem to listen to Wilco and Delta Spirit, and lately I've been on a Lamb Chop kick.

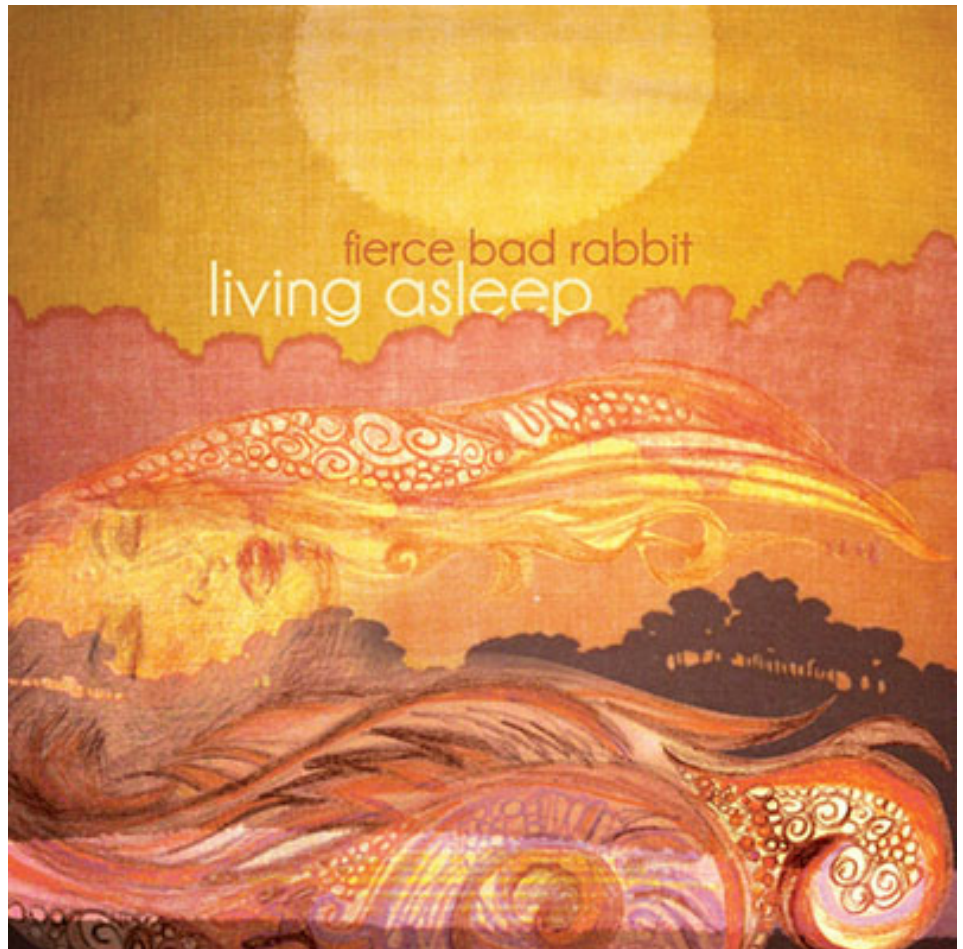
What was the most mesmerizing musical experience of your life?

I think getting to meet Robert Plant while working on songwriting in Nashville and also getting to be back stage with Arcade Fire at Red Rocks. When meeting musicians who are "it" and doing so amazingly well and making such incredible music, it just keeps you reaching to try to find how you can possibly get to that level.

The music industry is so mysterious, and meeting artists that have profoundly changed you and impacted so many people's daily lives creates a desire to figure that out. Nothing makes you want to go home and pick up your guitar more than that.

What's next for the group?

Who knows? After we release the record, we might head out for NYC for the CMJ Music Marathon. The universe seems to be holding the cards these days, and for us, that feels like the most efficient way to go.



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

A Tryst and the Bush

Dear Barb:

I am a mature student in my first year university with very limited funds. I have received a small grant from OSAP and a small loan. My problem is most of my friends are working and making good money. When I was working I used to be able to go out and party and travel with them, now I can't do any of those things. Even my girlfriend is working full time. I feel so bad that I can't take her out for dinner etc. Recently we were invited to a friend's birthday party and my girlfriend bought an expensive gift. Now she expects me to contribute half to the cost of the gift. I really can't afford it, plus she didn't discuss with me how much we would spend. Not sure how to deal with this without causing problems between us. Thanks, Don.

Great question Don:

You should only contribute as much as you were willing to spend. Your girlfriend should have consulted you, especially since she must be aware that you have limited funds. Perhaps she could return the gift and you could buy something together that you can both afford. Or if she really wants to give the gift that she has already purchased, then she could put just her name on it and let you purchase a separate gift for them.

Dear Barb:

I love entertaining and having dinner parties, however I was very annoyed at the last party when a few guests kept their cell phones on! I prepared this beautiful dinner for my friends, but they are texting and reading status updates during dinner. I feel this is rude and diminishes all the work I have done. During dinner I tried to make a joke about the cell phones, but no one took me seriously, they just continued texting. I really love my friends and making these dinners for them. Am I over reacting? Heidi in Hanover.

Hi Heidi:

It's great that you are taking the time organize and prepare dinner parties in your home. Cooking is an art and is not often appreciated as it should be. No, you are not overreacting; it is definitely rude for your guests to be on their cell phones during dinner. Unfortunately cell phone etiquette has not been clearly addressed in today's society. I would suggest that before your next dinner party you make it perfectly clear that this is a "cell phone free party." When extending your invitation, whether you do it through a phone call, or in person, advise people to leave their electronics at home! I am sure messages can wait to be answered until dinner is over! Thanks for your question.

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.

Comic

Wanda Waterman

Weird Canada

Just Not While You're in Uniform

Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer Ronald Francis has a medical marijuana prescription.

The RCMP has no policy against letting him smoke around 10 joints per day, but they forbid him to do so while wearing an RCMP uniform.



WANDA WATERMAN



AUSU
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

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IMPORTANT DATES, AUGUST

- Sept 1: deadline for special awards draw of AUSU Bursary and E-reader
- Sept 1: AU & AUSU closed – Labor Day
- Sept 10: registration deadline for Oct 1 start date
- Sept 10: AUSU Council Meeting
- Sept 30: extension deadline for an Oct 30 contract date.



This Week at lynda.com

lynda.com experts have curated playlists to get you started. With hundreds of lists on a variety of subjects, there is something for everyone. Visit the playlist center for more information and enter the playlist title. This week's featured list:

Explore Web Content Writing

As distance and online students here at AU, you are likely doing some web writing on the side. If you are operating a blog, business website, or creating recreational web content then this playlist may be for you. Learn how to maximize your rhetoric to be compatible with search engine algorithms and to be an effective communicator via online and digital platforms. Lynda.com has all sorts of resources for eager learners! What you will learn from this list:

- Business storytelling and article writing
- Writing Fundamentals: The craft of story
- Leading with stories
- SEO fundamentals
- HTML essentials training
- Web semantics

Courses: 7

Duration: 14h 25m

Skill Level: Beginner

Have you signed up for lynda? It's free for AUSU members. To learn more, check out ausu.org/services/lynda.php

Featured AUSU Member Service

Smart Draw

AUSU has partnered with Smart Draw to provide members with their award winning business graphics

software. This is a \$297 package is free for one year, only for AUSU members.

Smart draw allows users to create a wide range of charts, diagrams and other business graphics that can be dropped in to Microsoft Word or Excel files. This makes it easy for students to include professional diagrams in their assignments for AU classes.

To get more info on how to get this software for free, visit AUSU's website at ausu.org/services/smartdraw.php

Note: SmartDraw CI is the latest version. If you are upgrading an earlier version, email us for instructions.

AUSU Featured Groups & Clubs

Group Name: **Athabasca University**

Where: **Facebook**

Members: 1211

About: Members are all types of students taking all types of AU courses. The members of the group seem to support, encourage, and give advice to each other on course content, study tips, and other AU topics.

Activity: multiple posts daily with lots of replies and discussion

Great AU Finds Online

Open AU – AU's student-focused magazine is distributed through various national daily and regional weekly newspapers in Canada. This publication is no longer available online, but has been replaced with a news link through the banner at the top of the AU home page. You'll find more AU news in the News and Announcements feeds at the bottom of the home page, and AU will continue to publish Open magazine, in print form, for the AU community, once a year.

<http://www.athabascau.ca/>

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

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

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

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