

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 08 2015-02-20

Meeting the Minds

Dr. Dron, Part II

50 Shades of Ugh

Against the Defense

Exams

Online versus Paper

Plus:

*Borscht, Part III
The Career Path
and much more!*



CONTENTS

The Voice's interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

Features

Meeting the Minds: *Dr. Jon Dron* 4

Articles

Editorial: *The Social and Cultural Significance of Borscht (Part III)* 3
50 Shades of Ugh 7
Exams: *Online vs Paper* 16

Columns

In Conversation: *with The Highway, Part I* 9
The Study Dude: *They Say I Say* 10
The Travelling Student: *On the Way Out* 13
Primal Numbers: *Apps in Court* 15
The Writer's Toolbox: *Who Am I, Really?* 18
The Career Path: *Blogging and Podcasting for Money* 20
From Where I Sit: *A Change of Scenery* 23
Music Review: *Singles by Duke Dumont* 24
Dear Barb: *Things Lost* 25

News and Events

Student Sizzle 6
Click of the Wrist 19
International News Desk 22
AUSU Update 27

Comic

Weird Canada: *The Rhinoceros Party* 26

***The Voice
Magazine***

www.voicemagazine.org

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

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief**Managing Editor**

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

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

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

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

The Voice does not share
its subscriber list with
anyone.

© 2015 by *The Voice
Magazine*

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****The Cultural and Social Significance of Borscht, Part III****(AKA Rushing to Response is Stupid)**

So. Bill C-51. Titled simply as Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015. It's now onto its second reading in our parliament, after which it moves on to committee for amendments, then back for a third reading, after which it moves on to the Senate for their rubber stamp, and then the Governor General, for his.

The Conservative Party of Canada (I still refuse to call them simply "Conservatives" in deference to those people of Canada who actually are) is pushing to abbreviate any debate on the bill, and has been less than forthcoming with any questions regarding it.

The Official opposition, the NDP, have signalled that they intent to vote against the bill at every stage. The Liberal party has signalled that they will vote to accept it, but seek amendments and if no amendments are made, will make changing the bill part of their platform they intend to bring to the campaign in October of this year.

To be fair, there are some things that are good about this bill. Some of the items with respect to different departments of our government being able to share information with law enforcement and vice versa make sense. After all, if that information has already been legally obtained by the government, why should the left hand not know what the right hand is doing.

But then there's the rest of it. Things like how this bill enacts a "no-fly" list that is completely in the hands of the Justice Minister. A position appointed from the people elected to our parliament. Not necessarily anybody with any significant background in terrorist activities, liberty protection, or even law, but just somebody who the Prime Minister of the day thought should have that cabinet position. The list has no over-sight. The Minister can designate anybody to add names to the list, again, with no over-sight. And if you happen to be on the list, your only appeal is to the Minister, who can simply ignore it for 90 days, after which you can appeal to a court justice, likely someone appointed by the Minister, and to who the Minister can provide evidence that never has to be revealed to you.

So say you plan to go to some sort of protest, maybe against the government, maybe against a pipeline, maybe against kittens, who knows. The justice minister can instruct the airlines to tell their ticket agents to add anybody who wants to go to such a thing be immediately added to the no-fly list and prohibited from flying. And that's that. Nobody needs to tell you anything for at least 90 days while the Minister ignores your first appeal. Or maybe he grants it, two weeks after the protest is done. Either way, mission accomplished, and, according to this bill, all perfectly legally.

Of course, if you ask the CPC, that's not at all the intent of this legislation and the minister has no intention of using it that way. Well that's great. Can they say as much for the next minister? Or the one after that? One thing I've found is that when we grant a person the power to do something, sooner or later someone is going to exercise that power. But right now there's still a chance. Write your MP. Stop this thing.

And Enjoy the Read!

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



This is a continuation of the interview published in The Voice Magazine two weeks ago. In that piece, Dr. Dron expands on his Teaching Fellowship Award and some of his philosophies about pedagogy and the use of social media in a teaching/learning context. This week, Marie Well asks about his grading philosophies, influences, and works published.

Marie: I know you are not conventional in you assignment grading. What is your position on grading assignments:

Dr Dron: It's a terrible idea. Grades are extrinsic motivators of no intrinsic value whatsoever, that inevitably become the object of learning rather than a measure of it. It is behaviourist claptrap – you can make someone do something, sure, but if you want passionate, creative, lifelong learners, grades are highly counterproductive to effective learning. *Feedback* is extremely important, both positive and negative,

but grades serve no useful purpose beyond emphasizing that the teacher is in control and willing to exert his or her power to make you do something. It is among the biggest malaises in our educational systems and we should work to stamp it out. It is also terribly unfair. It is completely bizarre that teachers can tell students they have failed when, if the students have not learned, if there is any failure at all (sometimes it might just be lack of interest or misfortune along the way) it is a failure in the teaching. But it is no different when a grade signifies success: by making the focus something other than the activity itself, the activity is implicitly devalued. Moreover, teachers are slaves to grades as much as students: they often play a large role in determining the design of courses, especially when you consider the lengths we need to go to in order to prevent cheating. That's just ridiculous. Almost no one would cheat if there were no grades to attain and the whole process were dedicated to learning instead. There are ways to reduce the harm of summative assessment – giving students control over how and for what they are assessed, for example, or negotiating outcomes. But, even then, the notion of grades has no value beyond allowing lazy or overworked teachers to avoid giving clear formative feedback that will actually help students to improve.

Sadly, accreditation is intimately linked with teaching in our educational systems so, unless we can come up with ways to separate the two, we are stuck with it for now. It is, in principle, possible. One of the many things I like about AU is that it does provide at least a couple of mechanisms for that, in the challenge process and in recognition of prior learning (the PLAR process). If we could use those or similar processes for every course we teach, entirely separate from the learning process, we might make a gigantic difference to the quality of learning and teaching.

Marie: You not only publish an amazing amount of books and articles, but you also implement the latest and greatest technologies across the Athabasca University portal. What motivates you to make such a vast and continuing contribution to the academic life at Athabasca?

Dr. Dron: Not amazing—I publish a few articles a year, and give the odd invited talk or keynote here and there, and I like to play with toys (to tinker) and to feel I am making a difference – it all goes back to intrinsic motivation. And I believe in Athabasca University – it is unique in many ways, which is how it comes to attract such great staff and students, so I want to do things that will contribute to its community. As I said before, I'm a professional learner. I love it. I love engaging in a dialogue with people that inspire or challenge me, I love unravelling puzzles and solving problems, I love the flow of creating things, I love to find out how things work, and I love being able to choose what I do and how I do it, when I do it and where I do it. I'm very fortunate to be paid to do so.

Marie: I have to ask. Is it you who is at least part responsible for the implementation of the Landing at Athabasca University?

Dr. Dron: That would be safe to say—it has been my main pet project for well over 5 years and is a direct continuation of work stretching back long before that. I have driven (and, for the last year or two, have *done*) almost all of the development work, as well as contributing liberally to the theory behind it, and, with my friend, co-author, mentor and all-round great guy Terry Anderson, co-managing the project. I think that the Landing, or something like it, is crucial to both the growth and survival of AU. We desperately need flexible, social, learning spaces for sharing, creation, and interaction, soft spaces between the hard and rigidly defined purpose-driven tools like Moodle and student support systems. Spaces that extend beyond and across courses and organizational boundaries, where we can all learn from one another, persistent spaces to interact in beyond the ultra-soft flow of email and real-time exchanges. We are, or should be, a learning community, first, last and foremost. The Landing is one solution to that need. I would do it differently if I had to do it again, but it seems to have some value. It also enables pedagogies that are not possible in our other environments, so it is not a bad teaching tool for some (not all) approaches to learning.

Marie: What theories and researchers have most influenced you?

Dr. Dron: Gosh, that's a big question to which I would give a different answer every day. I rather deliberately pull ideas from extremely eclectic sources. Theories? Quite a variety of systems and complexity theories, quite a few learning theories, mostly in the constructivist or connectivist traditions (but I have eclectic tastes and make use of a lot of cognitivist research and ideas, and even some brain-based research), andragogy, heutagogy, communities of practice, constructionism, self-determination theory, actor-network theory, transactional distance theory, activity theory, conversation theory, and many many more. Research inspirations? A gigantic list – I would have to include many of my students and my teachers (often both at once). Here is just a tiny selection, in no special order and certainly excluding many that matter, of published authors who have profoundly shaped the way I think: John Dewey, Jane Jacobs, Ursula Franklin, W. Brian Arthur, Clay Shirky, , Ivan Illich, Douglas Engelbart, Alan Kay, Gregory Bateson, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Douglas Hofstadter, Michael G. Moore, Stuart Kauffman, George Lakoff, Seymour Papert, Etienne Wenger, Kevin Kelly, Stewart Brand, George Dyson (actually, the whole Dyson family!), David Hume, Jean Paul Sartre, Stephen Jay Gould, Albert Bandura, W. Ross Ashby, Barry Schwartz, George Siemens, Terry Anderson, Richard Dawkins, Sherry Turkle, Andy Clark, Edward O. Wilson, Norton Juster, J.L. Austin, Daniel Dennett, John Holland, Steven Johnson, Lynn Margulis, Jerome Bruner, Barry Wellman, Peter Checkland, Malcolm Knowles, Judith Donath, Paulo Freire, Gilly Salmon, Clay Christensen, Marshall McLuhan, Jean Lave, John Seely Brown, Dan Ariely, Scott E. Page, Christopher Argyris, Weibe Bijker, Francis Heylighen, Gilbert Ryle, Peter Brusilovsky, Philip Candy, Sasa Chislenko, Winston

Churchill, Noam Chomsky, Edward Deci, Mark Granovetter, Duncan Watts, Alfie Kohn, Thomas Kuhn, Karl Popper, Roy Pea, Jenny Preece, Eric Raymond, Carl Rogers, Roger Schank, Peter Vaill, David Weinberger, Donald Norman, Howard Rheingold, Michael Polanyi, Jon Kleinberg, Gordon Pask. But this barely scratches the surface – often, I have been inspired by relatively insignificant papers by individuals or teams that have just inspired me to think along a different line, even though the paper itself may have had nothing much new to say.

Marie: What are the book titles you have published, and how can we go ahead and purchase them?

Dr. Dron: The latest, Teaching Crowds, is a free download from the AU Press site, if you don't mind reading PDF files. If you want a paper copy or a proper e-book version, it is available from all good booksellers at a very reasonable price. See <http://teachingcrowds.ca> for the book itself and some related resources and places from which to buy it.

My last book, Control & Constraint in E-Learning: Choosing When to Choose (2007) is still in print and available from most online retailers or from Idea Group International, the publishers. Sadly that is not an open publication, but it is available in paper and e-book versions from AU Library.

Marie: Any closing remarks?

Dr. Dron: Thanks for this opportunity to expand on a few of my thoughts and ideas!



Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AUSU Student Forums

In the General Course Discussions forum, Barb seeks information on how to type accented characters in an online MuchLearning exam format. In the Computer Science and Info Systems forum, user "Brundlfly" resurrects an older thread on COMP 410 to inquire about study strategy.

Other topics include courses HIST 338 and SOCI 348.

AthaU Facebook Group

Carla seeks study tips for HUMN 360, *East Meets West*. Inas looks for advice in completing her 3-year Bachelor of Management Post Diploma. And Kelly needs help with academic writing skills.

Other postings include AU service standards, and courses ACCT 356, ADMN 233, HIST 338, MKTG 396 and WGST 200.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: " Want to learn how online learning works? Take our FREE AU-MOOC: Learning to Learn Online! Starts March 9 <http://ow.ly/JcJIL>." In an earlier tweet, @AthabascaU says: "We couldn't be more excited to have @angie_abdou joining AU as the Assistant Professor of creative writing! Big #win for students/staff!"

50 Shades of Ugh

Deanna Roney



Unless you have been living under a rock, you have heard of the series *50 Shades of Grey* by E.L. James. This series, which is now being made into a movie, is expected to break box office records. Even I succumbed to the masses and read the books (I will not be watching the movie.) The books were so hyped up I felt they had to offer something akin to a written masterpiece, albeit a masterpiece scattered with explicit sexual fantasies. I had figured these scenes would be the seasoning to the story, and not the half-rotten, sketchy, pillars that would be expected to support the entire novel.

After reading the books I wondered at their popularity. The books are so incredibly poorly written; the characters lack any depth, and by the end it seems that

James was simply tired of writing. She tosses some words together in an attempt to wrap up the story, no longer even poorly connecting the events together. The whole series left a bad taste. It depicts a young, naïve, woman who is emotionally belittled and bullied into submission. While I did not enjoy these books, I can appreciate the concept, however the execution just was not there.

With the release of the movie impending, the articles and posts regarding its validity have increased. With these I have found that I, like I previously believed, am not alone in my evaluation of the books. These articles have also enlightened me on a few more aspects of horror in the words presented by James. In an article by Nathaniel Downes, "'50 Shades of Grey': A Celebration of Rape Culture and Abuse." Someone who participates in the BDSM lifestyle discusses the misrepresentation of that lifestyle, which is based around consent. This book series, and now movie, are glorifying—even romanticizing—emotional and sexual abuse. The message this "story" sends is disturbing at best.

I can hear those who defend the books, and soon to be released movie, now: "Anastasia Steele consents and enjoys everything being done to her." Even if that was true, which it is not (I would provide direct quotes to prove this but the copy of the books which I read have long since been tossed,) Steele is emotionally manipulated and bullied by this man who has also suffered the type of abuse which he is now inflicting on her. She is a woman he perceives as easy to control. Christian Grey stalks and terrorizes his new submissive. The supporters will say that "she can always say no," but can she? Or is she too fearful of what her punishment will be if she does not listen?

I believe the concept of this book has validity and can speak to people on a certain level, allowing people to safely explore things which they never would in their life. I just do not think that this book, and subsequent movie, is the right way to go about it.

Emotional abuse, which is clearly present in *50 Shades of Grey*, is not a joke. It is not romantic or gratifying in any way. Emotional abuse can be very damaging and have intense, and lasting effects. I think those who enjoy the books maybe have not experienced such a thing either first or second hand. Reading through social media, the women, and men, who stand against the message this movie sends are seeing this abuse; they know (or have seen) the effects and do not want this lifestyle romanticized and glorified. They do not want to see anyone

else hurt at the hands of someone who is supposed to care for them. To be clear, I am speaking only of this book, this movie, and not of the lifestyle which it is attempting to represent. The glorification and romanticizing of this type of relationship is resulting in, not steps, leaps backwards for all women, and the men who respect them.

Respect is something which women have been striving for; which men have been trying to educate other men on. As a society, I believe we have come too far in mutual respect between men and women to have a book like this jeopardize it. *50 Shades of Grey* is romanticizing destructive, damaging, and belittling behaviour. As mentioned previously, James is pretending to represent the BDSM lifestyle, BDSM that, to some, may be liberating and enjoyable. That is their lifestyle choice. Perhaps had James consulted some of those who participate in that lifestyle the book would have accurately depicted what it was trying to. Instead, James has forced some to step out and speak against what this series is showcasing. According to some, in "'50 Shades of Grey': A Celebration of Rape Culture and Abuse" the most important aspects of the lifestyle are misrepresented or missing: consent and mutual pleasure. They are speaking out in frustration at the lack of understanding, and complete misrepresentation of what they participate in. As a result, many are stepping forward to set the record straight. A quick scan of any social media platform results in numerous articles of this nature. They are speaking not only to those who read the book or published the book, but to those defending the book, defending "their" lifestyle, because those people who are defending it based on freedom of lifestyle choice, do not understand the lifestyle they are trying to defend. This book perpetrates and celebrates abuse, while the lifestyle, according to the interviewee in Downes article, does not. With so many people stepping forward to set the record straight, I find it difficult to believe that, had James reached out to them to research her novel, they would not have openly discussed it with her.

Life Site News is even circulating a petition against the movie, 'say no to abuse.' In an article on their site, "Even the co-stars of the movie think *50 Shades of Grey* is awful (and maybe even a bit like Hitler.)" The stars speak out, sort of, about the making of the movie, and while some of their statements seem to be reaching, such as comparing it's following to Hitler's following, the overall statement of this articles seems to be that even the lead actors, Jamie Dornan (Christian Grey) and Dakota Johnson (Anastasia Steele) do not understand the success of the series. According to that article, Dornan found the role exceptionally difficult to play, and Johnson found it very uncomfortable. This leaves me to wonder if, before trying out for the movie, did either one take a moment to skim the book, or read the script? Or were they simply jumping on the bandwagon hoping to strike it rich? Regardless, the actors who are submersing themselves into the story find it difficult to understand its success. To me, this speaks volumes.

Whatever the reason for the success of E.L. James's *50 Shades of Grey*, I would strongly recommend that if you are looking for a book that brings alive this lifestyle, look beyond what the masses are saying, what the media is pushing. Find a book which accurately represents the lifestyle, a book which does not glorify abuse and is well written. The *50 Shades of Grey* books left me feeling cheated—cheated by reviews and cheated by the publisher.

References

Downes, N. (2015, February 6). '50 Shades of Grey': A Celebration of Rape Culture and Abuse.

Retrieved from Addicing Info: www.addicinginfo.org

Jalsevac, J. (2015, February 11). Even the co-stars of the movie think 50 Shades of grey is awful (and maybe even a bit like Hitler).

Retrieved from Life Site News: www.lifesitenews.com

Deanna Roney is an AU student who loves adventure in life and literature

In Conversation with The Highway, Part I

Wanda Waterman



"Take your time.
Make things right.
All you do is who you are."

- from the song "All You Do" by The Highway

Daniel Tortoledo (bass), Ted MacInnes (drums), Adam Douglass (guitar), and Griffin McMahon (keys) make up The Highway, a New York rock quartet that dives deep into the best of rock's roots to inspire its own original psychedelic rock. They've recently released the single "All You Do" as a foretaste of their upcoming second album, *Enter to Exit*. "All You Do" is a long, strange

ride, containing the dark tale of an evil deed compelled by love. Recently, all four band members took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about inspiration, influences, and the attraction of the "psychedelic."

Which elements in your childhoods and early years pointed you toward music?

Daniel: I can't really tell what led me into music but violin was my first instrument. I guess the sound or the shape of it drove me into discovering music.

Ted: When I was about four years old my older brother was taking guitar lessons, and I thought it would be a good idea to do the same. He pretty much shut that idea down and suggested I play drums instead. I got a drum set for Christmas, and the rest is history.

Griffin: I grew up in a house full of music – my mom raised us on Cat Stevens, the Beatles, and James Taylor records while my dad would play heavier seventies rock, like Rory Gallagher, Thin Lizzy, and Focus records.

My three siblings all had a big influence on me as well; my brother Conor's taste has been a massive influence—The Cure, Smashing Pumpkins, Talking Heads, Pink Floyd, Dinosaur Jr, Sonic Youth—the list goes on. I started cello and piano lessons when I was ten years old, and I knew immediately that I wanted to spend my life doing this. I studied classical organ and piano, and really love playing Bach, Chopin, and more avant-garde stuff like Messiaen just as much as I enjoy playing with The Highway and other rock projects.

Adam: Music always fascinated me. I always had a song stuck in my head, and I played with toy instruments, made "guitars" from stringing rubber bands across a shoebox. It was just something I had to do.

Which elements pointed you toward psychedelic music? And how did you develop your own unique mix of genres?

Adam: Aurally, one gravitates towards different styles of music the same way some people gravitate towards different types of food. I love hamburgers and I hate coleslaw. Some people love coleslaw. I don't know how you could hate hamburgers.

Daniel: Pretty much the idea to experiment a little more. Once you hear the word "psychedelic" you're inclined to look for what's behind that word, and of course the possibilities are endless. I guess the mix of genres comes about by doing this for a long time, the constant desire of solidifying what was sounding right. Also the number of musicians that have gone through this band is pretty amazing and each one of them helped in one way or another to shape things up through the years.

Ted: Psychedelic experiences themselves played a roll. I think taking an interest in psychedelic states, spirituality, the nature of reality and consciousness, things like that, is a natural thing that happens in one's life, maybe when entering one's twenties. Music and musical experiences are related to that, of course. The experience of watching a performance, of dancing, and especially of performing itself, is about as close to a spiritual experience as one can get without risking one's life.

In *The Doors of Perception* Aldous Huxley talks about another world, an inner world or a higher consciousness sort of thing, and he suggests that we humans have always been attracted to things that point us in the direction of this world. That's why we're fascinated by shiny things, flashy things, shooting stars, and sunsets. And a lot of our music, whether it's overtly psychedelic or not, tries to create that sense of wonder of the unknown which could be said to draw from that same place.

Griffin: The sixties music scene had been pretty much engrained into my body and soul by my upbringing. It only seemed natural to join forces with Daniel, Ted, and Adam. They have such a natural feel for this music.

I feel like we can read each other's minds when we play. I really connect with them. Also, Ted is an old family friend of my cousins from Connecticut— so he's my cousin!

(to be continued)



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to feel comfortable inserting your own views and ideas in your research articles--something otherwise shunned in academic writing.

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.

This week's focus is on a book titled *They Say I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. This book is the key to helping you advance your own voice in your academic writing.

Effectively Summarizing and Quoting What Others Say

In graduate studies, I came across a bunch of literature on a topic that seemed to have different interpretations. It was as if there was some agreement in certain places and some opposition in others and some entirely novel slants in yet others.

But, isn't that like life? So many new issues are presented in the, such as the "thigh gap". Beauty is relative. What was once pornography becomes commonplace. Morals change over time--and not necessarily for the better. Freedom of speech is a liberty to some and a curse to others. Every facet of life can be positioned as a debate that evolves out into some new facet.

That's why the conversation amongst researchers matter. Their voices influence the changing landscape of intellectual and contemporary thought, and your voice needs to be added in the mix as well. Yet, you first need to know how to succinctly summarize and quote what others are saying in your writing before you can leverage your own views.

Graff and Birkenstein (2010) have some suggestions for summarizing and quoting the material of others:

- make sure that your own voice is integrated within the summary. Add your own voice by honing in on the points that are most important to your own view that you intend to present.
- Try to pretend that you are an actor playing the part of the researcher you are about to summarize. See the world from his or her perspective, and summarize from that point-of-view.
- Avoid short sentence summaries that have loaded language. For instance, don't say that an author's point is "pure nonsense" or "contributes nothing to the ongoing debate." You want to be as objective and fair as possible in your representation of other's views.
- To understand the author's perspective, use your dictionary to look up any ambiguous terminology. Get to know their viewpoint intimately, and don't cite passages that you don't understand.
- Choose the author's points that best lead up to your argument. If, for instance, the author talks about obesity, and you want to make a point that parents are at fault in childhood obesity, select more of the points the author makes on the parents' role in obesity. In other words, make sure you summarize author's points that that align with your own argument.
- Make a "quotation sandwich" (p. 46). That is to say, introduce the quote speaker as the upper slice of bread. Follow the introduction with the actual quote. After that, proceed to add the bottom slice of bread, which is your explanation, or interpretation, of the quote, followed by why you feel the quote is relevant and meaningful in the context of your paper. Make sure the quotes support your own point-of-view, or if you are adding a naysayer, make sure that you have a quality rebuttal.
- Long complicated quotes need extra explanation on your part.

Inserting Your Voice: Whether You Agree, Disagree, or Agree and Disagree Simultaneously

In undergraduate studies and graduate studies, I would let the weight of the evidence guide my particular perspective on a matter. While not a bad strategy, sometimes we have our own ideas, our own experiences, and our own biases that could add meaning to a discussion on a particular topic. Should our own voice go by the wayside in academic writing?

Graff and Birkenstein (2010) suggest that we can take a stand on any discussion in the literature. We can agree, disagree, or agree and disagree simultaneously. Here's how they indicate we can insert our own views in academic writing:

- Believe the truth: you are more than intelligent enough to join any academic debate. You have more than enough experiences, background, and knowledge to contribute to any conversation.
- When you disagree, you need to offer persuasive reasons. These reasons could be that the author doesn't pay heed to relevant factors at play or that the author's reasoning is faulty, incomplete, or insubstantial. The reasons could also be that the author makes weak or erroneous assumptions, uses poor logic, contradicts him or herself, or doesn't address the bigger issue(s).
- You can always agree with one small point and then disagree on other points made by the same author--or vice versa.
- Be up front but considerate in your disagreement.
- When you agree, try to add more than just a rephrasing of the author's view. Add your own contribution. You could always try these strategies for adding your voice: discuss points that weren't elaborated by the author, but that could add to the argument; insert your own corroborating personal experience; introduce a situation that wasn't mentioned by the author, but that has relevance; simplify the author's argument in your own tidy explanation.
- When agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously, weight your argument slightly toward either agreement or disagreement. For instance, you could use the sentence "Although X was correct in the assumption Y, X failed to notice Z" to express primarily disagreement or ""Although X was incorrect in the assumption Y, X succeeded in noticing Z" to express primarily agreement.
- If you are ambivalent toward the author's point of view, go ahead and state your view as such. Say, "A reader with Y background could be of two minds about X's claim that..."

While these ideas are excellent for leveraging your own views, it is also noteworthy that following up your own view with supportive research and quotes can catapult your own voice into an even more credible position.

Answering the Big "So What?" and "Who Cares" Questions

When writing an academic piece, you always want to answer the questions "So what?" and "Who cares?" As a matter of fact, when writing anything under the sun, you want to answer these questions to the best of your ability, preferably before you begin drafting your article or book.

When you get to more advanced stages of your undergraduate degree or to any stage of your graduate program, you are usually expected to include some indication of why your writing matters and to whom it matters. Doing so may up your grade in addition to adding interest to your point of view.

I once wrote a paper on the major themes of one of Plato's works, but I never answered to myself, or within my paper, why these particular themes mattered in the scope of the assignment. By omitting this detail, I didn't let my reader (in this case, the instructor) know why these particular choices of themes in Plato's writing should be of any relevance to her day-to-day living. By omitting such detail, I stymied what might have been a more engaging relay of the themes. By answering the "So what?" question, you garner interest in your perspective. You make your article relevant to the reader. You up your grade and captivate the reader. Not a bad outcome for a little bit of thought investment.

Here are some tips for answering the "So What?" and "Who Cares?" questions of your articles as addressed by Graff and Birkenstein (2010):

- There are two primary questions you need to answer in your writing: "So what?" and "Who cares?" The "Who cares?" question should refer to a person or group, while the "So what?" question should apply to both some real world situation and the consequences of the matter in question.
- The "Who cares?" could be referring to, for instance, the scientific community. You could say that scientists used to think X, or that scientists long assumed X, or that scientists once believed X, but new insights have led to the realization of Y.
- But what if your readers are not scientists and still don't care. You could always appeal to the bigger picture--a larger issue that your discussion pertains to, such as racism, obesity, inequality, environmentalism, freedom of speech, and the like. You can always look at broader implications, major consequences, significant applications--or the very prominence of the work you are studying itself.
- Take the "So what?" question as far and as wide as you possibly can. This will imbue your writing with intrigue.

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

Graff, Gerald, & Birkenstein, Cathy. (2010). *They Say; I Say: The moves that matter in academic writing*. New York, NY: Norton & Company.



The Travelling Student On the Way Out

Philip Kirkbride



My name is Philip Kirkbride. I'm a college graduate from Ontario studying at AU. I've always wanted to do an exchange program or study abroad but never found the right time to do so. This is part seventeen in the story of how Athabasca University has allowed me to create my own study abroad program. In part sixteen I caught up with Matt who had been brush cutting in remote areas of Quebec. The lack of response from the Australian government in regards to his work visa had us both waiting in anticipation.

Another two weeks passed as I waited in Quebec to hear back about Matt's visa application. Matt had moved from Northern Quebec to Trois-Rivieres, a small town between Montreal and Quebec, and the brush cutting

company was now working on a contract for Hydro-Quebec. Instead of getting paid for how much they cut, everyone was now being paid a flat rate—around \$350 daily. In addition to the good pay, the work load had become easier. For at least a few hours each day workers congregated in a circle to chat, drink beer, and smoke. When I heard this, part of me wished I had pushed through and stayed at the camp. Though, in the end, I consider the path I took an investment in my education that I won't regret.

Matt still hadn't heard back about his visa application. I was getting nervous because I had invested a lot of time in creating a master plan on how to get to Australia cheap. Through analyzing common flight routes, and current promotions I found an insanely cheap route using a combination of what I'll call travel hacks.

The first segment of our trip would be to Las Vegas. Starting on October 31st there would be a hackathon in Vegas called Money 20/20. A hackathon is an event usually lasting several days where a large number of people meet to engage collaborative computer programming. Often prizes are given out, in the case of Money 20/20, a total of \$125,000 in prizes would be given out. Money 20/20 brings together the biggest companies in finance and electronic payments including MasterCard, PayPal, and Visa.

I'd found out from a friend that the hackathon included a promotion where anyone competing would get a \$250 credit towards their flight and hotel. Instead of booking a single ticket to Vegas I was able to find a flight to Honolulu, with a 4 day stopover for in Vegas for \$400. I had a \$350 flight voucher from United for agreeing to be bumped off a flight the year before. In addition I had an unrelated promo which got me 4 nights free at a hotel, all be it a low-end hotel. All in all I'd be able to get stop in Vegas and get to Hawaii with a small profit. I'd spend 4 nights in Honolulu and then fly into Sydney for another \$450. Opposed to a one way flight to Sydney for \$1300.

I feared if I didn't jump on the deal soon it'd pass me by. Not only that, but I was genuinely excited to go to the Money 20/20 Hackathon. The conference and hackathon directly related to the e-Commerce course I'd recently started, and I felt meeting people in the industry would inspire me to do even better.

That said, I was unsure about travelling into the outback of Australia alone. While I'd camped as a child, it'd been a while and I knew going with Matt would make things go a lot smoother.

Time quickly passed as I waited for Matt's response for his Australian visa. My landlord was growing impatient needing to know if I'd be moving out at the end of October or staying longer. I had to make a decision, with or without Matt. Without too much thought I considered the adventures that would await. With that I made the leap. Within minutes I was on the Australian website finishing my visa application.

The first year visa application is very straight forward. In about an hour it was all filled out, and the hardest part was giving up the \$420 administration fee to process my application. For Matt, doing his second visa, the process was much more complicated. Canadians between 18 and 31 are eligible for a single working visa which lasts a year after entry into the country. Canadians who finish three months of qualifying work may qualify for a second visa.

Over the next week I would prepare my large, 70L backpack and laptop bag, the only luggage I would bring with me for potentially the next year. Our first stop—or my first stop, as Matt had yet to get a visa with no hint that he would, was Las Vegas. My week of preparation also included re-visiting my favourite Quebec City locations to reminisce on the months that had passed in the beautiful city.

Among these favourite spots were the previously mentioned:

- La Bureu du Poste, a restaurant previously mentioned with both excellent food and cheap prices for your student budget. Located in St Roch neighbourhood with plenty of young patron and skateboards lining the wall, La Bureu du Poste is a restaurant I highly recommend, be prepared for a line.
- Bruleriede Cafe, a favourite espresso bar among both locals and tourists. In addition to having excellent espresso drinks it's a great place to brush up on your French or study. In a city where reliable

wifi hotspots are hard to come by, Bruleries is for the most part reliable. On one of my many visits I was given an assortment of beers to sample alongside fresh oysters from PEI.

- Walking along the city fortifications for an amazing view of the city.
- The famous Old Quebec City. This goes without saying, as Old Quebec is one of Quebec's top tourist destinations. That said, Old Quebec feels different from the rest of Quebec City. It inspires a feeling of youthful energy in awe of historic buildings, rich history, and culture.

After all that, I found myself completely packed and ready to say goodbye to Quebec City. It was October 30th, my flight was scheduled to leave the next morning, and Matt, who had still received no response on his Australian visa, had made his way back to Ontario.



Primal Numbers Apps in Court

S.D. Livingston



You probably think you know the trade-offs in sending loads of personal data into the cloud. The app makers give you fun and convenience. You give them a goldmine of data to sell or use in other profitable ways. But there's another way all that data might be useful: as evidence in a court room. As one recent case shows, Big Brother isn't only watching. He could also become a witness.

In a case reported in *The Atlantic*, a client's Fitbit data is being used to prove a personal injury claim. It's a Canadian case that involves a former personal trainer who was injured. The data collected and stored by the Fitbit

device and app will serve as a sort of silent witness, to demonstrate the long-term effects on the plaintiff's health and activity levels.

Way back when the first app makers started tinkering with code, it's doubtful they could have foreseen the day when these handy little programs would be used in a court of law. But in some ways, apps seem tailor-made for the job. Take a fitness app, for example. Weeks or months of data could provide an impartial baseline that proves a lot about a person's health and lifestyle. A very useful set of data that could bolster your case—unless, of course, it was used in court against you.

Suppose, for instance, you've been busily tracking your sleep patterns and calories. You don't always go to bed at a regular time, and you've got a few too many glasses of wine or pieces of cake in your app data. But recording all those not-so-healthy habits just keeps you motivated to make improvements, right?

Of course it does, until the day your insurance company uses all that data to deny you a claim for benefits. Or an employer uses it to fight your case for wrongful dismissal. Poor sleep habits? A touch of insomnia? No wonder you weren't performing well on the job.

In all fairness, the argument can be made that other types of personal data, like medical records, have long been used as legal proof. But there are two major differences between that and the use of app data in court cases.

One is the sheer volume of data that's being fed into apps or collected by wearable trackers. A database full of details on exercise regimes, sleep patterns, diet, heart rate, and other metrics paint a far more detailed picture than the height, weight, and blood pressure from an annual checkup. Combined, all those entries on your app are an even more powerful tool.

The second difference is that the app data being used (at least in the court case mentioned above) isn't only specific to the person involved. As *The Atlantic* article notes, "it is not the raw Fitbit data that will be used in the courtroom." Instead, it's comparative data that's been filtered through a third-party analytics company.

In other words, millions of pieces of data from other people, using a variety of different devices that measure things with varying degrees of accuracy, crunched into a result to show where a person falls on a so-called normal spectrum. Depending on which company is doing the analyzing, and which methods they're using, the evidence may not be as conclusive as it seems.

Is the average person likely to have their workout schedule or Big Mac habit used as evidence in a court case? Probably not. But Big Brother *is* watching. And next time you see him, he might just be wearing a judge's robe.

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.



Exams: Online vs. Paper?

Barabara Lehtiniemi



It may seem a contradiction but, while I prefer paper over e-texts, I prefer online over paper exams.

When I clicked the "submit" button on my latest exam, I felt satisfied. Not only was another exam out of the way and another course completed, but I didn't have to pop a painkiller to ease my aching arm. After writing three paper exams and three online ones, I definitely prefer the latter. Here's why:

Less agony. I don't enjoy handwriting, whether print or cursive. My writing has always looked tortured, and it feels the same way. My written work is now

primarily done with a keyboard and I only handwrite when I have no other choice. Lengthy written answers on a three-hour paper exam requires exercising hand and wrist muscles that are unaccustomed to use. It's a challenge to keep my writing legible long enough to write a grocery list, let alone a 500-word essay. After a three-hour paper exam, my arm is ready to fall off. Not so with an online exam. I've been typing for decades and much of my working career has involved sitting at a computer. I can type quickly with a fair degree of accuracy. And I know that my tutor will be able to read the results when he or she marks my exam.

Less time wasted. With a paper exam, the first ten minutes is chewed up filling out required fields on the exam (name, student number, etc) and then again on each answer booklet. Online exam time is not wasted in this way. Once I'm logged into the exam, every minute of time is usable exam time.

Reduced vulnerability. One worry with a paper exam is its journey back to Athabasca. If a paper exam is lost in the mail, as described in this 2014 *The Voice Magazine* [article](#), you can expect to re-write it. No fun! Online exams take a direct e-route to the marker. While there are vulnerabilities with online, such as power outages, dodgy internet connections, and the unpreventable "that shouldn't happen" computer glitch, consequences are usually less severe. Online exam answers are auto-saved throughout, and exam invigilators have resources to deal with unexpected issues.

Quicker results. With a paper exam, I have no idea when to expect my marks. I have to allow time for the invigilator to mail it, Canada Post to sort and deliver it, and then the mail room at AU to forward it to my tutor. (If you write at an AU exam centre in Alberta, your exam takes a more direct route.) Then my tutor has to mark it within a reasonable time frame—which doesn't seem to be accelerated by me obsessively checking my grades in myAU. On average, I wait one month after writing a paper exam to receive my marks. With an online exam, delivery is instantaneous. For my one multiple-choice exam, I had computer-generated marks within minutes of completing the exam. For exams with long answers, my marks were ready in about a week.

On the downside. Online exams aren't perfect, of course. For starters, I'm using an unfamiliar computer. The public library computer on which I wrote my most recent online exam had a few sticky keys that needed extra force. Secondly, online exam software is not as familiar as everyday computer programs. Unlike Word, a MuchLearning exam will never underline misspelled words, so my proofreading skills need to be sharp. Additionally, not all shortcut keys that I commonly use work in an exam environment. For example, my attempt to use the shortcut "Alt+130" to type an accented "é" in my recent exam resulted in the computer kicking me out of the exam for a few tense minutes. Finally, there is the persistent uneasiness that some minor computer blip will result in disproportionately major consequences.

Online exams won't be everyone's favourite method of exam writing. (My sympathies to all you two-fingered typists, and those of you with limited computer experience.) However, I'm so satisfied with online exams that part of my course selection process is to check AU's [list](#) of courses with online exams.

AU's attempt to move from paper to e-texts may have been an ill-conceived disaster, but their move from paper to online exams gets two thumbs up from this student.

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

Get Paid to Shop!

MYSTERY SHOPPERS NEEDED NOW

Earn \$28.00 per Hour

Get Free Merchandise, Free Meals & More

Call Now

226-777-8653

email: adatervicepro@gmail.com

Writer's Toolbox

Who Am I, Really?

Christina M. Frey



Writing is personal.

Sometimes it's personal in content, like a journal or memoir—or sometimes there are personal aspects, like a character who goes through a painful experience similar to something in your own history. Then there's the catharsis that can come from getting confused or angry or sad thoughts onto paper, and the vindication you feel when you turn your real-life nemesis into your story's villain. And who can ignore the hours of proverbial blood, sweat, and tears that go into a writing project you pour your heart and soul into?

But I'm talking about a different kind of personal.

The writer's voice

It's not just what you put on that paper or screen, it's how you put it—and that *how*, that personal style, is a part of you, a reflection of you, an aspect of you that you're sharing with the world. That's

your own personal writing voice, and it's as unique to you as your fingerprints.

Unlike your fingerprints, though, your voice isn't static—and that can be a tremendous source of confusion and frustration.

Who am I, really?

Among writers, the idea of a personal voice or style is so highly valued that it's easy to become overprotective of your voice, stifling your growth. At the same time, beginning writers might feel overwhelmed by all the "one best way to write" articles and find themselves grasping for something, anything, with which they can prove themselves in the writing world.

The solution to both is experimentation—and time.

Try something old

Developing your personal style is like the process of evolution; it takes a long time to accomplish, and it happens through trial and error.

Beginning writers often try to mimic a favourite author's style, and though you might someday cringe at your attempts (I certainly do at mine!), that kind of experimentation can be a good way to start the creative process. It's also helpful when you're not sure how to write your way into a new genre or audience.

The key is not to worry about creating something new, but to free yourself to explore your writing voice within safe boundaries. Can you write Shakespeare-style? Can you put together a Grisham-esque scene? Try it and see—but don't become so starstruck that you fear your own personal voice, either. Treat your experimentation as a conversation with your writer side rather than a firm directive on How You Must Write.

Try something new

It's normal to feel protective of your voice, rejecting anything that might change or influence the way you create. It's normal to want to churn out masterpieces right off the bat. But loosening up a little is another good way to allow yourself to grow and develop your style, especially if you're an experienced writer—or an overanxious one.

To get past some of your personal writing hang-ups, do a bit of freewriting, or writing without thinking about the result. This means no self-editing—and no judgment. No worrying about whether it's *you* enough. If you're really stuck, try your hand at a completely different genre, mood, or theme than you're used to working with.

The voice within

Your writing voice makes your writing unique, so give it the space it needs to grow and solidify. Over time you'll find yourself a more flexible writer—with a stronger, more versatile personal voice that's still identifiable as your own.

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](#).

Click of the Wrist

Wasted Away

It's cold. It's bleak. Spring seems a long, long ways off. But there's good news: this Sunday is National Margarita Day (yes, it's a real thing!), and even though the holiday's origins are probably mostly commercial, a margarita sounds like a reasonable substitute for the warmth of sunnier climes. Here's what you need to know to celebrate:

A Drink Is Born

Where did the margarita originate—and what's the tequila connection? For those curious about the history of the popular drink, the *Huffington Post* sorts out the details.

All Things Margarita

The National Margarita Day site's blog is a fascinating treasure trove of all things margarita—not just history and trivia, but also instructions for margarita-inspired beauty products, recipes for celebratory snacks, and fun memes to share on your Facebook profile. For the diet-minded, there are even recipes for "skinny" and "paleo" versions of the drink!

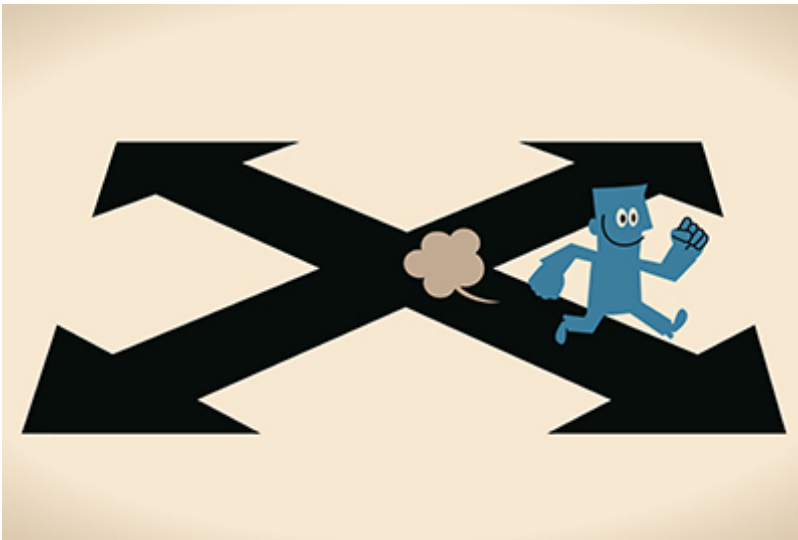
The Weird and the Wonderful

Bored with the same old, same old? If you're feeling adventurous, check out these uncommon margarita recipes. Does strawberry sriracha sound good? Orange salted caramel? Pumpkin spice? Or if greens are your thing, there's even a recipe for a kale margarita. Bottoms up!



The Career Path

Marie Well



Blogging and Podcasting For Money

While blogging or podcasting may not be the most effective form of raising capital, if you have a passion or expertise—any kind of knowledge to share with others—it can be a rewarding entrepreneurial side-activity. Plus, blogging can be a leverage for any existing business you may be affiliated with, or any marketing activities within your present company of employ.

With that said, there are two primary venues for blogging: (1) text-based blogging through Web media such as Wordpress and (2) podcasting for eventual submission onto iTunes and other audio forums. Another key form of blogging, video blogging on platforms such as Youtube, won't be discussed in detail in the context of this article.

My Blog

Recently, I watched a video course offered on Udemy.com that teaches the steps to podcasting. It is a podcast training session by tech podcaster, Steve Cherubino, and the course itself is called "It's Time To Podcast -- 10 Hours of Podcast Training". The course was marvellous, and is sufficient on its own to get you up-and-running with your podcast almost immediately after viewing the course. The course costs \$47, but if you are interested in getting started with an iTunes podcast, then the investment is more than worth the cost.

Immediately after viewing the course, I set up a Wordpress site, which took all of thirty minutes using Bluehost, which I'll discuss momentarily. Once set up, there was a free plug-in to download to make the site iTunes RSS feed ready.

However, my site has remained dormant, as I discovered through the copyright law with podcasting that I would need permission from copyright holders to refer to various authors' ideas. Although my site sits dormant, I've discovered that the best way to make ongoing original content is to use primary research methods for gathering materials, such as interviews, focus groups, and observations. This way, you ensure original content on a weekly basis. Yet, setting up an audio podcast, which is my intention, would require some additional checks as interviews recorded over the phone result in poor sound quality.

In spite of this pitfall in audio quality over the phone, Steve Cherubino, in his podcast, does a marvellous job of helping his viewers set up their systems for guest speakers and the like. Yet, this process doesn't come as readily for a non-tech such as myself, as Steve recommends courses of action such as setting up different sound cards for different speakers, which left me slightly befuddled. Nonetheless, his course is highly recommendable for getting started with podcasting, and sound editing software, such as the free Audacity, is one means of overcoming difficulties with audio quality when interviews are recorded over the phone or through skype.

Different Kinds of Text-Based Blogs You Can Start

Brett Snyder's book *How to Start a Home-Based Blogging Business* outlines a number of different blog platforms that you can readily access. These include the free blogger.com, which is a great beginner platform; movabletype.org; typepad.com, another beginner platform; tumblr.com, a microblogging platform; wordpress.com, the ultimate in beginner blogs with lots of tutorial support available; and wordpress.org, which you self-host through sites such as Buehost.com.

Both Text-Based Blogging—and Podcasting—Can Be Done through Wordpress

With Wordpress, you will find a ton of support for helping you get started. The free AUSU membership site, called lynda.com, offers all kinds of Wordpress tutorials that even extend into online shopping carts and digital downloads, for those with a more product-sales bias. But, for everyday text blogging, Wordpress is ideal. You can even add in plug-ins, such as Blubrry PowerPress, which you can get at the following url: <https://wordpress.org/plugins/powerpress/>. This plugin is fully iTunes compatible and will get your RSS feed audio compliant for delivery on multiple podcasting platforms. Steve Cherubino's Udemey course, as mentioned above, is the idea learning tool for implementing the Blubrry plug-in, and the process is quite simple once you have basic know-how with Wordpress.

Bluehost.com Gives You a Simple Way to Start a Wordpress Site for Around \$10/Month

One quick and efficient means of setting up your Wordpress site, which will take all of a half hour or so of your time, is to use bluehost.com's dedicated Wordpress feature. One option is to set up a Wordpress hosting purchase that will allow you five Wordpress sites with up to 100 million visits per month allotted. Plus, it includes one free domain and one free IP address. The price is \$12.49 US for the first month and, thereafter, \$24.99 US per month. If that is too much for the budget, although not featured on the Wordpress hosting page, the Bluehost staff presented to me over the phone the alternative of getting one Wordpress site for less than \$10 US per month.

Once set up, you can then purchase themes and plug-ins for your site. The themes can include beautiful appearances for your blogging/podcasting site, but make sure that the theme has compatibility with any podcasting plug-in you might want to include. If you want to take your site to the next level and have an ecommerce component, make sure the theme enables that kind of delivery as well.

Ways to Monetize Your Blog

Brett Snyder, in his book *How to Start A Home-Based Blogging Business* outlines a number of ways to monetize your blog. For starters, he suggests charging members for access. While this may seem like a relatively fundamental way to monetize your blog, there are heavy costs in setting up a website that takes log-ins and payments. A lot of the companies that build websites in Calgary charge at least \$1500 for such a site, so plan on making a heavy investment at the outset for log-in membership sites and payment gateways.

Another way Snyder recommends you monetize your blog is through freemium sites, which offer a base level of content for free and then charge for any of the "extras". Yet another way to charge visitors is through donations, although Snyder doesn't believe the donation model to be sustainable over time. Advertising, such as posting pay-per-click ads from other companies on your site is yet another way to make money off your content. You can also place an advertisement for another company on your site with a simple insertion of a graphic image into your html. You can also sell your content to third-parties through licensing. You can sell products on your content site, such as through Amazon, Zazzle or CafePress. Lastly, and as recommended by both Steve Cherubino and Snyder, you can sell sponsorships. This is especially true if you are doing an iTunes

podcast. You might just find companies approaching you for sponsorship spots, placed either verbally on your podcast or textually on your podcast Website.

Microphone and Software Set-Up for Podcasting

I purchased a Blue Yeti USB microphone for professional recording from Chapters bookstore's Apple store, available in select Chapters locations, although you can also buy the Yeti from Amazon.ca for around \$150 when on sale. This microphone has a simple user interface and you can have it set up on your computer, ready for recording, in a matter of minutes.

As for software, you can choose from the free Audacity program, which has support files on the Internet, or you can get Adobe Audition bundled with your student Adobe cloud subscription for roughly \$15.99 US a month.

iTunes

Lastly, to submit your Wordpress podcast to iTunes, just go to iTunes podcasts and click on "Submit a Podcast" in the right-hand side menu. From there, you just simply enter the RSS feed that your Wordpress site provides. Cherubino mentioned in his podcast that you would need another service to make the Blubrry plugin compatible for the iTunes RSS feed, but he later retracted in a comment, indicating that the Blubrry plugin in your Wordpress site was all that was needed.

International News Desk

At Home and Abroad



At Home: Universities Allowed to Hire Temporary Foreign Workers

The Globe and Mail is reporting that the federal government will allow post-secondary institutions to hire temporary foreign workers to high paying jobs without having to report the federal government as to how these jobs will be transitioned to Canadian citizens. Instead, post-secondary institutions will be required to make reports to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

The report goes on to say that in most cases, post-secondary institutions hiring foreign workers are planning to hire them as full academics, but the temporary foreign worker program allows them to bring those people over to Canada more easily.

Around the Globe: Harvard Goes to Court over Climate Change

Law students at Harvard University are putting their education to use by taking their own school to court, demanding that it be required to remove all fossil fuel companies from its investment portfolio. The case argues that the university has a duty to fight climate change, and that the investments contribute to "current and future damage to the University's reputation and that of its students and graduates." The suit is asking that Harvard be required to immediately withdraw approximately 79 million dollars from direct investments in coal, oil, and gas companies and begin phasing out any other investments that hold such companies in their portfolios. The Guardian reports that 230 faculty members have signed a letter urging Harvard to divest itself of these companies, and 34 students engaged at a sit-in in the University President's offices.



A Change of Scenery

Some days when a poor columnist's brain seems shriveled and bereft of a fresh new idea (or a new take on an old idea) she is forced to create one of those compilation or list type pieces.

Having a theme is preferable of course but sometimes a selection of interconnected bits that could be skillfully woven together just isn't there when you need them. Some topics will never grow up to be full-blown columns, not because they aren't important enough, but because most writers return again and again to those topics that naturally interest or plague them. We write to understand something or more accurately ourselves.

Ponder these.

1. Consider how the federal government continues to hurt the very military veterans they profess to value so deeply in speech after speech. We all understand that like our own resources, government coffers are finite. But no one can tolerate this ongoing hypocrisy. Perhaps the new Minister Jason Kenney will be able to mitigate the damage done by predecessor Julian Fantino. It's time.

2. Though I'm older than the four hosts of CTV's daily show The Social or even their target demographic, I love the show. It's so much politer (read: less shrieking and interrupting) than the American equivalent The View. Yet it's relevant, sexy, cutting edge, and so funny. I feel it's keeping this old gal in the know about what's hot and what's not. And it's Canadian!

3. The recent regimental funeral for Cst. David Wynn was a somber yet spectacular outpouring of love and respect for one special man and the policing/first responder family he represents. Whose heart didn't break watching his boys try to remain strong in front of our country as their hearts were breaking with personal loss? If his death is to serve any purpose whatsoever it should lead to an examination of the factors that led to his killer being allowed to 'walk among us.' As a Justice of

the Peace for more than thirty years I've known a number of Mounties and have some understanding of the danger their days entail. Who among us would step forward to accept those risks? Not I.

4. On my fridge is a Rhymes with Orange cartoon from last fall. It spoke to me. I also knew Hilary, the consummate over-packer needed to see it. It showed an open suitcase and three arrows pointing towards work you won't do, clothes you won't wear, and books you won't read. OMG. Talk about getting real. It niggled at me as we packed for our first ever cruise and the reality of airline luggage fees. Lord knows I'm trying to be smart. I took my Kobo but never even fired it up. Read paper books instead. Never took the laptop so that helped. We rechecked the clothes we packed before the final zip up. Foregoing the weight of a guilty conscience also helped.

Only time will tell if a change of scenery will provide new material for the column, from where I sit.

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

Music Review

Singles by Duke Dumont

Samantha Stevens



Artist: Duke Dumont

Singles: "I Got U" and "Won't Look Back"

Techno and dance music can be fun and uplifting at times, and Duke Dumont's latest singles "Won't Look Back" and "I Got U" (featuring Jax Jones) will get you moving with a big smile on your face, whether you are on the dance floor or just dancing in your chair. Once again, I am not typically a fan of techno and dance music, but these singles are suitable for the club or on your playlist to give you some extra pep while you are out for a jog.

Duke Dumont is a British DJ and music producer. In 2007 he released his first EP, and in 2013 his single "Need U" topped the UK singles chart. In December 2013, Duke Dumont released "I Got U" featuring Jax Jones, which also topped the UK singles chart. "I Got U" includes vocals from session singer Kelli Leigh's

performance of "My Love is Your Love", and Dumont apparently was inspired by the original recording of that song by Whitney Houston. In August 2014, he then released "Won't Look Back" which rose to be number 2 in the UK charts.

"I Got U" featuring Jax Jones is adorable. The song starts off with a blend of voices, which sound to me like children's laughter. By the time the singing starts I am hooked on this song. The lyrics are full of love and hope, and the singing is a soft feminine voice occasionally accompanied by male vocals. I really like how Duke Dumont framed the vocals by having the first part of the song stop while the singer becomes the predominant focus, and the beat softens to add a subtle sensuality to the song. Overall, I really like this song.

"Won't Look Back" is more of a dance club song with its heavy beats and powerful female singing. In fact, this song reminds of something that would have been created by Love Inc. in the 90s. There is definitely a 90s feel to this song. The one thing that I really like in this song is the piano. It is as abrupt and forceful as the vocals, creating a really heavy sound when paired with the typical techno beats. This song isn't really to just sit and listen to, I think I would prefer this song on my workout playlist.

So if you are a fan of dance music, or simply looking for something fun and whimsical, be sure to check out Duke Dumont's latest singles. The songs may have been intended for dance clubs, but I think both songs will work great as workout music or while taking a fun road trip. Both "I Got You" and "Won't Look Back" are available as a radio edit and extended respectively, and a variety of remixes are available for both on iTunes.

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



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Things Lost

Dear Barb:

My friend's dog suddenly dropped dead. Her dog was only five years old and well taken care of and very healthy. She is totally devastated and I don't know what to say to comfort her. Jessie dropped dead right in front of her and there was nothing she could do. How do you comfort someone who has lost a pet? Thanks, Amy.

Hi Amy:

So sorry for your friend's loss. Losing a pet can be as devastating as losing a child or other family member. They have been by your side daily, probably for years, and their loss leaves a huge hole in your heart and your life. There are things a broken-hearted person can do to help them work through their grief, however I don't think there is anything you personally can do, except to be a supportive listener for your friend. Many websites offer advice on how to deal with the loss of a pet. Perhaps you could help your friend to find a way to say goodbye to her beloved pet, as obviously she did not have that opportunity. Saying goodbye may include writing a letter to your pet or simply saying the words to yourself or out loud, as well as praying for your pet's peaceful transition to the afterlife. It takes time and the grieving process is different for everyone, so don't expect your friend to "get over it" this will come when the time is right. Thanks for your question Amy.

Dear Barb:

Hi, I am a thirty-five year old woman and I'm still single. I've had lots of relationships, but they never seem to work out. Sometimes it's his fault and sometimes it's my fault. I really can't figure out why I keep picking guys that I am not compatible with. Could there be something wrong with me, or maybe I really want to be alone. I believe that I want a husband and kids, but it just never works out. Do you have any advice for me? Tiffany.

Hi Tiffany:

Thanks for your question. I think a lot of people in today's society will be able to relate to you. In a society where 50% of marriages fail, it doesn't make a person want to take that chance. Relationships are hard work and require a lot of compromise and tolerance. Often people enter into relationships or marriages and believe that they will be able to change the person into someone they want them to be. That does not happen. People are who they are and do not change their basic personality. They may change some of their behaviours, but not who they are. Perhaps you are trying too hard and overlooking obvious incompatibilities early on, but inevitably they come to the surface. Try to relax and allow the future to unfold as it is supposed to; you might be surprised with who comes along.

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

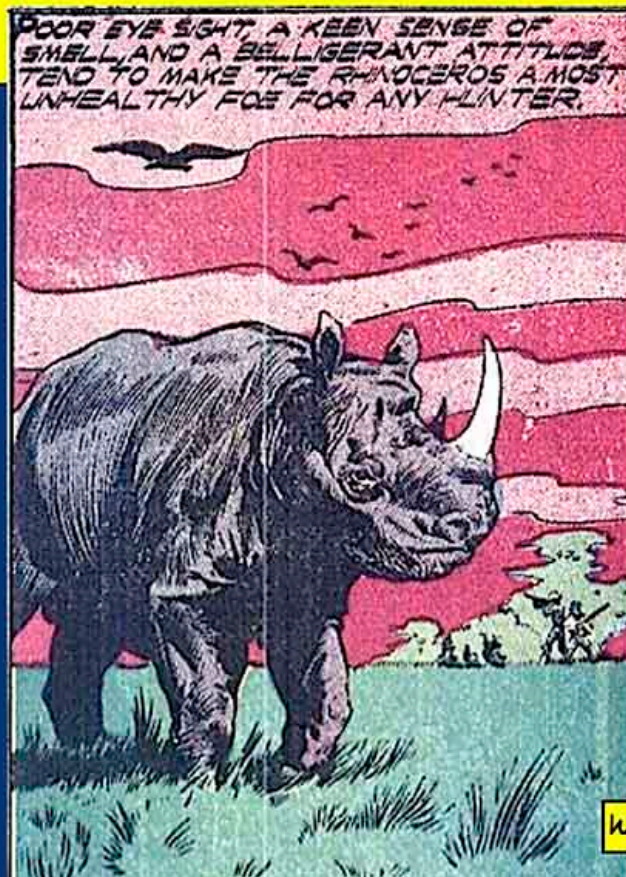
Weird Canada

WEIRD POLITICAL PARTIES DEPARTMENT:

The Rhinoceros Party was formed in the 1960's. It was thus named because, as party members claimed, the rhinoceros is "thick-skinned, slow-moving and not too bright, but can move fast as hell when in danger."

The party lay dormant for decades until 2007, when the party's president, Brian Salmi, legally changed his name to Satan and filed a \$50 million lawsuit (Satan v. Her Majesty the Queen) which was later dropped. He then ran in a Federal byelection with the following promises:

1. to rename Canada "Nantucket"
2. to turn Ste-Catherine Street, Montreal, into the world's longest bowling alley
3. to ban Canadian winters
4. to not keep any of his promises if elected



WANDA WATERMAN



AUSU
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

This space is provided free to AUSU: The Voice does not create this content. Contact ausu@ausu.org with questions or comments about this page.

Featured AUSU Member Service: Advocacy

A key role of AUSU is advocacy, both at the individual and institutional level.

Strength is in numbers, and the goal of any students' union is to provide a unified voice for the student community to accomplish things we could not do alone. All AU undergraduates pay SU fees, so AUSU represents all undergrads.

If you require advocacy or mediation on any issue, or even some support and information, you should not hesitate to contact AUSU. We provide advocacy for both individuals and for the membership as a whole.

For more information on how AUSU can help you, please visit AUSU's website at:
<http://www.ausu.org/services/advocacy.php>

Great AU Finds Online

The Write Site – A fantastic resource for students who need help writing academic papers. It includes drills and exercises, writing assessment tools, links to writing resources, and samples of various types of papers.

If you need more help, a writing coach can provide one-on-one support. The site received many requests, so check back every hour or so if the queue is full.

Visit the site to find out more about how the Write Site can help you to improve your academic writing:
<http://write-site.athabascau.ca/>

AUSU Featured Groups & Clubs

Group Name: **Athabasca University (@AthabascaU)**

Where: **Twitter**

Members: 7431 followers

About: Social media tweets from AU. Others can use hashtags to post on this site.

Activity: Almost 3000 tweets since February 2009.

IMPORTANT DATES

- February 27: Last business day to extend courses ending March 31
- March 10: Last day to register for courses starting April 1
- March 12: AUSU council meeting
- March 31: Last day to extend courses ending April 30



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:

Build Leadership Skills

Being a student at AU creates some difficulties in being able to hone leadership skills, yet every employer values them. Fortunately, lynda.com has training on a wide range of career and business skills. The Build Leadership Skills is ideal for new grads, or anyone seeking employment while they study. This stream of courses will teach you:

- How to be a leader people love to follow.
- How to uncover your hidden strengths and talents.
- How to inspire your team.

Have a look at this playlist and start using the skills in your everyday interactions outside of school!

Courses: 7

Duration: 8h 52m

Skill Level: Appropriate for all

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

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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

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

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Barbara Lehtiniemi, S.D. Livingston,
Wanda Waterman, Barb Godin, Christina Frey,
Samantha Stevens

www.voicemagazine.org

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

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

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

© 2014 by *The Voice Magazine*