

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 43 2014-10-31

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

No-No to NaNo

How Not to Write a Novel

The Travelling Student

Leaving Montreal

Plus:

*Turned Upsidedown
In Conversation
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**Managing Editor**

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka
Christina M. Frey
Barb Godin
Barbara Lehtiniemi
S.D. Livingston
Samantha Stevens
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

**Turned Upsidedown**

Before you read this article, you should read the [AUSU update](#) this week. Go ahead. I'll wait.

Okay? Now, let's start off with full disclosure. Tamra Ross, former editor-in-chief of The Voice, and former Executive Director of AUSU is also my spouse. You might ask how on earth we can do that without there being significant conflict of interest, and we've both always been well aware of that question. Which is why, for this hire when I applied, Tamra recused herself from the hiring process and left it to the three elected members of the AUSU executive to look at all applicants. Similarly, when it comes time to review the work I've been doing and if I'm providing AUSU members appropriate value for the pay I get, it is the AUSU executive again who handles that.

This also means that I have a bit of a tightrope to walk here, as this has, as you can imagine, meant a significant adjustment, but that I can't allow that to bleed into my duties as the managing editor.

What my duties require is to ask what this means for you, as AUSU members. Tamra started working for AUSU as communications co-ordinator, which, as AUSU's activities expanded, evolved into the Executive Director/Editor-in-Chief position.

When Athabasca University was repeatedly shrinking the amount of space they were willing to give to AUSU, Tamra developed and drove the plan that allowed AUSU to move into its own space in Edmonton, giving it needed room for extra staffing as the organization continued to grow. She also was very involved in developing AUSU's convocation assistance programs, specifically the bussing that AUSU provides so that people can get from Edmonton to Athabasca without the additional expense of renting a vehicle. And if you take advantage of AUSU's planner, those were almost entirely designed by Tamra, including the layout, most of the content and arranging for the printing and advertising that AUSU received to help offset the costs of the book. I am unaware if this will have any impact on the planner for 2015.

AUSU's collaboration with lynda.com and the various free courses you can access as a student was spearheaded and the various details of the program designed almost entirely by Tamra. Similarly, AUSU's new health care program, that it has recently launched, was also spearheaded and implemented almost entirely by Tamra's action, with Council offering hearty kudos to her at the last AUSU Council meeting for doing so.

As this has all happened very recently I have yet to contact AUSU President Jason Nixon to request further official details of the change, or how AUSU will proceed.

However, for now, the Voice remains, and I know of no plans to change that. So with that in mind, we have a number of great articles, including a new Minds We Meet, with a very new AU student, Alaa Salih. Also, we have the return of The Travelling Student, and an alternative look at a couple of the things brought up last issue. Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized, flowing script.

MINDS WE MEET



Alaa Salih is a 17-year-old AU student from Medicine Hat, Alberta. She's enrolled in a 4-year BA program, working on a double-major in English and Psychology. Recently finished high school, Alaa is in her first year of university studies.

Alaa was visiting Egypt and that's where The Voice Magazine caught up with her—via e-mail—for this interview.

Has Medicine Hat always been home for you?

No, I was actually born in Cairo, Egypt. At the age of 2, my family moved to the United States, and we lived there for a while. When I entered the 6th grade, we moved to Medicine Hat, Alberta. Out of all the places I've been to, I can proudly say that Medicine Hat is my home.

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

I was home schooled from grade 6 until I finished high school. I am used to working on my own, and I am self-motivated. I also travel to Egypt a

lot to visit my relatives, especially my grandma. I chose AU because it allows me to continue my education anywhere in the world. I am pursuing an English/psychology degree because I am so fond of literature and I enjoy psychology: it educates me more about human relations, consciousness, unconsciousness, and it helps me understand myself as well.

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

I like to write poetry and I post my poems online on this website: <http://allpoetry.com/Alaa>. I love to cook; I try different recipes almost all the time. Sure, sometimes I burn things but, oh well, I learn from my mistakes. I also enjoy spending my time with my friends and family. Furthermore, I volunteer at a nursing home, The Good Samaritan; I find it satisfying to help others out without expecting a reward.

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

After I am done with my degree, I plan to go into the field of education so I can eventually become a teacher. I would like to teach in elementary schools, as the kids there are easier to handle.

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

I had an English tutor in grades 6, 7, 8 and 9. Her name is Shalla. Her handwriting was so beautiful, and she could brainstorm ideas so easily. She also strived to write down new words to use in everyday conversations.

Mrs. Shalla wrote poems and essays, and she would also help me understand and analyze literature. When I was young, I wanted to be like her: a successful teacher whom everyone would seriously admire.

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

Well, there is a man whose name is Eric Thomas. He is not a celebrity, but he's a motivational speaker. I would like to have lunch with him because I would learn something from him. He would give me advice on how to do better in life and how to be successful. Eric Thomas was a high school dropout but he pushed through and finished a PhD and is now earning millions as a motivational speaker. He wakes up at 3 a.m. every day and strives to make his life better for himself and his family. I would like to know more about his life and how he managed to start from nothing and become someone great.

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

So far I don't have any problems. I find it easy to study on my own, and I enjoy using the computer to study and submit my assignments. I guess I dislike being in front of a computer screen for long hours, and being dependent on an internet connection is a negative for me. This is because Wi-Fi is not available everywhere and if I were to get a portable USB for Internet it would cost me more.

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?

When I finished high school, which is a couple of months ago, I was tired of studying and the pressure of the high school diplomas was overwhelming. I wanted to give up and take a break for a year. Then when I deeply thought about it, I looked at my life as plain and boring without being in school. Studying keeps me busy and it keeps my brain functioning. Also, postponing my education would eventually get to me—in the future I am sure I would regret it.

I wanted to give up and take a break for a year. Then when I deeply thought about it, I looked at my life as plain and boring without being in school

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

This is my first semester with AU, but so far I have to say that *Psychology as a Natural Science*, PSYC 289, is an interesting course. I love the way the textbook is laid out, including its practice tests and chapter reviews.

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

The proudest moment of my life was after finishing AP (advanced placement) courses in high school. I didn't think I would be able to finish high school with good grades in AP courses but after a lot of hard work and dedication I was able to complete all my courses successfully.

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

I gave up going to Medicine Hat College with my best friends. I also gave up a field that I was interested in: I was going to go into education and become a teacher. Honestly, it was worth it, now I can continue my education anywhere at any time without being overwhelmed with a hectic college life. I already have so much on my plate, therefore AU is the best option for me.

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

My first project would be to collaborate with universities and colleges all over Canada to provide courses/tutors to students living in cities outside Athabasca. For example, Mount Royal University is providing a 4-yr bachelor

of education degree through Medicine Hat College. I think that would provide more tools for students to stay motivated and provide them with easier ways for communication.

Describe your earliest memory.

My earliest memory was when I was 5 years old when we lived in an apartment building in Colorado. I was in the elevator with my older brother and suddenly the elevator stopped and we were stuck in there for a while. I am claustrophobic so I began panicking; I was screaming and crying while my brother was trying to calm me down. Honestly, I remember saying to him "I am dying!" I guess I was overly dramatic, and in the end we were pulled out.

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

A survival guide, a book full of jokes to entertain myself (can't go crazy on my own), and a backpack full of canned food, sharp knives, matches, ropes, Band-Aid, compasses—basically a survival backpack.

(I know a lot of people would say cell phone, but really there wouldn't be any reception and no internet so it's useless. And you wouldn't be able to charge your phone.)

Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.

The one thing that makes me unique is my thinking process and my analytical point of view. I am good at understanding people and relating to them on a personal level. I also try to put myself in people's shoes, and to give people everything I have to offer because at the end of the day, it's those little good deeds that matter.

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

The most valuable lesson I've learned in life is that bad times don't last. I know it might sound cliché, but I've had those days where I thought about giving up because it seemed like life won't get any better. But really, life does get better, those difficult times pass by, and when I think about it later, I laugh at how pessimistic I was. Nothing lasts forever, therefore I've learned to cherish the good times and when I run into adversity I remind myself that it's only a bad day, not a bad life.

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

I think e-texts are useful, but at the same time, some documents take awhile to load. In my opinion, if the university follows a call-centre model, that will be more helpful as it will provide students with faster and more efficient way of communication.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

I communicate with my course tutors through email; I find it better because when they reply to my questions, I can go back and re-read their instructions.

Where have you travelled so far?

So far, I've been to Cairo, Egypt for family reasons. I've been to the United States of America; I spent 8 years moving with my family from state to state. I've been to New York, New Jersey, Colorado, Ohio, west Virginia and Washington. Finally, my family settled in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada, and I am thankful we aren't moving away anytime soon.

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

I am currently reading "The fault in our Stars," by John Green. I watched the movie, but hadn't read the book. Most people insist that the book is better so I thought I'd read it to see what the hype is about.

No-No to NaNo

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Thousands of writers, and would-be writers, get seduced each year by NaNoWriMo. November 1 brings the opening day of National Novel Writing Month, in which writers are challenged to complete a 50,000-page novel in 30 days. Committing to writing an average of 1667 words per day over the course of the month, so the theory goes, overcomes that chronic enemy of many writers: procrastination. This year, I heard NaNoWriMo's siren song, but successfully resisted the lure.

NaNoWriMo began in July 1999 with twenty-one writers in the San Francisco Bay area. The following year, founder Chris Baty moved the event to November, and set up a website. Of the 140 participants in 2000, 29 of them completed a novel in 30 days. Participation, fueled by blog posts and media coverage, exploded to 5000 in 2001 and reached over 300,000 in 2013. Although NaNoWriMo is

called "National," participants are welcome from any area of the globe.

Writers are encouraged to begin with a fresh novel. "No plot? No problem!" says some of NaNoWriMo's merchandise. There are a few pre-November activities to allow writers to warm up in advance of the big day November 1. During the month itself, registered participants can login to NaNoWriMo.org to update their wordcount, track their progress, and win badges for incremental milestones. Participants can connect with other writers online or at one of the scheduled NaNoWriMo events.

Sounds so easy! I've got a premise for a novel. I've even got a brilliant title. And I can write 1667 words a day—although I seldom do. But, and here's a big one, I haven't spent much time writing fiction. My writing is predominantly non-fiction. And while any kind of writing is good practice for any other kind of writing, I think fiction takes writing muscles I've yet to flex. For me, diving into a novel without some warm-up writing seems kinda like running a marathon without having first tried running around the block.

While I'd like to expand my writing to include fiction as well as non-fiction, a reality check is needed here. If I want to write a novel, I need to prepare my fiction-writing muscles. I need to stretch my setting skills, tone my character development, and hone my dialogue. I need to run around the fiction block and prove I can write 1667 words of fiction in one day. I need to have realistic expectations—and realistic goals.

NaNoWriMo, to me, isn't just about motivation. It's about putting forth a reasonable effort in order to achieve a reasonable result. Putting 50,000 unrefined words together, for this writer, is just filling blank pages. The last thing I need is to spend well over a hundred hours of valuable time just so I can have an amateurish novel occupying space on my hard drive.

NaNoWriMo says it's "for anyone who has ever thought fleetingly about writing a novel." And that's fine. But I think NaNoWriMo is best left for those writers who've been practicing their craft and just need that kick-in-the-pants challenge to make them dedicate themselves to their novel. I'll be cheering all of those writers on, but I won't be joining them—this year.

If I want to write a novel during NaNoWriMo, I need to start limbering up now to prepare for November 2015. For this year, I'll say "no-no" to NaNoWriMo

Are you participating in NaNoWriMo? Tell The Voice Magazine how it's going for you 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

Click of the Wrist

This Halloween, thousands of partiers and trick-or-treaters will don masks to portray their favourite heroes and villains. But a bit of makeup can accomplish the same thing—and when it's taken to the limit, the result can be so good it's scary. This week's links showcase some incredibly talented work.

Behind a Mask

The Painting Lady

Monstrously good? The Painting Lady—a self-taught British professional face painter—brings a horror dimension to her artwork. Check out the frightening photos at the *Guardian*, and visit her [Facebook page](#) for more.

She's the Man

Italian makeup artist Lucia Pittalis transforms her face into the image of male celebrities and film characters. Sylvester Stallone as Rambo? Don Vito Corleone from *The Godfather*? Some of her impressions are eerily accurate.

FX

Special effects aren't just the realm of CGI—talented makeup artists can transform reality, and no virtual anything about it. Click through these shots of makeup FX from some of your favourite films and shows, including *The Walking Dead*.



DID YOU KNOW?

Benefits of Your University Degree



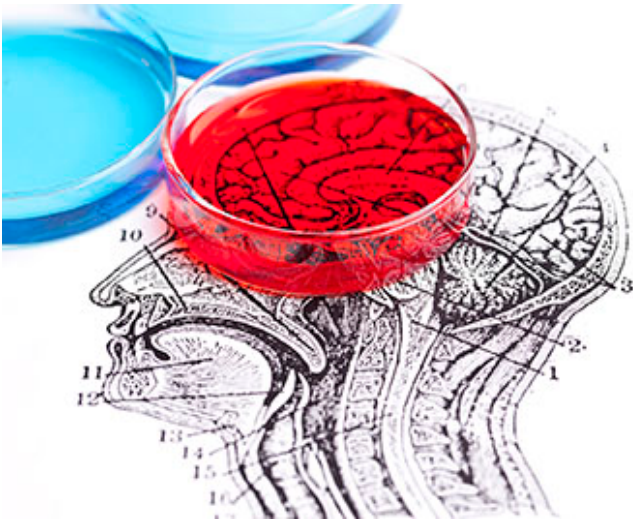
A recent issue of the *Times Colonist* has an [article](#) about how university graduates in BC weathered the downturn better than those who hadn't graduated. Only five years after graduating, those students who graduated at the start of the recession in 2008 had an unemployment rate of only 4.7% where the national average was 6.6%, and over 95% of those students were employed in jobs that required their degree. Even the much maligned Arts and Sciences degree had better unemployment rates.

So if anybody ever questions you as to why you're taking a full degree, here's a very good reason that you can give them.

Primal Numbers

How's the Weather?

S.D. Livingston



Besides checking the headlines and traffic updates, there's one daily ritual almost everybody follows. We check the weather forecast. Rain or shine, we can't help tuning in to see what the weather report has in store for us. But meteorology is far from an exact science, and a lot of times it's just plain wrong. So why do we keep believing the weatherman's predictions?

Weather reports are nothing new, of course. The *Old Farmer's Almanac* has been around since 1792—back when George Washington was still a newly elected president. The *Almanac* was so popular that it tripled its circulation after the first

year, and it seems like we've been hooked on weather forecasts ever since.

As the *Globe and Mail* noted in 2012, Environment Canada estimated that "93 per cent of Canadians [were] checking the forecast every day." One of the most popular websites and TV channels around is *The Weather Network*, complete with its own app and more than 358,000 fans on its Facebook page.

But for all that weather love, there's no denying that forecasters often get it wrong. In one famous case, weatherman Michael Fish assured BBC viewers that they didn't have to worry about rumours of a possible hurricane. Hours later, the Great Storm of 1987 hit the UK. Winds reached close to 120 miles per hour and 18 people died in the storm.

Even today, meteorologists admit that there's a lot of guesswork mixed in with the science of forecasting. In an article on the *Weather Network* site, one of their own meteorologists explained just how tough it can be, even with all the technology at their disposal. That's because so many variables go into a single forecast—everything from the accuracy of computer models to what season it is.

So why do we have such devotion to a science that doesn't seem terribly scientific? Because in spite of all the unpredictability, meteorologists do get it right more often than not. And they're getting better, with today's five-day forecasts being "about as accurate as two-day forecasts were 30 years ago."

Then there's the fact that, in some cases, we have to trust the experts. Just as most of us tend to trust our mechanics because we don't know what goes on inside our car's transmission, we don't have much choice if we want a peek at next weekend's weather. It's either tune in to the weather report or wait until the day of the marathon or picnic to see whether it's going to rain.

Even if the report turns out wrong, hope springs eternal and we tune in again the next day. In some ways it's a bit like checking your horoscope. Sooner or later, it's bound to be right. And you can always bring your umbrella just in case.

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.

The Travelling Student Leaving Montreal

Philip Kirkbride



My name is Philip Kirkbride. I'm a college graduate from Ontario studying at AU. I always wanted to do an exchange program or study abroad but never found the right time to do so. This is part four in the story of how Athabasca University has allowed me to create my own study abroad program.

In part three we stopped in Montreal for the night. Our original plan was to re-charge and leave in the morning. By 2am Matt was climbing the spherical structure that is the Montreal Bio Sphere, while I stood at the bottom waiting for security to arrive.

Matt stood a few levels up on the dome fumbling around while he reached into his pocket for his phone. Unfortunately it was too dark for either of us to get a good picture. I saw the lights of a car around the bend of a corner. I started walking away to distance myself in hopes of not bringing attention to Matt, the car approached steadily, and then kept driving right past us, likely someone going home from a long night at the Montreal Casino. "Where the hell are you going" yelled Matt. He called me a wimp and I called him an idiot in return. "Get down here, let's get out of here" I yelled softly.

Soon Matt was down and we started walking to the Casino in hopes of good food. It's only a short walk from the biosphere to the casino, or at least, it should have been. The island seemed like a maze during the night, with small bodies of water seemingly always between us and our destination. After a few bridges we finally made it to the casino.

You can usually find pretty good food in casinos. With the main business of casinos being gambling, having good and cheap food helps to keep people gambling longer and we hoped to take advantage of that. However, this was not the case at the Montreal Casino (though, to be fair, it was sometime after 2 am on a weekday).

We stumbled back outside and jumped into the first cab we saw. The cab driver was French, but of African descent. He might have been in a bad mood, but I got the impression that it was his usual mood. He wasn't wearing a seat-belt and, as we drove away from the casino, the safety indicator on the dashboard made a loud dinging sound approximately forty times before finally stopping (he never did put his seat belt on, like it was some kind of test between him and the indicator as to which could last the longest).

After taking us down several streets that I'm almost sure were out of the way of our hotel in an attempt to run up the meter, I asked him if he was sure he knew where he was going. He made a grunting noise which we assumed was meant to assure us that he knew. About five minutes later we arrived. The smile on the cab driver's face when Matt handed him the \$30 fare confirmed my suspicion that he had indeed run up our fare. Yet it didn't matter. I knew we had to be back on the road in about five hours and all I could think of was sleep.

We woke up the next morning just after 8:00am. Oddly I felt completely energized despite the lack of sleep. I was exhilarated by the adventure and ready to hit the road. We picked up a few sandwiches, donuts, and, of course, coffee from the Tim Horton's drive-through and headed towards Autoroute 40.

As we approached the highway we saw a hitchhiker on the side of the road. She looked like she was in her early twenties, with red hair, and a very rugged look. I can't say I would have pulled over for her. But I knew Matt had hitchhiked himself in the past so I didn't object, when it looked like he was going to, despite the fact that his SUV was already packed and it would be a challenge for her to even get in.

We stopped at the side of the road Matt rolled down my windows and the girl started walking over.



The Mindful Bard

Cargo Cult

Wanda Waterman



Film: Cargo Cult

Director: Bastien Dubois

Big Men, Big Planes, and Big Dreams of Plenty

"The poverty of our century is unlike that of any other. It is not, as poverty was before, the result of natural scarcity, but of a set of priorities imposed upon the rest of the world by the rich."

- John Berger

"Avarice is fear sheathed in gold."

- Paul Eldridge

This animated short film is set during World War II, and touches on how a native of Papua New Guinea might view the spectacular plenty of the Americans and the Japanese as it falls unbidden from airplanes flying overhead. Naturally these drops from the sky look like the beneficence of some higher power, some distant source of love.

This is the first time the Mindful Bard has devoted an entire article to one short film, but this one warrants it; it's so well made and the subject matter so relevant that it deserves exploration. It's no surprise that this little animated piece has won awards and nominations at film festivals the world over; it presents the extremely intriguing fact of the cargo cult phenomenon, reframing it to show its poignancy and its significance to the world at large. The film is also sublimely beautiful and a pleasure to watch.

Cargo cults have been springing up in Melanesia in some form or another since whites first started showing up in the region, bringing with them all the trappings of Western "progress." Their occurrences have dwindled but they still exist in various forms in Melanesia, particularly in Papua New Guinea.

These cults, in general, manifest a fascination with the goods dropped from airplanes, predictions of the coming of a great personage or great wealth, millenarianism (predictions of impending doom or salvation in the near or distant future), and the involvement of dead ancestors, all mixed in with the particular society's history and myth, as well as some rather confused Christian elements.

Devotees often fashion makeshift items as copies of Western goods; thus you'll find bamboo headphones, airplanes, and radio towers, fetishes created to attract the generosity of the cargo deities.

Most cargo cults are initiated by "big men" among the natives—men who've already impressed the other natives with their personal wealth (usually measured by livestock) and who are thus granted authority to create a religious narrative and demand it be accepted and acted on. These men quickly achieve the status of prophets and everything they say is accepted as gospel.

Strangely enough, cargo cults are formed partly as *resistance* to colonial oppression, like in the sixties when young people rebelled against the establishment by buying jeans that symbolised the Wild West and working class solidarity, even as the corporations that produced them became powerful enough to put the price of jeans beyond the budgets of workers and cowboys.

Sure, it's all down to the distinctive character of the primitive mindset, but really, are the "big men" who create cargo cults that different from the CEOs of global corporations, people who implicitly ask us to believe that the free market is a benevolent god that wants only to deliver joy and well-being?

Just like the Papuans, we're often torn between a naive assumption that these "big men" are acting in our best interests and our gut instinct that they're ready to throw us all under the bus to line their own pockets. True, Melanesian culture has prepared the natives to accept the cargo cult theology, but our education system also prepares us for deception and consumer slavery, giving us false information and discouraging our ability to think for ourselves.

Looking at it all from the outside, yes, the bamboo headphones and airplanes make us wince with the pathos of it, but why don't we wince when we see how our masses worship worthless commodities like big name soft drinks, cold breakfast cereals, and heavily promoted but foul-smelling deodorant spray—just because marketing has assured them that these products will bring joy, love, and good fortune into their lives?

This little film is one stone that kills two birds: First, it shows the primitive essence of consumerism, and second, it encourages us to lay aside the vulgar but universally human urge to show off one's material possessions, and to look instead at the nobler urge to find a beneficent power beyond it all. As the utilitarian philosophers pointed out, the ways in which we pursue happiness may be misguided, even counterproductive, but, in the end, the urge to happiness is beautiful in itself.

Cargo Cult manifests five of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence.
- It stimulates my mind.
- It provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

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

In Conversation With Leah Warshawski

Wanda Waterman



Leah Warshawski is one of the producers and directors of *Finding Hillywood*, a documentary about the use of film for healing in post-genocide Rwanda (read *The Voice Magazine* review [here](#)). Recently Leah took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about her experience, motivation, and inspiration.

What elements in your childhood and early years pointed you toward film? Toward documentary film in particular?

Well, actually, I never thought that I'd be a filmmaker growing up. My father (author of *Shaking The Money Tree*, a popular film funding book) geared me away from filmmaking and my major was Japanese. I went to college in Hawaii and worked on a boat in college. I was part of a few films on the water, and then I was hooked. It was not the path I thought I would take in life, but I'm very grateful for how things turned out.

What is it about your character and background that makes it possible for you to oversee and direct this kind of artistic project?

I like a challenge, and once I get focussed on something I believe in, I won't give up. It takes dedication. *Finding Hillywood* took us six years to complete because we were always raising money to keep working. I still haven't been paid for any of my work on the project—everything we raised went to make the film.

But I love the film and our characters and the journey it took us on. We're still learning. Before we started working on the film I had traveled extensively in Africa for other jobs and that travel experience gave me the confidence to work on a film on the other side of the world.

What was your most beneficial educational experience? What or who in your training had the most—and best—influence on you, as a filmmaker and as a human being?

I think travel is an education, and traveling/working in other countries was very beneficial to me. I've had many mentors in my life who taught me everything I know, including my parents, who've all made me who I am today. I'm still learning every single day. I worked with incredible watermen in Hawaii, and they're the reason I love and respect the water so much. And my husband is the reason I love the mountains so much.

What was the most mesmerizing experience for you while making *Finding Hillywood*?

Going to our first "Hillywood" screening in 2007—sitting on top of our production van as the sun went down on a crowd of 2,000 Rwandans waiting for the movies to start. At that moment we knew that we needed to share this experience with the rest of the world.

Do you have any thoughts on why film can be so healing?

Film can heal by allowing people to tell their own stories. And it's therapeutic for audiences to watch films together and to suspend all of their other duties and beliefs for the time the movie plays. It's a powerful experience to watch films with thousands of people around you.

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.

Music Review**Ménage: *EP*****Samantha Stevens****Album:** *EP***Artist:** Ménage

Ménage has achieved a great deal of success this year, having won Best Rock Song of the Year at the 2014 International Portuguese Music Awards. This is the second mini-EP in a series of four mini-EPs that the band will be releasing this year. Compared to bands like Arcade Fire and Mother Mother, Ménage is an alternative rock band that will have you hooked within seconds.

The three Ferreira siblings, Gabriel, Basilio, and Bella, were introduced to music at an early age while travelling between Toronto, Ontario and a

small Portuguese village where much of their family still lived. Gabriel and Basilio performed together for several years, playing alongside bands like Stone Temple Pilots, My Chemical Romance, and Billy Talent. Meanwhile, Bella toured Europe as a solo artist and hosted MTV Portugal. Two of Bella's recorded songs became unexpected radio successes. The three met up in Los Angeles, where they decided to write music together for the first time, and Ménage was born.

The influence of traditional Portuguese music can be heard almost immediately in their songs. It was this influence that made me fall in love with Ménage's sound instantaneously. As a fan of alternative rock, I was blown away by Ménage's meaningful and thoughtful lyrics, which is reminiscent of the rock ballads of old.

The first song on the album left me breathless. The beginning of "Our Time is Now" is subtle with the soft guitar that resonates with the families musical heritage and influences. As the song picks up into a loud, rock-infused melody, you'll find your soul melting with the powerful vocals and emotional lyrics. The addition of the softer female vocals and lighter tempo that is tossed into the song heightens the emotional power that drives this song. What really caught my attention was that the song ends with Bella singing what sounds like a round, something that many of us sang in elementary school music class. It was such unusual music device to hear in a rock song that I found myself stopping everything that I was doing, and my heart and imagination were swept away by Bella's alluring voice.

"To The End" is the second song on the album. The combination of female and male vocals lends a dimension to this song that transcends many other songs of this genre. The strong rock sound is enhanced by the chanting in the chorus, and I find that this song is infused with powerful emotions and determination that would bolster anyone's spirit.

"Promises II" is a sweet song with a gritty rock twist. Like the other songs on the album, this song has emotion pouring from it with every drum hit, guitar strum, and breath between words. The video that accompanies the song shows the band singing the song, and the level of passion that they put into their music is astounding.

The final song on the album is appropriately named "Love Song". The sound is serene and mournful with the vocals being the main sound of the song. The male vocals sing a love story that is easily recognizable. What makes this song stand out is the injection of female vocals that carry the story along during the chorus.

I personally loved this album, which is available on iTunes. As a rock fan, and a music fan in general, I found that the traditional sound combined with the well-known alternative rock sound created music that has no equal. I will definitely be checking out Ménage's first EP in this series, and I will be eagerly awaiting the final two.

Samantha Stevens is an aspiring writer who loves combining her love for literature with photography, painting, music, and all creative pursuits.



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to have all kinds of free Mind Map software at your disposal.

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 *Mind Maps: Quicker Notes, Better Memory, and Improved Learning 3.0* by Michael Taylor.

A Mind map in a Nutshell

I think we've all seen them, a circle in the middle of a page surrounded by branches with words on them, further breaking off into sub-branches, and I think you know what I mean. But in case you don't, here is a little crash course on what mind maps are and can do for you:

- It takes drawing at least a hundred mind maps before you get super proficient with them. You should also make at least one mind map per month.
- You write the main topic or theme in the middle of the page, circle it or put it in some unique shape, and then branch out with lines radiating from the center that contain keywords that constitute your subtopic. Each subtopic branch will further branch out into further subsets, and the process continues.
- Keywords are essential to mind maps, although images can be substituted for keywords.

- You can make each layer of subtopics and subsets a separate polygonal shape to differentiate the layers, or you can use larger lines for the first subtopics, and thinner or differently coloured lines for each layer of subsets from there. Another option is to vary the text, using italics for one layer, bold for another, larger font for the main ideas, and so forth. It is up to you how you want to differentiate each layer.
- Keep in mind that each branching out layer (from central idea to subtopics to further subsets) is like an outline format, but just not linear. You can even delineate each different layer with outline roman to alphabetical numerals. The mind map is meant to be succinct with images wherever possible and short keywords to delineate the topic.
- You can have multiple mind maps where each subtopic or subset gets its own mind map on a separate sheet of paper.

(Taylor, 2014)

Mind mapping Research Papers with Multiple Sources

The Study Dude loves how mind maps can be used for a variety of purposes, including decision-making, recall, book reviews, note taking, learning a language, you name it. However, when the process is laid out in black and white, mind mapping for a specific purpose becomes more transparent and accessible. Here are some tips to simplify your mind maps of research papers that use multiple sources:

- The process for mind mapping research papers with multiple sources, such as papers, presentations, business plans, proposals, and grant proposals, include the following preliminary steps: 1. gather your books, 2. isolate the main topic or subject, then the subtopics, and ignore the subsets just yet, and 3. gather at least three research resources.
- After that, make a research key, where you define a certain color or an alphabetical letter to differentiate each individual book in the mind map. Add code to the mind map that denotes that letter or color and the respective book. Be sure to add page numbers on your mind map.
- Repeat the process with all books.
- Get more research materials, such as books and articles, wherever there might be gaps in your mind maps.
- Longer research papers might requires multiple mind maps for each subtopic.

(Taylor, 2014)

Mind mapping for Writing Outlines

The Study Dude is enamoured with outlines, being a linear thinker, so the transition into non-linear outlines via mind maps is one of interest. Here are some of the steps for making an outline using a mind map:

- In the center of the mind map, write the general subject.
- Dump all you know about the subject down onto paper.
- Look for interesting relationships between the keywords you jotted down above.
- Pick the most enjoyable—or most practical and useful—areas of your mind map as your focus. This will become your premise.
- Make a new mind map with your premise in the center. Create subtopics with the "facts, issues, and arguments you want to discuss about the premise" (p. 71).
- Start writing your paper based on the mind map, while being sure to checkmark the branches that you have discussed. Ensure you have an introductory and conclusive statement for each section.
- You can modify, move, or remove branch keywords as fitting for your paper evolution.

Free Mind Map Software

Ah, yes! Everyone, especially the Study Dude, loves the word "free". What could be better for any tech-inclined youth than free software--for mind mapping? And what could be better for a technophobe of any generation than easy to use software? Well, here are some morsels to get your creative juices flowing with mind mapping:

- edraw mind mapping software comes with many templates and symbols.
- freeplane is not as nice as edraw, but a little more straightforward to use.
- Text2MindMap is a Web-based program for making mind maps, which is the easiest way to get started. (Taylor, 2014)

The Study Dude just tried out the Text2MindMap, and it is awesome. You just type in your data with indents for each layer, and the chart is automatically drawn and coloured for you right before your eyes. It takes all of two seconds to orient yourself to it, and you don't have to download a thing: it is all web-based. You can save the mind map after titling it, and you can even download it to a PDF.

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

Taylor, Michael. (2014). *Mind maps: Quicker Notes, Better Memory, and Improved Learning 3.0*. Amazon Digital Services, Inc.

Student Sizzle

AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following what's hot around AU's social media sites.

AUSU Student Forums

Student Rajdeep of BC posts info about an AU study group she is trying to start in the Vancouver area and worldwide online. Other topics include advice about contacting Tutor Services.



AthaU Facebook Group

Ryan posts his reflections on the call centre. Emily seeks advice on the PHIL 335 exam. And Renee looks for interest in a Red Deer study group. Other postings include the PSYC 290 final, fire drills during exams, and courses BIOL 235, GEOL 313 and PSYC 350,

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: Great article about AU Press! Did you know AU Press is the first open access university press in North America! <http://ow.ly/DwgST>

@AthabascaU also tweets about their interview with Peter MacKinnon, AU's Interim President, available on Youtube: <http://youtu.be/igcDmhytENE>



Not Showing Up

In the days since Wednesday, October 22, 2014 much has been said, written, and televised about how Canada will be forever changed by the tragic murder of Cpl. Nathan Cirillo, as he stood guard over the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This handsome twenty-four-old reservist from Hamilton has become the face of all that is good in Canada and the lightning rod for our collective grief.

Like so many others I sat glued to television set as the unthinkable happened right before our eyes. Even with a couple of near misses—thwarted terrorist attacks—we believed (hoped) Canada was safe from the misguided crazies of the world. We didn't have the high profile of the United States, nor the hatred that brings, to be a cause for the average Joe in the street to seriously worry.

Wednesday's tragedy, just like the deliberate mowing down of two servicemen in a Quebec parking lot two days before, took our innocence. The RCMP and CSIS will tell us that the threat has always been real, that they were monitoring individuals and intelligence, and that it was only a matter of time before a homegrown terrorist hit us where we live. Now, we will believe.

As much as we were shocked, horrified, sickened, and scared by the day's events most of us have since defaulted to our normal stance as Canadians: resolved, patriotic, strong.

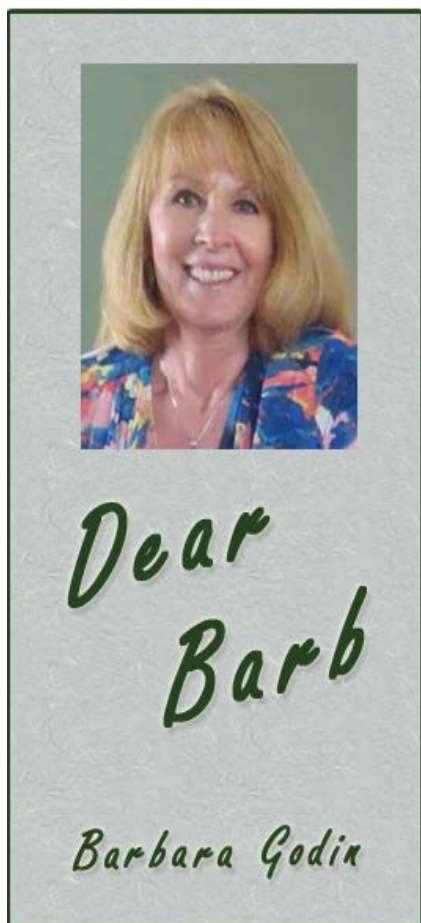
I'm not sure if I cried more on Wednesday for the loss of life and our innocence, or in the days since with the daily examples of strength, patriotism, and grief. To see retired servicemen spontaneously begin guarding cenotaphs across the country the next day made me proud. To see our politicians who so often behave badly return to work the next day resolute, strong, and statesmanlike made me proud. To see people begin wearing poppies weeks earlier than usual makes me proud. To see the

makeshift memorial and outpouring of gratitude and grief in front of the armoury in Hamilton makes me proud. To see the crowds line the Highway of Heroes in Ontario as the hearse carrying Cirillo's body went home. To see Kevin Vickers reluctantly accept the gratitude and attention accorded the hero he's become. To see the tributes; the spontaneous singing of O Canada; the shaken, solemn faces of the parliamentarians who lived through the nightmare attack; the editorial cartoon by Bruce MacKinnon; they all make me proud.

Of course it remains to be seen how long this heightened awareness and patriotism continues. Likewise how our access to iconic places like the parliament buildings will be altered. What backlash will be unleashed onto police agencies for not preventing it? Will the vandalism at a Cold Lake, Alberta mosque spread to others?

With Remembrance Day just weeks away, we all have renewed reasons to attend a local ceremony and say thank you in a tangible way. Not showing up would be a shame, from where I sit.

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



Christmas Cancer

Dear Barb: My younger sister has been battling cancer for the last five years. She seems to be in remission at the present time. Lately, Leah has been going to the casino and gambling at least once a week. She enjoys going there and has a lot of fun. The problem is her adult children don't think she should be wasting money at the Casino. They want me to talk to her but I'm really not comfortable discussing financial issues with my sister. Besides, I feel she's been through so much and if she wants to gamble she should be able to. What do you think? Looking forward to your response, Ellen.

Hi Ellen:

So sorry to hear about your sister, cancer is a devastating diagnosis to say the least. Without a doubt you are in a difficult situation. Your sister should be able to do what she enjoys, but if she is spending beyond her means, then perhaps you need to discuss this with her. Have the two of you talked about her gambling? Do you know how much she spends? Responsible gambling is all about knowing when to stop. Perhaps you could express to your sister that her children are concerned. If she reassures you that she is not overspending, then you really have to accept her word for it. You are undeniably in a sensitive situation, as you don't want to alienate your sister or her children. Let us know how it goes and thanks for sharing!

Dear Barb:

As Christmas is approaching I'm starting to feel stressed out. I am the youngest in the family and the only boy. My three older sisters are married and have young families. My mom hosts Christmas dinner every year and the day always ends up with someone getting their nose out of joint and leaving early which upsets mom. It is frequently a stupid event that gets my sisters going. They are close in age and have always been very competitive with each other. I feel sorry for my mom as she puts a lot of work into these events. I would like to do something to defuse this situation before it begins. Do you have any suggestions? Thanks Brent.

Hey Brent:

I can sense your anxiety and it's only November! Perhaps these unpleasant events continue happening every year because the dynamics do not change. For example, same place, same time, same people, thus triggering memories of previous years. Perhaps you and your sisters could host Christmas dinner this year, providing mom with a much needed break. Your mother will probably still want to contribute, so perhaps she could bring her favorite dish and each sibling could bring a side dish as well, consequently it will be a shared effort. Changing the venue most likely will alter the dynamics within the family. Moreover, your mom will be free to spend time socializing rather than in the kitchen preparing dinner. If no one volunteers to host the first dinner, put all the names in a hat and choose one. Merry Christmas!

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

The October 2014 Parliament Hill Shooting

On October 22 a mentally ill man went to Parliament Hill and fired shots, killing one soldier. Official responses to the event included a refusal to accept terrorist threats and a call for tougher security, but not one mention of the need for adequate funding for treatment of the mentally ill.

It was a horrendous crime, and we ain't gonna take it. The only appropriate response is to make obscene profits from war. Any Canadians who aren't on board with this are heartless monsters.



What is your administration doing to provide adequate resources to the mentally ill so that crimes like this can be prevented?

Um, let's talk about that after the war.

WANDA WATERMAN



500 Energy Square, 10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB T5J 3L7
phone: 780.497.7000
fax: 780.497.7003
toll free: 855.497.7003
ausu@ausu.org; www.ausu.org

October 29, 2014

Athabasca University Students Union Announces Departure of Executive Director and Appointment of Interim Executive Director

Edmonton, Alberta - Athabasca University Students Union (AUSU), announces a change in the leadership of the union. Ms. Tamra Ross is moving on from the role of Executive Director at AUSU effective today October 29, 2014. AUSU's Council is pleased to announce that Mr. Jason Nixon has agreed to take on the role of interim Executive Director while AUSU goes through a transition phase.

AUSU's Council expresses its appreciation to Ms. Ross for her service to AUSU and wishes her success in her future endeavours.

Mr. Nixon, the interim Executive Director, has served, and will continue to serve, as President of AUSU since April 2014, and prior to that as AUSU VP of Finance and Administration since April 2012.

AUSU Council is confident that the team in place at AUSU will be able to serve all of our membership needs while AUSU Council goes through the process of moving AUSU forward.

For further information please contact Mr. Nixon at president@ausu.org.

Issued on behalf of AUSU Council.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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

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Editor-In-Chief
Managing Editor Karl Low

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