

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 12 2015-03-20

Meeting the Minds

Dr. Terry Anderson, Part II

Frostbite and Felt-Packs

Nonsense about sensible footwear

A Second Look at Lynda

Get it while it's still here!

Plus:

*Open Mind, Open Hearts
The Night Before
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

EDITORIAL

Expert Advice

Karl Low



Our feature this week is the second part of the interview with Dr. Terry Anderson. The other half of the formative team behind the AU Landing, Dr. Anderson is a strong proponent of social media being used in teaching, and has a piece of advice for all online learners that might help them succeed in their courses.

Honestly, when it comes to social media, I'm still a bit lost by the appeal of the whole thing. I feel no need to share my life experiences or odd bits of time wasting things I've found on the net with everybody else. I'm sure they've got their own. More over, I really question the idea that we can form webs of knowledge and trust among the general population for the simple reason that most of the general population are not experts—on anything. Let's be honest, very few of us have enough training, practice, and skill to be truly called experts at something. We might be very good at something within our field, but there's a reason that doctoral degrees are so rare, and a reason that experts are singled out of the masses.

The sad fact is that in any crowd, the experts are going to be outnumbered. If they weren't, they wouldn't be the experts anymore, they'd just be part of the crowd. That's why universities and credentials were created in the first place, so that we could recognize the truly knowledgeable from the rest of us. The idea, as Dr. Anderson puts forward, that connectivism and developing networks moves us toward the future of education is countered, to me, by the idea of the democratic nature of the net. My stupid is simply not worth as much as an expert's knowledge. But how can you tell who's an expert and who isn't over the net? The Dunning-Kruger effect points out that we can't even self-evaluate very well, so how are we to evaluate others? I guess my fear of this idea of a network centered education is that you simply end up with a very large web of the blind leading the blind. But, as I've already pointed out, I'm no expert. And Dr. Anderson is. So maybe I've simply got it wrong.

In addition to our feature, however, we also have Barb Lehtiniemi giving us a second look at lynda.com, a sequel, if you will, to her first look that happened over a year ago. (If you're really interested, check out our archives, you'll find it in issue 2206). With the three year contract with lynda.com soon coming to an end at AUSU, it remains to be seen what will happen next.

A little more prosaic, Deanna Roney gives us an article about the difficulties of finding sensible women's footwear for a wedding. Honestly, I wasn't sure at first if it would be a good fit for *The Voice Magazine*, but if you think about this issue, you realize that in many ways it very much fits into the themes of how expectations of what is "normal" can make things difficult if you don't fall into that group and how all of us, as distance education students, are definitely not part of the "normal" of post-secondary students. I still haven't come to a final conclusion about what we can draw from it, but maybe that's a good thing. After all, if something can make us think, that's a good fit for *The Voice Magazine*.

Plus, don't forget our selection of reviews and other advice, all just waiting for you. Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl". The signature is stylized and cursive.

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



Dr. Terry Anderson is a Canadian Research Chair and on the editorial boards of several academic journals. He is also a teacher of AU's Masters of Distance Education program, and recently consented to be interviewed by The Voice Magazine by writer Marie Well.

*In the **first part** of the interview, Dr. Anderson spoke about the awards he has received, his philosophy of course design needing to incorporate assignments that provide practical experience, and how he has taken to using audio-recordings to provide comments and feedback to students' assignments.*

Marie: What pedagogical standpoint is most reflective of your way of teaching?

Dr. Terry Anderson: Jon Dron and I actually wrote an article a couple of years ago on the three generations of distance education pedagogy. The first generation we called cognitive behaviourism. That is the kind of pedagogy that is used in our undergraduate programs and in large lecture theatres on campus. The idea of that is that your role as a teacher is to disseminate information in a very clear way such that the

student can absorb what you are saying. You have very clear learning objectives so that everyone knows exactly what is happening and where they are going with no confusion.

So, I used to teach that way, especially when I was teaching high school students, but then, like most people in the 1990s, we fell into the constructivism pedagogies. These focused a lot more on small groups and how the group helps the individual construct their own knowledge. So that is what our graduate program at Athabasca focuses on, with their maximum of thirty students in real-time and asynchronous interactions.

I still do a little bit of that, but I think what I am most interested in now is in connectivism, where the idea is that it is not what you know, it is your capacity to know that counts. So, what you challenge your students to do is to develop networks that include not only people within and outside of the course, but also networks of the content that is out there: resources, Websites, and stuff of a similar nature. It is a very net-centric pedagogy that is evolving at this point. The individual who invented the term connectivism, is at Athabasca: George Siemens. He has been at Athabasca for about eight years, and he has a joint appointment with the University of Texas. Unfortunately, he got stolen away for half time.

Marie: If you could wave a magic wand and make changes at the university, what would they be?

Dr. Terry Anderson: I think it would be for students to have deep and rich social learning experiences. I think that developing a sense of camaraderie and that sense of helping each other, learning together, we can and we should develop more extensively within our online learning programs.

That is what Jon Dron and I have been doing by building the Athabasca Landing. We created an environment that any member of the Athabasca community can use for any non-commercial purpose. The nice thing about the Landing is that the President of the university has the exact same power as any undergraduate student. If an undergraduate student wants to start a new group about a course, they don't have to ask anybody, they just go ahead and do it. It is a special type of environment only available Athabasca University community, and therefore it is a safer environment. If you don't want your information shared on the wide open net, you can restrict anything you write or any group you've created or any photo you released to just people at Athabasca or people in your course or just your teacher or whoever you want. But at the same time you have the option of opening your work to views and comments from anyone—including Google search engines. It is designed to be a really empowering environment.

We thought it would be revolutionary for Athabasca. Unfortunately, the adoption is growing very slowly now after five years. We can't seem to get faculty to build it into their courses, and students don't use it for a variety of reasons. Maybe they don't even know about it. The undergrad program, where there is no student-to-student interaction, is where the Landing could be most effective. Yet, we haven't been able to do much in the undergrad programs.

Marie: How could a student start a group on the Landing and get people to join?

Dr. Terry Anderson: If you are a registered student, you would log into the Landing (landing.athabascau.ca), using the same log in you would use for the library or myau, and under groups you click "Start a New Group." You give it a name. You announce the group on the "wire" and you send an email to whomever you want to invite to the group. You can make it a closed group or an open group. Then anyone who has joined that group gets an announcement pushed to their email whenever there is a new posting, picture, or comment.

Marie: What are some of the highlights of your teaching experience?

Dr. Terry Anderson: I guess I'm a bit of a techno guy, and I like it when I'm able to use a new technology and see positive results. For instance, marking by voice was a highlight when I saw how effective it was and how it saved even me time. I think when I picked up a learning activity off of my own personal network, I have been able to pass things like articles to students. I think opportunities to bring my own personal network, my blogging, and putting that in a course is always quite exciting for me.

Finally, technologically, when I first came to Athabasca, we had no Web conferencing, so I had a small grant that came with my Canada Research Chair. So, I bought the first Web conferencing system that we use at Athabasca. It was funny because I thought, when it first came to Athabasca, it was really effective, and now, ten years later, it is getting used quite a bit. For the longest time, it was just Terry's research project. The computer services didn't support it. It was just sitting there on the side. That is exactly what the Landing is now. It is Terry and Jon's research project. It is not a project of Athabasca University yet—but I hope it will be integral to Learning at Athabasca someday.

Marie: What is your view of social media in the online learning environment?

Dr. Terry Anderson: I think it provides the glue that is really important to get students to have the energy because learning, especially at the university level, is usually quite hard work. Sometimes just knowing that other people are there, that they are struggling with the same things that you are struggling with, or that they can give you some advice or some help, really can make a huge difference.

I feel sorry for some of the undergraduate students who must feel all alone, like nobody else in the world is taking this same course. They could phone the tutor, I know that, but the fact is that that is very scary for a lot of people to

do. With social media, they don't have to write anything; they can just go and read what other people are saying. If they feel motivated, they can ask a question or make a contribution.

Marie: If you had one piece of advice for online learners, what would it be?

Dr. Terry Anderson: I think to get online, develop a net presence, develop your network, get off of Facebook for twelve hours a day and start exploring some of the other learning resources that are out there, some of the communities that are building nationally and internationally. For instance, if you are taking a language course, I would really encourage you to join one of the Web 2.0 chat groups and talk in that foreign language, with a native speaker of that language. In the process, you can help them learn English. This type of activity is usually outside of the course requirements, but it can be an immense help in acquiring proficiency in a foreign language. You gain social capital. You gain confidence. You contribute to the learning of other people.

Marie: What books of yours would you most recommend a student entering the education online program to read?

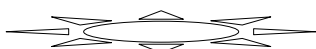
Dr. Terry Anderson: I think I am most proud of the one that Jon and I released this summer, which is *Teaching Crowds: Social Learning and Media*. That book is available free from Athabasca University Press. It talks about all the kind of social ways that learning is enhanced, and not just social in the sense of a group, like in a classroom, but social in the sense of a network of people who could be spread around the world and also social in the sense of people who share a common interest. For example, with Wikipedia, some of the larger articles are edited by forty, fifty people at different times. Those people are not a group, they are not even a network, and they don't know each other and have no interest in knowing each other, really. But, they are a set of individuals with a common interest in that topic. So, they have a social bond with it, and they contribute to it, they evaluate it, and they build together without the social obligations of the group or even of the network.

In the book, we talk about all three of those groups, nets, and sets and how they can be used in education and for informal learning as well.

Marie: What are groups, nets, and sets exactly?

Dr. Terry Anderson: A group is a group, as in a classroom. A net is a network, as in people on the Landing, for instance, or people who you are friends with on Facebook. A set is people who have a common interest. It could be the set of all students of Athabasca, who don't know each other, but have a common interest in learning at Athabasca. We have a relationship with those people, even though it is a very loose relationship, and what is of interest to somebody in that set could very likely be of interest to you.

For instance, The Voice readers are going to be reading the magazine, and they are not in a group. They are not in a network, but they are the set of people who are undergraduate students at Athabasca. So I hope they have a certain interest in reading this article and learning from it. Thanks for this opportunity.



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Frostbite and Felt-Packs

Deanna Roney



I have discovered something in the last year, not something wildly profound—and wildly frustrating. After having surgery on my ankle, I have lost the ability to wear heels—heels of any kind. I am hoping to, one day, gain this ability back, but for now it is my sad reality. I say sad not because I particularly like heels, but because it seems next to impossible to get a decent "dressy" shoe that is not a heel. Granted, where I live shopping is a bit more limited than other places. But, I have driven for an hour in one direction, and three and a half hours in the other direction for one purpose: seeking the elusive flat fancy shoe.

Last year I was looking for a more joyous occasion: my wedding. This year, sadly, it was the other end of the spectrum: a funeral. For my wedding I hunted high and low, if I could not go barefoot then I at least wanted a nice shoe. Not a sandal, but a shoe. I ended up having to order sandals online, but, before I succumbed to that, I shopped. When I went into stores to look, I would say I was, "looking for wedding shoes, but I need them to be flat." I swear the saleswoman would stop listening after hearing the word "wedding" and low and behold she brings out this beautiful shoe. Perfect for someone's wedding, just not mine, as it had a four-inch heel. Every time this happened I would have the same conversation with the saleswoman, each time my patience was wearing even more thin:

"Oh, well, it is for your wedding. Are you sure you can't even wear a small heel?" Her voice dripping with condescension.

I would once again explain that,

"No, I cannot wear a heel, it is not because I do not want to wear a heel, but due to surgery on my ankle I cannot wear a heel. Yes, those shoes are beautiful, but I would like to be able to actually WALK down the aisle."

It is a truly frustrating experience. If I was not limited in my shoe selection by my ankle I likely would have started the hunt for shoes with flats in mind, but would probably have ended up with some sort of a heel, because it at least suited the occasion. When I had this same experience only last week, it really made me wonder about the society we live in. It was one particular statement that made me stop and think:

"Why don't you try Valhalla, they have more practical shoes for walking around."

Valhalla is an outdoor store, similar to MEC. I have spent a small fortune in there outfitting myself for backpacking and kayak trips. While, yes, they have more flat shoes, they are all of that variety, not really filling my current need.

When facing these kind of patronising salespeople because I am looking for, of all the crazy things in the world, a formal flat shoe, it really makes me wonder at society. Why is it that society is brainwashed to believe we all have to dress alike, and look alike? Why is it that the only formal shoe readily available for women must be a high heel? I am sure there are plenty of women out there who would prefer a flat shoe and are wearing heels

because that is all they can find. I am also sure there are women who enjoy wearing heels, and who seek that kind of shoe. There is nothing wrong with that, I enjoyed them to a degree before I lost my ability to wear them. But, why can there not be more choice? Why must we be all jammed through the cookie cutter to all fit into what society deems appropriate? I know that, in the big picture, this is a small and frivolous thing. But, if we can't even get something so small and frivolous to change—what does that say about how far we have come in the deconstruction of antiquated social ideals?

I asked one of the shop owners if they would bring in more flat shoes. I relayed my frustrations in trying to shop for flats that are formal. While she seemed sympathetic and assured me there would be lots of flats to choose from coming in I have been going into that store for a couple years, looking at their numerous shoes, beautiful shoes, shoes that I cannot wear. In the summer months I have a bit more selection as a few more sandals come flat. But what about the times when the snow is flying? Which it does here at least seven months out of the year. Surely my choices should be more than frostbite or felt-packs.

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



Writer's Toolbox

Replace This

Christina M. Frey



You're rereading past issues of the Toolbox and realize that, oops! "Toward" isn't supposed to be spelled with an *-s*. And you're pretty sure you've spelled it that way quite a few times in your manuscript, but the thought of going through the whole 70,000-word document makes your eyes glaze over.

Enter the mighty and powerful Find and Replace.

F&R

Find and Replace—or F&R—is one of the editing tools that comes with Microsoft Word. The Find button alone is a great tool, as it allows you to search for terms quickly (what chapter does this character first appear in?); F&R is like the older, more powerful sibling.

In its simplest form, F&R finds and replaces text with text—like "towards" with "toward." It allows you to ensure consistent spelling and hyphenation throughout a long manuscript, and gives you the ability to make significant changes, like renaming your story's villain so that she no longer shares a name with your new boyfriend's mother.

You can also use F&R to replace double spaces with single spaces, space out ellipses, and make two-word nouns into hyphenated compounds. Or, if you tend to misuse a particular word, you can hunt down each instance and swap it with the correct word or concept.

Get Technical

Feeling ambitious? The basic F&R is already quite useful, but the drop-down menu under More can really transform your self-editing process. It allows you to search for (or replace with) words in a particular case, find whole words only (helpful if you're searching for a short word that is part of other, longer words), and more. The wildcard feature offers even more flexibility; for example, you can search for sneaky adverbs by running a Find on "*ly"—the * stands for any text, so the search snags any word ending in *-ly*.

And then clicking on the Format drop-down menu gives you even more customization power; you can specify font, colour, and other specific attributes for either your search term(s) or replacement(s). The Special drop-down menu includes special characters, like nonbreaking spaces (helpful for making sure your ellipses don't break over a line).

If you're curious about how to really make the more advanced features of F&R work for you, check out [this post](#) on "Advanced Find."

Don't Go Global

However, like many tools, F&R can make things worse if you don't keep it under control. Treat the F&R tool as a guide, but remember that it's not as smart as it thinks; never select Replace All, or you'll risk introducing more errors.

Applying F&R globally—e.g., to the entire document—can have bizarre results. A colleague of mine recently encountered a book in which a character named "Alice" had apparently had a name change to "Betty." The author had run F&R to make the change consistent, but had applied it to *all* instances of "Alice"—with no specification as to uppercase or lowercase. The result: "malice" appeared a few times as "mbetty."

Sometimes the errors are so small that it's hard to foresee potential problems. For example, you might decide to change all your straight apostrophes to curly ones—and then later notice that some of them are facing the wrong way. Going through each one individually using Find Next instead of Replace All would allow you to check that everything's lined up where it should be.

Or you might decide that you want "OK" to appear as "Okay." Applying it globally might result in a lot of improper lowercase or uppercase, because without a complicated macro or very specific instructions, Word can't make decisions about what should or should not be capitalized.

Choosing Find Next instead of Replace All is a lot more work, but you never know when F&R will be a little too accommodating of your request. Taking the time to go through each replacement is worth it to avoid jarring or distracting errors.

When you're self-editing, don't give over all the work to your software, but do make the software work for you. A little knowledge of Find and Replace, coupled with your own eagle eye, will help you bring consistency and readability to your manuscripts.

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](#).

The Mindful Bard

Wanda Waterman

dogwoof
dvd

ADVANCED



The New Rebel Yell is Coming From the Senior's Corner

Film: *Advanced Style*

Director: Lina Plioplyte

"You make me feel so young.
You make me feel as though spring has sprung.
And every time I see you grin,
I'm such a happy individual."

- from "You Make Me Feel So Young," by Joseph Myrow and Mack Gordon

Style

A FILM BY LINA PLIOPLYTE & ARI SETH COHEN



Why do gorgeously dressed older women make such a profound impression? In part, it's because they defy our social expectations, but also because they defy our *aesthetic* expectations; *dressing well shouldn't matter to older women*, is the unconscious assumption, *because beauty is a means to an end, and they've already done all they're going to do*. Well, bollocks to all that, say a growing demographic of spunky dames who refuse to sink into the background just because of a few

wrinkles and grey hairs.

It all started with street photographer Ari Seth Cohen's famed [blog](#) of the same name. Cohen loved taking pictures of sensationally dressed older women on the streets of New York, and he eventually put together a blog as a means of reversing the invisibility of the elderly in a culture that worships and celebrates youth. His initiative challenged the marketing focus of a country in which less than 5% of advertising directed at Baby Boomers even though it's the Baby Boomers who are doing 49% of the buying.

When Lithuanian born filmmaker, Lina Plioplyte, quite the style maven herself, met Ari Seth Cohen and learned about his blog, she had to put her oar in, and her involvement spun into this, her first feature film.

They're a bit of a historical abnormality, these over-60 birds; they grew up steeped in a youth culture that immunised them against abandoning a youthful outlook, and yet they consider the pursuit of youth a waste of time and energy. As Joyce Carpati puts it, "I never wanted to look young; I just wanted to look great."

With nary a hint of nagging militance, they've created a social movement that refuses to cave to the prevailing social expectations of what elderly women should be: demure, modest, conservative, conventional, quiet, and undemanding—having surrendered their hopes and dreams in a resigned anticipation of the grim reaper.

It's not that these style icons are trying to distract themselves from the inevitability of their imminent demises. They actually joke about how little time they have left and are ever ready to talk about their ailments and how hard it is to lose family and friends. But they're darned if they're going to huddle in a corner and give over the business of living and making a spectacular appearance. Their way of dressing isn't meant as an "in your face" to social conventions, but let's face it—the social conventions don't have a chance.

Take a look at artist and art teacher, Ilona Royce Smithkin, 94, who created the now iconic drawing of Ayn Rand which graces the backs of most of the author's books. Ilona makes her long feathery false eyelashes from her own flaming orange hair, and lives life to the fullest in spite of now having to care for a partner with Alzheimer's disease.

When Lynn Dell Cohen, now 81, was young, she begged her husband to buy her a boutique. He agreed, she says, to keep her from flirting and getting into trouble. She still runs that boutique, called "Off Broadway," where she appears dressed to the nines and dishes out style advice to her devoted customers. "I am dressed up for the theatre of my life every day," she proclaims proudly.

"I think good style improves the environment for everybody," says Zelda Kaplan, 95, who, sadly, died during the film's production. Zelda would travel to Africa to buy hand-loomed cloths from Africa, returning to New York to deliver them—along with her own design sketches—to her tailor to create one-of-a-kind fashions.

These women are not only full of enthusiasm for life, they have the nerve to act as if they're just starting out, like starry-eyed debutantes in search of that next great thing.

There's the 62-year-old who talks about her desire to meet and marry a man with children so she can experience the joy of being a mother. (But, for now, her clothes are her children, and she cares for them lovingly.)

Debra Rapoport, 68, talks giddily about how much in love she is with her younger boyfriend, a man who, at first, was turned off by what he considered her clownish style of dressing. She went through a brief period of self-doubt, asking herself, against her bent, "What would a man think of this outfit?" It didn't last long; she went back to expressing herself any which way, and the boyfriend came around.

Then there's Jacquie Murdock, 83, the former dancer still looking for a sugar daddy.

Your first impulse might be to regard these dreams as pathetically deluded, but soon you'll come around to seeing the chutzpah as powerfully adaptive. It's kept them strong, happy, busy, and successful. These are not spoiled, hothouse flowers, or wilting violets, after all, and it was often the school of hard knocks that gave them their inspiration.

For example: "My childhood wasn't a very happy one," says Ilona, who was born in Poland in 1920.

And right after the Second World War Joyce Carpati was 16 and studying opera in Milan. "You still saw bullet holes in the buildings," she says, "and people really did not have an easy time. And yet, in the afternoon, they would come out dressed magnificently. Magnificently. I was there in the autumn and I saw a woman in a tweed suit and laced suede Oxfords ... I thought: I love that!"

There's no doubt that the elegant personal style Carpati developed, and still sports, had something to do with her career in the magazine industry: she became the first female ad sales manager at Hearst publications, where she worked for both *Good Housekeeping* and *Cosmopolitan*.

When Joyce's husband died she realised she could either give up or carry on. "You be creative and go on doing what you're doing," she insists. "And if you don't, you're out of luck."

What does all this mean for our culture and society today? Posing a great big "why" to the commercial world's obsession with youth has been described as "punk and subversive" by Barneys' Simon Doonan, and he'd be right.

The ultimate subversive statement comes from Ilona: "At this stage of my life I'm more concerned with the air, the sea, the feeling of freedom within myself. I don't have to prove anything anybody else. I don't have to impress anybody. I wouldn't want to. Because I'm really enjoying this stage of my life, and I really feel good about me."

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

International News Desk

At Home and Abroad



At Home: New Scholarship Prompts Student Exchange

The first round of the Canadian Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships, the first major scholarship program to be introduced in years, has been allocated to 37 Canadian universities across the country.

Introduced in 2014, the scholarship will be given to both undergraduate and graduate students to allow them to study abroad or take part in overseas internships according to *University Affairs*. With a total value of approximately 40 million, about 80% of the money will be earmarked for Canadian students while the rest is to allow international students to study in Canada.

Around the Globe: Going Mobile for Work

The PIE News is reporting on a recently released study that found students who are mobile in their education tend to have better employment prospects. The study, conducted on behalf of the UK Higher Education International Unit, found that the differences were particularly noticeable for students who were studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) subjects, with the unemployment rate being 5.2% compared to 6.1% for their counterparts who did not take place in an exchange programme or a work or study abroad placement.

For those from a disadvantaged background, the difference was even higher with non-mobile disadvantaged students having a 7.6 unemployment rate rather than the 5% unemployment rate held by their mobile counterparts.

Unemployment wasn't the only factor, as the study also found wages were higher for students in 11 out of 17 of the subject areas looked at by the study. So grab that scholarship and get out there!



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to know the "right" questions to ask in your academic research and 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 *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success* by Lawrence A. Machi and Brenda T. McEvoy.

Nine Patterns of Argumentation and How they Can Form the Right Questions to Ask

When writing your literature review, you are expected to pose research questions. When I was in graduate studies, I randomly selected my questions without anyone telling me that there is a secret formula for asking questions. You want the questions to each fit one of several moulds for proper argumentation that are commonly expected.

One of the nice things about the argumentation patterns is that you don't have to have your data exactly fitting the population. Your data can be similar to another population, but not the same, for instance, and you can make a slight leap of faith in assuming the similarities cross-over in the two populations.

When I was at the Telus Spark Centre (a science exhibition centre in Calgary), one exhibit said that some planetary research could only be done by seeing similarities of the distant planet to the Earth and then assessing the properties of the phenomena on the other planet according to how they worked on Earth. This idea fascinated me, and the concept of finding similarities can be included in your own research, allowing you greater flexibility in your argument.

Machi and McEvoy (2012) outline the nine argumentation patterns that you can use to draw conclusions from your data in a flexible manner:

- The cause and effect argumentation pattern starts with a cause and ends with the effect. For instance, the essential oils placed daily on the collar of his coats (cause) resulted in a fungus growing on his chin (effect). When formulating questions for your research (especially for your thesis), be sure to consider whether a cause and effect question might be wise to ask. For instance, you could ask "What are the reasons for high GPAs in a subset of students over 40 in online academia?" You could also ask "What are the causes of student-teacher bonding in online universities?"
- The effect to cause argumentation pattern is the reverse. It is where one or more effects lead to a variety of effects. For instance, the effects of phoning the Alberta Health Link are that nine out of ten times they likely will send you to emergency where you will wait for hours only to be sent back home again, you will save time going to the clinic if they don't recommend you go to a doctor, and they will record all of your personal and private information for others to see. Your research questions could include "What is the impact of not eating after seven on overall health, weight, and diet?" (I lost 12 pounds just by not eating after 7--and am keeping it off.) Your research question could also be "What are the effects of writing a love journal on overall intimate relationship well-being?"

- The sign argumentation pattern has "signals, indicators [. . .] symptoms" (p. 119), qualities, or signs of an event, case, or action. For instance, "What are the early signs of head trauma in military females?" Or, you could similarly ask, "What are the qualities of someone engaged in unconditional love?"

As I don't want to delve into every case possible, I'll just briefly list the remaining ones, providing some explanation wherever I feel it would be most fitting. There is the sample to population pattern, the population to sample pattern, the parallel case (where a research question could be "What life-giving features of the Earth can be seen on Mars?"), the analogy pattern (where just certain qualities or parts of seemingly remotely similar things are compared, such as "How does the transformation of a butterfly compare to a student who undergoes life trauma while in studies?"), the ends-means pattern (where you choose some type of action and get a typically desirable result, such as "What study habits are necessary for students to achieve A grades?").

Exploratory Writing to Outlining: Easy Steps to Start Your Paper on the Right Track

In undergraduate and graduate studies, I perused the literature, got together all of my quotes and went straight to outlining. I would hash together all of my quotes in a mishmash of cue cards, organizing them for insertion into the outline. I rarely paraphrased, which is a big mistake, as paraphrasing should constitute at least 75% of the quotes used, but that is beside the point. More to the gist, the cue card system was a boon to my research and writing efficacy.

At one point, I never used cue cards. It wasn't until a professor alerted me to the benefits of the cue card system that I incorporated it. It was difficult first implementing this system, but once I got the swing of it, it became indispensable. Part of growing as an academic is taking risks in implementing new learning strategies.

Yet, there was one thing that I briefly considered doing but never followed through on. That is, I often heard of free-writing; where you spill out everything you know on a piece of paper. This seemed like a waste of time, and I attribute my lack of enthusiasm to the idea of free-writing coming across as more of a creative endeavour for people who don't like structure.

Now, heeding the advice in Machi and McEvoy's (2012) book, I am going to take the plunge and engage in exploratory writing before outlining. One of the suggestions in the book that makes exploratory writing seem indispensable is that you should treat the material (the quotes and literature) as if you were to be tested on it in an exam scenario (Machi & McEvoy, 2012). That does seem to make exploratory writing more meaningful, for sure: you have an arsenal of memorized facts to weave together into an argument. Also, Machi and McEvoy say that when you write your drafts, you should not rely heavily on the quotes you isolated, but write as much as you can with what you've retained in memory. It seems to be a sort of mental Olympics, and, although I'm hesitant to implement it to that extent, I think once I try it out, I'll likely become a convert.

Here are Machi and McEvoy's (2012) suggestions for exploratory writing and outlining:

- Gather your research materials, making notes and writing memoranda (memoranda is the highfalutin way to say "stuff"). Try to think of a way to synthesize the material into your own unique expression. Keep revising the big picture idea of your paper as you gather materials; you will need that puzzle template in the next step.
- Peruse all of the notes you have taken prior to beginning the outlining and writing processes. Even better, commit them to memory as if you are taking an exam or are about to teach the topic to a classroom of gazing students. Construct your argument.

- Write an exploratory paper where you take everything you have in memory and write it to the best of your ability. Make sure you explore your topic, your thesis, your evidence, your conclusion, any implications, and context.
- Place your exploratory writing on the shelf for a couple of days. If your exploratory writing shows some gaps or a lack of comprehension, go back to your notes, memorize them better and/or acquire more notes to fill in the gaps.
- The first step to making an outline is to make a table of contents. This will structure your outline beautifully.
- Next, draft the outline. Make sure everything is in the optimal order for making your argument. Ensure your writing has strong evidence and sound conclusions. Always go back to your notes. Don't make it a hodgepodge of facts, but give it life and structure. Weed out anything that isn't essential to your argument.
- Write the first draft and then edit accordingly. When editing, correct grammar, restructure paragraphs and sentences as fit, check syntax, make revisions, etc.
- Seek out expert or colleague advice for secondary and subsequent drafts. If they are professors or academics of high calibre, make all recommended changes.

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

Machi, Lawrence A., & McEvoy, Brenda T. (2012). *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.



In Conversation with *The Black Atlas*, Part I

Wanda Waterman



The Black Atlas is the alias of Peter Koronios, a solo artist who creates a mesmerising blend of ambient and grunge rock. He's recently released a brilliant cover of Florence and the Machine's "What the Water Gave Me," as a follow-up to his latest EP, *The Other*. Koronios spent 8 months teaching himself guitar, bass, and piano, and performed most of the EP's performances himself. The EP is deliciously rich and redolent of the dark forces lurking in rock history, and in "What the Water Gave Me" Koronios's vocal contribution forms an authentic expression of the sentiments and mood of the song, making his version a significant musical event in its own right. *The Other* will be followed by more EPs as part of a series called *The Equinox*.

"There's a place that I can see—it comes to me in dreams—
But I can't recall its name.

I don't know why, or what the hell it seems to be.

It has got me down on my knees.

And how those ghosts, how they dig their graves, how they dig
their graves and fade ..."

- Peter Koronios, from "Rivers" on EP *The Other*

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

I didn't really know that I wanted to pursue music seriously until I was in my teens. There were a lot of other interests I had that would end up influencing the music I make and which elements I ended up gravitating toward in the music I listen to.

Toward ambient and grunge in particular?

World music was always something that was being played when I was young, and it's something I still listen to. There are a lot of ambient elements in that. Film scores influence me quite a bit. Johnny Greenwood's collaborations with P. T. Anderson are something I really enjoyed. I was more into metal than grunge when I was younger. I think the whole association with grunge is more a product of the distorted guitar tones and slower tempos I'm playing.

What elements in your past lead you to the kind of dark reflections manifested in your songs?

Loneliness and isolation. Trying to make sense of that, and somehow learn from things that fall apart. Extracting an inherent universal pattern, which is perpetual decay and rebirth, and just allowing it to happen instead of allowing it to completely crush you.

How did you manage to spend eight months learning the instruments for this EP?

I didn't start from absolute zero. I had noodled around on guitar, bass, and piano for years, but I decided at the beginning of those eight months that I would take them more seriously and apply practice techniques I used in drumming to each of the other instruments. I'm still miles away from where I'd like to be in terms of proficiency. It's just about committing to getting better, literally locking yourself away for a few months and going inward. That's a foreign and frightening idea to many people.

Describe that process. How did you make it work?

I had my practice pad set up on one side of my bedroom, a keyboard on the other, a friend's bass guitar in the corner, and my guitar in the living room. I had my laptop open and a few instructional books I picked up at a music store. I'd go around the room for about six hours just going through exercises with everything. Then when I'd feel burned out or tired I'd eat, lie on my couch, and write on guitar until I fell asleep.

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

There are a host of incredible human beings that made music, as an activity and a way of life, something really powerful for me, especially my early teachers throughout middle school and high school. I took many private drum lessons over the years with a lot of teachers, trying to learn from different perspectives. Dom Famularo was and still is someone I admire very much, whose philosophy of life and music really kind of saved me from giving up on everything for good. I'll always be a student of his.

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.

The Travelling Student The Code of Vegas

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 the story of how Athabasca University has allowed me to create my own study abroad program. In the last part I arrived in Las Vegas for the [Money2020 Hackathon](#).

While nightclubs aren't usually my scene, the Haze nightclub Halloween party was a lot of fun. Lots of crazy Halloween costumes, loud music, confetti, and flashing lights. I ended up befriending a group from Ohio who agreed to work with me throughout the contest.

The next day started in the Aria conference centre where a breakfast buffet was served as sponsors pitched their API and tools to developers. Each team would pick a sponsor whose tools they'd use for the competition. We decided on using PayPal's tools to create a mobile app which would allow self-scanning and payment on mobile phones. Most participants, including our team, only aim to create a basic proof of concept to demonstrate their idea.

However, many teams went the full mile, pre-planning their team and projects weeks or months in advance. Over the next 24 hours we lived in the luxury of the Aria conference centre. We finished with a half-baked app which didn't function as we'd hoped. We had a lot of fun and learned a few things but I didn't expect to win.

I was pleasantly surprised to see an old friend from Waterloo who was also competing and also using the PayPal API. He'd come with two other student engineers from Waterloo with a planned project. They had modified a small grocery cart to contain an RFID reader, and when an item was placed in the cart the information would be synced to a custom-built iPhone app. The product was well made and complete. It even allowed a payment to be made on the iPhone app, after which a receipt would be emailed.

While they didn't win the grand prize, they ended up taking home \$5000 to split as well as a Samsung Tablet each for best use of PayPal. Most of the other interesting projects were based on BitCoin, an up and coming virtual currency. Some of them simple like a gambling game which runs with BitCoin, to more complex things like an automated trading system which buys and sells BitCoins automatically based on trends.

After the award ceremony we all left the conference area, but the conference would continue for a few days. The competition's winners would be given the opportunity to present their creations on stage. I found myself one casino over at the Cosmopolitan, where I'd been given some free-play. I don't remember if I won or lost but the drink service was excellent. While playing I received a text from Matt, so I ordered a Baileys and coffee to go and gave him a call.

Matt explained that he just got an emailing confirming his Australian Working visa. He'd be joining me in Australia after all.

A Second Look at Lynda

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Have you visited Lynda yet?

Lynda.com is the online software training company that is currently free for AUSU members. AU's Student Union has arranged for free one-year access for AU undergraduate students, but time is running out.

We first looked at lynda.com in this February 7, 2014 [article](#) in *The Voice Magazine*. If you didn't find a course that interested you back then, lynda.com is worth a second look. Over 800 courses have been added in the past year, and more are introduced every month. Intriguing new categories have been added, such as *Ebooks* (21 courses,) *Higher Education* (33 courses,) and *Public Relations* (2

courses.)

Courses are in an online video tutorial format and vary in length from minutes to hours. Jump in or out of a course at any point, and resume where you left off. The transcript of each tutorial scrolls just below the video and you can navigate to any point in the video by clicking on the relevant place in the transcript. Search for courses by category or keyword, save courses in your playlist to access later, and request certificates of completion.

Although lynda.com's main thrust is computer programming, graphics, and design, there are plenty of courses in other categories. There is sure to be something to interest everyone. After all, it's free!

For AU students, there are a number of courses that are directly relevant to learning:

Student Tools (42 courses.) In addition to tips on using some of the basic software (Word, Excel, Blackboard, Moodle, Outlook, Powerpoint, Evernote,) you'll find *Writing Research Papers*, *Managing Your Time*, and *Time Management Fundamentals*.

Education (121 courses.) Discover the physical process of learning with *The Neuroscience of Learning*. Unearth some apps to increase your productivity in school with *Google Apps For Students*. And how about some basics such as *Improving Your Memory* or *Speed Reading Fundamentals*?

Productivity (126 courses.) Learn efficiency tips on various software, plus personal productivity courses such as *Getting Things Done*, *Typing Fundamentals*, and *Overcoming Procrastination*.

Career Development (58 courses.) Enhance your job prospects with *Building Your Professional Networks*, *Giving Your Elevator Pitch*, and *Acing Your Interview*, or go the entrepreneurial route with *Raising Startup Capital*, *Building Business Relationships*, and *Coaching and Developing Employees*.

And since life shouldn't be all work and no play, lynda.com has hundreds of fun and creative courses too:

3D Printing (11 courses.) Everything from *Getting Started With MakerBot 3D Printers* to *3D Printing a Scale Model With AutoCAD*.

Blogs (62 courses.) Launch your blog with training on a number of platforms, such as WordPress and Bootstrap, then customize with themes, plug-ins, and images.

Illustration (77 courses.) Exercise your computer creativity with *Artistic Painting With Illustrator* and *Designing Your Own Online Avatar*, or pursue the traditional artists' methods with *Foundations of Drawing: Light and Shadow*.

Photography (492 courses.) Courses on every aspect of photography and photo processing, including choosing equipment, photography basics, raw processing, colour correction, and printing and sharing photos.

Social Networks (22 courses.) Get up to speed with courses covering Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, and Vine.

If you're an AU undergraduate student, you can access lynda.com for one year for free. To sign up, follow the instructions on the AUSU [website](#). On each visit, access your lynda.com account by first logging in to your [ausu.org](#) student account.

A note for procrastinators: AUSU's 3-year licence for lynda.com expires in December 2015. If you haven't already taken advantage of lynda.com, now is the time to sign up and take advantage of what's left of your free year.

Don't turn down the opportunity to learn something new.

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

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AUSU Student Forums

In the General Student Chat forum, user "CrimsonDawn" seeks help finding the T2202A form online.

AthaU Facebook Group

Austin wants to know when to expect an acceptance letter for his Masters program application. Stephanie seeks insight on some psychology courses. And Ameerah wants to know what other Bachelor of General Studies students are planning to do with their degree. Samarth is looking for a study buddy in Calgary for ACCT 253.

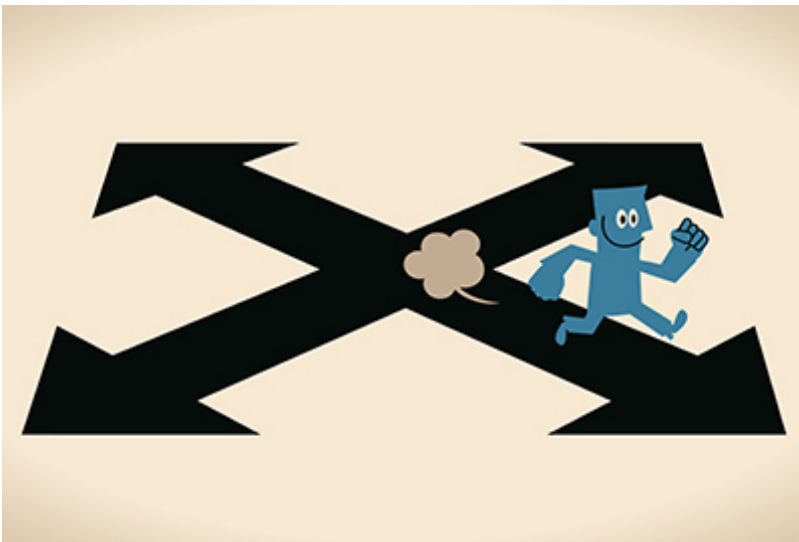
Other postings include final grades, the weather in Vancouver, trouble logging into student accounts, supplementary exams, and courses CMNS 302 and 421, CRJS 491, EDUC 309, ENSC 200, MATH 376, PSYC 375, and SOCI 231,

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Get your AU hoodies, shirts, caps & anything else with FREE shipping on all orders over \$79 for the month of March <http://iamau.ca/1HMj89h>." And @AthabascaU re-tweets a link to a news report about the "[7 Myths of Online Education](#)."

The Entrepreneur's Path

Marie Well



I had the good fortune recently to have my brother publish a Kindle book on Amazon for the first time. In light of his endeavour, I can now report how simplistic it is to publish on Amazon (much easier than I reported in my prior article on self-publishing), and I'll even give you a tip for how to get your cover page made professionally for next to nothing.

Additionally, I have been reading *The Laptop Millionaire* by Mark Anastasi, which delves into how to make a fortune with online marketing. I will get my hands dirty by actually testing out one of the book's recommended sites by signing up and actually setting up shop as a seller.

Kindle Book Publishing? Easy as Pie

In one of my prior articles on Kindle publishing, I reported on how to publish based on the how-to official Kindle book. It recommended that you have some HTML know-how and subscribed a very specific way to make your table of contents.

Well, I'm delighted to tell you that all you need is the ability to type your document (preferably with no extra return spaces) and the ability to make a table of contents based on heading styles (and the adding of links to the table of contents). No HTML needed. You just take your formatted Word document (with Table of Contents) and load it up on the Kindle site as is. Shh! It's our little secret.

As for your cover page, you get a professionally done cover for \$5 on fiverr.com. That's right. You heard it here. You can search under the tab for graphic design and peer at the book cover designer's portfolio until you find the best fit. Some of the designers even claim a 24 hour turn-around time. You will likely need to supply a graphic image which you can purchase for cheap on sites such as istockphoto.com. Be certain, however, to ensure that the designer has good customer ratings, which are also available on the site.

A good video on how to make a [Table of Contents](#) is available on YouTube. To ensure that it allows hyperlinks, be sure to choose "insert table of contents" from the Table of Contents drop-down menu on the References tab and select "use hyperlinks" (at least, it is that easy in Microsoft 2007).

And did I fail to mention that a current trend is to write 30 page ebooks on a topic you are passionate about? They can be either non-fiction or short stories. Plus, the more books you write, the more money you make.

Easy as pie! Now go get some cover art, hire a cover designer for cheaper than five chocolate bars, and load up your writing for sale. Be sure to let The Voice Magazine know if you've turned a profit.

Wait! There's more ways to benefit from [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com).

Reading the book [Laptop Millionaire](#) proved enlightening. Some of the best ideas pertained to Fiverr.com, such as paying \$5 for a Fiverr gig to promote your business or affiliate link through tweets, emails, Facebook, or other social media sites.

First, I'll ensure you know what it means to be an affiliate. Affiliates sell certain products on sites such as Amazon or Clickbank through their own sales channels for a percentage of the price of the item. That means, you make a profit just by selling pre-existing products. Amazon or Clickbank will give you a link for that particular product, and the link will recognize you as the purveyor of that sale; meanwhile, your affiliate account with either Amazon or Clickbank gets credited. That means, you make money passively.

The [Laptop Millionaire](#) book encourages you to buy the Fiverr gigs that promote your blog on their social media sites. Your blog should contain the affiliate links (as by just listing your affiliate link in a tweet or other social media post can be hammered as spam).

Fiverr can even serve as your gateway to profitable gigs.

Yet, a more creative way to make money off of Fiverr.com is to consider what you do well and what you can do in a small time frame, and post that service for sale on Fiverr.com. The services that Fiverr.com offer range from graphic design to computer programming/IT to editing services. Are you a fantastic writer? Offer to write every 500 words of a book or article for \$5. A larger size book could add up in no time. Are you a gifted graphic designer who can craft a compelling cover in a matter of minutes? Make book covers for \$5 a pop. Can you whip up a 3-page Wordpress site in a less than ten minutes? Sell Wordpress setup for \$5 a gig. It's that simple.

The [Laptop Millionaire](#) ensures you are aware of the profitability, of getting, say, even just 5 gigs a day. That is \$25 a day, which adds up to extra monthly income of \$750 or yearly income of \$9,000. You will likely need to build up your Fiverr business with lots of good customer ratings in order to get higher exposure on the site.

I took the plunge.

To test the concept of [Fiverr](#), I decided to set up an account. The process for getting started couldn't be simpler. The set up site first offers you the anonymity of a username and password of your choosing. The site then allows you the option to set up a gig. In the gig set-up screen, you enter items such as a gig title, a cover photo (1100X260px), a gig gallery of images (if, say, you are designing book covers, you can load up 550X370px images of your artwork), tags (3 words or phrases), a description (totalling 120 words), the duration it will take you to complete the job (one day, two days, etc.), and instructions that you can customize for the purchaser. Voila! You are all set to go.

As I'm in the process of designing a cover photo, it will be a bit of time before I'm up-and-running on Fiverr. But, hey, nothing is stopping you from purchasing a Fiverr gig to design your Fiverr cover art. It's a great way to cash in on services you do best in as little time as possible.



Open Minds, Open Hearts

While on our recent cruise I was pleased that each morning the ship provided three distinct four-page leaflets bringing news from Canada, the United States, and Great Britain.

In fact that's how I first learned that John Baird was retiring from federal politics and that a man from Lamont, Alberta had won fifty million dollars in the lottery. Unfortunately I don't know either well enough to benefit from their news!

Also earning a front-page story was the remarkable news that the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) had unanimously ruled that Canadians have the right to end their lives with the help of a doctor if they have a "grievous and irremediable medical condition that causes enduring and intolerable suffering."

This story is remarkable for several reasons. Rarely do the nine justices ever agree (without an additional ruling explaining dissenting interpretation) on any issue so ethically or socially divisive. This would also add Canada to a list of only ten other jurisdictions in the world to address the issue of physician-assisted suicide. It also forces government to deal with the issue after decades of rhetoric and sidestepping. The government has been given just one year to create legislation to protect the rights of the vulnerable and the doctors who have conscious objections as well as to outline the process by which the service would be accessed. A sound mind and clear, informed consent by an adult form the starting point.

To put a face to this issue one need only think of Sue Rodriguez who was diagnosed with ALS in 1991 and lost this battle with the SCC in a 5-4 decision in 1993. In 1994 she ended her life with the help of an anonymous physician.

In 2010, another BC woman, Kay Carter, 89 was forced to travel secretly to Switzerland to get the doctor-assisted suicide she wanted to prevent her from becoming in her words "an ironing board on a bed" and "dying inch by inch."

Most of us don't have to think very long or hard about people who have cruelly suffered. We just need to imagine ourselves enduring pain without end while knowing all hope of recovery is gone. Who among us doesn't hold personal dignity and the right to decide our own destiny as sacrosanct?

Comparisons are being made to the decades-long fight for racial and gender equality, rights for gays and the right to abortion. Despite the pain of these struggles and the emergence of both victims and heroes in the process, would any reasonable person actually suggest we turn back the clock? Whose rights would we throw under the bus? Women, blacks, LTGBs? I think as a country, and a people, we are ready to boldly look this issue in the eye and come to a resolution that will free all of us (patients and doctors) as well as protect those most vulnerable.

It will require political will, open minds, and equally open hearts 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

The Night Before

Samantha Stevens



Artist: No Dry County

Album: *The Night Before*

There is something about some types of music that remind you of summertime. The songs that bring fond summer memories back to the forefront of the mind often have that laid back tone, soft singing, and a slight country influence. Maybe it's because I spend my summer listening to such music and sitting around campfires with friends and family, but the latest album from No Dry County brought all of my wonderful summer memories back instantly.

The Night Before is the first full-length album for the Texas band No Dry County. Formed in 2009, the band began as an 80s cover band. Today they have been compared to bands like Kings of Leon and The Black Crowes, and artists like Ryan Adams or Tom Petty, and I found that they instantly reminded me of The Trews. Their sound is classified as Americana, but there are influences of blues, rock, country, and even metal at times.

The first track "Crazed Young Love" threw me off at first. It begins with the guitar droning melodiously which is eventually met with an even subtler bass and drums. However, when the singing starts it almost doesn't match the music because the vocals are so obviously used to the country genre. Still I found myself enjoying the first track on the album despite the unusual music and vocal pairing.

The song that I love the most on this album is "Homeland". The influence of country is very prominent in this song, and, although I am typically not a fan of the genre, it was the roaring guitar at the beginning of the song that attracted my attention. The lyrics are beautiful because they capture the struggle that is in the heart of someone faced with having to travel away from their family.

I also really liked "Wouldn't It Be Fine". There really isn't anything that sets the song apart from the rest of the album, but the addition of the keyboard caught my ear. As well, the guitar is slightly more prominent with a hard rock influence. Interestingly paired with these two elements is a soft singing that winds down into a harmonious blend of voices. The full effect is a song that sounds so beautifully hopeful that it couldn't help but draw my attention to it.

Overall, the entire album is fantastic. As I mentioned at the beginning, this album very much reminds me of the music that I listen to during the summer while relaxing outdoors, but I think that it would also be perfect to listen to while studying because the rhythm is continuously soft and steady from track to track.

The Night Before was released March 10, 2015, just in time to make it on my summer playlist, and is available 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

Mommy Dearest

Dear Barb:

My mother is driving me crazy! She is so nosy! She keeps going through my computer and my phone. I'm not sure what she is looking for, I'm a good son. I will be starting university this year and I have never been in any trouble. I don't use drugs or drink. Why would she be looking through my stuff? When I ask her about it, she denies that she has been through my stuff, but I can tell she has been. Also she asks me questions that indicate she has definitely been on my laptop. How can I stop my mother from this behaviour? Looking forward to your advice. Zack

Hey Zack:

You definitely sound like a good kid. Not sure why your mother would be going through your stuff. I think you need to have a serious discussion with her about why she is doing this. Assure her that you are not into drugs or any other vices. Tell her that you are aware of what she is doing and you would appreciate her not going through your stuff since you have not given her any reason for this type of behaviour. If your mother continues then you can put a password on your computer and phone. Perhaps she is just fearful you will get into trouble, so she is trying to prevent that from happening. Keep the lines of communication open. Congrats on entering university.

And speaking of mothers—

Dear Barb:

I recently broke up with my husband of two years. We just could not get along. It was always a tumultuous relationship, but my mom and him got along really well. The problem is I don't think my mom should continue a relationship with my ex, but she thinks it's okay to talk to him if she wants to. I told her if she continues to talk to him she will not see me. Why would she want to continue a relationship with him? Amanda

Hi Amanda:

It's unfortunate that you and your husband have broken up; relationships are difficult to say the least. I don't think you can really tell someone who they can talk to, let alone give your mother an ultimatum. This behaviour is not resolving anything. I'm sure over time the relationship between your mom and your ex will wane, but that is not something that you can control. You could explain to your mother that you would prefer she not discuss what is going on in your life with your ex and that you would not be interested in hearing about what is going on in your ex's life. Just because you and your ex didn't get along doesn't mean other family members shouldn't talk to him. Time to let this go and move on. Thanks for writing Amanda

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

~ Dysfunctional Love Languages in Advertising ~

ON WEIGHT LOSS



THINK YOU'RE JUST FINE
THE WAY GOD MADE YOU?
THINK AGAIN.

ON VIRILITY

TWICE A WEEK? AND YOU
CALL YOURSELF A MAN?



ON WEALTH



IT'S EASY! JUST COME
PICK SOME OFF THIS
TREE!

ON HAPPINESS

CHECK OUT THIS HAPPY
FAMILY—SLIM, VIRILE,
AND RICH!



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March 19, 2015

Athabasca University Students Union Welcomes Newly Elected Executive Members.

Edmonton, Alberta - Athabasca University Students Union (AUSU) is pleased to announce its recently elected Executive members for the 2015-2016 council term. Congratulations to **Jason Nixon**: returning in the role of AUSU President, **Shawna Wasylyshyn**: newly joining the Executive team as Vice President External and Student Affairs, and **Corrina Green**: re-elected back into her position as Vice President Finance and Administration. The elected candidates will commence their one-year terms effective April 1st, 2015.

AUSU's Council and Staff would like to thank **Kim Newsome** for her service to AUSU in the Vice President External and Student Affairs position from 2014-2015. We look forward to Ms. Newsome's further contributions to AUSU council as a non-Executive board member.

For further information please contact the AUSU Office at ausu@ausu.org.

Issued on behalf of AUSU Council.

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THE VOICE

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